

Michael Chekhov

July 29, 1939

QUESTIONS ARISING OUT OF FIRST SHOWING
OF SKETCHES FOR SETTINGS
FOR ADVENTURES OF SAMUEL PICKWICK, ESQ.

1. Could the general feeling be that everything is so old that it is ready to fall down - not one sound piece of wood.
2. Could we really show the divisions between the rooms so that when people hide, the audience will feel that they are really hidden in another room. This could be done by showing sections or separate parts of the rooms.
3. Could the kitchen in the last scene be more of a kitchen - a place where no one lives and which is used by servants - colder and less sumptuous. Hooks for hanging hams, etc.
4. In the last scene would we have more the impression of winter - snow in the windows - more feeling of Christmas.
5. The mullioned window gives a suggestion for discarding the street idea, and showing all such scenes through a huge window - the election scene and coachman scene, etc.
6. In the first scene we don't need the kitchen, and would prefer to use that space for changing the dimensions of the other three rooms.
7. In the first scene the way in which the people appear and disappear is extremely charming, and perhaps this could be used in other scenes by making such "holes" in the setting.
8. Will it be possible to use the idea of the moon, and sunset, etc.
9. The question of colors - they must be colors which speak but which are covered with dust - dust over everything.
10. Especially in the Inn where candles and lamps are used, could many different sources of light be found.
11. The settings for the first scene are much more humorous than the others, and it would be desirable to carry this feeling of humor throughout the other scenes, with the exception of the Frison scene. Perhaps we could increase this feeling of humor by changing the proportions, making certain parts crooked, etc.
12. Could we avoid any large empty spaces - that is spaces

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(QUESTIONS CONTINUED)

which are neither broken by furniture or architectural effects such as steps, walls, doors, etc. Such empty spaces are found for instance, in Mrs. Weller's Inn, in the corner of the Frison Scene, which is on the audience's right hand, and in the Kitchen Scene at the end.

13. The costumes must also be old and as-if covered with dust. Could they also express the characters, i.e., the main emotional life of the character. Perhaps the attached illustrations #3, 4, & 5 & 13 & 14 would give an idea of what is meant by this. Would not figures such as the one shown in illustration #7 be very expressive in the Night Scene in the Inn, for Tupman, Wamle, and Pickwick?

14. An illustration of the suggestion that humor be underlined in the settings is found in such a love scene as shown in illustration #8.

15. In the second scene of the First Act, I cannot recollect a back kitchen entrance where the scene of the meeting between Sam Weller and his father, and the scene between Sam and Mary could be played.

16. The second scene of the First Act is in the Inn called the "Blue Lion" - could we somehow have a sign or placard bearing the name of the inn and a drawing (something like that which is amusingly described by Dickens). The huge lamp in illustration #9 gives a suggestion.

17. As one of the numerous examples of incorrect dimensions and proportions which are so peculiar to the style which we are trying to achieve, illustration #1 is submitted.

18. In addition to the suggestion outlined in question #1 everything should not only be old and incorrect in proportion but should actually be off-balance. Although illustration #2 is a boat scene a certain impression of this off-balance quality can be got from it.

19. Although the carriage in illustration #10 is only for one person perhaps such kind of carriage could be used in the Election Scene - if possible a carriage on two wheels.

20. Illustration #8 contains a suggestion of chains for the Prison Scene.

21. Illustration #11 is submitted as a suggestion for an archway from under which the carriage might appear with charming effect.

22. It might be interesting to show in the street such characteristic sign posts and even turnstile as shown in illustration #12.

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TIME AND DAY AND YEAR FOR SCENES

The whole play takes place between autumn & Xmas Eve.

The first Scene is early morning - sunshine

The second " is sunset - almost dark - perhaps the street lights have been lighted. It ends in darkness and moonlight.

The third " is night - thunderstorm

The fourth " is early morning

The fifth " is dawn - early morning

The sixth " is Christmas Eve - from 11:00 to 12:00 o'clock at night.

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Costumes for Adventures of Samuel Pickwick Esq.

SAMUEL PICKWICK	Scenes I, II, & III	- One costume with "uniform" buttons (P.C. for Pickwick Club) Hat and cape.
	" II	- Night Shirt (dresses on stage).
	" IV, V, & VI	- Another costume, with possible slight variations for different scenes, to be changed during quick scene changes. Overcoat for scene VI (Cold winter).
WINKLE	" I & II	- Sportsman costume with "uniform" buttons. Hat.
	" IV, V, & VI	- Another costume (not sportsman).
SNODGRASS	" I & II	- One costume with "uniform" buttons. Hat.
	" VI	- Same costume with different buttons.
TUPMAN	" I, II, & III	- One costume with "uniform" buttons. Hat and cape.
	" II	- Nightshirt. (Dresses on stage).
	" VI	- Same costume with different buttons. Overcoat (Cold-winter).
MRS. BARDELL	" I	- House Dress.
	" IV & V	- Same dress with changes such as cape or light-weight coat, etc. Hat.
TOMMY	" I, IV, & V	- One costume.

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MRS. CLUPPINS	Scenes I, IV, & V	- One costume with variations for Courtroom and Prison scenes. Hat.
WARDLE	" II & III	- Travelling costume. Hat. Coat (Light-weight)
	" II	- Nightshirt (dresses on stage).
	" VI	- Another costume (dressed carelessly - lack of sleep for three nights.
RACHEL WARDLE	" II & III	- Costume with cape or coat, etc. Hat.
	" VI	- Same dress with variations.
ARABELLA WARDLE	" II	- Costume with cape or coat, etc. Hat.
	" V & VI	- Same as above with variations.
EMILY WARDLE	" II	- Costume with cape or coat, etc. Hat.
	" VI	- Same dress with variations.
ALFRED JINGLE	" II, III & VI	- One costume. Hat.
	" IV	- Costume as "Capt. Fitz-marshall". No hat.
	" V	- Tramp costume (Prison scene.)
MR. WELLER	" II, III, IV, V & VI	- One coachman costume. Overcoat. Muffler. Hat.

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MRS. WELLER	Scenes III & V	- One costume. Hat and cape for Scene V.
SAM WELLER	" I	- One costume.
	" II, III, IV, V & VI	- Another costume (kind of uniform.) Hat. (Quick change between Scenes I and II).
MR. STIGGINS	" III, V, & VI-	One hat. One costume. One overcoat to be worn in Scene 5 and again in Scene 6, to give impression of poverty, therefore should be light-weight.
MR. FOGG	" I, IV & V	- One costume. (Smart black). Hat. Robe, etc. for Courtroom.
JUDGE	" IV	- One costume. Robe, etc. for Court.
MARY	" II	- Costume. Cape, possibly with hood.
	" VI	- Same dress with variations.
JOE	" II & VI	- One costume.
SERVANT (INN)	" II	- One costume.
COACHMAN	" II	- One costume. (He has been fighting so he has no hat or coat).
BARRISTER	" IV	- One costume. (Plays entire scene in Robe, etc.).
OFFICER	" V	- One costume. (Prison).
PICKWICKIANS (2)	" I	- Two costumes with "uniform" buttons. Two hats.

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WOMEN (6)	Scenes III	- Six costumes (Temperance meeting - without hats or coats).
MEMBERS OF CROWD (2)	" II	- Two costumes (Scene on street through door and window).
CLERKS (7)	" IV	- Seven costumes.
PRISONERS (6)	" V	- Six costumes. Quick change from Clerks to Prisoners.