THE THEATRE OF STEELE MACKAYE: PICTORIAL ILLUSION ON THE AMERICAN STAGE

by

Joseph Anton Sokalski

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Centre for Study of Drama
University of Toronto

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To my mother

Julianna Tweten
(1924–1992)
Dissertation Abstract

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Steele MacKaye (1842-1894) was a highly important figure in late nineteenth-century theatre. Typically remembered for his practical contributions to the American stage, this manager-régisseur was also an accomplished actor, dramatist, lecturer, and inventor. This dissertation argues that during his twenty-two years in theatre MacKaye sought to realize a unique vision that sprang from his unshakable aesthetic preference for a pictorial illusion of reality.

The first chapter details MacKaye's extensive education in art. Studying various forms of art such as painting and sculpting led him to experiment with the so-called "photosculpture"—a device for creating sculptures from photographs. After training as an actor in Paris, MacKaye brought François Delsarte's system of acting to America (later founding the first American acting school). Combined, these experiences laid a foundation of knowledge in art that he brought to the theatre. The second chapter examines MacKaye's first major contribution to American theatre: the Madison Square Theatre. The elevator concept of this theatre's double stage was motivated by MacKaye's desire to create detailed stage pictures one after another. The third chapter addresses MacKaye's involvement with the cycloramic Civil War paintings of scenic painter Matt Morgan. It also investigates MacKaye's work in transforming the "Wild West" exhibition of William F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) into an indoor play (where the illusion of a prairie fire was followed by a stampede of live buffalo). These two productions expanded MacKaye's concept of pictorial illusion to
include life-size pictures on a vast stage. The last chapter examines the grandiose vision of MacKaye as expressed in his ill-fated mammoth theatre, the "Spectatorium." This 10,000 seat structure, conceived for the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, was to be the site for his illusionistic staging of Columbus' great voyage. The productions' scenic pictures involved numerous inventions with which MacKaye created live atmospheric effects on an enormous scale (actual wind, fog, and rain). The venture's immensity allowed for the employment of an aquatic stage so large that life-size ships sailed across it. Cut short by his untimely death, this final project perfected MacKaye's aesthetic of pictorial illusion.
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# The Theatre of Steele MacKaye:
Pictorial Illusion on the American Stage

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Steele MacKaye (1842-1894) was a highly important figure in late nineteenth-century theatre. Typically remembered for his practical contributions to the American stage, this manager-régisseur was also an accomplished actor, dramatist, lecturer, and inventor. This study argues that during his twenty-two years in theatre MacKaye sought to realize a unique vision that sprang from his unshakable aesthetic preference for a pictorial illusion of reality.

The first chapter details MacKaye's extensive education in art. Studying various forms of art such as painting and sculpting led him to experiment with the so-called "photosculpture"—a device for creating sculptures from photographs. After training as an actor in Paris, MacKaye brought François Delsarte's system of acting to America (later founding the first American acting school). Combined, these experiences laid a foundation of knowledge in art that he brought to the theatre. The second chapter examines MacKaye's first major contribution to American theatre: the Madison Square Theatre. The elevator concept of this theatre's double stage was motivated by MacKaye's desire to create detailed stage pictures one after another. The third chapter addresses MacKaye's involvement with the cycloramic Civil War paintings of scenic painter Matt Morgan. It also investigates MacKaye's work in transforming the "Wild West" exhibition of William F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) into an indoor play (where the illusion of a prairie fire was followed by a stampede of live buffalo). These two productions expanded MacKaye's concept of pictorial illusion to include life-size pictures on a vast stage. The last chapter examines the grandiose vision of MacKaye as expressed in his ill-fated mammoth theatre, the "Spectatorium." This 10,000 seat structure, conceived for the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, was to be the site for his illusionistic staging of Columbus' great voyage. The productions' scenic pictures involved numerous inventions with which MacKaye created live atmospheric effects on an enormous scale (actual wind, fog, and rain). The venture's immensity allowed for the employment of an aquatic stage so large that life-size ships sailed across it. Cut short by his untimely death, this final project perfected MacKaye's aesthetic of pictorial illusion.
Steele MacKaye differed markedly from many prominent theatre artists and actor-managers of the late nineteenth century. Scholars have suggested that the skills and talents of many of them were instinctive—including such diverse theatre figures as Dion Boucicault, Edwin Booth, Augustin Daly, and A.M. Palmer. However, MacKaye's theatre was definitely not the result of untrained intuitive artistic skills. He brought to the theatre a considerable amount of formal training in visual art and acting.

Steele MacKaye, born James Morrison Steele McKay on June 6, 1842, in Buffalo, N.Y., was one of four children of Colonel James Morrison McKay. McKay senior was a prominent lawyer and military figure who worked directly under Abraham Lincoln as a Northern spy during the Civil War, and was president of the American Telegraph Company. Perhaps because of the death of his wife when his son Steele was six years old, the wealthy elder McKay created a privileged social situation for his children. Indeed, the indulgences afforded Steele MacKaye and his siblings were later remarked on by a relative: "Colonel McKay was very kind and wise in bringing up his children and gave them every advantage." The advantage to Steele was great. While he possessed innate talent as a painter, young Steele's social background and position allowed him to study painting, both casually and formally, with a number of the most influential painters of the mid-nineteenth century. Attending a boarding school in Newport, Rhode Island in 1857, after being ousted from a boy's military academy (which was Colonel McKay's choice of education for his son) Steele spent summers there. During this time in Newport, he often played with the future landscape painter Winslow Homer, and together as teenagers they spent hours sketching the seaside. It was there also that MacKaye received his first formal instruction in painting from William Morris Hunt, who was noted for his landscapes and
figures, and whose ideas came to have a decisive influence on MacKaye. Hunt's own formal training instilled a sense of purpose in young MacKaye. While Colonel McKay intended his son to go to Yale, Steele refused, and instead, decided to study painting in France under the recognized master Thomas Couture (as Hunt had done). In the fall of 1858, at age sixteen, MacKaye left the United States for the École des Beaux Arts, in Paris. While studying there, he supplemented his courses with private lessons in art from a number of prominent painters, including Meissonier, Bouguereau, Troyon, as well as Couture. Thus, by the end of a year's study, MacKaye was exposed to a wide range of painting styles and methods. While none would have ultimately too strong an influence, at that time MacKaye was particularly drawn to painting and sketching in the style of Troyon, perhaps because of the success he found under this painter. A critic familiar with MacKaye's work of this period stated that he "must have been among the greatest of ... [Troyon's] pupils," and added provocatively, "I never saw a sign of imitation in MacKaye's work or drawing; he was original; and I have often pondered the results upon human art had he concentrated upon painting." 5 Unfortunately, all of MacKaye's painting from his French period was destroyed during the Commune, 6 making it difficult to independently assess the value and nature of this work.

Called back to the United States by his father after a year of study, MacKaye continued his pursuit of painting. Through his formal studies abroad, and his social contacts, he secured the position of art instructor at a school in Eagleswood, New Jersey. In this two-hundred-acre setting, MacKaye further developed his craft while instructing his students, a task which at times proved difficult since he became "impatient because he could not make artists of all of his pupils." 7 However, the location proved a boon as landscape painter George Inness resided there, allowing MacKaye to study with him. While the length of time MacKaye studied under Inness is unknown, at one period they used to paint together often. 8 Though MacKaye may not have taken formal lessons with
Inness, during one of their many artistic excursions Inness painted a watercolor to illustrate to MacKaye some compositional element under discussion. This extant sketch remains a reminder of the instructional nature of the days they painted with one another. George Inness was taken with MacKaye's skill: "Young Jim MacKaye has great stuff in him—more than all the bunch of my other pupils put together." Such a consideration by an artist of the caliber of Inness lends credibility to reports of MacKaye's abilities and proficiencies as a painter. During the period MacKaye studied with Inness, the latter focused on painting realistic landscapes that were filled with painstakingly observed natural details. "Painting for ... [Inness and his followers] became a religious quest for truth in nature," one critic has observed Inness' impact on MacKaye was far reaching, for a similar concentration on small details in bringing "natural and real" representations to the stage would characterize MacKaye's later work in theatre.

A second artistic medium that was to have a lasting effect on MacKaye's aesthetic and technical abilities was sculpture. This shows clearly in his enthusiastic response to Greek sculpture:

I never had an idea what sculpture meant until I saw the frieze that Phidias cut for the temple of Athena. When I saw how that great artist had found the immortal point where he could put the man on horseback so that the man dominated the horse like a god—it came to me that sculpture caught the history of motion and made it immortal in repose. ... I sat down and, in spite of myself, I actually wept when the meaning of those old marbles came in upon me—and, if I were to have been killed for it, I could not have told you what I was weeping about. We have nothing like that in modern times: one must go to Greece—back to the ancients, to get to real art. We are only copyists.

While MacKaye may never have formally studied sculpture, he did receive some training under his friend J.A. Ward:
Jim, [Ward said] I've been working like the devil on this pose but I can't get what I want. I want the old bard [Shakespeare] to be thinking—but he ain't!! What ails him? 'That's simple, J.Q.' said Jim, 'instead of making him pensive you've made him sleepy. The difference in pose is slight but radical. It affects the whole body—legs, torso as well as head. The posture of thought should be like this.' And Jim illustrated by assuming a posture of absorbed thinking. 'Hold it! Don't move!' cried Ward, and began working furiously at his clay to catch the pose, which MacKaye resumed again on further visits, from which he profited by making clay sketches himself ....

This early exposure to sculpture occurred while MacKaye was on sick leave from the Union army, which he had joined during an already raging Civil War. After attaining the rank of second lieutenant, he was released from duty because of ill health. However, military service not only allowed him to gain experience in sculpting, it also gave him an opportunity to participate in large-scale amateur theatrical productions for the first time.

In 1864, after his medical release from the army, MacKaye returned to painting. His talents as a painter and art critic were such that he was able to obtain employment. Demonstrating a knowledge of the world of art, its ins and outs, and having Continental exposure and contacts, he persuaded several New York businessmen to hire him as an overseas art broker. "The good which may come to artists is an extension of the market for their pictures. The evil which may come to them might be the sale of their picture at a lower price than they were accustomed to get at home. If an agent can be found who will extend their picture-market ... while power is not put into his hands to injure them, every opportunity must be given him to make a suitable compensation for his [the agent's] trouble," MacKaye successfully argued. By playing up the financial aspect of art brokering MacKaye secured himself the position of art buyer for the Bouté Brothers of New York and left for France to purchase paintings.
During the year he was in Europe soliciting and selecting commissions he came into personal contact with the most influential French painters of the period. One of MacKaye's notebooks contained the names of close to one hundred artists he met in Paris. The list reads like a who's who of the Paris art circle and included artists of various stylistic camps from Corot and Daubigny, Comte, Bonheur, to Ingres, Millet, and Rousseau. MacKaye's desire to paint was so strong that he continued taking private lessons even on this extended business trip. His painting talent, along with his knowledge of art, so impressed Théodore Rousseau that he was made "leur agent absolument exclusifs pour tout le continent Américain" for Rousseau and a number of other painters. Clearly, MacKaye's artistic ability and critical faculty were far above the average. His expertise in art criticism was also demonstrated in other ways. An article, published in a New York newspaper (1889) titled, "MacKaye as Art Connoisseur." sheds light on MacKaye's command of art:

A black-haired, brilliant-eyed man sat recently in front of a little picture in a Broadway café, and said: 'That is the original of the famous Maternity by Merle, the Master of Bouguereau. In Paris it is valued not less than 60,000 francs. In conception, composition, tone, it is a masterpiece.' The picture seemed to stir his soul. Soon a little circle of respected admirers were drinking in a profound lecture on art. The physiognomic, aesthetic, anatomic aspects of the picture were discussed and dissected. The man talked with the charm of genius and the complete mastery of his subject. Shortly—when, with quiet dignity, he went out—a stranger asked: 'Who is that?' 'Steele MacKaye,' was the response, 'the Sphinx of New York!—a mystery. Every one knows him as an eminent playwright, but he is also artist, scholar, philosopher. In his early twenties he was one of the best known art connoisseurs in Paris. His life work is a book on aesthetic philosophy. He is a teacher, to whom college professors might, and indeed do, go to school.'20
A second incident of the same nature involved the expertise which MacKaye brought to his position as art broker. When MacKaye's contract expired in 1867, the head of the New York firm, Bowles, Druvet, and Co., financiers to the Bouté Brothers' gallery, wrote the following in a brief letter to MacKaye: "During the time you acted for us in Paris in connection with our art matters you were active, expert and evinced rare taste and skill, performing your undertaking faithfully."21 After MacKaye completed this job, his knowledge of painting, along with his critical skills, and success as an artist, were substantial enough that he desired to set up his own institute of art in New York that would rival the "great house of Goupil."22 However, this ambitious plan was never put into action. Instead, MacKaye turned his attention to an invention that totally captured his imagination, the "photosculpture."

The Photosculpture

During his art purchasing tours MacKaye came across the photosculpture. It was invented by François Willéme. A company brochure obtusely explained the invention and its resulting product: "It is a photograph in marble, plaster of Paris, bronze, iron or stone."23 The device created mechanically-cut sculptures that were guided by photographs of the subject. In 1867, together with a number of business partners, MacKaye bought the U.S. patent, and with a capital investment of $100,000, the photosculpture was launched in America.24 (MacKaye's investment was $15,000 from his father.)25 He spent the next two years developing and marketing it.

A prospectus for the photosculpture, written by MacKaye, details how the machine worked. In contrast to traditional sculpture, which requires a subject to sit before the artist on several occasions, the new device required a minimum of the model's time: "A person desiring a statuette, bust or medallion of himself need pose but once, from one to twelve
seconds." Twenty-four photographs of the subject were then taken simultaneously from cameras set up in a circle. (The arrangement of this apparatus required a large rotunda for the laying out of the two dozen cameras.) Once taken, the photographs were then projected "by a magic-lantern," to obtain an outline of each photograph traced onto paper. The outlines were subsequently arranged with a central axis running through them. A similar axis was then run through the center of a piece of clay. The prospectus goes on to detail the operation: "Then the Pantograph is used, one arm of which follows the tracing on paper, the other—which contains a clay-saw, or needle,—being governed by the tracing arm. The figure is cut by revolving the clay upon its axis (while tracing from the drawing) by degrees corresponding with the intervals of view between the photographs obtained in the Rotunda." As the pantograph traced the twenty-four outlines the photographed figure "gradually appear[ed]" carved out in clay. The finishing touches were added by the sculptor who cleaned up, rounded out the edges, and cut in details wherever needed. During the creation of a bust or portrait this would have involved adding details to the figure's face and clothing. 26 A certain level of skill was needed in the latter half of the process, as the carving of details demanded an ability to sculpt. The advantage of this device over traditional sculpting was that an accurate proportional balance of the figure (difficult to get with free-sculpture) was guaranteed. 27 This enabled the sculptor to spend more time on detailed aspects of the sculptures, rendering them with increased verisimilitude. Thus, skilled artists could work on the finer points while trained workers could run the cameras and the pantograph; thereby creating an assembly-line sculpting studio. Clearly, MacKaye had sufficient skill in sculpting that he easily took to the role of sculptor demanded by the invention.

The prospectus of the photosculpture includes examples of the different applications of the device, showing numerous photographs of various types of sculptures turned out by the invention. Some were: "General Grant," "Bacchante," and "La Source." The
photographs of these works tell more about MacKaye and his artistic approach than the
description of the device itself. Thus, the photograph of the "General Grant" statuette
showed the brooding general sitting in uniform with crossed legs, cigar in hand, apparently
musing on great thoughts. The "Bacchante" was an "ornamental" statuette of a nude young
woman reclining on her back. A third photograph, showing a statuette titled "La Source,"
was another nude young woman leaning over rocks gazing into an opening from which
water sprung. Of the sixteen photographs detailing the different applications of the
photosculpture, over half show sculptures of classically-inspired nudes. Apparently, the
photosculpture turned MacKaye into a copyist, which was what he believed most sculptors
to be. Yet the suggestion that MacKaye's work was derivative need not be pejorative.
Photosculpture clearly permitted MacKaye to go further in his study of art than the two-
dimensionality of painting had allowed. In the rotunda of the photosculpture studio,
MacKaye experimented with classically-inspired subject matter. Playing with three-
dimensional shapes by molding and arranging his sculpture models, MacKaye created
imitations of classical works while at the same time fulfilling his desire for the creation of
the "natural and the real."28 Through photosculpture, statues could be made to seem truer
to life than ever before by using technology that actually captured life as it was witnessed,
in its precise relational proportions. This increased the verisimilitude of the finished pieces,
and perhaps allowed a speed and accuracy greater than was previously possible.

Modeling of the human figure in three-dimensional space would later become
important to MacKaye in moving actors around the stage successfully. MacKaye's work as
a sculptor may also have later had an impact on his approach to acting, as at this time it was
generally conceived that "[t]he [competent] actor ... made a picture of himself, ... even a
statue, [while] ... acting manuals advised the player to study ancient statuary for graceful
attitudes and forceful expressions of the passions."29
While MacKaye's work with the hybrid medium of photosculpture expanded his visual vocabulary, it also typified a pattern of behavior that MacKaye was to repeat throughout his career; pursuing novel artistic ventures for a period of time and then moving on to new projects at the expense of seeing the earlier ones completed. With the connections of MacKaye and his father, the photosculpture company managed to get noted public figures such as family friends General Ulysses Grant, Admiral Farragut, and Horace Greeley (a prominent politician and journalist) to pose for statuettes. Yet, even with such support, the photosculpture project never realized a profit. Within two years the charm of the invention appears to have worn off for MacKaye. In his letter of resignation to the president of the company he stated: "From 8 A.M., often till late at night, I have my operators to educate, my photographers to oversee, my tracings from the lantern to make, and I must bear the sole responsibility for success. ... Now, sir, my interest in the stock cannot pay me for this anxiety and strain." Not having put up money in the company himself probably made it easier for MacKaye to walk away from the project. The substantial sum invested by Colonel McKay did not appear to be a concern for the young artist. Having all interest in the invention driven out of him by overwork, lacking any personal financial stake in the business, and perhaps most importantly, having no public success with this art, MacKaye moved on to other interests. The photosculpture company folded soon after his departure.

MacKaye's interests in painting and sculpture co-existed with a love of theatre. Throughout his extended trips to France, first as a student and then as an art broker, MacKaye often went to the theatre. In the development of his artistic sensibilities theatre also took hold of his artistic imagination. Indeed, if not for strong familial opposition, MacKaye might have skipped all his other art training: "In ... [MacKaye's] own nature, the choice of profession between painter and actor was a struggle made turbulent by his father's absolute opposition to the career of an actor. But for that, he might have entered..."
upon his work in theatre ten years earlier than he did." MacKaye's eventual decision to embark on a career in the theatre did not extinguish the influence that painting and sculpting continued to have on him, however. His background and training as a visual artist gave him a strong foundation that he would not have had had he gone straight into theatre. Twenty years after his initial involvement with painting and sculpting, the impact of the visual arts on MacKaye's philosophy of theatre is apparent in an article written by him:

The natural expression which potentially limits human manners and most deeply concerns the sculptor, the painter, and the actor is pantomime. This form of expression is the radiation of the soul into motion; it is the most patent of all those mental manifestations because it reveals the subtlest depths of human nature. Pantomime is the primary mode of expression in life; it is fundamental and most profoundly significant. It appeals to the eye instead of the ear, and therefore, penetrates the mind with greater force and appeals to the soul with subtler potency than any other form of expression .... In identifying pantomime as the major concern of the painter, sculptor and actor, MacKaye brought together his various forms of artistic training. Clearly, his growing interest in acting was nothing more than an extension of his earlier studies. To explore painting and sculpting was to explore pantomime, and to explore pantomime led him increasingly to explore acting.

Early Acting

MacKaye's groundwork in theatre was laid with his family's interest in the medium. While no comprehensive record exists of what plays MacKaye saw in his formative years, his family frequently attended the theatre. One journal entry by MacKaye's sister notes that as early as 1859, while residing in New York, the entire family went "to
Laura Keene's to see The Heart of Midlothian," and that the play was "admirably put on."35 On October 10, 1860, she wrote that the family went to see "Brougham's new play, Playing with Fire" at Wallack's Theatre.36 On November 20th of the same year MacKaye's sister notes: "With Jim [Steele] to see Miss. Cushman in Meg Merriles."37 The socio-economic position of the MacKaye family permitted young Steele to see some of the finest actors of the period. Indeed, much discussion of plays and actors took place between MacKaye and his siblings, as he had definite favorites. Some actors that fueled the fire of MacKaye's acting desire were the stars of the day: Adelaide Ristori, Edwin Booth, and Matilda Heron.38 (Later in his career MacKaye was to gain the professional friendship of Booth and Heron, and for a period, boarded his family with the latter.)39 During the same period young MacKaye performed his own versions of plays in secrecy, as one of his cousins recalled: "Acting was considered very dreadful by his Scotch Aunt Sarah, so Jim didn't talk about it in the family. But on a visit to Rochester (about '58 or '60) he took me up stairs to the sitting-room, locked the door and recited the whole play of The Merchant of Venice. I never saw anything so expressive! And when he acted Shylock, I was so frightened: I can just see how he came at me--his eyes! Oh, it was tremendous!"40

MacKaye's interest in acting continued while he was a painting student in the early 1860s. He practiced "dramatic art" in a self-regimented training routine of exercises (seemingly invented by himself). Writing about MacKaye during this period of his life, his son Percy MacKaye identified the growing split of artistic interests: "In the following self-imposed schedule is evident the strong inward pull which the pictorial artist felt towards the art of the actor."41 This observation referred to one of MacKaye's notebook entries of a schedule of daily exercises. While there is no evidence that MacKaye actually followed the schedule, it expressed his pronounced interest in acting and a desire towards formal self-training. The schedule read:
**Pantomime and Expression: 1861**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00 o'clock till 2:00 o'clock</td>
<td>Drawing and Painting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00</td>
<td>Dramatic Exercises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00</td>
<td>Exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:20</td>
<td>Voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:40</td>
<td>Body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00</td>
<td>In Pantomime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:20</td>
<td>In Calisthenics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:40</td>
<td>In Emotional Expressions of Countenance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:1/2</td>
<td>Miscellaneous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:1/2</td>
<td>2 Evenings in week: Specialty.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Four hours a day were spent drawing and painting, and only two hours a day were spent on dramatic exercises, suggesting that MacKaye's primary interest was painting (and would continue to be for another nine years). However, the rigorous breakdown of dramatic exercises into numerous categories shows his apparent knowledge of some specific skills required by actors.

In this early period of painting, theatre-going, and private sessions dedicated to physical exercises, MacKaye also spent considerable time thinking and writing about acting and actor training. He was attempting to analyze acting from a scientific and physiological point of view, as recorded in a journal entry from February 7, 1862. Here MacKaye showed a keen perception of the actor's art, especially with regard to the physical changes that came over the emotionally-engaged actor. The language he used reveals his belief that science could be employed to help identify the workings of an actor. This initial desire to apply science to acting clearly came from the emerging scientific revolution of the mid-century. MacKaye—like many before him—thought that by being able to describe the exact
muscles in use during a specific emotion, an actor could get closer to portraying the emotion with greater verisimilude:

In the expression of the passions there is a compound influence at work. Let us contemplate the appearance of terror: Eyes intently fixed upon the object of his fear; the eyebrow elevated to the upmost; the eye largely uncovered; with hesitating and bewildering steps, his eyes wildly and rapidly in search of something. ... Observe him further: a spasm in his breast; the muscles of his neck and shoulders in action, his breath short and rapid; there is a convulsive motion of his lips, a tremor on his hollow cheek, a gulping and catching of his throat. His heart knocks at his ribs while yet there is no circulation, for his lips and cheeks are ashy pale.43

Later, MacKaye became even more scientific in identifying the physical changes that the actor must undergo: "[In portraying] ... fainting or approaching death, the four voluntary muscles of the eye resign their action, insensibility creeps over the retina, the oblique muscles prevail, the pupil is revolved so as only to expose the white of the eye. In laughing and crying, the outer circle of the orbicularis contracts, gathers up the skin about the eye and simultaneously compresses the eyeball."44 These observations were important to MacKaye both as part of his self-training in dramatic art, and also in his later formal acting lessons.

Having such a strong interest in theatre, MacKaye created an opportunity for himself to act. He had briefly performed while an instructor at Eagleswood, helping build a stage at the art school and playing the parts of Mephistopheles (Faust) and Claude, Prince of Como (The Lady of Lyons).45 However, his greatest early exposure as an actor came during his army service. While stationed in Baltimore MacKaye became involved with the Seventh Regiment Amusement Association, which provided entertainment for troops before they moved to the battlefront. During August 1862, the association staged at least
five different performances, in all of which MacKaye participated. These productions gave him his first public success as an actor:

A stage was built within the hollow square, formed by the wings of the barracks. There on 'acting nights,' the trees of the parade ground blazed with Chinese lanterns. The scene presented the guise of a fashionable ball, for the audience of soldiers in dress-uniform were all volunteers from among the first New York families, and their fair guests in crinoline, escorted by gleaming tophats, were drawn from the best society of Baltimore.--For the evening of August 2nd, 1862, festal preparations ushered a scene from Othello, in which James Steele McKaye [sic] played Othello and John H. Bird Iago. Followed by a musical interlude, the evening ended with dancing and refreshments, while Grafulla's Band played under the moonlit leaves, and the marching tread of passing regiments, going to the front, accompanied the dancers' feet.46

The report continued:

Growing ambitious, the Association on August 8th rendered The Merchant of Venice, in which J.S. McKaye [sic] acted Antonio.--After this, the whole regiment became stage-struck, the members spouting their parts at mess. Shakespeare's works were in demand, and Julius Caesar was soon given, with J.S. McKay as Cassius. The next production was remembered by Baltimore society as the most brilliant dramatic affair ever given in their midst. On the evening of August 15, 1862, the curtain rose on a performance of Hamlet, with J.S. McKay as the Melancholic Dane.47

MacKaye's performance in the role of Hamlet impressed at least one theatre professional. John T. Ford, manager of the Ford Theatre in Washington, D.C. (whose property was the site of President Lincoln's assassination three years later) offered MacKaye a full-time
position with his repertory company as lead juvenile whenever he received his discharge. This offer was never taken up.

At this time MacKaye's acting experience was confined to dramatic scenes rather than entire performances. In Hamlet, only act one, scenes four and five were performed. Similarly, MacKaye's four other performances in August of that year (each a week apart) were also just selective scenes. In one month MacKaye acted five different Shakespearean roles with his regiment, a feat unattainable by an amateur actor if each role was part of a full play. His biographer's suggestion that MacKaye acted the complete roles of Hamlet, Othello, Antonio, Cassius, and Shylock seriously obstructs a proper understanding of MacKaye's acting ability at this point in his career. Clearly, the ability to carry two scenes from Hamlet, especially the two involving Hamlet's confrontation with his father's ghost, is much different than an ability to perform the entire role. Nevertheless these scene studies fit into a continuum that took MacKaye from painting into theatre.

Many years passed between MacKaye's initial appearance in public and his formal study of acting. His employment as a professional art broker followed on the heels of his army service, after which came his two year involvement with the photosculpture. The conclusion of the photosculpture endeavor left MacKaye with financial problems. Within six months of his quitting this project, Colonel McKay refused to finance his son's upkeep. MacKaye had married while in the army, and his unemployment brought hardship to his young family. For nearly a year after that MacKaye worked as a freelance artist, using the one employable skill in which he had training. His wife recalled: "He sold ... [his paintings] for whatever he could get—a pittance each. So there we were, cut off with a shilling and living in hope! Men came and looked at the sketches while he was painting them. Sometimes they bought some!" MacKaye's failed efforts to support his family changed Colonel McKay's mind after a year. He capitulated and proposed to finance Steele's aspirations as an actor, demanding that, since Steele was set on pursuing this
occupation, he should study in Paris because it was "the one place in the world ... where supremely the drama is considered as an art, rather than as a mere source of amusement, personal exhibition, or money making." MacKaye agreed to this and traveled to France to begin formal theatre training in July 1869.

**Delsarte**

In the early fall of 1869 MacKaye was to start training at the Comédie Française's Conservatoire with François J. Régnier (director of the institute and an actor who had success in Eugène Scribe plays). Before classes with Régnier officially began, these plans were interrupted by an unscheduled meeting between MacKaye and François Delsarte, an acting teacher who had had many distinguished pupils (most prominently the celebrated Rachel) and was still influential in Parisian acting circles. Having weakened his voice on the French stage due to improper training, Delsarte spent his life studying oration and over the years developed a precise system of formulaic laws for speech and gesture. As his critical acclaim and popularity were fading, Delsarte was looking for someone to carry on with the theories he had amassed during his career of instruction. This person was to be Steele MacKaye.

After their first meeting MacKaye pulled out of the Conservatoire and his commitment to Régnier to study solely with Delsarte. His quick decision was the result of two things: MacKaye felt that Delsarte's philosophy of acting complemented much of his own personal study of the craft; and a bond that can only be described as mystical immediately arose between the two men. It happened that MacKaye looked so like the recently deceased son of Delsarte that when he initially entered Delsarte's room, the old man cried out, "My son! My son!" MacKaye read predestination into his fortuitous meeting with Delsarte, believing that carrying on Delsarte's work had been something he
had been preparing for since his earliest days of dramatic exercises and analyses of physiognomy. His belief was strengthened by his physical resemblance to Delsarte's son.59 (MacKaye's sense of mysticism was to surface at various later points in his life—including seances to contact his mother who died when he was young—though none were as overtly influential as in this instance.) Delsarte rapidly took MacKaye into his confidence and placed the hope of having his life's work (previously earmarked for his deceased son) continued by MacKaye, who eagerly accepted any and all instruction.

MacKaye devoutly consumed his private lessons with Delsarte. From October 1869 to July 1870, he was Delsarte's pupil. During the latter point of this period MacKaye conducted numerous classes for his teacher, with Delsarte present as a corrective observer. MacKaye's rapid progress from pupil to disciple was largely the result of the close fit between his personal study of acting and the material Delsarte was teaching. No doubt the men felt mutual admiration: MacKaye's admiration for Delsarte must have come from having his personal ideas about acting validated by a celebrated acting teacher and Delsarte's admiration for MacKaye might have come from the fresh response to and immediate comprehension of material he had spent a lifetime accumulating.60 This devotion to Delsarte was to change, but never to leave MacKaye.

The Delsarte system of oratory which MacKaye brought to America became the single most popular method of speech training in that country from 1870 to 1920, although it was subject to much confusion in later years as a result of Delsarte himself never having published a word.61 Delsarte planned on publishing his approach to oration (having drafted five chapters for a book tentatively titled *My Revelatory Episodes*) but he died before he could see the project through. Subsequently, many of his pupils came forward and published conflicting notes from Delsarte's lectures, creating a confusion as to his intent.62 The acting theory of Delsarte was essentially a "scientific" system intended for oratory. This theory of oratory was to free the speaker from artificial actions and was based
on the idea that "under the stress of natural instinct or emotion" a person's body took on the appropriate posture, allowing for the correct inflection to come forth. Thus, his system was a careful study of the body's natural reactions under stress. Regarding its practical application to actor training, the clearest description was MacKaye's:

Nearly every human being in this world has by nature or by habit certain unfortunate mannerisms. M. Delsarte's idea of dramatic art, as an art, is to rid a man of his mannerisms as far as it may be done, to do away with his individuality, so that in the various parts he plays he will not always play himself. I mean that a man to be a true actor must not only possess the power to portray vividly the emotions which in any given situation would be natural to himself, but he must study the character of the man whom he impersonates and then act as that man would act in a like situation. This is what Delsarte taught and what Rachel, Sontag, and Calvalho studied with him.

While the philosophy that informed Delsarte's system of oratory was unique (i.e., it combined science and metaphysics) much of the practical advice he offered was similar to oratory instruction in the tradition of Cicero and Quintilian. Earlier in the nineteenth century many manuals instructed actors on the craft of oration in this way. Indeed, the period's organized approach to oration and acting had a direct connection to the way that audiences were to "read" any given performance: "The business of the actor was to pictorialize ... passions ["joy, grief, anger, fear, jealousy"] in order to make them accessible and understandable to the audience ...." In keeping with the romantic tradition, actor training of the time (including Delsarte's approach) demanded that the actor should always complement the overall pictorial beauty of the scene rendered on stage: "Thus the body and the voice of the actor were to be consciously beautiful, a doctrine which also accorded well with the considered beauty of scene painting and the stage picture." Though MacKaye lived a generation after such thoughts were held, they were significant for him. Over the
length of his career he made careful study of the many compositional elements on the stage, from actors to scene painting to lighting to the use of space itself.

The philosophic engine that drove Delsarte's system was an elaborate structure based on the Holy Trinity of the Christian Church. In this view, all art and science had a Trinitarian origin. Mirroring the three persons of God, man was conceived of as having three parts: "Life" found its spiritual equivalent in the Father; "Mind" was equivalent to the Son; and "Soul" corresponded to the Holy Ghost. This Trinitarian base was then used in all aspects of oratory, from gestures and vocal inflection to movement of the eyes and legs.

"Life" was expressed by "vocal mechanisms" (lungs, back of mouth, and larynx); "Mind" was expressed by the "buccal mechanism" (velum, lips, and tongue); and "Soul" by the "dynamic mechanism" (head, body, and face). Delsarte structured his system to break down into multiples of three in order to prove his overall assertion that all art and science were based on the Trinity. Each section of his system had sub-levels. For example, on the level of gesture the human was made up of the head, body and face, each of which had corresponding elements below it (i.e., thought, gesture, and language).

Delsarte's initial structure and its ideas quickly became complicated when he applied science to the Trinitarian template: "Gesture is founded on three bases which give rise to three orders of studies; that is, to three sciences, namely: The static, the dynamic, and the semeiotic." The idea of science (and the language of science) infused this metaphysical construction completely. Thus, Delsarte positioned this structuring device of the Trinity as "the criterion of all science." In this way he saw the whole purpose of science as "discovering the fundamental trinities of all things." Only in doing so would man establish the "raison d'être" of these objects' existence.

Many of the practical concerns discussed by Delsarte in his scientific model were similar to ideas that MacKaye had worked out for himself. Delsarte stated that "true artists never let their gestures reveal more than a tenth part of the secret emotion that they
apparently feel and would hide from the audience to spare their sensibility. Thus they succeed in stirring all spectators.\textsuperscript{72} This emphasis on restraint was close to that found in MacKaye's personal journal observations years before. "To preserve the dignity of his character," he had noted, "the actor must permit to escape only those uncontrollable signs of suffering which betray how much he feels and how much he restrains."\textsuperscript{73} Of course, as one scholar has suggested, the "theoretical background for the principle of strength without boisterous cries and violent movements ... is clearly immense."\textsuperscript{74} These ideas were expressed by Cicero, "For if the imitation is too extravagant, it becomes, like indecency, the part of players in pantomime and farce; the orator should be moderate in imitation, that the audience may conceive more than they can see represented by him ...."\textsuperscript{75} However, these specific practical concerns of Delsarte (and MacKaye) were meanwhile those of the nineteenth-century. Ultimately, such sublimation of the actor's emotions must be viewed in the broad context of the romantic school of acting. As one scholar has noted:

Conveying the ideal in a situation and restraining the passions within the bounds of the beautiful were naturally connected with the practice of sublimation. Thus the scream of the tragic victim must resound in the mind of the spectator, not in his ear. The classic-romantic tragedienne did not shriek at the sight of the torture rack, she merely evinced a nervous, girlish shudder.\textsuperscript{76}

As a boy, MacKaye had made close study of facial muscles to arrive at theories of expression; so too did Delsarte make use of close physiological studies. An article released to coincide with the rising interest in this oratory system in America noted that Delsarte had spent five years studying anatomy "to obtain a perfect knowledge of all the muscles, their uses and capabilities."\textsuperscript{77} One of Delsarte's more detailed observations concerned the eye. In a study of the eye's physical make-up (the eye, upper eye-lid, and eyebrow) Delsarte noted 729 specific physical attitudes available for the actor to use.\textsuperscript{78} For Delsarte, a shifting eye and eyebrow combination differentiated between the expression of particular
emotions, just as different muscles contracting different parts of the face reflected different emotional states in MacKaye's early theory. The reason for Delsarte's close study of physiology was explained in a contemporary article that discussed how his findings were applicable to other arts, and not limited to oration or acting:

In the play of the physiognomy every portion of the face performs a separate part. Thus, for instance, it is not useless to know what function nature has assigned to the eye, the nose, to the mouth, in the expression of certain emotions of the soul. True passion, which never errs, has no need of recurring to such studies; but they are indispensable to the feigned passion of the actor. How useful would it not be to the actor who wishes to represent madness or wrath, to know that the eye never expresses the sentiment experienced, but simply indicates the object of this sentiment! Cover the lower part of your face with your hand, and impart to your look all the energy of which it is susceptible, still it will be impossible for the most sagacious observer to discover whether your look expresses anger or attention. On the other hand, uncover the lower part of the face, and if the nostrils are dilated, if the contracted lips are drawn up, there is no doubt that anger is written on your countenance.... It is easy to conceive what a wonderful interest the actor, painter, or sculptor must find in the study of the human body thus analyzed from head to foot in its innumerable ways of expression. 

Delsarte's interest in the aesthetics of all art is further evidence of why a young MacKaye would have found kinship with him. Delsarte, like MacKaye, had closely studied the expressive aspects of painting and sculpting "[and] was a man who for years, in Paris, was the chief authority on expression in all the arts. Sculptors and painters brought their work to him to criticize." One later student of Delsarte, who was to trade on the popularity of Delsarte's name in America, spoke of the master's technique of inflection: "The voice should resemble the painter's palette, where all the colors are arranged in an
orderly manner, according to the affinities of each. ... Sound is painting, or it is nothing.\textsuperscript{81} Clearly, various forms of art interacted in Delsarte's comprehensive view of expression, just as MacKaye's training in painting, sculpting and acting were to interact and inform his later projects. Similarly discussed within the philosophical groundwork of MacKaye's later lectures on Delsarte's system of artistic expression, was an idea that illuminates MacKaye's growing foundation in aesthetics. As a student he investigated the broad area of visual art from its base, thereby showing his scientific building-block approach to the subject. MacKaye observed: "There are three things essential to all perception: light, object, and eyes. It is necessary not only to know what these factors of perception are, but also to understand in what manner they cooperate to produce the most perfect perception."\textsuperscript{82} Clearly, cooperation, co-ordination, and arrangement of perception were at the foundation of MacKaye's growing interest in artistic expression.

MacKaye took from his work with Delsarte a philosophy of acting that had a metaphysical conception of bringing about "a co-operation of the three languages of the body: the verbal, the vocal, and the pantomimic" for the actor.\textsuperscript{83} While some historians later argued that Delsarte's system was a mechanical and dehumanizing acting method,\textsuperscript{84} the system actually "advocated spontaneous creative expression" in the actor.\textsuperscript{85} Indeed, the intended purpose of Delsarte's system of expression was threefold: "[1] to develop the greatest physical power of expression by giving each muscle and joint its fullest and freest play, (2) to give a perfect command of gradation and contrast in the manifestation of emotion, and (3) to cultivate the habit of observing instinctively scientific principles of power and truth in gesture, and thus to secure to spontaneous emotion a prompt and perfect form of expression."\textsuperscript{86} With these as primary goals, MacKaye apparently created his own theory of "aesthetic gymnastics" as an addition to Delsarte's work; intending these exercises to focus development on "pantomimic expression."\textsuperscript{87} According to MacKaye, the gymnastics allowed a certain relaxation for the actor, letting him channel any potential
built-up energies into his impersonation: "The true secret of power is ease in force. In nature the expression of passion is involuntary, and therefore devoid of all sense of effort. These exercises are invented to enable the artist to develop to the utmost his power of expressing passion with the least sense of effort .... These [gymnastic] exercises give the artist an increased command of his body." 88 Thus, "[b]y continuous following of the Delsarte principle both in theory and practical application to human expression, one may become perfect in spontaneous expression. [The reason is that] 'Deeds in man's life become spontaneous if continuously performed, the action being deposited in the central nervous system.' 89

In what would cause much confusion surrounding Delsarte's teachings in America some years later, MacKaye took liberties in developing his own exercises based on his studies with Delsarte. He taught "aesthetic gymnastics" as a part of Delsarte's actor training. Early in his career he identified these exercises as being a part of Delsarte's own ideas. Later, with the increased popularity of "Delsartism" in America (due primarily to MacKaye's efforts) these additions were called into question. Other pupils of Delsarte's personal training surfaced to argue that these exercises were never a part of Delsarte's methods, and thereby called MacKaye's acting theory and its efficacy into question. Indeed, MacKaye's closest associates were split on the issue. After a forty-year exposure to Delsarte's ideas as learned under MacKaye, Franklin H. Sargent reflected that MacKaye "developed a great deal that Delsarte had left in an unfinished state, methodized much that was left in a purely inspirational and fanciful form by his master." 90 By contrast, Rev. William Alger supported MacKaye, recalling that in 1869 MacKaye had witnessed Delsarte instruct students in rigorous exercises:

The first thing Delsarte does, when he takes charge of a pupil, is to put him through a series of decomposing motions, to liberate every joint, articulators and muscles of the body: next, he puts him through a series of repositioning exercises to adjust the
organism for free and economical action as a harmonic whole .... [A]t that very interview, Mr. MacKay unequivocally said that this systematic arrangement of liberating and harmonizing exercises was designed by Delsarte as 'aesthetic gymnastics.'

With such contending accounts, the exercises' origins are uncertain. However, Alger concluded his report with a balanced assessment:

Steele MacKay, no doubt, has corrected some trifling errors in ... [Delsarte's system], developed some portion of it further, made additions to it, and improved the name perhaps by changing it from 'aesthetic' to 'harmonic.' There is due to him also the immense and imperishable credit of lovingly and livingly receiving it from its author and communicating its outlines to the public for perpetual transmission .... But the integral system itself, as such, was constructed and bequeathed to mankind by François Delsarte.

In later years, after becoming an established figure in his own right, MacKay felt the need to speak out against his critics, to reaffirm the great work he felt he had done in promoting Delsartean acting. Discussing this subject for an article that his wife was writing, MacKay explained the accusations and criticisms being made, and in doing so asserted his claim to the acting exercises:

In relation to Harmonic—or, as I first called them, Aesthetic Gymnastics.—they are, in philosophy as well as in form, absolutely my own alone, though founded in part, upon some of the principles formulated by Delsarte.—In the beginning of my teaching I never dreamed of separating my work from his, for it was done in the same spirit as his, and I cared not for the letter, nor the fame.—It is only now, when others are teaching so much nonsense in his name, and basing it upon the truths stolen from me, that I am forced to do this. It is not done to distract from the desert of Delsarte, but to defend us both from the frauds who trade upon and obscure—by
an irrational and sentimental presentation of incontrovertible truths—our philosophy as well as our names. 93

In a later letter to his wife, MacKaye assessed his position and attitude towards Delsarte, and suggested ways in which the pupil surpassed the master:

If Delsarte's name is well known, it is because I made it so—and did this by the formulation of his own teachings in a manner more lucid to the mass than his own formulations, and besides this, contributed that practical philosophy of perfection for the individual ["harmonic gymnastics"] which has most strongly impressed and seized upon the minds and hearts of the studious. That I sought no credit for this myself should not secure me the censure of the just. 94

The criticism of MacKaye for his additions to Delsarte's work was not warranted. As found in Delsarte's own writings on the subject, MacKaye's additions were a natural outgrowth of the student-teacher relationship, which substantiates MacKaye's letters to his wife. As related by another student, Delsarte believed:

The student of oratory should not be a servile copyist. In the arrangement of his effects, he must copy, imitate and compose. Let him first reproduce a fixed model, the lesson of the master. This is to copy. Let him then reproduce the lesson in the absence of the master. This is to imitate. Finally, let him reproduce a fugitive model. This is to compose. Thus to reproduce a lesson, to give its analysis and synthesis, is to disjoint, to unite and to reunite; this is the progressive order of work. 95

Thus, having been instructed by Delsarte, and then having taught for Delsarte, with the master "putting in a word" where necessary, 96 MacKaye continued the work, adding his own material. He never suspected that others would become so censorious about a subject Delsarte himself recognized only as a means to an end. That MacKaye could include his own variation of harmonic gymnastics in his dissemination of Delsarte's theories in
America was a clear indication of how fully he had learned his lesson at the hands of the master. Indeed, Delsarte acknowledged MacKaye's talent and how successful MacKaye had been. Delsarte wrote to MacKaye: "Barely one more year of such study, my dear friend, will be sufficient to make you one of the first dramatic artists of the world--of the world, do you understand? For any other man I should hesitate to have thus engaged my honor as a master and as an artist."97 Delsarte went further, clarifying MacKaye's stature publicly: "In Mr. MacKaye I have placed my highest hopes. He is called to reap the fruit of my forty years of incessant toil. He is not only my best pupil—he is more than that—he is my only disciple and the only one worthy to pretend to that title."98

MacKaye's exposure to actor training and theatre in France was not limited to formal study with Delsarte. His numerous earlier trips there to study, purchase paintings, and later to learn acting gave MacKaye the opportunity often to visit one of the premiere theatres during this period, the Comédie Française. Of his brokering days MacKaye later remarked: "... for about a year I was the agent of a number of the American bankers in buying pictures. My ruling passion, however, was the theatre. I saw hundreds of plays and got to know many actors as well as painters, with whom I naturally associated."99 Historian Wade Curry has noted that: "during the five years between 1858 and 1873 that he was in Paris, MacKaye could have seen more than 150 plays of the Comédie Française."100 With his financial resources, his growing interest in theatre, and his personal connection to the Conservatoire, MacKaye may well have seen far more than this number of performances at the Comédie Française. His exposure to this institution had a direct influence on the theatre that he later created.

Fresh from his actor training in France, MacKaye returned to America and launched a series of lectures on Delsarte's science of oration and acting, which in turn created an interest in the formal study of elocution that was to last fifty years. The lectures MacKaye initially delivered were important to his future work. As they continued to grow in number,
he increasingly developed a certain authority in the area of acting. By some good fortune (and social connections from his influential father) MacKaye initially lectured on Delsarte at prominent colleges and universities. This in turn had a reverberating effect on his popularity and he was soon asked to speak at other institutions. Additionally, through private meetings on the subject of Delsartean acting (one with Edwin Forrest who later publicly remarked, "MacKaye has thrown floods of light into my mind. In fifteen minutes he has given me a deeper insight into the philosophy of my own art than I had myself learned in fifty years of study") MacKaye received an invitation from Boston's Mayor and the Governor of Massachusetts:

Knowing, either directly for ourselves, or through the testimony of good judges, how thorough a proficient you are in the science and art of dramatic expression, as developed by François Delsarte--acknowledged to be, in this department, the greatest master who has ever lived--we join in asking you to favor us, and our fellow citizens at your earliest convenience, with an illustrative lecture on this subject, showing especially the connection of the laws of dramatic expression, in the system of Delsarte, with character, morality, esthetics and religion.

Among the eighteen signatories to this invitation were Henry W. Longfellow, two Harvard College professors, and various captains of industry in Massachusetts. Such invitations and signatories greatly aided MacKaye's credibility as an acting teacher, just as these lectures set the tone for the growing public personality of Steele MacKaye.

MacKaye delivered his first lecture in Boston on March 21, 1871. As reported in the local paper, the talk was successful: "We do not believe that a lecture on the scientific basis of the dramatic art, so rich and valuable in the fruits of the ripest study and skill as this one, has ever before been delivered." The lecture was a discussion of Delsarte's philosophy of acting, coupled with acting demonstrations using monologues from *Hamlet* and *Iphigenia in Tauris*. The reviews of MacKaye's numerous lectures on Delsarte often
mentioned an acting finale that apparently left all doubters in complete agreement with his "scientific" basis of acting. Perhaps the strength of the lectures owed most to MacKaye's considerable power as a public speaker, wherein he clearly made use of the oratorical skills taught by Delsarte. The Boston lecture was titled "Delsarte and the Science of Dramatic Expression." It was divided into three parts, and included aesthetic gymnastics. As recorded by a newspaper the three parts were: "First, an examination of the scientific basis of all the arts: second, the exposition of a few of the elements of dramatic expression; and third, the illustration of aesthetic dramatics, or the method of developing the dramatic power of expression in the physique." 104 Public interest was such that reporters tried to record the lecture in its entirety as delivered by MacKaye. Yet, in doing so the latter portions of the talk were not usually put to paper: "In the second and third divisions of the lecture the assistance of Mr. MacKaye himself would be so necessary to elucidate the meaning of his language that transcribing it would be useless." 105 Additionally, because the aesthetic gymnastics successfully used to conclude the lecture supported the initial scientific principles, MacKaye hesitated to acknowledge that these physical routines went beyond his studies with Delsarte.

In closing his Delsarte lectures, MacKaye physically demonstrated what had been discussed in the hours of the lecture. One reporter noted:

Then, as a grand summarizing of the exercises of the art, Mr. MacKaye showed a number of 'chromatic scales' or 'gamuts' of facial expression, as he called them, which were so astonishing and impressive as to beggar all description. In exhibiting these gamuts, he stood before his spectators perfectly motionless, except in his countenance, and, starting from the normal expression, would make his face pass very slowly through a dozen grades of emotion to some predetermined phase, and thence he would descend, reversing the previous steps, to perfect repose. Thus, in one instance he showed a chromatic scale of feeling running through satisfaction,
pleasure, tenderness and love, to adoration, and having retraced his steps, descended facially—if that is a proper expression—through dislike, disgust, envy, and hate, to fury. Again he exhibited with ludicrous but edifying vividness the transitions from repose through jollity, silliness and prostration, to utter drunkenness; and made a most astonishing but painful spectacle of his fine face by passing through all the grades of mental disturbance to insanity, and down all the stairs of mental weakness to utter idiocy. It would be hard to overestimate either the effort demanded for the performances of these exercises, or that by which the necessary skill was originally obtained. The impression produced was at once very lively and very profound.106

A number of these emotional states appear in three "Gamuts of Expression in the Face" written by MacKaye later. This list clarifies those gamuts performed by MacKaye in his lecture finales, along with a more complete account of the full range of gamuts he possibly demonstrated:

(IN THESE EXERCISES the features pass with careful precision through a series of expressions, closely allied in nature, dissolving very slowly the one into the other.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Gamut</th>
<th>Second Gamut</th>
<th>Third Gamut</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Indifference</td>
<td>1. Sobriety</td>
<td>1. Repose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Despair</td>
<td>5. Imbecility</td>
<td>5. Horror</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Percy MacKaye pointed out that the gamuts performed were not Delsarte's original work but part of Steele's own study which he appended to Delsarte's theories, adding that the gamuts were little more than an extension of the personal dramatic exercises created in 1861.108 Yet, MacKaye's chromatic scale of gestures and pantomime as delivered in his lectures were modeled closely on Delsarte's own work. An 1871 newspaper article of a
visit to Delsarte's studio detailed the master's performance in a class. Here, he enacted a
demonstrational finale that was strikingly similar to MacKaye's later lecture:

[Delsarte] kindly consented to speak a few words ... and to present a specimen of
his pantomimic powers. The latter exhibition was really surprising. He depicted the
various passions and emotions of the human soul, by means of expression and
gesture only, without uttering a single syllable; moving the spectators to tears,
exciting them to enthusiasm, or thrilling them with terror at his will; in a word,
completely magnetizing them. Not a discord in his diatonic scale. You were forced
to admit that every gesture, every movement of a facial muscle, had a true purpose
.... It was a triumphant demonstration.109

The similarity between MacKaye's finale gamuts and Delsarte's own
demonstrations helps to explain some of the physical effects performed in the last third of
MacKaye's lectures. Along these lines, a course on Delsarte's theory offered by Delsarte's
daughter during a tour of America, gave students specific physical exercises as originally
taught by the master. The first lesson initiated the student to them. Mme. Geraldly's first
remarks were simple: "God is Trinity. Man created in the image of God, bears the seal of
the Trinity. In these lessons we shall analyze our whole person. We shall dwell upon three
terms: Concentric, normal, eccentric. We find them everywhere." Indeed, these three terms
were used frequently by Mme. Geraldly, MacKaye, and other Delsartean instructors.
Although their meanings were not often defined, these terms served as the base from which
many of Delsarte's exercises were built. Unlike many Delsartean instructors (e.g., Mme.
Geraldly) MacKaye clarified the origins of these terms:

It must be remembered that human nature is a form of being that feels, thinks and
loves. The three distinct natures in man which co-exist are (1) a vital or sensual
nature which feels and acts, (2) a mental or reflective nature which thinks and
understands, and (3) an affectional or moral nature which loves and wills. These
natures have definite forms of manifestation. The vital manifests itself by convex forms and *excentric* movements, the mental nature is expressed by concave forms and *concentric* movements, and the moral nature is expressed through straight forms and *normal* movements. These three distinct forms of motion combine in the formation of gestures, attitudes and expressions of the body of man. Every gesture then is but a different combination of excentric, concentric and normal movements. Thus, the numbers, three and nine and their cubes govern the classification of all the elements of this art.\textsuperscript{110}

With her own implicit understanding of these terms in place, Mme. Geraldy began her explanation of Delsarte's exercises, beginning with the eye, "the most difficult." These three terms were simplified by Mme. Geraldy at the beginning of her lessons:

**Lesson I**

*The Eye and the Eyebrow*

| The Eye       | Concentric | Closed.  
|--------------|------------|----------
|              | Normal     | Open, without expression. 
|              | Eccentric  | Wide open. 
| The Eyebrow  | Concentric | Lowered. 
|              | Normal     | Without expression. 
|              | Eccentric  | Raised. ... 

**Lesson II**

*The Head*

| The Head       | Concentric | Bent forward.  
|---------------|------------|----------------
|               | Normal     | Upright. 
|               | Eccentric  | Bent backward. 

**Lesson III**

*The Hand*

| The Hand       | Concentric | Closed.  
|---------------|------------|----------
|               | Normal     | Open. 
|               | Eccentric  | Wide open.\textsuperscript{111} 

Having defined the three terms for these body parts, Mme. Geraldy combined them to perform the physical representation of various emotional states. A number of these physical expressions of Mme. Geraldy's also appear in MacKaye's gamuts, thereby
possibly showing the actual physical positions held by MacKaye in the grand finale of his Delsarte lectures. Regarding combinations of the eye and eyebrows, Geraldy offered the following list (the three terms noted above are transcribed into their actual physical states for clarity):

**Combination of Eye and Eyebrow**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eye</th>
<th>Eyebrow</th>
<th>Expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Lowered</td>
<td>Intenseness of thought. [Contention of mind]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Without expression</td>
<td>Heaviness, or somnolency. [Grief]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Raised</td>
<td>Disdain. [Scorn]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Lowered</td>
<td>Moroseness. [Bad humor]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Without expression</td>
<td>Without expression. [Passiveness]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Raised</td>
<td>Indifference. [Disdain]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide open</td>
<td>Lowered</td>
<td>Firmness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide open</td>
<td>Without expression</td>
<td>Stupor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide open</td>
<td>Raised</td>
<td>Astonishment.112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MacKaye's own lecture used similar diagrammatic physicalizations to represent his dramatic expressions:

Taking these three primary expressions [eye, upper eye-lid, and eyebrow] and giving their nine combinations, MacKaye ... [demonstrated] the nine expressions of the eyelid in its different degrees of elevation. Multiplying these nine degrees of elevation of the upper lid by the nine movements of the brow by the nine movements of the eye, one has 729 movements without considering the expressions of the lower lid. As MacKaye ... [concluded]: 'So that when I say there are so many expressions of the eye which you can detect, you see it is not at all surprising when you know how it is done.'113

Mme. Geraldy further described two of MacKaye's physicalizations when she wrote: "The expressions of stupor and of astonishment are greatly increased when preceded by a quivering of the eyelid (blinking). This should be very rapid and very energetic. Delsarte always insisted on this blinking."114 Most significantly, these two expressions are found
in MacKaye's third gamut. The later lessons, as physically charted by Mme. Geraldy, included head and hand movements that became more complex by applying combinations of the coined terms to singular elements of the body. Different movements of the head included, "Concentro-concentric" (head bent forward and to one side creating the expression of veneration) to "Normo-eccentric" (head bent "from" the person indicating sensuality). The hands received similar charting: "Concentro-eccentric" (wherein the hands were open but the fingers contracted, expressing convulsion) or "Eccentro-eccentric" (where the fingers were spaced wide apart and backwards, indicating exasperation). Similar employment of such head and hand positions in the expression of emotions were possibly used by MacKaye in his picturesque finale.

In closing his lecture with gamuts that demonstrated the scientific "expression of the face," and listing the specific attitude that each "face" was to portray before forming the "face," MacKaye pre-emptively inserted a suggested emotion in the minds of the audience. Clearly, the effect of his finale was as much supplied by the accompanying evocative words used to describe the pose (the "predetermined phase") as the actual pose itself. Thus, the impact of the material presented in this final section of MacKaye's lecture (i.e., both describing and affecting the pose so the audience could "properly" read or "get" the "emotion" of any specific pose) came as much from the evocative word he presented as from the actual facial expression. Of course, order was important to this effect. First, a verbal description of the emotion to be demonstrated was given (facial or pantomime) say "anger," this was followed by the physicalization of the emotion, say the facial representation of "anger." The resulting effect was that, the action of physicalizing the suggested word created an impression in the mind of the viewer of the suggested emotional state. The viewers could not have helped but "see" "anger" because the word had already been planted in their minds. Understandably, audiences would have accepted the gamuts as approximations of physical expressions of emotional states, because MacKaye had "led"
the audience in their responses. One list of "Emotions" which MacKaye reproduced
physically in his finale used evocative words:

Gamut of Emotions in Pantomime.

1. Reflection 11. Indignant Command
2. Meditation 12. Repeated Emphasized Command
3. Pleasant Surprise 13. Curiosity
5. Affectionate Appellation 15. Appeal of Mercy
7. Sincere Affirmation 17. Ardent Admiration
8. Astonishment at being disturbed 18. Loving Contemplation
   (and accused) 19. Passionate Entreaty
10. Anger 21. Calm Resignation

This demonstration list's highly suggestive language would have been instrumental in
creating audience acceptance of a physicalization of any particular emotion. Thus, any close
physical approximation of a stated emotion would be approved by the audience,
encouraging them to also accept the authenticity of the scientific basis of MacKaye's system
of emotional expression. Such situations often occurred according to many of the positive
reviews of MacKaye's lectures.

In April 1871, MacKaye lectured at Harvard College with H.W. Longfellow
presiding. MacKaye was again successful. He was invited by the college (the invitation
signed by a large number of distinguished people) to present a talk on Delsarte's theory of
expression. The formal tone of this and other lectures is found in the definition MacKaye
gave to dramatic art: "Dramatic Art—true to its highest destiny—would convert the theatre
into a unsectarian temple, where both high and low would be brought into sympathetic
rapport; where the most opposite classes might learn to understand each other better, and to
love and respect each other more."116 This tone appealed to the student body of Harvard,
as did the subject matter, for it evoked the following response from a reporter for the

*Harvard Advocate*
The lecture in Massachusetts Hall, on the evening of the 21st, by James Steele MacKaye, whom a writer in the *Atlantic* calls 'the favorite disciple of the Great Delsarte,' was attended by between two and three hundred persons. ... The lecturer proceeded to a brief description of the 'scientific basis' of his art. ... The lecture was listened to throughout with an interest it well deserved. More forcibly than anything else could have been done, it brought home to our minds a sense of our own deficiencies in elocution, concerning which so much is said and so little done at Harvard.\(^\text{117}\)

Such a criticism of his own college, by a student reporter, suggests a growing public interest in the ideas of MacKaye's lectures. His work clearly elicited much curiosity about elocution and acting, and their "scientific" basis. Under the cultural impetus of the Scientific Revolution underway in Europe and America at this time, an elocution system based on a scientific method appealed to many.\(^\text{118}\)

Of course, MacKaye's language in his lectures was of its time. In his early talks, MacKaye used the term "philosophy" to describe his study of human expression. Many of his public speeches stressed this so much so that a friend eulogized MacKaye by discussing his expansive knowledge of the "philosophy of aesthetics." MacKaye's position as an advocate of scientific study does not contradict his "philosophical" investigations, however. As Terence Rees points out, "philosophy" and "philosopher" were nineteenth-century equivalents of "science" and "scientist." The terms were a result of the scientist's focus: nature. Thus, experiments with nature (e.g., discovering that gas could be distilled from heated coal) were "philosophical" discoveries. Similarly, those who pursued such experiments were seen as "philosophically inclined."\(^\text{119}\) This aptly suited Delsarte and MacKaye's work. Like other scientists of the period they investigated natural phenomena and hoped to discover the nature (or philosophy) of the given subject. (An archaic definition of philosophy is "the investigation of natural phenomena.")\(^\text{120}\)
Correspondingly, MacKaye's use of the term philosophy was consistent with his use of the word science. Delsarte and MacKaye's philosophical explorations on the nature and craft of expression were collectively an attempt to find the basic elements, or science, behind the physical manifestations of human emotion. To do so was to arrive at the science of artistic expression. The excitement around MacKaye's lectures was that, with his Delsartean methodology, MacKaye thought he had found this science. Understandably, many people were excited about the possibility of such a scientific breakthrough.

In the ensuing months, MacKaye's public talks brought him greater opportunity to perform as Delsarte's disciple, which added to his stature as a recognized authority on the subject of acting. He lectured numerous times at the genteel Steinway Hall in New York City, and honored requests from the Presidents of the College of the City of New York and Columbia College. In anticipation of the Steinway Hall lecture, one reporter noted the great wealth of knowledge MacKaye was bringing with him: "In other words, he proposes, so as far as is possible in the brief space of a single lecture, to illustrate by posture, facial change and dramatic monologues the grand, general features of the wonderful art of his master [Delsarte]." The request by Columbia College was signed by twenty-two public personages including: Edwin Booth, Lawrence Barrett, John Brougham, John Gilbert and Lester Wallack. In putting their names to such a request, these theatre professionals clearly gave their stamp of approval to MacKaye. The reminiscences of a New York Herald reporter present for the first Steinway Hall lecture (April 1871) suggest how pantomimic, engaging, and authoritative MacKaye's lectures were:

His illustrations in gesture were wonderful; for instance, his pose of 'protection,' when, after an outward ascending sweep of the right arm, he brought it curving downward and forward—palm down, fingers slightly crooked, and arrested the movement suddenly at the level of his hip, stiffening his neck and clenching his lips. You could almost see the shrinking orphan he was protecting from the
imaginary burly tyrant. — Then the gesture with which he accompanied his half-smiling, half-piteous apology for reciting and acting Euripides in a swallowtail [coat]. He seemed in a single sweeping curve to cut off the Greek himation [short cloak] and define the modern, outer festal garment. ... From that April night ... the name of Delsarte advanced quickly to be a synonym of art expression the country over.123

The forcefulness of MacKaye's personality, along with his skillful rhetorical ability apparently unarmed the most skeptical audience. A reporter at one of MacKaye's private lectures noted: "His air was singularly authoritative. He never pleaded; he pronounced syllogistically. His earnestness, his eloquence, his knowledge, so wrought upon his listeners that they sat there till 5 o'clock [from noon]. They plied him with questions—metaphysical, scientific, religious: he answered them all—quietly and completely equal to the occasion."124 Such performances clearly supported the observation that "[a]s a lecturer, Mr. MacKaye was brilliant. He could think and talk on his feet with all the fluency of an orator."125 One prominent lecture-tour operator of the day, James Redpath (who managed the tours for Henry Ward Beecher, and Ralph Waldo Emerson) assessed MacKaye's appeal: "Mr. MacKaye is a 'star' of the first magnitude. I venture to predict ... that he will be as popular as John B. Gough or Wendell Phillips. The best proof I can offer of my sincerity is this: I have myself engaged MacKaye for twenty nights for Boston alone."126

This status as a public speaker stayed with MacKaye throughout his life. Over a decade after his initial lecture tour, regional newspapers still saw MacKaye as an authority. The Rochester Democrat reported in 1885 that MacKaye was "the foremost American expressionist of to-day."127 One year earlier, a newspaper article clearly showed MacKaye to still be using the ideas he had developed previously: "Yesterday afternoon in Library Hall, Steele MacKaye delivered his lecture upon 'Delsarte the Great French Expressionist.'
His talk was very interesting and was based on written questions from the audience. In defining the Delsarte system of Expression, he said that Delsarte merely discovered the natural laws which govern expression and formulated them.  

This lecture at Cornell University continued with an explanation of Delsarte's "Philosophy of Expression and Dramatic Action," which differed little from its first exposure in Boston. The reviewer explained: "Expression, said ... [MacKaye], is the manifestation of the soul through the actions of the body. Of the three methods of expression the speaker devoted himself mainly to the pantomimic. There are two kinds of pantomime, the elliptic, which expresses one's own feeling, and the descriptive. The first is subjective, the second objective." While some of the terms changed, MacKaye still used the metaphysic base of the Holy Trinity for his acting philosophy.

For a long period after his initial lectures, MacKaye's public persona in America was tied inextricably to Delsarte. The interest that arose from his series of lectures was sufficient that "a project was started to have a conservatoire here [in America] with Delsarte as master." In supporting this, MacKaye expressed his belief in the need for aspiring actors to have formal training, such as he had received in France. Delsarte died before the project got off the ground, yet this did not stop MacKaye. He continued to promote such a training facility for young actors, using what he had learned from the master. (MacKaye's call for an American school of dramatic art was influenced by his assessment of the Comédie Française, but it was also informed by the 1871 push for such an institute in Britain by his one-time mentor Tom Taylor.) Over the next ten years MacKaye opened (with various levels of sophistication) four schools of acting to train students. These were the first formal actor training schools in America. MacKaye's intent was clear:

I wanted to establish a school where ladies and gentlemen might get that preparation for the stage under circumstances so thoroughly reputable and agreeable that it is so difficult to find under the present order of things. Now, if a lady wants to go on the
stage, to have a thorough preparation, it is essential for her to go down and begin among a class of people that must be repulsive to her. If she refuses to do that she does not carry her talent to the stage. If we are going to have on the stage the same order of talent, the same grandeur of ability, that we find in the painters' and the musical art, we must, like them, have institutions of learning where students can receive full instruction.\textsuperscript{133}

The four briefly run Delsartean schools were the subject of countless speculative newspaper articles. Many questioned MacKaye's altruistic intention and thought his motive to be strictly monetary.\textsuperscript{134} One newspaper went out of its way to investigate the last and largest manifestation of this impulse, the Lyceum Theatre School. Interviewing various pupils who had paid a substantial sum for lessons (one hundred dollars) the paper detailed the shabby treatment students received. One former member of the school remarked: "the teachers were few in number, and of but ordinary ability, and no discrimination was exercised in the admission of pupils. All who could pay the hundred dollars were welcome. As a result the pupils are a heterogeneous lot; some of them are bright, intelligent and well educated, but alas, there are others so ignorant as to be unable to spell or pronounce correctly."\textsuperscript{135} Countering such accusations were statements from other students in other newspapers: "The pupils ... [of the school] are drawn from the best families in society. Most of them are ambitious, cultivated and refined young ladies who would never have dreamed of adopting a dramatic profession had it not been that this school ... proposed to place the matter on a basis of art education and make the stage representations worthy and pure. Such is the aim of the school."\textsuperscript{136} With these goals, MacKaye's Lyceum School attracted the daughters of General Sheridan and General Bank, and, at one point, could not keep up with applications, which came in at six a day even after tuition was raised to three hundred dollars a term.\textsuperscript{137} When the Lyceum accepted its first 112 students, overcrowding resulted, bringing about suggestions of raising tuition to five hundred dollars in order to
decrease applications. Evidently MacKaye's subject matter and its promise of scientific instruction tapped a deep root with a certain class of American society at this time. However, the Lyceum Theatre School only succeeded after MacKaye moved on to other projects. Then, under the strong management of Franklin Sargent, it steadily developed, eventually being renamed the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, which remains in existence today.\(^{138}\)

MacKaye's public position as the disciple of Delsarte was sufficiently well-known that he became the subject of an 1876 burlesque. Titled *Forty Minutes with a Crank, or The Seldarte Craze*, satirist George Melville Baker depicted the "Seldarte School of Expression" as headed by "Archimedes Abbott" and his sundry toadies, who specialized in specific lines of business. This matched the arrangement of MacKaye's own school. The last Delsartean acting school that MacKaye established, advertised having twenty-nine different instructors in such areas as: "Speech and Action," "Voice," "Pantomime," French," "Stage Business," "Dramatic Literature," "Special Voice Culture," and "Fencing."\(^{139}\) These categories were sent up in the burlesque. Here, the character of Prof. Archimedes Abbott (possibly named to pun with his eureka-like zeal for his new-found science) was the "Principal of the Realistic School of Expression," evidently modeled on MacKaye. According to stage directions, this character was to have a "quick and jerky" manner. The monologue in which Abbott discussed his "system" was to be accompanied by "rapid but distinct utterance[s], great enthusiasm, and many gestures." The other instructors were equally speared. Being a "Realistic School" it naturally followed that Prof. Ragmuffin [sic] headed the "Tramp" department. His costume was to depict the idea that Professor Abbott had "taken him from the streets." This line of humor was also applied to the other instructors. Prof. Pomdeterre headed the "Erin" department and was played in the "usual stage Irish costume." Prof. Bologna of the "Deutsch" department was dressed in the "stage costume of the [G]erman comedian" popular in this period. Prof. Snowball, of the "African" department, appeared
blackfaced and in the "costume of [the] end man in [a] minstrel show." The last instructor in this burlesque was Prof. Musty Knott of the "Curfew" department. He had a "stage-struck" sensibility that gave motivation for his actions: "His quotations and all of his speeches should be given in a melodramatic way; and when not speaking, he should have a sort of 'scenting blood' manner." The "Curfew" department's sole instruction was in the proper way of reciting the phrase, "Curfew must not ring tonight," while hanging on the tongue of an enormous bell. Apart from the lovers at the center of this burlesque there was one other character of note: Minnie Moneybags, "a pupil." In what was to be an obvious send up, this character was to be played as thirty-five years old, in a "very young" costume, and a very old face, complete with gray hair and eye-glasses! The character of Minnie spent the play handing over money to the professors for the slightest bit of instruction, and attempting to practice "the grand acrobatic feat, hanging by the tongue of the bell" while reciting the line, "Curfew must not ring tonight," in obvious satiric reference to the old melodramatic situation (used to much serious effect later by David Belasco in The Heart of Maryland).

In a closer satiric jab at Delsarte and his American exponent, the play parodied MacKaye's lectures in the very manner and diction he used. By so doing, the burlesque firmly suggested MacKaye's general reputation. The popularity of this play, and the corresponding public recognition of MacKaye as the American disciple of Delsarte, was such that thirteen years after it was initially written this play was reissued. Here, in an obvious parody of MacKaye's own lectures of Delsarte, Prof. Abbott orated (with "great enthusiasm, and many gestures"):

[But a year ago] I was a private citizen: today I am a great public benefactor, the original exponent in America of the Seldarte System, the founder of the realistic school of expression. Gigantic! sublime! immense! We are evolutionizing expression. Behold the evolution of dramatic art. True expression slumbered in its
little bed till Seldarte roused it to action. All other systems attack the outworks: we of the new school throw our bombs into the magazine of pent-up eloquence and open at once the avenues of speech, glorious! ecstatic! superb! No artificial concentric, eccentric and normal action of the legs, arms and torso; no passion save what the heart inspires. Feeling is the walking-beam of our engine: feel and act. ... Everything is law and orderly. Like the old school, the human frame has been classified. The legs, being the vassals of the body, we call vaseline; the arms, from the cunning of the hand, we style cuticura; the body, which until Seldarte discovered its proper place, lacked art, we style lactart; the face, from which its power of mimicry, moxie; and the head, whence flow ideas (tapping his head) sapolio. All original terms hypothecated by the great master. ... The old school starts the arms, legs, and face, working to draw fire from the heart and mind: we start with the fire, which we build in lacart, the center of the system, generating the steam which, permeating and electrifying, sets vaseline, cuticura, moxie, and sapolio working; and the result is genuine expression. ... We will now produce, by the realistic method, joy, grief, mirth, rage and fear .... [After which Prof. Abbott physically enacted gamuts of expression for comic effect: i.e., stepping on toes to create "rage," and tickling to create "mirth." ] Mirth, having its location under the fifth rib, we produce by manipulation ....

Having established a public persona of virtuoso acting instructor, philosopher-scientist, and lecturer, MacKaye took the next step; demonstrating to the theatre world his Delsartean method of acting as applied to an actual show. He did this in his first (semi-) professional stage production of Monaldi, January 8, 1872. The play was MacKaye's adaptation of Washington Allston's 1841 novel. The cast consisted of a number of students in MacKaye's first school. The play was received with strongly polar reviews, both praising and criticizing MacKaye's acting ability, and his Delsartean method. Some critics
regarded MacKaye's pantomimic abilities as beyond reproach. The most provocative of the reviews noted: "If Mr. MacKaye were paralyzed from the neck down, he could express more with his face than nine-tenths of justly celebrated actors could with all their physique. His speechlessness is as crammed with expression as a thunderbolt with electricity. His attitudes are language."143 However, other reviews were so poor that they provoked a public response by MacKaye, wherein he defended his first showing:

Some papers have represented me as claiming superiority as an actor for myself. ...
I distinctly stated that I was mere beginner—that I had hardly passed the threshold of Delsarte's sublime school. I opened this theatre to show what his system could do in a short time—and while my students have been praised, the system which gave them their repose and simplicity has been sneered at. I tried to make the public understand that I offered my present efforts merely as a slight promise of what might be accomplished by a four years' course of study, and hoped they would permit us to creep and walk before they would expect us to run; but we are expected not only to run but to outrun all others.144

Clearly, MacKaye's first commercial play also served the purpose of being the sounding board for an acting school (basically private acting classes) set up in coordination with his newly rented building, the St. James Theatre in New York. In the curriculum of these private acting lessons, MacKaye blended his training in the arts. Thus, slowly solidifying his artistic foundation, MacKaye mixed together his present activities with those of the past, painting and sculpting. A contemporary advertisement for his acting classes in 1877 stated: "School of Expression—Dramatic, Oratoric, Graphic, and Plastic—Practical Training for the Stage, Bar, Lyceum, and Pulpit. Also Practical Lessons in the Elements of Expression as applied to Painting and Sculpture.—23 Union Square, N.Y.—Mr. J. Steele MacKaye, only living disciple of the renowned François Delsarte, of Paris, announces that he has opened a School of Expression as above."145
MacKaye, in speaking of the students involved in his production of Monaldi, highlighted the aesthetic rarity they were attempting to bring to the stage. Similar to concerns which later appeared on his school circular, MacKaye remarked how he was training these actors as artists, sensitive to the subtle interplay of characters. Most importantly, MacKaye suggested that the strategies he used in this production were akin to those employed by visual artists (signaling the application of his earlier studies to his theatre):

There are many little conventional stage tricks, which doubtless almost any utility man of the boards may know, which we ignored. The subtle qualities of simplicity and naïveté, of sincerity, of appropriate listening, of artistic massing of light and shade, as well as the delicate and truthful management of contrast and graduation in the art—all these qualities I know are present to some degree in our acting.146

Just as his health had made him leave military service, so too it affected his acting. MacKaye's strenuous efforts to prove himself and his acting method caught up with him in this first show. The New York Herald reported: "Mr. MacKaye had acted his role of Monaldi with tremendous energy to the last act, where he impersonates an insanity. ... [He] himself fell exhausted upon the floor. ... MacKaye had played his part so faithfully that he had really fallen into a swoon of exhaustion."147 This collapse on stage in MacKaye's first full production was an indication that his acting career might be cut short because of poor health. He recollected of this period: "Then came the reaction from my overwork—congestion of the brain, attacks of fever, months of illness ...."148

Combining his success as Delsarte's disciple with his two minor openings in New York (the second, Marriage, was also staged at the St. James) MacKaye gained the emotional and financial support from his father which he needed to continue his newly chosen profession in greater depth. He returned to the Comédie Française's Conservatoire to study acting directly under Régnier, as he had originally planned. After only a month of
study, Régnier was so pleased with MacKaye's acting that more lessons were not warranted; rather, an official Continental acting debut was arranged for him. Because this was decided late in the theatre season, no appropriate venue could be found, causing Régnier to suggest a debut in London. "You have it in you ... to become one of the greatest of French tragedians. But you are an American; and in the high art of tragedy, Paris is too conservative of its own, to permit a foreign artist from America to succeed, without confronting him with staggering opposition," he wrote to MacKaye. With such advice, and strong support (having now met the standards of two French acting masters) MacKaye struck out on his own.

In Paris, MacKaye acted the roles of Hamlet and Richard III in the early winter of 1872 under the guidance of Régnier. His manner of getting ready for Richard III was charted in a journal he set aside for the study of the central role, titled, "Richard III--Act V [. Scene V[,] Study of the role of Richard." MacKaye first broke the scene down into the text on the right side of the page and acting notes on the left side of the manuscript-sized journal. The two left-side pages that were actually marked by MacKaye show a strong, almost scientific attempt at analyzing character as broken down into discrete units—the result of his formal training. No notations were made on the right side where the text lay, while the left consisted of eight areas under which MacKaye intended to place comments and observations. Most telling for his style of acting (and a concern of large proportion) was the first category, titled "color of voice." Under this he broke the first page of text for the character into three distinct sections, and using an unique system of diagrams (a combination of two distinct V-like icons separated by a "+" sign) noted how exactly the voice was to be "colored" for best effect in these sections. The second category of importance for MacKaye in this character study was "Inflexion." Following the lead of the first section, he listed three sentences from the character's speech and drew above them horizontal lines with small circles at various points in the short sentences, presumably as
indicators of exactly how these were to be read. MacKaye's formal skills learned under Delsarte were applied here, as the master himself, in studying vocal inflection, used similar looking lines and circles in distinguishing specific inflection. The first sentence was: "1. Give me another horse." The horizontal line ran across the top of the sentence until the "h" of the word horse when it became a small circle and then continued on to become an upward diagonal as it ended. The second sentence marked for inflection was: "2. bind up my wounds." Here "wounds" was underlined. The horizontal line above the sentence started in a small tight circle at the word "bind" and then continued as a straight line until the word "wounds," when another small tight circle was made after which the line ended on an upward diagonal. The third sentence considered by MacKaye for inflection was: "3. Have mercy Jesus!" Here the word "mercy" was underlined, while the word "Have" had a tight circle over it that became a minor upward diagonal line, peaking at "mercy" and decreasing in a downward diagonal on the word "Jesus!" Of course, MacKaye's inclusion of an exclamation mark is also significant in how he planned this line. (These three sentences actually occur in act v, scene iii of the playtext as it is currently published, and are the lines spoken by Richard as he starts out of his dream.)

The next six categories in MacKaye's scene breakdown were all placed under an abbreviated title: "Org. value." This is shorthand for "organic value." Organic values were those which Delsarte saw as expressed by the organic being (the actor). The first of these concerns for MacKaye in preparing for this role was the category he titled "Elipse" [sic]. Here, MacKaye again revealed his employment of a formal methodology learned under Delsarte. "Ellipse" was a Delsartean term assigned to the subjective expression of "one's own feelings." In this category MacKaye wrote in point form what he saw to be the character's feelings which were to accompany the three lines of dialogue. Of the first one he wrote, "1 Desperation but yet resistance," of the second, "2. Uncrushed but faint and despairing," of the third, "3. Crushed and cast great despairing effort for salvation
from infinite horror." Clearly, there was a subtle differentiation with which MacKaye hoped to imbue his expression of these lines. The next category, "gesture," is the most visual material in this document. Here MacKaye laid down his precise physical position at the start of the scene. In doing so he demonstrated the exacting nature he brought to the study of acting and the way his physical movements were all planned to be built upon one another. Before addressing his physicalization of the three lines, MacKaye noted his opening position: "Lying on couch--face to audience--head on arm--arm over head. Left arm over thigh--He groans 3 times--1. Lengthens right arm towards audience and rises on elbow 2. Rises [.] one foot on ground. Right arm stiffened left arm overhead [.] 3. Starts from couch and falls from knees crushed arms above head--head bowed." The next section, "Expression," continued with the use of the broken-down three lines and offered MacKaye's specific employment of Delsarte's attention to eyes. For the first section he noted, "1. lids half closed [.] eyeballs turned up [.] mouth working [.] chest heaving." The next two lines definitely built on the physicalizations he had begun with: "2. Like preceding only eyelids raised a little more showing more of the whites--3. in addition rocking of head." The last three categories employed by MacKaye in his scene study were "Attitude," "Stage Business," and "Reflexions." Unfortunately, MacKaye completed only the first of these three categories. "Attitude" was broken down into the three lines mentioned above, and basically reiterated the physical positions planned in earlier categories. Here MacKaye wrote, "1. resting on right elbow [.] 2. Right arm outstretched [.] Left arm on heart [.] Right leg on ground [.] right leg in advance [.] 3. On knees--Left knee advance [.] Arms lifted hands grasping head--head rocking."154 Apparently, after getting the right coloring of the voice, MacKaye concentrated on getting the proper physical reaction to the first three lines of Richard's act v, scene iii speech. In the annals of theatre this play (and more specifically the speech that these lines initiate) had quite a performance history. Most notably, David Garrick received much acclaim for his version of this speech.155 Indeed,
Garrick's rendition inspired a painting representing the very moment studied above by MacKaye.\textsuperscript{156} While different from Garrick's, MacKaye's prepared staging is very similar to descriptions of Edmund Kean's performance of the speech as described by Tieck in 1817:

[H]e 'staggered forward' leaning on his sword, and 'sank on one knee, then started back as if he wished to rise, holding high in the air his other arm, which shook violently even to the finger-tips; then trembling, staring with wide open eyes, he advanced in silent anguish on his knees ... still shaking with fright.'\textsuperscript{157}

According to this journal, MacKaye approached the script carefully. He evidently built his physical effects one upon the other and looked for his motivation from a careful assessment of the character in the play. He charted the progress of his character vocally, physically, and emotionally in arriving at the decisions that were to guide his acting choices. The formal training under his French masters evidently expressed itself in the methodological and apparently rigorous study of roles. Just as Delsarte argued that the voice should be arranged in an orderly manner, clearly MacKaye undertook his study of Richard III in an arranged and orderly way for reproduction on the stage.\textsuperscript{158} Looking to the tremendous amount of work put into three lines of text by MacKaye, it is little wonder that he did not continue writing down his detailed assessment of the role. To do so would have been an enormous endeavor requiring a great outlay of time. That he was trained to approach and initiate a role along such analytical lines shows his rigorous formal education under master actors (to say nothing of his earlier disciplined study of the complex facial and gestural sequences taught by Delsarte).\textsuperscript{159}

While MacKaye's acting owed a little to the romantic style of Edmund Kean, at the same time his rigorous preparations as an actor were in keeping with the manner of actor training generally called for earlier in the century by John Philip Kemble, who demanded that "[a]ctors must do something more definite—they must learn to devote themselves to the
principles of their art, as musicians, painters, and, sculptors do to the laws of harmony, perspective, and muscular action." Such a cry for formal actor training was the very basis of MacKaye's own studies, and his motivation for promoting Delsarte's work in America. He wrote: "The training of Delsarte is to the dramatic artist the same as a thorough knowledge of color and a patient study of nature are to the painter." He supported this stance by concluding that "Although finger exercises can not give to the world a fine musician, such masterly execution added to genius makes Chopins and Paganinis." 

With Régnier's help, MacKaye arrived in London and was introduced to prominent members of the literary set, most notably Wilkie Collins and Tom Taylor. Through this introduction to Taylor, MacKaye made connections that led to his London debut. In May 1873, he performed the role of Hamlet at the Crystal Palace, using Delsartean techniques. The Palace was a repository for curiosities and oddities, and in a strange way MacKaye's production fit the setting. Reviews of the performance were generally supportive, though often took into account the nature and effect of the space on the production: "[I]n spite of a miserable barn of an opera house, in which the acoustics are of the worst, and although this experiment of Tom Taylor's is outside of the theatrical cliques, so that it was to be expected there would be the most unsparing criticism, Mr. MacKaye has made a solid and legitimate success." After opening at the Crystal Palace, the show toured the countryside in repertory with a number of Taylor's plays. Unfortunately, the physical demands of acting took its toll on MacKaye's constitution: "[M]y health gave out and several nights I fainted before the end of the performance." This situation worsened and MacKaye eventually had to quit the tour. Afterwards, he recalled this period and its resulting consequence: "After my return to London ... my health was so bad that I gave up all hope of achieving laurels as an actor." At this point MacKaye looked to other occupations within theatre. With Tom Taylor as his guide, MacKaye tried play writing: "Tom Taylor and I were warm personal friends, and one of our many conversations led to our association as
playwrights. We collaborated [on] a number of plays ...."165 Specifically, the two collaborated on Arkwright's Wife (1873) Lady Clancarty (1874) "Time Tells All" (n.d.) "The White Rose of Allandale" (n.d.) "The First Printer" (n.d.) and "Twixt Axe and Crown" (n.d.).166 Thus, MacKaye gained a certain level of writing skill while under the tutelage of an established playwright. During the same period MacKaye also co-wrote a play, Jealousy (1873) with Charles Reade, a dramatist and novelist who was a close friend of Taylor's. While serving an informal apprenticeship in play writing, MacKaye also attempted to solidify the acting theories he had studied under Delsarte. In February 1874, he wrote to a friend: "Instead of going into the world as an actor, I have retired into my study, impelled by a great desire to more perfectly prepare myself to lay the foundations of a complete and radical reform of dramatic philosophy. I have been investigating with the greatest ardor the whole subject of Emotion."167 He went on to suggest three areas of emotion that he planned to study: physiognomy, physiology, and poetry.168 The mixing of science and aesthetics suggests that this idea of "Emotion" was MacKaye's attempt at synthesizing his own private studies of ten years earlier, his formal studies with Delsarte, his ground-breaking lecture material, and his professional experiences as an actor.169

MacKaye's poor health played an obvious part in his discontinuing acting as a profession, but there may have been other equally important reasons motivating his decision to pursue other aspects of theatre. Although he gave up acting as his primary focus, during the rest of his career in the theatre he did manage to perform occasionally: "After his English tour, MacKaye's acting was with one exception limited to seventeen roles in his own productions of his own plays, each role assumed only for a short period."170 Perhaps MacKaye was not as formidable an actor as some reviews suggest. Peculiarly, MacKaye was never again cast in any professional acting roles apart from his own plays. The only other shows MacKaye acted in were benefit performances to raise money for retiring actors, and even in such performances MacKaye typically was cast in
lesser roles. Of the four benefits that MacKaye is known to have been involved in, only once did he play anything but a minor character.171

In 1875 MacKaye produced his own play Rose Michel, based on Ernest Blum's French play of the same name (also 1875). The title character of this French Revolution melodrama was played by Rose Eytinge. She was to gain acclaim for this role, which initiated her success and reputation as a strong actor of this period, placing her on par with Charlotte Cushman, of a prior generation, and Minnie Maddern Fiske, of a following generation. Eytinge's talents as an actor were clearly recognized in her time, and as such she offers up a gauge to MacKaye's own acting skills. In her memoirs she mentioned her early association with him and recalled that MacKaye "thoroughly understood the art of acting, but he could not act."172 Following this personal assertion, Eytinge reminisced about the relationship of MacKaye and Tom Taylor. According to Eytinge, MacKaye not only collaborated with Tom Taylor in writing Arkwright's Wife, he also played "Peter Hayes," the villain of the piece, while touring with Hamlet. Percy MacKaye, in chronicling this period of Steele MacKaye's acting experiences, painted a pleasing picture of his abilities in Arkwright's Wife by citing positive reviews of the tour: "As Peter Hayes, Steele MacKaye displayed good quality in a thankless part, playing a villain so subtle, so repulsive, so calculating, that in some respects it may be considered the hit of the evening. At moments Mr. MacKaye over stepped the bounds, but at others his acting was a picture."173 In contrast, Eytinge recalled Taylor's reaction to MacKaye's acting in Arkwright's Wife: Taylor thought MacKaye was horrible in the role, an assessment in keeping with Eytinge's own view of his abilities.174

By 1888, while keeping busy with numerous other theatrical projects, MacKaye was still acting occasionally in his own plays. Apparently, thirteen years after Taylor's initially strong pronouncement of his ability, MacKaye continued to employ his early actor training. The passing of time did not diminish his reliance on Delsartean gestures as
physical expressions of a character's emotions. In this year, MacKaye wrote, produced, and acted in *Paul Kauvar*, to which one review paid special attention to his performance in the title role:

> [MacKaye] expresses everything by an ingenious system of physical symbols which conclude to be a demonstration of the theory invented by M. Delsarte, of whom Mr. MacKaye was at one time the apostle. He acts a kind of algebra so to speak .... It is only fair to say that he gets there just the same, and with an accuracy that fully bears out the simile .... His acting, in addition to these intelligible strokes, is further distinguished by a profusion of graceful but meaningless gesture and action, very much like a writing master's flourishes.175

Another review of MacKaye's performance in this production put it in more positive light when it noted that, "Mr. Steele MacKaye, whatever else he may be, is not a 'lisping hawthorn bud.' "176 A conservative theatre community may not have been able to absorb the radically different approach to acting that MacKaye kept over his career, which may be the reason he performed solely in his own plays. Indeed, MacKaye himself had long been aware of such a possibility. In 1873 he wrote to his father: "In fact, stronger things have already been said for me than ever have been said for Edwin Booth and harder things have been said about Booth this very winter than have been urged against me by the most prejudiced. I have secured a position which, at any rate, no American actor ever before attained in less than ten years of public performance .... I represent a new idea, a new school in my art."177

While MacKaye's training under Delsarte played a large factor in his approach to characters, his actual on-stage physical presence may have also been influenced by his general French acting background. MacKaye's keen study of roles places him in line with the nuanced acting which was typical of French actors of Delsarte and Régnier's period. Moreover, MacKaye's close blocking notes suggest a performance so carefully planned
that it was similar in this regard to a contemporary description of one particular French actor:

He had no dramatic instinct, but by dint of labor, he succeeded in perfecting himself. Everything was studied beforehand, and he never varied his method, taking the same number of steps today as he had taken yesterday, and regulating each movement with mechanical exactitude. If he had to sit down, his character should be always in precisely the same spot, not an inch to the right or to the left. If he had to take an object on a table, it should be so placed that he could find it with his eyes shut.178

Of course, MacKaye himself was not completely tied to particular actions in performance as his Richard III analysis may suggest; Delsartean acting had spontaneity as its final goal. Just as reviews of MacKaye's acting often commented on his gestures, so too gestures were a feature of French acting. One 1880 observation of this style contextualizes MacKaye's manner of performance, and implies the high level of debt he owed to the French approach: "The play of features, the conveying of meaning by mobile elevations of the eyebrows, an amused expression, and, above all, an abrupt gesture—it may be of impatience, but in anticipation of the words that follow—these, of course, are common to all French actors."179 Such gestures were the subject of George Melville Baker's parody of MacKaye.

Perhaps the most formidable judgement of MacKaye's acting ability came from the New York Times. In MacKaye's obituary, the newspaper gave a gentle yet substantial review of his theatrical accomplishments that may be the clearest assessment available.180 After taking account of all MacKaye's work as pupil and disciple of Delsart, and his championing of an innovative acting style, the reporter concluded:

But there was nothing in the acting of Steele MacKaye when he finally went on the stage to illustrate this new principle that differed greatly from other amateurish,
stiff, and awkward acting. With experience, he acquired some degree of ease, but never so much as the competent actor possesses. On the stage he was sometimes strikingly effective; both pictorially and dramatically but he was always an amateur.181

Although acting consumed MacKaye at the outset of his theatre career, his earlier training in visual art made him keenly interested in the larger issue of the aesthetics of representational art. Painting, sculpture, oration, and acting were all vital elements of MacKaye's artistic foundation. As such, acting was only one area of art that he explored, and thus to judge him on this alone would be short-sighted. In time, MacKaye arrived at an artistic sensibility that was difficult to contain within a single medium. He searched to create a form of theatre that could embrace these disparate interests in art. His larger aesthetic concerns and curiosities ultimately led him to integrate his background in art into his projects. Correspondingly, an article written after his death,182 asserted not only the importance MacKaye placed on the study of artistic expression in total, but the immense knowledge he carried with him:

Steele MacKaye was seen at his best among his peers, undisturbed by the exigencies of the playhouse. No one has at all equaled him in his extemporaneous lectures to art students; and very few men in his time anywhere had so compactly formulated the fundamental principles of the philosophy [science] of art.—His best work ... [should] have given him an eminent place in the field of aesthetic philosophy.
Chapter Two

The Madison Square Theatre

If the staging is done with care, the settings are well painted, and the properties and costumes conscientiously planned, the spectators are able to believe themselves transported into the precise environment in which the author has placed his characters. This is true illusion (Moynet, 1873).183

This idea of stage illusion defines Steele MacKaye's approach to his most renowned project: the Madison Square Theatre. Increasing emphasis in the late nineteenth century on expanding the illusionistic potential of the stage influenced the kind of theatre MacKaye created. Here, he used his knowledge of emerging technologies to support his concept of theatre. The Madison Square was MacKaye's first major expression of his theatre aesthetic based on pictorial illusion. All aspects of MacKaye's conception of the theatre: its physical structure, the innovations incorporated into the building, and his management of it, combined to set the aesthetic stage on which he placed his pictures.

American theatre in the last quarter of the nineteenth century underwent numerous changes. At this time the general rise in immigration increased the variety of cultures, creating social categories more distinct than ever before. Correspondingly, growing economic stratification further entrenched these distinct cultural classes in the larger cities of America after the 1850s, affecting such social recreations as theatre (sometimes with horrific results).184 Just as many theatre practitioners were responding to these changes, Steele MacKaye entered the profession. MacKaye became interested in moving away from the usual commercial concern of producing plays for mass appeal, and focused instead on attracting a more discriminating audience. He was not alone in this. The desire to go beyond "mere entertainment" in theatrical offerings found expression in the New York of
the 1870s in a number of theatres that appealed to audiences desiring "elevation," notably Lester Wallack's Theatre and Augustin Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre. These theatres attracted upper middle-class playgoers by presenting productions that traded on the exclusivity sought by these audiences, thereby catering to and affirming the sensibilities of the audiences' refined tastes:

First nights at Daly's [in the 1870s] were such sought-after events that he could select his audience from the representative names in town. All Gotham was sure to be there. He invariably stood at the ticket taker's wicket, with a word of greeting for the illustrious ones. At his back was the inviting lobby, hung with paintings, engravings and historic playbills, warm and homelike, where well-groomed people kept up a buzz of talk .... The lights were subdued and the curtain went up. There was a little flurry of music to bring the members of the cast on the scene, and each received his greeting as an old friend. It was all very much like a huge family party, well-ordered, sympathetic.185

This is the kind of setting that MacKaye heartily embraced when he entered the field of theatre, and it was this setting that MacKaye strove to improve.

Such theatres of this time specialized in plays that were sympathetic to the moneyed audiences' lifestyle. For this reason their selection of playwrights was equally important, and Wallack's Theatre was typical in this regard. For the greater part of the 1870s Wallack's "had exclusive U.S. rights to the new plays of Tom Taylor, [and] Tom Robertson."186 While not the only authors produced at Wallack's, these playwrights were the standard-bearers of English middle-class theatre sensibilities, writing plays that revolved around "the bourgeois values of domesticity, sensibility, and principled and virtuous behavior."187 Since the new economic aristocracy of America equated itself with its established counterparts in Europe188 these theatres specifically based their productions on foreign plays.189 MacKaye was similarly affected. Along with the general appeal of
English theatre, he was influenced by studies he had undertaken with Tom Taylor in the early 1870s. Taylor instructed MacKaye in the art of play writing. The resulting collaborations indicate that they shared some sensibilities regarding theatre. MacKaye was impressed by Taylor, as he wrote to his wife: "Here in England, I have been studying the art of play writing, and serving an apprenticeship under the best masters [Taylor and Charles Reade]." Notwithstanding the significant impact of English sensibilities and training, however, MacKaye's primary influence would come from the Continent. Before beginning work on the Madison Square, he revised and staged no fewer than four French plays. Along with two later stage adaptations of French dramas, these were the primary dramaturgical models for MacKaye, since the only other plays he ever fully produced were those scripted by his own hand. Ultimately, in building his theatre, MacKaye relied on the model offered by the Comédie Française. His fascination with things French was not unique, however, and may have been informed by sensibilities found in an earlier generation of Americans. Discussing the United States in the 1850s, historian Tice Miller explains that "[t]he new rich, with no social rituals of their own, looked to the old world for acceptable means to advertise their wealth and position. In New York this display was mainly French: French fashions, French books, French plays, French language, French music, and French actors." MacKaye's desire to open a theatre that would embody his own artistic ideals was a planned venture in which he invested much thought. In 1872 MacKaye had his first experience organizing and operating the St. James Theatre in New York. He rented this theatre and mounted two plays that were popular enough to run for three months. Their primary purpose was to show the applicability of MacKaye's Delsarte-based acting theory in actual productions. Apparently MacKaye lacked commitment to, and knowledge of, managing a theatre. This was exacerbated by the overwhelming number of tasks he was called upon to perform. "I had to manage the theatre, teach the pupils, attend to the smallest
details of the stage management, besides learning all the business belonging to a heavy part in a five-act play—the first that I had ever undertaken on any stage," he declared. At the end of three months MacKaye wrote to his father: "Although I had no one to manage for me, I made a better pecuniary success than Mr. Daly at his start .... Nevertheless I am done forever with management. I have fought out my experience, learned my lesson, and have resolved to concentrate all my energies on my training as an actor." Closing the St. James, MacKaye shelved this desire to use theatre management as a way of publicly displaying his theatre ideas until 1879, when he raised capital to open the Madison Square. During that interval, MacKaye started to soften his resolve. As early as 1874, he returned to thoughts of running his own theatre. He alluded to this, and an acting school he was later to form, in writing to a friend: "I spent a long time in Paris studying the organization of the Théâtre Français and the Conservatoire, with my good friend Régnier—who is director of the stage of the Français and Professor of the first class at the Conservatoire. In this way I have accumulated an immense deal of practical knowledge concerning the administration of a great school, and a great theatre which will be useful to us in the future." By 1879 MacKaye acted upon these growing impulses to develop a theatre and apply his earlier thoughts. His theatre was to be modeled on his knowledge of the Comédie Française and he let these ambitions be known to the public. Doing so, he signaled that his theatre was hoping to attract a similar audience as the Comédie Française: a culturally sophisticated and established group that could appreciate the subtle refinements of the building and the acting, and would be willing to pay for the privilege of attending. As suggested by an article penned for the opening of MacKaye's theatre, the public apparently received the message: Mr. MacKaye's intention ... is to establish a first-class stock theatre and he hopes, if successful this spring, to organize a miniature Théâtre Français for next year ....
A good play, a good company, a good location, and a good manager, offer this metropolis an opportunity to create a bijou theatre, like the London 'Prince of Wales,' if they want it. Mr. Wallack says they do not want it, and determines to star. Mr. MacKaye has resolved to remain and try the experiment. Mr. Augustin Daly watches the result with interest. There is sure to be a Madison Square Theatre next season.  

The theatre society which MacKaye broached is clear in the leading theatre managers' reactions to the assault on their stable business by this upstart operator. Mr. Wallack conservatively decided to dismiss such a challenge while Mr. Daly was more open to seeing what the competition was capable of doing. Indeed, MacKaye's new theatre was located on the former site of Daly's first "Fifth Avenue" (which burned down and was rebuilt in the early 1870s) possibly making Mr. Daly curious as to what could be achieved in resurrecting his old theatre. No doubt Daly's theatrical reputation, as initially established at the Fifth Avenue, was a consideration when MacKaye set about redeveloping the building: the shrewd MacKaye must have known that using the old Daly theatre and proposing a similar bill of fare would create publicity through comparison. The press of the day clearly saw room in the New York theatre world to accommodate MacKaye's undertaking. Commenting on his proposition, one reporter surveyed the field of competition and concluded: "There is room for another stock company in New York since Wallack's is soon to be given over to stars again, and the Union Square and Daly's will be left alone in the field." A different critic readily noted what MacKaye was hoping to accomplish, and understood the enormity of the task:

Nobody but a serious believer in the drama, and the public tone of it, would have undertaken the rehabilitation of the Twenty-fourth Street house. The merit of Mr. MacKaye's purpose is, above all else, an art purpose. I shall wait with interest to
see if a manager with an aesthetic idea, and a high dramatic ambition, will succeed in making society understand his aims, and in winning its co-operation. 200

To bring his concept to fruition, MacKaye was conscious of the appearance that the theatre would carry with the public. In selecting a name for the theatre MacKaye knew that careful consideration was needed to create the proper associations necessary for attracting a sophisticated audience. In this matter MacKaye's wife disapproved of his idea to name the theatre after himself ("MacKaye's Theatre"). This name was motivated by MacKaye having made a reputation for himself with his lectures on Delsartean acting. He clearly knew the importance of getting one's name familiar to theatre audiences, and in this manner decided to copy the theatres that he was hoping to compete with: Wallack's, Daly's, and A.M. Palmer's Union Square Theatre. Yet his wife warned him off this name by arguing: "Do think well before coming out with the name MacKaye's Theatre. If you were not to succeed (and how terribly uncertain are all things dramatic!) ... It is beginning too confidently on a great uncertainty; risking all on a single throw. Simply Twenty-fourth Street Theatre, or Drawing Room Theatre." 201 The intended audience for the Madison Square is clear in Mrs. MacKaye's latter name suggestion, one appealing to people who fancied drawing rooms. Her first suggestion: "Twenty-fourth Street," mimicked Augustin Daly's theatre, the "Fifth Avenue," by promoting location above all else. Perhaps due to the persuasiveness of his wife's ideas, MacKaye settled for a name that suggested location: the Madison Square Theatre. This location proved to be an important feature of the building. After it opened one reporter noted the interplay of the theatre with other nearby venues: "Hazel Kirke, at the Madison Square, faces the Madison Square Garden as David did Goliath, and bobs up serenely after every evening's encounter, the overflow from the Garden more than filling the little house." 202 Actually, the reverse would also prove true: thanks in large part to the enormous popularity of the Madison Square Theatre, the area
surrounding Madison Square Park became the focal point for theatres in New York during the 1880s.203

The "experimental" aspect of MacKay's theatre as compared to other theatres in New York at this time came about through the sheer novelty it promised the public. Upon opening, the Madison Square offered a radical change in theatrical scope and scale. The theatre was not the typical three-thousand-seat theatre found in New York, but was an intimate four hundred and sixteen seats. An architect writing in the late nineteenth century discussed the standard theatres of the period and stressed the impact the Madison Square had:

The American theatres were planned more or less on the same broad lines (as London buildings). For some score or so of years the theatres erected afforded very few points of difference; many being built from one set of plans. During the seventies, however, a great influx of theatre-building took place, but it was not until the close of the decade that a small theatre erected in New York introduced a new era of American theatre architecture: the Madison Square Theatre.204

Many references in the press to the theatre's size hinted at its relative difference to other theatres. Wallack's Theatre (1861) sat one thousand, six hundred spectators, and Daly's New Fifth Avenue Theatre (1873) could fit two thousand, while Henry Irving's Lyceum in England seated one thousand, eight hundred.205 All three were considerably smaller than Laura Keene's Theatre (1856) which held two thousand, five hundred people.206 One critic explained the significant advantages of smaller theatres:

Small theatres have been found to pay better, in the long run, than larger ones. They require less scenery, a smaller ballet, orchestra, and mechanical force, less gas, fewer ushers and doorkeepers, and the general reduction of expenses is very considerable. When only partially filled the auditorium presents a more cheerful appearance; and, though the money gains are somewhat reduced, the chances of
loss are lessened in a greater measure. More than this, they are more suitable for the comedies and light pieces most in vogue, and their audiences are enabled to see many fine points of make-up and acting either lost or necessarily burlesqued in a larger house.207

Of course, this reporter noted that "[b]y small is meant with an auditorium to seat not over 1,500 persons, or still better not over 1,200, and a curtain opening about thirty feet wide." The Madison Square Theatre's size (only one-quarter the standard size of these "small" theatres initially) then, became instrumental in changing audience perceptions of what a theatre conceived on a relatively minute scale could offer, and also demonstrated to theatre producers the commercial potential of a radically intimate house.

The development of the Madison Square took place over two theatre seasons. The first opening occurred April 23, 1879, with a MacKaye-written piece, Aftermath.208 After running four weeks the production closed May 20, 1879. The second opening occurred February 4, 1880, with MacKaye's Hazel Kirke, which ran for four hundred eighty-six performances, closing May 31, 1881.209 In a statement to the press during the first opening, MacKaye explained his objectives: "If we meet with artistic success it will justify the expenditure necessary to convert the whole building into a much larger theatre."210 This plan was subsequently implemented when the initial production attracted financial backers who agreed to renovate the entire theatre in a manner that fitted MacKaye's ideas. A May 1879, review summarized: "MacKaye's tiny Théâtre Français ... [was initially] developed in less than a month ... [and] is today regarded as one of the leading houses."211 This quick rate of acceptance by critics and audience clearly confirms the timeliness of MacKaye's enterprise. He obviously found an ideal location and audience for his offerings. While the theatre's debut was sudden, the second opening was delayed due to renovations. The extensive additions ran into construction problems, pushing the task over budget. The second opening of the theatre, planned for September 1879, did not occur
until February 1880. Yet, according to one newspaper notice in late January 1880, the delay had a positive effect as it created great anticipation: "[N]o theatrical event for many years has so excited the fashionable circles of New York as the announcement that the Madison Square Theatre is at last ready for its opening performances next week."212

However, it was during the earlier flush of attention surrounding the initial opening of April 1879, that MacKaye positioned his theatre as one concerned with the art of the stage. He constantly pushed this idea through public comparisons of his projected theatre with the Comédie Française, and asked enlightened New York theatre-goers to see the similarities between the two. From this stance he was able to call for less commercialism in theatre, asking actors who considered themselves artists to rally around his task. "[I]t is necessary," MacKaye said, "to secure the same hearty co-operation from the artists as the Théâtre Français does in Paris."213 This deference to French theatre was constant. He stressed the refinement his theatre would offer to discriminating play-goers when he detailed how his "earnestness in rehearsal ... [would help him to] build up a form of dramatic art in America, which will compare very favorably in delicacy, finish, and sincerity with the best dramatic art of France."214 On another occasion MacKaye left little doubt about the stature he envisioned for his theatre: "True, I aim to create the same delightful harmony of co-operation that exists at the [Théâtre] Français; in a word—to make the Madison Square Theatre a happy home for the best artists in the profession, and an institute of fine art in the dramatic field." He humbly added: "Of course, to realize my aims will require work and time."215 Many of MacKaye's public statements regarding his project combined to reiterate his concept of theatre as art. Thus, by the time the renovated Madison Square was reopened nearly a year after its initial success, the public was aware of the project's aim and MacKaye's stance. One reporter noted that "the opening of his theatre was an event which interested all persons who love the stage, for it was understood that Mr. MacKaye's motive in this venture was aesthetic as well as commercial."216 This
aesthetic position of bringing art to American theatre was constantly placed before the public during the building renovations, leading MacKaye to inflate his rhetoric to maintain attention on the project. Yet the boldest statement regarding his aims came earlier: "My idea is to open a theatre where plays reflecting the civilization of the day--its virtues and mistakes--may be rendered with a care and attention to detail characteristic of the French stage. This is my aim. I make no pretense of beginning with perfection." MacKaye's stated attention to detail was fundamentally similar to the idea of "stage illusion" discussed by Moynet six years earlier--plays rendered with careful and conscientious planning. This theatre was to be run with such goals on and off stage. Assessing his aim of "reflecting the civilization of the day" on stage, one historian observes that MacKaye "held theatre to be a mirror of life." If this was to hold true then "the reflection, or imitation of life" that appeared on stage would, according to Aristotelian standards, necessarily be art. Thus, a line clearly exists between MacKaye's early formal training in art and his aesthetics of theatre; a belief in keeping with MacKaye's experience as an easel painter, where his paintings (mirroring reality) were obviously regarded as art. Just as early in his career, MacKaye created small imitations of life on the canvas of his easel; so, when he moved to the theatre, he created larger imitations of life on the canvas of the stage. In accordance with this principle, MacKaye firmly believed that in order to improve the "art" of theatre it must be brought closer to "reality." "Since the realistic is that element in art most thoroughly comprehensible to the common people," he later remarked, "I have labored, first, to increase and improve the element of realism in stage art, and then so to combine that with the spiritual and poetic as to make the fascinating force of realism a means of popularizing idealism." Fittingly, MacKaye conceptualized the stage of his theatre as a picture, or rather, as a series of changing pictures.
Innovations and Inventions

MacKaye's desire to "improve the element of realism in stage art" was accomplished with a number of theatre innovations and inventions. Applying his easel painting sensibility to this task, MacKaye arrived at a concept unique to New York and America. "It was my deep desire to present perfect pictures of artistic merit to pleased audiences which led me to the invention of the 'double stage' " he declared.220 Clearly MacKaye's knowledge of painting informed his theatre aesthetic at an ideological level. Just as clearly, he was interested in intermingling the ideas of art and technology on the stage. Here he followed a path set ten years earlier by Edwin Booth, who also invested substantially in technology in his own theatre.221 The resulting public attraction of the Madison Square theatre was as much to the spectacle of the theatre's operation as to the illusions created on stage.222 In interviews MacKaye usually differentiated his new theatre from others by pointing out the technical additions that an audience might enjoy. During the summer of 1879, he detailed many disparate elements of the theatre: "This spring we have added a proscenium, stage apparatus, changed the auditorium, rearranged the orchestra chairs, built up the floor and constructed eight capacious dressing-rooms and a green room," adding that the latter was all "on the stage level and ... fitted with every convenience and an abundance of mirrors."223 The rooms and water closets were later placed in an adjoining building when more space was required for larger innovations.224 MacKaye continued the interview stressing other changes to the playhouse: "Fire arrangements are also very complete; the house may be emptied in 30 or 40 seconds. There are 416 seats, but during the summer we may change the entire interior of the theatre."225

The gambit MacKaye offered the public was warmly received, but was not without its critics. Some questioned the efficacy of MacKaye's theatre and his grand idea of
creating an American Coméàie Française. The clearest dissenting voice came from the *Spirit of the Times* critic, "Trinaldo," who balked at the heretofore unchallenged stance taken by MacKaye. In a scathing review of the initial opening, Trinaldo offered a description of the Madison Square that countered the usual glowing reports. He jabbed:

The incongruity of the surroundings; the Lilliputian scenes, which make the actors and actresses look like Mr. and Mrs. Goschens; the absurd act drop, seemingly the pictured dream of an insane tile-painter—these contrast distressingly with the tremendous pretensions which a cruelly kind press has attributed to the management. A seven by nine Théâtre-Français, with no stage door, and only 416 seats, is odd enough; but when the tiny scene does not fit properly, and most of the furniture is painted upon canvas; when the gas wobbles, and the hero calls off the stage to the mechanics, even the excuse of an art-inspiration fails to justify the comparison between the smallest and the best theatres in the world.

Such views did not stop the renovation of the Madison Square, nor the public interest in the task MacKaye had set himself.

During the extensive renovations, one innovation in particular captured the attention and imagination of the theatre public: the double stage. The two stages, stacked one on top of the other, worked like a two floor elevator; moving one set up or down and offering the next set to the audience as quickly as the time it took for the stage to sink or rise to the appropriate level. This was far different from the typical practices of scene changing (i.e., intermissions of twenty to forty minutes that were necessary to shift scenery or carpenter scenes). The device's patent clearly stated its rationale: "It will be seen that by this contrivance the time formerly lost between the acts in setting the scene for the succeeding act will be saved, and the audience spared the long and fatiguing waits that often intervene between the acts of elaborately-mounted plays at modern theatres." Discussing the double stage in an interview, MacKaye suggested that it provided tremendous
opportunities: "The chief advantages of my new stage invention are—to enable us to sort
and distribute our scenery upon three floors, instead of huddling it upon one; ... and to
produce scenic effects impossible upon any other stage." The scenic effects involved
using greater numbers of scenic objects and properties on stage than was the standard
practice. Additionally, the novelty of employing an enormous elevator to remove entire
settings was the subject of great public interest.

An 1884 *Scientific American* article discussed the double stage and provided the
most widely circulated illustration of the theatre. This illustration is extremely detailed and
accurate, and provides much information concerning the device and the theatre (Figure 1).
The accompanying article clearly described the double stage's layout. Accordingly, the
premise of the double stage was simple:

Our illustration affords a view of two theatrical stages, one above another, to be
moved up and down as an elevator car is operated in a high building, and so that
either one of them can easily and quickly be at any time brought to the proper level
for acting thereon in front of the auditorium. The shaft through which this huge
elevator moves up and down reaches 114 feet from the roof to the bottom of the
cellar below, and the stages so moved are built up in a compact, two-floored
structure of timber strapped with iron, knitted together by truss beams above and
below, and substantially bound by tie and tension rods. The whole makes a
structure fifty-five feet high, twenty-two feet wide, and thirty-one feet deep,
weighing, as stated by the management, forty-eight tons, and having a vertical
movement of 25 feet 2 inches at each change.

The actual mechanisms employed in this innovative staging concept were duly
noted by *Scientific American*:

This immense contrivance is suspended at each corner by two steel cables ... and
these cables pass upward over sheaves or pulleys set at different angles, thence
downward to a saddle, to which all are connected. Connected to this saddle is a hoisting cable, attached to a hoisting drum, by the rotation of which the stages are raised and lowered. Practically, only forty seconds are required to raise or lower a stage into position, and four men at the winch are as much as is ever required. This movement is thus easily effected, without sound, jar, or vibration, from the nice balancing of the stage and its weight with counterweights, which are suspended from the saddle to which the cables supporting the weight of the stages are attached.\(^\text{233}\)

Another critic remarked that the counterweights were so balanced that a single man was usually needed to turn the windlass.\(^\text{234}\) For all of its sensation and effect, the working of the double stage was not often chronicled. However, the actual device at work was noted in a reporter's backstage visit to the Madison Square. Writing from his position at the back fly gallery he observed:

The act is coming to an end. Now watch and see them handle the double stage. The stage on which the play goes on is really the second or upper stage. Seventy-five feet below us is another stage, fully set with scenery, carpets, furniture and bric-a-brac. This great square opening into which we look is the well of an elevator. At each corner are two great steel ropes, reaching down to the floor below. All that we see ... is suspended from these eight wire ropes. No wonder they hang stiff and straight under their enormous load. The act is over, the curtain hanging against the brick wall slides swiftly down, smothering the sound of applause that breaks through the great arch that the curtain now covers. At once in perfect silence, the floor below and the stage under it, with all its furniture and scenery, rises swiftly. Up and up it comes, the lights pass our level, .... Carpenters, in slippered feet, walk out on it from the gallery below, and begin leisurely to take down the scenery. The curtain springs up, and there is another burst of applause. The play is going on
again below, and only forty-five seconds have passed since the curtain touched the
floor. Again the actors’ voices fill the place, but we cannot see them, for the second
floor of the great elevator fills the entire space, and cuts off the view. The play
proceeds to the end of the second act and then all this is reversed; the lower floor or
stage sinks into the cellar, and the second floor, reset with another scene, takes its
place.235

Such a complete and radical redesign of a theatre, one that employed the entire
physical stage to change scenery, was not without its detractors.236 One critic, speculating
on the difficulties that MacKaye imposed on himself with the initial proposal of the double
stage, spoke of some of the likely and unlikely remedies:

There are certain difficulties attending such an elevator stage: but none that a genius
which could conceive the design cannot readily find means to overcome.
Sometimes elevators stick in the shaft. That would be awkward. ... The wings and
borders of an ordinary stage might suppose to interfere with the elevator principle;
but Mr. MacKaye can write pieces in which all the scenes are boxed. The lights
may be rather troublesome to manage; but Mr. MacKaye can either make the floors
of his double-stage of plate-glass or invent some new system of border-and-side-
lights. Little things like these should not be permitted to cramp talent.237

Such facetiousness surrounding MacKaye’s project was common in its early development.

Thus, Scientific American, of four years later, concluded:

Not a little fun was made of Mr. Steele MacKaye, in 1879, when he obtained his
patent for and proposed to build the first movable stage .... The details of Mr.
MacKaye’s patent were not as completely worked out, although the idea was there,
as they subsequently were by Mr. Nelson Waldron, the stage machinist, who
elaborated the system and obtained a subsequent patent therefor, under which these
movable stages have since been so successfully and satisfactorily operated at the Madison Square Theatre.238

Nelson Waldron (also known as Nelse Waldron) not only elaborated the "counterweight raising and lowering system," but also designed and installed "traps in both stages," a difficult task considering that the accompanying trap mechanisms had to move with the platforms.239 While MacKaye was clearly the originator of the double stage, Waldron devised the necessary system for elevation, according to various patents taken out during the theatre's refit.240 MacKaye was granted one for the concept of the double stage (which included a sketchy lift system) while Waldron later received a patent that outlined a more detailed counterweight system (Figures 2, 3).241 (This patent also included the plans for the trap system, and an elevating gas border light system.) Waldron's patent, coupled with the Scientific American engraving, show this later elevation system to have been the shifting method actually employed in the theatre. The patent illustrations show MacKaye's counterweight system hung within the frame of the stage, while Waldron's counterweight system hung outside the frame of the stage (Figures 2, 3).242 This second system is the one depicted in the illustration of the completed theatre in Scientific American. The very concept behind this locomotion device suggests that MacKaye's double stage was the logical continuation of earlier French experimentations with traps employed to move extensive scenery pieces on and off stage from the substage area. M.J. Moynet detailed such a system used in 1873:

In raising or lowering large weights, [i.e., scenery] which often happens, square frames rising on sliders in grooved beams are used. Four counterweights are placed at each corner and the ropes are fastened to the drum of a windlass instead of being held by hand. These devices always use the same principle: the weight to be lowered or raised is counterbalanced by counterweights; to put it into movement or to stop it, a controllable force is used.243
A similar four-cornered counterweight device, turned by a single windlass, was the key feature of MacKaye's double stage design. Considering his interest and knowledge of French theatre, the influence may have been more than slight.

Oddly enough, the co-operation between MacKaye and Waldron in developing the double stage resulted in the vertical double stage not being used later in the century. This situation arose from the relationship MacKaye had with the investors in this project: the Mallory brothers. These men were two locally prominent religious figures (George, an Episcopalian minister; and Marshall, the publisher of a religious newspaper, *The Churchman*). The contract that MacKaye signed with the Mallorys to get his theatre renovated in the desired manner proved them to be keen and avaricious business men. Apparently never read by MacKaye, the signed contract stipulated that he hand over all the work done in connection with the theatre to these pious men. Thus, amongst the various products of MacKaye's work—including the rights to his play *Hazel Kirke*—the Mallorys ended up holding MacKaye's patent for the double stage. One newspaper detailed:

By this [legal] agreement Steele MacKaye is made to bind himself to give Marshall Mallory for ten years, and as long afterwards as Mallory may choose—say, for life—his whole time, energies, and service, physical, mental, and moral, in any artistic, inventive, theatrical, or literary capacity which Mallory may direct, for a salary of $5,000 a year .... As a guarantee of the agreement, Steele MacKaye was made to assign to Mallory all the copyrights, patents, and royalties which he had secured or might secure, with the future proviso that, although MacKaye was bound to Mallory for life, Mallory might discharge him at the end of any year.244

When MacKaye grew aware of his situation and canceled his contract, the Mallorys kept all that he had done with the theatre. The problem for the Mallory brothers was that Nelson Waldron owned the patent for the counterweight system actually used to raise the double stage. (Events show that Waldron was clearly on good terms with MacKaye, as when he
was hired six years later to execute the mechanical devices for MacKaye's production, *The Drama of Civilization.* Furthermore, the good will between the two men was cemented early; within the first year of the theatre's opening this "well-known machinist of the theatre" was given an "annual" benefit matinee, assisted by Kate Claxton, the Madison Square company of *Hazel Kirke,* and Wallack's acting company.\(^{245}\) Since Waldron sided with MacKaye, and thus held tight to the workable counterweight patent, the Mallorys, while possessing the vertical double stage patent, were unable to employ it in another theatre. Being enamored of the success of the double stage and sensing that the public draw of the theatre was the device's ability to offer speedy scene changes of elaborate settings, the Mallorys quickly worked out and received a patent for a horizontal double stage, apparently hoping to corner the market on the concept that made such a stir.

In submitting their own horizontal double stage design for patenting, the Mallorys argued that it was more "practical" than the stage employed at the Madison Square because the vertical double stage "necessitates deep excavation and high walls, always attendant with considerable expense, and in some localities with great expense while in others it is almost impracticable with any outlay."\(^{246}\) Having paid for the expensive excavation at the Madison Square, which ran over budget when solid rock was encountered, the Mallorys knew of what they spoke. The publicized cost of the Madison Square's refurbishment was over two hundred thousand dollars before the theatre opened (though the Mallorys later claimed to have invested only seventy thousand dollars).\(^{247}\) Of course, they did not corner the market on double stages. According to one scholar, numerous patents came forth after the Madison Square's success, spawning "various types of multiple or rotary stages."\(^{248}\) While not exactly the same thing, Oscar Brockett notes that the Budapest Opera House employed an elevator system which allowed any part of the stage to be raised or lowered, adding that such stages were also used in the Munich Art Theatre, the Vienna Burgtheater, and elsewhere.\(^{249}\) A later double stage patent positioned two stages back to back with an
audience area in each, facing one another, clearly getting around the Mallory patents. With a partition removed, audiences on either side of such a theatre could witness simultaneous performances on the two stages, or "a single performance on both, viewed by both audiences." The limit of the double stage concept was reached in 1906, when a patent was issued for a device that, instead of moving the performance area, raised or lowered the audience to one of two stages.

Not surprisingly, MacKaye received much publicity when he proposed to "elevate" the theatre with his double stage. The notoriety of the stage went on for some time but its largest impact was its initial novelty. MacKaye's wife recalled: "After performances, ... [Steele] would be asked by people (often very noted people) to show them the double stage—going up and down in it, with their theatre parties—for the stage was the theatrical sensation of that year." The year before this, a newspaper article punned MacKaye's extensive use of the word "elevated." MacKaye's approach to theatre was based on the concept of elevating its status, just as his double-stage would practically elevate the art he desired to create. In a complementary way, form followed content in this project. One critic took this idea to its limit when he lampooned MacKaye:

We have Elevated Railways; Mr. MacKaye's ideas, views, aspirations are all Elevated; he has devoted his time and attention to the Elevation of the Stage—why, then should he not call his house the Elevated Theatre? The name is already 'familiar in our mouths as household words;' every train would serve to advertise the theatre. One could go to the Elevated on the Elevated, and return to Yonkers, or Harlem, or Brooklyn, or the Battery, or any intermediate points, thoroughly Elevated by the performances; and—-for we reserve our strongest argument for the last—Mr. MacKaye contemplates running his stage upon the Elevator principle, and that ought to settle its title!
This attack on the elevator aspect of his theatre was not limited to jests. The criticism was practically warranted.

While the double stage proved to be a successful promotional tool, and linked thematically with MacKaye's call to "elevate" the theatre, its practicability is problematic on closer inspection. The major feature of the double stage was that it allowed for more complicated scenic elements, increasing the illusion of reality on stage, while at the same time speeding set changes. Since properties were not being moved on and off stage between acts while the audience waited, a more extensive, detailed, and heavier set could be constructed for any scene, resulting in greater verisimilitude on stage. The elaborately prepared stage picture would then be flown in quickly, creating a tour-de-force effect of speed and beauty for the audience to view. "Audiences who once see its advantages will in due time demand that all theatres use a double stage, and then shall be an end of the misery of 'waits,'" declared one observer.255 Yet, in mounting a play with more than two settings producers would run into difficulties. Little discussed, the practical problem is singular but considerable. W.R. Fuerst and S. Hume in their book, Twentieth-Century Stage Decoration, queried: "How is a setting which has been used in the lower section, and has consequently been struck in the space below stage, to be returned on the upper section if required? If no elevator exists by which scenery may be raised from below stage into the flies it is difficult to imagine any group of stagehands complacent enough to be willing to carry it that distance."256 Conversely, two identical sets may have been made, one below stage and one above, allowing any setting always to be available for either elevator. However, such an expensive duplication of scenery was financially impractical in a commercial theatre (besides doubling the amount of material stored backstage). The only solution was to mount shows that never had this problem, as suggested by the initial play on the double stage. Specifically, in Hazel Kirke, act one was the exterior of the mill, act two was the posh Fairy Grove, act three was the interior of the mill house and act four
(where MacKaye might have run into problems with his double stage if he had wanted to return to the act one setting) was the same as act three, the interior of the mill house.\textsuperscript{257} As long as plays were produced with this limitation in mind, there was no problem. That all shows were in-house productions, and thus could be written and planned with this consideration, obviously helped.\textsuperscript{258}

The "novelty" aspect used to promote the double stage was also applied to other innovations in the theatre. MacKaye frequently stressed to the public how different his theatre was. In newspaper interviews he turned the plain facts of the operation of the theatre into a series of events that, as one astute paper reported, "has proved to tantalize theatregoers" into desiring to view the "novel" and spectacular mechanical devices.\textsuperscript{259} These innovations were presented in such a way that their scope and scale may not have been imaginable to the average theatre-goer. MacKaye told a reporter: "But the stage itself is not the only novelty. The arrangement of seats is on a new principle; the orchestra is placed in a novel position; the ventilation of the house by machinery will also be something entirely new—an immense improvement on anything now in existence."\textsuperscript{260} MacKaye's constant stress on innovation and improvement read like sales pitches. Yet one sagacious reporter countered: "We do not place much dependence of the new-fangled notions which Mr. MacKaye has introduced, except as a means of attracting public attention to the enterprise." This critic conservatively believed that the strength of the entire project resided with the established actors signed to perform in the initial play.\textsuperscript{261}

One of the most practical and least expensive improvements to the theatre was the arrangement of the auditorium seats. Seating was on three levels: "the parquet, which occupies the entire lower floor; the orchestra-circle (the first gallery) and the balcony (the second gallery) and all of these are seated with commodious folding chairs, upholstered in raw silk."\textsuperscript{262} While many theatres of this period had level auditorium floors, MacKaye raked the one at the Madison Square and created clearer audience sight-lines than found
elsewhere. This innovation gave consideration to the audiences' comfort, and as such, did not go unnoticed by critics. A newspaper review of the renovated theatre began a boastful list of attractions with this very item: "Here is an idea of what [the spectators] ... found, particularly attractive and new: Seats easier of access than elsewhere, arranged at such a pitch that every one commanded a perfect view of the stage." In the seven rows of the first gallery this pitch was steep enough that "looking towards the stage one is apt to feel giddy," a critic noted. He continued: "This great elevation between the respective rows, however, insures an unobstructed view of the entire stage." A detailed description of the rake was provided elsewhere. One reporter mentioned that "the seats ... [were] placed slantwise, and those in the balcony upon curved lines." This feature enabled audiences a more comfortable view of the stage; no longer obliging them to keep their heads turned to one side. "However much Americans may incline to abuse their own spines they do not relish an enforced twist, especially when they are bent on pleasure," quipped one critic. Remark ing ten years later on the innovative seating plan in this theatre, architect Horace Townsend noted that the theatre "gained a fairly large seating accommodation in an auditorium of limited capacity by sloping the main floor uniformly upwards from the stage, which was raised but slightly above the level of the auditorium, and each row of seats on the main floor was raised about four and a half inches above the one immediately in front." While the raking of the auditorium floor was not a new idea in American theatres, and had been done as early as 1794, the idea of raising each seat row "uniformly" above the row in front of it by a specific height was unique. Townsend's observation is made manifest in a promotional illustration of the theatre's interior (Figure 4). This illustration clearly shows the seating arrangement. Viewed from the back of the theatre looking toward the stage, most individuals in the auditorium are clearly depicted. Sloping downward, the sitting crowd are all pointed towards the stage in an arrangement recognizable to anyone who has ever sat in a theatre with uniformly raked and angled
Correspondingly, anyone who has ever sat in a theatre with unraked seating easily understands an audience's positive reception of such an innovation that allows for clearer sight-lines to the stage. Furthermore, the overall approach to the auditorium seating was different from other theatres. One foreign architect clarified this, noting the sheer "simplicity of arrangement—the main floor devoted to seats of one character and entered almost directly from the street; the balcony seated in the same homogeneous way, and reached by a broad and direct staircase ...."272 No doubt this "simplicity" added to the attractiveness of the theatre.

From the auditorium, the audience took in a view of the stage that included a framed proscenium with a much smaller apron stage before it. Barnard Hewitt, in assessing the Madison Square, claims that there was no apron, and then includes the Scientific American illustration that clearly shows actors crossing the apron before the formal proscenium (Figure 1).273 While strongly framed on three sides, the bottom of the proscenium had a less formal border because the apron extended out into the audience. Yet, in straight-on illustrations of the stage, this lower edge appears as a continuation of the framing found on the other sides (Figure 5).274 As one reporter noted: "The stage opening ... is surrounded by a rectangular frame of richly-carved wood, bronzed in lusterless, yellowish green—in fact, it is ... a picture frame."275 Not only were such devices becoming popular at the time; more importantly, they aided the creation of a sustained illusion on stage.276 On this style of proscenium arch Percy Fitzgerald commented:

Some singularly pleasing effects flow from this. There can be no doubt the sense of illusion is increased, and for the reason just given; the actors seem cut off from the domain of prose; there is no borderland or platform in front; and stranger still, the whole has the air of a picture projected on a surface. There is a dreamy softened air about the whole that is very pleasing.277
However, the love-affair with this style of frame was to wane. Writing in 1892, architect Townsend stated that "the picture-frame idea of the proscenium arch was a mistake, and as such had gone out of fashion entirely in America." Such was the changing nature of theatre at this time. The Madison Square's proscenium was so tall that an upper border was placed on the inside of its arch to partially fill up the frame, thereby creating a lower inner frame. The design and shape of this border followed the design and shape of the upper part of the curtain, thereby creating symmetry amongst the different curtain devices placed before the audience (Figures 1, 3, 4, 5). Such employment of frame-shortening border masking used in other theatres with tall prosceniums received criticism much later by Sachs (1896) who went so far as to call for "adaptable" prosceniums (something that MacKaye was to experiment with in 1893).

In decorating the Madison Square's auditorium, MacKaye was a reformer. "I am unalterably opposed to gorgeously decorated theatres. They detract from the stage picture in which all beauty should be concentrated. All other surroundings of the audience should be quieting, restful and subdued," he remarked. This approach to the interior design of the Madison Square marked an enormous change from that of the standard theatres of New York. However, the public reception of the theatre's interior was unanimous:

As a theatrical interior, it is a revelation to New York as about as was [sic] the rich stage settings first accorded to the society drama in New York years ago, under the management of Mr. Daly .... Mr. Daly years ago showed what might be done behind the footlights, Mr. MacKaye last night showed ... what could be done before the curtain, in arranging and [sic] auditorium, the like of which New York has never dreamed of for comfort and elegance ... and for the grace of its decorations ....

The luxury of MacKaye's theatre is best explained by his hiring of Louis C. Tiffany to design the interior. Employing one of the defining artists of the gilded age hints at how
the interior worked towards a middle-class aesthetic appeal. The overall effect was "a warm, rich, and cheerful auditorium without distractions from the stage-opening as the optic focus of the house and without fatiguing the eyes." Such an atmosphere was the intent of MacKaye, who claimed in an interview that the interior was to "resemble more directly the decorations of the house of a man of wealth and culture." He continued: "We shall endeavor to combine cheerfulness, elegance and richness of design with the quiet and tasteful repose of a civilized home." As MacKaye's privileged background was known to many, he was clearly conforming to a trend best expressed by Percy Fitzgerald's contemporary observation that, "Theatres [in terms of decor, as well as "scenery and dresses"] now reflect the tastes of their directors." The tranquility found in the design of the auditorium was thoroughly promoted by the press. Discussing the design of the lower boxes the *New Orleans Picayune* described the general color scheme: "Their interior hangings are rich velvets and satins. In the wall decorations there are no positive tones. The keynotes of color—gold-green, dark-red and bronze—give a restfulness in the midst of fascinating adjuncts. Throughout, in material and workmanship, there is no sham." MacKaye's approach to decoration was representative of the period. One critic mentioned the inevitable result of such decorations and their impact on the overall theatre culture:

> The decoration [of a specific London theatre] is somewhat gaudy, a matter carried to excess in the leading theatres, vast sums having been laid out on ornamentation in nearly every new one. This is really an oppressive burden that weighs on the shoulders of every succeeding manager, for the finery is as perishable as it is costly, soon fades, and must be renewed in the same style. The new manager indeed must surpass his predecessor. This *luxe* of gilding and color impairs the effect of what passes on the stage, and after the first mild astonishment of the first night has little effect on audiences."
According to a newspaper account, the Madison Square Theatre crowned the changing theatrical refurbishments of the 1880 season:

In New York ... [the season] has been remarkable for the sudden development of luxury in the decorations of our theatres, and for the rise of that theatrical enigma, a new fashionable house. Mr. Daly brought over from London the notion for the quaint decorations of his new theatre; but his sober splendors were outdazzled by the crimson and gold of Boucicault at Booth's and the green and gold of the reconstructed Wallack's, while these in turn became as naught when Steele MacKaye had completed his dainty chapel of the drama. New York had magnificent theatres before; but the past season has given us the most beautiful and luxurious places of amusement in the world. That they are also the most comfortable, before and behind the curtain, the best adapted for seeing and hearing, the best provided with means of entrance and egress, all foreign observers concede, and ... Mr. Boucicault ... emphatically repeats the testimony.288

The most important decorative piece of the theatre was the stage curtain, which also doubled as the act-drop curtain, providing the audience with something to look at between the pictures on stage.289 One critic remarked that a little earlier in the century the act-drop was "the only piece of scenery which was visible to the theatre's patrons for an extended length of time."290 The manner and subject of curtains in this period were addressed by Percy Fitzgerald:

But there can be no doubt that the usual temples and vast landscapes of the commonplace act-drop are felt to be inappropriate and out of place, and many devices have been tried to improve upon the conventional arrangement. Curtains of plain material have been tried, but they invariably look poor and mean even in the best days; while those of genuine velvet ... are open to the objection of growing
'shabby,' of showing creases, and of getting worn at the folds and collecting the dust. Fitzgerald continued by suggesting what a curtain should offer an audience: "Everything points to the conclusion that the screen interposed between the audience and the stage should be a 'cloth,' richly but soberly painted, in harmony with the front of the house, rather than the back, and in a far more sober key than any of the scenes behind." Such a prescription was filled by MacKaye in his endeavor to improve the theatre. According to a Madison Square program on which the act-drop curtain was depicted, it was in keeping with the auditorium. Designs on the curtain matched the proscenium, with geometric flourishes begun on the arch carried into the layout of the curtain. Clearly, MacKaye continued the contemporary convention of harmony described by Fitzgerald. Designed by Tiffany, the act-drop curtain at the Madison Square offered the audience visual splendor. Its magnificence was further amplified by the proscenium's gilded frame, both drawing the audience's attention during the brief "waits." The curtain was lovingly described by a reviewer from the New Orleans Picayune: "The act-drop is a veritable marvel: It is a mystic, intense expanse of palpitating needlework: a piece of embroidered satin, representing a jungle of bulrushes and marsh flowers, rooted in a pool of water, over which hover insects of variegated hues and birds of brilliant plumage. It ... cost $3,000." The luxury of the auditorium is best expressed by this curtain. Most act-drops of the period were painted scenery (in keeping with the painted settings used on stage). By having an entire curtain embroidered, MacKaye obviously set his theatre apart from others in the city. Furthermore, considering that Irving's "tableau curtain" made for his 1881 remount of The Corsican Brothers, was "crimson silk velvet" and cost seven hundred forty pounds, the grandeur and value of MacKaye's curtain indicated the overall expense that went into creating the beauty of the theatre.
While MacKaye personally took credit for the general design of the theatre, it was not his idea alone, according to a contemporary architect: "The Madison Square Theatre, presenting many original points, was the outcome of the talents of more than one man. Two brothers named Mallory provided the funds; an actor and a manager, one Steele MacKaye, a portion of the ideas; and two clever young architects, Francis H. Kimball and Thomas Wisedell (an Englishman) the professional skill which put the theories into practice and materially improved on them."296 Unfortunately, this knowledgeable source failed to mention not only Waldron, but also Tiffany. Clarifying the latter's involvement was a letter Tiffany wrote recalling the Madison Square: "I was very happy in the opportunity to plan and work out with ... [MacKaye] the theatre decorations and curtains, because ... we found much in common in our art interests and in things that appealed to us. This was also the first undertaking on so large a scale in my decorative activities and glass work, in which I then took particular pride."297 The planning and working out of the theatre decorations tells of a greater role on Tiffany's part than MacKaye ever acknowledged. Nevertheless, MacKaye's relationship with Tiffany (begun years before when both studied art with Inness) and the Madison Square's interior design, confirms MacKaye's own affinity with contemporary art and his artistic sensibilities.

Iconographic evidence furthers newspaper descriptions of the renovated theatre as sumptuous. A large illustration of the renovated interior of the Madison Square was printed in a newspaper at the time of its reopening. Its relative size (nearly one third of a page) suggests that enormous emphasis was placed on the theatre's visual beauty (Figure 4).298 A different paper even noted that "no amount of description can convey a correct idea of ... [the theatre's] elegance, delicate luxuriousness and chasteness—it must be seen to be appreciated."299 This detailed engraving depicts the theatre from the back of the auditorium. The center of the illustration is taken up with a picture frame proscenium. Above this is an arch in which a veiled-off balcony is positioned. On either side of the
proscenium, orately turned double columns of wood meld with a series of private boxes. These private boxes are lattice, creating a distinct gazebo effect on either side of the stage, which caused one critic to quip: "The people who go into these private boxes go there, I should say, simply to be seen. You can hardly call them private boxes; they look to me very much like bird-cages." According to a different illustration, every inch of wall space in the auditorium was embellished (Figure 5). Above densely patterned walls, this illustration shows a fresco played out across the three sides of the upper balcony area. One paper noted: "The side-walls ... are covered with canvas, upon which are painted designs in oil colors with ... much delicacy .... The general effect is as if the walls had been covered with rich and expensive paper-hangings. The chief colors are red-brown and various shades of gold and brown. Upon the side-walls, on a line with the upper gallery, is seen a procession of Shakespearean characters, which appear as if they had been painted with a gold wash." Similarly, the ceiling of the theatre did not escape decoration, according to this second illustration. While broken up with trusses in Tudor style, the ceiling space is boxed into individual units of decoration with various patterns repeated from one area to the next. The center of the ceiling also had a circular area filled with floral designs, framing an enormous "sunburner" chandelier, the major light source in the auditorium. The scenery depicted on stage in the larger illustration is a drawing room or boudoir, with two curtained entrances upstage left and right (Figure 4). The room has a high ceiling and an extensive bookshelf on stage left that takes up the entire wall. There are Persian rugs, three Queen Anne chairs, and one small table. Clearly, the play-setting complemented the auditorium, itself a drawing room-environment.

As indicated by the title on Figure 4's reproduction in Epoch, "Newspaper engraving (1880) showing Act Third of ... [Hazel Kirke]" the performance depicted is Hazel Kirke, (the play that opened the renovated theatre). However, the setting for act three of Hazel Kirke, is the kitchen at Blackburn Mill. This illustration must be from act
two; which the script describes as: "Interior of villa at Fairy Grove; a room bright with sunlight." A reading of Hazel Kirke's second act suggests that this illustration depicts the conclusion of the act, a highly emotional sequence full of surprise and worthy of depiction.

In representing this sequence from Hazel Kirke, the illustration not only clarifies the setting of this specific act but also provides a contextual understanding of the local newspapers' reaction to other scenes in the play. Generally, the newspapers' response to the reopening of the Madison Square took little notice of the actual play. Rather, critical focus was on the theatre itself. Considering how the play's various scenes were staged, this is not surprising. Specifically, the setting of act one (the exterior of the mill) along with the setting of acts three and four (both are the kitchen in the mill) were quite conventional designs for the period, and thus received fleeting mention. These settings were a combination of flats and drops with pieces of furniture on stage. The scene that captured the interest of reviewers and audience alike was the stage setting for act two ("the villa at Fairy Grove") the name of which suggests the scenic splendor offered to the audience. It was represented in the large newspaper illustration of the theatre to show off the double stage to its best advantage. This engraving details the visual reward at the rechristening of the Madison Square Theatre; after taking in the auditorium's beauty the audience was presented with the second act of Hazel Kirke and its opulent representation of a room.

More importantly, the visual feast was multiplied by the remarkable speed of the scenery change from act one's exterior of the mill to act two's villa. Critics often mentioned this rapid transformation above all else in reviewing the play. Previewing the opening production, one reporter confirmed how the double stage changed performance dynamics: "Mr. MacKaye will play the drama through with only two-minute waits between the acts, and will then exhibit the double stage—one compartment set for the kitchen of Blackburn Mill, the other as the boudoir at Fairy Grove Villa, so that the audience can appreciate the
value of his invention. Here, MacKaye demonstrated the quickness of the last major scene change, which occurred between the second and third act. The drastic contrast of settings—from a beautifully decorated villa in the second act to the working-class kitchen of the third and fourth acts—was no doubt heightened by the rapid transformation before the audience's eyes (at times within a forty-five second interval). This quick change of atmosphere between acts made possible by the double stage was clearly an element of the play's appeal

Assessing this play one critic argued that: "The old-fashioned way of entirely removing the set of the first act and getting ready that for the second could hardly be accomplished in less than twenty minutes."

The visual impact of the play was enhanced also through MacKaye's staging. The scene depicted in the large newspaper illustration (Figure 4) is as follows. The happily married Hazel is confronted in her sumptuous country home by her sickly mother-in-law (Lady Travers) who reveals the secret of Hazel's false marriage to Arthur (Lord Carrington). According to Lady Travers, Arthur married Hazel across the Scottish border so that their English bonds would not be legally binding. Lady Travers goes on to argue convincingly that Hazel lives remotely because Arthur is embarrassed by Hazel's common breeding, adding that he does not plan to remain with her. Corroborating this story is Arthur's liveried servant Barney, standing upstage in front of the French window. It is also revealed that Arthur has fled from society to escape an earlier arranged marriage. Since this time, Arthur's father spent the other bride's dowry, and passed away. At this point Lady Travers asks Hazel to leave Arthur, freeing him up to return to society to wed the other woman and salvage his family's honor. This revelation causes a great emotional outpouring by Hazel, to which Lady Travers and Barney bear witness. The illustrated scene depicts the point in the act when Hazel rushes to the drained mother-in-law, and subsequently promises to leave Arthur. Upon stating the course of her future actions Hazel bolts from the stage, missing the spectacle played out before the audience of Lady Travers'
sudden heart attack—which ends her life and the act. The staging of this scene was enhanced through its complementary use of balance and symmetry. The illustration shows the blocking employed in the final sequence of act two to be dramatically effective. In this scene both women were placed down-stage front, balancing off either side of the stage while Barney—placed up-stage off-center with his back to the audience—was present for the scene but did not pull focus (Figure 4).

The formal symmetry of the scene indicates a pictorial aesthetic. Additionally, the playtext and the illustration of this scene suggest careful control of the effect by MacKaye (and as such stands as an expression of his theatrical sensibility). The room is precisely balanced by the central placement of a double French widow at the back of the set; itself positioned between entrances placed upstage on both right and left walls. This symmetry is continued by the layout of furniture sparsely but equally across the whole range of the down-stage area, heightened in the actual illustration by a forced perspective of the stage area (perhaps done by the illustrator to include more details in the picture). The room appears to narrow towards the center as it recedes from the proscenium, creating a path that directs the eye to the centrally located window at the back of the set. Furthermore, the playing of the scene provides insight into the effectiveness of this balanced composition. By staging the conversation between Hazel and Lady Travers down-stage right, MacKaye enabled Hazel to make a commanding exit off stage by placing the doors far up stage. Placed in a chair down-stage right, Lady Travers was given a position which has strong audience focus. Having Barney far up stage allowed for dramatic movement in his rapid (but silent and unscripted) response to Lady Travers' last breath. As configured, the scene played out with the simple economy of a clearly drawn picture. With the gilded frame around the proscenium locking the figures into a dreamy vision cut off from the audience, this picture was complete. While edging towards a form of realism, the type of pictorial illusion fostered in MacKaye's theatre was indebted to a romantic sensibility more prevalent
earlier in the century, though clearly still found on stage. One scholar clarifies this style of romantic staging as it relates to a scene such as the above:

One of the most deep-seated stylistic characteristics of the romantic theatre was its preoccupation with the stage picture .... As such, an intimate relation existed between movement and position on the stage, and the art and sculpture of the early nineteenth century. Picturesque attitudes, tableaux, positions, and expressions combined an emotional, almost furious romantic acting style with strict lines and classic dignity .... The flowing grace, statuesque carriage, and symmetrical groupings of this style were applied to every aspect of movement and blocking on the stage ....312

Most contemporary accounts of the play paid scant attention to the methods of staging. One critic justified his inattention by noting that: "[The play's] merits are not so great either in quantity or quality as to demand long discussion."313 By contrast, when setting was discussed in reviews, its mention often suggested the use of box sets. "The mounting is excellent also though, with the exception of the second act, it is not remarkable. That act is a gem. It represents a lady's boudoir, and is rich in rugs, brilliant in plaques, luxurious in upholstery, inviting in cabinets, and altogether beautiful. With the exception of the flat representing the out-of-doors as seen through a window, it might be the real boudoir of a lady of taste and means. This act was in the elevator, which worked to a charm, and received loud applause," observed one reporter.314 Many contemporary comments on the play stressed that the success of the second act's realistically detailed setting was tied closely to the double stage. According to one critic: "The dressing of the interior set (Fairy Grove) in the way of wall and cabinet decorations, was such as could only have been done by the ordinary method after a long wait, as plaques and vases, and numberless little articles that require delicate handling in putting in place were used."315 That objects were placed on or around the furniture implies the employment of a box set.
However, another reviewer remarked: "The scenery is wonderfully realistic. For the first time in an American theatre, doors look like doors and backgrounds do not cramp the stage picture." More importantly, another critic clarified that the stage illusion was primarily the result of scenic painting. Noting that "the boudoir scene is one of the most perfect interiors ever displayed in this country ...," this reporter believed Hughson Hawley's painting skill not only rivaled such important British scenic painters as Hawes Craven, but concluded that his work here would instantly make him a celebrity. Thus, Hazel Kirke, as staged at the Madison Square, used painted backdrops, possibly with practicable solid doors (something further suggested by the illustration in Scientific American). This engraving depicts a portion of the theatre's backstage cut away; the scenic doors appear semi-solid, within frames, and on hinges; painted flats, braced to the floor, make up the sides of the set; in place of back shutters, painted canvas drops are used extensively (as suggested by the large inventory of drops shown backstage); while borders are still employed to mask the upper gas lights. The items being moved in the upper stage area of this illustration also show that much of the decor was painted on drops or flats (Figure 1).

The period of theatre in which the Madison Square appeared saw much change. This was predominantly fostered by a monumental shift in the relationship between stage scenery and play structure. The underlying principle of scenic employment used at the Madison Square was a relatively new one: each act presented would have only one scene (or one location) within it. The theatrical result of such a dramaturgical consideration was an important step in the movement towards realism on the stage. The Madison Square allowed for demanding and substantial changes of scenery from one act to the next. Before such a device, carpenter scenes were a necessary staging method. Such scenes became part of the staple wisdom handed down to playwrights: "Time was, when inexperienced authors were warned against expecting one heavy set scene to follow another; and even now the
most experienced are not able to escape the clumsy contrivances known as 'carpenters' scenes'—that is, scenes painted on a mere curtain, brought near to the footlights, for the purpose of giving time for building more elaborate scenery behind."319 While such a scene played in front, the audience often overheard "the carpenter's hammer and the sounds emerging from behind."320 The Madison Square eliminated the use of carpenter scenes by promoting the writing and production of plays that had acts consisting of single locations. This movement, which the Madison Square embraced, was not an innovation by MacKaye but one that had been gaining ground for a considerable time. In 1879 one critic noticed, "the tendency in small houses is towards simplification. Plays are written or rewritten to promote this change. Where a few years ago three pieces would be given in one evening, one of them at least with many changes of scene worked with the old-fashioned flats and wings, now a single comedy suffices, each act being one elaborate scene, realistic in the extreme, and prepared for the express purpose."321 This trend was not without criticism: "For the last ten years the fashion has been adopted of making each act one scene, to the detriment, it must be said, of variety, and dramatic interest."322 Nevertheless, the Madison Square helped popularize this convention; clearly demonstrating that elaborate and varied settings could be created by working within the confines of this dictum. By 1887 one critic was blunt:

For no play ought to be elaborately mounted if there be a change of scene in the middle of an act. The consequence of neglecting this law is disastrous. At the Lyceum [i.e., Irving's theatre] we first have a mere drop scene with everything obviously painted and unsubstantiated, then a set scene in which everything is (more or less) real and solid. What can be more inartistic than this violent succession of different conventions—than this alternation of sham and substance?323
The continued "substance" of all composed pictures in every act of a play was key to the Madison Square's illusionistic innovation. This theatre put picturesque staging above all else, ensuring "variety and dramatic interest" with its detailed settings on stage. Additionally, the very conception behind the Madison Square exposes MacKaye's theatre sensibility as one that was primarily concerned not only with creating stage pictures, but more importantly, creating a variety of elaborate stage pictures (linked by a story). MacKaye's aesthetic of pictorial illusion as expressed on a small scale in this theatre was seen by critics as "perfect," not only because of the consciously-rendered, formally-arranged pictures framed-in on a small stage, but more significantly because of the rate at which such "perfect" illusions could be transformed into succeeding pictures (ones equally staged with considerable compositional skill). There was no inartistic intrusion of different conventions from scene to scene. MacKaye thus eliminated a constraining burden that hampered other theatre artists' creations of elaborate stage pictures during this period—time. In remodeling the Madison Square to feature the double stage, MacKaye was able to unleash an innovative and powerful theatrical concept: the ability to compose realistically detailed stage pictures one immediately after another. The increased level of illusion, along with its speedy transformation, was clearly desired and appreciated by audiences of the time, judging by its positive reception.

Because of the existence of the double stage at the Madison Square, some scholars have taken it as a foregone conclusion that all plays staged there used box sets. Hewitt implies this in his gloss on the theatre: "[A]n entire box setting with heavy three-dimensional pieces ... could be removed and replaced by another in forty seconds." This would seem to be the natural extension of the practical use of the double stage. Yet, the scenery employed at the Madison Square actually fits into a transitional period between wing and borders, and complete box sets. (Notably the Scientific American illustration clearly shows that the stage did not use grooves.) The Madison Square in its initial
productions did not use "box sets," as the term is now generally understood. While box sets have horizontal "canvas ceiling[s]," the Madison Square used borders.326 However, the theatre did employ side flats (or "raked flats") braced from the back, to make up interior walls, thereby "boxing" in the three sides of the stage. In this way the Madison Square was clearly transitional, not entirely a wing and border theatre, nor a box set theatre, but rather something in between. At this time, the combined three walls made of flats were not typically referred to as a box set but were rather a part of the staging strategy known as "set" scenery. More specifically, these flats were only one of the many components involved in set scenes. Generally, set scenes involved any scene that stood "on the stage and is not flown, that is to say, any scene that is not a drop scene, and that, in its turn, is to say that is not a flat scene [i.e., wholly painted on a single drop]." Such a scene was made up of "several elements (not a one-surface painting on a drop or a pair of flats)" some of which may be "built out in three dimensions."327 Basically, a set scene was "essentially one that can ... only be placed in position previously to its being disclosed to the audience's eyes; or shifted away piecemeal after it has been concealed by a curtain or has a flat scene drawn over in front of it. A set scene is a pre-set scene."328 It was having set scenes that required carpenter scenes. The elements that made up set scenes needed to be shifted on stage out of sight of the audience to have any aesthetic impact. Witnessing the assembly was thought to distract the audience from an appreciation of the combined effect of the "set" elements. Such set scenic arrangements varied from exterior landscapes (painted onto cut-out flats anchored to the floor by braces, and placed "one behind the other" to create a locale--and thereby functioning very much like the older wing system)329 to employing raked flats painted and arranged to create interior spaces (which eventually developed into "box sets"). Furthermore, this alternation of exteriors (mostly made up of "set" elements and back drops) and interiors (mostly made up of raked flats) was a dominant staging strategy. An illustration of Hazel Kirke's act one exterior location shows it to be clearly
made up of painted flats placed together to create the sides of a building and cut canvas
drops (painted as trees) set one behind the other, masking the side and top of the inner
proscenium frame, and performing the same function as wings (Figure 5). 330 This
arrangement received attention by one critic in his description of the elements assembled for
this act:

In act first there is a landscape backing [depicting the dammed river], in front of
which runs a set wall across the stage and down the left to the stage opening. This
wall is pierced in the center of the left side with a practicable doorway. On the left
are wood wings, on the stage-left-center a table and two chairs, and up stage-center
another table; right center a set-house, and in front a practicable arbor like an
entrance to other parts of the grounds, with wood wings right [which continued the
on-stage space into the off-stage area]. 331

Act two of the same play (the boudoir at Fairy Grove) shifted location to an interior scene.
Here some variety of raking flats, similar to those pictured in Scientific American, were
probably used to create the effect of walls (Figures 1, 4). The third and fourth acts of Hazel
Kirke, both interior settings, possibly used raked flats to construct the space. This use of
set scenery at the Madison Square is also clear in comments regarding the production that
immediately followed Hazel Kirke. One critic remarked that the third act of that play,
William Gillette's The Professor (1881) located "among the rocks," would "be a good
scene if some of the rocks did not creak and others bend beneath the footsteps" of the
characters. 332 In this exterior scene depicted on stage, steps were placed behind "set"
scenery of rocks to create the illusion of characters walking upon a mountainous location.
The widespread theatre strategy of using raked flats for interior scenes, and wing-like
canvas drops exclusively for exterior scenes, is found in a critique of an 1883 Count of
Monte Cristo production wherein a reviewer noted with much surprise that in representing
an exterior scene "no wings but box sides were used." 333 Clearly, wings (or cut drops
functioning like wings) were the standard treatment for exterior scenes, while boxed sides were reserved for interior scenes.

As represented in the *Scientific American* illustration of the Madison Square stage, much of the set scenery employed raking flats:

Raking flats were flats set along the sides of the stage from the front to the back, and joining the back flats to form the three sides of a room. They could of course contain practical doors and 'large windows' built into their framework, and so serve as a step on from the old wing and cloth to the modern box set.334

As the use of raked flats became more popular, their width (originally that of the old wings) was slowly reduced to make them less awkward to handle.335 In the *Scientific American* illustration, flats that make up the wall in the lower stage are depicted as quite narrow (Figure 1). The braces that held up these flats became "the method which has superseded the grooves."336 Furthermore, the *Scientific American* illustration shows many other scenic practices (Figure 1). The Madison Square not only used back flats, but also back drops. In the illustration it appears that the lower stage was made up of "raked flats"—no backings on the flats are shown in the upper stage. The down-stage right arch on the upper level is not supported by any means other than a pipe at the top, suggesting that it is a canvas drop. The illustration of the upper stage does not show any braces (although the lower stage flats are clearly braced) which further suggests that side drops were also used like raking flats. Additionally, in the upper stage of the *Scientific American* illustration there is a side drop that contains an arch, yet the thickness of the arch suggests that it is a flat. (Whether flat or drop, its purpose was clear: "[T]here are what are termed open flats, which are scenes cut out in places so that both the background is seen and the actors can pass through them. They are commonly used ... for interiors with open arches.")337 Examining the importance of drops in this theatre expands the issue. The great number of drops rolled up in the fly gallery as depicted in *Scientific American* suggests that they must have been
used somewhere other than just at the back of the stage. This use of a combination of flats and drops makes the Madison Square more transitional. It used set scenery, raked flats, along with side drops in interior scenes, cut drops and back drops for exterior scenes; all mixed side by side and from act to act. The *Scientific American* illustration clearly shows a raked flat being moved on the upper stage that is similar in design to a canvas drop hung from a pipe (Figure 1). In all, an interesting combination of scenic devices.

Set scenery was a catch-all term for everything placed on the stage. However, it was composed of specific materials and items. While the clear employment of set scenery at the Madison Square was mentioned in a reviewer's comment that scenes were "struck" and the next one "set" upon the double stage; the same report noted that this process permitted "an elaboration of every detail connected with the furnishing and adornment of the stage." 338 The exact make-up of these furnishings and adornments helpfully received mention in MacKaye's patent for the double stage. Here, the major components of set scenery that required shifting were categorized: "the scenes, furniture, and properties." 339 "[S]cenes" clearly consisted of the raked flats, small "set" scenery (i.e., ground row-like elements such as the "rocks" in Gillette's play) and painted canvas drops, all of which made up the largest stage component that needed shifting; the second category, "furniture," included chairs, tables, cabinets and rugs; the third category, "properties," were those smaller materials which characters made reference to or which they used during the act (i.e., hand properties). These specific categories are exceedingly similar to elements mentioned in a contemporary newspaper article that broke down the staging materials that required shifting at the Madison Square into "scenery," "furniture," "carpets," and "bric-a-brac." 340 That "scenery" was "taken down," clearly implies that this element was physically "set," hung, or attached to the stage. Similarly, the *Scientific American* illustration shows flats, originally placed upon the stage, being "taken down" at the same time as furniture is "shifted" onto the stage (Figure 1). That smaller items were placed on
stage is mentioned by one precise reviewer who discussed specific features of *Hazel Kirke's* second setting: "The floor is carpeted, rich furniture adorns the apartment, statuettes upon brackets hang upon the walls, and numerous small articles of bric-a-brac ... are visible upon a whatnot [a portable stand with shelves, used for displaying ornaments]." While much remained painted and "set" on the stage, it was a place increasingly filled with actual objects; a theatre trend observed by M.J. Moynet seven years before the Madison Square opened:

The characters, in our time, are surrounded with belongings, with implements of all kinds which have their part in the action. Local color, that modern innovation, has brought a new element into today's performances. The actors, dressed in the costumes of the period, move about amid objects necessary to the existence of the characters they are portraying.

Increasingly, the furniture and bric-a-brac employed on stage were actual (often ranging from standing clocks, tables and candelabras, to entire "furniture suites"). One reporter in 1884, investigating a shop which rented out such items to theatres, noted: "... we were politely snubbed [by the tradesman supplier giving a tour of his warehouse] by the remark 'Everything I supply is, as a rule, real. I very rarely am called upon for anything else.'"

The shifting of scenes in theatres at this time was traditionally initiated by a backstage whistle from the stage manager or prompter. In French theatres, this was replaced by a bell, to signal "to each foreman and his crew the precise moment that everything should be put in movement." A similar device was used at the Madison Square to make the workers aware that the elevator was about to move. The number of stagehands necessary for running the stage was fewer than in most theatres because of the double stage. The *Scientific American* illustration shows seven workers, not including the gas man. (In comparison, Irving employed one hundred thirty-five stagehands for his 1881
revival of *The Corsican Brothers.*) Some of these workers are shifting flats, which are roughly eighteen feet high (three times the height of the men illustrated). With flats that tall, stagehands required agility. Generally during this period, handling of flats demanded a remarkable degree of skill. One news item concerning workers at a French theatre noted: "It is ... wonderful to see with what dexterity the carpenters will carry one of these enormous scenes, some forty or fifty feet high, keeping it as nicely balanced as a gymnast does his brother artist who is aloft ...." Once backstage, the flats were, as one critic points out, "'run' or slid upright on their lower edge" into a scene dock. Such was the method of moving flats at the Madison Square as illustrated in *Scientific American.* Here, two separate flats (one eighteen feet high, the other ten feet high) are shown being shifted individually on the floor. One stagehand pushes a flat off stage while another pulls a flat into the stage area (Figure 1). The difference in scale of the noted examples (i.e., fifty foot flats versus eighteen foot flats) indicates the relatively diminished stage picture found in MacKaye's theatre. The scene shifting on the upper stage of the *Scientific American* picture suggests that the process was time-consuming and awkward. As one critic observed: "[T]o keep changing the background of flats is cumbersome ...." By allowing the flats to be taken down with more care and ease, the double stage also saved the wear on the flats themselves, as any damage to flats typically occurred during their movement. "But in truth any shifting entails damage and wear and tear," one critic remarked, noting that "the painting flakes off and the canvas gets frayed." Indeed, ten months after *Hazel Kirke* opened, new scenery was painted for the first act. However, over the lengthy sixteen-month run of the play, this was the only mention of replaced scenery. Because the other acts remained on the double stage for the duration of the play, only act one wore out due to shifting. Being most often moved, and remaining stored off stage for three-quarters of the play, this setting potentially received more wear and tear than any other; thereby
necessitating its replacement. Apparently, the management made up in splendor what the acts lacked in diversity by sprucing them up when they became too worn.

Shifting was not the only way to wear out scenery. Painted canvas drops were important to this theatre and they also became worn by repeated storage. Obviously, because there was no fly system at the Madison, the painted drops were rolled up when not in use. Of course, the repeated rolling of painted canvases was a prime reason for their flaking. *Scientific American* shows not only the numerous rolled-up drops located at the top of the scenic grid, but also shows the backwall gallery that was used by the scenic artist in painting the drops (Figure 1). A contemporary article which took the reader backstage at the Madison Square with the scene painter Hughson Hawley explained:

In this theatre the entire back of this building—almost forty feet wide and one hundred feet high—is used for a paint gallery. Enormous wooden frames are hung on ropes against the brick wall, and on these canvases are spread. By means of ropes and a complicated hoisting apparatus these frames can be raised or lowered at will. At the top of the building, about eighty feet from the cellar floor, is this narrow bridge or gallery, on which the artist sits or stands and paints. Under it is a second gallery for his assistants, so that several men may work at once on the same scene. ... Mr. Hawley paints away, unmoved by it all [i.e., the double stage moving between acts during a performance] It is the same every night, and for him, at least, the novelty of this singular piece of mechanism has worn away.352

A detailed account of the scene painter's efforts comes from the same backstage reporter, who was evidently beguiled by the paintings of Hawley:

Scene painting is simply watercolor painting and follows the same methods. Though the pictures are large and the effects broad, it is just as much a high art as oil paintings. The work is fine and delicate, as well as broad, and requires small brushes and delicate handling as much as any painting. More than this, it is not a
mere daubing on of rude masses of colors. This great canvas, now hung against the 
wall, seems all out of line and drawing; yet the details of the ornaments about this 
door [a painted door!], or the tapestry on the wall, is as fine work, as much high 
art, as any miniature. It is not the work that is at fault, for the future spectator will 
view it from a distance of over a hundred feet. Talking of these things and busily 
plying his brush, the artist [Hawley] spends half the evening over a single doorway 
in some future 'palace scene,' and giving the exact historical period of the 
picture.353

Not only was the backstage area used for furniture storage and scene painting, it 
also served as an active continuation of the on-stage setting, a technique "realists" 
increasingly stressed later in the century.354 The Scientific American illustration shows 
that on the main-floor stage, in the upper stage-right region is a doorway. Downstage of 
this, behind a raking flat, is a gas standard shining past and into the entrance. Within the 
on-stage view of this doorway is an upholstered armchair clearly illuminated by the gas 
light. Upstage of this entrance is a meter-tall vase also partially lit, as is an ornate side table. 
Combined, these four objects (including the light source) continued the onstage 
environment. This "lighting" of the backstage was a familiar technique by this time, having 
been employed as early as 1857 in a Scandinavian production of Ibsen's The Feast of 
Solhaug.355 A similar stage extension was achieved with another device: pointing off-
stage light onto the stage. Speaking of 1860, but applicable to the Madison Square, one 
scholar has noted that "[s]trong beams of light passing obliquely through a window" were 
often used to create a greatly admired effect.356 Similar off-stage lighting offered by the 
"movable standards" employed behind stage provided an alternative to traditional wing 
lights. Interestingly enough, this was tried by another theatre in the same year. At the 
Criterion theatre (London) "[w]ing lights were almost completely dispensed with, and the
battens [border lights] ... [were primarily] 'depended on to light the scene.' ° 357
Evidently, the Madison Square was not alone in experimenting with stage lighting.

Photographic evidence of the Madison Square stage at the time of its opening does
not exist. However, a few of the earliest photographs taken on stage in American theatres
are from the Madison Square three years after its opening. (Since the Madison Square was
one of two theatres singled out for this treatment it clearly held an important place in the
community.) 358 The reason for photography's relatively late use in recording actual
performances on stage was that "it was not until 1883 that electrical technology had
advanced sufficiently to permit the photographing of a complete scene on stage.° 359 Two
productions photographed on the Madison Square stage in 1883 correspond to other
accounts of the staging practices at this theatre. The two plays were: A Russian
Honeymoon, by Mrs. Burton N. Harrison (adapted from Scribe's La Lune de Miel, and
first produced April 9, 1883); and The Rajah, or Wyncot's Ward, by William Young (first
produced June 5, 1883). 360 The photographing of these two plays, and the later
duplication of their pictures, had great influence on the way plays were promoted—setting
the advertising standard for this period by fostering the large-scale circulation of
photographs of actual plays on stage. 361

The closing tableau of act two of A Russian Honeymoon, as photographed on the
Madison Square stage, shows the interior setting of a "spacious shoemaker's home," made
up of raking flats on the sides and a canvas drop creating the back wall of the building,
bringing about the effect of an enormous three-sided room (Figure 6). 362 The canvas walls
create a strong illusion of reality because of a clever painting technique that renders the
horizontal planks fully textured through the application of appropriate shadows. There was
no attempt at creating a ceiling, thus the painted walls continued up to the top of the
photograph; possibly met by borders. The lighting of the scene is a general illumination
from foot and border lights, though significantly, the upper stage region receives light
spilling through the rear windows. This set of high windows (nine panes tall by eight panes wide) centered in the up-stage wall reveals a further backdrop on which a forest is painted. The entire stage is half as deep as it is wide, though the single-ways shoe-box appearance is broken up by the raking flats angled towards the center of the stage. Helping this is a set of double doors opening on stage, which come out on an angle from the upper stage-right corner. The apparent thickness of one of the doors suggests that they are solid. Besides the twenty-five actors filling the stage (nineteen men, mostly costumed as soldiers, and six women) there are two benches, one chair, a table, and a spinning wheel. All these items are used in some manner in the scene by the actors, except for the wheel. The actors carry various hand properties; the soldiers carry muskets, while an older man clutches a cane. There is a bear skin rug center stage, while stage left of this a samovar highlights a small table. Apart from these furnishings, the room's decorations are painted on canvas. However, items on the wall are a curious mixture of painted and real objects. While the ornate window and door moldings are clearly painted (as are shelves and their contents) hanging from other areas on the wall are actual items (i.e., furs, satchels, stag horns, and a birdcage with parrot). Most of these objects are hand properties turned into relief pieces by hanging them from wall brackets. Like the illustration of Hazel Kirke, this climactic tableau is balanced by having the main action take place front-stage center, visually supported by placing all the incidental characters' attention onto this area. The staging is complicated by using two levels of playing space. In the upper stage-left corner a raised bed area situated above a tiled double-stove is occupied by two men looking down upon the center-stage activity. This feature of the stage picture balances the prominent doorway in the upper stage-right corner and the large crowd of characters located there.

The photographs from The Rajah clearly depict the three settings used in this four-act play (Figures 7, 8, 9). By never returning to the act one location, the play adhered to the constraints of the practicability of the double stage. Furthermore, the photographs of this
play's widely different settings emphasize the Madison Square's capability to vary location between acts, and to offer, with much detail, a different stage picture in each act. The photograph of the first act setting depicts the exterior of "Wyncot Lodge, England" (Figure 7). The second act moves to a palatial "drawing room" at the Lodge (Figure 8). Act three returns to an exterior scene: "a glade" in the park of Wyncot Lodge (Figure 9). Act four moves back to the act two setting of the drawing room. The variety of each act's stage picture is further emphasized by the exterior and interior contrast of the concurrent acts. Even in using the double stage, the great amount of detail found in each setting would have taken a long time to set on stage. Three years into the running of this theatre, the photographs of this production show how the scenic painter and director fully used the capacities of the double stage to construct elaborate stage pictures. At the same time, this play used staging techniques similar to those found in The Russian Honeymoon, and more importantly, in the first production of Hazel Kirke. This similarity centers on a strong employment and combination of side flats and canvas drops, painted in an extremely sophisticated fashion to create the necessary illusion of the interior and exterior locations.

As found in The Russian Honeymoon, appropriate set scenery (and furniture in The Rajah) visually support the painted raking flats in the "boxed" interior scene (Figure 8). At the same time, set scenery is also used in exterior scenes, as represented in act one and act three of The Rajah, where two-dimensional trees are employed (Figures 7, 9). The act three setting creates a dense and spectacular forest out of a careful combination of side flats, backdrops, and "set" trees (a combination of cut drops and supported relief tree trunks) which at one point masks the edge of a painted creek running through the center of the stage (Figure 9). The creek, and the short bridge spanning it, are positioned as a focal point for the act and the photograph. (Here a servant keeps watch on two women.) In the second act's interior location, raking flats and cut drops are painted to a sophisticated degree [with highlights and shadows re-creating detailed wall moldings of a drawing room (Figure 8)].
The flats and drops are visually supported in their three-dimensional appearance by having actual furniture placed next to them. The mixed style of scenic construction in this act is best expressed by the two-dimensional columns (painted on canvas) set on stage to hold up the fireplace. Similarly, the upstage balustrade is a flat piece of canvas painted to appear three-dimensional, and set before the staircase that leads off stage. These scenic elements are placed before the flats to increase the depth and illusion of the stage picture. The photograph of the drawing room of The Rajah's second act (Figure 8) significantly shows a staircase that leads off stage. This probably employed a backstage stair device (a "practicable") which allowed the off-stage actor to safely step down from the height he had reached in exiting from the stage stairs. Such a practicable—necessary if the stairs were to be used in act two of The Rajah—is clearly represented in the Scientific American illustration of the upper stage where workers carry furniture down a set of stairs onto the stage (Figure 1).

The photograph from act two of The Rajah also shows a strong off-stage light streaming forth from an upstage-right window, casting its beam firmly on the floor, and highlighting the action pictured on the stage (Figure 9). Similarly, the motivated source light for the well-lit up-stage staircase wall clearly comes from backstage. Projected off-stage light was necessary for the desired atmosphere of this act. More importantly, all the interior scenes of the plays performed at the Madison Square, as shown in illustrations or photographs, employed large oversized up-stage windows that reached to the ceiling (Figures 4, 6, 8). While allowing for a maximum amount of light to enter the scene area from backstage, these windows importantly motivate the lighting of the upper stage area. Thus, a convention of the period regarding the rendering of interior locations (at this theatre) was to employ large up-stage windows so atmospheric (and motivated) light would brighten the stage. (Such naturally motivated lighting was a prominent technique in later theatres.) 364 This window feature, coupled with the backstage light, illuminated the upper
portion of the stage most effectively, and would have eliminated any shadows cast onto the backdrops created by actors moving before the unfocusable gas border lights in the rear of the setting. Furthermore, with the conventional use of raked flats for interior scenes, any sort of lighting from either side of the stage would not have been usable except in "window" locations. This lighting technique was adopted when traditional wing lights were abandoned with the introduction of the double stage.

This method of creating motivated stage illumination through the arrangement of setting was one of the few identifiable staging features used at the Madison Square as late as 1904. A production photograph from the theatre at this time shows how much, and how little, staging techniques changed in twenty years. In a photograph from act two of G.B. Shaw's Candida, a drawing room is depicted, though only a side and back wall are shown (Figure 10). The walls of this room consist of flats painted with elaborate moldings and wainscoting in the fashion of twenty years earlier. In contrast, a huge up-stage center window, going as high as the ceiling, employs relief molding, as well as a set of functional curtains. Most importantly, light enters the upper portion of the stage from this window, and brightens an area that otherwise might have been extremely dark. The characters gather around a solid fireplace that protrudes from the stage-right wall, markedly different in this regard from the painted fireplace mantle in The Rajah's drawing room. The shelves and books located above the fireplace in the Candida photograph are actual objects placed before the walls of the set, as is a second bookshelf placed further up stage. Furniture and bric-a-brac are distributed around the room: fire irons, coal bucket, numerous armed chairs, a desk, and framed paintings hanging from the wall. The lighting is less uniform than that found in the earlier photographs of the Madison Square stage. Shadows are cast up-stage, as illumination comes mainly from a low downstage-right angle, motivated by the fireplace placed there. Clearly, in twenty years the Madison Square moved from less reliance on painted scenery and general lighting to an increased reliance on relief scenery and more
atmospheric lighting, all the time retaining the composition of a formal picture. However, with this shift came a simpler stage picture, as suggested by the less extravagant scene design in the 1904 photograph; possibly the result of the public's increased calls for illusions of everyday reality. In accordance with this, the box set capabilities of the double stage were extensively underused initially (as seen from a realist's sensibility). The creation of heretofore unseen extravagance in detailed set dressing was achieved in the beginning mainly through scenic painting. MacKaye created a box set theatre before this concept became fully fashioned in the theatre world, and it was for this reason that he did not initially fill it with what has become known as box settings. That the theatre could be used to create box sets was the reason why it remained active until 1904. As staging styles of pictorial illusions increasingly shifted away from scenic painting to the placement of more realistic details on stage, the Madison Square easily adapted. The "real" elements placed in plays were obviously embraced by audiences starved for the closer representation of actuality on stage. One scholar summarizes this trend:

Although the use of real properties introduced an alien element in to the idealistic plays, destroying the illusion of reality on which the plays were based, the realistic effects were undeniably popular with audiences. The plays became a curious mixture of reality and ideality, but increased patronage testified to the fact that managers were giving the audiences exactly what they wanted. Paradoxically, they seemed to want the illusory life on stage to correspond more faithfully to the external realities of everyday life.

While the Madison Square theatre's primary conception was based on the double stage and the changing of scenes, the lighting system was just as important and innovative. During this period there were a number of lighting conventions. In general, the 1880s saw an increased level of stage illumination. More specifically, greater lighting brightened the entire stage, allowing the "movements and mimics, the colors and shapes of the
scenery" to be clearly shown to the spectator as well as creating atmosphere for specific scenes. Yet this increased intensity in theatre lighting was not without criticism: "To tell the truth, lighting has been poorly used," wrote M.J. Moynet in 1873, adding "[f]or many years, everything has been over-lighted and from this has resulted a certain monotony. It is difficult at present to call attention to a certain scene, at least by using a still brighter light. Then, what is to become of the eyes of the spectator?" While rhetorical, his question was to become significant in later years. Steele MacKaye took up this question, and his answer for the poor spectator's eyes was to plan the Madison Square to move all the stage lighting behind the proscenium arch. "The object of my invention is to facilitate ... the concentration of light upon the stage ..." MacKaye wrote, stressing that this was to be done by "locating the orchestra above the proscenium with the stage-lights hid beneath it, casting the light from above within, instead of from below upon, the stage." Furthermore, he addressed Moynet's concern of audience eye strain in his patent for the double stage:

the stage-lights, which, however carefully screened, are necessarily an annoyance and an injury to the eyes of many spectators, especially those occupying places in the boxes and upper tiers, [in the Madison Square] are thus removed to a position where their entire force can be concentrated directly upon the stage, the rays in all directions being cut off.

Following this concern, MacKaye dealt with the problem of lighting the auditorium. Too often, centrally-located gas chandeliers blocked the view of the stage for spectators in the balcony, as well as fouling the upper regions with vitiated air. MacKaye's solution was to place his central light closer to the ceiling to remove the obstruction. In doing so, adjustments were made to the way the chandelier distributed light: "The great dome light was ... enclosed in glass, the underside being of prisms of glass, arranged somewhat on the Fresnel system, so as to throw the light downward. This dome light had its own ventilating flue, opening out on the roof of the house." The light was an "immense
crystal sunburner," a ceiling light of this period.\textsuperscript{375} The rest of the auditorium was lit by "bracket-lights on the side-walls" of the various tiers. In the two lower tiers there were "six groups of six lights." Each was enclosed in its own "handsome" plate-glass lantern, and given a separate venting flue.\textsuperscript{376}

The auditorium lights and all other gas lights in the building were controlled from the gas table. As illustrated in \textit{Scientific American} (Figure 1) the positioning of the gas table creates problems for the overall backstage arrangement of the theatre, specifically because of the gas table's relationship to the stage manager's work. Traditionally, the stage manager (or prompter) was "always found at his own particular side—the one named after him—which is the spectator's right, the well-known O.P. side [i.e., opposite prompt] being on the left. This invaluable functionary regulates the march of the play, sending for the players in proper time, and signaling for the curtain to rise or descend."\textsuperscript{377} According to Fitzgerald, the O.P. position of the gas table in \textit{Scientific American} should actually be the prompt side of the Madison Square stage (Figure 1). If MacKaye had put the gas table to O.P. and left the prompter on his traditional side, communication between the operator of the gas table and the prompter would have been extremely difficult.\textsuperscript{378} A later article detailing the organizing "principle" of gas tables was clear as to the standard arrangement: "The necessity of placing the plate [i.e., gas table] on the prompt side is in order that the gas man may be near the stage manager, and obey his direction for the turning up and down of the lights in the auditorium and on the stage, for various stage effects."\textsuperscript{379} Clearly, the \textit{Scientific American} illustration is erroneously reversed. The usual stage-left arrangement was employed at the Lyceum (London) where the gas table held the same vertical position as at the Madison Square. Describing how the Lyceum's table was used, Bram Stoker wrote: "All these [gas] taps were arranged so that the supply ... could be turned on or off at the 'Prompt' where the 'gas table' was fixed vertically."\textsuperscript{380} While the word "table" was used in America, in Britain this became "plate" mainly because "the
assemblage of gas pipes was enclosed behind a sheet of metal with the individual stop-cocks emerging through suitably labeled apertures."381 This is how the gas table is depicted at the Madison Square in *Scientific American* (Figure 1). Nelson Waldron's design of the double stage's counterweight system also suggests the illustration is reversed. His accompanying patent diagram (drawn from the audiences' view) shows gas borders plumbed to stage left, as is the main gas supply (Figure 3).382 Accordingly, the gas table at the Madison Square was necessarily placed stage left to be closest to the plumbing for the border lights. As late as 1901 many stages were arranged in this fashion. A manual for plumbing gas into theatres at this time noted: "Most of the lights in theatres are under control and worked from the prompt side of the stage (right-hand when viewed from the auditorium) where the outlet of the stage meter must be run."383

A considerable variety of lighting effects was obtainable at the theatre, judging by the large number of knobs and levers on the gas table in the *Scientific American* illustration. By comparison, Georges Moynet's 1893 illustration of a Parisian theatre's gas table showed ten different levers available to the gas man. These were broken into four categories: "HERSES" (grooves) which had seven levers (obviously one corresponding to each border row); "SALLE" (the House) which had one lever; "PORTANTS" which had one lever; and "RAMPE" (footlights) which had one lever.384 In the *Scientific American* illustration (ten years earlier) the Madison Square's gas table is depicted as having twenty-two dials and at least one lever (Figure 1). Clearly, it had a tremendous number of potential light settings, possibly keeping its operator extremely busy. From the placement of his hands, the gas man appears to be closely following a book-like text, positioned on a shelf unit apparently designed to hold such an object. His right hand rests on the bottom of a page while his left hand is engaged at a specific stop-cock. Additionally, the fingers of the gas man's left hand are splayed, suggesting that they are in mid-employment.385 His relative isolation suggests that the gas man was left alone to his business which he is in the
midst of performing. This staff member may very well have had the combined occupation of gas table operator and prompter. By comparison, the Moynet illustration showed no counter space available to the Parisian gas man, thereby suggesting that his cues may have been few and aural.

The major lighting component for the actual stage was a series of gas border lights. In an article describing the standard arrangement of these devices in theatres, MacKaye wrote: "The rigging loft is filled with draperies called scenic borders. Among these hang long lines of gas-pipes, provided with many burners, constituting border lights. A net-work of wire covers these lights to prevent the borders from coming in contact with the gas-jets." In MacKaye's original patent for the theatre, the first row of border lights (furthest down stage) was to be placed before the proscenium, underneath the orchestra balcony (Figure 2). Just as the planned proscenium was to be curved, so too this first gas border was to also be curved and fixed in one spot. When the proscenium did not end up with a curved frame, the curved gas border was not considered. Rather, the Waldron-designed fixed gas borders were placed straight across the upper frames of each stage, allowing the lights to sink or rise accordingly (Figure 3). This was the solution to the problem of creating border lights for both stages without resorting to (as one wag put it) "glass ceilings." The borders were plumbed with enough hose that they could ride up or down the stages' travel distance of twenty-five feet. One observer explained how this looked: "In combination with each of these movable stages are borders and border lights arranged to throw light down upon the stage, and so connected with flexible gas tubes as to be readily turned on and off ...." Each border light consisted of eight gas jets positioned regularly along a border, running the entire width of the stage, and thus giving an even distribution of light (Figure 3). As few as six and as many as eight borders were used in the theatre (Figure 1). If each was plumbed with gas there would have been a considerable amount of light over the entire length and depth of the stage. Indeed, a
backstage observer of the shifting stages remarked on this in his description of a change over: "The border lights above the stage are in full glare, and we can even see the glare of the footlights." He continued his assessment, mentioning the other elements that moved with the stage: "All that we see—the rigging loft, the ropes, flies, and gas lamps, all the scenery, the actors, the other stage far below in the cellar—is suspended from these eight wire ropes. ... [The stage is then moved.] Up and up it comes, the lights pass our level, with all the tangle of ropes, wires, and gas pipes, and the stage is close behind us." 391

Due to the relatively low ceiling demanded by the double stage, and because gas border lights were used, there was a fire hazard. Unlike other theatres, the Madison Square did not vent its border lights. 392 This was a possible reason for a fire that broke out in the theatre within a month of its second opening. On February 27, 1880, it was reported that the Tiffany act-drop was ignited by a gas border light during a performance. 393 The curtain was cut down and promptly extinguished without further incident. After the stage was cleaned up, the show continued.

Down on the main level, the side of the stage closest to the gas table had gas connections, allowing for tall gas standards to be used for movable lights off stage. This type of light was plumbed to the floor by a gas tube, and screened in with meshing for safety (Figure 1). Bergman likened the hoses supplying gas for the various light standards to snakes that "coiled ... across the stage floor." 394 These floor connections at the Madison Square were simple. They did not travel with the stages as the gas border lights did but rather were installed in the wings on the main floor level, making them fixed (Figure 1).

A third source of stage illumination (one closely tied to a ventilation system in the theatre) was the footlighting. At the Madison Square these were a series of gas jets. Unlike earlier footlights that often protruded noticeably above the stage floor, here they were positioned low to the stage floor in a continuous unit which followed the curvature of the
small apron at the front of the stage. "The footlights are sunk, and are concealed from the view of persons in the lower part of the house by the grasses [which edge the stage]," one critic noted.395 According to one diagram, the footlights used a single gas supply-line and "batwing" flames for a greater surface area of illumination (Figure 11).396 This illumination was furthered by parabolic reflecting pans at the back of each jet. The footlight jets numbered at least five and as many as twenty.397 Additionally, there was no means of modifying the lights' color. The footlights were heavily shielded, as the rounded cover over top of the footlights ended at a roughly forty-five degree angle to the stage floor (Figure 11). Compared to footlight positions in other theatres, any glare from these lights would have been minimal. Because the footlights were incapable of "floating" (i.e., rising or sinking for specific lighting needs) they possibly had some gas-flow adjustment device connected to the numerous dials on the gas table. As illustrated in James Hogg's detailed diagram of the footlights (Figure 11) below the batwing flame and above the gas supply-line were short vertical branches attached to the main gas line: pilot lights (i.e., "flashlights"). Such devices were used to ignite border lights as early as 1849 in England,398 and the employment of pilots on footlights in all theatres was only a matter of evolution according to one scholar.399 Regarding the Madison Square, one source noted that "the lighting of all gas" in the theatre was "by electricity," thereby suggesting these pilot lights were not gas.400 The large number of dials on the Madison Square gas table would have offered precise control of pilot lights on border and footlights. To avoid releasing combusted air into the auditorium, "each footlight [was enclosed] in an open hood, or little pulpit, so to speak, which connected with an air tube in common, discharging into air ducts communicating with one of the main discharging air flues."401 This was by no means a new invention, as twenty years earlier the Paris Opera house vented footlights in a similar way. The idea had longevity, and became a popular device with the continued use of footlights later in the century.402 One last feature of the footlights was a wire fence
(usually brass) running the undulated length of the stage at calf level, held by vertical rods placed a foot apart (Figure 1).403 Never discussed in relation to the Madison Square, a European source explains its purpose:

It will be noted that every stage now displays a wire, supported by small 'standards' stretching across in front of the footlights. This arrangement has been found necessary to protect the actresses and dancers from the danger of their dresses catching fire at the footlights. It was adopted in Paris owing to the sad fate of a ballerina, and in London owing to another accident of the same kind. The effect of this wire is singularly ugly and 'practical.' The danger really arose from the new fashion of sinking the footlights below the stage, which offers opportunities for the dresses to float over them, whereas under the old system of sconces placed on the boards and leaning outwards, there was little or no danger of the kind.404 With the Madison Square's footlights placed at an extremely low level to the stage such a precaution was necessary.

According to Scientific American, these lighting apparatuses combined to brightly illuminate the Madison Square stage. In the engraving (Figure 1) light emanates from up stage and casts clear shadows at the heels of the down-stage actors to such an extent that the footlights do not get rid of these shadows. Additionally, the power of the illumination is strong enough to cast not only shadows into the auditorium, but also to light up the faces of the audience. While partially the result of a somewhat dimmed auditorium, these lit-up faces suggest that MacKaye's stage is extremely bright. One public account noted that the various lights at the Madison Square all united to "flood [the stage] ... as if with daylight."405 This effect was typical for the time. Stage lighting in this period, through the employment of the gas table, allowed for the general "regeneration" of the stage picture: "In the name of illusion, light and shade could be better produced and synchronized, more or less, with the romantic play of light on backdrops, wings, cut pieces, and set pieces."406
Such effects were attempted in MacKaye's production of *Hazel Kirke* as evidenced by the following observation:

... one artistic point deserves repeated mention. In the boudoir scene [Fairy Grove], while the stage is *perfectly* light, the realistic effect of a room is sustained by making the exterior landscape brighter than the interior scene—a point usually overlooked by stage-managers.407

Moreover, one reviewer suggested that MacKaye's use of creative or artistic lighting may have gone too far. Again, discussing *Hazel Kirke*, a critic censoriously noted:

To see the sky cloud over when Dunstan frowns, and the sunshine burst out when Hazel smiles is entertaining enough; but when once you have noticed it, you find yourself watching the landscape instead of following the dialogue. Too much weather is not healthy upon the stage.408

This reporter returned to the same point a month later, sarcastically commenting that "nature" was possibly more inclined to rain upon Hazel's bonnet and give brilliant sunshine to Dunstan's anger, implying that the employment of these lighting motifs was still inappropriate.409 While MacKaye's use of stage lighting was clearly a result of his painterly (i.e., symbolic) approach, some thought the symbolism too obvious.410

MacKaye's repositioning of the orchestra pit from its standard location in front of the stage to a balcony above the proscenium arch was another major innovation at the Madison Square. One critic observed: "The front row of seats in the parquet is distant from the stage only three or four feet, and this space, generally occupied by the musicians in other theatres, is filled with grasses, plants and flowers."411 Such a short distance between audience and stage obviously allowed a closer view of MacKaye's stage pictures. In such a small theatre this was an important consideration. Additionally, MacKaye's radical placement of the orchestra was counter to the concept found in another "drawing
room" theatre of the period. Describing a British theatre, one reporter hinted at the problem MacKaye was trying to alleviate with his design:

The fashion was first introduced at the Prince of Wales Theatre [London] of placing the orchestra under the stage, owing to the necessity of finding extra room in the stalls. In a theatre devoted to drawing-room drama this might be justifiable, but where the orchestra takes an essential share in the piece there is a lack of propriety in the step. There is something painful, if not unpleasant, in the spectacle of these hard-working musicians cribbed, cabined, and confined in a sort of cellar below, where they are seen laboring through bars, or narrow openings—a heated unhealthy den. It besides degrades that portion of the entertainment.

MacKaye's aesthetic reforms in the theatre specifically took into account the audience's enjoyment of the music accompanying the pictures on stage. By moving away from the above "degrading" practice, and placing the orchestra in an orderly space above the stage, MacKaye came up with a sensible alternative. At this time, however, there was a split on how theatre orchestras should be regarded:

There are those who cling to the traditions of the past, and consider a full view of fiddlers and kettle-drums to be a legitimate part of theatrical entertainment; and there are doubtless musicians of such sensitive natures that they desire to be seen and personally appreciated, either for their talents or good looks. On the other hand, led by Wagner, there is a large class who would make the orchestra a concealed 'music box,' filling the scene with 'sounds and sweet airs that give delight' and reinforce the effect of the actors' words. These consider the personality of the performer an intrusion and offense, and only wish him represented by the product of his art.

MacKaye fell between these two schools of thought. He used his orchestra in a transitional fashion, sometimes visible to the audience, sometimes not: "Above ... [the proscenium] is a graceful balcony, deeply recessed, where the musicians, twenty-five feet above their
usual seats, are in full sight of the entire audience when playing; when they stop, are
[promptly] cut off from observation, by drawn curtains." The orchestra numbered
twenty members. According to one illustration, besides a conductor there were at least
three (possibly six) violinists, one wind instrument (possibly a clarinet) at least one cello or
double bass, and possibly a pianist (Figure 4). This dominance of strings over wind
instruments was an aesthetic decision in line with later musical conventions surrounding the
perceived appropriate mixture of instruments in the theatre. As one influential critic noted:
"To my mind it is far better to do with less wind and brass, and to get something like a
proper balance between wind and strings." On opening night, Beethoven's
Consecration of the House ushered in the festivities of the first production. The musical
director was Bernhard Mollenhauer, who scored a number of performances. Based on
a musical motif developed around the character of the title, the Hazel Kirke Waltz was
written by Mollenhauer as a souvenir of the one hundredth performance of the play.
"The music of the orchestra is heard now and then commenting, after its manner, on the
play," a backstage reporter declared. Clearly, music functioned as it did in most plays
of the period: associating motifs to specific characters; creating atmosphere; and supporting
specific moments in the play's narrative. Overall, the combination of MacKaye's
reassigned position of the orchestra along with its operation was strongly felt. "The
elevation of the musicians to a niche over the proscenium has been heartily approved by the
audiences. Instead of concealing the orchestra, it has made the music more of a feature than
before, and has removed an impediment to the full view of the stage from every seat in the
house," one critic concluded. Thus, this innovation had a positive effect on how
MacKaye's stage pictures were received--aurally as well as visually.

In clearing the orchestra from the front of the auditorium and bringing his audience
closer to admire the details of the stage pictures, MacKaye had to deal effectively with the
heating problems caused by the footlights. "The footlights of the stage ... are a continual
source of annoyance in every theatre," one critic noted, adding that "[t]he heat generated by the footlights in ... [the Madison Square] is sufficient to run a boiler for a ten-horse power steam engine." He concluded by mentioning how, "[m]any halls and theatre are heated almost solely by the gas burned seemingly to light them." When he redesigned the theatre, MacKaye created greater comfort for those sitting closest to the footlights by using an innovative ventilation system. (Evidently he was aware of public sentiment surrounding this issue. One reporter's comment of ten years earlier noted that "[i]f managers knew how many persons stay away from theatres" because of the uncomfortable situations in which audiences had to sit, "they would make the attempt to lessen the draughts [moving from the stage into the auditorium] which blow away money.”)

Rather than using the standard system where gas footlights drew their air from the theatre in exchange for heat, MacKaye created a system wherein the air drawn for these gas lamps came from outside. Correspondingly, their fumes were also vented outside. Such contained venting added less heat to the stage area and allowed for more comfortable temperatures along the first rows of the auditorium. MacKaye was clearly concerned with audience comfort, knowing that this would woo customers. Improving the air quality of the auditorium meant improving the general air quality of the entire building; something that could only occur with proper ventilation. Before the Madison Square, there was no practical concept of active ventilation in public buildings. The lack of ventilation in most buildings of the time was singled out by one engineer who observed the danger created:

In support of this allegation we have only to cite the unanimous opinion of our legislators, judges, court officers, lawyers, and others engaged in our courts; of those who attend lectures, concerts, balls, theatres, schools and churches. All testify that in the buildings erected for such purposes the ventilation is always more or less imperfect, and that great discomfort, ill-health, and even death, is a frequent consequence.
This large gap between what MacKaye's theatre was to eventually offer and what was available elsewhere was made clear in an anecdote by an engineer: "On the hottest night this season we were present at a lecture from a distinguished gentleman in one of the finest halls in this city [New York]. It was so stifling hot that many persons could not sit out the lecture and had to leave. At the [Madison Square] theatre everybody present sat out the performance, and many persons expressed their appreciation of the comfort they enjoyed without understanding the means by which it was produced."426

Theatre ventilation had been attempted before the system developed at the Madison Square.427 And while English theatres earlier in the century experimented with passive forms of auditorium ventilation, there was strong resistance to the use of complex ventilation systems. An 1860 description of Covent Garden's hot water pipe heating system ended with the observation that "none but ... [such] simple expedients [found here] for ventilation are adopted, experience having, I think, shown that most elaborate systems of ventilation are liable to failures, more or less complete, in proportion to their greater or less elaboration."428 The difficulty of the task manifested itself twenty years later at Daly's Theatre. In response to the success of MacKaye's ventilation system, Daly installed revolving fans in his auditorium "with much care and expense," but this sensible solution to auditorium ventilation did not last long. The fans were taken down because of the headaches thought to be caused to the audience by the imposed draughts.429 (Clearly headaches were worse for audiences than uncomfortable temperatures.) MacKaye's system went against all such practical wisdom, and in doing so proved to be extremely effective. "Within the past twelve months a series of experiments ... have been going on in a public building in this city [the Madison Square Theatre], and as they have resulted in obtaining a system of ventilation which is as nearly perfect as it probably can be made, we deem it proper ... to give a résumé of ... how it was done," engineer James Hogg declared.430 His article detailed the ventilation system employed in the Madison Square:
The mechanical arrangements adopted for bringing fresh air into the theatre consists in connecting a large Sturtevant blower or fan, eight feet in diameter and three feet face, with the upright air shaft ... by means of a large horizontal air duct. This fan was driven by a small steam engine, capable of working up to two hundred revolutions per minute. ... The fan delivers the air into several smaller air ducts, and these again to nearly four hundred tin pipes, each four inches in diameter. Each of these pipes has a square funnel-shaped opening, covered with wire gauze, discharging through the riser under each chair in the main body of the house. The funnel-shaped mouth and the wire gauze prevent the air from coming out as through a shute [sic] and equalize its delivery. Each person is thus enveloped in a rising body of fresh air.431

Recognizing that forced ventilation through the auditorium would have an effect on the audience's ability to hear what was spoken on stage, a problem identified as "one of no small importance," plans were made to channel the stage sound through the ventilation system: "It therefore became necessary ... to admit and direct the currents of air that they should flow from the front of the stage to the back of the auditorium and carry the voices of the actors with them." 432 Thus, the ventilation system had a "twofold purpose":

one was to draw the air toward the faces of the audiences for their comfort, and to aid the acoustic qualities of the house by carrying, so to speak, the voices of the actors toward the audience. Openings are therefore made under each of the balconies at the rear of the house, and from these rather than from the ceiling the greater part of the air is taken.433

Diagrams included in James Hogg's article on the Madison Square's ventilation system show that while the auditorium had extensive consideration, the backstage area had little forced ventilation (Figure 11).434 Continuing in his assessment of the auditorium ventilation Hogg noted:
... nearly a mile of tin and iron pipe have been used to distribute the pure air under every seat in the parquet, and in a continuous circle of perforations from box to box over the parquet, and in the space between the floor of the first balcony and the ceiling underneath, and also across the entire stage front, behind a bank of flowering plants, .... The air has, therefore, a sufficient number and area of openings to permit its entrance without discomfort to the audience, but to aid in this and other objects, the outgoing currents are made to flow toward the back of the house.435

To fit such a complex system in the small theatre, all of the "ventilating machinery" was placed "in the cellar (underneath the auditorium) which is given up entirely to this purpose."436 It was here that the air was heated: "Fresh air is forced over steam radiators and through pipes to every part of the floor of the auditorium."437 The complementary cooling component of the ventilation system was also located there. MacKaye's cooling system was created by forcing air over large sheets or blocks of ice stored in the basement.438 This chilled air was then pumped up to the auditorium through the same ventilation system as the hot air. The air in the system (be it hot or cold) was "forced" by two fans, one below the stage pushing the air through the building, and the other in the roof of the building, pulling the air out:

When the lower fan is driven at about one hundred and fifty revolutions per minute, [approximately "40 miles per hour"] and the upper one at one hundred revolutions; [approximately "30 miles an hour"] a current of air is sensibly felt in every part of the house; the temperature is but little above that of the external air; no stuffiness or bad odors are discernible; the emanations from the footlights are carried off, the acoustics are perfect, and there is no headache or sleepiness produced in the audience.439
The employment of fans at both ends of this unit was key according to Hogg's assessment of this ventilation system: "It shows clearly that the only true mode of obtaining thorough ventilation [in any building] is by the exhaust system or pumping the air out, under some circumstances combined with the repletive system of forcing the air in."\textsuperscript{440} However, the task of forcing air into the building was not easy. The problem of dust, a consideration important to a theatre desirous of attracting a sophisticated audience, had to be addressed:

New York city, and presumably, all large cities, are in dry weather enveloped in a cloud of soot and dust. This city is generally covered with such a cloud at least one hundred feet high. In view of the immense quantity of air that would have to be forced into the theatre in order to thoroughly ventilate it, the amount of dust in it would be a very serious annoyance to the audience.\textsuperscript{441}

Here again, MacKaye's theatre was innovative. This problem was remedied in a practical way:

To obviate this, a shaft outside of the theatre, six feet square, was built up to a height of fifty feet, and in this hangs an immense bag or sack, similar to a jelly bag. This bag is of nearly the same height, and the same area at the top as the shaft, and is made of cotton cloth, similar in texture to what is known as cheese cloth. As the air is drawn into the theatre by the mechanical means adopted, it has to pass through the meshes of this cloth, and the dust is thereby sifted or filtered out of it. When this bag becomes loaded or choked with dust it is removed, washed, and then replaced in its original position.\textsuperscript{442}

The theatre's ventilation system was enormously complex for its day. Its success, however, did not bring about an application for a patent. Hogg implied a reason for this in remarking, that because "no two buildings are alike, .... [a]ll patented modes of ventilation are but empirical devices; they may succeed in one case and fail in half a dozen others."\textsuperscript{443}
At the same time, the influence of the Madison Square's ventilation system was such that other theatres started experimenting with complex active auditorium ventilation systems a few years later.444 The clear success of the ventilation system at this theatre and the need for other public buildings to follow a similar method was summarized by Hogg:

If anyone needed to be convinced of the necessity of ventilating large audience rooms, a visit to the small room containing the exhaust fan would soon convince him. The emanations from the gas lights, the effuvia from the persons in the audience, with a mixture of the perfumery on their handkerchiefs and clothes, is quite nauseating to a person of delicate olfactories.445

Management

Steele MacKaye's Madison Square project has often been viewed as little more than the material inventions he created, thereby reducing his achievements to a list of devices.446 What is missed in such an assessment is MacKaye's "practice" of theatre: his theatre management. Steele MacKaye's managerial role was key to the sensation that the Madison Square created on the New York theatre scene when it opened; a sensation that went beyond the material inventions. Furthermore, only by understanding how he managed the theatre is it possible to arrive at a more complete understanding of MacKaye's work. His early theatre aesthetic is best summarized by the management of his innovations in this theatre. As the manager, MacKaye told the press: "You see about you the labor of my life. I have slaved and toiled here to have it consummated."447 Feeling so, MacKaye held himself responsible for the attention paid to it. Correspondingly, MacKaye's management set his theatre apart from others. Not only did he organize and arrange the on-stage and backstage devices, but also the auditorium and audience. The act of managing was necessarily important, as MacKaye realized that inventions alone would not make audiences
return. In this task, MacKaye reveals himself to have been a manager who had a keen attention to detail, and scrupulously managed not only the pictures placed on the stage, but also the larger picture the theatre presented to the public.

MacKaye's first order of business as manager was to gain public attention for the new theatre by selecting appropriate forms of advertisement. Wanting to attract a genteel crowd, MacKaye advertised the Madison Square Theatre as "a wholesome place for wholesome amusement." Acting as his own advertisement man, MacKaye created lines of news to position the theatre in the minds of the prospective audiences. Newspaper puffery surrounding the opening of Hazel Kirke helped to place the play within certain social circles, appealing to those who fancied themselves as keeping abreast of the most current theatre fashions and topics. In a review of the opening night of Hazel Kirke, one reporter boldly trumpeted that: "Not to have seen the Madison Square Theatre is to be behind the age in theatrical intelligence and artistic knowledge." Clearly, MacKaye's promotional efforts had their effect: getting such reviews published was the result of a strong managerial hand. Indeed, MacKaye may have directly influenced reporters where it counted most, as it is generally understood that a certain level of graft occurred between theatre managers and newspaper reporters during this period. Nor was such graft beyond MacKaye's established competitor, theatre manager and director Augustin Daly, who "paid off newspaper editors and bought critics" in order to insure good publicity. Daly extended himself too far when he invented nonexistent reviews for his plays. He was publicly caught and condemned for this tactic; yet this mischief had little effect on his solid reputation and failed to diminish the popularity of his theatre.

Once the theatre was successfully opened, the proper crowd solicited, and a successful play under way, MacKaye worked to keep his theatre constantly in the public eye. One event that helped this was the small stage fire which consumed the act-drop curtain. Not only did MacKaye replace the beautiful curtain but he ensured that theatre-
goers of New York were made aware of this task. He solicited newspaper reviews of his new curtain, and therein reminded the public of the type of establishment he ran. One reviewer explained the theatre's luxury:

Yesterday afternoon invited guests, representing all the little worlds of our social planetary system, assembled in the Madison Square Theatre to inspect the new embroidered drop-curtain, which replaces the beautiful embroidered curtain which was burned soon after the theatre's opening. To us the pleasure of sitting in this theatre consists in the unity of the whole affair—in the solid foundation of sense and utility which Mr. MacKaye has laid with infinite ingenuity and determined will; in the beauty of the architect's lines, the harmony of proportions, the elegance and the novelty of details, and finally in the beauty, taste, and exquisite workmanship of Mr. Louis C. Tiffany's and Mrs. Wheeler's curtain, upon which the pleased eye rests as upon a sunny landscape seen from the cool and somewhat somber richness of a grotto.452

Another way MacKaye gained rapport with theatre critics was to implement free professional matinees, where only theatre artists and critics were admitted, allowing them to see plays their schedules might otherwise not permit them to attend.453 Through this and other events, MacKaye received the support of the local reporters. The theatre critic, William Winter—a romantically-inspired reviewer with a strong desire for things artistic—was a god-send to the new theatre manager. During the 1870s and 1880s Winter was New York's foremost critic.454 In one of his many columns, Winter expressed his opinion of what an ideal theatre's atmosphere would entail, and in doing so he sounded much like MacKaye. Winter wrote that a theatre's surroundings "should be that of the drawing room where refinement prevails and where oaths and innuendoes and coarse jokes are never permitted."455 Needless to say, his philosophy was in concert with all that MacKaye was attempting at the Madison Square. Assessing MacKaye's project, Winter effused:
New and splendidly handsome, his house will receive all merited attention, respect and public good-will; but the influences which proceed from its stage are its soul, and justify its existence and pretensions. These, from the guarantee of the opening performance, will be such as the best friends of the drama could desire—a theatre administered in a pure and high spirit, to the advantage of mankind in beauty, refinement of life, liberal and fine intelligence, and thus in happiness.  

Winter's emphasis on the administration's role in the success of the theatre is astute, as it was MacKaye's keen managerial abilities that created a theatre that could solicit such critical statements by the press, however they were secured.

One of the first things a theatre-goer would notice at the renovated Madison Square was the price of seats. The number of seats available in the climate-controlled auditorium was increased by the renovation to 686, not counting the four boxes, which held six people each. The premium seats were two dollars on the main floor and the front balcony (the areas closest to the stage and the main ventilation effects) while the remaining one hundred gallery spots were saved for the lowest price available (fifty cents). Common ticket prices to a "variety" show in other theatres during this period were a mere dime; clearly Madison Square's climate-controlled comfort did not come to the audience without an expense. Beside being a theatre that offered ice-water between acts by liveried ushers, MacKaye potentially justified his higher ticket prices by giving gifts to the customers.

In the MacKaye Family Collection there are two similar cards, each two by three inches. On the front of each card there is a wide border of gold and brown with an illustrated pair of sparrows on branches in the center. There is text on each card that states: "The Compliments of the Season." Stamped on the bottom of the border of both cards in green ink is "HAZEL KIRKE." Opening up the small card there is an illustration of a colored flower on the right side, with a poem printed on the left side. The two cards differ in the type and color of their flowers, and their poems. These little giveaway tokens of
appreciation clearly express the management's careful appeal to the audience for its attention and support. This appeal extended to nightly programs. George Odell recalled: "This theatre was the first and perhaps the last ... to give out very pretty programs, on good stiff paper and with excellent printing. How we prized them!" Unlike some theatres that asked a fee for programs, the Madison Square supplied them free of charge. According to Fitzgerald this was all part of a trend:

In houses of the more elegant class, the bill [i.e., play program] is presented to the guest, as indeed it should be, for as well might the restaurant-keeper charge for his menu; but in others it is a source of annoyance, and a tribe of box-keepers seem trained to the art of levying fitting toll. All this, with the cloak and umbrella, opera-glass, refreshments, &c., was developed into an elaborate system by a highly business-like manager some ten years ago, the front of the house being farmed on principles that obliged serious and hostile efforts to be made by the farmer to recoup himself.

Even the scheduling of performances pampered the customers. The doors of the theatre opened at 7:30 p.m., the overture commenced at 8:15 p.m., and the curtain rose at 8:30 p.m. This last time was in direct contrast to other theatres which offered their evening performances at 8:00 p.m. The reason for this was two-fold. First, the speed of the double stage allowed for quick intermissions between acts which meant the entertainment was noticeably shorter. Rather than taking this time from the end of a performance and letting an audience out earlier than all the other theatres in town (and potentially implying that ticket-holders might not be receiving a full evening of entertainment) the management chose a reverse strategy. This policy, a second reason for an 8:30 p.m. start, was to appeal to clientele who might have found it difficult to have a relaxed dinner and arrive to an 8:00 p.m. performance. As one theatre-goer remarked: "The saving of labor in this theatre is immense, and the saving of time consequently
proportionate. Mr. MacKaye does not raise his curtain until half-past eight, a great boon to late diners.467 This implied appeal to wealthy patrons was similar to an 1832 observation by Charles Kemble, who complained how late dinner hours took away "the upper classes from the theatre."468 Thus, MacKaye found an answer to a problem that had long plagued theatre managers; getting well-heeled persons to their dinner and theatre too. By setting such a late curtain MacKaye also undercut the tendency towards late arrivals and the disruption they might cause, thereby adding to the decorum of the theatre. This decorum was further heightened in a different way: "The new mechanical stage not only annihilates time between the acts, but effectually puts a stop to seeing 'that man' that so many gentlemen are usually anxious to see on such occasions."469 This euphemism of going for a drink (i.e., alcohol) indicates that the Madison Square crowd were a more sober lot than those found at other theatres. This alone must have added greatly to the propriety and wholesomeness of the house.

Another feature affecting the reception of the plays performed at the Madison Square was the short intermission. In a newspaper advertisement for the opening of the theatre, the intermissions were listed as follows:

Between Acts I. and II. an interval of two minutes.
Between Acts II. and III. an interval of five minutes.
Between Acts III. and IV. an interval of five minutes.470

A later advertisement told of a different series of intervals: "Intermissions between acts, TWO, EIGHT, and TWO minutes respectively."471 Thus, there was truly only one eight minute intermission which made for a more unified play experience for the audience than was commonly had. Instead of two or three twenty-minute gaps in the performance, which allowed an audience to loosen their focus, the sparse intervals in plays at the Madison Square created an opposite effect.472 The energy of one act flowed into the next since the narrative was not halted by long waits, thereby allowing the audience to engage
with the play more completely than they might at other theatres. Yet the physical need for a more standard intermission later required MacKaye to bow to public pressure and restore a longer interval: "[T]he practical objection which was originally raised against the abolition of waits between the acts has justified itself, ... for Mr. MacKaye now advertises that there will be an eight minute intermission between the second and third acts, 'to accommodate the audience,' although only two minutes are required by the machinery of the elevator stage."473

MacKaye's own admission of his diligence in operating the Madison Square makes it clear just how seriously he took the hands-on, day-to-day management of the theatre. He would mention this in his resignation letter in 1881. This letter suggests that MacKaye regarded one of his most important positions undertaken with the Madison Square project to be his job as manager. In January of that year he wrote: "I had certain ideas and theories that I wanted to put into practical shape to show that I was not a dreamer. I did everything in a man's power for the theatre. I discharged the duties of advertising agent and even callboy duties that no other management would stoop to, in my zeal for success."474 A fuller range of the tasks performed by MacKaye before and behind the stage was suggested in a newspaper comment discussing William Gillette, who brought his work to the Madison Square to get MacKaye's help: "[Mr. Gillette] took his play [The Professor] to the Madison Square, and signed a contract for its production with the assurance that Steele MacKaye would trim it, and put it upon the stage; that Steele MacKaye would teach him how to act his part, and drill the company; that Steele MacKaye would get up the scenery, and invent new effects."475 Clearly, MacKaye conscientiously applied his "certain" ideas about the actual running of a theatre. He not only took part in play selection, but also in contract negotiation, script rewriting, directing and instructing actors, managing the secondary actors, as well as the preliminary scenic designs, and inventing new stage effects; all of these were important aesthetic factors in the success of the entire project. The
position of theatre manager was obviously an extremely busy one, even without initiating radical design changes to a commercial theatre, or pursuing an ideology that posited theatre as art and the stage as an artistic picture. As he suggested himself, MacKaye took on some of the roles performed by a business manager. Noting that "no man is worked harder," one account detailed this position:

He is usually treasurer, looks after the receipts, pays the salaries and disbursements, makes the contracts for advertising and printing, and exercises a general supervision over the check-takers and attendants. He has absolute discretion as to the free list, and must know thoroughly whom to admit without question and when to distribute the gratuitous orders .... He has to invent excuses with which to pacify everybody, .... His personal attendance at the theatre will occupy him almost incessantly.476

Having managed the front of the theatre successfully, MacKaye took his management backstage and proved himself equally innovative. The most important managerial decision he made there was equipping the backstage with fire-fighting apparatus, organizing routine fire drills, and assigning backstage workers specific tasks in case of a fire. When an accidental fire did occur after the Madison Square's second opening, it was quickly extinguished by the now well-trained stagehands. Of course, much was made of the occasion in the newspapers and in a "long, published interview," MacKaye explained how his managerial skills brought people into the auditorium and kept fires out of the backstage area; the latter being extremely important in attracting the former.477 Following on the heels of this newly-won recognition for theatre management, MacKaye was asked to write an article for The North American Review, wherein he focused on the manager's responsibilities for the safety of the theatre and the public. The lengthy article's kernel was a ten-point prescription for safer theatres. In prefacing these points MacKaye chided: "To realize this security to the public, laws should be enacted, and
enforced, obliging all proprietors of buildings constructed for the accommodation of a
crowd to conform to the following rules”:

First. To veneer all the wood-work in the scenic department with some fire-proof
composition sure to protect it from any fire that may occur in that inflammable
portion of the house.

Second. To construct in the roof above the rigging-loft large trap-doors, so
weighted that they will fall open of themselves the moment they are unfastened.
Their fastenings either to be automatic, or easily controlled from the prompter’s
box.

Third. To hang an automatic fire-proof curtain in the proscenium arch.

Fourth. To provide an air-tight tank with air-condensing pump attachment, capable
of holding water enough to extinguish any ordinary fire likely to start during a
performance, which shall be connected with a plentiful supply of pipes, furnished
with automatic sprinklers and hose, on every working or fly-floor.

Fifth. To keep in working order two fire-extinguishers for every working or fly-
floor.

Sixth. To supply two axes to every working or fly floor.

Seventh. To organize all employés of the house into a fire company to be drilled at
least once a week by a competent fireman detailed in this duty by the fire department
of the city.

Eighth. To adopt a seat that is capable of converting each floor in the auditorium
into a series of aisles at any time.

Ninth. To provide the best known system of ventilation for the auditorium.

Tenth. To allow ten feet of exit room to every two hundred seats on a floor.

These should be the ten commandments of government to amusement
managers.
The last section of this statement concerning the "ten commandments" laid down by MacKaye led some critics to label him "a new managerial Moses." Yet, as the "Moses" of theatre safety MacKaye's motives were not entirely altruistic. He was hoping to gain a monopoly on an industry-standard folding chair by inventing and patenting one. The monopoly did not materialize. MacKaye installed his folding chairs in a later theatre project, but only with mixed results. Subsequently, his innovative chair design and company failed.

By directly addressing the issue of fire in theatres MacKaye again showed a sensitivity to the concerns of the theatre-going public. After a series of spectacular theatre fires that had claimed the lives of many people in the previous ten years, theatre-goers rightly had a strong concern regarding the safety of the theatres they entered. MacKaye himself was no exception. At least partially responsible for his fire prevention reforms in the theatre was his first-hand involvement in one of the most gruesome theatre fires ever to occur in the United States. MacKaye had attended the Brooklyn Theatre on the night of December 5, 1876. When a fire broke out during the last act of The Two Orphans over 295 people died, shocking the nation and subsequently lessening "theatrical business for nearly a year throughout the country." The burning of this theatre, MacKaye's good fortune to escape, and the great loss of lives, inspired him to invent practices that would not only prevent such accidents but also convince people that safe theatres could be built. His initial foray in this area dealt specifically with the control and avoidance of fire. To this end he worked on fireproofing backstage material. While MacKaye "invented" a fireproof substance to employ in theatres (one that involved covering wood with an inch of plaster) it was hardly an original idea. In his "Safety in Theatre" article, MacKaye promoted the idea that fireproofing the stage would best be handled with a mixture of plaster of Paris. He arrived at this conclusion after assessing the faults of other systems. Laying out a safe way of fire-proofing the most flammable area of the theatre (the scenic department) he wrote:

"The papier-mâché mixture neither melts, expands nor transmits heat. If the entire scenic
department were thus lined, the scenery might burn with impunity without imperiling its surroundings.⁴⁸² He may have appropriated this idea from French theatres where plaster's effective protection against fire was well-known long before MacKaye claimed it for his own.⁴⁸³ Whatever the origins of MacKaye's work on this subject, his promotion of such a technique of fire prevention helped to establish his theatre's concern for safety.⁴⁸⁴ A tangible way he demonstrated this to the public was having fire extinguishers "conveniently placed" within every division of the carpeted auditorium.⁴⁸⁵ This was a practical and aesthetic decision: practical, because of easy access to the equipment in case of a fire; aesthetic, because the equipment's presence overtly suggested to an audience the management's conscious concern for fire safety, and its preparedness.

The investment in the Madison Square theatre by the Mallory brothers was another significant part of MacKaye's management. That they were religious figures aided the theatre's claim for wholesome entertainment, and gave the public the impression that the theatre was sanctioned by an established church. Obviously if men of the cloth invested in such a place, it was thought, then surely it must have some spiritual value. These brothers truly helped to position the Madison Square as a goodly and Godly middle-class theatre. Before the falling out between the Mallorys and MacKaye, such impressions clearly circulated. "These gentlemen [the Mallorys] believe, not only that a good theatre is a profitable speculation, financially, but that it is an important moral factor, and may be run in connection with the church and their church papers, so as to be mutually advantageous," strummed one reporter.⁴⁸⁶ After MacKaye breached his contract with them, the newspapers were equally ready to lambaste the two spiritual leaders for their utter hypocrisy in not fully rewarding MacKaye for his success, and for driving him from his theatre.⁴⁸⁷

The strong public regard for MacKaye's little art theatre was such that many of its features were copied. "Although the [Madison Square] theatre was very successful, the
practical good sense characteristic of the American people prevented a slavish imitation of it. Certain points not found wholly successful were discarded, but the heating and cooling apparatus and the seat arrangements were in the main followed by subsequent designers,\(^{488}\) Clearly, these two features were central to the comfort of the patrons, allowing them to give their undistracted attention to MacKaye's stage compositions passing magically before their eyes. Regarding the former apparatus, one contemporary observation suggests the importance of MacKaye's managerial presence: "[I]n the larger number of cases of public buildings that have a bad reputation for lack of ventilation, it will be found on investigation to result from bad management. Many very good devices have been rendered useless by neglect and mistaken economy. When the public demand sweet air as an essential part of all entertainments, they will get it,—and not till then.\(^{489}\) At the Madison Square the public did not have to demand; this wish was foreseen by the management. Yet not all audience members enjoyed the ventilation apparatus. In one brief note to MacKaye, written on a handbill (placed into nightly programs) which explained the novel aspects of the building, was an evaluation of this system by one such patron. The spectator noted his criticisms in ink at the bottom of the handbill. There, he underlined the handbill words "cooled with ice" and exclaimed: "Forced into the building, and plays around one like nothing ever before experienced. Many thanks for a severe cold and sore throat, contracted last eve, in your charming little Theatre."\(^{490}\) However, few attendees were displeased with the cooling component of the building. On the contrary, many saw it as a welcome change from other stifling theatres. While most New York theatres closed for the summer because of the heat, the Madison Square remained open and delivered relief from such conditions.\(^{491}\) To do so in extremely hot weather, though, required that every day the theatre used between "1,500 to 2,800 lbs." of ice to cool the auditorium.\(^{492}\) English novelist Mary Duffus Hardy described the formidable attraction the ice-cold Madison Square offered:
As the weeks passed on, the temperature became almost unendurable. The coolest place in all New York was the Madison Square Theatre. The thermometer had mounted to 100 [degrees F.] when we received a box for an afternoon miscellaneous performance in aid of the Edgar [Allan] Poe Memorial Statue. Among the many other things selected for the occasion was an abridged version of The Taming of the Shrew, when Edwin Booth consented to play Petruchio.

Nothing less than the desire to see this celebrated actor would have tempted us to stir ... armed with fans, smelling-salts and sundry antidotes to fainting fits, [we] panted our way from Forty-fifth Street to a Sixth Avenue car, which landed us close to the theatre. Immediately on entering, we felt as though we had left the hot world to scorch and dry up outside, while we were enjoying a soft summer breeze within. Where did it come from? The house was crowded—there was not standing room for a broomstick; but the air was as cool and refreshing as though it had blown over a bank of spring violets. We learned the reason of this. By some simple contrivance the outer air, circulating through and among tons of ice is forced to find its way through a thousand frozen cracks and crevices before it enters the auditorium; thus a flow of fresh air is kept in constant circulation, which renders an afternoon in Madison Square Theatre a luxury during the hottest of dog days.\textsuperscript{493}

A newspaper confirming this day's temperature as ninety-four degrees in the shade noted that this audience "kept their places until after 6 o'clock" (obviously prolonging their enjoyment of the ventilation).\textsuperscript{494} The public delight in this novel cooling system during the summer of 1880 became the subject of one reporter's anecdote; wherein it appears that the theatre ventilation was as much an attraction as the double-stage—perhaps even more so:

As the Madison Square was over crowded during the recent cool weather, imagine what it must be now, with six hundred tons of ice laid on to cool the house, while the thermometer outside marks 83 to 87. 'You must like Hazel Kirke, sir,' we
remarked between the Acts to one of the audience whom we had noticed a dozen times before. 'Certainly, I like the play,' he replied: 'it is a good play, a strong play, a pure play, and admirably acted; but between ourselves, we all know it by heart now, and make up family parties to come here and be cool. It is the coolest spot short of Coney Island to spend an evening, and a great deal handier to our hotel.' He smiled and we smiled—but we are both temperate men.495

MacKaye's practical and aesthetic policies at the Madison Square were popular, and integrated well enough with the theatre that many were continued after he resigned. The curtain time of 8:30 p.m. was not tampered with, and the new management continued the commemorative giveaways. Thus in the public's eye the management stayed the course created by MacKaye. Clearly his managerial strategies were essential to defining the Madison Square's popular appeal; one that was to last until the theatre was torn down in 1904. In keeping with the genteel aura of the Madison Square initiated during MacKaye's management, a few years later manager David Belasco followed MacKaye by publicly celebrating successful plays. After 150 performances of an 1884 production at the Madison Square, a newspaper reported: "A pleasant incident of the evening was the giving to Mr. Belasco of a gold medal from the members of the company, including the little players."496 This echoes the three hundredth performance of Hazel Kirke (November 26, 1880)497 when the cast of Hazel Kirke presented a similar tribute to MacKaye: "At close of the performance, ... resolutions [of thank-you], engraved and very handsomely mounted, were presented in a heartfelt manner to Mr. MacKaye by the attachés of the house and members of his company."498

New York theatre managers found their enterprises to be clearly threatened by MacKaye's innovative theatre, and acknowledged this in their own fashion, namely by refitting their theatres to compete.499 This was heralded by one reporter who thought that "[w]e should not be surprised to find all the theatres in the country were being fitted with
double stages and exquisitely embroidered drop-curtains."500 Clearly, the pictures MacKaye offered on his stage, along with his conception of what theatres should be, were better than all others in New York. Mentioning that he was approached for help by Lester Wallack and A.M. Palmer in the building of their new theatres, another newspaper account went on to describe the impact MacKaye's theatre had in many areas, and suggested the potential that still lay ahead for him:

[Mr. Steele MacKaye] has already introduced more practical novelties in theatre architecture, decoration, and furnishing than have ever before been discovered, and ... has plenty more of inventions on hand and in his head.501

While there exists a passing query regarding the originality of some of MacKaye's innovations at the Madison Square, it does little to diminish the theatre's final significance.502 The closing assessment503 of the Madison Square Theatre is left to a critic of the period who summarized what MacKaye had achieved:

All the miracles he promised for his new theatre, and which everybody laughed at—we included—have been more than realized. There are his chapelesque theatre, his elevator stage, his elevated orchestra, his patent ventilation, his embroidered act drop, his Delsartean company—all accomplished facts. And, more miraculous than all, there is his own play, which was declared to be a failure when first produced in the provinces, the success of the season, playing through from the first night to the best audiences ever gathered in New York, and likely to run on until next season, .... At a single bound, ... the Madison Square has become the most fashionable theatre in the metropolis, has secured the most legitimate success of recent years, and has the strongest stock company, to be still farther strengthened next season .... Mr. MacKaye has been regarded as a dreamer, a visionary, an impractical philosopher; but here are all his dreams come true, all his visions realized, all his
impracticable schemes in practical operation. He, his play, and his theatre are the distinguishing features of the past season, and will make it forever remarkable.
Chapter Three

MacKaye's Civil War Cyclorama Oration and The Drama of Civilization

The theatre sensibilities developed and expressed in Steele MacKaye's earlier work underwent significant change with two coinciding ventures: MacKaye's oration for English painter Matt Morgan's Civil War cyclorama; and his conception and direction of The Drama of Civilization for William F. Cody (Buffalo Bill). Occurring within months of each other, these projects dramatically shifted MacKaye's concern for pictorial illusion on stage to a larger scale than he had previously conceived, greatly expanded his directorial experience, and strongly influenced his succeeding theatrical work (most immediately Rienzi and Paul Kauvar).

These productions in the fall of 1886 (and MacKaye's involvement in them) were closely tied to the popular art form of the cyclorama, which had its beginning in the earlier part of the nineteenth century. Prefiguring the cyclorama was the panorama, a form of painterly entertainment that offered pictorial illusion on a large scale. In 1787 Scottish artist Robert Baker patented the panorama: an enormous painting "done on a cylindrical canvas," surrounding the audience and thereby creating a three hundred and sixty degree view. Because of its size, this type of display seemed to create an "actorless theatre," although it was often accompanied by some type of descriptive lecture. The usual topics of still panoramas were the representations of historical events on a grand scale, often battles. The sensation and celebration of such pictures led to their acclaim as national artifacts. [The great public regard of the English panorama, The Battle of Waterloo (1816) brought such financial reward for its painter Henry Aston Barker that he retired in 1826.] The popularity of this simple form of entertainment led to the more complicated "moving panorama." This was an enormously long painting affixed to a tall upright spool and slowly pulled across an open space to another spool, allowing a view to pass before the
eyes of the audience. Typically landscapes as seen from moving vehicles were the subjects of such works. By the 1830s the panorama developed into a more sophisticated circular painting called a cyclorama. The cyclorama differed from the panorama in two major ways: an increase in size (to "150 feet in diameter"); and the placement of two-dimensional and physical objects in front of the painting, creating a three-dimensional effect. The cyclorama was installed in a round room where an elevated platform placed in the center acted as an auditorium. This viewing area was circular, edged with railing, and with the exception of a few chairs, left open, thereby denying an audience any reference point in the room but the painting itself. This feature enhanced the impact of the work: "Once upon the platform the spectators lose all idea of orientation, and cannot tell the points of the compass or have any conception of the size of the building." Discussing the ability of the cyclorama to tease the eye, a newspaper reporter described the typical reaction to this type of display:

It is as though the laws of this world were suspended .... Some portions of the foreground appear to change their positions as the spectator changes his. ... In short, one feels quite helpless and wondering in the midst of this new and extraordinary nature. It would seem as though all these queer impressions might be at once met and settled by the simple consideration of the fact that it was only a picture. But that is just it; it is impossible to accept the thing as a picture. Not because it is absolutely natural, but because there is nothing by which to gauge the thing, one has no idea whether the canvas is ten feet distant or a thousand. And so, all means of rational judgement being removed, the spectator must remain, dazed and helpless, feeling much like the little girl in 'Alice in Wonderland,' when told that she was but a thing in the dream of the sleeping king.

The popularity of cycloramas in the United States grew to a peak after the Civil War when the public became interested in witnessing the representation of this divisive national
event as offered by the medium's enormous scale: "Veterans were eager to recall their battle experiences, and others wanted to actually see what they had heard about."

This held true as late as 1886 when cycloramas still drew press comment: "The cyclorama of the Second Battle of Bull Run is largely patronized, but is almost too realistic. Ladies faint at the frightful picture of the horrors of war." There are at least eleven cycloramic or panoramic paintings of Civil War subjects in existence; representing just a handful of those produced. The largest paintings "dazzlingly combined art and spectacle, reproducing war with stunning scale in specially constructed buildings that offered the aesthetic imperative of an art gallery together with the breathtaking experience of theatre."

Generally, by 1880, Civil War cycloramis were over-produced. As interest declined, so too did use of the form. This slide in popularity was halted by one cyclorama that almost single-handedly revived the public interest in the medium for another decade through its immense scale and its nationalistic subject matter, the defining battle of the American Civil War, Gettysburg. This singular creation was initially painted in 1882-83 by Henri F. and Paul Philippoteaux, a father and son team of French artists. It was four hundred feet in diameter and over fifty feet high. It had its American premiere October 22, 1883, and within a year, half a million people had stood before it.

A large part of the Philippoteaux's success lay in the scale of their additions to the medium. More successfully than others before them, they placed an enormous number of actual objects in front of the painting and blended them in, thereby creating a "real, three-dimensional environment" as had never before been attempted. Once mounted on the wall of a round room, the ground before the canvas was covered in planking to imitate and continue the landscape found in the picture. Trees, rocks and grass were appropriately positioned alongside "cannons and all manners of military paraphernalia" to blend in with the painting's details. In one instance, "Two men are seen carrying a litter [stretcher]. The more distant soldier is painted on the canvas; the litter is real, two of its handles
passing through holes in the canvas. The figure resting on the litter and the nearer bearer are cut out of boards and painted.523 Other elements of the painting were similarly represented. A contemporary source described the lengths the artists went to in the creation of the illusion: "Many of the details of the picture were obtained from eye-witnesses of the battle; the uniforms, the modes of carrying the blankets, and the details of harness, and the minor parts of the scenery were studied carefully."524 Such research created results with exacting detail, as when "[a water well,] which began as a three-dimensional structure in the foreground was continued into the painting, so that some of its stones were real and others were but representations on canvas."525 Another article of the time confirmed this emphasis: "In the foreground are scattered some real pieces of harness and similar objects, and they compare perfectly with what is seen on the canvas."526 This new feature of approximated three-dimensionality greatly increased the verisimilitude of the work.

One of the attractions of the Philippoteaux cyclorama was its instructive lesson on the history of the Civil War. A "programme book" available for purchase contained many facts about the Civil War generally and the Battle of Gettysburg specifically. However, most important to the educative element of the painting was its reception as "an artistic transcript of photographic views of the [battle] field."527 Thus, the cyclorama was promoted and accepted as the re-creation of the actual setting, if not of life. This was enhanced when "on certain days, Major Bancroft, a local veteran, gave talks on the battle and pointed out prominent features in the painting."528 The impact resulting from the combination of these elements was overwhelming for spectators:

When one reaches the platform from which the cyclorama is shown the effect upon him is simply astounding. He suddenly finds himself upon a high hill and everywhere within the range of his vision, on the hills, in the valleys, in the woods, on the open fields, in ditches and behind stone walls, and in shot-shattered shanties he beholds the soldiers of the blue and gray engaged in the awful struggle for the
supremacy. No words can adequately describe the wonderful effects of this life-like portrayal of this great battle. 529

Matt Morgan's Civil War Cyclorama

American artists in the 1880s who wanted to capitalize on the renewed popularity of Civil War cycloramas experimented with the medium to get around the need for fully circular buildings. Often the result was large-scale war paintings that were hung flat. In a confusing turn of phrase, these exhibitions went by the older term "panorama." 530 One historian suggests that the major difference between the panorama and the cyclorama was the way each was displayed. Furthermore, while the former were not placed in round buildings, "panoramic pictures [still] enjoyed similarly enthusiastic patronage [as the cyclorama], sometimes in unlikely places, sacrificing nothing to scale or realism." 531

In 1886, three years after the Philippoteaux cyclorama opened, Matt Morgan, an English painter who had made a name for himself in America with a collection of scandalous tableaux vivants of semi-nude women in 1875, painted a series of twelve Civil War battle pictures that he toured across the country in theatres. 532 For a number of years Morgan had been the principle artist with the Strowbridge Lithograph Company in Cincinnati. 533 Not only was he recognized as one of the best designers of show bills but was later to be viewed as one of the greatest scenic artists of the day. 534 The Civil War paintings that toured with "Matt Morgan's Diorama Company" had been completed within a single year and this achievement added to the positive reception of the work. 535 One critic remarked: "Here a single artist begins this great task [painting twelve paintings in serial] and carries it to a successful end in less than a year. Never before in all the history of art has so much been accomplished in such a short time." 536 Morgan's speed was the result of a painting technique which he had acquired in England years earlier:
Different painters have different methods, and there is as much variety in the schools of scene painting as in other branches of art. The German, French, and American artists use opaque washes, or, as it is usually expressed, work in 'body color.' The English school in which the greatest advances have been made, use thin glazes. This in scene painting is the quickest and most effective. [Matt] Morgan, Marston, Fox, and Voegtlin are among the leading representatives of this school in America, and their method is gradually spreading among the artists of this country. Its rapidity may be judged from the fact that one of these artists lately painted a scene measuring twenty by thirty feet in less than four hours.537

To heighten the reception of his series, Morgan knew that he needed to supply an accompanying verbal component, as was the convention. For this reason he hired Steele MacKaye to develop a descriptive lecture to complement the paintings. While more rudimentary, MacKaye's earlier theatrical work had embraced a similar pictorial aesthetic to that he would later witness in Morgan's paintings. Ten years earlier, in 1876, MacKaye had independently produced Queen and Woman, employing scenic backdrops that depicted actual locations where the play was said to take place (something not attempted later at the Madison Square).538 The most prominent spaces depicted were: "the 'Bank of the Thames,' 'Old London by Moonlight,' the 'State Room in the Tower of London,' and The Chapel in the White Tower." These paintings were noted in a newspaper for their skilful beauty and superiority to contemporary backdrops in competing plays.539 Having this (limited) exposure to representational scenic painting, MacKaye spent a month writing the oration for Morgan (only parts of which are extant) and the project became the first of several collaborations between the two men. This commission allowed MacKaye to exploit his art training and oratorical ability in a new medium. He applied these talents to bring life to enormous paintings in the way that his earlier theatre projects had been attempts, on a smaller scale, to create pictorial illusions on stage.
In bringing his theatre experiences (which had developed by staging deliberately
illusionistic play settings) to Morgan's work, MacKaye finally had the opportunity to
operate on an aesthetic scale that matched his desires for romantic pictorial illusion on
stage--epic grandeur. The quality of Morgan's painting was essential to MacKaye's
execution of his task. He wrote to his wife: "I am driven hard to complete my work ....
The work [by Morgan] ... is of much greater magnitude and importance than I had
supposed, and I shall not be able to finish writing my oration before the end of the week.
... Morgan's paintings are magnificent."540 A period assessment of the artistry required by
a successful scenic painter contextualizes Morgan's work and provides a basis for
MacKaye's awe-inspired remark:

One always looks with admiration at the works of a great scenic painter. With the
vast stage of one of the great theatres to work on, he seems like a magician, creating
great tracts of country, landscapes, and mountains, rearing beautiful palaces like an
architect. There is a sense of something noble as the curtain draws up and reveals
one of these fine expanses. The knowledge of the essence and of the effect of art
possessed by a great scenic artist is surprising.541

The complexities of Morgan's paintings were furthered by their dioramic quality.
"Matt Morgan's Diorama Company" was so named because he painted his pictures along
the lines of earlier dioramas. As first conceived by Louis Daguerre, dioramas had a
particular visual effect: "The picture itself consisted of transparent canvas. It was painted on
both sides so as to provide two different effects, one from light directed onto it from the
front, the other from light directed onto it from behind. ... The picture one saw could be
very gradually transformed. ... [I]t did not represent one moment frozen for ever as did the
static panorama, but an extended period of time."542 That Morgan's work employed
dioramic effects was part of its appeal, as gradual transformations of scenes allowed by his
carefully conceived compositions brought life to a usually static art form. The transient
pictorial effect obtained using such an approach influenced MacKaye's own ideas about stage pictures. In Morgan's work, MacKaye witnessed the power brought to pictorial illusions by incorporating shifting qualities and quantities of light. MacKaye's later projects all undertook a substantial investigation and employment of the transient lighting effects encountered in Morgan's dioramas. While MacKaye's exposure to and training in landscape painting had no doubt sensitized him to the compositional effects of light on his stage pictures (i.e., his efforts at the Madison Square) Morgan's dioramic approach resolved the traditional painter's inability to represent changing pictures.

Morgan's show solved two major problems inherent in cycloramic displays: portability and variety. The Matt Morgan War Pictures (or Battle Pictures) were first exhibited on August 30, 1886, at Heuck's Opera House, Cincinnati, where the success of the venture allowed it to tour until January 1887. The opera house allowed the audience the comfort of sitting and viewing the paintings. The show later moved to St. Louis where MacKaye's oration was be used. Devising his paintings in such a way as to fit into any rented theatre freed Morgan from the expense of having to refit an entire building to accommodate the pictures. Furthermore, rather than present a single battle scene, Morgan offered twelve. While an audience may not have been seduced into paying to see a smaller rendition of a battle perhaps already viewed in grand cycloramic fashion, Morgan enticingly promised a collection of twelve distinct battle pictures in the comfort of a local and familiar theatre.

The Battle pictures were carefully crafted into a unified evening's entertainment. They presented a twelve-part history of the Civil War, displaying the most important battles and events. A careful eye had been given to establishing the proper atmosphere and creating a throughline amongst all of the paintings:

The pictures are the largest of any series ever painted. Each of them is 45 by 27 feet—as large as a good sized city lot—and they are twelve in number. They
completely filled the stage opening at Heuck's which will give one an idea of their magnitude. ... Then, too, there is a marvelously beautiful drop curtain inscribed with Grant's words, 'Let us have peace,' and a great map of the South, with the battle fields marked, which accompany the paintings.546

Filling an entire proscenium twelve times with separate paintings was undeniably an impressive venture, independent of Morgan's task of creating a single engaging story. The order and subjects of the twelve paintings were briefly explicated in a newspaper account. The depicted events clearly offered a northern-biased history of the Civil War:

No. 1.—Belmont, Nov. 7th, 1861, when General Grant was first disclosed to a nation groping for a soldier to lead it to victory.

No. 2.—Donaldson, Feb. 15, 1862, with the assault led by the splendid Smith, the unconditional surrender and the first great victory of the war.

No. 3.—The First Day of Shiloh, April 6, 1862. The last charge of the confident Rebel hosts repulsed.

No. 4.—The Second Day of Shiloh, April 7, 1862. The two armies, the Cumberland and Tennessee, drive the enemy from the field.

No. 5.—Vicksburg, June 25, 1863, with the Mine and Explosion in front of 'Battery Hickenlooper.'

No. 6.—Gettysburg, July 3, 1863. The high water mark of the Rebellion, and the victory of the 'Army of the Potomac.'

Intermission of Ten Minutes.

No. 7.—Mission Ridge, Nov. 25, 1863, when the Army of the Cumberland smashes Bragg and sends him whirling away from Chattanooga.

No. 8.—Yellow Tavern, May 11, 1864, where the grandest cavalry fight of the war is portrayed.

No. 9.—Grant in the Wilderness. A night scene in a storm on the battle field after one of terrible days of fighting 'on this line if it takes all summer.'

No. 10.—Atlanta, July 22, 1864, the most desperate hand to hand contest of the war—the battle that sent Sherman 'Marching through Georgia.'

No. 11.—Five Forks, April 1, 1865, where Sheridan drives the enemy into the 'last ditch.'

No. 12.—Appomattox, April 9, 1865. Peace.547
Like the Philippoteaux cyclorama, Morgan's *Battle Pictures* initially used a retired military man to narrate the evening. While newspaper sources failed to mention whether Morgan's original orator actually gave a formal lecture, he clearly functioned as a viewing guide:

As each painting was shown General W.T. Clark, who was chief of staff under McPherson, explained the battle which it represented, and pointed out the localities and commanding officers. This explanation, together with the map, gave one a clear idea of the war and fixed in his memory places and incidents so that they will be forever retained. In fact the element of education is all important in the paintings, and they are really great practical object lessons on the war.548

MacKaye's later oration went beyond pointing out locations and specific figures, though it did stress the detailed representations of scenes (a feature initially suggested by the specific dates assigned to each picture). This accuracy of the scenic reproductions would have been emphasized by the oration, such as when MacKaye interrupted his description of a particular battle to remark: "[T]he picture at this point was painted from photographs taken almost in the midst of the fight--the principal photographer Larry [B]eaux killed while focusing his camera."549 The inclusion of such asides indicates that this series of pictures offered fidelity of depiction as a primary aesthetic goal. The extant passages of MacKaye's script show that asides were interjected throughout the lecture as means of bolstering credibility. Furthermore, these asides reveal the different kinds of stories and details depicted in the now lost paintings. In his oration for *Battle Picture No. 5* (Vicksburg) MacKaye interrupted the war narrative:

Grant and Sherman stand side by side--in the R. middle distance in front of Grant is little Fred Grant on a pony captured on Jeff Dario's plantation a few weeks before--Mrs. Grant wrote to Mr. Morgan explaining the particulars of the position of young Fred on this occasion--and anxiously requesting to have his connection
with his father at this memorable minute recorded in this picture. Mrs. Grant also sent a photograph of the boy taken about this time from which his portrait here was painted.550

Such accuracy garnered enthusiastic reviews. The verisimilitude offered in the paintings and highlighted by the oration clearly achieved their intended effects:

In an artistic sense, the pictures leave nothing to be desired. Historically they are correct, the scenes, soldiers, flags and horses being painted from original sketches and photographs; while as teachers of history they will do more than twenty ponderous histories of the war. Then too, they arouse a man's patriotism. They all represent Northern victories and the pulse beats faster and blood comes quicker as the stirring memories of the days that tried men's souls are recalled by the living canvas.551

MacKaye's oration played as large a part in the entertainment as did the pictures themselves. With the curtains closed, the orator would give some background concerning the painting to be revealed. After telling a story which built up to the moment depicted in the painting, music sounded and the curtain was removed. At this point the speaker continued in a more specific manner, describing different vignettes represented in the painting. Separate scenarios accompanied each of the twelve paintings. An existing oration handwritten by MacKaye for one of Morgan's pictures gives a sense of the amount of time spent on each painting by the orator. Taking his lead from the description of Battle Picture No. 4 (The Second Day of Shiloh) MacKaye's lead-in oration for Battle Picture No. 5 (Vicksburg) began:

The success of the federals at Shiloh led to the evacuation of Corinth--and ultimately inspired General Grant--with the determination to take Vicksburg--and thus clearing the Mississippi of all confederate obstructions and free the grandfather of waters to 'ni [?] xed [crossed] to the sea' as a National waterway. The
daring of this project—can be appreciated when you understand that to take that city
Grant was forced to violate all known rules of war—by entering the country of the
enemy—and cutting himself off from his base of supplies and communication with
[it.]
An attempt to reduce Vicksburg had been made by a great naval fleet on the
Mississippi under Farragut Parker [?] and plan [?] officer davis. This attempt
proved a complete failure.
To capture Vicksburg [.] Grant undertook a task so appalling that well the
audacious mind of Sherman shrank from the task. Sherman wrote to the authorities
in Washington denouncing Grant’s plans. This letter happened to pass through the
hands of his superior officer who imaginatively returned it to Sherman—after the
success of the very campaign Sherman had denounced and thus saved Sherman
from bitter humiliation. The place of this frightful campaign was as follows—to
march the army 40 miles down the west bank of the Mississippi—cross the army to
the east bank in Kausport running the gauntlet of the Confederate gigantic batteries
[.] make the crossing of that great and difficult river in the face of all the opposition
[.] After all this was done—the perils of the plan could only just begin. It was there
necessary for Grant to cut himself off from his base of supplies, and took his men
[?] in a hostile country, absolutely surrounded by the enemy, launch into the
interior without a new base haunted by all the terrors of the undertaking [.] Grant
resolved to go in.
The constitution of Grant’s character prompted him to undertake a task which no
one else would have dared even to propose—He dared—and his deeds were as great
as his daring. He captured what all the world declared an invincible stronghold—
captured it in the face of petty cavils—sneers—and even indignant protestations.
[C]aptured it horse, foot and dragoons—and made himself an immortal place at the head of the greatest conquerors in the history of mankind.

Music ------------------Picture

Picture of the Blowing up of Fort Hill

The moment depicted is the explosion of the mine by which Grant destroyed Fort Hill and opened a road for the national Army into Vicksburg.

The orders from Grant were that the mine should be exploded at 3. p.m.—every soldier manning a gun—and every officer commanding a company—were ordered to set their watches by the firing of a certain gun at noon that day.—All were to stand ready at the appointed hour—and the moment the mine was exploded every regiment of infantry and every [sic] gatling guns were to pour their shot and shell into the imprisoned and doomed city. The hour has come—ever man stands to his gun with the lanyard taut in his hand.

All along the edge of the distant hill—we see the Confederate lines—The National lines are in the foreground—At the left, where the flag stands was the headquarters of General Logan—near the end of the Tent L. stands old Stolbraudt the chief of artillery—R.C. stands General Leggett looking through his glass with General Gillespie at his side—Just below in foreground stands [sic] Generals Logan—McPherson and Clark—.... [At this point MacKaye interjected to discuss the depiction of Fred Grant on horseback.] All have come out to witness the terrific explosion—which is seen in the distance R. and which blew Fort Hill with its guns—horses—and garrison of men hundreds of feet into the air—This great feat was accomplished in the following manner—On the extreme R. is an old building called the White House. In front of it an elm tree, between tree and house, was commenced thru [sic] days a ditch, which made zig-zag lines to the Foot of Fort Hill. In the center of the high n [?] Captain Hickenlooper mined out an immense
chamber--where he placed 8000 lbs. of powder--The explosion of which tore the place to pieces with the force of a terrible earthquake. While the mining and sapping [trench-digging] was in progress the work was very sharply protected by the courage and ingenuity of one mysterious man--In the R.C. of the picture is seen a clumsy structure called Coonskin Tower--its existence, and name were due to the man I mention--This man appeared at camp about the time the gap was commenced--He was a long, lank country fellow about 6 ft. 4 ins. in height, dressed in a hunters costume and wearing a coonskin cap--He carried an enormous rife longer than himself. He would not give his name but claimed to be a miner man from Kentucky--he said he was a sure shot and asked permission to fight the [?] in his own way--He was evidently so sincere that he was told to show what he could do--This is what he did--In the dead of night--he found a place just outside of, but quite near to the Confederate batteries on Fort Hill--These batteries were constantly firing upon the sappers [soldiers from the engineering corps who dig trenches] and miners of the Federals--At this place discovered by our hero there was a quantity of R.R. ties--this extraordinary man--shielded by the darkness of night began to pick up these ties and make a tower of them--He would creep out of the federal camp with four or five days rations--and each morning--the federals saw his queer structure growing higher and higher.--After several returns to camp for food--he succeeded in getting his tower high enough to enable him to look over the parapets of Fort Hill--There he began to work in the daytime.--His work consisted in picking off every Confederate soldier who dared to look over the parapets--or to man a gun on the side where the sapping was going on--The Confederates soon found that certain death awaited any man who dared to show himself on that side of the Fort--in terror they deserted this exposed place and thus failed to discover the mine the federals were setting for their destruction.--This solitary soldier of the
Republic was called by the boys in camp, Coonskin, in honor of his cap, and the
tower which he built and from which, he single handed silenced the guns of the
enemy was called Coonskin Tower—. This noble patriot—too modest to give his
name—will nevertheless be immortalized in history as the man whose singular
vigilance, and devotion, served his country more than a whole regiment of ordinary
men.

Music---------------------Curtain 552

When the lengthy oration and the accompanying paintings were combined with a
curtain map of the Southern States, and a curtain containing Grant's statement of peace, the
whole made for a full evening's entertainment. MacKaye clearly had the ability to pour
great feelings into his narrative and elicit strong emotions from his audience. Moving
beyond the relatively rousing tone of the story accompanying No. 5, MacKaye's oration
for Battle Picture No. 6 (Gettysburg) which led into the intermission (itself dramatically
positioned for Northern audiences at the "highwater mark" of the Confederate forces)
concluded on an emotional note of little restraint:

At the end of this group of dead—lies little Jessie Nelson—who when his drum was
pierced by a bullet—seized the musket from a dead comrade—rushed in to the fight—
and had hardly fired his first shot for his country when he fell dead [,] his brave
young heart stilled forever by a confederate ball—Yonder he lies the drummer boy
of Shiloh with his drum on one side—his musket on this other ... a type of crowd of
boys the pride and the joy of grand mothers ... glorious boys—who laid down their
youth—and their hopes—and their lives—that we might enjoy the chances of peace—
in a union connected forever by the blood of their generous hearts.

Music---------Curtain 553

The Morgan Pictures received much acclaim from the opening-night audience.

Calling the production a "new departure in art," the Cincinnati Times Standard said:
[T]here was not a man or woman who was not thoroughly pleased and delighted with the splendid painting. As picture after picture was shown [,] the enthusiasm mounted higher and higher until at length [,] after the exhibition of the wonderful night scene succeeding the Battle of the Wilderness, there was a wild outbreak of applause mingled with cries of 'Morgan, Morgan.' All the house took up the cry, and finally the artist walked out on the stage and bowed. But that was not enough, and Mr. Morgan was again called and recalled, while a number of splendid floral pieces were handed up to him on the stage, he bowed while in embarrassed satisfaction.554

Another newspaper review explicitly referred to the theatrical devices used in combination with the oration to enhance the presentation of a particular picture:

As to the twelve pictures it is difficult to tell which is the best—or rather which impresses one the most vividly. Perhaps the terrible scenes [sic] of the night after the battle of the Wilderness is the most thrilling. Here the mechanism of the stage has been called in to add to the effect. ... The battlefield is shrouded in the blackness of night. All is dark save where a light shines through a tent door, inside of which are seen several officers in anxious consultation. All at once there is a flash of lightning and the long roll of thunder. The dark storm clouds are revealed as they gather in dread thick masses as if to shut out from the pitying stars the sight of the field of carnage. But by the continuous flashings of the lightning—for the storm increases—is [sic] also seen the slain, lying as they fell, twisted and blood stained. Far off are visible the white tents, while everywhere is scattered the debris of battle, cannon, arms, dead horses and the wreck and ruin caused by the shot and shell. This is only visible when the lightning gleams and in that ghastly light the scene is more awful than words can describe. The terrible darkness, then the
lightning and sight of the dreadful field of slaughter and then again the deep night, while all the time the thunder fills the air—all is heart-straining in its realism.555

General Clark appeared as lecturer for the opening performances. It is unknown, though, when, or under what circumstances, he left the show. Ultimately, MacKaye was offered the job of delivering his own oration. This situation arose when the Battle Pictures moved to St. Louis, where MacKaye, writing to his wife, mentioned that he was offered "$150 a week and all expenses, if I will deliver the Oration which I am now writing to accompany the Pictures. The engagement will be for 35 weeks. This would enable me to send you over $100 a week and leave me plenty of time to write my new play."556 In this same letter MacKaye discussed the most attractive feature of the proposed contract: "The offered engagement is exceedingly dignified. My oration and I will be starred, and everything done to make things pleasant for me."557 Being the "star" of such a lengthy tour testifies to the strength of MacKaye's vocal abilities. MacKaye added to his wife: "Moreover, the labor would be much less fatiguing than teaching.—I am strongly tempted to accept, as it secures ample support for the family, and relieves me from sitting on the ragged edge of anxiety."558 Nevertheless he rejected the job, apparently because of a different proposal from William Cody.

Because the Battle pictures in performance were actively interpreted by an orator, their combined display verged on a visually-motivated theatrical production. MacKaye brought to the project not only the voice of a trained actor, but a European tradition of oration not notable on the American stage, as at this time elocution in the United States followed the tradition of public oration found in Britain, used in "functions of state," and not in the theatre.559 MacKaye, however, having been trained in France, was imbued with that country's concept of elocution, which was inseparable from the oration of the actor. Thus, MacKaye fused these two traditions in his work.560 Correspondingly, MacKaye's success with this project was possibly informed by the public speaking style of the period.
Without aural documents the history of public oration is fragmentary. However, Bruce McConachie states that, "[a]ntebellum orators strove for a cadenced flow of sound, punctuated occasionally by broad gestures and building majestically toward a climactic conclusion." Indeed, such a narrative build is present in MacKaye's oration for Vicksburg, which climaxed with the sentimental remark concerning little Jessie Nelson. Just as the mid-century tendency was towards theatres that seated over a thousand spectators, public addresses were also delivered before large crowds. McConachie remarks: "The physical remoteness of the actor-orator from his audience [in these large theatres] no doubt reinforced the remoteness of the rhetorical images and stage pictures from the spectators' notion of everyday reality." Later in the century, while still removed from the experience by the design of the cyclorama auditorium, the remoteness of the event vanished as viewers were plunged into the reality of the battle by the eloquent descriptions of the orator and the visual impact of an extremely-detailed all-embracing picture. Thus, MacKaye's descriptive lecture was essential in creating a sophisticated performance. The detailed visual representations gave interest to the eyes, while the accompanying oral description gave clarity to the displayed images, along with narrative coherence to the various areas of any given part of a specific painting. Indeed, in certain orations done on such a grand scale, the distance created by the enormous space of the auditorium and the large theatrical gestures of the orator probably kept "in check 'a kind of officious detail which would only lower the general effect.'" A result of such staging practices was that, "[i]n a seeming paradox, the formality and remoteness of ... [nineteenth-century oration] led to some of the most emotion-packed speaking and performing ever witnessed in America." From reading MacKaye's emotion-laid oration together with the accounts of the opening-night audience's enthusiastic reception of the *Battle Pictures*, it is clear that Morgan's paintings reached towards this emotional peak.
MacKaye's task of writing an oration to accompany Matt Morgan's *Battle Pictures* clearly employed much of his earlier training. In writing the narration for Morgan, he was called upon to match his words to another's canvas. By verbalizing the picturesque, MacKaye not only relied on his past theatre experience but also used the skills he had developed as an art student, critic, and buyer. To read MacKaye's oration is to recover Morgan's paintings in their most "perfect" rendering. Ultimately for MacKaye, writing the oration was similar to writing a play scenario and stage directions all in one (as suggested by the inclusions of stage notation in MacKaye's oration, i.e., "R.C. stands General Legget"). Consequently, working on Morgan's venture gave MacKaye the best possible training for his next project: writing not only a directing-scenario, but also stage directions, for a three-dimensional picture of history.

*The Drama of Civilization*

William F. Cody (1846-1917) was a showman and actor who became known for his persona, "Buffalo Bill." Before his career in entertainment he had been a trail scout supplying guidance and buffalo meat for the U.S. cavalry in western regions of America. His success as a performer developed out of a rodeo-like "Wild West" exhibition he initially staged in 1883, though he had been involved with theatre earlier.566 Beginning in 1873 and continuing for eleven winter seasons in New York, Cody starred himself as "Buffalo Bill" in at least twelve western plays (whose subjects were the thrilling interactions of cowboys and Indians). These plays had limited success, which made Cody return to his exhibition during the summer months.567 In the spring of 1886, he began his first "Wild West" tour of eastern America, and unlike the public response extended to his plays, his exhibition gained extraordinary popular success. One paper summarized the reception: "It is well known that the average number of visitors to the Wild West camp at
Staten Island [Erastina, N.Y.] this summer has exceeded 20,000 daily, and July 5, [presumably for the July 4th holiday] fifty-three thousand persons witnessed the two performances. The exhibition was so well received that it provoked the suggestion of arranging an indoor winter show, allowing the troupe to stay longer in New York to capitalize on their popularity. During this successful summer run, a meeting between William Cody and Steele MacKaye resulted in suggestions of how an indoor production might be organized, and ways that it could be made more cohesive and dramatic. The outcome of this discussion was The Drama of Civilization. This revised indoor version of Buffalo Bill's Wild West show not only bridged the gap between amusement and education, but became "a form of entertainment in which pictorial ... [illusion], the aesthetic of the nineteenth-century stage, reached its most complete realization." The Drama of Civilization offered nothing less than "reality itself, pictured with all the true artifacts of western life from teepees to Deadwood Stage Coaches, a life in which the real heroes (Pawnee Bill, Texas Jack, and W.F. Cody) and the villains (Sitting Bull, Indian Horse, and Rocking Bear) were played by their real live selves." Indeed, this was intended by the show at its outset, as expressed in the souvenir program: 

"[The 'Wild West' Exhibition] ... marks a new era in the history of amusements: that for originality, adherence to truth in 'holding the mirror up to nature' [,] and a fidelity to fact that is the 'true aim of art:' 

Steele MacKaye became involved in the development of the indoor show soon after his first meeting with William Cody. In September 1886, MacKaye was still writing the oration for Matt Morgan's Battle Pictures. At this time he was approached formally by Cody and Nate Salsbury (Cody's business manager) to convert the "Wild West" show into an indoor exhibition. His initial response to Cody's request for assistance showed MacKaye's desire to man the helm of such a big undertaking:
Messrs. Cody and Salsbury—Gentlemen—At your request I have herein endeavored to formulate certain suggestions for the reconstruction of the program of your entertainment of the 'Wild West.' The suggestions are made with a view of the appearance of your combination at the Madison Square Garden in this City. [This building is not to be confused with MacKaye's Madison Square Theatre.] MacKaye's commission to dramatize the talents and effects of Buffalo Bill's troupe allowed him to combine his newly re-tuned oratorical strengths, his recent interest in and exposure to cycloramic painting, and his directing experience. Bringing these skills to bear on this project, MacKaye created a large-scale production that was a clear expression of his own changing sensibility towards the aesthetic of pictorial illusion. The influence of Morgan's *Battle Picture*'s on Cody's production was evident in MacKaye's confident movement from the one project to the other, and his ability to propose and undertake this even larger scheme. From the outset, MacKaye identified the general concept later adopted by Cody and Salsbury, which became *The Drama of Civilization*. In a manner similar to the all-encompassing history of the Civil War that he had just written for delivery as a lecture, MacKaye proposed a history of the American frontier to be played out by Cody's company:

In constructing the program and the *descriptive lecture* of your entertainment I would suggest that your illustrations of the life of the West should follow exactly the order observed in the evolution of its territorial History—if this were done the exhibition would naturally divide itself into scenes and acts, like a great play. You might call this play *The Story of the States*. Before this, Cody's show had been a strung-together collection of disparate western attractions which included exhibition shooting, stunt riding, and horse races; none of which were linked narratively. MacKaye carefully stated his different conception of the new show:
Heretofore the exhibition of the 'Wild West' has presented only illustrations of the skill of the scout, and the cowboy, in their encounters with the savage and animal life of the plains. The 'Wild West' as reorganized will present in coherent form the history of the conquest of the wilderness by the heroic pioneers of civilization. The perils begotten of the elemental forces of nature—as well as those entailed by the hostility of the Indians—will be exhibited with a realism at once beautiful, terrible, and humorously entertaining.  

MacKaye went on to sketch out four acts and their potential contents, incorporating some elements from Cody's original show. The speed with which Cody approved MacKaye's suggestions indicates his and Salsbury's enthusiasm for the proposed indoor show. By October 7th, less than six weeks after Matt Morgan's work opened in Cincinnati, MacKaye was in New York. He had not only accepted Cody's offer, drafted a scenario and sent it off to Cody on tour in Chicago, but had already received a positive response. The show proposed to Cody's business manager was clearly laid out:

This Scenario (1st) follows the historic order in the presentation of the various features of the 'Wild West'.

(2nd) It introduces new features, notably:

--The aboriginal savage in his garb of skins, and with the weapons used before the white man appeared

--The Emigrant Trains

--Prairie Fire

--Stampede of wild cattle

--Life of a mining camp

--Life of a fort

--A realistic presentation of the formation and bursting of a cyclone in the mountains, etc. ... Thus this Scenario completes the story of the perils of the
pioneer, giving the fight of man with the awful, elemental forces of nature, as well as his conflict with the wild cattle of the plains.—In a word, there is a method, coherency and completeness to this story which must greatly enhance its intrinsic merits, and fit it more perfectly to the Garden as a winter indoors entertainment. 576

Here, MacKaye reiterated his dedication to a grand play based on historical depictions of the colonization of the American West. Such a vision would later be announced boldly to the audience in the souvenir program as, "A History of American Civilization," and modified by MacKaye to be "A Grand Drama of Civilization." 577 The enthusiasm for MacKaye's proposed play was clear in Salsbury's reply: "My dear Steele—Yours to hand. Your Scenario is a Corker, if you can carry it out. Let me impress upon you that, in dealing with Wild West actors, you must try to get broad effects without burdening their minds too much. For, as sure as fate, they will weary of the job if the limits are too narrow." 578

MacKaye's dramatic sensibility and his command of the intended staging were sharp enough to confidently propose a theatrical re-enactment of a historic event of national interest that was not present in Cody's original show: the 1876 Indian massacre of General George Custer and his troupe at the Little Big Horn. While this scene did not make it into the opening of the play, it was freely promoted as an upcoming addition. 579 Finally added in mid-January of 1887, the "new Custer tableau" soon grew in popularity to eventually become the unrivaled climax of a show that would play for the next twenty years. 580 One contemporary newspaper account mentioning the "Custer battlefield" portion claimed that it was a masterpiece of "scenic art." 581 Most demonstrative of MacKaye's influence is that while Cody's later shows dismissed and then returned to a number of MacKaye's ideas, Cody never got rid of the Custer scene initially conceived by MacKaye. His theatrical sensibility in combining the character of Buffalo Bill with the emotionally-charged historical event surrounding General Custer was expressed in his first letter to Cody and
Salsbury. The initial scenario for the envisioned fourth act, which MacKaye himself regarded as overall "very crude and imperfect," was full of action:

Act 4th The Fort—exhibition of Arms and exhibition of skill in arms by soldiers and servants in front of Fort—which is painted on a drop—The alarm—Soldiers ordered and armed—march off headed by Custer with marching music—Scene change to Gorge and Forest in which Custer was massacred—Soldiers come on—Show battle between soldiers and Indians. Custer killed—triumphant dance of almost naked savages—Scene closed in by a drop representing the plains where Buffalo Bill killed Yellow Hand [This incident was the climax of Cody's "Wild West" show at this time.]—This scene is enacted—another battle in which the Indians are enacted [sic]—Custer Avenged—and the Chiefs captured—Grand Triumphant Finale in which Buffalo Bill is the central figure and Hero.582

In a synopsis of the play provided to newspapers for promotional purposes, MacKaye developed the Custer scene in greater detail and further theatricalized history:

The first scene [of the final act] presents a picture of the exterior of a western fort—in front of which soldiers, off duty, are amusing themselves in various ways. Scouts arrive announcing the rising of the Sioux tribe led by Sitting Bull.—Custer comes from the Fort—The soldiers are called to arms—and falling in—follow Custer off, and disappear—The scene changes to a picture of the spot, in the Little Big Horn, where the noble Custer fell fighting amidst his men—only one of whom ever escaped to tell the horrible tale of that days bloody work. As the place is disclosed the Indians are discovered in the midst of a war dance—Their village with its picturesque teepees is seen in the background. The dance is arrested by the distant sound of an army bugle—The Indians start and listen—The bugle is heard again—nearer. The Indians start and with ferocious pantomimic expressions conceal themselves among the trees—and form an ambush for the approaching soldiers.
Suddenly two scouts emerge into the arena, just in front of the Grand Stand, from under the seats—They stop at sight of the Indian Village and observe it carefully with their field glasses—satisfied with their examination of the Little Big Horn village they retire to return almost immediately with General Custer and his bugler. The General after inspecting the scene before him orders his bugler to sound the call—when instantly the whole of his force ride on and forms in line—Custer then commands his bugler to sound the charge—and leads his men as they sweep wildly upon the Indian Village only to fall into the ambush of red men—where with the frantic courage of despair they fight vainly for life—everyone of them being massacred, scalped, and mutilated—The Curtains closing as the heroic Custer falls from his horse.

Not to leave such a carefully built, emotionally taut scenario there, MacKaye proposed to bring Cody into the scene to further the patriotic emotions pitched to the audience:

Upon the climax of this memorable engagement—an enormous curtain descends with a colossal picture of Custer, the greatest Indian fighter that ever led a trail in the 'Wild West.' [MacKaye thereby linked Custer with Cody's "Wild West" show.] As this curtain is unfolded the cowboys and Indians and vaqueros led by Buffalo Bill rush out on horseback from each side of the proscenium and forming quickly in front of the curtain dash madly on in a great body up towards the Grand Stand—Stop Short—Salute—and disappear with magical velocity beneath the seats of the spectators.583

In later years, after the depiction of Custer's slaughter was firmly established as the climax of the "Wild West" show, this scenario grew to epic proportions at Cody's suggestion. Rather than closing the curtain on Custer's death, it remained open, offering up a tableau of the massacre. One reviewer remarked: "Everything is concluded with a lavish expenditure of gunpowder."584 After a moment of this, Cody would ride into the arena, accompanied
by his troupe, "react" to the carnage on stage, and "doff his hat" in respect. Following this, the lights would dim, Cody would be found in a spotlight with the words "Too Late" projected on a curtain behind him.585

This blending of history with dramatic fiction moved closer to historical accuracy when Mrs. George Custer was brought to the Garden to confirm the depiction of her husband's last stand, an act similar to the veterans' testimonies accompanying the Civil War cycloramas. The triumvirate of MacKaye, Cody and Salsbury managed to get Mrs. Custer not only to verify the authenticity of General Custer's death scene as staged in the play, but also to attest to the verisimilitude of the pictorial representation of the Little Big Horn landscape painted on the large canvas backdrop. MacKaye wrote to Salsbury: "In ... [the] painting of the scenes, Mrs. Custer will be announced as superintending the picture of the spot where her husband was killed."586 As a child, Steele MacKaye's son Percy witnessed "the gigantic, scenic preparations and the early rehearsals, at which the widow of General Custer herself was present in conference with ... [MacKaye], while he directed the tragic mock-fight with the Indians, in which long-haired 'Buck Taylor,' as Custer, was the last to fall among the dead."587 Completing the reproduction of this historical event was a letter signed by Mrs. Custer kept on hand for promotional purposes, swearing that the recreation before the eyes of the spectators was an accurate portrayal of the actual events.588 Of course, this was an impossible claim on her part, as she had not been present at the battle. In having Mrs. Custer on hand for The Drama of Civilization MacKaye moved Cody's exhibition from a casual recreation into a sanctioned picture of the past—a truthful reality.

In his design for The Drama of Civilization, MacKaye's primary concern was to develop a stage that aesthetically fit with the arena space of the Madison Square Garden—the chosen venue for the show. As initially planned by MacKaye in an early sketch, "[t]he vast interior was cut in half with a partition on the east side of it, with a proscenium
This configuration allowed for an extremely deep set (necessitated by all the animals included in the show). In his initial letter to Cody laying out his scenarios and staging concepts, MacKaye wrote: "The Stage and Arena should be on the same level—so that all racing can start from [the] stage—and run around [the] arena—also the stage coach effect can thus be obtained."

MacKaye's original diagram clarified his description of this proposed staging arrangement. At the back of the arena were audience boxes, in front of which were seats in a horseshoe shape. The inner open area of the horseshoe was the performance arena with a "speaker's stand" in the center (later placed at one side of the curtains). At the tips of the horseshoe seating, a large curtain drew across the entire width of the building; behind this was the "stage proper," marked with a series of five wings. Further behind this stage were the stables and dressing rooms. A description of this arrangement, when it toured Europe, details more specifically the large scale of the stage as it was initially conceived and employed within the Garden:

The magnitude of the scheme will be better understood when you note the figure of the dimensions. There were seven panoramas, each two hundred feet long, worked on drums thirty feet high; the drops inside the cycloramic effects were ninety feet wide; the stage was one hundred and thirty feet deep, the opening being eighty-seven feet ....

The scenic backgrounds at the Garden were moving panoramas, which allowed rapid scene changes: "We devised upright cones or rollers upon which to roll the canvas after it was hung in grooves overhead, which enabled us to run the scenes from right to left or vice versa, with a single trip drop for the front curtain." Devising machinery such as these enormous moving panoramas made the construction of the production difficult. MacKaye's necessary refit of the Garden caused newspapers to comment that "[t]he most extensive alterations are being made in the interior of the vast structure under the supervision of Buffalo Bill, [and] Steele MacKaye." These modifications cost over $60,000.
of the most radical structural changes was the need to raise the roof by twenty feet over the stage proper to accommodate the scenic effects. A local newspaper summarized the results:

The Garden has been turned as far as possible into a theatre with a ground stage at the east end. The walls were painted a drab color and the roof and skylights covered lightly with a dark colored shingling. The beams were hung with all sorts of gay flags and streamers. The floor was laid in fresh hard tan bark and from its eastern edge the stage proper opened, on which the four scenes in the 'Drama of Civilization' were set. A huge curtain shut it off at will and all the interludes were given in the ordinary circus ring now turned into a tan plot.

MacKaye's conception of a "great play" with the acts on stage divided by interludes in the arena allowed him to thoroughly incorporate many of the equestrian stunts and races that had made up a large part of Cody's outdoor exhibition. While the horse races held during the interludes were virtually a requirement of any performance involving horse exhibitions, they also signaled the production's similarity to other equestrian-based theatre events. Significantly, in his layout of the Garden, MacKaye duplicated the staging practices of equestrian dramas performed at Astley's Royal Amphitheatre in England and the French Cirque-Olympique, fifty and twenty-five years earlier, respectively. Though some reports noted the equestrian exhibition, they did not separate that element from the overall effect of the production. One reviewer commented: "[T]he performance is still largely equestrian," but continued by stating that the overall production design was "praiseworthy," mentioning especially that the "swiftly changing scenes" had "color and variety and novelty enough for the boldest of sensational plays." While the "horse show"-iness of the piece was still evident, MacKaye's revision clearly managed to turn Cody's exhibition into the recognizable form of a play. Indeed, MacKaye's importation of theatrical staging ideas into an equestrian environment inevitably moved the horse show
closer to the suspended reality of a play featuring horses. As such, MacKaye's use of a ground-level playing area eliminated a common aesthetic problem found with placing horses on stage:

[T]here is always 'disillusion' in the introduction of the real horse. His hoofs are heard re-echoing on the boards with hollow sound long before he enters, and when on stage, he reveals the boards still more palpably; his footing seems so precarious, the rider is always ill at ease. For these reasons the impression intended is rarely produced; and if so, it is not worth while to introduce the animal.602

Using a ground stage avoided placing horses "on the boards"; MacKaye thereby greatly enhanced the illusionistic concept of his play. The correlation between The Drama of Civilization and earlier equestrian dramas suggests that MacKaye modified the equestrian drama tradition for an 1880's audience. Thematically, the show's various stories (illustrating the opening up of America by the pioneers, the portrayal of buffalo hunts and Indian Wars, and a restaging of Custer's last stand) combined to create a patriotic appeal. MacKaye's use of current and popular technology (cycloramas) together with theatre devices and effects he invented for the production, increased the verisimilitude of the performance.

The settings for the four acts on the stage were primarily panoramic paintings. The idea of employing such vast drops for scenic locations was apparent in MacKaye's initial conception of the play and obviously supported his pictorial aesthetic. One of his first outlines of act two, "The Pioneers," described an Indian village and its transformation: "The Village can be painted on a drop--The scene changes by simply lowering a drop representing the prairie--Here the Buffalo Hunt picture is presented."603 The employment of painted backdrops and moving panoramas as a way of establishing specific locations in this play was clearly guided by the conventional use of such devices. MacKaye knew just the artist to accomplish the task of painting the necessarily large canvases in a timely
manner: he hired Matt Morgan. After a briefing on the scale of the show, Morgan "seemed to comprehend the situation and opportunity for great display at once and grew equally enthusiastic over the transaction. ... [At this point] he named a figure for his personal service in superintending the work and handling the artistic end of the proposition."604 The skill that Morgan brought to this position was considerable, according to the demands needed to succeed in the profession:

Scene painting is an art requiring special and technical education. The ordinary artist would be entirely unsuccessful at it. It is done in distemper, that is, with water-colors mixed with size, on burlap, or linen canvas, the canvas being previously sized. The perspective effects are peculiar, the colors change very much in drying, and the effects of gas-light, colored and calcium lights, and other stage effects, have to be very thoroughly understood. To be a really successful scenic artist requires exceptional talent.605

Expenses and material lists indicate the great size of the cycloramic backdrops and hint at the problems preparing, painting, and fitting these drops into their proper positions. In one list of expenses Morgan mentioned: "4 Panorama drops containing 280 yards each," "6 Straight Drops containing 130 yards each," and "6 Borders containing 25 yards each."

Morgan's substantial talent, along with his responsibility for covering all of this canvas, a total reported as 15,000 yards, suggests why his salary was two hundred fifty dollars a week while his highest paid assistant (one of three) made thirty-five dollars a week.606 To achieve the enormous scenic task, Morgan required a number of steps:

First comes the covering of the canvas with distemper, technically known as 'priming,' which dries in a day; then follows the charcoal or chalk outline; after this follows the business of 'blocking in.' The 'priming' may be executed by assistants, ... ten or twelve. So may also, in some cases, the 'blocking in,' the artist himself
mixing the colors. But the outline cannot, of course, be entrusted to the hands of a subordinate.\textsuperscript{607}

One of the few backstage accounts of this production came from Louis E. Cooke, the business manager for Adam Forepaugh (himself, the lessee of the Garden and "formidable rival" of Mr. P.T. Barnum).\textsuperscript{608} Recalling preparations for Morgan's scenic painting Cooke noted:

We had only six weeks to prepare for it and could not take possession of the Garden until three weeks before the opening. I commenced to purchase canvas by the wagon load, so that Morgan could get his staff of artists started at once. The scenes were painted with a panoramic effect, that is, in a semi-circle, not only to give a greater depth of view, but to overcome the physical obstacles encountered in the Garden, where there was no opportunity for a scene loft, or any way to handle the canvases, which measured 40 feet in height by 150 in length.\textsuperscript{609}

The Madison Square Garden that housed this production was "a crude brick wall enclosure with a rickety roof," and thus very different from the same-named but more famous structure erected later in the century. The building gave cover to a vacant lot "where [P.T.] Barnum had often pitched his tent." Prior to MacKaye's venture, horse and chicken shows along with beer gardens were standard attractions.\textsuperscript{610} Correspondingly, a horse exhibition delayed initial access to the building, making what had been planned to be a six week fit-up of the production into a three-week one.\textsuperscript{611}

Working with Cody's troupe marked the beginning of MacKaye's theatrical career in training large groups of amateur players. The cast of the piece were cowboys, stunt riders, and Indians from Cody's exhibition; while seasoned performers, they were not actors. Taking Salsbury's early suggestion of getting "broad effects without burdening ... [the] minds" of the cowboys and Indians, and recalling Salsbury's other remark that "success will depend on the simplicity of action and grandeur of mounting," MacKaye's
direction of the troupe focused on giving them pantomimic training. According to Cooke, MacKaye's specific technique involved taking "every Indian and cowboy, separately, and lead[ing] them through their parts, in pantomime, since there were few spoken words." This time-consuming task was necessary to obtain the effects he desired. Such a routine was a perfect match to the company's level of skill as suggested by a newspaper that gave a comical view of the rehearsal process:

The difficulties which ... [MacKaye] encounters can scarcely be overestimated. It is hard to get an Indian to understand the Delsarte system. ... Mr. MacKaye was soon busy holding rehearsals, but the Indians would have discouraged Delsarte himself. ... A score of Indians, a dozen cowboys, five or six old settlers and several mules stood in a row in the center of the garden, and the rehearsal began. Red Dog ... mistook his cue and ... scalped two men before it was his turn to appear. [At this point MacKaye queried] 'When will you ever learn to scalp a man properly? ... In scalping ... you must take him [an old settler] by the hair thus, smile thus, look to the right, look to the left, then look around the whole landscape to see if anybody is in sight, swing your scalping knife thus, smile again—that is Delsarte—' ... 'Whenever you tomahawk anybody, you must take the middle of the stage,' shouted MacKaye as the rehearsal went on. 'All wrong, all wrong! You don't use your tomahawk right. This way,' said Mr. MacKaye, taking the tomahawk and swinging it in a terrific circle about his head. 'This is the way Delsarte—' ... Mr. MacKaye posed and drilled the Indians, the cowboys, the old settlers and the mules in picturesque groups. He tried, in obedience to the Delsarte theory, to get the Old Settler to look as if he was lying when he was telling stories.—Mr. MacKaye was vastly tired when he got through the day's rehearsal.
Some scholars have focused on the strong use of pantomime in *The Drama of Civilization* to criticize MacKaye's theatrical sensibilities. William Brasmer argues that there were "few spoken words" (as Cooke noted) which undercut MacKaye's entire project:

Even the reality of the Wild West Exhibition, so sought by Cody, Salsbury, and MacKaye in the style of production they developed, was never a true reality, for the Wild West Exhibition eliminated human speech. Never on stage or in the arena did the protagonists of the Wild West Show speak to each other. Without dialogue there was no development of character. Without debate there was little understanding between persons of different heritage. Without language there could be no enlightenment in the audience.614

While language was clearly not the central feature of the piece, *MacKaye's Drama of Civilization* attempted to use extensive dialogue in combination with the presentation, by a prompter, of a major story summary preceding each scene. This orator gave "running-caption words" from a platform fitted with a sounding board.615 One opening night report mentioned that the play began with "the introduction by the chief prompter, Salsbury, perched in a box at one side of the stage."616 The role of orator for the show evidently required special talents that Salsbury did not have, as after his introduction, the position was taken over by a second reader: "Frank Richmond, the silver-tongued orator, [who] appeared in a sort of pigeon loft to the left of the stage[,] ... recited words from MacKaye's golden-tinged vocabulary."617 Obviously, MacKaye wrote a formal lecture to accompany the play, similar to the oration he had just completed for Morgan. However, the reception of MacKaye's writing was mixed:

The most prominent drawback to enjoyment is afforded by the 'orator' who prepares each scene with a pompous and insufferable long and unnecessary description of what is to be. The orator should be boiled down or lassoed. He
speaks well but there is too much of him. The pantomimes describe themselves, and need no assistance. 618

This orator was likely Richmond, as according to one newspaper observation: "A negro with a phenomenally loud voice does the lion's share of the talking and the cowboys and Indians fill up the volume with shouts, huzzas, and whoops." 619 Correspondingly, that cowboys and Indians whooped it up indicates that the play was not as entirely pantomimic as Brasmer suggests (or perhaps, as reviewers desired). Along with the whooping, one newspaper mentioned that "[t]here is some attempt at dialogue during the scenes; but the Garden is too large for the words to be heard distinctively." This report ended by clarifying the issue: "Frank Richmond, the orator who introduces the pictures, makes himself heard; but the other performers have not his elocutionary powers." 620 A different reviewer agreed, adding, "... and if in the vast auditorium one does not hear everything that the actors say in the 'great drama of civilization,' their actions are dramatic enough to tell the tale." 621 However, those sitting close to the stage heard a great deal of dialogue:

One scene in which the first signs of coming civilization are shown in the shape of a squatters settlement with a log cabin in foreground and real people running about engaged in the various occupations of a frontier life, while a girl is seated on a swing and her mother is engaged at the wash tub, talking voraciously and scolding occasionally, is excellent. 622

What was finally achieved in the Madison Square Garden was a pageant-like performance which featured a series of spectacular pictures. It opened November 24, 1886, after some delay. 623 The Spirit of the Times noted that the show "was postponed ... because Matt Morgan's scenery and Nelse Waldron's mechanical effects were not ready." 624 Indeed, Salsbury was wise enough to foresee such problems. He wrote to MacKaye three weeks earlier: "If you are cramped for time, I have told him [Cody] to postpone the opening for a few days. You can't afford to risk failure by want of proper
A review of the first performance noted that over six thousand people were in attendance: "The huge house was crowded last night up to the roof ... [while] the whole circle of boxes were gay with men and women in evening dress." Included in this audience were such important persons as Henry Ward Beecher, and Generals Sherman and Grant. Like the outdoor exhibition, the Garden's show was popular from its opening. The play "drew 10,000 to 18,000 persons a day for more than 100 performances before closing on February 22, 1887." When the show moved to London it received "an average daily attendance of more than 35,000" during its six month engagement.

The final structure of the play differed little from MacKaye's initial outline, as one review noted: "The drama is divided into four Stage Scenes and three Interludes." This was expanded to five stage scenes when "The Last Charge of Custer" was added. The interludes between the scenes divided themselves into three basic exhibitions arising from the various groups of Cody's company and their own special tricks: "Indian war dances, the mounting of bucking ponies, and exhibitions of shooting by Buffalo Bill, Buck Taylor, Annie Oakley and others." This was MacKaye's way of fitting Cody's stunts into the play. These "entr'actes," as MacKaye called them, also served a structural purpose: entertaining the audience while scene changes occurred on stage. The performance began with an introduction of the entire troupe, which MacKaye initially protested as lessening the dramatic impact of the play but he buckled to pressure from the equally-vocal Cody and Salsbury. The latter warned MacKaye two weeks before the premiere:

A word as to Cody. You will find him petulant and impulsive, but with good, crude ideas as to what can be evolved from your material. He will want to introduce (by my suggestion) the whole outfit to the audience, before the actual show begins. I think it will have a convincing effect on the people, and put them in a mood to accept without criticism the rest of the show. You know the fellow that gets the first knock-down has the best of the fight, and up go the odds in his favor. --Remember
that Cody is the Star, and introduce him to the audience in a heroic and hoop-la
way.631

Preparing the audience for the start of the actual show was the "Salutatory" preface
found in the program, which laid out the intention of the evening's entertainment:

It is the aim of the management of Buffalo Bill's Wild West to do more than present
an exacting and realistic entertainment for the public amusement. Their object is to
PICTURE TO THE EYE, by the aid of historical characters and living animals, a
series of animated scenes and episodes, which had their existence in fact, of the
wonderful pioneer and frontier life of the Wild West of America. ... [T]he story of
the gradual civilization of a vast continent is depicted. The hardships, daring, and
frontier skill of the participants being a guarantee of the faithful reproduction of
scenes and incidents in which they had actual experience. The central figure in these
pictures is that of THE HON. W.F. CODY (Buffalo Bill) to whose sagacity, skill,
energy, and courage ... the settlers of the West owe so much for the reclamation of
the prairie from the savage Indian and wild animals who so long opposed the march
of civilization. ... Attention to the Orator will materially assist the spectator in his
grasp of the leading episodes.632

Following the written greeting came "the appearance in turn of the different bands and
notable characters in the show."633 As suggested by Salsbury, this was an event that
increased audience anticipation of the actual show as it involved: "150 Indians, 100 armed
military heroes, 80 courageous scouts and cowboys, 30 women and children, 65 Mexican
vaqueros. [As well as] A score of frontier celebrities, crackshot champions, and wild West
characters, led by Buffalo Bill himself."634 After a parade around the arena, the first act
(or "epoch" as titled in the program) was presented on the stage. One of the few full
accounts of the performance described it thus:
The scenes that were painted to cover the different epochs of American history began with the primeval forest, which was first disclosed when the curtain rose showing the blue dawn in a dense forest, with the birds warbling in the trees and the sun gleaming gradually at the break of day. The first animal life to be seen was a herd of real mountain elk, which came bounding on the real turf that formed the stage; these animals would stop, look around, surveying the scene, frequently ploughing the earth with their horns and assuming natural playful attitudes, their eyes glistening in the artificial sunlight like diamonds, only to be disturbed by the pursuit of the savages wrapped in the skins of animals which they had killed.

The same author continued in his description:

Following this introduction came the meeting of friendly tribes of redskins in the wilderness, their greetings being interrupted by hostiles from other tribes, who entered into hand-to-hand conflicts with the bow and arrow and other weapons used before firearms were invented. We next saw the same forest cleared up, with the cabin-home of the frontiersman in the foreground, while further back, in full view, was the pioneer sowing his seed with open hand and harrowing the ground with real cattle, horses and implements such as were used in the early days. This peaceful scene was destroyed by skulking savages, who swarmed from the underbrush and attacked, killed or carried off their captives.

Another reviewer, commenting on these actions of the first scene, found it to be an "excellent scene of a squatter settlement, [which] depicts the life around a log cabin of the real frontier. The shooting, lassoing, elk hunting and the whole great spectacle have wonderful novelty and freshness."
As had been planned in the initial scenario, the second act represented the wagon
train's journey:

The next epoch showed the pioneers wending their way west across the plains,
with all the incidents of that time and period fully illustrated. The immigrant train
was brought into play; the old stage coach and the sports and pastimes of the plains,
.... This scene culminated with one of the most realistic prairie fires that has ever
been artificially presented, where we saw a real stampede of horses, cattle, buffalo,
 elk, and deers, rushing madly across the plains. 638

A different reviewer detailed the third and fourth epochs: "Third Scene—a Cattle
Ranch, where the cowboys' fun is interrupted by an Indian attack, which is beaten off at
last by Buffalo Bill and a party of rescue .... Fourth Scene—A Mining Camp in the Rocky
Mountains. Here rides the 'pony express' and the Deadwood Coach is robbed, though the
road-agents are captured. The camp is carried off, as a climax, by a cyclone." 639 The
Deadwood coach was part of the climactic fourth epoch, and its employment was
sensational: "[T]he old Deadwood stage-coach striking a snag in the ravine and going to
pieces, while the six mules escaped on a dead run, with only the forward wheels dragging
the driver by the reins—all this never failed to bring a tremendous final curtain-call from the
great audience ...." 640

The other spectacular event of the play (and one fitting with MacKaye's interest in
mechanical innovations) was his show-stopping cyclone. Louis Cooke's recollection of its
machinery was compelling: "Here was introduced one of the most effective cyclones that
has ever been staged; bringing into play the steam supplied from across the street for
batteries of four six-foot exhaust fans, such as are used in forcing air into mines and other
deep cavities." 641 Cooke continued by clarifying the amount of work put into building the
necessary mechanisms:
As there had never before been anything in the way of a scenic production at the Garden, there were untold problems and difficulties to overcome. It was necessary to cut through solid walls, building temporary housings, or lofts, on the roof, to carry the ropes and blocks, to handle the heavy set pins and move the panoramas, in order to produce some of the storm and atmospheric effects. Trenches had to be dug across 27th Street, to connect with the steam plant in the old Stevens car shops. The steam was used to supply batteries of four six-foot exhaust fans, ....642

While the setup of the cyclone device was much discussed, how or where its fans were placed was not, but MacKaye's use of fans on a proscenium stage in his later project, the Spectatorium, provides a clue. Diagrams in patents held by MacKaye illustrated two sets of large nozzles on either side of the proscenium of his Spectatorium theatre. One scholar has studied this later venture in detail and notes that MacKaye used electric fans to generate wind that he blew through pipes fitted with flexible telescopic ends. In turn, these nozzles were suspended by cables manipulated by an electrically-powered crank wheel, allowing these ends to be directed wherever desired.643 Each pair of air nozzles on either side of the stage was further separated, one was placed up stage, the other down stage. Thus, the combined efforts of these fans could create the effect of "a violent storm."644 Some similar but less elaborate device was used for the cyclone in the Garden. There, such a contrivance was directed from the off-stage area where it would supply a high volume of air to any location on stage, creating the cyclone-like intensity of wind required for the effect.

The earlier Madison Square Theatre also played a role in MacKaye's concept of employing fans in Cody's show: in that theatre MacKaye had learned to control large quantities of air and deliver it to specific locations. MacKaye's experience with ventilation systems was not just learned in the auditorium at the Madison Square Theatre, it had also been employed successfully on stage there. Blizzard effects played an elemental part of this theatre's first play, *Hazel Kirke*. At the climactic moment of the third act, characters clearly
mention an approaching snow storm no less than seven times (six references within one page) while stage directions state that the wind sounds or "moan[s]" seven times in this act.645 The creation of actual wind on stage in this production was not difficult; simply tapping into pipes already blowing air around the theatre could easily produce such an effect. Thus, the snow storm occurring off stage (and appearing on stage when the cottage door opened) could have been contrived as a simple continuation of Nelson Waldron and MacKaye's ventilation experiments.

MacKaye employed the same chief machinist on Cody's project as he had used at the Madison Square Theatre, Nelson Waldron. It was Waldron who had made the double stage operate smoothly, and possibly he also helped in developing the theatre's ventilation system. Brought into the Cody project by MacKaye, Waldron was heavily involved with the stage effects. The show's program noted: "Mechanical Effects by Mr. Nelse Waldron and assistants." MacKaye had such a strong working relationship with, and such confidence in Waldron, that responsibility for all the mechanical effects was given over to him. (MacKaye, himself, took his public recompense elsewhere in the play's program: "The entire performance under the personal artistic direction of Mr. STEELE MACKAYE").646 Thus, with Waldron overseeing the cyclone effect, MacKaye felt confident in achieving a workable device. This assurance was implicit in MacKaye's public assessment of the promised stage effects: "Mr. Nelson Waldron, the most experienced, and expert stage machinist of our time, will have charge of the mechanical effects, devised by Mr. Steele MacKaye to render realistic the illustrations of the history of pioneer life which he has written for this occasion."647 Louis Cooke summarized the creative energies brought together with the arrival of Waldron. He noted that Nelson's presence solidified the feasibility of the entire project: "We secured the services of 'Nelse' Waldron, the best stage carpenter of his time. ... I then felt sure that we had at least three of the best men that could be secured in the line of literary, artistic and mechanical work."648 Clearly he was
speaking of MacKaye, Morgan, and Waldron. Other workers, specifically stagehands, were hired to help set up and run the show; a standard arrangement at this time, according to one newspaper: "For your carpenters, scene-shifters, property-men, gas-men, and limestock men you usually contract. There are speculating master carpenters and machinists who will readily make a bargain with you for so much a week ...."649

Once the technical mechanisms to create the wind for the cyclone were devised, the tangible concerns of depiction were addressed:

Preparatory to this, in the autumn before snowfall, men had been sent into the forest to gather up tons of fallen leaves and smaller shrubbery, sufficient to last through the winter. Two or three wagon loads were used at each performance, by throwing them in front of the great drafts, created by the fans which forced air through funnels that could be turned in any direction .... The roar of the fans, and the rush of air turned upon the camps of miners and troopers, lifted the tents from their fastenings, caused the flags to snap in the gale. Then, when the storm was at its fury height, the leaves would be turned loose, sweeping the arena with terrific force, lifting equestrians from their horses and creating other sad havoc.650

This backstage account by Cooke has been accepted at face value by at least one historian who has subsequently echoed this report: writing that the cyclone winds were strong enough to "unseat riders from their horses."651 However, one period source detailed how this illusion was actually created:

The scene shifts back to the mining camp. Thunder is crashing and lightning flashing, and one absurd sentinel, supposed to be a United States cavalryman, is patrolling the lines of tents. Suddenly comes a roar, the tents sway and they are leveled, several dummies are whirled wildly in midair, and the curtain drops upon what is suppose to be the terrific destruction of the camp by a cyclone.652
Clearly the cyclone was not as strong as Cooke indicated. Using dummies in place of actors was a clever and simple way to represent the terrific force of wind blowing humans across the stage. Additionally, while Cooke's account suggested that the entire arena was the site of the cyclone, the dropping curtain which closed off the act makes it clear that the cyclone was confined to the stage. The importance of employing actual wind on stage was duly noted by *The Drama of Civilization's* stage manager Lew Parker:

Eventually, when the performance took place, a cyclone scene with real wind, was one of the successes of the production. We had used about a hundred bags of dried leaves, which we dropped in front of the machines, of course, behind the masking, so that the audience could not see; and they were blown with terrific force across the stage; the first time on record wherever real wind was used as an effect.653

While setting the proper mood for the arrival of the cyclone, MacKaye's use of thunder and lightning to introduce the storm demonstrates his acute awareness and control of the principal visual stage effects. His sensitivity to the scene surrounding the cyclone implies a similar concern with the ambience of all four epochs. Indeed, MacKaye's conception of the four acts demonstrates that he placed great importance on visual compositions, especially lighting variations used to establish distinct moods between the different acts. (Moving indoors allowed for greater control of the show's overall lighting; something almost nonexistent with the earlier outside exhibition.) Regarding the opening scene, one reviewer noted: "The primeval forest is shown--a really beautiful scene, by the way, and with happy moonlight effects. It is the hour preceding dawn. ... The sun rises."654 Clearly, MacKaye began his play with the dramatic use of darkness, which necessitated the shrouding of the Garden's skylights. The same lighting effect caused another reviewer to remark: "the curtain rose showing the blue dawn in a dense forest ... and the sun gradually at the break of day. ... [A] herd of real mountain elk ... came
bounding on .... [T]hese animals['] ... eyes glistening in the artificial sunlight like diamonds. 655 When the sun did rise on the act, its intensity was brilliant.

Just as MacKaye began his epic tale with the symbolic dawning of a new day, he also firmly placed lighting in the basic structure of the second act. This effect was not missed by reviewers: "The emigrant train comes on; the prairie schooners and their oxen, ... the supper and preparations for night; a natural and interesting picture. Darkness comes. All are sleeping. Suddenly a distant glow on the horizon, brightening and widening—nearer and nearer till the prairie is a sea of rushing fire." 656 Evidently, the shifting color scheme was carefully organized by MacKaye as a series of contrasts. The press synopsis for the act details this effect and how it was built from a careful consideration of the specific colors used in the adjoining scenes:

The whole party [of emigrant wagons] draw up on the Prairie—and, as the sun—in all the gold and ruby glory of its setting—sinks down over the plains—the old people prepare the camp for the night near the spring ... twilight deepens .... Night comes on revealing the crescent of the new moon in the sky.--Suddenly in the far distance, a prairie fire is seen to start. It grows slowly larger--its smoke rising and obscuring the moon as the fire creeps, like some merciless monster, upon the unconscious sleepers of the camp. 657

One account of the prairie-fire staging came from Louis Cooke, who limited his comments to the illusory nature of the effect: "This scene culminated with one of the most realistic prairie fires that has ever been artificially presented." 658 The actual staging of this scene was explained in more specific terms by the stage manager (Lew Parker):

... the grass rows used in the prairie fire were graded from twenty-six feet high in the rear to three feet in front, giving the appearance of immense distance. The fire scene was most realistic. At that time, we had no electric devices to help us out. I devised a steam curtain some distance in front of the burning grass and we forced
the elk, buffalo and bears across the stage behind the steam effect, which gave the appearance of the animals going through a mountain of fire and smoke.\(^{659}\)

(Of course, steam was a common device used to suggest smoke on stage by this point in the century.)\(^{660}\) The scene built to a climax when the settlers lit their own fire on the foreground of the stage as a fire break. While one newspaper did not discuss how this fire-break device was staged, it noted the general effect: "The best of these stage pictures represents ... a fire which sweeps from the horizon to the foreground, where it is apparently met and conquered by a counter-fire."\(^{661}\) The counter-fire down stage evidently offered a strong visual contrast to the raging fire approaching from up stage, and was a part of MacKaye's conception of the act as planned in his early scenario: "They [the pioneers] attempt to escape by back-firing the Prairie."\(^{662}\) The conscious organization of transient levels of light in this act was beautifully realized, according to William Cody's sister:

A red glow is seen in the distance, faint at first, but slowly deepening and broadening. It creeps along the whole horizon, and the camp is awakened by the alarming intelligence that the prairie is on fire. The emigrants rush out, and heroically seek to fight back the rushing, roaring flames. Wild animals, driven by the flames, dash through the camp, and a stampede follows. This scene was extremely realistic.\(^{663}\)

MacKaye's concept of lighting as an integral compositional element of the various acts was expressed in his promotional synopsis. Here he acknowledged his sensitivity to the different moods that lighting would bring to the indoor show: "The first act opens in the dead of night. The second act forms a strong artistic contrast with the first by opening the broad light of a scorching noonday sun which shines with merciless intensity upon the barren expanse of the Prairie."\(^{664}\) This structuring device was in keeping with an effect common at the time. "The [mid to late nineteenth-century] lighting system which allowed only a raising or lowering of lights, with or without color mediums, nevertheless permitted
... the lighting at different intensities of areas" one historian has noted. More importantly, he argues that "when they were not content with plain lighting, the Victorians added interest to their stage pictures by means of contrasts."665 This same authority mentions the period's frequent employment of an effect which was essential to MacKaye's concept of lighting this show: "Another contrast, usually of short duration but always impressive, was that of light and dark. "666 MacKaye's desire to show the shifting dawn or dusk in his production was a continuation of a stage effect that had wide-spread and popular appeal. As early as 1881, a newspaper mentioned that "[o]ne of the most beautiful effects produced upon the stage is the change from day to night or from night to day," adding "Of these the former is more striking."667 Such sensitivity to lighting levels by MacKaye must have involved not only Morgan in the painting of the scenes but also the gas-man (or electrician) employed at the Garden. This juncture of talents required much artistry, especially in illuminating the large cycloramic canvases of MacKaye's play. A contemporary observation detailed the enormous work involved in successfully lighting pictorial illusions on stage:

The last thing that the scene painter does before the production of a new play is to have his scenes set upon the stage at night in order that he can arrange the lighting of them. The 'gas-man' of the theatre is the artist's mainstay. It lies in his power to ruin the finest scene that was ever painted. Ground lights turned too high upon a moonlight scene, calciums with glass not properly tinted, or the shadow of a straight-edged border-drop thrown across a delicate sky—all those things are ruin to an artist's most careful work. The proper lighting of a scene is therefore a matter that requires the most careful study. The artist sits in the center of the auditorium and minutely observes every nook and corner of his scene under the glare of gas. Here a light is turned up and there one is lowered until the proper effect is secured. The gas-man takes careful note of his directions, and the stage manager oversees everything.668
However, if electricity had been used in place of gas, the lighting contrasts would have been more striking. Discussing the installation of electrical lights in the Madison Square Garden in 1879, one reporter observed that this invention brightened up the interior considerably. Most pertinent was his trailing observation: "The Fuller light throws shadows so black and so well-defined that the sun thinks seriously of going out of the business. Of course there are objections to these remarkable shadows."669 (MacKaye's possible use of incandescent lighting may explain how the bright sun was made to twinkle in deer's eyes.)

MacKaye's tight control of the stage pictures and all the incidental concerns surrounding their creation was such that the wild animals of the first act did not roam freely over the entire arena but were netted-in on stage. Practical considerations made this necessary. Allowing the animals to roam uncontrolled around the arena and then having to corral them to properly stage another scene would have lengthened an already long program of events. However, the control of the animals on stage was not always possible, as suggested by a newspaper account of an accident that occurred on opening night. In the first act: "A herd of deer was ... introduced, and an elk ... jumped the netting which fenced the stage in and tried to make friends with the spectators in the boxes." Though it broke the stage picture carefully set up by MacKaye, the animal was retrieved in a manner in keeping with the performance: "An Indian brave was sent out to chase the elk in, but the animal, made a feint at charging and the noble red-man, mounted the seats and slinked out the back way to a place of safety."670 Another reporter, mistaking this elk for a moose, remarked that the animal walked around the arena for a full ten minutes, and "so to speak, took in the town" before it was finally caught.671 Like this opening-night mishap, criticism of the show had little to do with MacKaye and his direction, but rather focused on the wrangling of animals and the inherent "live" elements of the staging. One reporter stewed: "The least attractive of the 'epochs' is the cattle ranch, in which the wild mustangs and cattle are too
evidently spurred and goaded into apparent high spirits.” This unimpressed critic closed his
review by remarking that “[t]he lassoing is not at all skillful.”672 Other aspects of the
performance not under MacKaye’s direct control also fouled up, most noticeably the
troupe’s sharp shooting: “[T]he target could not be put up in position last night, however,
and the greater part of the shooting was given up.”673

Accompanying the display of the tempest, and visually supporting the other epochs
enacted on stage, were Morgan’s panoramic drops. Indeed, the centrality of these paintings
to the pictorial effects of the play was emphasized in a previewing article: “At the Madison
Square Garden, Mr. Matt Morgan is painting a picture half a mile long and fifty feet high.
Mr. Morgan puts in mountains whole, and the chief criticism made by finical art critics is,
that his valleys are larger than the original.”674 (While this reporter cited the correct height,
it was not probable that each panorama was half a mile in length. Morgan suggested the
length of each drop was one hundred fifty feet, a measurement roughly corresponding to
Cooke’s.) Beyond the light tone of the reporter, the article stressed the painting’s emphasis
on pictorial illusion: “Then Mr. Morgan caught a rope, swung down the [painted] tree a
little, painted a knot hole and put a chipmunk in it. Then he swung up again into the air and
covered the top of Pike’s Peak with eternal whitewash. After that, he turned his attention to
painting a cyclone—so natural, that he had to hold his hat on with one hand, while he
employed the brush with the other.”675 This canvas must have been the last cycloroma
revealed to the audience during the performance, its painted cyclone initiating the
approaching storm which closed the show. After displaying the painted cyclone, the steam
fans were started and the leaves thrown in-front to be cast about suggesting the arrival of
the storm. In this way MacKaye choreographed the audience’s attention, moving it from
witnessing the disclosure of the painted depiction of an approaching cyclone, to beholding
the actual effects of this cyclone before their eyes. Consequently, Morgan’s realistically
painted cyclone leapt off the canvas in the form of the swirling wind and blowing leaves,
followed by the stampede of animals and flying mannequins. By depicting the approaching storm in a painting, MacKaye gave concrete visual form to the cyclone effect. To stage just the arrival of the wind and blowing leaves, with no illustration of the cyclone, would have been to create an effect that had barely a visual form and consequently less dramatic impact. MacKaye was consciously aware of this. In his synopsis for this specific scene he wrote:

The scene again changes to the village in the mountains—opening at the approach of a storm.—A cyclone is seen forming in the far distance of the valley.—Two opposing clouds come crashing down the mountainside—and strike each other with fearful force—form the whirlwind which rushes through the valley—tearing up trees—and ripping the camp to pieces.—As this storm approaches—the stage robbers are in the foreground just in time to be caught in the cyclone—and torn to pieces—the curtains falling upon the wild, and awful havoc of this realistic scene.676

The key to making the scene effective was to have the cycloramic painting show the cyclone "forming," which created anticipation of the actual wind effect. While no newspaper detailed the end of this scene in performance, the accuracy of other sections of MacKaye's synopsis in respect to their performed counterparts suggests that the cyclone scene ended with "awful havoc." MacKaye's description of the two clouds "crashing down the mountain" and their use to visually initiate the cyclone storm was remarkably close in effect to the thunder and lightning storm used to great acclaim in Morgan's Battle Picture No. 9 ("Grant in the Wilderness") three months earlier. Not only were the narrative situations similar, but so too were the techniques of presenting a pictorial illusion with the accompaniment of thunder and lightning. A newspaper account of Morgan's Picture No. 9 noted: "All at once there is a flash of lightning and the long roll of thunder. The dark storm clouds are revealed as they gather in dread thick masses as if to shut out from the pitying stars the sight of the field of carnage. But by the continuous flashings of the lightning—for the storm increases—is [sic] also seen the slain."677 Similar swirling "dark storm clouds"
were singled out as the visual point of interest by MacKaye in his creation of a lightning storm preceding the cyclone in *The Drama of Civilization*. The Morgan picture was accompanied by backstage thunder and lightning, and MacKaye's cyclone, perhaps owing some of its conception to this specific Morgan *Picture*, also employed theatrical devices to add to the visual effects of the storm (i.e., when MacKaye's cyclone scene began, the audience witnessed, "[t]hunder ... crashing and lightning flashing").678

While MacKaye's ingenuity and directorial expertise clearly made the use of atmospheric and environmental phenomena the successful spectacle that they were, the depiction of such events was not untypical on stage.679 The violent storms and relatively strange and remote locations of the *Battle Pictures* and the *Drama of Civilization* were part of a romantic ideology inherent not only in the scenic paintings of these productions but also typical of this period. The general trend of such stage illusions is summarized most succinctly by Richard Moody in his discussion of nineteenth-century theatre:

>The scene painter found his most theatrically stimulating backgrounds in the wild glories and incomprehensible sublimities of natural scenery—there was hardly a play that did not require at least one exterior. Cataracts, sharp declivities, deep forests, moonlit streams, and distant mountain vistas were represented by him in their most striking and awesome aspects. And ... he particularly delighted in the tempestuous and destructive manifestations of nature on the rampage. Fires, thunder and lightning, rain, snow, and tornadoes became indispensable accompaniments to the scenic display.680

Recent scholars have downplayed MacKaye's significance to *The Drama of Civilization*, but period accounts show that he was the production's center of attention more often than the figure usually given consideration: William F. Cody. The reason for this is the extent to which MacKaye changed Cody's entire exhibition. The reluctance of some Buffalo Bill researchers to recognize this influence is probably the result of their need to
prove Cody's creative talents in all areas, which may have prevented them from closely investigating the extent to which MacKaye changed and developed Cody's show. One period report handled the facts plainly:

Those who saw Buffalo Bill's Wild West at Erastina [Staten Island, New York] last summer would scarcely have recognized it last night at the Madison Square Garden, so completely has its character been transformed by Steele MacKaye in the change from an outdoor to an indoor show. Last summer's exhibition was an odd, sketchy, haphazard picture of life in the far West. That of last night was a spectacular and spirited series of tableaus and pantomime, with far greater dramatic interest and a stronger quality of picturesqueness.681

A similar assessment hinted at MacKaye's success in creating a visually-expressive project: "The glowing drama into which Mr. Steele MacKaye has woven Buffalo Bill's troupe is well illustrated by the splendid scenery which forms the background. In the vast auditorium the actions of this great Drama of Civilization are dramatic enough to tell the tale without any words."682 Further contemporary reviews stressed MacKaye's contribution. One account began its estimation expansively: "Patriotic playgoers crowded Madison Square Garden last evening to applaud the first performance of Mr. Steele MacKaye's last great drama, which was acted with great spirit and power by Buffalo Bill, several dozen cowboys, cowgirls, and genuine greasers, besides a hundred and fifty Indians of various tribes in full fig and feather."683

Historian William Brasmer argues that MacKaye not only transformed Cody's show, but also suggests that The Drama of Civilization, and therefore MacKaye's contribution, was pivotal to Cody's career. Brasmer concludes that MacKaye's play topped Cody's long search for a proper form to display his "Wild West" talents; adding that The Drama of Civilization was the "culminating production" of Cody's Wild West show. Cody's later extensive tours, which lasted until the mid-teens of the twentieth century,
"merely enlarged the legends of Buffalo Bill" that were decisively formulated with MacKaye's play. Brasmer also suggests that without MacKaye's Drama of Civilization, "Cody's exhibition would have floundered by 1887." Expanding on Louis Cooke's period assessment of the contributions of MacKaye, Morgan, and Waidron to the play, Brasmer contends that the talents of MacKaye, Morgan, and Salsbury came together at the right time: "Three talents thus coalesced—Salsbury's organizational ability, MacKaye's penchant for mechanical stage trickery and his ability to direct large productions, and Morgan's facile brush which could cover large areas of space." Brasmer does not go far enough in his assessment of what made the show successful. At least two additional factors had an impact: first, MacKaye and Morgan's relationship was initially developed on the Battle Pictures, enabling them to work quickly together in the six weeks they had to get the Cody show ready; and second, MacKaye's strong working relationship with Nelson Waldron (extensively tested in the more complicated project of the double stage) allowed him to propose tricky mechanical effects confidently. Finally, notwithstanding Brasmer's laudatory remarks, MacKaye's ability to direct large productions was not clearly defined at this point in his career, but rather was in its infancy. Not only was this play MacKaye's first large-scale theatre production, more significantly it was his introduction to directing multitudes. Only after Cody's show, with his stagings of Rienzi (1886) and Paul Kauvar (1887) did MacKaye gain a reputation for his choreography of crowds.

Rienzi and Paul Kauvar

The influence of the Garden production on MacKaye's theatrical work was immediate. In less than one month he moved from choreographing cowboys and Indians for Cody to choreographing a picturesque mob of soldiers for Lawrence Barrett's Rienzi. Asked by Barrett to help remount this 1828 play, MacKaye took the helm and applied his
experiences and newly-attained knowledge of working with large groups. He heartily rewrote and "superintend[ed] the performance." MacKaye's honed skills clearly complemented Rienzi's plot, itself built for the type of sweeping visual spectacle he had just completed:

In the first Act, amid the ruins of ancient Rome, Rienzi is proclaimed the Tribune of the people. In the second Act, Claudia, his daughter is betrothed to Angelo Colonna. In the third Act, he discovers the treason of the nobles. In the fourth Act, outside of the cathedral, two hundred persons take part in the processions and choruses. In the last Act, Rienzi is assassinated.

As this period account attested, and as one scholar has phrased it: "Barrett and MacKaye treated the play as a spectacle." This approach was particularly evident in two scenes that featured "200 auxiliaries for citizens, soldiers, priests, nobles and courtiers." Opening December 13th, 1886 (a scant sixteen days after The Drama of Civilization's premiere) Rienzi's production in Washington, D.C., was successful in large part because of the striking scenic pictures devised by MacKaye, who carefully employed this army of supernumeraries. Recounting the opening night, one witness recalled:

In the 'big' scene of the play, the courtiers at a banquet try to assassinate Rienzi. At their cue, the courtiers jump to their feet, draw their swords, and Rienzi calls for his soldiers.—On this occasion, 125 young men from the government departments were to rush on and surround Rienzi, forming a splendid picture. Then followed the final speech: 'Throw down your swords; meet me in the cathedral and renew again your allegiance! 'Curtain.'

This particular performance ended when the mob of men came on at the appropriate time but Barrett (playing Rienzi) "failed to speak his final lines" and simply held the moment. After a long ovation from an audience that included the President and Generals Sherman and Sheridan, the bell rang and the curtain dropped. Barrett's later explanation for his
missed lines was a tribute to MacKaye's directional prowess: "Good God, MacKaye, I entirely forgot 'em! I was watching the supers form your superb picture." The telling effect of MacKaye's ability to stage pictures could be no stronger than to entrap a seasoned actor in mid-performance. What Barrett and the audience were reacting to was the spectacle of men moving into their tableau.

Less than one year after this, MacKaye employed a similar staging composition in his play *Paul Kauvar* (initially titled *Anarchy*) wherein he brought a mob of two hundred French revolutionaries on stage at the climactic moment. Seizing the aristocratic heroine of the story, the crowd released her only upon the rigorous order of Paul himself, the honest but noble revolutionary in love with the woman. (The final tableau of this spectacular scene showing the arrangement of the crowd was depicted in a souvenir illustration by Matt Morgan.) With *Paul Kauvar* MacKaye surpassed his prior direction of mobs. According to David Belasco:

[For *Paul Kauvar*, MacKaye] designed an amazing mob scene. It was the first *genuine thrilling mob we ever had*. They thought they had a mob, years later (Conreid did) at the German Theatre--but it was nothing to compare to Steele MacKaye's. The ensemble of the present day [1925] does not compare with ... [MacKaye's]. In rehearsal, he was a master--the master-spirit of the whole .... That mob of *Paul Kauvar*! It was a surging, thrilling hideous mob, where every one had to act like a great artist to the minutest detail. There were women, men, children, old people--sprawling, starving--and wild, frenzied leaders--tremendous!

One opening review of *Paul Kauvar* duly recognized MacKaye's achievements in this area:

What training and hard work that mob had undergone it is not easy to imagine without knowing what is necessary to bring a half hundred supernumeraries to such an understanding of their task that they act together and yet move as by individual impulses--in a word, to appear like sentient beings and not like manikins [*sic*]. The
picture presented by the acting of the blood-thirsty anarchists was one that is apt to linger with its suggestive horrors after much else in the play has gone out of mind. The mob knew how to yell and groan and shout; it knew when to move and how to move; it swayed from side to side of the stage, and rushed with the fury of beasts of prey upon the helpless victims. Like the true mob it quailed before real forces and intelligence, and was fickle in its sympathies and desires. It was the creature of frenzy and the moment and knew no law but the law of lowest passion. This was the impression that the motley crew of beings who crowded upon the stage in 'Anarchy's' closing scene conveyed to the spectator. To produce this impression required intelligent direction, and that such direction was available was proven by the effect produced. 693

MacKaye's method of training Kauvar's mob was similar to the earlier rehearsals with Cody's troupe. More specifically, MacKaye discussed Kauvar's crowd scene and told how he achieved his results: "I had a grand mob in Buffalo. I spent three weeks in rehearsing it. Its members, men and women, alike, were not only perfect in the 'business' of the scene, but even in the inflections and intonations of voice .... In training the mob, I begin drilling a group of two persons; then I take four, then eight, and so on." 694 When Paul Kauvar toured, a stage manager arrived ahead of the show to arrange and drill the local supernumeraries into the unified mob by using MacKaye's proven technique. Such use of local talent for crowd scenes was the subject of many local newspaper articles. 695

MacKaye's training of stage mobs was similar in approach to that which was popular in Europe at this time, not only with the Théâtre Libre but also with other more experimental theatres. 696 Of course, this was not lost on informed critics: "[Paul Kauvar's] mob is a mob—not a vulgar tumbling of supernumeraries—a tumult, an uproar, such as only the Duke of Saxe Meiningen's players know how to put upon the stage." 697
MacKaye spent a great portion of his early theatre career investigating acting, acting theory, movement, gesture, pantomime, and play construction. These are the plastic elements, the brushes and paints, which are most malleable and most frequently used by theatre artists and directors. As far back as 1876, however, visual compositions were a focal point of MacKaye's theatre vocabulary. While on the opposite end of the scale from the cycloramic painting of Morgan's Battle Pictures, and The Drama of Civilization, the scenic backdrops which accompanied MacKaye's 1876 show, Queen and Woman, obviously worked within the realm of illusionistic locations. From his easel painting period, through his experiments with accurate backdrops (1876) and the "perfect pictures" on the double stage, to his involvement with the Battle Pictures, and the representation of nature found in The Drama of Civilization, MacKaye was clearly fascinated with pictorial illusion. He applied his painterly experiences to various theatrical productions as one would work with different canvases. After experimenting in rented theatres in his earliest productions, MacKaye made use of his knowledge on the small canvas of the unrenovated four-hundred seat Madison Square theatre, then on the more sophisticated canvas of the rebuilt Madison Square, which in turn led to the six-thousand seat Madison Square Garden. After this, he experimented with large-scale picturesque compositions of mobs on stage. In the result, the art of theatre that MacKaye created was perhaps closest to the art of easel painting in that its focus was always on visual composition. While the pictures created on stage were constructed with a different set of materials than MacKaye had trained with as a painter, the visual component remained central.

The Drama of Civilization allowed MacKaye to foreground finally the visual aspect of theatre. In this way, the Cody production was "a turning point in MacKaye's career. ... For the first time he worked in a medium where visual effects were more important than written dialogue." Until his involvement with Morgan's Pictures and Cody's show, MacKaye followed a path set by the convention of giving primacy to the spoken word on
stage. His work on these two projects freed him from using dialogue as the dominant element of a play. Indeed, The Drama of Civilization succeeded because MacKaye "created a moving story without his usual reliance on words." The press of the time clearly recognized this: "The Wild West Show at the Madison Square Garden, is no longer wild. Steele MacKaye has tamed it and transformed it into a series of living pictures." Herein he returned to his visual art training. Finally, during the period MacKaye worked on the Battle Pictures and The Drama of Civilization, he came upon a theatre idea he kept for the rest of his artistic days: equating pictorial illusion with a grand visual scope. With these two projects MacKaye developed the concept that the larger the visual perspective of the theatre event, the more accurate, and the closer to actual life it could become. Even with The Drama of Civilization this idea of a large visual scale was not limited to just using life-sized objects (i.e., buffaloes, horses) but more importantly included the idea of staging life-like occurrences of an even bigger scale (i.e., cyclones, prairie fires). Thus, these coinciding productions of 1886 allowed MacKaye to explore and develop not only a new artistic goal but also working methodologies that he would employ a few years later in his most ambitious venture, the Spectatorium and its accompanying epic story of the life of Christopher Columbus.
Chapter Four

The Spectatorium and The Great Discovery

Steele MacKaye's last proposed theatre was the "Spectatorium," which was to house his commemorative play of Columbus, The Great Discovery, at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago. The Spectatorium is usually schematized in one of two ways: as MacKaye's overriding failure; or as a daring, swan-song effort by a theatre genius. However, the complexity of the project warrants a closer examination unhindered by such conclusions. MacKaye's final plan built on his earlier work of creating stage pictures using new technology, while at the same time its scope was so enormous that it defied comparison. The Spectatorium housed an innovative theatre, innovative inventions, and an innovative performance. Just as this building set its own rules for what was possible with theatre technology, so too the production within it posited its own terms for performance. Combined, the Spectatorium, the inventions, and The Great Discovery were a project which demonstrated and fulfilled MacKaye's theatre aesthetic of full-scale pictorial illusion. This vision was found in the initial model of the theatre, and was still apparent after the collapse of this project; in MacKaye's scaled-down version of the theatre (the Scenitorium) and its model-sized production of this play (retitled The World Finder).

The genesis of the Spectatorium project arose equally from MacKaye's search for more "artistic" theatrical work than was currently produced on the commercial stage, and from his desire to pursue the creation of a theatre based on life-size pictorial representations. Meeting these goals would require enormous capital (to undertake the construction of such a theatre) and posed the task of finding an audience to fill it. MacKaye's frustration with contemporary commercial theatre, the result of his own experiences, was expressed in a letter to his wife in April 1890: "How I wish I were free to give my time and strength to seeking and formulating truth, stead of living this slave's life.
with beings, who, for the most part, pretend to be artists—save for the work.“702 His desire to pursue more artistic work translated itself into a reality within a year of this writing, in the form of the Spectatorium project. In an introduction to *The World Finder* which was performed in the MacKaye Scenitorium in February 1894, he discussed the motivating interests behind this project,703 the goal of which was, as he expressed to newspapers, "to arrive at as close a reproduction of all the subtle changes of nature as modern mechanism can attain":

The ends I aimed at were so audacious that I did not dare, for several years, to divulge the nature of my work, even to my most intimate friends, believing the confession of my secret would secure me only rebukes for wasting my energies on impossible dreams. Even after I had evolved certain inventions, which convinced my own judgement that I had found a practical means to the unprecedented effects I sought, I remained silent, because the cost of my project would be so great that I despaired of securing the necessary capital, unless some unexampled occasion should arrive ....704

MacKaye's personal project had the benefit of just such an unexampled occasion when he fortuitously met over dinner with Chicago World Fair Directors in London in September 1891. They were searching for a crowning jewel for the Exposition, and after hearing MacKaye's theatre proposal, believed they had found it. Recounting MacKaye's sales pitch, the President of the Fair admitted that the power of MacKaye's well-honed oratorical abilities sold him on the grand project, and further implied that MacKaye had evidently planned the project over an extended period. H.N. Higginbotham recalled:

After preliminary introductions, my vis-à-vis (who previously, as well as his mission, was unknown to me) was requested to explain his subject.—I have many times regretted that I had not concealed a stenographer to recover that evening's conversation. Mr. MacKaye stated that he was the originator of mechanical devices
that would enable him to revolutionize all histrionic, dramatic, and operatic performances. He came to the meeting without any contrivance, neither drawing or writing, and yet with his wonderful gifts he laid before me such a picture as I never before held, and probably never will again,... His rhetoric was faultless, his sentences well chosen, not a word missed or misplaced. His facial expression added fire and meaning to his utterances; his gesticulations were timely and added precision and power to his speech. He changed his position at times, to give greater weight to his words, throwing into the picture he was creating—light and shade; depicting in quick succession—joy, sorrow, disappointment, hope, fear, doubt, and despair. The full force of all his powers was turned upon me as if I were an army to be conquered, as if an audience of thousands had to be convinced.... So he carried me away with him into the clouds, and I wondered how I was ever to be returned to a condition that would enable me to cope with the practical or business side of the questions involved; to boil his imagery and imagination down to a percentage; to calculate in dollars and cents the value of it all.—I sat like one entranced, or completely hypnotized, wondering if a sane man could really conduct such a sublime performance.

Unbeknownst to himself, MacKaye proposed an event that filled a niche the organizers of the Fair were desperate to locate. The President of the Fair remarked: "If there were nothing else to see, the world would come to Chicago to see... [his] performance. It is just what we have been looking for—a worthy celebration of the event which the Exposition will commemorate." Other people involved with the Fair were equally impressed. Frederick Law Olmstead, Dean of the Board of Architects, responded to MacKaye's proposal by stating: "This is the noblest artistic scheme I have ever heard of. It will be the crowning glory of the Fair, and all connected with it ought to feel deeply in debt to Mr. MacKaye for his creation. Such a conception deserves the place of honor on the Exposition
grounds." These sentiments explain the Fair organizers' quick acceptance of MacKaye's project, even while he offered no solid construction plans or play.

MacKaye's stated purpose behind the Spectatorium project was an extension of his thoughts, developed over the years, regarding the nature of entertainment, the public's desires, and how these might be addressed by his own artistic goals. Two years before, MacKaye had privately bemoaned the lack of visionary theatre artists around him, now the World's Fair project allowed him a platform to express his own artistic intents, and reveal how this proposed theatre project promised to tap into general entertainment desires. In a handwritten statement he explained the path he traveled to reach this project:

During a practical experience with the public, as an author and manager, I have been taught that the tendency of our modern public taste was towards realism rather than idealism. This bent of the public mind was perfectly natural in a country like ours, for two very excellent reasons: First, our people are by nature more matter of fact than fanciful. Second, that total lack of thoroughness in artistic training which is to be expected in a nation as new and unformed as ours, makes it far more difficult for a manager to adequately present and artistically realize the ideals of the poet and the philosopher than to successfully produce the sensational realism of the stage carpenter, costumer, and scene painter.

With this MacKaye hinted at the personal idealism which informed his vision of theatre. This was a view which worked towards idealized realism while acknowledging that the expectations of audiences were generally for nothing more than perfect pictorial illusion. Similarly, around this period other theatre inventors clearly recognized such audience demands: "It has become necessary in the production of certain kinds of drama to introduce as much realism as possible to satisfy the public which refuses to be satisfied with imaginary results, but demands that ... thrilling effects ... shall be made visible." MacKaye argued that this realist tendency in theatre had led audiences down the easiest path
possible and in doing so, had left them with little imagination for experience beyond what they could witness with their eyes:

Again, with the natural effects these realisms seek to imitate, the minds of the masses are so familiar that it is far easier to obtain a ready and spontaneous recognition of the real from our people than of the ideal. The practical business operators, who at present dominate the development of the amusement world in this country, very naturally prefer to invest their capital in such amusement as will most surely come within the comprehension of the multitude and thus increase the probability of a monetary success. In consequence, there has been of late years a much greater development of the sensuous than the spiritual side of theatrical art.710

MacKaye desired to create a theatre of spiritual idealism. At the same time he promised his audience the largest-scale pictorial illusions ever witnessed on stage. Though he espoused plans for an extravagantly sensationalistic theatre, he chided the commercial sector of which he felt no part:

The result of this tendency [of theatrical sensations] has been a vast increase in the number of entertainments which sow the seeds of vulgarity and materialism and a neglect of those calculated to engender refinement and that wholesome form of idealism in the public heart which most surely inspires lofty views of human life, and tends to mold most nobly the youthful manhood of the race.711

The idea of education as an integral element of the Spectatorium was embedded in MacKaye's earliest public statements on the project. In notes for a speech discussing the theatre, MacKaye made this clear by stating that his Spectatorium project was "intended as an arena for the co-operation of all the Arts and Mechanical Sciences upon a scale never before attempted. The aim of this co-operation is to develop a form of entertainment which shall be the most fascinating and impressive while at the same time the most noble and
beneficent of any that has yet moved the minds of mankind." Clearly, the mind was to be moved by high ideas at the same rate as the eyes were to be impressed. This was emphatically explained when he wrote that these mechanical sciences were employed to "bring into the realm of art as perfect a reproduction of nature as possible." MacKaye's desire to pursue an artistic re-creation of nature was akin to desires held by nineteenth-century American landscape painters (e.g., George Inness) who were influenced by a "contemporary preoccupation with nature as a manifestation of God's grand plan." This plan was best expressed "through a genuine love and understanding of the elements of nature—discernible in the intimate arrangement of leaves on a bough— inherent in a given [painted] scene." Thus, the era that MacKaye first learned the craft of painting was one "in which taste [in paintings] was governed almost exclusively by the edifying and pious sentiments expressed in a picture and ... by the realistic means necessary to enhance this message and content." Surrounded by such artistic considerations, MacKaye's final project clearly felt their influence. For MacKaye as theatre inventor, the Spectatorium project was a culmination of his long pursuit of such aesthetics. He finally arrived at ways of creating a vast range of realistic natural phenomena on stage and wished to combine these skills with his artistic sensibilities to create life-size pictorial illusions of nature that the audience would marvel at and be inspired by. Seemingly on a different line, Percy MacKaye has argued that Steele MacKaye's last project can best be understood as a living motion picture studio built two years before the motion picture camera was invented. However, the only cinematic element of MacKaye's enormous theatre was his drive to feature nature as the central stage character. Unlike most theatre, which necessarily demands human figures as the focal point, MacKaye's Spectatorium had the potential to rely primarily on nature with little regard to human intercourse. So too this capacity resides with cinema.
In no uncertain terms, MacKaye attempted to re-create on stage the effects of the canvas painter. Having spent his later years developing the palette of inventions that would allow him to re-create the effects of nature that were the subject of the most acclaimed nineteenth-century American landscape painters (such as William Morris Hunt, George Inness, Winslow Homer) MacKaye was now ready to reproduce nature subject to his own artistic control. Indeed, it was MacKaye's first art teacher, William Morris Hunt, who plainly stated the artist's role as "an interpreter of nature." MacKaye sought to place the beauty of nature before the eyes of the theatre-goer in exactly the manner that American landscape painters applied the artistic control of their imaginations and paints to render an idealized, though recognizable, reproduction of nature. With this project MacKaye concentrated on the ability to reproduce atmospheric and nature effects in the theatre, and more importantly, on how he could artistically control these effects while supporting the narrative. Presenting nature on stage, tamed to conform to an artistic vision, was MacKaye's primary production goal of the Spectatorium, while the somewhat idealized and inspirational narrative was secondary. Another purpose of MacKaye's project was to use this natural spectacle as a balm for weary commercial theatre-goers and amusement seekers. To this he added the educative lessons that a historical narrative might provide:

When amusement of the multitude can be made the means whereby lives benumbed by overwork, callused by coarse occupations, stricken by great sorrows, or deadened by the poisonous sweets of luxury, may be brought to that clear consciousness of the real worth of life which is created by the contemplation on the heroism history reveals, then indeed the temple of entertainment performs its worthiest function and attains its highest rank.

The task which lay before MacKaye was clear. It involved making theatre audiences revere the "natural" spectacles and be inspired by the historical stories he was to create in his temple of entertainment. He knew the difficulty of his task, as he stated to the press:
"How to make the lofty and refined popular is an aim which seemed to me worthy the devotion of a lifetime." The lofty subjects were to be taken from history and MacKaye attached much significance to this. For him, history was the most accessible way of educating general audiences towards doing future good in and for society. He stressed this clearly:

All the wondrous past of History, with its supreme struggles, its awful sufferings, its sublime endurance, its exalted aspirations, its heroic endeavors, and its mad but instructive mistakes, is utterly wasted, and of no use to the future of man, unless the youth of each new generation can be induced, by some attractive method, to contemplate that past with an intense interest and a just and heartfelt appreciation of the character it reveals.

In comparison with what the Spectatorium was to become, the project as originally proposed by MacKaye was quite conservative. After receiving approval for the venture, MacKaye formed the "Electric Spectacle Company" to oversee building the Spectatorium. However, MacKaye did not appear to be prepared for such a quick acceptance of his project. His first proposal was vague though it promised grand scale to the project. In an official application to the Director-General of the World's Fair, September 8, 1891, MacKaye wrote:

Sir, The undersigned hereby applies for two acres of space, in the grounds of the World's Fair, whereon to erect a building completely equipped for the exhibit of all the latest inventions, machinery, and appliances, connected with electricity in its practical application to Panoramic and Dramatic Arts. In consideration of this grant, a plant of the greatest efficiency and a building of the most decorative character will be erected, at my expense, upon your grounds.

At this point MacKaye made it clear that he was interested in developing something which involved panoramas. Indeed, this initial letter of intent hinted that the untitled theatre would
be at least fifty per cent panoramic. (Thus MacKaye acknowledged the importance of the concept of panoramas to his theatre aesthetic.) In his second proposal the terms of the project shifted somewhat. MacKaye split the panoramic and dramatic elements into two entirely distinct components: a theatre (and its production) and a panorama. In this second prospectus for the "Electric Spectacle Company" the following was listed as the company's (desired) property:

Two acres in the grounds of the World's Fair of 1893, at Chicago.
A portable Theatre, with a seating capacity worth $8,500, for each performance at popular prices.
A complete electric plant for inventions applying electricity to stage illusions, scenic, mechanical, musical and dramatic.
A full equipment of scenery, costume, properties and stage mechanisms, for the presentation of a great spectacle, illustrating the story of Columbus and the discovery of America, with grand Spanish Aztec and savage ballets.
A grand Panorama illustrating the great events in the history of the New World from its discovery to the date of the Exposition. ...
The Theatre and complete paraphernalia built to be packed in sections and transported to any city in the world.
The Spectacle and Panorama will be the chief and most attractive features of the whole Exhibition. The average price of admission [to the Spectacle] will be seventy-five cents—... The price of admission to the Panorama will be but 10 cents.723

In this early planning period, MacKaye's suggestions for touring the project were remarkably similar to what was undertaken by William F. Cody's Wild West show after its Madison Square Garden production. This plan may have been inspired by the financial
benefits MacKaye witnessed Cody reap from his grand European tours of The Drama of Civilization. MacKaye's prospectus for the "Electric Spectacle Company" continued:

At the close of the Exposition, the Theatre, Spectacle and Panorama, can be transported for the winter to Mexican and South American cities—all of which are interested in the story of Columbus, as well as the discovery, and history of America. The expenses at these points can be reduced to less than one half of what they will be at the World's Fair—as the entertainment need not be done on so grand a scale—the name of the attraction giving it an enormous drawing power.724

Clearly, MacKaye's early conception of this project had numerous similarities to his work with Matt Morgan's Battle Pictures and The Drama of Civilization. The more obvious similarities were the chronological depiction of major historical events on a life-size scale, the scenic emphasis on "Panoramic" art, the exhibition aspect of touring the show, the idea of the "presentation of a grand spectacle" (which was similar to the five epochs depicted in The Drama of Civilization) the "savage ballets" (which were analogous to the interludes of various Indian dances in Cody's show) and the emphasis on mechanical devices to produce the spectacles (which recalled the mechanical creation of a cyclone that had been used to great effect in The Drama of Civilization).

After its initial acceptance, the single most important event in the project's planning period was MacKaye's production of a working model of the Spectatorium's proposed stage effects for an investors' meeting. Initially, MacKaye complained bitterly about having to build a model to silence the organization's faction of more cautious investors. He (correctly) thought that this would delay the entire project. Subsequently, he would recall:

The prospect of my scheme's prompt adoption ... was exceedingly good, when there suddenly appeared the doubter. ... So, to dissipate all doubts, I undertook the making of a model ... which would prove the mechanical feasibility of my inventions, and partially suggest the artistic value of the effects they were devised to
produce. ... [Two prominent businessmen] were the men who had the nerve to supply the capital for making this experimental model, at a time, too, when the project had no more tangible existence than my own verbal formulation of its mechanical means, and my description of its possible artistic results. Perhaps miraculously, MacKaye's initial plans were not put down on paper but rested entirely in his head. With no drawings to show potential investors, and only his spoken words, it is astonishing that MacKaye got as far in this project as he did before having to come up with a physical model. This suggests the striking power of his rhetoric. On the strength of his oratorical ability and his past record of success (the formidable Hazel Kirke, the Madison Square Theatre, The Drama of Civilization, and Paul Kauvar) MacKaye had received enormous financial backing to launch this project. The success of MacKaye's model indeed waylaid any fears in the investors hesitant about MacKaye's iconoclastic ideas, and resulted in the financial approval for the project. The investors became so enthusiastic about the project that they added elements. In a sympathetic account of this model presentation meeting, one of MacKaye's assistants on the project recalled the speed with which MacKaye lost a measure of his control over the Spectatorium. Frank Russell Green noted:

I was at the demonstration of the model, when the first money was subscribed, and my great regret was that they did not let ... [MacKaye] go on, and give the production in the more modest way which he desired and as it was most practical to do.—Indeed, the Company went at it with an expansive and ornate design in architecture, as they saw chances for letting out concessions for restaurants, [and] roof gardens.

Ultimately, the meddling investors seriously affected the project, delaying its construction which finally ground to a halt and was never resumed when economic depression struck in the spring of 1893. Over a year after developing the first model, in the dying days of
the project, MacKaye ("Director-General" of the renamed Columbian Celebration Company) continued to add many incidental money-making schemes, superfluous to his initial ideas, to cultivate further investment. MacKaye's success in his salesmanship of his idea for the Spectatorium further backfired on him by creating for the investors a vision of entertainment they determined to make permanent. In explaining the shift away from a temporary theatre MacKaye recalled:

The more thorough ... [the investors] investigated the character, the purposes, and the prospects of the Spectatorium, the more they became convinced that it should not serve merely a passing use, but should become a permanent institute of art in this city .... Inspired by this conviction, the Company [the newly formed Columbian Celebration Company; named to coincide with the Columbian Exposition Company—the organizers of the entire Fair] ceased all negotiations ... and proceeded at once to secure a site just outside the Fair grounds upon the lake shore, where it commenced the erection of the immense structure designed for its purposes.728

The site of the Spectatorium was changed for a number of other reasons not mentioned by MacKaye. The primary one was that the available space within the Fair grounds was unable to accommodate such a large structure in the rapidly shrinking available number of sites. [The theatre when moved was still easily accessible by one of the Fair gates (Figures 12, 13).]729 A second reason for the change in location was MacKaye's refusal to give the Fair organizers the percentage of the expected box office revenues which they demanded. Because of his prior experiences with contracts that had taken great profits away from him (i.e., Madison Square Theatre, Hazel Kirke and The Drama of Civilization) MacKaye was unwilling to have what one of his later financial backers called "too great a share of the receipts" handed over to the Fair organizers.730
Once the site was changed, a plan for a much larger and permanent building quickly replaced the initial plan for a temporary structure. The earlier plan had been in keeping with the conception of the majority of the buildings at the Fair (i.e., they were built to be torn down when the Fair closed). The permanent Spectatorium did however retain the project's original idea of combining a panorama and theatre. As suggested by the final building's patent, these features were blended "[i]n a theatre or similar structure adapted for the exhibition of various scenic effects, a semi-circular scenitorium [stage] adapted to support the scenic arrangements, in combination with an auditorium constructed in the form of an opposing arc." This plan for a permanent panoramically laid-out building now demanded a firming up of the conceptual basis of its proposed productions. MacKaye's general approach was clarified by the patent which detailed the stage's layout. Basically, MacKaye copyrighted the building by patenting the major mechanical devices of the stage area. In doing so, he simply grouped all of these together into a long two-page patent claim: "Apparatus for Producing Increased Realism in Scenic Effects." More clearly than anything else this title suggests MacKaye's aesthetic approach to the wonders which were to appear in his building. At this time, influential business magnates of the period became interested in the permanent project. One associate recalled: "George M. Pullman and others came to MacKaye's rescue." With this influx of prominent investors the project began to swell to immense proportions, clearly dismissing the modesty of the temporary building. After purchasing the new theatre site, "[I]and adjoining the [proposed] Spectatorium ... was leased to insure control of the immediate environment. Restaurants, roof gardens, a private harbor, a carriage house, and other accessories were added to the plans for the building." Further additions included an indoor swimming pool, a Turkish bath, a barber shop, a magazine concession for the selling of "hygeia" water, and a newspaper library to house every daily newspaper in the country for Fair visitors' pleasure. The reason for such additions was monetary and had little to do with MacKaye's initial vision:
"[T]he capitalists ... backing the project hoped to re-coup their investments in a shorter time than the theatre alone would allow."735

While out of scale with other theatres of the period, the intended size of the permanent structure (roughly three hundred feet by five hundred feet) was in keeping with buildings erected within the grounds of the Chicago World's Fair. Indeed, many of the Fair's buildings made the Spectatorium appear small. The Fair's largest structure, the Manufactures and Liberal Arts building, was over one thousand five hundred feet long and seven hundred fifty feet wide, while the Agriculture and Machinery buildings were each over eight hundred feet long by five hundred feet wide.736 Indeed, beyond the fairground, the city was experiencing a renaissance in commercial building, partly attributable to the Fire of 1876 which had razed vast areas downtown. At this time the city took great pride in having built the twenty-two story Masonic Temple, "the tallest building in the world."737 The Spectatorium fit right in to this environment of colossal buildings (although at a projected two hundred seventy vertical feet, the Spectatorium would have surpassed the Masonic Temple in height).

The name "Spectatorium" came from MacKaye's conception of the performance which this building was to lodge:

A Spectatorium is a Metaphysical musical poem, illustrated by the most advanced and artistic realism, and by the most carefully studied pantomime. Its aim is to present the facts of history with the most graphic force, and, at the same time, by means of profound and poetic symbolism and noble music, to suggest the eternal philosophy of the facts of time.738

A "Spectatorium," it naturally followed, was the house for such an event. The names of the building and event were arrived at after some thought. MacKaye explained: "A Spectatorio combines grand spectacle with grand oratorio."739 MacKaye's use of the term "oratorio" suggests the large role which music was to play in his productions. Here, MacKaye pushed
the boundary of the traditional oratorio by proposing to stage the performance, something which is clearly not done with this art form which is defined as "a dramatic but unstaged musical composition for soloists, chorus, and orchestra." While MacKaye's ideas concerning poetic symbolism and music were significant, they were initially vaguely defined. However, at a later point in the project MacKaye discussed his concept of the use of symbolism in the play and provided his rationale for its inclusion. The reason MacKaye resorted to symbolism was:

we could not do the subject [of Christopher Columbus] full justice in many hours. Therefore, we seek to convey some impression of the character of ... [Columbus' own] conflict by a resort to symbolism, or in other words, by giving a representative function to some of the scenes, personages, described for this purpose. All through this production these symbolisms are introduced—and your intelligence needs but this hint, to enable you to detect and interpret them for yourselves. 741

The theatre's name clearly suggested viewing, not listening, as its primary audience activity. The genesis of this decision may be hinted at in a period anecdote by Dion Boucicault, wherein he remarked that "Albert Hall was opened [in 1864] by the Prince of Wales in the presence of ten thousand spectators. We cannot call them an audience, as not a word His Royal Highness uttered on this occasion could be heard." 742 Similarly, Boucicault, like MacKaye was interested in the development of a nomenclature for theatre, and possibly influenced MacKaye. Boucicault wrote:

Some years ago I ventured to invent the word auditorium to express the portion of a theatre occupied by the audience, and being in front of the foot-lights. I was subject to some ridicule for this piece of pedantic presumption; but the word was really wanted, and it stuck. I now propose to call that portion of a theatre occupied by the stage from the curtain backward the scenarium. The portion in front of the curtain
and between it and the foot-lights is called the *proscenium*. This small space belongs to the scenarium when the curtain is up and to the auditorium when the curtain is down.743

This article was published in a periodical that MacKaye himself had written for six years earlier. More significantly, three years after Boucicault's piece MacKaye used similar categories. Realizing his vast theatre was to be for spectators (an idea discussed by Boucicault) and one which was to house grand spectacles, MacKaye named his building the Spectatorium. For some unknown reason (perhaps because of his rigorous formal education, having studied Latin from age three)744 MacKaye rejected Boucicault's term "scenarium" for the stage area and offered his own: "scenitorium." In MacKaye's eyes, all of this combined to create a harmonious whole: the scenitorium was separated from the auditorium by the proscenium. That these latter two words were commonly used only helped create an atmosphere conducive to public acceptance of the complementary term coined by MacKaye.

When completed, the actual plan for the Spectatorium was spectacular, and this was publicly announced by illustrations and descriptions. In his attempt to promote the theatre as an adjunct to the World's Fair, MacKaye commissioned one of the official World Fair artists, Childe Hassam, to paint a picture of the proposed building. This colorful and impressionistic rendering became the most circulated illustration of the Spectatorium (Figures 14, 15).745 The early press reports were captivated by the building's scale and its various feats of design, notably the project's need to build out onto Lake Michigan. In a newspaper article titled "Steele MacKaye's Strange Theatre," a reporter chronicled the project's start-up as discussed with MacKaye:

The building is being erected—half on land and half on water—just north of the World's Fair Grounds, between Everett Avenue and the lake. The north wall stands out over the Lake Michigan. There will be a stage front 9 rods wide; the
ships of Columbus, with 50-foot masts, will appear on water, in front of the audience; 9,000 people may find comfortable seating, and in the rooms near the stage, on each side of the auditorium proper, 3,000 more can find places [backstage] .... 350 feet of the original lake will be filled in, or used. The walls are of wood and 23 feet thick, in order to plan for the strongest of structures. The 2 central posts, upon which the great center truss will rest, are 3 yards square, each. To this, truss girders will run to each of the north towers. The walls will be 150 feet in height, and 8 stories of the building are to reach half as high as the dome. 

The extra three thousand seats were to be placed behind the proscenium on the side walls so the audience could witness the stage machinery at work during any given performance. To move such vast numbers of people in and out of such a multilevel theatre, extensive elevators were planned:

Fifteen of the largest elevators ever built are now being constructed at Chicago for 'The MacKaye Spectatorium.' These elevators are to be used in conveying the people to the various sections of the auditorium and to the vast galleries, roof gardens, restaurants and tower of the building. They are to have a carrying capacity of 10,000 persons per hour, and are guaranteed to stand every test for velocity and absolute safety. This is the largest elevator contract ever made, and these elevators will in themselves be a remarkable exhibit, more than anything in this line at the great fair.

The early press releases surrounding the Spectatorium highlighted the unique features of the building and made it sound more complete than it was at the time. Perhaps in keeping with his keen managerial skills, MacKaye wrote a great deal to promote the Spectatorium. He used newspapers to sound out his venture and to manufacture interest in it. MacKaye's expansive news releases often emphasized the building's size and construction. In one
specific account, he moved from discussing necessary information (its location) to sweeping anticipatory statements that suggested the structure was already constructed. To this end he generally referred to the building in the present tense, adding to the sense of its certain completion. Although it was yet far from complete, MacKaye beamed in an interview: "The Spectatorium is located on the Lake Shore at the north entrance of the Columbian Exposition grounds, in Jackson Park. It is the largest structure ever erected for the alliance of the arts in the domain of drama and music. Its frontage is 500 feet, depth nearly 400 feet, altitude at the dome 270 feet." The extremely large dimensions reported in such articles implied hard evidence which was not there, appearing to prove MacKaye's claims for the theatre's status as the "largest." A similar line of support surrounding the launch of the Spectatorium was found in a public testimonial by P.T. Barnum's circus manager (no stranger to spectacle) who remarked that "the performance at the Spectatorium will transcend in realism, magnitude, and variety of interest, any entertainment that has ever been offered the public, at any time in any part of the world." While the majority of construction involved wood, later reports capitalized on the innovative use of steel:

The largest building ever erected in the world for amusement purposes is 'The MacKaye Spectatorium' at Chicago .... Its roof is composed of 'T' shaped steel beams, built into immense trusses. These beams are bolted together as a truss; each truss is then raised to its position and, at an altitude of 170 feet, is placed on top of the bents by an immense two-arm, traveling derrick. The roof weighs over 1,000 tons and is capable of supporting a freight train of 40 loaded cars.

In February 1893, this building was hit by a cyclone which cut through the Fair site. A portion of the roof, in the process of being attached, was ripped from its moorings on the derrick and plunged one hundred seventy feet to the ground killing a number of workers. Along with severe winter weather, this incident set construction back considerably.
Sheer spectacle was at the center of the theatre's conception and the center of its promotion, yet MacKaye always qualified this by describing the social aims that made the project a benevolent undertaking. In a prologue for the later Scenitorium, MacKaye combined these terms of benevolence and spectacle and recalled: "With a capital of $500,000, the company proceeded to erect the Spectatorium; and in order to convey some fair perception of the vastness of this undertaking, it is necessary for me to describe, as tersely as possible, the structure and the production, with which this Company had undertaken to gift this community."752 The most complete description of the Spectatorium came from MacKaye himself:

The Spectatorium was 480 feet long, 380 feet wide, and from the foundation to the apex of the dome 270 feet high.---In the front of the house were the entrance lobbies, and an immense roof garden, running the full length of the structure from east to west, overlooking the whole of Jackson Park.---There were also two large restaurant floors with a grand café, 80 feet square, in the central pavilion. Above this were to be the observation floors of the immense dome .... The rear of the building was a vast semi-circular reservoir, the surface dimensions of which were over 100,000 square feet. From the foundation of the reservoir to the gridiron of the scenic department, the height was 170 feet, making the cubic measurement of the Scenitorium, or Scenic department alone, over 17,000,000 cubic feet. Here was to be placed all the newly invented machinery for a startling advance in realism.753

Further along in this piece, MacKaye discussed the vast mechanical contraptions that would render the promised illusions the Spectatorium was to house:

There were to be twenty-five telescopic stages, all of which were to be furnished with scenery of an entirely new species devised by myself. The frame of the stage pictures was 150 by 70 feet [MacKaye clearly conceptualized the stage as a picture.], and the full range of the vision of the public, at the horizon of the picture,
would have been over 400 feet. It would have required over six miles of railroad
track for these stages to move upon, and their aggregated weight would have been
over 1,200 tons. In making a change of scene, the machinery of the building would
have easily controlled over 600 tons, and would have made each change within
forty seconds ....754

Even on paper, the spectacular size and scope that MacKaye spoke of caused a tremendous
impression. Correspondingly, this description of the project created an appeal to
prospective audiences to view the building, if nothing else.

From the start, "[t]he design of the Spectatorium developed from MacKaye's plans
for changing scenery."755 Of course, this necessarily went hand in hand with the ability to
manufacture the life-size illusion of nature on stage. (Similarly, the Madison Square
Theatre was designed entirely for its ability to change scenery as suggested by its deliberate
focus on stage pictures and their speedy composition.) MacKaye was concerned with
offering up different pictures of nature for the audiences quickly. To offer up a single
representation per show would have been little more than offering what was currently
available at the larger panoramas (e.g., Niagara Falls). More importantly, he hoped to place
before the audience ever-changing pictures that highlighted the shifting patterns of nature
observed outdoors. These were the same atmospheric transformations that landscape artists
of the period tried to arrest on their canvases. In this way, MacKaye was attempting what
was impossible for the landscape painter: using this theatre's shifting scenery to reproduce
the transient qualities of nature. Only large-scale dioramas had ever attempted such effects
to this point, and they lacked the ability to include actors in their pictures. With this project,
MacKaye was hoping to surpass the limits of all previous forms of pictorial arts.

In setting his sights this way, MacKaye was continuing a line of interest
considerably investigated earlier in the century. "Many have been the plans suggested for
the purpose of reforming the mode of changing the scenes," Percy Fitzgerald wrote in
1881, before going on to discuss a theatre concept of that time that MacKaye later embraced with the Spectatorium:

One scheme had nearly been adopted in the French theatres, and consisted in making the whole background semicircular with a coved ceiling. Thus all broken lines were got rid of and there was a smooth surface. The different scenes, it was contrived, should rest on this framework, and fold up like a fan when a change was required. The unwieldiness of this plan was found a fatal objection, and it was put aside.756

MacKaye, having spent time in Paris, may have been influenced by such large-scale theatre plans but he clearly avoided the earlier mistakes of this French theatre. Rather than having the shifting scenery attached to the cyclorama background, MacKaye's plans involved loading trucks with scenery that came out in staggered relief fashion.

The great size and scope of the scenitorium area in his building were essential for MacKaye in creating full-scale pictorial stage illusions. Earlier in the century it had been argued that such tremendous space on stage was a necessary requirement if theatres were to be effective: "Stage-land should be viewed through some such noble [and spacious] opening, not through a mean frame. Behind should be a spreading, open stage, not one of those squeezed cupboard-like areas which destroy all romance and delusion."757 Because the Spectatorium audience was to witness over four hundred feet of space extending behind the proscenium arch, the image set before the audience would have resounded with immense depth when filled with perspective-aligned scenery. This allowed for a greater pictorial fidelity than was typically witnessed in theatres of the period, though such fidelity was common in cycloramas.

Murray Nelson, the general manager for the Columbian Celebration Company, who, along with MacKaye, was most responsible for the financing of the project, recounted:
Owing to the great size of the building, effects of distance were obtained which are impossible in an ordinary theatre. I remember on one occasion Anton Seidl, who had been engaged with his orchestra for the Spectatorium, saying to me after an exhibition of the working model which was constructed upon a scale of 1 to 20, that 'the scenic effect was as much more beautiful than anything than had ever been accomplished at Bayreuth [and] Bayreuth was better than an ordinary American country theatre.' This statement with all due allowances for exaggeration and poetic license was made with apparent conviction and sincerity. 758

Even when the Spectatorium project was reduced to the much smaller Scenitorium production, the effect of distance envisioned by the cycloramic conception of the theatre worked well. Reminiscent of eyewitness accounts of cycloramas, one reporter commented on the Scenitorium show and the way it deceived the viewer: "One of the astonishing things is the effect of tremendous distance that is given to the sea views, the water ... seemingly to stretch away to vast distance, though but a modest stage depth is used at the Scenitorium." 759

Nineteenth-century theatre artists before MacKaye were captivated by the enchanting possibilities of stages employing panoramic backgrounds. In 1863, Charles Fechter's new theatre used one in a way that MacKaye was to attempt thirty years later:

Many beautiful and interesting effects again will no doubt be achieved on ... [Fechter's] new stage. ... In opening outdoor scenes, where, for instance, the open country, or perhaps the open sea, extends far away into the distance, the sky will close the scene in overhead: an unbroken canopy extending from a certain point behind the proscenium and high above it, over the stage, and away to where, at the extreme backward limit of the theatre, it mingles softly with the horizon. One may, without being too sanguine, believe that this great arched canopy, spanning the stage from side to side, and from front to back, will lend itself to all sorts of
beautiful and truthful effects. With trees, or rocks, or whatever else may be needed at the sides—not, indeed, pushed on in flat pieces parallel to the proscenium, like the separated joints of a screen, but planted here and there, as Nature plants, carelessly and irregularly—it will be possible so to close in an out-door scene, as that there shall be really no flaw or weak place about it, no unfinished gaps to which the scrutinizing eye can wander in the confident hope of ascertaining 'how the trick was done.'

Yet, in 1873, the actual employment of cycloramic backgrounds on stage was considered to be flawed, which engendered sharp criticism of projects that tried such effects:

There exists a grave inconvenience in a painted panorama representing a vast area. The junctions of back drops and the side panoramic flats are never exactly successful, especially when the line of intersection is in the sky. Replacement of the back drop and the side flats by a great curved panorama has been projected. It is thought that with sufficient illumination the curved aspect of the construction in question could be eliminated for the spectator especially if there were no horizontal straight lines that by virtue of the laws of perspective, would become bent lines for the audience seated above or below the line of the horizon.

The urge to use cycloramas to render outdoor spectacles on stage was not quashed by such criticism, however, and was addressed again in 1881, when one critic identified the primary technical obstacle blocking the creation of such exterior scenes:

So long as the present principles of scenic representation obtain, and the aim is to give a more and more exact imitation of objects outside, any formal system of mechanics would be found too inelastic to admit of the endless variety required. These demands become every day more and more craving; some new prodigy of imitation is required, and the scenic artist is called on to furnish some monumental structure of proportions more vast than has been yet attempted.
MacKaye's Spectatorium assumed the need of a curved space as the basis for its conception, as evident in the floor plan of the Spectatorium (Figures 16, 17, 18). (MacKaye's knowledge of perspective was apparently sophisticated and informed by popular ideas on the subject as well as by his artistic training.) Theatre size also was an important consideration around the time MacKaye began thinking about his project. In 1889, theatre veteran Dion Boucicault wrote about the tendency of oversized theatres (the likes of which were in MacKaye's mind) and discussed their demands. He remarked that "... we are monstrifying everything, as if size and extremity were elements of art." MacKaye clearly believed that enormous scale was a necessary part of the artistic conception of his project. The major issues surrounding such enormous buildings were considerable for Boucicault:

A larger theatre requires for the production of the same work [as a smaller theatre] a greater number of musicians in the orchestra; a greater consumption of gas; a greater number of attendants; a larger number of supernumeraries and ballet; a larger staff of carpenters, property-men, and gas-men; a larger amount of canvas and wood for the larger scenery; a larger quantity of furniture on the stage. There is an increment in every department. It is, therefore, much more costly to carry on than a smaller theatre. The same entertainment does not look so well on the larger stage, unless it be a spectacular play, and the public do not patronize a performance in proportion to the size of the theatre in which it is given.

This practical assessment also strongly hinted at one possible outcome of such enormous theatres: "The exorbitant buildings to be devoted to music and the drama ... [are] liable to disappoint the hopes of their projectors." Following this, Boucicault raised his primary concern; one which was to apply to the Spectatorium four years later. He asked "the fundamental question--will they be self-supporting? Will they pay?" Unfortunately, MacKaye's theatre never had a proper opportunity to address such queries.
The Inventions

To realize the performance envisioned in the scenitorium, MacKaye invented many mechanical devices, eight of which dominated the creation of his pictorial illusions. While one of his engineers was later granted patents on some machinery created for the Spectatorium project, MacKaye himself held the important ones. These were: the "Proscenium Adjustor," the "Silent Unfolding Announcer," the "Luxauleator," the "Telescopic Stage," a wave-making machine with water channels, and a wind-making apparatus. In addition, there were the "Illuminoscope," the "Colorator," and the "Nebulator."

Before witnessing the inventions conceived for the shows' illusions, the audience would have noticed three unique devices in the proscenium area. First was the proscenium adjuster, made "for the purpose of uniformly enlarging or contracting the proscenium opening" (Figure 19). Recognizing that the enormous proscenium he was building would limit the audience's ability to focus on intimate scenes involving smaller numbers of characters, MacKaye proposed using side wings and a drop at the proscenium edge of the stage that could close in the central portion of the stage when required. The left and right wings would slide towards center and a solid drop curtain would lower down from the top of the proscenium to restrict the audience's view and keep the focus on centrally-placed figures. The neutrality offered by the black color of these shutters would act as counterpoint to the lavish colors witnessed on stage when the adjuster receded. This proscenium adjuster offered the equivalent of a cinematic close-up in that it focused attention on specific figures within the larger scene presented to the audience. Also cinematically, the mechanism was to work "without a moment's delay and almost
imperceptibly to the audience." The proscenium adjuster was complemented by another device to be employed for the start and the end of the show:

The proscenium opening was also closed by large double doors, which opening slowly on the stage picture produced beautiful effects in the model, whether they could have been possible of operation is hard to say. [sic] A door 75 feet wide and 100 feet high rigid enough not to rattle in the wind might have been too heavy to have been moved. The architect Major Jenny was not a genius and Steele MacKaye was and I was usually inclined to follow Steele MacKaye's lead because he was the type of man who constantly did things that everyone else said were impossible.

A second invention, the "silent unfolding announcer," was placed in the auditorium. It was a concession on MacKaye's part. He recognized that "the colossal scale of the production ... [demanded that the spectator be] most artistically divided between pantomime, for the most distant and extensive scenes, and speech for those which more nearly approach the public." Believing that the audience would need guidance in interpreting the large-scale pantomime played out at a great distance before them, MacKaye devised enormous scrolls on either side of the proscenium arch which would simultaneously remark on the stage pictures,

so that the audience may comprehend the meaning of the various acts, scenes, parts-scenes, or representations without the necessity of an oral explanation, thereby dispensing with a public lecturer or interpreter and overcoming the objections incident to such practices, which are rendered necessary in presenting panoramas and various other entertainments wherein the meaning is not obvious to the ordinary observer.

In this way the audience observed the stage pictures and listened to the accompanying music without any interruptions. (While this was planned for the Spectatorium, it was not employed in the model production of the Scenitorium. In that instance, MacKaye used a
The patent plans for this device show that the printed story was illuminated by incandescent bulbs shining on a "traveling sheet" of paper or cloth. As such it was a significantly more modest device than was described by the New York Daily News, which stated that "the story of Columbus is told in letters of fire a foot long, a sentence at a time" (Figure 20).

A third invention that straddled the border between the auditorium and the scenitorium was a device designed to act in lieu of a formal curtain between scenes, the "Luxauleator." This was discussed in some detail by one reporter present at the investors' model showing:

A portion of the appliances used for this light is in plain sight of the audience. This portion consists of a row of electric lights all around the proscenium opening. These lights are placed at the apex of a conical shaped reflector, the base of which is turned outward. These reflectors are made of brightly polished nickel and the first impression one gets of them is that they are a row of bells, the electric lamp itself not being visible. ... When the luxauleator is used, a switch is turned and the lamps at the apex of these reflectors glow with an immense voltage of electricity. The effect of this is to present an optical illusion by which the blackness all around the proscenium opening is carried into the rectangle itself and there appears to be a vanishing line just at the mouth of these bell-shaped reflectors. The same switch which turns on the luxauleator also cuts off the stage lights. When the luxauleator is being used the audience sit in a mellow, soft light while the stage is apparently in dense darkness, but in reality the stage is light enough for all practical purposes of those employed thereon.

The curtain of light also allowed for quick transitions between scenes, otherwise, with a proscenium opening of one hundred fifty feet by seventy feet, the traditional use of curtains would have added to the audience waits. Some commentators suggested that the
Luxaulator would have blinded the spectators, but that does not seem to have been the case. One critic explained: "When the Luxaulator was turned on, an optical illusion was created, and the blackness of the surrounding proscenium appeared to extend through the space between the row of lights. Of course, there could be very little light in the scenitorium if the Luxaulator was to be effective." However, when the device was used in the later Scenitorium production one reviewer highlighted its effectiveness: "[T]he curtain of light, blotted out the scene. ... [T]he glare of ... [the electric light] rays as effectively cuts short the vision as any curtain ever devised." A different reporter noted that "one may advance within a foot of the curtain of light and still be unable to see through it." Another effect created by the Luxaulator was the appearance that it gave to the total stage illusion. It literally framed the enormous proscenium opening like the gilded border of a period oil painting. This illusion was enhanced by the proscenium dimensions which made the picture wider than it was tall. The illustration MacKaye enclosed with the Luxaulator's patent so clearly showed a conception of the theatre stage as framed that the illustration appears to be a sketch in a picture frame rather than a depiction of a theatrical set placed on stage surrounded by a proscenium (Figure 21). The effect in reality would have been diminished as the proscenium arch itself was curved on an arc paralleling the back wall of the scenitorium area. This feature heightened the cycloramic quality of the picture.

Many of the inventions employed within the scenitorium were constructed around the substitution for a standard floor of the "stage portion ... [with] a concrete or cement bottom, and the sides ... also cement to a height of eight feet, making a perfectly water-tight box of a semi-circular shape." Filled, this box became a water stage. On the floor of this reservoir ran a parallel series of railroad tracks that followed the curve of the stage from upstage to down, allowing MacKaye to place flat trucks in any position on the stage. The level of this water stage, across which truck scenery rolled, was kept constant by an
intake that continually pumped fresh water in at the front of the stage, while a lip-like spillway at the rear of the stage butted against the cycloramic back wall and took excess water away. One newspaper detailed this setup:

A feature of the stage department is that the scenitorium is always filled with water at a depth of six feet, and all the land used, for instance the street of Granada or the island of San Salvador, is drawn into sight over the water. As most of the views are marine in character the presence of this water is absolutely necessary in all save two scenes—that of the monastery of La Rabida and the scene at Granada.782

With the railway tracks under water, MacKaye manipulated the stage truck devices before the audience using submerged cables rotating around drums in the off-stage area. This scheme was elaborated on by Murray Nelson:

Upon these tracks ran specially designed flat cars which carried various sections of the scenery which was not painted upon flat surfaces but built up and in comparatively high relief. When these stages were to be used, they were drawn by continuously moving wire cables in the manner of a street railway so as to intercept the vision of the spectators through the proscenium opening.783

These trucks, which worked essentially on a principle similar to that employed by elevator stages (in moving entire stage settings in and out of the viewing area at a relatively quick rate using cables) allowed MacKaye to offer heavier and more substantial sets than were possible in other theatres:

Unlike the ordinary scenery, which is made either of painted canvas or of papier-mâché, the scenes in 'The MacKaye Spectatorium' are constructed of practical building material and to use an ordinary theatrical word there is no setting of scenery or anything of that kind, each scene being built independently of all others on the track or stage which bears it from the point of concealment into the range of sight.784
Similarly, though it was possible for relatively small or isolated scenes to be contained on one truck, this was not typically the case: "In presenting a stage view ... it is very frequently necessary to use more than one of these stages or trucks as for instance, in the view of San Salvador seven independent stages are used, each one of which comes into place over a set of rails on which it travels alone, the whole filling the stage from the backwall to the very edge of the proscenium" [a distance of one hundred thirty feet].785 This multi-truck staging created a physical sense of depth and height in all planes of the various settings: "The stages rose in tiers almost like the seats in the audience."786 The staggering of truck stages one behind the other and their slow movement into position was patented by MacKaye and referred to as a telescopic stage.787 His patent clarified the concept:

In theatrical appliances, a series of independent movable stages, with set-scenes or other objects thereon, mechanism for propelling each stage independently of the other, and automatic coupling mechanism for locking adjacent stages together at a predetermined point in the movement of the foremost stage, together with means for unlocking the stages at such pre-determined point on the reverse movement of the stages.788

According to one observing reporter, the depth suggested by the layering of various trucks with three-dimensional structures and objects created a greater illusion of reality than normally witnessed on stage:

Instead of flat canvas the scenery is in reality artistic modeling in some sort of composition of the streets of Spanish towns, of the coast from which Columbus sailed, and of that palm-fringed strand in the western hemisphere upon which he [Columbus] was the first European to set afoot. It happened that when I peeped beneath the curtain a stray ray of sunlight was streaming down upon the yellow-white walls of famed La Rabida, ... and no picture I have seen of the convent so
vividly brought it before me as that model in miniature. It is safe to prophesy that with all the artful aids Mr. MacKaye has prepared this scenery obtains a wondrous air of realism [Figure 22].

The back wall of the stage area, "or as much of it as can be seen by the audience ... [was] not, properly speaking, a scene, nothing but the sky being represented." Of course, the primary function of the back wall was to aid in the illusionistic representation of the atmosphere. Extending over four hundred feet in length and running from the edge of the water stage up into the loft, the back wall took on cycloramic proportions because of its size and its semi-circular shape. This cycloramic conception of the scenitorium, was elaborated on by Murray Nelson in his description of what was envisioned:

... a spectator saw through the proscenium opening an example of open water meeting with the sky which was painted upon the inner side of the semi-circular back wall of the stage. This design was mainly useful to show ships in motion on the water and productive of vividly realistic effects when the stages carrying the ships or boats were moved slowly out of the line of vision in one direction, while the stages carrying the land and fore-shore scenery were moved slowly out of the line of vision in the opposite direction, giving a panoramic effect of remarkable beauty of ships leaving a harbor for instance, or sighting land.

A high point of the illusions on the water stage was to be the representation of the ships of Columbus. MacKaye planned to have three floating ships with fifty-foot masts sail across his stage. By tethering a ship to a pivoting rocker arm which itself was attached to a flat underwater truck, MacKaye created the illusion of floating ships sailing through the water. Murray Nelson recalled: "The caravels were three-fourths of the size of the ones actually used by Columbus and were reproduced with great exactness from those which were brought from Spain and exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition. They were
beautifully made and were entirely completed." Further detail of how the ships were to
be used in the production appeared in a newspaper:

The three caravels which represent those of the fleet in which the great discoverer
sailed are exact facsimiles of the Santa Marie [Maria], the Pinta and the Nina, even
to the last detail of mast, spar and rope. They are not in any sense property ships,
but are practical and in the production will be manned by bona fide sailors. These
ships ... are so constructed that they are susceptible to both wind and waves.

When combined with the moveable truck platforms, the creation of panoramic motion
occurred: "The sea is a real pool of water, over which the caravels will sail, the scenery in
the rear, meanwhile being moved to give an appearance of speed to the vessels. As
Columbus leaves Spain the shores will recede into the wings, and as he nears America the
shores of the promised land will appear from the wing on the other side of the stage."

The strong emphasis on water effects suggested by the dominance of the pool stage
subscribed to MacKaye's overriding theatrical concept of recreating natural atmospheric
and weather conditions. Besides the creation of this stage, most of the devices that
influenced the building's design were those which employed water, since manipulating
water was more complicated than just filling a pool. MacKaye's current and wave-making
machines demanded an extraordinary amount of energy to function; up to "1600 horse
power" when used in combination. MacKaye noted:

Among the weather effects, were to be the clear day through all the subtle
modulations of the approaching storm with real haze and fog and rain. In addition,
the real wind effect of almost every degree of force, with the movement of real
waves of water, presenting thus all the phases of the atmosphere produced by
different degrees of temperature and humidity, combined with the many capricious
aspects of the sea ....
Of course, the promised spectacle of water effects on stage did not start or end with MacKaye, such illusions were attempted in various forms long before and long after this project. Michael Booth notes that: "From the time of the naval battles and aquatic pantomimes in the water tank on the stage of Sadler's Wells at the beginning of the nineteenth century, real water had always been a feature of theatrical spectacle." Nineteenth-century theatre technology offered an ability to recreate actual bodies of water on a stage (on which actors in floating vessels enacted dramas). Indeed, in America, the Lafayette Theatre (1825) had a stage one hundred twenty-five feet deep that could be transformed into a water tank. Similarly, the inclusion of ships on stage had a long history apart from MacKaye's fleet. However, MacKaye took this further than any before him with his innovative devices and artistic vision; where Sadler's Wells placed a water tank on its stage, MacKaye conceptualized the entire stage as a cycloramic water tank.

True to his word, MacKaye's inventions actually allowed him to produce "in the most realistic manner, all sorts of ... water-scape effects." His patented wave-making machine was an essential tool in this regard. It consisted of a large square paddle constructed around a box submerged under water and placed off-stage. Moving the paddle forward and at varying speeds created waves of different intensity (Figure 23). Similar to this, but more complicated, was the invention of "water channels," which were underwater troughs that pumped water from one side of the stage to the other, creating the effect of water currents. The complexity of designing this device was enormous. In order for it to be fully functional, "the building itself ... [had to be] an integral part of the mechanism for controlling the flow of water." One critic has detailed the way this was brought about in a description of what must be considered a laudable theatre innovation:

Around three sides of the large tank, forming the scenitorium, ran a viaduct. Doors between the scenitorium tank and the viaduct could be opened or closed to control
the quantity of water passing from one area to another. Vast quantities of water could be circulated through the scenitorium, out into the viaduct, around the building, and back into the scenitorium from the other side.803 Such a design allowed for the possibility of creating an actual flowing river on stage "by rapidly pumping water out of one side of the scenitorium while just as rapidly pumping it in the other. Channels below the water's surface guided the major body of water around the curve of the scenitorium." MacKaye did not even limit himself to creating unnaturally straight rivers, as "[diagonal currents could be created by pumping in water at one level and pumping it out at another" (Figure 24).804 Creating such a river clearly met MacKaye's goal of manufacturing actual water effects on stage, and at the same time solved the problem of producing the illusion of rivers on stage, which was a concern of theatre artists in this period: "However successful the stage machinist has been in his treatment of fire, the same fortune has not attended him in his dealings with water. Nothing ruder or less like the element can be conceived than the presentation of, say, a river in an average theatre--a few canvas screens placed behind one another, their edges cut out after the conventional outline of waves."805

MacKaye's other devices involving water were less complicated, such as his method of creating rain and fog on stage. For rain, pipes attached to the overhead rigging had holes punched in them and were then joined to a water supply. By regulating the volume of water to the pipes "a gentle rain or a hard shower could be produced."806 To flesh out the natural effects of waves, rivers and rain, MacKaye created a fog device that consisted of a "trough containing lime."807 Hung in the fly gallery, this trough would be lowered into another trough of water, "slaking the lime, and thus forming a fog."808 According to the patent for the device, this mist could be made to "completely or partly envelop the scenic arrangements, ... [giving] the effect of a light or a dense fog."809 Additionally, by means of a wind machine, the fog could "be caused to gently rise or
descend or be suddenly lifted or dissipated." The one problem with this fog patent is that it did not actually work. MacKaye mistook the properties of the forced chemical reaction. One scholar explains: "Quick lime, or calcium oxide, when dipped in water does cause a chemical reaction, and calcium hydroxide is produced, but no fog is formed. The result is a milky looking solution of calcium hydroxide suspended in water." After being granted the patent for the device, MacKaye discovered this problem. However, he appears to have made his way around it as suggested by the architectural plans for the Spectatorium which showed "steam pipes under the water" accompanying the original drawing indicate ... were to be used to produce mist and fog effects." In resurrecting the fog effect with the introduction of steam pipes, MacKaye returned to a device he had originally used in The Drama of Civilization. Indeed, Murray Nelson confirmed the use of an invention designed to create "cloud effects with steam." MacKaye's desire to avoid relying on steam by using lime instead was possibly due to the visual perils inherent in steam fog. When the use of steam had been first employed in this manner some years before, audience reaction was mixed:

Another new agent in scenic effect is the use of STEAM, which is suppose to give that vaporous effect in motion hitherto attempted by gauzes and painted clouds. This ... [was] applied at the famous Bayreuth performances, where the height of dramatic propriety and perfection was suppose to have been attained. A regular steam-engine or generator was fitted up under the stage or at the wings; at the proper moment a number of cocks were opened, and the whole scene was filled with vapor. ...[T]he impression was anything but favorable, and the general effect was of a literal kind, viz., that there had been an escape of steam. It can never be sufficiently borne in mind that realism or real objects on the stage limit scenic effect in proportion to this realism. Everything should be 'seeming.'
MacKaye's ability to control fog on stage depended on his successful employment of a wind machine. In a way similar to his return to steam fog, MacKaye's wind machine for the Spectatorium was an extension of earlier experiments, as suggested by former associate, Lewis Parker: "When poor MacKaye was building his 'Spectatorium' in Chicago, near the World's Fair, he came up to our Grounds [the Buffalo Bill exhibition grounds] to see me; and told me that he was going to use the same style of wheels [fans, as those used in *The Drama of Civilization*] to produce real wind for driving his ships." (Of course, the wind was intended to just billow the sails, not actually drive the vessels.)

The wind device planned for the Spectatorium shared conceptual similarities with MacKaye's devices for control and movement of water in the theatre:

Huge fans were used to drive air into or pull air from the scenitorium. By forcing air in one side at the same time that it was pulled out the other, currents of air were created. A fan was also installed in the center of the roof of the scenitorium, which could pull the air up or push it down. Air from the fans was forced through conduits into flexible nozzles formed by telescopic sections. These nozzles could be adjusted to direct air wherever it was desired. One fan was placed down stage and one up stage on each side of the scenitorium. These four fans, combined with the fan located on the roof of the scenitorium, made it possible to give the effect of a gentle breeze, stiff gale, or even a violent storm [Figures 25, 26].

That the telescopic nozzles could direct channels of air anywhere on stage allowed for the illusion of directional wind to be approximated. Correspondingly, the nozzles' ability to billow the sails of the caravels in any required direction added dramatically to the verisimilitude of the production.

Notwithstanding the grandeur of his devices for wind and water, by far the most important inventions to be employed in the scenitorium involved MacKaye's conception of lighting. His efforts at re-creating light as it appeared in nature were similar to attempts
made earlier in the century. In 1877 a lighting engineer named L.J. Duboscq, who had been the head of electrical services at the Paris Opera, published The Catalogue of Apparatuses Employed for the Production of Physical Phenomenon in Theatres (1877). Listed in Duboscq's collection of devices for stage illumination were several technical descriptions that showed the aim of his inventions to be the same as Steele MacKaye's would be fifteen years later: the "perfect illusion of nature." Likewise, MacKaye's specific intention of creating the possibility of subtle shading with his lighting inventions was a feature long called for on stage. Many critics over the years had grown weary of the bright but flat light which gas offered: "[There is no sunlight], no casting of shadows, which makes the whole richness of objects in average daily life .... On the stage the glare of gas is equable—coming from above, below, and from the sides; and such shadows as there are, are the coarse shadows of limelight." MacKaye's desire to produce a fine gradation of shifting light and shadow was an extension of his earlier exposure to the possibilities of electrical theatre lighting. Years earlier MacKaye had explored the use of electric light when he had Thomas Edison's company install electrical lighting on the Lyceum Theatre stage (a project MacKaye was involved with for a short time). Moving beyond such techniques that simply traded gas lighting for electric lighting, MacKaye's proposal for lighting the Spectatorium was as ambitious as the entire building itself. Later, in recalling the lighting envisioned for this theatre, MacKaye noted:

An entirely new system of lighting was to be used in connection with these [mobile] stages, the aim being to arrive at as close a reproduction of the subtle light effects of nature as modern mechanism made possible. It would have required, to produce these effects, an amount of light equal to over 500,000 candle power, and all the mechanism by which this light was to be managed was entirely new in design and character.
The detailed thought that MacKaye invested in lighting the scenitorium demonstrates the importance he placed on this element in the creation of his stage pictures, and his artistic sensitivity:

Among the light realisms were the optical phenomena produced by the passage of time from night, through the early dawn, the rising of the sun, through all the hours of the day with their changing shadows, to the setting of the sun, followed by all the tints of the twilight, and the gradual appearance of the constellations, accurately depicted as they exist in the southern hemisphere—the stars softly stealing through the evening sky into the night, and thence through deepest darkness to day again; also the falling stars and meteors, the milky way, the aurora borealis, the real lightning, and the real rainbow....

MacKaye's theatre drew on his ability to create such effects by staging a play conceived so that "[e]ach scene may and generally does extend over an entire day, ... [allowing for] the various effects of light and shade that come with each day ... [to] be utilized." Of course, MacKaye was not the first to experiment with the creation of rising or setting suns using electricity. Twelve years earlier in England it had been noted that "[f]or representing the ... glories of the rising or setting sun, a machine has been contrived in combination with the electric light." Similarly, while not specified as an electrical effect, Offenbach's revival of Orpheus in Paris used lighting in a way similar to that which MacKaye was later to undertake: "The object was to represent the somewhat hackneyed change from night to morning, to portray the cloudy realms of Olympus wrapped in darkness, and the passing from the conventional mists and clouds into a brilliancy of a celestial palace—from desertion to crowds"

MacKaye's main lighting source not only mimicked the sun's intensity but also traveled across the stage's grid system in an arc similar to the sun's movement across the
southern sky. One newspaper reporter, commenting on a public display of the model built to test MacKaye's ideas, gave a detailed description:

One of these lights, the sun, will have the lighting capacity of fifty arc lights, representing 100,000 candle power. The light is so governed and managed that it can represent with exact fidelity, any phase of day, for instance, it can be made to give the gray light of morning, to gradually rise to the full glistening light of meridian splendor .... This is accomplished by the arc of a circle at the top of the scenitorium. This arc has a radius of 220 feet and extends from the line of vision on the east side to the line of vision on the west, the sun at mid-day being very near the center of the proscenium opening and directly over the top of the scene. The arc ... [on which this sun travels is parallel to the floor] and 150 feet distant from it. ...

The other light, [of 20,000 candle power] representing the moon, travels a similar but smaller arc and can be handled and managed as easily as the greater light. 828

A witness to the demonstration of the investors' model summarized the elaborate effects created when all these devices worked in unison:

By a combination of these light effects, it is possible to obtain any condition desired and every phase that attends the natural course of nature, even to the most subtle modulations of a tropical day. Not only can be presented the effulgent light of the meridian sun at noon tide and the mellow, silvery light of the moon in a clear light, but also the hazy, murky atmosphere of the approaching hurricane with its thick bank of clouds obscuring the heavens, and the atmospheric conditions which attend the breaking of the storm. 829

The lyrical description of these effects clearly articulates MacKaye's painterly approach to lighting. The originality of MacKaye's subtle light effects as suggested by this account finds support in Murray Nelson's 1909 remark: "[S]everal [of MacKaye's] devices for
producing effects of morning and evening, now more or less commonplace because of the developments in the science of electricity, ... [were] highly novel fifteen years ago.830

MacKaye's concept of single-source theatre lighting was possibly influenced by various elements of his background. Like the overall theatrical concept of this project, perhaps MacKaye's fascination with the control of lighting on stage came from his early and substantial training as a painter. Painters of this period, especially the American landscape painters under whom MacKaye studied, gave strong consideration in their paintings to the way that light hit the given subject or landscape to be painted (i.e., its direction, and intensity). This aspect was primary to their conception of a painting as a whole. MacKaye's early mentor, William Morris Hunt, was known to study the ever-shifting light of nature. Moreover, Hunt "frequently expressed his difficulty in depicting the transience of natural light."831 Significantly, transience was to be a primary element of all MacKaye's pictures on the Spectatorium stage. On the other hand, George Inness preferred manipulating light in his paintings "for romantic, moralizing purposes,"832 and MacKaye's use of lighting in Hazel Kirke and The Drama of Civilization, suggest that he too was not beyond using lighting to such ends. To portray realistically on canvas light as witnessed in nature was to be an artist who captured nature more completely than other painters; likewise, to portray an environment on stage illuminated as one witnessed it in nature was to represent nature with greater fidelity. Conceivably, there is no better way to reproduce natural lighting on stage than to reproduce the natural source of light: the sun. At the same time, MacKaye was drawing on a lighting aesthetic found in period cycloramas, which used natural "daylight that filtered into the big buildings from above" to illuminate their enormous canvases.833

While the single-source illumination was to be the jewel of his lighting department, MacKaye also envisioned complementary moonlight. The representation of moonlight on stage had been extremely popular in the last half of the nineteenth century; especially before
the introduction of electricity, because "nothing ... can be so well counterfeited."834 Yet, by conventional means, there was nothing that required more work to be effective.835 The usual stage moon was created with limelight and if improperly handled, sparked much criticism: "It must be admitted that all attempts at presenting the moon, whether 'horned' or at the full, have been of a rather lame and impotent kind, not reaching beyond the elemental principle of cutting a hole in the canvas and covering it with a transparent material."836 MacKaye himself was familiar with such moonlight effects and their drawbacks. Early in his career MacKaye sued a scenic artist who ruined his 1881 touring production of *Won at Last* by creating a moon too large for the box in which it was to ride during its passage through the night sky on a painted backdrop. The ill-fitting moon was recut to fit, subsequently causing the audience much amusement when its triangular shape appeared in the closing moments of the play. MacKaye had advertised "superb Moonlight effects" and argued in his court case that by failing to produce this "his reputation had suffered severely."837 MacKaye's twenty thousand candle-power electric Spectatorium moon rode along a curved path, dramatically illuminating the "night-time" pool stage.

MacKaye also created accompanying lighting devices, most notably "footlights, horizon light and lights in the fly loft," to round out various demands of the show.838 Together with these more standard conceptions of light were those intended for specific atmospheric effects. The creation of clouds and colored lights was to be engineered through the varied use of a simple reflecting-projector device. Different names were given to each kind of projecting light: "Illuminoscopes"—described as principle source lights—were to "illuminate and color scenic arrangements imitating nature and to increase realism in such imitation";839 "Colorators" were a series of "coloring drums" through which light (from the Illuminoscopes) passed in order to "blend the colors and secure the various tints desired in any scene";840 the "Nebulator" (or "cloud-creator") was a type of cloud cloth passed before the same type of projecting lamp "to produce the effect of clouds and cloud shadows
moving simultaneously over the landscape and sky foundation" (Figure 27). The latter two devices were based on the Illuminoscope's singular concept which "consisted of a light source inside a half-cylindrical reflector. Around the reflector was a larger cylinder made of a transparent material which could be tinted, painted, or etched with the effects to be projected. This outer cylinder could be turned by a series of gears to gradually change the color or to cause the projected image to move" (Figure 28). This projector's ability to create the appearance of movement was most important for the depiction of clouds on stage. Until MacKaye's invention of the nebulator, representing clouds on the increasingly illusionistic stage was becoming a problem: "Sometimes, indeed, a ragged cloud is suffered to trail across, but the edges are so hard that they betray that they are of stouter material than vapor." By having the clouds projected, such concerns were avoided, thereby ensuring that their representation more closely mimicked their actual counterpart. A planned rainbow effect differed from these devices in that it was not based on the half-cylinder reflector. In the words of a tradesman who worked on the device, the rainbow was "projected from a stereopticon, ... painted on glass, [and] masked in with an opaque black, so as to project an arc upon the sky cyclorama." The intended effect of this is made clearest in a newspaper illustration of the time (Figure 36).

One further innovation used by MacKaye in pursuit of creating atmospheric effects was the detailed attention he gave to the representation of the night sky. One reporter of the investors' model noted the effect while admitting some ignorance: "By a peculiar arrangement, which is not as yet explained, there is made to appear on this background of sky the constellations of the southern hemisphere, each star being given its correct magnitude by the light which attends it, and each being set at the proper place in the firmament from a chart furnished by the ablest astronomers of the day." Not only did MacKaye accurately represent the stars' positions in the night sky, he also obtained a degree of fidelity with regard to the stars' relative intensities of illumination. Such was the
toilsome degree to which he drove himself to create unequaled illusions. One technician clarified how this effect was achieved: "These constellations were punctured in the [cyclorama's] linoleum with different sized needles, and behind each hole was an intricately wired electric bulb, covered with orange colored paper, so that each star would actually scintillate with its true proportionate value, in accordance with nature."847 Such effects had been attempted in France years earlier (these possibly had even been witnessed by MacKaye) but it was only with the invention of electricity that such representations became reliable. Writing in 1873, M.J. Moynet detailed the difficulties of creating such an illusion twenty years earlier:

The sky is sprinkled with twinkling stars, admirably imitated by means of a series of little gadgets. A little square of tin, fitted at the center with an imitation diamond of colored glass is sewn on the back of the curtain. A tiny lamp fitted there sends its light through the facets of the diamond which is just opposite a hole cut in the curtain. The light twinkles as you look at it. This is quite a cumbersome thing, however, since it requires a light for each star. One could undoubtedly obtain the same effect with one or several sources of electric light."848

MacKaye's concerted effort in inventing all of these devices and employing them to create illusions of various atmosphere effects came to fruition in the investors' model, despite the later collapse of the Spectatorium project. As suggested by one overwhelmed reporter, the inventions accomplished all that MacKaye promised:

That is atmosphere, the first I ever saw in a picture. That is dawn itself. It is nature in her subtlest aspect. The picture is as true as any I have witnessed .... Mr. MacKaye, your art and your science together have solved the problem of absolute realism.849
The Great Discovery

The Great Discovery, the performance envisioned for this new style of entertainment, would have fully utilized the innovative building which was to house it and the machinery invented for it. Combining pantomime, oratory, an eighty-piece symphonic orchestra, and a three-part four hundred person choir in a three-dimensional setting with historically accurate sets, costumes, dances and music, the pictorially-represented story of Columbus' voyage was to instruct audiences as much as entertain them. Using eight hundred performers, the play was to accurately depict the environment, circumstances, and events surrounding Columbus' initial quest. The desire for authenticity dictated much of what was to be included. Complementing such representational aims, the play's aesthetic focus was to "create a harmonious blending of nature and art such as had never before been effected." On this account MacKaye sent researchers to Spain to gather information on authentic costumes, dances, and architecture. The scenery on the moving trucks that were to slide into place from either side of the proscenium was to be full size and three-dimensional. For materials that could not adequately be constructed, the actual objects were to be used regardless of expense (e.g., palm trees). Details of the accuracy employed in the construction of the scenery comprised part of the publicity surrounding the venture. One press release "for newspapers on the Spectatorium" documented the detail and expense the production incurred for its aesthetic principles:

A comprehensive idea of how thoroughly every scene of 'The MacKaye Spectatorium' will be presented ... may be had from the fact that over five carloads of tropical flora has been imported direct from Jamaica, W.I. This flora, which is all to be used in the single scene representing the first landing of Columbus at San Salvador, was selected at Jamaica by two agents of the Company, who were sent there for this purpose, and was shipped direct from the immense plantation of the
Boston Fruit Company. As much care will be used in every other scene, as regards detail, as has been shown in this one.851

With such openly stated promises, theatre-goers were assured an illusion of reality as close as any technology could bring to them.

A definitive script of The Great Discovery no longer exists. What remain are a few incomplete and mixed-up drafts of the play, all of which reveal a text changing according to the shifting production circumstances. Furthermore, it does not appear that the original play script was ever completed, making it difficult to fully understand the exact story that was to have been presented. The dramatic structure of the play is a hybrid, vaguely reminiscent of MacKaye's layout and treatment of history in The Drama of Civilization, "[s]ome [scenes] are described only by narration. Others have fully developed dialogue."852 Despite the many changes in the script and the lack of available evidence, what is clear is that a few ideas remained constant from MacKaye's initial play conception to the final scaled-down performance in the Scenitorium. These were the well-known historical facts surrounding the story of Columbus. In a number of scenes MacKaye was to portray the Godly vision that inspired Columbus' quest for the new world; the raising of money for the expedition; Columbus' actual journey on the sea, and the discovery of land; and a return home with accompanying grand reception. The final scene ended with Columbus' death in poverty and obscurity. The play was to be based on the most historically-accurate available information. Handwritten notes in one manuscript of The Great Discovery attest to MacKaye's reverence for fidelity:

After a careful consideration of the most important biographies of Columbus, I have based my narration, principally, upon the works of Irving and Prescott,—as these authors spent several years in Spain, for the express purpose of making the most exhaustive investigations into Spanish History and were given by the government
special facilities for study of all the original documents and archives which—the
most-searching light upon the life and times of this greatest of all Discoverers.853
Using these two sources, MacKaye originally planned to develop a four-act play that
incorporated narration, pantomime and dialogue.854 In a shorter extant manuscript,
"Scenario of The Great Discovery, A Spectatorio in Three Acts," the narration incorporates
direct quotations from Irving and Prescott's books. MacKaye used these "most scholarly
historians of Columbus' life" in order, as he stated, to "unquestionably justify the manner
in which this story is unfolded."855 While citing history books to validate the accuracy of
the scenes depicted, he did not limit himself to these; other sections of this particular
scenario had entire scenes consisting of dialogue between characters. Indeed, the most
dramatically charged scenes involved dialogue, as evident in the "Scenario" scene
surrounding the mutiny aboard ship before the discovery of land:

Columbus turns cheerily to his crew and cries—'Make sail—make sail, my men.'
With a sudden resolution, they turn upon him, and Gomez, facing him with sullen
firmness, says—'Make sail—for what?'
Columbus replies—'For the land that lies before us.'
'Nay', cries [Q]uintero, 'for the death of which you doom us.'
Suddenly the whole crew come forward in a body.
Gomez desperately declares—'We will raise no sail before the hell-sent wind that
blows us farther from all hope and home.'
The admiral, with flashing eye, calmly questions—'You refuse obedience?'
Quintero fiercely replies—'We refuse despair.'
And the whole crew, advancing in a body, shout—'Aye—we refuse despair.'
The old mariner, with menacing mien, once more inquires—'So! you mutiny?'
Gomez, with reckless desperation, thunders back—'We revolt!—against the tyranny
of madness.' ...856
As in this scene, conversations between characters are found in many other places, such as when Columbus and crew-member Ruiz argue about the mirage of land they (and the audience) witnessed the night before. Additionally, in other extant material (i.e., one manuscript's set descriptions for act one, scene one) entire scenes are played out in dialogue between characters. (Clearly the technology of the adjusting proscenium was designed for such situations.) These dialogue scenes document MacKaye's claim that the original play was to be "artistically divided between pantomime for the most distant and extensive scenes, and speech for those which more nearly approach the public." 

MacKaye's Columbian Celebration Company went into forced bankruptcy in May 1893, a victim of a three month country-wide economic recession, and construction on the half-built Spectatorium stopped. The incomplete building lay unused during the run of the Fair and was subsequently torn down in October 1893, and auctioned for scrap. Undaunted, MacKaye turned around, retitled his play *The World Finder*, and developed plans to resurrect it and his scenic inventions in a scaled-down "Scenitorium theatre." Using an empty cyclorama building, the reduced scale of the production could not incorporate actors into the scenes without destroying the attempt being made at pictorial illusion due to the inappropriate scale of the actors to the nearby miniature set. MacKaye's stage pictures were evidently more important to him than the inclusion of actors in his play. With this reduced stage, a drastic rewriting of the story was necessary, including the elimination of all the dialogue and the cutting of two acts (reducing the number to two). But even in this form MacKaye still stressed that actors and dialogue were part of the overall conception of the project. This was made clear to the reviewers of the Scenitorium production who explains to the public:

> It is understood, of course, that the scenitorio [the scaled-down name used in place of the spectatorio] is but the pictorial presentation of the scenes and effects of a play, without the dramatic action that is designed to fill the scene. Instead of the
actors appearing[,] the author reads a description of what would be depicted in action by characters were the play given in the ordinary way. 860

Subsequent commentators on this aspect of the failed project focused on MacKaye's scaled-down Scenitorium production and often concluded that there was to have been no dialogue in the original show. Nicholas Vardac reiterated Percy MacKaye's suggestion that the actors to be used in the initial Spectatorium show were reduced to "pantomimists." 861 Succeeding historians also fell into line with Percy MacKaye's assessment that no dialogue was to be found in a "spectatorio." Indeed, those involved with the project soon forgot MacKaye's desires. Fifteen years later Murray Nelson recalled that: "The only spoken words in the production were to have been the cry of 'land! land! land!' by the lookout in the Santa Maria, Columbus' caravel; when the shore of San Salvador was first sighted." 862 While this would have been a dramatic employment, extant sources suggest Nelson was mistaken in his recollection of MacKaye's intention.

The greatly reduced Scenitorium production of The World Finder (February 1894) while composed of only two acts, provides the clearest detailed description of the production envisioned for the failed Spectatorium. Contemporary evaluations of this show, in combination with reviews of the March 1893 investors' model create a strong sense of the major aesthetic features planned for The Great Discovery. In turn, this understanding is visually complemented by newspaper illustrations of specific scenes from the investors' production (Figures 29-37). 863 Getting together the later Scenitorium production, MacKaye used much of the script employed in this earlier investors' model. A comparison of reviews for the shows suggests that the investors' model demonstration was extremely similar to the Scenitorium production. Thus, reviews of the investors' model display, coupled with reviews of the Scenitorium production, provide an approximate depiction of the envisioned Spectatorium show.
The initial investor's model was housed "[i]n the upper story of an old wooden building," which was actually the loft of the old armory. It had room for "thirty or forty guests in short rows in front of the miniature stage," and as such was considerably smaller than the later Scenitorium production. In the loft, the investors' model stage was "erected at one end of the long room, which was filled in with tiers of chairs. There was also a piano." The later Scenitorium theatre was situated in a building that housed eight hundred seats. More importantly, the Scenitorium production was fitted into the site of a cyclorama pavilion that had been open for the duration of the World's Fair a year earlier and subsequently closed. While MacKaye's Spectatorium show was to surpass the cycloramas of the day, his later Scenitorium's reduced size and its easy fit-up into an old cyclorama space hint at the close ties between the two media. With this later Scenitorium theatre, MacKaye took advantage of the pavilion's curved back wall on which to place his cycloramic sky. One of the major reasons for selecting the old cyclorama building was this need for interior distance: "This site was the only one available for the Scenitorium, which requires a stage width of over a hundred feet." The initial investors' model was substantially smaller, as its stage "consisted of a sheet of water back of an opening in a perfectly black wall, not more than 6 by 4 feet." Unlike traditional theatres, the Scenitorium's proscenium opening was "on a curve instead of straight and [additionally,] all round the opening ... [was] a somber coat of black paint." Not renovated for brilliance, the building's auditorium was decorated in gradating colors: "The tints of the walls run from fawn to terra cotta, with black base line; and the chairs are all finished in dead black. This, however, is all purposely done, in order that the entire light of the house, during the performance, may be concentrated on the stage." A different account provided further detail: The whole place has an odd look. The auditorium has been built up within the shell of the old cyclorama. ... The parquet at present is the only part of the house in
place. This rises with more abruptness than is usual in theatres, and it is evident that
a clear view of the stage will be obtained from any seat, no matter what monstrosity
of theatre hat the woman in front of you affects. The stage itself is the strangest
thing in the house. It is wider than it is high. I don't know the exact dimensions,
but apparently it is about twenty feet wide by twelve feet in height [Figure 29].

In both the investors' model production and the Scenitorium show, MacKaye
delivered the necessary narration, though in each case his poor health possibly limited his
effectiveness. An account of the initial investors' model noted that "Mr. MacKaye came
from a sick bed against the advice of his physician to exhibit his wonderful creation and
explain it to his guests." Nearly a year later with the MacKaye Spectatorium opened,
the day of February 5th, 1894, found MacKaye in dire health:

A moment later, when Mr. MacKaye was assisted to a chair on the stage, Mr.
Handy's statement [of MacKaye's illness, identified postmortem as stomach
cancer] was verified by the ghastly pallor of the author-inventor's face and his
evident feebleness. ... [MacKaye] made a touching ... apology in advance for the
defects in the production. Mr. MacKaye laid particular stress upon the cruel
collapse of the wind apparatus at the last moment, which would put the production
of the storm at sea and divers cyclones and atmospheric effects out of the
question.

In prefacing the Scenitorium show MacKaye spoke of the many aspects of the failed
Spectatorium project and their significance. The symbolism of the doors that opened the
show was highlighted by MacKaye in his curtain speech. In a manuscript for the
Scenitorium lecture MacKaye told of their intended effect:

The Doors of Destiny—Every movement associated with a Scenitorio is endowed
with some significance—the merely mechanical actions, as well as those distinctly
artistic in nature. Therefore, even to the doors, which open and close upon the
scene, there is given the dignity of an intellectual function, the symbolic Destiny; by their opening—Birth; by their closing—Death. As the destiny of life opens and closes upon consciousness, usually, by very gradual degrees, so these doors, in accordance with this idea, are notably slow in movement, their unfolding and folding, in each instance, being accompanied by a philosophic choral, which begins the moment, they commence to move, and ends the moment their movement ceases.876

As suggested by the amount of time MacKaye spent on this single feature of the production, the oration accompanying the actual show was equally detailed. This aspect was singled out by reviewers in their assessment of the play:

Mr. MacKaye's description, a semi-lecture, is admirable, and is fuller of information concerning Columbus than any history with which the public is acquainted doubtless. It may be found necessary, however to so modify it that a more rapid succession of scenes may be permitted, as the general public will require a speedier gratification of its curiosity as to what is coming next in the pictorial way. ... A little abbreviated, Mr. MacKaye's text will suffer no loss of literary interest and will serve a more popular end as a romantic guide and expositor to the scenes that more convincingly assert Mr. MacKaye's title to the rewards of genius.877

A different review of this production similarly called for a modification of the lecture: "It is doubtful if Mr. MacKaye's narrative or lecture upon Columbus will prove satisfactory as it stands. Much of it is turgid and tedious. With less of it and the perfection of the pictures the scenitorio ought to prove popular."878 Though MacKaye's accompanying lecture was slow, the show itself was not excessively long; advertised as commencing at 8:15 p.m. and ending by 10:30 p.m.879 Initially, the actual production may have been somewhat longer
than this, as nearly two weeks into the run the press commented that the performance "now lasts just two hours and a half, and is concise and brisk."880

Before the February 1894 Scenitorium opening, an article detailing the plot of the show was published in a Chicago paper, providing an overview of the production that was lacking in later reviews. Under the heading "MacKaye Scenitorium," the show's layout was prefaced with critical comments:

The general character of Steele MacKaye's Scenitorio, *The World Finder*, ... will be displayed to view ... tomorrow evening and [will] inaugurate an entirely new order of entertainment. ... The opening will be an event of unique interest and will reveal to the public the results of a lifetime of study and invention by Mr. MacKaye in the realm of art.

The 'Scenitorio' is in two acts, and will begin with an opening choral by forty voices entitled 'The Doors of Destiny.'

Act 1 contains nine scenes:

Scene 1--The convent of Rabida at noonday (artists, E.J. Austen and Franz Beiberstein) and the struggle of Columbus.

Scene 2--The divine vision of the world finder, at the darkest hour of his life.

Scene 3--The old monastery, as the day wanes and the meeting of destiny: chorals, 'The World Denounces Juan Perez', and 'The Future's rebuke to the World.'

Scene 4--Santa Fé in the foreground, with the Hill of Martyrs, the Alhambra and the ancient city of Granada in the middle distance, and the glaciers of Sierra Nevada mountains in the far distance, glistening in the light of the moon (artist, Franz Beiberstein).

Scene 5--Dawn and Sunrise in the historic valley.

Scene 6--The glorious day of the memorable surrender of the infidels to Christian rule: the last efforts of Columbus at the court of Spain, and the immortal act of
Isabella: chorals: 'The World's Lament at the Queen's Encouragement to an Adventurer,' and 'The Future's tribute to the Woman Whose Greatest Act Will be Remembered When Queens Have Ceased to Be.'

Scene 7--The Port of Palos, at night (artist, E.J. Austen); The special mass for the salvation of the mariners, doomed to face the perils of the awful voyage.

Scene 8--Sailing away from the old world.

Scene 9--Passing the last sight of land: chorals: 'The World's Curse of Columbus' and 'The Future's Benediction of the Dauntless Discoverer.'

The action of Act 2nd is divided into three days—days of dread, revolt, and victory. The 'dread' period illustrates the crossing of the borders of the sea of darkness, with sky, storm and clouds (artist, Walter Burridge). The incidents of this day depicted are the wreck, the maddening drought, the garden of the devil, the mysterious swell, the mirage, sunset amid the shadows of the awful sea night. The chorals are 'The Warning of the Demons', 'The Greeting of the Spirits of Light,' and 'The Gloria in Excelsis of the Crew.'

The scene on the 'revolt,' or second day is laid out in the midst of the sea of darkness:

The incidents depicted are the lost land, the crew's despair, the demand of the mariners, the reply of the old pilot, the black pall, the cyclone, the stilling of the tempest, the rainbow, the first revolt, a clear sunset in the tropic seas, the glorious constellations of the southern sky, the conspiracy, Columbus' deather [sic] warning, the deathless faith of the grand master of the sea, the strange light and night.

The chorals are: 'The Mocking of the Fiends,' 'The Prophecy of the Angels,' 'The Storm Song of the Fairies,' [sic] 'The Faith Choral of the World of Love,' 'The Rainbow Song of the Upper World,' 'Benediction of the Heavenly Voices,' 'Salve
Regina of the Crew,' 'Goading Song of the Demons,' 'The Trust Choral of the Celestial World,' and 'The Song of Light.'

The 'Victory' period opens with scene 3, an illustration of grand proportions and brilliant illumination entitled 'The End of the Magic Sea.'

Scene 4--San Salvador: the incidents depicted are: a momentous dawn, the murderers, 'Land! Land! Land!', the crews remorse, the magnanimous victor, and the new world. The chorals are: 'Despair of the World of Darkness,' 'Joy of the World of Light,' 'The Deum of the Crew' and 'The Hail of Heaven and Earth to the New World!'

Scene 5--the old inn at Valladolid, at night (artist, Franz Beiberstein).

Scene 6--The deathbed of the world-forsaken (artist, O.D. Grover).

Scene 7--Celestial Vision of a dying hero (artist, O.D. Grover) 'Lines to a Deserted Servant of Mankind' will be recited by Mr. MacKaye. The chorals will be 'Dies Irae' and 'Celestial Greeting to the World Finder.'

As performed, the opening scene of the Scenitorium show was similar to the investors' production a year earlier. In the latter, with MacKaye at a special rostrum, "reserved on the right of the proscenium," and having prepared the audience for his show, he began the play:

At a word from Mr. MacKaye all lights were turned out and the audience sat in perfect darkness. Two small doors then began to open slowly and disclose the first scene. This showed the old convent of La Rabida, with the hills and trees near it, the sandy roads leading to the convent and in the distance the mountains and Spanish sky. Along one of the roads were three crosses, such as are often seen on Spanish highways. The scene was not one on plain canvas. The convent and the hills near were all in relief and realistic [Figure 30].
This was recorded in greater detail when restaged in the Scenitorium: "The first scene in 'The World Finder' showed the convent of La Rabida. The scene which had been perfectly dark, blossomed out with a sunny landscape of Spain. As the doors, in lieu of curtain, drew back, the rocky mount on which rose the convent stood out with its glaring white walls and the red tile roof." Dovetailing this description was a newspaper account of the investors' model showing of a year earlier. This article detailed the ending: "As the first scene of La Rabida faded to blackness, there shone out from around the little proscenium arch a fringe of particolored incandescent lights in globes. This ... is a curtain of light." The next scene of the show as played at the earlier investors' model was carefully noted:

[Scene two] showed the little village near Granada, with the Alhambra on the hills beyond. Day was dawning, and the effect was marvelously real. One fairly felt the chill of the gray morning. A real breeze was blowing, and it flapped banners and bent trees very effectively. ... Here the King and Queen come to receive the Alhambra from Boabdil and his Moors, and a grand fête takes place, in which the sports and pastimes of the day are faithfully given, even the musical instruments of that time being used. ... Columbus meets the King, his proposition is rejected, the monk appeals to the Queen, and she pledges her jewels to aid the navigator.

This scene received a more detailed accounting in the press regarding its effects when staged a year later in the Scenitorium:

When the [Luxauleator] lights were again lowered the witching outline of the city of Sante Fé came into view, with palaces lit up in the foreground, while behind twinkled the lights of the watchful moslem [sic] in the minarets of the mosques in Granada. The moonlight gave way gradually to the rosy dawn and then a superb vista of city and plain, running back in the far distance to the snow-capped Sierra Nevadas, was revealed. In this scene, also, the growth of the daylight and all the effects of sun and shadow were given with extraordinary accuracy. To the scene
which succeeded this gorgeous pageant was added the mystical poetry of the ocean.887

One incident affecting the Scenitorium production was the wind machine breaking prior to curtain, thereby eliminating the wind effects. However, this missing device was employed successfully in the earlier investors' model showing. After the ships left port, the description of the wind machinery picked up:

Passing the old lighthouse, the town disappears ... the caravels sail a seemingly trackless expanse of water. Then night, stars, then all again darkness. Another sunrise ... the caravels becalmed in the tropics. ... Suddenly a storm—tremendous even in the model. The waves dash high; darkness; the caravels become separated. Then the clouds break ... and the rainbow! ... At last dawns the great day; land is sighted: the three caravels ride safely at anchor in the New World ... the meeting with the savages, and the planting of the Cross.888

Reviews of the early investors' show and the Scenitorium production often failed to move beyond descriptions of the opening scenes. Typical of most accounts, one newspaper—while aiding in the description of the wind machine as employed in the investors' model—lost interest in discussing the later scenes:

Hearty applause greeted Mr. MacKaye when the first scene was in full view.

Twilight, dawn, midday, storms and rain were represented in this and succeeding scenes. The canvas on the three ships of Columbus filled with the wind that rocked the vessels from Palos to the arrival of the new world. The other scenes given were the vision of Columbus, a street in Granada, Palos harbor, ships leaving Palos, on midocean, the storm, and arrival at San Salvador [Figures 32-37].889

Such reviews clearly detailed how MacKaye's inventions helped him to achieve his aesthetic goals.
Nearly equal in importance to the spectacles of nature reproduced on stage, and offering narrative and atmospheric support, was the musical component of the project. MacKaye's emphasis on spectacles of nature made him interested in other artistic elements that could support his representations. In writing of his need to give "the natural effects a grand and magnificent frame" (as one would a painting) he stated that he found such support in music. He noted that "all these effects, [created visually on stage] with the various moods of mind which they excite in the breast of the poet, might be celebrated by symphonic and glorious song." To this end MacKaye developed an enormously complex system of music which was to lend strong aural support to the stage pictures. He unveiled this system at the initial investors' model whereat most reporters transcribed his detailed explanation. MacKaye announced:

There are three species of music employed in the spectatorium. First, the symphonic, which follows all the cosmic changes of the scenes and all the dramatic action of the story, interpreting the sentimental mood and meaning of each change. Second, the incidental music. This occurs in the scenes themselves and forms a part of the incident of the story, illustrating with instruments of the time the music of the age and forming merely an archeological exhibit in musical art. Third, choral music. In a spectatorium this form is an adaptation of the old idea of the Greek chorus very much enlarged in its scope and character by its association with the modern scene. For the purpose of the spectatorium the chorus is divided into two sections. One of these sections, composed entirely of male voices and located in the spectatorium proper, or the audience chamber of the building, in plain sight of the public represents the visible or material world, and gives expression to the sentiment of that world toward the historic events which transpire during the progress of the story. The other section, located in the scenitorium behind the scenes, is invisible and represents the mystic or ideal world. It is composed of male and female voices.
and reveals the ideal view of the human story. When any great historic event has reached its climactic expression in the scene, the choruses celebrate that event—the chorus of the spectatorium from the material, and the chorus of the scenitorium from the ideal point of view. During the progress of the story the invisible chorus performs also another function. At the climax of a scene, it interprets the ideal value of the human act presented by the scenic picture, but during the progress of the story the spiritual contentions which are supposed to be going on among the dramatis personae are suggested to the public by the voices of the invisible chorus. To accomplish this, the mystic chorus is again divided into two sections [,] one composed entirely of male voices giving expression to the demoniac idea, while the other, composed entirely of female voices, expresses the divine idea. As for instance, during the voyage of Columbus, when the great navigator encounters, with his crew, the meteors, the storms, the mirage, the alternations of hope and fear, which ultimately bred despair in the sailors, the voices of the invisible chorus celebrate the different emotions which pervade the breast of Columbus and those of his crew.

During the storm the demoniac chorus sings the songs of superstitious terror to the sailors, and they, hearing it, seek Columbus and beseech him to listen, but his ears are deaf to the songs of fear. As the diabolic song dies away into the darkness of the storm—the divine chorus is heard singing the inspiring song of hope and faith to Columbus. This song he hears, and, seeking his crew beseeches them to listen; but they, in their turn, are inaccessible to the song of hope, illustrating a great spiritual truth, namely, that every heart hears only that song which is akin to its own character—the coward that of fear upon the slightest pretext; the brave man that of hope, even in the presence of the most discouraging circumstances. This is only
one of the many instances illustrating the spiritual use of the chorus and suggesting the spiritual value of this order of entertainment. 891

MacKaye's original plan for a four hundred person chorus at the Spectatorium was in keeping with a popular style of music recital of the period in which large singing groups were the major attraction. Writing in 1889, Boucicault recalled attending concerts (possibly oratorios) featuring five hundred person choruses accompanied by one hundred fifty piece orchestras at the Crystal Palace "many years ago." 892 Clearly, MacKaye's chorus was an extension of such earlier entertainments, and its size was a foreseeable necessity if such a large building was to be filled with song.

A number of aspects surrounding the musical component of the production involved noted musicians of the period. For the symphonic music, MacKaye commissioned Anton Dvořák to write a piece for the Spectatorium production. When the project failed Dvořák kept his research material and later used it in his New World Symphony, the title clearly inspired by Columbus. Correspondingly, Anton Seidl, who was hired to conduct the Spectatorium orchestra for its intended opening in May 1893, seven months later conducted Dvořák's New World Symphony when it premiered. 893 Murray Nelson recalled that another musical component of the original production was "a very large specially designed organ to be played by Frederick Archer, a musician of note and [which was to be supported] by an orchestra of 80 musicians under the direction of Anton Seidl. The music was selected and adapted by Archer and Dvorčk [sic] who wrote considerable music particularly for this production." 894 Such an organ was seen to be necessary to supply a full sound in the enormous space of the planned building. As with MacKaye's painstaking attention to scenic detail, the exacting nature of the production extended to the smallest musical event. Archer was sent to Spain to find indigenous folk music to be the basis for incidental motifs, and some instruments were built from scratch. 895 The souvenir "Spectatorium Magazine" (only one "dummy" paste-up was ever
made) highlighted this: "Not only will old instruments ... be seen, but their tonal resources will be made manifest, as well as the method of their employment by the troubadours." Murray Nelson's recollection added to this claim: "As a minor illustration of the care and expense devoted to this production, the stage musical instruments were not dummy but practical and were manufactured by an old German instrument maker [Joseph Bohman] in Chicago from original Italian and Spanish drawings in Newberry Library." One major difference between the performance of the investors' model and the Scenitorium production was that in the interim MacKaye completed the choral score. This allowed for greater musical support in the latter production than had been available with the lone piano played at the first showing. One review of the investors' model remarked that "The singing, of course, was missing," although another mentioned that "neither music nor actors were needed; for Steele MacKaye described the action of each scene." Conversely, at the Scenitorium production, the choral music fully supported the show. While an earlier review of the investors' model was simple ("The second act opens with dawn, at Palos, the three caravels riding at anchor. The sailors depart ... a wonderful panorama") many Scenitorium reviews were more detailed, possibly, in part, because of the inclusion of music. Specifically, they often highlighted the way the chorals filled in the atmosphere of the scene: "It is the little town of Palos, and at first we can only see the lights in the church upon the hill and some houses on the shore. From the church comes the glorious melody of a Gregorian mass, which mingle strangely ever and anon with the boisterous songs of some of Columbus' sailors drowning their fears before the awful voyage begins on the morrow." Various other musical interludes inserted throughout the Scenitorium production supported specific points according to MacKaye: "Many of these chorals will take their cues from the portions of dialogue, read by me, and I hope, by this combination of marvelous mechanism, dramatic recitation, and music, to achieve results both popular and impressive." While some reviews of the Scenitorium
production made almost no mention of music, overall its effect was strongly received: "[T]he chorus, organ, and orchestra lent their potent though invisible aid in making poetry of the play. ... Many of the numbers have the form of Gregorian church music." 902 Not numbering four hundred members as envisioned for the Spectatorium production (because of the obvious space restrictions in the Scenitorium) a more modest forty persons gave the chorus voice. 903 In one letter detailing the choral music which accompanied the opening of the Scenitorium show along with the slow moving doors, MacKaye stated: "You will notice that these chorals are not Christian or Semitic in character, nor even yet distinctly pagan. ... The music associated with these door-chorals is Greek in character, and is quite different from all the music associated with the Catholic or Christian story, which is presented between these chorals." 904 In performance at the Scenitorium, the chorus' function was much simpler than MacKaye had planned for the Spectatorium show. One reporter of a "Press View" held before the Scenitorium premiere noted the changes:

The orchestra and choruses are concealed from sight, and occupy changeable positions back of the scene, according to the varying demands of the representation. ... The music is rendered by an invisible chorus with orchestral support, the chorus being divided into two sections—the 'Chorus of Time' and the 'Chorus of Eternity.' ... These choruses are easily distinguishable, because the chorals expressing the views of Time have no instrumental accompaniment, while the chorals revealing the spiritual sentiments of the Eternal world are always sung with instrumental accompaniment. 905

MacKaye, in composing the libretto for many of the chorals himself, left it up to Archer to supply the music. One song MacKaye wrote, the "Trust Choral," went as follows:

To all true souls, who trust and wait,

God's will a strength doth lend
To meet life's test, however great
Its power to break or bend.
So blest are those whose trust, steadfast,
Outlives the storm and night,
For they will surely see at last
The triumph of the right.\textsuperscript{906}

This was given to Archer to set to music with MacKaye explaining the desired effect: "This choral is sung at night, when the stars are shining serenely in the heavens, just after Columbus has been warned by his friends that his life is in danger.—I shall be gratified if you will compose music expressing the celestial calm, peace and strength of this moment."\textsuperscript{907} Reviews of the Scenitorium production make it clear that Archer succeeded in obtaining MacKaye's musical wishes: "[T]here is a great deal of choral work for which Mr. Frederick Archer has composed music of much power, dignity and originality, and this is sung by fine choruses of male and female voices, and makes one of the most enjoyable of the aesthetic features of the work considered as a whole."\textsuperscript{908}

The Scenitorium's favorable reviews fueled newspaper speculation concerning the failed Spectatorium's full-sized capabilities: "But the atmospheric system, telescopic slides and proscenium adjuster are such invaluable additions to the science of stage realism that a visit to the Scenitorium results in the supreme regret that MacKaye might not have succeeded in the complete construction of his monster model theatre and Spectatorium."\textsuperscript{909} Indeed, the Scenitorium's small size, along with many other factors (e.g., the narration in place of acted dialogue) prompted reviewers to stress the "picture"-like appeal of the theatre in their positive assessments. Upon the opening of the Scenitorium, \textit{The Chicago Times} wrote:

... it can be cheerfully admitted that ... Mr. MacKaye's wonderful handling of stage illuminating—a department in which his inventions seem certain to work a
revolution—to justify all the claims made for the exhibition. ... One thing is certain: Mr. MacKaye has shown the world something new, startling, and beautiful in stage scenic effects. There are in his scenitorium pictures of wondrous charm, approaching so closely to perfect realism as to challenge nature herself. ... The audience showed a most commendable spirit of sympathy and Mr. MacKaye was evidently much cheered [from his dire illness] by the loud applause which continually greeted the evolution of the pictorial drama.\textsuperscript{910}

To a certain degree, some charity may have been given the show due to MacKaye's failing health, a concern brought to the attention of all attendees who witnessed MacKaye's nightly entrance when he "was supported to his chair his feebleness made it necessary for him to occupy."\textsuperscript{911} Clearly, reporters took into account the personal energy necessarily expended by MacKaye to see his failed project mounted in a diminished fashion. The Chicago Herald duly noted: "For three days and three nights preceding the opening of his Scenitorium, Steele MacKaye lay upon a couch in the theatre, and directed the details of the production. His diet was milk, occasionally with a cracker."\textsuperscript{912} The reporter for the Chicago Tribune did not share the benevolent viewpoint of the majority of the reviewers. His assessment of the Scenitorium, as a coda to the larger project of the Spectatorium, was less than charitable:

It is, of course, only a model that is now given on Michigan avenue of the massive entertainment originally intended for the World's Columbian Exposition. But one cannot help feeling that even if the first plan had been carried out it would have been a stupendous failure. The underlying idea of 'The World Finder' is an overstraining of realism which is radically a violation of the nature of the laws of artistic illusion. Mr. MacKaye aimed to enlarge the limitations of the stage and has not succeeded except in perfecting certain electrical devices which are of incidental but not of essential value to theatrical art. He was radically wrong, one thinks, in giving
fats instead of ideas to the people—a lower mission than the bare boards of Shakespeare's time possessed. He aimed in scenic investiture to offer realities as far as possible instead of the imitation of them, yet the pleasure and value of theatrical illusion lie principally in the perception of the imitation. The office of theatrical art is to excite the imagination by suggestion, not to smother it with facts. He tried to combine several arts, but in combining them weakened in a measure every one.  

This review was by far one of the harshest which MacKaye's Scenitorium show received. A more typical and complimentary assessment came from the Chicago Inter-Ocean which noted the effectiveness of his night-time sky:

Had there been nothing else last night to command the approbation of the audience than the scene in the second act showing, first, a clear sunset in the tropic seas, followed by the softening into the entrancing blue of an evening sky, and then the manifestation of the glorious constellations of the Southern sky, Mr. MacKaye would be entitled to the highest praise for the practical and artistic value of an invention that could produce such marvelous results in scenic development.

Influenced by the successful effects achieved in The Drama of Civilization, MacKaye structured this production to use strongly contrasting lighting situations. This was initiated at the start of the show, wherein he blackened the entire auditorium to open the proscenium doors and approximate the slow rise of the morning sun in Spain. Indeed, this emphasis on contrast lighting found its way into the reviews of the Scenitorium production: "While Mr. MacKaye related the story of Columbus' arrival at the convent, and the chorus out of sight chanted sonorous music, the day progressed from noon to sunset, and the shadows lengthened till darkness hid the scene. The passage of the sun was perfectly simulated." This slowly changing atmospheric lighting was firmly contrasted by the illumination of the succeeding scene which employed quick and brilliant lighting for dramatic variation and effect: "A beautiful incident was the celestial vision which illumined
[sic] the darkest hour in Columbus' struggle at this point. The sky was suddenly darkened, and then from it burst a great congregation of angels, and Christ was seen amid a number of the world's rejected pointing to the earth floating in space with the western hemisphere dimly outlined." Some critics recognized MacKaye's mastery of electrical light in the employment of pictorial illusion. One newspaper celebrated his work by declaring: "Mr. MacKaye is the first artistic scientist who has been able to so control electric lighting that he can give to stage views all the verisimilitude of night and day in his contrasted scenes, having every gradation as perfectly and as imperceptibly made as if it were the very method of nature." Clearly, MacKaye accomplished his defunct project's goal of the representation of transient nature on stage, and in so doing proved its artistic value.

The Scenitorium production of The World Finder opened February 5th, 1894, and slowly developed an audience in the following weeks. By February 11th, "the public ... [had] begun to find its way to the Scenitorium in paying numbers." Unfortunately, as the production was being refined during this period, MacKaye's health steadily declined. He was forced to stop delivering the play's lecture on February 13th due to illness, though the show continued until his death on February 25th, 1894. Ironically, it was on the last day that MacKaye personally narrated the play that he received the "only income from a performance of The World Finder—$13.23." MacKaye had, however, drawn a generous stipend over the three years of the entire project, which was substantial enough to support his family.

The failed Spectatorium and the fully-realized Scenitorium production were conceived and executed around the Chicago World's Fair celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of Columbus' voyage to America. Motivated by this celebration, the Spectatorium attempted a theatrical recreation of Columbus' original voyage, hoping to capitalize on interest generated by the Fair. However, the Fair began in May, and ran until October 1893. The Spectatorium had been intended to open May 1893, but was pushed
back to July before its collapse. The Scenitorium theatre did not open until the following
February. During the period of the Fair, twenty-seven million people passed through
Chicago in celebration of Columbus' voyage. By the time the Scenitorium opened in
February 1894, public interest in Columbus had worn a bit thin:

It is indeed Mr. MacKaye's tragic misfortune that, after nearly a year's delay in his
production, just at this ribald and gorged moment, America is satiated with the great
discoverer.—This ungrateful state of sentiment is very human and will probably
interfere with the financial reward for Mr. MacKaye's superb contribution to
discoveries in the aggregate as splendid as the opening up of a new world.921

The Scenitorium came too late to capture the great public interest needed to keep it afloat.

Other forms of entertainment in Chicago at the time of the Fair took advantage of
the assembled crowds, and suggest the possible financial outcome for a timely
Scenitorium. Of the great number of amusements that came to Chicago and set up outside
the gates of the Fair to entertain the millions of tourists, one in particular had close ties with
MacKaye, while having no specific bonds to the Columbus theme of the Fair. William
Cody and Nate Salsbury, still touring the Wild West show in which MacKaye had been
instrumental, "capitalized on the adulation ... [they] won in Europe ... [at] the 1893
World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago."922 Over six million people attended Cody's
show in Chicago, garnering for his production gate receipts of over one million dollars.923
Cody evidently realized the phenomenal success which MacKaye himself had dreamed of
for his Spectatorium. Similarly, other large-scale attractions around the Fair suggest the
tremendous opportunity lost by MacKaye. All around Chicago in the summer of 1893,
fairgoers could visit a wide variety of panoramas: "On Wabash Avenue at Hubbard Court
one could see the [Philippoteaux] battle of Gettysburg panorama and directly opposite it the
panorama of Niagara Falls. At Michigan and Madison was the Chicago Fire Panorama.
(The Midway Plaisance boasted two panoramas: one of Kilauea [Volcano] and one of the
Panoramas were not the only entertainments that took advantage of the tourist population, and in particular, the Columbus theme. At the same time, Imre Kiralfy produced a play involving Columbus on a monstrous scale, appropriately titled the "Grand Historical Spectacular Masterpiece America." This play was similar in its structure to that which MacKaye had promised. Soon after the Fair closed Kiralfy moved this play to New York:

*America*, transferred from Chicago to our Metropolitan Opera House, and produced before an immense audience ... is a Kiralfy spectacle, in four Acts, interspersed with singing and ballets. New Yorkers have seen something like it before in the Kiralfy shows ... but never upon so grand a scale, with such gorgeous accessories and palatial surroundings. The scenes depict the departure of Columbus from Huelva; his voyage to San Salvador and return to Spain; the Plymouth Plantation in 1621; Washington crossing the Delaware and the British surrender at Yorktown. There are ballets of Peace, War, Progress and American inventions. The famous Schaffer family juggle and acrobat. In the Temple of Peace, about five hundred radiantly attired ladies crowd the vast stage. ... Nothing is neglected which can appeal to American pride, patriotism and sentiment, and the response of the public is on as liberal a scale as the performance. New York likes big shows, and this is the biggest ever presented.

In an environment which had already been the scene of such tremendous scale, with a Columbus-satiated crowd, MacKaye's Scenitorium was not favorably situated, no matter how attractive or novel the production he offered. Unlike the situation fifteen years earlier, when the delay in opening the renovated Madison Square Theatre created much audience anticipation, and ended in general success, this was not the case with the Scenitorium. Too many factors outside of MacKaye's control affected the public interest and response to the project. Opening the Scenitorium at such a time with a show about
Columbus was a risk MacKaye took because he had no alternative. Not only was his financial name on the line due to the large debt tied up with the failed Spectatorium, but more importantly, his artistic reputation and the goals encompassed in this venture were being sharply questioned by the public. As he indicated in a letter written a number of days before the Scenitorium opened, MacKaye clearly realized this:

I am about to face the most terrible emergency of my life upon the success of which depends my entire future, and probably my physical fate. I am about to make a production which I, at one time, hoped would vindicate me as an artist before this community. ... I can only present a very partial and a very imperfect picture, and make a very faint suggestion of the production with which I had hoped to celebrate the great historic event commemorated by the Exposition during the season of the World's Fair.

The tremendous challenge that the new form of entertainment offered the public was widely recognized in the press. "Whether [the Scenitorium's production of] The World Finder will inaugurate a new era of public amusement remains to be seen. It is doubtful. Daring as is the conception and elaborate as is the execution of it, the probability is that Mr. MacKaye's efforts will not be imitated often, if at all," declared one writer. A different reviewer was more exacting in his assessment:

... there is nothing in his wonder-children of color, force and atomysis to promise financial return for so much weighty invention; He would have bored thousands to enlighten a few and quite a huge loser from the speculation, but it is inspiring to find one man in the theatricals who devotes himself in all his splendid mental equipment for the aggrandizement of a profession which, though so closely knit with art and mechanical science, is for the greater part content to offer abortive music, contumacious wit, cheap spectacle and heinous contortion of dramatic art for money that any public would spend illicitly than in the gentle persuasion of beauty,
truth and the proofs of heaven's beneficence to man. Cultured people will enjoy the Scenitario; the vulgar will not understand it; but MacKaye's extraordinary gifts to invention are revealed and perpetuated in the little theatre where his genius has imprisoned its most electric results and bade the soberer hosts of seekers for diversion and improvement to behold.930

Despite being scaled down, MacKaye's innovative entertainment opened to reviews that clearly acknowledged the artistic success of his play and his impressive ability to stage full-scale picture-perfect illusions of nature. With this last project Steele MacKaye clearly offered a highly interesting practical response to the changing aesthetics of late nineteenth-century theatre. One critic writing four years before MacKaye's death concisely defined this shift:

In our day the art has to work in space of three dimensions; it has ceased to be pictorial and has become plastic. The back-drop has been superseded by the solid set, the scene painter by the scene-sculptor, or rather, modeler. And the more you multiply the solid elements of your scene, the nearer you get to abolishing your backdrop, for the simple reason that where the two are in juxtaposition there you get the contrast of true and false perspective ....931

MacKaye clearly recognized this situation, and insisted on retaining his background. Rejecting the limited available pictorial scope of standard theatres in this period, MacKaye increased the size of the back cyclorama as the perspective demanded. He knew there was no need to abolish the picturesque features of the stage. If the theatrical space was made large enough there would be no false perspective, as the entire picture stage would be composed of solid, and mostly actual, elements; ranging from the actors to rivers, ships, and storms. MacKaye used all of his training and experience to become a true scenic sculptor: forming all elements of the stage (including space) on the same scale. In his hands, pictorial illusion, so popular from early in the century was taken to its limit. Full-
size, actual backgrounds supported the actors moving through the stage space, and became instrumental in creating the reality of the events on stage. As Martin Meisel succinctly observes: "Where the theatre could reconstruct the playing space to conform with real space, built to scale and solidly furnished, problems of perspective and even of composition nearly evaporate."932 The Spectatorium production, as witnessed in its scaled-down versions, achieved this. However, in striving towards the goal of placing an absolute recreation of nature on stage, MacKaye ultimately attempted the impossible. This realization seems to have struck him a month before his death when he started investigating the possibility of writing a novel. In expressing his interest for this artistic medium, he noted to a friend the difference he saw between theatre and the written word. "The picture presented by the novelist," MacKaye noted, "is perfect because it is conveyed direct from the printed page to the reader's imagination; but the dramatist's picture can only reach his audience through the medium of mechanical effects and the impersonation of characters which are always imperfect."933 MacKaye clearly recognized the impossibility of completely transferring the actual onto the stage and acknowledged that no matter how close his stage pictures got to re-creating reality, they would always remain "imperfect" presentations of living reality. Yet as he set out to explore new avenues of expression, his fundamental artistic ideals remained essentially unchanged. In a eulogy 934 for MacKaye one associate eloquently summed up MacKaye's singular dedication to his art:

    He went without sleep and food that he might make a sunrise and a sunset and might make the sea roll and ships sail for us and our children. Nature was so sublime he wished to paint it as never artist had painted it. He wanted to bring nature up close to the human heart. His dream was to surpass the words of literature and the brush of the painters.

With the visions created in the Scenitorium MacKaye completed his quest.
Chapter One Notes


2 Throughout this assessment of Steele MacKaye, it is necessary to go into some biographical detail to most fully understand the development of his craft. The different spelling of Steele MacKaye’s last name and his father’s, McKay, occurred because Steele returned to the ancestral spelling of the family name and in doing so convinced his siblings, and eventually his father, to follow suit. See Percy MacKaye’s expansive and frequently biased biography on MacKaye, Epoch: The Life of Steele MacKaye. Genius of the Theatre, In Relation to His Times and Contemporaries, 2 vols., (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1927; Rpt. Grosse Pointe, Michigan: Scholarly Press, 1968), specifically Epoch I: 53.

3 Epoch I:102.

4 Adeline Wellington Homer, letter to Percy MacKaye, (1924), as cited in Epoch I: 35.

5 Prof. S.S. Curry, letter to Percy MacKaye, (1916), as cited in Epoch I: 73.

6 Epoch I: 73.

7 Mary Medberry MacKaye, letter to Percy MacKaye, (1911), as cited in Epoch I: 89.

8 Mary Medberry MacKaye, letter to Percy MacKaye, (1911), as cited in Epoch I: 89.

9 This sketch by Inness is reproduced in Epoch I: plate 14, opposite 75.


13 Guthrie 161.

14 Steele MacKaye, interviewed, unreferenced newspaper article, (December, 1885), as cited in Epoch II: 61.

16 Steele MacKaye, unmarked notebook, (1865), as cited in *Epoch I* 119.

17 See *Epoch I* 121.


21 Charles S.P. Bowes, letter to Steele MacKaye, (1867), as cited in *Epoch I* 120.

22 *Epoch I* 122.


24 *Epoch I* 123.

25 *Epoch I* 124.

26 Steele MacKaye, Photosculpture Prospectus, as cited in *Epoch II*: Appendix xxxix, ix.


28 Guthrie 161.


30 *Epoch I* 124.

31 Steele MacKaye, letter to Dr. William Rimmer, (29 August 1868), as cited in *Epoch I* 124.
32 Epoch I: 125.
33 Epoch I: 79-80.

34 Steele MacKaye, "Expression in Nature and Expression in Art," *The Voice*, ix, (April, 1887), 49-50, as cited in Susan Eaker, "Steele and Percy MacKaye: Their Theories and Practice in the Theatre," master's thesis, Cornell University, 1940, 19. This stance was integral to MacKaye's artistic beliefs and he held this view until a month before his death wherein he replaced this position with one that favored the verbal over the visual; a position taken up when he considered writing a novel.

35 Sadie MacKaye, personal diary entry, (2 February 1860), as cited in *Epoch I*: 80.
36 Sadie MacKaye, personal diary entry, (10 October 1860), as cited in *Epoch I*: 82.
37 Sadie MacKaye, personal diary entry, (20 November 1860), as cited in *Epoch I*: 83.
38 *Epoch I*: 96.
41 *Epoch I*: 91.
42 Steele MacKaye, unreferenced notebook, (1861), as cited in *Epoch I*: 91.
44 Steele MacKaye, unreferenced notebook, (1862), as cited in *Epoch I*: 92.

48 *Epoch I*: 95.
49 Box 17, Folder 5, D.C.L.


Epoch I: 129.


Colonel McKay, letter to Steele MacKaye, (spring, 1869), as cited in Epoch I: 131.


Cole and Chinoy 187.

Cole and Chinoy 187.


"Physiognomy" is the "art or practice of judging character from facial features," (Collins Dictionary, 2nd. ed.). This is not to be mistaken with "physiology," which is the study of the functioning of an "organism" (Collins Dictionary, 2nd. ed.).

See Eaker 14.


Numerous books based on Delsarte's work were published in Europe and America over an extended time. Some of the more important and curious ones were: Genevieve Stebbins, The Delsarte System of Expression, (New York: Edgar S. Werner, 1885); Angeline Arnaud, Delsarte System of Oratory, trans. Abby L. Alger, 3rd. ed. (New York: Edgar S. Werner, 1887); Samuel Silas Curry, Province of Expression, (Boston: School of Expression, 1891); Charles Wesley Emerson, Evolution of Expression, I, 29th ed. (Boston: Emerson College of Oratory, 1913); Edward Warman, Gestures and Attitudes: An Exposition of the Delsarte Philosophy of Expression: Practical and Theoretical, (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1892); J.W. Shoemaker, Delsartean Pantomimes: With Recital and Musical Accompaniment: Designed for Home, School, and Church Entertainments, (Philadelphia: Penn Publishing Co., 1891); Robert D. Blackman, ed., Voice, Speech and Gesture: A Practical Handbook to the Elocutionary Art, (Edinburgh:
John Grant, 1908; T.E. Hamel, *Cours D’Éloquence Parlé D’après Delsarte*, (Quebec: Mathieu, 1906).

63 Lee Strasberg, as cited in Cole and Chinoy 187.

64 Steele MacKaye, biographical interview, (December, 1879), unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 109, D.C.L..

65 Booth, *Victorian Age* 120.

66 Booth, *Victorian Age* 120. Emphasis added.

67 Zorn 6. See also Morris v.

68 Shaver 51.


70 Shaver 41.

71 Shaver 41.


73 Steele MacKaye, "Sources of Expression: 1862," unmarked personal notebook, (7 February 1862), as cited in *Epoch* I: 92. Emphasis added. Clearly MacKaye saw the need for the actor to remain dignified and beautiful; an acting ideal most prominent earlier in the century.


75 Cicero, "De Oratore," (55 B.C.) as taken from *Cicero on Oratory and Orators*, trans. J.S. Watson, (London: George Bell and Sons, 1876), selected passages, as cited in Cole and Chinoy 23.

76 Marker 185.


80 Steele MacKaye, biographical interview, (December, 1879), unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 109, D.C.L. Emphasis added.


82 Steele MacKaye, Lecture 1, (10 January 1877), "Delsarte and His Philosophy of Expression," as cited in Morris 55. Such aesthetic concerns were placed into practice in MacKaye's later work. See his handling of the cyclone sequence in *The Drama of Civilization*.

83 Eaker 97.


87 Eaker 97.

88 Steele MacKaye, a transcription of one of his Delsarte lectures, "Dramatic Expression," (April, 1871), unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, D.C.L.

89 Steele MacKaye, unreferenced lecture notes (possibly 1877), as cited in Morris 103. This approach is still the subject of current actor training theory. See Phyllis G. Richmond, and Bill Lengfelder, "The Alexander Technique, T'ai Chi Ch'uan, and Stage Combat: The Integration of Use, Somatics, and Skills in the Teaching of Stage Movement," *Theatre Topics*, vol. 5, no. 2, (September, 1995), 167-179.


93 Steele MacKaye, letter to Mary Medberry MacKaye, (11 April 1892), as cited in Epoch II: 270-271. Emphasis added. The article resulting from this correspondence was: Mrs. Steele MacKaye, "Steele MacKaye and François Delsarte: A Letter Outlining Their Personal and Professional Relations," Werner's Voice Magazine, 14, (July, 1892), 187-189. This provides a strong summary of the general criticisms leveled at MacKaye concerning Delsarte's original teachings.


95 François Delsarte, as related by M. L'Abbe Delaumosne, "The Delsarte System According to His Most Famous Pupil," as cited in Zorn 168.

96 Mary Medberry MacKaye, lecture given to the "S.S. Curry School of Expression," (November, 1898), as cited in Epoch I: 136.

97 François Delsarte, letter to Steele MacKaye, (spring, 1870), as cited in Epoch I: 141. Also cited in McTeague 3.

98 "From a pamphlet proof," advertising MacKaye's School of Expression from the "Stray Notes of MacKaye," as cited in Morris 2. Emphasis hers.

99 Steele MacKaye, biographical interview, (December, 1879), unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 109, D.C.L.

100 Curry 18.


102 William Gaston, Mayor of Boston, letter to Steele MacKaye, (13 March 1871), as cited in Epoch I: 149-150.

103 E.P. Whipple, Boston Transcript, (22 March 1871), as cited in Epoch I: 151.


106 "Delsarte and the Science of Dramatic Expression," Boston Daily Advertiser, (24 March 1871), unmarked scrapbook, D.C.L. Emphasis added. This was incorrectly cited as The Boston Advertiser, (22 March 1871), in Epoch I: 152.

108 Epoch I: 152.


112 Mme. Geraldy, "The Course of Lessons Given in America by Mme. Geraldy [n.d.]," as cited in Zorn 122-123. The terms inside the square brackets are the expressions for these combinations as publicly taught by another student of Delsarte. See François Delsarte, as related by M. L'Abbe Delaumosne, "The Delsarte System According to His Most Famous Pupil" as cited in Zorn 174.

113 Steele MacKaye, Lecture 18, (21 February 1877), as cited in Morris 86.


117 The Harvard Advocate, (28 April 1871), vol. xi, no. 6, 82, as cited in Epoch I: 155.

118 "Introduction," Zorn 5.


120 Collins Dictionary, 2nd. ed..

121 "MacKaye's Lecture of Delsarte," (April, 1871), unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, D.C.L..

122 V.A.P. Barnard, President of Columbia College, letter to Steele MacKaye, (April, 1871), as cited in Epoch I: 158.


James Redpath, circular letters, Boston, (24 August 1874), as cited in Epoch I: 231. Also cited in Morris 11. The general sequence of MacKaye's Delsartean lectures included the following: 21 March 1871, St. James Hotel, Boston; two more lectures at this time, Tremont Temple, Boston; 18 April 1871, Lotos Club, New York City; 21 April 1871, Massachusetts Hall, Harvard College; Steinway Hall, New York City, twice in April, 1871, then 8 May, and 19 December 1871; Brooklyn 1871; 1874, twenty lectures in Boston, extensive tours from Maine through to Pennsylvania over several months; 1878, series of twelve lectures for the Boston School of Oratory (see Epoch I: 156, 231); 1885, from December to February, 1886, a series of lecture tours through Ithica, Utica, Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse. (See Epoch II: 59-60, and Morris 9, 11.)

The Rochester Democrat, (8 December 1885) as cited in Epoch II: 59. Also cited in Morris 13.

The Ithaca Journal, (12 December 1885), as cited in Eaker 23.


Steele MacKaye, biographical interview, (December, 1879) unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 109, D.C.L.


See McTeague 1.

Steele MacKaye, biographical interview, (December, 1879) unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 109, D.C.L. Emphasis added.

See New York Dramatic Times, (7 February 1885), unmarked scrapbook, D.C.L.


Unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, D.C.L.

138 See McTeague 45.


140 George Melville Baker, Forty Minutes With a Crank, or The Seldarte Craze, (1876), (Boston: Walter H. Baker, 1889), 3-4. It is unclear in the 1889 reprint if the name of Minnie Moneybags was a lampoon of the actress Minnie Maddern (Fiske), (1865-1932), who made her spectacular debut on the New York stage with MacKaye in his version of Sardou's Andrea, (1873), titled, In Spite of All, (1885). Potentially influenced by her early study with MacKaye, Minnie Maddern Fiske later championed the "science of acting." See Mrs. Minnie Maddern Fiske, Her Views on Actors, Acting and the Problems of Production; as told to Alexander Wolcott, (New York: Century, 1917), 76-89, as cited in Cole and Chinoy 585.


143 N.Y. Times and Messenger, (14 January 1872), as cited in Epoch I: 168.


148 Steele MacKaye, biographical interview, (December, 1879) unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 109, D.C.L.

149 François Joseph Régnier, letter to Steele MacKaye, (October, 1872), as cited in Epoch I: 185.


152 Shaver 51-52, as cited in McTeague 7-8.


154 Steele MacKaye, "Study for the role of Richard III," Box 36, Folder 21-8, D.C.L.


159 See "Delsarte and the Science of Dramatic Expression," Boston Daily Advertiser, (March 24, 1871), unmarked scrapbook, D.C.L.


163 Steele MacKaye, biographical interview, (December, 1879), unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 109, D.C.L.
164 Steele MacKaye, interview, unreferenced newspaper, (December, 1879), as cited in *Epoch I*: 215.

165 Steele MacKaye, interview, unreferenced newspaper, (December, 1879), as cited in *Epoch I*: 215.

166 Tom Taylor, testimonial document of co-ownership, signed before the U.S.A. Consulate General, (24 January 1874), as cited in *Epoch II*: Appendix xliii.


170 Eaker 18.


173 An unreferenced local review mentioned in Steele MacKaye, letter to Mary Medberry MacKaye, (9 July 1873), as cited in Epoch I: 211.


175 Boston Courier, (16 December 1888), as cited in Vardac 144. Emphasis added.


178 The Era, (3 November 1888), as cited in Downer 550.

179 Percy Fitzgerald, The World Behind the Scenes, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1881), 157. Emphasis his. Such actions were in keeping with the acting belief that a character's gestures usually precede their speech; an idea evidently employed on the stage by French actors. For more information on the French style of acting in this period see: George Henry Lewes, On Actors and the Art of Acting, (London: n.p., 1875), specifically 116. Also see Downer 549, 551.

180 New York Times, (26 February 1894), Box 141, Folder 10, D.C.L.


Chapter Two Notes


was caused by lower-class audiences, who felt their access to the new opera house was denied because of their socio-economic situation. See John Kasson, *Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1990), 222-228.


187 McConachie 242.


189 The popularity of English adaptations of French plays in the 1870s was discussed by Percy Fitzgerald who published a five page list of English plays and their original French titles. He stressed that most of the contemporary plays on stage in England had French origins. See Percy Fitzgerald, *The World Behind the Scenes*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1881), 290-295.


191 These were: *Marriage* (1872) adapted by Steele MacKaye from Octave Feuillet's, *Julie*; *Rose Michel* (1875) adapted by Steele MacKaye from Ernest Blum's, *Rose Michel*; *Queen and Woman* (1876) adapted by Steele MacKaye from Victor Hugo; *The Danicheffs* (1877) adapted by Steele MacKaye, from the French. Later plays also adapted from the French by MacKaye included: *Dakolar* (1885) adapted by Steele MacKaye from Georges Ohnet's, *Le Maître de Forges; In Spite of All* (1885) adapted by Steele MacKaye from Sardou's *Andrea*. See "A Chronological List of the Dramatic Works of Steele MacKaye," as cited in *Epoch* II: xvi, xvii.


193 The plays were MacKaye's *Monaldi*, and his adaptation of Octave Feuillet's, *Julie*, which he titled, *Marriage*.

194 Steele MacKaye, biographical interview, (December, 1879), unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 109, D.C.L..


198 Seven years earlier, MacKaye exploited Daly's reputation. In 1872 while Daly's sensationally titled *Divorce* was packing in crowds to see the depiction of this rarely discussed social rupture on stage, MacKaye played *Marriage* across town to strong effect. That *Marriage* was an adaptation of Feuillet's *Julie*, supports the obvious publicity tactic by MacKaye of retitling the play to be noticed by the Daly audience. Thus, *Divorce* played at an established theatre, while *Marriage* opened at a fledgling theatre. No doubt it was extremely enticing for MacKaye seven years later to have the opportunity to obtain and run a theatre on the site where Daly had created some of his most important early work. See *Epoch I*: 175.


201 Mary Medberry MacKaye, letter to Steele MacKaye, (1 April 1879), as cited in *Epoch I*: 299.

202 *Spirit of the Times*, (2 April 1881), 214-215.


208 This was a reworking of his play Won at Last, which played Wallack's Theatre for a month in early 1878. At the Madison Square, MacKaye played the lead role.


210 *The Daily Graphic*, (April, 1879), as cited in *Epoch* I: 301.


212 *New York Dramatic Times*, (31 January 1880), as cited in Young 214.


217 *The Daily Graphic*, (April, 1879), as cited in *Epoch* I: 300. Emphasis added. MacKaye's sensibilities changed from years earlier, when, in his acting debut, he decried that he was being asked to start with perfection.


221 See *Spirit of the Times*, (31 January 1880), 544, for a summary criticism of the various inventions of the Madison Square, as tried separately in ten theatres. See also

222 *Epoch I*: 340-341.


226 This "Trinaldo," as cited in Wade Chester Curry, "Steele MacKaye: Producer and Director," dissertation, University of Illinois, 1958, 61, may be a typographical mistake for "Trinculo" the pen name of theatre critic Andrew C. Wheeler who also wrote under the name "Nym Crinkle." If so, it is peculiar that having co-written a failed play with MacKaye in 1876 titled "Twins," Wheeler would be so harsh in his judgment of MacKaye. See Tice Miller 130, 133.


229 Steele MacKaye, U.S. Patent 222,143 (granted 2 December 1879), as cited in *Epoch I*: Appendix xlii.

230 Steele MacKaye, unidentified newspaper interview, (November, 1879), as cited in *Epoch I*: 323.

231 While Elisha Otis created the first passenger elevator in 1853, its development was relatively slow until this steam-driven device was changed over to electrical power in the mid-1880s. The first commercially installed electric passenger elevator was in 1889 ("elevator" in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15th ed.). In contrast, MacKaye's elevator stage was powered by counterweights. See also Spencer Klaw, "All Safe, Gentlemen, All Safe!: How the Elevator Forever Altered the American Skyline," *American Heritage*, vol. 29, no. 5, (August/September, 1978), 40-47.

232 "Movable Theater Stages," *Scientific American*, vol. I, no. 14, (5 April 1884), 208. Compared to theatres of the 1870s, the Madison Square's stage was not much smaller than most. One theatre inventor of the period recalled that: "It is well known to persons familiar with the construction of the stages or [sic] ordinary theatres that the width of the stage is commonly about twenty-six feet between the floor fly-grooves[,] and the distance between the fly-galleries about double the said width, or fifty-two feet." William Hyland, U.S. Patent 147,005 (granted 3 February 1874), as cited in Raoul F. Johnson, "United


235 Unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 65, D.C.L.

236 The conservatism of professional theatre workers regarding the employment of mechanical devices was a major obstacle for MacKaye. A remark made eight years after the success of the double stage makes it clear that seasoned stage hands were still reluctant to reconsider their methods of scene changing. One commented: "Mechanical changes may be desirable in order to avoid 'waits,' but when carried out in view of the audience are generally clumsy, always inartistic." J.G. Buckle, *Theatre Construction and Maintenance*, (London: n.p., 1888), as cited in Richard Leacroft, *The Development of the English Playhouse*, (London: Eyre Methuen, 1973), 243. Emphasis his. This critic asked that such changes occur behind curtains (which MacKaye's always did).

237 *Spirit of the Times*, (16 August 1879), unmarked scrapbook, 65, D.C.L.


239 Johnson 180.

240 Nelson Waldron was also called Nelse Waldron in numerous references. See *Spirit of the Times*, (23 October 1880), 322, and *Spirit of the Times*, (30 October 1880), 346.


243 M.J. Moynet 37.

244 *Spirit of the Times*, (15 January 1881), 610.

245 *Spirit of the Times*, (23 October 1880), 322; *Spirit of the Times*, (30 October 1880), 346.
Marshall H. Mallory, U.S. Patent 228,468 (granted 8 June 1880), as cited in Johnson 71. See also Johnson 180.

For former figure see: Spirit of the Times, (31 January 1880), 638; for the latter figure see: Spirit of the Times, (15 January 1881), 610. According to figures in this latter paper, the theatre easily paid for its construction within a year.

Johnson 98.


The term "elevate" was frequently used in society at this time, finding employment in discussions of the various "arts" that had goals of "spiritual elevation." The social idea of "sacralizing culture" was an explicit part of MacKaye's language and artistic intentions. See Levine.

Spirit of the Times, (16 August 1879), unmarked scrapbook, D.C.L.. This statement is also cited in Epoch I: 318-319 where Percy MacKaye has edited the article, shortening it without proper reference and adding italics for emphasis. A comparison of this statement and Percy MacKaye's version in Epoch gives a clear example of the way in which Percy MacKaye edited primary sources in his book.

Unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 65, D.C.L.


This hints at a possible study for future scholars interested in seeing how frequently the double stage was used after MacKaye quit the Madison Square. It would involve investigating the plays performed and their setting requirements and how these were met by the double stage.

A later discussion of the productions of The Russian Honeymoon, and The Rajah, show that these plays worked within the noted scenic confines. Typically the fourth act returned to the location of the third act or the second act.
259 New York Dramatic Times, (31 January 1880), as cited in Young 213.

260 Steele MacKaye, interview (November, 1879), unreferencecl newspaper clipping, as cited in Epoch I: 323-324.


262 "City Summary," New York Clipper, (14 February 1880), 374. This is clearly represented in Hogg's cross-sectional diagram no. 1 (Figure 11 in appendix).

263 See Fitzgerald 243 for a contemporary comment on British auditorium floors.

264 New Orleans Picayune, (5 February 1880), as cited in Epoch I: 342.


266 Spirit of the Times, (3 January 1880), 544.


269 Townsend 29.

270 See the Chestnut Theatre (Philadelphia, 1794) as mentioned in Hewitt 39-40. Such a feature was recognized as important for theatres in general at the time and equated with the "disposition" of seating found in ancient Greek theatres. See John A. Fox, "American Dramatic Theatres III," The American Architect and Building News, vol. vi, no. 188, (2 August 1879), 36.

271 See appendix Figure 4: "Interior of the Madison Square Theatre, showing the new position of the orchestra" (1880) unmarked newspaper, unmarked scrapbook, 37, D.C.L.. Also reproduced in Epoch I: plate 46, opposite 323.

272 Townsend 29.

273 See Hewitt 237. The apron stage is also apparent in: "Interior of the Madison Square Theatre, showing the new position of the orchestra" (1880) unmarked newspaper, unmarked scrapbook, 37, D.C.L., (also reproduced in Epoch I: plate 46, opposite 323); Hughson Hawley, "Madison Square Theatre (interior)" (1879) architectural drawing as reproduced in Epoch I: plate 46, opposite 323.

274 See "Madison Square Theatre Programme" as reproduced in Epoch I: plate 49, opposite 346. See also "Interior of the Madison Square Theatre, showing the new position of the orchestra" (1880) unmarked newspaper, unmarked scrapbook, 37, D.C.L. (also
reproduced in *Epoch I*: plate 46, opposite 323), where the apron appears to be little more than a stylized curve of the lower proscenium frame.


276 In this year (1880) Squire Bancroft placed a two foot frame around his theatre's proscenium, (i.e., The Prince of Wales), (See Booth, *Victorian Age* 71). In 1882 DeWitt C. Waugh was granted an American patent for a four-sided picture frame proscenium. [See DeWitt C. Waugh, U.S. Patent 265,647 (granted 10 October 1882), as cited in Johnson 181.] See also Richard Southern, "The Picture-Frame Proscenium of 1880," *Theatre Notebook*, vol. V, (1951), 59-61.

277 Fitzgerald 20-21.

278 Townsend 30.

279 See "Movable Theater Stages," *Scientific American*, vol. L, no. 14, (5 April 1884), 208, (Figure 1); see "Madison Square Theatre Programme", as reproduced in *Epoch I*: plate 49, opposite 340; see newspaper engraving "Interior of the Madison Square Theatre, showing the new position of the orchestra" (1880) unmarked newspaper, unmarked scrapbook, 37, D.C.L., (Figure 4); see "Madison Square Theatre" Kimball and Wisedell, architects, Iconography 180, Baker Special Collection, D.C.L., (Figure 5).

280 See Leacroft 242-243.


285 Fitzgerald 250.

286 *New Orleans Picayune*, (5 February 1880), as cited in *Epoch I*: 343.

287 Fitzgerald 216-217.

288 *Spirit of the Times*, (5 June 1880), 452.


290 Wesley Swanson, "Wings and Backdrops: The Story of American Stage Scenery from the Beginning to 1875," *Drama*, (December, 1927), 80.
291 Fitzgerald 236-237.

292 Fitzgerald 237.

293 "Madison Square Theatre Programme," as reproduced in Epoch I: plate 49, opposite 346.

294 *New Orleans Picayune*, (5 February 1880), as cited in Epoch I: 343.


296 Townsend 29.

297 Louis C. Tiffany, letter to Percy MacKay, (1926), as cited in Epoch I: 481. Also cited in Guthrie 78.

298 In the bottom right hand corner of this picture is the signature of the illustrator, "E.J. Meeker." While this newspaper clipping is located in one of the fourteen unnumbered scrapbooks at the D.C.L., and has no proper citation accompanying it, a reduced reproduction is located in Epoch I: plate 46, opposite 323.

299 *Puck*, (11 February 1880), 797.

300 For a description of these boxes see "City Summary," *New York Clipper*, (14 February 1880), 374.

301 Townsend 29.


303 For examples of contemporary drawing rooms which look much like the room depicted on stage, and the auditorium of the Madison Square Theatre also depicted in this illustration, see the pictures of two drawing rooms, as reproduced in "Suggestions of Decorative Art," *Scientific American Supplement*, no. 268, (19 February 1881), 4266.

304 Epoch I: plate 46, opposite 323.


306 "Hazel Kirke" in Quinn 451.


310 In this way the scene's originality is slight as it is similar to a scene found in Dumas-fils La Dame aux Camélias (1850) where, the hero's father pleads with the heroine to leave her lover for the good of the family. This parallel did not go unnoticed by Odell (11: 21).

311 Only several years later do stage directors stress the placement of actor's back to the audience. See Jean Chothia, André Antoine, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).


315 New York Herald, (5 February 1880).

316 New Orleans Picayune, (February, 1880), as cited in Batcheller 108.


320 New York Dramatic Mirror, (14 February 1880), as cited in Hewitt 235.


322 Fitzgerald 34. Also cited in Southern 21.

324 Hewitt 237.


326 Leacroft 239.

327 Southern 264.

328 Southern 269-270.

329 Fitzgerald 7. Also cited in Southern 265.

330 See also Hughson Hawley, architectural drawing of Madison Square Theatre from the upper balcony, of act one of *Hazel Kirke*, as reproduced in *Epoch I*: plate 46, opposite 323. See also Kimball and Wisedell, architects, Madison Square Theatre, Baker Special Collection, Iconography, 180, (Figure 5). This illustration of the theatre interior clearly shows the act one setting of *Hazel Kirke*.


332 *Spirit of the Times*, (11 June 1881), 504.

333 *New York Dramatic Mirror*, (17 February 1883) as cited in Hewitt 245.

334 Southern 328-329.

335 Southern 329.


340 Unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 65, D.C.L..
"City Summary," *New York Clipper*, (14 February 1880), 374. According to this source, "Properties" at the Madison Square were organized by Frank Goodwin, while D. Grover Stockley was the "Upholsterer." By counting Hughson Hawley with these two men, it is possible to conclude that three different people were responsible for supplying the three different types of objects moved on and off the stage.

M.J. Moynet 130.


M.J. Moynet 143.

Fitzgerald 49.

Fitzgerald 28. See also M.J. Moynet 28.

Southern 292.

Edwards F. Spencer, review of Mary Anderson's *A Winter's Tale* in *The Artist* (December, 1887), as cited in Southern 265.

Fitzgerald 242.

*Spirit of the Times*, (20 November 1880), 415.

For a contemporary account regarding the public reception of this play's lengthy run see *Puck*, (28 April 1880), 132.

Unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 65, D.C.L.

Unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 65, D.C.L.. Curry cites this clipping and states it's origins as the *Boston Transcript*. See Curry 75.

See Chothia 63-64.


Terence Rees, *Theatre Lighting in the Age of Gas*, (London: The Society for Theatre Research, 1978), 143. This technique's repeated use at the Madison Square is discussed later with other iconographic evidence.

*The Builder*, (1879), 37: 75, as cited in Rees 40.

*Iolanthe* was photographed on the Boston Bijou Theatre stage (the week of 12 December 1882) less than four months before the first on-stage photograph was taken at


360 The photographs of these two plays are reproduced in Appelbaum 1-4.

361 See Bordman 189, 191.

362 The photographer of this scene was Benjamin Joseph Falk, according to Gerald Bordman who also described the goings-on in this specific scene of the play from which this photograph was taken. See Bordman 189.

363 For more on "practicables" see M.J. Moynet 110.

364 In 1887 the Théâtre Libre was noted for this method of lighting scenes. See Chothia 63.

365 Appelbaum 22 is the reference for the Candida photograph. This trend to less extravagant scenes is most visible in the chronological placement of the photographs found in Appelbaum's book.

366 See Appelbaum 1-4, 22. Three productions from the Madison Square are photographed, ranging from 1883 to 1904. These show a shift from "set scenery" to "box" set scene design. Clearly the theatre was able to successfully move from one style to the other over these twenty years.


368 Bergman 295.

369 Bergman 368.


372 Steele MacKaye, U.S. Patent 222,143 (granted 2 December 1879), as cited in Epoch II: Appendix xlii. Also cited in Johnson 70.
373 See Rees 10-11, 94-95.

374 Hogg 3980.

375 *Spirit of the Times*, (31 January 1880), 638. For information on "Sunburners" see Rees 95-102.

376 "City Summary," *New York Clipper*, (14 February 1880), 374. See also Hogg 3980. According to the former article, bracket gas-burners connected with individual venting flues had been used in the Boston Theatre (MA) for many years.


378 The method of speaking tubes is not ruled out (they were employed during this period) but possibly were not used in such a small theatre. See David Mayer, "The Music of Melodrama," in *Performance and Politics in Popular Drama: Aspects of Popular Entertainment in Theatre, Film, and Television, 1800-1976*, eds. David Bradby, Louis James, and Bernard Sharratt, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 52.


381 Rees 104. On this page Rees also cites *The Coldwater Republican*, (19 September 1882), as the source for the American use of "gas table."


383 W. Grafton, *A Handbook of Practical Gas-Fitting*, (London: n.p., 1901), 141-154, as cited in Rees 211. The *Scientific American* engraving possibly became reversed during the publication process. If engraved from the "proper" side, the image would naturally be reversed when printed.

384 See M.J. Moynet 85 for a reproduction of Georges Moynet's 1893 illustration.

385 Supporting the idea that the *Scientific American* illustration is reversed are the number of people represented in the picture as left-handed (one actor on stage carries a sword in his left hand, while the gas man adjusts a vertical dial with his left hand). The convention of right-handedness in the general population suggests that these figures would typically be represented as right-handed; thereby furthering the claim for the reversal of the illustration.

386 The prompter of the Madison Square at the time of the initial run of *Hazel Kirke* was Fred P. Barton ["City Summary," *New York Clipper*, (14 February 1880), 374]. However, a man called "Massen" was criticized by the press for not keeping "a tight
rein" over the performances of the actors a year into the run. See *Spirit of the Times*, (5 March 1881), 112.

387 Gosta Bergman misidentifies this theatre as having "electric light battens," (Bergman 288). Unfortunately he does not identify his source.


390 Nelson Waldron, U.S. Patent 245,895 (granted 16 August 1884). The gas jets were spaced approximately every two and one half feet across the twenty-two foot stage.

391 Unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 65, D.C.L. Emphasis added.

392 Rees 40.


394 Bergman 261.

395 "City Summary," *New York Clipper*, (14 February 1880), 374. Tim Fort misidentifies the footlights as having been eliminated in this theatre. See Tim Fort, "Steele MacKaye's Lighting Visions for 'The World Finder,'" *Nineteenth Century Theatre*, vol. 18, no. 1+2, (Summer/Winter, 1990), 35. Unfortunately, Fort does not cite his source.

396 Hogg 3981.

397 See Hogg's diagram number three for the low figure. For the high figure the number of possible "standards," or vertical braces in front of the footlights were counted (Figure 1) with the assumption that a brace would be placed roughly wherever there was an open flame.


399 See Rees 124.

400 Kyle Bellew, *The Theatre*, (London), (1 February 1881), as cited in *Epoch II*: Appendix L.

401 Hogg 3980.


404 Fitzgerald 283-284. See also Tracy C. Davis, *Actresses as Working Women: Their Social Identity in Victorian Culture*, (New York: Routledge, 1991), who deals with this subject on a social level.

405 *Spirit of the Times*, (31 January 1880), 638. Emphasis added.

406 Bergman 261.


408 *Spirit of the Times*, (25 December 1880), 537.

409 *Spirit of the Times*, (22 January 1881), 630.

410 This contrasts Michael Booth's belief that lighting in this period "did not underline a theme or symbol arbitrarily selected by the director." See Booth, *Victorian Age* 139.


412 Fitzgerald 70.


414 *New Orleans Picayune*, (5 February 1880), as cited in *Epoch I*: 343.


417 *New Orleans Picayune*, (5 February 1880), as cited in *Epoch I*: 343.

418 "City Summary," *New York Clipper*, (14 February 1880), 374. For a commentary explaining what "Mollenhauered" theatre music was, see *Spirit of the Times*, (25 September 1880).
419 Bernhard Mollenhauer, *Hazel Kirke Waltz* (New York: Wm. A. Pond, 1880), Box 141, D.C.L.. See mention of this giveaway in *New York Daily Tribune*, (16 May 1880), Box 28, D.C.L..

420 Unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 65, D.C.L..


422 *Spirit of the Times*, (14 February 1880), 38. Emphasis added.

423 Hogg 3980.

424 *The Builder*, (1870), 28: 869, as cited in Rees 102. For a discussion of the draughty air currents that typically moved across the stage to the auditorium (from an area of relatively high heat—caused by all the gas lights—to an area of little heat) see Dion Boucicault, "Theatres, Halls, and Audiences," *North American Review*, cccxcv, (October, 1889), 431. He mentioned that main curtains often had to be tied down to prevent them from blowing into the orchestra, the draughts being so strong.

425 Hogg 3980. This subject is also taken up in W. Emden, "Theatres," *Architect*, (24 March 1883), 196-198, as cited in Leacroft 237.

426 Hogg 3982.

427 In 1817, a ventilation system was installed at Covent Garden. This "forced" air system was actually spontaneous ventilation created by placing Bunsen burners in ventilation shafts so that they might draw a flow of air. See a reproduction of the theatre's advertisement for this device in George C.D. Odell, *Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving*, 2 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), 2: 157-158. See also Covent Garden playbill, (8 September 1817), as cited in Rees 95. For spontaneous ventilation see Hogg 3981.

428 *The Builder*, (18 February 1860), 102-103, as cited in Leacroft 230.

429 *Spirit of the Times*, (21 August 1880), 72.

430 Hogg 3980.

431 Hogg 3981.

432 Hogg 3980.

433 Hogg 3980-3981.
434 See appendix for a reproduction of Hogg's diagrams of the Madison Square's ventilation system (Figure 11).

435 Hogg 3980.

436 Hogg 3981.


438 Within a year a similar technique was used to preserve the body of President Garfield. See Robert Friedman, "The Air-Conditioned Century: The Story of How a Blast of Cool Dry Air Changed America," American Heritage, vol. 35, no. 5, (August/September, 1984), 20-32.

439 Hogg 3981. The figures in brackets are also from Hogg 3981.

440 Hogg 3981.

441 Hogg 3980.

442 Hogg 3980.

443 Hogg 3982.

444 See "Gas and Gas-Lights," The Stage, (7 December 1883), as cited in Booth, Trades 32.

445 Hogg 3981.

446 William Young is a strong example of a scholar who deals with the innovations of the Madison Square Theatre in a "list" approach. (See Young 212.) He goes little further than just listing MacKaye's inventions. In this way he keeps to the pattern established by Percy MacKaye. Being the first to thoroughly assess Steele's career, Percy MacKaye placed primary emphasis on the material inventions at the expense of all else. (See Epoch II: xxii and II: xix.) This tactic informed most of what Percy MacKaye wrote concerning the Madison Square Theatre. Subsequently, many scholars delving into MacKaye's work and the Madison Square list the inventions yet fail to recognize that MacKaye's talent for theatrical innovation went beyond physical devices.


448 L.F. Marcossion and Daniel Frohman, Charles Frohman, Manager and Man, (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1916), 68. This statement is also found in an advertisement in New York Herald, (1 February 1880), unmarked scrapbook, 36, D.C.L.

450 McConachie 207.


452 *New York Tribune*, (2 May 1880), as cited in *Epoch* II: Appendix xlvii, xlviii.

453 See *Spirit of the Times*, (6 March 1880), 106; *Spirit of the Times*, (13 March 1880), 130.

454 *Spirit of the Times*, (30 May 1868), as cited in Miller 98.

455 Newspaper cited in McConachie 236, as taken from Miller, but the page reference for Miller is incorrect.


457 William Winter's relationship with Steele MacKaye was friendly enough that Winter penned *Hazel Kirke's* twenty-four line curtain speech as a favor. Winter's lines can still be found attached to an early prompt copy of the play, after which they found their way into performance and subsequent publication. See Box 38, "Various Promptscripts," D.C.L.. Also see *Epoch* I: 347.

458 Steele MacKaye, tabulations made in Box 140, Notebook N, D.C.L.. Confirmed by Hogg 3980, who placed estimates of the seating capacity at six hundred fifty.

459 Moody places this in perspective by mentioning that ticket prices in the middle of the century were typically fifty-cents for premium seats, and twelve and a half-cents for gallery seats. See Moody 215.

460 Woodard 68.

461 MacKaye was not the first manager to offer ice-water to an audience. It was a common practice in English music halls. See Fitzgerald 284.

462 Box 17, brown envelope, D.C.L..


See advertisements for Booth's, Daly's and Union Theatre in *Spirit of the Times*, (3 April 1880), 206. The Union Theatre also promised a finish time of 10:45 p.m.

Kyle Bellew, *The Theatre*, (London), (1 February 1881), as cited in *Epoch II*: Appendix L.


*Puck*, (11 February 1880), 797.

*New York Herald*, (1 February 1880), unmarked scrapbook, D.C.L.. Also in the D.C.L. collection there is a "Special Programme Commemorative of the Fiftieth Performance of Hazel Kirke" that states the intermissions as follows:

Between the First and Second Acts—Forty-five seconds
Between the Second and Third Acts—Eight minutes
Between the Third and Fourth Acts—Two minutes (Box 17, D.C.L.)

This information suggests that the transformation from the mill exterior of act one to Fairy Grove of act two occurred more quickly in later runs, possibly heightening the effect of the elevator's ability to bring about rapid change of sharply contrasting scenes.

Unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 36, D.C.L..

*Spirit of the Times*, (February, 1880), unmarked scrapbook, 42, D.C.L..

*Spirit of the Times*, (February, 1880), unmarked scrapbook, 42, D.C.L..


*Spirit of the Times*, (4 June 1881), 472.


Unreferenced newspaper clipping, (1882), as cited in Epoch I: 436. MacKaye's safety ideas found popularity in England more than ten years later. See Townsend's article wherein he agreed fully with MacKaye's suggestion for the necessity of having trap doors above the stage grid that could be employed as smoke flues during a fire. Unfortunately, Townsend did not attribute this specific idea to MacKaye (Townsend 31). However, as a professional architect, Townsend was so impressed with MacKaye's theatre that he wrote an article that posited the Madison Square Theatre as a "model theatre" of safety for future theatres in England. This paper he read to the Royal Institute of British Architects (14 December 1891), (Townsend 28).


Odell 10: 315.


New York Dramatic Times, (31 January 1880), as cited in Young 212.

See two satiric cartoons depicting the Mallory Brothers' avarice, New York Press (1880) as reproduced in Epoch I: plate 50, opposite 347.

Townsend 29.


Box 16, Folder 1-11, D.C.L..

See Puck, (14 July 1880), 341.
492 Hogg 3981.

493 Mary Duffus Hardy, cited in Bayrd Still, Mirror for Gotham, (New York: New York University Press, 1956), n.p., as cited in Henderson, 151. The Edgar Allan Poe Statue benefit was held at the Madison Square on Monday, 28 June 1880, according to Epoch I: 355. This is confirmed by Spirit of the Times, (3 July 1880), 565.

494 Spirit of the Times, (3 July 1880), 565.

495 Spirit of the Times, (3 August 1880), unmarked scrapbook, D.C.L.

496 New York Tribune, (10 September 1884), as cited in Batcheller 132.

497 Epoch I: 363.


499 Rebuilt in 1881, Wallack's Theatre was compared to the Madison Square in many ways, see The American Architect and Building News, vol. X, no. 305, (29 October 1881), 201.

500 Puck, (12 May 1880), 167.

501 Spirit of the Times, (4 December 1880), 459.

502 There is a challenge to MacKaye's founding of the Madison Square. It is a contentious issue, never raised by his biographer, or discussed in any study of the Madison Square Theatre. This issue surrounds a document found within the MacKaye archives, which is cited here because of its relative obscurity. It raises questions of MacKaye's originality (regarding a number of minor innovations at the Madison Square) versus his opportunistic studying of current trends in the contemporary theatre of the period. To what degree is MacKaye innovational in conceiving, opening, and managing this theatre in comparison to other theatres operating in New York at this time? Does MacKaye lead or follow trends of the period? These are enormously difficult questions to answer with any degree of accuracy. For this reason, this chapter leaves them as a passing note. Regarding the Madison Square, one piece of influential material has been located and demands mention in order to reach a balanced assessment of MacKaye's conception, innovations and managing of the theatre. The information that sheds light on this issue is a loose, undated newspaper clipping (likely from 1881) in MacKaye's archives, not to be found with the numerous scrapbooks of newspaper clippings. It states:

Letters From The People

To the Editor of The Star:

The Star being a leading newspaper, must in the main uphold justice and adhere to facts. Now Mr. Steele MacKaye styles himself, in all his advertisements
published in the newspapers of today 'The founder of the Madison Square Theatre.' The facts are, that he was not the founder, but merely the finder of it, while I, in all justice and truth, claim to be the founder of that theatre. I first conceived the idea of turning Heller's Hall into a theatre. I leased it for three years, and made the necessary alterations--just as he found it when he first played 'Won at Last' there two years ago. I first announced in my programme, and in all my advertisements, my intention of making my Drawing Room Theatre the link between the stage and the church. I was the first manageress in New York who introduced ushers in livery to dispense ice water among the audience. My future intentions, when I had the theatre, which were made public, suggested the present condition and prosperity of the Madison Square Theatre. But Mr. Steele MacKaye, with more capital at his back and with better luck, carried out my already commenced original design. Mr. MacKaye may well be entitled to the laurels of having executed an idea, but in all truth and fair play I, though only a struggling little woman, am entitled to whatever merit there may be in having originated it.

Very Sincerely

Minnie Cummings

New York, April 19 (Box 23, Folder 8-14, D.C.L.)

If the writer may be considered as telling the truth, and it appears that she had little to gain from mis-stating facts and, indeed herself was aware of this, the letter suggests less than innovative managerial practices on MacKaye's part. If Minnie Cummings had so broadcast her intentions then, in all likelihood, many involved in theatre in that city would have heard of these, MacKaye included. The fact that MacKaye took the same theatre, considered calling it the Drawing Room Theatre, created a link between the Church and the theatre, and offered water as refreshments to customers, suggests a knowledge of that which had gone before in the same space. While a singular contrary letter to a newspaper editor cannot, and clearly does not, topple the work achieved by MacKaye in the innovations, inventions, and management of the Madison Square (and its accusations ultimately can never be firmly proven) it could be used to round off a reverse argument: that these innovations sprang solely from MacKaye's creative theatrical mind. Some of the details of this letter are verified in a book on nineteenth-century American women theatre managers. As scholar Jane Curry notes, Minnie Cummings "entered management by converting the Fifth Avenue Hall, on the site of the previously destroyed Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre, into Minnie Cummings Drawing Room Theatre." [See Jane Kathleen Curry, Nineteenth-Century American Women Theatre Managers, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 110. Jane Curry does not cite her source but it is likely Odell 10: 651-652.] Cummings' theatre opened December 30th, 1878. After one production, the theatre was forced to close because she "did not receive capital which had been promised to her" (J. Curry 110). While Curry's claim (based on Odell) reiterates an idea raised by Cummings letter, no other source is mentioned to support this statement. Less than three months later, MacKaye reopened this theatre as the Madison Square. Interestingly enough, MacKaye appears to have kept on some people associated with Cummings' theatre. The first play produced at Cummings' Drawing Room Theatre was an "operatic farce, Manhattan Beach; or, Love among the Breakers, by Edward Mollenhauer and Charles Barnard" (J. Curry 110). As mentioned earlier, a musician named Mollenhauer was hired by MacKaye to be the orchestra conductor for his play Hazel Kirke which opened the Madison Square. The one problem in linking this person directly from Cummings' theatre
to MacKaye's theatre is that MacKaye's conductor was listed as "Bernhard" Mollenhauer and Curry lists "Edward" Mollenhauer. Whatever the case behind the identities of these men and their relation (possibly siblings in a musical family) the material is raised here to suggest that the larger issue of MacKaye's founding of this theatre is not ironclad.

503 *Spirit of the Times*, (12 June 1880), 48.

Chapter Three Notes


505 Barber 103.


507 Barber 104.

508 Barber 104.

509 Barber 104.

510 Barber 104.

511 Barber 104-105.


513 *Boston Daily Transcript*, (30 December 1884), as cited in Holzen 179.

514 Barber 105.

515 *Spirit of the Times*, (28 August 1886), n.p.
Some of these paintings are cycloramic in their conception and others are smaller panoramic paintings: *The Battle of Gettysburg: Pickett's Charge* (1870) Romthermel (Holzen 172); *The Death of General Reynolds* (1870) Rothermel (Holzen 173); *Cyclorama of the Battle of Atlanta* (1885-86) Wm. Wehner and the American Panorama Company (Holzen 174); *Charge of the Pennsylvania Reserves at Plum Run* (1870) Rothermel (Holzen 181); *Battle of Shiloh, 1862* (Chicago, 1885) Cosack and Co. (Holzen 182); *Battle of Shiloh Panorama* (1885) Theophile Poilpot, (Holzen 183); *Andrew's Raiders Panorama* (1870) Wm. Knight (Holzen 192); *Battle Scene of the Rebellion* (1884-85) Thomas Clarkson Gordon (Holzen 192, 196); *Cyclorama of the Battle of Gettysburg* (1884) Philippoteaux (Holzen 198); *Sheridan's Ride* (1889) Charles Hardy Andrus (Holzen 189); *Grand Panorama of the Late War* (n.d.) Charles Hardy Andrus (Holzen 189).

Revered as a national treasure, this cyclorama has been restored and is on display at the Gettysburg National Museum, PA.

The terminology gets awkward. While Morgan's paintings were large panoramas and not three hundred sixty degree cycloramas, their conception was closer to a large cyclorama because of their number and series. Panoramas typically were conceived as singular in effect. Since Morgan conceived of his paintings as a series their overall effect was cycloramic. See also Percy MacKaye who calls Morgan's work cycloramic, *Epoch II*:
69. The issue gets more complex when Morgan calls the organization promoting this work: the "Matt Morgan Diorama Company."

531 Holzen 183.

532 Morgan emigrated from England where he illustrated for such "shilling illustrated magazines" as: *London Society* (1864); the highly regarded *Illustrated London News* (1866); *The Broadway* (1867); *The Tomahawk* (n.d.); and *Britannia* (1869); the latter two for which Morgan was the sole illustrator. He died June 4, 1890, and by 1897 was posthumously regarded as a "brilliant but ephemeral genius" (White 80). See Gleeson White, *English Illustration, The Sixties,' 1855-1870*, (London: Constable, 1897) (Bath: Kingsmead, 1970), 57, 76, 80, 92. For an account of Morgan's scandalous *tableaux vivants* presented at the Theatre Comique in 1875, see Jack W. McCullough, *Living Pictures on the New York Stage*, (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983), 74-80.


534 Cooke 12.


536 "Wonderful War Pictures" unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 39, D.C.L.


538 As staged at the Madison Square, the exterior act one setting for *Hazel Kirke* (Blackburn Mill Dam in England) was not based on the actual location. However, one artistic fan of the play did send MacKaye a sketch of this place--for his consideration in future productions. See Box 25, Folder 10-6, Folder 10-7, which contain drawings of Blackburn, England.


543 *Spirit of the Times*, (8 January 1887), 744.

544 *Spirit of the Times*, (4 September 1886), 190. Also mentioned in *Epoch II*: 72.
In this matter Morgan was following the work of Louis Daguerre, whose 1822 Parisian building, the Diorama, offered an audience three different panoramic paintings with added lighting effects. Morgan's work clearly evoked European impulses found earlier in the century. See Gosta Bergman, *Lighting in the Theatre*, (Stockholm: Almquist and Wiksell International, 1977), 232, which includes illustrations of the Diorama.

"At the Theaters: The War Pictures Wonderfully Realistic," *Cincinnati Times Standard*, (3 August 1886), unmarked scrapbook, 39, D.C.L.. While blue-penciled notations to this clipping list it as being from 3 August 1886, *Epoch II*: 72 lists the opening day of Morgan's *Battle Pictures* as 30 August 1886. Obviously, these paintings were built specifically for the dimensions of theatre prosceniums of the day. The measurements of Morgan's paintings are similar to the rather conventional dimensions given to the Madison Square theatre's proscenium arch five years earlier.

Unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 39, D.C.L..

"At the Theatre: The War Pictures Wonderfully Realistic," *Cincinnati Times Standard*, (3 August 1886), unmarked scrapbook, 39, D.C.L..

Box 36, "Miscellaneous," Folder 1, "Lecture Notes on the Civil War?" D.C.L..

Box 36, "Miscellaneous," Folder 1, "Lecture Notes on the Civil War?" D.C.L..

"At the Theatre: The War Pictures Wonderfully Realistic," *Cincinnati Times Standard*, (3 August 1886), unmarked scrapbook, 39, D.C.L..

Box 36, "Miscellaneous," Folder 1, "Lecture Notes on the Civil War?" handwritten loose notes, pages 1-8 of 13, D.C.L.. This statement is transcribed from MacKaye's hand. Illegible words are followed by [?].

Box 36, "Miscellaneous," Folder 1, "Lecture Notes on the Civil War?", 12-13, D.C.L.. The fact that MacKaye made reference to the drummer boy of Shiloh would suggest that this passage is for the *Battle* picture of the Second Day at Shiloh (No. 4). However, the passage as written in MacKaye's hand is in a section which clearly deals with the battle of Gettysburg (No. 6).

"At the Theatre: The War Pictures Wonderfully Realistic," *Cincinnati Times Standard*, (3 August 1886), unmarked scrapbook, 39, D.C.L..

"Wonderful War Pictures," unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 39, D.C.L.. Emphasis added. This painting possibly achieved its strong effect in part by its dioramic composition. Various flashes of light in front and behind the picture would have revealed sudden glimpses of heretofore unseen portions of the painting; something suggested by this review (specifically when the light is noted to shine through a tent door).

557 Steele MacKaye, letter to Mary Medbery MacKaye, (13 September 1886), as cited in Epoch II: 73.

558 Steele MacKaye, letter to Mary Medbery MacKaye, (13 September 1886), as cited in Epoch II: 73.

559 Epoch I: 155.

560 Epoch I: 155.


562 See McConachie 113.

563 McConachie 113.

564 Richard Weaver, The Ethics of Rhetoric, (Chicago: H. Regency, 1953), 176, as cited in McConachie 113.

565 McConachie 113.


567 Brasmer 137-139.

568 Spirit of the Times, (11 September 1886), 227.

569 Brasmer 134.

570 Brasmer 134.

571 Box 158, Folder 39, "North Platte Telegraph" in "Buffalo Bill's Wild West: A History of American Civilization," souvenir program, 7, D.C.L.. Though this program is specifically for the MacKaye production, it is similar to the program sold by Cody during the summer at Erastina. The page describing the actual program of events was the only change.


Box 35, "Manuscripts of Unfinished Plays," Folder "Buffalo Bill," "The 'Wild West' at the Madison Square Garden," 1, (of a fifteen-page typed and handwritten "synopsis" by MacKaye), D.C.L.. This synopsis was later released to the local newspapers to promote the upcoming indoors show. See Nate Salsbury, letter to Steele MacKaye (29 October 1886), as cited in Epoch II: 80-81. See the last sentence of this synopsis repeated in the New York World (15 November 1886), as cited in Nellie Yost, Buffalo Bill: His Family, Friends, Fame, Failures, and Fortunes, (Chicago: Swallow Press, 1979), 179.

Steele MacKaye, letter to Nate Salsbury, (October, 1886), as cited in Epoch II: 77.


Nate Salsbury, letter to Steele MacKaye, (6 October 1886), as cited in Epoch II: 76.

See Spirit of the Times, (4 December 1886), n.p..

581 "It's A Great Show: The Unique Wild West Exhibition 'Catches On' with the Public Instantaneously," unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 120, D.C.L.

582 Box 35, "Manuscripts of Unfinished Plays," Folder "Buffalo Bill," 5-6, D.C.L.

583 Box 35, "Manuscripts of Unfinished Plays," Folder "Buffalo Bill," "The 'Wild West' at the Madison Square Garden," 9-12, D.C.L.

584 "The 'Wild West' in Full Blast at the Madison Square Garden," unmarked newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 120, D.C.L.


586 Steele MacKaye, letter to Nate Salsbury, (31 October 1886), as cited in Epoch II: 80.

587 Epoch II: 90.

588 Box 23, "Inventions and Legal Papers," Folder 5, "Certified Copies of Eyewitness Account of General Custer's Fatal Campaign," D.C.L. Unfortunately, this file was empty when viewed in August, 1994.


591 Box 35, "Manuscripts of Unfinished Plays," Folder "Buffalo Bill," 7, D.C.L.


593 Lewis Parker, Odd People I Have Met, (N.p.: n.p., n.d.), 84.

594 Cooke 12.

595 New York World, (15 November 1886), as cited in Yost 179.
596 *New York World*, (15 November 1886), as cited in Yost 179.


602 Fitzgerald 78-79. Emphasis his.


604 Cooke 12.


609 Cooke 12. Also cited in *Epoch II*: 78.

611 See Box 18, Folder 3-3, "William Cody," for a partial explanation of the
details surrounding this delay. It is typed on the back of stationary titled "Buffalo Bill's
Wild West: America's National Entertainment; Winter Quarters, Madison Square Garden."

612 Louis E. Cooke, letter to Percy MacKaye, (1918), as cited in Epoch II: 79.
Emphasis added.

613 "MacKaye as a Hair-Lifter: The Great Playwright Teaching Indians How to
Scalp," unmarked newspaper clipping, (20 November 1886), in unmarked scrapbook,

614 Brasmer 153.

615 Commentary footnote in Epoch II: 85.

616 "Wild Life in Madison Square Garden: War Whoops, Dances, A Prairie Fire
cited in Epoch II: 85.

The program for The Drama of Civilization listed the "Orator" as "Frank Richmond." See
Box 158, Folder 39; "Buffalo Bill's Wild West: A History of American Civilization"
souvenir program, 2, D.C.L..

618 "Buffalo Bill in Drama: Four Wild West Epochs at Madison Square Garden,"

619 "The 'Wild West' in Full Blast at the Madison Square Garden," unmarked
newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 120, D.C.L..

620 Spirit of the Times, (4 December 1886), n.p..

621 "The 'Wild West' in Full Blast at the Madison Square Garden," unmarked
newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 120, D.C.L..

622 "The 'Wild West' in Full Blast at the Madison Square Garden," unmarked
newspaper clipping, unmarked scrapbook, 120, D.C.L..


624 Spirit of the Times, (27 November 1886), n.p.. Also see Epoch II: 84 where
this statement is miscited.

625 Nate Salsbury, letter to Steele MacKaye, (29 October 1886), as cited in Epoch
II: 81.

626 "Wild Life in Madison Square Garden: War Whoops, Dances, A Prairie Fire
MacKaye transposed this number to nine thousand when he cited this review in *Epoch* II: 84.

627 "Steele MacKaye, 'The Columbian Celebration Company,' unpublished manuscript, 1892, D.C.L., p. 15" as cited in Curry 110. It is difficult to see how Curry makes this claim for the Garden holding ten thousand people, when newspaper accounts of the opening night mentioned that the building was full and held six thousand. The figures Curry cites from MacKaye are suspicious. Confirming the closing date of the show is Odell 13: 339.


629 See footnote commentary in *Epoch* II: 85.


631 Nate Salsbury, letter to Steele MacKaye, (5 November 1886), as cited in *Epoch* II: 81.


634 *Spirit of the Times*, (27 November 1886), 564.

635 Cooke 12. Also cited in *Epoch* II: Appendix lvi.

636 Cooke 12. Also cited in *Epoch* II: Appendix lvi.

637 Unreferenced newspaper review as cited in *Epoch* II: 86.

638 Cooke 12. Also cited in *Epoch* II: Appendix lvi.


640 Cooke 12. Also cited in *Epoch* II: 79.

641 Cooke 12. Also cited in *Epoch* II: Appendix lvi. Daniel Leroy Hannon has taken this statement to mean that electrical batteries drove the fans. Here, the word
"battery," is interpreted in a different sense (i.e., "a number of similar things occurring together,") (Collins English Dictionary, 2nd. ed.). It is not clear if steam was used to create a mist-like wind or to generate electric fans. See Daniel Leroy Hannon, "The MacKaye Spectatorium: A Reconstruction and Analysis of a Theatrical Spectacle Planned for the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 with a History of the Producing Organizations," dissertation, Tulane University, 1970, 98.

642 Cooke 12. Also cited in Epoch II: 78.

643 Hannon 98.

644 Hannon 98.


647 Box 35, "Manuscripts of Unfinished Plays," Folder "Buffalo Bill," "The 'Wild West' at the Madison Square Garden," 1, D.C.L.

648 Cooke 12.


651 Blackstone 19.


653 Parker 39. Clearly, if actual wind had been used previously in Hazel Kirke, it was never given wide-spread regard.


655 Cooke 12. Also cited in Epoch II: Appendix lvi.


658 Cooke 12. Also cited in Epoch II: Appendix lvi.

659 Parker 84. Also cited in Russell 339.

660 See Scientific American Supplement, (1881) II: 4265-4266. See also Hopkins 305-308; and Rees 148.


663 Helen Cody Wetmore, Last of the Great Scouts: The Life Story of Col. William F. Cody; As Told By His Sister, 1899, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965), 245.


665 Rees 193. Emphasis his.

666 Rees 194.


669 Puck, (2 July 1879), 266. While Lew Parker stated that this production did not use "electrical devices," electric lights had been installed in the Madison Square Garden in 1879. However, the entire building was rebuilt in 1880, making it unclear which system was used after the renovation. It is possible that after this time electrical lighting was the primary source, accompanied by a back-up system of gas lighting. This was a standard arrangement for theatre lighting as late as the end of the century.


675 "MacKaye as a Hair-Lifter: The Great Playwright Teaching Indians How to Scalp" unmarked newspaper clipping, (20 November 1886), unmarked scrapbook, 119. Also cited in Epoch II: 83. This method of painting from a swing chair did have its drawbacks, see Fitzgerald 256.


679 Moody ch. iv.


682 Unreferenced newspaper review as cited in Epoch II: 86.


684 Brasmer 140.

685 Brasmer 140.

686 Brasmer 143.

687 Spirit of the Times, (18 December 1886), n.p..

688 Spirit of the Times, (7 May 1887), 492.

689 Washington Post, (14 December 1886), as cited in Curry 111.

691 Box 17, Folder 2-5, D.C.L. Also reproduced in *Epoch II*: 153.


694 Steele MacKaye, interview, unreferenced newspaper (1887), as cited in *Epoch II*: 146.


697 Col. Henry Watterson, editorial, unreferenced newspaper source, as cited in *Epoch II*: 159.


699 Woodard 116.

700 *Spirit of the Times*, (4 December 1886), n.p.. Emphasis added.
Chapter Four Notes


704 Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (5 February 1894), as cited in *Epoch II*: 312.


706 H.N. Higginbotham, as quoted by Major Moses P. Handy, World's Fair Commissioner, "Major Handy's Letter," *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, (27 February 1894), unmarked scrapbook, 133, D.C.L.. Also cited in *Epoch II*: 312.


708 Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (5 February 1894), in "Box 7," D.C.L., as cited in Guthrie 145.


710 Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (5 February 1894), in "Box 7," D.C.L., as cited in Guthrie 145.

711 Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (5 February 1894), in "Box 7," D.C.L., as cited in Guthrie 145.

712 Steele MacKaye, handwritten notes for a speech, in ink, undated in "Box F," D.C.L., as cited in Guthrie 183.

713 Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (5 February 1894), in "Box 7," D.C.L., as cited in Guthrie 183-184. Also cited in *Epoch II*: 347.


716 See *Epoch II*: 323, 429-431, Addenda ci-ciii where Percy MacKaye has solicited statements to this effect. The solicitation is evident in A.F. Victor’s letters to Percy MacKaye. See A.F. Victor, letter to Percy MacKaye, (5 April 1927), and A.F. Victor, letter to Percy MacKaye, (6 April 1927), in scrapbook titled "Epoch Letters Q-W," D.C.L.. These claims were later taken up and given regard by Vardac. See Vardac 150-151.


719 Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (5 February 1894), D.C.L., as cited in *Epoch II*: 311. Also cited in Guthrie 149.

720 Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (5 February 1894), D.C.L., as cited in *Epoch II*: 311-312.

721 Steele MacKaye, unmarked handwritten lecture, (likely the manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*), Box 34, 4 of 12, D.C.L..

722 Steele MacKaye, letter to Hon. George Davis, Director General of the World’s Fair, (8 September 1891), as cited in *Epoch II*: 300.

723 "Electric Spectacle Company," (16 September 1891), Box 25, Folder 10-6, 2, D.C.L..

724 "Electric Spectacle Company," (16 September 1891), Box 25, Folder 10-6, 3-4, D.C.L.. In his final suggestion MacKaye appeared to ignore the potential cultural differences of the play and how this might effect its reception in South American cities.

725 Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (February, 1894), as cited in *Epoch II*: 315.

726 Frank Russell Green, letter to Percy MacKaye, (30 October 1924, and 4 April 1925), as cited in *Epoch II*: 333.

728 Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (February, 1894), as cited in *Epoch II*: 332.

729 MacKaye's Spectatorium was viewed as tangible enough to be included on a map of the Chicago World's Fair. See appendix for a reproduction of an 1893 Rand McNally Guide Map to the World's Columbian Exposition, specifically Figures 12, 13. Included are two illustrations (one an enlargement) which show MacKaye's building in the grid position of "A-18." While not listed in the general index to this particular map, a close examination of the map itself suggests the theatre to be an adjunct to the Fair. Figure 12 is reproduced from Neil Harris, Wim de Witt, James Gilbert, and Robert W. Rydell, *Grand Illusions: Chicago World's Fair of 1893*, (Chicago: Chicago Historical Society, 1993), inside cover. Figure 13 is reproduced from Robert Muccigrosso, *Celebration of the New World: Chicago's Columbian Exposition of 1893*, (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1993), 81.


735 Guthrie 95-96.

736 Muccigrosso 81.


739 Steele MacKaye, interview, *Chicago Times*, (16 August 1892), in "Spectatorium Scrapbook, 1" as cited in Guthrie 114.

Steele MacKaye, unmarked handwritten lecture, (likely the manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*), Box 34, 6 of 12, D.C.L.


Boucicault 431. Emphasis his.


This watercolor painting presently resides at the Schweitzer Gallery. For illustrations of Childe Hassam's World's Fair painting in color see: Neil Harris, *Wim de Wit, James Gilbert, and Robert W. Rydell, Grand Illusion: Chicago's World's Fair of 1893*. (Chicago: Chicago Historical Society, 1993). The most readily available source for Hassam's painting of the Spectatorium is *Epoch II*: plate 86, opposite 317. See appendix for a reproduction of Hassam's painting, specifically Figure 14 (from *Epoch II*: plate 86, opposite 317). A different artist's rendering taken from the *New York Tribune*, (9 March 1919), is reproduced as Figure 15 in the appendix. This is also reproduced in Hannon 68.

Unreferenced newspaper citation, (1892), as cited in *Epoch II*: 345.

*Boston Journal*, (23 April 1893), in Box 25, Folder 10-1, 17, D.C.L.


"Big Thing for the Fair," *Chicago Times*, (24 August 1892), as cited in *Epoch II*: 338.


Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (5 February 1894), D.C.L., as cited in *Epoch II*: 346.

Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (5 February 1894), D.C.L., as cited in *Epoch II*: 346.

Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (5 February 1894), D.C.L., as cited in *Epoch II*: 346-347.


757 Fitzgerald 229.

758 Murray Nelson, letter to Percy MacKaye, (1909), in Box 25, Folder 10-6, 4 of 6, D.C.L.

759 "MacKaye's Scenitorium," *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, (6 February 1894), in Box 25, Folder 10-6, 26, D.C.L..


763 See appendix for reproductions of various illustrations of the Spectatorium floor plan, specifically Figures 16, 17, 18. Figure 16 is a reproduction found in *Epoch II*: 313. Figure 17 is a reproduction found in *Epoch II*: 321. See also Box 25, Folder 10-7, D.C.L.; Hannon 71. Figure 18 is reproduction of MacKaye's U.S. Patent 490,490 (granted 24 January 1893) as found in Hannon 218.

764 Boucicault 434.

765 Boucicault 434-435.

766 Boucicault 434.

767 Albert L. Tucker was one of the builders of the Spectatorium model. Less than two years after MacKaye's death Tucker and a partner patented a number of theatrical devices, three of which are clearly derived from inventions employed in the Scenitorium. Giving a hint of his indebtedness to MacKaye, Tucker and his partner prefaced a number of their inventions by noting the devices were made for use in a "scenic theatre" (a Scenitorium?). This is a peculiar phrase. Other than the Spectatorium and Scenitorium of 1893-94, little public emphasis can be found regarding "scenic theatres" as a popular type of entertainment in America. Clearly they were different from cycloramas and panoramas. In all of these patents Tucker was the "assignor" for the Western Electric Company. See Hannon, (1976), 23. See August J. Oehring and Albert L. Tucker, U.S. Patents 555,113;

768 Hannon 232, 235.

769 See Epoch II: Addenda lxxiii for list of MacKaye's patents.

770 Steele MacKaye, U.S. Patent 490,482 (granted 24 January 1893). Also cited in Johnson 75. See appendix for a reproduction of the patent illustration of this device, Figure 19 (from Epoch II: Addenda xcix). An English painter, Professor Hubert von Herkomer (1849-1914) developed a similar device in 1892 while experimenting with theatre ideas comparable to those achieved by MacKaye's last project. See John Stokes, Resistible Theatres: Enterprise and Experiment in the Late Nineteenth Century, (London: Paul Elek, 1972), specifically chapter two, "A Wagner Theatre: Professor Herkomer's Pictorial-Musical Plays," 69-110.


772 Murray Nelson, letter to Percy MacKaye, (1909), in Box 25, Folder 10-6, 4 of 6, D.C.L..

773 "MacKaye's Big Show," Chicago Inter-Ocean, (20 March 1893), in Box 25, Folder 10-1, D.C.L.. Also cited in Epoch II: 363.


775 New York Daily News, (13 March 1893), as cited in Vardac 149. Also cited in Epoch II: 386. See appendix for a reproduction of the patent illustration of this device, Figure 20 (from Epoch II: Addenda lxxxiii).


777 Hannon (1976), 48.

778 "Plays and Players" The Chicago Times, (6 February 1894), in Box 26, Folder 10-6, D.C.L..


780 The patent illustration can be viewed in Epoch II: Addenda lxxv. Also in Curry 205, and Hannon 220. See appendix for a reproduction of this illustration, Figure 21 (from Epoch II: Addenda lxxv).

782 "An Adjunct to the Fair," *Nebraska State Journal*, (4 April 1893), 304.

783 Murray Nelson, letter to Percy MacKay, (1909), in Box 25, Folder 10-6, 3, D.C.L.


785 "An Adjunct to the Fair," *Nebraska State Journal*, (4 April 1893), 304.


789 Unmarked newspaper clipping, (November, 1893), Box 25, Folder 10-1, 27, D.C.L.. Emphasis added. See appendix for a reproduction of this device's patent illustration, Figure 22 (from Hannon 249).

790 "An Adjunct to the Fair," *Nebraska State Journal*, (4 April 1893), 305.

791 Murray Nelson, letter to Percy MacKay, (1909), in Box 25, Folder 10-6, 3-4, D.C.L.

792 Murray Nelson, letter to Percy MacKay, (1909), in Box 25, Folder 10-6, 5, D.C.L.

793 "An Adjunct to the Fair," *Nebraska State Journal*, (4 April 1893), 304.

794 "The Spectatorium," *New York Times*, (2 April 1893), in Box 25, Folder 10-1, 16, D.C.L.

795 "MacKay's Big Show," *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, (20 March 1893) in Box 25, Folder 10-1, 15, D.C.L.

796 Steele MacKay, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (5 February 1893), as cited in *Epoch II*: 347.

798 Wesley Swanson, "Wings and Backdrops: The Story of American Stage Scenery from the Beginning to 1875," Drama, vol. 18, (December, 1927), 79.


800 Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to The World Finder, (5 February 1894), as cited in Epoch II: 347.

801 See Steele MacKaye, U.S. Patent 490, 484 (granted 24 January 1893). See appendix for a reproduction of the patent illustration, Figure 23 (from Hannon 271).

802 Hannon (1976), 22.

803 Hannon (1976), 22

804 Hannon (1976), 22. Hannon's source is "Final Prospectus of the Columbian Celebration Company, Chicago, (July, 1892), D.C.L.," as cited in Hannon 14, 18. See appendix for a reproduction of the patent illustration, Figure 24 (from Hannon 224).

805 Fitzgerald 71.


807 Hopkins 274.

808 Hopkins 274.

809 Steele MacKaye, patent of "Apparatus for Producing Increased Realism in Scenic Effects," no. 490,490 (granted 24 January 1893), as cited in Hannon 238.

810 Steele MacKaye, patent of "Apparatus for Producing Increased Realism in Scenic Effects," no. 490,490 (granted 24 January 1893), as cited in Hannon 238.

811 Hannon 102.

812 Hannon 105.

813 Hannon 105. He is possibly referring to archival material touched upon in Epoch II: Addenda c.
814 Murray Nelson, letter to Percy MacKaye, (1909), in Box 25, Folder 10-6, 4, D.C.L. Also see Hannon 105.

815 Fitzgerald 66. Emphasis his.


819 Hannon (1976), 23. See appendix for a reproduction of this device's patent illustrations, Figures 25, 26 (from Hannon 99, 101, respectively).


823 "MacKaye's Big Show," *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, (20 March 1893), in Box 25, Folder 10-1, 15, D.C.L. Also found as, Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (5 February 1894), as cited in Epoch II: 347. See also Tim Fort, "Steele MacKaye's Lighting visions for 'The World Finder,'" *Nineteenth Century Theatre*, vol. 18, no. 1+2, (Summer/Winter, 1990), 35-51.

824 Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, (5 February 1894), as cited in Epoch II: 347.

825 "The Spectatorium," *New York Times*, (2 April 1893), Box 25, Folder 10-1, 16, D.C.L.

826 Fitzgerald 73.

827 Fitzgerald 102. For a complete description of this effect see Fitzgerald 102-103.


833 Bergman 231.


836 Fitzgerald 73.


838 Hannon (1976), 48. See also *Epoch II*: Addenda c; and "Electric Effects at the Chicago Scenitorium," *The Western Electrician*, vol. xiv, no. 8, (Chicago), (24 February 1894), 86.


841 Steele MacKaye, U.S. Patent 490,481 (granted 24 January 1893). Also cited in Hannon 295. See appendix for reproduction of this device's patent illustration, Figure 27 (from *Epoch II*: Addenda lxxix).
Hannon (1976), 48. See appendix for reproduction of this device's patent illustration, Figure 28 (from Epoch II: Addenda lxxxvii).

Fitzgerald 73.

Frank Russell Green, letter to Percy MacKaye, (30 October 1924, and 4 April 1925), as cited in Epoch II: 322.

See appendix for a reproduction of a newspaper illustration of the intended model effect, Figure 36 [from "The Spectatorium Magazine," (May, 1893), Box 25, Folder 10-4, D.C.L.].

"An Adjunct to the Fair," Nebraska State Journal, (4 April 1893), 305.

Frank Russell Green, letter to Percy MacKaye, (30 October 1924, and 4 April 1925), as cited in Epoch II: 323.

M.J. Moynet 150.

Chicago Sunday Advertiser, (26 March 1893), as cited in Epoch II: 387.

Steele MacKaye, interview, Chicago Times, (16 August 1892), in "Box 7," D.C.L., as cited in Guthrie 164.


Hannon 21-22.

Steele MacKaye, unmarked handwritten lecture, (likely the manuscript introduction to The World Finder), Box 34, D.C.L.. The books referred to by MacKaye may have been the following: Washington Irving, The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus, 2nd. ed., 2 vols. (Philadelphia: D. McKay, 1892); William H. Prescott, History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic, 3 vols., ed. John Foster Kirk, (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1883).

This four act version is mentioned in "The Spectatorium," The New York Times, (2 April 1893), Box 25, Folder 10-1, 16, D.C.L..

Steele MacKaye, manuscript of "Scenario of The Great Discovery: A Spectatorio in Three Acts," Box 34, 33, D.C.L..

Steele MacKaye, manuscript of "Scenario of The Great Discovery: A Spectatorio in Three Acts," Box 34, 80-81, D.C.L..

Steele MacKaye, manuscript of "Scenario of The Great Discovery: A Spectatorio in Three Acts," Box 34, 84-85, D.C.L..
858 Steele MacKaye, interview, "MacKaye's Big Show," *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, (20 March 1893), Box 25, Folder 10-1, D.C.L. Also cited in *Epoch II*: 363.

859 Various pictures taken on the World's Fair grounds during the summer of 1893 provide glimpses of the Spectatorium and suggest that its construction was further along than period reports indicate. See Larry Anderson, "Yesterday's City: Steele MacKaye's Grandiose Folly," *Chicago History*, (Fall/Winter, 1987/88), 114. This article includes a photograph of the Iowa Building behind which the Spectatorium can be seen. Anderson believes that the building got as far as the "Roof Garden" level (as suggested in *Epoch II*: 364), but close scrutiny suggests that the building was raised to the "Grand Restaurant" level, (twice as high as Anderson claims). Furthering this idea is that reports of a cyclone having torn the roof off suggest that the building was completed to a "roof" level. Additionally, the roof fell one hundred seventy feet to the ground. This places its position as being at the Grand Restaurant position. For a comparative reference see the cross-section view of the Spectatorium in the appendix (Figure 16) where the Roof Garden restaurant is labeled "O," and the Grand Restaurant is labeled "S." Similarly, material in Anderson's article raises another issue. Comparing the view of the Spectatorium half-hidden behind the Iowa Building as found in Anderson's article, with the same photograph published in an official book on the Fair it is evident that the lingering background image of the Spectatorium in the former photograph was removed (i.e., covered over in the photograph). See James W. Shepp and Daniel B. Shepp, *Shepp's World's Fair Photographed*, (Chicago: Globe Bible Publishing Co., 1893), 382. Traces of the Spectatorium's existence do show up in Shepp's photographs of the Maine Building (391) and the photograph of the Virginia Building (435). (This latter photograph is reproduced in Hannon 67.) The photographs of these buildings not only suggest that the Spectatorium reached the restaurant level, but also clearly demonstrate the Spectatorium's purposeful removal from the official Iowa Building photograph.


861 Vardac 149, who cites Percy MacKaye in *Epoch II*: 353.


863 See appendix for a series of engravings depicting the voyage across the Atlantic as depicted in the March 1893 investors' model production, along with renderings of the convent of La Rabida, Vallambrosa, and an illustration of the Scenitorium stage, Figures 29-37.

864 "MacKaye's Big Show," *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, (20 March 1893), in Box 25, Folder 10-1, 14, D.C.L..

865 *Chicago Evening Post*, (19 March 1893), as cited in *Epoch II*: 380.

866 "MacKaye's Big Show," *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, (20 March 1893), in Box 25, Folder 10-1, 14, D.C.L.
867 Chicago Evening Post, (19 March 1893), as cited in Epoch II: 380.

868 Vardac 150, but he failed to account for this figure. A later newspaper mentioned the seating capacity was less than a thousand, see: unreferenced newspaper citation, (Chicago), (15 February 1894), as cited in Epoch II: 454. Vardac appears to use Percy MacKaye's incorrect supposition of the Scenitorium proscenium as sixty by twenty feet, when it was actually twenty by twelve feet, as discussed later (see Epoch II: 427).

869 Chicago Tribune, (October, 1893), as cited in Epoch II: 427. This dimension is in keeping with a proscenium opening of twenty by twelve feet, and not the sixty by twenty feet suggested by Percy MacKaye.

870 "Model of the Scenes," Chicago Record, (20 March 1893), in Box 25, Folder 10-1, 13, D.C.L.. This is confirmed by the reporter who noted that the investors' model was, "built on a scale of less than one-half inch to the foot" [Chicago Sunday Advertiser, (26 March 1893), as cited in Epoch II: 387] and the reference to this being more likely one-twentieth scale. [See Chicago Sunday Advertiser, (26 March 1893), as cited in Epoch II: 387.] At a scale of one-twentieth the original, the back cycloramic wall for this investors' model would have been twenty feet long. This is confirmed in an anecdote told by Frank Russell Green, who stated it was about eighteen feet. (See Epoch II: 322.) James Fraser, letter to Percy MacKaye, (1926), confirms this, as cited in Epoch II: 371.


873 Unmarked newspaper clipping, (November, 1893), in Box 25, Folder 10-1, 27, D.C.L.. See appendix for a reproduction of a newspaper illustration depicting the Scenitorium on the occasion of MacKaye's funeral, Figure 29 (from "Funeral of MacKaye," The Chicago Record, (28 February 1894), unmarked scrapbook, 134, D.C.L.).

874 "MacKaye's Big Show," Chicago Inter-Ocean, (20 March 1893), in Box 25, Folder 10-1, 14, D.C.L.

875 "Plays and Players," The Chicago Times, (6 February 1894), in Box 25, Folder 10-6, D.C.L.. Also cited in Epoch II: 443. The broken wind machine was working in the initial investors' model show and won positive reviews for its verisimilitude. Its effects will be discussed later.

876 Steele MacKaye, unmarked handwritten lecture, (likely the manuscript introduction to The World Finder), Box 34, 3 of 12, D.C.L.

878 "Plays and Players," The Chicago Times, (6 February 1894), in Box 25, Folder 10-6, D.C.L..

879 Unreferenced newspaper article, (11 February 1894), as cited in Epoch II: 449.


881 Unmarked newspaper review, (Chicago), (4 February 1894), Box 25, Folder 10-6, D.C.L.. Emphasis added.

882 Unmarked newspaper clipping, (November, 1893), Box 25, Folder 10-1, 27, D.C.L.

883 "Model of the Scenes," Chicago Record, (20 March 1893), in Box 25, Folder 10-1, 13, D.C.L.. Emphasis added. See appendix for a reproduction of a newspaper illustration of "La Rabida," Figure 30 [from "MacKaye's Big Show," Chicago Inter-Ocean, (20 March 1893), Box 25, Folder 10-1, 14, D.C.L.].


887 "Plays and Players," The Chicago Times, (6 February 1894), in Box 25, Folder 10-6, D.C.L.. Emphasis added. Also cited in Epoch II: 444. See appendix for a reproduction of newspaper illustration of a portion of scene two, Figure 31 [from "Model of the Scenes," Chicago Record, (20 March 1893), Box 25, Folder 10-1, 13, D.C.L.].

888 "MacKaye's Big Show," Chicago Evening Post, (19 March 1893), as cited in Epoch II: 381.

889 "Model of the Scenes," Chicago Record, (20 March 1893), in Box 25, Folder 10-1, 13, D.C.L.. The sequence of events described here match closely with a series of newspaper illustrations published with reviews of this production. See appendix for reproductions of these engravings, specifically Figures 32-37. Figure 32 is from "The Spectatorium Magazine," (May, 1893), Box 25, Folder 10-4, D.C.L.. Figure 33 is from "Model of the Scenes," Chicago Record, (20 March 1893), Box 25, Folder 10-1, 13, D.C.L.. Figure 34 is from "Scene and Song Unite," Chicago Herald, (20 March 1893), Box 25, Folder 10-1, D.C.L.. Figure 35 is from "MacKaye's Big Show," Chicago Inter-Ocean, (20 March 1893), Box 25, Folder 10-1, 14, D.C.L.. Figure 36 is from "The Spectatorium Magazine," (May, 1893), Box 25, Folder 10-4, D.C.L.. Figure 37 is from "Scene and Song Unite," Chicago Herald, (20 March 1893), Box 25, Folder 10-1, 11, D.C.L.. See also Epoch II: plate 90, opposite 373.
Steele MacKaye, manuscript introduction to *The World Finder*, "Box 7," D.C.L., as cited in Guthrie 183-184.

"Scene and Song Unite," *Chicago Herald*, (20 March 1893), in Box 25, Folder 10-1, 10, D.C.L.

Boucicault 433.

See *Epoch II*: 356.

Murray Nelson, letter to Percy MacKaye, (1909), in Box 25, Folder 10-6, 5, D.C.L.

See *Epoch II*: 354.


Murray Nelson, letter to Percy MacKaye, (1909), in Box 25, Folder 10-6, 5, D.C.L.


"MacKaye's Big Show," *Chicago Evening Post*, (19 March 1893), as cited in *Epoch II*: 381.


Steele MacKaye, letter to Percy MacKaye, (Chicago), (3 December 1893), as cited in *Epoch II*: 433.

"Plays and Players," *The Chicago Times*, (6 February 1894), Box 25, Folder 10-6, D.C.L.

This is mentioned in the scenario of the Scenitorium production as published in a Chicago newspaper, under the title, "MacKaye's Scenitorium," (4 February 1894), Box 25, Folder 10-6, D.C.L.. See review of benefit performance for MacKaye in *Chicago Times*, (21 February 1894), as cited in *Epoch II*: 457.


907 Steele MacKaye, letter to Frederick Archer, (16 November 1893), as cited in Epoch II: Appendix lxiii.

908 "MacKaye's Scenitorium," Chicago Inter-Ocean, (6 February 1894), Box 25, Folder 10-1, 26, D.C.L.. Also cited in Epoch II: 446.


911 "MacKaye's Scenitorium," Chicago Inter-Ocean, (6 February 1894), Box 25, Folder 10-1, 26, D.C.L..


915 "Plays and Players," The Chicago Times, (6 February 1894), in Box 25, Folder 10-6, D.C.L..


918 Unreferenced newspaper article, (11 February 1894), as cited in Epoch II: 449.

919 Anderson 113. See also Epoch II: 311, 460.

920 Hannon 215; though he does not cite his source.


924 Burg 229.


926 *The Spirit of the Times*, (9 December 1893), 672. Emphasis added.

927 The tremendous complexity of the financial problems arising from the failure of the Spectatorium dragged out in court for more than nine years and involved over one hundred lawyers. See "Stockholders Lose in MacKay Case," unmarked newspaper clipping, Box 25, Folder 10-1, D.C.L.. See also the Supreme Court of Illinois records: "Gillette versus Chicago Title and Trust Co.," (23 October 1907), *The Northeastern Reporter*, vol. 82, no. 7, 891-910. For a contemporary summary of this case see Murray Nelson, letter to Percy MacKay, (1909), in Box 25, Folder 10-6, 1-3 of 6, D.C.L..

928 Steele MacKay, letter to Elwyn A. Barron, theatre critic for the *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, (1 February 1894), Box 19, D.C.L.. Emphasis added.

929 *Chicago Evening Post*, (6 February 1894), as cited in Eaker 92.


931 A.B. Walkley ("Spectator"), *The Star*, (London), (2 August 1890), as cited in Southern 266.

932 Meisel 44.

933 Curtis Dunham, letter to Percy MacKaye, (n.d.), as cited in *Epoch II*: 279. For a contemporary assessment of MacKaye's novel see Moses P. Handy, unmarked newspaper clipping, (Chicago), (February, 1894), unmarked scrapbook, 134, D.C.L..

934 Professor Swing's eulogy, as noted in "Funeral of MacKaye," *Chicago Record*, (28 February 1894), in unmarked scrapbook, 134, D.C.L..
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Box 17. Folder 2-5, "Anarchy souvenir," D.C.L.

Box 17. Folder 5, D.C.L.

Box 17. brown envelope, D.C.L.

Box 17. "Program of Hazel Kirke," D.C.L.

Box 17. "Hazel Kirke Programs and Advertisements," D.C.L.

Box 17. Folder "Theatre Receipts, Nov. 4, 1880—Jan. 7, 1881—," D.C.L.

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Box 25. Folder 10-6, MacKaye, Steele. Letter of proposal for the Electric Spectacle Company. 16 September 1891. D.C.L.


Box 25. "Final Prospectus of the Columbian Celebration Company," D.C.L.


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"The Lyceum, May-October, 1884"

"Monaldi, Hamlet, Rose Michel, Etc. II"

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Patents:


Appendix

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15. An unidentified rendering of the MacKaye Spectatorium.
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18. Steele MacKaye's patent diagram for the scenitorium.
20. Patent diagram of the silent unfolding announcer.
22. Patent diagram of the telescopic stage.
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36. Following a cyclone, the second day at sea ends with a rainbow in The Great Discovery (1893).
37. The appearance of the New World (San Salvador) in The Great Discovery (1893).
S. MACKAYE.
Theater Appliance.

No. 222,143.
Patented Dec. 2, 1879.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, STEELE MACKAYE, of New York and D., have invented a new and useful Improved Theatre Stage and Orchestra, which is fully set forth in the following specification and accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a front view of my improved stage and orchestra; Fig. 2, a vertical section of the stages at line X X of Fig. 3; Fig. 3, a plan or top view of the same with the casing removed.

The object of my invention is to facilitate the speedy setting of the scenery of different acts of a stage play or opera, an economy of space in the auditorium of a theatre, and the concentration of light upon the stage with the least inconvenience to the audience.

These ends are accomplished by constructing two movable stages, one above the other, with appliances for lifting and depressing the same, in the upper one, done by the action of the stage-lights hid beneath it, casting the light from above within, instead of from below upon, the stage.

A represents the stage proper; B, the flare of the proscenium thereof; C, the lower movable stage; D, the upper movable stage; E, F, E, the guide-posts; H, movable stage-frame; I, I, the suspension-ropes; J, J, the pulleys therefor; K, K, the balance-weights; L, the hoisting-ropes; M, its pulley; N, the drum; O, the ratchet and pawl; P, the orchestra; R, the stage-lights; S, the motor; T, the motor: U, the spring thereon; V, the floor of the auditorium.

The operation of these contrivances and arrangements is this: Suppose the lower movable stage, C, to be secured on a level with stage A, the scenes, furniture, and properties of the first and second scenes or acts of a play may be set on movable stages C and D. After the presentation of the first of these, automatic latch S is withdrawn by rod T, and the pawl of ratchet O on drum N is released, and both stages C and D lowered by rope L, passing over pulley M and drum N.

The second scene or act may then be given immediately from movable stage D, and while it is in progress the third scene or act will be struck and changed on stage C.

Upon the completion of the second act or scene, stages C and D are raised by the action of the apparatus before described, bringing stage C, with the third act or scene set thereon, upon the level of stage A, ready to be presented to the audience.

While the third scene is being acted upon stage C the fourth scene is being struck and changed on stage D, ready for presentation in its turn on the conclusion of the performance of scene three, and this process is continued until all the scenes and acts of the play have been performed.

The latches S S are automatic in their action in catching under a roller of the proper size, and returning them into their places as soon as the beveled-edge roller, which in rising pushed them aside, has risen to its proper projection which constitutes the latch.

The extension of the rafters of the stage-frame within the guide-posts causes them to serve also as guides to steady the stages in their rise and descent between the posts.

These compound stages may be divided and separately moved, instead of together, as herein explained, without departing from the leading idea and principle of my invention, which is the organizing of double stages capable of being separately operated upon at the same time for successive presentation.

It will be seen that by this contrivance the time formerly lost between the sets in setting the scene for the succeeding act will be saved, and the audience spared the long and fatiguing waits that often intervene between the acts of elaborately mounted plays at modern theatres.

The location of orchestra P above the stage, with concealed lights R beneath it reflecting inwardly directly upon the stage, accomplishes two desirable ends: The space ordinarily given up to the orchestra in the auditorium is saved for the audience, and the stage-lights, which, however carefully screened, are necessarily an annoyance and an injury to the eyes of many spectators, especially to those occupying places in the boxes and upper tiers, are removed in a position where their entire force can be concentrated directly upon the stage, the rays in all other directions being cut off.

What I claim as my invention, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

The combination of stage proper, A, movable stages C and D, connecting-stage II, and guide-posts E, E, E, F, provided with a hoisting, securing, and balancing apparatus, constructed and adapted to operate together substantially as and for the purposes set forth.

WITNESSES:

STEEL MACKAYE.

2. Steele MacKaye's Double Stage patent (1879).
5. Madison Square Theatre's interior, as drawn by its architects, F.H. Kimball and T. Wisedell (1880), illustrating the act one setting of *Hazel Kirke*.
6. A tableau featuring the second act shoemaker's home in *The Russian Honeymoon* (1883) as photographed at the Madison Square Theatre.
7. The first act lodge exterior of *The Rajah* (1883) as photographed at the Madison Square Theatre.
8. The second act drawing room in *The Rajah* (1883) as photographed at the Madison Square Theatre.
9. The third act "glade" in *The Rajah* (1883) as photographed at the Madison Square Theatre.
10. The second act drawing room in *Candida* (1904) as photographed at the Madison Square Theatre.
VENTILATION ARRANGEMENTS OF THE MADISON SQUARE THEATER, NEW YORK.

EXPLANATION OF THE PLATES.

Fig. 1.—a, a, s. e, s. Inlet air shaft.  b. Ice chamber.  c. Air shaft to blowing fan.  d. Blowing fan from which the air is distributed by pipes opening under the seats in the auditorium, as indicated by the arrows, e, e.  f, f, f. Drains or spouts shafts connecting with the exhaust fan, g.  h. Dust-sieves indicated by the wavy diagonal lines.  i. Stage and scene room.  k. Double stage.  l. Orchestra opening.

Fig. 2.—Enlarged view of the foot light arrangement.  a. Foot light with hood and opening at the back for the escape of the heated air into the horizontal chamber, b. In this chamber the gas pipes, c, for supplying the gas lights in various parts of the house are laid in order to heat the gas before being consumed.  d. Air duct for supplying chamber the gas pipes, c, for supplying the gas lights in various parts of the house are laid in order to heat the gas before being consumed.  e. Air duct for supplying and in Fig. 1.  All the horizontal outlet shafts in the house are similarly divided.

The arrows in the figures indicate the direction of the current of air.

11. A cross-section illustration of the Madison Square Theatre.
15. An unidentified rendering of the MacKaye Spectatorium.
17. A floor plan of the MacKay Spectatorium.
APPARATUS FOR PRODUCING INCREASED REALISM IN SCENIC EFFECTS.
No. 490,490.
Patented Jan. 24, 1893.

 Witnesses:

S. MACKAYE.
Inventor.

18. Steele MacKaye's patent diagram for the scenitorium.
S. MACKAYE.
PROSCENIUM ADJUSTER.

No. 490,482.
Patented Jan. 24, 1893.

20. Patent diagram of the silent unfolding announcer.

Patented Jan. 24, 1893.

No. 490,487.

Inhalator.

S. MACARE.
22. Patent diagram of the telescopic stage.
26. Patent diagram showing a cross section of the wind machine.
27. Patent diagram of the nebulator.
29. The Scenitorium (1894).

30. The first scene of *The Great Discovery* (1893).


33. The departure from Palos in *The Great Discovery* (1893).
34. Palos recedes as Columbus' fleet sails forth in *The Great Discovery* (1893).

35. Passing the last sight of land in *The Great Discovery* (1893).
36. Following a cyclone, the second day at sea ends with a rainbow in *The Great Discovery* (1893).

37. The appearance of the New World (San Salvador) in *The Great Discovery* (1893).