

Topic 041**FORM and DISTRIBUTION**

Light provides objects with a sense of FORM. The eye is able to recognize objects in terms of shape, size and position. Our binocular vision assists with this process by providing DEPTH.

"By means of controlling the distribution of light and creating patterns and compositions of light and shade, it is possible to produce sensations on the retina that will be interpreted as forms in space." (A Syllabus of Stage Lighting, S. McCandless 1964).



Form as applied to light is rather complex. It is everything that intensity, color, movement and direction are not. Yet form is caused and influenced by these other qualities of light. Form has to do with the DISTRIBUTION of light or how light strikes a surface and reveals an object. We typically discuss form in terms of clarity and recognition of shapes.

Form and distribution can be discussed on two levels.

First, we can discuss form as applied to the stage setting in respect to how objects appear. A stage might be evenly, softly and flatly illuminated from a low front angle. Alternately, the same stage might be unevenly dappled with tight circular pools from a high overhead angle.

We can also discuss form as applied to the light produced by a stage lighting fixture. (Example: "The fixture produced a sharply defined square shaped beam with a very wide dispersion angle".)

Form becomes much more complex when you consider that an image projector can be used as a stage lighting fixtures. As a result of this technology the light produced from the 'fixture' can take on absolutely any shape, form or distribution.

As in nature, stage light sources may produce either soft diffused shadowless light or hard shadow producing light, - or anything in between. The edge of a lighting beam may also range from a soft almost invisible edge to a hard, sharply defined edge. A beam of light may also have a broken, uneven distribution, as in the case of a gobo or template pattern projection.