

Elementary Stagecraft  
Design Styles & Techniques

# Design Styles

- **Naturalism** –utilizes real items to reconstruct everyday life onstage
- **Theatrical Realism** – uses theatrical conventions to represent life onstage
- **Expressionism** – non-illusionistic, uses non-realistic scenery to portray an eternal truth or express a metaphor relating to the dramatic action
- **Absurdism** – strives for ‘truth from chaos’ by creating a disjointed, illogical world illustrating the irrationality of human experience
- **Postmodernism** – breaks theatrical conventions by combining multiple styles and techniques to create layers of meaning for the audience

## Theatrical Realism

Traditional scenic techniques using wood, muslin and paint



*You Can't Take It With You* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

## Theatrical Realism

Standard wood framed flats with dimensional trim



*Light Up The Sky* : Players Theatre, CSULB

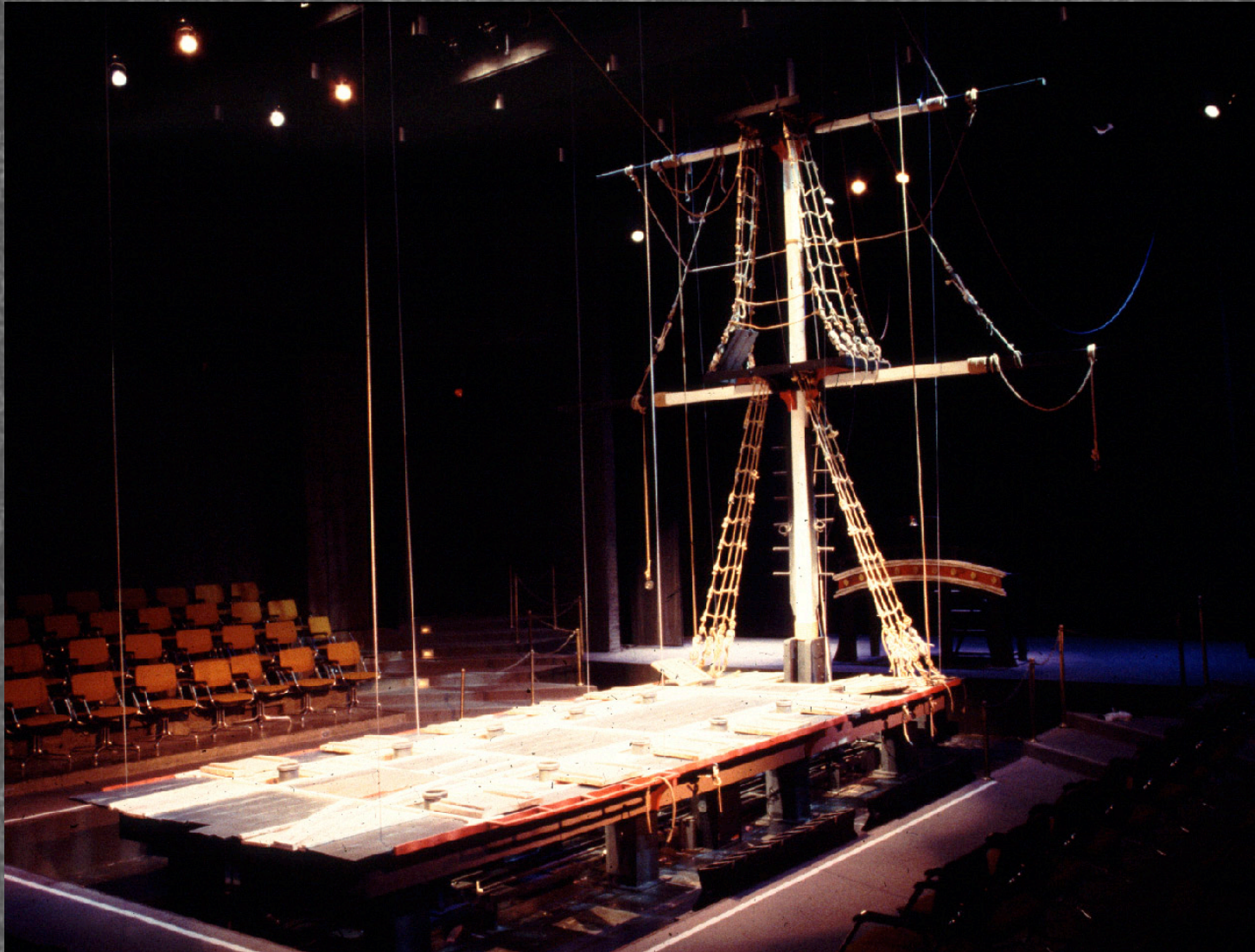
## Theatrical Realism

Dimensional trim is wood molding and vacuum-formed plastic



*Light Up The Sky* : Players Theatre, CSULB

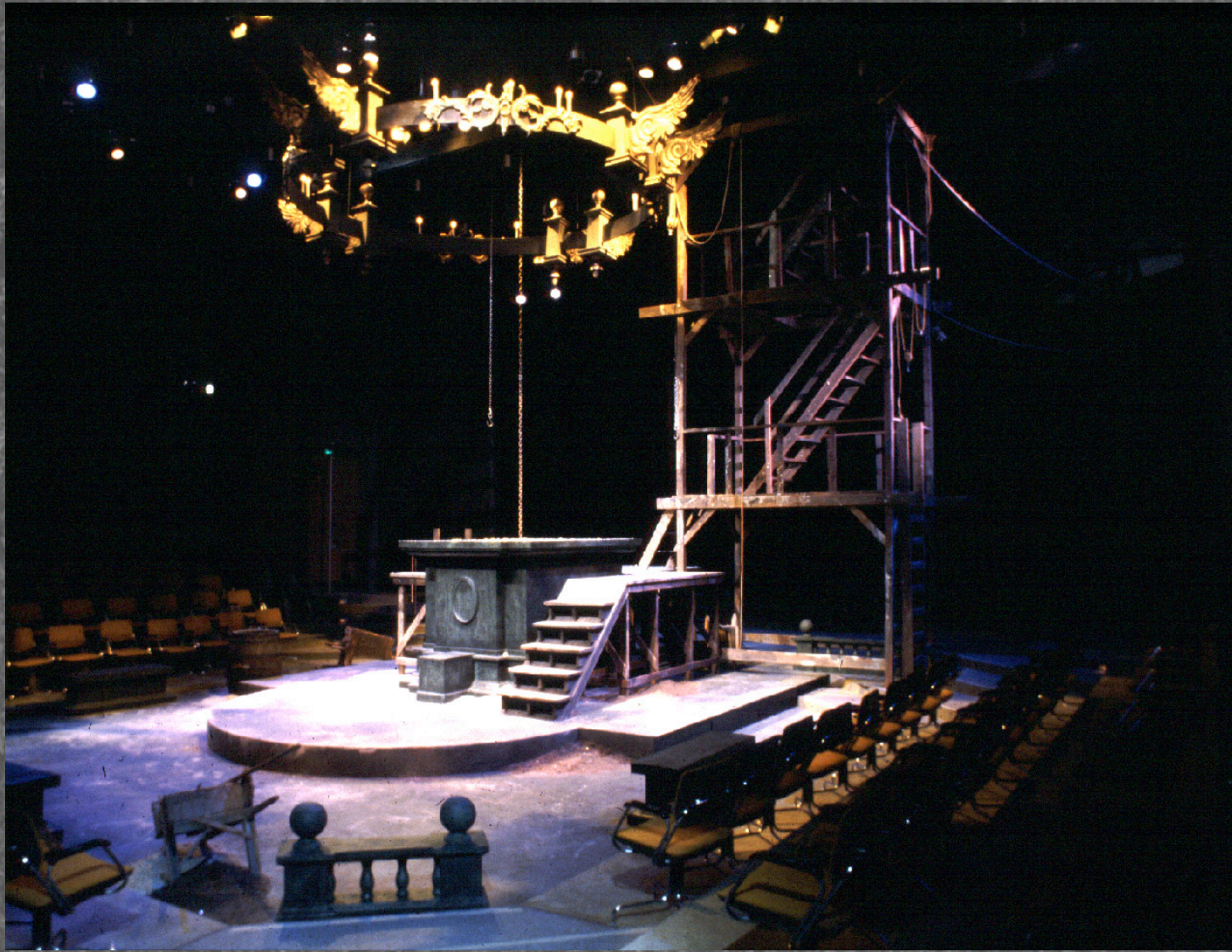
Deck of ship is suspended from the theatre ceiling to recreate the motion of a ship at sea. Pneumatic jacks stabilize the deck for the “land” scenes



*Warrior* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Primarily wood construction.

Overhead piece made from vacuum-formed plastic



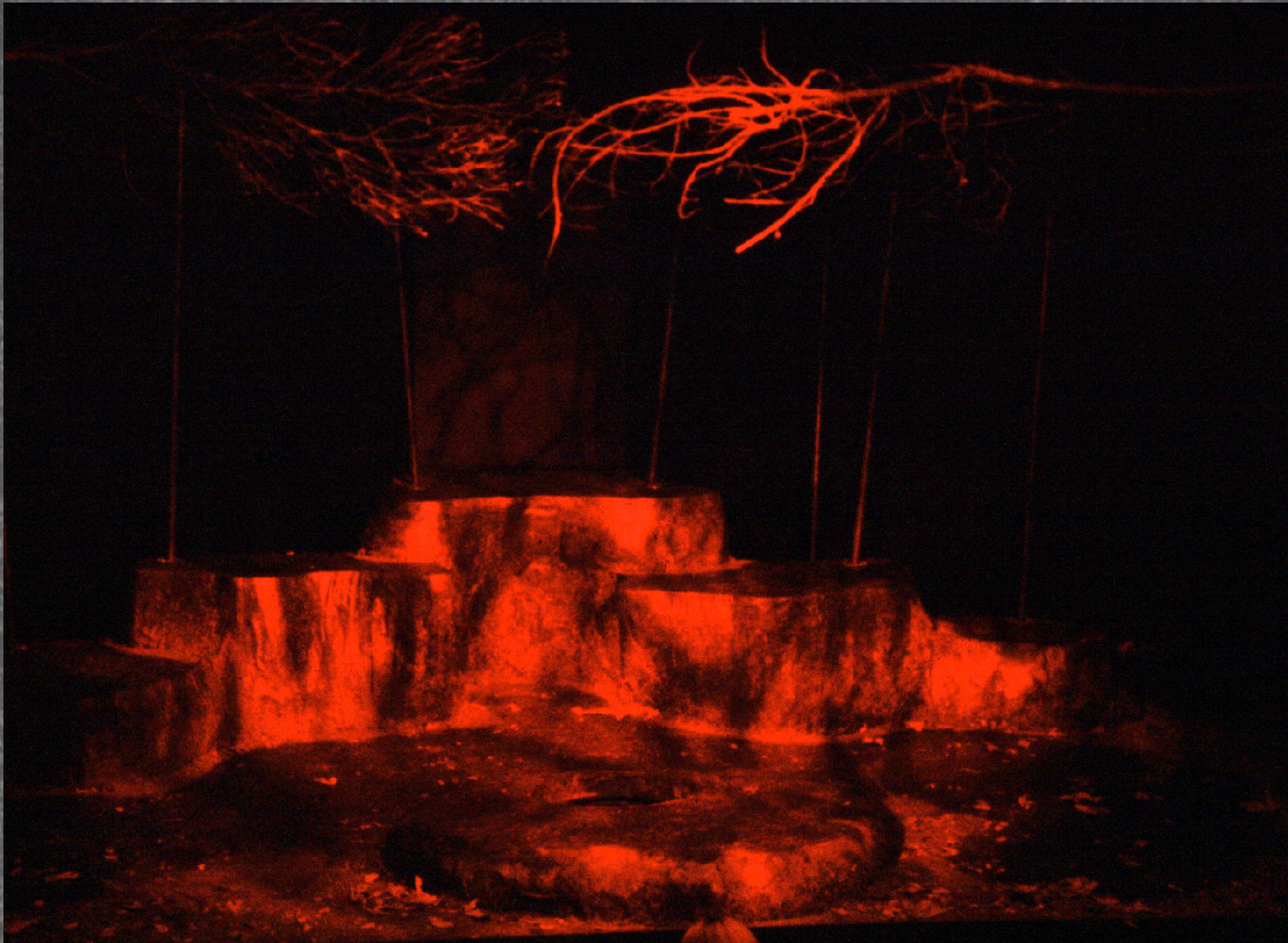
*The Puccini Project* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Primarily wood construction.  
Painted sky drop for background.



*Diviners* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Fiberglass covered platforms set on top of raked platforms



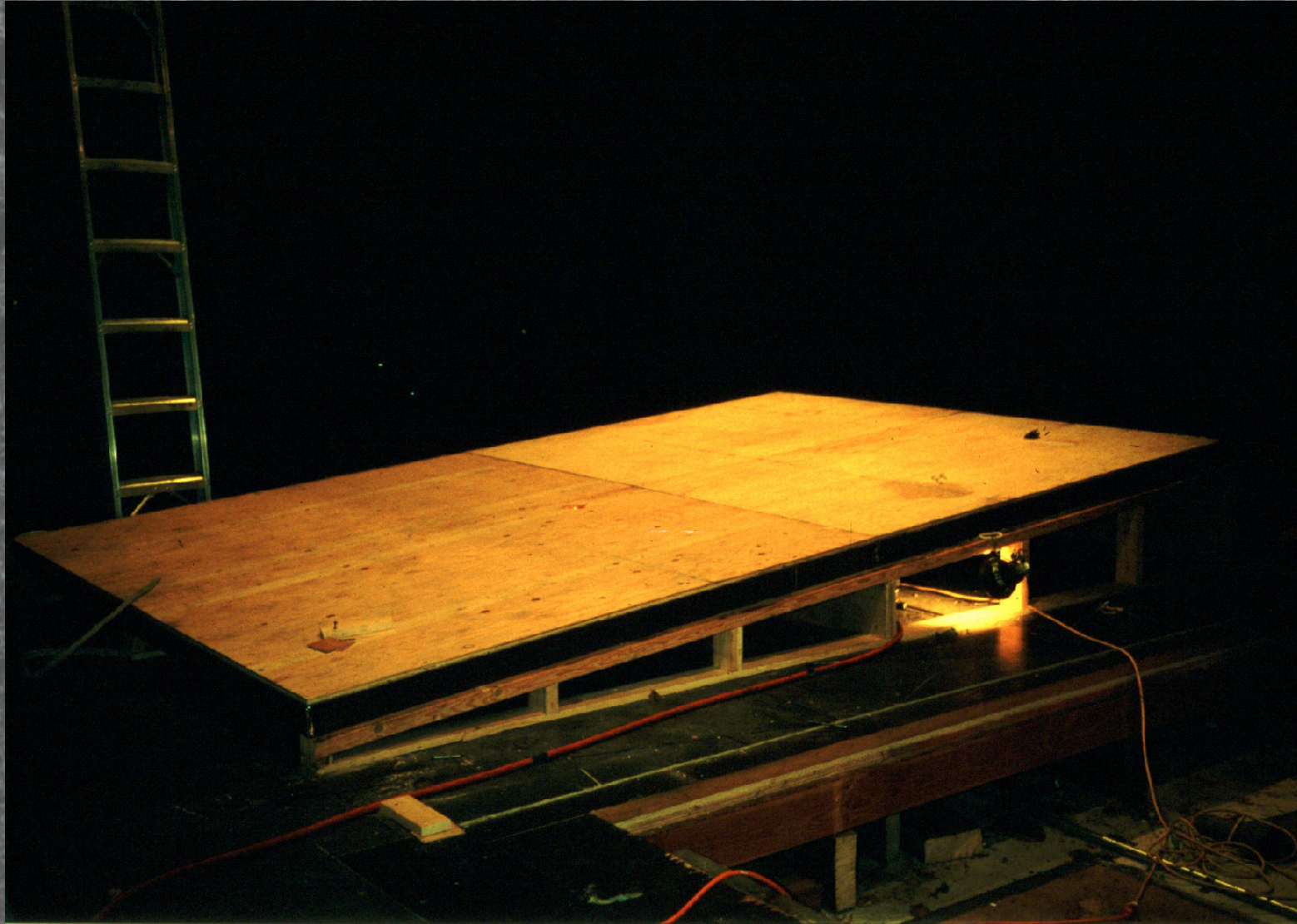
*Ridley Walker* : Players Theatre, CSULB

Raked stage built with slanted "knee" walls



*Ridley Walker* : Players Theatre, CSULB

Stock platforms placed on top the “knee” walls form the raked stage



*Ridley Walker : Players Theatre, CSULB*

Tree trunk framed with wood and covered in chicken wire, muslin and glue.



*Firebirds* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Tree trunk wood framing, to be covered with wire, muslin and glue.



*Firebirds* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Minoan columns flanking upstage doors.



*Electra* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Minoan columns under construction : 1x3 ribs,  $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood spacers.



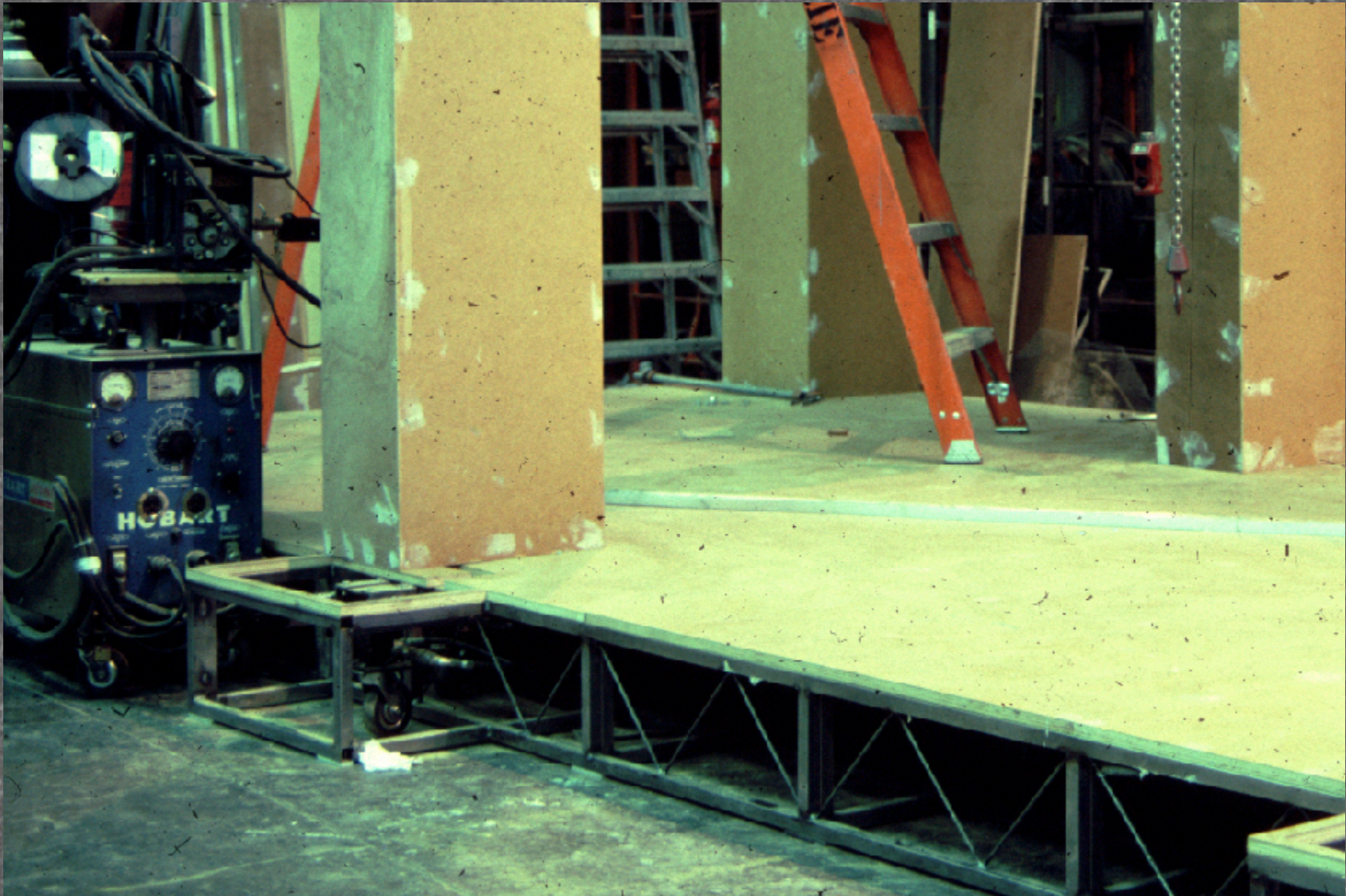
*Electra* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Minoan columns under construction : 1x3 ribs,  $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood spacers.



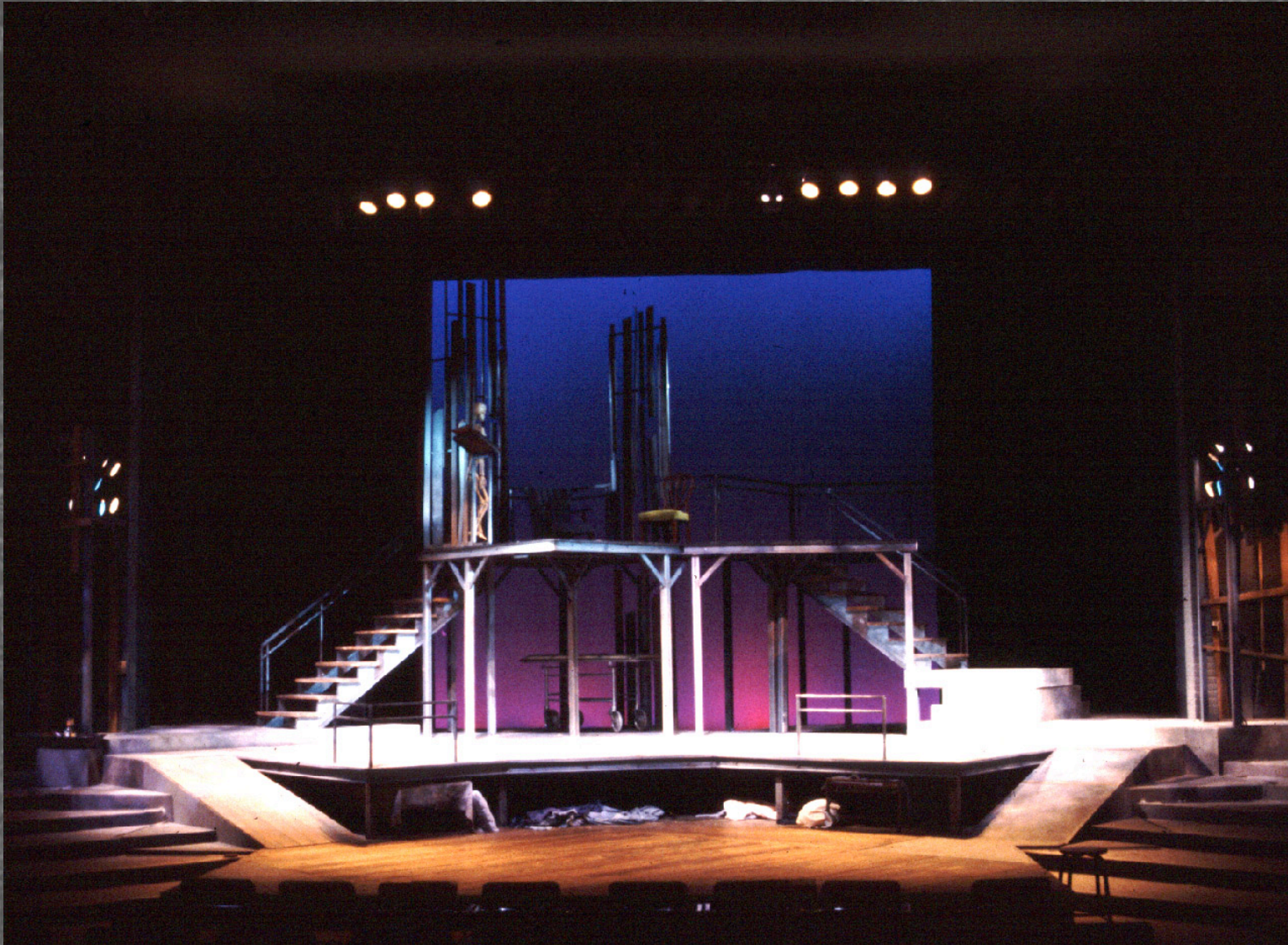
*Electra* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Metal framed scenery, steel used instead of wood for platform framing.



Unknown Show : Guthrie Theatre

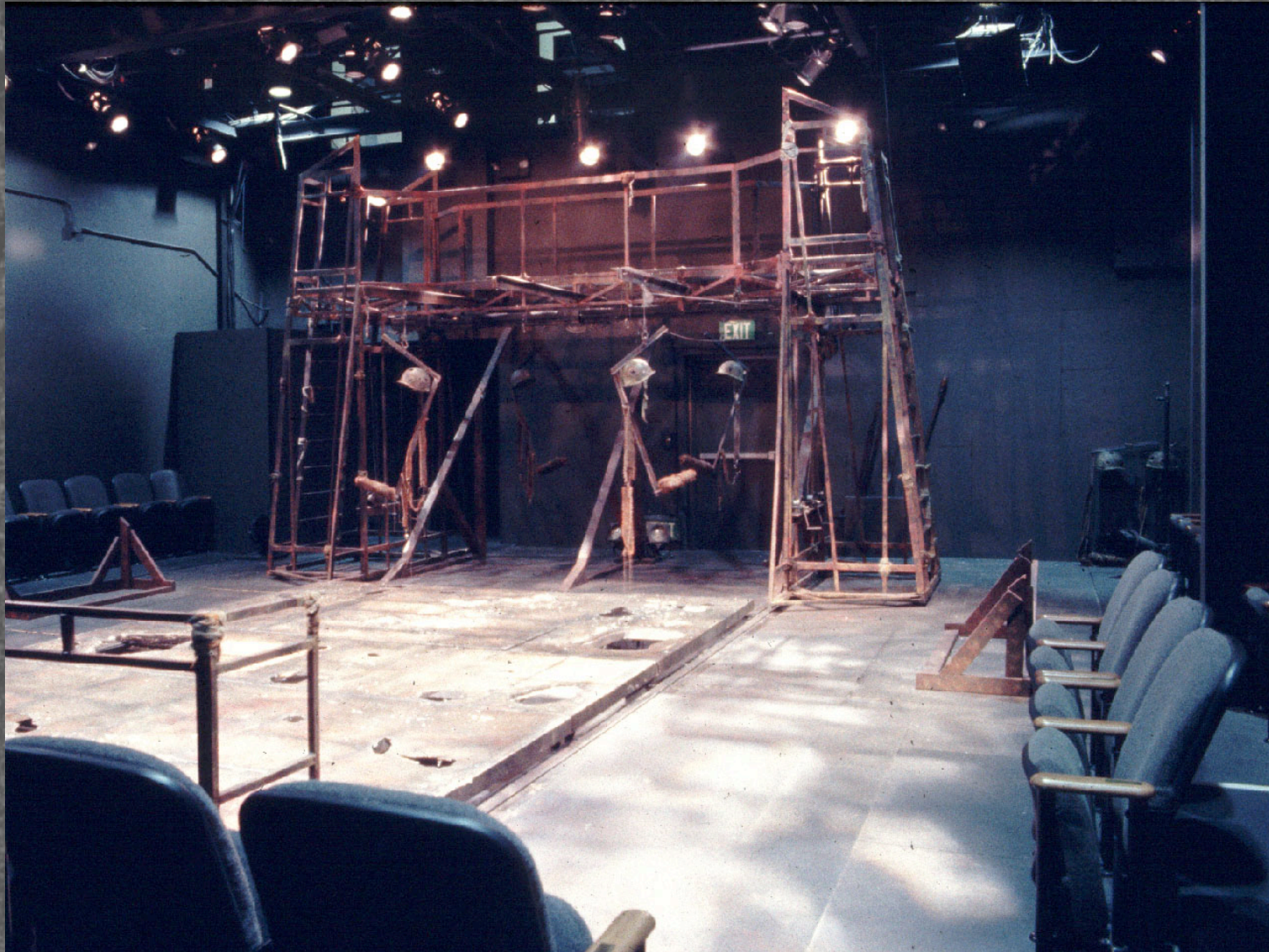
Metal framed scenery, steel used for platform support.



*Dr. and the Devils* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Metal framed bridge.

Stage platforms covered in expanded steel and fiberglass.



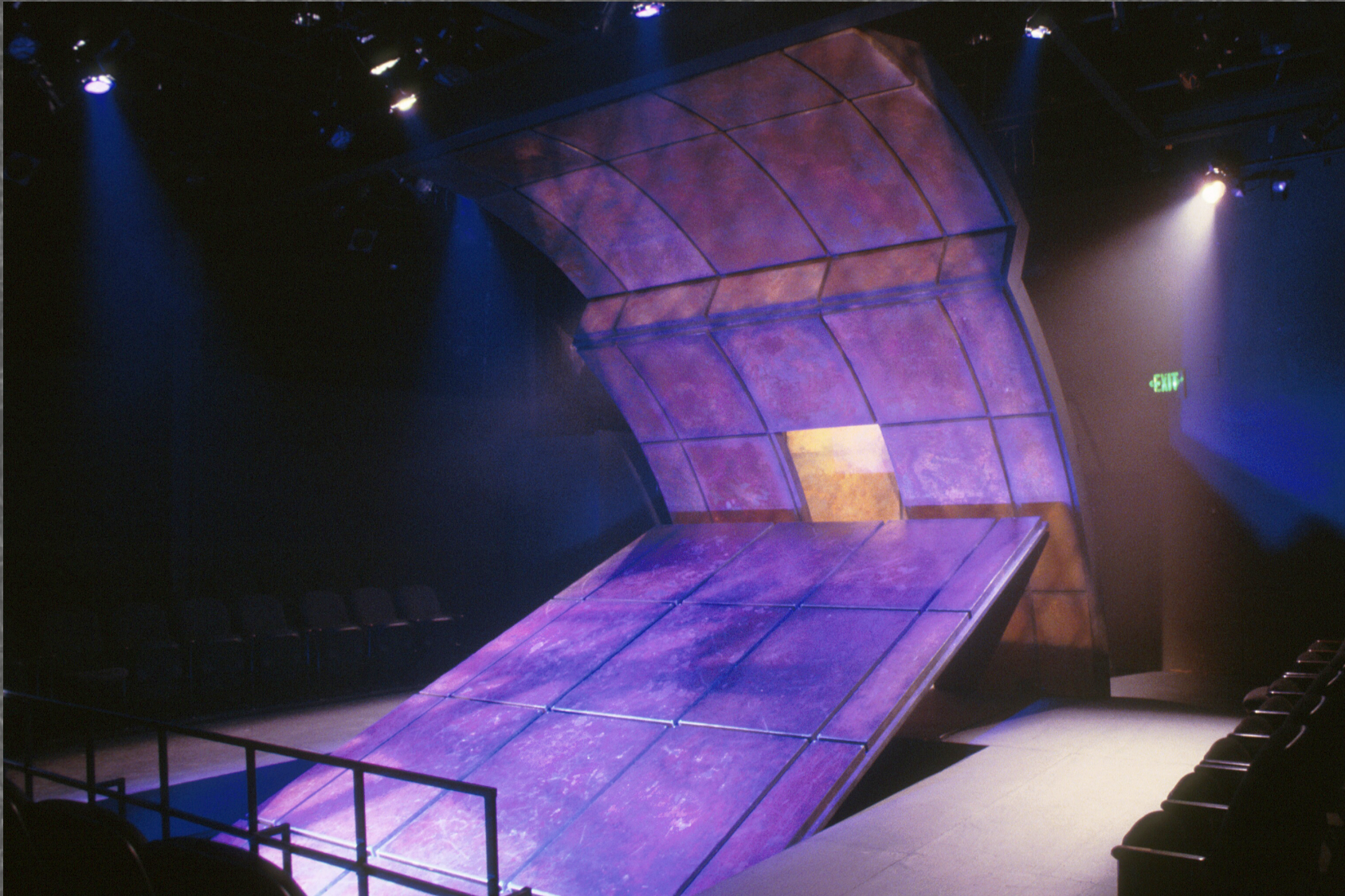
*Among The Chosen Few* : Edison Theatre, CSULB

Stage platforms covered in expanded steel and fiberglass.



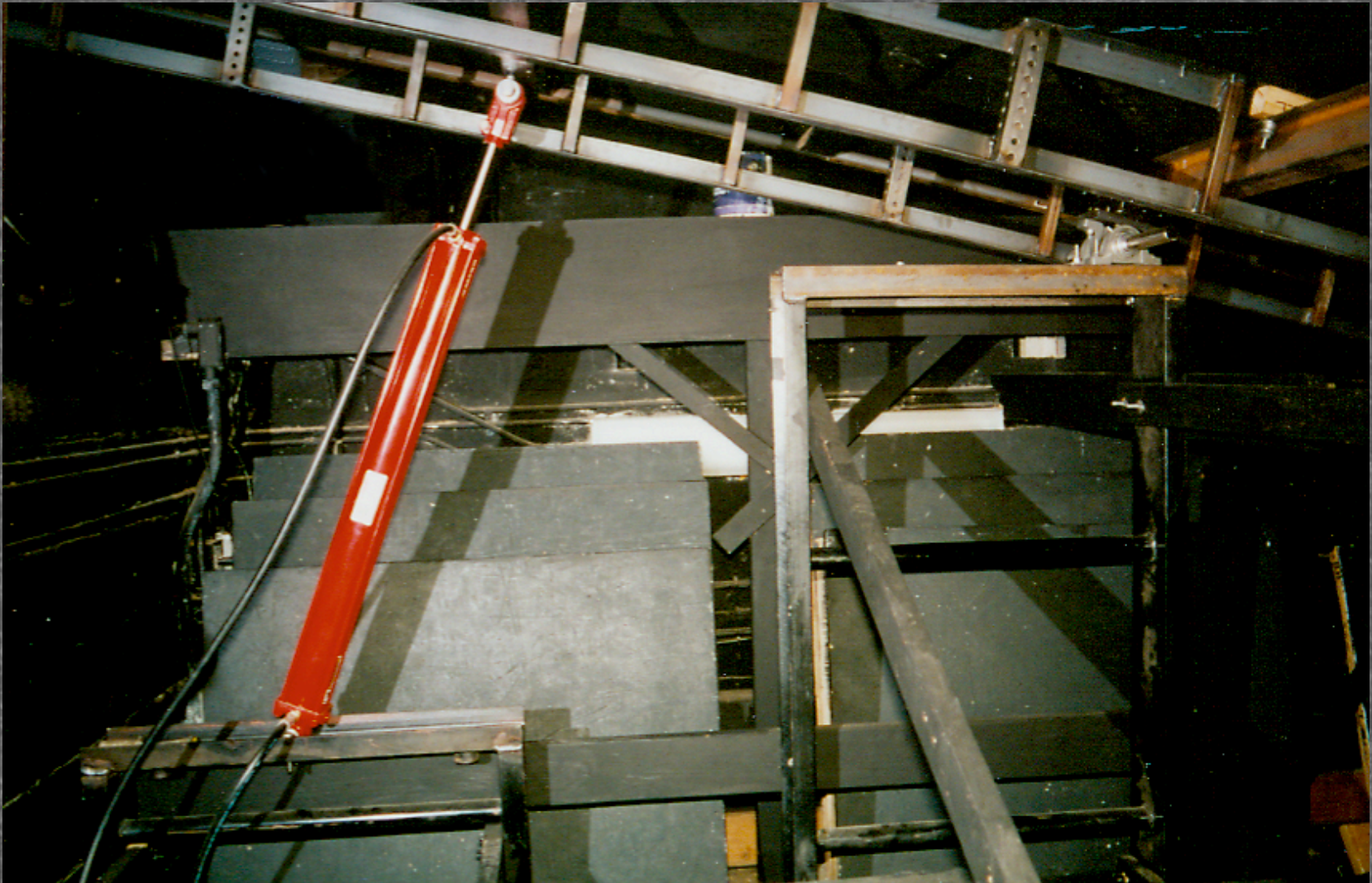
*Among The Chosen Few* : Edison Theatre, CSULB

Steel framed platform covered in plywood and sheet metal.  
Back wall constructed from wood and covered in sheet metal.



*Murder* : Edison Theatre, CSULB

Platform raised and lowered using a hydraulic ram.



*Murder* : Edison Theatre, CSULB

Wedding cake trim in vacuum-formed plastic and “frozen drapery”



*Murder* : Edison Theatre, CSULB

Vacuum-formed plastic and “frozen drapery” : velour soaked in white glue and left to dry in the desired shape



Unknown Show

Wood construction with Styrofoam and other plastic elements.



*The Flies* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Styrofoam cave mouth being spray painted.



*The Flies* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Styrofoam cave mouth being carved.



*The Flies* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Styrofoam Hand Throne, steel framework covered with Styrofoam and carved, finished with muslin and glue, then painted



*The Flies* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Rock made from wooden framework and covered in carpet padding foam.



*The Flies* : Studio Theatre, CSULB



*The Flies* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Painted drop lit for forest scene.



*Measure for Measure* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Painted drop lit for a scene at court.

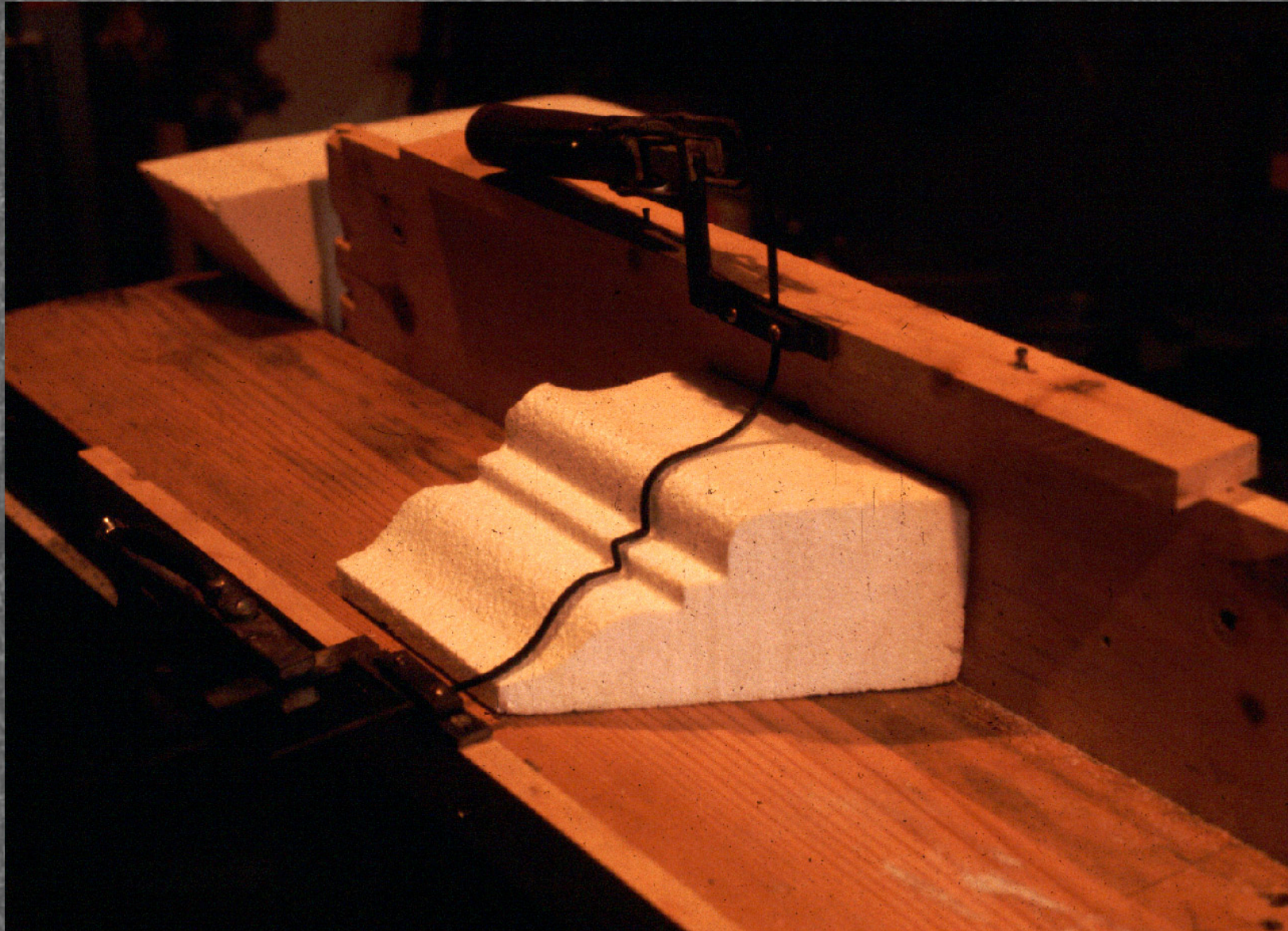


*Measure for Measure* : Studio Theatre, CSULB

Giant ferns up center are fiberglass and polyester resin.  
Rest of set covered in coarse fabric covered with liquid latex



*A Midsummer Night's Dream* : University of New Orleans



Hot Knife Cutter : shaped wire heated with electric current, for Styrofoam cutting

