Sing for Your Costumes: A Costume Design Thesis on The Boys from Syracuse

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SING FOR YOUR COSTUMES:
A COSTUME DESIGN THESIS ON THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE

by

Terry Baker

B.F.A. The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2015

A Thesis
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Fine Arts in Theater

Department of Theater
in the Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
May 2018
THESIS APPROVAL

SING FOR YOUR COSTUMES:
A COSTUME DESIGN THESIS ON THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE

By

Terry Baker

A Thesis Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Fine Arts
in the field of Theater

Approved by:

Wendi R. Zea, Chair
Mark Kent Varns
J. Thomas Kidd

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
April 4, 2018
AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Terry Baker, for the Master of Fine Arts degree in Theater, presented on April 4, 2018, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: SING FOR YOUR COSTUMES: A COSTUME DESIGN THESIS ON THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Wendi R. Zea

This thesis document is a presentation and exploration of the process involving the costume design for The Boys from Syracuse (music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Lorenz Hart, book by George Abbott) in the McLeod Theatre at Southern Illinois University Carbondale during February 2018. This light-hearted, farcical musical reminds us that life doesn’t have to be so serious. It explores our ability to be consumed by our own responsibilities, which causes us to escape to the theater and just enjoy a show.

Chapter 1 contains the research, background information, and script analysis that was conducted to further enhance and inform the design of the costumes. This chapter also contains the goals that I wanted to achieve within my design and personal growth. Chapter 2 focuses on the design process and how each costume evolved through collaboration and discussion. Chapter 3 documents the build process of the design and how it was realized. An examination of the dress rehearsals and the production’s four performances are also contained within this chapter. Chapter 4 documents an analysis of the entire design and its evolution through outside critiques and commentary supported by personal self-reflection.
DEDICATION

To the three amazing women who raised me:

My grandmother, Margie Sechrest,

I could never thank you enough for instilling your work ethic and determination within me. You are truly missed and forever loved.

My mother, Sandra Baker,

You are my foundation, biggest supporter, and the most amazing mom a son could have.

Thank you for your never-ending love and compassion.

My aunt, Shelby White,

Your strong will and unbreakable spirit is forever inspiring. You are always honest with me and never lead me astray. Thank you for always being there and loving me for me.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have had much support from my family, friends, and peers during this journey to get my masters. I could never thank you all enough.

Wendi R. Zea, for your constant support, pushing me outside of my comfort zone, and building my character. Your compassion for your students is inspiring. You are the most talented mentor a student could have, and your wisdom is astounding.

Dr. Anne Fletcher, for always being honest and telling me how it is, even if I didn’t want to hear it. Your support has been invaluable.

My trio of best friends, Bryant, Seama, and Maggie, for your humor, love, and friendship. Our long talks, therapy sessions, and laughter helped me through this more than any of you will ever know.

Andrew Armas, for your love and guidance. Your talent and determination continually inspires me every day. I could never thank you enough for everything you do for me, especially for always making me laugh. You truly are a beautiful man, inside and out.

The faculty and my fellow graduate students at Southern Illinois University, for the generous words, kindness, compassion, and constructive critiques.

Southern Illinois University Student Health Services, for helping me through the flu while I was writing this document.
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CHAPTER 1

“DEAR OLD SYRACUSE”: HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS

*The Boys from Syracuse* explores the light and frivolous world of Roman and Shakespearean comedy. This light-hearted, farcical musical reminds us that life doesn’t have to be so serious. It explores our ability to be consumed by our own responsibilities, which causes us to escape to the theater and just enjoy a show. Using the influence of humor and love, *The Boys from Syracuse* exemplifies Rodgers and Hart’s tenacity and the pizazz of the 1930s without straying away in plot from its predecessor, William Shakespeare’s *The Comedy of Errors*, inspired by Plautus’s *The Brothers Menaechmi*.

*The Boys from Syracuse* premiered at the Alvin Theater on November 23, 1938. It ran for 235 performances before its closing, which was impressive for a musical produced during the Depression. It was Rodgers and Hart’s sixth show to make it to Broadway in a three-year period. The show started as an idea that Richard Rodgers had about turning a Shakespeare play into a musical. He pitched the idea to his partner Lorenz (Larry) Hart during a trip to Atlantic City (Green 154 – 56). In an interview with *The New York Herald Tribune*, Rodgers says:

> I knew Larry would like the idea immediately. Anything that was novel or offbeat was always sure to interest him. So early in 1938, when I suggested that we consider adapting a Shakespearean play into a musical, his eyes quickly lit up and I could almost see sparks coming out of his head. We promptly started tossing ideas back and forth about the possibilities of doing Shakespeare in song and dance. Since no one had ever done it before we had a pretty unlimited field to choose from (“A Night Out with the Boys”, *New York Herald Tribune*. 14 April 1963).
Hart’s interest in Rodgers’ idea was piqued because he immediately thought of his brother, Teddy Hart. Teddy was a clever comedian in his day, but he was constantly being mistaken for another comedian named Jimmy Savo. This led Hart to suggest they use Shakespeare’s *The Comedy of Errors* as the inspiration because of the play’s focus on the characters mistaking twin brothers (the Dromios) one for another.

With the combination of wanting to create a musical inspired by Shakespeare and Hart’s comedian brother, Rodgers and Hart agreed to start putting the show together. In the book, *Somewhere for Me, A Biography of Richard Rodgers*, Meryle Secrest writes:

…after some thought Rodgers and Hart agreed upon a musical that would take the greatest possible liberties with *The Comedy of Errors*. However, it would make use of Shakespeare’s basic concept, i.e., having twin servants, Dromio of Ephesus and Dromio of Syracuse, who wait upon twin masters, Antipholus of Ephesus and Antipholus of Syracuse, giving endless possibilities for comic misidentifications (201).

But first, they needed to find someone to write the script. They brought their idea to George Abbott, with whom they had an off-and-on relationship since their collaboration on *Jumbo* in 1935. Abbott was more than thrilled about the idea, and he began working on a script immediately. Secrest quotes Rodgers referring to his experience working with Abbott, “[h]e (Abbott) had it (the script) all finished before we got started. The book was so sharp, witty, fast-moving and, in an odd way, so very much in keeping with the bawdy Shakespearean tradition that neither Larry nor I wanted to change a line” (Secrest 201). After completing the script, Abbott went on to produce and direct the musical, as well. During its run of 235 performances, *The Boys from Syracuse* acquired mixed reviews. The number of performances did not meet Rodgers and Hart’s expectations, but this wasn’t uncommon for a Broadway hit during this time
period. In his lifetime, Rodgers did get the chance to see it revived in 1963, where its 502-performance run was better received by a more modern audience (Green 157).

Richard Charles Rodgers was born on June 28, 1902 to a New York doctor’s family. He became interested in music at an early age because of his talented pianist mother and father, the doctor, who was a good baritone. His childhood was filled with family concerts in their New York apartment where they would perform all of the latest musicals and operettas. Rodgers was a skilled pianist by the age of six because of his mother’s teachings. His talent for music was nurtured by his parents as he grew up. He began writing songs that were performed in the Akron Club’s yearly musical comedy event; his brother was a member of the club. When he was seventeen the first Rodgers and Hart song was sung in a Broadway musical because of Rodgers’ introduction to Larry Hart by Philip Leavitt, a mutual friend of the duo who thought they would make the perfect team (Block 47).

Lorenz Milton Hart was born May 2, 1895 to a German immigrant family. He had an acute interest in both classical literature and classical theatre as he was growing up. He was seven years old when he saw his first play. He was instantly hooked and started attending theatre as often as he could. He attended Columbia University where he was introduced to Rodgers (Nolan, 150). In the Theatre Arts Monthly, Rodgers wrote, referring to his first-time meeting Hart,

…I was enchanted by this little man and his ideas. Neither of us mentioned it, but we evidently knew we’d work together, and I left Hart’s house having acquired in one afternoon a career, a partner, a best friend and a source of permanent irritation (Green 139).

They immediately began collaborating once their mutual friend, Phillip Leavitt, started sending work their way because of his connections in New York City. Rodgers and Hart’s
The collaborative partnership persevered from 1918 to 1943. Their partnership began to dissolve during the late 1930s when Hart succumbed to his problems with alcohol and his own personal demons. Kislan says, “Together they created nearly one thousand songs, seventy-five of which are frequently played today” (Kislan 135). He also talks about them producing twenty-seven stage musicals and eight motion picture scores. On the topic of Rodgers and Hart’s legacy, Kislan says they, “exerted influence, individually and collectively, on the art of songwriting and the musical comedy…” (136).

*The Boys from Syracuse* mingles 1930s-style music with raucous comedy and slapstick humor. Pre-Golden Age of Musicals combined the glitz, glamour, and the sleek style of the Hollywood film musicals of the day. Yet, they did not fully integrate music and dance with advancement of the story line. 1930s musicals (on stage and in film) were a way for Americans to escape the early days of the Great Depression and the aftermath of World War I. Many songwriters and actors came together to create some of the more-popular, stylish musicals. This “feel-good” type of musical is first seen in Busby Berkley’s films. His films contrasted the bleak reality of the real-world with the glamour and elegance of the musical ideologies. Berkley is given credit for starting the quintessential idea of a 1930s musical with his elaborate dance numbers (Maslon, “Broadway & Hollywood”).

Other influences from musicals in this era included Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, Ethel Merman, and Marlene Dietrich to name a few. Their talent and elegance contributed to the era’s memorable moments in the entertainment history. Silver-screen and Broadway musicals influenced each other during this time and still do, today. This can be observed in Rogers and Hart’s work, especially *The Boys from Syracuse* because of its focus on humor, romance, and frivolity, all of the feelings the average American escapist yearned for in the 1930s – feelings that we, as theatre goers today, still desire. The importance of
glamour, romance, and comedy from this era provoked and influenced most of the anachronistic research used in our costume design for *The Boys from Syracuse*, which will be discussed in Chapter Three.

This musical comedy begins with an announcement from the Dromio twins. They say, “This is a drama of Ancient Greece. It is a story of mistaken identity. If it’s good enough for Shakespeare, it’s good enough for us” (Abbott 1). This reference to Shakespeare and Ancient Greece sets the tone for the entire story. One could say that Abbott wanted to pay his respects to Shakespeare for providing inspiration for the story, but the decision to set the show in Ancient Greece ties it to the original concept of twins with mistaken identities from the Roman playwright, Plautus. Shakespeare took inspiration from *The Twin Menaechmi* by Plautus. In Plautus’ version there was only one set of twins, but when Shakespeare wrote *The Comedy of Errors* he decided to add another set (the Dromios) as slaves for the twin brothers (the Antipholuses).

In *The Complete Roman Drama*, George Duckworth comments on Plautus excelling in his construction of *The Twin Menaechmi*. Duckworth says, “In a farce of this type…the action is the main thing…There is no slackening of the pace until the final scene, where the recognition is perhaps unduly prolonged. The entrances and exits of the characters are well handled” (Duckworth 438). Plautus uses the “entrance and exit” element of comedy often in his play, with the characters mistaking the twins for one another as they keep leaving and coming back on the stage in different scenes. This is an element that Shakespeare uses in his play, as well. Without the well-planned entrances and exits of the twins and other characters, the structure of the play wouldn’t be as comedic. This “entrance and exit” element is noticed often in *The Boys from Syracuse* because of the Antipholus and Dromio twins coming and going so often.
As the show progresses we are submerged into a comedic and farcical world. Abbott utilizes many of the original Shakespearean elements of comedy. In Shakespearean comedies, we often see a struggle for young lovers to overcome their problems. In *The Boys from Syracuse* we observe a paranoid Adriana coping with and nurturing her marriage to Antipholus from Ephesus because she yearns to have a love like they once had, as scene in Table 1.1. In the song, “Falling in Love with Love”, Adriana’s lyrics show the sadness about her marriage and her desire to have the love that she remembers. It makes the viewer hopeful and able to connect with her because we all have lost loves with whom we yearn to reconnect. Luce, Adriana’s head maid, is struggling with her marriage to Dromio from Ephesus (Antipholus from Ephesus’ slave). In the song, “What do You do with a Man?” we learn about her desires regarding her marriage and Dromio of Ephesus’s expectations pertaining to Luce, as well. The song shows each of their struggles within in their changing marriage. The theme of young lovers struggling is apparent within Antipholus from Ephesus’ affair with the Courtesan and with Antipholus from Syracuse falling in love with Adriana’s sister, Luciana. Each song within the musical is further examined in Table 1.2.

Mistaken identity is another prominent element in a Shakespearean comedy and is, in fact, the premise for the entire musical. The use of mistaken identities lends this comedy its farcical style, enhanced by slapstick in performance. The Antipholuses and the Dromios constantly being mistaken for each other keeps the plot moving forward. Rapid and carefully timed entrances add to the constant, comic confusion. The word cloud image in Figure 1.1 (on page 7) illustrates the script’s most used words: “Enter”, “Exit”, “In”, “Out”, etc. are among them. Clever servants are also among Shakespearean elements of comedy. It goes without saying
that the twin Dromios, Luce, and Adriana’s maids are very clever within the show, often outwitting their masters or employers.

Figure 1.1

Family tension is the last, but not least, element of comedy that is prevalent within this musical. Aegean, the Antipholus twins’ father, wants to find his family after the shipwreck separated them. This causes tension between the sets of twins that are looking for each other. Not long after the show begins, Aegean explains how all of the twins were separated in the song

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1 All figures in this chapter, unless otherwise indicated, were executed by and are property of the author.
“I had Twins”. The story is a journey of these characters trying to find each other and how their relationships with other characters are impacted within this journey.

_The Boys from Syracuse_ is set in Ancient Greece in the city of Ephesus. The story spans different locations in the city (i.e., the square, the streets, and various character’s houses) during a twenty-four-hour period from morning to noon of the following day. In Caleigh Derrebbery’s article, “The Boys from Syracuse is American Shakespeare”, comparing Ephesus to 1930s New York City she says it was:

a thriving business and cultural center with a wildly diverse population. People migrated there in search of opportunities they didn’t have elsewhere. Supposedly, Marc Antony and Cleopatra took refuge in Ephesus after Cleopatra’s sister was murdered. You don’t have to look very hard to see the similarities between the two cities (Derrebbery).

As Antipholus from Syracuse searches for his twin brother, Antipholus from Ephesus, we are submerged into a world that leaves us wanting to know if they will ever find out about each other and be reunited with their family. The last Shakespearean element of comedy is a happy ending for the main characters. We get this happy ending when the sets of twins are reunited with each other and the Antipholus twins are reunited their mother and father. The Seeress of Ephesus reveals herself to Aegean as his long-lost wife during the finale.

Abbott used many elements from _The Comedy of Errors_ to build and emphasize the story he created. Some themes of this musical comedy are “love”, “laughter”, and “yearning for things to be better than they are”. When focusing on the comedic style, this musical aimed to make the audience feel good and enjoy an evening of love and laughter. In _The Musical_, Richard Kislan says, “Comedy is a vision of life more than it is laughter. Laughter follows the acceptance of that vision because the vision of comedy makes that laughter possible. What is that vision? Simply this: everything will turn out all right in the end” (Kislan 174). The audience will trustfully leave
the theatre feeling entertained and hopeful. This musical is a “feel good” type of show that ends happily and focuses on the frivolity of life.

Each character in the show is longing for something and will do whatever it takes to get it, knowingly or unknowingly. Antipholus of Syracuse longs to be reunited with his twin brother. Antipholus of Ephesus longs to live his life however he pleases without answering to anyone or being held accountable for his actions. Luciana, Adriana, Luce, and the Courtesan all yearn for love and recognition. The characters are juxtaposed with one another as opposites: the Antipholus twins have opposite personalities and upbringings, the Dromio brothers have opposite sensibilities, and Adriana and the Courtesan are both lovers of Antipholus from Ephesus yet come from completely different social statuses and have different outlooks on life.

The different class systems play a large role in the musical. The characters are divided into upper, middle, and lower classes. The upper class consists of the Duke, Antipholus of Ephesus, Adriana, and Luciana because of their status within Ephesus. Luciana becomes upper-class because of her sister being married to Antipholus of Ephesus. The middle class contains Antipholus from Syracuse, the Sergeant, his Corporal, the Tailor, Angelo, and the Courtesan. The Courtesan is working class, but because of her wealthy patrons supporting her prostitution, she is a step above lower class. The Courtesan and her courtesans can be categorized into a prostitution hierarchy according to ancient Greek historians. The Courtesan would be known as hetairai, a prostitute who only has one wealthy partner at a time, with whom she has relationships and spends time, apparent in her affair with Antipholus of Ephesus. The other courtesans would be categorized as pornai, the working girls who have many partners in one day to make money (Seltman 120). The lower-class contains the Dromio twins, the other courtesans, the maids, Luce, Aegean, the Seeress, and the Sorcerer. All of these characters are either servants or working-class. The different class systems provide the makings of a well-rounded
musical with characters from different ways of life. The show obtains its depth and comedy because of the wide variety of personalities and the clashing of different social statuses.

**Table 1.1: Characters & Analysis**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Qualities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Antipholus of Ephesus</td>
<td>Arrogant, oblivious to those around him, entitled, ignorant, egotistic, womanizer, rogue, a person with a high position, uses his status to do whatever he wants, disregards his wife, bratty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antipholus of Syracuse</td>
<td>Humble, self-aware, yet stubborn, smitten with Luciana, likeable, searching for his twin brother and Dromio’s brother, will do anything to find them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dromio of Ephesus</td>
<td>Slave to Antipholus of E. People pleaser. Dominated by his wife, Luce, and his Masters, can’t think for himself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dromio of Syracuse</td>
<td>Slave to Antipholus of S, Easy going, amused by everything, treated as a friend, more than a slave, content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sergeant</td>
<td>Enforces the rules of the city, but only when they apply to others, has his fair share of good times, arrogant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporal</td>
<td>Assistant to the Sergeant, does what he is told, a blind follower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke</td>
<td>Stern, can be bought if the price is right, enforces the rules of the city, shows favoritism to the higher classes, has no time for lower classes that cannot give him money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aegean</td>
<td>Father to the Antipholus twins, pitiful, desperate, will do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>anything to be reunited with his family.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tailor</td>
<td>A well-respected Tailor to the higher classes of the city, pretentious, wants to please his customers for the right price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentice to Tailor</td>
<td>Serves his mentor, yearning for approval, needy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelo the Goldsmith</td>
<td>Greedy, a follower, yearns to fit-in, people pleaser.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant of Ephesus</td>
<td>Petty, pompous, arrogant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant of Syracuse</td>
<td>Wants to help his friend find his brother, looks out for his safety, survivalist, sleuth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorcerer</td>
<td>Comical, witty, will sell his magic at a reduced-rate, con-artist, deceptive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pygmalion</td>
<td>A dancer for the Courtesan. In Greek mythology, he was a sculptor who fell in love with an ivory statue that he carved. He wishes to Aphrodite for the statue to become a real woman, so that he can marry and love her, and this wish is granted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adriana</td>
<td>A dissatisfied wife to Antipholus of E, yearns for her husband to treat her and love her as he once did, hopeful, blinded by her devotion, forgiving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luciana</td>
<td>Naïve, loving, nurturing, yearns for a husband, a dreamer, idealizes the perfect marriage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luce</td>
<td>Outspoken, neurotic, longs to have her husband, Dromio of E, under her thumb, so that she can watch him and dictate his every move, dissatisfied with her marriage, forceful,</td>
</tr>
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manipulative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courtesan</th>
<th>Upper-class prostitute, worldly, fun-seeking, yearns for a husband, but will probably never find him in her line of work, manipulative, survivalist.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courtesans</td>
<td>The Courtesan’s clique, serve as her minions, do what they are told, prostitutes of Ephesus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatima</td>
<td>The Courtesan’s head prostitute and assistant, serves as the Courtesan’s henchwoman, does her bidding, outspoken, will do anything for the Courtesan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maids</td>
<td>Adriana’s hand-maidens, serving, nurturing, will do anything for Adriana, housekeepers, master pleasers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeress (Emilia)</td>
<td>Formidable, highly respected in the temple, everyone listens when she speaks, revealed to be the Antipholus twin’s mother.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galatea</td>
<td>A dancer for the Courtesan. In Greek mythology, she is Pygmalion’s statue that comes to life because of his love for her.</td>
</tr>
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<td>“I Had Twins”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Song</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>“Dear Old Syracuse”</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>“What Do You Do with a Man?”</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>“Falling in Love with Love”</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>“The Shortest Day of the Year”</strong></td>
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</table>
We aren’t sure if he’s singing about Adriana or the Courtesan because he’s singing to the Courtesan.

“*This Can’t Be Love*”

In this love song, we learn about Antipholus of Syracuse’s pure and simple love for Luciana, Adriana’s sister. The jazz melodies and catchy chorus make the song memorable. It evokes a feeling of love and simplicity in the lyrics, leaving the listener entranced.

“*Ladies of the Evening*”

The working-class women share their irritations with the listener because they work longer nights while the upper-class women sleep. In this comedic song, we realize how hard they have to work to survive and the toll it takes on them, but it is contrasted against a peaceful melody that evokes a softer, peaceful feeling.

“*He and She*”

In this duet, we explore more of the backstory in Luce and Dromio of E’s marriage. This song is comedic, but the feeling is sad and less hopeful for the outcome of these characters’ marriage. It is obvious that neither of them are happy, and the song explains their discontentment, which
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“You have Cast your Shadow on the Sea”</td>
<td>This duet shows the continuing evolution of Antipholus of S and Luciana’s love for one another. It makes the listener feel his passion and how he will do anything to love and be with her. The feeling is mutual in Luciana’s reply. The song finishes with the listener feeling enamored and curious if they will live happily-ever-after.</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Come with Me”</td>
<td>This song’s masculine undertone and commentary is comedic and a change of pace from the other love songs. The Sergeant is explaining to Antipholus of E that he can come to jail with him to avoid his responsibilities and displeased wife. Antipholus of E actually considers the idea because of his own cowardice and avoidance to take responsibility for his own actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Big Brother”</td>
<td>In this heartwarming song, we learn about Dromio of E missing his brother and his hope that he will return to him. It leaves the listener feeling nostalgic and hopeful that they will be reunited.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
“Sing for Your Supper”

Adriana, Luciana, and Luce sing a very catchy tune in this song that evokes all of the feelings of the early 1940s. In this song the trio unite and sing a hopeful song about how they will live their lives to the fullest and get what they want. The lyrics and music make the listener feel this way and want the best for them and themselves.

“Oh, Diogenes!”

This song explains the Courtesan’s want for an honest husband. We view her as the villain because of her affair with Antipholus of E., but she is just trying to survive. This catchy song aids in our understanding of how she feels and what she wants. It evokes a feeling of hope for her that she will get the love she desires.

When I first found out that my thesis design was going to be *The Boys from Syracuse*, I will admit I was not pleased. This initial reaction was based mainly on the fact that I had never heard of it and it didn’t look interesting when I researched past productions. My first and most important goal was to take a show that I have never heard of and make it something I was excited to design and learn more about. Previously *Hairspray* was the largest musical I had costume designed. The cast was large, but not as large as *The Boys from Syracuse*. I was concerned about the amount of characters that needed to be considered during the design process. Luckily the show had already been cast, and I could focus on the actors’ body types and features as I started contemplating the design. The cast list indicated that twenty-six actors (15
men and 11 women) would be utilized in the production. At first the list looked overwhelming, but what helped the design process was that the show doesn’t take place over a long period of time. Because the show occurs in the same twenty-four-hour time frame, I knew we could focus on one fully designed look per character to help alleviate the pressure of a large show build in the costume shop.

Because of the different class systems within the story, the key to this design was going to center on my consideration of color, texture, pattern, and silhouette. I wanted to focus on more vibrant colors and combinations for the higher classes and a subtler, secondary version of color for their servants (i.e., slaves and maids). The working class (policemen, merchants, citizens of Ephesus, etc.) would have neutral color palettes with accents of color. This combination would help them not take focus, but the accents of color would connect them to the rest of the characters that live in that world. As the story began, I wanted to show a clear difference between those from Ephesus and the few from Syracuse. When we see Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse for the first time, I wanted there to be a distinctive difference in the way they dress (i.e., color and texture) as compared to the citizens of Ephesus.

Choosing colors selectively was a goal of mine. Because the show can get confusing for the audience in terms of remembering who-is-who as it progresses, I wanted to show connections between lovers, brothers, parents, etc. by using color and pattern. I believed color would help reflect these connections. I planned on experimenting with combining different fabrics for a more nuanced look in the characters, which I will discuss more in Chapter Three. The period specific (Greek and Roman) silhouettes would aid in the combination of silks and other light weight fabrics for the women in contrast to the men, who would be a blend of cottons, leathers, armor, and other visually heavy weight materials. I wanted to show a clear difference in the diverse, opposing classes within the show. By mixing different fabrics, we
would be able to explore texture to add depth to each character’s look – not only physical texture, but also visual texture that could be seen by the audience (i.e., a pattern in a woven material or a combination of multiple prints (stripes, chevron, etc.).

I wanted to experiment with various dyeing techniques for this design. The looks for these characters would allow me to experiment with dip dyeing and muting colors, which will be discussed more in Chapter Three. As I began rough sketching and rendering, I wanted to explore a new style of rendering. I have become accustomed to using watercolor when rendering for a show, and this was the perfect opportunity to try to use a different medium. I have always been intrigued by ink and marker renderings. By using ink and marker, I was able to explore a medium that I do not use regularly. This new medium exploration allowed me to be more organic and not as controlled as I started doing my thumbnails and collaborating with the design team. In the beginning phases of the design I usually address many details, but doing this early on doesn’t provide potential for discussion and exploration with the director. By using a free style when sketching my thumbnails, I was able to focus on the silhouette of the costume and not every detail that we would be able to discuss later. This helped us cultivate more ideas and continue collaborating, so we didn’t narrow the design concept too early in the design process.

This show required sufficient research on dance shoes, to reconcile the needs of the choreography with my desire for a Greek and Roman look to the footwear. There were many parameters to consider with this production, and it was my goal to make sure actors had all of the shoes they needed for rehearsals as soon as possible. The downside in giving them shoes early in the rehearsal process was that we later discovered we needed different styles and types of shoes for choreography based on the skill of the actor and the choices of the choreographer. This will be further discussed in Chapter Three.
Before we started design meetings, my hope was that we would decide to set the show in ancient Greece, which we did. By conducting thorough research of ancient Greek silhouettes, I was able to stay true to the look of the period. But, at the same time, we were also able to add our own twists to the design through comedic and anachronistic elements. This musical gives references to some mythological figures (i.e., Pygmalion, Galatea, Diogenes, the Amazons, etc.) that are well-known in Greek history. My goal was to research the myths and art throughout that history, so that I would able to show how they have been perceived in that society. The research I discovered on ancient Greek silhouettes, 1930s~40s comedic anachronisms, class systems, and other elements that influenced the design will be discussed in Chapter Two.

As the costume designer for this musical, my goal was to apply everything that I have learned during the past year and realize that my designs and choices do not always have to be perfect. But I still wanted to take pride in my work and focus on my personal growth without letting it consume me. Continuous learning is and will always be a goal of mine, but not at the cost of my health. My final goal was to find a healthier approach when dealing with the entire design process. In the past, I would let stress get the best of me, and I didn’t want that to happen this time. By keeping a level head and discussing my concerns with my mentor and design team I was able to make informed decisions as we moved through all of the processes.
CHAPTER 2
“SING FOR YOUR SUPPER”: DESIGN PROCESS

After reading the libretto numerous times I began to research ancient Greek clothing and silhouettes. I was uncertain if we would be setting the musical in ancient Greece but having an idea of how clothing looked during that time period would prove invaluable before we started design meetings. Luckily, I was studying ancient Greece and Rome in my Period Styles class. This provided a good starting point before I began more in-depth research.

We began our design process with a Pre-Design Meeting. This meeting provided an opportunity for the design team to give our own interpretations of the musical. Mainly, I was curious about how our director, Tim Fink, perceived the story and where he wanted to set it. After confirming a setting of Ancient Greece, Fink went on to describe his excitement to direct a 1930s musical comedy. He noted this musical premiered during a time when people went to the theater to escape their personal lives. In regard to theater goers, Fink said, “There is always a basic drive for the family to reunite.” I was immediately inspired by his focus on comedy and family. Because the musical premiered in the 1930s, Fink’s biggest concern was making the comedy relevant to our audience, today. He said, “Comedy depends on relevancy. We need to be mindful of things in the script that aren’t quite funny or acceptable anymore.” This notion led to Fink wanting the design team to use Mel Brooks’ film, History of the World: Part One for our comedic inspiration as we moved forward in the design process. Fink was drawn to the idea of incongruity within the story through the use of anachronisms (i.e., blending ancient Greek silhouettes with modern day accessories).

We began to discuss the costumes. Fink used references such as Abbott and Costello, the Marx brothers, Laurel and Hardy, the Three Stooges, and other Mel Brooks films. From those
references I knew exactly what he wanted to say to the audience with the designs. This also helped me know where to begin my research. We started discussing characters, scenes, and the look he desired, such as Fatima being a nerdy secretary and the Duke being inspired by the Gov from Mel Brooks’ *Blazing Saddles* film. The scene we focused on the most during this meeting was the opening number. Fink and I agreed that all of the actors should be wearing dark cloaks. He suggested adding drama masks to the dark cloak look, and I suggested incorporating the comedians’ (he referenced earlier) facial features into the masks. Fink wanted the opening number to seem dark and out of place, something the audience would not be expecting. Unfortunately, we weren’t able to achieve this opening look due to budget cuts during the design process, to be discussed later in this chapter.

After the Pre-Design Meeting I began to research the types of comedies and comedians that Fink talked about. I noticed a very campy and slapstick quality to this style of humor. This led me to begin creating an inspiration board of images that captured the feeling I thought the story evoked. I focused on the emotional response I had when reading the libretto and how those emotions could be shown in colors and images. I felt the love and sense of family within the libretto. This feeling of love and family is what I used while I was creating the first inspiration collage (Figure 2.1, page 22).

In this collage I used romantic images of dance and Greek silhouettes juxtaposed with vibrant colors in abstract paintings and manipulated fabric. I emailed this image to Fink to illustrate to him how the story made me feel, so that I could get his feedback before presenting this image to the design team at our next meeting. His response to the image was, “It's too romantic, not comic enough. The lines are flowing and ‘legato’, and don't capture the rat-a-tat
rhythms of the dialogue.” Initially, I was confused by this response because this was my interpretation of how the script made me feel. I began analyzing my collage and realized that it didn’t evoke the comedy within the script.

![Figure 2.1](image)

After analyzing my first inspiration collage, I began to research more pictures that made me laugh and feel fast-paced rhythms. I edited the first collage and used it as starting point for the second collage (Figure 2.2, page 23). In the second collage, I added movement with line and pictures of dance, music, and laughter. Once I compared the two collages, I could see a clear difference in feeling. I emailed the updated collage to Fink to get his feedback and he said, “The inspiration board is MUCH better. The angularity and rhythms are better!” After getting his approval, I knew this would be the image I would use to guide me through the entire design process.

2 All figures in this chapter, unless otherwise indicated, were executed by and are property of the author.
In Design Meeting One, I presented my final inspiration collage (Figure 2.2) and explained to the design team how I perceived the script. After examining the collage, Fink began to discuss how he envisioned each character. I was surprised by this because in past design meetings the director usually doesn’t know that early in the process how they want each character to look. I liked knowing this early because it would help me as I began my research. Fink wanted to use modern research for some of the characters (i.e., Tim Gunn for the Tailor, fashion designers for the Tailor’s Apprentice, Vegas showgirls for the Courtesans, etc.). Using these modern references would help stay true to our anachronistic designs and help a modern audience connect to the story.

We began to discuss the three lead females (Adriana, Luciana, and Luce). Fink was inspired by birds for the three. He liked the idea of using a hawk to represent Adriana because of her strong and cynical nature, Luciana would be inspired by a canary because of her innocence and sweet personality, and Luce would be inspired by a crow because of her darker side and dominant personality in her interactions with her husband, Dromio. I was immediately inspired by the color palettes of the three birds and used that in my color research as I began to look at
Greek silhouettes. We also discussed how the various characters would be paired and grouped together. This was important to know because Fink and I both wanted to use color to connect the characters with their partners or the slaves with their masters.

In between Design Meetings One and Two I researched ancient Greek silhouettes to present to Fink at our next meeting. I searched for garments that worked for the personality of each character and added to their presence on stage. I used this research as I started sketching my thumbnails (see Appendix A). In the thumbnails I wanted to give a rough idea of how the characters would look, not focusing on details, but only on silhouette. The thumbnails paired with the research would give opportunity for Fink and me to discuss how the actual costumes would be designed. After finishing the thumbnails, I put together a color palette to illustrate how the colors would connect certain characters and how color would illustrate the distinction between different classes.

In Design Meeting Two I presented my thumbnails, research, and color palette. Fink liked what I presented, but he felt the two of us should have a breakout meeting outside of the design meetings to talk about each character individually. I also asked the choreographer, Darryl Clark, if he would meet with me to talk about his shoe and costume requirements, and we set up a time to do so. At the breakout meeting with Fink we discussed and collaborated on design choices that better suited the story based on his perception of each character. We modified a few characters by adding accessories, shortening hem lengths, showing more skin on some and less skin on others. After we talked about details on the characters we discussed the color palette (Figure 2.3, page 25).
In the color palette I chose primary colors for the lead characters and secondary colors for the secondary characters. I wanted to demonstrate a connection between the slaves and their masters by using pastels (i.e., the maid’s connection to Adriana and Luciana and the courtesan’s connection to the head Courtesan). Fink liked most of the color choices, but he suggested changing a few. For the three lead females, he liked the idea of Adriana being more powerful in shades of red, Luciana in light blues, and Luce in black and white because she is the head maid, and he liked the idea of her looking like a French maid. I asked him if we still wanted to use the three birds as their inspiration because it made sense for Adriana and Luce, but it didn’t work for Luciana as canary is usually yellow. He told me we could eliminate the idea of using birds as their inspiration because that wouldn’t work now based on the other characters’ colors. Fink also suggested changing the maids into stronger pastel colors, eliminating the pastels on the courtesans, and adding more color to Emilia. Our most important color revision was on the
Dromio twins because it was so different. Fink wanted them to look more like clowns, which led him to suggesting orange and yellow as their main color inspiration.

![BFS Color Palette](image)

**Figure 2.4**

I used all of Fink’s suggestions in the revised color palette (Figure 2.4). After analyzing the new color choices, I agreed that the design now looked more comedic and had a stronger presence illustrated in every character. I discussed the new choice with my mentor, Wendi Zea, and she agreed with all of them, except Luce. She felt Luce, in black and white, would appear too separated from the colorful world of the other characters. I decided to combine the first color palette of Luce with the second to see how Fink would respond. By using a darker purple, I would be able to give Fink what he wanted and keep Luce in a color that would connect her to the other characters and the colorful world that we were creating.

After meeting with Fink, I met with the choreographer, Darryl Clark. Clark discussed the various characters and how he perceived them with regard to the music. We talked about the
Courtesan characters and the Act I ballet finale. The ballet is the largest dance number in the musical, and Fink expressed the importance of this ballet as the finale before intermission. The ballet is composed of three big dance numbers: the Courtesan’s solos, Pygmalion and Galatea’s ballet, and the dance of the Amazons. Clark told me his interpretation for each Courtesan. He envisioned the head Courtesan as a combination of Gypsy Rose Lee and Marlene Dietrich in *Kismet*, Fatima as a geeky secretary who is always messing up and very comedic, the second Courtesan like Queen Latifah, very earthy and sexy, and the third Courtesan was encompassed her music which is very cute, innocent, and like a baby doll. I used all of his ideas when I started sketching my preliminary designs. Before the meeting was concluded, we talked about the shoe requirements, and I also discovered that Clark wanted to do a large tap number in the “Oh, Diogenes!” number. I began looking through our shoe storage to see if we had what was needed and if the shoes in stock were the style I wanted. Luckily, we had a large number of shoes and dependent on how fittings went I wouldn’t need to buy many.

In Design Meeting Three I presented my rough design sketches (see Appendix B) to the team. Fink was very collaborative when I presented the sketches to him. He suggested changing a few things on some characters (i.e., a darker purple on Luce, more skin showing on the Maids, a lavender tunic for the Duke, etc.). The most important note he mentioned was to have fun and use more anachronisms within the design. I used his suggestions to guide me in the edits I did to the rough design sketches. I wanted to give him what he suggested, but also put my own choices in the design. This made the process more collaborative and less about compromising.

I discussed more edits to the rough design sketches with Fink and Clark throughout the two-week break in between design meetings. The three of us were still not convinced about the design for Luce. I took this opportunity to sketch out other options. I suggested using palazzo pants in her design because of her domineering personality, drawing inspiration from Bea Arthur
from *The Golden Girls* television series. She would be the only servant wearing pants because she wears the pants in her marriage to Dromio from Ephesus. Fink was intrigued by this idea, so I ran with it. I presented him three different options, and he chose elements from each that I used her final rough, as seen in her rough sketch design evolution in Figure 2.5.

![Figure 2.5](image)

During the break between Design Meeting Three and Four, I was told by my mentor that the department would likely be reducing my budget by twelve percent. She suggested that I revise my budget in preparation for the worst-case scenario. I spent the weekend editing and lowering my budget by trying to find more options in our stock, sourcing cheaper options online, and being more selective and purposeful in my design choices. I was able to get the budget a lot lower. When I was told the new budget number on Monday, I wasn’t hindered by it because I had decreased my estimated budget over the weekend and was prepared for it. Unfortunately, because of the cut, I told Fink that we would only be able to do a certain amount of characters in the opening number in the black cloaks and gold masks. This led Fink and Clark to discover a new concern… the finale of Act I.
After talking about the budget cut and the opening looks, it was decided to cut the opening black cloak looks and focus more on Adriana’s ballet disguises. These looks were confusing from the beginning. I was never aware of them when I read the script because they are not mentioned. Fink and Clark had always envisioned Adriana being in the ballet finale in different disguises because she is there as a hallucination and constant reminder to her husband (Antipholus from Ephesus) about his infidelity. I suggested early in the design process that we could do some basic accessories that would go over her base costume and would connect her to the Courtesan’s world (Figure 2.6). Fink was never sold on this idea and, now that we were cutting the opening number looks, we had the opportunity to give Adriana cohesive, thought out designs for her disguises. By the end of our discussion it was decided that she would wear a simple, white dance dress that she would then add costumes on top of (i.e., veils, skirts, masks, etc.) as she disguised herself as various Courtesans (Figure 2.7, page 30).
Before I started doing my final renderings, I still didn’t like the way the Amazons looked. I realized I was too close to them, so I asked my mentor if she would give me some feedback. The Amazons were first designed in leopard print togas overdressed on their base costume, combined with a funny hat and wrist gauntlets, as seen in Figure 2.8 on page 31. After collaborating with Fink and Clark, we decided this look was not powerful and did not display enough of the actor’s skin. I redesigned them in a look that evoked an elegant, provocative warrior. I used inspiration from Wonder Woman’s crown to add an anachronistic element (Figure 2.9). After presenting this redesign to Fink, he still felt like they did not look strong enough. I discussed this with my mentor, and she suggested that I research Wonder Woman again and figure out what it is about her that makes her look strong and provocative. I researched images from the 2017 Wonder Woman film and found an image of her wearing leather armor and a short skirt. I used this image to inspire my final rough sketch for their designs. I used the
skirts from the second design and added a suede bodice with leather strapping (Figure 2.10, page 32). Fink was pleased with their final design.
After discussing all of the edits to the rough sketches with Fink, I began my rendering process. I decided that my final renderings would be completed with marker and ink. I had never rendered with markers before. Because of this I started researching other costume design renderings that used marker, and this led me to Bob Mackie. I was intrigued by his style and the way he suggested movement in his design with organic lines juxtaposed with chaotic movement of his marker strokes. I used his rendering style as a guide for renderings I was doing for a class project. This project was the perfect opportunity for me to experiment with his rendering style before I did my final design renderings for *The Boys from Syracuse*. I learned a great deal about rendering with markers with that project. One of the biggest lessons was how unforgiving marker can be. Once the marker is on the paper, it’s permanent. I couldn’t erase it or remove and manipulate it like I usually can when I do my watercolor renderings. I learned that I had to make confident choices when I did these final renderings.

I began the final renderings by choosing all of the poses for each character. They were based on Mackie’s famous poses in his renderings. I chose poses that evoked the character’s personality and illustrated movement in their bodies to illustrate how the costume could move in
the choreography. I sketched all of the renderings based on the body types of the actors that had been cast in each role. After sketching I began coloring. During the coloring process I explored combining and layering various colors to achieve different skin tones and types of fabric. I decided to do a simple, yet expressionistic background based on a complimentary color that enhanced each costume, as seen in Appendix C. After they were all complete, I was very proud of them. Going out of my usual water color comfort zone proved to be beneficial and helped me discover a new medium.

I presented the renderings at the final design meeting. Fink said the rough sketches would have sufficed, and he hoped that I didn’t do final renderings just for him, even though they were beautiful. I was amused by his comment and explained that final renderings are a part of the design process, and they provide more detail for the costume shop when we begin the build process.
CHAPTER 3

“FALLING IN LOVE WITH LOVE”: BUILD AND PRODUCTION PROCESS

After our last and final design meeting, the department prepared for winter break. I spent the break creating a plan of preparation for the costume build process that would begin once we returned. I started sourcing various fabrics, pulling shoes and garments from costume storage (stock), ordering garments that we would need to dye and alter, and any other details that needed to be figured out. One of my main goals was to figure out all of the actor’s shoes. Luckily, we were able to ask the actors to come in for shoe fittings the last week of scheduled classes. After shoe fittings, our costume shop manager began adding shoe rubber to the soles of the shoes that needed it and made sure all shoes were dance ready by first rehearsal. I wanted to be sure that the actors had appropriate shoes as early as possible, to ensure that we would have time to change them once discoveries and editing began in the rehearsal process.

The week before classes started, my mentor and I went on a shopping trip to Textile Fabrics in Nashville, Tennessee, and began selecting fabrics based on the color and style in my renderings. While we were at Textile Fabrics we found high quality fabrics that allowed me to see how they moved when manipulated. This was invaluable because usually I’m not able to see how a fabric moves based on a swatch that is ordered from an online source. My mentor and I decided to purchase as many of these fabrics as we could afford for the lead characters and important secondary characters. She said we would fill in the rest of the production with cheaper fabrics to stretch the budget, and this would give the production a balanced and nuanced aesthetic. I was pleased with the fabrics that we found, especially finding the right plaid for Fatima’s design (see Appendix F).
After purchasing the fabric in Nashville, I was able to get a grasp on what I still needed to source for fabrics in the other designs. I began looking at the local Joann Fabrics hoping to see the fabrics in person and look at the options compared with the other fabric we already purchased. Slowly, I began finding options that I liked. Being able to see and feel the fabrics helped immensely in making decisions about color, texture, weight, and print in the fabrics I chose. It also allowed me to change some fabric choices from their original rendered designs. This can be observed in my choice to change the look of the Sorcerer’s cape. Originally, he was designed to have a solid purple cape with gold trim (Figure 3.1). When I was looking for fabric options at our local Joann Fabrics, I found a beautiful Shibori dyed fabric with various shades of purple incorporated within the material. This textural print added to the mysticism of the Sorcerer, and it gave the character visual interest. Once I got the opportunity to see all of the fabrics together in the fitting (Figure 3.2), I was pleased with my decision.

Once fabric was purchased and ordered and shoes started making their way to rehearsals, the first week of the build process began. This first week began with Production Meeting One. In

\[ \text{Figure 3.1} \quad \text{Figure 3.2} \]

\[ ^3 \text{All figures in this chapter, unless otherwise indicated, were executed by and are property of the author.} \]
this meeting, Fink and I discussed a possible redesign for Pygmalion’s ensemble look. In the original design he was going to have a youthful appearance that matched the other characters within the story (Figure 3.3). Fink wanted Pygmalion to be redesigned as an old man for his ensemble look, which he would use to add more comedic moments to the story. I was able to make this happen by finding options in our stock, which I paired with a long white beard and a white wig (Figure 3.4).

Another focus during the meeting was discussing other ensemble characters. Fink was concerned about the actors wearing their one costume the entire production, even when they were not in character (i.e., filling the stage as extras during scenes that required more bodies). I told him that we would not be able to build or purchase any more costumes, but I would look in our stock to see if we had any robes or accessories that we could add on top of the characters’ base costumes to change their looks. Fink liked this idea, especially when it concerned changing
the Duke’s costume to a “cheesy disguise” when he is in the Courtesan’s brothel. We decided that this would be achieved by removing his purple wrap and adding a beard with an elastic strap and a wig. At the end of the meeting Fink brought up the design for Luciana and how rigid and structured she looked in the rendering. I assured him that her dress would have the movement and flow that he requested during the design meetings. He still seemed skeptical, but at the Design Presentations that night he pulled me aside and said he wasn’t sure why he said that. He told me he trusted my design and to “keep doing what I was doing”.

Most of the first week was spent completing the specification (spec) sheets for the costume shop manager. The spec sheets give the detailed information for how each costume should look, front and back. She references the spec sheets to create a build schedule by factoring in the personnel hours needed for each costume and how they will be constructed. My mentor guided me on how each spec sheet should be worded and sketched to make sure every detail was accounted for. Once we finished spec sheets, the costume shop manager created the build schedule, and it was determined that we would only have four contingency hours for the entire build. Those four hours were quickly used within the first week because one of the stitchers caught the flu. This meant everything had to go according to plan during the entirety of the build for us to stay on schedule.

Our first online order arrived at the end of the week. It was a large order from Amazon.com. I was pleased with most of what we received; however, I was not pleased with the chest plate armor. It was made of rubber and flex foam, and it looked very cheap. I knew this would not read well on stage, and it would be almost impossible to paint it properly. I decided to return the armor and start searching for other options, not knowing this was the beginning of a long search that would involve many more disappointments and returns until I found the right armor. During the weekend, after our first build process week, I came in to work in an empty
shop. This allowed me to be less distracted and get a good grasp on the requirements of the design. I pulled fabric options for garments for which I knew we would not need to buy fabric. I figured out all of the jewelry needs for each character, based on what we had in stock, and for whom I would need to buy jewelry and accessories. I wanted to ensure that every detail was accounted for, so that when we officially started the build process on Monday, I would be able to answer every question with confidence because I had figured out the details beforehand. Because this production was so large, I wanted to stay ahead.

Week two began with Production Meeting Two. We discussed the Antipholus twins needing to have removable capes for choreography purposes. I told Fink and the stage manager that I would start pulling rehearsal garments, to ensure that the actors could start getting used to the idea of their costume and how it moved. I found rehearsal garments in our stock (i.e., capes, skirts, aprons, veils, etc.) that were close in size to what the actual costume would look like. I labeled all of garments and took them to rehearsal before I watched a run of Act I that night. Before the run, I presented each rehearsal garment to the actor so that they would know what to wear during rehearsals. The run of Act I was very informative. It was vital to have the opportunity to watch a run that early in the rehearsal process. I discovered during the run that many of the characters were being used as ensemble members, proving once again that I needed to find some options in our stock to change their looks for certain scenes. My biggest concern that I observed during the run was the quick change for Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse into their twin looks, as it would need to happen in forty-five seconds or less. I immediately began thinking of ways to facilitate the ease of the change before first dress. We later discovered they would be able to wear their twin looks under their first costumes, which made the quick change easier and faster.
As the week progressed my mentor and I began experimenting with dye color swatches. I ordered several dresses from Dharma Trading Company in various styles and cotton weights. The dresses are manufactured in ready-to-dye white which allows the buyer to dye or alter them in any way they want. Ordering the many dresses and tunics reduced the number of garments that needed to be built. My goal was to have them dyed to match my designs, and add overlays in nicer fabrics, so they wouldn’t read as flat or cheap on stage. We started creating dye colors, based on what we had in stock, by mixing them together and testing them on fabric swatches. Overall, we had most of the colors I wanted, and we only had to purchase a few specific dyes. Once we figured out the recipes for each dye color, my mentor began dyeing each garment. This process would take several days because there were nine garments in total that needed different color treatments.

The other armor options I found online arrived during this week. I was still not pleased with them. Luckily, they were purchased from Party City, so I knew I would be able to return them at our local store. After returning round two of the armor, I found one last option that I could afford on Amazon.com. I ordered it hoping that this one was going to be everything I wanted. When option three of the armor arrived later that week, it was perfect. It was made of plastic and would withstand the run of the production with some added internal structure created by using glued felt. I was relieved that the armor had finally been figured out and I could focus on other areas of the design.

As we wrapped up the second week of the build process, the large fabric order arrived. I was happy with how all of the fabric looked. The priority was the yellow linen, so that the Dromio twins’ look could be built in time for the publicity photoshoot the following week. Before their two tunics were assembled they needed to have a polka dot print painted on them. I experimented on fabric swatches with a circular stamp. I tried different mixtures of paint and
textile medium until I achieved what I wanted. I decided to hand stamp the polka dots onto the yellow linen because I couldn’t find the right print with the color combination that I rendered in their design (Figure 3.5).

At the beginning of week three of the build process we had Production Meeting Three. In this meeting the choreographer asked me if I could bring different shoe options for the Amazon characters to wear during their dance number. He was concerned with the actresses’ ability to achieve his style of battle choreography in the dance heels I had chosen for them to wear. I didn’t know what to say at first because I immediately began to panic knowing that I didn’t have the money within my budget to purchase six pairs of dance sandals. He requested a Hermes dance sandal with straps that crisscrossed around the leg of the dancer. I knew we did not have anything like this in our stock, but I told him I would see what I could find within our stock to help facilitate his request. After the meeting I discussed my concerns with my mentor, and she told me to see what we had in stock and if we had nothing that would work then they would
have to make their dance heels suffice. I immediately began searching our sandal stock for six matching options that would complement my design and ease the choreography. Luckily, I was able to find six options that I liked, and I tried them on the girls before I watched the run of Act Two that night. The sandals fit the actors perfectly, and the choreographer liked them as well.

We started costume fittings during week three. I was excited to start seeing the costumes on the actors. It is always the most exciting and terrifying part of the process for me. It’s exciting to see the beginnings of the renderings coming to life, but it’s also terrifying when something doesn’t look right or fit the actor correctly. This is part of the process, and it can be a fun challenge to figure out solutions and ways to make things work. I discovered in Luce’s fitting that her purple blouse needed to be dyed again to achieve the dark, rich purple that I preferred for her design. My mentor dip dyed it again, after her fitting, and the purple looked much better. During Aegean’s fitting I tried a different option on him. In his original design he was wearing a brown tunic (Figure 3.6, page 42), but while I was pulling options from our stock I found a tattered greyish blue tunic that I preferred. I thought this tunic would connect him to the vibrant blue that the Antipholus twins would be wearing. This helped enforce my concept to connect characters using color. The shades of blue would connect a father (Aegean) to his sons (the Antipholus twins). I was pleased with how the new tunic option fit him (Figure 3.7, page 42), so I decided to use it. Another addition to his costume came later during dress rehearsals. I added a pair of tattered pants for him to wear under his tunic. The pants covered the knee pads that he requested and added to his disheveled look that Fink desired for the character.
Halfway through the week three build process we had the publicity photoshoot. The photoshoot included Luce and the two Dromio twins wearing their yellow and orange twin looks. The photoshoot went well; I thought they looked fantastic and exactly like the renderings. I presented all of the actors in their costumes to Fink, and he really liked Luce. I could tell something wasn’t quite right with how he felt about the Dromios’ costumes. He didn’t talk about them at all. I asked him if he liked them, and he said they were fun, but he didn’t deliver this comment with as much excitement as he did with Luce. I knew I would need to discuss this with him further at another time. During the shoot I also realized I wanted to add trim to Luce’s hem on her blouse to match the trim around her neckline to diffuse the amount of purple on her waist by adding contrast.

We ended the week with more fittings. It was brought to my attention during the Tailor’s fitting that he would be doing a split kick in his costume. This was not factored into his design,
so the costume shop manager and I decided to add two side slits to his ankle length tunic to help facilitate this split kick. The biggest lesson I learned this week was to not sacrifice my design in order to save the shop from having to do more work. During Galatea’s fitting we fitted her white ballet dress. I was happy with the way it looked on her, and I didn’t have any notes for it. After the fitting my mentor pulled me aside and told me that she thought I was selling myself short on that white dress. She said my rendering for Galatea looked visually interesting and what she looked like in the fitting was not. I immediately started considering her comment, and I realized that I wasn’t happy with how the white dress looked, but I didn’t want to say anything because I didn’t want to add more work to the already complicated build schedule that we had. She told me not to sacrifice my design just to make the costume shop manager happy.

This was a hard realization for me. I’ve always strived to make everyone happy when it comes to my designs, but it was in this moment that I realized that I was sacrificing my designs to have a happy work environment. Through proper communication with the costume shop manager, we found a way to solve this problem and create the right dress for Galatea. I liked the edits and additions we made to the white dress when I got to see her wearing it in the second fitting. My lack of proper communication with the manager also became apparent during Adriana’s fitting. During her fitting, I realized that her dress did not have the structure and flow that I rendered. It was decided that the dress would need to be rebuilt because the bodice was flat-lined in a material that made it rigid and not what I wanted. Luckily, we had enough money within the budget to purchase more of the fabric. I realized after that this rebuild could have been avoided if I had been more specific in my spec sheet for this design, communicated better with my costume shop manager, and experimented more with how the fabric moved and formed to an actual body.
Production Meeting Four started the fourth week of our build process. During the meeting I presented Fink and the design team the fitting photos, so far. He commented on Dromio from Syracuse not needing his first everyday look. I was confused by this, but I didn’t put much thought into it because it was a look that I pulled from stock, so it could be easily cut from the design. I could also tell he wasn’t liking something else that I presented to him because he was silent and not acting like himself. After the meeting was over, I pulled him aside, privately, and asked him if he liked what I showed him. He said he needed to have some time to absorb the fitting photos more thoroughly without being rushed. Again, I sensed that there was also something about the Dromio twins’ looks that he wasn’t sure about because he said he felt like they were wearing little yellow dresses. He was also worried the yellow linen would read too “hot” on stage and that the color may need to be toned down. I told him they are wearing tunics and he said, “Still, they look like yellow dresses on men.” I discussed this with my mentor later, and she told me I needed to talk to him more and figure out what exactly it was about their looks he didn’t like.

I texted Fink that afternoon and asked him if we could dirty them up a little, so that they look more like servants and this would also tone down the yellow. He said that was exactly what he was thinking. After I got home that night, and he had time to absorb each one, Fink emailed me his reactions to the fitting photos. He asked that the Dromios have their hemlines shortened so that we could see more “hairy, man knee” and to dirty the costumes a little like we had discussed earlier through text messaging. He asked for more leg to be shown on Fatima and maybe add another slit in her skirt and for the Tailor to be more tailored. I was relieved when I got this email because I was expecting many notes based on his reactions at the meeting that morning.
The following morning, I forwarded the email regarding Fink’s fitting note reactions to my mentor. She responded saying they were notes that were easily achievable. I discussed them in person with her later, and I brought up my concerns about the Dromios’ hems being shorter. I also wanted to add boxers under their tunics for the extra comedy and so we would not see their white dance shorts. She suggested boxers with a polka dot print to replicate the polka dot print I painted on the tunics. I discussed this with the costume shop manager, too, and she said the same thing, so I decided that it was worth a try. I dyed two pair of white boxers orange, and I then used the same method I had utilized on the tunics to paint yellow polka dots onto them. The finished result was two pair of boxers that were the reverse of the yellow tunic skirts with orange polka dots.

We spent the week having more costume fittings. I made more discoveries with some of the design choices I had made. During Pygmalion’s fitting I wasn’t liking the large T-shirt dress that we purchased in hopes of altering to match my rendering. It reminded me of a hospital gown when I looked at it on him (Figure 3.8, page 46). I had pulled a different option for him to wear as the old man, and we tried that on him as an alternative to the T-shirt dress. I preferred the way this looked on him. The dark blue tunic pulled from stock (Figure 3.9, page 46) had visual interest, movement, and texture that the T-shirt dress was lacking. I emailed the two photos to Fink to get his approval to go in a different direction because the dark blue tunic was drastically different from what I had originally rendered (Figure 3.10, page 46). He liked the idea, so I made the choice to use the option from stock, and it eliminated our having to do a complete alteration to the light blue T-shirt dress.
We started fitting several of the Amazon characters this week. I noticed during all of their fittings that there was a lot more skin showing between the underwear waist line and the bottom of the bodice than I had expected. This could be seen through the two slits on the front of the skirt. My mentor and I decided we would order high waisted body shapers in a nude color so that we could dye them a golden yellow. The body shapers arrived quickly from Amazon.com, and we were able to try them on the last two Amazons during their fittings. The body shapers made the costume look more unified and polished.

Later in the week Fink called me during shop to inform me we would need to recast one of the lead secondary characters, the Courtesan. I was shocked by this news because first dress was in a week. I immediately asked him who would be taking her place and learned he would be promoting the actress playing Courtesan three into the role, and her part would be filled with a new actress that was not a part of the original cast. I discussed this change with my mentor and the costume shop manager. We all began cross referencing the actresses’ measurement sheets to ensure we would be able to make this happen without significant changes to the items we had already built. Luckily, Courtesan three and the actress taking her place had identical
measurements, so we would not need to do any major alterations to the existing costumes.

Another factor that worked out in our favor was that we hadn’t started building the lead Courtesan’s costume, so we would be able to build it to fit the actress taking her place. It was a shocking adjustment, but we hustled to solve it as quickly and easily as possible.

The following day we had an emergency costume fitting to check if the actress replacing Courtesan three would fit into her costumes. It was a successful fitting with few alterations. This was a relief to both the costume shop manager and me. As week four of the build process came to a close we finally had the costume fittings for the Antipholus twin looks. I was anxious to see these costumes the most because they were the lead characters of the story and because we had to change my first fabric choice for their design early-on in the build process. Originally, I found a medium weight polyester in our stock that moved nicely and had the weight that I wanted. The costume shop manager determined that we would not have enough of this material to build two matching tunics. I discussed this with my mentor, and she suggested ordering a blue suede that we could afford, and it would make the twins look more masculine and structured because the suede would have more rigidity when compared to the polyester option from our stock.

I was nervous about seeing the suede on the actors because I didn’t know how it would fit their bodies. During their fittings I decided to remove a lot of the fullness within the chest and skirt of the tunic. This was a decision that I would later regret when the garments were completed and on stage. Because I decided to remove a lot of the fullness in the tunics, they read very stiff on stage and lacked the flow and movement that the renderings had. I was happy with how they looked, but the overall feeling they evoked was stuffy and rigid. Fink and I discussed them being virile and structured, but I overdid it with the structure causing their tunics to look restricting.
In Antipholus from Ephesus’ fitting we tried the first look before he changes into the twin look. His first look was Roman soldier inspired, reminiscent of the Sergeant’s costume. I was very happy with how he looked in the costume. I found a red cape lined with green in our stock that worked perfectly with the armor. I liked this cape because the green lining connected him to the Courtesan, with whom he was having an affair. I was so excited about the Antipholus twin fittings that day that I showed the fitting photos to Fink before rehearsal started that night. He was pleased with how they looked, but he wasn’t sure why Antipholus from Ephesus had two looks, the armor look and twin look. I explained to him that the armor costume is what he would wear before putting on his twin look. Fink informed me that Antipholus from Syracuse would be the only Antipholus twin who would have a different costume before changing into the twin look. I was confused by this because we had always had the two sets of twins in different costumes before they changed into their matching looks. Fink apologized for the confusion and for not catching this months ago during design meetings. Cutting the armor look from the design was a bittersweet moment for me. I was pleased that we could save some money by returning it, but I was also disappointed because I liked the way it looked on the actor.

As we began the final week of the build process I started to feel the pressure of completing this design in time for first dress. I knew there was a lot to accomplish in seven days. This week would be my time to catch up on making detailed decisions and finish the costume crafts. Costume fittings had been filling all of my time during shop hours for the past two weeks, so I was relieved to get those hours back and start doing my other designer duties (i.e., preparing paperwork, tying up loose ends, figuring out details within the design, etc.). My mentor began working on the wigs this week. I had given her research for how I wanted each wig to be styled. I wanted a blend of 1940s hairstyles and Ancient Grecian hairstyles. Once she began styling them and getting her wig plan in order, I realized that I didn’t have enough 1940s hairstyles in
my design. I discussed this with her, and we decided that the three lead female characters (Adriana, Luciana, and Luce) would have 1940s hair to stay true to their Andrews Sisters inspiration, and the maids would have Grecian hairstyles. I also added some 1940s hair style elements to some of the other female characters to balance out this concept.

After watching a complete run of the show at the end of this final week in the build, I determined that I didn’t like the Dromio twins’ hats anymore. They were constantly falling off of the actors’ heads, and the tails on the sides distracted from their acting and hid their faces when they would stand profile to the audience. I discussed this with Fink after the run, and he said he was glad I brought that up because he hadn’t liked the hats ever since the photoshoot. He explained that he never brought up his dislike for the hats because he didn’t have a solution, and he was willing to settle for how they looked. I suggested removing the tails on the sides and adding an elastic band to the opening of the hat to make the hats look like a combination of a ski cap and a Phrygian cap. He liked this idea and told me to try it. After I completed the edits on the hats and gave them to the actors for rehearsal they fit better and were more visually pleasing. Fink liked them, I liked them, and the actors liked them. The Dromios’ hats were a success.

As we wrapped up the final build week, the costume shop manager, employees, and I spent the weekend preparing for dress rehearsals. I wanted to make sure every detail was accounted for, so the actors would have everything they required for the first dress rehearsal. This was for them to start getting used to their costumes and accessories and for me to see complete looks on stage early so that I could polish and edit them. I spent the Saturday before first dress finishing all of the costume crafts and labeling every single item within the design. The rest of the costume shop employees were frantically trying to complete all of the Amazon character costumes.
From the beginning of this process I wanted to alleviate us working to the very last minute before first dress, but because of the volume of costumes needed, the lack of skilled labor in the shop, and flu season… it was unavoidable. Being prepared and having every detail figured out early helped the process, but my lack of experience showed as the build process came to a close. I wanted to stay ahead of the curve, but because this was my first large musical costume design, I didn’t have the experience to recognize problems and concerns early before they happened. Overall, I did feel like I discovered problems and solved them as quickly as possible.

As a whole, First, Second, and Final Dress went well. I liked what I was seeing on stage. Having everything done for first dress allowed for editing certain costumes (i.e., cutting accessories, adding accessories, re-styling wigs, teaching the actors how to wear their costumes properly, etc.). During our production meeting after First Dress my biggest note from Fink was that he wanted to see the Dromio twins’ looks more distressed and dirtier. We had discussed this a few weeks ago, but I wanted to see them on stage first before editing those looks. The following day I experimented with spraying leftover fabric swatches of the Dromio twins’ looks with a mixture of diluted dye that would achieve what Fink wanted. I was nervous about applying this spray to the actual costumes because there was no going back once the dye had been sprayed onto the costume. After spraying the costumes and letting them dry, I didn’t like how they looked. I was hoping that they would read differently on stage. After watching second dress that night I liked how the distressing looked on the costumes, it wasn’t ideal because they were the only “dirty” characters in the production, but it did add to their personalities, and Fink loved it.

While watching Second Dress I could see a lot of the male character’s compression dance shorts under their tunics. This inspired me to add contemporary boxers, in various colors and prints, to all of the male characters to cover the dance shorts and to re-enforce the anachronistic
and comedic elements within the design. Instead of pulling different boxers for the Antipholus twins, we dyed their existing white boxers blue to match their tunics. My mentor had two suggestions during First and Second dress that week. Her first suggestion was changing Angelo’s costume during Luciana’s dream sequence choreography. She thought it would add to the design if he and Pygmalion matched as Luciana’s ensemble dancers to add to the design of a 1940s Golden Age musical. Most musicals during that time period had matching costumes for ensemble dancers. I knew we had a costume in stock that would fit Angelo and would match Pygmalion. I discussed this with Fink, and he told me to try it. We looked at the different costume on stage the following night, and it add a unification the entire dance number. Her second suggestion was to add a capuchon hood to Pygmalion’s old man ensemble costume. This hood would help cover the elastic strap that held his beard on his head, and it would pull the costume together as an entire look. I pulled one from stock and tried it on him the following night before dress rehearsal. I liked the hood, so I decided to add it to the design.

As we finished dress rehearsals I felt a sense of relief and pride before opening night. This was a challenging build process, but seeing the design come together on stage made all of the challenges worth it. The four performances ran smoothly without many costume emergencies, except for some sandals breaking and the same necklace needing to be repaired after every performance. I brought my mother and aunt to see one of the performances, and they were very impressed with what the costume shop had achieved in a four-week period. Seeing their reactions and hearing about them after the show was great. All of the late nights, the constant planning, editing the design, working seven days a week, balancing the budget, and all of the other tasks a costume designer upholds are worth it when you see the sparkle in someone’s eye as they talk about and praise a design that you and your team made happen.
CHAPTER 4
“ I HAD TWINS”: POST-PRODUCTION AND EVALUATION

After the production closed I had time to reflect on my design and the process. I received many comments from the actors and Fink about how they thought the costumes were funny and beautiful. Fink pulled me aside during intermission of a performance and said to me, “I’m really happy with what we accomplished in this design. I know I had my doubts at times, but once I realized you knew what you were doing; I let that go and trusted you”. This meant a lot coming from Fink. It was a collaborative process that I thought went very well. My goal was to be as collaborative as possible with this design. This should always be the case when working with many different personalities during a design process, but my pride can blind me because I am too close to my art. Once I let go of this pride and was willing to let the design evolve, the process was productive.

At first, I wasn’t excited to design Boys from Syracuse because I had never heard of it and after researching it, it seemed very dated. My goal was to take an unfamiliar show and personally discover what made it alluring and inspiring. The more I analyzed the script and listened to various recordings of the songs, I started to let go of my prejudices and embrace the story. In the end I enjoyed the story, its comedy, and the music. Once design meetings began and I was informed that we would be doing an anachronistic and campy version I became inspired immediately. Researching Ancient Greece and modern comedies was fun and informative. This research became my primary inspiration in the costume designs and it helped me find subtle ways to add my interpretations of the story and music.

Because this was the largest show I had ever designed I was concerned about the total number of costumes. This concern combined with the budgetary restraints caused me to focus on
one fully designed look per character. Fink was not happy about this, at first, but once I defended it based on the script he changed his mindset. The story takes place in a twenty-four-hour period, which allowed the design to focus on one look per character because they would not need to change. As the design evolved, costumes were added, but only because the script referenced them, and the choreography required them (i.e., the Amazons and ballet costumes). The design was polished and focused without it seeming convoluted and distracting.

After the production closes, the thesis designers are required to meet with their thesis committee to defend their design. My thesis committee members are Wendi Zea (my mentor and Associate Professor of Costume Design), J. Thomas Kidd (Associate Professor and Chair of the Southern Illinois University Department of Theater), and Mark Kent Varns (Professor of Theater and Southern Illinois University Department of Theater Resident Lighting Designer). During this defense meeting I received feedback from my committee and was required to defend my design choices and goals. Overall, the feedback for my design was constructive and enlightening.

Varns asked, “Did your designs support what the director requested? And did it evolve throughout the design process and how?” I felt like I provided exactly what the director requested, within our means. I started the design process with an open mind and willingness to collaborate and I thought the design showed this. Kidd’s feedback called attention to areas of my design that I hadn’t noticed. He felt there was a disconnect between my renderings and what the final costumes looked like. This was a note that I have received before regarding my costume designs. He commented further by referencing the differences in the Antipholus Twins, Fatima, and Courtesan Two and their renderings. When I rendered the Antipholus twins’ costumes I had
the original fabric choice in mind (Figure 4.1). After the twin looks were constructed out of the blue suede they looked rigid and stiff compared to the softness and flow of the design in the rendering. This stiffness and rigidity was further emphasized when the characters were on stage (Figure 4.2).

Kidd’s dislike for the disconnect between the Antipholus twins’ renderings came from his experience as a director and artistic director. He asked me, “At what point is a costume rebuilt and redesigned when you realize it looks nothing like your rendering? Because when it comes to your renderings looking like what was built, you failed that aspect.” My mentor and I explained that this would not have been possible because of the lack of funds in the budget and the lack of experienced labor in the costume shop. I understood his dislike for their costumes as the lead characters within the production. I realized after this was brought to my attention that I

4 All figures in this chapter, unless otherwise indicated, were executed by and are property of the author.
shouldn’t have requested the fullness be removed from their tunics across the chest and in the skirt, as I stated in Chapter 3. Having more fullness in the skirt would have reduced the A-line shape that was being created by the stiffness of the suede. Choosing a lighter weight fabric would have produced a more flowing tunic, as well. Overall, I was content with the final result of the Antipholus twin looks. Fink and I had always wanted them to look very structured and virile. All things considered, I felt like this was accomplished.

Kidd also felt like the choice to design Fatima in plaid caused her to be a distraction when she was surrounded by the other characters during the production (Figure 4.3, on page 56). I explained that this choice was supported by Fink’s request for her to be inspired by a nerdy secretary. Kidd said, “The print on the fabric you chose was bolder than what you rendered.” I chose a plaid fabric that was similar in color and print, but I will agree that it was bolder. I liked the fabric that I found, but I did notice the difference in the rendering (Figure 4.4, on page 56). I could have solved this by incorporating various printed fabrics into the other Courtesan characters to indicate a connection among the Courtesan ensemble. Kidd’s final comment on the disconnect between rendering and realized design was based on Courtesan Two. Kidd felt like the actor’s body shape should have been considered in her rendering (Figure 4.5, on page 56). The costume did look different on the actor (Figure 4.6, on page 56) than it did in the rendering because I rendered an actor with a different height and body shape. I have received the same critiques before that my renderings look better at times than what is realized because I illustrate tall, unrealistic body types in my rendered costume designs.
I wanted to experiment with a new style of rendering for my designs (see Appendix C). My usual medium of choice is watercolor, but my mentor suggested that I broaden my skill level. This lead to my decision to use marker and ink, inspired by the rendering style and techniques of Bob Mackie. Overall, I felt that I captured the humor within the story through the
use of dynamic poses that illustrated how the costumes would fit and move on the actor’s bodies. In regard to Kidd’s comment about the renderings not matching the realized design, I discovered that I focused more on Mackie’s rendering style, instead of using the actual actor’s body types. This was a useful learning experience for me to not let other designer’s styles hinder my own style. In the future I will focus on realistic body types and not render actors that have statuesque and unrealistic bodies.

In my renderings and the design, I wanted to show an inspired and calculated use of color, line, and texture to connect the characters and show differences between the opposing class systems within the story. I chose to use primary colors for the lead characters and secondary colors for the secondary characters. I used colors within these groups to connect couples, friends, and family members (i.e., Luciana coupled with Antipholus from Syracuse by using shades of blue, Adriana connected to her maids by using shades of red, the Courtesan characters being connected with secondary colors, such as shades of green and purple, etc.). It was brought to my attention during my thesis defense that I was successful in connecting all of the characters through color, but I lacked focus in the other areas of line and texture. Originally, I wanted to show a clear difference between tailored, stream-lined characters’ silhouettes juxtaposed with other characters having organic and flowing silhouettes. After reflecting on this critique, I realized that I had indeed focused more on color, ignoring possibilities for contrasting the textures and silhouettes. This is not to say that the textures and silhouettes were not considered. In the end, the choices that were made happened organically during the process.

By focusing on color, I was able to experiment with custom colors on garments by testing different dyeing techniques. In my original goals, I wanted to explore Shibori dyeing and other tie-dyeing effects. During the design process I discovered these techniques would be distracting when combined with the design and look of the production as a whole. My mentor
and I both agreed these dyeing techniques would give the production a 1960s look. This would take the design to a different period and distract from the elegance of the 1940s era the design was evoking. In the end, I decided not to focus on elaborate dyeing techniques, and instead concentrated on mixing custom colors that the garments would be dyed with entirely. This would allow us to have costumes that were color blocked, with coordinating sheer fabrics layered on top. This technique was most apparent in the maid characters. I ordered cotton dresses in white, so I would be able to dye the dresses the color I desired. After dyeing, the costume shop would layer iridescent fabric on top of the maid’s dresses to make them look nicer and not read flat on stage (Figure 4.7).

I learned a lot about dance shoes during the process for this production. I have only worked on one musical before costume designing *The Boys from Syracuse*. My lack of experience when choosing the appropriate dance shoes was apparent during the rehearsal and production process. Purchasing shoes can take a large amount out of a design’s budget. This led me to try to find as many options as possible that we already owned. I allotted an emergency fund within the budget to allow for easy replacement if shoes were damaged during rehearsals.
and the production. I never knew how delicate shoes could be, especially when being used in choreography. I thought shoes could withstand anything. My mentor informed me that most dance shoes usually only last for three productions. Most of the shoes I chose from our stock were old, and I discovered late that this would be their last time on stage. I would have preferred to purchase brand new shoes for every actor, but in this situation, that was not a realistic option. I worked with what we had, and I liked the way they looked with the costume design as a whole. In the end, one pair of shoes was destroyed during the production, and many pairs were thrown away after the production closed.

In conclusion, I wanted to be proud of what I designed and to learn more about my craft as a costume designer. Usually I am a perfectionist, and this hinders my ability to collaborate and connect with whom I am working. During this process, I decided to let go of that perfectionist mentality and embrace the imperfections and learning moments. I feel like my communication with the costume shop manager improved during this process. There were situations where the design almost suffered because of my fear I would upset the costume manager and the shop. After I let this fear go, I was able to communicate effectively with everyone. Unfortunately, this realization happened late in the build process, but I feel like the designs did not suffer. Fink’s idea to combine Ancient Greece with modern-day anachronisms was inspiring and fun. I could have added more anachronisms to the design, but I thought it had a well-balanced blend of the two ideas. I learned a great deal during this process: how to let go and trust others, to be quiet and listen, to accept criticism humbly, to render for your actor’s body types, to explore more fabric options, and most importantly… to trust my design.
Bibliography


Appendix A: Thumbnail Sketches
Appendix B: Rough Sketches
Sergeant

Maid 2 (Athena's)

Amazon Look
Appendix C: Final Renderings
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE

ADRIANA

AMAZON LOOK

FATIMA LOOK

GALATEA LOOK
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE

DROMIOS

DROMIO OF SYRACUSE

DROMIO OF EPHESUS
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE

LUCE
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
MAID 3
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE

EMILIA
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
SERGEANT
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE

MAID 2
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
CORPORAL
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
MAID 1
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
DUKE
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
COURTESAN
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
Sorcerer
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
FATIMA

ASSISTANT LOOK
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
MERCHAND OF SYRACUSE
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
COURTESAN 3
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
MERCHANT OF EPHESUS
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
COURTESAN 2
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
TAILOR
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE
PYGMALION

ENSEMBLE LOOK
THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE

ANGELO
### Appendix D: Budget & Costume Piece List

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Spec Sheet
Show: Boys from Syracuse
Designer: T. Baker
Date: 
Character: Antipholus x 2
Costume #: Twin Look
Actor: G. Luke

T-shaped Tunic
Sleeve length 7" from shoulder
- Neckline - 3" scoop in front to 2" scoop in back
- Shoulder seam starts 2" from base of neck
- Knee-length hem
- 80" sweep
- Inside waist elastic casing

Cape
- 2 1/2 rectangle
- Roll hem all edges
- No lining
- Blue fabric ties on hem
  - 2" finished
  - Inside and out
  - Purchased frog at neck
  - Shoulder pleats shaped
    on form and tacked in place
    wappers to tunic
Spec Sheet

Show: Toys from Syracuse  Designer: T. Baker  Date:  
Character: Adriana  Costume #: Dress/skirt  Actor: S. Hanell

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<tr>
<th>Skirt</th>
<th>Top</th>
<th>Drape Overlay</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- A-line 2:1 gathers at waist</td>
<td>- Left side dolman sleeve</td>
<td>- Sheer rectangle 3 yds long x 20&quot; wide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 80&quot; sweep</td>
<td>- 28&quot; sweep at sleeve hem</td>
<td>- Details on back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Right side sleeveless</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Darted bodice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Neckline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 2&quot; rounded scoop in front from base of neck</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pink Veil (Fatima)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Shoulder seam starts at 2&quot; from base of neck</td>
<td>- 60&quot; x 60</td>
<td>- Roll hem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 6&quot; V scoop from base of neck</td>
<td>- Hair comb in center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Side zipper</td>
<td>White Veil (Galea)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Trim at neck, sleeve hem</td>
<td>- 60&quot; x 60</td>
<td>- Roll hem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Skirt hem</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Hair comb in center</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spec Sheet

Show: *The Boys from Syracuse*  Designer: T. Baker  Date:  M. Belliveau
Character: *Dromios* X 2  Costume #:  Twin Look  Actor: G. Farrell

- Over the head tank top tunic
- Elasticized waist with a little blousing
- Above the knee hem
- 2:1 gathering
- 2" contrast belt
- 8" x 6" pockets - Top applied
- Neckline - 5" scoop in front to 2". Scoop in back

- Shoulder strap 4"
- Underarm 4" below pit
- 80" sweep

---

Back View
Spec Sheet

Show: BES  Designer: T. Baker  Date: 
Character: Luciana  Costume #: Only Costume  Actor: E. Turner

Overlayer
2 rectangles (1 front / 1 back)
- 22 x 17
- Roll hem
- Stitch to shoulder
- Add trim

Shoulder scarf
- 32" long
- 20" wide
- Side point 8" up from bottom point
- Attach trim
- Pinched in center and attached at shoulder

* Goes over a dharma dress
Spec Sheet

Show: BFS  Designer: T. Baker  Date:    
Character: Maid 3  Costume #: Maid look  Actor: G. Nowak

Over Top (C) - A-line cut - Cowl neck front and back - Depth to match Dharma dress - Pinched in front of shoulder - Length mid-thigh - Hem sweep 10" more than Dharma dress

* Goes over Dharma dress
**Spec Sheet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Show: BFS</th>
<th>Designer: T. BokeR</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Character: Emilia</td>
<td>Costume: Seuss look</td>
<td>Actor: T. Smith</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Veil - Purple Nylon Serceur</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- 72&quot; x 37&quot; Rectangle</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Roll hem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Add fringe to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Short ends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sew comb in center</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Face veil - Purple Chiffon</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 x 7 Rectangle</td>
<td>Roll hem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attach ear pieces to each end</td>
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Spec Sheet

Show: BFS  Designer: T. Baker  Date: 
Character: Sergeant  Costume #: Only Costume  Actor: A. Lampl
d
Cape
- Bagged out with itself
- Top width at 20”
- A shape at width of fabric
- 9” long
- Add gold satin ribbon “S”

Full width of fabric
Spec Sheet
Show: BES
Character: Maid 2
Costume #: Maid look
Actor: I. Williams

Over Tunic
- A-line cut
- Cowl neck front and back
  - Depth to match Dharma dress
- Length Hi-lo
  - Front mid hip
  - Back mid thigh
- Hem smooth curve in front
- Hem sweep 10" more than Dharma dress

Veil
- Rectangle 46 x 26
- Roll hem
- Comb in center of long side

* Goes over Dharma dress
Spec Sheet

Shows: BFS  
Designer: T. Baker  
Date: 

Character: Maid 1  
Costume #: Maid look  
Actor: M. Pruitt

Over Tunic
- A-line cut
- Cowl neck front & back
  - Depth to match Dharma dress
- Length Hi-lo
- Front mid hip
- Back mid thigh
- Hem smooth curve in front
- Hem sweep 10" more than Dharma dress

* Goes over Dharma dress
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spec Sheet</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Show: BFS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character: Duke</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**A-shaped Tunic - Lavender Satin**
- No waistline
- Long sleeve
- Ankle length
- 90" sweep
- Straight sleeve
- Shallow rounded neckline
- 2" from base of neck on shoulder, CF, CB
- 12" sweep at wrist
- "DUKE" letters on back

- Made of metallic felt
- Add trim to neckline, wrist, & hem

**Wrap - Blurple dupioni**
- Large rectangle - Full length of fabric
- Roll hem
- Draped in fitting
- Stiched at shoulder
- Snap on shoulder
Spec Sheet

Show: BFS  Designer: T. Baker  Date: 
Character: Contesman  Costume #: Only look  Actor: A. Nwokoji

Bra Top
- Green crinkle
  - Fringed
- Deep V front and back - 7"
- Pleats at shoulder
- Soft pinch pleats below bust
- Contrast under bust band 2" wide
- Hook/Bar closure
- Beads draped at fitting
- Shoulders - stuffed applique - craft5

Skirt - Magenta charmeuse
- Waist at high hip
- 2" waist band - waist band fastening at panel separation
- Front Panel - 15 x 39, bagged out gathered at waist to 9"
- Back Panel - Half circle length 39"
Spec Sheet

Show: BFS  Designer: T. Baker  Date: 
Character: forever  Costume #: Only look  Actor: J. Beasley

A- Shaped Tunic - Purple textured
- No waistline
- Long sleeves
  - Patchwork (divide evenly into 60 sections; alternate colors)
- Ankle length
- 10" Sweep
- Straight sleeve
- Shallow rounded neckline
  - 2" all around from base of neck
- 12" Sweep at wrist
- Add trim at neck and CF, hem
- Elastic casing on inside at waist
- Belt - tucked at front
  - 2" width
  - Gold fabric

Cape
- Full width of fabric
- Bagged out
- Top edge gathered to fit curve of back trim
- No trim on cape
- Length - full length of fabric bagged out
### Spec Sheet

**Show:** BES  
**Designer:** T. Baker  
**Date:**  
**Character:** Fatima  
**Costume #:** Only look  
**Actor:** M. Hintz

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<tr>
<td>✔ Boot Neckline - 2&quot; CF/CF from base of neck 3&quot; from base of neck on shoulder</td>
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<td>✔ Fitted with darts</td>
<td>Roll hem</td>
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<td>✔ Contrast short sleeve at neck, CF, hem</td>
<td>Attach to hat</td>
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<td>✔ CB zipper</td>
<td>Veil (for S. Howell)</td>
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<td>Roll hem</td>
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<td>✔ 90&quot; sweep</td>
<td>Hair comb in sink</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Slit over left leg to upper thigh</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Purple grosgrain trim on all edges</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Gathered into waist</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Length just below knee</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ No lining</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Bias-hem &amp; slit opening</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ 2&quot; wide waistband out of purple fabric</td>
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**TuTu x 2**

- Waist band made out same as skirt band  
- Snaps for 8 scarves, evenly placed around belt  
- Cut scarves 22" square  
  - 4 green 3 snapped at corners  
  - 4 pink 3 to belt
Spec Sheet

Show: BFS  Designer: T. Baker  Date: 
Character: Courtesan 2  Costume #: Courtesan Look  Actor: J. Kess

Bra Top
- CB opening
- Deep V back - 8"
- Shoulder straps 1½"
- Contrast under bust
  Strap 1½"
- Front panel gathered into under bust strap
- Front 6" from base of neck
- Bell sleeves, gathered at cap
  - 6"

- Strap/Back - Teal fabric
- Bust panel - Lime green
- Sleeve - Shimmer organza (pink)

PACK VIEW

1½"
1½"
6"
Spec Sheet
Show: BFS  
Designer: T. Baker  
Date: __________________
Character: Merchant of E.  
Costume #: Only Look  
Actor: J. Miller

Wrap
- 64 x 37 rectangle
- Bagged out
- Lined with mauve satin
- Attached at shoulder corner to corner
- Add pulled trim to pulled tunic
Spec Sheet

Show: BFS  Designer: T. Baker  Date: 

Character: Courtesan 2  Costume #: Courtesan Look  Actor: A. Ward

Skirt
- half circle
- cut back as drawn
- overlap at slit
- knee length
- waist band 2"
- contrast fabric
- bell fringe hem
- Fairy organza
  flat lined to teal
  organza

[Diagram of skirt]
Spec Sheet

Show: BFS  Designer: T. Baker  Date: __________
Character: Tailor  Costume #: Only Look  Actor: T. Wilson

A-shape Tunic
- No waistline
- Elastic casing on inside slightly above natural waist
- Long sleeves - Pink plaid
  - 12" sweep at wrist - straight sleeve
- Ankle length
- 100" sweep
- Shallow rounded neckline
  - 2" all around from base of neck
- Belt 2" width
  - Pink fabric
- Teal trim with printed squares
  - Neckline
  - Down CF
  - Hem
- Pink trim with print on top of blue @ hem

Vest
- Straight cut
- Front opening cut back to leave 9" opening at rest
- Hem - mid thigh
- Cap sleeve - 41/2"
- Lined
- Fall straight from shoulder
Spec Sheet

Show: BES  
Designer: T. Baker  
Date:  
Character: Apprentice  
Costume #: Only Look  
Actor: O. O'Brien

Over layer
- Cut 2 (Front/Back)
- Narrow roll hem
- Attach to shoulder of Tunic a top corners
- Pink trim with print at hem
- Use wrong side of fabric

Pulled Tunic
- Remove sleeves
- 1" blue trim @ neck
- Attach pink trim to hem

- Inside elastic casing @ waist

Diagram:
- Dimensions:
  - 17" across
  - 15" length
  - 15" depth
Spec Sheet

Show: BFS  
Character: Galatea  

Designer: T. Baker  
Costume #: Ballet  
Actor: L. McIntyre

Veil
- 2 yd x width of fabric
- Roll hem
- Hair comb in center of long side

Over layer
- A-line cut
- Cowl neck front and back
- 3" depth from base of neck
- Pinched at shoulder
- Length mid thigh
- Sweep 60"

Waist sash
- 3" wide
Spec Sheet

Show: BFS  Designer: T. Baker  Date: __________
Character: Angelo  Costume #: Only Look  Actor: J. Sommers

Wrap
- Bagging out full piece of metallic gold fabric with gold satin
- Coin trim on hanging end in front
- Other short end gathered and sewn to R. shoulder

Dharma Dress
- Add 1 1/2" border of gold satin and coin trim
  - Neck - no coins
  - Sleeve hem - satin trim and coins
  - Hem - satin and coins
Spec Sheet

Show: BFS  Designer:  Date:  
Character: Amazons  Costume #:  Actor:  

Bodice
- Princess seams
- CB zipper
- Sleeveless
- Round neckline
  - 2" all around from base of neck
- 2" leather straps
  - Placed as drawn
  - Mirror front to back
- Bodice ends halfway between midriff & waist

Skirt
- Front panel bagged out
- A line skirt smooth at waist
  - Above knee length
- Trim at hem

[Diagram of skirt with measurements]
Appendix G: Production Photos

“I Had Twins”, Act I

Merchant, Antipholus, and Dromio from Syracuse, Act I
Antipholus and Dromio from Syracuse
Tailor, Apprentice, and Antipholus from Syracuse, Act I
Antipholus from Syracuse during “Dear Old Syracuse”, Act I
Antipholus and Dromio from Syracuse during “Dear Old Syracuse”, Act I

Luce and Dromio from Ephesus in “What do you do with a man?”, Act
Adriana, Luciana, and Maids in “Falling in Love with Love”, Act I
Angelo, Luciana, and Pygmalion, Act I

Sorcerer and Courtesan Two, Act I
Courtesan 3, Act I
Fatima, Act I
Courtesan Dance, Act I

Antipholus and Dromio of Ephesus, Sorcerer, and Adriana, Act I
Fatima in ballet finale in Act I
Adriana in Fatima disguise in ballet finale in Act I
Pygmalion and Galatea in ballet finale in Act I
Amazons in ballet finale in Act I

Galatea, Antipholus from Ephesus, and an Amazon in ballet finale in Act I
Adriana Amazon disguise and an Amazon in ballet finale in Act 1
Merchant from Syracuse and Ephesus, Corporal, and Antipholus from Ephesus, Act II

Corporal, Sergeant, and Maid 3, Act II
“Come with Me”, Act II

Dromio from Ephesus and Sorcerer, Act II
“Sing for Your Supper”, Act II

“Sing for Your Supper”, Act II
Maids in “Sing for Your Supper”, Act II

Sorcerer, Act II
Courtesan in “Oh, Diogenes!”, Act II

“Oh, Diogenes!”, Act II
Duke entrance, Act II

Aegean and cast, Finale of Act II
Adriana, Antipholus twins, and Dromio twins in finale of Act II

Emilia in finale of Act II
Luce and Dromio twins in finale of Act II

“Curtain Call”
VITA

Graduate School
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The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Bachelor of Fine Arts, Theater, December 2015

Special Honors and Awards:
Kern-Straumanis Graduate Assistantship Award
Eelin Stewart-Harrison Award for Excellence in Costume Design

Thesis Title:
Sing for Your Costumes: A Costume Design Thesis on The Boys from Syracuse

Major Professor: Wendi R. Zea