

**Topic 033****THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF LIGHT, VISION AND DESIGN, APPLY REGARDLESS OF THE LIGHTING DESIGN DISCIPLINE.**

The only real differences from one lighting industry to another are the methodology and equipment types involved. For example, display designers may use a 3"-150 watt fresnel, theatre designers may be at home with an 8"-2000 watt Fresnel (pronounced as FRENEL), and the television or film designer may be used to working with a 30"-10,000 watt fresnel. Further, the lighting designer must have knowledge and experience with the lighting methods, fixtures and hardware that are available to serve their particular lighting industry.

***EVERYONE IN THEATRE KNOWS 2 JOBS...THEIR OWN...AND LIGHTING!***

## Objectives of Lighting

"**Lighting** may be defined as the use of light to create a sense of VISIBILITY, NATURALISM, COMPOSITION and MOOD, (or ATMOSPHERE)".

## Visibility

VISIBILITY is often considered to be the most basic and fundamental function of stage lighting. What we don't see, we seldom clearly understand. Visibility is dependent on far more than just the intensity of light. Other factors such as; contrast, size, color and movement all can influence visibility. Distance, age and the condition of the eye also play important roles in visibility. "Good visibility is essentially selective. Its purpose is to reveal things selectively in terms of degrees of acuity". - (S. McCandless, 1933).

**Functions of Visibility****Provide visibility:**

We have to be able to see the actors! So lighting must illuminate them or it turns into radio...

**Reveal shapes and forms:**



Lighting can (and should) be used to make things three-dimensional. This involves lighting from the side and the back in addition to the front. If actors were only lit from the front, they would look flat and two-dimensional.

**Provide a focus onstage:**



The audience should be able to tell where they are supposed to direct their attention at least partly based on the assistance of lighting. In this scene from *The Dark of the Moon*, it is clear the focus is on the two figures lying on the ground.

**Assist with mood and style:**



The way lighting is used should help to establish a clear atmosphere. Is it creepy? Romantic? Intense? The actors being lit from below in this scene from *The Threepenny Opera* adds an element of menace and threat to the mood.

**Help establish time and place:**

The audience should be able to tell by the lighting if it is day or night, dawn, noon or dusk. They should also be able to tell if it is indoors or outdoors, if it's the harsh lighting of a doctor's office or the warm lights of a living room, etc. This scene from *Arcadia* takes place in the evening, by candlelight in the study.

**Reinforce a central visual image:**

Lighting has to coordinate with the rest of the design elements to help facilitate the message the director is trying to convey. This production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as discussed in scenic design, had fantastical elements, fairies, etc. So the lighting had to reflect that as well--with rich, saturated colors and the clever use of lighting from underneath an umbrella.