

The Great Hall Design Ideas

Resources for Research

- **Great Hall** - the principal hall in a castle or mansion used for dining or entertainment.

https://www.ancient.eu/Great_Hall/

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_hall

<https://www.pottermore.com/explore-the-story/the-great-hall>

- **Terpsichore: The God of Music of Music and Dance** *Classical Mythology definition* - 1. The Muse of dancing and choral song. 2. choreography; the art of dancing.

Dance of the time Period

<http://mjtr.de/capriol/edance.html>

In the middle ages many new dance styles were introduced: Almain, Canaries, Coranto, Galliard, Pavan and others. The leading country for dancing at this time was Italy, where a number of dance manuals were printed. Italian dances were current in most places, including England, and Queen Elizabeth prided herself on her Italian technique. Another feature of Elizabeth's reign was the arrival in Society of the English Country Dance, which continued in fashion thereafter for more than two centuries.

This show combines common, ancient (early 1600s) musical themes with more modern approaches, all taking place in a “great hall” or royal ballroom. For example, Mvt 2 goes through multiple style changes using the Bach Bouree. This program theme captures the visual essence of a medieval ballroom, or Great Hall but in a more modern time. Although each movement is based on a type of dance, the show does not need to include much, if any dance; simply portray the look and feel of the music. There will be specific notes in the detailed portion later in this document.

There are four parts (*with an added pre-show processional and recessional options*):

1. Processional - traditional and stately...perhaps processing into the ballroom for a celebration, wedding, coronation or even a masquerade ball of some sort
2. Bouree - light, bouncy and accessible going from a traditional approach to a rock feel then a jazz/swing feel and finishing up with a big band like shout chorus (“park and play”), in a fast and driving Mambo feel.
3. Pavanne - a slow and stately dance (ballad), with a little forward motion simulating a slow processional. The percussion and electronics approach gives this movement a modern, ‘new age’ feel.
4. Galliard - The actual dance is described as “a lively dance in triple time for two people, including complicated turns and steps” - Our version is based on a modern wind band

The Great Hall Design Ideas

treatment of the Galliard. Although it doesn't have a jazz/pop/rock feel, it does have a more pageantry friendly, cinematic like finale approach.

Imagery for props, banners, backdrops, and panels - to change the look/size of the field and create the look of a "great hall"

- Banner and "regal" type imagery (banners could be posted and used as backdrops and to close down the field)



Royal Ballroom (also known as the Great Hall)

In essence, the entire show (except for the optional pre-show and recessional), could depict a ballroom or dance hall, as if in a medieval castle. Flats, panels, walls, etc., could also be a great way to close down the field for small to medium bands and with some simple painting/printing on the walls, you could recreate this simple look/feel.

The Great Hall Design Ideas



Use of Stairs

Instead of just ornate walls, the ballroom-like set up could include a staircase in the middle or front of the field. Again, this would be most ideal for small/medium bands. The staircase should probably be no further back than slightly behind midfield. It could also serve as a place for soloists, small groups, guard and to mask equipment changes. The pit percussion placement could also be incorporated into this staircase set up.



A staircase with a circular dance floor (raised stage) in front of it could also be effective, even if the stage is a circular tarp.

The Great Hall Design Ideas

Tambourines with ribbons for Part 4 (Galliard)

The closer is playful, quick and light...perhaps some guard (again, featured dancers or more veteran weapons), could use them for the first half or so of Part 4. They don't need to make a noise or even have heads, this is more of a visual prop although using real tambourines could be very effective if done well.



Guard Costume Resources

The costume could start out more formal using a cloak, cape or long gown/skirt. You might use it in Part 1 and then remove it somewhere in the first half of Part 2, even using the cape to dance with at some point.



The Great Hall Design Ideas

Specific Staging Notes

Intro/Pre-show

- Set the mood and look for the show with the fanfare eventually interrupting this mood
- Members not playing could be posed like statues at the start of the show
 - Posed down on the ground, perhaps facing away or in toward the small group and dancers?
- Use the entire woodwind section for this movement or use a small woodwind group to emulate a chamber ensemble of that time period
- The idea is to dovetail the pre-show into Part 1. To do so, have the woodwinds continue playing the opening pre-show phrase fading out while percussion begins softly underneath leading into the start of Part 1 (a crossfade that will need detailed with your drum majors and contest coordinators).
 - Use two different parts of the field to show separation of the two musical identities and incorporate simultaneous theatrics
 - Dancers w/o equipment can be staged with woodwinds nearer front; flags can be back with brass leading them in or framing the form as it moves front. They could be using the banners on poles to lead the brass/percussion in; or, they can have flags.

Part 1/Processional

Guard recommendations

- Some guard could start with woodwinds up front (or on a stage). They can be actual dancers. Or, guard that will become weapons for Part 2.
- The remainder of the guard processing in with the brass in back could be carrying traditional banners, banners and shields, or traditional silks that look time period appropriate.
- You should consider incorporating a removable skirt to the costume. If utilized, it could remain on for all of Part 1 as this is a very formal start to the show.

General Thoughts

- You have the option to use male vs. female dancing in the intro and throughout the show since all the musical repertoire is of a “dance” nature.
 - Or, use a couple of guard dancers and a portion of entire weapon section as dancers up front in a “staged” area for the intro transitioning into Part 1
- This is a very traditional and proper sounding and looking opener. You may try a true parade block/processional toward the audience for the brass and battery
- Brass, (woodwinds not playing upfront), as well as battery can join/connect to the woodwind group playing in the staged area after it moves forward into the main focus

The Great Hall Design Ideas

- Not a lot of drill movement is needed for this segment of the show. Stage for communication of mood/style as well as a fanfare like full band culmination with ideal placement for projection. Place them somewhat close to the audience and in a form that is more parallel to the audience to ensure a communicative culmination to Part 1.

Specific events and visual notes for Part 1

- **Measure 18-21** - all halted, good stage for brass especially
 - Upper brass and mellos can play through the low brass...this will give you a darker sound. Not a fan of tubas placed back by the battery (if that can be avoided), as you lose that voice in the overall ensemble sound
 - Flags/banners positioned on the sides or in back of brass/winds to start
 - Rifles/dancers placed in front of the winds carrying primary visual focus with the woodwinds
 - smaller steps recommended for winds and staged appropriately for good projection and overall communication (ala a fanfare)
 - Low brass/low woodwinds vs. upper brass/woodwinds - from a staging perspective, this can be treated as a side to side event focus here to get clear voice separation and to ensure the audience understands the contrast or back and forth nature of the scoring
- **Measure 28-31** - smaller steps are recommended to project a regal and stately look and feel. The winds should be staged conservatively for good projection.
 - Low brass/low woodwinds vs. upper brass/woodwinds can be staged and treated as side to side approach here to get voice separation
- **Measure 32-33** - halt for impact and added simple foot pose or choreography
- **Measure 34-42** - Out Chorus/recap of opening woodwind theme
 - Not large steps; just good, fluid movement to allow for the projection of the winds
- **Measure 43 to end** - halt for culmination
 - Dancers (or all guard) stay upfront or in prime focus
 - However, remember, those transitioning to weapons (if you choose to go that way), will pick up rifle or weapon in the first portions of Part 2