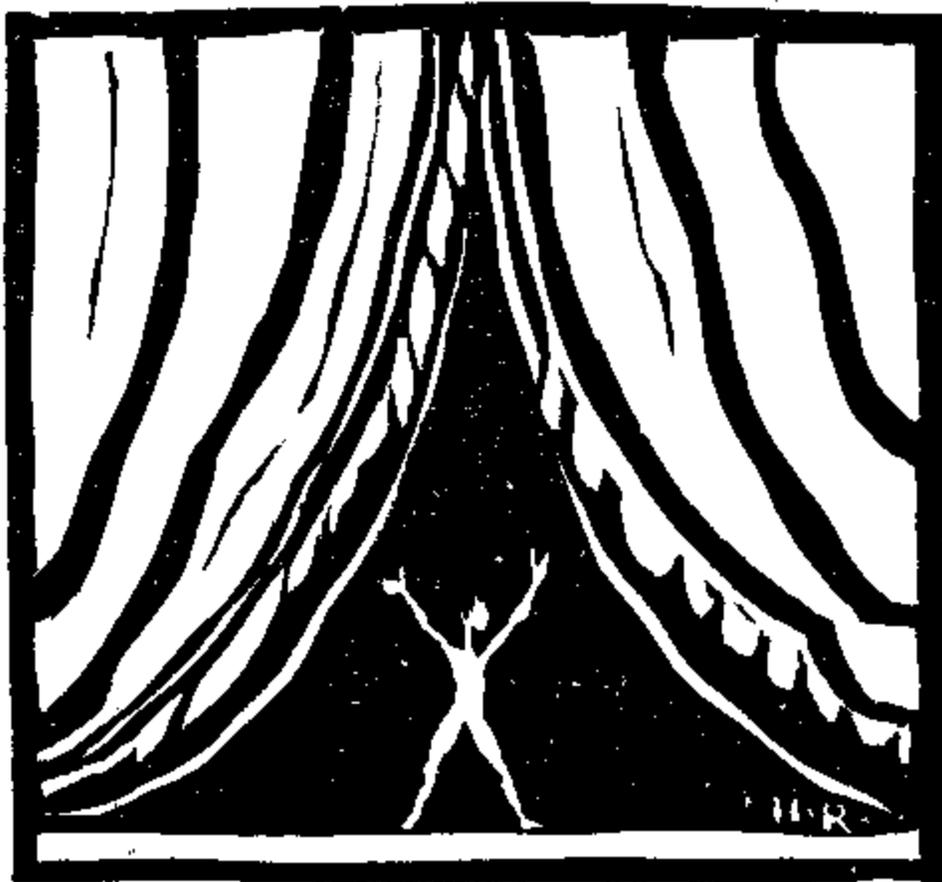


HERMAN ROSSE



DESIGNS FOR THEATRE

Chapin Library • Williams College
May - September 2005

Herman (Hermann) Rosse, born in the Netherlands in January 1887, studied architecture and design at the Royal College of Art, London, and after a period of travel in Asia also attended Stanford University, where he earned his B.A. From 1911 to 1913 he produced most of the decorative interior designs – including paintings, stained glass, tiles, and marquetry – for the Peace Palace at The Hague; and while working there he met his future wife, Sophia Helena Luyt (1891–1982), a landscape architect who was responsible for the design of the formal gardens. Together they moved to California, where Rosse was commissioned to design decorations for the Netherlands pavilion at the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco. There he also made his first set and costume designs for theatre. In 1918 he moved to Illinois, where he had accepted an appointment to head the Design Department of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. In addition to teaching, he took private commissions for interiors, fabric design, and book illustrations, and made further designs for the stage in conjunction with Ben Hecht, Kenneth Macgowan, the Goodman Theater, and Mary Garden’s Chicago Grand Opera.

In 1923 Rosse moved with his family to New City in Rockland County, New York. He was already familiar with the New York theatre world, and now became more closely involved with drama, vaudeville, and musicals. In 1929 he went to Hollywood as Art Director of John Murray Anderson’s film *King of Jazz*, starring Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra, for which Rosse’s imaginative and technically innovative designs earned him the Academy Award for Art Direction (now in the Chapin Library).

For the next several years he continued to design for films, including the classics *Frankenstein* and *The Emperor Jones*, but also worked in theatre in London and the Netherlands, taught as the Professor of Decorative Art at the Technische Hoogeschool in Delft, and designed Dutch pavilions at world’s fairs in Brussels, Paris, and New York.

In 1948 Rosse was appointed Resident Stage Designer at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, New Jersey. He worked there for a dozen years, while also editing *Chapter One*, the newsletter of the Greater New York chapter of the American National

Theatre and Academy (ANTA). In 1949 he won a competition to design the Tony Award, the silver prototype of which is in the Chapin Library. Rosse died in Nyack, New York in April 1965.

Since 1988 members of the Rosse family have donated books, manuscripts, paintings, drawings, prints, plans, photographs, documents, and memorabilia concerning the work of Herman and Helena Rosse. The present exhibition features selected of items from this important archive concerned with Rosse’s designs for theatre: not only set and costume designs, but concepts and proposals for the design of theatres themselves. The accompanying labels, reproduced in this handlist as they appear in the exhibition, have been drawn primarily from the words of Herman Rosse himself, and from those of his contemporaries.

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Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

San Francisco Season of Modern Drama, September Nineteen Seventeen

Stenciled broadsheets
Lettering by Herman Rosse

Printed brochure, with expanded text
Two variant readings, prepared by
Herman Rosse and the Committee

Printed admission ticket for the first benefit
entertainment, at the St. Francis Hotel,
May 1, 1917
Design and lettering by Herman Rosse

Herman Rosse’s first significant involvement in American theatre came in San Francisco, the then recently rebuilt City on the Hill bubbling in all ways economic and cultural. It had achieved considerable notoriety by successfully staging the vast Panama-Pacific International Exhibition in 1915, for which Rosse contributed the interior design and exhibit presentations for the large Netherlands pavilion, which emphasized the Dutch colonial heritage in Southeast Asia.

Still needing to care for only one child (of an eventual nine), Rosse and his wife Helena were able to participate in the avant-garde artist communities of Palo Alto and San Francisco which had embraced the “Little Theatre” movement then flourishing across America.

Rosse became something of an apologist for the San Francisco Little Theatre, and helped to organize a series of short plays, presented in quick succession, for which the ticket represents a kick-off event. As expressed in Rosse’s script on two related broad-sheets:

For a perfect little building, one needs a considerable amount of money; to obtain money one has to show that there is a sufficient amount of interest in the new drama to warrant the expenditure; but to find out if the interest exists, one has to produce the new drama under the proper conditions – and so on, ad infinitum.

It is in an attempt to break this magic circle that Mr. Richard Ordynski and Mr. Hermann Rosse formed the plan of producing a short season of artistic modern drama during September. This season could be compared in certain ways with the grand-opera season as San Franciscans know it. It would be a Four-week season of American and foreign drama of indisputable artistic interest. The success of this season would be a gauge by which to measure the support on which a permanent theatre devoted to the same ideals could count.

The brochure notes that “the artistic Designing of Scenery and costuming” for the 1917 Season of Modern Drama “will be in Charge of Mr. Hermann Rosse, who came to this City on a Commission by the Netherlands Government to design the Decoration of the Holland Section at the P.P.I.E. [Panama-Pacific International Exposition]. Mr. Rosse is known through his decorative Work in the Peace Palace at The Hague.”

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Designs for an Art Theatre, Palo Alto, California

Three sheets (of 12), ink, pencil, and watercolor, ca. 1915–1920

The Bay Area needing a permanent facility for their Little Art Theatre productions and allied activities, Rosse, the architect-member of this circle, submitted designs. An “art theatre” was built and opened at 1757 Bush Street in 1918, named The Players Theatre, serving also as home of The Players Club and Guild till 1928. Since the building is no longer standing, we have not been able to determine how much of Rosse’s scheme was incorporated into it.

It is clear that Rosse conceived the building to be more than a functioning small theatre. He incorporated features found also in the Chicago Little Theatre operated by the legendary Maurice Browne (see the open page “Other Activities” of the report of their 1914–15 season also displayed here, from Herman Rosse’s personal library).

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Designs for the Oriental Theatre, Detroit, Michigan

Related correspondence between P. Lester Landis and Herman Rosse November 26, 1926 and March 12, 1927

Photostatic copies of drawings

The Oriental Theatre opened in downtown Detroit late in 1927; it later became the RKO Downtown, and was demolished in 1950. Both ends of the large lobby area contained huge elaborate mechanical constructions by Rosse, which were themselves entertainment centers. His description on p. 2 of his letter of March 12, 1927 reads:

The other stage 10 × 17 × 6 ft. deep, containing a large jeweled garden, four trees carrying rubies and emeralds, stand in an enclosure in front of a palace door. All architectural parts to be covered in diamonds and other precious stones.

An electrically driven pressure pump which pumps up water from a receptacle, starts a fountain going. When the pressure reaches a certain number of pounds, the doors automatically open, at the same time displaying the fountain in the shape of a peacock with a spreading tail made by the water, all the water being gathered in the receptacle above that.

The inside of the palace is covered with rubies, garnets, carbuncles, etc., to make a contrast when the door opens. When the pressure reduces, the door closes to open again when the pressure is worked up again.

The whole of it also is closed in by a black sky dome.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Designs for *The Drama of the Nativity and the Massacre of the Innocents*
Art Institute of Chicago, 1919

Four sketches of stage sets
Pencil, ink, and watercolor

Photograph of stage set

The Drama of the Nativity and the Massacre of the Innocents was performed at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago on December 17 and 19, 1919. Herman Rosse had recently been named head of the School's Design Department, and himself designed the scenery and costumes for *The Drama of the Nativity*. He had a special stage built, on which the action was played either within a large central arch or in front of two special curtains, one of which represented the Virgin (or Christ), and the other Herod (or the world).

The Herod curtain, shown in the sketch at bottom, is colored "in vivid reds worked to so high a pitch that emerald green seemed its only superlative in redness, and consequently this color was used in the narrow dagger-like shapes which cross the main wave like rhythm of the masses of angular shapes which form the design". The Virgin motif curtain,

in contrast, shown at top, featured "angels in hushed movements . . . listening toward the segment of the earth for the birth of Christ. The curtain is in many shades of blue with silver stars. The segment of the earth is in purple with wavy lines encircling it in black and deeper purple" (Rosse, writing in *The Drama*, March–April 1920).

In one scene decoration was projected onto transparent scenery with lanterns.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Printed broadside announcing
Exhibition of Designs for the Theatre by Herman Rosse
from February 25th to March 16th, 1921
Arden Gallery, New York
Design and lettering by Herman Rosse

Sheldon Cheney said of Herman Rosse in *Theatre Arts Magazine* for April 1921 that Rosse was striking out ahead of the latest European fads in design more than any other artist in the American theatre.

With the single exception of Robert Edmond Jones, he has, I believe, the most creative mind and talent among all those who design for the American stage today. . . . [At the time of Rosse's move to California in 1915 his stage designs] were probably more eclectic and derivative than creative; but, be it noted, very widely eclectic because he had already visited the theatres, not only of most European countries, but of India, Egypt, Java, Japan and China. He was already experimenting and originating, however, and had many books and portfolios of projected scenes, stages, and auditoriums. (Always he seems to see the theatre as a whole – not merely a stage picture-frame which he is to fill.)

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Design for a stage for the use of projected scenery
Pencil, ink, and watercolor, *ca.* 1920

From his earliest years of work in the theatre Herman Rosse was not content merely to dress sets and design costumes. His thoughts embraced theatres themselves, and how their construction might serve the needs of performance. One area of innovation Rosse considered, and put into practice, concerned scenery that was projected onto neutral backgrounds rather than painted as in traditional set design. The critic Kenneth Macgowan wrote of this in his *Theatre of Tomorrow* (1921) as a conception which

creates virtually a new theatre and a new art. [Rosse] has planned to place within the proscenium, upon drops, curtains or gauzes, an illusion of moving scenery, partly accomplished through varying lights and moving materials, and partly through designs projected on these surfaces by the motion picture machine. Through thousands of drawings – made and photographed much after the manner of the animated cartoons of the movies – he would create an absolutely living and dynamic background. This background would necessarily out-act the actors, but such a method of production is intended only for an entertainment in which story, action, color, music, pantomime and voice would be fused to create a new type of continuous emotional spectacle.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Designs for movie palaces
Pencil, ink, and watercolor, probably 1920s

From around 1910 until World War II, thousands of “movie palaces” were built in the United States, reflecting public interest in popular culture centered on the motion picture. The greatest of these theatres also offered live stage shows, musical performances, and personal amenities such as barber shops. Their

heyday was the 1920s, which saw the construction of the elaborate, fanciful architecture that led historian Ben Hall to call the movie palace “an acre of seats in a garden of dreams”. Indeed, one of the three designs by Herman Rosse shown here is deliberately titled a “Fairy Palace”. Its caption calls for “transparency doors behind which [is] the Palace Ballroom. Sunk orchestra. Real fountains behind hedges. Orange lampions all over ceiling.”

Settings by the New York Studios
Printed brochure, probably 1920s

The New York Studios are advertised here as the largest plant in America devoted to the construction of “theatrical settings”. Herman Rosse is listed among affiliated designers. The directors of the firm included John Murray Anderson, George Balanchine, and George Kaufman. A letter of November 1926, shown in an earlier case, is addressed to Rosse at the New York Studios.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Costume and set designs for *Ziegfeld Follies*
New Amsterdam Theatre, New York, 1922
Various pencil, ink, and watercolor

Manuscript specifications for the production

Legendary producer Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr. presented his first *Follies* in 1907. In succeeding years new versions of the popular revue became increasingly elaborate and costly. The *Follies* of 1922, with designs by Herman Rosse together with Ziegfeld regular Joseph Urban and associates, is considered the pinnacle of the series. It ran for 67 weeks in New York and 40 more weeks on tour, a *Follies* record.

Although Rosse is not credited in reference books with costume designs for the 1922 *Follies*, the archive in the Chapin Library contains many sketches for that purpose. A large drawing for one of the sets, “Spring Time in the Alley”, is displayed above the bookcases behind this case.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

“Spring Time in the Alley”

Set design for *Ziegfeld Follies*

New Amsterdam Theatre, New York, 1922

Ink, watercolor, and bodycolor

Set design for *Bughouse Cabaret*

A stage production by John Murray Anderson

to accompany the film *Behind the Front* at the

Rivoli Theatre, New York, 1926

Ink, watercolor, and bodycolor

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

“The Circus Theatre”

Theatre Arts Magazine, July 1923

Drawing of circus theatre

Graphite and ink, ca. 1923

In this article Rosse praises the “practical and beautiful shape” of the “circus theatre”, that is, a circular theatre in which the audience sits on all sides of the stage. It was developed in Classical times, out of doors, but largely abandoned to today’s familiar indoor theatre, which is easier to build in a rectangular form. And yet “in no other theatre is it possible to have so many good seats as in the circus. And the construction which troubled our renaissance forefathers is a trifle in modern engineering. Circular roofs which exert no outward pressure on the supporting walls are easily built, thanks to steel skeletons and reinforced concrete construction. . . .”

The drawings shown in this and the two following cases help to illustrate Rosse’s point. Here a “typical circus” is pictured, with a high stage at right above an entrance for men and horses, and a slightly lower platform for the orchestra at left.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Two drawings of circus theatres

Variouly graphite, ink, and bodycolor, ca. 1923

The central drawing in these cases illustrates a scene from the story of the Volsungs, with scenery which is brought down from the circular hangings at top. The scenery is gauze-like, so that when lit, the side toward the spectator becomes transparent and the opposite side appears opaque, hiding the audience behind it.

At right is “the circus pure and simple”, without scenery but with platforms and steps leading from the high stage to the ring.

Kenneth MacGowan, 1888–1963

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Masks and Demons

New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1923

Upon Herman Rosse’s arrival in New York from Chicago in 1923, he was embraced as a kindred soul by Kenneth MacGowan, noted producer and associate of Eugene O’Neill in the Provincetown Playhouse, who had become the leading voice of American theatre through his publications. MacGowan would later follow Rosse to Hollywood. He achieved success with many films, and notably retired in 1947 to become founding chairman of the Department of Theatre Arts at UCLA!

Rosse’s interest in masks was refined on his year-long, round-the-world tramp steamer cruise in 1905–1906, which included a three-month stint in Java where he learned much about the unique theatre performed there, and where he carefully studied and drew the Javanese masks and batik. His ultimate use of masks is found in his incorporation of the traditional masks of Tragedy and Comedy in the design of the Tony Award in 1949. Rosse’s original prototype, cast in silver, is on display in the central case in the Great Hall of the Chapin Library.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Set designs for *Bow Bells*
London Hippodrome, 1932

Four drawings
Variously pencil, ink, watercolor, graphite, and wash

Rosse designed sets and costumes for several of the elaborate musical revues produced by the prolific John Murray Anderson, such as the *Greenwich Village Follies* (1924) and *Rhapsody in Jazz* (1926–7), as well as his film *King of Jazz* (1930) for which Rosse won the Academy Award for Art Direction. For Anderson's revue *Bow Bells*, staged at the London Hippodrome, Rosse devised a plan whereby all of the sets were changed, in full view of the audience, by the use of overhead "chariots" operated by electricity. "Nine in number, in groups of three, each chariot held a high screen. When they were closed, the screens completely covered the stage opening; the screens were loaded and reloaded off-stage. One effect in which the panels were of silver mesh with an appliquéd design of metal acanthus leaves, was used in the finale of the show, and the entire company, like Shakespeare's players, became 'such stuff as dreams are made on' and were 'melted into thin air.' The effect was breath-taking."

Rosse also invented for the stage a double treadmill "so that each scene first of all assumed the appearance of a 'still life,' which then broke into action. The background of the stage was a series of revolving drums which changed in a mystifying way" (*Out without My Rubbers* by John Murray Anderson, as told to and written by Hugh Abercrombie Anderson, 1954).

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Set designs for *Bow Bells*
London Hippodrome, 1932

Two drawings
Graphite and color wash

Shown here are more of the conceptual designs drawn by Herman Rosse for *Bow Bells*. Also dis-

played, above the bookcases on the east wall of the gallery, are three *maquettes* or models by Rosse of representative scenes from the revue.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Three maquettes for *Bow Bells*
London Hippodrome, 1932
A selection of production drawings for *Bow Bells* may be seen elsewhere in this exhibition.

Three costume designs for John Murray Anderson revues, each titled *The Life of Handel*
Variously pencil, ink, pastel, and watercolor,
with cloth samples
Probably 1920s

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Set design for *The Great Magoo*
by Ben Hecht and Gene Fowler
New York, Billy Rose, 1932
Ink and watercolor

Set design for *Baroque Ballet*
Produced in 1950
Ink, watercolor, and bodycolor
A series of sixteen projected scenes for this production are displayed in the Chapin vestibule

Curtain design for the operetta *Mandragola* by Ignatz Waghalter after Machiavelli, which had only two performances by the Little Opera of America, New York, in March 1925 before closing
Ink, watercolor, and bodycolor

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Designs for a Community Amusement Park
at Nyack, New York, ca. 1933

Two drawings, pencil, ink, and wash
Two photographs of drawings

Shown here are drawings by Herman Rosse for a proposed Community Amusement Center for

Nyack, New York, not far from his home in New City. The scheme would have combined indoor and outdoor theatres – designs for which, respectively, are displayed at upper left and lower right – with shops and recreation areas. In the reproduction at lower left, another version of the front of the indoor theatre, reflected in a lily pond, Rosse has painted out a line of cars in the original and drawn a crowd of people.

A model and drawings for this project were shown at the Forty-eighth Annual Exhibition of the Architectural League of New York, February–March 1933.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Carnival of Life
Etching, ca. 1934–1936

Rosse planned a series of four paintings to form the mural decoration of a room with subjects taken from the imaginary life of three of the characters of the Italian *Commedia del'Arte*: Pierrot, Pierrette, and Harlequin. Only one of the paintings was completed – it now hangs in the '62 Theatre and Dance Center at Williams College – but Rosse executed a second scene in the series as the etching shown here.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Two costume designs for *Elisabeth*
Produced in Rotterdam, 1935
Pencil, ink, and watercolor, with cloth samples

Costume design for a John Murray Anderson revue
Pencil, ink, and watercolor
Probably 1920s

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Tony Award medallion
Silver prototype, 1949

The “Tony Award” is named in honor of Antoinette Perry (1888–1946), actress, director, and chairman of the board and secretary of the American Theatre Wing throughout World War II. It was first presented, to mark “distinguished achievement” in the theatre, in 1947, but for two years the winners were presented with a cigarette lighter, a money clip, or a compact, in addition to a scroll. Then the United Scenic Artists sponsored a contest to design a formal award, which Herman Rosse won with his medallion depicting the masks of comedy and tragedy on one side and the profile of Antoinette Perry on the other. The silver prototype of the award, retained by the artist, and the certificate he received on his achievement, are shown here from the Chapin Library’s Rosse archive. Since 1967 the medallion presented to recipients of the Tony Award has been mounted on a black base.

Also shown are the certificate presented to Herman Rosse in honor of his design, and a photograph showing, left to right, producer-director Armina Marshall, Herman Rosse holding a plaster cast of the Tony Award, actress Jessica Tandy, and producer-director Brock Pemberton.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Baroque Ballet
Produced in 1950

Sixteen drawings of stage sets,
each within a rustic proscenium
Pen, pencil, and watercolor

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Set designs for *Show Boat*
Paper Mill Playhouse, Millburn, N.J., 1950
Pencil, ink, and watercolor

Rosse was appointed Resident Stage Designer at the renowned Paper Mill Playhouse in 1948, and worked there for a dozen years. The sketches shown here for the Jerome Kern-Oscar Hammerstein musical *Show Boat* are typical of Rosse's set designs at this time: small, rapid, but detailed.

A typed note on the verso of the photograph shown at center, of a larger drawing by Herman Rosse not in the Chapin collection, calls attention to "an interesting feature" of his settings, "the use which was made of the showboat itself with its double deck and the tugboat 'Able Molly'. By shuttling these so that in one scene more of the tugboat, in others more of the showboat was shown, a great variety of scenes was acquired without much additional building." To this Rosse added in pencil: "The Paper Mill Playhouse version shown here favors the 'folky' quality of the story of this musical play."

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Five schematic conceptions of the
"bridged aisle seating method"
Various pencil and graphite, *ca.* 1958

In the Chapin Library's Rosse archive are dozens of manuscript pages, sketches, and drawings concerned with a proposed novel theatre seating arrangement, named by Rosse the "bridged aisle" system. He thought about it at great length, with typical thoroughness researching the seating arrangements at numerous domestic and foreign theatres and comparing current theatre architecture with that of the Classical world.

In one manuscript he notes that in the "bridged aisle" concept "the number of seats . . . compares favorably with that accommodated by the double deck system fashionable for so-called 'de luxe' motion picture theatres." In another he says that "the plan

is the direct result of an attempt to nullify the unfavorable seating conditions as a result of the building laws", and compares the result to the court theatre of the 18th century.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

"A propos a type of Theatre Plan in accordance with the prescripts of the Building Ordinances of NYC"
One page of a manuscript draft of an illustrated article by Rosse for the journal *Page One*

New York City. Laws, Ordinances, etc.

Building Laws of the City of New York (Laws, Rules, Regulations, Etc., Applicable to the Erection, Construction, Maintenance and Alteration of Structures and Buildings in The City of New York)
Compiled by Bernard J. Gillroy
1955

Herman Rosse was not just a visionary designer, but a practicing architect as well, and was acutely aware that his dreams, whether they were to be built or to serve as models to other architects, had to conform to strict codes. This copy of the building laws of New York City is from his personal working library.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Four drawings of theatre interiors
Graphite and ink wash
Various dates

Two of these drawings are related to the artist's "bridged aisle" seating concept, explored elsewhere in the exhibition.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Set designs for *The Immortal Puppet*

by Herman Rosse

Pencil, ink, and watercolor, 1959

Pencil sketches for the play

Original typed script

The Immortal Puppet, subtitled *A Melodramatic Morality Play in Two Acts, a Prologue and an Epilogue*, is unusual among Rosse's work in that the designer was also the playwright. The work, he said, was "based on the popular puppet plays and other forms of entertainment, which have amused and edified many generations of Dutch *kermesse* [festival] goers, from the mouth of the Scheldt to the shores of the Zuyder Zee". Set in and around Amsterdam in the late 17th century, the play features characters made in a very exaggerated manner to resemble wooden puppets.

A larger drawing for *The Immortal Puppet* is displayed on the west wall of the gallery.

Herman Rosse, 1887–1965

Bridled Schizophrenia

Graphite and ink, 1960s

Set design for *The Immortal Puppet*

Pencil, ink, and watercolor, 1959

The Dangers of Designing Hell

Graphite and ink, 1960s

The first and third of these drawings were late work by Herman Rosse, when he was reflecting how far stage production could go in exuberance and realism. Always imaginative and inventive in his own work, he would have been fascinated with the many technical advances in special effects on stage and especially in film that have occurred after his death.

The drawing at center is associated with Rosse's own play, *The Immortal Puppet*.

THEATRE DESIGN EXAMPLES FROM THE LIBRARY OF HERMAN ROSSE

Victor Louis, 1731–1802

Salle de spectacle de Bordeaux

Paris: Aux depens de l'Auteur; et se trouve

chez Esprit, libraire, au Palais-Royal, 1782

From the collection of Helena and Herman Rosse,

presented in memory of J. Martin Rosse, AIA,

by Jean F. Rosse

Commissioned in 1773 by the Duc de Richelieu, governor of the province of which Bordeaux is the principal city, Louis' *Salle de spectacle*, when completed in 1780, was larger than any other opera house or theatre in Europe, as shown in the last plate of this sumptuous volume, which compares it to the main houses of the continent. The erection of this imposing structure was a deliberate act of decentralization from Paris. In his introduction, Louis argues that if the ancient Romans had built the same way the French have built, all the great monuments of the empire would be in Rome itself, an especially poignant argument in the face of the numerous Roman ruins in Bordeaux, including the 10,000-seat amphitheatre.

Prof. E.J. Johnson, when studying this suite of successive plans and elevations, remarked that the Bordeaux opera house is a very complex structure in terms of the diverse spaces included in it, a great example of the late 18th-century tendency to supply separate spaces for different functions. At ground level (not shown) the building was flanked by retail shops. The main entrance to the theatre led under the small concert hall to a grand staircase that led up both to the main theatre and to the concert space, and to a café, reception rooms, and a library, which coupled with the adjacent gallery dedicated to great men of the theatre, created what was the first theatre museum as such. The building was a social center as well as a theatre, and is acknowledged as the great predecessor of Garnier's Opéra de Paris of the 1850s.

The shapes of the two halls for the audience were chosen for acoustical purposes, and the circular plan of the main hall corrected what the French found to be a fault in the sightlines of Italian houses with

V-shaped or horseshoe plans. The central box was reserved for the *jurats* or magistrates of the city, while the box in the proscenium was for the royal representative in the city, the *Intendat*. Thus the audience, watching the performance, was always reminded of royal power. The sheet opened for display shows in minute detail the painted ceiling over the main theatre.

Jan Fokke, 1742–1812

Historie van den Amsterdamschen Schouwburg, met Fraaije Afbeeldingen
Te Amsterdam: By G. Warnars,
en P. den Hengst, 1772

Fokke's rare work was occasioned by the burning of the Schouwburg, the principal theatre in Amsterdam (opened in 1693), the night of May 11, 1772. By 1775 a new theatre had been built. We have chosen this illustration of the pandemonium in the audience as fire sweeps across the stage, because it is reminiscent of Mr. Rosse's drawing *The Dangers of Designing Hell* on view in the Chapin Library.

Wendingen: Maandblad voor Bouwen en Sieren van Architectura et Amicitia
Amsterdam: Uitgevers Maatschap pij
"De Hooge Brug", 1918–1931

Organ of the society "Architectura et Amicitia" of Amsterdam, its founder, long-time editor, and designer was the architect H. Th. Wijdeveld (1885–1987). Rosse had studied with Wijdeveld during his young days at The Hague and helped to expedite the American publication of *Wendingen's* famous Frank Lloyd Wright issues in 1925 (Vol. VII, Nos. 3–9). All issues of *Wendingen* are scarce, and Mr. Rosse's file in the Chapin Library is an especially appropriate document of his career, as both he and the magazine were constantly probing and exploring new avenues of design, staging, and building.

Though this issue, Nos. 9–10 of September–October 1919, includes an illustrated article on Rosse's recent theatre and operetta stage designs, even more farsighted, if far too grandiose, is Wijdeveld's scheme for "Het Groot Volkstheater", a vast multi-theatre project parallel to the Hooftstraat, intended for the lower end of Amsterdam's central Vondel Park. In magnitude, it would have been equivalent to moving New York's Broadway Theatre district into Central Park.

Hans Schliepmann, 1855–ca. 1931

Lichtspieltheater, eine Sammlung ausgeführter Kinohäuser in Gross-Berlin: 109 Abbildungen mit Text
Berlin: Verlag von Ernst Wasmuth A.-G., 1914

The German acceptance of film as a legitimate medium of artistic expression and as wholesome entertainment for the population at large is testified to by the numerous movie theatres built in Berlin and throughout the nation in the pre-War years. They were distinguished by their spaciousness, including vestibules, sitting rooms, balconies, boxes, and individual seating in armchairs.

But nothing distinguished the movie *Palast* more than the acceptance of the Jugendstil and Art Deco styles in its architectural design and ornamentation. This in turn encouraged similar construction throughout Germany that would find highly divergent strains in both the Bauhaus and the National Socialist architecture of the next two decades.

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