



Theatre Virtual Learning

Theatre Design & Production

Advanced Theatre Design & Production

April 13, 2020



Theatre Design & Advanced Theatre Design Sound

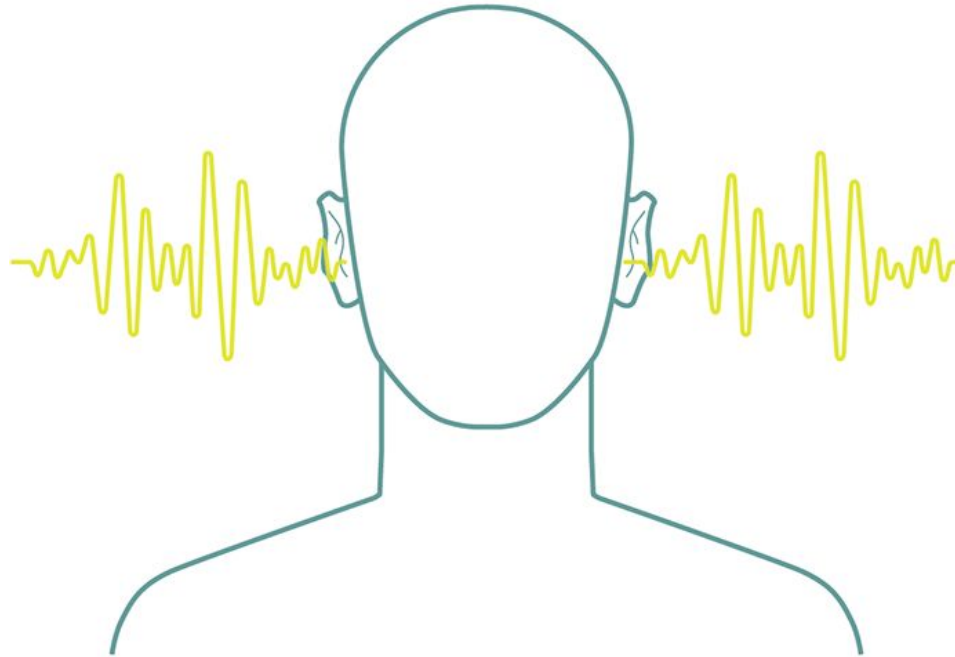
Lesson: [April 13, 2020]

Objective/Learning Target:

The student will understand what a sound designer's job entails

Bell Ringer/Let's Get Started

When someone says “sound”, what first comes to mind. Write down 3 things you think of.



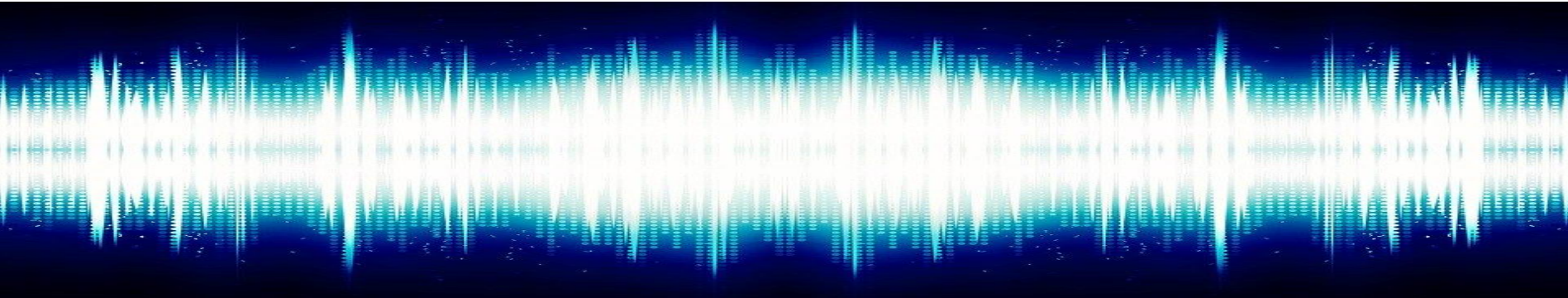
Click for
a giggle!



BOING

Lesson Steps:

- The following slides explain the role of a sound designer.
- Please read through the slides.
- As you go through them, there will be check in reflection questions.

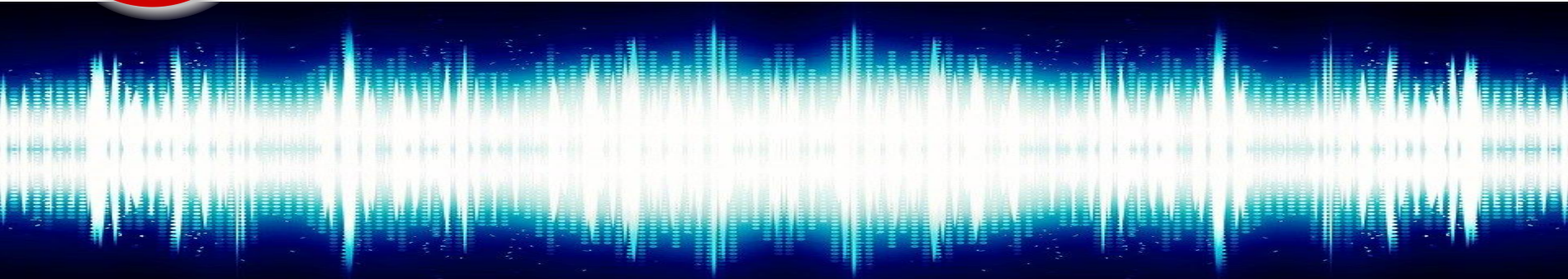


The sound designer is in charge of anything that is heard during the production. This includes:

- any live or recorded music
- sound effects
- vocal amplification of the actors, both speaking and singing



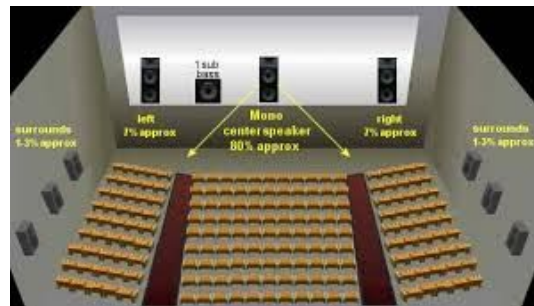
Have you ever been to a play or musical that has music playing as the audience is entering the theatre? How did it change the mood of the space?



Tasks of a Sound Designer:



- Engineer and instruct the set-up of the sound system in the space.(A sound designer should know sound systems inside out.)
- Work closely with the director in deciding what is appropriate for a show.
- Communicate with the other designers to make sure their work doesn't interfere with each other.
- Arrange microphones as needed:
 - In a straight play (AKA no singing), help reinforce the actors' voices with microphones (unless it is a small theatre).
 - In a musical, the actors will generally wear wireless microphones so that they can be heard over the orchestra. Sound designers must arrange this.



More tasks of a sound designer:

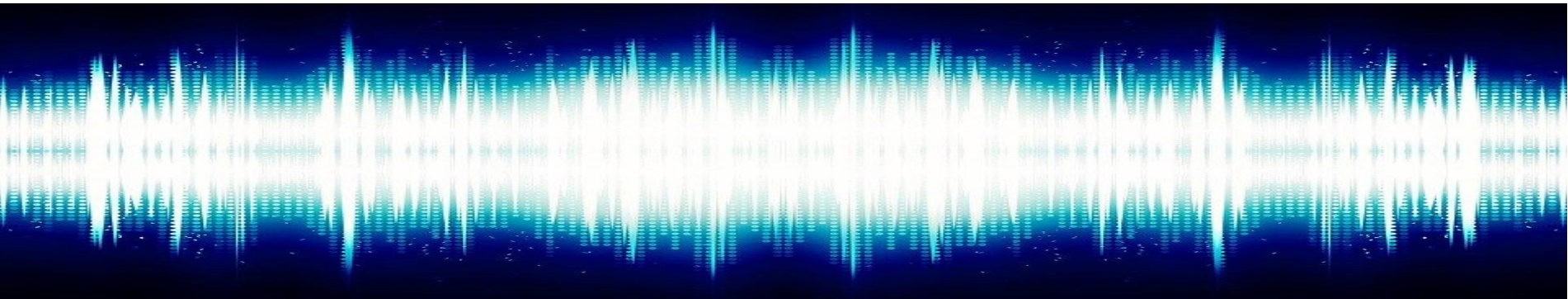
- Acquire pre-recorded sound effects and decide where they go during the production.
- Record his or her own sound effects.
- Create a method to make live sound effects backstage.
- Choose previously recorded music for scene changes, underscoring, or featured moments during the production.
- Compose music and recruit musicians to play it (if the sound designer has that sort of ability).
- For a musical, make sure the orchestra is well balanced and isn't overwhelming--the sound designer would try to acoustically isolate the orchestra. Conversely, the sound designer would have to provide microphones if parts of the orchestra were too soft.





Stop & Reflect:

Of all the tasks described of the sound designer, which task(s) do you think might be the most difficult and complicated? Why?



Design pre show/scene change/intermission/post show music

The music must

- Fit the time period
 - This rule can be broken for stylized productions!
- Should not be distracting
- Set the tone for the production



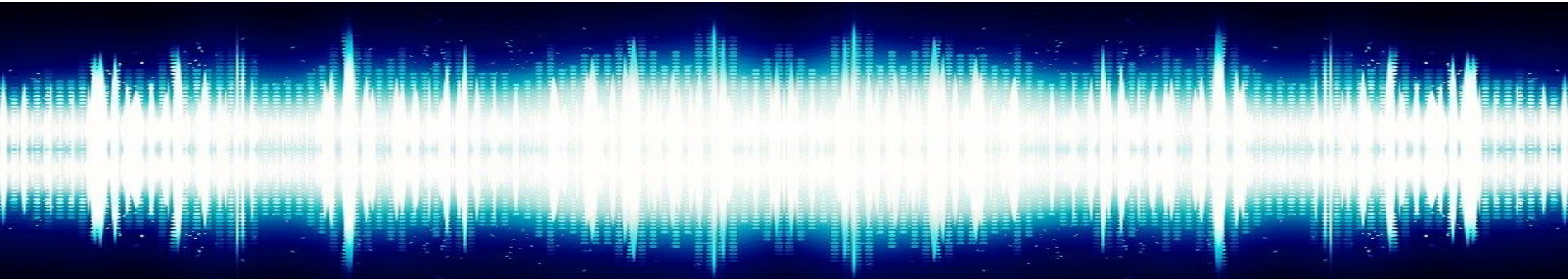
It is played

- any time the audience is in the theatre and the show is not being presented.
- as an underscore to help heighten the effect of the scene
- at a volume that can be heard, but does not impede any conversations before or after the show or the dialogue of the scene it is underscoring.
- to set the mood for what is to follow or continue the mood of what just occurred.



Stop & Reflect:

You are the sound designer for the play: ***THE LIFE & TIMES OF COVID19***. Decide on one pre-show song. What would it be and why?



Oversee the running of the sound board

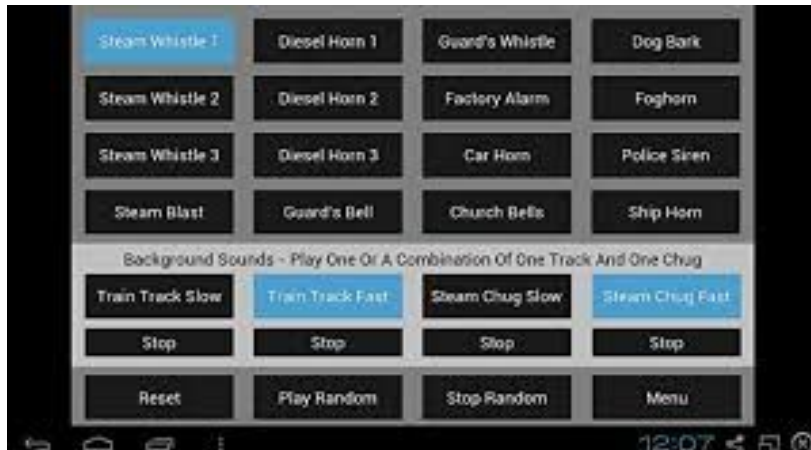
The Designer needs to make sure the system is run

- Loud enough for the audience to hear, but not too loud. The actors need to be heard, the sound effects should seem as real as possible.
- With proper levels set. Each microphone needs to be properly equalized and at an audible level but does not feed back.



Sound effect cues are a large part of the job

- Identify the sounds needed and which should be made live or played recordings.
- Make or find a recording of the sounds (i.e. train, clock, rain...).
- Find objects to make the sound live (i.e. thunder, phone...).
- Oversee the playing or making of the sound during the show.



The main thing about sound

Sound should not be noticed. It should be unobtrusive. It should blend in as a part of the play. If sound is noticed, something has usually gone wrong.

This makes sound a thankless job, because if they do their job correctly, no one notices, but if they mess something up, everyone notices.



Practice Activity:

Look for sounds on line. Try to find a phone ring for a modern show, and a show from the 1950's. Find a large dog bark and a small dog bark. Is it difficult to find different sounds?

