Man and Superman, Occidental College, Los Angeles, CA

Susan Gratch, Occidental College
Shaw’s exploration of the Creative Life Force begins in a London lawyer’s office for the reading of a will, travels by motorcar to Richmond, through the mountains of Spain, and concludes in sunny Granada. I showed the director posters from the early twentieth century, and we decided to take our visual cues from these highly stylized graphic images. A relatively small square stage thrust through the proscenium, framed by permanent corner seats downstage and a false proscenium. These were painted a brick red, and the proscenium and seats were treated with a black Art Nouveau design. Into this neutral space, the simple, boldly colored, two-dimensional set pieces were flown, with the addition of minimal furniture and scenic props. The major expense was the rental of a period automobile, which was made possible by the Dean of Faculty – we added a special grill design to the car – Jack Tanner was the owner of an “Axeen.”