

# Production Design Adaptation

Enriching the Humanities Through Opera

**OPERA  
AMERICA**

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# *How does production and visual design aid in storytelling?*

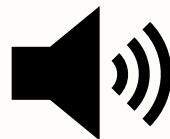
## **Today's Objectives:**

- Respond to the musical and storytelling elements of opera to develop criteria for visual artistic choices.
- Refine an adaptation pitch to demonstrate critical understanding of the visual elements of production design and opera to tell a story.
- Create visual representations of set and costume designs based on opera adaptation pitches.

# Listening Activity



As you listen to the music, write down any colors, mood, spaces/places, textures, foods, etc. you can associate with the music.



Act I

03:28 – 05:30

# ***Roméo et Juliette* Synopsis**

The opera *Roméo et Juliette*, based on Shakespeare's play, tells the story of Romeo and Juliet, two teenagers from the feuding Montague and Capulet families. They meet at a ball, fall in love, and secretly marry, knowing their families will never approve. After Romeo kills Juliet's cousin in a street fight, he is forced into hiding to escape the Capulets' vengeance. Meanwhile, Juliet fakes her own death to avoid an arranged marriage, but the plan goes tragically wrong. Within a few days, the drama culminates in the tragic deaths of both Romeo and Juliet.

# Key Scene #1

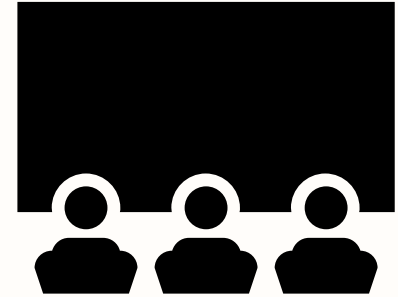
## Act I: Scene 1, No. 4 - Romeo and Juliet meet

Romeo and Juliet meet at the ball and are both captivated by each other. Romeo, being more experienced, tries to woo Juliet, while Juliet, who is more innocent, is intrigued by Romeo despite the conflict with her beliefs.

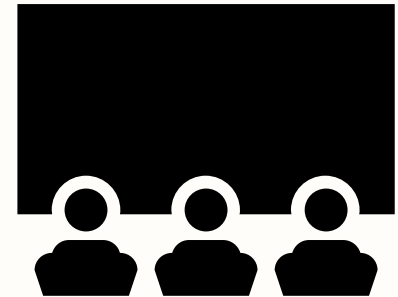


# Key Scene #1 continued

[Met Opera on Demand](#): Track #15. ACT I: Ange adorable  
00:00 – 04:43



[PBS LearningMedia™](#) : Roméo et Juliette | Act I | The Metropolitan Opera  
32:21 – 37:04



# Key Scene #2

## Act III: Scene 1, No. 10 - Meeting Friar Laurence

As Romeo and Juliet's romance has developed very quickly, Friar Laurence mistakes Romeo's lovesick behavior for feelings toward his former lover, Rosaline. Although Friar Lawrence knows he should not, he performs the marriage of Juliet and Romeo in the hope that their union will end the fighting between their families.

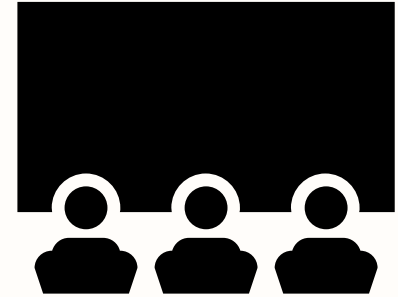


*Romeo and Juliet*, San Francisco Opera (photo: courtesy of San Francisco Opera)

# Key Scene #2 continued

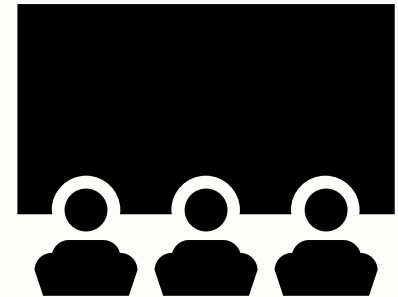
[Met Opera on Demand](#): Track #27. ACT III: Mon père! Dieu vous garde!

00:00 – 03:32



[PBS LearningMedia™](#) : Roméo et Juliette | Act III | The Metropolitan Opera

1:43 – 5:30

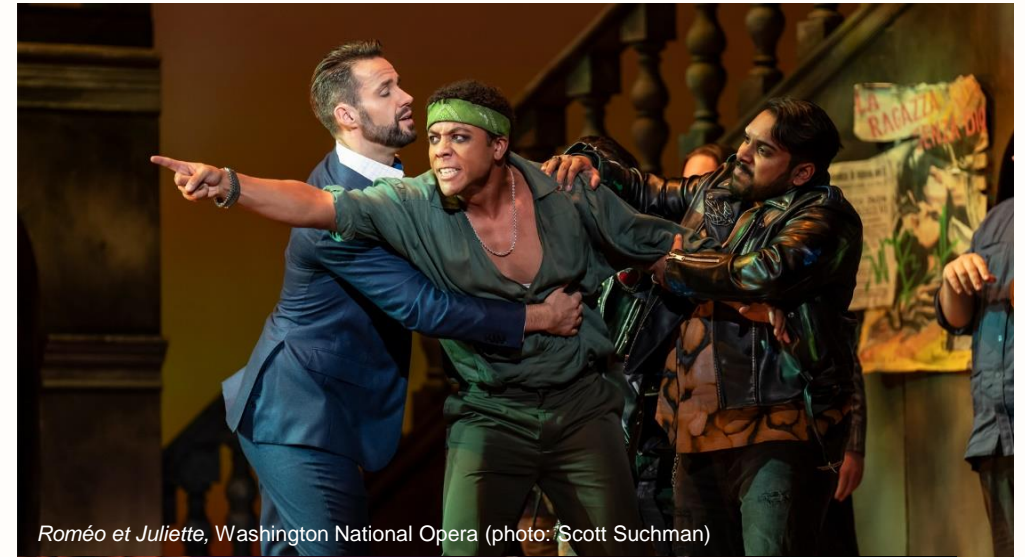




# Key Scene #3

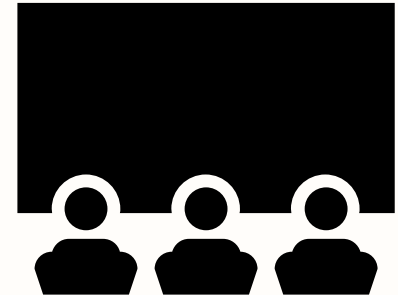
## Act III: Scene 2, No. 13 - Romeo kills Tybalt

At the climax of the opera, a fierce street fight erupts between the two rival families. Romeo, desperate to stop the violence, pleads for peace, but neither side listens. During the chaos, Romeo's best friend, Mercutio, is killed by Juliet's cousin, Tybalt. Overcome with grief and rage, Romeo seeks revenge and kills Tybalt. This act seals Romeo's fate, deepening the Capulets' hatred for him and leading to his exile.



# Key Scene #3 continued

[Met Opera on Demand](#): Track #32. ACT III: Allons! tu ne me connais pas, Tybalt,  
00:06 – 05:39



[PBS LearningMedia™](#) : Roméo et Juliette | Act III | The Metropolitan Opera  
19:33 – 25:04



# Production Design Definitions

**Production Design:** The process of creating the visual aesthetic and environment for a film, television show, commercial, or other forms of media. It involves creating sets, props, as well as costumes, projections, and other visual elements that help bring the story to life and immerse the audience in the narrative. The Production Designer is responsible for overseeing the creation of these elements, working closely with the director, producers, and other key creatives to ensure that the visual style of the production aligns with the overall vision and tone of the project.

# Production Design Definitions

**Stage/Set Design:** The art and practice of creating the physical environment in a theatrical production, film, television show, or other visual medium. This includes scenic elements and design layout for sets, lighting, props, and furniture to bring the story or concept to life. It involves arranging these elements in a way that enhances the audience's visual and aesthetic experience. Stage design may also involve creating technical elements such as sound systems, special effects, and rigging to support the production. Stage designers work closely with other production team members to create a cohesive and visually appealing environment complementing the production's overall vision.

# Production Design Definitions

**Props:** A term commonly used in live performance and film production to refer to objects or items used on stage or on set to enhance the performance or scene. Props can include anything from furniture, decorations, weapons, hand-held objects, and more. Props are used to add realism and detail to a production and help bring the world of the play or film to life for the audience.

# Production Design Definitions

**Lighting Design:** Refers to the art and practice of creating and controlling the lighting for a performance. This includes designing the placement and intensity of the lights and using different colors and effects to enhance the performance's mood and atmosphere. Lighting designers play a crucial role in enhancing the storytelling and emotional impact of the production, helping to set the stage, highlight performers, create a sense of place and time, and evoke different emotions in the audience. It is an integral part of the overall visual and artistic design of the production.

# Production Design Definitions

**Projection Design:** The art of creating and manipulating projected images and videos to enhance the visual elements of a live event, such as a concert, theater production, dance performance, or installation. It involves using specialized software and hardware to project images, videos, or other visual content onto a surface, such as a screen, wall, or even the audience itself.

# Production Design Definitions

**Costume Design:** The process of creating costumes and outfits for characters in theatre, film, television, or other visual media. It involves researching the time-period, setting, and character traits to develop pieces that help bring the character to life. Costume designers work closely with directors, actors, and other production team members to ensure that the costumes accurately reflect the vision of the production. This can involve sourcing or creating garments, accessories, and props, as well as coordinating fittings and alterations. Costume design plays a crucial role in storytelling and character development, helping to enhance the overall visual and emotional impact of a production.



# Production Design Definitions

**Hair and Makeup Design:** Refers to the planning and execution of hairstyles and makeup looks for performers and actors. This creative process involves analyzing the characters or themes in the performance, researching historical or cultural references, and designing hair and makeup that enhances the overall aesthetic and storytelling of the production. Hair and makeup designers work closely with directors, costume designers, and performers to create a cohesive and visually impactful presentation on stage or screen.

# Production Design

## Act I: The Capulet's ball.



*Romeo and Juliet*, The Dallas Opera (photo: Karen Almond and Kyle Flubacker)



*Roméo et Juliette*, Washington National Opera (photo: Scott Suchman)

# Elements of Design

○ Color 

○ Line 

○ Shape 

○ Texture 

○ Form 

○ Space 

○ Value 

○ Pattern 

# Elements of Design



*Romeo and Juliet*, San Francisco Opera (photo: courtesy of San Francisco Opera)

## Color and Line:

The two families' contrasting costumes of red and blue provide the only color and pop against the neutrals in the set, soldiers, and townspeople costumes. The element of line is used to frame the set and bring focus to the center of the stage.



*Roméo & Juliette*, Arizona Opera (photo: Tim Trumble)

## Space and Texture:

With the tower balcony as the only physical element, the stage feels spacious. Projections of stars and sky add texture, creating a dark yet dreamy, otherworldly atmosphere.

# Production Design Guidelines



Consider all that was discussed when designing your production: color, mood, textures, spaces/places, etc.

Production design should include:

- Set and costume designs based on your opera adaptation pitch
- At least 3 elements of design in your work

# Production Design Examples

Act III: Scene 2, No. 13 - Mercutio and Tybalt dueling, before Romeo steps in.





# Production Design Questionnaire



What are the reasons behind your choices? Are your choices based on the music, story, or libretto, and/or a combination of these?

How are you visually representing the time and location?

How are you visually communicating mood and emotion?



**Present** 

# Reflection

Share thoughts on the production design process.

How has your experience with adapting a story visually change your perspective on storytelling or your approach to developing ideas?

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