**Examples and Analyses of Directors’ Concept**

**Director’s Concept for *A Thousand Cranes***

"The text of Kathryn Schultz-Miller's short play is a kind of structured memory: through Sadako's brief life, we encounter the Hiroshima bombing as an incomprehensible human act. The issues of race, culture, nuclear war and patriotism are complex for young audiences. Producing 'A Thousand Cranes' demands restraint, imagination, the willingness to face horror, the willingness to forgive. In our production we try to stir a young audience's theatrical imagination by presenting another world that seems familiar, a child's flights of fancy as a journey to understanding, a story that is simple yet compelling. In the end, we hope to ask questions rather than teach. If a child can know loss as a necessary outcome of war, and see another culture as human rather than exotic, we have succeeded."

~ Andrew Tsao, Indiana Repertory Theatre.

*Looking at the director's concept above for A Thousand Cranes, we can see that the director has approached theme most completely, and he has given good clues to the feel of the play in terms of setting and costumes and acting. Can you see the clues? Words like "restraint," "child's flights of fancy," "willingness to face horror," and "simplicity" are good hints at what he's trying to achieve. These are wonderful and tantalizing clues for a design artist, don't you think?*

**Director’s Concept for King Le*a*r**

"King Lear" is a reminder of how quickly a country can be destroyed from within by political back-biting, greed and complacency. Lear takes for granted both his responsibility as king and his land's stability, assuming he can leave the daily running of the country to others while he retires to "the good life". Because Shakespeare's message is appropriate for any point in history, we have chosen to set this production without specific period or culture. We also wanted to create a raw, elemental world where violence becomes commonplace. Fire, wind and water are placed within a steel structure set upon the earth, giving the set a non-realistic, presentational feel, where one does not expect each location to be fully realized visually. This helps to accommodate Shakespeare's quick and constant scene changes. In the background you can see a vague image of the empire that everyone is trying to capture. It is polluted and corrupt, not beautiful. On this land, no one is immune from the desire for power. In our "King Lear" there are no heroes and there is ultimately no innocence; everyone gets their hands dirty. As the battles both political and personal ensue, the story reveals itself to be actually a quest for love and understanding, and what is truly important in life.”

~ Karen TenEyk, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park.

*The director's concept for* King Le*a*r *is likewise tantalizing. Take a look at the words director Karen TenEyk uses to stimulate her designers and other artists: "raw, elemental world where violence becomes commonplace," "polluted and corrupt," "desire for power," and "everyone gets their hands dirty." Her description of the setting does set some restrictions on the set designer, but it is not so detailed that it will impede the designer's artistic choices. This concept is very clear and gives very clear "rules" for the artists to follow.*

**Director’s Concept for *The Illusion***

"At age 18, Peirre Corneille (1606-1684) began his career as a lawyer, only to abandon it for the theatre five years later. In 1636, during a period when the theatre in France was enjoying a slight gain in prestige, Corneille wrote 'L'Illusion Comique'. He referred to this play as a "strange monster" because of its unconventional blend of theatrical styles and its violation of Aristotle's three unities of place, time and action-the theatrical dogma of the period. "Corneille's use of a cave as Alcandre's place of enchantment draws on a European tradition in which caves were regarded as mystical entities-methaphors for the cosmos-places where magic and a sense of the divine dwelled. During the Baroque period, in which Corneille was writing, caves had become a popular theatrical setting where the triumph of art over nature was demonstrated (for instance, mechanical devices were built to fashion fountains out of natural pools of water). This Baroque ideal is reflected in Alcandre's ability to create illusion as splendor and refinement within the rough and primitive environment of the cave."

~ David Esbjornson, The Classic Stage Company (New York).

*The director's concept for The Illusion dwells on the play's historical setting and the popular conventions of the time. Yet even this concept gives artists a place to go. We know that the setting will be a cave, and we are also given some other clues: " splendor and refinement within the rough and primitive environment of the cave," "triumph of art over nature," and various allusions to magic and occult.*