

THE PURPOSE OF SOUND AND MUSIC IN THEATRE

1	TIME AND LOCATION	The 'when' and 'where' of a production. Sound designers need to consider the period and genre of a play, as well as the venue where the performance will take place. They also need to respond to the social, historical and cultural context of the production. For a play text, this might mean thinking about when and where the play was written, as well as when and where it is set. A sound effect of a car or aeroplane will be very different according to the period of the play and the type of vehicle.
2	MOOD AND ATMOSPHERE	The feeling that the production creates for the audience. Sound is very significant in creating mood and atmosphere, and audiences will associate different sounds with different moods. Mood and atmosphere can be created through the use of music or through a soundscape or choice of sound effects. Moods and atmospheres can also be achieved through the alteration of sounds, for example adding reverb or echo. When you consider a sound design, ask yourself whether the sounds are there to indicate a specific time or location, whether they are creating a specific atmosphere or mood for the audience, or whether they are doing both: sometimes a playwright or director uses a certain location or time deliberately to create a mood or atmosphere, and this could be reflected in the sound design.
3	AUDIENCE ATTENTION	There may be key words, phrases or lines that the actors speak that need highlighting. Sound effects at these moments can help to highlight to the audience that something important is being said. For example, the character admits to a murder, a low pitched drone with clashing notes could start to increase in volume throughout the dialogue to build the tension and signify a key revelation.
4	SPECIAL EFFECTS	A sound designer can use sound to create a variety of special effects as required by the production. For example, the sound of a vehicle getting gradually closer by increasing the volume and panning the audio through different speakers so it sounds like it is moving closer.
5	AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE	Sound can create a specific experience for the audience. This can include using very loud and thick textured sound to make the audience feel uncomfortable, or surrounding the audience with sound to make them feel immersed in the production.
7	SCENE CHANGES	Sound and music can help with the flow of a production by setting the scene, mood and atmosphere during a scene change so the audience don't feel they are simply waiting for the next part of the production to begin.
8	THEMES AND CHARACTERS	Sounds and music can be used to indicate a recurring theme or when specific characters enter. This reminds the audience of something that has happened previously in the production, or gives them an impression of a character's personality. In music, a leitmotif (pronounced "Light-motif") is a recurring piece of music (or at least melody) that represents a character, action, or theme. This is a well-established technique used in almost every medium that involves music and story.

STYLE OF SOUND

1.	REALISM	Incorporates elements that are meant to represent real life. Realism can be total or partial. Total realism means a production that seems as close to real life as possible, so sound designs for these productions need to mimic sound in real life. Partial realism incorporates realistic elements into a production that might not be realistic overall, for example, using a sound design that has some realistic and some non-realistic elements.
2.	SYMBOLISM	More interested in communicating an idea to the audience than in representing real life. Symbolism allows the sound designer to create a design that communicates some of these ideas to an audience, perhaps through deliberately using certain sound effects or music for certain characters or using abstract sounds.
3.	MINIMALISM	Use empty spaces and rely on the actors to create an experience for the audience. In minimalist theatre, sound can be used to create an entire setting, or a location can be changed simply by changing the soundscape.
4.	FANTASY	Creates a new world. For sound designers, this might mean the use of a range of sound effects, music or soundscapes to create a magical atmosphere. However, it is worth remembering that a fantastical design still needs to maintain an internal logic so that the audience can understand and engage with the world of the production.

SOUND DESIGN FOR COMPONENT 3 TEXTS – SPREAD

1. S	STYLE	The sound should and music should fit with the style of the production e.g. if a production is futuristic and magical, the sounds should usually reflect this through electronic and futuristic sounds (unless there is a contrast on purpose).
2. P	POSITION	Sound designers need to consider how many amplifiers are needed and where to position and connect the speakers on stage or in the audience.
3. R	RECORDED / LIVE	Using pre-recorded sound is a popular way to play sound effects and music in theatre Sound designers can also create pre-recorded sound scape, combining a number of sounds into a single track. You can also create live sound through objects, body parts or musical instruments.
4. E	EFFECT	Creating an artificial sound, e.g. the sound of a car horn, electronically. This can also mean where the sound is edited or enhanced for an effect, for example, reverb, echo, pitch-shifting. The acoustics of a room can also have an effect on the sound. This is the way the sound travels in the space which affects what the audience can hear. Acoustics can create effects naturally e.g. reverb or muted sound.
5. A	AMPLIFICATION	To ‘amplify’ means to ‘make louder or bigger’. The amplifier boosts the signal from the mixing desk to a level where it can be ‘read’ by the speakers. In larger spaces, performers sometimes need microphones to put through the speakers e.g. radio mics, floating mics or hanging mics.
6. D	DIEGETIC OR NON-DIEGETIC	Diegetic sounds – those that seem to come for the world of the stage, such as a scene’s background noise, doorbells, music that is put on by the actor, ringtones Non Diegetic sounds – are those used to add mood and atmosphere for the audience. They are not heard by the characters.

MUSICAL ELEMENTS (ALSO FOR SOUND) FOR COMPONENT 3 TEXTS – DR SMITH

1.D	DYNAMICS	How loudly or quietly the music/sound is played. It also includes the way the music/sound is played e.g. sharp, soft, smooth.
2.R	RHYTHM AND TEMPO	Rhythm in music this is the pattern of the notes in the music (how long they last for and the pauses in between). For sound effects this can refer to the gaps and pauses between sound effects. Tempo is how fast or slow the music/sound is played.
3.S	STRUCTURE	The order that the music/sound is played in.
4.M	MELODY	This is the tune that is made up of different pitches. Pitch is how high or low the sound is. Very high sounds, for example, may create a more uncomfortable atmosphere.
5. I	INSRUMENTS	This is a device that produces the music or sound. In music, this can usually be put into four categories: Woodwind, string, percussion, brass. For sound, this could be any object the sound is played on. You can also use electric instruments.
6.T	TEXTURE TONALITY	Texture is how many layers there are in the music (to create a thick or thin texture). It also refers to how the layers interact e.g. if all the rhythms are the same (monophonic) if there is a main part supported by another part (homophonic) r if different parts interweave in between each others (polyphonic). Tonality is the overall sound of the piece e.g. a major (happy) or minor (sad) key. There can also be atonal music where there is no key which can create an strange atmosphere.
7.H	HARMONY	How two or more notes sound when played together at the same time. Sometimes this can create a ‘nice’ sound but other times can create an eerie effect, for example, if the notes clash.

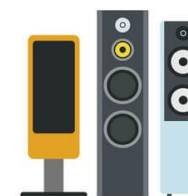
SOUND - KEY VOCABULARY

1	Cue sheet plotting	A list of cues with timings
2	Distortion	Making the sound/music sound gritty or fuzzy on purpose
3	Drone	A long sustained note
4	Echo	The repetition of a sound caused by reflection of sound waves
5	Fades	A gradual transition from quiet to loud (or vice versa)
6	Floating mic	A microphone positioned on the front of the stage
7	Foley	the reproduction of everyday sound effects – usually added into films after filming. However, in theatre, foley can be used by creating sound effects using every day objects
8	Hanging mic	A microphone suspended above the performance area
9	Intermittent sound	A sounds that is not constant – it comes and goes
10	Mixer	A device that can change and combine sounds
11	Motif	A repeated sound/piece of music to remind the audience of a theme
12	Panning / Directional sound	Sound technology that produces a sound in a highly focused way, particularly so that the sound travels a long way. It also refers to the location and angle of a speaker, e.g. using an offstage speaker to suggest the location of a car. Panning created the effects of the sound moving across the space by focusing it in different areas
13	Radio mic	A microphone that is worn by a performer, often taped to the cheek
14	Reverb	The effect that occurs when sound waves hit surrounding surfaces and we hear the original sound plus its reflections. Adding reverb to a sound makes it longer and weightier
15	Snap	A quick and sudden transition, such as from loud to silent or a blackout
16	Sound levels	The volume of the sound/music – this is usually measured in decibels (dB)
17	Sound-scape	An effect made up of several sounds to give the impression of a setting or atmosphere e.g. a city street
18	Source	Where the sound comes from, such as a computer file. Also used to describe the sound itself, such as a bell ringing.
19	Surround sound	Sound reproduction that often uses three or more transmission channels to enhance the illusion of a live hearing
20	Transition	Movement between sound cues, such as fade and snap
21	Underscore	Sound (often non-diegetic) that is played quietly while performers are speaking, to add atmosphere

SOUND EFFECTS CUE SHEET

SFX	CUE	SOUND OPERATOR'S NOTES	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SFX
SFX 1	Fade in music 15 seconds before LFX 1 Fade Out when cast all laugh on stage	F.I (5) Track 6 from C.D. 'Westerns' to level 10 F.O. (3) to Silence	Music to be faded in to show that this play is a 'Western'. Fade out so that the audience can hear the merriment of the bar.
SFX 2	When Barman says 'Why can't I keep my big mouth shut?!' When audience have finished clapping	F.I(3) Track 6 from C.D. 'Westerns' to level 10 F.O.(5) to Silence	Music to suggest end of drama.

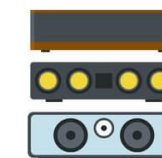
'SFX' means 'sound effects'. This is how to plot the sound.

TYPES OF SPEAKERS


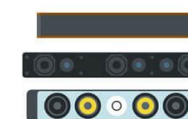
FLOORSTANDING SPEAKERS



SUBWOOFERS & SURROUND SOUND SPEAKERS



CENTRE SPEAKERS



LCR SPEAKERS



IN-WALL & IN-CEILING SPEAKERS



BOOKSHELF SPEAKERS