

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: A SET DESIGN FOR THE PRODUCTION OF *DUKE ELLINGTON'S SOPHISTICATED LADIES* PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AT THE CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK

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This thesis documents my set design process for a production of the musical revue *Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies* as it was produced by the Department of Theatre at the University of Maryland, College Park. The production was performed in the Ina and Jack Kay Theatre at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, from October 17 to October 25, 2003. The thesis includes an analysis of the musical revue and outlines in detail my design process and the execution of the design itself. Analysis of my design process and conclusions about the set design are provided.

A SET DESIGN FOR THE PRODUCTION OF
DUKE ELLINGTON'S SOPHISTICATED LADIES
AS PRESENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE
AT THE CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK

By

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Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment
Of the requirements for the degree
Masters of Fine Arts
2003

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* Production Photographs taken and provided in courtesy by Stan Barouh

INTRODUCTION

This thesis documents my set design process for *Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies* produced by the Department of Theatre at the University of Maryland, College Park, in the Ina and Jack Kay Theatre at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, from October 17 to October 25, 2003. This production was a collaboration of the academic departments within the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center. The Department of Theatre, School of Music, and the Dance Department all contributed to the success of the production. Scot Reese from the Department of Theatre was the stage director, Edward Walters from the School of Music was the musical conductor; and Alvin Mayes from the Dance Department devised the production's choreography. Designers involved in the production included third year design MFA candidates, completing their thesis productions: Yu-Hui Lee was the Lighting Designer; and Angela M. Chavez was the Costume Designer. Other members of the production team included: Lacey Finker, stage manager; Marcia Saylor, sound designer; Tim Jones, properties manager; David Kriebs, production manager; and Kieran Kelley, technical director.

As set designer for the production I created the scenic environment for the performance of the musical revue. The design elements: scenery, properties, and set dressing, all supported an overall visual conception for the production. Our production process formally started on March 7, 2003, and concluded on the opening night October 17, 2003.

The following four chapters outline my artistic approach to the set design. Chapter One, titled *Analysis and Research*, includes a brief history of the revue's origin, notes of the development of the revue as well as an analysis of the show's lyrics.

Chapter Two, *Design Process*, describes how I developed the set design for *Sophisticated Ladies* from the visual research phase to the time the finalized plans were submitted to the scenery shop's technical director. The chapter includes a discussion of the director's conceptual approach to the production, and the visual research I completed that supported this approach and subsequently my own design process. My design process included development of preliminary designs through sketches and storyboards, the creation of a 1/4"=1'-0" colored scale model, and technical drawings used for the construction of the set.

In Chapter Three, *Set Design Execution*, I outline in detail the practical realization of my set design. This chapter documents the period of time, in the production process, after which the shops have received the design until the time the set is installed in the theatre for the performance. This section includes any revisions to the design properties, scenic art, and set dressing, that were a result of budgetary or production related considerations or conflicts. Finally, in Chapter Four, *Design Process Analysis and Conclusions*, I provide critical analysis of my set design and execution process, and explore possible alternative solutions to challenges I faced.

Following Chapter Four there are a series of three Appendices. Appendix A: *Research Materials*, provides images of my research for the set and properties. Appendix B: *Design Development and Drafting Plates*, includes sketches and storyboard thumbnails, pictures of the preliminary design ideas, photographs of the 1/4" scale model, paint elevations, and drafting plates; ground plans, sections, and elevations. Appendix C, *Production Photographs* contains photos of the realized set. Finally, there is an extensive bibliography listing resources.

Chapter One: Analysis and Research

Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies is a tribute to the music and work of Duke Ellington. In honor of Ellington's genius as a musician and composer, Donald McKayle conceived and created the revue. This accolade is classified as a retrospective musical revue and is comprised of Ellington's musical hits written between 1923 and 1966.¹ Opening on Broadway in 1981, it was one of two big hits of the genre that was both "100 percent American and Black American at that".² Ellington's style is a product of the cultural revolution that occurred in Harlem, New York during the 1920's and 30's. In the 1920's Ellington moved to Harlem, the intellectual and artistic center of black America, where the Harlem Renaissance was in full swing. There he developed his career as a musician, bandleader and composer. Ellington, a true legend of the twentieth century, is forever memorialized in McKayle's revue; *Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies*.

Harlem Renaissance:

"Harlem, the cultural capital of Black America, had for centuries provided enlightened leadership in the arts, unmatched by other urban communities."³ The Harlem Renaissance, as accepted by most historians, was established in 1925 and was originally called the New Negro Movement.⁴ It was a fertile period of creativity in African-American

¹ Gerald Borman, *American Musical Revue, From The Passing Show to Sugar Babies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 164.

² (Borman 1985, 162)

³ Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, introduction by Mary Schmidt Campbell; essays by David Driskell, David Levering Lewis, and Deborah Willis Ryan, *Harlem Renaissance Art of Black America* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. Publishers, 1987), 105.

⁴ (Studio Museum in Harlem, New York 1987, 106)

literature, music, and the fine arts; “a mecca for the exploration of all the arts.”⁵ Black intellectuals began to migrate to Harlem, New York prior to World War I from Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles, and principal cities in the South. These intellectuals called for a rebirth of the artistry that the African-American people once had in their native Africa.⁶ “As early as 1917, a new ‘white curiosity’ evolved from the culture and characteristics of black America which appeared in the United States, and especially in the center of culture; New York City.”⁷ After World War I the interest grew and “people from all walks of life striving to become entertainers in music, theatre, and film”⁸ were drawn to Harlem. Black intellectual leaders of the time, such as writer James Weldon Johnson, Charles Johnson, the head of the National Urban League, and W. E.B. Du Bois, encouraged this white interest. Their hope was that it might lead to public exposure and increased professional opportunities for African-American artists. As a result of this growing interest, “a renaissance of ideas and artistic expression manifested itself in Harlem by the 1920’s.”⁹ The work of the Harlem Renaissance artists reflected the explosion of African-American music and jazz that occurred in New York during this time and several Night-clubs showcased jazz musicians and singers and catered to a great mix of audiences.

During the Harlem Renaissance, whites-only nightclubs “operated by organized crime as outlets for their illegal liquor business,”¹⁰ featured all-black entertainment and

⁵ (Studio Museum in Harlem, New York 1987, 105)

⁶ Ibid, 105.

⁷ Amy Helene Kirschke, *Aaron Douglas Art, Race, and the Harlem Renaissance* (University Press of Mississippi, 1995), 14.

⁸ (Studio Museum in Harlem, New York 1987, 105)

⁹ Ibid, 106.

¹⁰ (Kirschke 1995, 84)

avored large musical revues rather than small jazz combos or blues singers. A Broadway appearance of the first all-African-American musical, *Shuffle Along*, produced by two black vaudeville teams; Noble Sissle and Eubie Blake, and Flournoy Miller and Aubrey Lyles, contributed to these forms of entertainment and featured exciting jazz music and exuberant jazz dancing that excited New York.

As one of New York City's illegal drinking establishments of the 1920's, the Cotton Club was prominent. Gangsters owned the club and employed black talent that provided entertainments in the form of dance and vaudeville as well as providing an environment for up and coming musicians and entertainers. It was located on 142nd Street near Lenox Avenue and opened in the fall of 1923. Its exterior and interior resembled a log cabin with jungle décor that included a proscenium stage and a dance floor. Inside the Cotton Club, the revue was a huge elaborate room with

A bandstand that was a replica of a southern mansion with large white columns, and a backdrop painted with weeping willows and slave quarters...The waiters were dressed in red tuxedos, like butlers in a southern mansion, and...there were huge cut-crystal chandeliers. The performer's costumes were sensational. The soloists, dancers, and singers were always dressed to the hilt-the women in long flowing gowns...or in the briefest of brief dance costumes...Low cut and very, very risqué.¹¹

The venue opened at 10 p.m. and ran until 3 a.m. with show times specifically designed to attract a high-spending after-theatre crowd.”¹² The original Cotton Club, which closed in 1936, exposed white Americans to the African-American culture and provided African-American entertainers with a revue to display and develop their talents. Overall,

¹¹ (Kirschke 1995, 43)

¹² Hasse, John Edwards. *Jazz The First Century*. (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2000),43.

Harlem was a place where African-American artists could practice their crafts in a supportive environment; it seemed a likely place to call home. ¹³

Duke Ellington:

“The wit, taste, intelligence and elegance that Duke Ellington brought to his music have made him, in the eyes of millions of people both here and abroad, America’s foremost composer.” - *President Richard Nixon*

Edward Kennedy Ellington was born in Washington D.C. in 1899 as the son of a White House butler. He began playing the piano in his early childhood and composed his first song, “Soda Fountain Rag”, at the age of sixteen. During his years at Armstrong High School he took piano lessons and studied freehand and mechanical drawing. Upon graduation, his drawing skills had won him a scholarship to attend Pratt Institute of Fine Arts in Brooklyn, New York. However, Ellington turned down the scholarship in order to pursue a career in music rather than the fine arts. In the beginning, Ellington painted signs during the day to support his music career and played his piano for small bands at night. Ellington put an ad in the Washington telephone directory to get more jobs. His ad was larger as than that of any of the other bands that advertised and was soon he was making enough money to give up sign painting. ¹⁴ In late 1917, Ellington formed his first group: The Duke’s Serenaders. Between 1918 and 1919, Duke made significant steps towards independence and became his own booking agent for his band. By doing so, Ellington’s band was able to play throughout the Washington area and into Virginia for

¹³ (Studio Museum in Harlem, New York 1987, 105)

¹⁴ James Haskins, *Black Music in American Jazz, A History Though Its People* (New York: Harper Trophy, 1987), 82-83.

private society balls and embassy parties. In addition to this forward step, Ellington married Edna Thompson and on March 11, 1919, Mercer Kennedy Ellington was born.

In 1923, Ellington left the security that Washington offered him and moved to New York. It was also in that year that Ellington made his recording debut. He and his renamed band, The Washingtonians, established themselves during the prohibition era by playing at places like the Exclusive Club, Connie's Inn, the Hollywood Club (Club Kentucky), Ciro's, the Plantation Club, and most importantly the Cotton Club. The banjo player, for The Washingtonians was Elmer Snowden. Disagreements between Ellington and Snowden forced Snowden to leave the band and made Ellington a bandleader in February of 1924, at the age of 24.

Ellington worked as a prolific composer and bandleader at Harlem's Cotton Club. "Ellington's move to the Cotton Club in December 1927 was a break of a lifetime for the young Washingtonian."¹⁵ Ellington and his band performed as a show orchestra catering to the audience's desire for the slick, commercial style of the Broadway bands.¹⁶ In addition, the rise in radio receivers and the industry itself, Columbia Broadcasting Systems broadcast Ellington's band across the nation live on "From the Cotton Club." The band's music, along with their popularity, spread rapidly. Ellington took advantage of the sophisticated clientele, the media coverage, and first-class shows that the Cotton Club offered. While at the Cotton Club he also broadened his fan base by recording for every major label.

In 1928, Ellington and Irving Mills signed an agreement in which Mills was to produce and publish Ellington's music. Recording companies like Brunswick, Columbia, and

¹⁵ (Hasse 2000, 42)

¹⁶ (Haskins 1987, 85)

Victor came calling and Ellington's band became the most sought-after band in the United States and abroad.

During its Cotton Club years, from 1927 to 1931, the Ellington orchestra made about 200 recordings and grew from ten to twelve players, offering Ellington more challenges and opportunities for composing. His now famous "jungle music," a kind of musical exotica, originated during this period. According to Haskins, Ellington's music "epitomized the sophisticated jazz that grew out the funkier, down-home variety of New Orleans and Memphis and Chicago" and "while the music of someone like Louis Armstrong was called hot jazz, Ellington's was cooler" and "called swing. It was a New York-based style."¹⁷ Though Ellington used parts of Swing that included similar instrumentation, employing a singer, playing both pop songs and original pieces, and providing rhythmic music for dancing, his music evolved to be much more than jazz and swing. It "expressed a greater range of emotions, employed more sensitive dynamics and more of a sense of theatre than most, featured the most distinctive players and most varied sounds, experimented and innovated more than any others, was less prone to fads, and presented more original (and challenging) pieces, particularly on records".¹⁸ It was Ellington's style to mix "instruments together in unusual ways creating distinctive and unique tonal colors-for example, pairing a tightly muted trumpet with a low-playing clarinet and a high-playing trombone."¹⁹ Unlike other bandleaders of the time as Goodman, Basie, Lunceford, or Webb, Ellington created most of the music that his band

¹⁷ (Haskins 1987, 82-83)

¹⁸ (Hase 2000, 63)

¹⁹ Ibid, 62.

played and was interested in creating more than just dance music. “Ellington created music that explored his musical imagination.”²⁰

In 1931, Ellington wrote his "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)", and the piece proved prophetic. Four years later, the word "swing" was on everyone's lips after Benny Goodman generated huge crowds and helped launch the swing era. When swing music and dancing became a national obsession in the late 1930's, Ellington stood above the pack. The Duke Ellington Orchestra “predated the swing craze by a decade, helped in fact to foster it, popularized its catchphrase, and provided its highest benchmark of originality.”²¹ It was also in 1931 that Ellington ended his time with the Cotton Club and when he and his band began nonstop touring.

Throughout his career, Ellington and his band traveled both across the United States and abroad. They gained international fame in the 1930's with the success of “Mood Indigo” (1930) and “It Don't Mean a Thing” (1932). By 1932, he had fourteen instrumentalists and a singer, Ivie Anderson. One year later, in 1933, Ellington made his first tour of Europe and produced some popular hits, including “Sophisticated Lady” and “Solitude”. In April 1939, on the eve of World War II, Ellington and his orchestra toured Europe again with resounding success. Where as in the United States, they were presented as either a dance band or a stage-show attraction; popular entertainers, in Europe, they were treated as serious artists, and given concert presentations and elaborate printed programs.

²⁰ (Hasse 2000, 62)

²¹ Ibid, 64.

As a composer, and according to biographer Hasse, “Ellington seems to have done his best work when he was inspired by a mood or an image.”²² Ellington once said, “The memory of things gone is important to a jazz musician. Things like old folks singing in the moonlight in the back yard on a hot night or something someone said long ago.”²³ His son, Mercer Ellington, said, “He always wrote what he felt. I don't think he ever wrote in contrast to his mood. The only time he was off guard was in his music. The happy tunes were written during happy days and the sad things were written when he was feeling sad.”²⁴ Most of Ellington's music is highly personal, based on a memory, mood, or image. One of Ellington's greatest strengths was his ability to grow artistically. Just as Ellington experienced mood swings, so to did his career include peaks of creativity. He boasted a great long arc of creativity from the late 1920's through the mid-40s. From this period the following songs are included in *Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies*: “The Mooche”, 1929; “Mood Indigo”, 1931; “Drop Me Off in Harlem”, 1933; “In a Sentimental Mood”, 1935; “I've Got To Be a Rug Cutter” and “Caravan”, 1937; “I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart”, 1938; “Something to Live For”, 1939; “Bli-Blip”, 1941; ““Don't Get Around Much Anymore”, 1942; “I'm Beginning to See The Light”, 1944; “I'm A Lucky So-and-So”, 1945; “I Got it Bad and That Ain't Good”, 1941; and “Just Squeeze Me”, 1946. There was a second such arc, from 1956 through about 1970. From that period the revue showcased “Satin Doll”, 1958 and “Imagine My Frustration”, 1966. Over the decades Ellington shaped his music to fit the times, changes in personnel and venues, and the direction of his muse. Consequently, because his sound kept

²² (Hasse 2000, 75)

²³ Edward Kennedy Ellington, *Duke Ellington, 1899-1974 Music is My Mistress* (New York:Da Capo Press, Inc., 1973), 69.

²⁴ Ibid, 105.

evolving, his work from the 1920's is different in many ways from that of the 1960's.

During the 1960's, Ellington earned seventeen honorary doctorates, multiple Grammy Awards, and the highest civilian honors from the government of France. In 1966, Ellington was presented with the President's Gold Medal on behalf of Lyndon Johnson and became the first African-American to compose a modern book musical, *Pousse-Café*. Then in 1969, President Nixon awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award, at a special ceremony at the White House.

By the time Duke Ellington reached his seventy-fifth birthday, he heard himself called America's greatest composer and had been honored throughout the world. During a career that spanned more than fifty years, he had played approximately 20,000 performances in Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, Asia, and the United States. His music had reached tens of millions of people through radio, television, and his thousands of recordings.

Donald McKayle and the first production:

Donald McKayle, a prominent dancer and choreographer in New York since the 1970's, formulated an idea to create a revue based on the music of Duke Ellington. "With the possible exception of Fred Astaire, The Duke was the most elegant popular entertainer America has produced, and fortunately a good deal of that has rubbed off on the production."²⁵ McKayle envisioned *Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies* as a

²⁵ Betty Blake and Joan Marlowe, review of *Sophisticated Ladies* by Edwin Wilson, *New York Theatre Critics' Reviews* Vol. 52 no. 21 (December 1981), 334.

musical portrait of Duke Ellington in a form that he referred to as a choreo-musical. He said, “it(s) was to be constantly musical with all music drawn from the magnitude of Duke Ellington’s creative output.”²⁶ McKayle’s first draft, completed on March 6, 1978, was titled *Duke*. By the time it opened on Broadway in March 1981, changes occurred in the title as well as the content of songs. On Broadway, *Duke* was called *Duke Ellington’s Sophisticated Ladies*, however, the original concept remained intact and an intrinsic part of the production. McKayle’s revue was comprised of thirty-six of Ellington’s musical hits written between 1923 and 1966 and the structure is essentially fragmented; having a thin, rather non-existent storyline.

McKayle, named as one of “America’s Irreplaceable Dance Treasures” by the Library of Congress and the Dance Heritage Coalition, was born in East Harlem on July 6, 1930. He was inspired, at a young age, by Pearl Primus and began dancing in his senior year of high school. It was there that he won a scholarship to the New Dance Group. In 1948, at the age of 18, he made his professional debut with choreographed pieces done with the New Dance Group. Only three years later, in 1951, McKayle founded the Contemporary Dance Group, premiering “Games.” This piece juxtaposed the innocence of youth with the real dangers they inherent. Other earlier pieces include “Rainbow Around My Shoulder”(1959) and “District Storyville” (1962), both of which remain in the Alvin Ailey Company repertory today. McKayle remained a free agent even though he spent a great deal of time dancing for other choreographers as a guest artist with various companies and in numerous Broadway musicals.

McKayle’s interest and central focus was always choreography. Throughout his career he has choreographed more than fifty works for companies in the United States,

²⁶ Donald McKayle, *Sophisticated Ladies*. Original score, Introductory notes. (1981)

Europe, Israel and South America. Though he never maintained a permanent company himself, his success in choreography branched out to include theatre as well. He created pieces for dances on concert stages, Broadway, television, and film. His directing credits on Broadway include “Golden Boy” (1964), “I’m Solomon”(1969), “Raisin”(1974), “Dr. Jazz” (1975), and “Sophisticated Ladies”(1981). Other theatrical works include “N’Orleans”(1981), “Emperor Jones”(1984), and “Stardust”(1990). McKayle’s choreographed dance sequences for film and television began in the 1960’s and credits include: “The Ed Sullivan Show” (1966-1967); “The Bill Cosby Special” (CBS, 1967); “The Motown Special” (NBC, 1968); “The Great White Hope”(1969); Disney’s “Bed Knobs and Broomsticks”(1970); “The 49th Annual Academy Awards”(ABC, 1977); and “The Jazz Singer”(1980). In addition to choreography, McKayle also directed the first few episodes of “Good Times”(1974). Stage acts choreographed by McKayle include Tina Turner and Harry Belafonte.

Donald McKayle received a number of awards for his work on *Duke Ellington’s Sophisticated Ladies*, including a Tony Nomination for Outstanding Choreography, the Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Choreography, and a NAACP Image Award for Concept/Writer and Best Stage Play.²⁷ Other honors included five Tony Award nominations, an Emmy Award nomination, the Samuel H. Scipps/American Dance Festival Award, the Capezio Award, the Heritage Award, and the Living Legend Award. His closest associations today remain with the repertory group at the Los Angeles Inner City Cultural Center and the School of Dance at the California Institute of the Arts, at which he was appointed Artistic Director in 1975.

²⁷ Donald McKayle, *Transcending Boundaries, My dancing Life* (London: Routledge, 2002), 304.

In addition to his work as a choreographer, McKayle taught at Bennington College, the Julliard School, the American Dance Festival, Bard College, Sarah Lawrence College, and served as dean of the School of Dance at the California Institute of the Arts. He currently serves as professor of dance at the University of California, Irvine. According to Kimberly Pittman, author of *Donald McKayle, Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History*, “Donald McKayle is a contemporary legend and one of the most influential African-American choreographers of the postwar era.”²⁸

McKayle’s revue opened on Broadway on March 1, 1981 at the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, where it ran for 767 performances. Roger S. Berlind, Manheim Fox, Sondra Gilman, Butron Litwin, and Louis Westergaard produced *Duke Ellington’s Sophisticated Ladies* in association with Belwin Mills Publishing Corporation, and Norzar Productions, Inc. Michael Smuin, who along with Donald McKayle arranged the musical staging and choreography, directed the production. Smuin received two Tony Nominations for his work on *Sophisticated Ladies*. Mercer Ellington, Duke Ellington’s son, led the musical direction for a band of twenty members, with musical and dance arrangements by Lloyd Mayers. The original cast was comprised of the electrifying Gregory Hines, Judith Jamison, Gregg Burge, Phyllis Hyman, Hinton Battle, Terri Klausner, and P.J. Benjamin. Tony Walton designed the set, Jennifer Tipton was the lighting Designer, and Willa Kim designed the costumes.

Reviews for the production were mixed; for the most part they were favorable. Frank Rich’s review from *The New York Times* stated that, “this is the only Broadway revue of recent vintage that operates on a truly grand scale”, and “Ellington, who had an

²⁸ Kimberly Pittman, *Donald McKayle, Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History* Vol. 5 (1996).

extravagant style to go with his genius, would undoubtedly be pleased.”²⁹ In an unfavorable *Newsweek* review dated March 16, 1981, Jack Kroll comments, “Nevertheless, *Sophisticated Ladies* is far from what the genius of Duke Ellington deserves. Despite its flash, glitter and drive, the show doesn’t do justice to one of the greatest figures in jazz, in American music and in the twentieth-century music of any kind.”³⁰

²⁹ Betty Blake and Joan Marlowe, review of *Sophisticated Ladies* by Frank Rich, *New York Theatre Critics’ Reviews* Vol. 52 no. 21 (December 1981), 331.

³⁰ Betty Blake and Joan Marlowe, review of *Sophisticated Ladies* by Jack Kroll, *New York Theatre Critics’ Reviews* Vol. 52 no. 21 (December 1981), 334.

Chapter Two: Design Process

“There is no art when one does something without intention.”
- *Duke Ellington*

This Chapter outlines the period of time between the Director’s Concept Meeting and the day the finalized set design and plans were given to the scenery shop’s Technical Director, Kieren Kelley. This was a time period of approximately eleven weeks from March 7, 2003 until May 22, 2003. During this time, several elements were instrumental in my process for designing the set. They included, the preliminary ground plans provided by the director, my visual research, and my understanding of the revue itself and the songs to be performed.

Director’s Concept and Visual Research:

On March 7, 2003, theatrical team came together to begin the production process for *Sophisticated Ladies* at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center for our first meeting, the Director’s Concept Meeting. At that meeting, the director, Scot Reese, supplied the production team with a packet of information that supported a discussion of his conceptual approach for the production of *Duke Ellington’s Sophisticated Ladies*. The packet included historical information about the African-American cultural revolution in New York, known as the Harlem Renaissance, a history of “Art Deco” design, graphical images from this period in time, a chronological history of events from 1931 to 1949, and lists of style influences and terms that were relevant to the revue. Reese wanted these terms to be used by audience members after seeing the performance. The terms included, “sophisticated”, “classy”, “nocturnal”, “sentimental”, “indigo”,

“mood”, “lush”, “alluring”, “sublime”, “soul”, “elegant”, “luxurious”, “class”, “sultry”, “slinky”, “sleek”, “finesse”, “rueful”, and “melodious”. He also provided a list of people who might be considered style ideals, such as Dorothy Dandridge, Lena Horne, Josephine Baker, Billie Holliday, Ethel Waters, Cab Calloway, Louis Armstrong, Nat King Cole, as well as artist Miquel Covarrubias.

Reese wanted to create an environment that was reminiscent of the 1920’s 30’s, and 40’s, from a modern day point of view. In addition, he sought to embrace and embellish the cultural aspects of the Harlem Renaissance. Furthermore, he had an idea to treat Act One differently than Act Two; in Act One he wanted to create a more casual night-out-on-the-town feeling, and in Act Two, he was aiming for a more formal presentation style, similar to the red carpet event at an Academy Awards ceremony. The second act was a tribute to the sophisticated side of the women that were part of Act One. Reese felt that this idea could be expressed through the costume design; creating contrasting informal and formal attire for each specific act. However, he also wanted these two acts to relate to one another, and hoped to find cohesion for the production in the set design.

At the Director’s Concept Meeting, Reese was very clear about his conceptual approach to the revue, and provided me with ample information to support his ideas for the production. My visual research directions evolved from the information received at the meeting. I gathered images that supported Reese’s ideas; specifically, I was searching for images within his parameters that also supported the emotional responses he was interested in stirring in the audience.

Most musical revues, including *Duke Ellington’s Sophisticated Ladies*, contain departures from reality in which people do not usually sing out their feelings to friends or

break into dance to tell a story. These departures are fundamental artistic conventions. Scenery and costumes in musical revues are usually highly stylized, colorful, and coordinated far beyond what is present in the real world outside of the theatre.³¹ Another intrinsic element of the musical revue is that they typically lack a book, meaning there is an absence of words or plot. Consequently, the driving elements that make the production move forward are the lyrics of the songs, the choreography, and the production design. The structure of the revue presented a challenge to the production team, and to me as the set designer, because the overall visual presentation of the production must help the separate songs flow together and unify the production. I was interested in creating a set design that accommodated each of the songs individually while uniting the separate visual elements together to create a complete picture.

My research included the “Art Deco” decorative period and the visual arts of the Harlem Renaissance. Reese did not intend to replicate the “Art Deco” style. Therefore, my approach was to adapt the visual images and design elements of that decorative style and apply them selectively in my design.

In order to successfully contemporize a historical decorative period, I first needed to have an understanding of the period itself. Consequently, my research into the “Art Deco” period resulted in images of architecture, furniture, set designs of Hollywood sets, decorative treatments, and graphical representations. From my research, I gathered that some of the major design elements of the period included stepped forms, rounded corners, triple-striped decorative elements and black and white decoration. The most important qualities of the style were geometrical order and streamlined forms, and bold outlines. During this period of time, largely as a reaction to the post-industrial phase of

³¹ (Borman 1985, 163)

world history, “Art Deco” design incorporated machine-like materials and metals such as shiny chrome. In addition to machine and automobile patterns, shapes, stylized gears and wheels, natural elements such as sunbursts and flowers were used as design motifs.

As I compiled research materials, I was influenced by the various elements of the “Art Deco” style and specifically sought to apply certain elements in my design. One example of research material that influenced my design was a picture of the interior of the Gaumont Palace Cinema, from Cheltenham (1933). I admired the geometrical architectural details of the space. (Appendix A plate 1)³² The horizontal bands on the walls of the theatre space ended in curvilinear motifs. These bands visually drew my eye to the main curtain of the stage. I would later apply this similar motif to my design of a show curtain in hopes to capture the attention of the audience members towards the center of the stage. I was also inspired by several images gathered from Mandelbaum and Mayers book *Screen Deco*. This book highlights film sets from Hollywood during the 1920’s and 30’s. It reflects the time period and style very well and allowed me to see the “Art Deco” elements applied on actual sets. Cecil B. De Mille’s film set for *Madam Satan* (1930) included a series of outlined steps that were typical for the period. (Appendix A Plate 2)³³ The outline really emphasized and defined each step. I used this image to influence choices in paint treatments and design for the bandstand. Other Art Deco Hollywood sets that inspired me were *Fig Leaves* from 1926, and *What Price Beauty* from 1928. The set of *Fig Leaves* has a floor that is treated with a high gloss finish, and both of these sets had central entrances with architectural details and draping.

³² Martin Battersby, Revised by Philippe Garner, *The Decorative Thirties*. (London: The Herbert Press, 1988),58.

³³ Howard Mandelbaum, Eric Mayers, *Screen Deco, A Celebration of High Style in Hollywood* (New York: St, Martin’s Press, 1985), 184.

(Appendix A Plates 3 and 4)³⁴ In both examples, the central focus is on the draped entrances. For my design, I intended to incorporate a central entrance for the “sophisticated ladies” to make their grand entrances in Act Two thus creating the more formal atmosphere Reese desired. These examples provided ideas on how I might use and design the central entrance for the production. Furthermore, I also had an idea of framing the bandstand. It was my intention to design a frame around the bandstand that would envelope and emphasize it as well as visually define the space it inhabited. In the set for *Adam and Evil* of 1927, I found an example of this. The set included a series of semi-circular frames around the acting area. (Appendix A Plate 5)³⁵

Finally, my research included a survey of furniture of the time period, a comprehensive examination of the period styles through applications of design motif and use of materials. Cabinet designer Emile-Jacques Ruhlmann made great use of the diamond motif on several of his cabinets. (Appendix A Plate 6)³⁶ The motif completely covered the cabinets and created a stylized skin over the shape of the cabinet. The pattern is so prevalent that at times the form of the cabinet is obscured. I was interested in using a similar technique on the deck of the stage. It was my intention to use a motif on the floor that would disguise the seams of the material while at the same time providing a decorative pattern. Through my thorough examination of the “Art Deco” style I was well prepared to extract details and elements from the period and apply them to my design.

³⁴ (Mandelbaum 1985, 85, 63)

³⁵ Ibid, 114.

³⁶ Yvonne Brunhammer, *The Art Deco Style* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1984), 57.

In my design for the set, I was interested in paying tribute to the artistic explosion of the Harlem Renaissance that was happening around Ellington as he developed his style of music. The visual artists were capturing the rhythms and emotions of the literary and musical movement. Their works embodied the spirit of the Harlem Renaissance and “visualized a modern black culture.”³⁷ “Painter Aaron Douglas, author Langston Hughes, jazz musician Duke Ellington, blues singer Bessie Smith, dancer Josephine Baker and...performer Paul Robeson- had certain attitudes about the black-experience-as-art that, through paintings, writings, musical compositions and performances, explored an assortment of black representational possibilities, from Langston Hughes’s and Bessie Smith’s images of the rural and folkloric to Aaron Douglas’s and Duke Ellington’s invocations of the progressive and ultra-modern.”³⁸ I sought to design a background for Ellington’s music that was a visual tribute to the Harlem Renaissance. I hoped to accomplish this through a visual presentation of the works of the fine artists of the period. I focused on three particular visual artists of the Harlem Renaissance. They included, Archibald J. Motley Jr. Aaron Douglas, and Miquel Covarrunias. I selected them for their individual styles that I felt echoed the themes of Ellington’s music as well as the director’s concepts for the production.

“Archibald J. Motley Jr. received his formal training at the School of Art Institute of Chicago and applied his training to the world he saw around him.”³⁹ Motley is credited with being the first African-American artist to have a one-man exhibition in a New York

³⁷ (Powell 1997, 20)

³⁸ Richard J. Powell, *Rhapsodies in Black Art of the Harlem Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 16.

³⁹ Jontyle Theresa Robinson, Wendy Greenhouse. *The Art of Archibald J. Motley, Jr.* (Chicago: Chicago Historical Society, 1991), xi.

Art Gallery. This show was held in February 1928 at the New Gallery on 600 Madison Avenue. The president of the gallery saw sales potential in Motley's work and encouraged him to "take advantage of the growing interest in African-Americans and the art that represented them" during the Harlem Renaissance.⁴⁰ I chose Motley's paintings because I felt they embodied many of the attributes desired by the director. For example, several of the paintings portrayed street scenes filled with excitement and movement, and created a true sense of placement in Harlem. In his paintings *Blue* (1929) and *Saturday Night* (1935), Motley captured the environment of the nightclub scenes with sophistication and class. (Appendix A Plate 7 and 8) The director's idea of a night-on-the-town was evident in Motley's pieces titled *Jockey Club* (1929) and *Saturday Night Street Scene* (1936). (Appendix A Plate 9 and 10) His use of color is deep and lush and exudes emotion and mood; from sultry reds and oranges to nocturnal and soulful blues. Motley's color palette greatly influenced the choice of color used in my design for the band and the deck.

The second Harlem Renaissance artist I chose was Aaron Douglas. According to Amy Helene Kirschke, author of *Aaron Douglas, Art, Race, and the Harlem Renaissance*, Douglas "rose from humble origins to become an important leader in African-American art and the most significant visual artist of the Harlem Renaissance. He was the first African-American artist to explore modernism and to incorporate African art into his work."⁴¹ Douglas "chose to observe aspects of African rituals expressed in dance and everyday life and incorporated the iconography in to his work. He selected

⁴⁰ (Robinson 1991, 11-12)

⁴¹ Amy Helene Kirschke, *Aaron Douglas: Art, Race, and the Harlem Renaissance* Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, c1995.

design elements, particularly from the masks and figural sculptures of West Africa, to serve as visual signposts in the new art he was creating for Black America.”⁴² I felt these works embodied the emotion behind the Harlem Renaissance music style “jungle music.” During the Harlem Renaissance, the music was classified as “jungle style” which was characterized by the growling horn sounds of the popular black bands. Thus, I chose particular Douglas paintings that featured the West African masks and motifs as mirrored that expression. (Appendix A Plate 11) In several of Douglas’s paintings he illustrated a “‘transformed’ Negro (that) was an art-deco silhouette, enveloped in tonally graded arcs, concentric circles and waves, and hieratically placed in a neo-Egyptian *Jazz moderne* setting.”⁴³ (Appendix A Plates 12-13) These silhouettes represented bold outlines of the figures that appeared to be surrounded by the rings of light. In addition, Douglas also created highly stylized black and white silhouettes that conveyed a strong sense of style, sophistication and elegance. (Appendix A, Plates 14-15) I chose the paintings of Douglas because I was attracted to the idea of silhouettes and their connection to the production. I was comparing Ellington’s music and contribution to African-American advancement to a source of light from the past, and the revue as a forum to showcase this light. The use of silhouettes was popular during the “Art Deco” period and as a visual tool, it had the ability to create sultry and sensual vistas. Hence, Douglas’s work with silhouettes in color as well as black and white influenced my ideas for the final design.

Miguel Covarrubias was one of many satiric portrait artists living in New York in the 1930’s. Covarrubias arrived in New York from Mexico at the age of eighteen. This

⁴² (Studio Museum in Harlem, New York 1987, 106-107)

⁴³ Haward Gallery, *Rhapsodies In Black Art of the Harlem Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 23-25.

artist, who professed to have no formal training, created caricatures that took New York by storm and quickly became a “favorite fixture of the American cultural scene.”⁴⁴ I chose Covarrubias’ paintings and caricatures for their exaggerated style and elegance. Using humor associated with the art of caricatures he had the ability to capture the mood of the times. I selected his works to influence my set design for the production by aiming to create an environment that was as flexible as his caricatures; one that could be full of emotion and movement and remain sophisticated in its portrayal of mood and emotion. (Appendix A Plates 18 to 21)

Finally, I viewed archival video footage of performances during the time period from Harlem nightclubs as well as contemporary films of the period. The latter include: “At the Jazz Band Ball, Early Hot Jazz Song and Dance From Rare Original Film Masters 1925-1933”, “Looking For Langston” (1989), and Francis Ford Coppola’s “The Cotton Club”. In these films I could see recorded images of Duke Ellington at the Cotton Club, singers and dancers from the period featured, as well as physical elements of the bandstands: dance floors and stages. For example, “At the Jazz Band Ball” shows a dance number from 1929 with Duke Ellington’s Orchestra playing. The dance floor of the space was highly reflective; almost mirror like, and the dancers moved over it in a very provocative manner. The high gloss finish of the floor related to the “Art Deco” style and use of shiny metals. This historical research supported my idea of incorporating a high gloss finish to the floor in our production. (Appendix A Plates numbered 7 to 21, represent the research presented to the director and the production team, at the Post Research meeting held on April 4, 2003.)

⁴⁴ Denna Jones Anderson, Beverly J. Cox. *Miguel Covarrubias Caricatures*. (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1985), 23.

Development of the Design:

Before I started to execute sketch designs I familiarized myself with the revue. At this point in my design process, I had already listened to the music several times. While I listened to the music I considered the Director's ground plans for each song, paying close attention to his proposed positioning of the actors within the space. In addition, I made notes of any references in the song that might indicate changes in mood and/or presented special needs for particular types of scenery or properties. For example, the song "Solitude" is about a lonely woman, and she sings, "I sit in my chair." This line indicated a possible need for something to sit on as the actress sings her sad song. As I thought about the lyrics of the song and the overall emotion and mood it expressed, I decided to use a swing for the singer to sit on instead of a chair. I felt the idea of a solitary swing in the darkness would evoke the mood of the song better than a chair.

I incorporated the use of silhouettes, stepped forms, rounded corners, geometrical and streamlined forms, bold outlines, and simplicity. In preparation for the Preliminary Design Meeting, a production team meeting where I would present preliminary designs, I created a number of sketches of ideas for the set based on these intentions. In my initial sketches I used extracted details of the Harlem Renaissance paintings that connected with certain songs of the revue, like the silhouetted figures of Douglas' black and white paintings to frame the stage. My initial idea was to select the female figure from the painting *To Midnight Nan at Leroy's* (Appendix A Plate 16), and increase the scale to fit the opening of the stage, as in my sketch. (Appendix B Plate 1) Furthermore, I prepared a series of storyboard sketches that traced the scenery changes from song to song.

(Appendix B Plates 2)

The storyboard and sketches were shown and discussed with the director prior to the Preliminary Design Meeting. At this private meeting Reese and I discussed the transition of scenery and actors from song to song and I received feedback of my ideas from Reese. He greatly favored the idea of the swing for “Solitude”, as well as the idea of having two paintings fly in for “Satin Doll”. He also reacted positively to the idea of creating a tableau curtain* of the main drape, the use of a translucent show curtain to separate and slowly reveal the upstage area and the bandstand, and the creation of portals that would act as a frame within the design. However, there were also elements that he responded to with some concern. For example, though he liked the idea of portals he did not particularly like the square stepped shape I represented in the sketches. In addition, I suggested the use of a large turntable for “Bli-Blip” and “Take the A-Train” that he felt would be too awkward for the choreography, and asked that I rework and simplify the idea. As a result of this discussion I was able to refine and re-formulate my preliminary design ideas for the set.

Next, I created a visual aid, in the form of a standing light box, which would be used in our next production meeting, the Preliminary Design Meeting, to describe my ideas for the set. The front of the light box represented the proscenium arch of the Ina and Jack Kay Theatre. The back of the box was cut away and light was projected from behind. When this light was projected through the layers of the box it revealed a look for each song. I selected this presentation style to exemplify my idea of using silhouettes and also to provide the production team with a front view of the design. At the meeting, I was able to make changes in the views, as they would occur from song-to-song in the

* Tableau curtain: two overlapping panels of fabric that are rigged to pull open on a modified curved diagonal.

show. The design of the light box enabled me to quickly make the scene changes as each element was attached to a long piece of clear film that was used to illustrate the movement of the pieces of scenery. For example, if I suggested that a piece of scenery could fly into view I was able to replicate this action in the light box by slipping the model piece into view between the layers of the box. Consequently, I was able to lower, raise, and slide into view the different scenic elements that made up each scene. This method enabled me to more effectively describe my visual ideas to the production team.

The entire production team was present for the Preliminary Design Meeting held on April 25, 2003. The main elements of the proposed design consisted of a movable bandstand to hold the actors and the band, two tracking legs, a circular portal, a transparent tableau curtain, and a tableau main drape. I designed the decorative legs to be tracked so that they could move into center from the sides and operate as a device to mask the entrance of the actors, or to change the stage configuration. In my preliminary sketches I used a figure extracted from Douglas' black and white painting *To Midnight Nan at Leroy's* (1926) on the portal of the stage. (Appendix A Plate 16). However, this time I split the entire picture in half to create two separate pictures and applied the image to the legs. The idea was that these legs would frame the stage picture; when the legs traveled to center stage they would complete the painting. I wanted these panels to be as flexible as possible in order to function as a compositional tool we could use in various songs. To increase their utility I designed the legs to be translucent so that from song to song the lighting designer could manipulate their colors. My idea was to create a decorative frame that changed colors. In addition, there were other scenic elements for particular songs. For example, for the song "Hit Me With a Hot Note," I proposed that a large cutout of a burlesque dancer extracted from a painting of Covarrubias (Entrevista

Impossible entre Sally Rand y Martha Graham) would slide onto stage from stage left.

(Appendix A Plate 20 and Appendix B Plate 3) The figure was risqué and alluring, and the dancer could appear from behind it. The idea was for the scenery to disguise the dancer's entrance.

I designed another scenic element to be used in two consecutive musical numbers, "Bli-Blip" and "Take the A-Train." To accommodate both numbers, this scenic element would be two-sided. One side would be painted as an interior of a café and have two chairs at a table by a window. The other side of the scenic element would be an exterior of a building with a functional street lamp connected. For this I chose a section of a painting by Archibald J. Motley Jr. titled *Saturday Night Street Scene*, from 1936.

(Appendix A Plate 10) For this idea, I designed a piece of scenery that would travel on stage from the stage right side to the center, and bring the actors for "Bli-Blip" to the stage seated at a table in a café. After their song the actors would return to their café scene and become part of the scenery for the next song, "Take the A-Train." As they were seated the scenery would revolve to expose the exterior of the café, with the actors in the window welcoming the actors for the next song. The two-sided revolving platform would then exit off stage left. (Appendix B Plate 4)

There were also series of scenic elements that were designed to fly in and out for the production. For example, for "Solitude," as mentioned earlier, there was a proposed idea of a swing flying in for the singer to establish the mood of the song. (Appendix B Plate 5) In the song, "In a Sentimental Mood," there is a line that describes the sentimental feeling of the singer, "I'm within a world so heavenly." For this musical number, I came up with the idea of a very large moon to present the singer to the stage. This unit would be designed as a crescent shaped moon that the actress could sit on. As

the moon lowered into view the actress would be able to descend from her moon throne onto the bandstand. (Appendix B Plate 6) In the number “Satin Doll/Just Squeeze Me,” there is one male and one female singer. In the number, first the man sings to the woman, and then vice versa until they come together at the end of the song. The idea for this number was that the singers would be part of paintings and would come to life when they sang to one another. (Appendix B Plate 7) To establish this, the pieces of art were to be lowered into view, positioned just above the bandstand (downstage of the band), while the singers entered and posed in front of the paintings. I split Covarrubias’ painting, *Rhapsodies in Blue* (1927), in half to create the two pieces of art. (Appendix A Plate 21) One half contained the singing female figure of the original piece, and the second contained a dancing male figure. The male figure was one of Covarrubias’ caricatures as well. (Appendix A Plate 19)

The last flown element proposed was for “Caravan.” On this scenic element I used a black and white image from poster painted by Aaron Douglas for *Krigwa Players Little Negro Theatre of Harlem*. (Appendix A Plate 17) This image incorporated the same style as the images use for the decorative tracking legs. The poster’s image is exotic and reminiscent of a caravan scene in the desert. Visually, I felt this would relate well among the other black and white images used for the decorative tracking legs. The silhouette light box was a success. The production team clearly understood my ideas for the set and for transitions between the songs and the presentation created a dialogue among the members of the production team.

In addition, at this meeting Chavez presented preliminary sketches of costumes for the actors. Her color palette was vast and bright. Through the sketches I could see her designs were a mixture of the “Art Deco” and contemporary styles. In addition, she had

swatches of materials that she selected for the costumes. Some of these fabrics were delicate and sheer and Chavez had a concern about the surface texture of the scenic elements. The process of designing for the theatre is a collaborative effort, and Chavez's sketches and materials gave me information that would aid my design process and the selection of materials for the set. Such as through discussion the production team made decisions that would lead us to the next phase in the design process - creating a final design.

As a result of discussions made at this meeting, some proposed elements were discarded. For example, the large cut out of the burlesque dancer was cut for "Hit Me With a Hot Note." Reese, the director, did not want anything else on stage during this song except for the singer, who would be doing a walking strip tease in the spotlight. He felt anything else on stage would distract attention away from her performance. Furthermore, the idea for a moon for "In a Sentimental Mood" was considered. This idea raised a number of concerns relating to practical safety, and budget issues. Consequently, the director without hesitation abandoned that idea. Though I cherished the idea of a large moon suspended in the space and silhouetted with the actor, I realized that it was not cohesive with my overall idea of using scenic elements that were extracted parts of Harlem Renaissance paintings. Furthermore, I understood the director's concerns for safety and the limitations of our budget and agreed with this cut. Another scenic element eliminated in the first round of design meetings was the black and white Aaron Douglas illustration for "Caravan." This scenic element was a repetition of other scenic elements used in Act One. According to Reese, there appeared to be too many of the same elements used from song to song. He felt that if we used similar ideas to frame or bring actors to the stage, the scene changes would become too predictable and boring for the

audience. I agreed that this scenic element was redundant in comparison to the other scenic elements. However, I felt the number needed something that could support the lyrics. A decision of how “Caravan” would be treated in terms of scenery, lighting, and choreography was not reached at this meeting. However, as a team we agreed that the Douglas painting was not the scenic element and that the matter was to be resolved as the number developed.

As some ideas were discarded, others emerged that offered better solutions to challenges specific to the performance. For example, the director and the choreographer discarded the idea of the double-sided revolving scenic element proposed for “Bli-Blip” and “Take the A-Train.” Reese suggested a more simplified design. I suggested that we could use the tracking legs for “Bli-Blip” to bring the actors to center stage, and for “Take the A-Train” we could fly in the exterior flat with the lamppost. (Appendix B Plate 10, 11, and 13) In addition, the idea of the exterior flat having a window, with actors upstage of it, was no longer necessary. Instead, I suggested that the windows of the flat could be translucent, allowing light to pass through and create a glowing appearance. Finally, an adjustment was made in the two framed pieces of art. My original proposal involved the actors positioned in front of the flats in the same pose as the painted figures, as though the actors were part of the picture itself. The actors would leave their paintings as they sang to one another. Reese suggested that my idea would be much stronger if there were no painted figures in the paintings and we allowed the actors to be the subjects. Then, as the figures came to life the framed art would become a barren painted background. I agreed with his suggestion and the figures were taken out of the paintings.

After the Preliminary Design Meeting, I returned to my drawing board to produce technical drawings for a preliminary costing meeting with the Technical Director, Kieren Kelley, in order to determine if the set design would be within the budget. When planning the major scenic elements of the design, I kept in mind the actors using the space and the proposed choreography for the production. With that information I knew there were certain elements I needed to include in the design. The major scenic element of the design was the bandstand; as I set out to design it, I kept in mind the eight band members, the director's desire for actors to dance and sing on it, and its relationship to the rest of the stage. The band composition consisted of a piano player, drummer, base player, one trombone, two saxophone, and two trumpet players. In my original design the bandstand consisted of three platforms, a central upstage entrance, and a stage left semi-circular downstage area on which the actors could perform. The central entrance had a rectangular shape and was draped. There was also a decorative railing around the stairs, in front of the top platform, and behind the band. This configuration provided several levels for the actors. The steps leading to the first level spanned two-thirds of the length of the bandstand and allowed various options for the actors to access the band area. I designed the semi-circular platform as a performing area for actors on the bandstand.

On May 5, 2003, Kelley received a rough ground plan, a centerline section of the set, and a line set schedule. (Appendix B Plates 8 and 9) My initial ground plan contained a bandstand that had three levels and rounded corners. At that meeting we discussed the great expense of building curved scenery, as well as material choices for the scenic elements. It was decided that the flown flats could be hard flats covered in muslin, and the tracking legs and exterior flat could be constructed of steel and wrapped in muslin. After our meeting, Kelley calculated a budget estimate for the proposed set.

As a result of this meeting, and in response to the budget, Kelley suggested that I might rethink the shape of the bandstand.

On May 9, 2003 there was a Design Presentation Meeting. I brought to this meeting a 1/4"=1'-0" scale white model of the set, elevations of the bandstand, a plan of the deck, and specifications of the additional scenic elements. In addition, I brought a properties research booklet for Tim Jones, the Properties Master. This booklet provided several images of possible band chairs, music stands, lamp posts, and microphones that could aid him in the acquisition of set and hand properties. This booklet also included a detailed drawing of the railing and the draped archway. (Appendix B plate 18 and 19)

This model contained a new configuration for the bandstand. The overall dimensions of this unit were now 22' wide by 13' deep. There were still three levels on the bandstand and a central entrance on the third level, as well as railings. One upstage corner of the first level had been squared and the corner of the second level remained curved. The stairs that led to the first level spanned two thirds of the front edge of the platform. To the far stage left side of the platform there were no steps, instead there was an offset semi-circular platform designed for use by the conductor, singers, and dancers.

During this meeting I received feedback from the members of the production team. There were staging concerns about the bandstand's second proposed configuration. Both the director, Reese, and the choreographer, Alvin Mayes, agreed that this arrangement would not be flexible enough. They were concerned about the position of the stage left semi-circular acting area. They felt the location of the acting area was too close to the band members and might not be easily accessible. In order to increase the flexibility of staging options for the choreography, they suggested that the final configuration might include two separate stair units going up to the first level of the

bandstand. To create separate stairs we decided as a group to move the semi-circular acting area to the center of the bandstand, which allowed for the actors to access the first level from the right or left of the acting area. The repositioning of this acting area arose another concern. Reese and Kriebs, expressed their concern about the amount of space allotted for the band members. They felt the area was too small and suggested that I rework the dimensions of the bandstand, paying close attention to the composition of the band members on stage and their particular space requirements.

According to the scenery estimate prepared by Kelley, the proposed design would be over budget by \$4, 590.00, meaning that I had to reconsider certain elements of the design. These included the shape of the bandstand, the detail and amount of railings, and the design of the show curtain. Kelley offered suggestions that would aid in reducing the cost, including: removing the upstage rounded corners of the second level; simplifying the design of the railings; eliminating the decorative railing upstage of the band members; and redesigning the show curtain. The fine gauze tableau show curtain was one of the costly items in the scenery estimate.

I wanted a decorative show curtain that could hide or reveal the stage at certain moments through out the production. I chose a tableau shaped curtain, as it would echo the shape of the main red drape. Reese and I discussed using the tableau show curtain in several songs. For example, it was to open and reveal the exotic dancers in “The Mooche,” to open slightly and reveal the singer of “It Don’t Mean a Thing,” and to completely open up and out for the remaining songs until intermission, when it would close again. In Act Two, the curtain would open for the first song, remain open until it closed during “Sophisticated Ladies” and open once more for “It Don’t Mean a Thing.” There would be a final closing of the curtain to end the production. Kelley suggested

options to lower the cost of the curtain. The first option was to create a flat drop that would fly in and out, and the second option was to create two curtains that could travel together or apart to close and open. Both of these options were different from my original design idea, however, they did not dramatically alter my ideas about the intended use of the curtain. In other words, with either option we would still be able to hide and reveal the stage. Reese expressed that he did not have a problem working with either of the new choices and left the final decision up to me. I needed some time to think about the show curtain; therefore, it was not until later that I would make the final decision.

While some questions could not be answered at the meeting, others were. I decided to eliminate the railing upstage of the band members, as seated band members blocked most of the railing. That decision came easily, as I believed the change would not affect my overall design. At this meeting, we also discussed the surface material of the deck. Originally, there was a need for a special dance surface to be used on the down stage area of the deck for the tap dancing routines. However, it was discovered that between meetings, the tap numbers had been eliminated. That decision led to the elimination of the specified deck material, which had been a great expense in the budget. Consequently, due to the change of choreography, the cost of the proposed design was lowered.

An additional concern brought up at this meeting involved checking balcony sight lines in relationship to the height of the circular portal and tracking legs. For the decorative header in the set I used another black and white image by Aaron Douglas that was a book decoration from 1927. (Appendix B Plate 20) This scenic element was to be translucent and treated similarly as the tracking legs. Together the legs and the decorative header formed a frame in the proscenium that could change color. In the scale model the

proportions of the design on the header appeared to be too small. Therefore, Dan Ettinger, an adjunct instructor and scenic advisor at the time, advised me to increase the scale of the design on the header.

Following the Design Presentation Meeting and before a second budget meeting with the Technical Director, I addressed the changes that were discussed. I created a third configuration for the bandstand, in order to accommodate the staging requirements. I placed the drummer upstage of the other members to the stage left side of the third platform in order to maximize the area I was allotted for the band. In front of the drummer I placed the saxophone players, and in front of them I placed the trumpet players. To the stage right side of the sax and trumpet players I placed the standing bassist in front of him the trombone player. This downstage position of the trombone and trumpets players allowed them to have a full range of movement with their instruments. Typically, the piano player of a band is the conductor and needs to be in the sight of the other band members. Therefore, I positioned the piano player on the stage right side of the bandstand facing the other members of the band. This new configuration had a center semi-circular stage area with stair units on either side and was increased to 24'-0" wide. The repositioning of the semi-circular stage area increased the depth of the bandstand to 16'-0" deep.

On May 15, 2003, I met with Kelley, once again, to discuss the state of the budget. At the meeting, I showed him the new configuration for the bandstand. (Appendix B Plate 17) Even with the changes, I was still \$1,250.00 over budget. To lower the cost, I reduced the radius of the semi-circular central platform, which in turn decreased the depth of the bandstand to 14'-0". This would allow the bandstand to be built in four sections rather than six and reduced the amount of materials and labor

needed. In addition, I chose to eliminate the rounded corners of the upstage edge on the bandstand's second platform. As these rounded corners were not in sightlines, I did not feel that their loss would greatly impact my design concept for the production. In fact at the front edge of the bandstand I still had rounded step units around the central semi-circular acting area. Lastly, I decided to go with a gauze show drop instead of a split curtain. (Appendix B Plate 21) I felt this choice supported my concept for the design and maintained the sophisticated and elegant style of the production. The new idea for the show curtain would be a more formal presentation for the overall stage picture. I believe the changes that occurred with the show curtain, due to budget constraints, actually helped to improve overall design of the set. Consequently, all of these changes lowered the estimated cost of the set design while still maintaining the integrity of my design.

The Final Design Meeting occurred on May 22, 2003. At that meeting, the final designs and budgets are discussed and accepted. I presented a color 1/4"=1'-0" scale model, a complete set of drawings, and a set of painter's elevations for the scenic artist, Carrie Ballinger. (Technical drawings: Appendix B plates 22-31; Color model pictures: Appendix B 10-16; Renderings: Appendix B Plates 20, 21, and 32-34) Ballinger was the resident Paint Charge at the time of the meeting and was asked by Kriebs, the production manager, to review the painter's elevation and assess the budget. *This was the last production meeting in my design process. Kelley confirmed that the cost of the set was within budget for scenery, properties and paint. In addition, the director and the choreographer approved changes made to accommodate the budget and consequently, approving the final design.

* Carrie Ballinger resigned her position as resident paint charge before the execution of the design and was replaced by Ruth Barber.

At this meeting, concerns surfaced about new information presented. For example, in the color model the bandstand and the deck were the same color and finish. Daniel Ettinger, an adjunct professor and interim design faculty advisor, suggested that a painted trim be added to outline the stairs of the bandstand. The director, choreographer and I favored the suggestion. Referring back to research of Art Deco characteristics, I decided the trim should be like the chrome used on automobiles.

Lastly, at this meeting I delivered a copy of the ground plan and section to Muriel Lee, the lighting designer and Andrew Haag, the Master Electrician. They both examined the ground plan and section and made requests to reposition certain hanging positions of scenic elements in order to accommodate the positions of lighting instruments. *The changes they suggested at this meeting did not in any way affect the design of the set.

The Final Design Presentation Meeting ended my design process for *Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies*. Throughout the process I worked to design a visual environment that related to the director's approach. My design process was guided by Reese's ideas and included my original approach. By researching painters of the Harlem Renaissance and selecting particular artists and paintings, I created a unique idea for the set. Reese's desire for there to be a contemporized "Art Deco" feeling was being satisfied through Chavez's designs for the costumes. I had created a set with elements mostly selected from the "Art Deco" period and the Harlem Renaissance.

* Corrections to the drawings were given to Muriel by June 1, 2003.

Chapter Three: Set Design Execution

This chapter details the time period from the time of the Final Design Presentation until the set was installed into the theatre. Throughout the execution phase until the set was on stage for the first time, several changes were made in the design. The changes were a result of budget and practicality of design. Various concerns with the design were raised at meetings, rehearsals, and in the scene, paint and properties shops.

One concern involved the bandstand and the number of band members it could hold. On September 20, 2003 there was a designer's run of the production. At this run of the show the designers saw the work of the director and choreographer, and discussed the play as it had evolved. I was approached by Ed Walters, the bandleader, about the possibility of adding two additional band members to the ensemble. The question was whether or not there would be enough space on the bandstand. In order to address this question, Tim Jones, the properties manager, and I assembled the chairs and music stands in the rehearsal room on top of a ground plan of the bandstand. Then, Walters, Reese, and I looked at the configuration. The first change Walters made was the placement of the drummer on the bandstand. Originally, I planned for the drummer to be on the stage left corner of the bandstand. Walters informed me that it is always a good idea to position the drummer close to the piano player in order to establish the tempo. Walters believed that with these adjustments the two additional band members, along with the previous planned members, would all fit in the designated area. As a result, we decided to add the additional members.

Once the bandstand was installed in the theatre and the band members assembled, we realized that the space was too full. The band members' placement was so far

downstage on the bandstand that it blocked access to the first level of the bandstand. Through discussion with Kelley it was decided to add an extra 6" upstage of the band. That accommodation allowed the members to spread out upstage, clearing room for the actors to utilize the stage left stairs, and permitting the addition of the new band members. Since the decorative railing behind the band was eliminated, due to cost, a strip of wood was added to the deck to prevent their chairs from falling off the wagon. Later, it became apparent that this addition was not sufficient and a functional railing was added to this area of the bandstand.

Another problem with the design was the placement of the escape stairs from the upstage level of the bandstand. As the actors began to rehearse on stage the director noticed that the escape stairs were in the wrong position. Originally, the escape stairs were positioned on stage right. However, as the actors used these stairs to access the upstage center entrance of the bandstand in Act Two, their entrances and exits were too visible to the audience. Kelley, my design advisor Professor Dan Conway, Reese and I discussed the situation. In order to disguise the entrances and exits of actors, we decided to reposition the escape stairs to the opposite side of the bandstand behind the band members. In addition, the stair unit was reconstructed creating a smaller and steeper stair unit. That decreased the number of steps and the size of the top platform, and increased the rise of each step. The decision to alter the original placement of the escape stairs enabled us to mask the actors that used the escape stairs more effectively.

On September 26, 2003 the production team re-assembled and discussed any new business or concerns. At this Update Meeting, Lee, Reese, Mayes, Kriebs, and I went over the song-by-song shifts and discussed any changes in choreography up to that point in the rehearsal process. There was a minor change that involved the use of the fine

gauze show drop. That change involved flying the show curtain out during “The Mooche” instead of leaving it in. This change did not affect the overall visual effect of the piece as the drop was still going to be used to slowly reveal the dancers. The new idea was for the drop was to stay in place at the beginning of the number as the dancers moved on stage in the light. Because of the drop the dancers were slightly obscured. The dancers were completely revealed as the drop was flown out.

In addition, the director wanted to eliminate the Act Two *a vista** downstage movement of the bandstand. The idea of the bandstand moving in sight of the audience was designed as part of the visual picture in the second act. The first number of Act Two is “Drop Me Off in Harlem” and my idea was to have the bandstand actually moving downstage with the singer to its new position. The elimination of this movement would have greatly affected the visual impact of the song and my design. Reese’s suggestion was in response to the difficulty of moving the bandstand in a rehearsal. Reese, Conway, Kelley, and I discussed the matter in length. Kelley explained that the difficulty of moving the bandstand related to the incorrect preset position of the casters. He assured us that there was a method of positioning the casters of the wagon that would allow the bandstand to move downstage without difficulty. Consequently, the suggestion to change the *a vista* movement of the bandstand was not necessary.

The specified paint treatment selected for the deck and the bandstand underwent several changes throughout the execution of the design. Originally, the paint treatment specified for the deck and the bandstand consisted of a three-step process and the application of a scored pattern. The first step was a tinted base coat primer; the second step was coats of Rosco Prussian Blue Color Coat Acrylic Enamel, followed by a topcoat

* A vista: In view of the audience.

of Benjamin Moore Stay Clear, a clear Acrylic Enamel. There were changes to this prescribed paint treatment that occurred during the execution phase of the design. For example, due to the budget, we were not able to use the clear topcoat I specified. In addition, the test application I prepared for the Scenic Artist did not produce the desired effect because the topcoat dried cloudy instead of clear. The Scenic Artist, Ruth Barber, provided several options for alternative choices of finishes. I selected the sample that had a clear topcoat of Rosco Gloss. However, this topcoat was not applied; instead, a second coat of the Prussian Blue Color Coat Acrylic Enamel was utilized. As a result of rehearsals on the set, the deck became scarred with scuffmarks. These scuff marks created a texture on the surface and reduced the shiny quality of the enamel paint. In addition, there was a problem with the dancers slipping on the shiny surface. In order to remedy both situations, it was decided that a topcoat consisting of gloss and flat clear acrylic be applied to seal the painted surface as well as eliminate the scuffmarks. After this coat dried, a thin layer of Future Floor Acrylic was mopped over the entire deck. This application restored the shiny quality that was desired for the deck. In order to create a safe danceable surface, a solution of one part ginger ale to two parts water was mixed and sprayed onto the floor, which created a tacky surface. Furthermore, in order to create a shiny surface for each show, I developed a specific deck preparation routine for the stage crew. The process completed prior to each performance involved mopping the deck with clean mops and hot clean water, and allowing the deck to air-dry with the aid of fans. When the deck was dry it was sprayed, in a downstage to upstage pattern, with the diluted ginger ale mixture. From this point on until the performance began, no traffic was allowed on stage.

The idea of scoring a pattern into the surface of the deck was to conceal the seams of the material by incorporating them into the pattern. To hide the seams of the four by eight foot sheets of Masonite, I used the diamond shape from my Art Deco research and created a pattern for the deck. The sheets were laid at a forty-five degree angle to the apron to accommodate the pattern. The idea was to add additional scoring to the existing seams thus creating the desired pattern. Originally, the scene shop planned to use a mat knife to score the boards. However, when they tried the technique on the painted material they found it difficult to obtain a straight line. In addition, the size of the score was not sufficient to be noticeable from the audience. The shop was not successful in creating a technique for this desired effect. The second idea was to paint a pin strip over the seams to create the diamond pattern. However, once the floor was loaded into the theatre, and treated with the topcoat, the seams of the sheets were not as apparent as I anticipated they would be. Therefore, I abandoned the idea of adding the diamond pattern to conceal the seams.

During the design execution phase I also had to design the music stands for the band members. Through out the design process I planned to use the music stands that the School of Music offered to loan to the production. These stands had three sides and were set at a fixed height. From my research, I noticed that several of the swing bands would have their initials on the music stands. For example, in the film "At The Jazz Band Ball" Duke Ellington's Orchestra had music stands with a "D" and "E" on them. I wanted to use this idea for our band as well. Therefore, I had planned to design a decorative banner with the letters "S" and "L" on them that would stand for the Sophisticated Ladies Band. However, at the time of the Update Meeting, I was informed that the stands were no longer available. So, instead of the built three-sided stands, I decided to use metal

adjustable music stands for a base. These metal stands were more flexible; took up less space on the crowded bandstand, and were adjustable to fit each band member's needs. However, I still intended to dress the stands with decorative banners. I selected black cotton fabric for the banners; with white felt "S" and "L" letters, and blue and white sequins trim. In the design of the banners, the "L" was twice the size of the "S" and I positioned it to the left of the "S." This juxtaposition of the letters on the banner was implemented to visually represent, rather than indicate, the name of the Sophisticated Ladies' Band.

Another aspect of the design that was affected throughout the execution was the set's relationship to the lighting. For example, some changes occurred in the adjustment of the line set positions and trim heights. In order for the lighting designer to back light the two tracking legs we needed to figure out a way to reposition scenery and combine legs and borders. The two-framed paintings used in Act Two for "Satin Doll" were originally designed to hang just above the first level of the bandstand with the actors positioned just downstage on the steps. Lee, Reese, and I discussed the possibilities of relocating scenery. Reese suggested we move the position of the framed art downstage. This move gave Lee the room she needed for the additional lights, and it affected the staging of the song. Reese and Mayes embraced the new position as it brought the scenery and the actors downstage of the band and closer to the audience. Furthermore, we combined the black legs and borders on one batten in order to clear more fly space which was needed to focus lighting instruments more effectively. The side black curtains of "tabs" used to block the backstage from the audience were also adjusted. Originally, I specified masking tabs running from downstage to upstage. As Lee incorporated spotlight operators positioned at the pin rails, tabs were eliminated to open lighting

possibilities from the sides of the stage. These changes did not affect the masking of backstage. Lastly, as lighting instruments were focused, Lee and I met and adjusted the trim heights of battens and scenery. We agreed that we were interested in masking as much of the lighting units as possible. However, in order for Lee to achieve certain effects with the lighting, we allowed some of the instruments to be seen. For example, there were areas of the audience, towards the front, where the bottoms of lighting instruments could be seen. We accepted this as part of the visual picture, and left some parts of the lighting units in view.

In my design, I used the main drape of the theatre to create the tableau curtain. This was the first time that particular curtain configuration was done in the Kay Theatre, so Kelley had to create a rigging method to secure and lift the curtain into position. My idea was to have the peak of the swag four feet off-center towards the stage left side. This proved to be a challenging task for the shop and slight adjustments in the rigging and the physical swag were made to create this asymmetrical look. To further support this visual effect, I adjusted the position of the off-centered show drop nine inches from its original position. However the swag of the curtain prevented the follow spot from reaching upstage areas. Consequently, additional adjustments occurred in the shape of the tableau curtain in order to accommodate the use of follow spotlights from the house. After all of the adjustments were completed, the pleats of the heavy velour needed to be separated and ordered.

The technical rehearsal process ran from October 11 until October 16. The technical rehearsals provided time for all of the separate design elements and the actors to come together, as well as ascertain how elements would have to be adjusted. During the technical process, I had to make alterations in the shift change chart and the trim heights

of battens. For example, during the song “Solitude,” we originally planned to fly in a solitaire swing just stage right of center. The swing was to be utilized by the actress. However, due to the design of the swing, its rigging, and its position among the other flown elements, any back and forth swinging motion made the other visual scenic elements move. The most affected element was the black and white decorative header. To remedy this situation, I was advised by Dan Conway to completely take out the header and bring in a black masking border downstage of the swing. In addition, I suggested that the actress should only swing gently from side to side instead of back and forth. These resolutions worked to our advantage. By flying out the header we were creating a new look for the song. By eliminating the highly visual element at the top of the stage, the audience’s attention was drawn towards the lonely swing and the actress.

Chapter Four: Analysis and Conclusions

“I like any and all of my associations with music – writing, playing, and listening. We write and play from our perspective, and the audience listens from its perspective. If and when we agree, I am lucky.”

- *Duke Ellington*

In Chapter Four I analyze my design process and draw conclusions about my process and design. In order to effectively assess my design work it is essential to experience the production seated as an audience member. I attended two performances, the opening night on October 17, 2003 and the closing night performance on October 25, 2003. I sat in different areas of the auditorium at the two performances. The first night I was in the orchestra section and the second night I sat in the balcony. This gave me a different point of view and a separate perspective of the performance based on the visual impact of the design.

The analysis and conclusions that I am able to comment on are based on my retrospection of my design process and the execution of the design. Overall I believe my design process was fluid and productive. I feel I progressed steadily and moved from step to step with efficiency. There were long hours spent in solving problems within the design, resolving the budget, configuring and re-configuring shift changes from song-to-song, and correcting issues with sightlines and paint treatments. I believe set design for the theatre is not an exact art form. There are no exact formulas and throughout the development of the design there is plenty of room for refinement. In other words throughout my process I expected to encounter problems, however, as much as possible, I tried to catch and correct any concerns or oversights before the technical rehearsals were in full swing.

Hindsight shows me that with slight changes in my design process I could have avoided some issues altogether or at least softened their impact. The following are suggestions that may have resulted in a more thorough design process and design execution. An example is the space issues that arose in regards to the band members on the bandstand. During the design process, the size of the band and the type of band members was not determined. Consequently, the space limitations on stage were a result of estimations made in the design. In retrospect, I should have been more assertive in demanding that a decision of the final band size and members be made before my final design was accepted. Through this experience, I learned that estimations do not lead to successful execution.

Another area of my design process that I feel could have been improved was my collaboration with the lighting designer. During the process I expressed my idea about the use of silhouette as a part of my visual design. To support this I selected translucent materials for the tracking legs, the decorative header, the exterior building, the gauze show drop, and the center drapes for the draped archway used in the second act. In addition, the construction method of these elements was planned to facilitate the silhouette effect. I also designed a circular shaped portal and used a rear projection screen to further emphasize this. I included the use of the white cyclorama to silhouette the band in the first act. My design ideas required a successful coordination of scenic and lighting elements. During the execution process, I became aware that I had not clearly expressed this design idea to the lighting designer as I received several questions as to how I intended my elements to be lighted. In discussions, with the lighting designer during the design execution I felt I clarified my ideas and design choices. However, during technical rehearsals I was not seeing my ideas realized as effectively as I

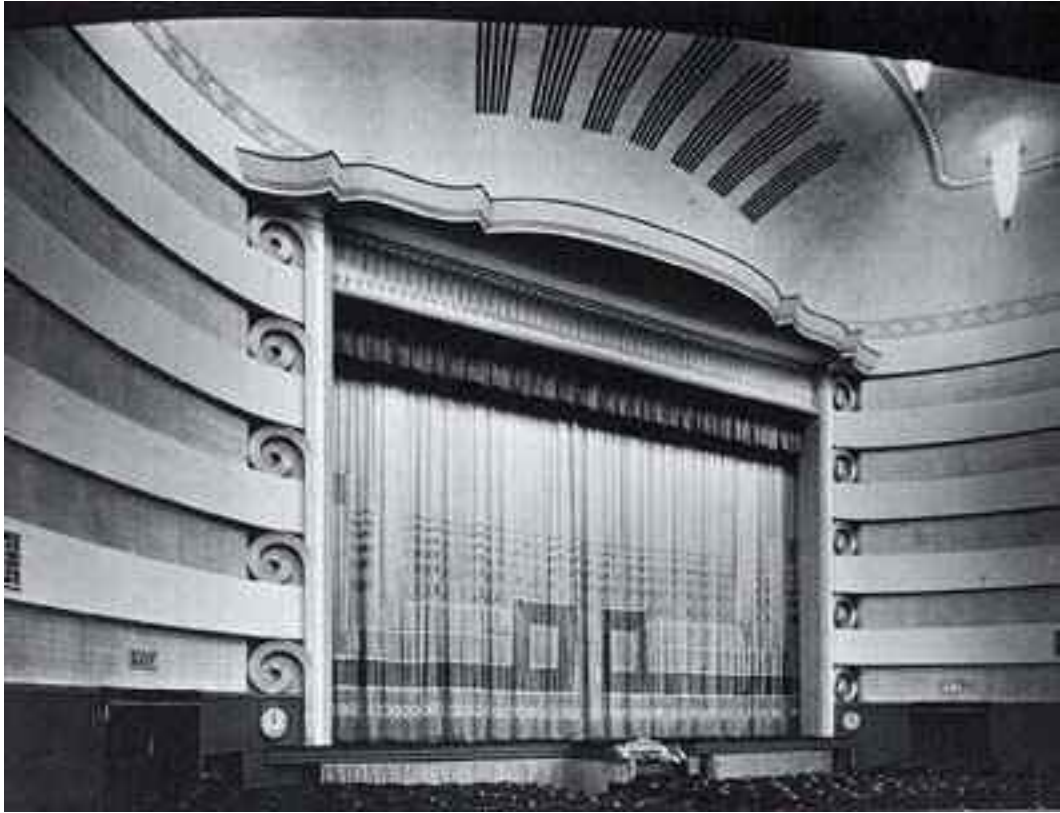
envisioned. For example, the idea of using the cyclorama to silhouette the band in the first act was never used. It was discussed during technical rehearsals and the idea was abandoned. The director was insistent upon disguising the bandstand in its upstage position. Furthermore, the gauze show drop was not being utilized as I had intended. I was hoping to silhouette the actors through it. I brought the question to the director who preferred to see the actors' faces instead of silhouetting them. By that time I realized that the communication of my ideas to both the lighting designer and director were not effective. Through this experience, I have learned that I need to be more assertive and direct when expressing my design concepts.

During my design process I ran into problems with the selection and application of materials for the paint treatment of the deck and the bandstand. Upon request from the technical director, I ordered the base blue paint prior to any discussions with the scenic charge, Ruth Barber. The scenic artist did not favor the selection of these products due to inherent health hazards. Secondly, I never successfully produced a sample of the finish. When Barber began to paint the show, the decisions of technique in the application of the paint and the topcoat appeared to be to her discretion rather than my specified materials and application process. Consequently, during the execution of the design, I realized I lost the ability to make requests and/or suggestions about the painting process. In conclusion, I learned about the specification of materials and their application. Firstly, I should always be aware of the hazards of any materials that I specify for my designs. Secondly, if I am going to specify a paint treatment for a design, then I should be aware of the application procedures and uses of the product. Hence, I can have more influence on the outcome of the paint treatment through developing a sample of the desired technique and application process for the scenic artist. Though, in the end, I felt the visual

outcome of the paint treatment was accomplished, this was the most difficult lesson to learn.

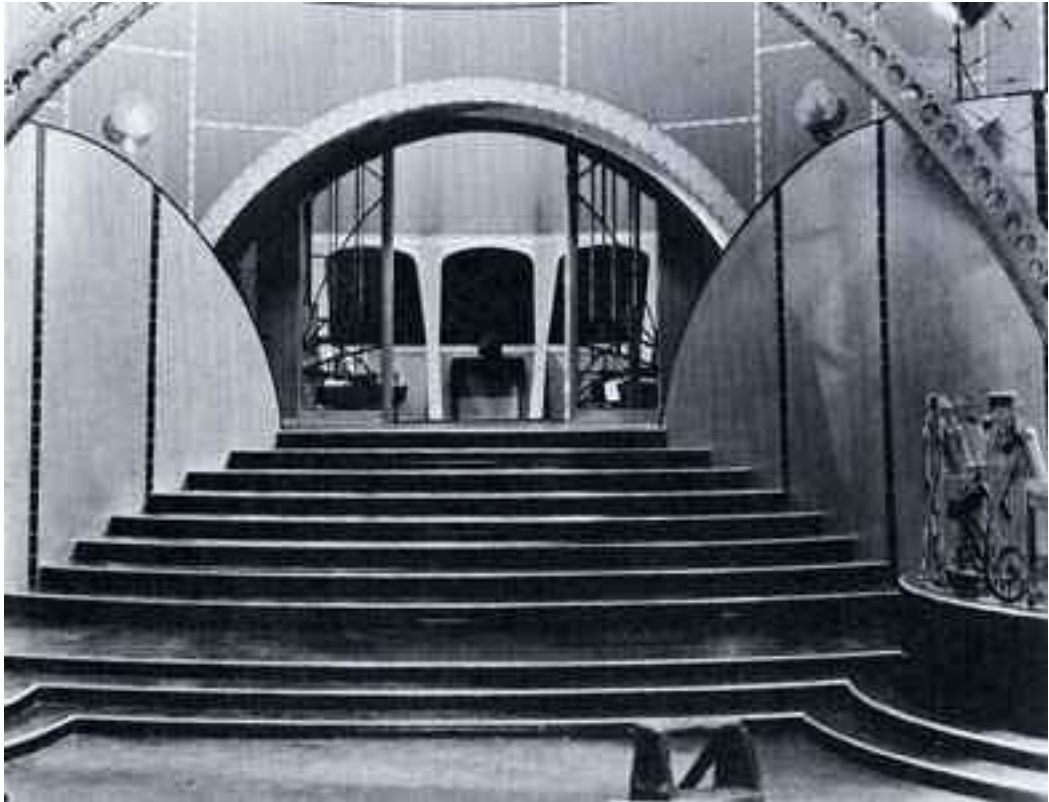
Finally, I believe I designed a set that fulfilled the directorial concepts for the revue and created an original design idea. I was successful in creating a unified visual picture that was easily modified to create individual looks. My “Art Deco” inspired set design moved with the energy and spirit of Ellington’s music and to the tempo of the dancers’ choreography. Although changes occurred in the original design, due to budget and staging concerns, I believe I successfully maintained my overall ideas and integrity of my set design, and created a set design for production that fulfilled the expectations of the director and the team. The environment I designed was alluring, soulful, elegant, luxurious, classy, sleek, and above all else, sophisticated. (Appendix C contains photographs of the production)

APPENDIX A, PLATE 1 *



* Martin Battersby, Revised by Philippe Garner. *The Decorative Thirties*. (London: The Herbert Press, 1988), 58.

APPENDIX A, PLATE 2*



* Howard Mandelbaum, Eric Myers, *Screen Deco A Celebration of High Style in Hollywood* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 184.

APPENDIX A, PLATE 3*



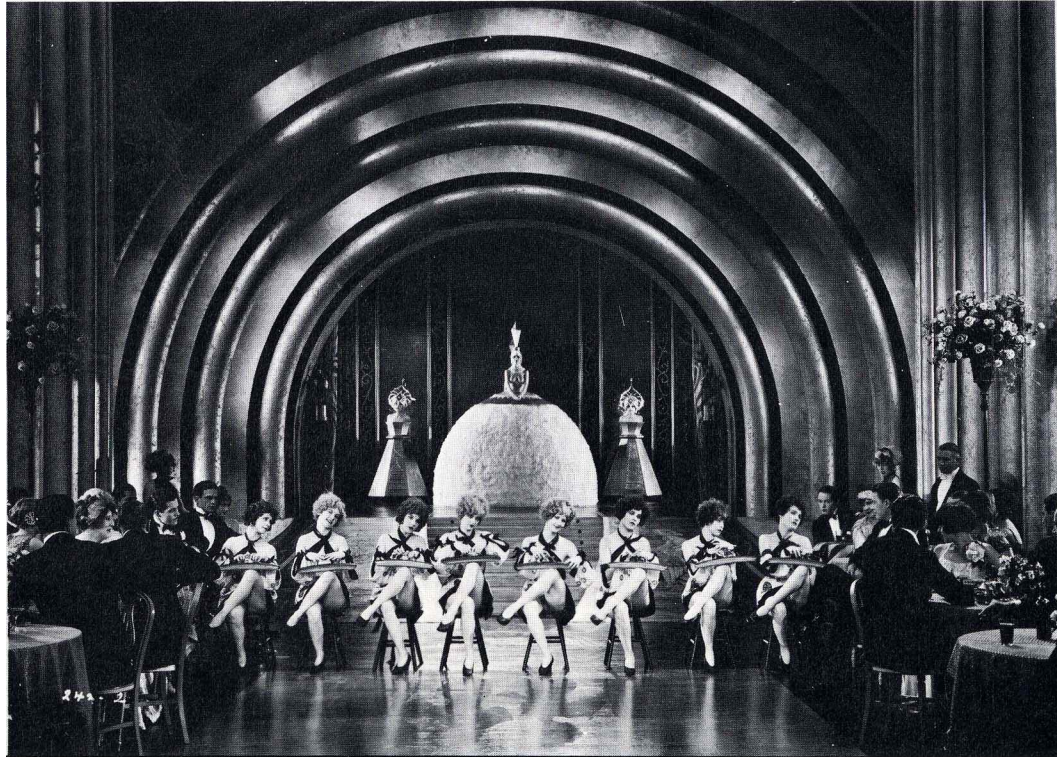
*(Mandelbaum and Myers 1985, 85)

APPENDIX A, PLATE 4 *



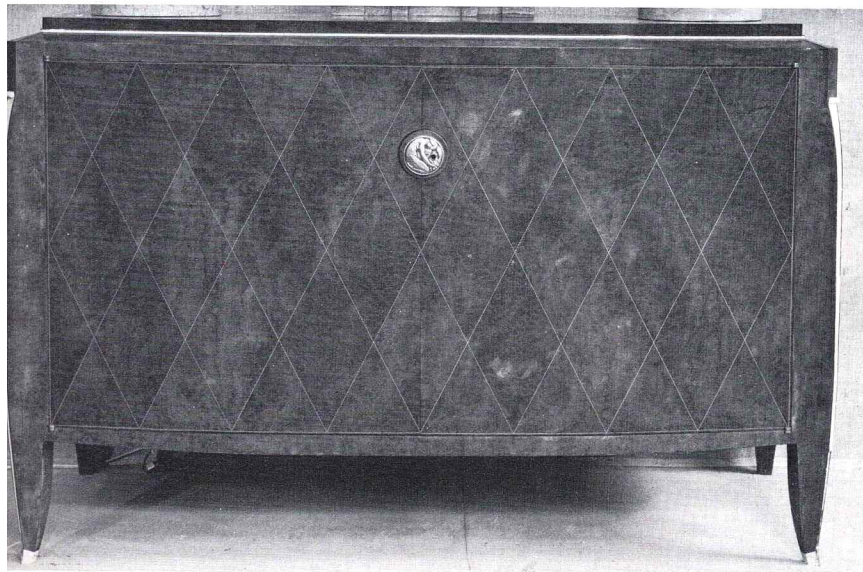
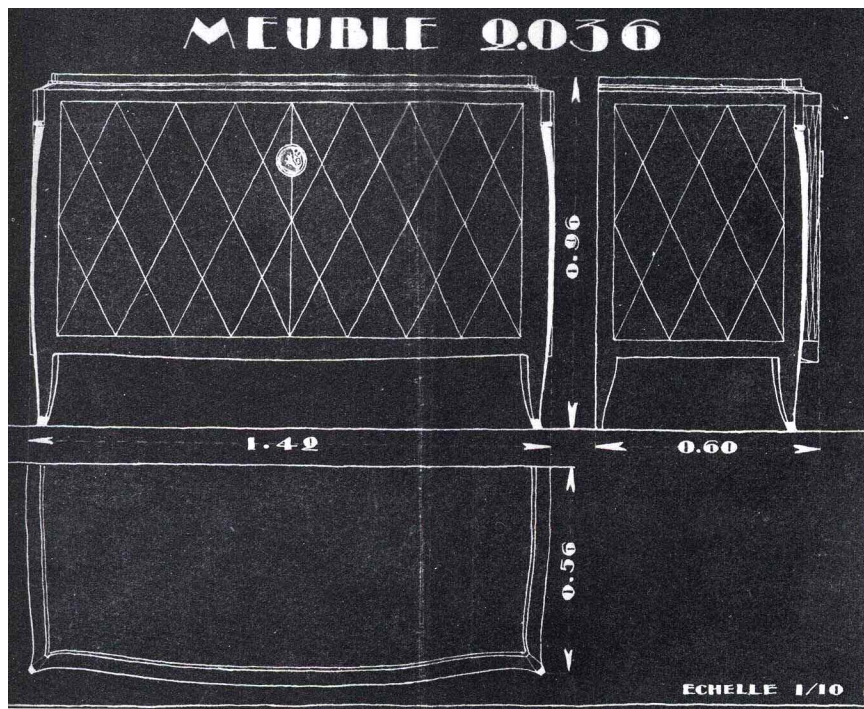
* (Mandelbaum and Myers 1985, 63)

APPENDIX A, PLATE 5 *



* (Mandelbaum and Myers 1985, 114)

APPENDIX A, PLATE 6*



* Yvonne Brunhammer, *The Art Deco Style*. (New York: St, Martin's Press, 1984), 57.

APPENDIX A, PLATE 7 *

Blues, 1929



* Hayward Gallery, *Rhapsodies In Black Art of the Harlem Renaissance*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 111.

APPENDIX A, PLATE 8 *

Saturday Night, 1935



* Jontyle Theresa Robinson, Wendy Greenhouse, *The Art of Archibald J. Motley, Jr.* (Chicago: Chicago Historical Society, 1991). 108.

APPENDIX A, PLATE 9 *

Jockey Club 1929



* (Robinson and Greenhouse 1991, 92)

APPENDIX A, PLATE 10
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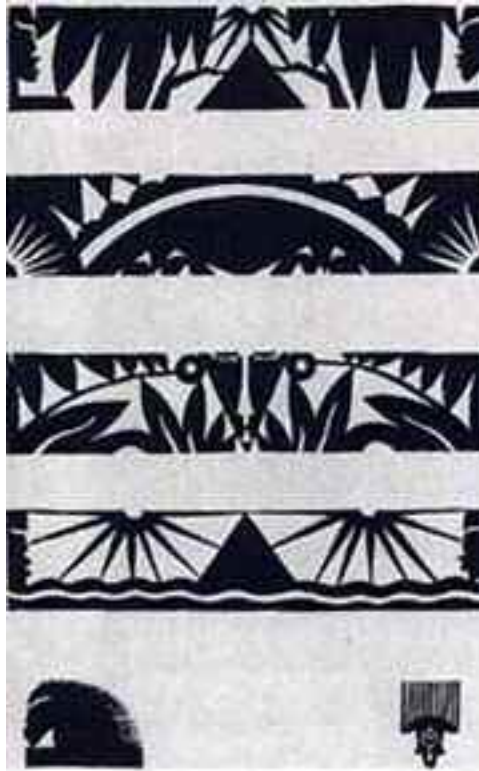
Saturday Night Street Scene 1936



* (Hayward Gallery 1997, 116)

APPENDIX A, PLATE 11 *

Book Cover Decorations 1927



* Amy Helene Kirschke, *Aaron Douglas Art, Race, and the Harlem Renaissance* (Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, c1995), plate 49.

APPENDIX A, PLATE 12 *

Aspects of Negro Life: Song of the Towers 1934



* The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, introduction by Mary Schmidt Campbell; essays by David Driskell, David Levering Lewis, and Deborah Willis Ryan, *Harlem Renaissance Art of Black America*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. Publishers, 1987), 24.

APPENDIX A, PLATE 13 *

Study For Aspects of Negro Life: An Idyll of the Deep South 1934



* (The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York 1987, 21)

APPENDIX A, PLATE 14 *

Ma Bad Luck Card October 1926



* (Kirschke 1995, plate 27)

APPENDIX A, PLATE 15 *

The Prodigal Son 1927



* (Kirschke 1995, plate 54)

APPENDIX A, PLATE 16 *

To Midnight Nan at Leroy's January 1926



* (Kirschke 1995, plate 14)

APPENDIX A, PLATE 17 *

Poster of Krigwa Players Little Negro Theatre of Harlem May 1926



* (Kirschke 1995, plate 19)

APPENDIX A, PLATE 18*

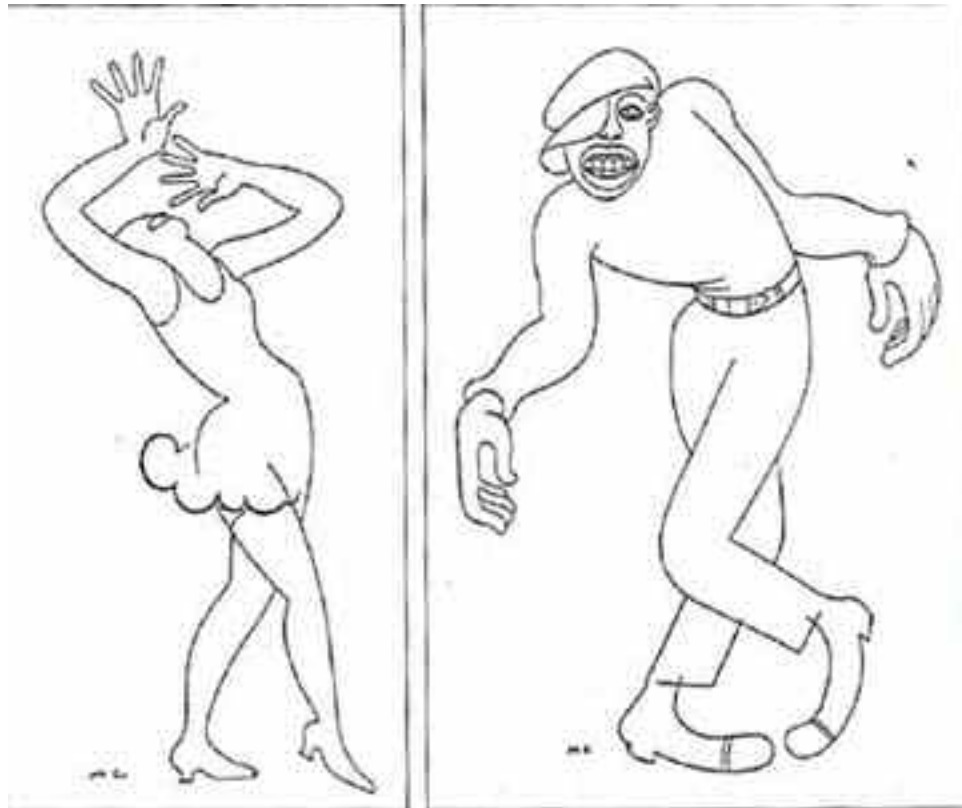
Del Libro Negro Drawings 1927
Charleston (33) and *Corista* (34)



* Sylvia Navarrete, *Artista Y Explorador Miguel Covarrubias*. (Mexico: Consejo Nacional Para La Cultura Y Las Artes, 1993), 25.

APPENDIX A, PLATE 19*

Dos Ilustraciones Del Libros Blues, An Anthology (110/111) 1926



* (Navarrete 1993, 84)

APPENDIX A PLATE 20 *

Sally Rand vs. Martha Graham
Published in *Vanity fair* December 1934



APPENDIX A PLATE 21 *

* Denna Jones Anderson, Beverly J. Cox, *Miguel Covarrubias Caricatures*. (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1985), 107.

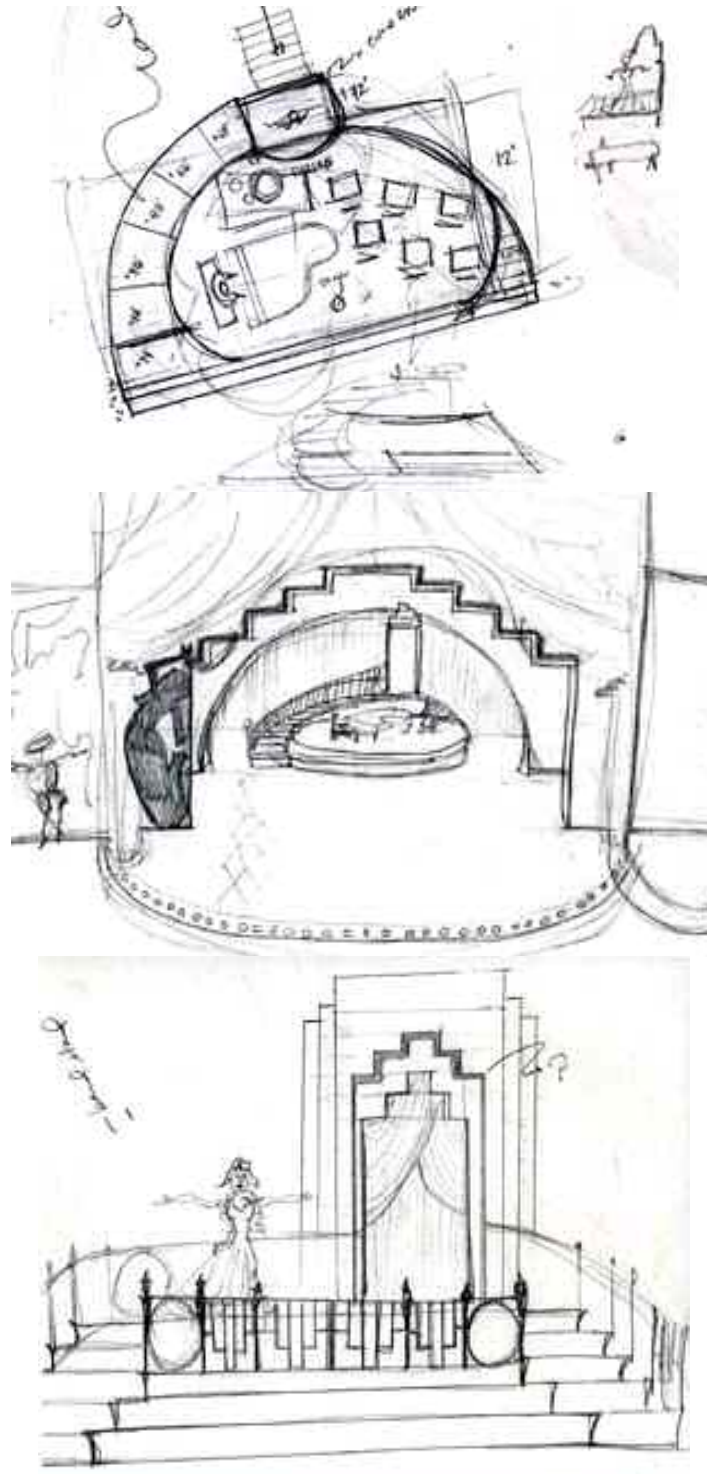
Del Libros Negros Drawings 1927
Raspedies in Blue (30)



* (Navarrete 1993, 23)

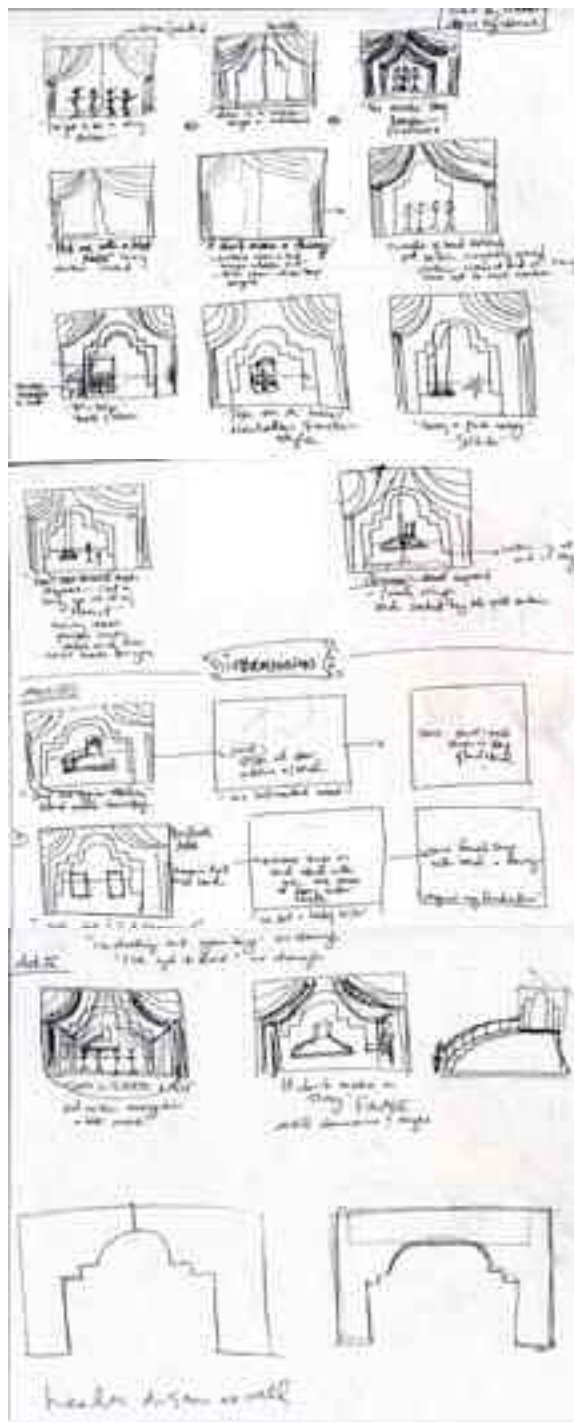
APPENDIX B, PLATE 1

Preliminary sketches for design idea.



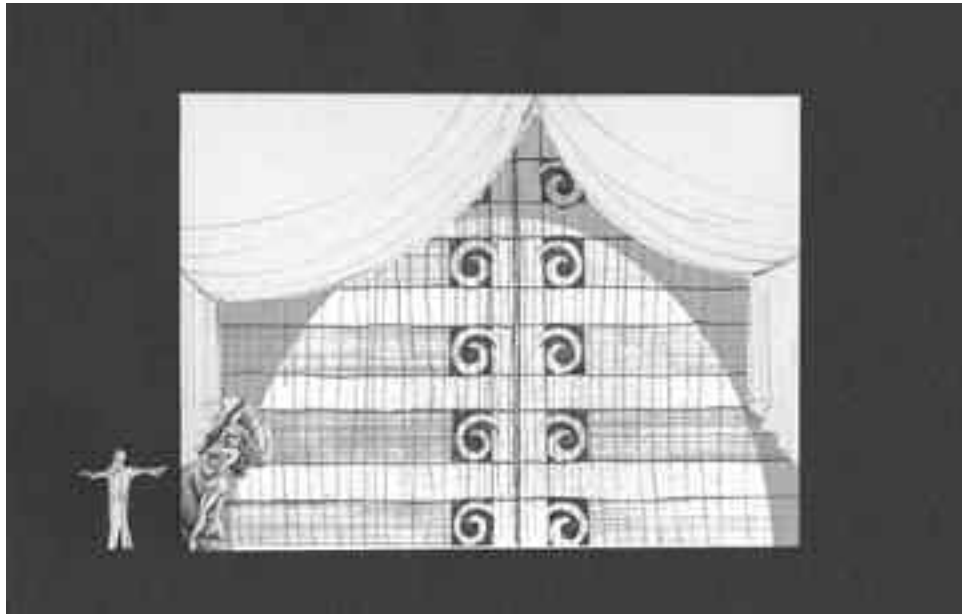
APPENDIX B, PLATE 2

Thumbnail storyboard song-to-song



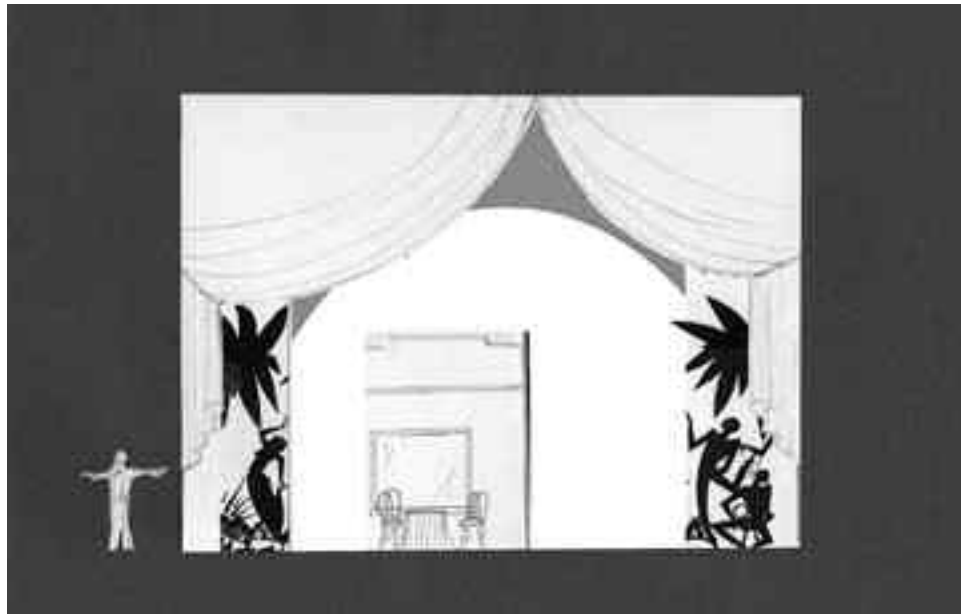
APPENDIX B, PLATE 3

Light Box images “Hit Me With a Hot Note”

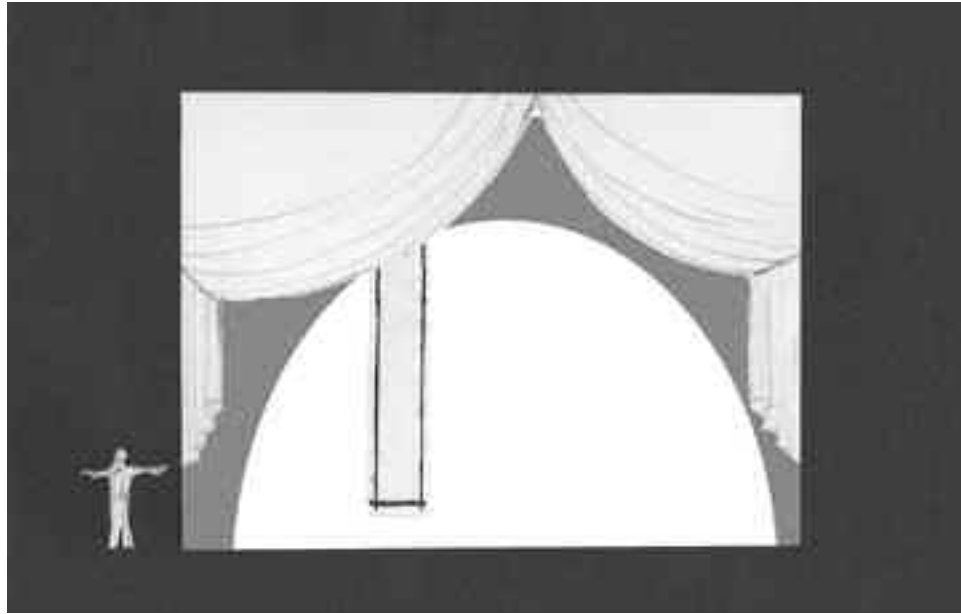


APPENDIX B, PLATE 4

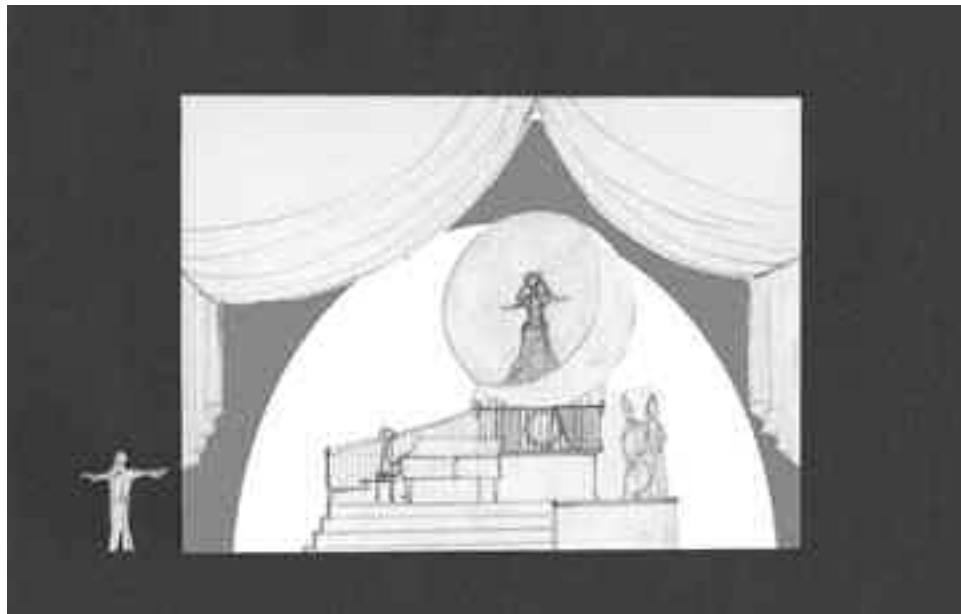
Light box images with “Bli-Blip” and “Take the A-Train”



APPENDIX B, PLATE 5
Light box images for “Solitude”

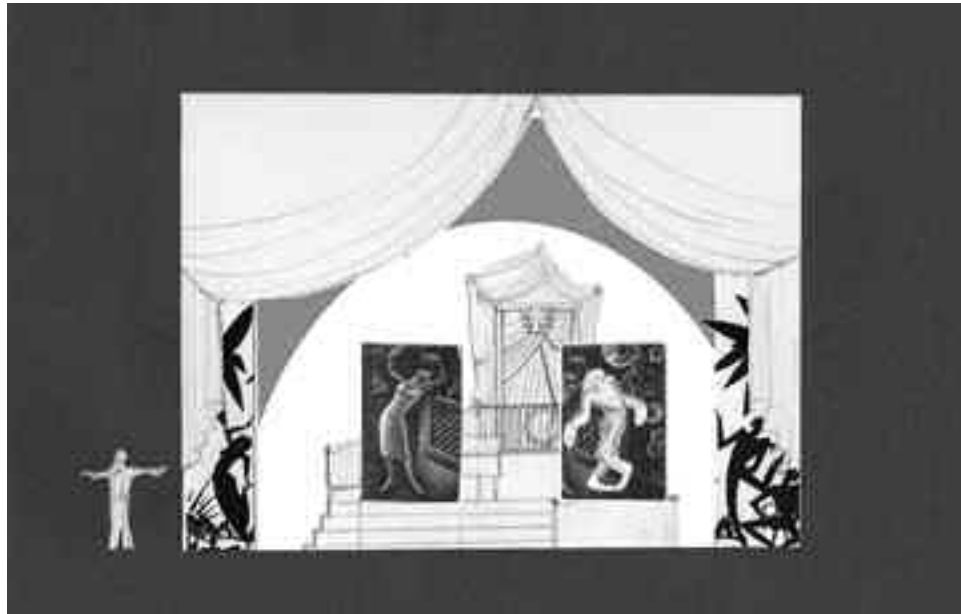


APPENDIX B, PLATE 6
Light box images for Moon Chair for “In a Sentimental Mood”



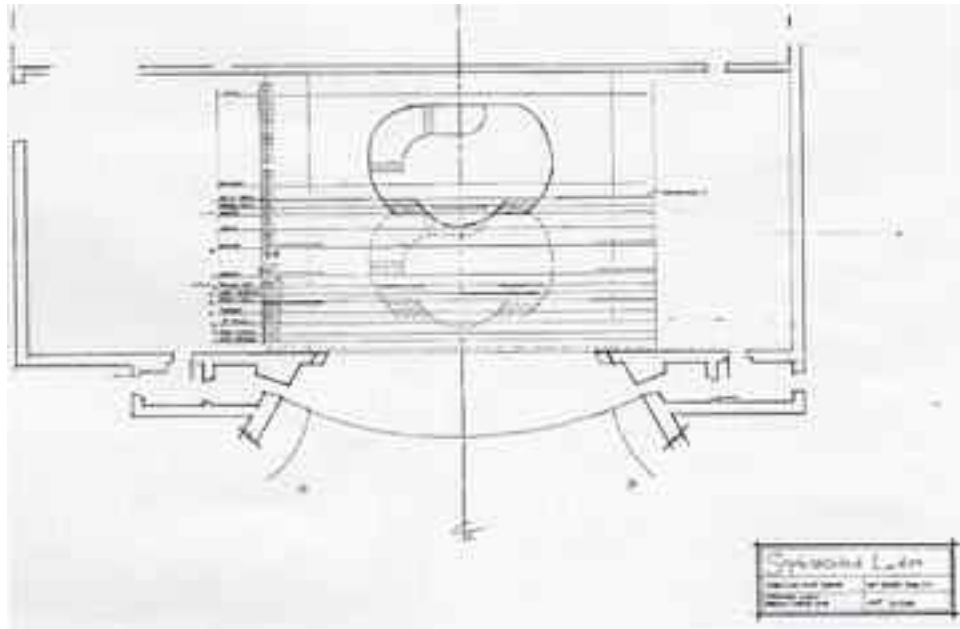
APPENDIX B, PLATE 7

Light box images for Framed art pieces in “Satin Doll/Just Squeeze Me”



APPENDIX B, PLATE 8 *

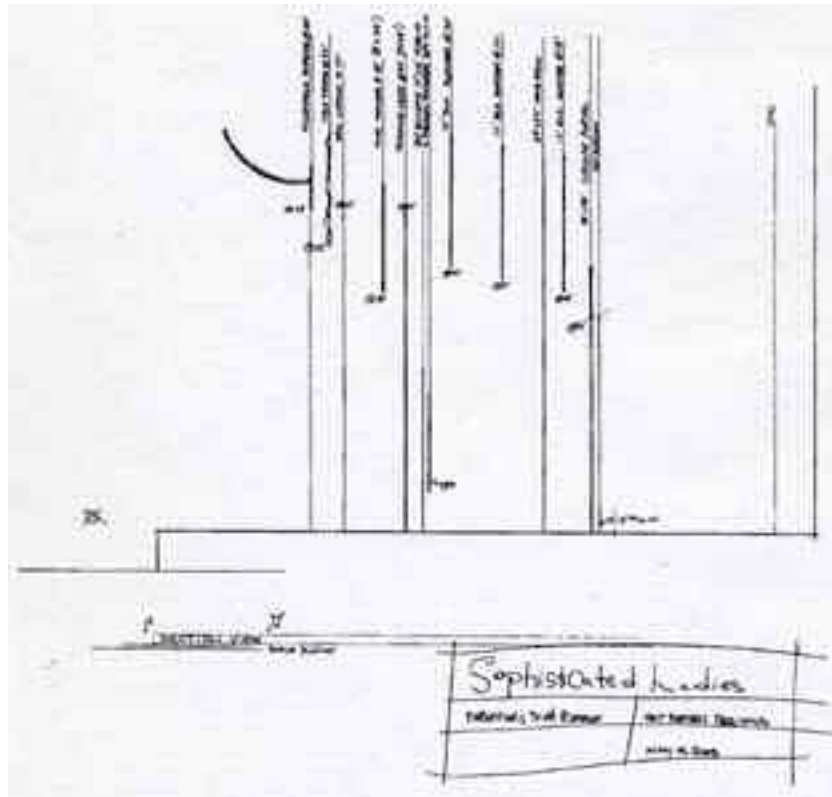
Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale drafting of general ground plan of preliminary set design



* Drafted by Author

APPENDIX B, PLATE 9 *

Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale drafting section of preliminary set design



* Drafted by Author

APPENDIX B, PLATE 10

Picture of the 1/4" model of the set for the beginning of "Bli=Blip"



Sophisticated Ladies Beginning of Bli-blip

APPENDIX B, PLATE 11

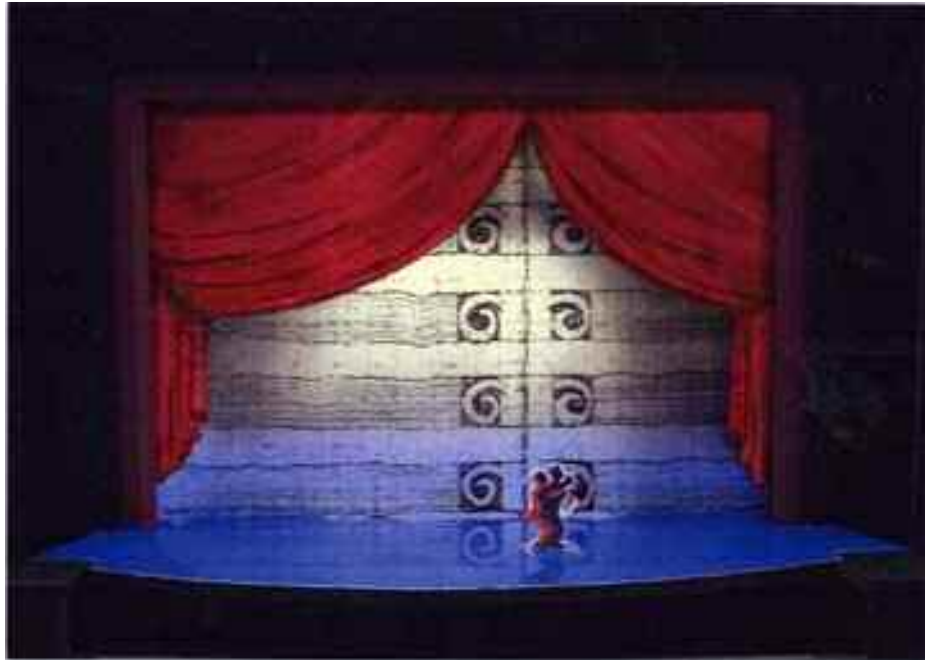
Picture of the 1/4" model side legs open to reveal the actors for "Bli=Blip"



Sopiscated Ladies "Bli-blip"

APPENDIX B, PLATE 12

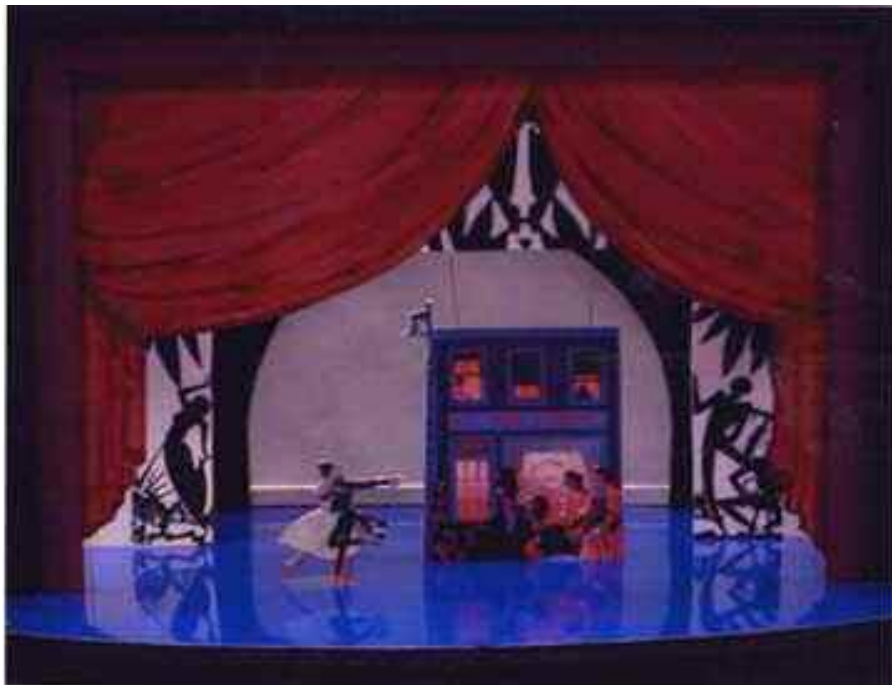
Picture of the 1/4" model of the Overture and "I've Got to be a Rug Cutter"



Sophisticated Ladies Overture and "I've Got to be a Rug Cutter"

APPENDIX B, PLATE 13

Picture of the 1/4" model of the "Take the A-Train"



Sophisticated Ladies "Take the 'A' Train"

APPENDIX B, PLATE 14
Picture of the 1/4" model of the "Solitude"



Sopisticated Ladies "Solitude"

APPENDIX B, PLATE 15
Picture of the 1/4" model of the "Satin Doll/Just Squeeze Me"



Sopisticated Ladies "Satin Doll" and "Just Squeeze Me"

APPENDIX B, PLATE 16

Picture of the 1/4" model with the band in Act Two position

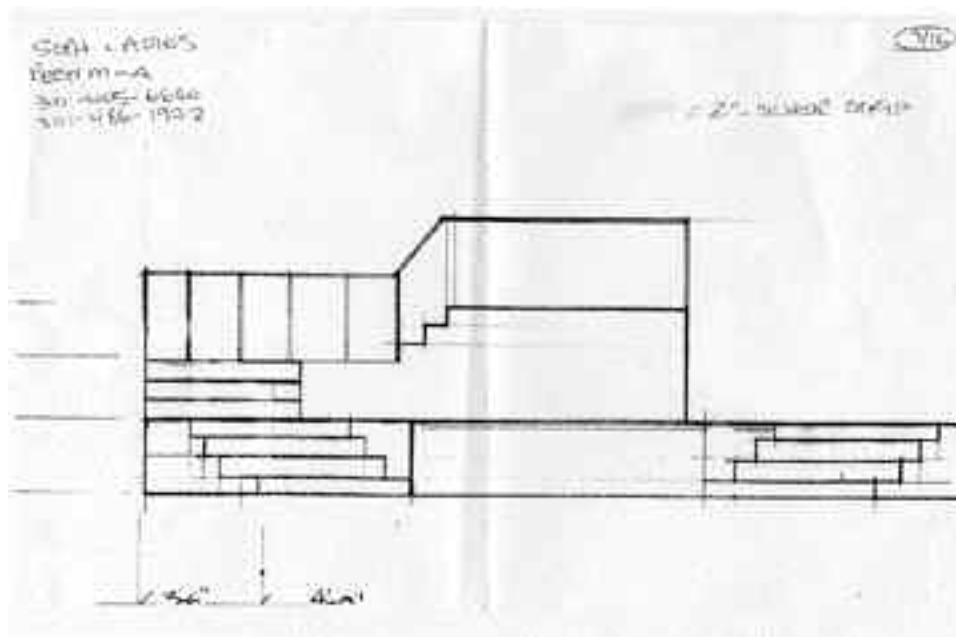
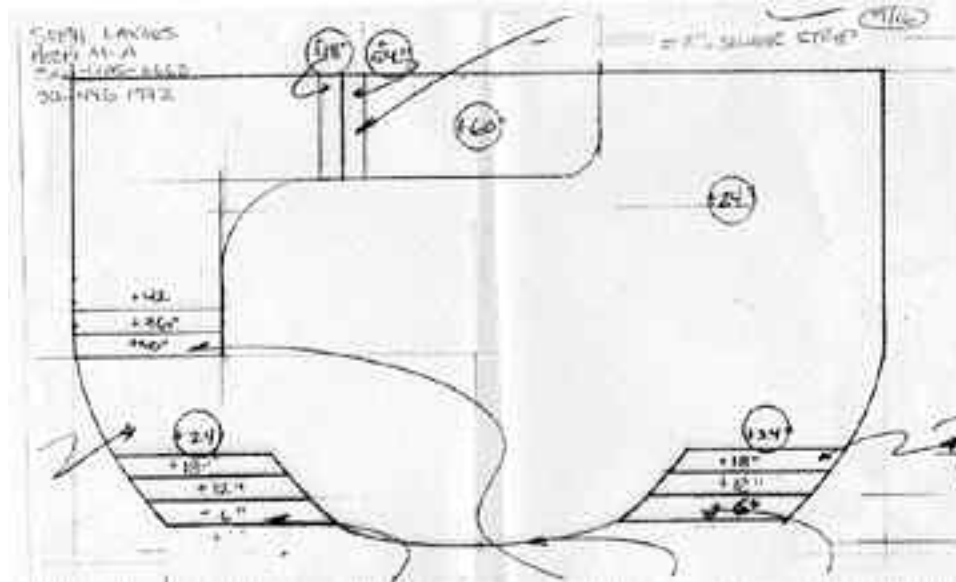


Sophisticated Ladies

Band Position in Act II

APPENDIX B, PLATE 17 *

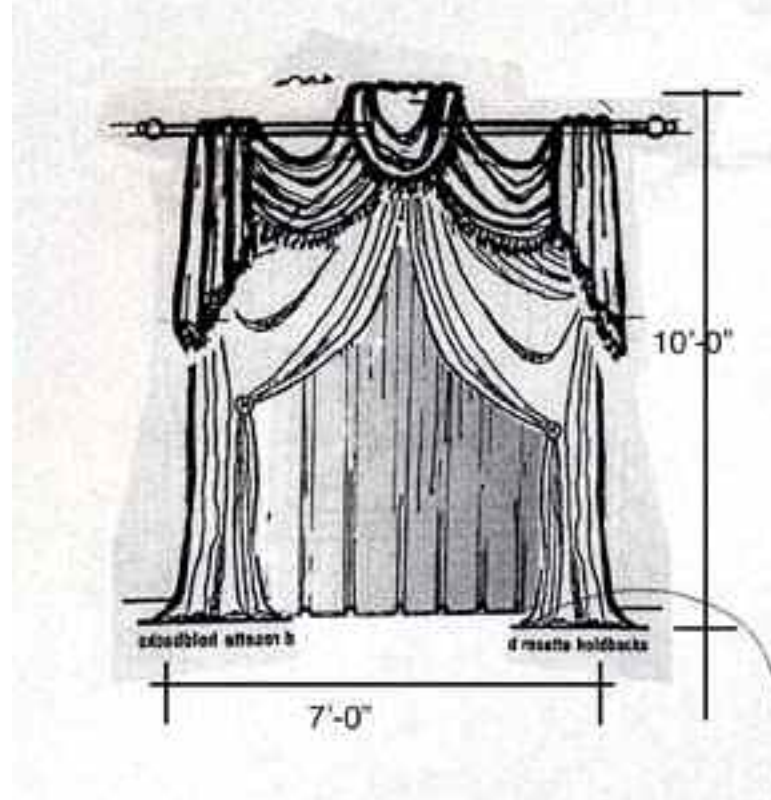
Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale of new bandstand configuration to Kelley
May 15, 2003



APPENDIX B, PLATE 18

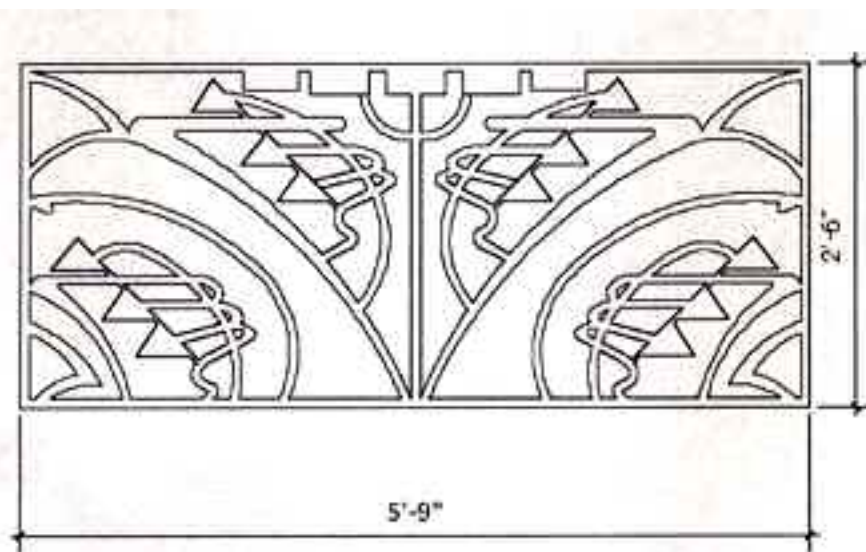
* Drafted by Author

Reduced scaled drawing of the draped entrance for properties



APPENDIX B, PLATE 19

Reduced scaled drawing of the central railing for properties



APPENDIX B, PLATE 20⁴⁵

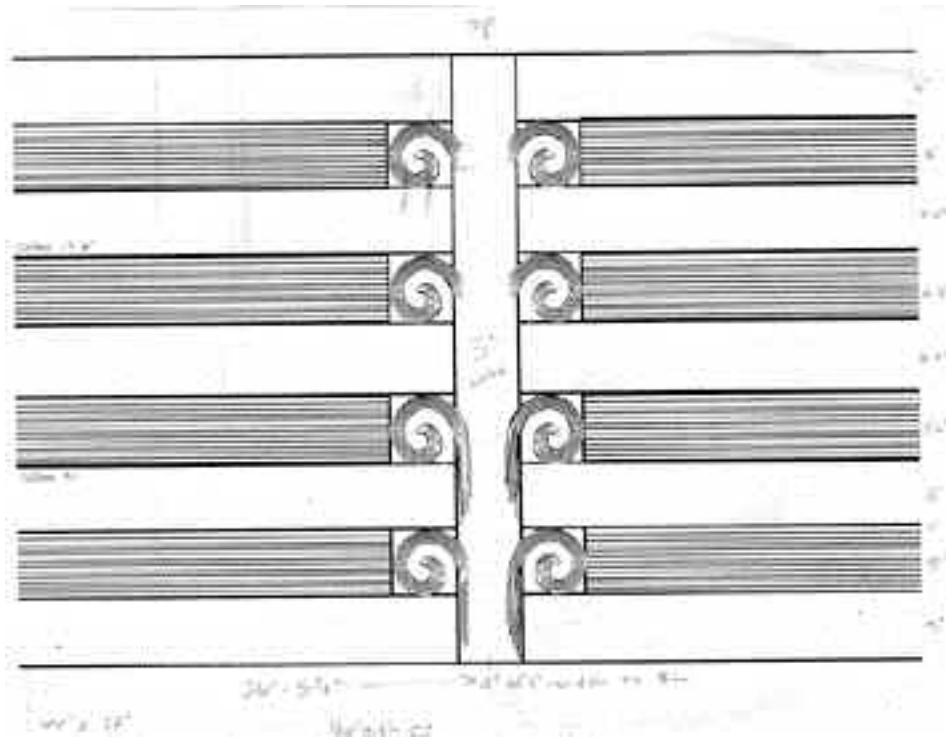
Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale painter's elevation of the Decorative Header



⁴⁵ Rendered by Author

APPENDIX B, PLATE 21 *

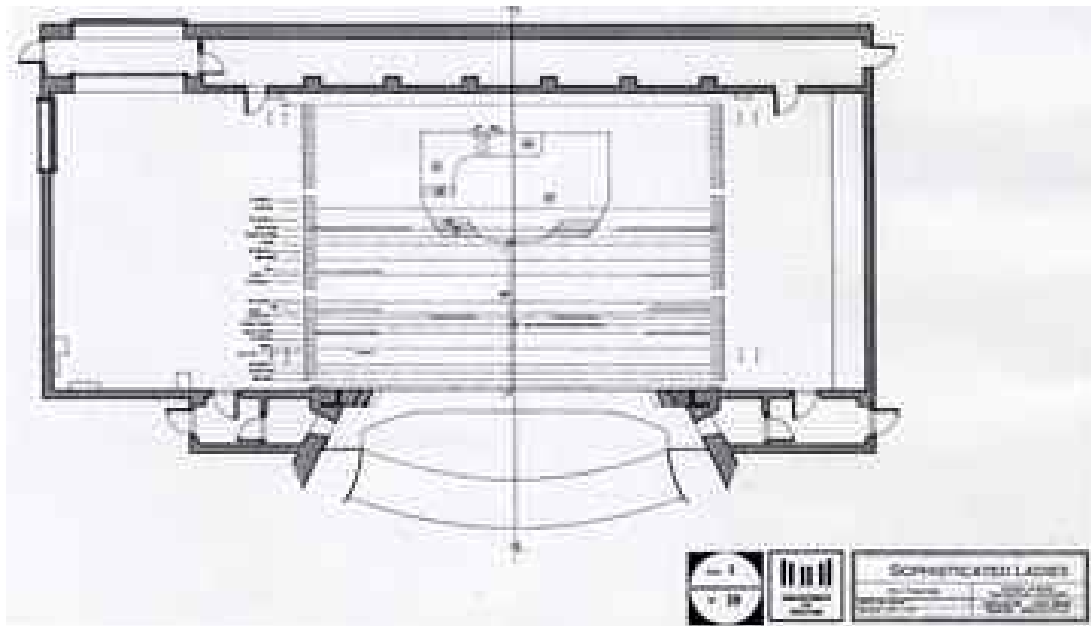
Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale drawing of the design for the show drop, used as painter's elevation



* Drafted by Author

APPENDIX B, PLATE 22 *

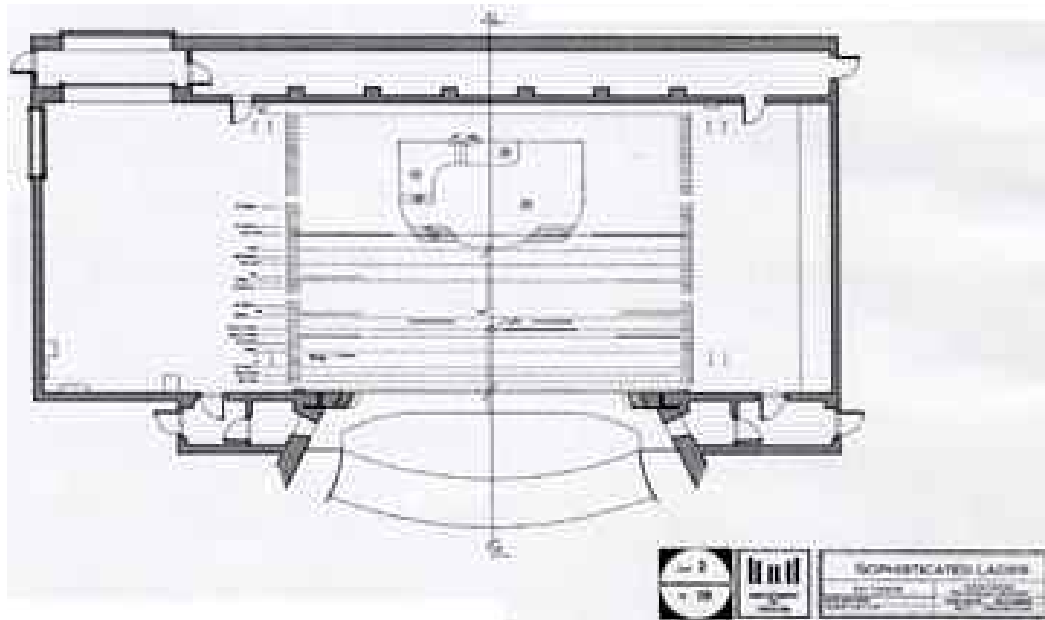
Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale Master Ground Plan



* Drafted by Author

APPENDIX B, PLATE 23 *

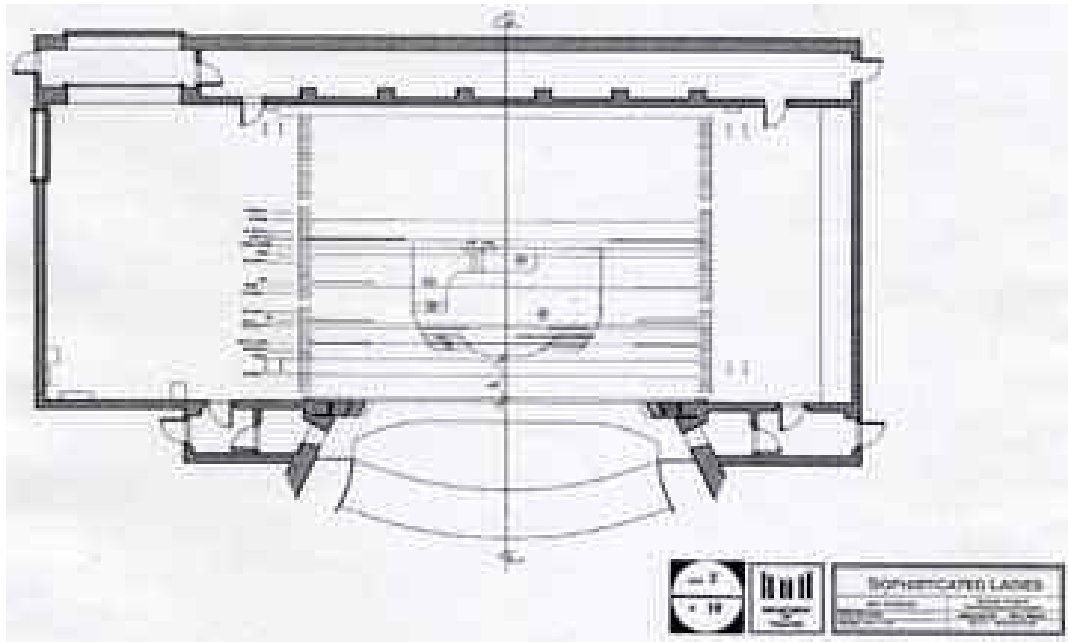
Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale Ground Plan for Act One



* Drafted by Author

APPENDIX B, PLATE 24 *

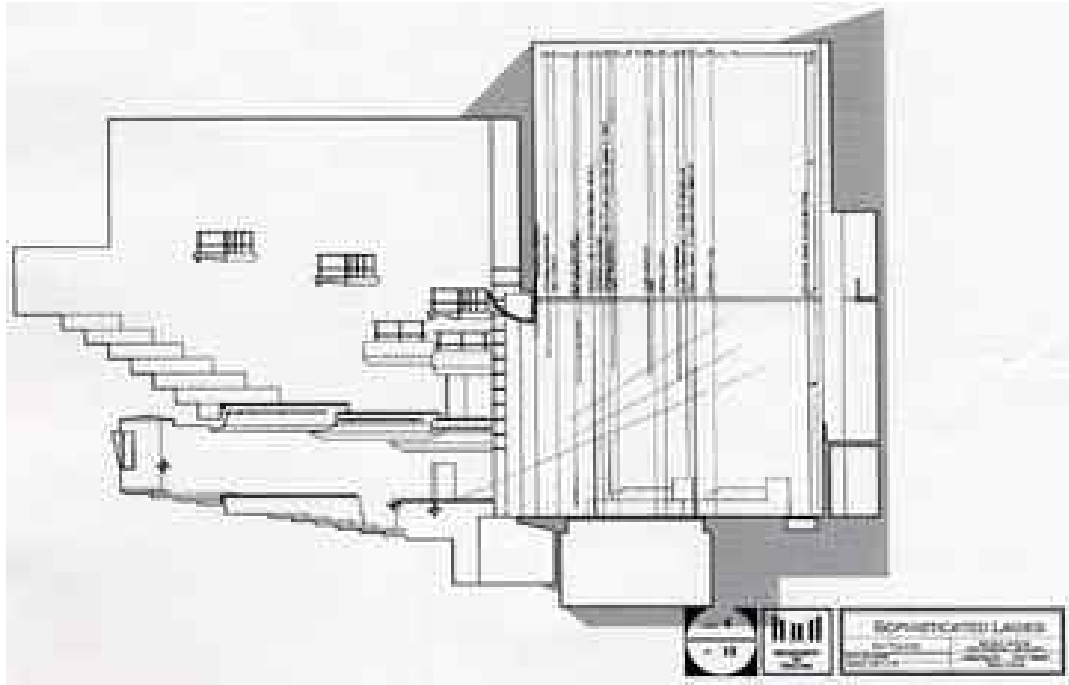
Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale Ground Plan for Act Two



* Drafted by Author

APPENDIX B, PLATE 25 *

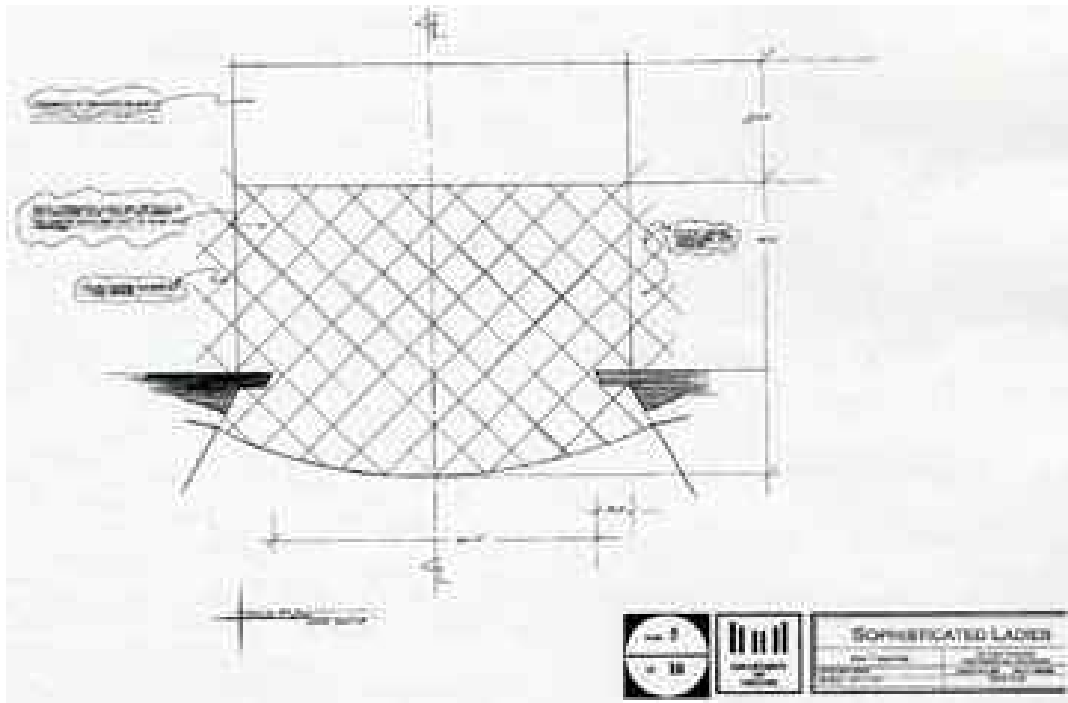
Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale stage right section



* Drafted by Author

APPENDIX B, PLATE 26 *

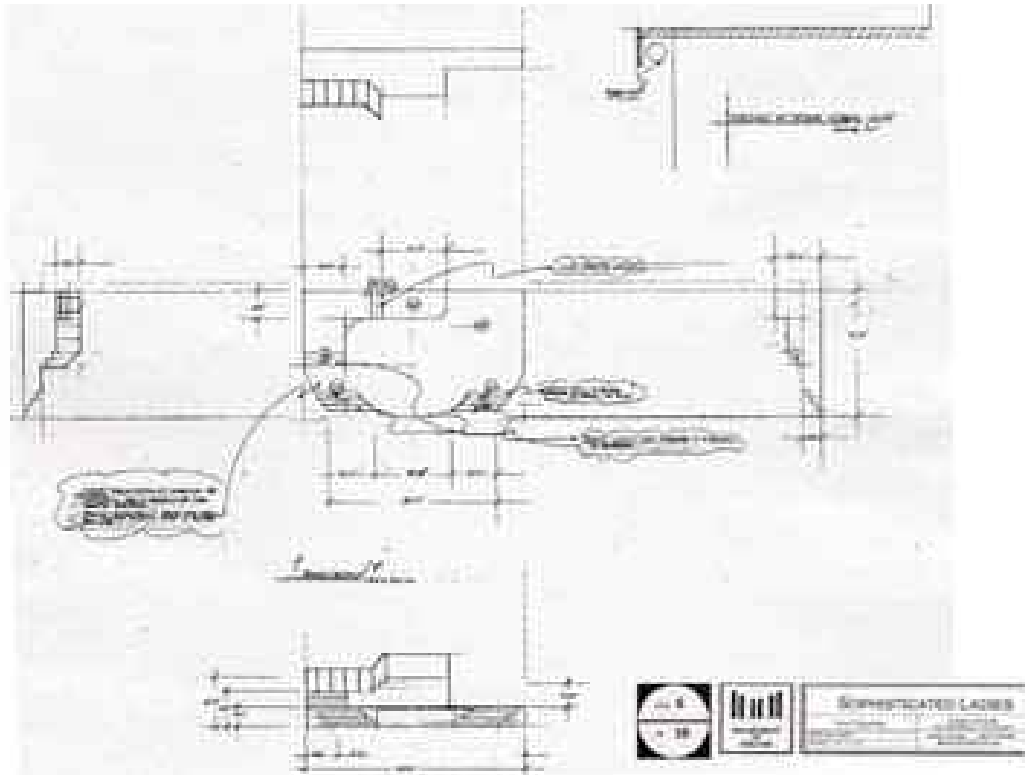
Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale deck plan



* Drafted by Author

APPENDIX B, PLATE 27 *

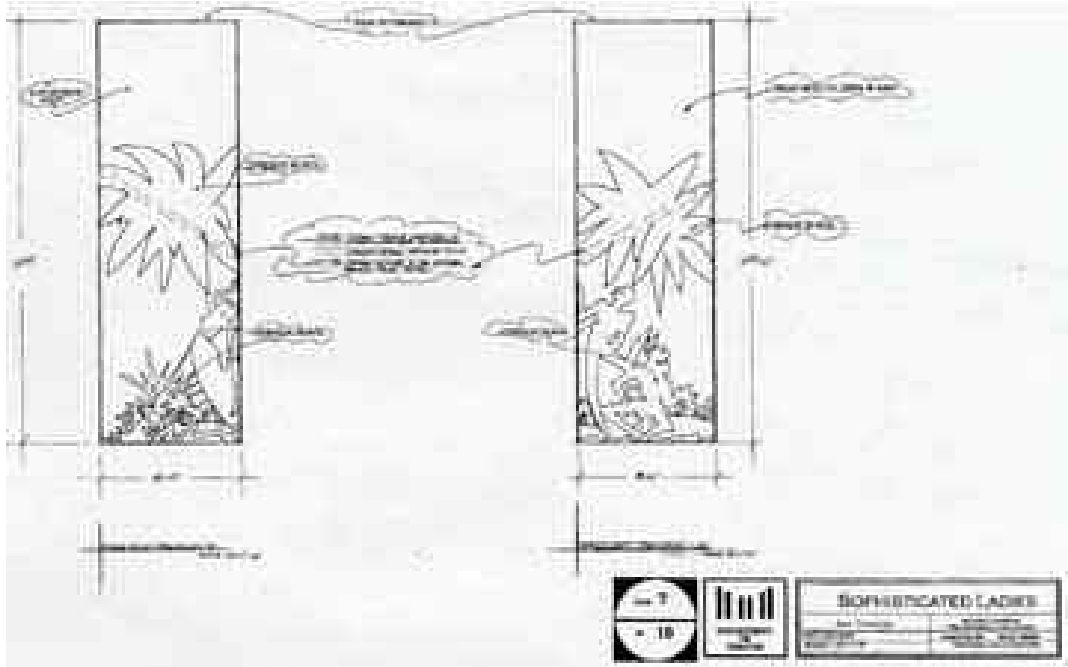
Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale bandstand plans and elevations



* Drafted by Author

APPENDIX B, PLATE 28 *

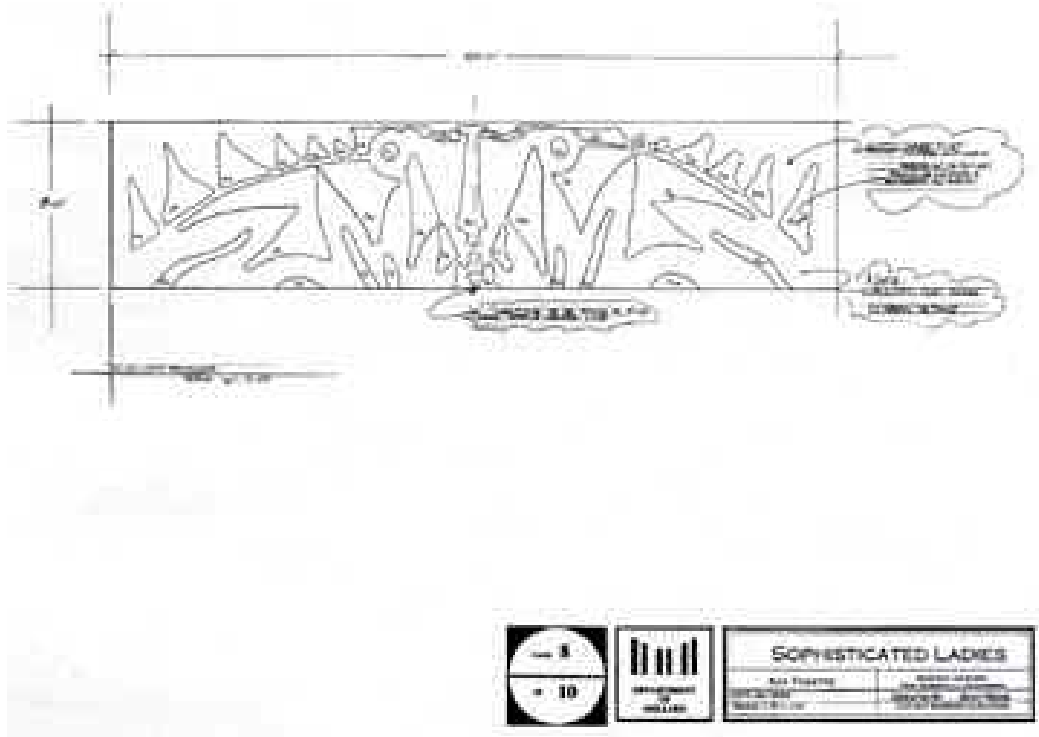
Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale traveling leg elevations



* Drafted by Author

APPENDIX B, PLATE 29 *

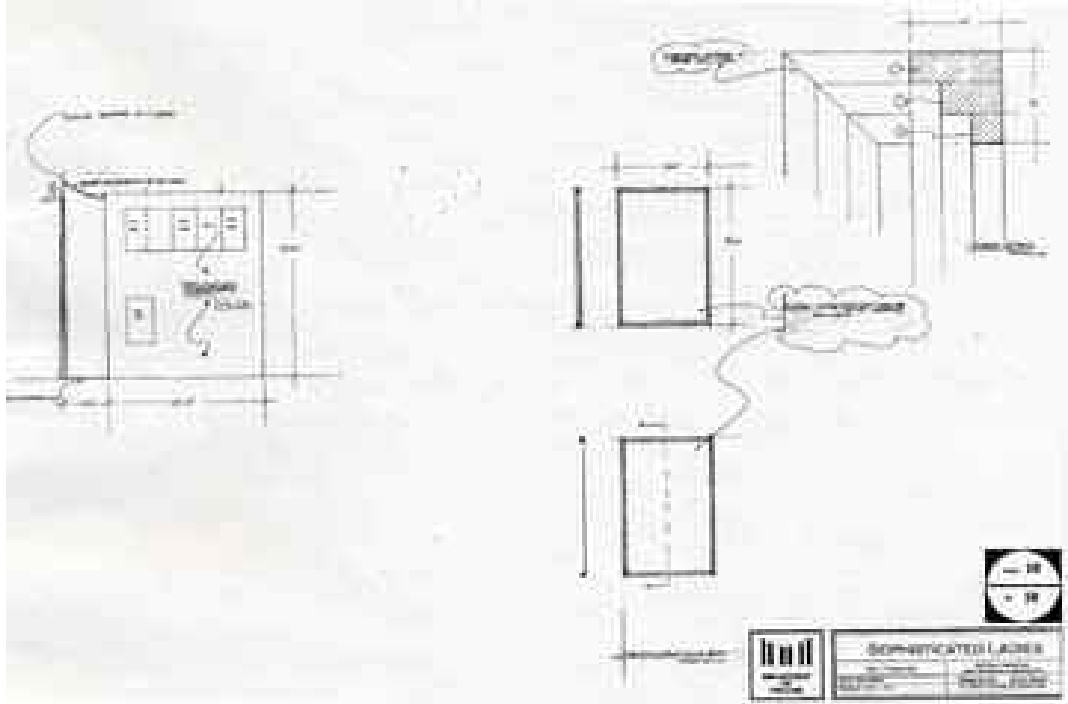
Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale decorative header elevation



* Drafted by Author

APPENDIX B, PLATE 31 *

Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale exterior wall and framed art elevation



* Drafted by Author

APPENDIX B, PLATE 32

Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale painter's elevation of the stage left framed art for
"Satin Doll/Just Squeeze Me"



Framed Art #1 - 6'X 9'

APPENDIX B, PLATE 33

Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale painter's elevation of the stage right framed art for "Satin Doll/Just Squeeze Me"

6'



9'

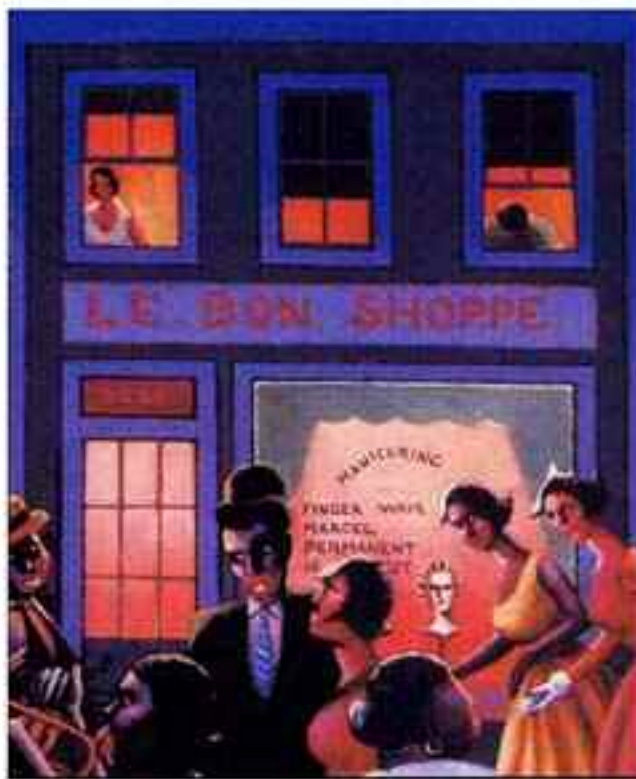


Framed Art #2 - 6'X 9'

APPENDIX B, PLATE 34

Reduced photocopy of 1/4"=1'-0" scale painter's elevation of exterior flat painter's elevation for "Take the A-Train"

10'



12'



Exterior elevation - 10' X 12'

Appendix C, Plate 1 *

“Bli-Blip”



* Photos courtesy Stan Barouh

APPENDIX C, PLATE 2 *

“The Mooche”



* Photos courtesy Stan Barouh

APPENDIX C, PLATE 3 *

“It Don’t Mean a Thing”



* Photos courtesy Stan Barouh

APPENDIX C, PLATE 4 *

“Solitude”



* Photos courtesy Stan Barouh

APPENDIX C, PLATE 5 *

“Satin Doll/Just Squeeze Me”



* Photos courtesy Stan Barouh

APPENDIX C, PLATE 6 *

“Drop Me Off in Harlem”



* Photos courtesy Stan Barouh

APPENDIX C, PLATE 7 *

“In a Sentimental Mood”



“Take the A-Train”



* Photos courtesy Stan Barouh

APPENDIX C, PLATE 8 *

“Sophisticated Ladies”
Act Two Position of the Bandstand



* Photos courtesy Stan Barouh

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