

Roman Theatre CBRT Script

By Amy Branda, a student in Dr. Rosalind Flynn's course, The Teaching of Theatre, at The Catholic University of America

- 1 – The Romans were cheaters!
2 – Did *you* know that?! (gesture)
3, 4 – Nope.
5 – Wow, how did they cheat?
6 – They copied the Greeks!
7, 8, 9 – You mean they used Windex to cure their wounds?! (sound effect/ gesture)
10 – No! You watch too many movies!
1, 10- We're talking about Roman *Theatre*!
2 - You know, the lights, (gesture)
3 - the sounds, (sound effect)
4 – the stage! (gesture)
All - Romans copied the ideas of Greek Theatre.
5,6 – You see, Greeks solved the problems of sound (sound effect- same as above)
7, 8 – and lighting (gesture- same as above)
9, 10 – by performing in the great outdoors (gesture)!
1 – Like the Greeks, Romans built theaters with semi- circular, tiered seating!
2, 3 – Like a stadium?
All – Exactly! (gesture)
4 - So aside from mimicking the Greeks (sound effect), did they do *anything* else? (gesture)
5 – Of course!
6, 7, 8 – You see, the Roman audiences were loud and rowdy (sound effect)
All – How rude!
- 9 – So, to solve this problem they used symbols to show different types of characters.
All- (sound effect of a cymbal-instrument)
9, 10 – Not that kind of symbol!
All - Oh.
1 – You see the actors wore masks (gesture)
2 – brown for men
3 – white for women
4 – with a sad face for a play known as a “Tragedy” (make a sad face and sound effect)
5 – and a happy face for a play known as a “Comedy” (make a happy face and sound effect)
6, 7 – Were these symbols shown in costumes too?!
8, 9 – Oh, definitely! (gesture)
10 – A purple costume meant this guy was rich (sound effect- cha ching!)
1 – On the other hand, a red toga meant this man was penniless (sound effect <sniffle>)
2 – a boy would wear a striped toga (gesture)
3 – what about a girl?!
4, 5, 6 – A girl! Women! Unheard of! (gesture)
7 – It just wasn't considered proper for a lady, you see.
8 – So their parts were played by men or boys wearing a white mask.
9, 10 – Ok, so cheaters, outdoor stadium theatre, lots of symbols, *what else?* (gesture)
1 – Well the actors spoke lines...

All- Duh! (gesture)
1, 2 – while a second actor mimed gestures to fit the lines (gesture- miming a box)
3 – Examples please!
4 – One. Feeling a pulse to show a sick person, (gesture)
5 – Two. Showing music by making the shape of a lyre with the fingers (gesture)
6, 7- Gotcha!
6- Hey, wasn't Rome home to the bloody Gladiator fights?!
(gesture & sound effect)
7 – That's kind of like Theatre, right?!
8, 9, 10 – Very good! (gesture)
8- Roman theatre was bloody and often deathly!
9- In a flying scene, an actor would actually jump from a high place, attempting to fly, but actually fall flat on his face (sound effect)
All- Ouch!

10- Yup, they'd often die, like really die.
All- awww...
1, 2-Yes, people died all too often in real life too, in battles, plots against the emperor! (gesture)
3, 4-But you see, theatre, kept people alive.
5- It kept people happy and busy so they wouldn't plot against the great emperor!
6- Speaking of emperors, do you know that emperors like Nero would use theatre to show their talents?
7, 8- Ha! Talents... or so they thought...
9- Emperor Nero would sing (sound effect)
10, 1 - and sing (sound effect)
2, 3 – and sing (sound effect)
4, 5, 6- and no one could leave until he was finished (applause)
All - and the curtain closed (gesture).

Work Cited:

“Roman Theatre” <http://ireland.iol.ie/~coolmine/typ/romans/thea.html>. 23 Sept. 2007