

THTR 250

Introduction to Design

Fall 2020

The A,B,C's of reading a script

Reading a script seems really straightforward and easy and it is, but since it is the central, common document everyone involved in the production has in common, there are a few things making it more complicated than just reading.

Reading the script is learning the author's story. Once you begin reading the script, your own experiences make that experience unique. That is something to celebrate. Remember two things: one, your experiences are what make you, you. And, two there are no "wrong" answers in art.

As you approach a script, you should think about the common design approach. Typical practice is reading the play three times, or in three ways: first, to enjoy the author's work - this is the purest reading because you are just learning the story.

The second type of reading, is reading to gather information. You want to find out everything you can about what the author is telling you. Who are the characters? Where does this happen? When does it happen? What happens? And Why? (sound familiar? this is just like the journalists mantra of who, what, when and where) This is called internal research. At this stage, you can begin to analyze the problem (the play and it's design can be considered the problem in design sense) sketch and dream about it.

As ideas begin to form, read again, with the solution in your head and see how it works (the third type). This is also where you begin to share the design with other people involved in the production to get feedback.

You can certainly do a design in fewer readings. (I know, - I've done it) But you will not be giving yourself the best chance to do your best work. My experience has taught me that the more I read the play and think about it, the more I can make a connection to the play which will lead to a richer solution.

What about that "concept" thing? Where does it come from?

The development of the concept is script based (always!) and comes from diligently reading and researching the script and discussing it with other members of the creative team. I prefer to call it an approach to the play. It sounds less arrogant and academic.