

Master the Art of Make-up and Costuming

Friday, August 5th, 2011

2pm

Kay Macrosson and Lisa Hood, Faculty

Costuming

The primary goal of costuming is to strengthen the musical performance by using colour and flow to create a unified look! Here are some basic tips:

- The type and colour of the fabric should compliment the theme of the song choice. When making a costume from a material that has the potential to be hot or scratchy (lame', some laces etc), attach a small piece to the part of the body to be covered with the material and wear it for an hour. If it feels too uncomfortable, you may want to consider lining it or using another material. Find/borrow/steal very powerful flood lights and use them when deciding on your costume. How does it look under the lights? Does the color wash out or does it come alive in a way you hadn't expected? Does your black top turn brown? Does it turn the shiny lame portion of your top black instead of lighting it up?
- When fitting the costume, the appropriate undergarments should be worn by every member of the chorus. The 'all-in-one' creates a sleek look on all body types. (Underwear and nylon waistbands create lumps on even the slimmest body type)
- It must be comfortable for everybody and allow for 'breathing room'. Breathing is the most important thing for a singer!! Although looking good is a very close second, if there is no room to take a nice big breath, the singer won't be much use to the chorus ;-)
- The costume should allow ease of movement and should fall back into place when executing the choreography. Test this out long before you take the stage! Does it rise up in the back as you raise your arms? Do the arms fall down to your elbows when you raise them above your head? Is it too tight around the hips? The last thing you want to be having to worry about on stage is repositioning your outfit after every move!
- We must be comfortable on stage, but we also must look the part. Audiences expect a symphony orchestra to be dressed formally, a country act to have a few musicians wearing cowboy hats, and a rap group to wear baggy pants and bling. Imagine any of these ensembles dressing like one another and then giving their usual performance! The public wouldn't know what to make of it. We have the luxury of becoming these characters and more, but we must play the part fully without holding back and having a clearly defined costume will leave no doubt in their minds the minute we hit the stage.

The clothes we wear are a big part of the experience. The day after a performance, audience members tell their friends they *saw* a concert, not that they *heard* it. This is profound. Seeing, rather than hearing a musical performance is built into our very language.

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TIPS and TRICKS FOR A MORE BEAUTIFUL YOU!

During a SAI performance, your face and head will always command more attention than whatever you choose to do with your feet or hands. Your audience will be awed at a really intricate cool choreography move....but it's your face they will look back at once you are done wowing them with your body. Your FACE IS IMPORTANT! It gives them clues to how you feel about yourself during the performance and how they should feel about what you are singing. We all spend hours and hours working on the same phrase in a piece of music to gain its perfection. Why then throw away those points you gained by not paying just as much attention to how you look on stage! "If you look good and portray that you know you do....then we (your audience) will think the same" Your confidence will shine through! Here are a few tips to help you on your way to looking Mahvelous!

- Facial continuity - if you are wearing a blush that is in the red/blue family and a lipstick in the orange/red family, it will look garish on stage, even if it seems to look okay on the streets
- A caution on eye shadow - generally matte eyeshadow works best. Glossy eyeshadow under stagelight will wash your eyes out. If you are going to use gold metallics or glossy colours, limit them to the eyelid only and keep them off the brow area.
- Through the use of makeup, specifically highlighting and shading, the apparent shape of a face can be changed. By highlighting the face's protruding bones, the features become pronounced; shadowing cavities can add depth.
- Lighting controls makeup to a high degree. Makeup can lose its effectiveness due to incorrect stage lighting. Conversely, skillful lighting can greatly aid the art of makeup. Beg, borrow or steal a set of powerful flood lights and use that to check what your make up will ACTUALLY look like under stage conditions. It's amazing what you will see and NOT see!
- Understanding light's effect on makeup and various shades and pigments is important when designing a performer's makeup. The following are among the basic rules of light: nothing has color until light is reflected from it; an object appears black when all of the light is absorbed; an object appears white when all of the light is reflected. If certain rays are absorbed and others are reflected, the reflected rays determine the color.
 - Pink tends to gray the cool colors and intensify the warm ones. Yellow becomes more orange.
 - Flesh pink flatters most makeup.

- Fire red ruins makeup. All but the darker flesh tones virtually disappear. Light and medium rouge fade into the foundation, whereas the dark red rouges turn a reddish brown. Yellow becomes orange, and the cool shading colors become shades of gray and black.
 - Amber is flattering because it picks up the warm pinks and flesh tones in the makeup.
 - Amber and orange intensify and yellow most flesh colors. They turn rouges more orange. Cool colors are grayed.
 - Green grays all flesh tones and rouges in proportion to its intensity. Green will be intensified. Yellow and blue will become greener.
 - Light blue-green lowers the intensity of the base colors. One should generally use very little rouge under this type of light.
 - Green-blue washes out pale flesh tones, and will gray medium and deep flesh tones, as well as all reds.
 - Blues gray most flesh tones and cause them to appear more red or purple.
 - Violet causes orange, flame, and scarlet to become redder. Rouge appears more intense.
 - Purple affects makeup like violet lighting, except reds and oranges will be even more intense, and most blues will look violet.
- Eyes and eyebrows are the greatest communicative tool in an actor's arsenal. They are the most expressive feature on the face.
 - A generous amount of powder is needed to reduce unwanted shine. If a performer's makeup is under-powdered, his skin oils will break through quickly, producing shine and possibly running. After powder is applied to the entire face, starting under and around the eyes, it is gently pressed for thirty seconds. The excess is brushed off with a large soft brush or piece of cotton.
 - Though the eyes are the most expressive feature of the face, the eyes and ears of the audience follow mouth movements often for clues. If a performer's lips are underdone or overplayed, they will detract from the performer and the performance. A general rule is: the larger the mouth, the deeper the lipstick tone. However, you should not appear "all mouth".

Make – up....there’s an APP for that!

Tips on Application!

- Wash your face thoroughly, taking extra care to exfoliate. Follow with a toner, and moisturize afterward to create a clean, smooth base for your makeup.
- For reddish complexions, choose a foundation with a slight golden or yellow undertone. However, even for warmer complexions, remember that the stage lights will tend to wash out or add a 'colder' effect to colors, so go warmer in tone wherever you can to counteract this (unless the character you're playing is meant to be wan, sickly or ghostly, in which case, stick with cold, pale tones!).
- Use a sponge or foundation brush to apply your base, for more even coverage. Make sure to blend evenly into the hairline, at temples, and slightly below the jawline. Take extra care that your jawline color blends naturally into your neck -- there's nothing more distracting than someone whose face contrasts starkly with a neck that's a completely different color.
- Stage lighting tends to 'flatten' a face and remove definition. Add contour, character and definition to your face. Go darker for whatever you want to 'recede' or hollow on your face. Enhance cheekbones with color that starts just below the cheekbone itself, and which is concentrated in the 'hollow.' Start the color at the point in your cheek that is slightly outside the center of your eye, then back on each side.
- Reduce plumpness and strengthen your jawline by adding color in a direct, subtle line of shadow from chin to the bottom edge of each side of your jaw. Add shadow to the eyes by using cream along the curve of the socket.
- For a wide-eyed, open look, add highlights using pale cream colors to the center of the lids and browbones.
- Line the eyes with a thin, firm line above the upper lashes, and with a thinner line below the lower ones. Widen and deepen the line from the center of the eye as it sweeps outward on each side. For dramatic or colorful roles, use black, thick lines. Carefully extend your eyeliner up and outward beyond the edge of your eye. If you do this properly, when the eye is open wide, this line merges with the line of your lashes, simply adding a subtle lift and openness to the eye.
- Emphasize the eye sockets with more shadow, as needed, as well. Use liberal mascara and/or false eyelashes.
- Draw natural, firm brows with a high arch (a good arch on the brow really frames the face).
- Line the mouth in a firm, dark line that enhances the natural shape of your mouth. Don't go overboard here -- the object isn't to create a completely different mouth shape, but to strengthen what you have naturally.
- Powder your entire face thoroughly. It will 'set' your makeup and provide a more naturalistic finish. Reapply powder as needed.
- After the show, remove your makeup no matter how tired you are, for the health of your skin (not to mention your pillowcase!). Use a cream or oil-based makeup remover on the eyes (not soap), and a good cleanser on your face.