

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: THE CUNNING LITTLE VIXEN

A SCENIC DESIGN

A PRODUCTION BY THE MARYLAND
OPERA STUDIO AT THE CLARICE SMITH
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER'S INA AND
JACK KAY THEATRE

Grace Limbach Guarniere,
Master of Fine Arts 2020

Thesis Directed By: Associate Professor, Daniel Conway,
Department of Theatre, Dance, and
Performance Studies

The purpose of this thesis is to provide research, supporting paperwork, production photographs, and other materials that document the scenic design process for *The Cunning Little Vixen* by the University of Maryland – College Park, Maryland Opera Studio. This thesis contains the following: scenic research images that express the play, and location, and inspiration that helped develop a common emotional vocabulary with the production team; preliminary sketches; photographs of the ¼” scale model; a full set of drafting plates and paint elevations used to communicate the design to the technical director and the paint charge; a prop list with research supporting, in detail, what is needed for hand props, set dressing, and consumable pieces for the prop master; and an epilogue of the continuing transformation of this production due to the unforeseen circumstance of COVID-19.

THE CUNNING LITTLE VIXEN

A SCENIC DESIGN

A PRODUCTION BY THE MARYLAND OPERA STUDIO AT THE CLARICE
SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER'S INA AND JACK KAY THEATRE

by

Grace Limbach Guarniere

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 of
Master of Fine Arts
2020

Advisory Committee:

Associate Professor Daniel Conway, Chair

Associate Professor Helen Huang

Associate Professor Jared Mezzocchi

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2020

Dedication

For my incredible Mother, for without her undying support, many grocery bailouts and sincere understanding in what I do to create, I could not have accomplished this feat.

To Emily Lotz, for paving the way and being the prime example of what a Lady of Design should be and for teaching me to be strong, confident, and face my challenges head on. Thank you, Sensei.

To Ryan Fox, my fellow graduate who is my rock in all things design, management, tech support, teaching, healthy procrastination and drama.

My fellow classmates, for the incredible support as well as the incredible experience of being a team member!

To David Zinn, thank you for teaching me the biggest lesson in 2019 that I have ever grown from as an artist, “Your work looks beautiful... now what?” It is imbedded in my mind how unsatisfying it is to just have a “pretty product.” I seek out the real, so when beauty is discovered instead of fabricated, it is that much more impactful.

Acknowledgements

There is so much that is involved with bringing a story to the stage and it is incredibly important to acknowledge the individuals that contributed their expertise. I am thankful for the dedication that has helped with creating this product and also helped me discover more about being an artist during the process.

Creative Team:

Amanda Consol
Craig Kier, Maestro
Lauren Gallop, Lighting Designer
Austin Blake Conlee, Costume Designer

Production Staff:

Ashely Pollard, Production Manager
Molly Klezer, Stage Manager
Michael Driggers, Technical Director
Reuven Goren, Scene Shop Coordinator
Tim Jones, Properties Master
Ann Chismar, Scenic Charge

I am forever thankful to my advisors and mentors throughout this process who have pushed and challenged me at each step to get the design to a final product. Your endless guidance and support have influenced me to become the person I am today.

Daniel Conway
Misha Kachman
Brian MacDevitt
Jared Mezzocchi
Helen Huang
Leigh Smiley

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CONCEPT STATEMENT

The Cunning Little Vixen is a story of a young vixen in a world full of misunderstanding but having an adamant confidence in being. The world that is created from the script elaborates on many scenarios of human hierarchy, animal hierarchy, as well as the blending of the two worlds and how the different beings interact with each other. The play takes place over many seasons and even reveals how there is a generational life that thrives in this setting. The opera has an ominous but liberating score that encompasses the atmosphere as if each instrument is an animal itself. The orchestra makes an ambiance of adventure as we follow a young vixen through her life of becoming herself and inevitably her demise of being different. This story has a theme of societal clashing where different rules of living clash in hopes to inspire the seeking of understanding and the acknowledgment of others.

To harbor and highlight these themes, we created a flexible world within indescribable time. Setting this story in a dystopian future brings a specified tension to the piece by elaborating on time passing and seeing the time approaching rather than focusing on one period. This also allowed a freedom in selecting materials that are stylized and in a world that is familiar to our own but not exact. Creating an environment that can shift its focus from being more human-like or more animal-like communicated this point. There was a direct correlation of how one influenced the other as we see the characters manipulate the space.

The set needed to facilitate the audience following these chaotic stories deeper and deeper into the forest and so having the environment twist, swing, expand and close in on itself was an exciting life to bring onto the stage as we build and clear away detritus to find the farm house, or build an awning from spare wood and tattered fabric to accent an animal wedding. The fluidity was key in these transitions as the score provides long musical interludes that allow for movement and short transitions that require an immediate turn of the lights.

After a long emotional journey of an overwhelming environment, the opera concludes with a powerful build of the music as the cast reflects on this new need to understand. The set is still recognizable as the same structure but modified as if it has been through a life throughout the story. There is a final breath as the world has been expanded and dressing has been ripped, removed and thrown down to reveal new sightlines into the space.

PRE – PRODUCTION PROCESS

1.1 INITIAL MEETING

The very first meeting for *The Cunning Little Vixen* took place on May 15, 2019 with the first intended performance scheduled to open on April 3, 2020. This initial meeting was scheduled in hopes that the creative team will better familiarize themselves with the director, Amanda Console, while learning about each other as collaborators and as artists who will be my closest allies for the next eleven months. Bringing our portfolios to the table helped me gain an insight to how my fellow designers solve problems that arise in a play, on renderings as well as practical solutions to their products. As we spoke, Amanda was already pulling from our strengths as individual designers; the abundance of color in most of Lauren Gallop's portfolio, and the humor in the details from Austin Blake Conlee's Renderings. This was an important first step in understanding each other's thought processes and identifying what tools we have as team that Amanda is looking forward to using.

Diving into the play, Amanda lead with strong ideas, each one different from the next. Practical items that we discussed was having the opera be sung in Czech and not in English. She elaborated conceptually on using the 'Pussy Riot Movement' as a great modern representation of how she sees the vixen. Elaborating further, she also wanted to keep this idea of gentrification and how establishments overrun by a genre of people will inevitably modify the environment they inhabit. These impulses lead us to discuss the period being a fluid dystopian future. Hearing about how she saw each character's role in this environment was helpful in organizing each scene in more detail and solidified that there was going to be a lot of movement in the set. Humans

tended to have a movement language of clearing away items to make space for their world while animals had an organic and blissful freedom that would coincide with others but prompt the reaction to balance the chaos. The language that developed from this was clear; the world will be a manifestation of balance between humans and nature in a dystopian future.

I was tasked to create a container that can not only be modified, but express the repetition of societies past, being transformed, built and repurposed again. The opera requires many locations, including the farm, an inn as well as an expansive forest that we see over many seasons, so there is also a specificity that comes with how and where the space is modified. Characters would be aiding with transitions, rather than the facilitated theatre automation, because they are manipulating the world in their own societal favor.

1.2 RESEARCH MEETING

The design team brought in research images prompted by the opera, impulses, and what is discussed in the initial meeting. Research allows ideas to come forward as a visual response to provoke and solidify the ideas of the piece. Amanda reached out before the initial research meeting to suggest images relating to crafted environments. I collected art installations that showed chaotic environments that have been crafted, destroyed and repurposed in its own way (Figure 1). This prompted the idea of nature having the same movement language (Figure 2-4). Expanding on the idea of nature being manifested from a human world I gathered images of forests being invaded by time sensitive events in juxtaposition to gentrified areas (Figure 7). This meeting also required a large net to be cast on locations to find out what really defines an indoor and outdoor space in a period environment as well as a nonspecific environment (Figure 5, 8) The decision was made to manifest a world created similarly to the art installations. It was important that the materials be building materials and not actual nature (Figure 9).

THE WINNING LITTLE VIXEN RESEARCH MEETING
DIRECTED BY AMANDA CONSOL
SCENIC DESIGN BY GRACE GUANIERE

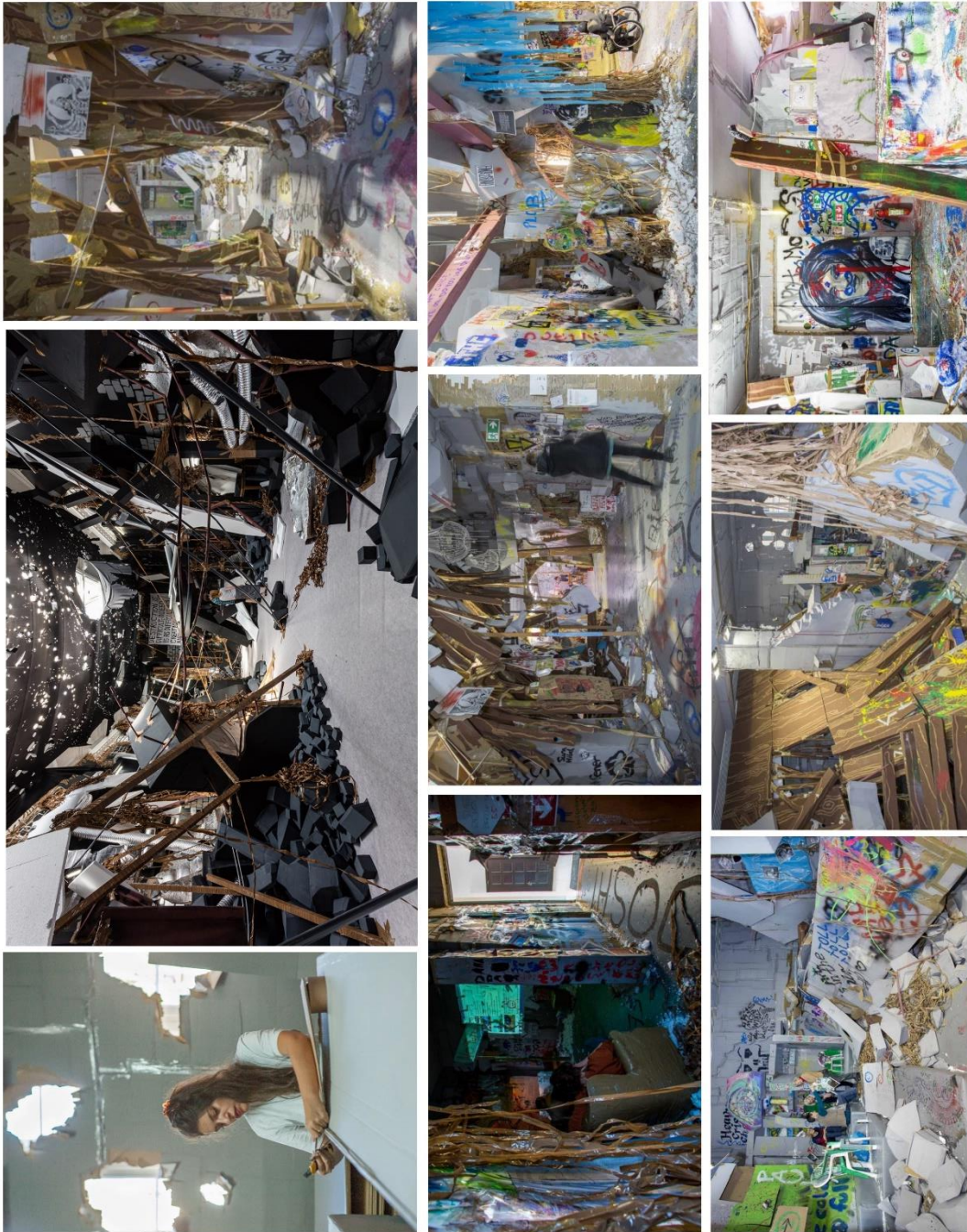


Figure 1

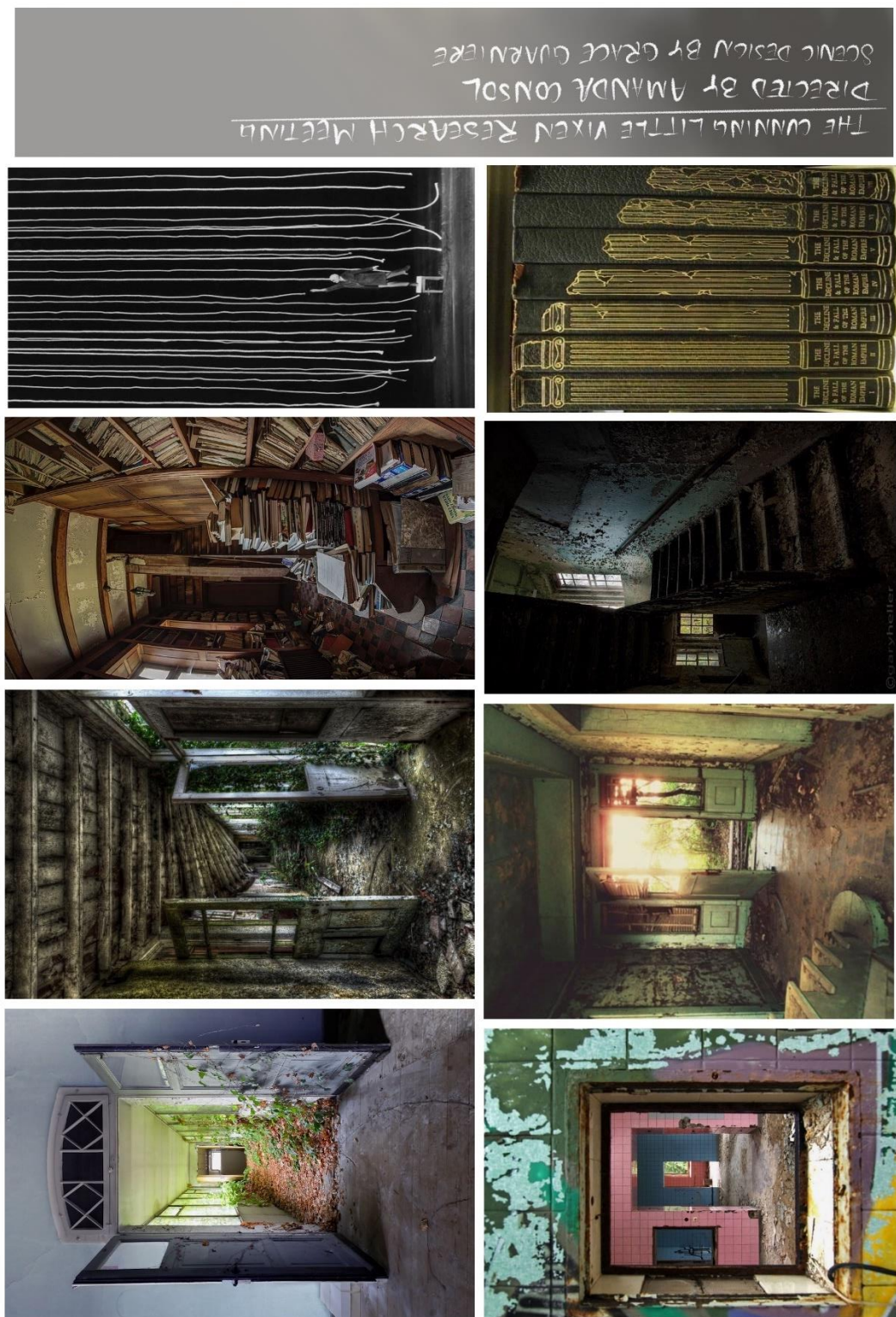


Figure 2

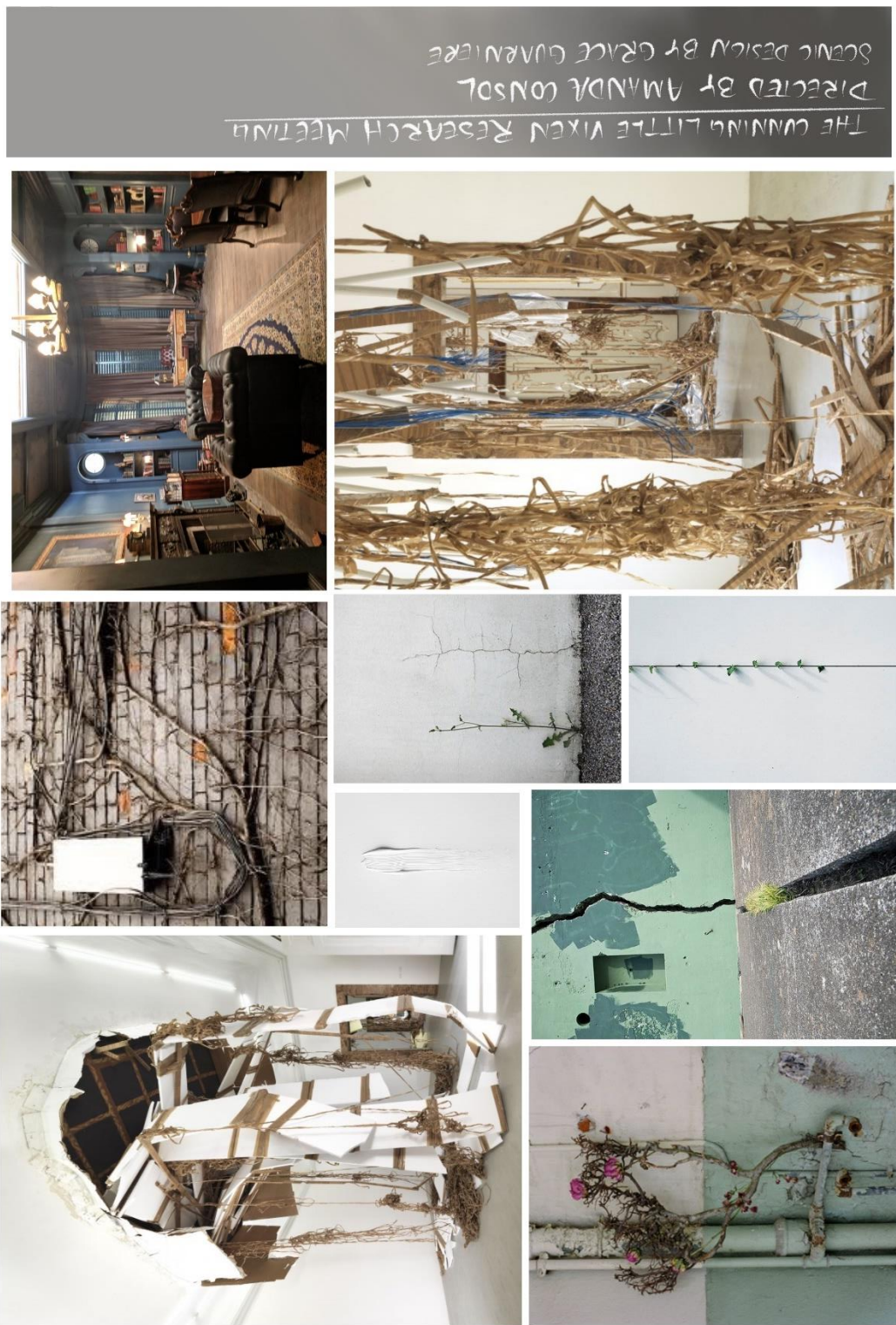


Figure 3



Figure 4

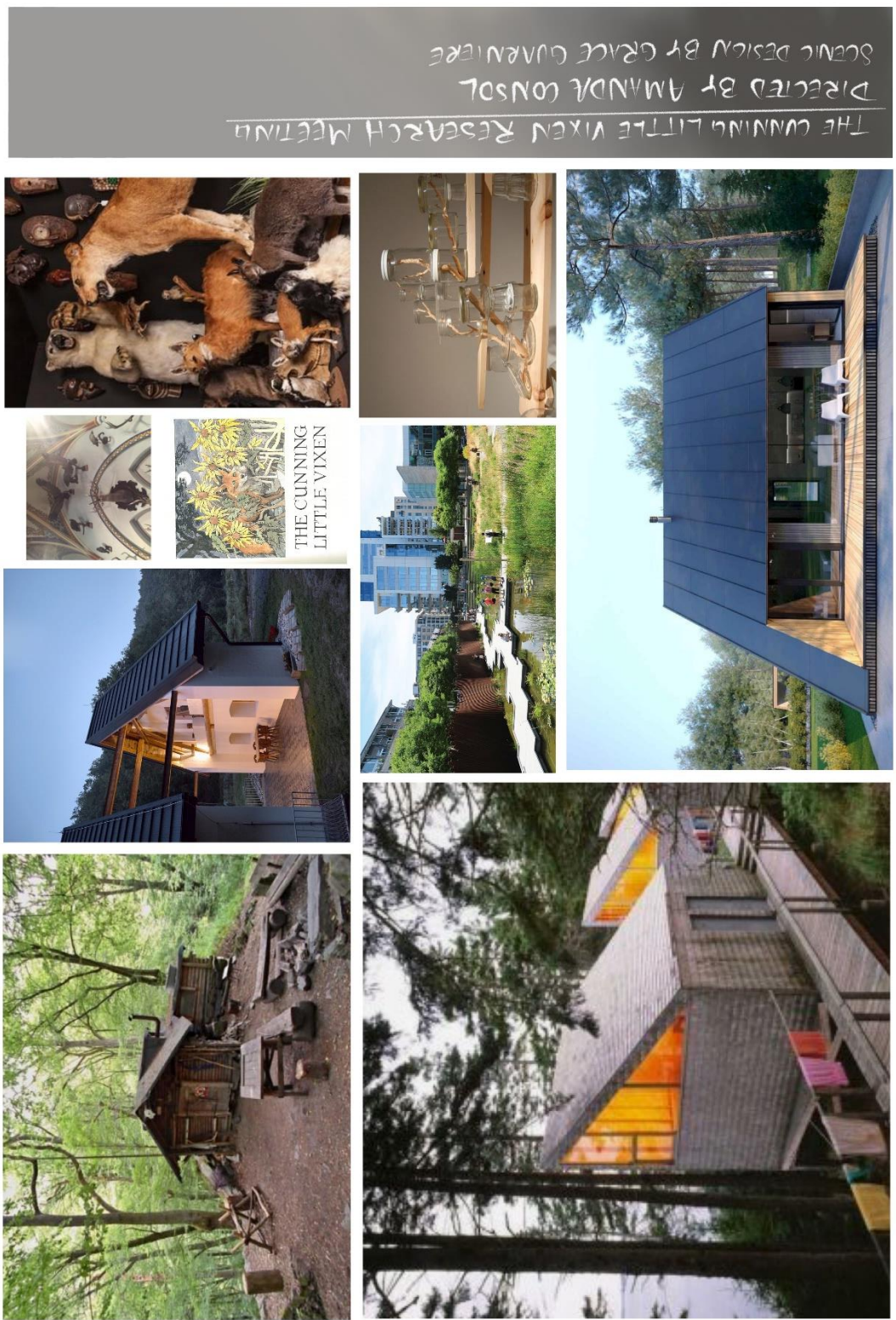


Figure 5



Figure 6

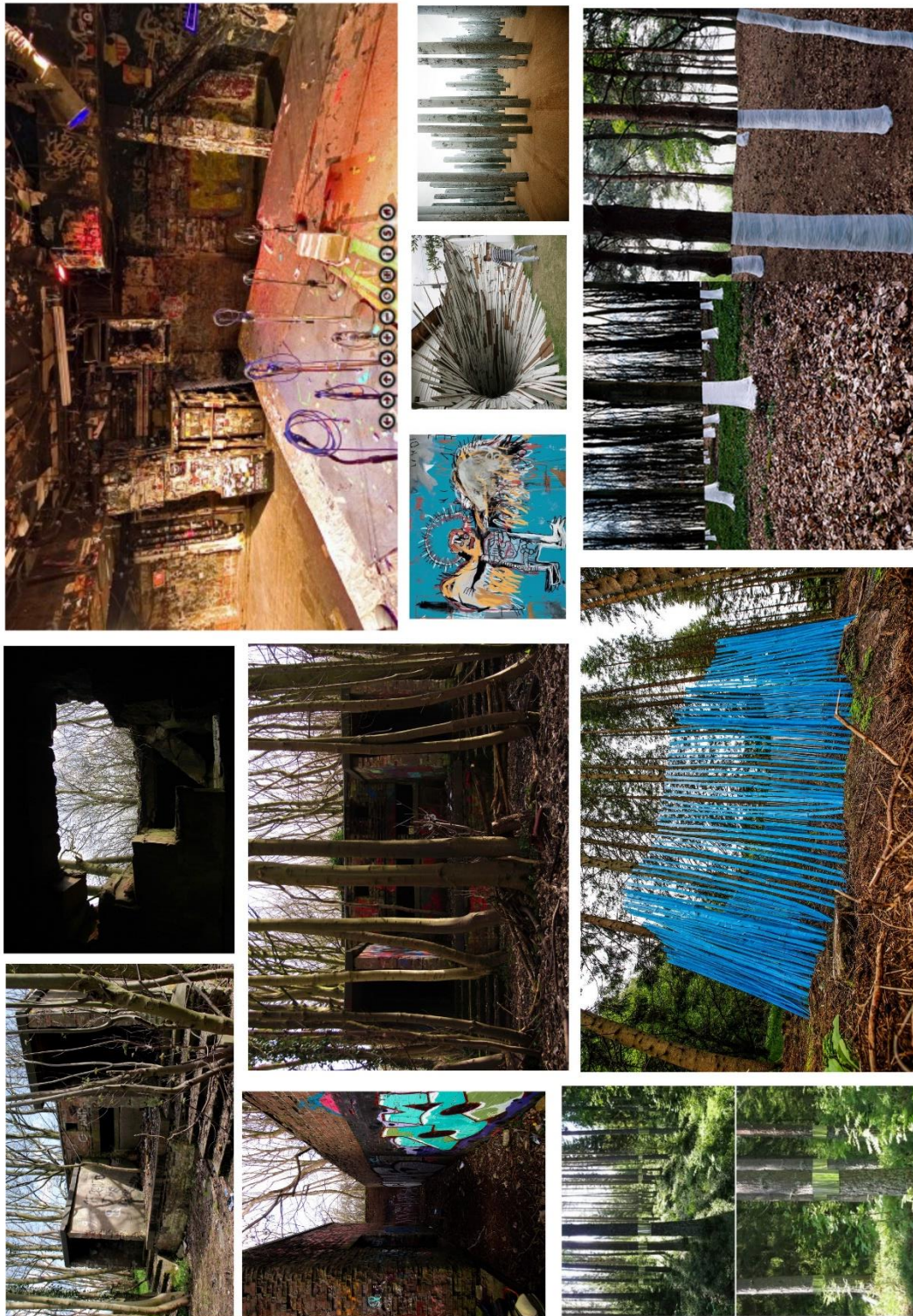


Figure 7

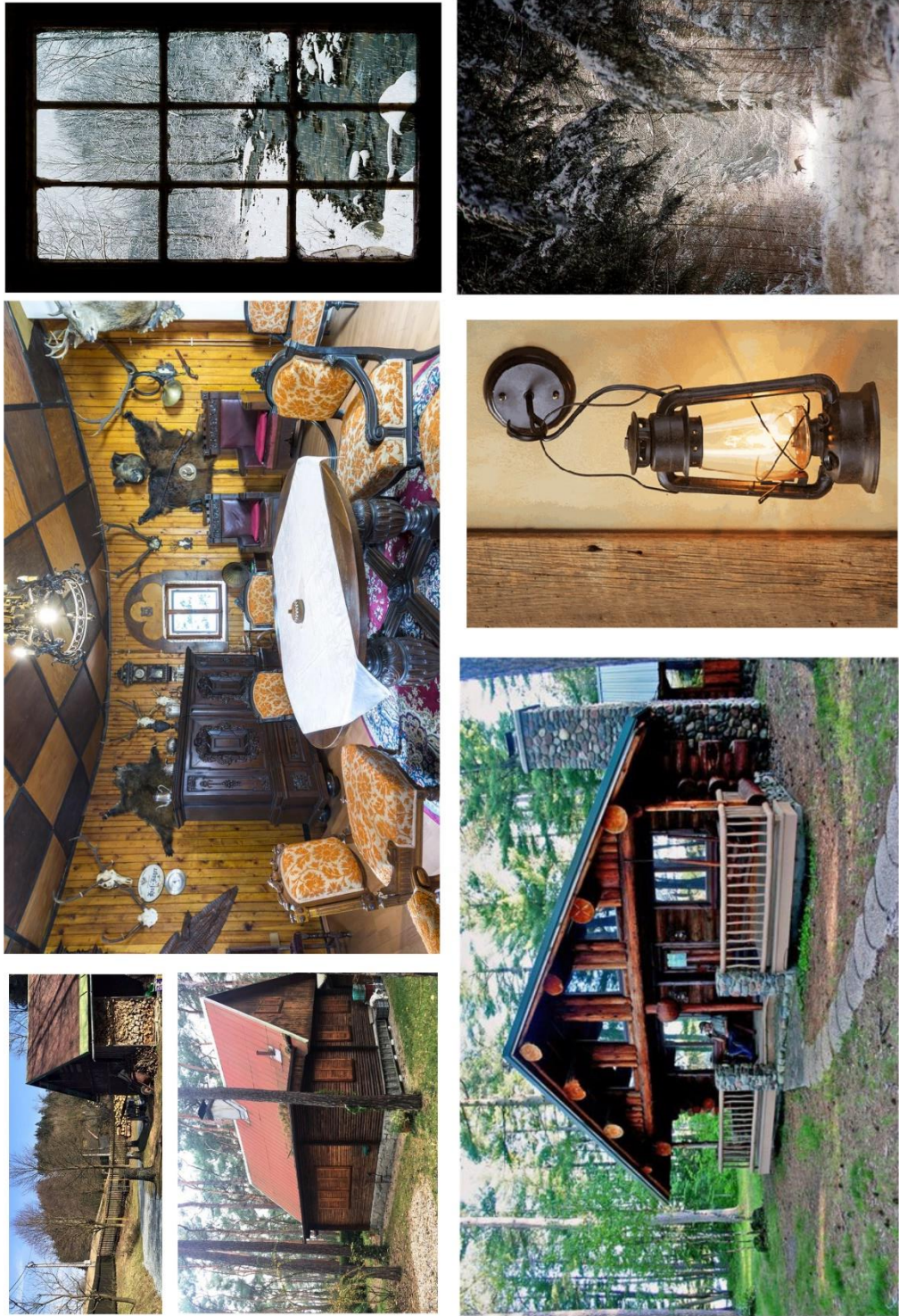


Figure 8

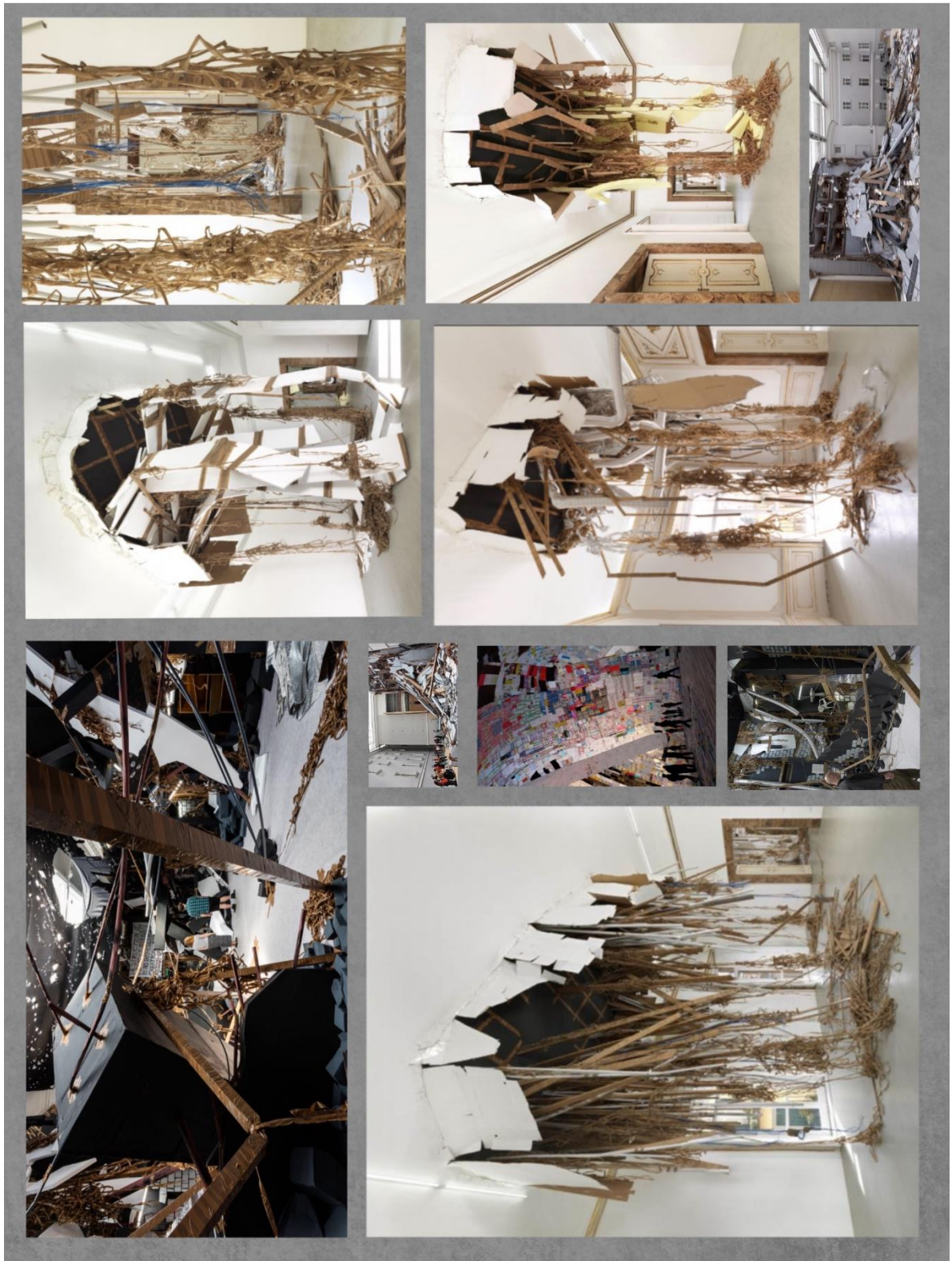


Figure 9

1.3 SKETCHES

Sketches are a condensed idea in response to the research meetings depicting specific images modified in favor of the design. The scenic sketches inspired by the research not only expand on new ideas compositionally but for the other collaborators and I to specify what we want to express directly without the filter of another persons' interpretation. Sketching also opens my thought process and how this opera transitioned emotionally. Thumbnail sketches made it very easy to have quick responses and reactions from Amanda on how she would use each space uniquely and explored practical ideas in a quicker way.

The initial sketch that started us on our journey (Figure 12) was what I presented to Amanda after solidifying the needs of the opera. Her response to the space was positive because it included all the environmental and emotional descriptions stated in the previous research meetings, however it was a practical issue on how to use the space to facilitate each scene seamlessly. This rendering seemed so static, and solid in one location that transitioning through what wants to be a massive space would be a challenge. So, to find out where we can extrapolate on this sketch that feels correct but doesn't work the way we wanted, I showed Amanda my thumbnails (Figures 10-11) and the many practical avenues we could explore. She chose two practical approaches that we would explore in more detail; a rotating sculpture, and an expansive container.

I returned with new sketches, now factoring in the theatre, (Figure 13-15) and because of the expansive quality that we need to convey the endless cycle of nature and the forest we decided to peruse the ladder (Figure 15).

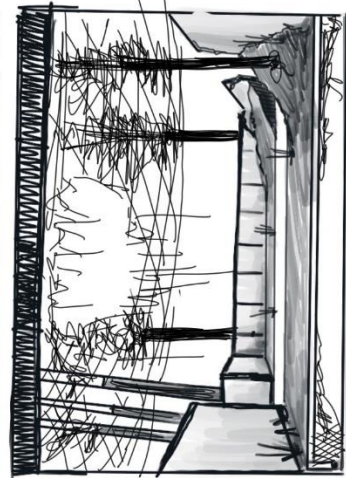
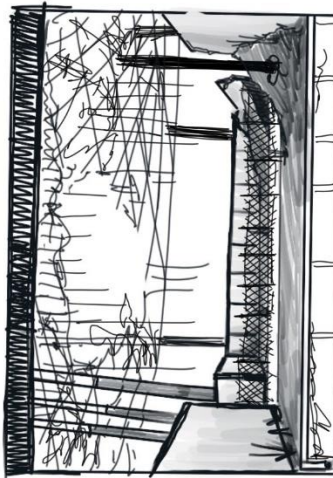
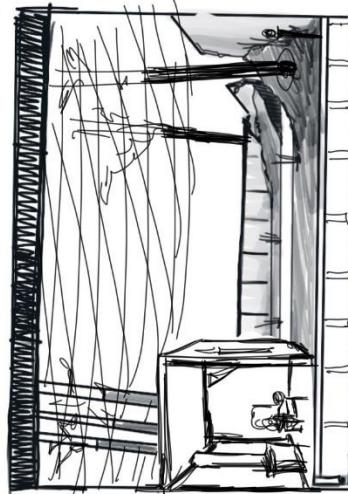
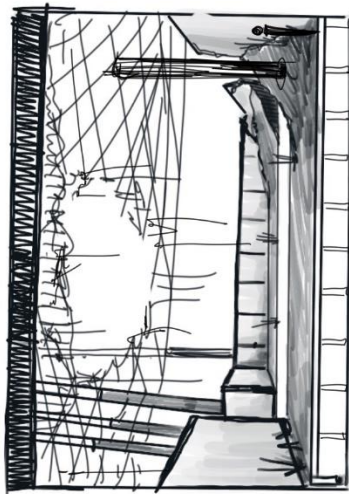
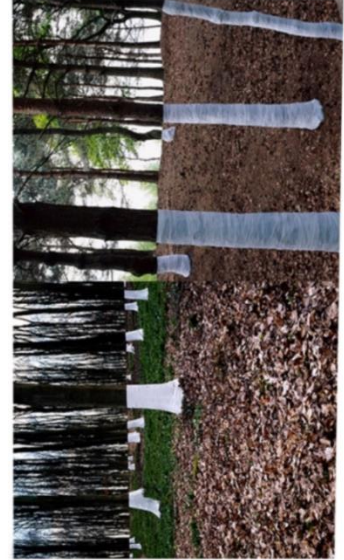


Figure 10

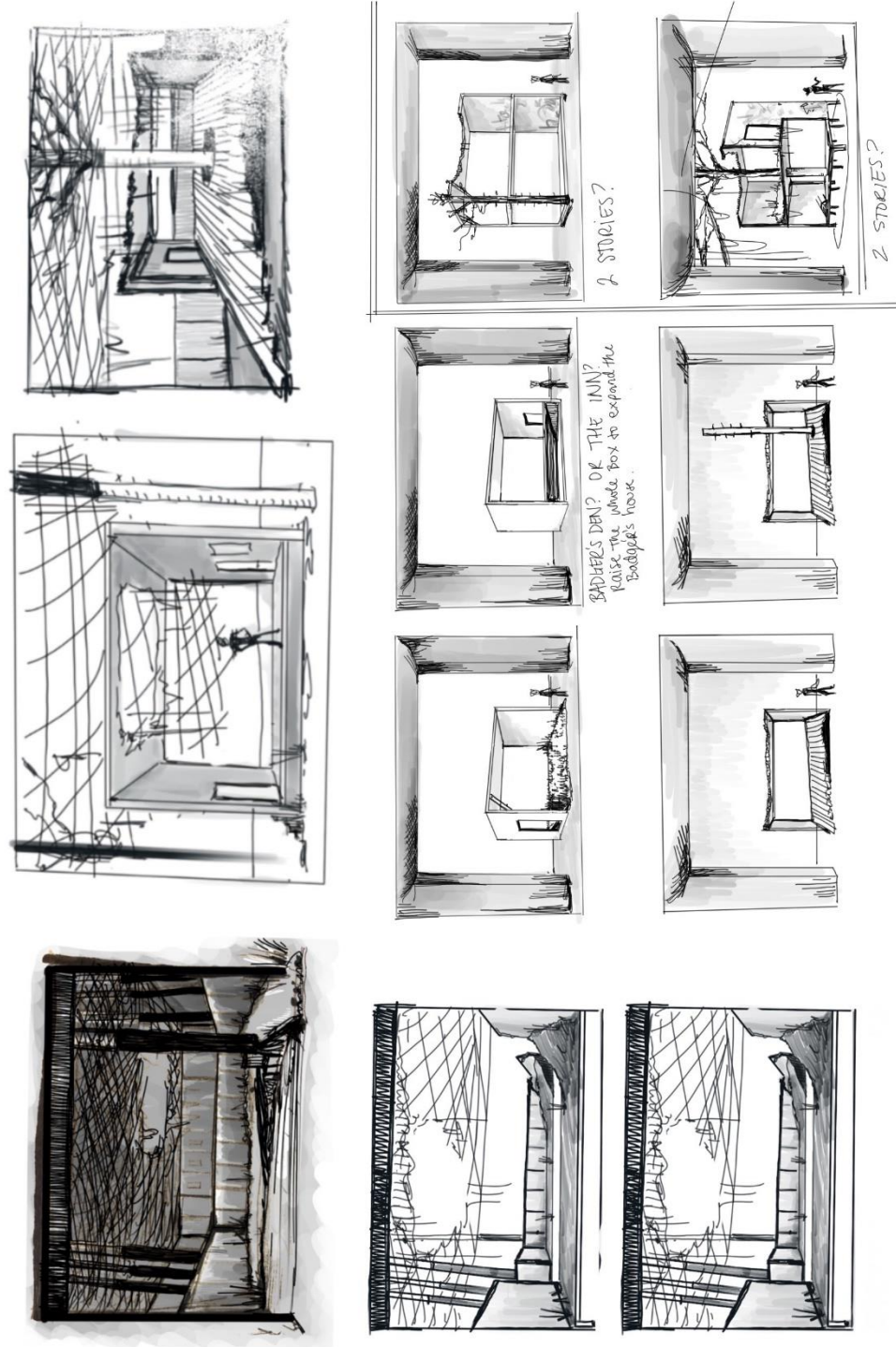


Figure 11

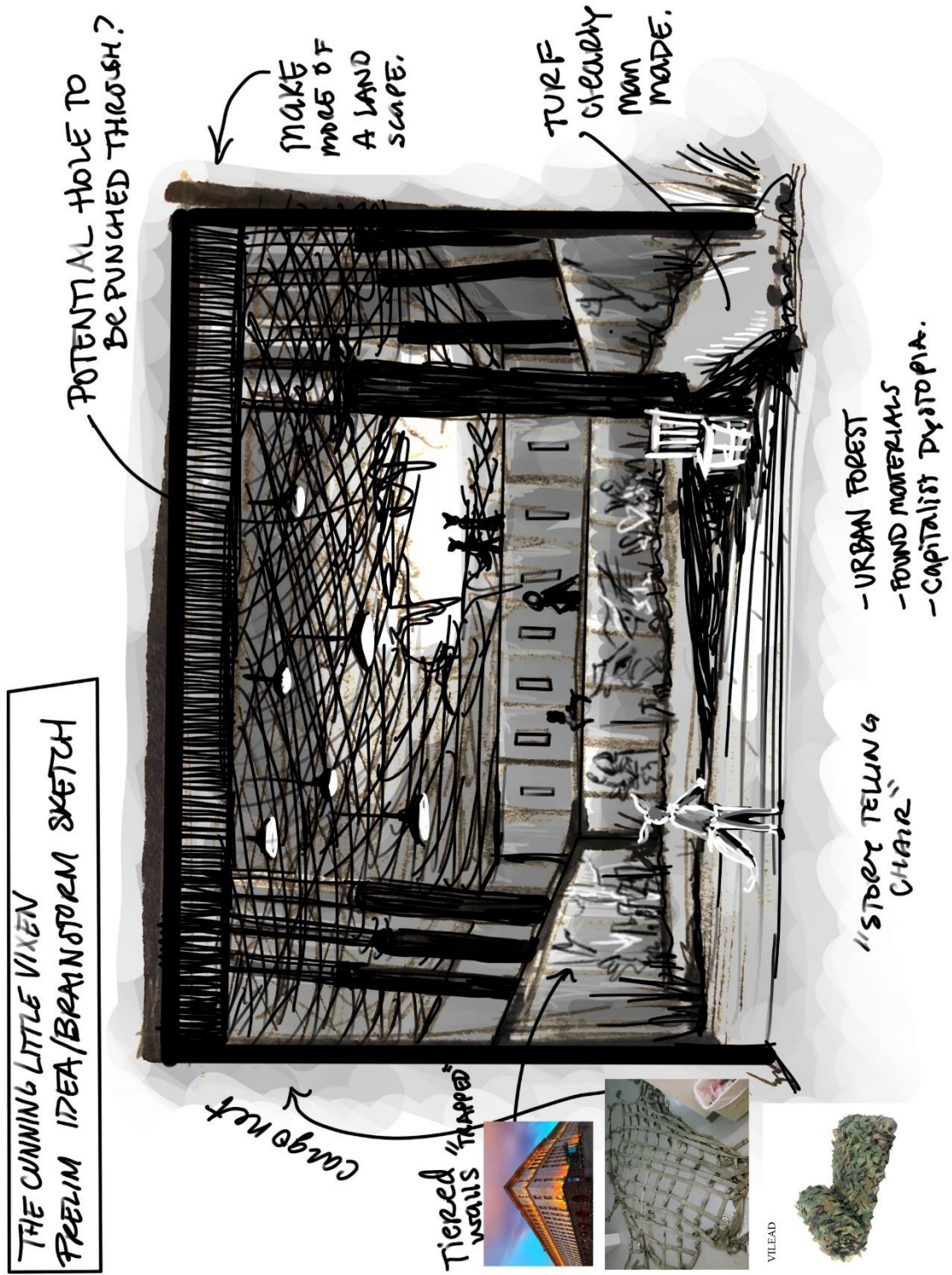


Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15

1.4 MODEL

The model is built in 1/4" scale of the actual Kay theatre and is a more tangible representation of the set. At this point in the process, it was necessary to take the rendering and make a space in 3D. Referencing my research of textures and the chaotic nature of the environments that Amanda favored, made making a model essential. We had check-in meetings that questioned the materials that these shapes and textures are made from. Initially when making a model, it needs to be clarified that we can decide a material after we establish the shape and intention for the space.

While building the model, I discovered the need for perforated materials, solid structures with decay, more levels to explore and the ability for the space to be moved as if we are traveling through a space. I incorporated the decaying and perforated structures in an enclosed formation while consistently referencing the claustrophobic nature of the immersive experience research while placing each unique piece. The key features that I need to keep from the sketch are the ceiling, having an ambiguous language of weather it is being lifted or falling, as well as the contrast of large "human world" structures and the chaotic line of nature detritus over growing. From this point, I picked out where I wanted the space to open from and to reveal this expansiveness that is necessary for our emotional journey in the piece. I incorporated an off-center turntable that swings a multilevel cluster of our stylized "trees" to change the balance of the whole composition on stage as it turns from one side to the other. To expand on that movement, I added more air to the space by adding moving walls that slide on and offstage to convey a claustrophobic beginning, to an expansive ending (Figure 16-20).

After presenting the model, I got to see Amanda react and play with the space. Now having tangible items to move within this model box, new ideas emerged from how the characters can manipulate the materials as well as how we could transition from scene to scene. However, we found that there was an issue of focus compositionally and would it distract the viewer. I needed to shift the overall composition of the foreground to be emerging from stage left and then cantilever as it recedes in the space to better establish a focal point (Figure 20-25).

The final model adjustments came during the production process (Figure 26-32) to better facilitate what would be built for special reasons and to establish a scene breakdown. This model was not “dressed” as elaborately or chaotically so that Amanda could move the pieces easier in the model.

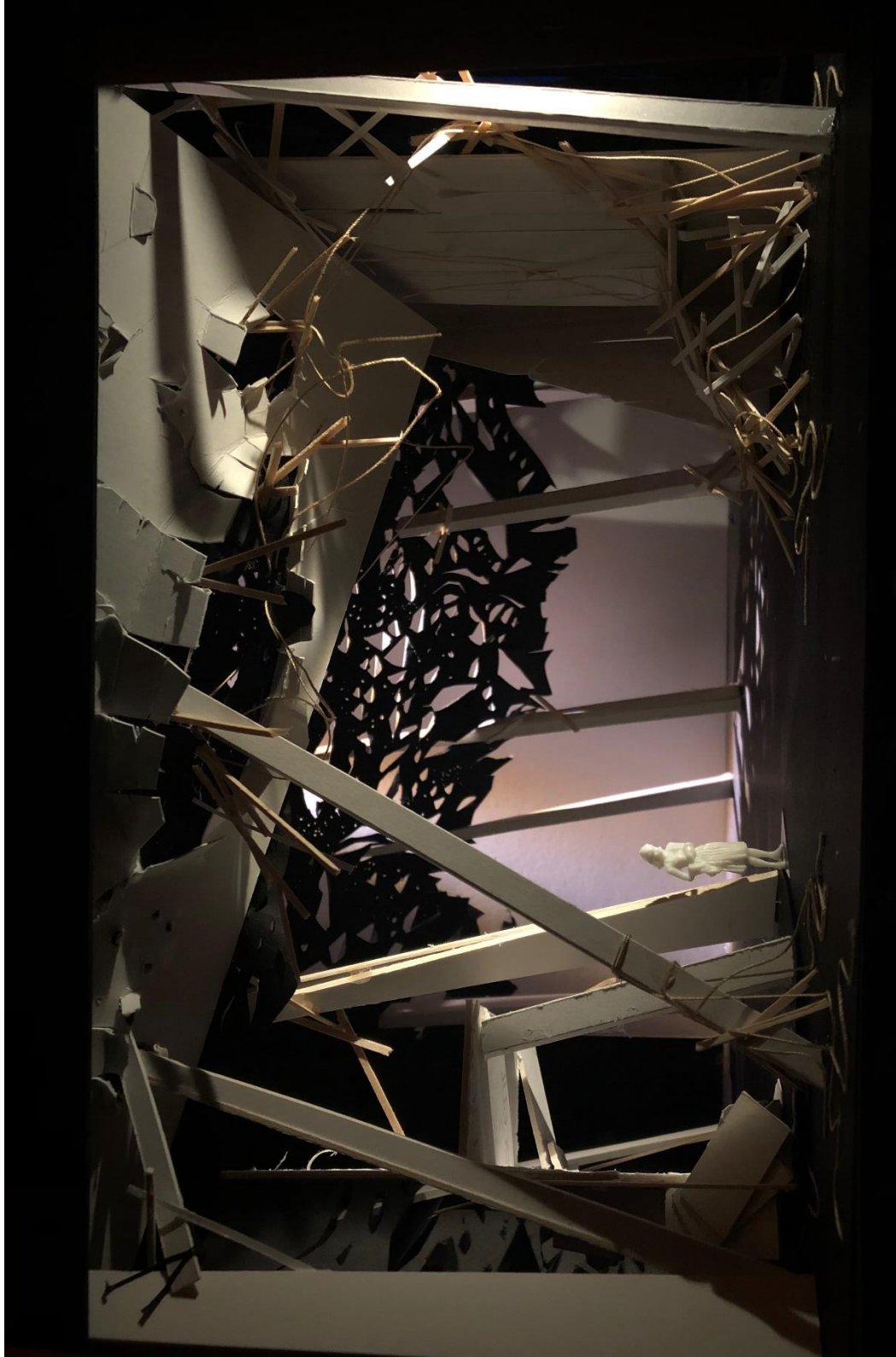


Figure 16

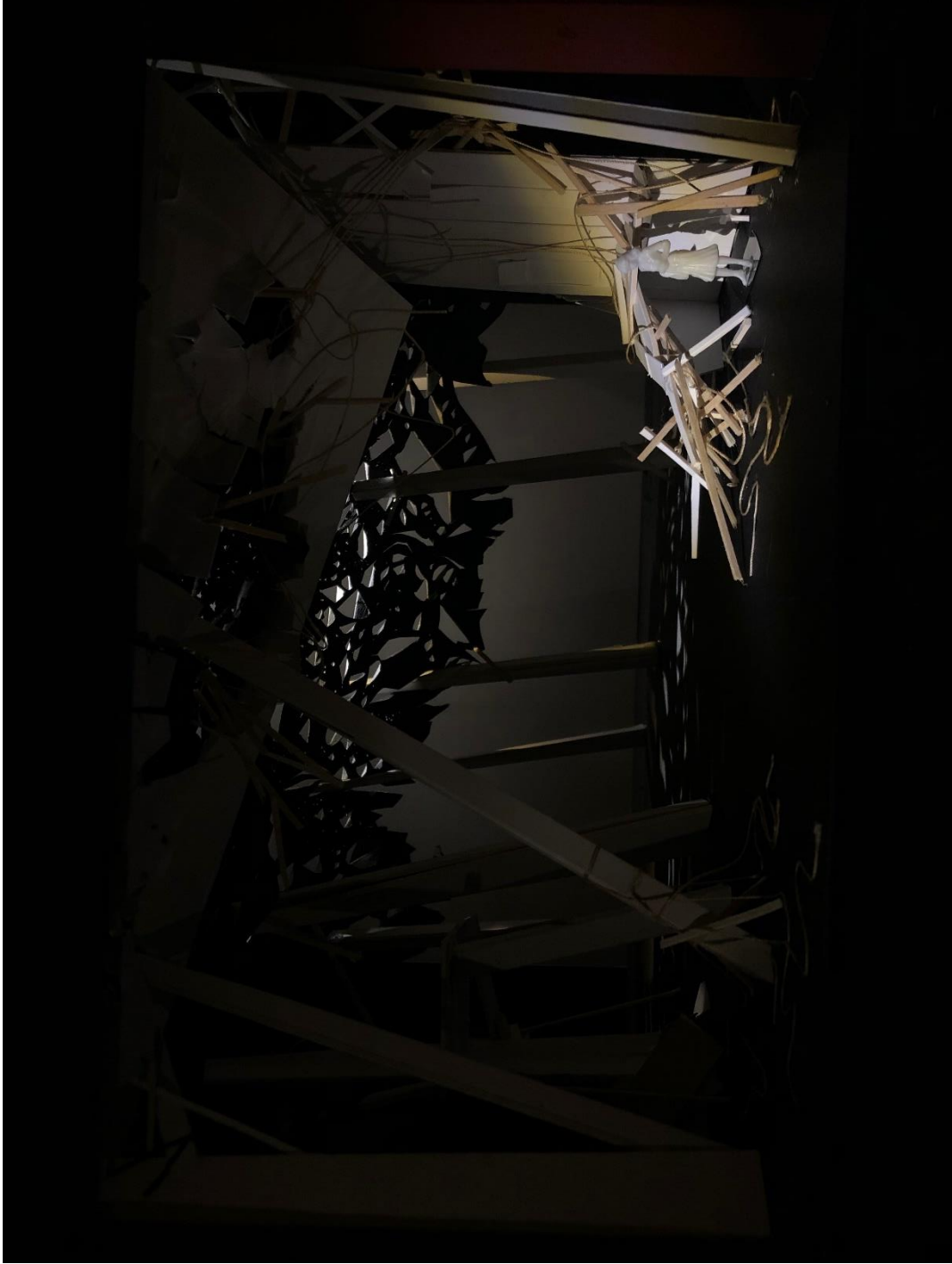


Figure 17



Figure 18



Figure 19



Figure 20

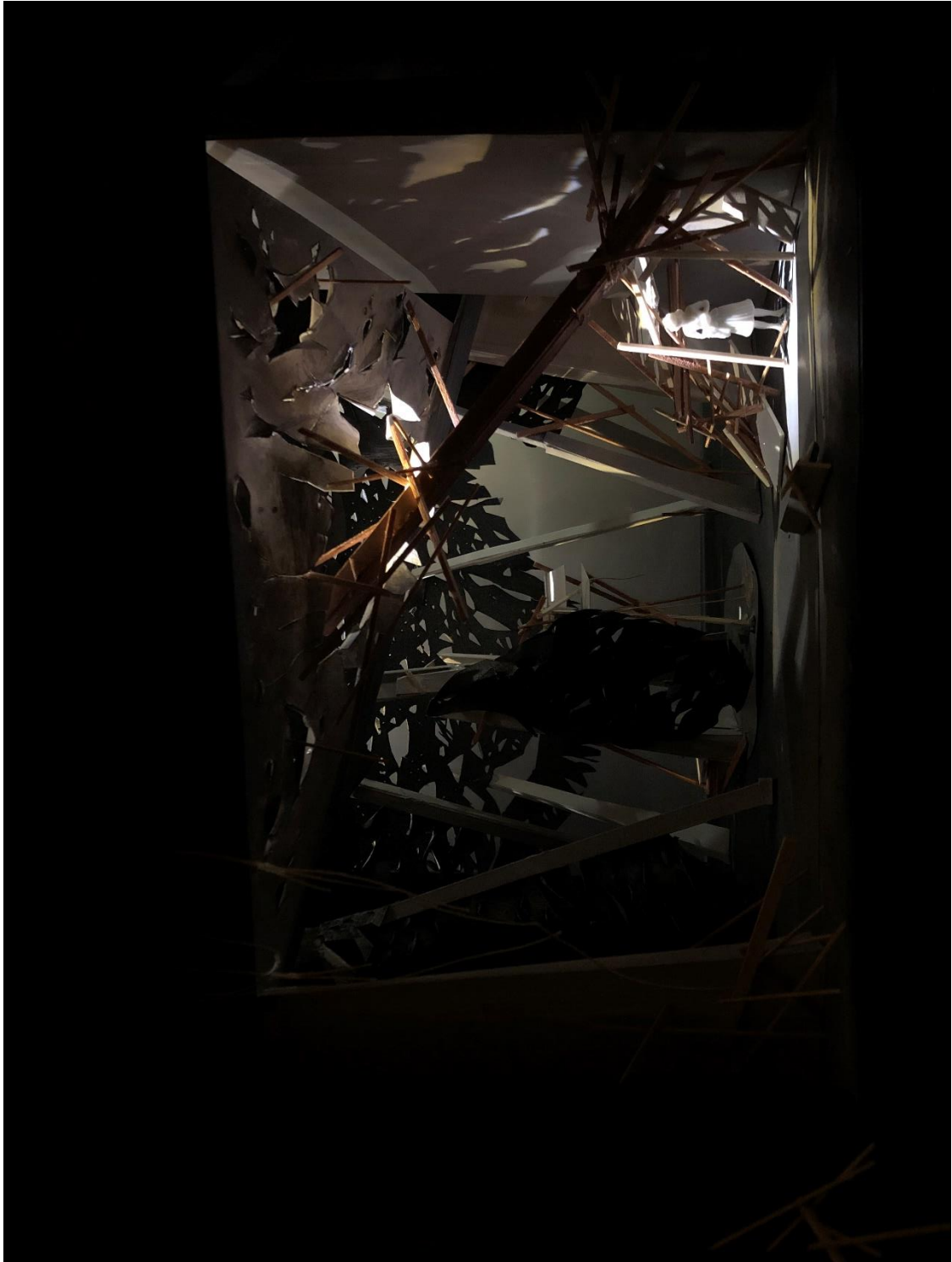


Figure 21

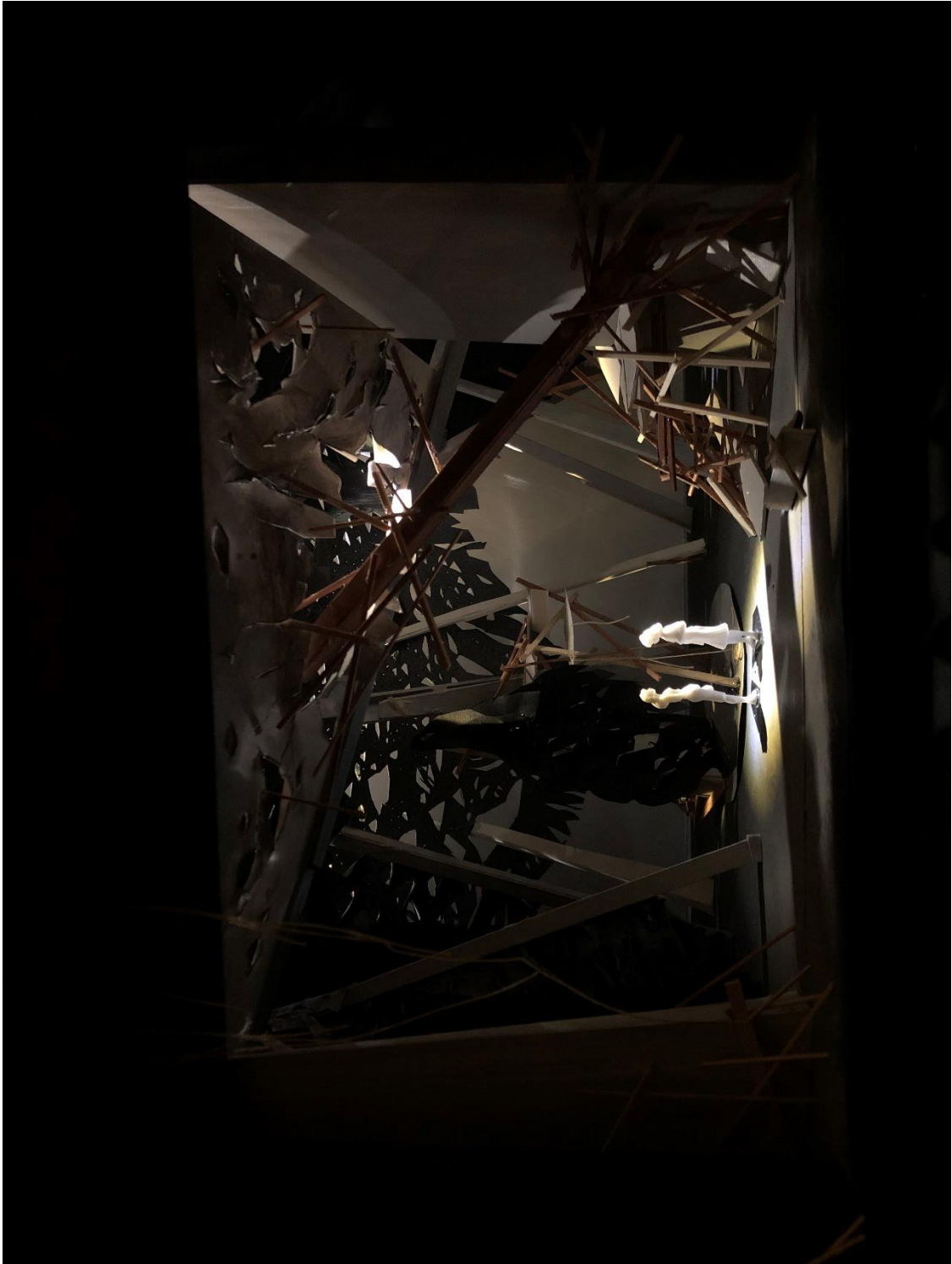


Figure 22



Figure 23

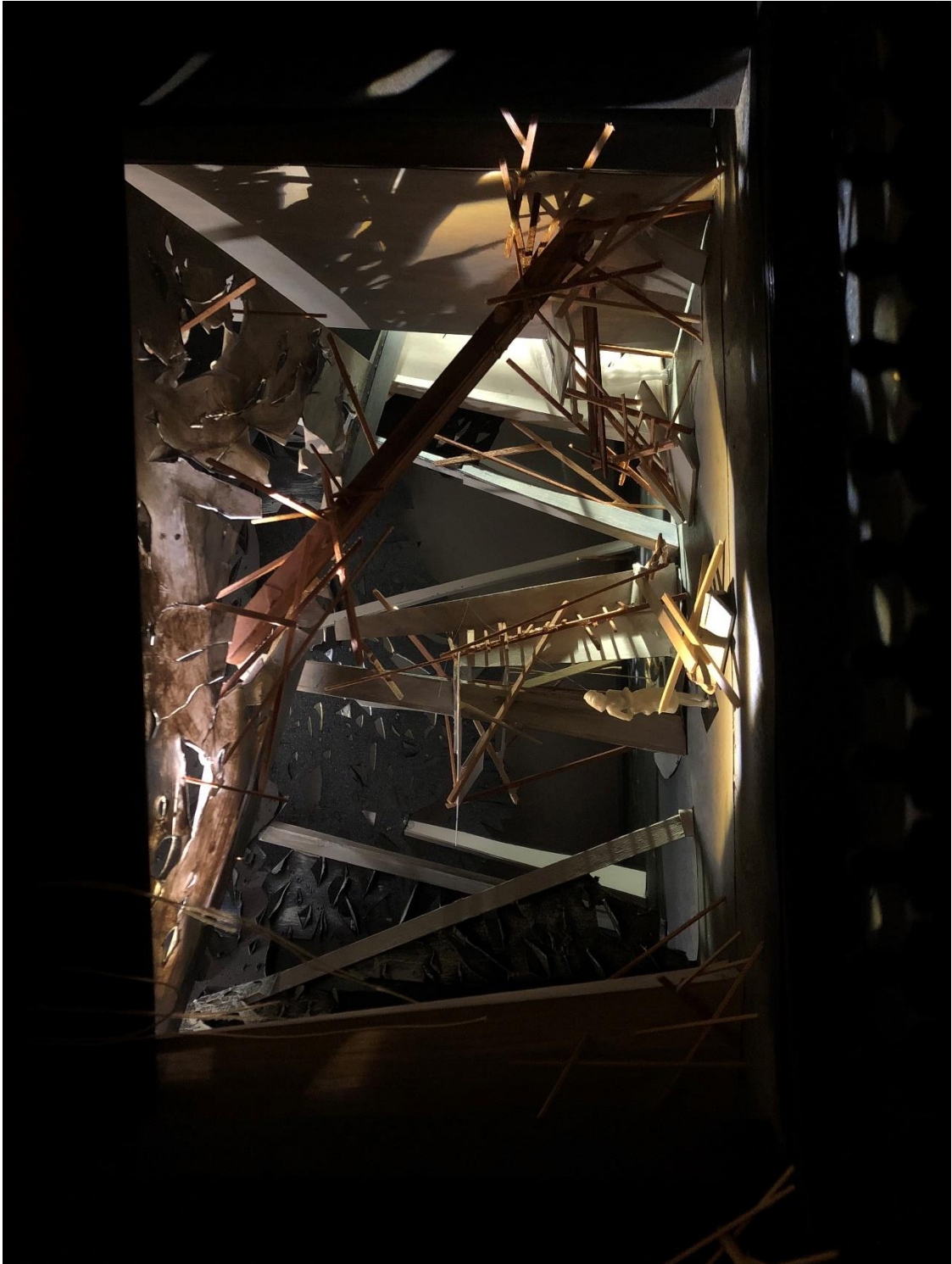


Figure 24



Figure 25

OPENING



Figure 26

FARM

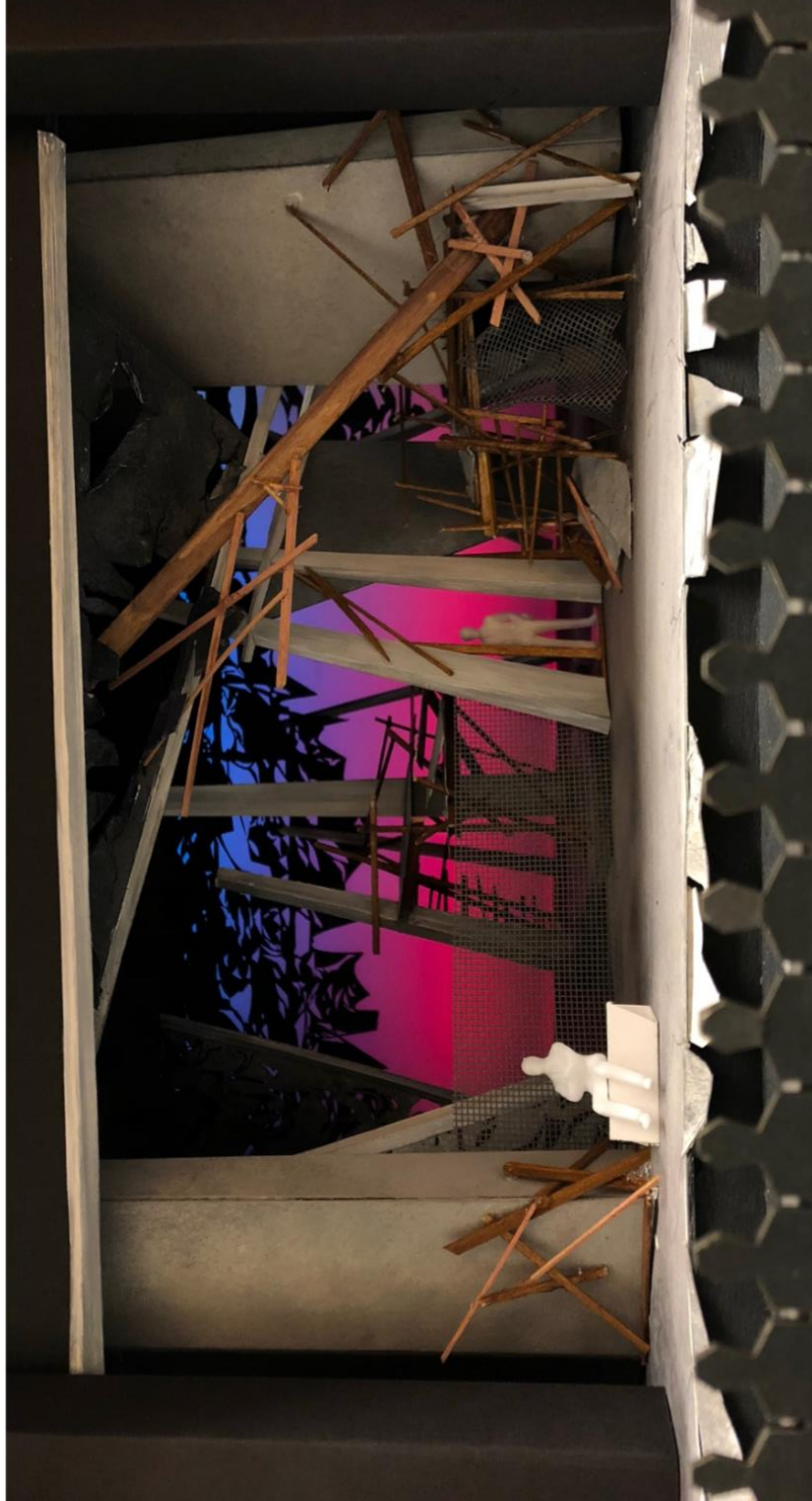


Figure 27

ACT II OPEN ON THE BADGER'S DEN

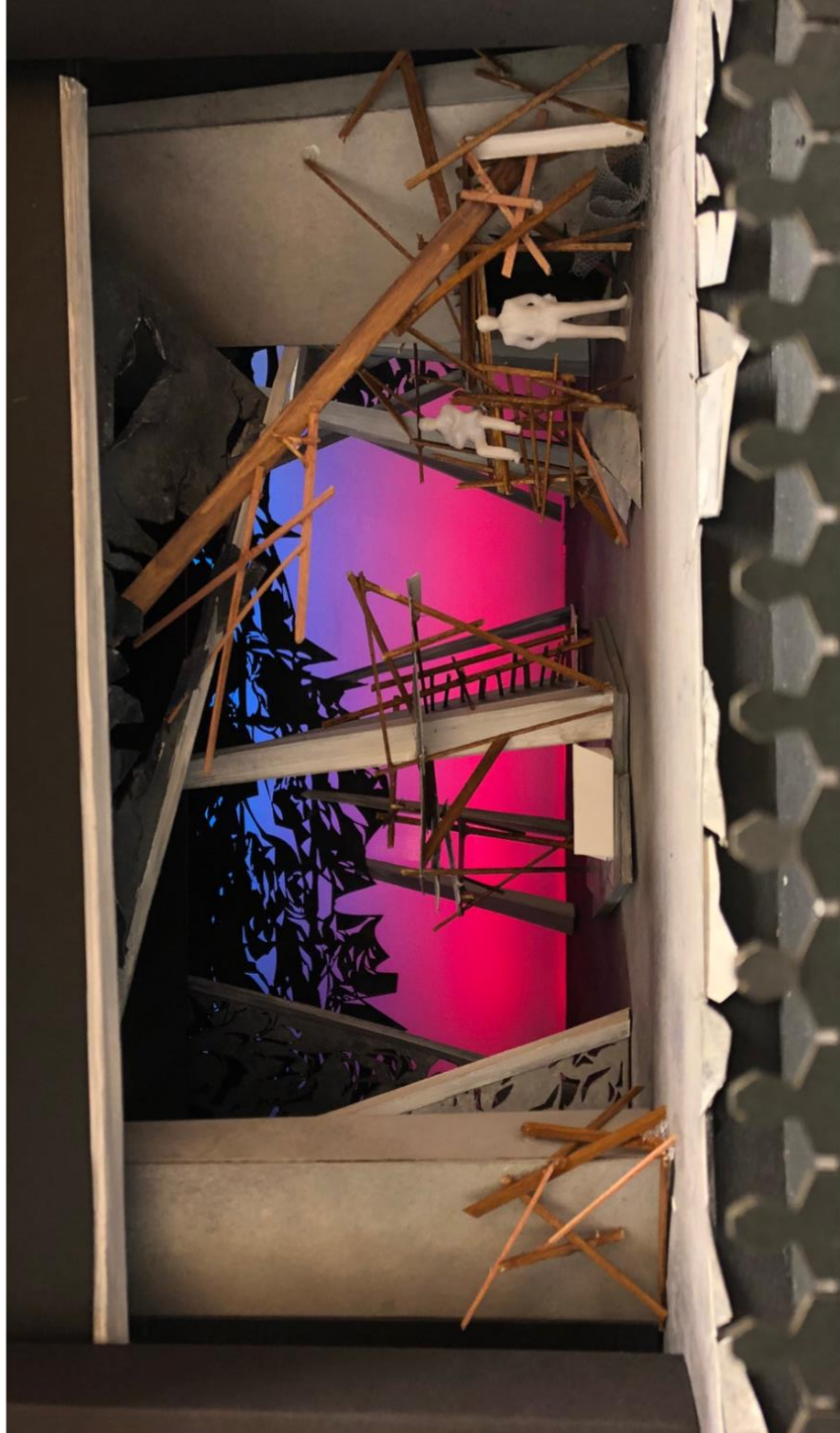


Figure 28

WEDDING OF VIXEN AND FOX



Figure 29

ACT III: THE FOREST (FORESTER SETS THE TRAP)



Figure 30

THE FOREST (SUNFLOWER IDEA)

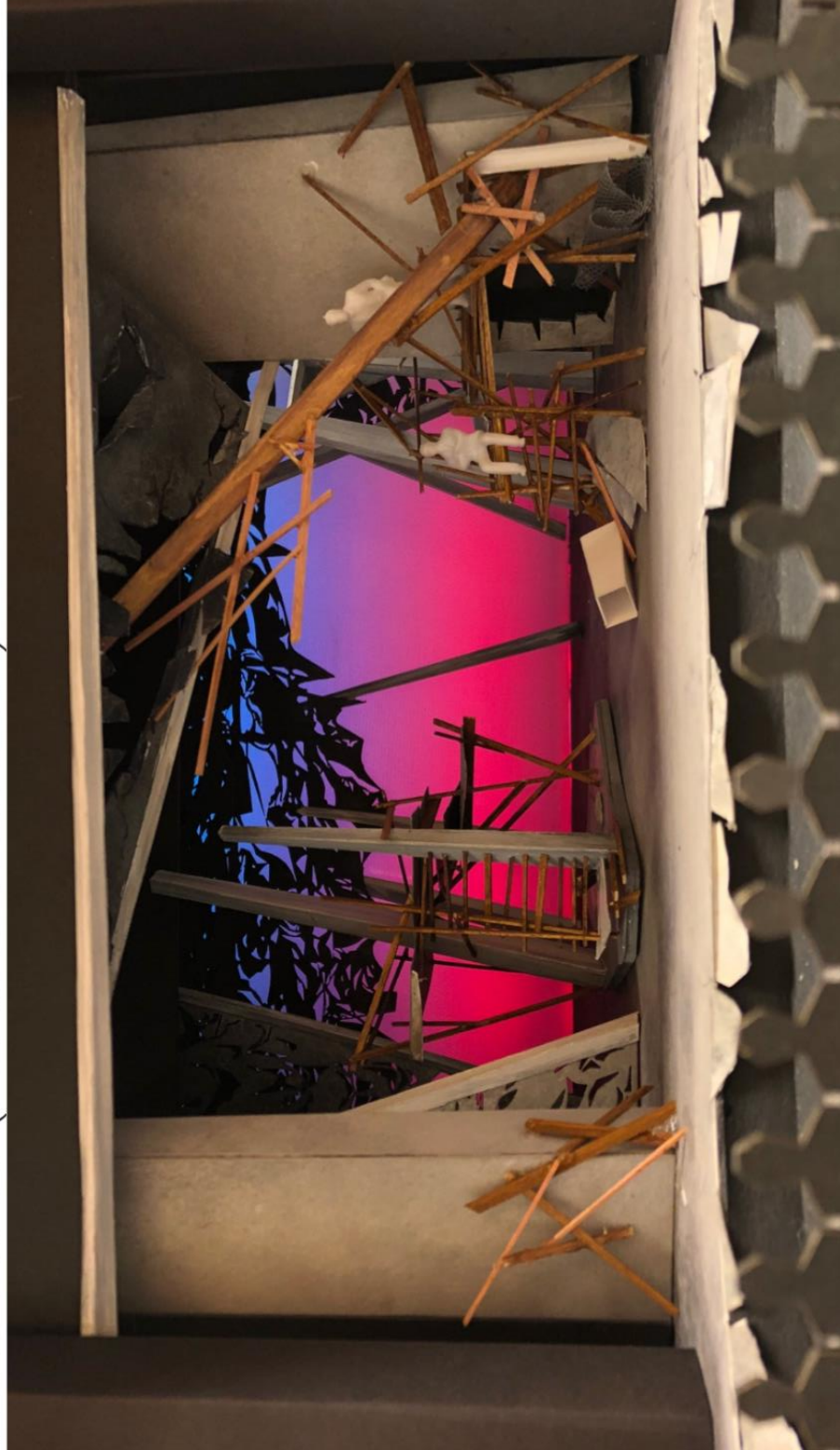


Figure 31

FINAL SCENE



Figure 32

THE PRODUCTION PROCESS

2.1 DRAFTING AND COSTOUT

The next step was to render the sketches and model as organized plans. The drafting portion was intimidating trying to compose such a chaotic and organic sculpture into a calculated and clean drawing of instruction. The ground plan (Figure 33) was straightforward because it indicated where the larger structures and legs would sit on the floor. I shifted these parts in the space to accommodate accurate sightlines. The section was also detailed to communicate what borders would have to be added in response to placing a ceiling in the space.

As discussions arose about the practicality of levels and structure, there was a very fluid conversation on how flexible this design was. The main levels that were built on the turntable were drafted to be thin sheets of walkable area with the note of “add supports where needed,” (Figure 38). With constant conversation between the shop and I, this process made it seem as if I was designing with carpenters as well. The flexible nature of the design even allowed a styled freedom in how the structures were built.

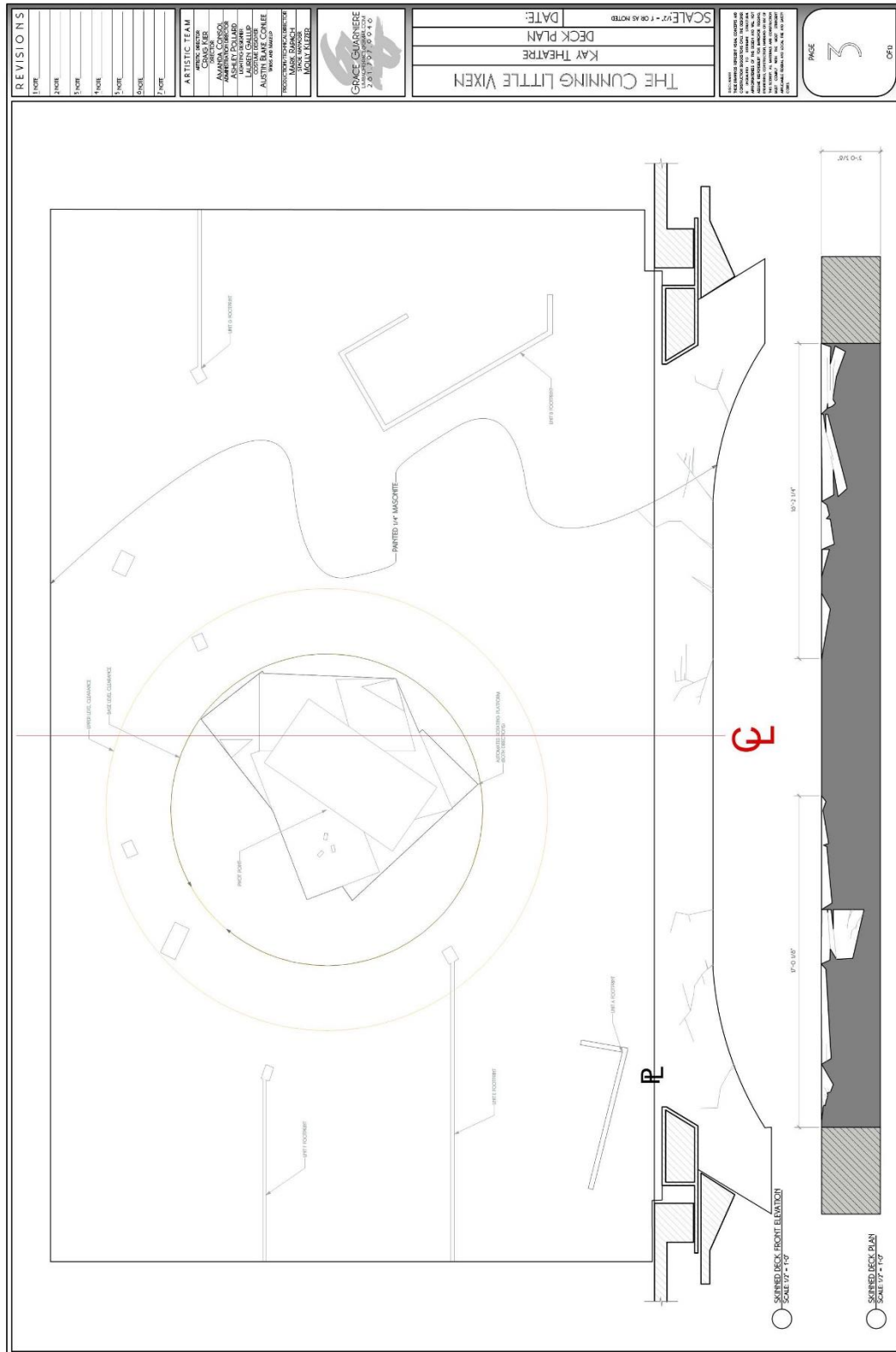
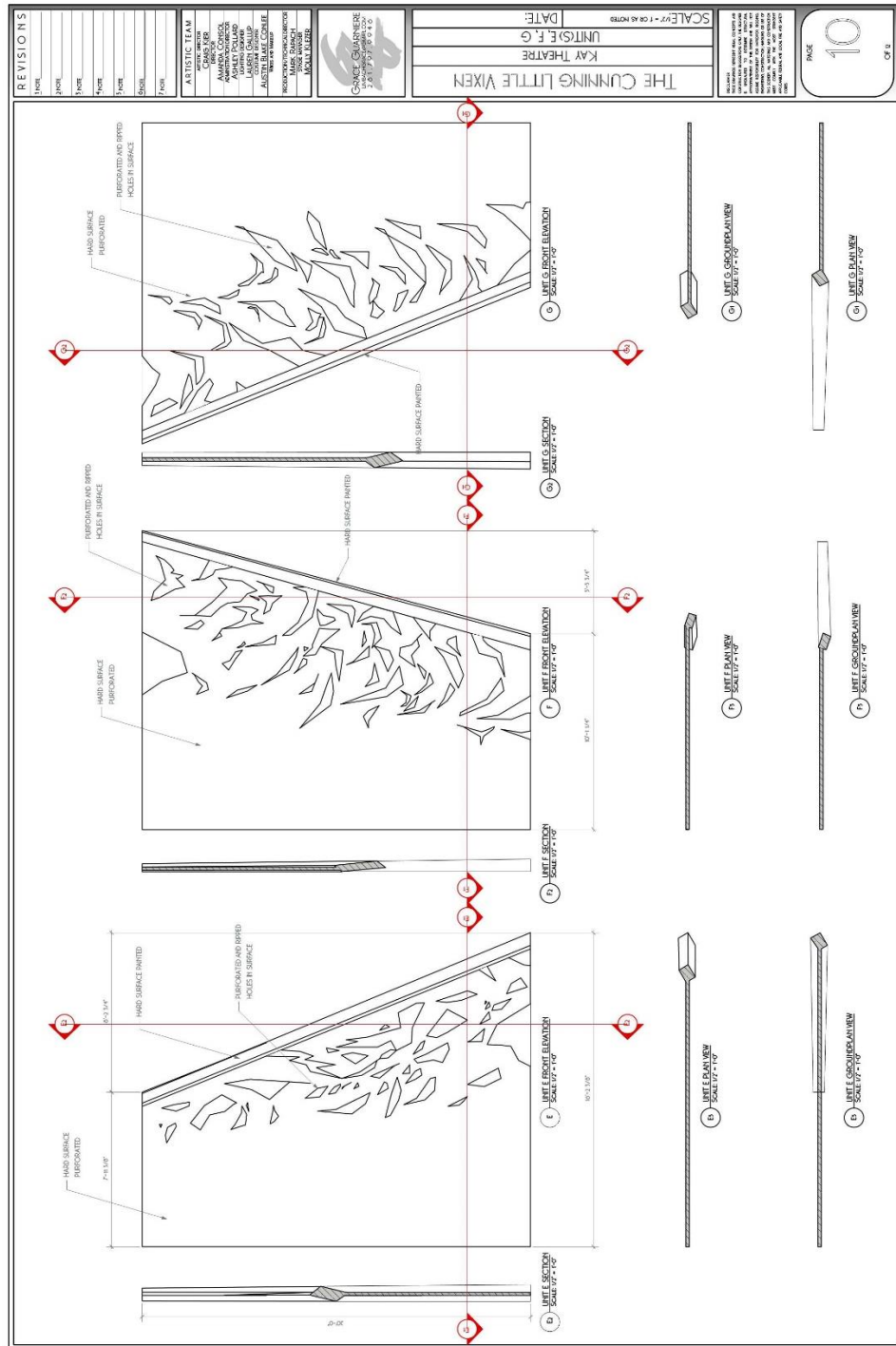


Figure 35

Figure 37



2.2 PAINT ELEVATIONS

Paint elevations are created to communicate how the set should be painted to the scenic paint charge (Figures 44-47). The charge uses these elevations to cost out the paint needed to complete the set as well as develop samples in how to execute these applications. With the help of digital brushes and stamps on photoshop, I was able to create the desired texture of the environment. The scenic charge reaches out with any questions and updates for the samples during the process.

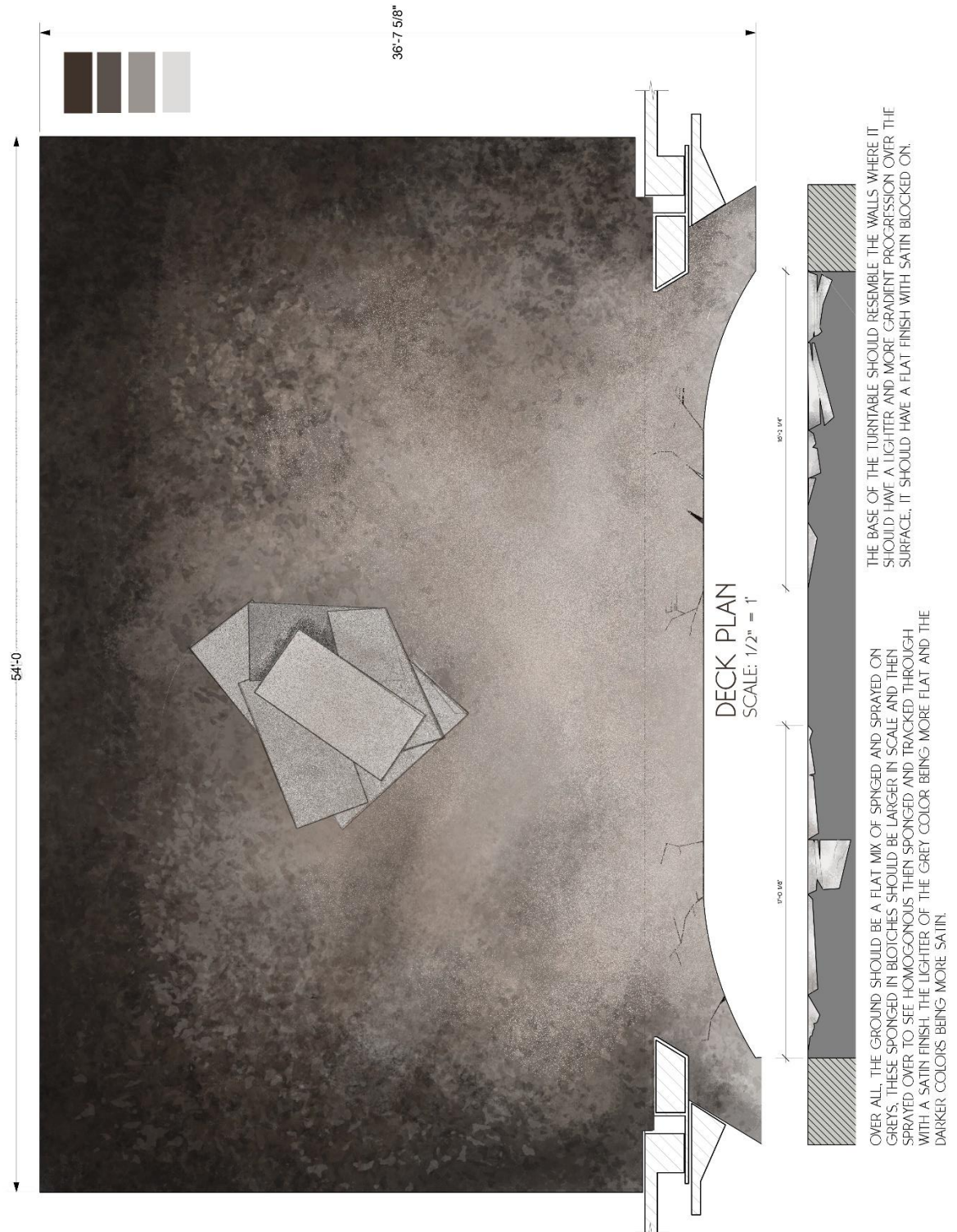


Figure 44

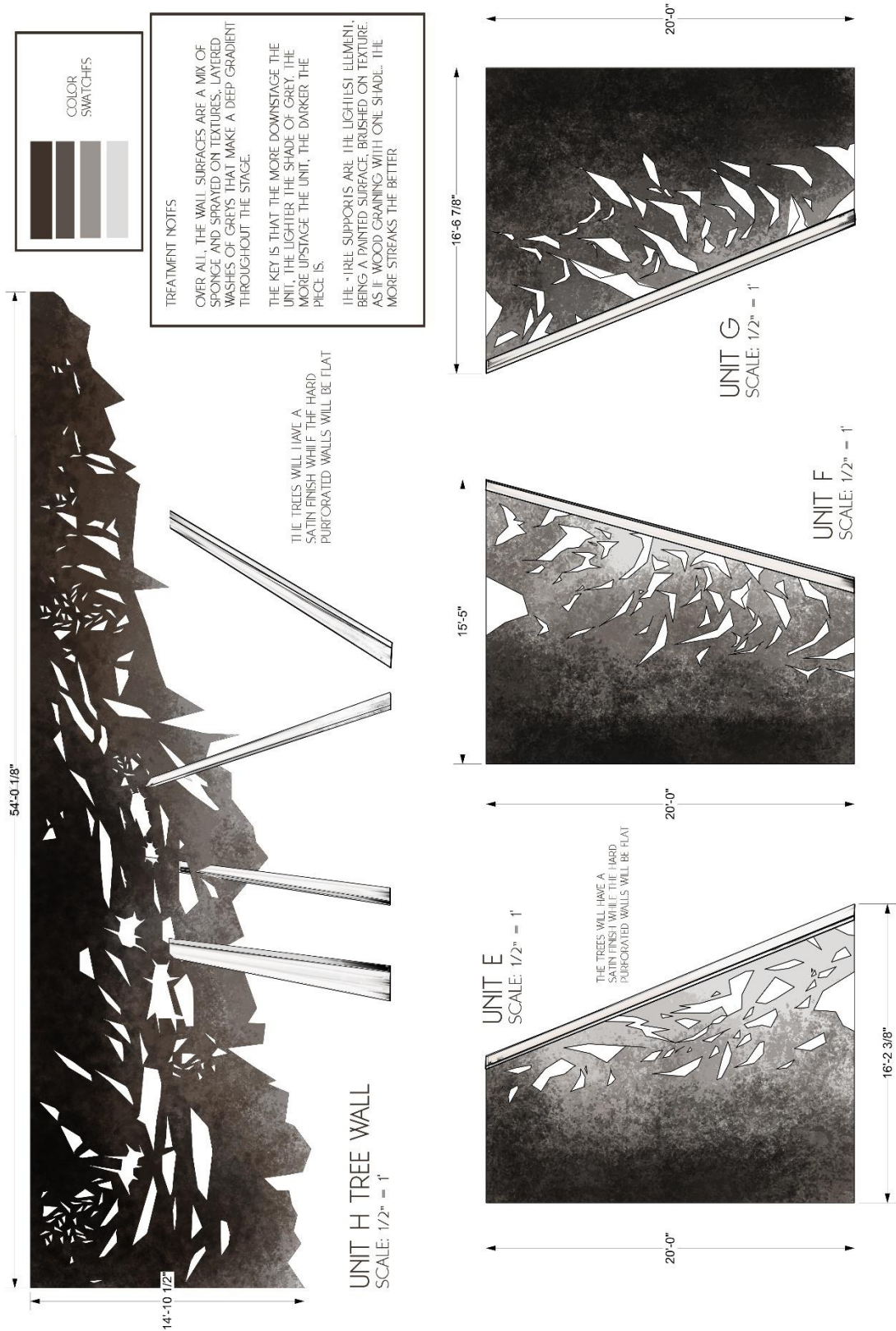


Figure 45

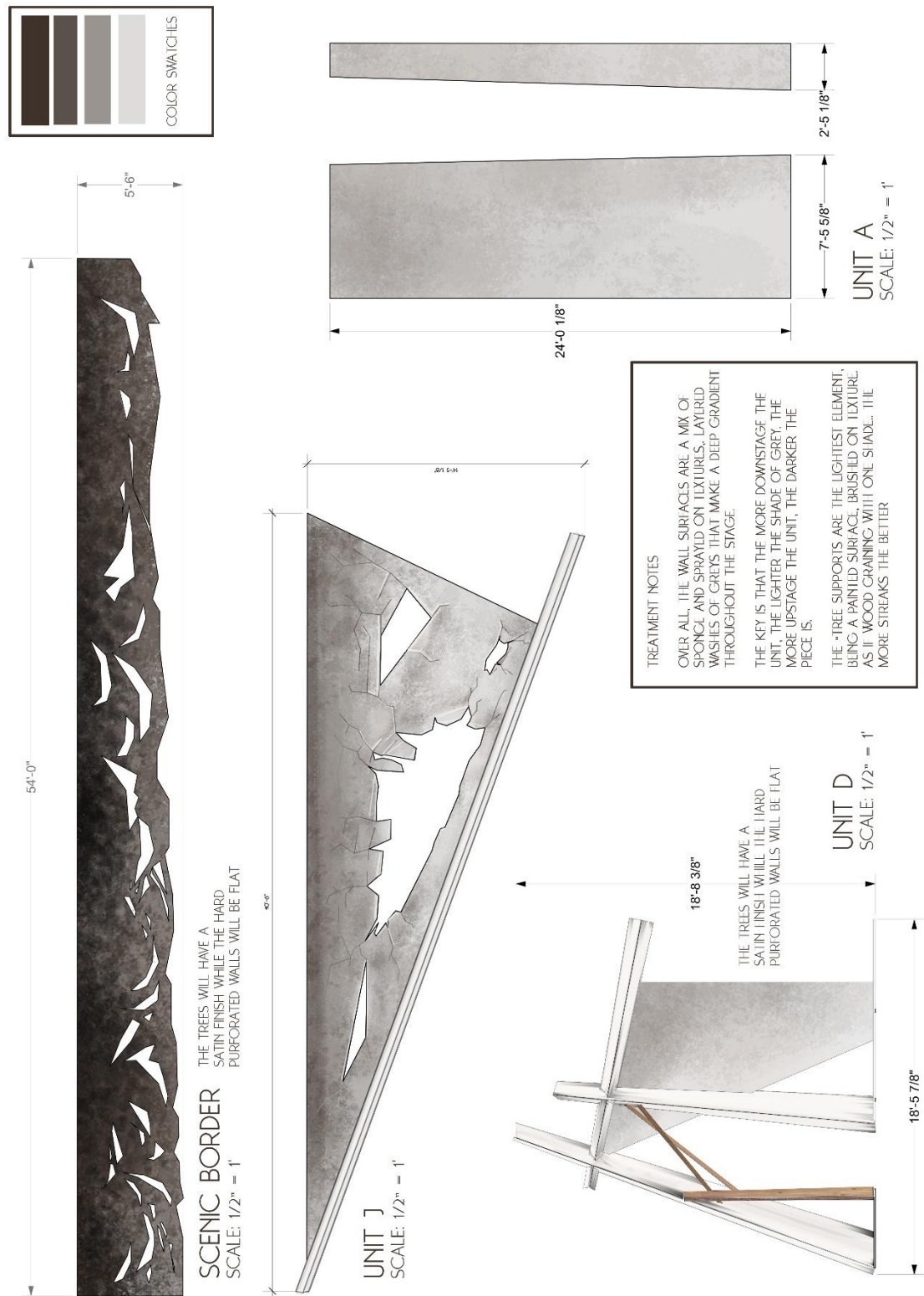


Figure 46

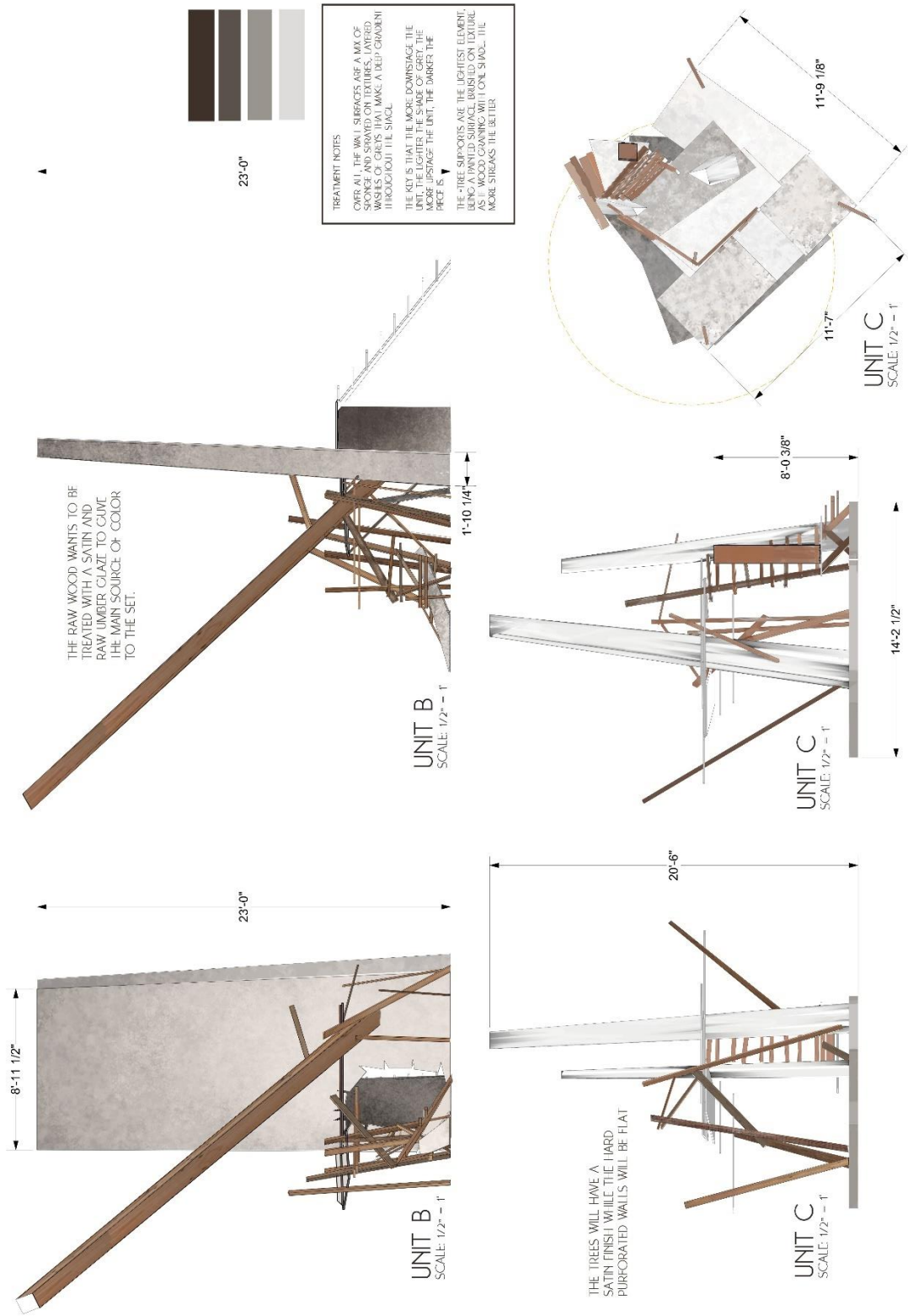


Figure 47

2.3 PROPERTIES LIST

A Properties list (Figure 48-53) is created to request what props are needed in the opera and to specify quantity, description and organization of each prop. This list was created in collaboration closely with Amanda to facilitate character choices. The properties master references this list when itemizing each prop. Items that are built, borrowed and bought are specified to enable a more concise cost-out.

The Cunning Little Vixen

Props List							
Maryland Opera Studio, University of Maryland				Director: Amanda Consol			
Updated: 2/26/2020				Designer: Grace Guarniere			
<p>- See Grace's "Prop Book" on box for pictures of props</p> <p>- Human Props: Utilitarian, clean, simple in design and line, deprived of color and has a uniformity from one item to another</p> <p>- Animal Props: Old items from human world where there was color and expression, these will be worn out, broken and repurposed for an unusual use then its previous intention.</p> <p>- Domesticated Animal Props: So these are animal props that are the middle ground between human and animal, they are human props that have been used roughly by animals."</p>							
Prop #	Prop	Description (location, paint, function)	Qty.	Needed in Reh Y/N	Currently in Reh Y/N	Final Y/N	Notes/Questions
FURNITURE/HAND PROPS							
1	Smoking Pipe	Animal: -Badger uses this it does not have to emit smoke - Simple matte Black pipe		Yes			
2	Forrester's Rifle	Human: - This is worn on the Forrester's back and handled in the forest. - It does not go off - It wants to be Matte black, or charcoal grey, sleek and simple. Utility only. - With strap		Yes			
3	"Stool"	Used by humans, broken by animals: - So these are actually what would be chopped down trees in our world. They will need to support weight, and be sit-able, they are more like uncomfortable geometric logs! - They will receive the same paint treatment as the drafted trees for the hard legs.		Yes			- How many do we have?
3.1	"Bench"	Used by humans, broken by animals: - So these are actually what would be chopped down trees in our world. They will need to support weight, and be sit-able, they are more like uncomfortable geometric logs! - They will receive the same paint treatment as the drafted trees for the hard legs.		Yes			- How many do we have?

Figure 48

4	Flask	<p>Human:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carried by Forrester in his bag. - It is a flask painted matte white to look clean and part of the world. - Trying to stray away from a classic flask shape. 	1	Yes			
5	Farm Fence	<p>From Human:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hung up to define the farm boundaries - Will need to be a minimum of 20' in length and 6' in height - This needs to be secured on the back most stage center point on unit A and connected to the rolling wall unit. 		Yes			
6	Dish Towel	<p>Human:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Linen Dish towels used to do work around the farm - Wipe things up 	2	Yes			
7	Shallow water dish	<p>For dog from humans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The dog bowl that is placed out for water - Wants to be grey or white. - Just simple plain and neat. 	1	Yes			
8	Rope and Pivot point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used to hold back the vixen from a fixed point in the mound down stage center. This needs to be useable and be pulled on. The rope has to travel through the ring of the ring pull to be pulled back and forth but the ability to lay flat when we are not playing with it. 	1	TBD			Let's talk at the production meeting. We'll need a way to play with this in the rehearsal hall in some form.
9	Eggs	<p>From Animal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Off cuts of the set no bigger than 2" x 2" but definitely the same material as what is making up the mounds. - They can be an assortment of angles and fun! - These will be painted to be natural wood and also white. Varying them like real chicken eggs. - They are held in the chickens pockets and laid on stage. 	6	Yes			
10	Sticks/Lumber	<p>Torn apart by animals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specifically we will need plenty of 1x1, 2x2, and 2x4 in the space, and no smaller than 2'6" long. - These will be painted to be natural wood. - This lives as set dressing that is moved throughout the piece. - Need 1x1 at 4' and 3.5' (x2) - We need a minimum of 6 pieces that range from 4'-6' 	2 - 1x1 3 more assorted	Yes			
11	Tea Cup	<p>For Badger (Animal):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fancy, no saucer, just a beautiful cup! - More character the better, possibly chipped. - Anything ornate and unique will work! 	1	Yes			

Figure 49

12	Dirty Liquor bottle	Animal: - A small liquor bottle (brown) with grime on the bottom!	1	Yes			
13	Compass SUN DIAL!!!	This is used like a compass	1	Yes			
14	Notebook	For Dog (domesticated animal): - Pen needs to write in notebook - Notebook wants to be simple, small, 8"-9" tall and paperback - Can distress be added to this cover and poetry written in the pages.	1	Yes			
14.1	Pen for PROP #14	For Dog (domesticated animal): - Pen needs to write in notebook	1	Yes			
15	Spade	Human: - Stylized Spade - The tip of the shovel can be painted a matte grey and the handle be white	1	Yes			
15.1	Hoe	Human: - The Hoe has same treatment as spade (PROP #15) - It is only carried on and off stage	1	Yes			
16	School bags	Human: - Backpacks for the school children. - Clean modern, simple	2	Yes			
17	Badgers Curtains	Animal but trying to be domestic: - Curtains that the badger has Acquired and placed up for his home. - No smaller than a 6x4 with fringe! - And in the blue or cool family - This may be a carpet that is hung to look like curtains on a permanent rung across the mound.		Yes			For rehearsal we would like a lighter fabric that can be held up by music stands
18	Vixen Curtains	Animal: - The vixen takes over the badgers home and puts up her own touches "curtains" to look like patched together cloth! - Patched together fabric scraps (discuss with costumes for off cuts.) - Not fully rectangular, Very roughly patched together		Yes			For rehearsal we would like a lighter fabric that can be held up by music stands
19	Bottles	Humans: - Simple and clean bottles with corks on top to close. - White and grey bottles, with a ceramic feel.	1	Yes			
20	Inn Tray	Human: - Deep tray, white, to carry in drinks and cups	1	Yes			
21	Cups	Human: - To Drink from, to be carried in on tray	4	Yes			
22	Playing Cards	Human: - Playing cards, modern, sleek, monochromatic	1 deck	Yes			

Figure 50

23	The Pipe	For Pastor (Human): - Pipe is used on stage, does not need to emit smoke! - Modern design, matte white with a black stem.	1	Yes			
24	The School Teacher's Book	Human: - Larger textbook. - Black and hardcover, simple. - No text unless it has a Latin title	1	Yes			
25	Notebook	For Pastor (human): - Small pocket book of scriptures! - No larger than 5"x3" - We want gold lettering of a cross and a soft cover. - Does not want to have letters though - No thicker than 1/2"					CUT
26	Spin wheel / Sunflower	Animal: - Made to be mistaken as a sunflower, this spin wheel wants to be made from yellow paper and has been played with by animals, so some wear and tear on it, maybe some grime		Yes			This needs to be made onstage - from various fabric bits and a smaller 1x1 (maybe 2')
27	"Rabbit"	- Fox offers this to the Vixen, it wants to be a fuzzy fabric filled to dangle like a dead rabbit but not made from real fur. - Filling a fuzzy frayed knit with sand or something that acts like a dead rabbit when tossed around					COSTUMES WILL BE MAKING THIS
28	Marriage Fabric	Animal: - To be used to resemble a Hoopa made by the animals. - A flow light weight linen. - Can have some tearing to it! - 10'x10' - This is built on stage by the animals, will be preset on the turning unit		Yes			For rehearsal, we would like something slightly smaller
29	Poacher Rifle	Human: - This is meant to resemble the other rifle (PROP #2) but should be wood grained and more Organic looking as a color - With a strap	1	Yes			
30	Poacher Backpack	Human: - To hold pelts and all his poaching necessities - We like the wire look to it! - With strap		Yes			
31	Fox Trap	Human: - This is suppose to be a big fox trap that is 2' large in diameter! - We want it to be able to close but it does not have to snap shut!		Yes			What will this look like?
32	Miscellaneous toys	Animal (in mounds): - Old rackets, broken, will be used as an instrument, strings dangling or damaged is ideal - Nothing should be new. They're all well worn and half-broken.		Yes			Can we have these on day 1?

Figure 51

33	Tape bundle	Animal (in mounds): - Brown packaging tape to tape all over and make a tangled mess.					
34	Shag-rug(s)	Animal (in mounds): - Shag-rug to have as a "burial material"					CUT
35	Colorful rug(s)	Animal (in mounds): - Colorful ripped rug, tattered and having strings unraveling from the piece is better!		TBD			
36	Old Jump Rope	Animal (in mounds): - Old jump rope, colorful but faded	1	Yes			
37	Torn up shirts and fabrics.	Animal (in mounds): - Torn up shirts and fabrics. - Consult with costumes for colors.		Yes			MORE ITEMS THAN YOU THINK. WE NEED THIS IN REHEARSAL DAY 1. Shouldn't all be torn up. Some are clothing items that can be found and worn/added to costumes in conversation with Austin.
38	Baseball Glove	Animal (in mounds): - Broken glove, torn, can be torn on stage		Yes			
39	Slinky	Animal (in mounds): - Classic metal slinky		Yes			
40	Instruments	Animal (in mounds): - Broken guitars, Mallets and drum sticks, tambourines with no chimes.		Yes			
41	Metal Fan Cover	Animal (in mounds): - Metal fan cover! - Used as a basket or a shield.		Yes			
42	Miscellaneous lamp-shades	Animal (in mounds): - Eclectic lampshade, ripped or able to be broken: - Worn as a hat or used as an unsuccessful bowl for items.					CUT
43	Flip Flops	Animal (in mounds): - Flip flops (x2 pairs) - Do not have to match, worn, colorful flip flops, or old odd shoes.	2 pairs	Yes			- Conversation with Austin about look
44	Fanny packs	Animal (in mounds): - Fanny pack, no label, tacky warm color, to collect and hold items.		TBD			- Conversation with Austin about look
45	Fire Blanket	Animal (in mounds): - Fire blanket. - Thin Mylar type sheet.		Yes			
46	Bike Tires	Animal (in mounds): - Bike tires (x3) - Thin and light weight, dirty, they will be used to throw or used as hula hoops	3	Yes			CLICK FOR REFERENCE LINK

Figure 52

47	Forrester's bag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This has to hold the bear trap and flask - It wants to be as large - A neutral grey or black color! - But the over all shape should be a sack that can hold everything! 		Yes			CLICK FOR REFERENCE LINK
48	Currency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bland ceramic heavy coins. - Thick disks, can be cut dowel painted white. - Need at minimum 16 coins. 	Minimum 10 coins	Yes			
49	Protest Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - These signs are pieces of cardboard that read "milostpa'n (the accent is over the a). - They are 3 various sizes. They are about 2', 1.5' and a very small one about 8"x1' 	3				
50	Ball of Yarn	Red: Ask Austin for color	1				
51	Knitting Needles	Standard needles	2				
52	Small Book	The book is about the size of the palm of your hand	1				
53							
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Figure 53

2.4 PROPERTIES BOOK

A Properties book contains a more detailed description of each prop as well as accompanies the prop with additional research and reference images. It also includes details about set dressing as well as a detailed explanation on how the prop is being used and, if asked, who is using the prop. This book is created with the director to add any specification necessary for the props needed. There is a preface in this book to help the properties master also make stylized decisions while gathering, buying and building each prop.

The Cunning Little Vixen Prop's Book

Scenic Designer: Grace Limbach Guarneire (281) 797 9946

When distinguishing props use these guidelines

- Human Props: Utilitarian, clean, simple in design and line, deprived of color and has a uniformity from one item to another
- Animal Props: Old items from human world where there was color and expression, these will be worn out, broken and repurposed for an unusual use then its previous intention.
- Domesticated Animal Props: So these are animal props that are the middle ground between human and animal, they are human props that have been used roughly by animals.

Figure 54

The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

1. Smoking Pipe for Animal

Badger Uses this It does not have to Emit Smoke

Simple matte Black pipe



The Cunning Little Vixen

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2. Forrester's Rifle for Human

This is worn on the Forrester's back and handled in the forest

It does not go off

It wants to be Matte black, or charcoal grey, sleek and simple. Utility only.



Figure 55

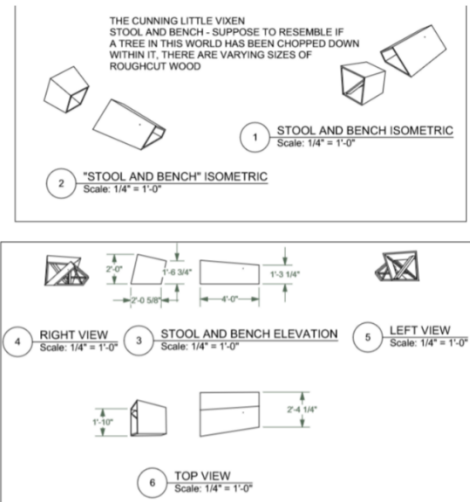
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3. "Stool" and "Bench" Used by humans, broken by animals

So these are actually what would be chopped down trees in our world. They will need to support weight, and be sit-able, they are more like uncomfortable geometric logs!

They will receive the same paint treatment as the drafted trees for the hard legs.



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4. Flask for human

Carried by Forrester in his bag.

It is a flask painted matte white to look clean and part of the world. Trying to stray away from a classic flask shape.



Figure 56

The Cunning Little Vixen

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5. Farm Fence from Humans

Hung up to define the farm boundaries

Will need to be a minimum of 20' in length and 6' in height

This needs to be secured on the back most stage center point on unit A and connected to the rolling wall unit. We can discuss practicality when hanging.



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6. Dish Towel for humans

Linen Dish towels used to do work around the Farm, Wipe things up.



Figure 57

The Cunning Little Vixen

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7. Shallow water dish for dog from humans

The dog bowl that is placed out for water
Wants to be grey or white. Just simple plain
and neat.



The Cunning Little Vixen

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8. Rope and Pivot point

Used to hold back the vixen from a fixed point
in the mound down stage center. This needs
to be useable and be pulled on. The rope has
to travel through the ring of the ring pull to be
pulled back and forth but the ability to lay flat
when we are not playing with it.



Figure 58

The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

9. Eggs from Animals

Off cuts of the set no bigger than 2"x2" but definitely the same material as what is making up the mounds. They can be an assortment of angles and fun!

These will be painted to be natural wood and also white, Varying them like real chicken eggs.

They are held in the chickens pockets and laid on stage.



The Cunning Little Vixen

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10. Sticks/ lumber torn apart by animals

Specifically we will need plenty of 1x1, 2x2, and 2x4 in the space, and no smaller than 2'6" long. These will be painted to be natural wood.

This lives as set dressing that is moved throughout the piece.

Need 1x1 at 4' and 3.5' (x2)

We need a minimum of 6 pieces that range from 4'-6'



Figure 59

The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

11. Tea Cup for Badger(Animal)

Fancy, no saucer, just a beautiful cup!
More character the better, possibly chipped.
Anything ornate and unique will work!



The Cunning Little Vixen

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12. Dirty Liquor bottle for animal

A small liquor bottle (brown) with grime on the bottom! Will have to be drunk on stage!

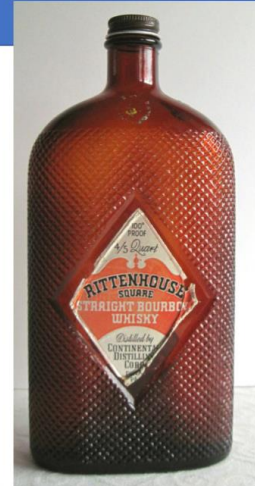
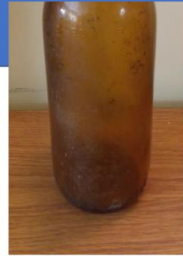


Figure 60

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13. Compass SUN DIAL!!!

This is used like a compass



The Cunning Little Vixen

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14. Notebook and pen for dog (domesticated animal)

Pen needs to write in notebook

Notebook wants to be simple, small, 5x3-7x5 and paperback

And can distress be added to this cover and poetry written in the pages.



Figure 61

The Cunning Little Vixen

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15. Spade and Hoe for humans

Stylized Spade,

If the tip of the shovel can be painted a matte grey and the handle be white, it would be perfect.

Can the Hoe have same treatment as spade
It is only carried on and off stage



The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

16. School bags (2) For humans

Backpacks for the school children. Clean
modern, simple



Figure 62

The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

17. Badgers Curtains Animal but trying to be domestic

Curtains that the badger has Acquired and placed up for his home. No smaller than a 6x4 with fringe! And in the blue or cool color family

This may be a carpet that is hung to look like curtains on a permanent rung across the mound.



The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

18. Vixen Curtains for animals

The vixen takes over the badgers home and puts up her own touches "curtains" to look like patched together cloth!

Patched together fabric scraps (discuss with costumes for off cuts.)

Not fully rectangular, Very roughly patched together



Figure 63

The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

19. Bottles (2-3) for humans

Simple and clean bottles with corks on top to close.

White and grey bottles, with a ceramic feel.



The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

20. Inn Tray for humans

Deep tray, white, to carry in drinks and cups



Figure 64

The Cunning Little Vixen

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21. Cups (4) for Humans

To Drink from, to be carried in on tray



The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

22. Playing Cards (human)

Playing cards, modern, sleek, monochromatic



Figure 65

The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

23. The Pipe for Pastor (human)

Pipe is used on stage, does not need to emit smoke!

Modern design, matte white with a black stem



The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

24. The School Teacher's Book(human)

Larger textbook. Black and hardcover, simple, no text unless it has a Latin title



Figure 66

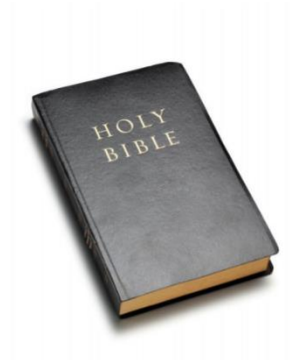
The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

25. Notebook for Pastor(human)

Small pocket book of scriptures! No larger
than 5"x3"

We want gold lettering of a cross and a soft
cover, Does not want to have letters though
No thicker than 1/2"



The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

26. Spin wheel / Sunflower for an animal

Made to be mistaken as a sunflower, this spin
wheel wants to be made from yellow paper
and has been played with by animals, so some
wear and tear on it, maybe some grime



Figure 67

The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guariniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

27. "Rabbit"

The Fox offers this to the Vixen, It wants to be a fuzzy fabric filled to dangle like a dead rabbit but not made from real fur.

Filling a fuzzy frayed knit with sand or something that acts like a dead rabbit when tossed around

Costumes is Building this



The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guariniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

28. Marriage Fabric Animal Prop

to be used to resemble a Hoopa made by the animals. A flow light weight linen. Can have some tearing to it!

10'x10'

This is built on stage by the animals, will be preset on the turning unit



Figure 68

The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

29. Poacher Rifle Human Prop

This is meant to resemble the other rifle but should be wood grained and more Organic looking as a color



The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

30. Poacher backpack Human Prop

To hold pelts and all his poaching necessities
We like the wire look to it!



Figure 69

The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

31. Bear Trap Human prop

This is suppose to be a big bear trap that is 2' large in diameter! We want it to be able to close but it does not have to snap shut!



The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

32. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Old rackets, broken, will be used as an instrument, strings dangling or damaged is ideal



Figure 70

The Cunning Little Vixen

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34. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Shag rug to have as a "burial material"



The Cunning Little Vixen

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33. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Brown packaging tape to tape all over and
make a tangled mess.



Figure 71

The Cunning Little Vixen

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35. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Colorful ripped rug, tattered and having
strings unraveling from the piece is better!



The Cunning Little Vixen

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36. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Old jump rope, colorful but faded



Figure 72

The Cunning Little Vixen

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37. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Torn up shirts and fabrics. Consult with
costumes for colors.



The Cunning Little Vixen

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38. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Broken glove, torn, can be torn on stage



Figure 73

The Cunning Little Vixen

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39. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Slinky



The Cunning Little Vixen

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40. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Instruments!

Broken guitars, Mallets and drum sticks,
tambourines with no chimes.



Figure 74

The Cunning Little Vixen

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41. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Metal fan cover! Used as a basket or a shield.



The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

42. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Eclectic lampshade, ripped or able to be
broken. Worn as a hat or used as an
unsuccessful bowl for items.



Figure 75

The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

43. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Flip flops (x2 pairs)

Do not have to match, worn, colorful flip flops, or old odd shoes.



The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

44. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Fanny pack, no label, tacky warm color, to collect and hold items.

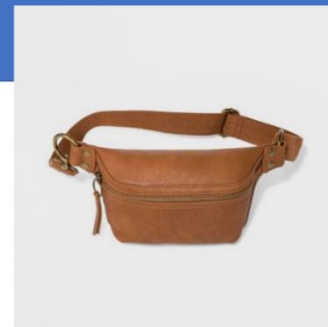


Figure 76

The Cunning Little Vixen

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45. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Fire blanket. Thin Mylar type sheet.



The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

46. Miscellaneous toys (animal props in mounds)

Bike tires (x3)

Thin and light weight, dirty, they will be used
to throw or used as hula hoops

Suggested reference :

Alta Bicycle Tire Duro 26 x 2.125 Bike Thread
Diamond Drizzle Style (Black)
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07K62F2HJ/ref=cm_sw_r_cp_tai_fzjkEbTHAJ5FT



Figure 77

The Cunning Little Vixen

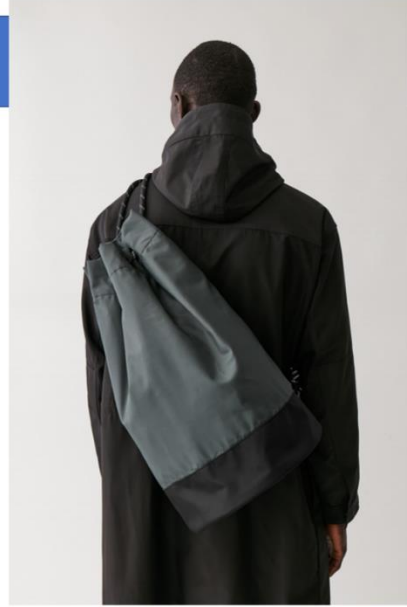
Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

47. Forrester's bag

A human bag. This has to hold the bear trap and flask

OPTION 1 Grey backpack

<https://global.rakuten.com/en/store/mischief/item/10056227/>



The Cunning Little Vixen

Grace Guarniere (281)797.9946 limbachgrace@gmail.com

48. Currency

Bland ceramic heavy coins. Thick disks, can be cut dowel painted white. Need at minimum 16 coins.



Figure 78

REFLECTION

Reflecting on this process, and focusing on the product that we achieved, I believe that the show would have been a success. The conversations between the director and other areas were not only cohesive mentally but visually as well. I found myself excited and inspired finding the humor and details by putting myself in the perspective of the humans or the animals, additionally, finding out where those lines blurred. The concept that we all manifested was part of our impulses when solving design issues and it was an easy enough language that, the shops got involved with their ideas as well.

After there was a model built, the production process was very concise and successful but getting to this point had some flaws. In the initial meetings, there were so many ideas that there was not ever a preference discussed. In the initial meetings there was a platform where every idea was valuable but because each impulse was so different from the next, it was hard to narrow down each concept until the model was presented as a solidified idea. A discovery from this collaboration process was revealed: I would assume that everything that people say in our meetings is truly what they mean. There was a moment when Amanda would describe her idea, and to better understand I would attempt to repeat it back to her, and she would tell me that's not what she meant. This is the moment when I found it helpful to continue repeating her ideas back to her, to interrogate whether I am misinterpreting her words or whether she means what she is saying. This issue was the result of many reiterations of sketches and special ideas. I am proud of what the design became as well as the adjustments that had to be modified when bringing the design into the real space.

There were constant conversations that kept everyone on the same page and enough fresh ideas to keep the project motivated.

This project has had one of the most fluid processes; everyone was involved in every decision in a seamless way. Each creative team member and even some production members, had a voice to create this environment and it was just as flexible as nature in our own civilized world.

EPILOGUE

As the set was being loaded in, Covid-19 began to take effect and brought this process so a skidding halt. There are multiple pieces that were loaded onto the stage and started to fill the space only confirming the grand scale of how powerful this show was going to be. The University of Maryland campus transitioned to an online platform for continuing work, but any organized performances were canceled.

There is now a plan to salvage the items we have access to and combine them into an online experience. This positive outlook on this production hopefully will bring another light to opera and a new accessibility to this artform.

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2019. <<https://www.pinterest.com/lilguarniere/the-cunning-little-vixen/>>

Pinterest. Web. 2020. <<https://www.pinterest.com/>>