
Scenography and Societal Change and the Creation of Artworks in Contemporary Art: An Analysis of the Practice of Scenography in Nabajyoti Nagar, Guwahati, Assam, India

Aditi Deka*

**Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Visual Arts, Assam University Silchar, Assam, India.*

*Corresponding Email: *dekaaditi2020@gmail.com*

Received: 08 January 2024

Accepted: 25 March 2024

Published: 10 May 2023

Abstract: The most beautiful visual element of a theater is its scenery. It entails placing a performance in a distinct and recognizable setting, defining the characters in terms of costumes and the accessories and qualities that go along with them, and lighting the performance appropriately to maximize the audience's enjoyment of the performance. Therefore, in addition to a mastery of architectural principles, the practice of scenography requires a sufficient understanding of the fundamentals of design, fair knowledge of graphics, and a working knowledge of the fine and practical arts, carpentry, tailoring, and electrical engineering. Because of this, the scenographer needs to be a well-rounded artist with enormous creative potential. Scenography can be used to create a civilization in the right way. Scenography investigates societal influence. In this study, the practice of scenography in Nabajyoti Nagar, Guwahati, Assam, India, is analyzed in relation to societal change and the creation of art works in contemporary art.

Keywords: Scenography, Societal, Change, Creation, Artworks, Contemporary.

1. INTRODUCTION

Expanding on this, Joslin McKinney and Philip Butterworth propose that Scenography is about audience involvement and reception as much as it is about producing and delivering pictures to an audience. It is an experience that is sensual and cerebral, emotional and logical. The five essential design parameters content, object, space, recipient, and dramaturgy are integrated and utilized in scenic design. A noteworthy development in the exhibition scene is the observation of scenography, a modern creative staging technique that originated in the theater and has been increasingly influencing exhibition settings in recent years. The classic

exhibitionary complex has been reformed by scenography, and as a result, there is now an unparalleled meeting point between scenography and modern curating, which further informs a fundamental ideological change.

2. RELATED WORKS

1. **Margaret Choi Kwan Lam (2013)**, in the Master's Thesis titled "Scenography as New Ideology in Contemporary Curating and the Notion of Staging in Exhibitions" highlights that take advantage of a new field of inquiry to examine the relationship between modern curating and scenographic practice, their fusion, and the revolution it has sparked.
2. **Tochukwu Okeke (2019)**, in his paper titled "Scenography and Societal Change: An Appraisal of Scenographic Practice in a Developing Economy" focuses that the stage director needs to be a well-rounded artist with boundless creative capacity. In order to determine the professional potential available to the trained scenographer in a society that is always evolving and fast developing, this study looks at the traits of the scenographer.

Statement of the Problem:

The artist and scenographer collaborate to deliver the message in the most effective way possible, with the director taking the lead and being primarily in charge of dramatic elements like acting, casting, and direction, and the scenographer handling the visual elements. Thus, scenography is a novel ideology that has the potential to alter society for the betterment of society, and scholars and academics rarely study this topic.

Objectives of the Study:

The main objectives of the study are-

1. To study the relationship between societal change and scenography.
2. To analyses the scenographic creation of art works in contemporary art.
3. To explore the Scenography Practice in Guwahati, Assam, India's Nabajyoti Nagar.

Research Questions:

1. What are the relationships between societal change and scenography?
2. Is there any the scenographic creation of art works in contemporary art?
3. How is the Nabajyoti Nagar Scenography Practiced in Guwahati, Assam, India?

Hypothesis:

The influence of scenography on societal change is critically important. Contemporary art is highly valued in terms of artwork creation. Today's artistic worldview places great value on the practice of Scenography, which was originally studied in Nabajyoti Nagar, Guwahati, Assam, India.

3. METHODOLOGY

The research is grounded in contemporary art-related scenography, investigation, and primary sources that were obtained on-site. On February 20, and February 21, 2024, in the steep

village of Nabajyoti Nagar, close to Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam, the survey and data were gathered. The primary goal of the research study is to demonstrate how location, investigation, and staging have influenced contemporary art, with a focus on Nabajyoti Nagar in Guwahati, Assam. This study employs a systematic discourse analysis to facilitate a close reading of several works within a specific theoretical framework (Lucas, 2016). This method, which is a kind of qualitative research, is based on the notion that social and sustainable environment is reflected in cultural production. It examines obscure aspects of cultural phenomena in an attempt to comprehend particular phenomenon. Furthermore, fieldwork investigations are necessary for critical discourse analysis to be evaluated and theorized because it is an interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary problem-focused approach (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). This method considers not only analysis, interpretation, and justification, but also application (Catalano & Waugh, 2021).

Significance of the Study:

The multidisciplinary stance in art history suggests that scenography, which has long suffered from being perceived as a vision, a theatrical backdrop, or a lesser form of art, can now be recognized as an active agent of different events and as a method of thinking that aids in analysis.

Scenography and Societal Change:

Though ideas of social scenography and applied scenography are barely hinted at here, Baugh has opened up these new avenues of research. Focusing on community-based and socially engaged art, Baugh argues that the emergence of materially and socially concerned performance practices in the early 21st century will continue to have a big impact on how scenography is researched and used going forward. The collaborative and communal mindset that has characterized the best scenographers of the 20th century will consequently be crucial to the future of scenographic practice. Scenography has always been a collaborative art form with a significant influence on contemporary art.

Why Does Site Exploration Need Research?

Conducting a site study is crucial in addressing the uncertainties related to contamination and ground conditions. It will be easier for you to decide which materials to utilize when building if you conduct a site study. Making better judgments regarding the materials that will work best for our project should be possible once we have a better understanding of the properties of the soil.

The process of acquiring geological, geotechnical, and other pertinent data that could have an impact on the execution or construction of a building or civil engineering project is known as site investigation. Numerous procedures are used to manufacture rock and soil from a vast range of resources. Any changes from the proposed work should be explained, along with the locations of each site inspection and their justifications.

Connection between Site and Scenography:

It's crucial to understand that stage design, set design, and scenography are some other titles for scenic design. Lighting, sound, set design, and costume designs are all components of the

Scenography that go into creating an ambiance and mood for a play. The scenes that make up a theater production or any live or recorded event where the development of a space with a specific setting or climate is required are designed and created by stage designers, also known as scenarists. Since they are the most affordable and high-quality option for creating a landscape or a structure that successfully completes the picture, scenic models have been utilized for many years in the film business.

Importance on Scenography in Contemporary Art:

Creating these unique settings with a comprehensive strategy that incorporates space, structure, lighting, sound, graphics, and occasionally even costumes is called scenic design. It's a cooperative approach to effective storytelling. Aspects of contemporary scenography, design process, and production are examined in this basic studio. You can greatly excite your thoughts and emotions by viewing contemporary art. As a result of its promotion of creativity and self-expression, it is an effective communication tool. It also offers insight into the world around us by reflecting the culture and society of today.

In an artwork, technique matters for several reasons. It is essential to establish a foundation first and foremost in order to build atop. The quality of the artist's finished work may suffer from a weak technical base. Second, realistic visuals can be produced by an artist with strong technique. The only goal of the scenic designer is to use the physical environment to evoke a feeling. In addition to setting the mood, furniture and accessories like drapes and decor should give performers artistic freedom.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A site-specific piece of art is created for a particular place; as such, it loses all or most of its meaning if taken out of that place. Both independent and commercial artists create site-specific art, which can include pieces like rock climbing, stencil graffiti, sculpture, and other artistic mediums. Installations can be placed underwater, in isolated natural settings, or in urban areas.

Modern stage design is introspective in nature, aiming instead for a hidden, inner reality rather than mimicking other people. The performative act is created and supported by space, which has poetic, artistic, and critical roots. The exhibition's main theme is heavily reliant on the scenography. The scenography even goes before the exhibits themselves are chosen, serving as a tool for defining the objectives and content of the show. Scenography is the most eloquent visual aspect of the theatre. The most beautiful visual element of a theater is its scenery. It entails placing a performance in a distinct and recognizable setting, defining the characters in terms of costumes and the accessories and qualities that go along with them, and lighting the performance appropriately to maximize the audience's enjoyment of the performance.

Therefore, in addition to a mastery of architectural principles, the practice of scenography requires a sufficient understanding of the fundamentals of design, fair knowledge of graphics, and a working knowledge of the fine and practical arts, carpentry, tailoring, and electrical

engineering. Because of this, the scenographer needs to be a well-rounded artist with enormous creative potential. The characteristics of a skilled scenographer in order to determine the professional opportunities available to him in a society that is constantly evolving and quickly developing.¹

Scenography makes performative space possible in the process of creating exhibitions by viewing space as a scenario that must be actively constructed by the interaction of the body, time, object, and space, rather than as a functional container. As a result, the idea of aesthetics is no longer primarily dependent on formal composition in the context of creating contemporary exhibitions, such as the use of materials, color schemes, composition, infographics, etc. however, become a lived experience something that scenography could provide to establish a novel mode of expression.²

The qualities of theater scenery are also present in adaptations for museum settings. The primary distinction is that instead of players and theatergoers, there are museum visitors. Thus, the exhibition area is comparable to the stage.³ Since scenography is seen as primarily a literary domain, scene work has always been a liminal art, existing between the visual arts and theater.⁴



Picture- 1

Other than showing the one small road owned by the household, the image is similar to the previous one. It also emphasizes the beauty of nature with its bamboo plants. From the picture, one can observe a beautiful painting. One can look at a fantastic painting from the perspective of a lovely natural setting. As you can see from the picture, bamboo painting is one of the most fundamental yet delicate painting techniques.⁵



Picture-2

In the picture, at the top of the hill, is the 100-year-old Shiv Temple, which holds great significance for this area. Though rudimentary, the temple requires more work. Twenty-five years old is the age of another Shiv Mandir in this area. Looking into the location and surroundings for research reveals that the 100-year-old Shiv temple has a big impact on the religious community.⁶



Picture-3

The focal point of the picture is a little residential street. An antique Shiv temple dating back a century is located at the top of the road. This location has a very alluring aura. In this place, people have quite comfortable lives.⁷



Picture-4

In the pictures, the researcher is seen gathering data. There are many communities living in Nabajyoti Nagar, where the researcher is gathering data, according to a woman who works there. The people here are very supportive of one another and united. From this area, the researcher collected socioeconomic and religious data. I would want to express my gratitude to Juvaraj for capturing the photo I required for my data collection.⁸



Picture-5

People in this area are really cooperative. The picture shows a girl holding a small infant. In the picture's background, a few people may be seen going about their regular business. The other residents of the residence carried on with their daily activities.⁹



Picture-6

With the artist student and the resource person on site, research, and scenography, a discussion is held. Among these is a brilliant lesson that explains how scenography is related to contemporary art both directly and indirectly. Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakheta in Guwahati, Assam, is the location of the explanation. The methods and elements that link the site to the scenography are crucial to the contemporary artistic landscape.¹⁰

Major Findings of the Study:

The major findings of the study are-

1. The overall approach to creating these unique settings is called scenography. It also has holistic approach.
2. Scenography has a significant influence on contemporary art. Scenography is essentially a new worldview for human and sustainable development.
3. The identity of contemporary art is the construction of scenes, which periodically investigates various paradigms, dimensions, and actions.

4. In contemporary art, Nabajyoti Nagar's scenography has significant value. It demonstrates that scenography can be created on location and examines contemporary art perspectives.
5. The growth of society and sustainability is greatly influenced by the scenography. It also brings about positive changes in society. It affects both geography and history.
6. For scholars and artists alike, the design and development of art through scenography plays a significant part in contemporary art. The connection between location and staging examines contemporary art from a variety of angles.

5. CONCLUSION

The objective of this research is to find a venue, carry out research, and develop a contemporary art scenography that involves viewers as active participants in relation to the piece on exhibit. As a result, scenography approaches have been applied in this study to reveal a range of methodologies. Understanding the interactions of interior features, artwork, and furnishings is a key strategy in generating certain locations and situations. Reconstructing space in accordance with a relevant narrative is how dramaturgy space is achieved. According to the Conviviality principle, recreating the living area from the images and using the research as the background creates sentimental feelings similar to recalling a site investigation.

Using the mise-en-scene approach, which frames the surroundings and objects from a certain point of view or perspective, the exhibition links the narrative in each topic. The scenography concept is unique because of its method of spatial engagement.

Glossary of Terms:

Scenography :	The practice of representing perspective in art, particularly as it relates to stage scenic design and painting.
Art :	The application or expression of human creativity and imagination, usually through the use of art, such as sculpture or painting
Contemporary Art:	Artwork created and produced by contemporary artists
Nabajyoti Nagar:	Nabajyoti Nagar is a village perched on a hill near Srimanta Kalakhetra in Guwahati, Assam.
Guwahati:	Guwahati is the capital of Assam in India.
Assam:	Assam is the state of India.

Photographs:



In Guwahati, Assam's Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra Conference Hall, a student artist and specialist are giving a lecture on scenography.



A student artist and specialist, Sanchayan Ghose, Associate Professor, Department of Painting, Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati, Santiniketan, India, in the Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra Conference Hall in Guwahati, Assam.



Media coverage: On the last day of the workshop, a journalist was seen with artist researchers Aditi Deka (Pathak). "Windows to the Soul: Unraveling Identify in Scenographic Artistry" is the title of the final piece of scenographic art.



On February 24, 2024, in the Art Gallery of Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra in Guwahati, Assam, India, artist researcher Aditi Deka (Pathak) with the guests.

6. REFERENCES

1. Okeke, T. (2019), Scenography and Societal Change: An Appraisal of Scenographic Practice in a Developing Economy, *New Design Ideas* Vol.7, No.3, 2023, pp.662-681
2. Widyaevan, D. A. (2023), Staging The Space: Scenography in Exhibiton Design, *New Design Ideas* Vol.7, No.3, 2023, pp.662-681
3. Thomassen, I. (2017) The role of scenography in museum exhibitions: The case of the Grossraum at the Norwegian Museum of Science and Technology, Oslo, Institute for kulturstudier Og Orientalske Spark, Universities Oslo.
4. Larionow, D. (2014), Scenography Studies – On the Margin of Art History and Theater Studies" *Art Inquiry. Recherches sur les arts* 2014, vol. XVI ISSN 1641-9278.
5. Filed Survey dated 20.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.
6. Filed Survey dated 21.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.
7. Filed Survey dated 21.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.
8. Filed Survey dated 21.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.
9. Filed Survey dated 21.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.
10. A talk and exchange of ideas between the expert and the student artist at Srimanta Sanakaradeva Kalakhetra in Guwahati, Assam, India on February 19, 2024.