

## **Scenic design Independent Study**

### ***Heathers: The Musical***

I would like to pursue an independent study class that focuses on the aspect of set design. The main goal of my independent study would be to look into designs of past successful plays and movies and then sketch two original set designs from a show that I've read with the help of Ms. Figg-Franzoi. I would produce new drawings within the set that are the right time period and the proper mood. The purpose of the study would be to have a bigger perspective on the technical aspect of set design and scenography. The play that I would create and design a costume and sets from would be *Heathers: The Musical* by Kevin Murphy and Laurence O'Keefe. Throughout the study, I would also look at other plays and movies for inspiration. Such as *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Ragtime*, *An Inspector Calls*, *Wicked*, and the *Skin of Our Teeth*. I would also use two credible websites: Architects digest, and The Tony award winners website. Some scenic designers that I would focus on would be Edward Gordon Craig; who figured out the use in creating large spaces, Boris Anderson; for his set design in *Cabaret*, Bob Crowley; for his designs in *Aida* and *Once*, and lastly Christina Jones for her work on *American Idiot*. I would not need to purchase any materials for this study, such as sketchbook paper or other resources, because the theater department already has them in stock.

I've wanted to take an independent study since my Freshman year because it seems like an amazing opportunity to study something that I am passionate about. I also do well in an independent environment and it seems like a viable class for colleges to see on my resume. I feel that I am qualified to do this independent study because I'm very focused and driven. I've even been able to independently take college classes online. Not only that, in my free time I have worked on five Homestead shows as prop master. I also want to pursue a degree in scenic design, so I am aware of the dedication and the artistic value that goes into scenography. A class

specifically geared in set design does not exist at Homestead and without an independent study in this concentration I would not be able to be involved in a class as unique as this. To summarize, in a set design independent study I would be challenged to produce two original set designs with few inexpensive materials and would gain insight of this aspect of theater for future knowledge that I would not normally have access to.

## **Scenic Design Class Proposal:** ***Heathers: The Musical***

### **Thesis Committee:**

Ms. Figg Franzoi

### **Abstract:**

In this Independent study, based on scenic design, I will explore various groundbreaking methods and set designers in the professional theater world by video and reading various textbooks. Then after researching I will create two original set drawings for a musical called *Heathers*.

### **Project Description:**

I've always been very passionate about theater for many reasons, but the main reason was its requirement of endless imagination. I've always loved how theater has the power to take its audience to other worlds, but in reality it's imagination is just created under one building. As a five year old this always fascinated me, as it still does to this day. However, as much as I love being baffled by stunning sets and technical maneuvers, I would like to gain some insight about theater design for future experiences.

*Heathers* has instantly become one of my favorite musicals, not only because of its simplicity but also its underlying message: that we don't have the power to control others but we do have the power to control our own actions for good or bad. However, I believe that the one flaw about this musical is its lackluster set. I would like to create a set that this show truly deserves, instead of the one it has currently.

### **How:**

My goal for this study is to create an original and creative set drawing with the help of Ms. Figg-Franzoi, Homestead High School Drama director. I will use various books and credible websites

in order to gain creative professional perspective to create my designs. My rationale for undertaking my chosen topic is that scenic design has been a huge interest of mine for many years, yet this topic has become increasingly important to me during my time in Homestead's stage crew.

### **Research Questions:**

The purpose of this research is to develop an understanding of how professional technical theater has evolved throughout the years, where did it start from and where is it going? I will use my research to inform my next questions:

- What is the tone, style and mood for the musical *Heathers* and how can I help enhance the story through my scenic design? Through my research I must answer the questions of how to establish a location and time-period and what is the central image or metaphor for the musical?
- For the practical purpose of the scenic design, I must choose what type of theatre to set my design: proscenium, thrust, arena, environmental, found space. What is the benefit to the type of space I choose?
- What are the requirements for the physical layout in terms of space? What are the blocking requirements (Movement/Dancing/Violence)? How can I create a clear ground plan knowing this information and how will my set design create a clear traffic pattern for the actors?

### **Project Timeline:**

#### **September 1-4:**

- In depth research study of Edward Gordon Craig and Boris Aronson to be put into Google document

#### **September 8-October 7, 2015**

- Research on Bob Crowley for his many designs and Christina Jones for her work on *American Idiot* to be put into a Google document
- Then research various set designs for *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Ragtime*, *An Inspector Calls*, *Wicked*, and *the Skin of Our Teeth* through video, reading and images to be put in a Google document
- Share Google document with Miss Figg-Franzoi

#### **October 8- 24, 2015**

- Read *Heather's* script
- Focus on 1st design through research (create a google doc with picture ideas)
- Have Figg approve design idea
- Start light design in pencil

**October 12:**

- 1st original design submission in Pencil

**October 24-27:**

- Get critiquing idea from figg and fix
- Add ink and color
- Turn final color design into Miss Figg

**October 28- November 13, 2015**

- Start second design in light pencil
- Focus on 2nd set design through research (with a Google doc with picture ideas)
- \*second design should be same set but another scene that I would like to create
- Have Figg approve design idea
- Start light design in pencil
- Ink and color set design

**November 18th:**

- 2nd original design submission

**November 19-21:**

- Final Feedback from Miss Figg
- Finish adding final touches that was given during feedback

**Set Design Submissions:**

October 12th: 1st Original Design Submission

November 14th: 2nd Original Design Submission

November 16th: (optional if there is enough time) One Original Costume Design for J.T

**Design/Supplemental Research Materials:**

Sketchbook paper

Pencils

(Sketching) Colored pencils

Heathers: The musical script

Heathers soundtrack ( I already own)

The Color Scheme Bible

Rendering for Set Design

Architectural digest's website

Tony website