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SELECTED PROJECTS IN COSTUME DESIGN

By

Lindsay Anne Beardall

A Plan B Report submitted in partial fulfillment
Of required elements for the degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

In

THEATRE ARTS

Plan B

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2011

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There are many people who have guided me on my path to grad school. Rather than list them by importance, I will instead list them in the order I met them:

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INTRODUCTION

I started my collegiate career as an art major in 2-D design with the intent that I would be an art director for an advertising agency. I took a costume construction class two years into my major and I promptly left 2-D design for costume design. Costume design is a wonderful combination of my love of art, history, sewing, drawing, design and creating. I have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to design four different shows during my time at Utah State University. During my time as a costume designer at Utah State University I designed costumes for four productions. In the four plays there were a total of almost 100 costumes designed. 16 were constructed in the costume shop and the rest were purchased, borrowed or pulled from our costume stock. I learned that skills are required when pulling costume pieces from stock. How the elements are combined can transform the piece and give it a new life. In each experience I have had the chance to help tell the stories of the characters on stage by dressing them in a way that they might dress themselves. What would the characters have in their closet? This challenge is one of my favorite aspects of costume design.

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Chapter 1 *The Glass Menagerie*

BACKGROUND

Tennessee William's *The Glass Menagerie* is a drama about the broken Wingfield family that finally falls apart when the son leaves home, abandoning his mother and damaged sister. Amanda Wingfield, the domineering matriarch, rules over her small apartment shared by her son, Tom, and daughter, Laura. Laura spends her time with her collection of glass animals while her brother dreams about a life at sea, away from the shoe factory. Amanda encourages Tom to find a "gentleman caller" for his sister to care for her. Tom's co-worker Jim is introduced at a dinner but their hopes for a wedding are shattered when Jim reveals he has a fiancée. After the disastrous dinner, Tom leaves his mother and sister to live the life of a merchant marine. Colin Johnson directed the production at Utah State University

during fall semester 2009. Nathan Kluthe designed the set, Paul Yeates designed the lights and I designed the costumes. Williams set the play in 1937 and Johnson and I decided to remain true to the script in the costume design. I designed the show with a restricted color palette because I felt this emphasized the trapped feelings the characters experienced as they faced (or didn't) the uncertainty in their lives. I chose gray and black for Tom, shades of blue for Laura, faded golds and yellows for Amanda and brown for Jim, the gentleman caller. I made a collage of my color palette to explain my concept to the director (Fig. 1.1).



RESEARCH

I researched both the 1930's and the 1920's to gain an understanding of the clothing worn during the time period appropriate for the characters. I found books that included many photographs from the Great Depression that showed the despair many people felt during that difficult time. I also found pages

from contemporary clothing catalogs from that time period. The costume shop on campus has a large collection of Sears and Roebuck catalogs from the turn of the century to the 1960's. These catalogs are invaluable when designing costumes for people of the middle and lower classes because many people shopped via catalog. Although the Wingfields would not have been able to afford the latest styles due to their lack of money, the Sears catalog gives an idea of what Amanda would have liked to have been able to afford if she had the means.

EXECUTION

I pulled many of the costumes from our costume storage, especially the men's costumes. I discovered that there were pros and cons to designing with such a tight color palette. On the positive side I was able to quickly find items that were appropriate because I had colors and silhouettes in mind. On the negative side, there weren't as many items in the colors I needed and in sizes to fit the actors. After searching through our costume storage and conducting initial fittings, I made a purchase and build list with the shop manager, Amanda Profaizer. A green blouse and a brown suit were purchased and the costume shop built three dresses; one for day and two for evening.

I learned some very valuable lessons during the course of designing *The Glass Menagerie* including fabric content and period appropriate details. I was reminded of the two lessons as I shopped for the green blouse and the brown suit. The green blouse fit the style lines of the period and the color fit the character, Laura. The only problem was the fiber content. Polyester didn't exist in the 1930's and it is problematic under saturate stage lighting. Natural fibers react differently to stage lights than synthetic fabric which can take on an oily appearance. I chose to pair the blouse with a chunky cardigan to cover the sleeves of the blouse. This solution not only allowed me to keep the blouse in the show, but it also helped to further establish Laura as insecure because the cardigan acted as a security blanket.

Jim O'Connor's brown suit was made of the right fabric but the style lines weren't completely period appropriate. The jacket of the suit had the correct lapels and silhouette but the pants had an incorrect rise. The rise of pants refers to how high up the torso the waist of the pants is set. Pants of the

time period reached the natural waist of the wearer whereas modern pants are typically worn on the hips. I wasn't completely happy with the suit but I chose to overlook it for the few scenes where the suit was worn without the jacket.

Due to our isolated location there aren't a large variety of fabric stores to meet our needs as a costume shop. I purchased some cotton fabric locally and purchased silks and satins online. The costume shop also has a large number of fabric pieces of various sizes from past shows. I used all of these sources as I chose fabrics for the three dresses we would ultimately construct.

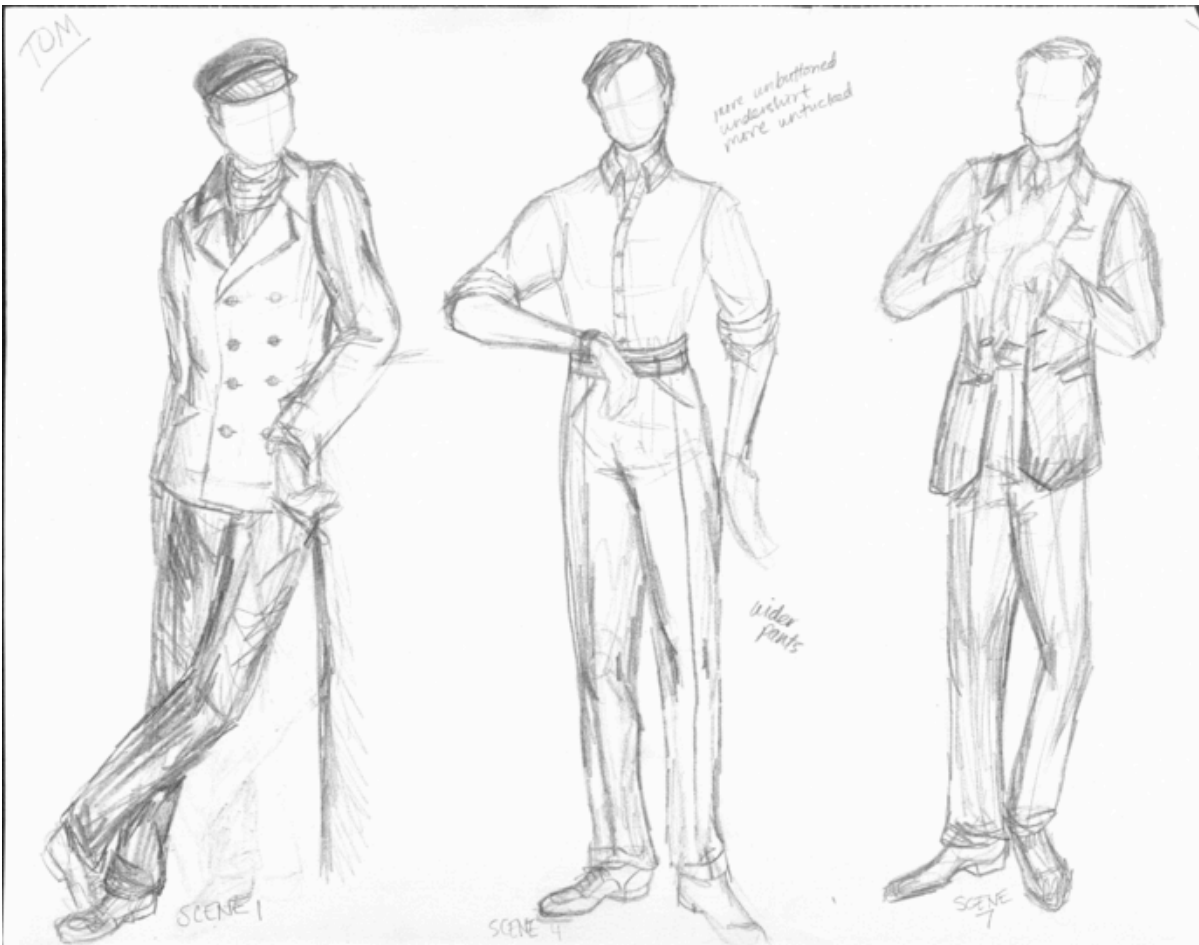
CHARACTERS

TOM WINGFIELD



Tom is the primary breadwinner for his family; comprised of his mother, Amanda, and sister, Laura. Tom works in a shoe factory but dreams of a day that he will be able to travel the world as a merchant marine and write poetry. He attempts to escape his existence by going to “the movies” and avoiding the cramped apartment. I assigned the color gray to Tom because I felt that it reflected his outlook on the world. I was inspired by pictures of factory workers and men in separates as I designed Tom’s costumes (Fig. 1.2).

Tom spends part of the play acting as the narrator, as the narrator he is dressed as a merchant marine. I researched the merchant marines and decided to dress the actor in a knit scarf, a pea-coat and a knit cap (Fig 1.2). Part of this decision was made based on the research while the other portion was due to the limited time designated for costume changes. Tom's work clothing consisted of button up shirts and a rough pair of black and white tweed pants worn with black work boots. I chose to dress Tom in separates for the dinner scene in Act II because a suit didn't seem to fit his personality as an aspiring poet and potential drifter (Fig 1.3). Rather than give Tom a black or a gray tie I chose blue, Laura's color, to show his connection to her. Plates 1.1 and 1.2 show Tom's final renderings and a production photo of Tom as the narrator.





TOM SCENE 5
THE GLASS MENAGERIE
Robyn Keller



TOM SCENE 1
THE GLASS MENAGERIE
Robyn Keller



TOM SCENE 7
THE GLASS MENAGERIE
Robyn Keller



Plate 1.2 Production photo Act I Scene 1 Tom Wingfield narrates his story

LAURA WINGFIELD



Figure 1.4 Laura Wingfield research collage

Laura is the daughter of Amanda and sister of Tom. She is extremely withdrawn and unable to deal with the realities of life. She spends her time in the apartment playing old records and taking care of her collection of glass animals. As I designed Laura's costumes I wanted to emphasize the "little girl" aspects of her personality. Clothing of the time period featured rounded collars and shapeless dresses, perfect for a young woman who wants to stay a girl (Fig 1.4). I chose to dress her in oversized cardigan sweaters worn like a security blanket against the outside world. Another choice I made was to pair short socks with oxford type shoes. This reminded me of my own childhood when I wore short socks with dress shoes. A young woman who dressed like a little girl would seem to have some apprehension about growing up. The script referenced Laura's insecurity about her limp and it seemed that she would wear shoes that either tied or strapped on her feet. During the Act II dinner scene, she wore low heeled Mary Jane style shoes with a strap across her foot, keeping her shoes securely on. Laura's main color is blue due to her "blue roses" nickname. Blue is also the color of loyalty, a quality that Laura embodies.



Figure 1.5 Rough Sketches of Laura Wingfield's costumes

Laura's main costumes consisted of a day dress, a blouse and skirt outfit with an oversized cardigan and a dinner dress (Fig.1.5). For Laura's day dress I initially chose a turquoise cotton fabric with embossed gold stripes and roses. In an effort to make it look more worn out I washed the fabric multiple times and used a color remover to break down the color. I chose the fabric because I felt it illustrated Laura's character of being trapped just as the gold roses were constricted by the gold stripes. As the dress progressed from a mock up to the actual fabric I realized, sadly, that the fabric was not going to look right. I should have picked either cotton in a lighter weight or rayon for the dress. The turquoise fabric was discarded and I chose another fabric to achieve the desired effect. I purchased light-weight cotton with a vintage pattern that was more appropriate for Laura's day dress. I dyed the fabric a light tan

color to give it an aged look. Then I used color remover to fade the edges of the sleeves, hem and collar to make the brand new dress appear old.

During Act II, Laura is dressed up for the arrival of the gentleman caller. I chose to dress her in a yellow dress with blue details. Yellow was a diversion from the usual blue color palette to represent Amanda's hopes and dreams for Laura. It also harkens back to Amanda's former glory as the girl from Blue Mountain with "seventeen gentlemen callers." I designed the dress to look awkward on Laura because she felt so uneasy in the situation. The only reminders of Laura's own personality are contained in the blue sleeves and ruffle. I also chose a blue rose pendant as Laura's only jewelry. The pendant was made of oven baked clay and then painted shades of blue to retain the dimensions of the rose. This was a visual reminder of Jim's old nickname for Laura, "Blue Roses." It was a literal choice that I knew the audience wouldn't be able to see but I think it adds an extra dimension to the play by giving the actor an additional detail to consider. I chose light yellow rayon linen for Laura's dress because dresses of the time period were typically made of rayon or cotton. Rayon was also a good choice because it flows well and would allow for the slim silhouette of the time period. I knew that I would be unable to find fabric with the exact pattern so I made stamps out of foam rubber and stamped the fabric using fabric paint.

Plate 1.3 is a shop rendering of Laura's dinner dress, showing the style lines of the dress as well as the blue rose pendant. Plate 1.4 is a production photo of Amanda and Laura Wingfield outside of the apartment.



Plate 1.3 Laura Wingfield's dinner dress shop rendering



Plate 1.4 Production photo Act I Scene 5 Amanda and Laura Wingfield

AMANDA WINGFIELD

The matriarch of the Wingfield family enjoyed the upbringing of a Southern Belle. She uses this as her reason for being unable to provide for her son and daughter. Amanda was raised to have someone else take care of the home while she entertained guests. During the play she mentions that she only learned to bake angel food cake. While designing and choosing costumes for Amanda I leaned towards fabrics such as lace and chiffon to reflect her refined upbringing (Fig. 1.7). In addition to the fine fabrics, I also used a large amount of costume jewelry to accessorize Amanda's costumes. Amanda reminded me of a magpie and I translated this idea through the overabundance of costume jewelry worn. It seemed that the character would have held on to any finery she could have from previous years even if it was only made out of tin and glass. I selected pale yellow colors for her palette because I felt that the color was evocative of jonquils, Amanda's favorite flower. Yellow is also a color that demands attention, a quality also found in Amanda Wingfield.



Figure 1.6 Amanda Wingfield's costume rough sketches

A majority of Amanda's costumes were pulled from our stock. I found one lace dress in particular that seemed to embody the feeling of lost glory. The underdress was the same color as the lace which would look very flat on stage. The existing dress was also too short for the actress. I remedied both problems by adding gold lace to the underdress, adding extra length to the bottom, neckline and sleeves (Fig.1.8). A thin belt was added to the dress to define the waistline.



Amanda's other dresses were accessorized with shawls, brooches, necklaces and bracelets from our costume storage. The cold weather mentioned by some of the characters didn't support the short sleeves on all of the Amanda's dresses. I chose a variety of shawls to remedy this problem because a cardigan sweater didn't seem like an appropriate choice for a former southern belle.



Figure 1.7 Original and revised final rendering of Amanda Wingfield's dinner dress

I had some difficulty in designing the dinner dress for the final act. My original design didn't seem to work for the character or the scene. I talked with Colin Johnson, the director, about what wasn't working with the original design (Fig. 1.9). We decided the first design was too "normal" and expected of a dinner party hostess in the late 1930's. It didn't harken back to the girlhood days of Amanda who wore the dress dancing. The only things that I really liked from the original designs were the yellow lace overlay and belt. I went back further than just the drawing board and hit the books to find more research. I looked at dresses and accessories from the 1910's for inspiration. This date seemed logical for Amanda's heyday as a young woman with many suitors. I completed a working rendering of my new design for the costume shop. This rendering was done in a different style than the previous rendering but I was still able to communicate my ideas to the cutter draper, Brandee Jenks, a fellow graduate student. My final design was comprised of a brown silk under dress, a white semi-sheer burn out satin brocade overdress with a yellow lace duster belted with a belt made from the same brown silk. The combination of fabrics was unexpected enough to draw the eye but fancy enough to fit the label of an old dance dress

from Amanda's earlier years. I felt that the lace connected the dress to previous dresses worn during the play.

I found yellow lace and brown silk dupioni in the costume shop and purchased white burn out satin on-line. At first I was nervous about the combination of fabrics because I wasn't sure how they would look visually together. We ran into some problems with the hem of the burn out satin layer because it was a different weight than the rest of the dress. After struggling with the layers, the shop manager suggested adjusting the satin layer as a dressing note. The dressers simply pulled on the shoulders of the dress after the dress had been belted to even out the hem. It was a much simpler fix than hemming the dress again.

Plate 1.5 is a production photo of Amanda's dinner dress.



JIM O'CONNOR



Figure 1.7 Jim O'Connor research collage

tell her the truth, no matter how painful the truth would have been. I looked at research images of men in suits and two-toned shoes to design Jim's costume (Fig. 1.10). The two-toned shoes seemed like a good choice for a young man who cares about his appearance.

To show the character contrast I chose to dress him in a brown suit and a green tie, different from Tom's separates of black and gray. I avoided using any of the other colors in the color palette in an effort to show Jim as a different character, outside the world of the apartment. The absence of any previously seen color was meant to act as a clue for the audience that he would **not** be Laura's gentleman caller, despite Amanda's desires. I chose a striped dress shirt, green tie, red suspenders and brown two-tone shoes as Jim's dinner outfit. A suit seemed to look more pulled together than casual separates.

Plate 1.6 is a production photo of Jim's arrival at the apartment; show his brown suit as well as Laura and Tom's costumes.

Jim O'Connor held the dual role of Tom's foil and Laura's presumed gentleman caller. Jim has his feet planted most firmly on the ground and in reality. He is interested in improving his skills through night school courses. Jim's path to excellence contrasts Tom's in that Jim doesn't sacrifice his family to attain what he wants. I also felt that Jim's revelation of his engagement to Laura set him apart because he was enough of a man to



EVALUATION

I felt very confident with the final result of my costume designs. The colors and textures helped to tell the stories of the characters even when the actors weren't speaking. By collaborating with the set and lighting designers, we were able to provide the actors with the visual elements to complement their portrayals. I had the opportunity to present my costume designs at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival regional festival held at Dixie State College in St. George, Utah. It was a great opportunity to receive feedback and advice not only for design but also for rendering techniques and presentation. I was awarded the regional winner, second only to the Barbizon Award (the winner was a fellow graduate student, Brandee Jenks.) I was extremely proud of my work and I felt as though I represented the university in a favorable light.



Plate 1.7 Production photo Act I Scene 5 Amanda Wingfield encourages her son to find a gentleman caller for his sister

Chapter 2 *Always...Patsy Cline*

BACKGROUND

Always...Patsy Cline is the story of friendship between Houston housewife Louise Seger and Country music star Patsy Cline. The two women exchanged letters and developed a friendship that lasted from 1961 until Patsy Cline's death at the age of 30 in 1963. The story is told through Louise's monologues and Patsy's songs performed with a live band. *Always...Patsy Cline* was performed as part of the Old Lyric Repertory Company's 2010 summer season. It was directed by Adrienne Moore with set design by Shawn Fisher, lighting designs by Randy Mugleston, sound design by Bruce Duerden and props design by Julia Powell.

RESEARCH



When I started my research for *Always...Patsy Cline*, I knew very little about the music icon apart from a few of her songs. After meeting with the director I realized that it would be necessary to research more than just photographs of Patsy Cline, I would also need to research her life as well as the trends of country music at the time. I read books on country music as well as biographies about Virginia Patterson Hensley, the woman who

would become Patsy Cline (Fig.2.1). As well as reading and researching images, I also turned to the internet to view videos of past performances. While searching on-line I found a database of images of Patsy Cline's old costumes auctioned Christie's. These images were incredibly useful because they showed not only the front of the costumes but sometimes even the back. This helped as I designed the necessary costumes, especially when I didn't know what the back of the costume would look like. The

collection not only included purchased ready to wear items but also handmade cowgirl costumes, constructed by Patsy Cline's's mother. These images aided me as I designed two of Patsy Cline's cowgirl costumes for the show.

EXECUTION

Before the beginning of the Lyric season I submitted a “wish list” of costumes I hoped the shop would be able to build as well as the costumes I planned to pull and purchase. I knew that we had a good stock of cocktail dresses, western pants and western boots. Going into the season I knew that due to time restraints (there were three other shows to build) it would be helpful to keep the building to a minimum. Through working with the manager, Amanda Profaizer, and the cutter/drafter, Louella Powell, I was able to start the season with the confidence that the show would be a success.

We built two of Patsy's cowgirl outfits; a red cowgirl dress and a gold pantsuit. There were alterations on almost all of Patsy's performance dresses and shoes; alterations to Louise's shirt and pants and additional decoration on the band's shirts. We purchased shirts for Louise and the band as well as some pairs of pants for some of the band members who didn't fit in the pants pulled from stock. The execution will be described in the character sections.



Figure 2.1 Louise Seger original rendering

CHARACTERS

LOUISE SEGER

Louise Seger was a Texas housewife who started as a Patsy Cline fan and ended up exchanging a series of letters with the star. Louise talked a lot about clothing during her many monologues during the show. I knew that Louise wouldn't have time for a costume change so I decided I needed to focus on details to tell her story. When I initially designed the costume for Louise, I opted for a yellow western style shirt tucked into high-waisted

pants tucked into cowboy boots (Fig. 2.2). I imagined a blonde flipped out bouffant hairstyle with bangs to contrast Patsy's dark hair. After I met the actress portraying Louise, I decided to change a few of the design aspects to better fit her body type and coloring. Yellow wasn't a flattering color for the actress to wear near her face. I also realized that darker pants would be much more slimming for the actress's legs than a pair of light blue pants.



As I reconsidered the

yellow western style shirt in my rendering, I chose a light blue and black western style shirt. The contrasting yoke and cuffs added interest to the shirt and the slim fit was flattering to the actress. The light blue complimented the actress's coloring far better than the yellow I had rendered. Although the yoke of the shirt already contained embroidery, I wanted to add more color to the initially two toned yoke. I used three colors of embroidery floss to fill in the original design, allowing the flowers to look like flowers as opposed to just an abstract design. The added embroidery gave Louise an added richness to her shirt to set her apart from the western shirts of the band (Fig. 2.3).

I chose a pair of colorful cowboy boots based on the colors in the shirt embroidery, red and gold. I pulled a pair of black high-waisted pants from our stock and tried to use them as they were. I wasn't as thrilled with the color or the fit. The legs of the pants were too wide and modern looking, despite the high

waist. After dress rehearsal we narrowed the pant legs to give them a silhouette more appropriate for the early 1960's.

We decided that a pulled back hairstyle would be appropriate not only to the period but would be functional as well. Hairspray and plastic hair inserts known as 'Bump-its' were used to achieve the appropriate period height. I wanted to portray Louise as a woman who worked so she would want her hair off her face (Fig. 2.4).



Figure 2.3 Production photo showing Louise Seeger's hair and western shirt

PATSY CLINE



Historically, Patsy Cline had two dominant styles, cowgirl and cocktail (Fig.2.5). Her mother sewed her cowgirl costumes for her early performances. I wanted to use similar style lines and colors but use better materials than the originals. My thought was to present the very best of Patsy Cline to the audience and to show the performer in the best light. For Patsy's first costume, her iconic red cowgirl dress, I chose a bright red silk shot through with silver threads. On the internet this fabric was beautiful

and it *seemed* like it would give a nice sheen onstage. Once we started working with the fabric we quickly realized that it wasn't meant to be. The fabric held on to every wrinkle with a grasp that couldn't be relinquished. The costume shop manager and I purchased a lightweight silk dupioni locally when we realized the initial fabric was unusable. The replacement fabric wasn't as vibrant as the ordered fabric but it didn't wrinkle nearly as much. Once the shirt was partially constructed, we sent it to a local business to be embroidered with musical notes. I drew notes on the shirt, sleeves and skirt to act as a guide for the craftsperson. After it was embroidered, the sleeves were finished and attached and the side





seams were sewn up. To top off the look I painted a pair of cowboy boots with acrylic paint with Patsy's name, similar to a pair that had once belonged to the star.

I had more freedom when I designed her second cowgirl costume because the script mentions gold lamé pants and I could not find any pictures of Patsy Cline in gold pants. There were several mentions of the elusive pants in the books I had read but there were no

photographs. I found other pictures of Patsy Cline wearing pants and then I combined them with other western styles of costumes she had worn. I decided on a bright turquoise silk for the shirt and on details on the pants. Our cutter draper suggested using a heavy spandex for the gold lamé pants. This fabric was much more durable than the lame and the stretch allowed the actress a greater range of movement. As the costume came together I began to worry that the outfit resembled an Egyptian "Star Trek" officer. My fears were laid to rest as we added fringe and embroidery to the blouse. These additions helped to move the costume from the Star Fleet to the Grand Ole Opry.

Plate 2.1 is a production photo of Patsy Cline in her red cowgirl costume. Plate 2.2 is a production photo of Patsy Cline in her turquoise and gold western with Louise and the Bobcat Band.



Plate 2.1 Production photo Patsy Cline singing "Honky Tonk Merry-go-round"



Plate 2.2 Patsy Cline singing "Shake, Rattle and Roll" with the Bobcat Band and Louise Seger

Patsy's other costumes were cocktail dresses, ranging from the late fifties to the early sixties, appropriate for the duration of her career. USU costume storage was full of beautiful dresses, including many vintage dresses. I chose several before our first fitting with the hope that we would have enough to fulfill the needs of the show. One of the challenges was that I would have a limited number of fittings with the actress playing Patsy Cline due to her residence outside of the area. I was happy that she was extremely easy to work with and was willing to try anything. Also, she had a great hourglass figure so many of the dresses looked as if they had been made especially for her. Although her hair was the perfect color her hairline was too high and her hair texture was too fine. We solved this problem with two wigs, one for the first part of the show and another for the later part. Molly Hill, a talented student, ventilated and styled the wigs.

Although the build for Patsy Cline's costumes was limited to two outfits, few of the pulled items were used without alterations. For the number "Walkin' After Midnight," I chose a light gray dress with a full skirt and lace details (Fig. 2.9). The dress was supposed to have been worn during one of Cline's early television performances in the late 1950's. The dress fit the actress perfectly but I wasn't satisfied



Figure 2.6 Walkin' After Midnight Dress Process Photos

with the color or the skirt length. The color was drab and the skirt was much too long. I made the decision to change the skirt length and tint the dress violet. Resident costume designer Nancy Hills expertly stripped the dress of the gray hue and then dyed it a beautiful lavender shade that suited the actress's coloring beautifully. After the skirt was shortened we used the extra lace to cover the shoulders so the foundation garments worn by the actress wouldn't be visible. The alterations did nothing to detract from the original beauty of the dress; they just helped to suit the purposes better than before. A full crinoline petticoat was worn under the full skirt to achieve the perfect silhouette.

For the scenes where Patsy Cline performs at the ballroom I chose a vintage cocktail dress made of floral black lace. Very little was done to alter the appearance of the dress, gemstones were added to the center of the lace motifs. This addition made the dress sparkle under the stage lights. It was more subtle than a dress made of sequins but it was a good choice to show the difference between Patsy Cline's cowgirl costume and her cocktail dresses.

Plate 2.3 is a production photo showing Patsy Cline in the lavender lace dress and plate 2.4 shows the black lace cocktail dress described in the previous paragraph.





Plate 2.3 Production photo Patsy Cline performs "Walkin' After Midnight"



Plate 2.4 Production photo Patsy Cline performs at the ballroom with the Bobcat Band

BOBCAT BAND

The Bobcat Band acts as Patsy Cline’s back-up band for her musical numbers. The band consists of six musicians, all with the name “Bob.” My initial design for the Bobcat band consisted of Western style suits, dress shirts and bolo ties (Fig.2.10). This wasn’t possible due to the budget and the short build time. The compromise was to dress the band in western style shirts and western pants with boots. This



Figure 2.6 Bobcat Band rendering

solution was actually a better option because some of the band members needed to be able to roll up their sleeves to better play their instruments. The western shirts were purchased on-line and in Salt Lake City. There was a concern that the decorative embroidery wouldn’t be visible from the audience. Fabric markers were used to emphasize the existing embroidery. This visually heightened the decorations without making it look cheap. The only other alteration completed was on the shirt of the guitarist who acted as the band leader. He was concerned that that the snaps on his shirt would scratch his vintage guitar while he was playing. We removed the decorative snaps and

replaced them with snaps on the inside of his shirt facing. This eliminated the chance of the damage to his vintage guitar.

Plate 2.5 is a production photo of the Bobcat band and Patsy Cline performing “True Love” at the end of the show.



Plate 2.5 Production photo Patsy Cline and the Bobcat Band singing "True Love"

EVALUATION

I felt very pleased when I saw the finished product. The costumes seemed to help tell the story rather than detract from it. It also helped that the audience was very enthusiastic and seemed to enjoy the show as well. My only regret was that my original renderings didn't show the true scope of the show. My designs on paper were much less interesting than the designs that were presented on stage. I absolutely loved the process of designing the show and getting to know the music of Patsy Cline.

Chapter 3 *PROOF*

BACKGROUND

Proof, by David Auburn, is the story of a brilliant but mentally ill mathematician, Robert, two daughters, Catherine and Claire, and his former protégée, Hal. Catherine cared for her father for the last four years of his life while Claire supported the family financially. Catherine inherited her father's abilities but both she and her sister worry about the mental illnesses she may have inherited as well. Catherine presents a complex mathematical proof as her own and struggles to prove herself to Hal and Claire. *Proof* was directed by Adrienne Moore on a set design by Milinda Weeks and lighting design by Bruce Duerden. The play was presented in the intimate black box theatre.

CONCEPT

Although the play was written in 2000, Moore wanted to time period to evoke the feelings of a "21st century play." This lead me to choose research images of clothing that could be worn at different time periods, not just now or just ten years ago. The use of "classic" clothing items, such as bootcut jeans, hooded sweatshirts tee shirts and Converse tennis shoes, helped to accomplish this goal. We felt that this approach would help the audience to relate to the characters visually without feeling bound by the year 2000.

RESEARCH

I chose to use the internet to complete a majority of my research due to the wide array of modern fashion readily available. The ease of collection images combined with a busy summer made the internet an ideal place of research. I arranged research collages for each character so that Moore and I could discuss the direction I was headed towards in my research. She liked my research for all of the characters with the exception of Claire. We talked about the time markers in the play; the lack of cell phones and a character mentions a friend moved in 1983. Moore wanted Claire's wardrobe to adhere most closely to the year 2000 to show her interest in fashion and current events. My previous research collage included

contemporary clothing items such as slim leg pants and skinny jeans. After discussing the plan with Moore, I decided to revamp my Claire research and look back to the fall 2000 ready to wear.

EXECUTION

I knew that the show had a short build time, a mere three weeks, so I would need to use my time efficiently. I completed my renderings prior to the beginning of the semester so that I could clearly express my design choices. I created a costume plot based on my renderings and then started pulling costumes from our costume storage. I was able to pull all of Robert's costume pieces but it became clear to me that our stock of contemporary costumes was severely lacking. I discussed the issue with Louella Powell, our costume shop manager, and we decided to purchase the needed costumes and construct the dress Catherine wears to the funeral. I was most interested in making the dress because it is such an important plot point. The black dress is supposed to be such a departure from Catherine's other costume pieces and I felt that a perfect fit was vital to the presentation.

I purchased most of the needed costume pieces from local stores as well as three pairs of shoes from the internet. The actress who portrayed Catherine had expressed a concern with the fit of her jeans for the show. To save time she offered to go jean shopping with me, this proved to be a great solution and a time saver. As I bought the costume pieces I thought about the characters and if they would have the item in their closet. This helped me focus on the characters rather than just their costumes.

CHARACTERS

CATHERINE

As the younger daughter of a brilliant but mentally ill mathematician, Catherine worried about how much she had inherited from her father. Prior to the action of the play, Catherine dropped out of her university studies to care for her father for four years. She is described as possessing strength because of the sacrifice she made for her father. As I discussed the character with the director, Adrienne Moore, we decided that Catherine would be comfortable but not sloppy. After our initial meeting I compiled a research collage of images that would help tell the audience about the character (Fig 4.1). One thing that

Moore liked about the collage was my unintentional repetition of the color gray in Catherine's tops. We decided that she would have almost a uniform of clothing items and colors that she would be comfortable wearing.



Figure 3.1 Catherine research collage

I expressed my concern that the costumes needed to be flattering because Hal needed to have a reason to fall for Catherine even in her depressed state. I thought about how Catherine's hair would be styled and the natural texture of Stehmeier's hair. I advised her to add texture to her hair so it would contrast Claire's sleek hair. Catherine's costume pieces would consist primarily of a pair of dark wash jeans paired with different tops. This choice suited the character and it aided in costume changes. Catherine wasn't concerned with fashion, clothes were merely practical. This lack of interest manifested itself in

the gray color palette and in the repetition of the jeans (Fig.4.2). Tops of similar colors would make it easier to do laundry and to get dressed every day. This attitude towards fashion makes the appearance of the black dress after the funeral even more of change than if she had been neatly dressed in colorful clothes in the prior scenes.





Plate 3.1 Production photo, Act I Scene 1 Catherine and Robert talk about life

extend to her clothing choices.

As I chose costume pieces for Claire I tried to think about how they would work together in a closet. Would the pants from one scene match a sweater from another? It was almost like designing a mini collection for Claire. This method helped as we moved her costume pieces around during the dress rehearsal process. Claire's original first outfit consisted of a green v-neck sweater, brown plaid pants and brown wedges. During the second act she had to change from a pair of jeans with an embellished tee shirt and orange cardigan into a cream turtleneck sweater with a brown pencil skirt and knee high boots. This change took too much time to accomplish even with multiple dressers assisting the actress. Moore and I



discussed the problem and proposed solutions to help speed up the costume change. After we looked at the renderings on the wall we decided that Claire's first costume should be the turtleneck and pencil skirt outfit (Fig.4.4). The pair of jeans swapped out for the brown plaid pants and worn with the wedges, enabling the costume change to be accomplished much faster because she only changed her top.

I designed Claire's hair as a long bob with side swept bangs. I knew that the actress's hair was naturally straight and I asked her to straighten her hair even more to set her apart from Catherine. . I used part of the costume budget to pay for a french manicure for the actress. This small detail helped to further establish Claire as a New York woman who strives to give off a refined appearance. Small details would be easily seen in the intimate black box theatre.



Plate 3.2 Production photo, Act I Scene 2 Catherine and Claire argue about Catherine's mental state

ROBERT

Robert is the father of Claire and Catherine. At the beginning of the play he has been dead for a week. He had been mentally ill for more than half of his life but the illness was paired with brilliance as he revolutionized the field of mathematics. I looked to modern fashion for Robert's costumes not because he was cutting edge but because I liked the use of patterns and layers (Fig. 4.5). The use of multiple textures appealed to me because I felt that Robert was a complex character with depth, not just a crazy mathematics professor.



My original renderings of Robert included ties which made him look much more buttoned up than Moore had originally envisioned (Fig.4.6). We spoke about the setting of the play and decided that Robert probably wouldn't wear a tie at home. We also spoke about his last costume, a tee shirt and pants worn in the wintertime, outside. During this scene Catherine return home and realizes how far her father has slipped mentally. Moore had considered an undershirt but I thought a worn out tee-shirt would be more appropriate, especially one from the University of Chicago, his academic home. All of Robert's

costumes were pulled from our costume stock and distressed using shoes polish, colored hairspray and dye. I found an old tee-shirt and after dyeing it a yellowish tan color, I applied an iron-on of the University of Chicago. I found the image on-line, enlarged it and printed it on iron-on transfer paper. I cut out each letter and applied them to the shirt to give the effect of a worn out tee-shirt, probably given to Robert by the University. This was time consuming but the final product was worth the work.





Plate 3.3 Production photo, Act II Scene 1, Robert describes fall as Hal and Catherine listen

HAL

Hal is a former student of Robert's who has been searching Robert's study for any useful work. He is a math professor with a full teaching load who also plays drums in a rock band. He is aware of the stereotype placed on mathematicians and he works hard against it. Moore and I decided that Hal would be one of the best dressed characters in the play. I made an effort to think about his accessories as a way



to show his changed sense of style in the flashback scene.

This idea also guided me as I chose a suit for Hal to wear for Robert's funeral, I chose flat front pants rather than pleated because they look younger and less old-fashioned (Fig.4.7). I also thought about Hal's age as I chose a jacket for the beginning and end of the play. I found a faux dark brown leather jacket that looked much more mature and polished than a sweatshirt.



Plate 3.4 Production photo, Act I Scene 3, Hal and Catherine share a moment after the funeral

Almost all of Hal's costumes were purchased with the exception of his suit and his flash back hoodie and tee-shirt. The shop altered a black tee-shirt with a white graphic of a band on the front by coloring in the white with a silver fabric marker. The graphic was too stark against the black shirt and the silver helped to tone it down without losing the design of the shirt.

EVALUATION

I thoroughly enjoyed the process of designing *Proof*. It was a challenge to design mostly contemporary costumes and to have the responsibility to put the entire show together by myself. It was very gratifying to see the finished product on stage and to know that I was responsible. I received mostly positive feedback from John Binkley, the KC ACTF respondent from Los Angeles. He liked Claire's costumes, especially her shoes, and he felt that they helped to establish her as a working woman. He also appreciated the flashback scene because Hal looked "much younger." I am extremely proud of my work as a designer and I think the work speaks for itself. *Proof* was an adventure in modern clothes and I thoroughly enjoyed my experience.





Plate 3.5 Production photo, Act I Scene 4, Claire and Catherine share a moment



Plate 3.6 Production photo, Act II Scene 1 Hal, Robert and Catherine on the back porch



Plate 3.7 Production photo, Act II Scene 5, Catherine and Claire discuss Claire's plan for New York



Plate 3.8 Production Photo, Act II Scene 5 Catherine and Hal discuss the proof



Chapter 4 *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

BACKGROUND

William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* tells the story of love, fairies and confusion in Athens. The Duke of Athens, Theseus, has returned from battle with his prisoner of war/fiancée, Hippolyta, the recently defeated Queen of the Amazons. A member of the "court," Egeus, has requested aide because his daughter, Hermia, refuses to marry the man he has chosen, Demetrius. Hermia loves Lysander and is given the option of marrying Demetrius or death. She decides to run away to the forest with Lysander but before they do, she tells her friend, Helena, of their plan. Helena is in love with Demetrius so she tells him of the plan with the hopes that it will make him fall in love with her. The four young people make up the group known as "the lovers." A group of local workmen, the Mechanicals, also go to the forest to rehearse a play for the Duke's upcoming wedding. Meanwhile, the King and Queen of the Fairies, Oberon and Titania, are fighting over an orphaned human child. Their quarrel sets off a chain of events highlighted by love potion, mistaken love and an ass's head. In the end, all is set right as Demetrius marries Helena, Lysander marries Hermia and the mechanicals' play is chosen as the wedding entertainment.

Our production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* featured the music of Felix Mendelssohn. This production was presented by Utah State Theatre in cooperation with the Utah State Music Department who provided their orchestra and women's choir. Richie Call directed, Sergio Bernal conducted, Dennis Hassan designed the set, Bruce Duerden designed the lights and Molly Pack designed the hair and make-up as well as serving as the assistant costume designer.

During our first production meeting we determined the time period for our production. One idea was to set the play in the 1400's which was the last time there was an actual Duke of Athens. Another idea was to follow the time period the play was performed and base it in the 1590's. Both ideas were discarded in favor of setting the play in 1810, the time of Mendelssohn. Although he wrote the music

decades later, the romantic images associated with that time period seemed to be a good fit for our production. I was excited by this time period because it is one my favorite time periods and I had never designed a realized show in that time period. During this time I established my color palette and I established my design concepts for the court, the mechanicals, the lovers and the fairies.

RESEARCH

The characters of A Midsummer Night's Dream can be grouped into four categories: the court, the lovers, the mechanicals and the fairies. The court is comprised of Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus and Philostrate. They are either royalty or associated with the royal class. The lovers are Demetrius, Lysander, Hermia and Helena. They are the young people of the play who experience the follies of love during the course of the play. The mechanicals are the workmen from Athens who are of a lower class than the court and the lovers. Quince, Bottom, Snout, Flute, Starveling and Snug are the names of the men who make up the mechanicals. The fairies include Oberon, Titania, Puck, Peasblossom, Moth, Cobweb, Mustardseed and a number of other unnamed fairies that live in the forest, apart from the mortals (the court, the lovers and the mechanicals.)

For the mortal world, I researched historic clothing in books and on-line. I concentrated on the silhouette and the details of the clothing of the period. I needed to learn about what people wore under their clothes because the lovers would remove several layers as they journeyed through the forest. Although we wouldn't see their underwear, such as corsets, I needed to know what modern undergarments would give us correct style lines. My color palette for all the mortals was restricted to black, white and shades of gray. The monochromatic palette also gives the sense that the mortals lived in a very strict world where a person could be put to death for disobeying a parent. I felt this would be good choice to contrast with the bright colors of the fairies in the forest.

The mechanicals shared the same color palette as the court and the lovers but I wanted to utilize rougher, more homespun fabrics for their costumes. I knew that the style lines and the colors would be similar so I would use texture to differentiate between the classes.

underdress for Helena. A coat was purchased for Theseus online and then embellished with cuffs and faux military medals. The remaining costumes were pulled from our costume storage and others were borrowed from Utah Festival Opera and Pioneer Theatre Company.

My biggest project was hand painting several yards of silk for the fairies. We initially purchased 30 yards of white silk charmeuse with the intent that we would have extra left over. In the end I painted all 30 yards. I used Jacquard silk dye in a variety of colors to achieve the desired effect. I followed a similar process for almost all of the fairy costumes. First I cut pieces of silk to fit the large frames we previously used to paint kimonos. Then I stretched the silk onto the frames using pushpins and thumbtacks. Next, I used a variety of paintbrushes and spray bottles to apply the liquid dye to the silk in various patterns (Fig.3.2). After the silk was colored it was rolled in paper and then placed in a sheet metal tube over a large pot of water to be steamed for six hours. This process set the dye, making it permanent. Setting the dye was important because the actors sweated as they danced. I didn't want them to have any multicolored armpits due to the unset dye reacting with the perspiration!



Figure 4.0 Silk painting process photos

One of the most time-consuming was the process used to paint Titania's wrap skirt and Moth's costume. Each piece was painted with loops and swirls in a main color. The negative spots were filled in

with another color and then the entire piece was covered with yet another color. The result was a free-form pattern that was unique for each character. Prior to painting the silk for both costumes I used a pencil to trace the pattern pieces onto the silk stretched on frames. This allowed me to paint the hem a different color than the rest of the skirt. This technique was not perfect because I found that the steam setting process caused the silk to shrink slightly, altering the traced paper pattern. Fortunately none of the costumes were rendered unusable.

The fairy costumes were made from silk which meant it was challenging for beginning stitchers. The fabric was very slippery and required extra care when constructing the costumes. Due to this, the costume shop staff worked on these costumes while students in the beginning stage crafts class worked on the alterations and simple closures.

CHARACTERS

THESEUS, THE DUKE OF ATHENS



Figure 4.1 Research collage for Theseus, Egeus and Philostrate

I looked at portraits of different rulers from various countries to find my inspiration for the design of Theseus's costume (Fig. 3.3). I chose to focus on military rulers during the time of Napoleon to echo the military campaign the Duke had recently completed. This aspect of his character was shown through the use of military medals, a baldric, tall boots and a stand collar on his jacket. The collar seemed to reflect his adherence to rules and regulations as well as give the actor a sense of his character's power and nobility.

I searched through our stock for an appropriate coat that would fit our actor but I was unable to find anything suitable. We purchased a tail coat and added ornamentation including medals, a sash and appliqued cuffs. I added trim to the cuffs and attached them to the sleeves of the coat an inch lower than the hem. This compensated for the actor's long arms that weren't quite covered by the sleeves. The addition of the baldric, epaulets, metals and cuffs elevated the coat to one that was fit for royalty.

HIPPOLYTA, QUEEN OF THE AMAZONS



Figure 4.1 Hippolyta rendering

When I designed Hippolyta's costume I wanted to emphasize that she was a sort of prisoner in a foreign land. I felt that I accomplished this by adding an openwork overskirt that had a design reminiscent of a cage (Fig.3.4). Josephine, the first wife of Napoleon, was the main inspiration for Hippolyta's costume design. I saw many paintings by Jacques-Louis David of Josephine wearing capes, gloves and collars so I decided to add those elements to the costume design. I chose long gloves to further emphasize Hippolyta's detachment from Athens and Theseus.

As I started pulling the costume pieces I realized that we didn't have anything resembling my research in stock so her costume would need to be constructed. I searched on-line to find the fabric for the overlay but I wasn't able to find the pattern I desired. We purchased more silk to construct Hippolyta's white underdress and dark gray overdress. I also chose white chiffon shot through with silver thread for the overskirt for the white dress. This was much more subtle than the original design and I wish that I would have picked something more visible for the stage such as black lace. The white underdress was trimmed with black floral trim and I used a silver lace trim on the collar attached to the over dress. I made a hair ornament out of a black hair band with

silver lace applied over it. The overall effect resembled a crown, appropriate for Hippolyta's rank as queen of the Amazons.

EGEUS

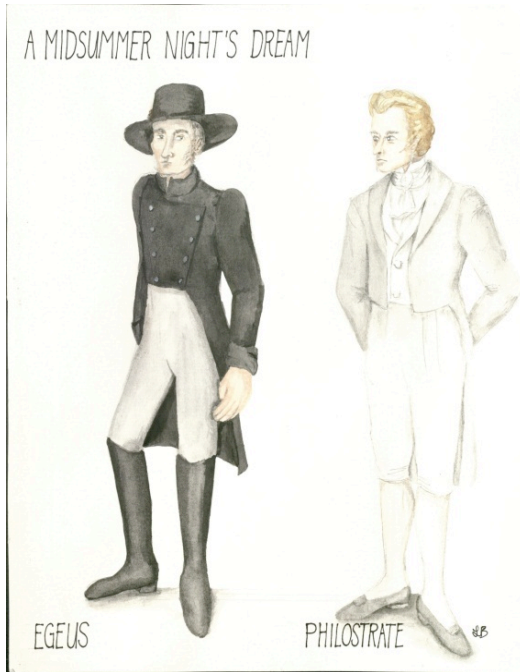


Figure 4.1 Egeus and Philostrate rendering

Egeus is a man who seems to enjoy discipline and upholding the rules. As a result he clashes with his daughter Hermia who wants to marry a different young man than the one her father has deemed suitable. My original design for Egeus was inspired by a drawing of an austere man wearing a double breasted coat, wide brimmed hat and boots (Fig.3.5). The expression on his face gave the idea that this man meant business and was not interested in emotional matters. This seemed to fit the character that was willing to give up his daughter's life in exchange for his honor. I dressed the actor in a dark coat and vest with minimal decorations; white breeches and black boots.

PHILOSTRATE

Philostrate is the master of revels; it is his responsibility to organize the entertainment for the wedding of Theseus and Hippolyta. Due to his status in the court, I chose to dress the character in lighter clothes with metallic details. I felt that the details gave an added richness to the overall costume of the character. I also chose to dress him in shoes rather than boots to further set him apart from the other mortals. The shoes seemed appropriate for a character whose main duties were in the palace.

Plate 3.1 is a production photo of Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus and Philostrate's discovery of the sleeping lovers. I chose this production photo because it shows the realized costumes for the four previously discussed characters: Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus and Philostrate.



Plate 4.1 Production photo, Act IV Scene 1 Theseus, Hippolyta, Philostrate and Egeus discover the lovers sleeping on the ground

LYSANDER

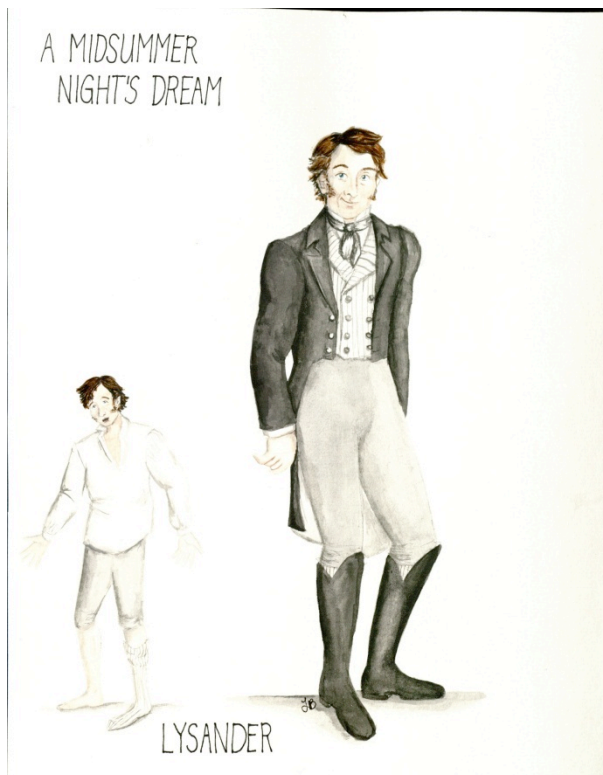


Figure 4.1 Lysander rendering

Lysander is a young man who loves Hermia but is not deemed worthy by Egeus, her father. Originally in my design I wanted the young men to look similar but have differentiations in accessories such as striped vests or boot style (Fig. 3.6). When it came to fitting the actor in his costume pieces I ran into a size problem. He was very slender and we didn't have any appropriate coats that would fit his slender frame. The problem was solved by borrowing a coat from the Utah Festival Opera. Not only was the borrowed coat closer to his size but it was also gray which set him apart from the actor portraying Demetrius.

DEMETRIUS

Demetrius is a young man who formerly loved Helena but now loves Hermia. He has the added advantage of the approval of Egeus. I took this into consideration as I chose costume pieces for Demetrius; I dressed him in dark pieces similar to Egeus (Fig. 3.5). This action also helped to distinguish him from Lysander who wore the same pieces: shirt, vest, coat, breeches and boots (Fig.3.7). One challenge I faced with the two young men was their apparent age difference. Even though both actors were roughly the same age, the actor playing Lysander looked about 15 while the actor playing Demetrius appeared to be almost 30. I used their hairstyles to bring them closer in age, visually. The actor playing Demetrius was balding so I instructed the dressers to spray the actor's head to camouflage his thin hair. This gave the illusion of a thicker head of hair. Lysander's hair was combed back into hairstyle more

appropriate for the time period. The small change in hair helped to make one actor appear younger and the other to appear more mature.

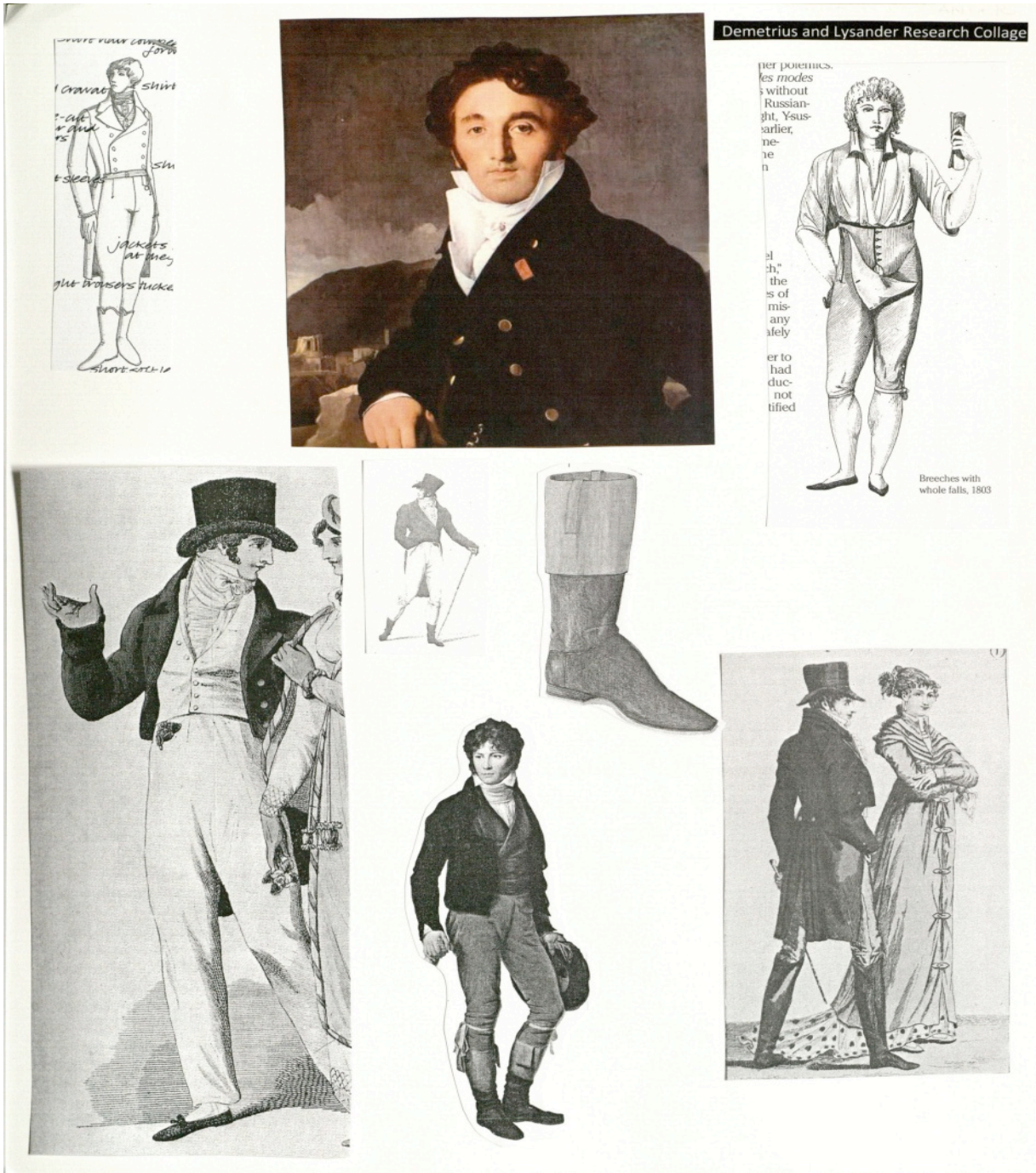


Figure 4.1 Lysander and Demetrius research collage

HELENA



Figure 4.1 Helena and Hermia research collage

A friend of Hermia who loves Demetrius, she seeks his adoration when she tells him about Hermia and Lysander's plan to flee into the woods. Rather than make one girl "ugly" and the other "pretty," I chose similar white dresses for both girls (Fig.3.8). My initial design for the character included more costume pieces including a bonnet, necklace and a short sleeved spencer. As I started pulling costume pieces I realized that the bonnet and necklace would be problematic due to the physical nature of the play and we didn't own a spencer that matched my rendering. For the pre-forest scenes I gave

Helena a light weight spencer made of silk to contrast with the white shawl worn by Hermia. I felt that the spencer would hold up better than a shawl with the physical action of the character. As with the young men, I used to color to differentiate between the two young women once they were in the forest. We built a gray silk underdress for Helena to contrast with the white silk underdress worn by Hermia. Both young women wore modern ballet style flat shoes to mimic the style of the period. The flat shoes would be easily removed, essential for the activity of the play and the physical demands.

HERMIA



Hermia is a young woman who loves Lysander, despite the disapproval of her father, Egeus. I chose to focus on the likable attributes of Hermia's character as I selected accessories to set her apart from Helena. Small roses for her hair and a delicate shawl seemed to suit her sweet personality (Fig. 3.9). I didn't want to portray Hermia as too sweet, just as I didn't want to depict Helena as the ugly girl. I would rather the audience form their opinions based on the script and the presented action. As with

Helena, I dressed Hermia in a white dress with a white underdress beneath. Although I would have preferred to build the girls' overdresses, we didn't have the time. In our costume storage I found suitable dresses from a previous production set in the same time period that suited the production.

OBERON

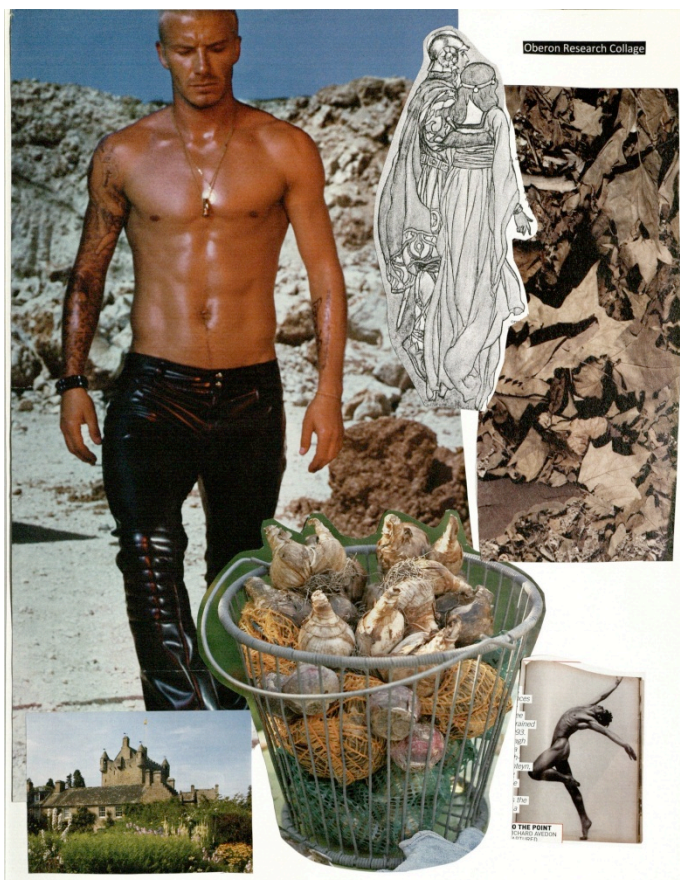


Figure 4.2 Oberon's research collage

As the king of the fairies, Oberon is a doer of mischief. He gets into arguments with his queen, Titania, and he doles out revenge by way of a magic flower. As I designed Oberon I was inspired by pictures of David Beckham, the English football star as well as pictures of tulip bulbs (Fig. 3.10). I like the juxtaposition of physical strength and nature. From this collection of images I started to sketch. Richie Call, the director, liked the idea of layers like a bulb or a tree and he also liked the idea of tattoos on the fairies, male and female. I proposed the idea of dressing Oberon and Puck in similar costumes; Oberon's would be more elaborate

to show his position as king. My initial color palette for Oberon included shades of brown and dark green colors. Call suggested amping up the color palette to include bright blue and green, similar to the colors in the movie *Avatar*. This color change helped to move the male fairies into the same realm as the female fairies. Previously the women were colorful and the men were a little boring, dressed in shades of brown, green and gray.

The process of constructing Oberon's costume was time consuming. We purchased a pair of stretch pants from a dance supply store online and then we stretched the pants onto a pair of mannequin legs and then applied strips of fabric by hand. The shop had two pairs of legs so we were able to work

on Puck's pants simultaneously (Fig. 3.11). The hard lines created at the waist and feet proved to be problematic during the first dress rehearsal. Belts and spats were created for Oberon and Puck as a solution to this problem. These belts helped to add more interest to the applied stretch pants.. The spats also helped to ground the costume, preventing it from looking like just a pair of stretch pants with fabric glued on.

I wanted to set Oberon and Titania apart from the other fairies and show their position as rulers. The collar was an idea that had appeared in my rough sketches of Oberon (Fig. 3.12). Oberon's collar was made of the same fabrics used in his pants and accessories. Strips of fabric were also applied to the collar to mimic the texture of



Figure 4.2 Oberon and Puck construction photo

the rest of his costume. The strips resembled a lion's mane, perfect for the king of the fairies.

Plate 3.2 is the final rendering of Oberon's costume and plate 3.3 is a production photo showing Oberon and Puck's realized costumes.

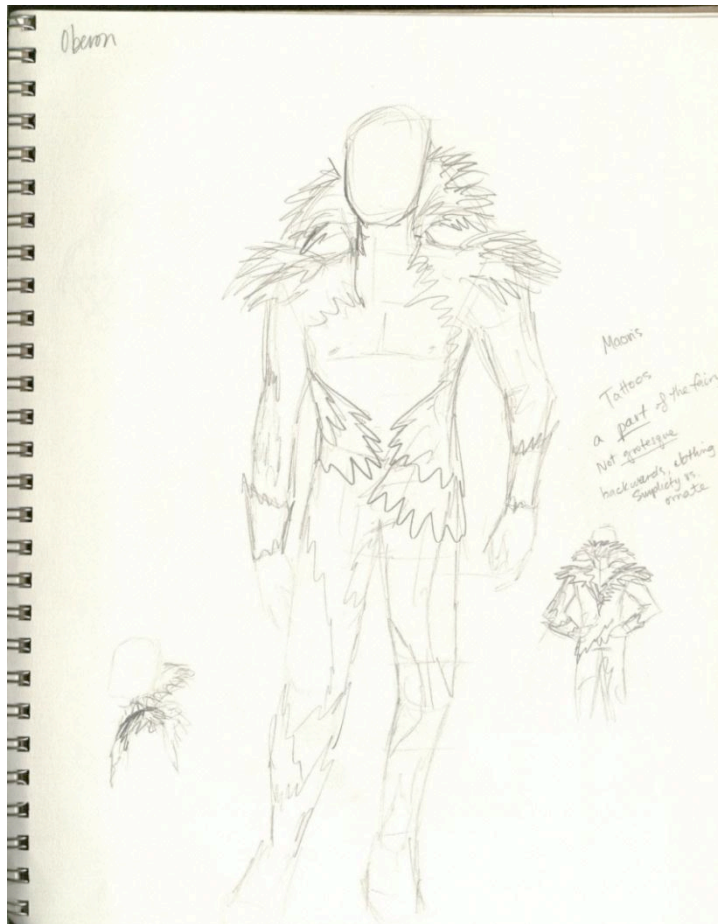


Figure 4.2 Oberon rough sketch

A MIDSUMMER
NIGHT'S DREAM



OBERON

Plate 4.2 Oberon final rendering



Plate 4.3 Production photo, Act II, Oberon tells Puck about the magical flower

PUCK, TWIG, GNARLY, BUD AND VIGGO

As Oberon's lieutenant, Puck is second in command in the fairy world. Puck is very mischievous and his mistakes propel the action of the play forward. He is the one who sprinkles the love potion on the lovers' eyes and he transforms Bottom's head into that of a donkey. I wanted to show the relationship of Oberon and Puck in their costume construction techniques. Puck's costume pieces were similar to Oberon's in construction but they were scaled down to fit the actor and to show Puck's lesser authority. I used lighter colors in Puck's costume to set him apart from the king (Fig. 3.13).

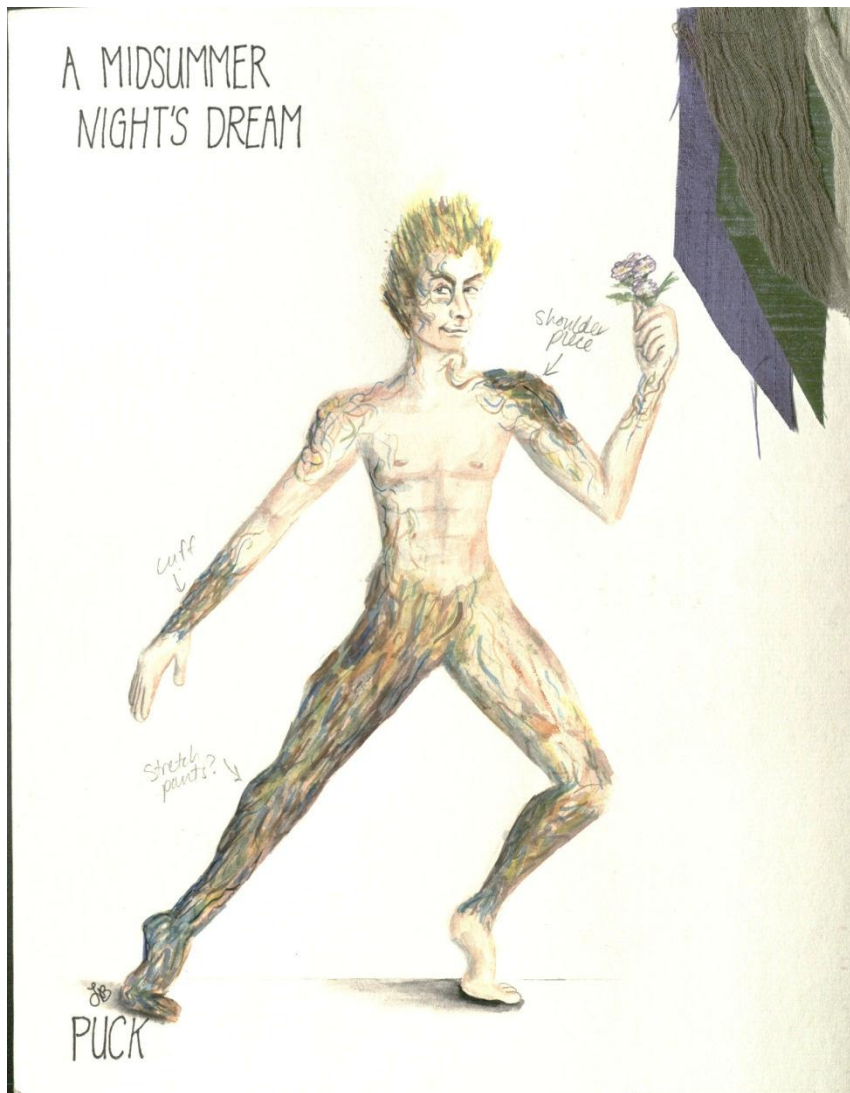


Figure 4.3 Puck rendering

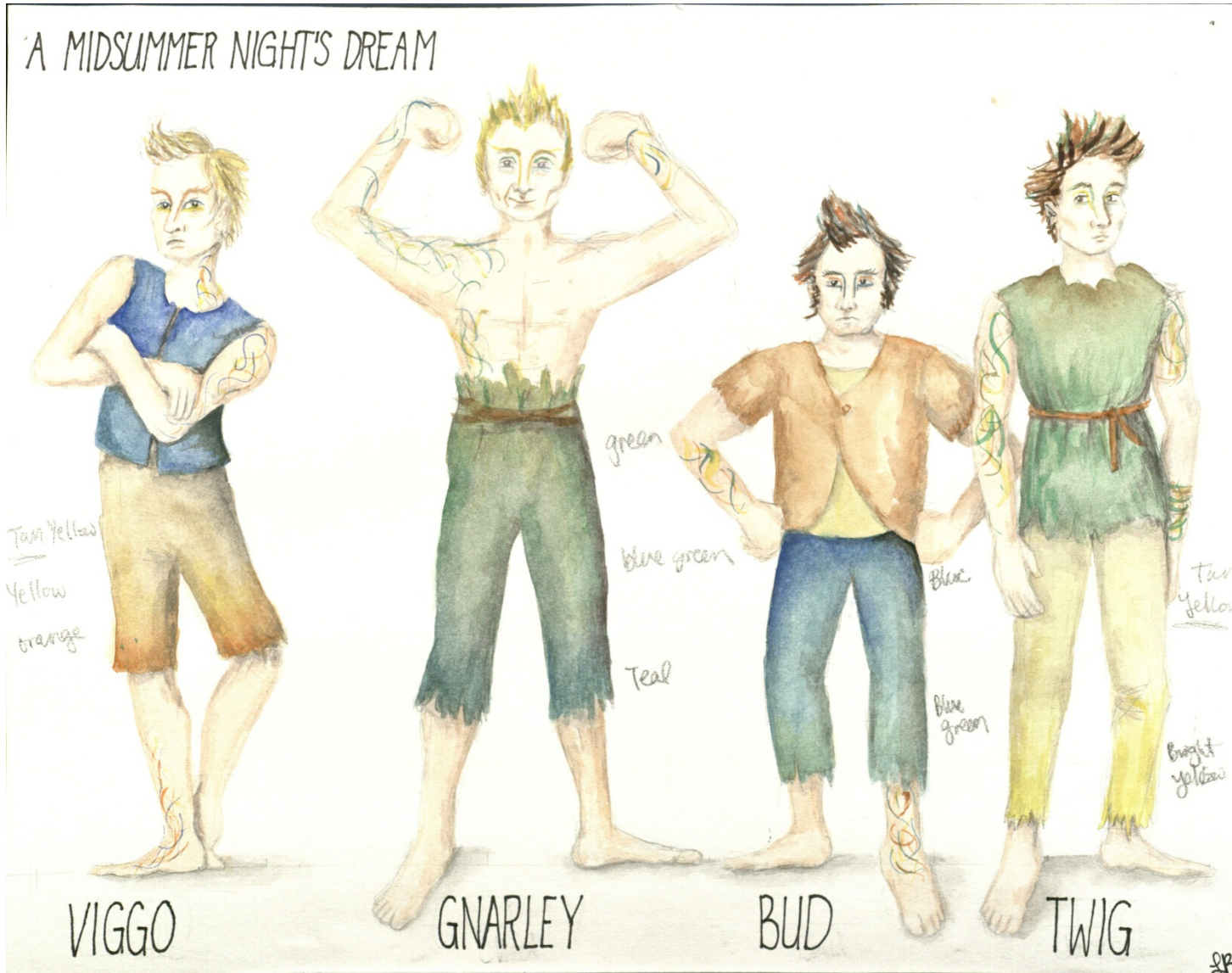


Plate 4.4 Viggo, Gnarley, Bud, and Twig rendering



Plate 4.5 Production photo, Act II Oberon tells Puck and the rest of the male fairies about the magical flower

TITANIA



Titania is the queen of the fairies, wife to Oberon, the king. Titania is not afraid to stand up to her husband, especially when there is changeling child involved (the source of their fight.) I looked to modern fashion and flowers as I researched Titania (Fig. 3.15). This combination of images seemed to support the idea of Titania as a queen who is not afraid to stand up for herself. I gravitated to the

juxtaposition of soft feminine and tough hardware of leather and metals. My early sketches of Titania were very disjointed; I had too many ideas and not enough focus. As I focused on fewer images I picked out the elements that I felt helped to create the costume and complete the rendering.

The execution of the costume required some thinking outside of the box to create a costume to fit the unique body shape of the actress. She was extremely petite with a very large bust. I spoke with the costume shop manager, Amanda Profaizer, to brainstorm the structure of Titania's costume. Profaizer helped me to break down the elements of the costume into four pieces: minimizer bra, wrap skirt, a second bra with attached costume pieces and a half corset (Fig. 3.16). A specialty sized bra was



purchased online and a second bra was purchased locally. The second bra became the foundation for the top of the costume; I draped the costume onto the bra and hand stitched it in place. This approach allowed for a costume that fit the actress's body and adhered to my design. In addition to constructing the corset and draping the bodice, I also hand painted all of the silk. In addition to the dress, Titania's costume also included a collar with an attached cape.

PEASBLOSSOM



Figure 4.6 Peasblossom and Foxglove rendering

During the design process, the director and I decided that Peasblossom was Titania's second in command, parallel to Puck's authority under Oberon. As considered Peasblossom's costume I looked to Titania's for inspiration. I designed a simplified version of Titania's costume for Peasblossom consisting of a short wrap skirt, a structured top and a sash across the bodice (Fig. 3.17). I painted the wrap skirt so that the edge of the skirt was red and the rest was a wash of yellow and orange. The color gradation effect on the skirt was inspired by flower petals.

It was important that the actress playing Peasblossom would be able to move freely in her costume due to the choreography. I drew on my past experience as a dancer to create a costume that would allow the actress to dance without being encumbered by her costume. The corset top was constructed using lightweight plastic boning to allow for movement while maintaining support. During the dress rehearsal process it became necessary to add an additional piece to the waistband of the wrap skirt so that the top and skirt didn't gape as the actress danced. The addition secured the bodice to the waistband, preventing a separation of corset and skirt.

MUSTARDSEED, MOTH, COBWEB AND FOXGLOVE



were whimsical without appearing tacky. I decided to incorporate the idea in the costumes worn by Moth and Foxglove (Fig. 3.17 and Plate 3.6).

For Mustardseed's skirt, I patterned large petal shapes that would be layered to create her skirt. Each petal was painted yellow with orange edging. The shape was directly inspired by an upside down flower with the layered petals forming the skirt. This construction method was time consuming but the effect was beautiful on stage, she looked like one of the fairy illustrations come to life. Her bodice was designed after one of the illustrations featuring a draped top layered over a textured top (Fig. 3.19). Mustardseed's realized bodice

Mustardseed, Moth, Cobweb and Foxglove are female fairies loyal to Titania. Images of flowers, modern fashion and illustrations of fairies inspired my designs for the rest of the fairies (Fig. 3.18). I chose images of modern fashion featuring clothing pieces with watery designs; as if a painting of flowers had been left a puddle. This led to my technique for silk painting patterns for the skirts and dresses. I used flowers as my inspiration for colors used and illustrations of fairies shaped some of the silhouettes. I liked the decorative hemlines featured on the dresses in the fairy illustrations. They



was comprised of a corseted top covered in green silk with a draped over bodice made of yellow silk.

Cobweb's original costume was supposed to be constructed primarily of lace with silk pieces interspersed in the skirt, presenting the idea of cobwebs (Fig. 3.17, 3.15). My inability to fully realize this idea led to the final costume of dyed silk with lace accents. I divided up the needed silk pieces into two pieces which were painted in a contrasting manner, one piece was primarily blue and the other was purple. Cobweb's gored skirt was constructed of alternating panels to give depth to the costume. Pieces of lace were then appliqued onto the bodice and skirt. I chose lavender as the primary color rather than gray because I knew that gray would be too dull next to the other bright colors. The effect was successful because she was subdued but still fit in with the other fairies.

Moth's costume changed slightly from the rendering to the finished product. I decided that the netting shoulder piece wasn't appropriate, the texture was all wrong. Initially I liked the asymmetrical hem line because it was inspired by moth wings but I decided it wouldn't communicate the idea of moth wings. The hem line was straightened to one length and scalloped. The painting treatment was meant to evoke moth wings and flower petals, hence the bright yellow edging next to the green pattern.

The hair for the fairy girls was long and interspersed with either color or pieces of fabric. Leftover scraps of silk were given to the girls to wear in their hair. This allowed them to add color to their hair without the use of bleach and dye. Moth and Cobweb were given hair extensions to add length and fullness.

Plate 3.6 is a full color rendering for Cobweb, Moth and Mustardseed. Plate 3.7 is a production photo showing the costumes of Peasblossom, Foxglove, Cobweb, Moth and Mustardseed.





Plate 4.7 Production photo Act III, the fairies enchant the local workmen who have come to the forest to rehearse

NICK BOTTOM, THE WEAVER

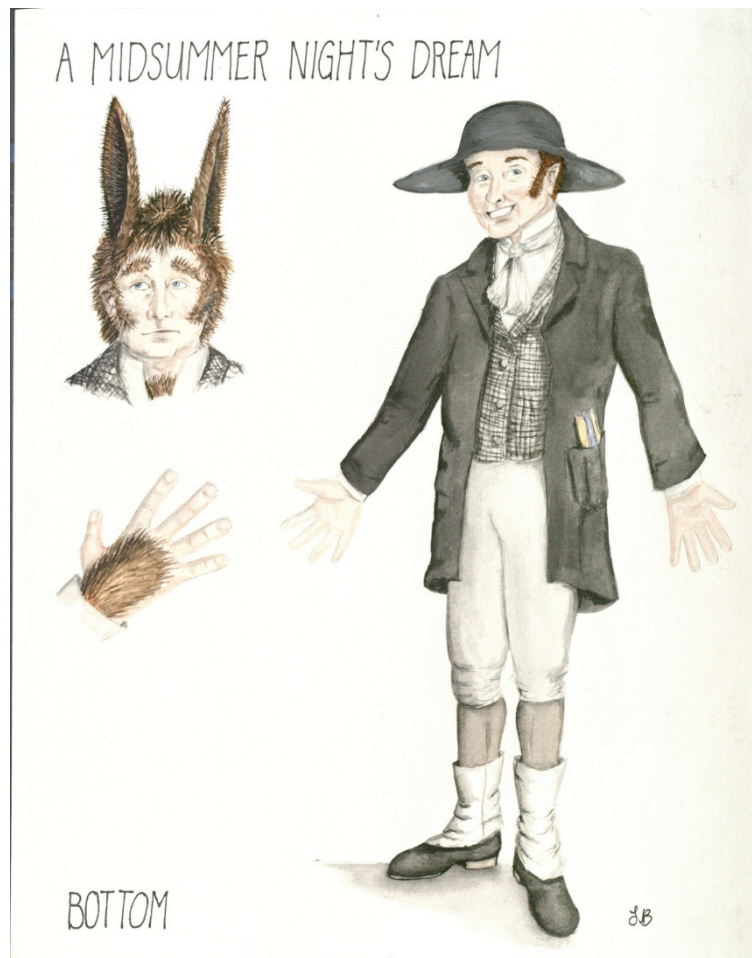


Figure 4.8 Bottom rendering

Bottom is an aspiring actor who gets sucked into the fairy world and becomes the unexpected paramour of the intoxicated fairy queen. I chose to emphasize Bottom's desire to be the best by dressing him clothes that looked like a gentleman's but in the rough fabric of a workman (Fig.3.20).

The director and I discussed how we could make Bottom stand out from the other mechanicals visually to support the actor's performance. We decided that Bottom would be a man from the lower class who aspired to look like a gentleman. I was fortunate to find a tail coat made from a fuzzy

black and white wool herringbone fabric with the right style lines. Not only was it perfect looking, but it also fit our 6'5" actor as though it was made for him.

During Act III, Bottom is transformed by Puck's magic and given the head of an ass. I did not want to put a mascot head on stage, a fate that befalls some actors who play Bottom on stage. I discussed my concerns with Call and we decided that a wig/hat hybrid would suit our purposes better than a full mask. Caroline Kennedy, a costume design student, constructed large donkey ears out of industrial felt, lacquer and pieces of hair. The ears were then attached to a wig that had been styled by Molly Hill. I

spoke with both students about my design for the ears and shared research (Fig. 3.22). Hill added extra hair wefts to the center of the wig to give the Mohawk effect present on donkey heads. She also added extra hair pieces on the sides of the wig to mimic sideburns and to cover the elastic chin strap worn by actor (Fig. 3.21).



Figure 4.8 Rough Sketch of Bottom's donkey head and photo of finished head

Plate 3.8 is a production photo showing the character Bottom with his transformed head.



Plate 4.8 Production photo Act III, Titania and Bottom relax with the fairy attendants

THE MECHANICALS

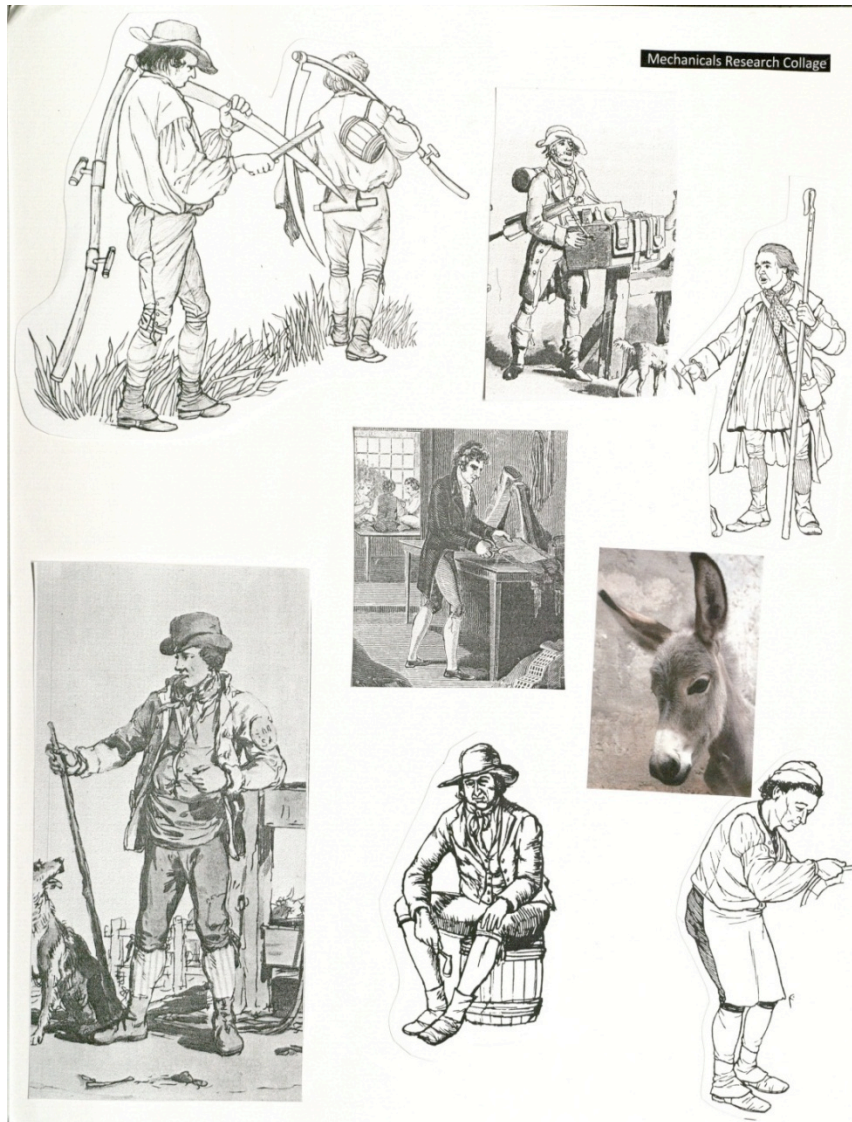


Figure 4.8 Mechanicals research

The mechanicals are a group of working class men who venture into the forest to rehearse a play. I chose costume pieces in the monochromatic color palette of the mortal world but in rough fabrics to show the difference between this group and the court. While researched I found many images of laborers, many who shared occupations with the characters in the play (Fig. 3.22). Their clothing was similar to finer clothing of the time but the silhouette was looser and the texture of

the fabric wasn't as refined. I gave each of the men an accessory that would correspond to their occupation. Starveling, the tailor, wore a measuring tape around his neck; Flute, the bellows mender, wore an apron and a hat. These small accessories added to the overall appearance of the mechanicals as a whole.

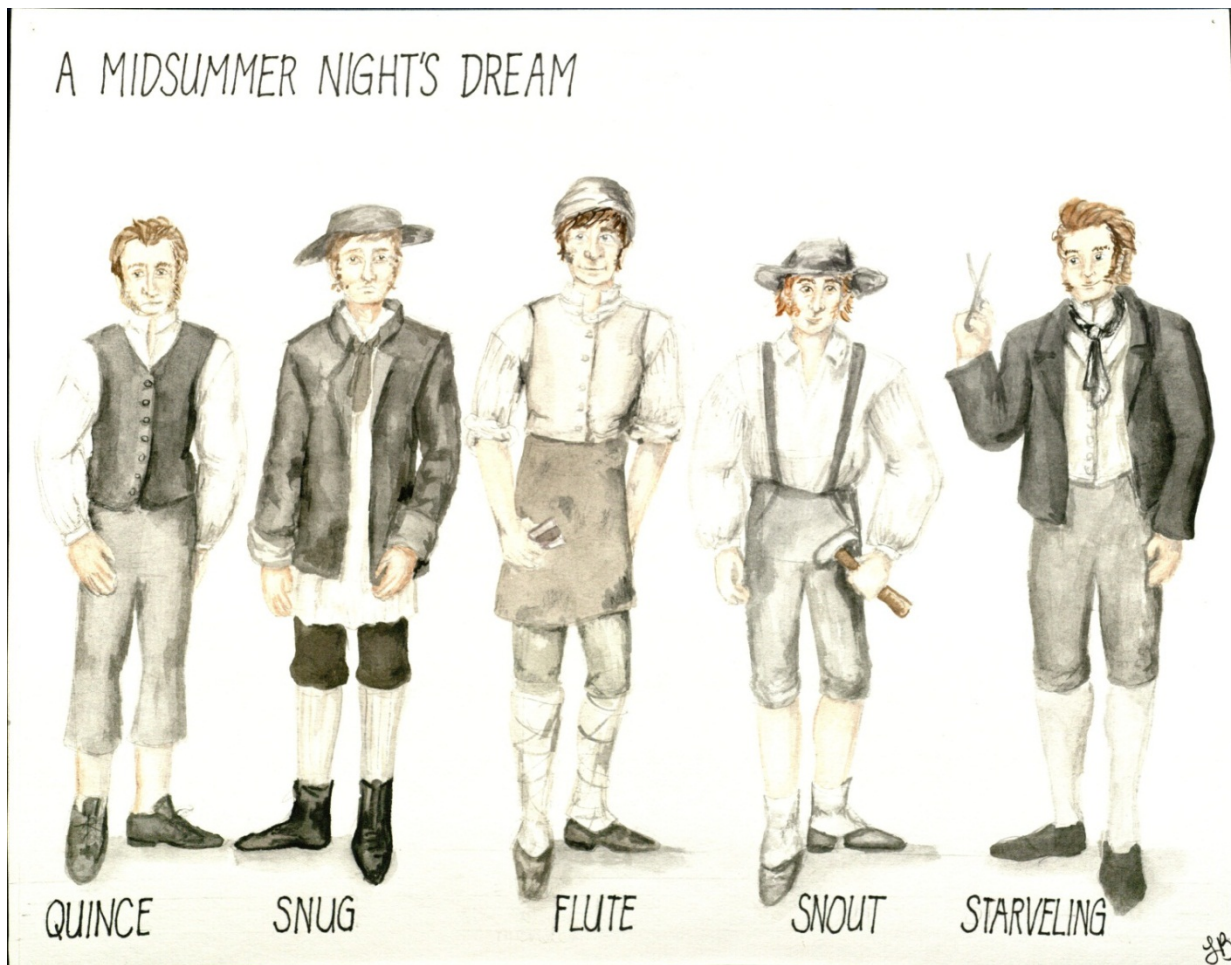


Figure 4.9 Final rendering of Quince, Snug, Flute, Snout and Starveling

The mechanicals also appear in the play at the wedding feast. They present the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, two lovers who meet at wall by the light of the moon. Pyramus arranges to meet Thisbe at a tomb. Thisbe is frightened off by a lion and Pyramus kills himself, believing Thisbe to be dead by the lion. Thisbe returns to find her love dead and she also kills herself.

I wanted most of the characters to have costumes that appeared to be homemade. Lion's costume consisted of a mane made of fabric scraps, oven mitt "paws" and a tail constructed of the same fabric scraps as the mane. For Moonshine I focused on the night sky rather than just the moon. I layered pieces of sheer fabric embossed with glitter to mimic the starry sky on a dark blue cloak. He also wore a conical hat layered with the same fabrics. Wall wore a poncho with a brick wall painted on the front and the back. The costumes for Pyramus and Thisbe were pulled directly from our costume stock. I chose blue costumes that would coordinate with one another, showing their connection despite their misfortunes. I felt that Pyramus and Thisbe would have more elaborate costumes than the others because they seemed to be the most outgoing of the group. Bottom's enthusiasm for acting seemed that it would extend to his personal appearance as well as his performance as Pyramus.

Plate 3.9 is a production photo of the mechanicals performing at the wedding feast.



Plate 4.9 Production photo Act V, the mechanicals present the story of Pyramus and Thisbe at the wedding feast

EVALUATION

I was very happy with the final production, all of the elements worked together as an artistic whole. The color palette change from the mortal world to the fairy world helped to show the audience the difference between the realms. Catherine Zublin the faculty costume designer from Weber State University gave me feedback after one of the performances. She applauded my design for Bottom's ass head transformation describing it as "one of the best design solutions." Zublin also liked the visual relationship between the costumes worn by Oberon and Puck; she said they both looked great. I had the opportunity to present my designs at the KCACTF regional festival in Los Angeles, California. Even though I didn't win any prize, I was proud of my accomplishments as a designer.

If I had the opportunity to complete this project again I would have changed a few costumes. I would have used a more graphic overlay on Hippolyta's dress. The white chiffon with silver stripes was more subtle than I had intended.

In hindsight, I wish I would have added more decoration to Titania's collar and added some sort of pattern to the cape because it appeared very flat on stage. The collar could have been so much more dynamic if I had used more texture in addition to the painted treatment. I would have also adjusted the hemline of Cobweb's skirt so that it would have been more flattering for the actress. The longer length hit her at an unflattering place and the straight hemline wasn't as interesting as the other fairies'.



Plate 4.10 Curtain Call featuring full cast, choir, conductor and orchestra

Appendices

APPENDIX A**Bibliography for *The Glass Menagerie***

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