

WICKED DESIGN

The design of **WICKED** is one of its most powerful features. The set, costumes, props, make-up and lighting all combine to create the worlds of Shiz University, the Emerald City, the Great Gillikin Forest and Kiamo Ko, the castle in Winkie County. From Glinda's dynamic entrance to the amazing image of the Wizard's metal head, set designer Eugene Lee had his work cut out for him. The set was inspired by an image in Gregory Maguire's novel. The proscenium is ringed with large, fantastical cogs and gears from an ancient-looking clock, and they're choked with crawling vines. A giant, mechanical dragon oversees all.

The main idea for the set is that you're looking at the interior of a giant clock: gears and other mechanisms. Gregory Maguire's novel goes into great detail describing the Clock of the Time Dragon. Although this aspect is not developed in **WICKED** it demonstrates how a designer's vision is inspired. Eugene Lee's set blueprint displays his fascination with clockwork as the primary visual metaphor for the set. Once the essentials of the set have been developed, a number of multi-function set and prop pieces create the different scenes so that a number of different worlds within the confines of the set can be created easily and quickly. These additional pieces can be simple or complicated. One example of a complicated additional set piece is Glinda's bubble machine, which Lee crafted along the lines of a clock pendulum furthering this time metaphor. Even though Glinda rises 10 meters above the stage, don't worry, the actress playing her has a safety wire clipped to the contraption! One example of simple set pieces, which create a new environment, is Glinda and Elphaba's bedroom. The two wooden beds dressed in different bedcovers that reflect their personalities and the rack of Glinda's shoes, is a visual delight, embodying humour and signalling to the audience the contrast between the two girls. Thus, the design is conveying messages to the audience to support the music, script and characterisation even when the audience is unaware of it.

DESIGN: (Beginners-Advanced)

Imagine you could stage a production of **WICKED** at your school.

- Draw/sketch/paint a backdrop that would be suitable to use throughout the entire show. Would this backdrop be realistic, symbolic or perhaps surreal?
- Create a set design which is simple, multi-functional and budget-conscious for your production.
- Design 4 – 5 costumes for your production that might depict a more contemporary world than the gorgeous fantasy world in **WICKED**. Could Elphaba's witch hat become a cap with a traditional witch, stitched or painted on it?
- Make a list of 5 props that could be used throughout your production. What everyday items could you adapt to make your props special?

