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Haunted Houses: A Directorial Exploration of Expressionism

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Jose Martinez-Chavarria
LHC Thesis Abstract
March 20, 2017

Haunted Houses: A Directorial Exploration of Expressionism

The purpose of “Haunted Houses: A Directorial Exploration of Expressions” is to demonstrate the effectiveness of my directorial skills in staging a drama on stage with both an objective and subjective reality. The play *Haunted Houses* by Kathryn Schultz-Miller served as the chosen work whose staging would implement the common expressionist staging strategies of abstraction, simple and flexible blocking, nonrealistic lighting and a strong emphasis on visuals and stage images. The following thesis provides a detail directorial book containing the blocking, scenery, props and creative concepts used in this original production that allows it to be recreated if desired. A research paper that provides the origin of the Expressionist art movement and its influence in theatre artists is also included. *Haunted Houses* contains two challenges: smoothly alternating scenes with an objective reality to scenes with a subjective reality and portraying 18 characters by only using four actors. The transitions of realities was effectively approached with the use of fabric as a main element of the world of the play. Fabric served to highlight the abstraction and facilitate the transitions of settings as it was used in many ways. The multiple portrayal of characters by one single actor was effectively approached by heavy characterization rehearsal, focusing on defining physicalities and voice placement for each persona. Actors were able to increase familiarity and produce a more impactful performance.