

# Research Statement of Todd F. Edwards

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As a designer, research is an integral component of everything I do. I constantly explore historical sources, art, music, world views, past and current events extrapolating and converting my findings to components that create the environments of the production and aid in the telling of the desired story. The collaborative nature of theatrical and performance design requires me to integrate my research with the research of others on the design team creating a cohesive experience. My minor in art has exposed me to many artistic forms and movements that I routinely use in my work. When approaching a design that has cultural, and/or historical components I strive to insure that I am fully understanding and respectful of the cultural and historical significances being presented by looking to multiple sources and consulting with individuals, groups or organizations that identify directly to the material being researched.

My current area of study is exploring the use of traditional cinematic effects and techniques routinely found in film and television and including them in live performance. I am researching and implementing the inclusion of green screen technology, motion capture and animation. I have been studying the impact of this technology in story telling and ways that it can be used for scenic, lighting, media, sound design and special effects. I am interested in how the inclusion of these techniques and its related technology support the story as it is being presented to a live audience. Does it aid in the storytelling process or take the audience out of the live experience? Is it distracting or just spectacle for the sake of spectacle. How do these things need to be altered given the performance being experienced i.e. stage play, musical, dance/movement or installation both static and interactive?

The next step in my research is including more game theory, virtual and augmented reality in performance design and production. I am researching how these technologies works in the traditional storytelling paradigm of live theater, dance, music, installation and performance art. I am interested in finding ways to integrate these techniques in ways that aid in the audience's experience and heightens their enjoyment and understanding of the material. It is important to me to find how to balance the inclusion of these technologies in the design process so the actual technology become transparent and the gained effect aids in the expression of the story and how it is experienced by the audience/spectator. This balance is delicate and unique to each production.