

view of this and as designs aimed at young audience, elements that are more children slanted were employed in order to appeal to their visual interest and level of aesthetics. In this respect, elements such as curved, rectilinear, and irregular lines as well as two-dimensional shapes, and three-dimensional forms were employed to imitate objects in nature for them. They were necessary for me to produce designs that fall within the schema of the targeted audience. They were also necessary to enhance communication of the play's actions in relation to the set. The idea of conceiving new more designs did not end at this stage as the designer kept exploring new different ideas in variety of ways to meet the visual expression of the play to the audience and complement the actions of the actors. This exercise was done while the researcher considered the nature of the stage for the performance and the suitability of the various design sketches on the intended stage. The sketches were shown to the director which helped him to block the movements of actors and also to effect some changes to the already blocked ones.

To a greater extent, colour, the core of the study was researched and discussed at this level. The researcher conducted a focus group discussion with some children within the age brackets of eight and thirteen (8-13) years to gain a thorough understanding of their perception of colour. The psychological effect of colour on such children was also needed to connect them with the play's psychological background. It was also intended to enhance their understanding of the play's environment in relation to the actors and their actions. Other visual references as animation movies, pictures and videos of stage performances for young audience were also looked at. These only served as sources of inspiration for me to satisfy the aesthetic appeal of the children.

The conceptual research dovetailed with the incubation stage which Gillette (2000:25) state; it relives the unconscious and relies on time to let ideas hatch. This process was not faithfully adhered to as the researcher rather kept contemplating on the individual

sketches. At this point, it realised that the ability to have a solution-focus approach was very helpful in chasing down the final ideas for the play's actions. By so doing, the researcher visited the performance venue on a number of days to check up on the stage to be certain about the configurations of the sketches on the stage.

Understanding how to work with a specific design began with the selection stage. It is stipulated by Gillette (2000:25) as a process in which you sift through all the data accumulated and decide on specific design concept. With this assertion, the researcher selected the desirable designs for the play and a computer-generated model of them was created which helped to communicate the perspective of the designer's intention. The model was used to complement the discussion on colour with the children (as mentioned earlier under the conceptual research). The selected designs were created with the kind of audience in mind so that they will be best received by them. At this stage, the researcher had explored several colour scheme concepts of which the polychrome colour scheme was adopted in order to meet the diverse demands of the colour preferences by children for the set design. The colour scheme concept is amply discussed in the successive sub-topic in this chapter (3.11).



Figure 3.1. A computer-generated model of the set

Source: Picture generated by Nash Neequaye

The penultimate stage; implementation phase commences when the designer stops planning and starts doing Gillette (2000). At this phase, drafting for the designs was executed after the scenic pieces were constructed to the desired dimensions and scales in a manner that would correspond with the sizes of the children. In view of this the developed designs were further translated into elevation drawings using the scale of half ($\frac{1}{2}$ ") inch to one (1') foot and (1") inch to one (1) foot respectively. For instance, figure 3.2 illustrates the floor plan of the stage that captured the placement of the scenic pieces. Similarly, the front elevation and working drawings of the various scenic units were also drafted to scale as seen in **fig.3.3** and **fig.3.4** respectively. Additionally, the detail drawings of the three- dimensional two-tiered staircase and the huge dead tree were also drawn to show their profile (see **fig.3.5**).

Also, different materials were secured from the market for the construction of the individual scenic units at the School of Performing Arts carpentry workshop. It took about two weeks for the constructions to be completed. It was also around this stage that most of the preferred colours had been secured from the market. It must be noted here that it was a herculean task of acquiring the desired colours. This was because most the local paints did not have some of the hues that were needed and therefore the researcher had to settle on foreign ones which also came at higher prices. This in a way greatly challenged my budget. The constructions of the various scenic units were therefore completed before the scheduled date and coated with white paint to be rendered in colour later.

Finally, at the evaluation stage, the designer checked the designs to make sure they expressed the play visually as desired. All the scenic units as well as the colours were transported to the place of performance two weeks prior to the performance night. Further technical demands required for mounting the set were also considered and added; they were mounted on the stage to check for their steadiness, positioning and convenience as

regards the actors' movements. The stage was an open space with the audience facing the actors, as if watching a performance on a proscenium stage. There were no rooms for sightlines, however, due to the concrete nature of the stage floor, some portions of it were not stable and could not support some of the scenic pieces. A number of heights were therefore created and the necessary adjustments made and tried with the set for several days until they worked well as expected. The scenic units were rendered in colour a week prior to the performance. The painting was actually completed in three days. Afterwards, costumes were introduced to check for colour balance and the needed adjustments and changes to the set and costumes were effected for an efficient performance. The actors also used them for mock rehearsals for three days until the final opening night of the performance.

On the technical dress rehearsal night, all of the other technical complements; costume, light, and sound were brought on board for a preview. Timing for lighting cues was adjusted to suit the flow of actions. The intensity of the light was also checked in order to avoid any inconvenience on the young actors. A summary of the activities and the venues for the set design and construction has been provided in the diary schedule in **Table 3.2**.



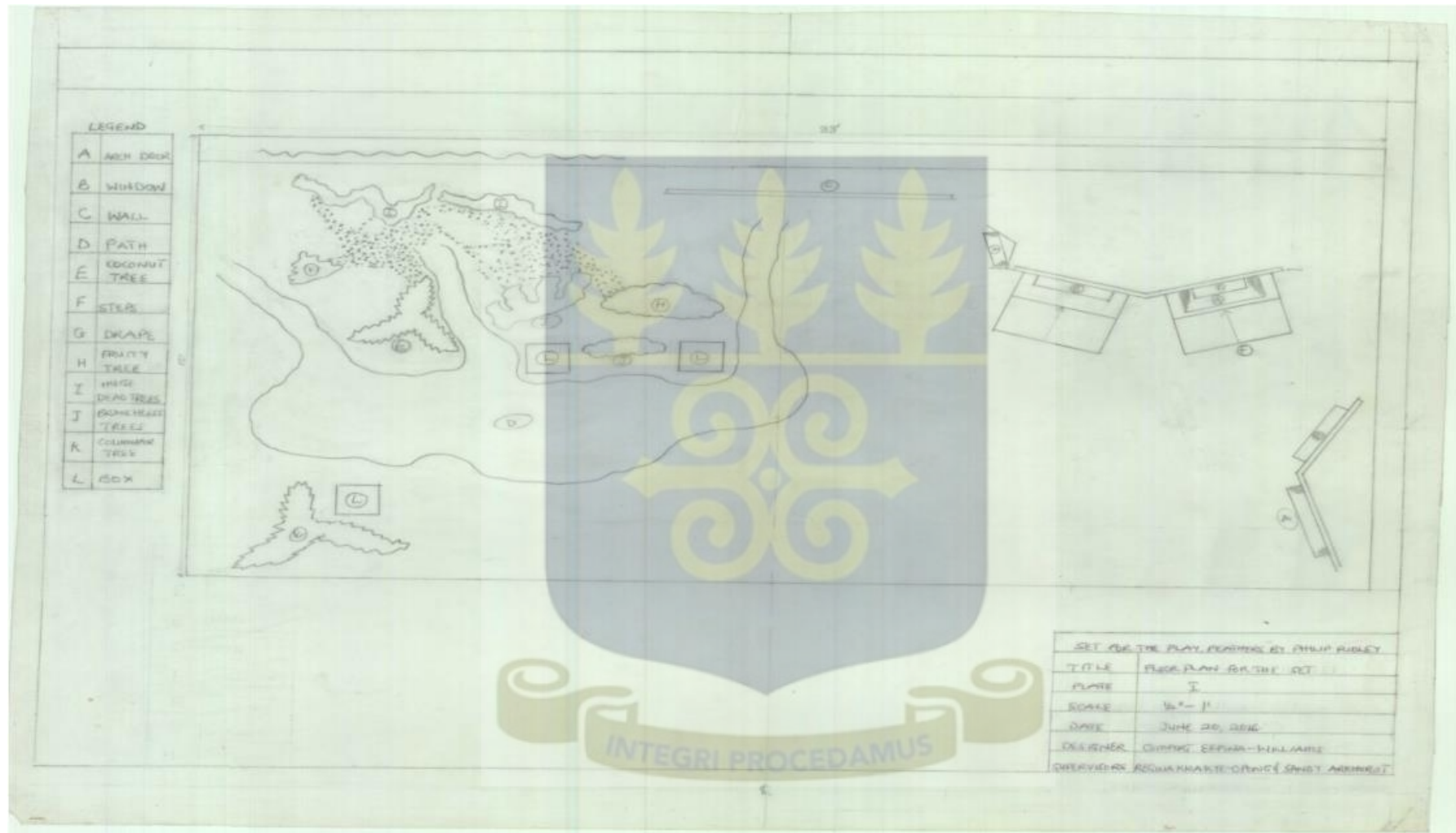


Figure 3.2: Floor plan of the set.

Source: Picture generated by Comfort Effina-William

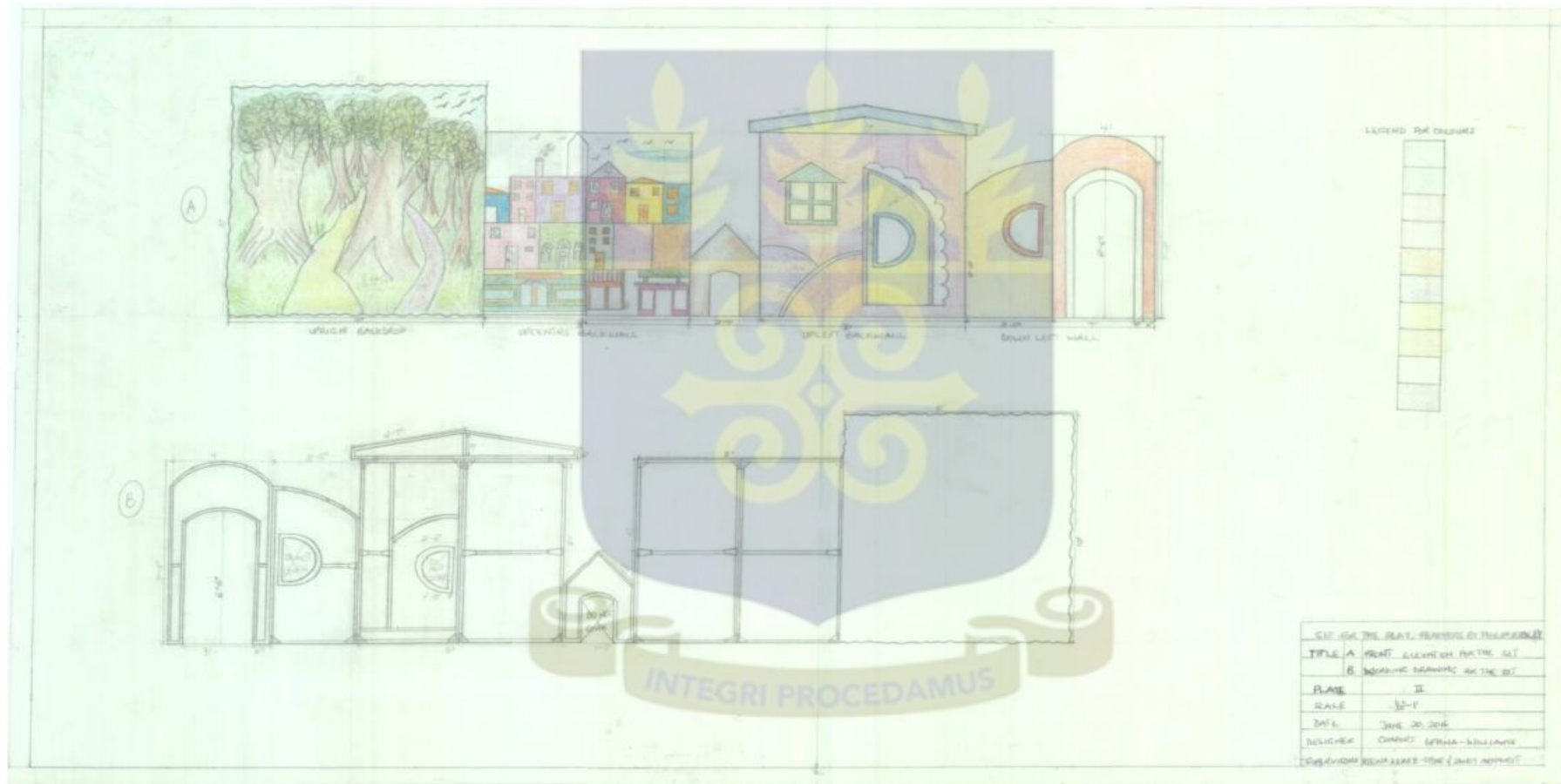


Figure 3.3: Front elevation and working drawing of the set.

Source: Picture generated by Comfort Effina-Williams.



Figure 3.4: Front elevation and working drawing of the trees.

Source: Picture generated by Comfort Effina-Williams.

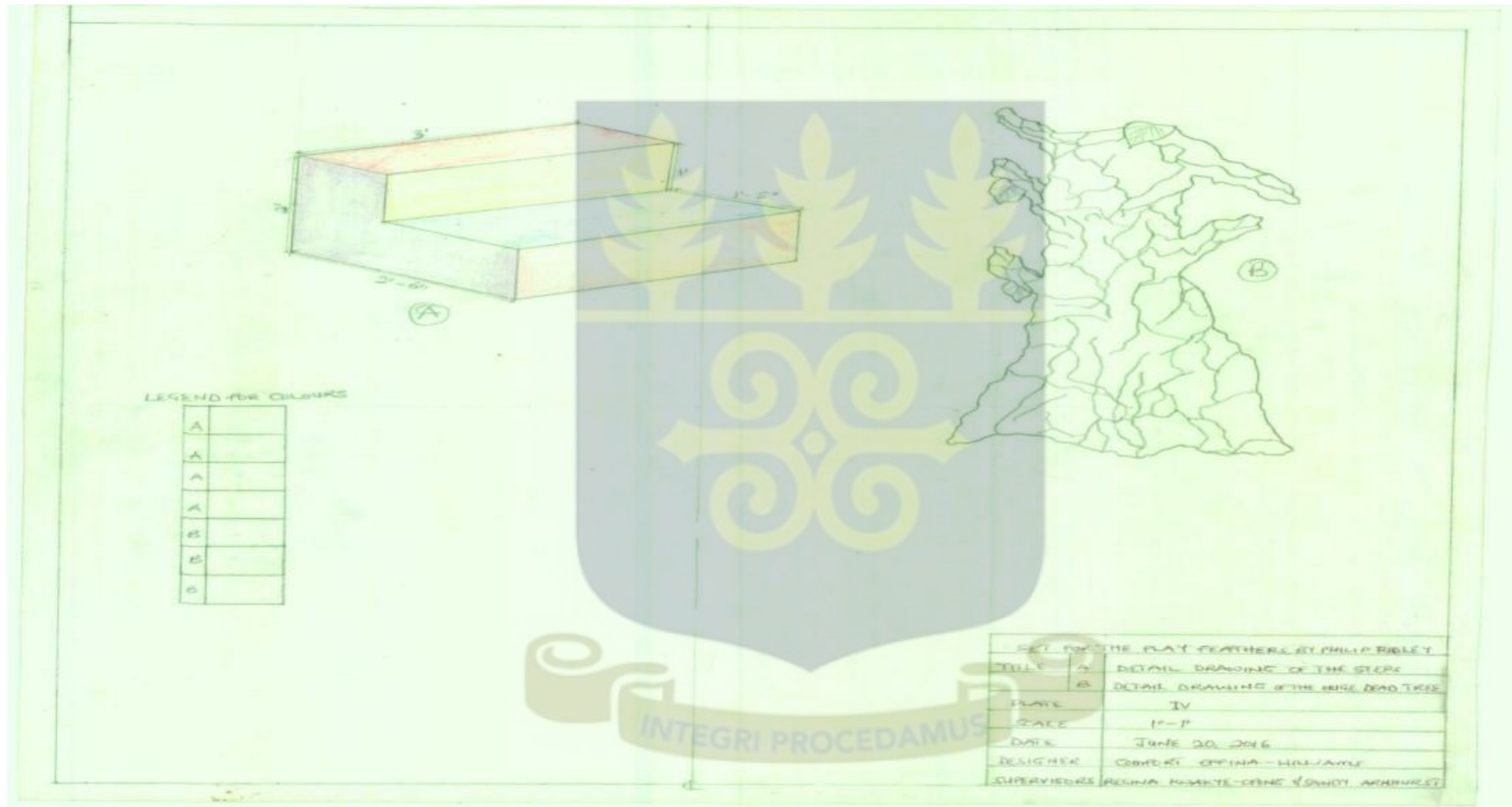


Figure 3.5: Detail drawings of the two-tiered steps and the huge dead tree.

Source: Picture generated by Comfort Effina-Williams.

Table 3.2: Diary of Set Design and Construction Schedule for Philip Ridley’s Play, Feathers.

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	VENUE
4th- 5th Feb, 2016	12.30pm-2.30pm	Script Reading	Solid Rock Foundation School Premise, Agbogba.
8th- 10th Feb,2016	1.30pm- 3.30pm	Script Reading (Continued) & Blocking	"
10th-12th Feb, 2016	12.15pm-	Discussion of Colour Scheme	"
13th- 15th Feb, 2016	10am- 6pm	Generation of Sketches and Model Designs	Scenic Room
16th- 20th Feb, 2016	8am-4pm	Purchasing of Construction Materials and Paints	Accra Central
22th- 27th Feb, 2016	7am- 6pm	Cutting and Construction of Scenic Units	School of Performing Arts (SPA) Carpentry Workshop
29th Feb –5th March, 2016	7am- 6pm	Construction Continued	School of Performing Arts (SPA) Carpentry Workshop
7thth- 9th March, 2016	"	Coating of the Constructed Scenic Units.	"
9th- 11th March, 2016	4pm- 5pm	Application of Paints (Colours) & Transportation of Scenic Units to Performance Venue	Solid Rock Foundation School Premise, Agbogba.
12TH March2016	2.30pm- 4.30pm	Set Construction & Technical Rehearsals	"
14th - 16th March, 2016	3pm-5pm	Mock Performance	"
17THMarch, 2016	4pm- 5pm	Dress and Technical Night	"
18TH March	6pm- 7.30pm	Production Night	"

3.12 Colour Scheme for the Set Design





The effectiveness of a design depends on how a designer applies colour. A colour scheme for any design helps to deepen its quality. Colour scheme is a combination of a range of colours selected for a design. Parker et al (2003:197) relate that “colour scheme serves as a guide to the colour composition within a design or throughout a production”. This signifies that a colour scheme serves as a guide for explaining the colour relationship for a piece of work. It also helps the designer to stay true to the design.

The colour scheme was influenced by the children’s colours preferences for the set design regarding the relationship between the characters and their environment. These colour choices were therefore averagely adopted based on their dominancy in preference for a particular locale as provided in **Table 3.3**. Based on the number of these colours, the polychromatic colour scheme was adopted for the design. In the article, *Aspects of Design*, polychrome is the application of five or more colours which may either be related or unrelated to a design (Jackson, December 02, 2008). It allows one to use as many colours as possible to a design. This is to make the design more lively, depict a more realistic picture of the set, and also gives it a vibrant look. Polychrome was adopted to give the children a true representation of their colour preferences; it projected something of their own so as to enable them relate more with the play’s environment and draw conclusions based on their choices. This was also intended to give the children room to explore, think critically as well as to relate the various scenery very well with the actions of the actors. The harmony of polychromatic scheme was therefore intended to radiate the exuberance of children.

As an intended design for children and with the aid of the Munsell Colour System, medium saturated values of the preferred colours were used to suite the exterior ambience of

the setting. The colours were employed to bring out the brightness of their play spaces in a manner that they will be convenient with. Both warm and cool colours preferred by the children were clinically applied to the entire set in a playful manner that appealed to their sense of imagination, retain their attention, and also leave a lasting impression on them. The colours selected, therefore became the crux for communicating to children about the complementary role of scenic design towards the realisation of a play's setting as well as performing aesthetic functions in Children's Theatre.

Table 3.3: Colour swatches for the various scenes

SCENES	COLOUR PREFERENCES
Shyla's House	Pink, Blue, Purple, White, Yellow 
King Leondo's House	Green, Pink, Red, Blue, Brown, Yellow, Orange, Purple, White 
Ruined House	Orange, Blue, Yellow, Red, Black, White, 
A Path	Brown, Green 
Block of Houses	Blue, Pink, White, Yellow, Purple, Red, Orange, Violet, Brown, Green 

3.13 Scenic Artistic Inputs

Plywood	Manila cards
Wawa board	Wood glue
Wire Mesh	Foam
Brown papers	Paints
Transparent plastic	Caco
Cardboards	Wood chippings

3.13.1 Budget

Table 3.4: Paints

Quantity	Description	Unit Price GhC	Total GhC
1 bucket	White paint	100.00	150.00
1 gallon	Pink "	25.00	25.00
"	Yellow "	"	"
"	Blue "	"	"
"	Green "	"	"
2 " 2 "	Red (Acrylic) Orange	30.00 "	60.00
			60.00
2Bottles	Violet Colorante	5.00	10.00
"	Yellow "	"	"
"	Blue "	"	"
			= 400.00

Table 3.5: Wood Work

Quantity	Description	Unit Price GhC	Total GhC
7 pieces	1/8" Plywood	25.00	175.00
6 pieces	Wawa board	35.00	210.00
	Nails		
1 Pounds	3 "	5.00	15.00
4 "	2 "	5.00	20.00
3 "	1 1/2 " 1	6.00 "	18.00
2 "			12.00
15 yards	Wire Mesh	7.00	105.00
8 pieces	Masking Tapes	5.00	40.00
1	Mesh cutter	18.00	18.00
1	Hammer	15.00	15.00
			=628.00

Table 3.6: Upholstery Materials

Quantity	Description	Unit Price GhC	Total GhC
5 sheets	One eighth inch foam	8.00	40.00
4 yards	Transparent plastic	6.00	24.00
1 board	Caco	35.00	35.00
2 boards	Polystyrene	8.00	16.00
1 gallon	Wood glue	48.00	48.00
3 cans	Formica glue	15.00	45.00
			=208.00

Table 3.7: Stationery

Quantity	Description	Unit Price Gh C	Total GhC
5 pieces	Pencil	50p	2.50p
10 pieces	Manila Cards	2.00	20.00
5 brushes	Paint brush	7.00	35.00
15 sheets	Brown paper	2.50p	37.50p
1 set	Artist brushes	23.00	23.00
			= 118.00

Transportation

GhC200.00

GRAND TOTAL**GHC1,554.00**

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DESIGN INTERPRETATION

4.1 Overview

This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part presents the analysis and findings of the data collected as regards colours for the design; with special emphasis about children's colour choices. The second part provides analysis and interpretation of the colour scheme and how they complemented the actions of the actors during the performance of Philip Ridley's play, *Feathers*. Colour in reference to mood, set and costume, as well as the effect of light on the colours in the set are also analysed. This section also concludes with audience perception of the production which helped in achieving the objectives of the study.

4.2 Analysis of Focus Group Discussion

The designer did not want to rely on any presumptive perspective of children's relation with colours, but rather to experiment with their colour preferences for the set design for the play, *Feathers*. This, in a way, positioned children as active agents and commentators of their own colour choices for the theatre experience. In order to achieve this purpose, focus group discussion was conveniently adopted because it uses less structured interview guide for collecting data from participants. Also, with the aim of finding several viewpoints about colours from children (respondents), Heary & Hennessy (2005:236), adjoin that "focus group is suitable when researchers want to gather information about children's views or perspective of a topic of interest" This was an opportunity for me to acquire children's standpoints on the subject of colour and also apply it in a manner that will be fluid with their understanding and appreciation of the context within which it will

be placed.

During the opening discussion, the participants were asked about their general perception and understanding of colour, as well as their relationship with it. It was an informal way of getting them involved in the discussion. It was generally gathered from the children that they are aware of the fact that they are surrounded by colours and that enables them to perceive things around them. They expressed that without colour it will be difficult to identify objects for what they are. Respondents within ages eleven and thirteen years, however, articulated significantly that colour is a property of light; it characterises what they see as colour. Thus, they are able to see colourful objects because of light. In view of this Morioka and Stone posit that “In the physical sense, there really is no such thing as colour, just light waves of different wavelengths” (2008: 8).

Colour as a property of light was not popular among children within the middle school age group. They only observe colour as an intrinsic product of what they are able to identify around them but not as a result of the reaction from light. This is buttressed in the article, *Life’s Little Mysteries*, of which Natalie Wolchover (June 29, 2012) contends that “colour perception emerges in our brains in response to our experiences of the outside world”. Significantly, it appeared that the perception of colour at this level lie on a divide; objective and subjective levels. This is where the early adolescent age group (11-13) understands colours, mostly based on the scientific perception of colour as light, whereas the younger ones make colour a product of their mind based on environmental events respectively.

The levels of the children’s colour perception re-echo Piaget’s third and fourth concepts of children’s development as cited by Shaffer & Kipps (2010:55). The concrete concept reveals that children of the middle age group only understand objects that are concrete as

compared to the formal operational concept which suggests that children in the early adolescent group are able to comprehend things in the abstract. Consideration of this point was key for me to note in order to apply colours in ways that will appeal to their sight especially when they will be reflected under artificial light and also in ways that appeal to their external exposure.

From both middle aged and early adolescents, it was further gleaned that colours make them appreciate and associate with objects around them; enabling them to express their inner feelings about things they like and dislike. For instance, it was revealed in a general account that the blue hue is cool and makes them feel calm. Some boys from both sects and few girls of the early adolescent age group actually shared that they like blue and love blue outfits because it reflects their personalities. Majority of the boys within age thirteen (13) loved the black hue, because it made them feel confident and bold.

Conversely, majority of the girls expressed their love and attachment for yellow and pink colours. To them, pink is feminine related and easier for them to associate with, whereas yellow makes them feel elated and as such they find any yellow object very exciting and inviting. Interestingly, a particular boy of age nine (9) expressed deeply, his admiration for yellow because it reminds him of his childhood toy cars and thus loves yellow objects quite a lot. At this level of the discussion, it became apparent that the respondents (children) found it more convenient and pleasing to talk about colours they liked most in order not to call to mind colours that made them feel unusual and moody. Pieces of Information garnered from these perspectives were important to be able to come up with designs that have psychological interventions to the benefit of the group of people involved while helping to express their innate desires towards the preferred colours.

Following the responses above, there were also shared emotional connections between

children and colours which in a way contributes to their mood formation. For instance, a boy of age twelve shared that he liked the colour black the most because he had lost several of his relatives and that reminded him of their death. This he said, kept his bright side as it often kept him in tune with them. This sounded strange to some of his peers, because it is a colour that naturally switches them into a sad mood and also reminded them of death and funerals. The experience of children towards this colour is a reflection of the conscious association which they have been conditioned to make as regards the colour black. In a reaffirmation of this idea, Amoah Labi (2009:45) in the Journal, *Reading the Intangible Heritage in Tangible* relates that “black is thought of in terms of melancholy, death, and tragedy”. Though the meaning of this colour is seen through the eyes of children, it represents the wider Ghanaian notion of what black stands for.

In a reciprocal response, another boy of the same age relayed that the colour pink reminded him of malaria; a colour which means a lot to girls especially. He expressed that he took a course for malaria treatment and the drugs were in pink hue, hence causing this kind of attachment. However, contrary to this feeling, majority of the girls loved the colour pink; it is their favourite colour and it also reminds them of the princess in their much-loved cartoons. This reflects the evocative role of pink as being highly feminine regardless of how it reminds someone of a drug or sad event. This reiterates the idea that colour is uniquely a subjective language (Morioka & Stone 2008, & Eiseman; 2006). Hence, this makes anything with colour extremely personal. A critical consideration of these pieces of information was significant for me to be able to translate colours into an emotional language in a way that will elicit the needed emotional responses as will pertain to the performance.

Further into the discussion, it was revealed that the participants also experienced and related to

some colours based on their natural and social impulses. For instance, they describe how the sky is represented with the colour blue, the vegetation being characterised with the green colour, white for peace and victory, black representing death, brown for earth and funeral, red for danger, and yellow for gold (riches). By these examples, they demonstrated how abstract ideas inherently have colours that make them easily identifiable and easier to be represented in any way desirable. It became apparent that the relationship between the children and these colours was borne from their experiences and cultural backgrounds respectively which Mohd et al (2012), have subtly referred to as ‘conscious symbolism’ where blue represents the sky, and green signifies vegetation. This was another bit of information was considered when creating a desirable content based on the context of the design.

Advancing from the above, a discussion of the play, Feathers, was held. In an earlier meeting with the children before the discussion on colour, the storyline of the play was shared with them to whet their interest. This made it easier for them to understand the play for the second time. They understood the play as interesting, filled with joy and sadness. Basically, the discussion dwelt on the characters, the setting, and the colour choices (end product) of the respondents (children) which would serve the setting of the play. This was also to help reveal the nature of the characters and complement their actions to audience. By so doing, the characters were described and the setting vividly described to them. This was intended to create in their imaginations images of the individual locale required to complement the play’s actions. That notwithstanding, given the pictorial descriptions for the individual scenic units, the participants were able to give some colour preferences that they wish to see on stage. For instance, majority of the participants from both levels chose some specific colours for **Shylyla**’s house namely; pink, yellow, purple, blue, and white.

A further probe into the meanings and reasons for their choices of these colours disclosed that

they generally perceived **Shylyla**'s as an emotionally unstable girl, hence such preferences to echo her disposition. In spite of the common knowledge that pink is effeminate; stereotyped for girls or females, most of the boys also surprisingly preferred it for **Shylyla**'s house. Their choices were not gender bound; a reflection of their understanding of **Shylyla**'s personality. Their reason for the dominance of pink was because she is a little girl and it is universally loved by girls. Their responses to pink echoed a feeling of empathy towards her situation in the play. This important information was necessary for me to consider the trend of colour stereotyping in order to make colour links that are relevant to the targeted children.

Similarly, majority of the participants preferred green hue as the primary colour for the forest. To them green suggests vegetation and nature. Alternatively, it was also suggested by others that aside from the green plants, the forest could be characterised by variety of colours and that will make the forest beautiful and interesting to explore. In relation to this, some of the children hinted that the use of more colours could also imply that **Blazerbird** inhabits it judging from its colourful feathers. The parallel patterns in their submissions became evident that those who chose green did so based on their relationship to their environmental impulses, whereas those who preferred variety in the colour composition were reliant on the arbitrary use of colours in creating scenes for mostly cartoons and animated movies. Considerably, the prevailing colours selected for the path were green and brown resonating how they have ingrained in them the observation of their environment.

With the ruined house in focus, the dominant colours were orange, white, red, black, and brown. Picturing in their minds the nature of ruined house, the spectrum of these colours except orange carries a sad connotation. To them black hue will make the house look like a real 'ruined' house whereas the presence of a red hue will tag the house as a dangerous

zone. On a different note, most girls within the middle and early adolescent age brackets preferred to see the house in orange hue with some notes of white hue; suggesting that the house was perhaps beautiful before it got ruined. Interestingly, their colour preferences were essentially meant to capture the mood of the play, while serving as guide for expressing their relationship between the characters and the locales. This exercise situated the respondents (children) in positions as active co-constructors of this research agenda and also to enable them understand what they would see on stage from both the scenic designer's perspective as well as through their own lenses.

A further reflection of their social stimulation with colours became evident when they chose variety of colours to represent the block of houses. They compared their preferences to the myriad of buildings that they see around them; adding that such buildings are very beautiful and environmentally 'eye' catching. One of the boys (eight years old) had this to say; "it will be interesting to see how colourful the buildings will look when it is put on stage". This and other responses became obvious that their colour choices were also influenced by learned responses that are characteristic of the different buildings in their environment; a reaffirmation of the concept of colour as a conscious symbol. The preferred colours and their meanings have been illustrated in **Appendix A**

The series of discussions therefore revealed that children's relationship with colours is relatively based on their learned or domestic experiences. While keeping up with what is traditionally known to them, children are able to divorce their philosophical association with some colours to make different meanings based on how they appeal to their sense of beauty and their social impulses. Significantly, the colours they chose for the various locations inherently carried some specific moods; thus, the colour constituents for each of the locale represented a kind of mood which helped to create a desirable atmosphere for the performance.

Similarly, the colours also shared some connections with the nature of the characters. For instance, the colours preferred for **Shylyla**'s house would help communicate to the audience her internal emotional and psychological state through a mood-filled set design.

In a mutual manner, the dominant green for the forest echoes it as a product of nature which could reflect the abode of **Blazerbird**. In consonance with this, Parker et al aver that "the influence of the characters on scene design can sometimes be subtle, sometimes obvious, and on occasion symbolic" (2003:46). This quote implies the important relationship characters bear on their environment and vice versa. These colours are extensively analysed and interpreted under the subsequent sub-topic: colour scheme analysis and interpretation to bring to bear the nexus between characters and the kind of environments created for them in relation to the play's actions.

Essentially, knowledge of children's general perception of colour, the philosophical, and learned bases of their meaning making, were significantly noted, thereby making them partakers in the creative process. Naranjo-Bock (2011), describes this engagement as a critical part of design creation process which enables the designer to discover how to provide meaningful interactive design experiences for children within a specific age range. This exercise was very important for me to be able to deliver designs that would stimulate children's thoughts and also contribute to their psychological and physical needs within the context of the theatre experience.

4.3 Compositional Description and Analysis of Design

Every artwork or design is made of elements and principles that constitute what is seen. It is significant that the elements that make up the design be described and analysed to show how they were manipulated through the application of the principles of design. The work

therefore employs the formal approach in analysing the compositional elements and principles which form the visual language of the whole design. The formal approach to a design by Terry Barrett (2000: 26), projects how a piece of art is composed, coordinated and assembled visually. These formal elements include; line, colour, texture, shape, and form. Constructively, Parker et al (2003:38) also adjoin that “the principles of composition are the various ways one can understand how the elements of design are arranged in a cohesive manner in order to bring interest and meaning to a work of art”. These include unity, balance, harmony, proportion, variation, contrast, emphasis, and rhythm.

As children-oriented play, the set was composed of a conscious imitation of these elements to suit children’s artistic expectations. It was also to ground the set in the reality of children’s experience while enhancing their understanding of the play’s environment and actors’ actions. In view of the above, curved lines together with both horizontal and vertical lines were used to create curvilinear and rectilinear shapes respectfully which dominantly created the profile of one part of the set. Also employed were irregular lines to determine the irregular shapes and organic forms of the trees. These were consciously manipulated to convey the energy of children. In affirmation, Edu (personal communication, November 03, 2015), adjoins that children fall in love with rectilinear and curvilinear shapes and should be used to imitate their relationship with them as far as their understanding and recognisability are concerned. Before analysing the design, a brief description of the stage and the seating position of the audience are given to have a fair idea of the general outlook of the performance space and the relationship between the young audiences.

The actors played against a multiple set with five different locales; a house for **Shylyla**, a ruined house, a path, a block of houses, and a forest. Each of these locales was staged on an open ‘proscenium-like’ stage that measured in length of 15’ (feet) by a width of 33’ (feet)

and it appeared the audience viewed actions on stage as though from within a proscenium frame. The larger playing areas were the forest, path, and Jared's house because most of the actions happened against these locales.



Figure 11: Set design rendering of the house set design in perspective.

Source: Picture taken by Harriet M. A. Adjahoe

Shylyla's house was located at upstage left from the actors' perspective. It measured in height of 9' (feet) - 3" x 8' (feet) wide. The house was suggested through the composition of three basic lines; curved, angular, rectilinear lines. Slightly angular lines were used to create the shape of the roof impression (at the top) and the top of the cellar. This together with the rectilinear lines which run to the base defined the two-dimensional shape of this house. The arrangement of these lines appeared monotonous, however, contrast was introduced to break the rigidity through the use of the most apparent curvilinear lines. This effect created variation in the design. Gillette (2000:74), suggests that variation creates visual interest.

The use of curvilinear lines was also evident around the door area of the house. The door opening was 6' (feet); 5" (inches) from the base of the house. The outline of the door had a curved line that converged with the vertical line at an angle. A relatively reduced scale of the

shape of the door was repeated at its centre and this created emphasis on the door area as suggested through the use of yellow and blue hues. The rhythmic flow of the curved lines that run along the door as well as those that were joined below the window suggested a sense of movement. They were also intended to reinforce the psychological State of Shylyla. According to Parker et al (2003:28), “line is a path of action and therefore cannot help but take on a sense of direction and sometimes movement”. These lines helped to ground the set into the world of the young audience for effective exploration of the play’s environment.

Adjacent the door was a suggested squared window of 1’ (foot) 9” (inches) high and 2’ (feet) wide. I used both vertical and horizontal lines to create this geometric shape. It was proportionally segmented into four equal parts to create balance in the entire shape. Brewster & Shafer (2011), therefore posit that balance in design provides restfulness or stability. The simulated two-dimensional shape of the window was achieved through painting. To reinforce this impression, an extruding triangular slab bathed in blue hue was placed directly above it. This window together with the two-tiered stairs that stood equidistant to each other gave **Shylyla’s** house a three-dimensional appearance. This effect was consciously created to give the house a tactile appeal. These forms are articulated in Appiah’s three-dimensional concept which Jennifer Low (2015:11) cites that he characterised a three-dimensional object corresponding with the three-dimensional figure of an actor in order to create in the minds of the audience, the physical reality of the actors

The successive arrangement of the contrasting rectilinear, angular, and curvilinear lines blended in with one another to achieve harmony in the design. Curvilinear lines were used to generally denote the emotional quality of the play. The shapes were also significant in capturing the audiences’ attention to actions within this area and also provided them with variety in form.

Two feet (2') off the position of the block of houses was the path which covered from stage centre down to stage right. It connected from the block of houses to the forest. Curved lines were dominantly used for the path and this gave its meandering outlook. The soft characteristics of the lines also made the path take on an attitude and sense of movement as it could carry the audiences' eye along its edges.

The 'ruined' house was also cited at downstage left. From the top of the door to its base was 7' (feet) - 11" (inches) high x 7' (feet) - 5" (inches) wide. Curved lines were expansively employed together with few vertical lines to give the house its two-dimensional shape. Evidence of these lines were found at the door opening which was 5' (feet)- 5" (inches) high and 3' (feet)- wide. The vertical lines injected into the design gave the set its height. They helped reduce boredom and also added variety in its shape. The contrast between these two major lines created emphasis in the design. More so, they were to draw children's attention to the instability that characterised this locale. The broad curves used suggested that the house was once a stable home. The blue vertical lines used on the door area complemented the idea of a stark ruined house. They were also intended to heighten the visual interest of the design in a way that would connect the young audience to the emotional atmosphere of the play. The few jagged lines featured in black hue introduced into the design gave the impression of cracked walls with openings.

The block of houses stood upstage centre, about two feet (2') apart from **Shylyla's** house. It measured 6' (feet) x 8' (feet) in height and base respectively. This locale constituted thirteen (13) different simulated rectilinear and square shapes. It was generally composed of vertical and horizontal lines that gave the imitated houses a sense of height and restfulness respectively on all of the three levels. The proportion of each shape to other created the idea of proximity; a connection of mutual relationship between each of the

neighbours. Also, the proportion of the individual blocks would have produced a regular pattern but by varying the sizes they came together to create visual interest in the design. The varied sizes also created harmony in their order of arrangement. Accordingly, Gillette delineates; “harmony is achieved when all elements of the design fit together in an orderly whole” (2000:78). The mimicked windows and doors were however contrasted using both rectilinear and arched lines to also create variation and interest.

The approach of representational art through the use of geometric shapes towards the design was registered in this area to give the children a picture of what they observe around them in real life. The concept of representational art also shaped the visual composition of the forest locale through the use of irregular lines. It consisted of eight different kinds of movable trees of varied heights against a perspective painted backdrop of varied tree sizes. The forest was located on stage right from the actors’ perspective. The manipulation of foam in creating the two dead trees gave them their irregular forms and tactile feel. This made the trees take on a character that was different from the coconut trees, columnar, fruity, and branchless trees thereby complementing their outlook within the forest composition.

Curvy lines were used to simulate the other trees. These lines characterised the contoured shapes of the trees. For instance, repeated short curved lines gave the two coconut trees their shape and also created interest in movement and could cause an audience’s eye to move along them. Irregular lines were painted on the branchless trees to suggest the texture of tree barks. Variation was introduced into the shapes of the various trees to break boredom. The irregular lines also reflected the emotional stress felt by **Shylyla**, **Two Two** and **Blazerbird** in finding their way out to the ruined house.

The overlapping arrangements of the trees together with the painted ones as well as the thinner twigs used in total gave the forest a sense of depth and also rendered it three-

dimensional in form. In effect, the value pattern in the placement of the trees implies movement which can move audience's attention through its format.

The entire set was created through the use of dominantly curved, rectilinear, and irregular lines. The manipulation of these lines helped to render the design in geometric and irregular shapes and forms in ways that imitate objects in nature. These elements in a whole imitated the flare of children's forms in ways that they would be perceived as relating to their experiences and observations of things around them. They were also used to stimulate children towards an aesthetic and artistic theatre experience. Accordingly, the perception of imitation stands at the core of representational art; something signifies another thing in so far as the former resembles the latter in some significant way (Friggs & Hunter 2010). The arrangement of the total scenic units was such that each of them logically agreed with one another thereby subscribing to the conceptual core of the design.

4.3.1 Colour Scheme Analysis and Interpretation

As an aesthetic medium of communication, colour was used to unify all the other elements composed in the design which helped to enliven the concept of representational art for the set design for the play. Thus, the primacy of colour was intended to bring to the fore the other compositional content of the set so as to pay attention to what is descriptively evident. As earlier discussed in chapter two under the sub-heading, Appropriating Colours for Children, this part of the analysis therefore discusses how children's colour choices and their connotations were set apart to complement the set appropriately for the actors.



Figure 4.2: Colour rendering of Shylyla's house

Source: Picture taken by Harriet M. A. Adjahoe

Colour as the undercurrent of the play, created a strong connection between the main character, **Shylyla**, and her surroundings which was conveyed through the use of medium saturation of the colours. As earlier noted, the preferred colours for **Shylyla's** house were pink, yellow, purple, white, blue, and brown as seen in **Fig 4.2**. The researcher appropriated these colours according to the meanings children assigned to them and also to generally reflect the personality and condition of the main character, **Shylyla**, in relation to the whole action of the play. During the discussion of the play, respondents (children) characterised Shylyla as a little princess who loves colours hence the dominant preference of pink for the house. Eiseman (2006), has identified pink as representing the innocence, love, and sweetness of a child (girl). In line with these meanings, the pink hue was used to fill the expanse area of **Shylyla's** house to create emphasis on her character as well as her condition and also to evoke the idea that she was the princess of the home. It also echoed the love and compassion her parents had for her, while mirroring the emotional connection

between parents and the needs of their children.

A yellow hue was used to wash the door area. This made it appear larger while the purple hue that outlined it made the design cosier. According to the children, yellow means happiness, joy, gold, and brightness. Based on these meanings, the yellow hue was used to create an accent in the design; symbolising the limit of **Shylyla**'s joy and movement only to the house. The complementary nature of the yellow and purple hues created harmony in the design of which Parker et al (2003:189), assert that "complementary colours appear directly opposite each other on the colour wheel". Similarly, the balance achieved between the value of the warm yellow and the off-setting cool nature of the purple made it easier on the young audience while still maintaining the vibration between them. The contrast between these two colours contributed to the achievement of balance in the design. Their combination also made the design convenient and appealing to all sects of audience.

The children thought of blue as representing the sky, being lonely, and very soothing. It was used to proportionally segment the simulated window into four equal parts to achieve balance, of which Brewster and Shafer (2011:106) have posited that "balance in design provides restfulness or stability". Blue was generally identified as cool, calm, and represents the sky. It was extrusively used as a visual metaphor on the play to reflect **Shylyla**'s defrosted or cold situation. It echoed the emotional expressivity of **Shylyla**'s numbness which could only be brought alive by the colours of a blazing sunset as represented by the vibrant pink, yellow, purple and white hues. This therefore is in respect of the opinion shared by Funch (2000) that colour is an outlet of communication and children choose certain colours to express their emotions about a subject matter. Hence, the use of the blue hue to reflect the **Shylyla**'s cold disposition. The recurring white curved lines that run along the door as well as those that were joined below the window were intended to reinforce the

psychological state of **Shylyla**.

The white lines particularly symbolised the revival of hope in **Shylyla**'s unresponsive condition, as such reinforcing her innocence, and also presented her as a force around which the play's action evolved. The relationship between the advancing pink and yellow hues (warm) and the receding purple, white and blue (cool) came together to achieve harmony in the design, resonating what Funch (2000:118) suggested that "to achieve harmony in children's art is to increase their growing sense of confidence". The totality of these variant colours mimicked children's immersion in play while entrancing them with the magic of the sensuous appeal of colour to the whole performance experience.

Additionally, the colours also allowed the children to enter into the protagonist's psychological consciousness enabling them to empathise with her outer reality within the play's action.

In order not for the cellar to be easily identified by the soldiers in their search for **Blazerbird**, it was treated with a single note of contrasting brown hue. This helped to reflect the energetic colours of the house. It also embodied the length **Jared** and Lena could go to protect their daughter, **Shylyla**, from being separated again from her favourite friend, **Blazerbird**. Similarly, it foreshadowed the displacement of the entire family at the end as a result of the presence of **Blazerbird** in their home. In spite of these, it re-emphasises the house as symbolising the emotions and stability that are achieved in the house; a place where basic needs of children are significantly pursued.

In an effort to give a representation for the abode of the neighbours, a select palette preferred by the children was expanded through mixing and blending. The assemblage of these different colours formed the block of houses as seen in **fig.4.3**. The proportion of each shape to other created the idea of proximity; a connection of mutual relationship

between each of the neighbours. The attitude of each shape to another was quite rigid and monotonous; however, the variation of colours introduced helped to express them in harmony. The harmony achieved was intended to avoid a visual experience that was so bland, and rather to engage the children so as to create in them a sense of order and beauty in the design. Block and Wolf (2013), have suggested that harmony in a design brings order to disorder in order to sort unrelated objects into groups that have sequential relationships.

The individual colours and their arrangement also formed a collage image which could move the children's eyes over the variety of colours. The block of houses connotes the value of the environment in influencing children's perception of it as a social hub. They together became a source of representation to the children; which means that each of the neighbours had a home among the block of houses. This is in consonance with what Waddell (2014), further said; children often translate their experiences in a much more impressive way than adults do. There is a level of agreement between the earlier submission and Waddell's which see representational art as the convenient means of communicating easily to children. Hence, Funch (2000) adjoin that art is created to convey certain meanings, harbouring values that transcend their material base.

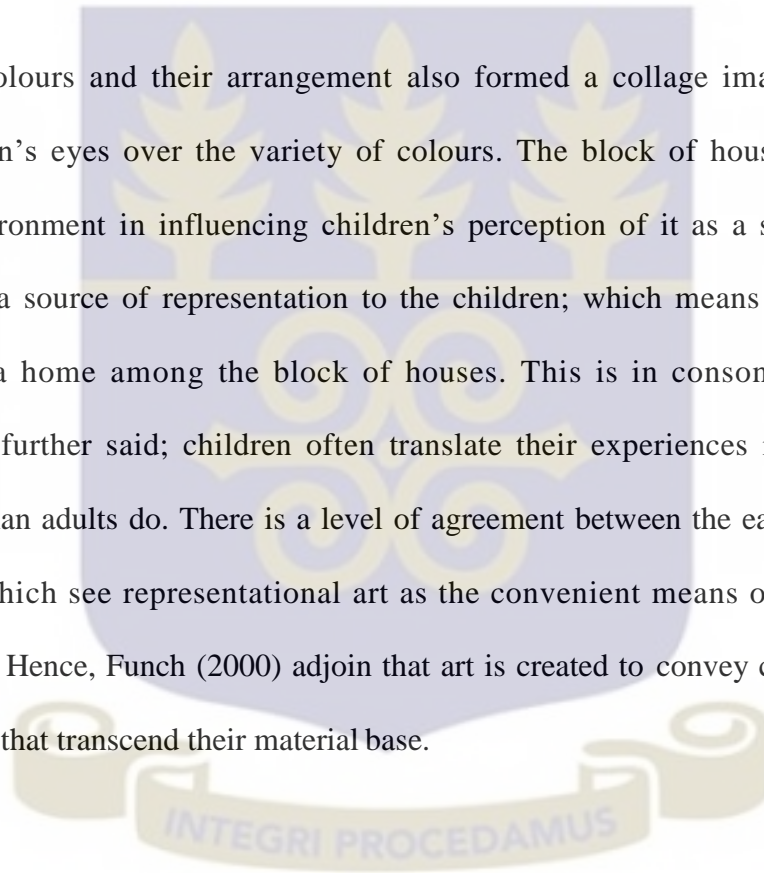




Figure 4.3: Colour rendering of the simulated block of houses.

Source: Picture taken by Harriet M. A. Adjahoe

The colours that characterised the ruined house were orange, orange-red, blue, white, and black. The orange-red and orange hues are analogous, creating a harmonious colour palette which is aesthetically pleasing to the eyes. However, the blue stripes were introduced to complement the orange hue at the door area. One would expect a ruined house to have darker values of hues, intriguingly, it was suggested by some of the children that perhaps the house was once beautiful before being ruined. This was therefore suggested through the colours as seen in **fig.4.4**.

The blue stripes projected the idea of confusion that had beset the occupants of the house as

a result of the unrest caused by the loss of the king's blazerbird. Based on the agreement of featuring the ruined house in orange and white, the thick jagged lines were characterised in black instead, which still spoke loudly and reinforced the effect of a ruined house. Its presence in the harmonious colours created contrast which helped to achieve interest in the design since it did not fit in its environment. It was also intended to evoke a purposeful effect; representing cracks and openings in the walls of the house denoting a house unsafe to live in. The white hue was used to break the orange hue from the red orange to create variation. It also contrasted with the black hue to create emphasis in the design while connoting the idea of a once stabilised home, now desolate by war, hence, rendering its inhabitants homeless.



Figure 4.4: Colour rendering of the ruined house

Source: Picture taken by Ebenezer K. Asime

The path was produced in brown and a darker value of green to make it appear as the ground. The contrast introduced into the colour treatment of the path was almost

unnoticeable; it was not sharp so as to make the path blend in with the colour composition of the forest. Green according to the children symbolises nature, vegetation while brown means nature. The darker green hue was used in patches to give the impression of a once grassy path that had been frequently trodden. This was evident with the frequent meetings of the neighbours' along the path to give comments on the story. It depicts the healthy relationship that existed among the neighbours, while the brown hue stood for the bond that existed between them. For instance, with recourse to the play's actions, the three neighbours met along the path to collect fruits, leaves, and flowers to help reduce the pains of Lena's child delivery. Intrinsically, both the green and brown hues connote the healing effect that the environment has on man and his surroundings.



Figure 4.5: The forest rendered in colour

Source: Picture taken by Isaac Odamptey

The forest theme was treated with darker values of the hues; black, brown, green and higher value of few other hues. As common elements of nature, the trees were emphasised

through their colour treatment to make them child friendly. Green was dominantly used here to depict the idea of a forest, and thereby subscribed it to the representational concept for the design. It also contributed to grounding the play in a believable environment for the children because they are easily stimulated by recognizable elements that they can relate with of which trees form part. This is also shared in the article, *Designing Websites for kids: Trends and Best Practices* by Lazaris (November 27, 2009) who has expressed the idea that children's experiences in life lie in nature; they are mostly familiar with natural elements like trees, water, and animals and designers can simplify these obvious elements to appeal to their visual experience. The two huge dead trees were determined by a darker value of brown to give the impression of lifeless trees. A similar value of green was also used on some of their parts to inject some sort of life into them because of the association green has with life. Green, black, and brown hues were arbitrarily applied to the trunk of the coconut trees, the columnar, fruity, and branchless trees to create aesthetics in the design.

A lighter value of grey hue was also used to simulate the impression of tree barks on the branchless trees thereby making their surfaces appear tactile in feel. Their arbitrariness created aesthetics in the design. It also expressed children's relationship with using colours arbitrarily to make meaning. In this vein, Stewart (2008) has suggested that iconic motives of arbitrary colours in designs are; to facilitate learning, for representation, and also for children's self-expression. In this regard, the green hue together with the brown and black were applied arbitrarily to overemphasise the designs, create variety, and also to confine them to the representational concept for children. The repetitive features of these colours also related the various parts of the design to one another in order to heighten the essence of harmony and unity among them. These colours in effect created focus and interest in the design for children and also rendered the forest a sense of depth which made the image visually appealing and dynamic as seen in **fig.4.5**.

The outlook of the forest in general is hope-filled, furthering the idea of Jared as the focal point of bringing hope to his daughter. It also emphasised his responsibility as a father, thereby heightening his risk of venturing into this forest as against the king's orders. His encounter in the forest is also an exhibition of a daring courage of a father and a strong sensation of a man who will do anything to keep his family safe.

The colours preferred and their constructed meanings by the children were expressively used for the set to show the mutual relationship that exists between the characters and the play's environment. They helped to achieve stimulation and to symbolically represent the nature of people involved in the theatre experience. The colours fell within the children's schema and that assisted in influencing their attention so as to understand the relationship between characters and their environment. As seen in **fig.4.1**, the entire colour composition was produced to give a sense of subtle gradation; from the bright colours that characterised the block of houses, the ruined house, and **Shylyla's** house to the lower value colours of the forest. The composition also created balance in the design while inducing a feeling of movement from one end of the stage to another.

The colours helped to reveal the other related elements like the lines, shapes and form in their geometric manner. They further prepared the ambience for the young audience before they encountered the actors; creating an intimate atmosphere for their enjoyment of the performance. The colours used demonstrated their interrelation with the significance of the colours of the feathers in the life of the main character, **Shylyla**. Colour served a therapeutic role in reviving the unresponsive condition of the little girl; a true reflection of the healing effect of colours on children in creating an aesthetically appealing environment for their scenic experience.

4.4 Mood and Colour

How colour is used to identify the various components forming the space is critical in determining the mood of such space. According to Gillette (2000:106) “mood is the dominant emotional quality of a production”. The mood of any play could be expressed in its interrelationship of the colour scheme used. Metaphorically, colour was generally used to represent the mood of each of the locale. The play had a general intense sombre emotional tone, however, the set designer decided to reduce its tension by emphasising on the cartoon-like application of colours in the set. This therefore created a sober feeling but with vibrant energy in the visual stage composition before the young audience. For instance, **Shylyla’s** house evoked an upbeat and joyful mood which kept with the emotional flow of the actions whereas the forest reflected a serious and sad mood anytime Jared went into it. The forest also evoked a feeling of loneliness and the struggle one has to go through in finding his or her way out of it. This locale connected the audience to the actors as their emotions and imaginations were carried along with the actor to be able to sympathise with him. The colour tones of the forest also made a comment on Shylyla’s unresponsive mood; while presenting itself as possessing the power to heal her numbness. In effect, the colours helped to determine the emotional and psychological state of the play’s environment.

4.5 Collaboration among the Design Elements: Set, Costume, and Light.

4.5.1 Set and Costume

Costumes contributed significantly in bringing out the colours of the set for an effective performance. In realising this, the compositional arrangement of the colours was discussed with the costume designer after the colour scheme for the set was drawn. This was to ensure a balance between the colours of the costumes she had prescribed for each of the actors and that of the set. Some colours of the costumes conflicted with the colours in the

set; in view of this, such costumes were changed to ensure a beautiful balance between the set and the costumes.

The actors wore the costumes throughout the two days of mock rehearsals and for the technical dress rehearsal night. The colour mixture between the set, costumes, and the ones emitted from light helped me to have a picture of what the final product would be. This exercise also helped to blend the colours of costumes with the set which helped to achieve balance.

4.5.2 Set and Light

An effective set design partnered with a great lighting design helps audiences to focus on the actors within the scenic space. This helps them to perceive and hear the play better by directing them where to look and who to listen to. However, the role of costume in creating balance with the set, the designer depended enormously on light in revealing the desired colours of the set. Parker et al (2008) holds that scenic designer's work becomes visible under the illumination of light, a fundamental requirement for making the image visible to the audience. This helped to create the ambience that was significant for the various locales to also tell the story. In order to achieve this, a meeting was held with the lighting designer to discuss the colour scheme concept and the colour composition for each locale.

After several deliberations and meetings, she suggested the use of LED Red Green Blue (RGB) lights. The choice was that these lights help with easy colour mixing when a particular scene needs specific lighting effect. It was also to help enhance the colours of the set and better reinforce the mood intended for the design to achieve towards the play. Due to the time allocated for the rehearsals, the designer could rehearse with the lights only on the technical dress rehearsal night. A run through of the performance was done to check for

the amount of light distributed and intensity needed for each of the scenes. This is to say that the distributed light at each of the locales independently enhanced the contributive role of the set in telling the story. For instance, the emitted green textured light on the forest scene enhanced its dull and heavy atmosphere as a result of its composition.

Similarly, the soft amber light used to **Shylyla**'s house reflected the brightness of the colours and also enhanced the undercunning meaning of the little girl's unresponsive situation. Significantly, the total distribution of light on the set aided in bringing out the aesthetics of the entire set up and also projected the overall mood and atmosphere of the play which heightened the psychological and emotional flow of the play. The light also helped young audience to be able to visualise the pictorial composition of each of the locales. Despite the stimulation created by light it was not without some challenges; the limited number of lighting instruments posed a challenge to the play. This caused visual uneasiness as the audiences' focus on the set and the actions against it was not often sustained as a result of the swift movement of the light.

4.6 Audience Responses to Colours of the Set

On March 18, 2016, after the production had come to an end at 7.30pm, it was expedient to seek some responses from the children to find out about their impression and level of appreciation of the colour input. An exercise in this light was significant for me to assess the significance of the research and also to ascertain the objectives that it set out to achieve. Individual experiences of colours depend on how one perceives a phenomenon, however, amidst this subjectivity, there may be moments of common reactions to such colour experiences. Schonmann (2011:51) asserts that "we can observe how differently each individual responds to a theatrical performance...yet there are times when almost all the spectators react alike". That was the case of the young audiences who shared similar

experiences with the colours yet wrapped in different expressions. The responses were collected from some children who participated in the discussion process and those who did not.

There were some immediate responses that were gathered right after the performance and they were generally associated with the beauty in the arrangement of scenic units and colours on stage. This created some form of stimulation in the children because their affinity with the recognisable elements on stage made it easier for them to relate with the performance. This is a significant observation that children's spatial arrangement contributes a lot to their physical and cognitive development. This point reinforces the earlier assertion by Stanković & Stojić that "constructed elements of the space can support children and help to provoke processes which lead towards improvement" (2007:72). Their submissions also favourably reflected their admiration for the composition of the bright and contrasting colours on stage. To the children, the colours created interest and that enhanced their concentration span which also assisted them in understanding the flow of the play's actions.

The children also expressed how the colours gave them a direct connection with each of the scenic units; they could easily identify the individual locales based on the colours and how they were arranged. These colour arrangements are in agreement with the idea that such features indicate the aesthetical judgement of children based on the simplicity, compositional, and unambiguous spatial relations of the scenic units, (Feeney & Moravcik, 1987). This in a way contributes to the development of children's aesthetic needs while in the theatre. On another level, others also realised that the colours directed the actors' actions on stage which to them iconised each of the scenic units and that encouraged the actors movement from one place of colour composition to another in order to make their actions complete.

Following their experience with the variety of colours in the set, most of the children also expressed their desire to see or witness again a performance with similar composition of variety of colours since that gives them a lot to recall the performance for its outlook and its effect on them. This is in reason with Lascurian's claim that "children are enamored by variety of colours" (Lascurian, October 08, 2015). It was further noted that the colours served as sources for their emotional and cognitive satisfaction, allowing them to assume into the play's psychological connection. For instance, the colour combination of **Shylyla's** house evoked a feeling of sympathy towards her personality; which was reflective of a sad moment any of them may have experienced.

Conversely with the arbitrary application of colours, three of the young audiences did not like them because they did not construct what they saw look real. To them the use of a colour like red did not make the forest look real because that evoked a sense of danger and fear. Interestingly, they shared that it made the forest look scary, symbolic of how **Blazerbird** was killed over there. Some of the audience members who were not part of the discussion reacted differently to some of the colours based on their cultural background; an indication of the role of culture in colour meaning making.

The architectural details of the entire set were greatly admired because it flowed with their experiences and receptive abilities. These became another source of reference which Weincek (2009), has suggested that designers for children's theatre need to create a reference point that a young audience can easily relate to.

From the observation of others, the set was very beautiful and suitable for the play, however, they suggested that the arrangement in the positions of the scenic units would have been best if the forest had been placed at the centre since most of the actions happened there. Some also complemented the parallel intents of the play and the set

design because just as the play, *Feathers*, deals with the significance of colours in the life of the main character, so does the crux of the study explores colours in set design for children.

In essence, it was deciphered that however the diverse expressions used by children, there were common responses that were socially and culturally connected which helped to stimulate the audience. The gathered responses from the children further demonstrated that the colours they selected were consciously appropriated by the designer in a way to encourage their understanding and appreciation of the performance. Their responses signify that since the colour palette was from their own construct, the designer was able to create interesting designs that immersed them into the performance space, thereby connecting their emotions with the play's environment.

The collected responses reflected the contributive role of colour towards children's aesthetic, psychological and physical development. Similarly, children's admiration for the elements also reaffirmed Piaget's concept of concrete operations and formal operations; where children are receptive to and think logically about concrete and abstract objects within their schema. In all, colour postures children as supremely masterful of the ideal process of choosing colours which helped to serve the play's environment accordingly for them. This in a way encourages designers to compose designs that regard children as co-composers of their own scenic experience in relation to any theatrical performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overview

This final chapter provides the summary of the entire study. It also presents the challenges encountered during the research, the major findings of the research, the conclusion and recommendations.

5.2 Summary

Scenic design employs a number of elements towards the enhancement of the aesthetic and artistic experience of Children's Theatre. It was against this background that I decided to explore extensively the element, colour, as a nucleus for communicating the complementary role of scenic design for Philip Ridley's play, *Feathers*, for children. The study has provided the background to the study which helped to place the exploration of colours for children within the context of Children's Theatre. This was to measure it up with reference to the research problem, its objectives and questions that underscored the research.

Literature has been reviewed on the concept of who a child is. This significantly helped to place Children's Theatre through the lenses of Schonmann and the role of set design in Children's Theatre within a scope. An attempt has been made to discuss set design for Children's Theatre as a critical spatial need for children towards their physical and cognitive development. With Weincek's guide to set and costume design for young audience, characteristics of set design for Children's Theatre have also been considered. The Munsell Colour Theory which is based on a three-dimensional model; hue, chroma, and value model has been discussed. Colour perception, children and colour, appropriating colours for

children, and the impact of colour in set design on children have also been reviewed.

The objective of the study was to seek through scenic exploration to reawaken colour consciousness within children for an effective theatre experience as regards the play, *Feathers*. This intent has been achieved through the methodology adopted for the study. It employed the qualitative research design under which focus group discussion has been used to collect data regarding children's colour preferences for designing the set for the play, *Feathers*. In view of this, children within the age brackets of eight and thirteen (8- 13) years were involved in the discussion. This helped to adopt basic questions which made the discussion easier and friendly to deal with. In this essence, a polychrome colour scheme was drawn based on the preferences and the meanings the children assign to the colours, and this also helped with the application of colours accordingly to achieve the environmental expressivity of the play.

Similarly, under the aegis of qualitative research design, the artistic method was employed towards achieving the individual designs for the set. The artistic liberty afforded by this method enabled me to rely highly on my experiential value to produce designs that distinctively lean towards the performance. Again, in cognisance of this method, the design process as outlined by Michael Gillette (2000), a holistic, structural approach guided me through the practical process to ensure that every aspect of the design was treated in detail. Representational art concept, as defined by Block and Wolf (2013) was also employed; a vehicle that captured children's ideas, perspectives and experiences through the set designs. This concept further enabled me to adopt other visual elements which complemented the colour scheme. More so, it projected the idea of children's space which helped to sustain the attention of the young audience.

The data gleaned from the focus group discussion has been presented and analysed. The findings on colour which highly informed the colour scheme have been discussed in chapter three. The colours were effectively applied to the set design for the play, Feathers, thereby creating an effective theatre experience for children. The formalistic approach has been efficiently employed in analysing and interpreting the application of colours in the design. The responses from the young audiences have also been analysed. They reflected the powerful role of colour as a communicative tool that enhanced their understanding and appreciation of the play's message. The responses have also proved colour as a contributing element that can improve the aesthetic experiences of Children's Theatre.

Partnership with light allowed for effective shift from one location to another without any set changes. It also helped to achieve the spatial differences between the individual scenic units. A balance in the colours of costumes further helped to achieve the desired colour impression of the set.

5.2.1 Challenges

The height of the entire research was not attained without encountering some challenges. One key challenge was sourcing literature that discusses specific characteristics of set design for children's theatre. Also of plight was securing literary materials on colour appropriation in design.

One of the major challenges encountered during the construction process was human resource to complement my efforts due to the bulky nature of materials used. I relied on the help of some colleagues who could be available only on weekends. In view of this I did most of the work alone which affected me health wise.

Budget for securing tools and materials for the construction of the set was highly blighted. Unfortunately, the cost for most of the materials had been increased few weeks after the budget was drawn and this meant spending more than initially planned.

Another big challenge encountered was getting the desired colours from the market. This was due to the unavailability of some colours being obtained in their actual value among the Ghanaian collections of paints. Nevertheless, this was more than partly achieved with the help of some paints which came in smaller tubes. This also required extra budget which contributed to the deficiency of financing.

A mishap encountered was the performance space. However open it was without sightlines, the windy nature of the environment contributed to some of the scenic units breaking off and others losing their strength. Nonetheless, these were later worked on a day prior to the performance as well as on the final day in order to maintain their strength so as to withstand the pressure from the wind.

5.2.2 Findings

- Children have meanings to colours that may be different from the adult construct and this can be used in such capacity to create interactive designs for them. This helps to customise a play's performance space for their enjoyment and appreciation.
- The colour compositions for each locale for the play helped to code it with a particular mood.
- Colour is significant for creating a connection between children and their understanding of the play's characters and their environment.
- Children are able to symbolise and relate well with colours borne from their learned experiences and their cultural background.

- The use of variety of colours helps children to recall how the set design for the play is visually portrayed. This in a way enhances their visual storytelling or narration.
- Compared with children who can see and differentiate between colours clearly, this research may not serve well for children with colour blindness defect. This could be an area of interest for any future research.

5.3 Conclusion

This study has effectively explored colour from the perspective of children which helped to develop colour content for the set design for the play, *Feathers*. The colours were effectively and purposefully employed which engendered varied aesthetic appeal, psychological and physiological responses in the young audience. Achieving these through the design in a way contributes to the development of children's physical and aesthetic needs. Fundamentally, a consideration of the target audience for a particular production as far as possible helps one to create a set that is meaningful, interactive, and interpretable. The connotations that children link with colours help to create designs that have profound impact on audiences and can also elicit their stronger comprehension of a play. It also reflects set design as contributing to the artistic and aesthetic function of Children's Theatre.

5.4 Recommendations

Children have special needs at every level of their development and it is significant that set designers for Children's Theatre should acquire knowledge of the age brackets of children involved, both performers and audience alike to be able to create designs that are commensurable with the ages of the children involved. This will help to match their cognitive constructs with the visual interpretations they make of the scenic environment.

Facilitators and designers of Children's Theatre should involve children on colour discourse

within the context of any performance. Children's engagement on the subject of colour helps designers to understand their colour preferences and the connotations they link with colours in order to create designs that are fluid with their interactions. This helps to use colour appropriately in designs thereby enhancing their visual and emotional interactions that bring out their inner feelings and thoughts. It also demonstrates an increasing confidence that children's ideas, their inner spirits, and concerns are considered seriously.

□Set design for any Children's Theatre must be considered as children's spatial need to be able to satisfy it within the thrust of their theatrical experience. This ensures practical convenience for actors regarding their movement within adequate floor plans and the placement of entrances and exits towards a smooth flow of the performance. Awareness of this spatial understanding provides children with the ability to encode spatial cues which enhance their visual directions and also boost their overall interactions within the performance space. It further facilitates the young audiences' exploration of the environment by linking it with the situations of actors within the play's actions.

Set design should be treated as a contributive factor for the complete growth of children. Designers have to make sure the treatment of elements is consciously done to enhance the messages in a play but not to merely use them. Everything in the environment should connect with their experiences. This will advance their reflective impact on conserving any theatrical experience for their physical, cognitive, and aesthetic development.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Pictures and Illustrations

The children's colour choices for the set design for the play, *Feathers*, and their meanings

	Pink- Beauty, love, princess,
	Blue- Sky, peace, cold
	Red- Blood, fire, danger, funeral, love, fear
	White- Victory, peace, clean, innocent.
	Green- Nature, vegetation
	Orange- Happiness, brightness, beauty
	Purple- Beautiful, happiness, princess
	Yellow- Happiness, joy, brightness, gold.
	Black- Sadness, funeral, death, war, fear
	Brown- Earth, funeral, sadness

ILLUSTRATIONS OF SET DESIGN



The set designer and her assistants at work

Source: Pictures taken by Akua A. Afriyie



The set designer painting the block of houses and the columnar tree

Source: Pictures taken by Harriet M. A. Adjahoe



The branchless trees, coconut trees and the huge dead trees undergoing construction

Source: Pictures taken by Akua A. Afriyie



The columnar tree and the dead tree (behind)

The fruity tree

Source: Pictures taken by Frederick Quansah



Colour renderings of branchless trees and the dead trees (behind)

Source: Pictures taken by Frederick Quansah



The set designer setting up the stage

Source: Picture taken by Frederick Quansah



The set designer and her assistant setting up the stage

Source: Picture taken by Ebenezer K. Asim



The individual set units and their colour swatches

Source: Pictures generated by Comfort Effina-Williams



The entire set in perspective

Source: Picture taken by Ebenezer K. Asime



The entire set under emitted light in perspective.

Source: Picture taken by Isaac Odamptey



A computer-generated model of the colour rendering of the set.

Source: Picture generated by Nash Neequaye



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HEADMASTER, SOLID ROCK FOUNDATION SCHOOL MS. ELIZABETH A. HAZEL

MS. EUNICE B. HAZEL

STAFF OF SOLID ROCK FOUNDATION SCHOOL ROBERT NIMAKO BREFO

MAGARET LAMPTEY

Dept. of Theatre Arts, UG
IN COLLABORATION WITH
Solid Rock Foundation School
PRESENTS

Phillip Ridley's Play
FEATHERS
Directed by Ebenezer K. Asime

An MFA Project
(Scenic Design)

Date:	Venue:	Time:
18th March, 2016	Solid Rock Foundation School Annex At Agboba	6:00 pm (Sharp)

ADMISSION IS FREE!

INTEGRI PROCIDA
Come & Experience A Children's Theatre Amidst COLOURS!

Synopsis

A beautiful girl, Shylyla, remains numb after suffering a scare from her mother's disappointed suitor. Nothing could restore her frozen condition except the feather of a blazing sunset. How would she survive without the presence of this colourful feather?

CAST

RACHAEL ETSIWAH

NORA NORTEY

ABIGAIL KUMI

JOHN HOUPER

JOHN E. YEMPEW

HALIMATU ABUBAKARI

SANDRA BANFRO

DAISY T. FORSON

CALDORA AGODJOR

VERONICA ADWOA

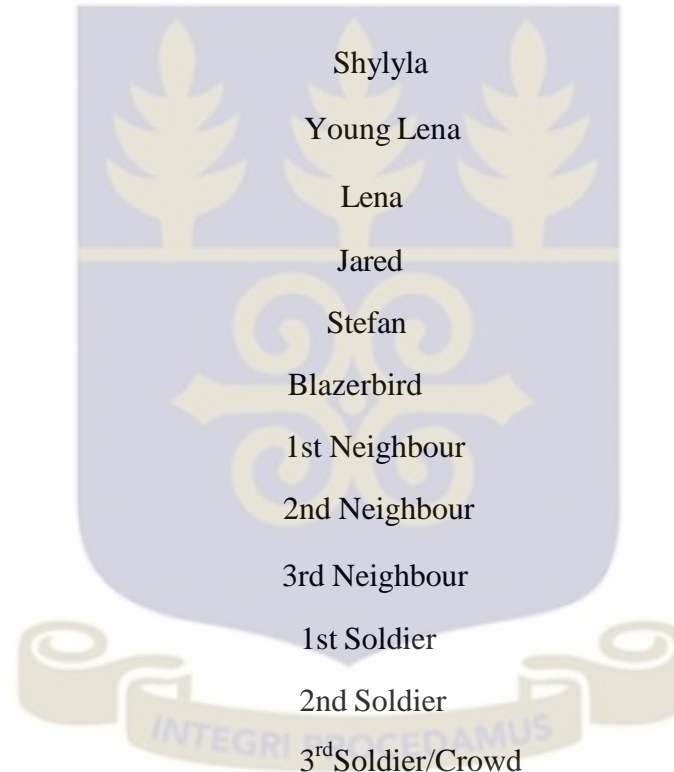
ENOCH TEKPER

GAD KONADU

RICHMOND MWINIE

AKOTO M. SAMUEL

EMMANUEL NSIAH



Shylyla

Young Lena

Lena

Jared

Stefan

Blazerbird

1st Neighbour

2nd Neighbour

3rd Neighbour

1st Soldier

2nd Soldier

3rd Soldier/Crowd

1st Youth

Town Crier/2nd Youth

Two Two

SET DESIGNER

Comfort Effina-Williams

DIRECTOR

Ebenezer K. Asime

Wendy Akusika Mamiya

TECHNICAL CREW

Harriet A. Adjahoe

Alex K. Appiah

Frederick Appiah

Lydia M. Dotsey

SOUND

Mr. Oppong

Frederick Appiah

COSTUME DESIGNER

LIGHT

Richard Oppong

SUPERVISORS

Dr. Regina Kwakye-Oppong

Mr Sandy Arkhurst

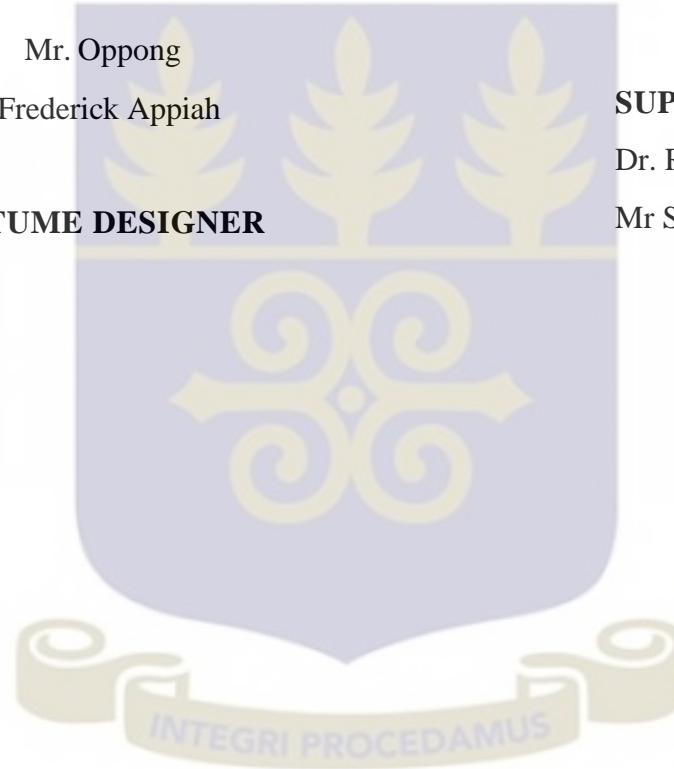
CHOREOGRAPHER

Daniel Anyim

PROTOCOL

Akua K. Afriyie

Brenda Odoi



Appendix B: Interviews and Discussion Guide

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION (INTERVIEWS)

Sandy Arkhurst – Lecturer, School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana. (23 November, 2015)

Johnson Edu- Lecturer, University of Education, Winneba & University of Cape Coast. (November 03, 2015)

Tagoe Vincent- Head, Visual Arts Department, University of Ghana Basic School, Legon.(October12, 2015)



APPENDIX B: INTERVIEWS AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

AN INFORMAL FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE ON COLOURS 18/2/16

Question: What do you understand about colours? What is your general perception of colours?

Question: How do you experience colours within your environment?

Question: What are your favourite colours? How do these colours influence your choice of items?

Question: What colours do you dislike? How do you feel when you encounter these colours?

Question: How do you understand the play, Feathers? What is the nature of the characters in the play?

Question: What colours would you choose to show the relationship between the characters and their environment?

Question: What colours would you prefer for the various scenes? What are the meanings of the colours you have chosen?

