

ALTERNATIVES TO STANDARD STAGE FLATS

I was recently informed by my tech. Director that muslin flats are old fashioned and no longer used. He builds walls using 2X4s for framing, and then covered in sheetrock. Needless to say, this creates a ton of dust on stage that gets into the masking curtains.

Personally, I use 1x4 for the frame, and 1/8" luaun for the face.

We use "flats" made from 1x3 framing (on edge), faced with 1/8" luaun. Usually with center braces and corner diagonal braces depending on overall dimensions of the piece. Very light, and fairly sturdy.

I use 1x4 frame and 1.8" luaun for the skin. They are very light and easy to handle and they are reusable. If you are going to use sheet rock and 2 x 4's, you can save a lot of time by just throwing your money directly into the dumpster.

I also built prefab window units and door units with doors mounted in reversible casings. For heavy doors that take heavy abuse during a show, I frame a unit like this with 2 x 4s and braces.

Assemble the frame carefully and it will last a long time. When the skin is too beat up to repair, reskin the frame with another sheet of luaun.

I second the Luaun covering. More durable than muslin and you can attach things to it anywhere. (Things like set decorations....pictures, wall mounted lamps, mantles....etc.)

I use 2"x2" for most flats. This allows me surface area to clamp them together side by side. I use QuikClamps and can load in/out a set in a short period of time. Most of productions in my facility, a church, overlap with other events, so a set might be loaded 3 or 4 times during final rehearsals and performances. Quick assemble and transportability are a must, preferably by one person.

For flats with working doors, I go to 2x4 frames. (Think Noises Off.)