SCRIPT ANALYSIS – The Technical viewpoint
What does a designer look for when analyzing a script?

The first reading should introduce the designer to the story. Read it for fun. Uncover the plays given circumstances. Stage directions should be considered not as the answer to design, rather one way that a show can be designed. Use the information to synthesize your own design concept.

During the second reading, look for conceptual images and the dramatic mood. Look for specific moments and incidents that stimulate your imagination and provide you with strong visual and textural images and feelings. Even though these images are random and incomplete, jot them down. The more you read, the more different ideas will appear.

During the third reading he should develop lists of the specific design requirements. In addition to the script, many of these ideas will be gathered from the design meetings with fellow collaborators or through discussions with the director.

Below are a few of the questions that need to be answered after reading the play...

1. What happens in the scene?
2. What characters are involved?
3. What character dominates the action?
4. What is the climax (or crisis)?
5. What is the setting or location of the scene?
6. What is the period of the action?
7. What images (metaphors) are suggested by the script? Sights? Textures? Feelings?
8. What is needed to stage the scene? Entrances and Exits? Set props? Hand props?
9. What time of day does the scene take place?
10. What are the sources of light?

When analyzing the text, the designer first approaches the script as a member of the audience, then as the director and finally as the designer. Underline or highlight those lines the designer finds significant and make notations in the margins.

For design meetings, the designer will share these thoughts, images and ideas while asking questions that lead to specific approaches. For instance...this scene seems to me like rough burlap, but brightly colored...How does an idea like that gain expression in actual design?

Reference...
