



Larry Cook—Scenic Designer for “The Wizard of Oz”

What do you consider to be this production’s biggest challenge?

How to communicate the idea of a journey onstage to start with... now that I’m in it- dealing with all of the technology we are employing on this show.

What about this production excites you the most?

Well, the 32’ diameter revolve is pretty exciting! Flying performers is always fun and exciting. Projections can be frustrating but fun and exciting. All that in one show? WOW! I loved watching the movie every year as a kid and I’ve never seen it onstage, so I’m really looking forward to seeing this production.

How much of a role did the 1939 film play in inspiring your designs? What inspired you the most?

Not a lot. We were pretty aware that we couldn’t reproduce that onstage so we mostly tried to avoid using it. That said, there are some nods to the Film version. Spent a fair amount of time trying to find images of Baum’s stage versions of the book but couldn’t find anything- those would have been interesting.

Why did you chose to feature a turntable in the set design?

Back to question one, “How do we communicate the idea of a journey onstage?” I had this image in my head of Dorothy and friends skipping along but staying in one place, and I knew the only way to make that happen was with a really big revolve. Luckily we had an equipment request come through and a really good season last year that made it possible.

What role are the projections going to play in the production?

With the revolve, it is difficult to put classic scenery onstage. As well, the revolve required a large chunk of the scenic budget so we had to come up with another way to communicate a change of location. Projections will help do that for us. Heidi envisioned Oz as a dream that Dorothy has after being knocked-out. So, she wanted to create a world familiar to Kansas but distinctly different and very odd. Hopefully the projections will help us provide that.