
Shrek As A Musical: Phenomenal Job Of Design Team

Have you ever watched a movie, play, or musical and thought to yourself, “how in the world do they look so realistic, and how did they bring the character to life like that?” In “Shrek the Musical”, they did just that. They brought to life the aspects of the Ogres, Donkey, the even shortened Lord Farquaad in the musical to connect to the movies. I am going to elaborate on how they did this and how it’s a vital part of the musical.

The design element I decided to elaborate on is the costume aspect of the play and how it really brings the characters to life. The design team on “Shrek the Musical”, really knew what they were doing when they began designing the costumes for the production. There are three characters I am going to really dig into and those three are: Shrek, Donkey, and Lord Farquaad. I feel as though these three were really brought to life by the design team.

I’m going to begin with Shrek, with Shrek they used green to me as a symbolic meaning, such as green stands for envy. With that being said, I believe that the design team took in to consideration that Shrek never got to live a normal life style, therefore making him jealous of the other kids whom wasn’t sent away as a child. Also, with them using green as the color of his skin, to me it just shows how envious he really was. Furthermore, the size they made Shrek really played a factor in the musical, it’s kind of collaborated with the envious side of him, due to him being bigger than everyone else, no one really wanted to associate with him because, big is scary. Shrek’s clothes also played a part of his scary physique, his clothes were a bit different than most of the people in town, and for a lot of people who are living in a countercultural world, different is scary.

Secondly, Donkey comes into the musical. The design team uses grey for Donkey’s character, for a lot of people the first thing that would come to their mind when they saw that they used grey would think that being grey is mostly associated with depression, and other dull thoughts, but the artist knew what they were doing. Grey doesn’t only associate with depression or emotionless, it can also be formal, and mean things such as: conservative and sophisticated. Although, Donkey was far from formal, he had a sophisticated side to him. With that being said, I can give you an example of how he is sophisticated. Donkey was really talkative, but he knew where he was going, he even says it in the musical “ I am like a GPS, but with fur”(16:58).

Finally, Lord Farquaad, they used a special mantle for his costume being the actual actor was around 6’2” and Farquaad himself was only 4’2”. They used the special mantle so that the actor could perform on his knees most of the musical. Though the film and musical are similar in many ways, Farquaad in the musical is more flamboyant and fun-loving, less subtle, and even more conceited. Also, another aspect of his hate for the fairytale creatures, is that his mother and father are actually one of them, although it doesn’t say it in the movie, it is portrayed in the musical that grumpy is his father and his mother happened to be the princess from “The Princess and the Pea”. The reason behind him being so grumpy and mean all the time is because when he was a child his father abandoned him in the woods after the princess (his mother whom had to sleep on 25 mattresses) “ one night she rolled over... and Mama was gone”.

In conclusion, I think the design team did a phenomenal job on the costume design aspect for this musical. They brought the story to life and connected it to the movie. In my eyes they couldn't have done a better job. The costumes were my favorite part about the whole musical, because I felt connected to the characters and I felt as if I was in the musical or watching the musical live. When someone has that kind of grab ahold of you, they're doing their job correctly.