

*Behind the Design* is just my attempt to demonstrate some of the thoughts that go into the designs of shows.

## ***THE HIDING PLACE***

The Corrie ten Boom Story

Adapted by Bradley Winkler from the book by John and Elizabeth Sherrill

Sometimes, the venue's design or the show's mechanics will dictate how a show is designed. *The Hiding Place* was such a production. The production company was a semi-professional group that produced shows in the summertime with minimal finances and even less technical support. The venue was a converted lecture hall with NO off-stage space. All scenic elements would be seen; therefore, they must somehow work together to tell the story. The first act primarily took place in the home of the ten Booms. The second act takes place in the Schevengingen prison, on a Nazi prison train, and at Ravensbrück Women's Extermination Camp. *The Hiding Place* is a true story about real people and places.

The script dictated that there be a hiding place in the ten Boom's house where characters were hidden but were not always seen leaving. So, a hidden room with an escape hatch hidden from the audience had to be devised on a stage with no backstage or offstage. Although the set was fragmented, it had to have a 'real' hiding place and door. There was also a visual need for levels. The visual of the police standing above the family, pointing down and threatening just inches from the hidden room of hunted Jews, I thought was pretty powerful.

Although the second act was easier to conceptualize, it had to be always onstage. Using the verticality of the rail stock cars and cattle shoots provided the feel needed for the second act location. Placing the second act units on the upstage walls and surrounding the act one set provided an eerie foreshadowing of what was to come.