

# Atmosphere

## BY THE END OF THIS UNIT YOU WILL:

Explore the atmosphere of a drama piece, Women in Black.

Explore the use of pathetic fallacy.

Understand how to compose music to create specific atmospheres using a range of compositional techniques.

Understand how to use levels, height depth within your work.

Understand how to devise a dance in a specific atmosphere.

Explore a range of stimuli and practitioners to inspire performances.

Respond to a given brief.

Understand safe practice and performance in the theatre.

## STANISLAVSKI:

You must try to show a truthful expression of life on stage – Naturalistic acting. You must try to give your characters motives and reasons for the way they act and behave. Clear objectives – the “magic if”.

The audience should understand when and where the play is set. You need to remember that the audience is passive and are watching life unfold in front of them.

The structure of your play should have one clear plot and perhaps a sub-plot.

## BRECHT:

His type of theatre was known as Epic theatre. Your play must try to educate the audience about an important issue. You don't want the audience to become emotionally involved as you want them to make a reasoned judgement on their own.

You play should include what Brecht termed the “alienation” technique. This is a direct address to the audience – this would require stepping in and out of role.

You would multi-role characters and use placards to help tell your story.

Your play does not have to follow a linear plot eg. beginning, middle and end.

Emphasis is on an episodic style.

## Andy Blankenbuehler:

Andy Blankenbuehler, a former Broadway dancer, is the award winning choreographer of Hamilton the famous Broadway musical.

### His Creative Process:

- Distinguish your characterisation.
- To entertain audiences, there are lots of show stopping, visually impressive moments throughout the production such as the turntable revolving stage being used where the dancers are moving
- Taking everyday pedestrian movements and turning it into choreography.
- Big repeated gestures
- Bob Fosse Influences
- Fred Astaire Influences
- Choreographing to the lyrics
- To educate/inform people about The War of Independence helping tell the narrative through movement
- To tell the story of Alexander Hamilton through the style of Hip Hop
- The theme of revolution

### Effect of Choreographic Outcome:

- Mood and Atmosphere
- Contrast and variety
- Structure
- Relationship to theme/idea

### Communication of the theme ‘Atmosphere’ in dance:

Intention, Mood, Meaning, Idea, Theme, Style.

### Application of Choreographic devices in work:

- Actions
- Space
- Dynamic
- Relationships
- Structure
- Devices (accumulation, counterpoint, canon)

## KEYWORDS:

Chromatic Scale Major Mime Non-Naturalistic Canon Contact Emotion  
Ostinato Motif Exaggeration Objectives Formations Brief  
Drone Dissonance Minor Naturalistic Stimuli Alienation Story Telling Eye Contact

## BERKOFF:

His approach is incredibly physical. His style is non-naturalistic, often focusing on movement rather than voice.

Your movement should be stylised (slow/robotic) with exaggerated facial expressions and mime.

You should use a direct address to the audience to enhance their viewing experience.

When voice is used it must be exaggerated to heighten the physical aspects that the actor is creating. His method was referred to as “Total Theatre”.

## DANNY ELFMAN:

The “Danny Elfman” sound is defined by his particular choice and combination of instruments. The main themes are written in a large orchestral score, including pipe organ, harp, celeste, accordion, vibraphone, temple blocks, tubular bells, sleigh bells, xylophone, marimba, piano, fairground steam organ, synth choir and choir.

Elfman gives very detailed performance direction with regards to dynamics, articulation and phrasing.

Texture - Constantly changing, uses layering and melody driven homophony.

Harmony and Tonality - Use of minor keys throughout, use of whole-tone scale, use of open chords and chromatic shifts.

Rhythm and Tempo - Constant changing of time signature, use of ostinato, cross-rhythms and Syncopation.