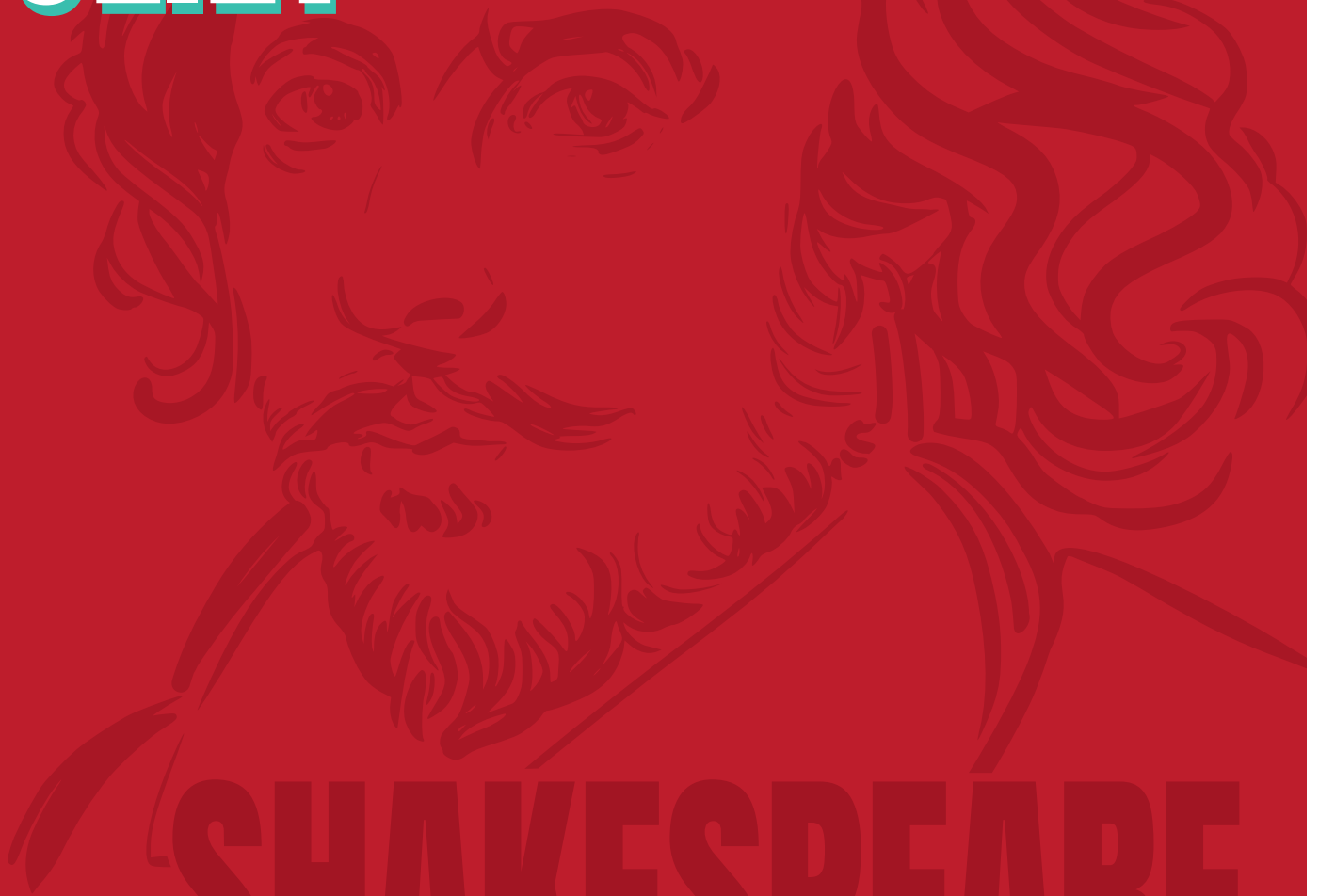


UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-PARKSIDE THEATRE ARTS DEPARTMENT PRESENTS

# ROMEO AND JULIET



((LIVE  
STREAMING))

# SHAKESPEARE

**STUDY GUIDE**

UNIVERSITY OF  
WISCONSIN **PARKSIDE**



## A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome from the Theatre Arts Department at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside!

Our award-winning theatre program is dedicated to creating high-quality theatre productions that will engage your students and enrich your class curriculum. We are thrilled to share with you the incredible experience of watching live theatre and we hope that you enjoy our virtual production of *Romeo and Juliet*!

Sincerely,

*Misti*

**Misti Bradford**, Chair  
Theatre Arts Department  
University of Wisconsin-Parkside  
bradford@uwp.edu

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## PARKSIDE THEATRE ARTS

The University of Wisconsin-Parkside Theatre Arts Department focuses on student success by providing unparalleled opportunities in a professional training company model. All students practice various aspects of theatre, from acting and directing to scenic, lighting, sound, and costume design and construction.

Students work with guidance from acclaimed faculty to produce high-quality productions. State-of-the-art design labs and well-equipped venues serve as inspiring backdrops to an award-winning program. Be part of our company.

**Learn more:** [uwp.edu/theatre](http://uwp.edu/theatre)

# A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

**Brian Gill**  
Director

The years surrounding the probable writing and first performance of William Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet* (1594-1596) were marked by intolerance and upheaval. The eruption of the Nine Years' War in Ireland, an assassination attempt on Queen Elizabeth, the public hanging, drawing, and quartering of Catholic martyr Robert Southwell, and a Spanish raid that would see the burning of Penzance and Mousehole in Cornwall are only a small sampling of the mayhem the English monarchy experienced during a tumultuous decade. It should therefore come as no surprise that, into this disorder, Shakespeare introduces his famous "star-crossed lovers."

Because the play is over four hundred years old and is required reading for nearly every high school student in the United States, we all know what happens next. In accordance, we dutifully hunch our shoulders, set our jaws, and grimly make our way through the play as in a funeral procession, relieved when the last page is turned or the actors finally return to the stage to take their final bows. It is after all a tragedy, is it not? Yet this could not be further from the truth. The first three acts (or for the purposes of this production the first half) are a comedy, with rude jokes, exciting sword play, and even a bit of slapstick. These are vibrant, intelligent, funny, and relatable young people. It is only when it becomes apparent that the adults have abdicated their responsibilities and that their children are left to their own devices that tragedy can flourish. Intolerance is a learned behavior and though both Romeo and Juliet choose to abandon the teachings of their parents and kinsmen, hatred runs deep and always exacts a steep payment. It is a lesson we continue to revisit and relearn.

There is one more element of upheaval that appears in the original text which now seems painfully relevant: plague. The city of Mantua (where Romeo has been exiled) falls under quarantine due to an outbreak of the plague, and Friar Lawrence's crucial letter to Romeo never arrives. With the rise of COVID-19 cases last spring, and the concurrent shutting down of colleges and universities throughout the world, our production of *Romeo & Juliet* was halted while the world scrambled to adjust to the new realities this 21st century plague imposed upon us all. The Theatre is no stranger to closing its doors to plague. Shakespeare's own Globe was forced to close in 1593, 1603, 1608 and again in 2020. But Theatre abides, theatre adapts, and doors that are closed will open again. Nearly 7 months after our Main Stage went dark, and with a great many adjustments, including strict safety protocols, Parkside Theatre Arts is able to live stream our production of *Romeo & Juliet*. We are grateful that you have joined us and look forward to the day when we can once again sit together in a darkened theatre and watch a show.

Thank you for coming to play with us.







## CHARACTERS

PICTURED: UW-Parkside Theatre Arts students, faculty, and staff in their company photo from the 2019–2020 academic year.

**JULIET** | daughter to Capulet

**CAPULET** | Father of Juliet, head of the Capulet family

**LADY CAPULET** | Mother of Juliet, wife to Capulet

**TYBALT** | nephew to Lady Capulet

**SAMPSON** | Capulet servant

**GREGORY** | Capulet servant

**ROMEO** | son to Montague

**BENVOLIO** | nephew to Montague, and friend to Romeo

**BALTHASAR** | Montague servant

**ABRAM** | Montague servant

**PARIS** | a young Count, kinsman to the Prince

**MERCUTIO** | kinsman to the Prince and friend to Romeo

**ESCALUS** | Prince of Verona

**FRIAR LAURANCE** | Franciscan Friar

**NURSE** | Nurse to Juliet

**AN APOTHECARY**

# PLAY SYNOPSIS

The servants of the feuding Capulet and Montague families trade insults on the streets of Verona. The prince of Verona, having grown tired of their continual public brawls, decrees that the next member of either family to provoke a fight will be put to death.

Romeo Montague is infatuated with a girl named Rosaline, so, he and his friends Mercutio and Benvolio secretly attend a masquerade ball at the Capulets where Rosaline is expected to be attending. However, Romeo quickly forgets about Rosaline when he meets and instantly falls in love with Juliet, daughter of Capulet, and she with him. However, as they are both from feuding families, their love is forbidden.

Unable to restrain himself, Romeo returns to the Capulets after the party, and climbs the garden wall just as Juliet appears on her balcony. They declare their love for one another and vow to meet the next day.

Wishing to marry Juliet, Romeo turns to his old friend Friar Lawrence and tells him of his intentions. The friar agrees, and Romeo and Juliet are secretly married in Friar Lawrence's cell.

Soon after their secret wedding, Romeo finds himself in the middle of a fight between Mercutio (his friend) and Tybalt (Juliet's cousin). In trying to stop the fight, Romeo causes Mercutio to receive a mortal wound at the hands of Tybalt. Enraged by the murder of his friend, Romeo attacks and kills Tybalt. In desperation and fear for his life, Romeo returns to Friar Lawrence for help who informs him that the Prince has banished him to Mantua for the murder of Tybalt.

Juliet's nurse arranges for the newlyweds to spend Romeo's last night in Verona together in Juliet's bedroom. Unaware of her marriage to Romeo, Juliet's parents set about arranging her marriage to Paris, a noble kinsman.

The next morning, Romeo leaves for Mantua and a horrified Juliet, learning of the marriage plans, flees to Friar Lawrence, who offers a drug that will give her the appearance of death for two days. He assures her that he will get word to Romeo who will rescue her from the Capulet burial vault and take her to Mantua. She agrees to the plan and takes the potion before going to bed. Juliet's nurse finds her apparently dead the next morning.

Romeo, still in Mantua, hears of Juliet's reported death, but the messenger from Friar Lawrence never arrives to tell him the truth. Maddened by grief, he purchases poison from an Apothecary and returns to Verona and the Capulet's tomb. There, Romeo is confronted by Paris, and, in the ensuing fight, kills him. In the vault, Romeo finds his apparently dead wife, drinks the poison, and dies by her side.

Juliet awakens in the tomb to find her husband dead. Finding the vial empty of poison, she kills herself with her knife. Returning to the tomb too late, Friar Lawrence is left to explain what led the "star crossed lovers" to their deaths.

# ABOUT THE LANGUAGE

## IAMBIC PENTAMETER

Shakespeare did much of his writing in a form called iambic pentameter, in which each line of text has ten alternately stressed syllables (five pairs, or feet). There are five iambs in each line.

A full line of iambic pentameter has the rhythm:

**da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM**

Or, for example:

**“but soft what light through yonder window breaks”**

(Romeo | Act 2, Scene 2)

**“Thou knowest the mask of night is on my face?”**

(Juliet | Act 2, Scene 2)

Sometimes the verses in Shakespeare’s plays rhyme; however, Shakespeare often used blank (unrhymed) verse, as he does in much of *Romeo and Juliet*.

For example:

PRINCE

Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,  
Profaners of this neighbor-stained steel –  
Will they not hear? What ho, you men, you beasts,  
That quench the fire of your pernicious rage  
With purple fountains issuing from your veins;  
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands  
Throw your mistempered weapons to the ground  
And hear the sentence of your moved prince.

(Act I, Scene 1)

Some say this rhythm echoes the human heartbeat and is a naturally spoken rhythm in English. Actors generally do not speak it in a sing-song fashion, emphasizing the rhythm or meter, but are aware of it and allow it to influence which words are stressed in the context of a scene. However, much like life, blank verse is not perfect. Sometimes Shakespeare’s lines do have extra syllables, or are short some syllables. Sometimes the emphasis changes. Many scholars and actors believe variation in blank verse offers insight into a character’s state of mind, emotional state, or reaction to what is happening onstage.

## PROSE

Prose is another tool Shakespeare used to communicate information about a character’s class or state of mind. Prose does not follow a specific rhyme scheme or rhythm. Instead, it sounds like everyday speech. Sometimes characters switch into prose when they are emotionally shaken or behaving unlike themselves. In many of his plays, lower class characters speak in prose, while upper class characters speak in verse. However, this is not a hard and fast rule.

Here, SAMSON has been ordered by CAPULET to send invitations to a party to all of the people on his list. SAMSON, unable to read asks ROMEO to read the list for him. Because SAMSON is a lower class character, ROMEO changes from verse to prose to better communicate with him.

ROMEO

Not mad, but bound more than a mad-man is;  
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,  
Whipp’d and tormented and—Good-e’en, good fellow.

SAMSON

Godgigoden. I pray, sir, can you read?

ROMEO

Ay, mine own fortune in my misery.

SAMSON

Perhaps you have learnt it without book. But I pray, can you read anything you see?

ROMEO

Ay, if I know the letters and the language.

SAMSON

Ye say honestly. Rest you merry.

ROMEO

Stay, fellow; I can read.

(Act 1, Scene 2)

## RHYMED VERSE

Verse is written in iambic pentameter, but also has a rhyme scheme. In many of Shakespeare's plays, royal and magical characters speak in verse. Here MERCUTIO uses rhyming verse to show ROMEO how clever he can be:

ROMEO  
Nay, that's not so.

MERCUTIO  
I mean, sir, in delay  
We waste our lights, in vain light lights by day.  
Take our good meaning, for our judgement sits  
Five times in that ere once in our five wits.

Note the similar sounds at the ends of words:

delay/day, sits/wits

Throughout *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare switches between verse, blank verse, and prose for both comic and tragic effect. He also uses a variety of literary devices in characters' dialogue to add to the comedy and clarify the relationships and situations between the characters.

## -ED ENDINGS

Sometimes the rhythm of the iambic pentameter falls on an "ed ending" which is then emphasized:

ROMEO  
But Romeo may not, he is banished.  
Flies may do this, but I from this must fly;  
They are free men, but I am banished:  
And sayest thou yet that exile is not death?

(Act 3, Scene 3)

Therefore you would say "ban-ish-ed", separating it into three syllables.

## ALLUSIONS

An expression that calls something to mind without mentioning it explicitly; an indirect or passing reference, often to the Bible, mythology, or historical literature.

ROMEO  
Well in that hit you miss. She'll not be hit  
With Cupid's arrow. She hath Dian's wit,  
And, in strong proof of chastity well armed,  
From love's weak childish bow she lives uncharmed.

(Act 1, Secene 1)

## SIMILE

Comparing two unlike things using "like" or "as."

JULIET  
...so tedious is this day  
As is the night before some festival  
To an impatient child that hath new robes  
And may not wear them

(Act 3, Scene 2)

## SCANSION

Remember, iambic pentameter has ten alternately stressed syllables (five pairs, or feet). This rhythm (also called scansion) is as follows:

unstressed-stressed unstressed-stressed  
unstressed-stressed unstressed-stressed  
unstressed-stressed

OR

u / u / u / u / u /

## ACTIVITY

On the next page, read the first line of Romeo's speech from Act 3, Scene 3 and notice the way it scans. Then, mark how the rest of the monologue scans.

u / u / u / u / u /

'Tis torture, and not mercy: heaven is here,

Where Juliet lives; and every cat and dog

And little mouse, every unworthy thing,

Live here in heaven and may look on her;

But Romeo may not: more validity,

More honourable state, more courtship lives

In carrion-flies than Romeo: they my seize

On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand

And steal immortal blessing from her lips,

Who even in pure and vestal modesty,

Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin;

But Romeo may not; he is banished:

Flies may do this, but I from this must fly:

They are free men, but I am banished.

And say'st thou yet that exile is not death?

Hadst thou no poison mix'd, no sharp-ground knife,

No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,

But 'banished' to kill me? --'banished'?

O friar, the damned use that word in hell;

Howlings attend it: how hast thou the heart,

Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,

A sin-absolver, and my friend profess'd,

To mangle me with that word 'banished'?

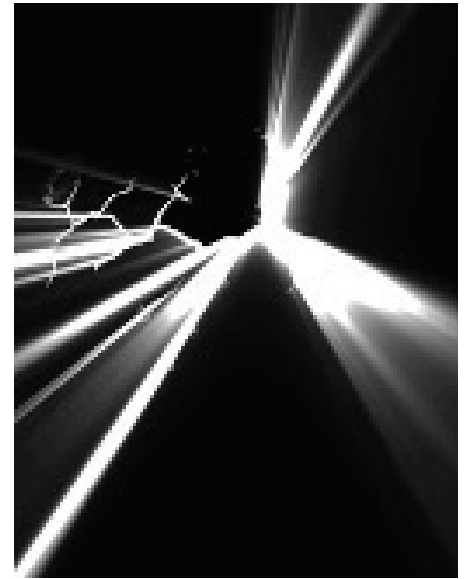
## ACTIVITY

**After you have scanned the speech, write in your own words what Juliet is saying. Identify which literary devices you notice. Highlight or underline the following in different colors:**

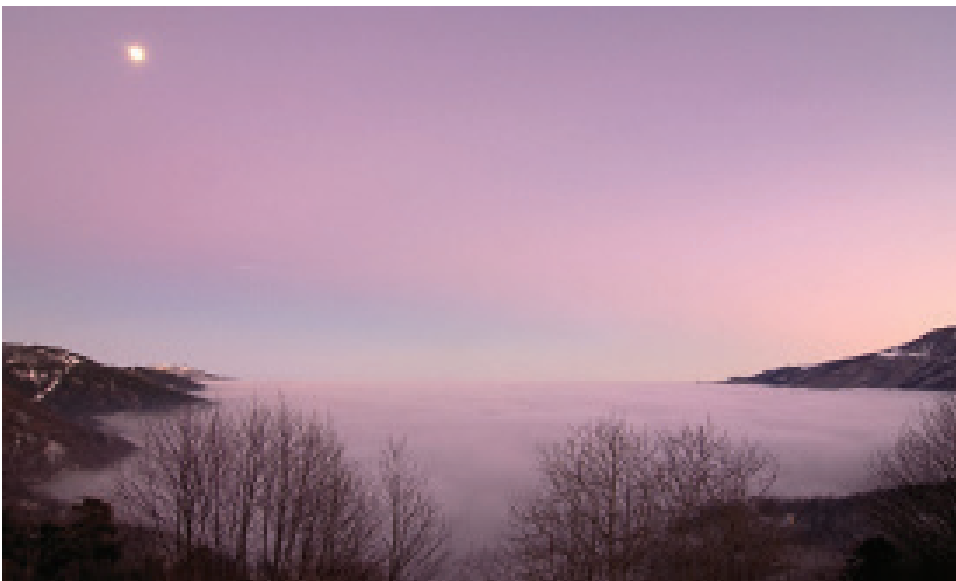
- Most important verb in each line
- Rhyme
- Repetition of words or phrases
- Imagery, simile or metaphor
- Use of lists

**How might an actor or actress perform this rich language to express what Romeo is feeling and doing? Use specific examples from the speech.**





PICTURED: These are images used for research by the lighting designer as part of the process for doing her work.



## LIGHTING DESIGN

**Jessica Baker**

Student Lighting Designer

Lighting Design is an important element in plays and musicals. Lighting can help emphasize the time, location, and general mood of the text. Lighting should never be something that distracts from the play, but rather something that compliments it. When picking colors, it's important to think how the light will affect the set and costumes. In this production of *Romeo and Juliet* you will be able to see color changing lights, light from different angles and texture. Lighting is like a paint brush that brushes the whole stage with shades, texture and shadows. There will be haze to be able to make moments softer for romantic moments; however, it can also make the darkness creepy. My approach to this show is to have the beginning be bright and beautiful to compliment the comedy, then as turmoil increases the lighting will become starker, textured and honed in on the actors.



## COSTUME DESIGN

**Misti Bradford**

Costume Designer

After several conversations with the show's director, we decided to create a world where our characters could be relatable to a modern audience through style and fashion. I really wanted the clothing to have a silhouette of an early Elizabethan world but with the use of modern clothing. This gave our characters a younger, hipper appearance with the ability to move freely with the stage combat and dance choreography required of the play. However, we wanted them to feel like they are still under the constraints of a very different construct that would be the reality of Elizabethan society.

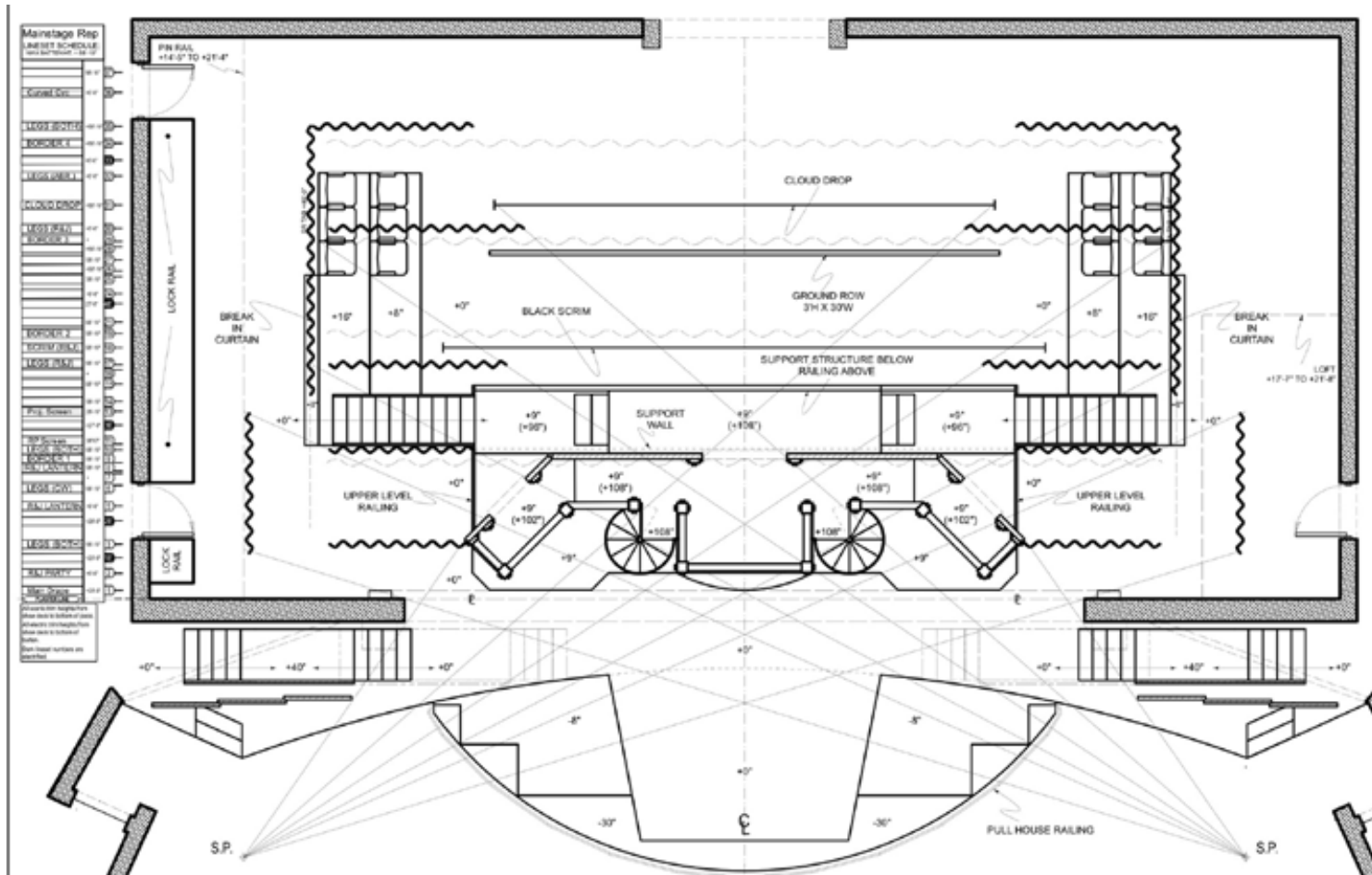
**PICTURED:** These are images used for research by the costume designer as part of the process for doing her work.

## ACTIVITY

**After the performance, answer the following questions:**

- How did the costumes convey details about the characters?
- Which one was their favorite costume? Why?





## SCENIC DESIGN

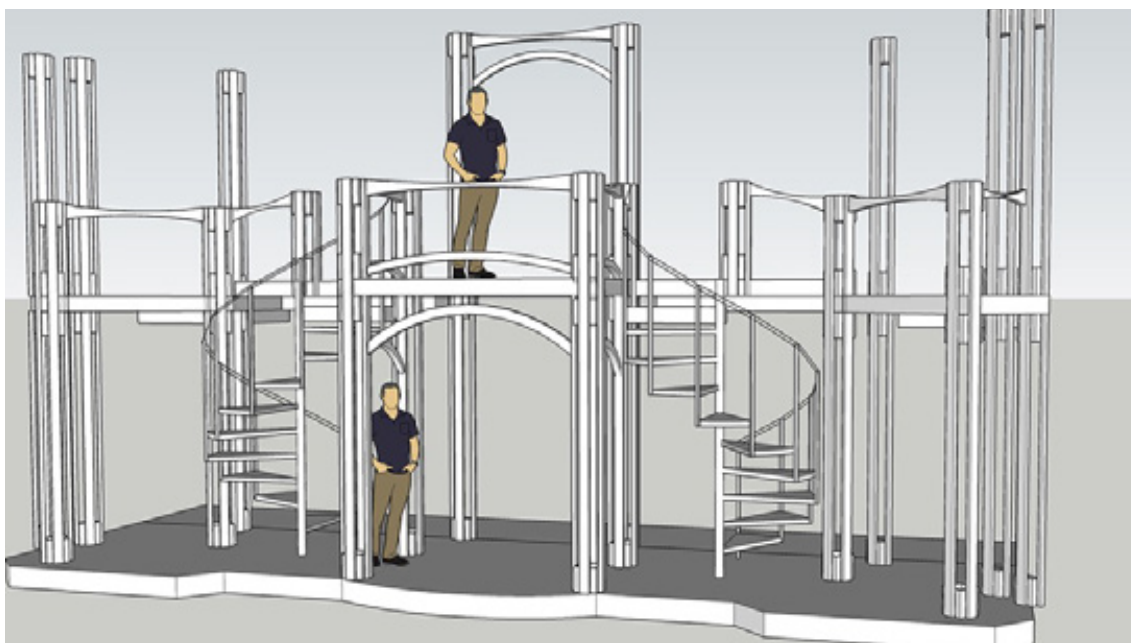
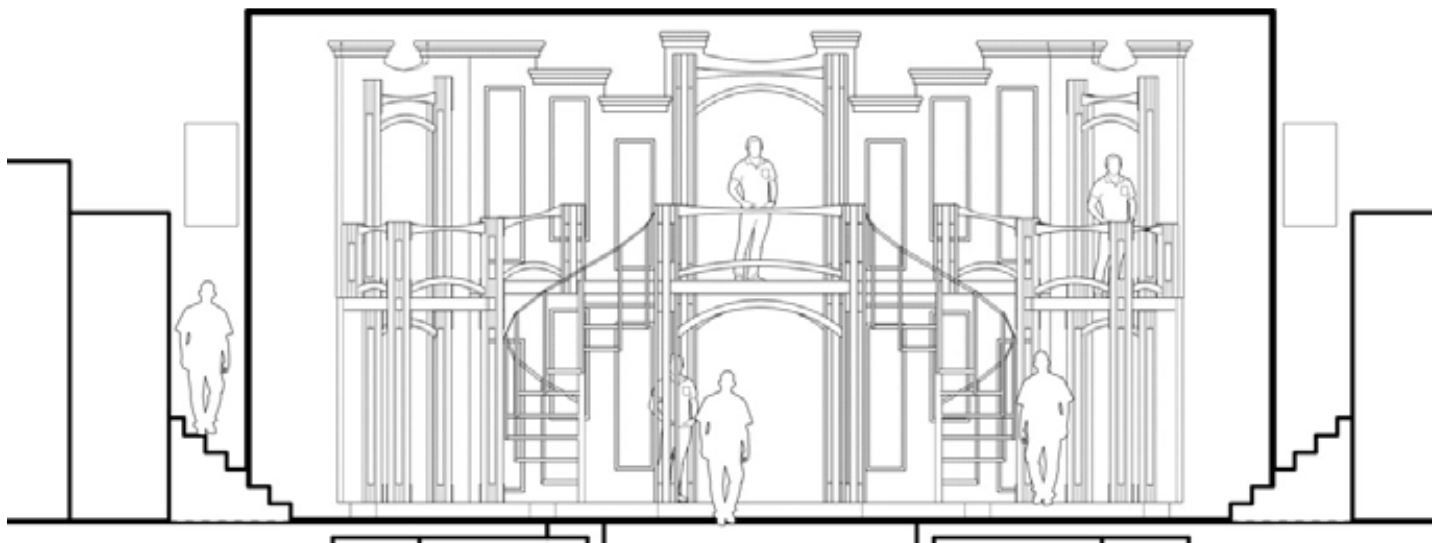
**Jody Sekas**

Scenic Designer

Scenic design for me is a wonderful opportunity to both tell and enhance a story. When reading any novel or script, I visualize the worlds that the characters inhabit – I can see the backgrounds, the furniture, the lighting – but that is only part of the picture. What is fun, and essential to scenic design is to not only help the audience understand where we are, but to help the audience feel what the characters are experiencing, the overall emotional impact of each scene, and the play as a whole.

**PICTURED:** This is a ground plan created by the scenic designer using design software and technology commonly used in architecture, engineering, and entertainment industries.





PICTURED: These images show the progression of the scenic design process. A final drawing of the design is called a rendering.

