

# Miss saigon essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The Staging was very impressive. Everything was life-sized looking extremely realistic, they even went to the extreme of getting a computer operated helicopter weighing 800kg.

The helicopter was so large it would need a 2.5m cube box. Also the Ho Chi Minh gold statue creates a amazing atmosphere, it is 12ft tall and forms an amazing backdrop to the stage. Props this large were used to create the visual effects to really shock the audience, and put across to them on just what a scale this performance was on.

They help make the show impact you in a big way, the performance is put together extremely well, there are a lot of large sets, but not a stagehand in sight or a pause in the action. This is because the show was thoroughly rehearsed, been performed to perfection and changed hundreds of times The makers of this production have used every inch of the incredibly large and high stage in the hippodrome to their advantage. The vast stage is surrounded by tall blinds, which hang the whole length of the stage. These create a plain backdrop, but are very cleverly designed in such a way that a certain amount of blinds come up a certain way, to let a set or prop through, only leaving a matter of a few inches on each edge. This shows how much time must have gone into making the sets, as they have been measured out so carefully.

The effect on the audience when the set goes through the blinds is very impressive as it looks like it is simply disappearing off the stage. The speed and the fact the blinds are so precise means they have computers which have been programmed very well. I understand that 32motors were used in

this production and 15 alone were used moving these enormous venetian blinds. Everything runs smoothly, so the performers never have to pause. The show has been choreographed extremely well, this meant there is always something to look at on the stage.

Each song that was performed, the actors involved knew exactly where they needed to be and put so much energy into every song, the movement was amazing, and in really high energy scene that involved a large number of people, involving back flips and simultaneous movements. The audience was overwhelmed with the performance, there was a lot to look at and take in. The choreography was often very elegant, and moved the audience greatly. A section of the performance that impressed me was when all the actors who were on stage were dancing, they all produced sticks with a strip of red silk on the end, all performers knew which way to wave it and what patterns to make. The final effect on the audience looking down on this was extremely impressive, all the red strips making the same patterns 20 times over on the stage.

Members of the cast know exactly what they are doing at each part of the performance, no actor ever went out of character, and each actor's body language benefited and fitted in with the scene that was happening on stage. Even if it was a crowd scene, the audience could never pick out a specific actor and wonder why he or she was doing what they were. For example, The red light district, each sexual dancer had a small stage, and were dancing to a group of men, these people were moving around hurriedly, observing each one. Chris and John were there as well trying to find Kim, all this was happening at once at an impressive pace, but not one

member of the cast showed any interest of the other happenings on the stage. In this scene there is so much for the audience to look at they can not just take it as one. There are a lot of red lights above the happenings advertising the sex shop below, to further complicate this scene.

The audience was very impressed with the accuracy and pace of this scene, it is one that has stuck in my head the most. The show will need twenty-two, 44ft trucks to move it between venues, this shows how immense the set and cast are. As well as the incredibly large props I have already mentioned, there were several extremely realistic room sets, these were open-ended rooms that wheeled on stage, in which a lot of the action took place. They were used as bedrooms mainly, 2 of Chris's bedrooms, the army one and the room in which Kim and Chris marry. Kim's child's room, with a curtain to hide the bed.

Chris and Ellen, his new wife's hotel room, they stay in while looking for Kim. These rooms closed off a section of the stage, so the scene being performed in them could have all the attention, and not have to use the vast stage. Each room was very well decorated and designed, None of the effects used would have looked half as impressive without the stunning lighting effects that were used throughout this production. Each performance uses 6 follow-spots, 20 vari-lights, 30 moving light curtains, 8 fog and smoke machines, and 135 kilos of dry ice.

The lighting effects helped to create the general overall atmosphere of the scene, this was done very effectively and accurately. In the opening scene, the 8 girls were all sitting in a crowd at very different parts of the stage

singing in the near darkness, 8 spotlights very cleverly switched on find the exact points of the girls faces without moving toward them. I thought this was very clever. Particularly as just before this elegant, moving part, was a very high-energy scene in the bar.

I thought the two effects contrasted each other very well. I think this production of Miss Saigon combines all the visual effects needed to make an unforgettable performance, that most people will see again and again. As 28million people have seen the show now, it is unlikely the show will fail.