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The graphic design and application problems on the theatre publicity stands: a three-dimensional (3D) advertiser graphic design for a play

Banu Bulduk^{a *}

^a *Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi, Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Ankara, 06800, Türkiye*

Abstract

Theater's being a branch of art which is able to live with its *up-to-dateness* among all other branches of art (Nutku, 1991) forms a thought of the necessity of advancing technology to protect theater's timelessness and to support theater; and from this thought forth, the place of graphic design in publicity of theater is examined in this study. If theater is defined as "a way of expression of the culture of the country it exists in", it is thought that the culture of a country, its cultural life can be reached through examining its plays. In this sense, it can be said that theatrical posters have the characteristics of cultural posters. In the first part of the study, theater in its historical development and its publicity are examined, definitions are made under the determined titles, the evaluation has been done by examining the graphics used for theatrical posters. The development of theater is given place in its historical process, the development and importance of the publicity of theater are explained by stating the significance of graphic design in its publicity. The design problems of theater publicity done in Turkey are tried to be explained and the qualifications of a three dimensional graphic design application which is suggested to be applied in future and solution offers are given place in the last part.

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1. Theatre and its publicity during its historical development process

Theater forms an important part of society and culture. As a branch of art which contributes to the cultural formation of a society and at the same time develops depending on the cultural structure, theater can also be defined as an activity performed on a stage which provides enjoyment by making people think with its expression and its guiding feature, which raises awareness, guides and educates, which enriches life with a new perspective and artistic activity and depth.

Theatre, which is defined by Schiller as "the wooden heights giving meaning to the world" (Esslin, 1996), can be called as an art of acting a text of a story in a place reserved and designed as a stage in advance, in a time dated before, by the actors' speech and behaviours. The message that the play encoded reveals by this action. There is the support of many people in the performance from many different art disciplines, playwright being in the first place, from the actors who animate the text on the stage by their speech and acts, to the costume designer, lighting and

* Banu Bulduk. Tel.: +90-533-652-06-88 ; fax: +90-312-297-61-89

E-mail address: banubulduk@hacettepe.edu.tr

stage director. From the point of getting ready for the theatre performing in front of the audience and completing it by performing it in front of the audience, theatre can also be said to be visualising, animating and acting a reality by means of a narration method particular to theatre (Şener, 2003). In this sense, performing the play in front of the audience and presenting it to the audience's taste require the use of visual communication means and bring design works along. All of those plastic arts have to cohere for the success of the theatre which includes all plastic arts. The graphic design art using visual communication means has an important place in the publicity of the play as well as the stage design, setting, costume, lighting and make-up that theatre includes, all of which are arts needed to have artistic consideration. Which of these communication means would be used should be ascertained, how the play would be set should be planned defining the content of the play and the appropriate technique by looking into the target group. As to the last phase, the play has to meet the audience to make it complete. The play absorbs something from the reaction of the audience each time it is performed. For the theatre publicity generated both in the world and in Turkey to evaluate the poster in the first place and the design up to the mark; stand samples, graphic elements that should be on a stand and stand making, theoretical data about its setup and its application examples are gathered.

The development and publicity of theater in Turkey is shaped and grows by the support of the state. Çalışlar defines State Theaters as “a theater institution conveying a national theater identity in Turkey” (Çalışlar, 1995). In Turkey, state theaters, private theaters, city theaters, municipal theaters and theater groups serve.

1.1. Publicity

Publicity can be defined as an action entirety which is done to inform people about that product/service and to announce that product/service in the process of the presentation of a product/service to the public. It is known that, in Ancient Greece, the publicity of tragedies and comedies are done “with publicity objects prepared with pictures and writings prepared on a cloth in a shape of a flag” (Gümüşlü, 2008) and at the same time it is also known that the time of the play is announced by people who announces the event in the city using those objects. The contributions of designers should also be regarded as well as its playwright and director for a successful presentation of a play. Theater, as an important branch of visual arts, benefits from design/graphic design both on stage and through its publicity. Özdemir Nutku, a theater history researcher, emphasizes the significance of the development in theater by defining theater as the one which is most able to live with its up-to-dateless among all branches of art (Nutku, 1991). Theater's being an art of staging puts also its visuality and importance forward. In Turkey, theater is developing by both its publicity and plays. In this sense, if theaters are defined as culture producer workings (Güler, 1997), they practice their responsibility of public service by using publicity elements. The actualization of theater and its publicity can be provided by two or three dimensional expression techniques. The graphic design factors can be listed in those expression techniques. In our day in which visualization comes to the fore, the publicity of theater takes an important place in terms of meeting the play with people from all around the country and thus arousing interest in theater as much as in its importance for development and passing down the plays to new generations. For these reasons, choosing a qualified artistic publicity gains importance and it is needed to give much more significance to the publicity of plays. The publicity of theater which consists of different disciplines and which is an art raising awareness of public should be qualified in terms of its artistic side. The graphic materials used should have the characteristic of making positive impression on audience and arousing curiosity throughout this publicity period. In this sense, a graphic design takes the responsibility of conveying a message and to introduce a product and production. It is thought that the publicity of theaters should not be limited to theater buildings and that publicity composes an important part of *the popularization of publicity*. It is thought that the graphic materials used in publicity should be in social and cultural environments for making publicity more attractive and the access to information easier. Those can be lounges of big banks, functional buildings, hospitals, social facilities, subway stations, airports and bus stations. In Turkey, it is observed that the publicity of theaters is mostly limited to theater buildings.

1.2. The importance of the theater publicity

The publicity of theater should be made to announce and introduce the play. In this sense, it can be said that the effort of attracting audience to a play remains incapable in Turkey. In addition to this, it is observed that the stands (cabinets) and photographs which are prepared to satisfy the curiosity of audience about the play s/he watches are visually not effective and inefficient in terms of information. The audience is informed about the play either after watching the play or at the end of his/her dialogue with people who watch the play before. It is thought that the designs made for plays are insufficient for both their quantitative and qualitative sides and so the satisfaction of the audience curiosity cannot be fulfilled. In this sense, it can be said that the designs which are artistically contented (qualified) are important for that they will attract the audience and arouse curiosity among them.

1.3. Graphic design

Graphic design is a creative discipline of visual arts which cover many fields (Ambrose, 2009). Bektaş defines graphic design as a new way of communication which is formed with the mutually complementary use of two elements of communication, writing and image on the same field (Bektaş, 1992). Some graphic design materials are used in theater publicity. These can be listed as poster, handout, catalogue, ticket, the 3D design application/adaptation of posters used in movie publicity, information stands (cabinets) and electronic ads including e-adds, banners, e-catalogue and e-programmes. The posters used for publicity take the responsibility of communication between the audience and the play by conveying information to audience. It is clear that the posters which aim to announce a theater event/play are required to make a right contact with audience. It is thought that they are an effective way to reach the target group by their direct expression and design. Graphic design, on the other hand, establishes a bond between the theater and the audience. In the publicity of theater, it is significant to determine, to apply –in the period of transmitting the play of which publicity applications are about to be prepared to audience- and to examine in detail what the idea, term, incident or situation is expected to take the attention of the audience and also it can be said that it is necessary to apply the determined point to the designs. The perfection and quality of the design provide the basis of a *good design* definition. Good design shares the common criterias in the world. These criterias are functionality and effectuality; aesthetic and attractiveness; practicality and bringing new measures to be followed by the world (Mozota, 2005).

2. Application

In this part 3D graphic design which is suggested to be used in the future and is a new application is seen. A play is chosen to prepare a 3D design work thought to be a different application. The play is defined as *Kurban* written by *Güngör Dilmen* in 1967, took part in 2009 programme of Ankara State Theater.

As to the performance part, the most appropriate material and technique to the 3D performance is determined and then it continues with the design and performance phase. To relieve the idea that for the theatre publicity 3D stand is a part of artistic design process as the poster is aimed. Although a process which consists of stand, poster, billboard, press release, brochure, leaflet, banner and radio should be followed in a process of the publicity of the play, 3D design practices are held which are demonstrated in the theatre building in this work.

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