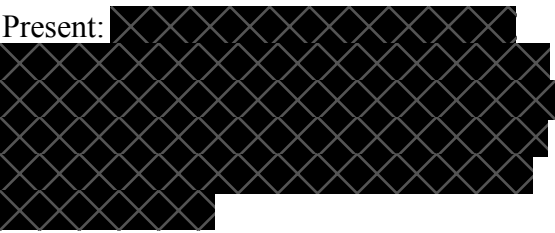





The 39 Steps Production Meeting Report

Date: 11/04/24	Production Meeting: #1
Location: Zoom	SM: Grace Engstrom
Start: 3:30pm CST	End: 4:18pm CST

Present: 	Absent: N/A
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GENERAL

1. Introductions were made between the production staff
2. The Director shared their concept presentation
3. There will be no production meeting next week because of Veterans Day
4. Scenic and Costume CTR Presentations will be presented at our next meeting in two weeks
5. The production calendar has been emailed and sent out so please review for updated deadlines and dates
6. We will meet this semester through December 9th- the last Monday of Classes
 - a. Get through all CTR presentations
 - b. Get some rough sketches done
 - c. Go away on break with a good idea of what is happening
7. Full designs will be due in February
8. Cast list by February 4th
9. We are adding  on as Technical Director and he will join us for our next meeting
 - a.  will be his mentor
10. We are looking at the possibility of adding an Intimacy Director to the production
 - a. Decision will be made in the next two weeks by our next meeting
11.  will be handling all fight choreography for the production

DIRECTOR

1. Background
 - a. Originally a Novel written in 1915 by John Buchan
 - i. Set a few years before World War 1
 - ii. Popular during World War 1

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- iii. Spy ring was known as “The Black Stone”
 - iv. “39 Steps” indicated the number of stairs leading to the Black Stones’ base of operations
 - b. Developed into a film in 1935 by Alfred Hitchcock which is what the play is mostly built around
 - i. Many things were changed from the novel
 - 1. The spy ring is now called the “39 Steps”
 - 2. Scenes were added in the film
 - 3. Female Presenting leads were added
 - c. Play was first adapted in the 4 person version with a low budget
 - i. It was revamped by Patrick Barlow in 2005
 - ii. Parody of the film but not making fun of the film
 - 1. Parody= comedic twist on the original spy story
 - iii. Set in 1935 a few years before World War 2
2. Key Ideas
- a. Man on the run
 - b. Innocence
 - i. Hitchcock movies often follow the idea of a person running from something but they are innocent and the audience knows but the world of the play does not
 - c. Anti-War
 - i. In the movie and the film there are scenes where Richard Hanny (main character) give a speech about working together and living as a cohesive race
 - d. Working towards something bigger than yourself
 - i. Hanny originally goes on the run but he is looking for something he is only apart of
 - ii. Gets caught up in the whirlwind of cross country espionage
 - iii. Not doing it for myself doing it for my country
 - e. Want to remember that although it is funny the story is there
 - i. Do it as simply as we can
 - ii. Doesn’t want the play to escape us
3. Concept
- a. Film Noir meets Farce
 - i. Film Noir + Farce = The 39 Steps
 - ii. Farce similar to The Play That Goes Wrong
 - iii. Concept revolves around Film Noir
 - 1. Film Noir has a lot of roots in German Expressionism
 - b. German Expressionism- popular in the 1920’s
 - i. ‘Businessman’ woodcut
 - 1. Deep contrasts between the black and the white
 - 2. Sharp angles
 - ii. Direct influence of the Film Noir genre
 - c. *Metropolis* by Fritz Lang (1927)

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- i. Still images including the poster and a skyscraper
 - ii. Grandness and large scale
 - iii. Sharp Angles and Skyline
- d. Sets by Appia and Craig
 - i. Grandness- seem very large
 - ii. Simple- in a bare state
 - iii. Allows for audiences to imagine what can happen
- e. Film Noir- popular in the 1940's
 - i. Contrast between the lights and the darks
 - ii. Shadows that played at every corner
 - iii. Angles and depth
- f. Proto Noir is where the film fell into
 - i. Pre Noir
 - 1. Has a lot of Noir feel but is not characterized the same way
- g. The Play That Goes Wrong relation to The 39 Steps
 - i. It is a farce
 - ii. You see a lot of the strings but it doesn't break the audience away from what is happening onstage
 - iii. Clowns build a car onstage and crew has to help get it off
 - iv. Preshow possibility- Richard Hannay sits in a chair in front of the grand drinking Scotch and reading the Novel
- 4. What is more important, the faithfulness of doing a Film Noir film or the historical period in which the play is set? As there is a big difference between the 1930's and the 1950's
 - a. Do you want aspects of Film Noir or full Film Noir?
 - b. Have an answer to what year by 11/5/24 at 4:00pm CST
- 5. What size understudy cast do you want?
 - a. Keeping in mind costume construction for understudies depending on the size
 - b. Keeping in mind the crossover between One Acts and the Dance Showcase
 - c. Hesitation with overburdening the understudies with having to learn the whole show if covering multiple roles
- 6. What gender casting of the clowns do you want?

SCENIC

- 1. Sets by Appia and Craig
 - a. Grandness- seem very large
 - b. Simple- in a bare state
 - c. Allows for audiences to imagine what can happen
- 2. The feel of set inspiration
 - a. Feel larger than life
 - b. Feel rigid but fluid at the same time
 - c. A lot of space and a lot of playing room where anything can happen
 - d. Room for play on levels
- 3. Open to seeing crew members moving things on and off stage

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- a. Having little bit moments that can add to the comedy
- 4. Creating different locations- creating the flavor rather than having full specific settings
 - a. Having minimal theatrical pieces used to put different locations together and piece together the idea of a different setting
- 5. Realist setting with the subversion of the unexpected rather than cartoonish
 - a. Allow for the actors to believe the world that they are in and play it for truth
 - i. Actors see it as their truth
 - b. Camp is not the right word to describe it but rather more slapstick and subversion of the unexpected
 - c. Allow for the audience to see the theatricality and the strings of the performance
- 6. Neutral set that allows the more colorful props and costumes to pop
- 7. See the director notes above for more specifics on the concept presentation

LIGHTING

- 1. Lighting will be a helpful piece in creating the different locations throughout the set as they will likely be presented onstage in more minimalistic ways
- 2. The inclusion of haze/smoke/fog that is mentioned within the script is something that we would like to see onstage
- 3. See the director notes above for more specifics on the concept presentation

SOUND

- 1. In the moment where Richard Hannay is being chased and shot at by an airplane, what if it starts out with it being a sound effect and then turns into the actors making the sound onstage?
- 2. See the director notes above for more specifics on the concept presentation

COSTUMES

- 1. How do you see the high contrast in terms of costumes? Black and White? Color?
 - a. Not black and white
 - b. Color is acceptable and also used in German Expressionism
- 2. 1935 with the possibility of pushing it up to the 1940's or 1950's to fit with the film noir
- 3. Characters as written
 - a. 4 person cast
 - i. Gender preference for the clowns is still to be determined
 - b. Understudy cast
 - i. Size to be determined
 - c. Breakdown of Clown 1 and Clown 2 Characters will be the same as what is written in the script
- 4. Characters playing the truth of the matter more Film Noir rather than cartoon
 - a. There are moments of melodrama that can be brought forward through these

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elements

5. Open to Mustache Reveal
 - a. Professor Jordan and the James Bond archetype- starts to peel off bushy mustache as he starts to turn German to reveal a Hitler style mustache
6. Not in the fine tune details in the bold/broad strokes
 - a. High contrast images = bold/broad strokes
7. The saturated colors of the costumes will be able to pop over a more neutral set
8. See the director notes above for more specifics on the concept presentation

PROPS

1. The saturated colors of the props will be able to pop over a more neutral set
2. See the director notes above for more specifics on the concept presentation

PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT

1. Nothing at this time, thank you!

PRODUCER

1. Nothing at this time, thank you!

PUBLICITY

1. Nothing at this time, thank you!

STAGE MANAGEMENT

1. Update paperwork with [REDACTED] as the new Technical Director with [REDACTED] as the mentor
2. Send Report to [REDACTED] before sending it out to the rest of the production team

ZOOM RECORDING

[11/4/24 39 Steps Production Meeting Recording](#)

Next Meeting: Monday, November 18th 2024 at 3:30pm CST