

Learning Places Fall 2018

SITE REPORT #3A

Queen's Theater

NAMING PROTOCOL. When saving and posting your site reports on OpenLab, please follow the following format: SiteReport#Letter.LastnameFirstname. Here's an example:

SiteReport2B.SwiftChristopher.

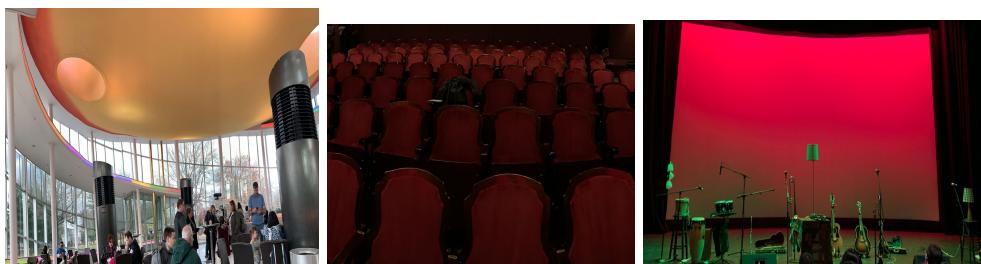


Select a meaningful image to that captures your perception of the performance site and provide a caption explaining what the image is.

This image was chosen because of the representation of the bright and translucent theater from a distance. The location was beautifully thought out; it was a combination of modern structures mixed with nature aspects.

STUDENT NAME: Ashwag Mokbel

SITE OBSERVATIONS Insert 3 photographs and provide a title for each image. The title should be a word or short phrase that sums up the subject matter of the photo or a visual theme present in the photo.



Bright autumn day

Get ready for showtime kids

Time to rock and roll

Why did you choose these images? Do they summarize a feeling you have for the performance space? Do they focus on prominent objects or features? Explain.

These three images were chosen because I believed that each image represented a moment of an experience that encountered while visiting. The first image “Bright autumn day” was selected due to its elegant architecture that brightened up the clouded day. It wasn't sunny out but the way the lobby was set up, reflected natural sunlight. For the second image, “Get ready for showtime kids” was chosen because it took quite some time for all to be seated. Especially since most of the audience were parents and children, they had to wait and announced for all to prep/seat themselves so the show can begin. Finally, the third image was picked to represent the playful stage. As shown in the picture, the instruments are set out with LED lights shining down on them. Also, the performers intentionally put in a table and lamp to resemble a living room to bring more comfort to the children.

PERMANENT THEATER

Answer the questions below *only* if you attended a performance in a purpose-built theater or an adapted space that is now a permanent theater.

1. Briefly describe the genre or type of performance (one sentence).
The performance was a live sing along holiday musical.
2. Describe the dimensions, shapes, and arrangement of audience and performance spaces in the building: entrances, ingresses, egresses, lobbies, lounges, audience seating, box seats, and stage.

Queens theater was located within a secluded park. When approaching the theater , the outside of it caught my eye. The exterior structure of the theater was cylindrical glass that was translucent. The entrance of the theater leads straight into the lobby where there was snack stands, a face coloring table, as well as the booth to purchase tickets. Inside the lobby, the ceiling was high and the walls were circular. It allowed everyone in the small location to view one another. The ceiling resembled an inverted gypsum dome that had tinted orange skylights, with LED lights circling the lobby. The natural light was bright within the theater lobby due to its glass structure. The hallway to enter the theater room is greeted by the staff where they hand out sing-along books and pamphlets. There are two wing entrances, left and right, depending on the seats booked. The first thing in point eye view is the stage. It was constructed as a traditional proscenium stage, where the audience was facing the built-in stage that was enclosed by a curtain. There were built in lights above the stage ascending down, allowing the performers to be the center of attention. The seats were all divided into

three sections, left wing, right wing, and the center. However, they were all perfectly placed in horizontal lines with just a few inches between each row levels. This made it difficult for the audience that are ranging from different heights to see the stage well. When looking around the theater, there were no seat boxes or seatings in higher locations.

3. Does the architectural design provide opportunities for voyeurism, food or alcohol consumption, reading, talking, or other interaction among audience members? Explain how the architecture might *encourage* or *limit* activities other than viewing the performance.

The architectural design did not provide any opportunities for voyeurism. Instead, the seating arrangements limited the audience to only view the stage as well as the back of the heads of other viewers. Within the lobby, there were snack stands where they allowed members to purchase items before entering, however, nothing can be carried in. Before entering each person was given a sing-along book to keep up with the performance. It limited the activities of the performance because the audience was encouraged to get up and dance/sing along with the performers. However, if anyone wanted to dance to the music, they had to get out of their seats and dance in between aisle or on the stage near the performers due to the closeness of seating arrangements.

4. How did the architectural design and fixtures affect your reception of the play (sight lines, acoustics, lighting, etc.)?

The architectural design of the horizontal seating, site lines limited the way I perceived the show. There wasn't a clear view of the performance from all seats. The seating arrangements were almost the same between each row, varying between a few inches. As for the vertical sight line, it was barely any height increase as the seats reached the back of the theater. The descending slope of the seats wasn't perpendicular enough to provide spectators to bypass blockage if encountered. The stage view was blocked by the back of the heads of other audience members, who were larger in size. The theater had good acoustics installed that allowed the sound to travel naturally for long distances and allowing people to hear the music clearly from any standpoint. When the musicians were performing the sounds of the instruments were carried out throughout the whole theater. Even their vocals were echoed, allowing all to hear. Not only that, without actually hearing the music the audience could feel all the sounds physically when their feet are on the ground. When it comes to lighting the theater was set up in such a way that the only visible place was the stage. The lights were embedded into the proscenium stage ceiling to shine a light on performers. It was adjustable

to make brighter or darker. Altering the LED lights created a playful stage for the children in the audience, which varied in red, green, and orange colors.

5. Describe the dynamic between the audience space and the performer's space. Was the stage a proscenium, thrust, or theater-in-the-round arrangement? Did the performance and audiences spaces ever merge (audience in stage area, actors in audience area, for instance)?

The relationship between the audience space and the performer's space was crossed when children went on stage. The performers kindly asked for volunteers(children) to get on stage to sing and dance along. The performance was very interactive. The stage was proscenium allowing all to view both the performers and dancing children. Although we knew we were the audience and they are the performers, they set it up in a way to make it feel like your the comfort of your living room. The performers even gave personal stories between each song as well as ask the audience questions. The merging of the audience and performers was delightful to watch since it made both parents and children happy.

6. Use a metaphor to describe the audience/stage relationship (ocean, layer-cake, peephole, for instance...*and don't use these examples!*). Explain why you chose that image or idea.

JELLO! The audience and stage reminded me of jello because during the performance the spotlight was shifting from the audience to the performers on stage. Also the all the dancing reminded me of how jiggly jello can be and how the kids were moving. Unlike a typical theater show, this one was not strictly a one way of direction and full of playful moments.

ANALYSIS/DISCOVERIES [FOR EVERYONE]

Use this section to reflect on your observations. Remember to refer to your observations when drawing general conclusions.

Performativity: ways in which theater becomes life, words become actions, audiences become actors, objects become agents, buildings convey meaning, and participants become engaged in broader social concerns.

1. Describe the moments in the production where *theater* became more like *life* or when something occurred in the performance space that exceeded the internal action of the play itself.

There was a few segments of the performance where it became more than a show. As the musical was progressing the performers kept telling members from the audience (mostly children) to get on stage and pretend they are at home jamming to the holiday songs. The main singer, repeatedly said between each song to "get comfy kids, this isn't a live show but a show that feels like home." Although it was a miniature sing-along, it's not typical for the performers to allow dancing children on stage. The fact that they set it up as an interactive show to make it feel like you're in the comfort of your home, allowed me to reminisce my own experiences growing up.

2. How might the designed and/or natural features of the performance space enable moments of performativity? Or, on the other hand, do the architectural and/or natural elements inhibit performativity?

There were multiple features of the performance space that inhibited performativity of the musical. First starting with the entrance of the theater, the lights were embedded on the proscenium stage ceiling. There was a limited the amount of light the theater received. Walking in it was difficult to go down the stairs and locate your seat number. The dimness almost made me fall if I wasn't carefully stepping. After locating the seats, the seating arrangements were irritating. Everyone was super tight to one another, to the extent, that any movement affected the person next to you. That was a challenge because it was designed to be an interactive dance/singalong. If anyone wanted to dance, they would have to get off their seats and walk to one of the aisles or go on stage. Also, the stage wasn't large; it was a small stage where it limited the number of people on it. The theater's neighborhood didn't implement into the show to its best advantage. Since it was a playful children's show, the natural outside scenery would have been amazing. The kids could play, sing and dance while being carefree, rather than being limited.

QUESTIONS for FURTHER RESEARCH. Write down questions that require further research to answer. These should follow directly from your analysis section and be complex and specific enough to serve as the basis of a research project; do not include questions you can answer with a quick google search. Focus your research questions on spatial and architectural aspects of the performance space.

1. Question? **If the performance intended was meant to be interactive, why was a proscenium stage selected?**
2. Question? **Was the performance created to educate the audience about various holidays or for just entertainment?**
3. Question? **Was the external architecture created to give a bright and joyful experience?**

SITE REPORT #3B

STUDENT NAME: Ashwag Mokbel

FURTHER RESEARCH

Develop a new research question (or revise one of your questions from part 3A of this report).

This question should concern EITHER:

The relationship between the performance you viewed and the staging (if in a traditional theater space) or the place where it was performed (if in a provisional theater space).

OR

The relationship between a social / political issue and the performance you viewed.

Research Question:

If the performance intended was meant to be interactive, why was a proscenium stage selected?

Find 2 sources. *You can choose to use: internet sources, books, archival documents or ephemera, scholarly articles, newspaper articles, or performance reviews. Your choice should be intentional.

1 source should have to do with the **production or performance** (this could either be about the play itself or about something to do with the performance). For example, if I viewed a production of *Hamlet* that was interactive, I might research “Hamlet” or conduct research more broadly on “interactivity and Shakespeare.” **1 source** should be about the **place or social / political issue** that is articulated in your research question.

Write an MLA citation for each source:

Source 1

Ueno, Kanako, et al. “Experimental Study on Stage Acoustics for Ensemble Performance in Chamber Music.” *Acoustical Science and Technology*, vol. 26, no. 4, 22 Dec. 2005, pp. 345–352., doi:10.1250/ast.26.345.

Source 2

Ruokonen, Inkeri, and Maie Vikat. "The Creativity of Gifted Children in Estonia and Finland from a Musical and Environmental Perspective." *TRAMES: A Journal of the Humanities & Social Sciences*, vol. 9, no. 1, Jan. 2005, pp. 49–68. EBSCOhost, citytech.ezproxy.cuny.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ssf&AN=510448026&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

Why did you select these sources? How do they address all or part of your research question?

Source one examines the effects of room acoustic conditions on music players with the best suitable stage. The author presents the connections between the measurements of seats, stage area, volume and understanding how the style reflects direct sound. The article states “the impulse responses measured were divided into three components ; the direct sound including the reflection from the floor (Dir), the early reflections (ER) and the reverberation process (Rev).” This source was perfect because it breaks down the best possible stages for sound travel.

Source two focuses on the beneficial effects of music on young children. Since this performance was all about music on different holidays, I believe this best supports the concentration of music that was shifted from the performers to the audience. In the article, it explores young gifted children and their own musical environment and their creative abilities. In the article, it states “transmitting cultural values as well as nurturing the creativity and imagination needed for innovative and artistic thinking” allowing children to absorb the educational lessons in songs.

Describe the process you used to find this source including any keywords and the search engine or tool you used to search.

For the first source I went to the city tech library website and used the EBSCOhost search engine but didn't find any hits so I went to google scholar. For source one I used the key words “Architecture” AND “proscenium stage” or “music”. For source two I used the city tech library website and used the EBSCOhost two I used the keywords “Musical performance” AND “culture ” OR “diversity”. With these terms I found the article that fit regarding little to no education about various religious holidays.

What other sources or further information would you need to answer your question? Where would you look for that information?

Other sources that can further gather information relevant to the topic is to research more about the purposes behind all the aretecticure of stages. There is more mathematics behind the construction of how stages are built to present better performance quality. I can look into the backbone of theaters before the construction and its benefits. Also the selection of location is another factor that needs research. Location and construction of theaters are the most important aspect of performances.