

# STUDENT WORKSHEET 4

## PRODUCTION ROLES FLASH CARDS

### PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Working closely with the lighting designer, sound designer, video designer, illusion designer and director, Production Designer Tim Hatley is responsible for the visual concept for the show. He oversees all of the design and creative decision-making related to costume, set and props. Tim Hatley did a lot of visual research into the fifties and eighties to ensure that his designs, props, and costumes were historically accurate. He was always mindful of the design fundamentals such as scale, colour palette, texture, scale and materials. The production designer often leads the collaborative process and makes sure everyone is using their unique skills to enhance each other's work and the show as a whole. He says:

“THE ART OF CREATING A DESIGN FOR A MUSICAL, ESPECIALLY ONE THAT MOVES AROUND AND IS SO FLUID, IS ABOUT THE WHOLE PICTURE.”

**TIM HATLEY (PRODUCTION DESIGNER)**

### LIGHTING DESIGNER

Working closely with the production designer, sound designer, video designer, illusion designer, director and technical operator, the lighting designer decides which lights are used and when to light the show in a way that best tells the story. The lighting director has a lot of power; they control what and who the audience see (or don't see) and when. This is especially true in a show like **BACK TO THE FUTURE: The Musical**, which uses a lot of illusions and relies on complex lighting plans.

“LIGHTING IS THIS LAYER THAT NEEDS TO BRING OUT THE BEST IN EVERYBODY'S WORK... IT SHOULD ABSOLUTELY BE FUSED WITH THE REST OF THE WORK.”

**TIM LUTKIN (LIGHTING DESIGNER)**

The key elements of lighting which Tim Lutkin used to create his designs are direction, intensity, colour and movement.

### SOUND DESIGNER

Working closely with the production designer, lighting designer, video designer, and director, the sound designer finds or creates the appropriate sound effects needed to help to tell the story. The sound designer Gareth Owen must make decisions about the source and direction of sound, types of sound (live or recorded), volume and levels and how sounds are manipulated or edited. Think of all the exciting sound effects used in the 'Sequence to '55': the screeching tyres, the heavy rain, the sound of the car crashing into the hay bales... The sound designer is responsible for all of these and more!

## VIDEO DESIGNER

Working closely with the production designer, lighting designer, sound designer and director, the video designer creates and incorporates recorded media into the live show to enhance the storytelling. **BACK TO THE FUTURE: The Musical** relies heavily on the use of projection and moving graphics to help with its time travelling scenes, created by Video Designer Finn Ross. Think about how the moving projection behind the stationary car in the 'Sequence to '55' scene helps to make it look like the DeLorean really is accelerating to 88 miles per hour! This all thanks to the video designer and their collaboration with the other behind the scenes roles.

## ILLUSION DESIGNER

Not every show needs an illusion designer but this one certainly does! Did you know **BACK TO THE FUTURE: The Musical** Illusion Designer Chris Fisher is a member of The Magic Circle? He has also worked as International Illusions & Magic Associate for Harry Potter & The Cursed Child. Working closely with the production designer, lighting designer and director, the Illusion Designer is often a member of the magic circle and cleverly uses light, sound and projection to create spectacular illusions live on stage, for example the flying DeLorean in the final moments.

## STAGE MANAGER

Working as a bridge between the creative and technical departments, the stage manager is in charge of coordinating the production, making sure every performance runs smoothly. This includes ensuring that the actors, props, set and costumes are all exactly where they need to be at the correct moments and calling all the technical cues (light, sound or video changes) on time. The list of responsibilities for a stage manager is always long but for a show like **BACK TO THE FUTURE: The Musical**, with its complex design and many technical aspects, the stage manager certainly has their hands full!

## DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER

Working closely with the Stage Manager and the Assistant Stage Managers (ASMs), the Deputy Stage Manager (DSM) plays a key role during rehearsals, technical rehearsals, and the show. They keep an accurate record of key decisions made by the directors and actors during rehearsal. The DSM will instruct or 'cue' the technicians, sound and lighting box to start the performance. Then, during the show, will cue any lighting changes, sound effects and music. For example, in **BACK TO THE FUTURE: The Musical**, they would 'cue' the scrim or gauze to come down at the front of the stage, for the start of the final storm scene.

## HEAD OF EFFECTS

Working alongside the production designer and stage manager, the Head of Effects plays a huge part in the smooth execution of the many live effects used throughout the show. They are an integral cog in the backstage machine and must be on hand during every performance. A key responsibility for the head of effects is cueing all of the explosions, flashes, smoke, flames and fireworks - otherwise known as pyrotechnics - that are used during the many jaw-dropping moments in the show, such as the moment when Marty goes back to 1985 and tracks of fire are created on stage. In the case of shows that make use of complex illusions like this one, the Head of Effects will also work closely alongside the illusion designer to help ensure that the show's many impressive illusions run smoothly and that the secrets to those illusions are kept safely under wraps.