

Production's When To Do What

The adage that 'one one cocoa fills basket' comes to mind when one considers how a playwright springboards his or her script into a emotionally-charged production number. Stage production can be likened to the basket of tricks that the playwright collects to transform the play into the production piece that he or she so desires. Earlier a co-ordinated approach was alluded to. This area attempts to develop that argument.

How many times have you attended a function and walked away thinking that it lacked organisation? Or you considered a number of suggestions that could have improved the overall impact? How many times have you entered a public place and found that the colour co-ordination of the paint and decor were not synchronised? How did you feel about this? Were you passionate enough to react?

Stage directions bring to the production, the **glitz and the glamour** to ensure that the audience walks away with the desired '**wow effect**'. The playwright is dependent on a number of persons to assist with infusing audience impact through the following areas:

- Helping characters to know how and where to position themselves on stage;
- Describing the mood or mental state of characters;
- Informing the lighting staff when to dim or brighten the stage lights, what atmosphere to create;
- Instructing the sound technicians when to introduce the complementing sound effects for a scene;
- Deciding when and how characters enter and exit the stage;
- Adjusting the props and backdrop for different scenes; and
- Sustaining the overall impact of the production through - characters are provided with cues from the beginning to the end.

Stage directions inject the artistic colour that the playwright desires at the appropriate intervals throughout the play. This co-ordination facilitates the perfect blend of dialogue, action, sound, lighting, scenery, props and costuming. Like a skilled painter the playwright stimulates the imagination of the audience through imagery and colour.