Jobs of the Set Decorator

- To work with the set designer in the beginning stages to get color palate, and idea for the feel of the play, and brainstorm ideas for more complicated set pieces.
- Maintaining the paint room and its contents in the space
- To decorate from painting, to furnishing to constructing some specific set pieces (if needed).
- Fireproofing the set
- Working with props on specific furnishing and set pieces (sometimes there is overlap, so there must be communication).
- Working with lighting on color choices
- Putting in P.O.’s for your purchases, usually including paint, brushes, rollers, trays, and specific items such as glue and flour for paper mache.
- Painting the floor back to black with floor paint (provided by the TA)
- Only use paint that you have purchased, or is left by previous shows (post strike). Do not take paint for personal use.

How to Wash a Paintbrush:

- Always wash brushes right after using them, if you need them in an hour or so, you may wrap them in wet paper towels for a short period of time.
- Rinse brushes out thoroughly in the slop sink in the paint room or in the workshop.
- Wring out brushes and rollers as much as possible
- Take rollers off of handles and stand up on end in a place where the water will drain (not just where they will sit in the water)
- Hang brushes up on pegs by their handles

***This may seem excessive, but you would be surprised.
Usual Process

- Meet with Set Design Team to work out basics and plans.
- Come up with a color palette and research the time period/setting of the show. Review with Directors, TD’s, and Set Designer
- Send in P.O.’s for paint and other necessities.
- Help build until they have set pieces to paint.
- Decorate set pieces as needed, remember to fireproof *****
- Show progress to lighting designer
- Pull furniture and necessary set pieces before move-in
- During move-in paint stage if necessary,
- Help set up set, and finish any last minute painting, gaff tape inbetween bordering flats
- Decorate the set with furniture and furnishings, this will need to be done with props most of the time.
- Bring all materials back to the space, make sure that the paint room is back in order for the next show and paint the floor back to black if needed.

Prices and Usual Items

- Paint: buy Glidden at Home Depot, it usually costs $22-$25 a gallon, buying quarts is very rarely a good idea, since it is around $15 and it’s not even half the paint.
- Stir sticks and can openers come with the paint, so make sure you get extra.
- Fire Proofing needs to be purchased at Backstage Hardware, most of the time the TD will get this for you, but make sure before assuming.
- Brushes, Rollers, Trays, etc. can be purchased at Economy Hardware in South Campus (on Beacon Street). Paint is a lot more expensive here, so just get that at Home Depot.
- Blick Art Materials and Shaws take P.O.’s for other items
- Artists and Craftsmen (A&C) is around the corner from the space and that requires reimbursements.
- Winmill Fabric is in China Town (go to the Boylston Stop on the green line) Their address is: 111 Chauncy St. (617) 542-1815
- Freddy Farkles Fabric Outlet - they are about 1 mile from Home Depot. 86 Coolidge Ave, Watertown, MA 02472

Fireproofing

*****Consult TD on fireproofing, the basic rules are:
- Only one layer of paint needs to be fireproofed
- Fireproofing paint: 1 gallon paint to 1 cup fireproofing
- Fabric: Submerge fabric until soaked through for about 30 mins, and then wring out and let dry.
Specific Instructions

Paper Mache
This has been utilized in shows such as Midsummer Night’s Dream, Into the Woods, and Wind in the Willows. Paper mache is flour and Elmer’s glue added to mostly water. You can get the crew to collect news papers, which will need to be ripped into strips. For the final layer, add fireproofing and paint to the mixture to save yourself some trouble.

Faux Painting/Floor Painting
A lot of different textures can be produced by mixing different paints together on the surface. This is perfect for a faux wood floor, or tile, or a stone wall etc. For a tile floor, make stencils, and alternate colors with about an inch for “grout”. For a wood floor, paint the floor dark brown, get 3/4” tape and tape the lines for the floor parallel to the front of the stage with short lines perpendicular, have one person paint a light brown with a roller, while the second person paints in darker brown for the grain (finger painting this works the best).

Finger Painting is perfect to get a marbling effect or texture, just use a lightened (add white) version of a color and mix it in while it’s drying on the surface.

Stained Glass
Fake stained glass can be made by cutting up discarded lighting gels and using rubber cement to adhere them to the back of plexi glass. Use thin black tape in between the cells in the front of the glass. (Drawing out the design on the plexi before hand with dry erase will make it much easier). See the rose on the first page from Beauty and the Beast.

Painting Tips

• Always make sure you have a can of black paint and usually white.

• Fireproofing should be mixed in smaller quantities to the paint, not to the whole can, unless you are planning on using the whole can.

• Wood stain can be used on furniture, use a brush to apply and a cloth to buff once it has started to dry. Use a fireproofing sealant after staining.

• Standing on the can to close it is better than denting it by hitting it with a hammer.