



Adult Learning Within Reach

## Member Lecture – 25 January 2024

The stage is a world: principles and practice in theatre design  
Alison Warren, WEA tutor

Questions answered post-lecture

### **Q1 What do you feel about film as part of the set and the action?**

Generally I love it. The work of companies like Kneehigh and Complicitie where the film is an important addition to the mood and the play and is fully integrated is fabulous. Kneehigh's 'Brief Encounter' was astonishing in this case, as was the Katie Mitchell directed 'Waves'.

However, where it's a gimmick or gets in the way of the actors it's awful. But that would be true of any scenic design elements that behaved the same way.

If you want to see it pushed to its limits, look for 'Forkbeard Fantasy'. Sadly no longer touring but examples of their work are on Youtube.

### **Q2 What happens to a set once the run is over – are they ever kept for posterity?**

No, rarely. Sets are only kept where the show might run again, or they can be reworked into a future production. The discussion about this and sustainability in theatre making is a hot topic at the moment.

### **Q3 Where can I find out more about design for amdram?**

I can recommend this book – Creative and Successful Set Designs: How to Make Imaginative Stage Sets with Limited Resources by Todd Muffatti. It is American as he designs for high school, but is therefore very good on sets with limited budgets.

Useful links and resources for further reading

Books

**Unmasking Theatre Design: A Designer's Guide to Finding Inspiration and Cultivating Creativity** by Lynn Porter

**The Crowood Theatre Companions design book series**

## Links

**Theatre Company websites** (for example [Royal Shakespeare Company](#)) – often have footage of design creation.

**How does a get-in/out work in a theatre?** – Youtube – Capital Theatres, Edinburgh.

Forthcoming WEA courses by Alison Warren

**Literature: Be an informed theatre audience member** which expands on other topics related to theatre will run in the summer term – keep an eye on the WEA website at [www.wea.org.uk](http://www.wea.org.uk).