

# Scottish Rite Valley of Boston

# WELCOME

**Actors / Directors  
Workshop  
September 15, 2012**

Jeff and Fran Gardiner

# Agenda

## Part I - Jeff Gardiner

- History of Scottish Rite in the Theatre
- Planning your Production
- Team Collaboration
- Putting it all together

## Break

## Part II - Fran Weinberg Gardiner

- Developing an Acting/Stage Vocabulary
- Understanding the Script
- Playing a Character
- Playing a Scene: Actor/Director Collaboration

## Luncheon and Discussion

# Jeff Gardiner, 33°MSA

- Professional Set and Lighting Designer and Technical Director
- Over 40 Years Experience In:
  - Community, College and Professional Theatre
- Designed and Mounted Over 250 Theatre Productions
- Member - U.S. Institute of Theatre Technology
- Member – New England Theatre Conference
- Past Board Member – StageSource
- Winner - 2004 I.R.N.E. Award for Best Lighting Design in New England Theatre
- Designer and Technical Director of “Something’s Brewing in Boston”

# Fran Weinberg Gardiner

- Masters Degree in Theatre
  - Emerson College
- Award Winning Theatre Director
- Private Acting and Audition Coach
- Theatre and Acting Teacher
  - Emerson College
  - Boston Casting
  - Wheelock Family Theatre
  - Riverside Theatre Works
  - Stoneham Theater
- Director of  
“Something’s Brewing in Boston”

# Scottish Rite Degrees

- 29 Degrees
- Tells a Historic Story in the Middle East and Europe
  - King Solomon's Temple
  - Palaces of Cyrus and Darius
  - Desert near Sinai
  - Court of Saladin
  - Lodge of Crusader Knights
  - Modern Times
- Developed by Albert Pike, SMJ, 1855 and Charles McClenahan, NMJ, 1867
- Ritual based on lessons of "Good and Evil, Insight and Ignorance."

# Scottish Rite Degree History

- Prior To 1887 Work was done In Lodge Rooms
- Performed on one candidate at a time
- Degrees were tedious and long
- Elaborate regalia and mechanisms
- Long and difficult scene changes
- Did not establish a “Locale”

# Scenery in Ritual

- First used in Chicago in 1884
- J.S. Sosman, 32°
  - Sosman & Landis  
Scene Painting Studio,  
Chicago
- Designed and Painted a Drop of King Solomon's Temple to Hang Behind the East of Lodge Room
- Introduced Fraternity to the Use of Theatre Technology

# Impact of Scottish Rite's move to the Theatre

- 1890 - Less than 40,000 Members
- 1930 - Over 600,000 Members
- Growth was due to move from Lodge ritual to Theatre Spectacle



# Scottish Rite Building Frenzy

From 1900 to 1922 Scottish Rite Cathedrals were built in every major city

- Each had a full Proscenium Theater
- Seating for up to 3,000
- Elaborate Scenery and Lighting Equipment
- Rehearsal and Banquet Space

# Painted Drops

Sosman and Landis Scenic Studios  
Chicago, Illinois  
1908 - "The Secret Vault"



# Painted Drops

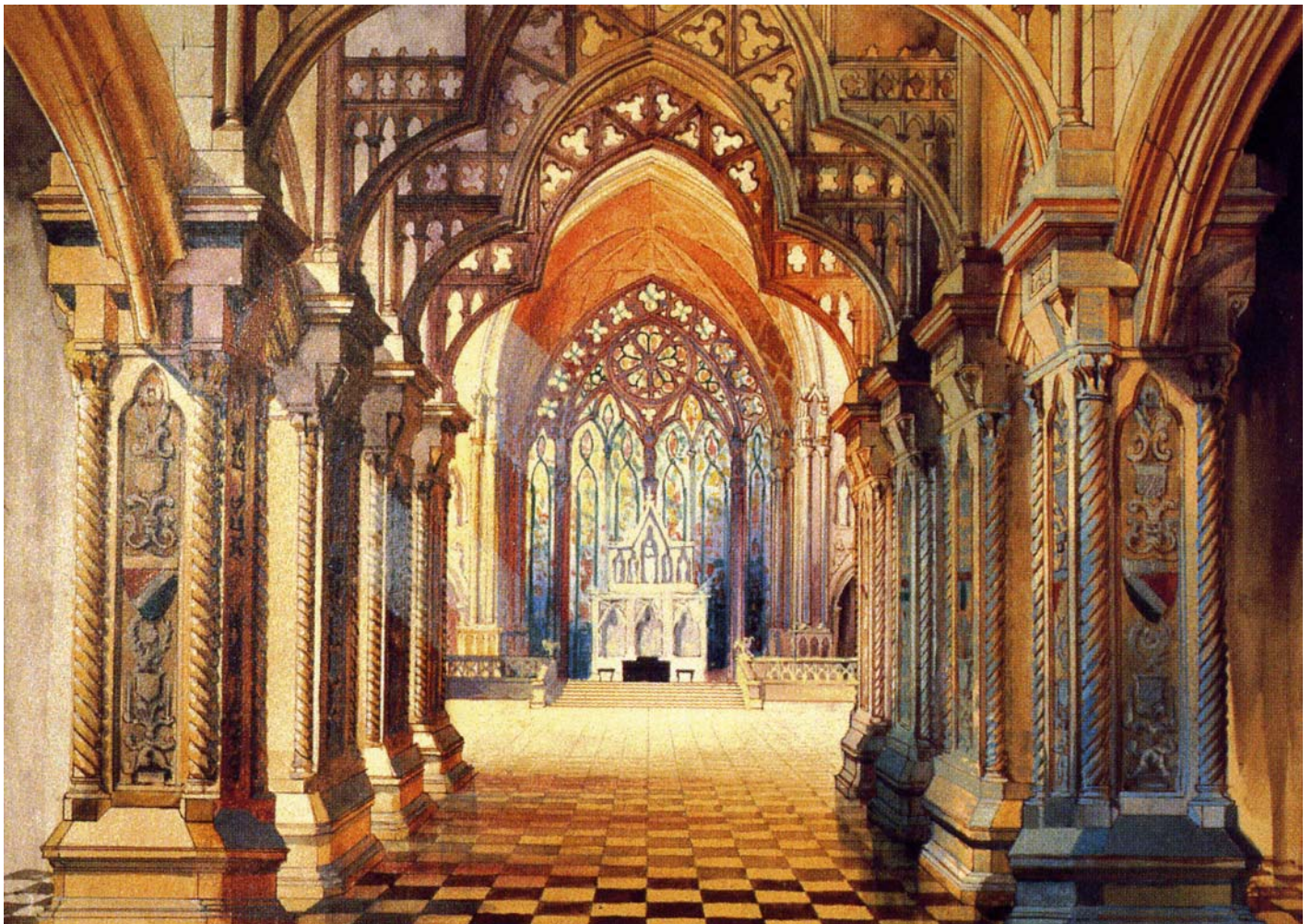
Sosman and Landis Scenic Studios  
Chicago, Illinois  
1904 - "Rebuilding the Temple"



# Painted Drops

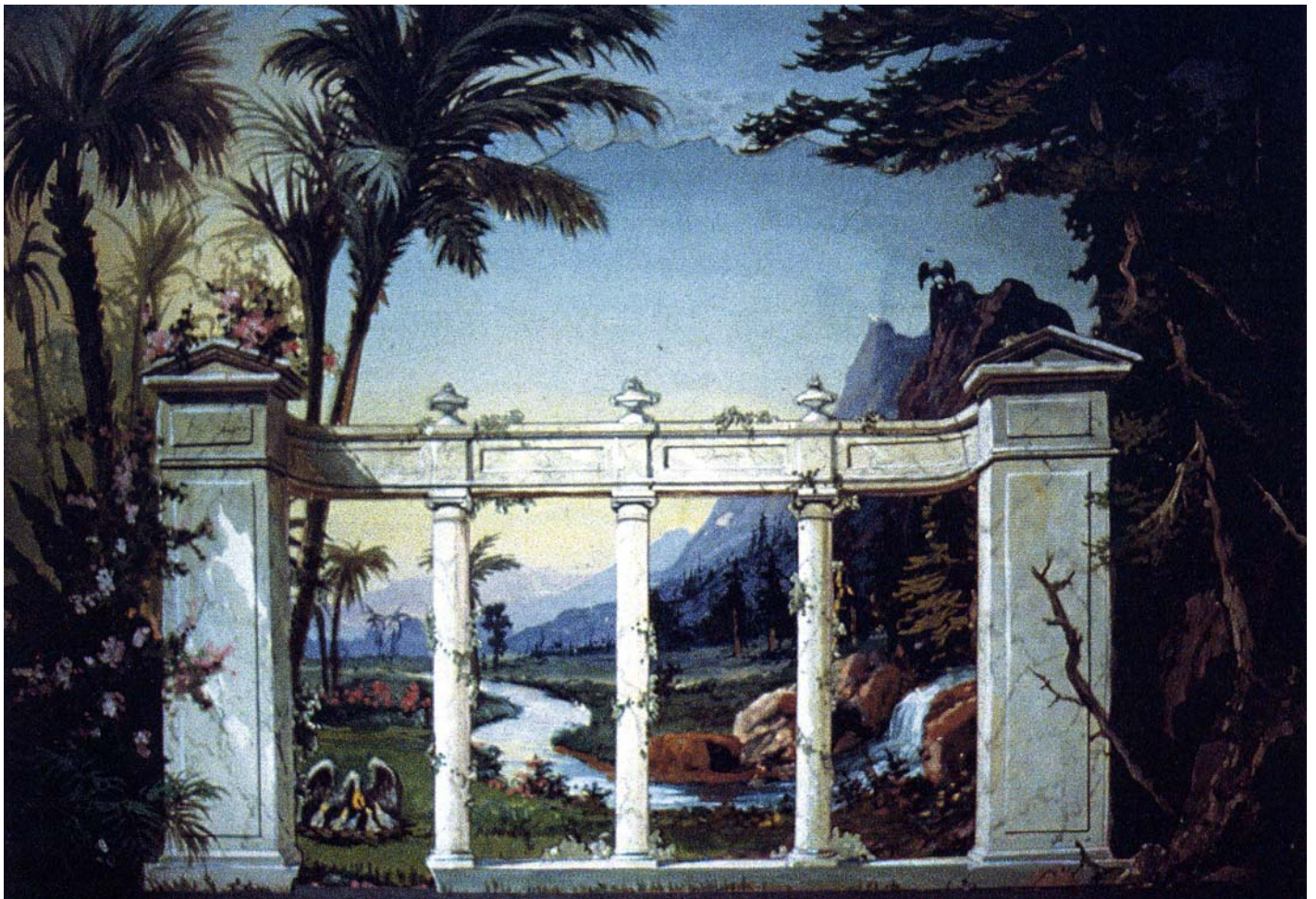
Great Western Stage Company  
Kansas City, Kansas

1914 - "Gothic Cathedral" 19th Degree"



# Painted Drops

Sosman and Landis Scenic Studios  
Chicago, Illinois  
1904 - "Scene from 18th Degree"



# Scottish Rite Impact on Theatre Industry

- Scottish Rite Funded Scenery and Lighting Development
- Development of Counter Weight Fly System is Credited to Extensive use of Painted Drops
- Scenic Design Companies Flourished
  - Sosman & Landis, Chicago
  - Great Western Stage Co, St. Louis
  - Twin Cities Scenic Design, Minneapolis
  - Many others

# The Theater Facility

## The Physical Plant

- **Stage**
  - Stage Deck, Back Stage, Wings, Fly Loft, Gallery
  - Curtains, Electrics, Battens
  - Fire Curtain
- **Proscenium Arch**
- **House**
  - House, Balcony, Lobby
- **Supporting Facilities**
  - Dressing Rooms
  - “Green Room”
  - Rehearsal Hall (s)
  - Shop (s)
  - Storage

# Curtains

- Used to Frame the Stage and Mask Equipment
- Main Drape or Show Curtain
  - Usually of Red or Dark Colored Velour
  - Opens to Reveal Scenes
- Main Valence
  - Usually same Material as Main Drape
- Borders
  - Usually Black in Color
  - Masks Lighting and Rigging
- Legs
  - Usually Black in Color
  - Masks Wings and Hides Actors
- Travelers
  - Usually Same as Borders and Legs
  - Provides “In-One” Acting Area



# Scottish Rite Scenery

- Traditional Drop and Wing
  - 2 Dimensional Painted Muslin
  - “Dropped” or Flown In and Out
- Few 3 Dimensional Pieces
  - Chairs, Tables, Altars
- Used Lighting and Fly System for Fast Scene Changes
  - Fade out - Fly Drop out/in - Fade up

# Scottish Rite Ritual

- Evolved from Lodge to the Stage
- Intended for Dramatic Stage Presentation
- Based on Theatrical Context
- Relies on “Drop and Wing” for Ease and Simplicity of Scene Changes
- Requires Extensive Production Support

# Differences

## Masonic Degrees versus “Real World” Theatre

- Ritual, not a Creative Art
- “Degree in a Box”
  - Same thing over and over
- Casting is not by Audition
  - Consider age, size, shape, voice
- Few Rehearsals
  - Minimum Actor/Character Development
- Full Technical Requirements
  - With Compressed Time to Merge Tech with Actors
- Lighting and Sound are Defined for Degrees Only
  - Lighting Cues Required for All Light Changes
  - Sound needed for All Functions

# Production Meetings

- Includes Producer, Director, Stage Manager and Production Staff
- Production Staff Includes:
  - Sets, Lights, Costumes, Sound, Props, Makeup
- Discuss Status of Production Elements and Changes Needed
  - Concept Meeting: Immediately after Director is Selected
  - During Production Process – Monthly
  - Last 4 Weeks – Weekly
  - Last Week - Daily

# Production Needs

- “Degree Production” includes the Entire Day
  - One Day Class (4 Degrees)
  - Two Day Class (2x2 Degrees)
  - Four Fridays (4x1 Degree)
  - Also includes:
    - Entrances and Exits
    - Openings and Closings
    - Ceremonial Sections
    - Introductions, Receptions, Presentations, Entertainment
- All Changes Must be Known by Every Function
- Need to Manage Entire Day
- Director of the Work (Day)

# Director Preparation for the Degree

- Read the script! More than once!
- Highlight blocking notes and requirements in script
- Draw a “to scale” plot of each scene
- Know your entrances for each scene
- Draw your stage props to scale
  - Tables, chairs, campfires, etc.
- Make a List of hand props
  - what, who, when
- List your lighting changes
  - Style, when, change duration

# Lead Times

- Set Construction
  - 3 to 6 Months
- Drop Selection
  - 3 to 6 Months
- Special Props
  - 1 to 2 Months
- Special Lighting and Sound Requirements
  - 4 to 8 Weeks
- Lighting and SFX Rentals
  - 4 to 6 Weeks
- Sound Changes
  - 2 to 4 Days
- Lighting Cue Changes
  - 1 to 4 Days

# Actor Process of Working on a Degree

1. Read-through and Character Exploration
2. Learn Lines before Rehearsal #1
3. Rehearsal #1 - Blocking
  - Director's Notes on Blocking
4. Rehearsal #2 - Run Through
  - Director's Notes
5. Rehearsal #3 - Run Through
  - Director's Notes
6. Rehearsal #4 - Dress Rehearsal
  - Director's Notes

Director's Pep-Talk

**Do the Degree**



# **BREAK**

---

**Please Come  
Back in  
10 Minutes**

# Agenda

- Developing an Acting/Stage Vocabulary
- Understanding the Script
- Playing a Character
- Playing a Scene: Actor/Director Collaboration

## Luncheon and Discussion

# Top Ten Ways to Succeed in your Degree Work

10. Be Animated and Use Your Body
9. Always Move with a Purpose
8. Stay Involved with Action on Stage
7. Play the Moment that's Happening
6. Listen to the other Actors and Respond in Character
5. Speak Clearly
4. Project your voice to be heard in the Last Row in the Audience
3. Keep your Character Real and Truthful
2. Be Aware to Play to the Audience and Share the Stage with your Fellow Actors

# **Top Ten Ways to Succeed in your Degree Work**

**# 1**

**Memorize  
Your  
Lines!!**

# GUIDELINES FOR ACTORS:

- Live “Truthfully” under Imaginary Circumstances
- Be in the Moment
- Play an Action - not an Attitude
- Make Clear Choices
- Develop Vocal and Physical Skills
- Do your Homework outside of Rehearsal
- Learn your Lines!
- Be an Ensemble Member that your fellow Actors can trust
- Come prepared to contribute to the rehearsal process

# GUIDELINES FOR DIRECTORS:

- Read the Play Several Times
- Analyze the Script
- Develop Blocking and Stage Action
- Discuss Scenery, Lights, Props With TD
- Review Costume Needs With Costumer
- “Read-through” Prior to First Rehearsal
- “Off-book” at First Rehearsal
- Collaborate With Technical Staff
- Develop Clear Communication Skills
- Keep a Production Folder
  - Feedback and Notes on the Production
- Praise the Positive While Improving

# Sample Scene

Thanks for attending  
the Workshop  
and...

**“BREAK A LEG!”**