

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: FALL MFA DANCE THESIS CONCERT 2023: AN IMMERSIVE WORLD

A SCENIC DESIGN

A DANCE PRODUCTION PRESENTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND - COLLEGE PARK, SCHOOL OF THEATRE, DANCE AND PERFORMANCE STUDIES, CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER'S ROBERT & ARLENE KOGOD THEATRE.

Shartoya R. Jn.Baptiste, Master of Fine Arts, 2024

Thesis directed by: Professor, Misha Kachman, School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies

This thesis seeks to describe the scenic design process for *The Fall MFA Dance Thesis Concert (FMFA)* choreographed by Javier Padilla and Gerson Lanza at the University of Maryland - College Park, School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies through research, documentation, photographs, and other design materials. Some of the following materials included in this thesis were used as tools to convey the scenic design to the choreographers and the production team: research images, sketches, photographs of the 1/4" scale white and colour models, a complete drafting packet, paint elevations, a properties list, and book. Photographs from the production and a written reflection on the design process are also included.

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SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER'S ROBERT & ARLENE KOGOD THEATRE

By

Shartoya R. Jn.Baptiste

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts
2024

Advisory Committee:

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Professor Amith Chandrashaker

Professor KenYatta Rogers

Professor Alvin Mayes

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2024

DEDICATION

This degree is devoted to my ancestors, my family,
my island home - Saint Lucia; to *the land, the people, the light*,
and to the Caribbean's past, present, and future artists.
May our culture, voices, and our art forever be moving, loud, and vibrant.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my immense gratitude to the choreographers who birthed these stories and to the outstanding creative team, production team, performers, and faculty whose cooperation, enthusiasm, and collaboration made this project possible and enjoyable.

Creative Team:

Choreographers - Javier Padilla and Gerson Lanza

Costume Designer - Cody Von Ruden

Lighting Designer - Scott Monnin

Media Designer - Tim Kelly

Sound Designer - Roni Lancaster

Set Decorators - Sofia Olivar, Gavin Mosier, and Margarita Syrocheva

Scenic Assistant - August Henney

Production Team:

Stage Managers - Erin Sanders and Adam Hawley

Technical Director - Micheal Driggers

Production Manager - Jenn Schwartz

Scene Shop Coordinator - Reuven Goren

Scenic Charge - Ann Chismar

Props Manager - Timothy Jones

Performers:

Christina Collins, Isabella Grady, Emily Adams, Caleb Wein, Kevin Clark, Daniel Miramontes, Britney Falcon, Avital Dreslin, Genevieve Fernandez, Debanshi Chowdhuri, Charlene Cowan, Emily Sheridan, Lleyton Beinhaker, Ellington Cartham, Delorean Fullington, Josanne Francis, Morgan Smiley, Javier Padilla, and Gerson Lanza

Faculty:

Misha Kachman, Daniel Conway, and Amith Chandrashaker

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Chapter 1: PRE-PRODUCTION PROCESS

1.1: The Choreographers' Stories

The Fall MFA Dance Thesis Concert (FMFA) was a platform to tell the curated stories of choreographers Javier Padilla (Javi) and Gerson Lanza with their dance pieces entitled *El Bodegón de la Bruja* and *Mi Vida, In Rhythm*, respectively. It was evident from the concept meeting that this dance production would be personal to the choreographers, and an intimate and immersive experience for the audience. Both stories discuss important topics that have personally affected each choreographer. With both stories happening in distinct locations (i.e., Puerto Rico for Javi's and Honduras for Gerson's), and the *FMFA* dance concert being in one shared physical space - The Robert & Arlene Kogod Theatre - I decided to enter this design process with a mentality driven by problem-solving and extra effort in collaboration!

Having a dance background and going into this process already knowing Javi and Gerson on a friendly level, made communication easier. It was an honour to be the scenic designer who brought their stories to life. I was particularly excited about this production because most of the performers were people of colour and both choreographers' stories stemmed from places where the larger population is not caucasian. My first set of tasks as the scenic designer for *FMFA* was to listen to the choreographers' concepts, take note of feelings, places or thoughts for research purposes, observe my initial connections with the physical space and their concepts, and most importantly, dream with them.

In this thesis, I deliberately wrote parts of Javi's and Gerson's stories in the present tense as a conscious effort of manifestation, so their worlds could live with the reader now and in the future. With no further ado, here are their stories they shared during the concept meeting:

1.1.1: *El Bodegón de la Bruja* by Javier Padilla

One of Javi's desires is to use this dance creation as a decolonization tool to comment on the housing crisis happening in his homeland, Puerto Rico. Recently, the residents of Puerto Rico were displaced due to the mass gentrification led by the United States, and by extension, this displacement has affected Puerto Rico's citizens, the agriculture, mangroves, and wetlands on the coast of the island. *El Bodegón de la Bruja*, which translates to "The Witch's Box", is where Javi builds and shares the story of witches versus witch-hunters, where the witches represent the Puerto Rican citizens, and the witch-hunters symbolise the colonisers. The witch-hunters plan to infiltrate the space/colonise the locals' home — a magical Caribbean Ice Factory. Javi wants multiple dance sequences happening in different spaces at the same time and plans to invite the audience to interact with the dancers. His goal is to have the audience be just as much a part of the story as the dancers themselves.

In addition to the commentary on Puerto Rico's gentrification, there are other important messages that Javi drives into this dance production. Firstly, he wants this dance piece to encourage the narrative of brown bodies being the norm whilst other bodies being foreigners, then use it to promote brown love among brown people, and he places emphasis on the impact of community and family, a strong value in the Caribbean community. Most importantly, this dance piece highlights the shortcomings of colonial legacies and promotes a world where people of colour can win and reclaim the land that once belonged to them. Being from the Caribbean, and a person of colour, this story resonated with me deeply. I immediately felt the power of the story and the energy of the space that Javi had imagined.

To support the multiple dance sequences in different spaces, Javi is keen to include separate spaces that were either hidden or enclosed to promote the audience to explore. He also mentioned that these spaces can be “reclaimed” by someone or something else, for instance a space that was once a bedroom can be reclaimed and changed to be a Witch’s lair. Additionally, he was interested in hindering the audience’s view of the action in some spaces and hoped to consider the idea of peepholes or keyholes as another way for the audience to access these spaces. As much as these spaces were separate and confined, they had to be cohesive as a unit and positioned in a way that the witches, witch hunters, and the audience could roam freely, which was one of the biggest challenges.

In the meetings with Javi, words and phrases such as film noir, fiction, fantasy, magical, love, catholic mysticism, and a hurricane passing through were used to describe the feeling and energy of the spaces. Javi wished to have a moment where one of the dancers transformed into a creature with wings. The wing reveal was part of the climax of the story he envisioned. He suggested that the reveal should happen inside the altar but was open to other placement suggestions. Javi was also excited about using as much space in the theatre as possible. He shared the idea of using the hallways of the theatre space as portals to this world he was creating.

With the immersive nature of *El Bodegón de la Bruja*, Javi preferred the risers to be removed to help the audience be more involved in his work by walking and sitting in these separated spaces. Luckily, he was willing to work with the seating arrangement of Gerson’s dance piece, which opened the door to a stronger collaboration between the two performances and a better immersive experience for the audience. We hoped that the spectators could be guided by the dancers to different spaces and the audience in turn would interact with both dancers and the set.

With the audience being so close to the set, it meant that the details in the paint, props, and build of the set must be realistic.

1.1.2: *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* by Gerson Lanza

Gerson's story is real, personal and intimate. It is about his migration from Honduras to the United States of America (USA), and the challenges he faced on this journey. In our concept meeting, he lists culture, language, and race as obstacles he had to overcome as an Afro-Latino, Spanish-speaking ten-year-old boy, in conjunction with people and places that had motivated him as he grew up. Below is a snippet of what Gerson shared with the creative team:

“In January 2001 at the age of ten, I was informed by my father that our permanent resident cards were approved. My brothers and I were both thrilled, yet sad to leave our language, culture, and friends- but most importantly our father. The United States has been the “Gold Mountain” where dreams are made. Today Immigrants from all over the world continue to flock to *La USA* in pursuit of the American dream.

In January, the preparation for a June 16th departure quickly began. My dad painted one of the garage walls with chalkboard paint. The occasional once a week English classes quickly began, in which all our friends also attended hoping to gather a bit of English in preparation for their hopeful big break.

In 2001, I joined my mother in the United States, a reunion ten years in the making. Adjusting to America was incredibly difficult, but I was saved by Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing and Visual Arts - and the tap dance I learned there.

116th between Lenox and 5th has been my home for the last twenty years since I immigrated to the US as a kid, but Harlem loomed large in my mind well before moving here. In Honduras, my father and I religiously watched Showtime at the Apollo - and while we frequently disagreed with the audience on who deserved to get booed off the stage, I'll never forget the energy of those moments when the Sandman came floating out from stage left, effortlessly tap dancing in perfect elaborated rhythms, sweeping the unwanted talent off stage.”

I empathised with Gerson and thanked him for sharing his heart wrenching story with us.

I recalled Gerson expressing the painful realisation he had of not being Latino enough in a black space and not being black enough in a Latino space, a sensation he never faced in Honduras. One of Gerson's inspirations that I hooked onto is Howard “Sandman” Sims — an Apollo Theater tap dancer who would chase subpar acts off the stage when the audience booed them off by tap dancing

on sand (Taylor, 2014). Gerson is also influenced by Harlem, New York, and by Langston Hughes' poem *Mother to Son*, specifically the line: "...life for me ain't been no crystal stair".

The contrast between the environment he grew up in versus the environment he grew into is a concept that is the foundation of *Mi Vida, in Rhythm*. This made me wonder, how and whether the scenery can enhance the narrative of moving away from home and migrating to another country, as well as to embody immigration issues in the USA. With Honduras being a country steeped in percussive musical instruments, Gerson is inspired by sounds of different instruments that had been brought to Honduras by African descendants and the traditional dances of the Garifuna people that involve intense footwork — an energy like that of Tap dance. I took note of the comfort smells or foods Gerson grew up with as he shared his life story with us. Additionally, I kept in mind that Tap dance became a way for him to navigate anxiety and depression which brought me to the conclusion that every surface in the set design Gerson interacts with, should be a safe "tappable" surface. I also thought during the first meeting, with beans being a staple food in Honduras, what if it was used as a sound element that was integrated into the set?

The space should feel real; like time travelling through Gerson's life. To make this possible, the team discussed that the media designer - Tim Kelly could carry that weight and be a valuable tool in the storytelling of Gerson's life; the media design was seen as a memory bank. Hence, I anticipated including canvases for the media to live. Another aspect of Gerson's story is a live jazz band. He requested a cabaret seating style similar to a jazz club. It was important to have a stage that could safely accommodate musicians, instruments, dancers, and a tap floor. Gerson wants his story to embody a sense of community and live in a visceral space where the dancers could walk through the audience. With Javi's flexible seating and immersivity, it was an easy agreement between the two choreographers and the team to select a cabaret style layout.

By the end of this meeting, we also decided that it would be best for Javi's piece to be first in the program and Gerson's second, as Javi's was more movement-oriented for the audience than Gerson's with a seated audience. This black box theatre had to hold the magical world of *El Bodegón de la Bruja* with various locations on an island, and the tangible reality of *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* with different cultures and continents, separated by a changeover/ show intermission of ten to fifteen minutes, with a scenic budget of just three thousand dollars and only thirty days of build time. What a challenge... I said bring it on!

1.2: Storytelling Through Research Images

1.2.1: *El Bodegón de la Bruja* by Javier Padilla

My creative way into *El Bodegón de la Bruja*'s world started with research on the exterior of houses in Puerto Rico. Overall, I wanted the space to feel like a byproduct of the people or like a “make do with what you have” feel. An inspirational thought Javi shared was, “...living in the Caribbean, nature may look like it is against us, but it is part of us”. From there, I started diving into the beauty in decay of a tropical space and the debris left after a hurricane passes over an island. The following includes images and a few reasons why I was drawn to them for the design.

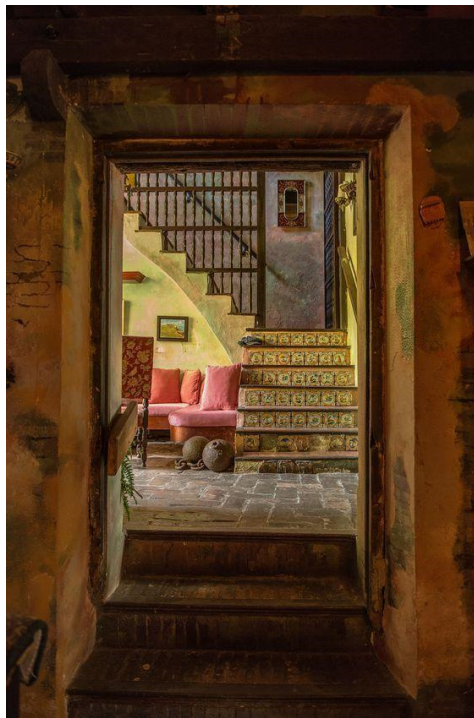


Fig. 1. A research image that Javi sent to me that captures the energy of the space he imagined.



Art by Arnaldo Roche



Art by Maria Ortix



Bomba dance



El Bodegon de La Bruja
 Choreographer - Javier Ignacio Padilla Garcia II Scenic Designer - Shartoua Tr. Baptiste II FMFA Scenic Research

Fig 2. Emotional research: I explored the use of people, culture, colour, pattern, and texture in these works of art.



Fig 3. Exterior research: hurricane destruction, the colours and materials used to build homes and bars, the link between film noir and window slats, the movement and drapery of a clothesline, and its potential to hinder the view of the audience.

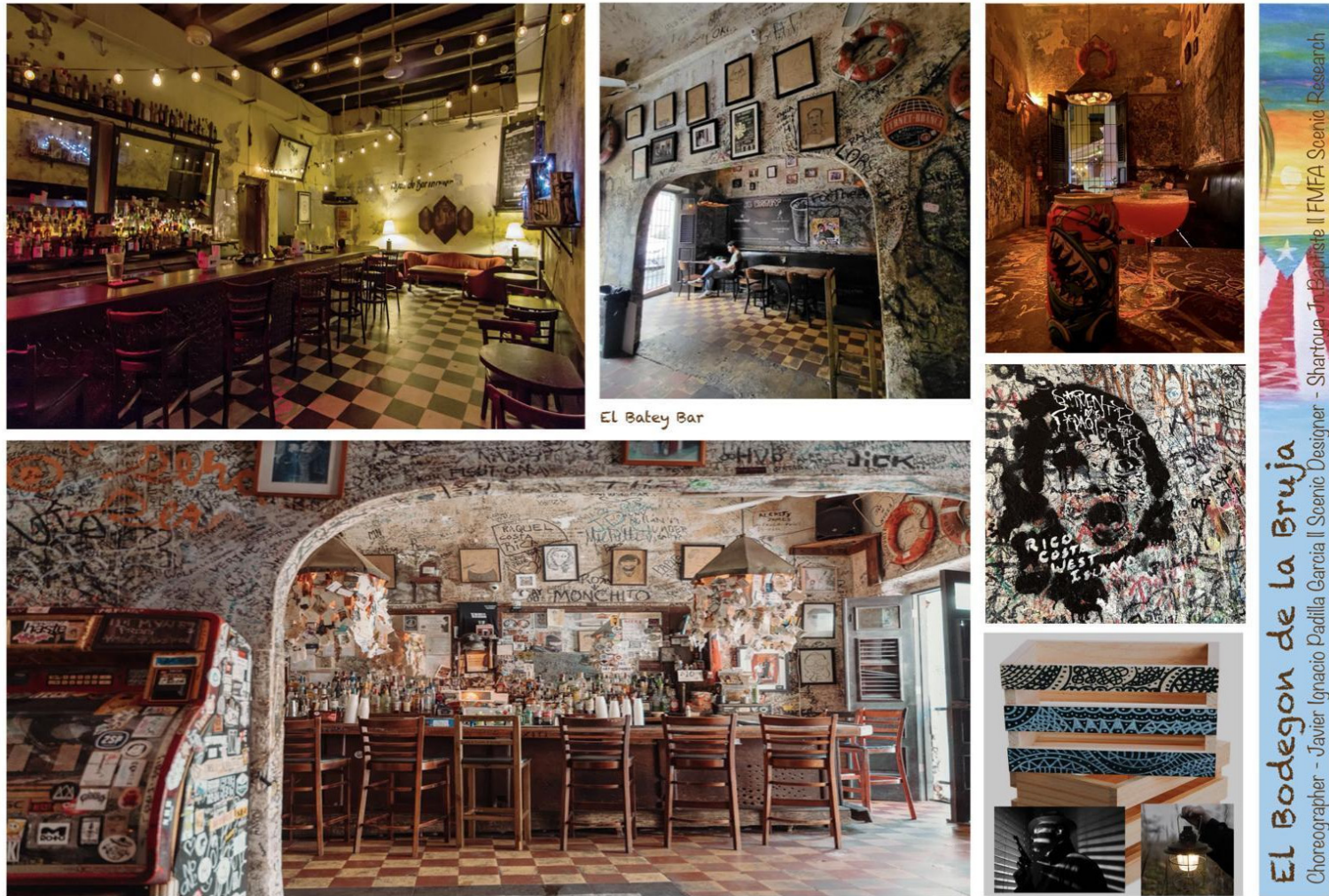


Fig 4. Bar research: the bottom left image is a bar in Puerto Rico called El Batey. In this, I investigated the feel of time passing by, the story of the people who visited the bar, the festoon lights draping like the clotheslines, and adding a horizontal layer into the space that shortens the height of the space. Linking the film noir and window slats motifs into hand-made centrepieces for the cabaret tables.

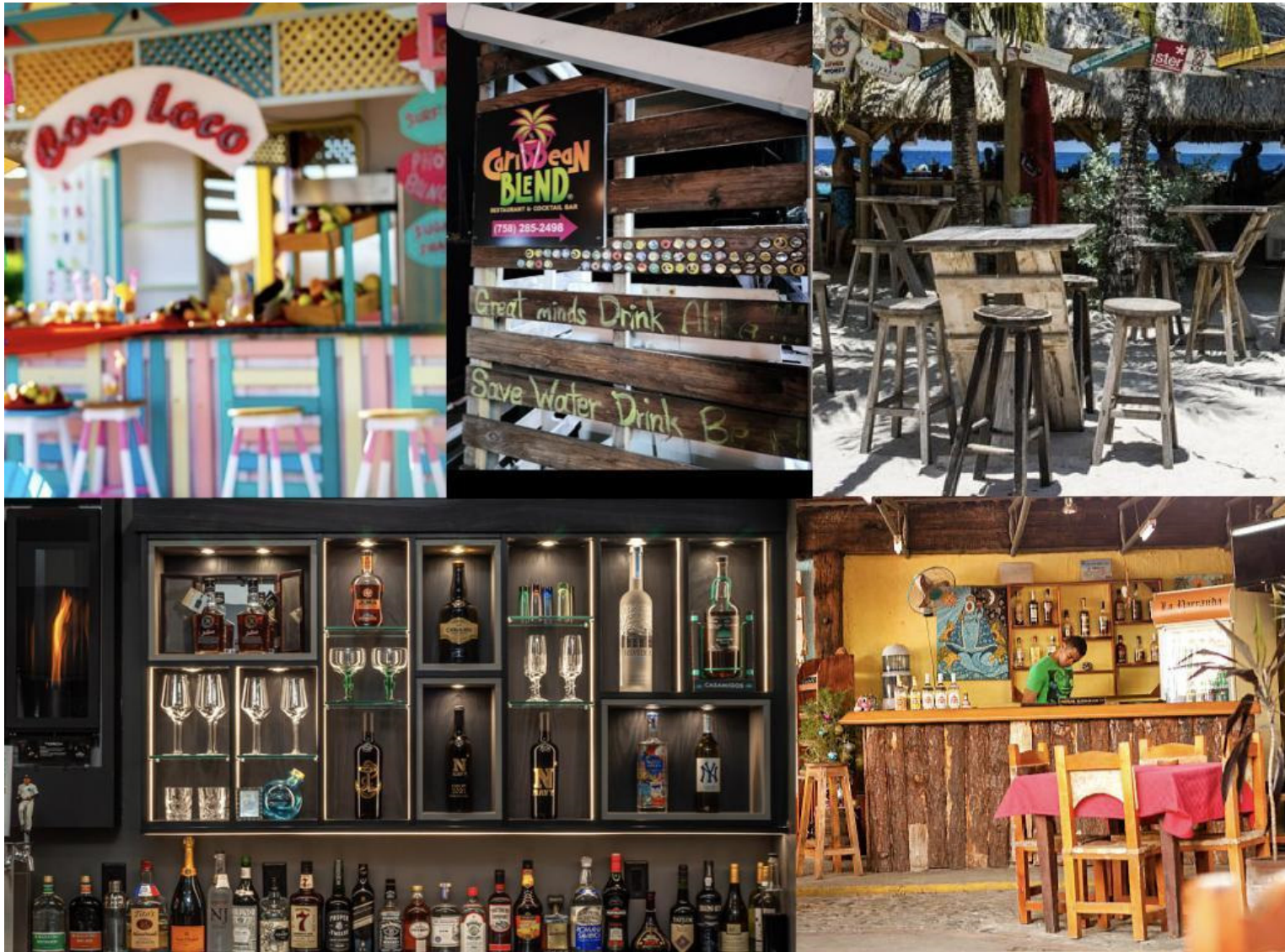


Fig 5. Extended bar research: the proportions of space on a bar shelf, the use of lattice, wood, and wooden palettes, the shape of the bar shelf, and vertical and horizontal lines that can cast potential shadows for a film noir feel.



Fig 6. Church and river research; the destruction of a space, catholic motifs like statues, the greenery interacting with space, the use of a river as a community space to do laundry, the reflection of the water, nature versus man.



Fig 7. Altar research: the bottom left was a strong image for the colour palette of that space. I considered the comparison and contrasts between Santeria motifs to Catholic motifs, the use of incense, masks, and items hanging from ceilings and on the walls, the sound of a beaded curtain and the link between the vertical lines in the curtain with the horizontal lines of film noir.



Fig 9. Extended research on items that can be a through line for all the spaces, doors, wood, peep holes, film noir slats, concrete beams. I also explored the link between the bird cage and the wing reveal moment.



Fig 10. Poster research for the hallway.

1.2.2: *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* by Gerson Lanza

My creative way into *Mi Vida, in Rhythm*'s world, was through the soundscape and landscape of Honduras, the architecture of its houses, the culture and movement of the Garifuna people, jazz clubs in New York, and the "Sandman". Langston Hughes' poem - *Mother to Son*, specifically the line: "life for me ain't been no crystal stair", inspired me to think of levels, the physical action of climbing or reaching a pinnacle, and finding a way to align these thoughts with the concept of migration. The following includes images and a few reasons why I was drawn to them for the design.

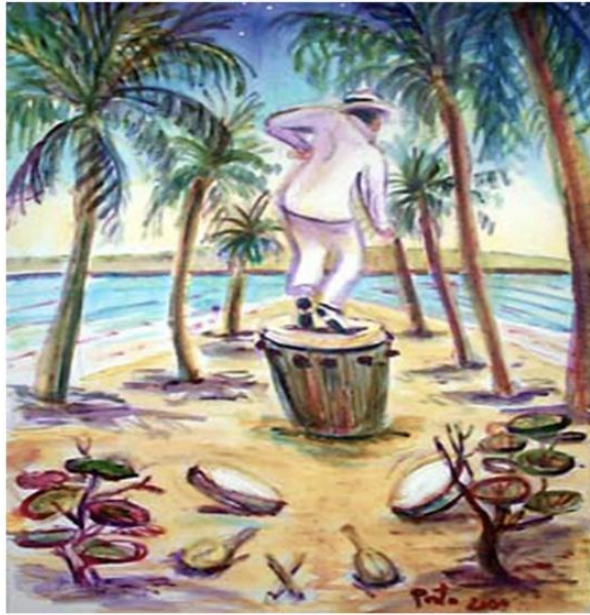


Art by Cristina Bernazzani entitled "Memories of Immigrant"

Art by Art Spiegelman entitled "A Warm Welcome", 2015

Mi Vida, In Rhythm
 Choreographer - Gerson Lanza || Scenic Designer - Shartoya Jn. Baptiste || FMFA Scenic Research

Fig 11. Emotional research; the beauty and the fear in migration.



Art by Antonio Broccoli Porto



Howard "Sandman" Sims

Mother to Son

BY LANGSTON HUGHES

Well, son, I'll tell you:
 Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
 It's had tacks in it,
 And splinters,
 And boards torn up,
 And places with no carpet on the floor—
 Bare.
 But all the time
 I've been a-climbin' on,
 And reachin' landin's,
 And turnin' corners,
 And sometimes goin' in the dark
 Where there ain't been no light.
 So boy, don't you turn back.
 Don't you set down on the steps
 'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.
 Don't you fall now—
 For I'se still goin', honey,
 I'se still climbin',
 And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

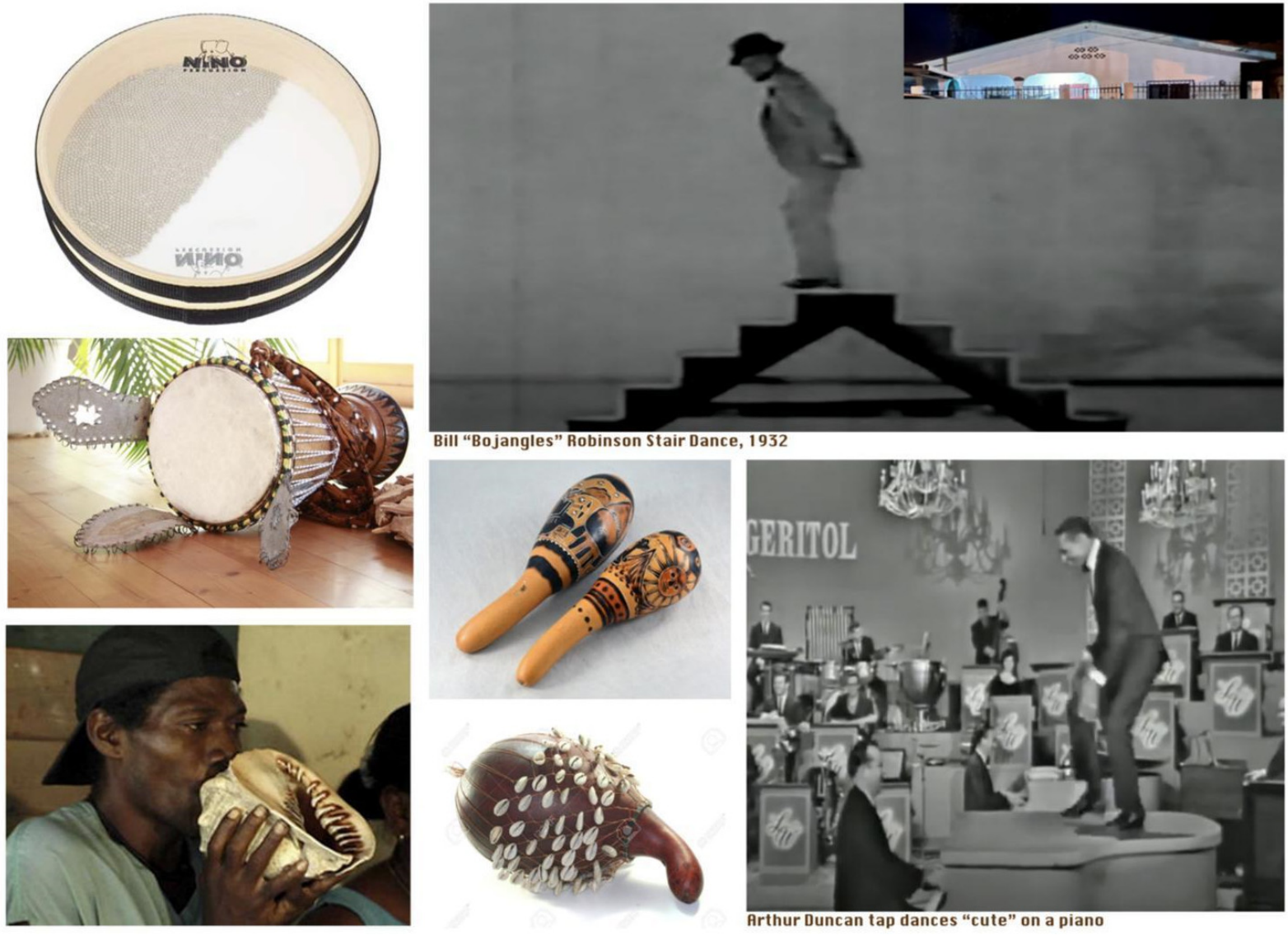
Mi Vida, In Rhythm
 Choreographer - Gerson Lanza || Scenic Designer - Shartoya Jn. Baptiste || EMFA Scenic Research

Fig 12. Honduran people, "Sandman" and poem research; the top left image brought the thought of Gerson dancing on top of a cabaret table or top of something.



Mi Vida, In Rhythm
Choreographer - Gerson Lanza || Scenic Designer - Shartoya Jn-Baptiste || FMFA Scenic Research

Fig 13. Honduran architecture; Gerson's family home (bottom left), the triangular shapes of the roofs, the wooden structures, the windows, the link between film noir in Javi's piece and slatted windows in Gerson's piece, the colours of the buildings.



Bill "Bojangles" Robinson Stair Dance, 1932

Arthur Duncan tap dances "cute" on a piano

Mi Vida, In Rhythm
 Choreographer - Gerson Lanza || Scenic Designer - Shartoya Jn. Baptiste || EMFA Scenic Research

Fig 14. Sounds of Honduras and levels research; here I observed the link between the triangle roofs of Honduran houses and staircases, explored the thought of Gerson dancing on top of a piano, and the sound elements that could live inside a set piece.



Fig 15. Jazz club research; connecting the triangles of the Honduran roofs to the stage design for the jazz club and exploring diverse ways of integrating these triangles into the space.



Fig 16. Interior of roof research; finding a connection between the roofs and the hurricane element of Javi's piece to Gerson's triangular motifs.



Fig 17. The most recent image of Gerson's family home in Honduras.



Fig 18. Garifuna people of Honduras performing a traditional dance. I noticed the use of colour in the costuming and its link to the houses.

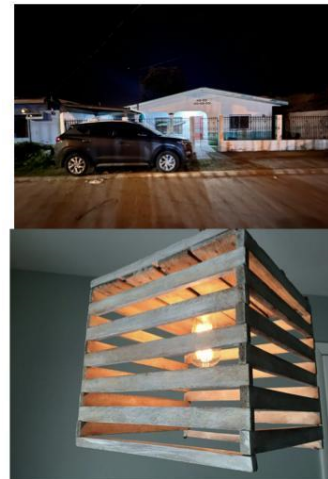


Fig 19. Chair and centrepiece research; these photos made me consider using mismatched furniture as a way of immersivity by bringing the bold colours of Honduras and Puerto Rico into the space instead of using only the theatre seats provided. I observed the shadows of Gerson's home and the handmade centrepiece idea.

1.3: From Research to Preliminary White Model

By the first design meeting, I started looking at the scenic design as one space with two performances, rather than two separate spaces. At this point in the design process, I still did not completely grasp Javi's concept of colonised spaces being reclaimed by something. Javi further explained, "...think like a subversion of something looking like an office but is a church that is no longer in use." In this meeting, the choreographers and I confirmed what all spaces should be. We agreed that an office should be reclaimed by a river where the natives wash their laundry, a dressing room reclaimed by the earth, a bar that represents Puerto Rico and New York, an altar that can fit no more than four people, Honduras, and a jazz club. I know all this may sound confusing, but with the upcoming photos, clarity will come. Moreover, as the conversation on the different spaces grew, so did the level of difficulty to safely fit all locations, including audience members.

With the original idea being fully enclosed spaces, like rooms with four walls that the audience would have to walk into, it was almost impossible to safely have an audience of 130 to 135 people safely seated in the theatre. I thought using the idea of peepholes and doors could be another way into each enclosed space, but there was not enough footprint in the theatre space, nor time and money to accomplish this. Tim Kelly and I explored the opportunity for collaboration with this motif. He mentioned using a QR code for the audience to watch the performances that happen in each enclosed space on their phones. However, the team acknowledged that that would remove the immersive aspect the choreographer needed. Another thought I shared was using the perimeter of the space for Javi and Gerson to use the middle (see Fig 10), but unfortunately, that was not feasible either. Finally, we decided to have more open spaces. So instead of using walls to prohibit the audience's vision, I could use other objects such as clotheslines, clothes, and poles to accomplish that.

Furthermore, with the idea of witches being survivors of colonialism, I left with the following questions: How can the audience also be involved and collaborate to decolonize? How can we do all this safely and feasibly in one space that is shared with Gerson's story?

Javi's magical spaces were significantly different from the spaces Gerson inhabited; Gerson's spaces were more realistic, fewer in number and larger in size. For instance, the jazz club's stage was the scenic unit with the biggest footprint in the theatre space. This stage had to feel like a pinnacle, and as substantial as the stages Gerson has performed on in the USA, like The Kennedy Centre. The motif of triangles and levels was an important design choice for Gerson's spaces. The use of triangles stemming from the shapes of the roofs of Honduran houses was implemented in the shape of the stairs leading to the stage and the backdrop for the stage. The backdrop on the stage was used in both pieces. In Javi's piece, it was tilted downward and became a fallen roof, and in Gerson's it served as a diamond-shaped backdrop. This "roof unit" was the only automated element in the design thus far. Additionally, the motif of levels and stairs was included in the jazz club's stage, the bar, and Honduras. This may sound clichéd, but I was interested in using levels to show a literal climbing motion for Gerson since he has been rising to the top in any circumstance. Concerning the design for Honduras, I decided to make a replica of a fragment of Gerson's Honduran home so that his story could be as authentic as possible.

A priority of mine was to have the climax of Gerson's performance happen on top of the piano on stage. This idea posed many issues such as, where can we find a piano for this? How safe will this be? What kind of piano do we use? I learnt that tapping on top of a piano could untune it, so the props manager - Tim Jones and I considered using a piano shell. But where can we find this piano shell? At this point, we hoped to have five musicians, including a pianist, and this idea of

dancing on a piano was not confirmed by the production manager yet. For now, the biggest priority was fitting all these spaces into the black box theatre.

By the looks of it, the bar was the only unit that both Javi and Gerson would share. Hence, this bar had to represent Puerto Rico and New York. This space had to feel like a safe space for people of colour to thrive or feel vulnerable and had to represent the moment Gerson moved to the USA. Taking a page from “Sandman”, I decided to have sand on top of the bar as a tappable surface for Gerson. This sand could change the sound of his performance and was a wink-wink nod-nod reference to Gerson finding his footing in America. Due to this, audience members could not be seated at the bar, but it also meant more performance space being available to all the dancers.

Concerning the wing transformation for the first half of the dance production, the costume designer - Cody Von Ruden and I explored multiple versions of this. We produced the idea of having this wing unit being a collaboration between scenery and costumes. Initially, we thought it could seamlessly live in the wall of the altar, then revealed by being peeled off the wall by the performer as they transformed, leaving an outline in the wall. I planned to have LED tape hidden in the outline of the wall so that the space could glow after the wings were removed, an idea I enjoyed sharing with the lighting designer - Scott Monnin. Now a question this posed was - how does this wing unit exist in Gerson’s world? I did not dwell on answering that question yet as I was aware that this wing unit may be the first to be cut during the cost-out process, but I still decided to dream, design, and hope that it would be possible. The most enjoyable part of designing this unit was the collaboration between costumes, lighting and scenery.

Another exciting collaboration was between scenic design and media design. With Javi’s dance piece being magical and Gerson’s being realistic, media was a key tool to elevate and

distinguish these concepts. I ensured in each space there were surfaces available for Tim Kelly to either project onto or screens he could push content through. For instance, the office had a monitor screen on the desk, the dressing room had vanities with screens as mirrors, the bar had a television, the stage had the roof unit that could be made of scrim, Gerson's door was designed to be a media friendly canvas and, lastly, I planned to have bedsheets on the clotheslines around the general space. Tim Kelly's suggestion was to use these canvases differently for both dance pieces. He discussed that content could be more specific for Gerson's piece. For example, he would use the canvases to show old videos and pictures of Gerson and his family, captions with Spanish to English and Garifuna to English translations, and newspaper clippings or photos of Gerson's main stage performances all over the USA. On the other hand, he was interested in projecting textures onto Javi's world and using the screens in the dressing room, office and bar as places to show live recordings happening in other rooms for seated audience members.

The chairs for the audience were one of two techniques I used to blur the lines between Javi's and Gerson's spaces. I requested that 75% of the chairs in the space be painted in colours of the Puerto Rican flag and Honduran flag with splatters of colours from the set. Another method to create a through line between their spaces was the use of the clothes lines and the festoon lights. Both draped similarly and physically connect the spaces together. I was intentional with the placements of them. The clothes lines connected all of Javi's spaces and the festoon lights linked all of Gerson's spaces. Together, these lines all crossed paths in a beautiful manner and brought a horizontal, lightweight, communal feeling to the space. It may be a tiny element, but this was the most impactful element that melted these two worlds together.

Concerning the audience members, the seating arrangement for the audience was a big concern of mine. I had to comfortably seat 135 audience members as per the theatre's usual quota

and I wanted to place some of the audience on an eight-inch platform. The platform was vital for me so that Gerson's elevated spaces do not feel completely excluded from the audience and I liked how an elevated seated area added this "VIP" feel to the jazz club. However, my desires were met with two major problems. Firstly, if all audience members were to be seated at cabaret tables, I could only seat eighty people some-what comfortably with the large footprint that the scenery takes up. This had to be approved by UMD's fire marshal, which would take some time. Secondly, the scene shop cannot build any units for the audience to use as per UMD's insurance policy. With this information given, I brainstormed and requested to use audience riser platforms UMD already had in stock that were safe for audience members. With that issue being solved, I still awaited the approval of the fire marshal for the seating layout of my proposed eighty audience members.

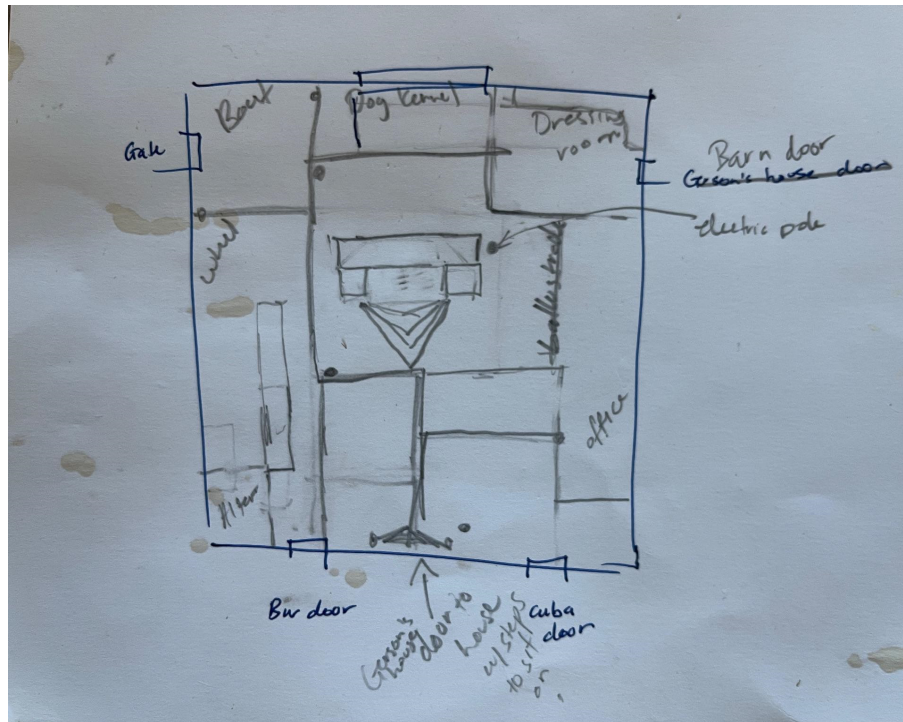


Fig 20. First pass at a ground plan sketch to explore the real estate of all the spaces featuring a graduate student's coffee stains.



Fig 21. 1/4" white model image; (from left to right) of Gerson's house, the bar, the altar, and the stage.



Fig 22. 1/4" white model image; (from left to right) the stage and the office.



Fig 23. 1/4" white model image; (from left to right) bar, altar (unseen) and stage.



Fig 24. 1/4" white model image, (from left to right) the stage with the roof unit at the down position and the office next to it. The roof will be in the down position for *El Bodegón de la Bruja* to imitate a broken roof from a hurricane.



Fig 25. 1/4" white model image, the stage with the roof in the upright position for *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* as the backdrop for the jazz club's stage.

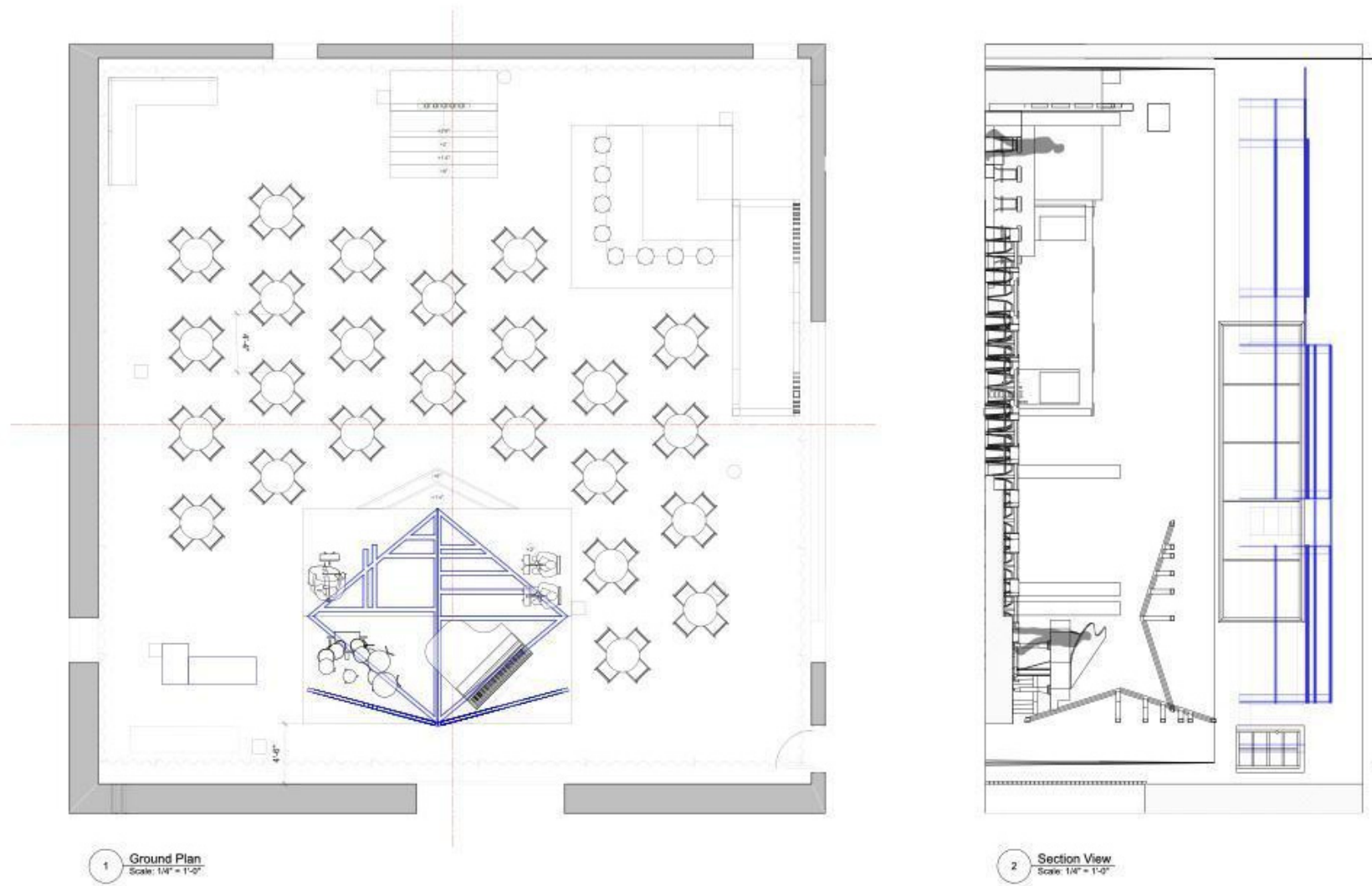


Fig 26. First draft of ground plan and centre line section view and seating layout. Out of scale.

1.4: From White Model to Colour Model

By this meeting, thankfully the fire marshal had confirmed the layout of 80 audience members with some seated on eight-inch risers from stock. It finally felt like everything was coming together! After lightly discussing costs with the technical director - Michael Driggers, I realised that using wooden pallets to build the bar and some of Javi's other spaces felt right, linked well with Gerson's world, and was affordable. To further save costs, we agreed to have most Javi's spaces be built from items in props' storage. I leaned into the colour palettes of these props rather than changing them. A win we discovered at this meeting was there would be no long changeover between the two dance pieces. The only items that changed during intermission are the roof unit tilting into its upright position and the centrepieces.

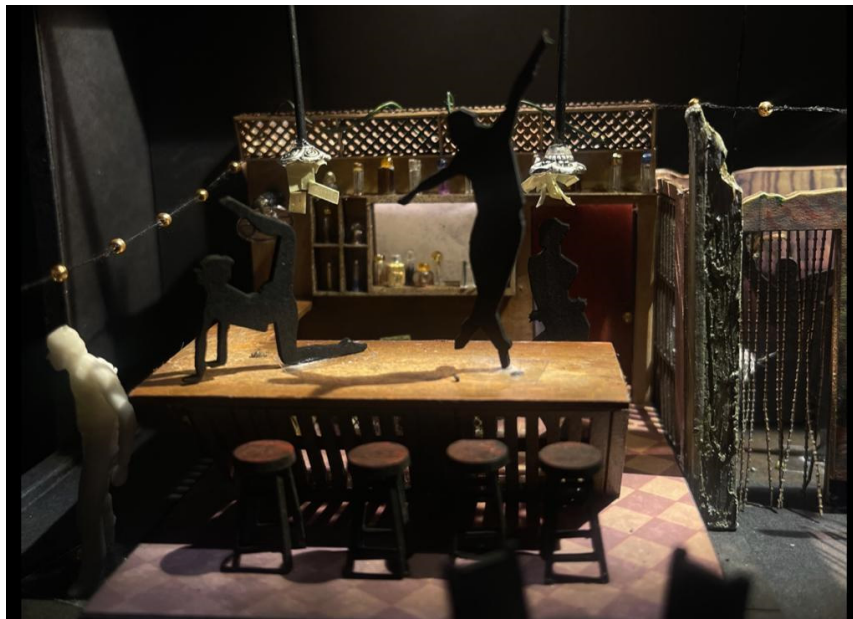


Fig 27. 1/4" colour model; the bar.



Fig 28. 1/4" colour model; the exterior of the altar with the removable wings.



Fig 29. 1/4" colour model; the exterior of the altar. This image suggests the direction of light through the beaded curtain.



Fig 30. 1/4" colour model; the interior of the altar with rose windows, a physical altar and birdcage chandeliers.

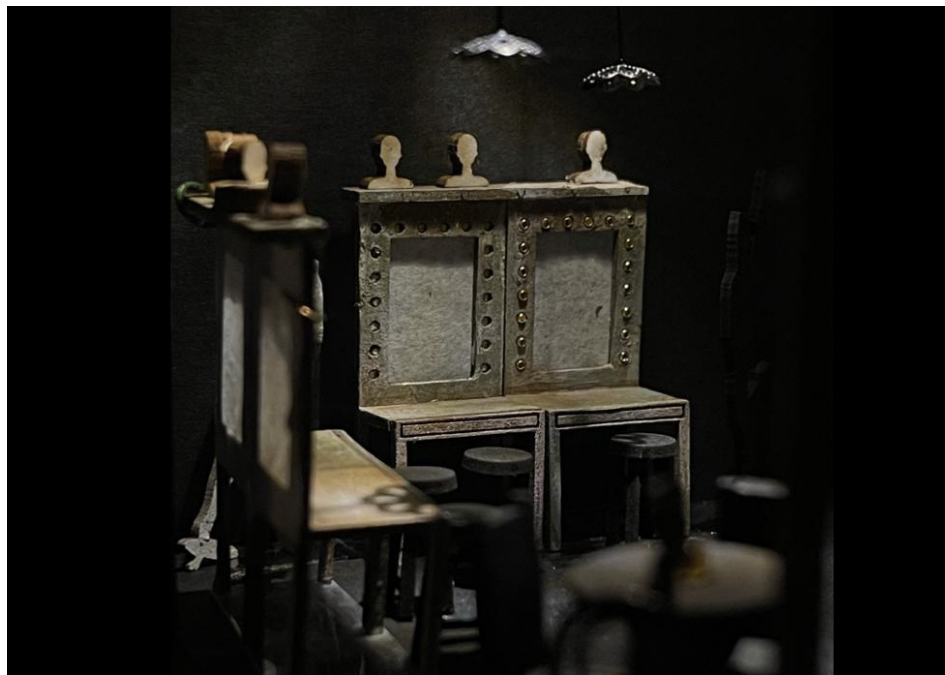


Fig 31. 1/4" colour model; the dressing room with vanities and mannequin heads.



Fig 32. 1/4" colour model; the dressing room with a clothesline.



Fig 33. 1/4" colour model; the office with baskets and laundry.



Fig 34. 1/4" colour model; Gerson's Honduran home.

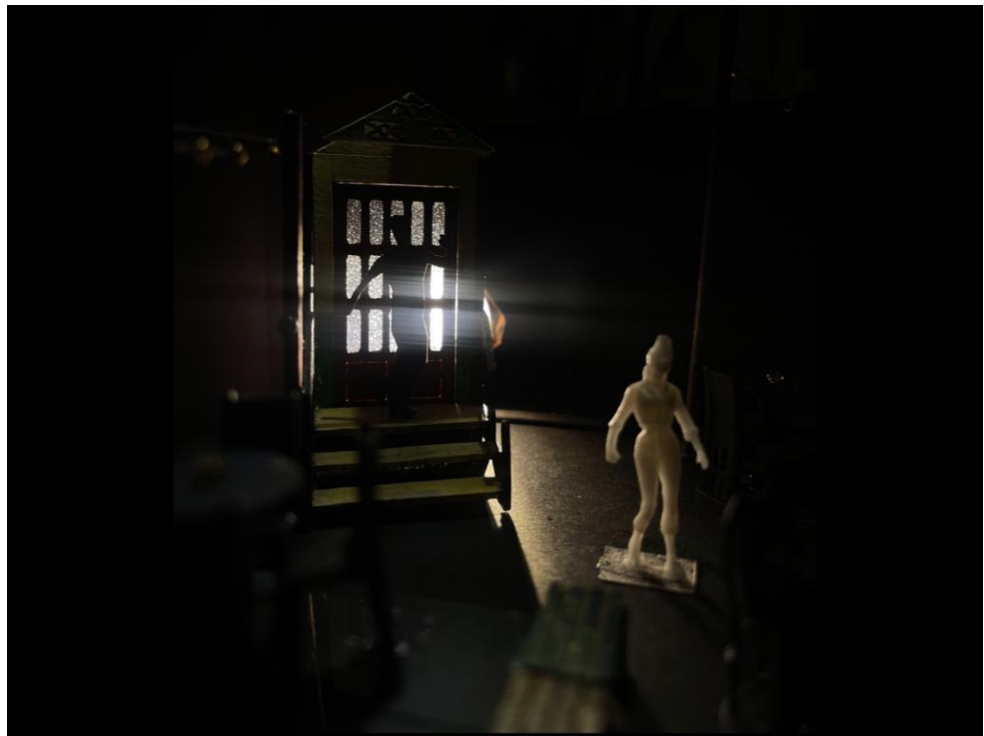


Fig 35. 1/4" colour model; Gerson's Honduran home. This image suggests the direction of light.



Fig 36. 1/4" colour model; the stage with the roof unit in its down position.



Fig 37. 1/4" colour model; the stage with the roof unit in its up position.

Chapter 2: PAPERWORK

2.1: The Drafting Packet

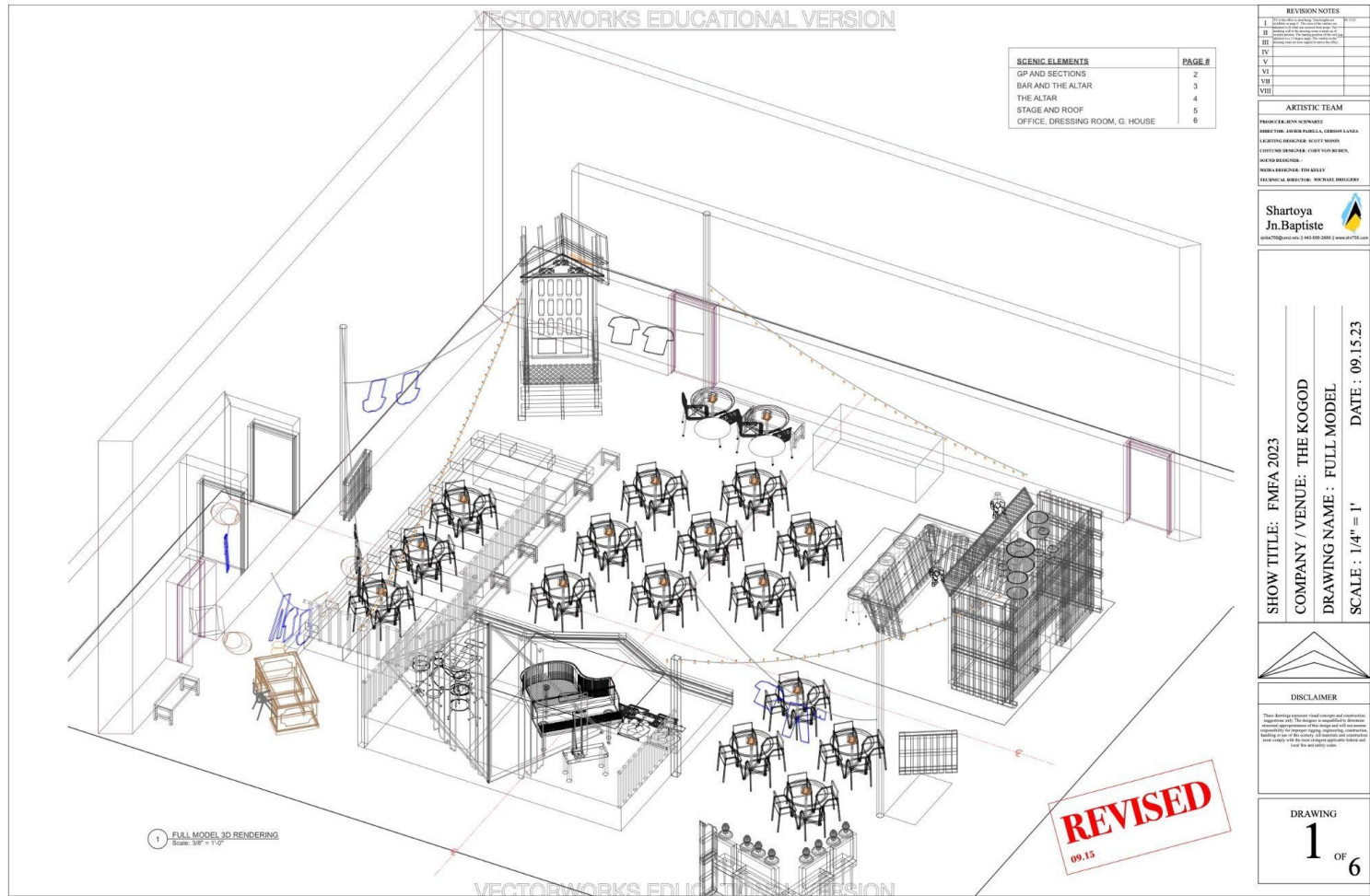


Fig 38. A copy of the revised drafting packet as of September 15th, 2023. Page 1; drafting out of scale.

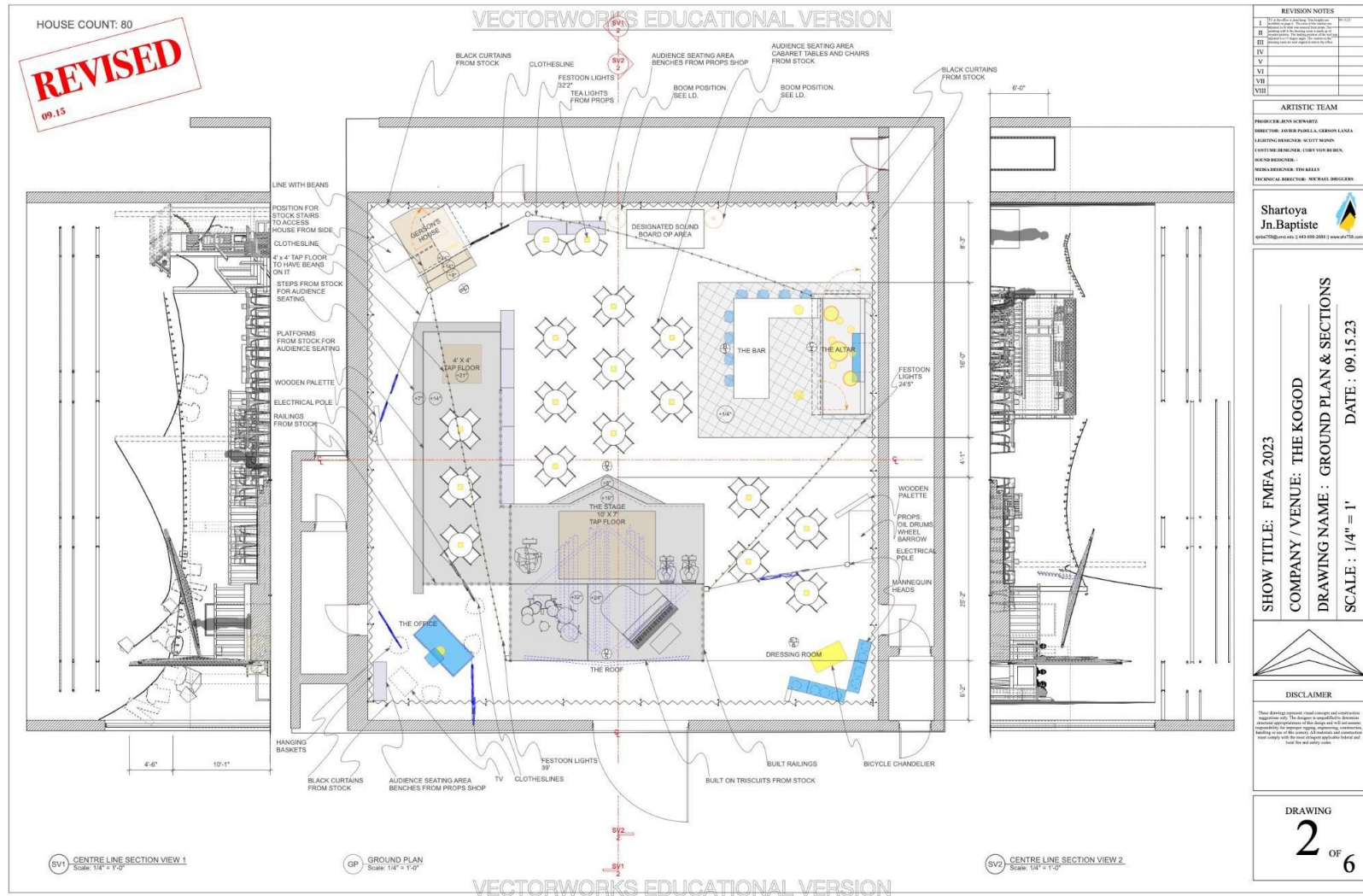


Fig 39. A copy of the revised drafting packet as of September 15th, 2023. Page 2; drafting out of scale.

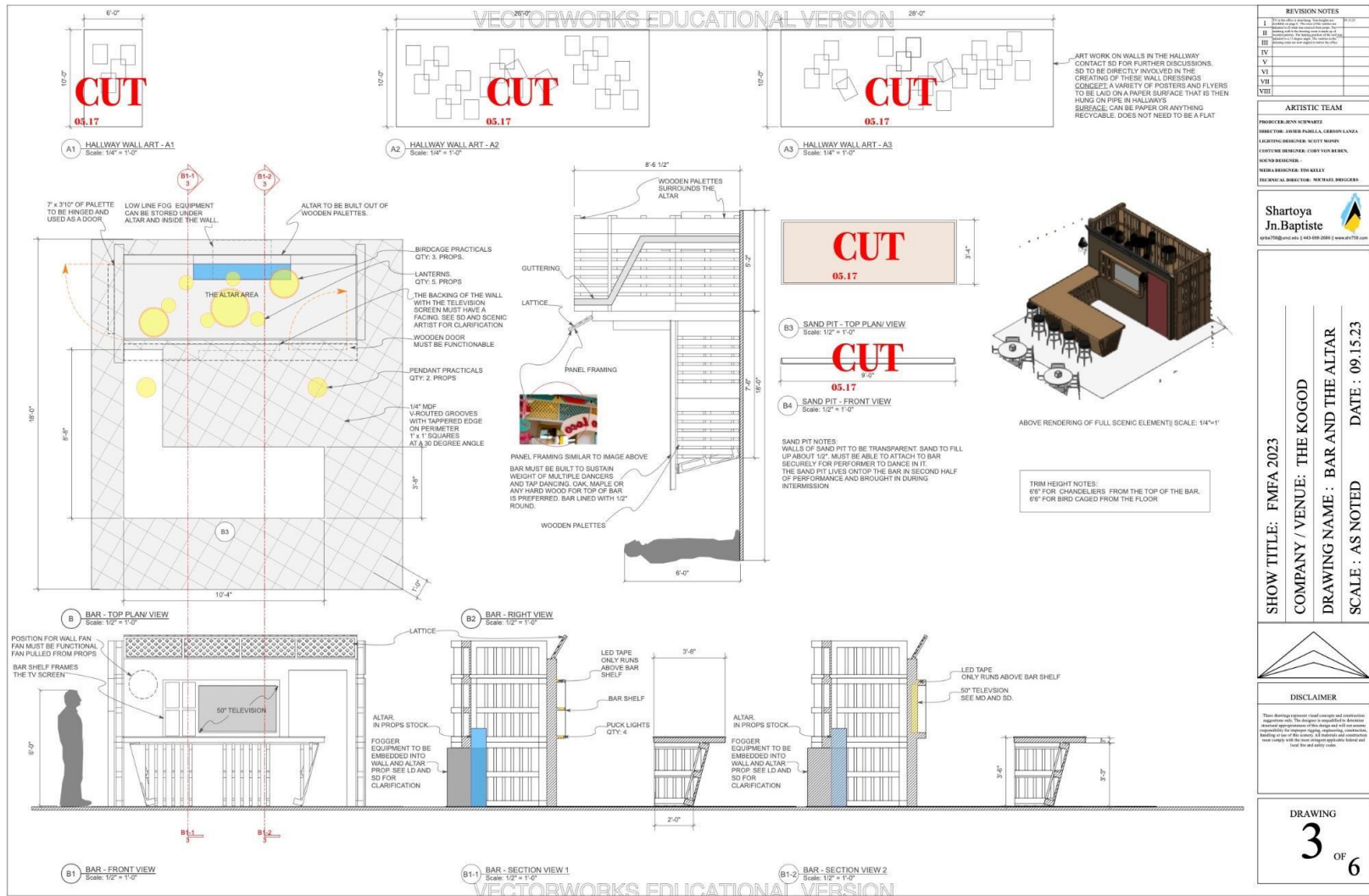


Fig 40. A copy of the revised drafting packet as of September 15th, 2023. Page 3; drafting out of scale.

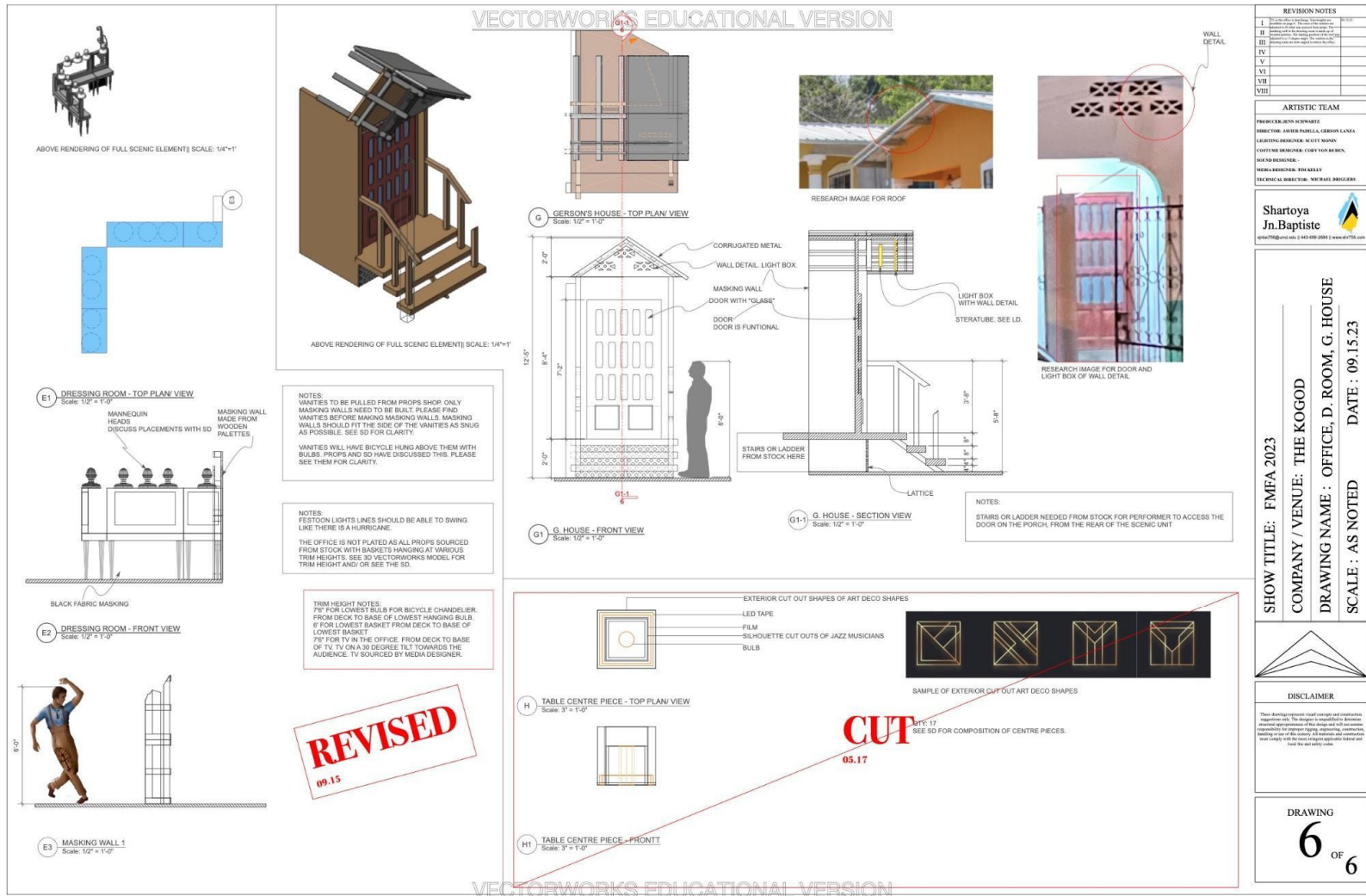


Fig 43. A copy of the revised drafting packet as of September 15th, 2023. Page 6; drafting out of scale.

2.2: The Heartbreaking Cost-Out

During the cost-out meeting, I discovered that the paint and props estimates were fortunately not over budget, but the scenic build was over by \$4,345.79 and 20 build days. As demotivating as that sounded at the time, I went into this meeting with my personal suggestions on what to cut and ensured that I kept the most essential elements of the design i.e., the bar and the stage. I also had previous side meetings with Driggers which made this cost-out meeting easier. I trusted him and was open to solving this with him.

To cut down on the deficit, I explored rearranging the spaces and removing specific units from the design. I came to the conclusion of moving the altar to live behind the bar and not have it be a separate unit. I omitted the build of the flyers for the hallway and instead pin up loose flyers to the walls. The centrepieces were a low priority for me, and I decided to completely cut them out for Javi's piece but have mason jars of beans for Gerson's piece.

The biggest cut of them all was eliminating the wing unit, the collaboration unit between scenic design and costume design and a major element of Javi's climax. Most of these decisions did not affect Gerson greatly but were particularly challenging to share with Javi. Thankfully, Javi understood and gave further suggestions of things he was comfortable removing. For example, we removed all builds from the dressing room, including the idea of using screens as mirrors. This brought the cost down to being over by \$637.48 and four days instead. This was a win and more manageable for the production team to manage.

I know cost-out may feel like a disappointing moment for some designers, but I was satisfied with what we came out with at the end of it all.

Venue	Kogod Theatre	Build Period	8/21/23 - 9/1/23		
Scenic Designer	Shartoya Jn. Baptiste	First ROS	10/1/23		
Designer Packet		Labor		Materials	
Unit	Description	%	Days	%	\$
Hallway Art	Artwork on walls in hallway	25.00%	2.5	8.05%	\$ 567.39
Bar	Dancable bar with wall, door, and sand pit	45.00%	4.5	18.55%	\$ 1,307.19
Altar	Walls with doorways, windows, and wings	60.00%	6	19.94%	\$ 1,405.18
Stage	Platforms system with moving wall/ceiling	65.00%	6.5	18.39%	\$ 1,295.65
Dressing Room	(x4) Dressing mirrors with wall	40.00%	4	12.86%	\$ 905.87
House	Elevated Doorway with steps	70.00%	7	13.11%	\$ 923.98
Audience Riser	Raised platforms with audience seating	0.00%	0	0.00%	\$ -
Other	Telephone Poles, Tables, chairs, benches	0.00%	0	0.00%	\$ -
Unit 9		0.00%	0	0.00%	\$ -
Unit 10		0.00%	0	0.00%	\$ -
	General Hardware			10%	\$ 640.53
		Est. Build Days	30.5	Subtotal	\$ 7,045.79
		Labor Budget	10	Samples	\$ 300.00
		Under / (Over)	(20.50)	Total	\$ 7,345.79
				Production Budget	\$ 3,000.00
	UPDATED:	5/3/23		Additional Funds	\$ -
				Under / (Over)	\$ (4,345.79)

Fig 44. A copy of scenic build cost-out before scenic cuts.

Venue	Kogod Theatre	Build Period	8/21/23 - 9/1/23		
Scenic Designer	Shartoya Jn. Baptiste	First ROS	10/1/23		
Designer Packet		Labor		Materials	
Unit	Description	%	Days	%	\$
Hallway Art	Artwork on walls in hallway	0.00%	0	0.00%	\$ -
Bar	Dancable bar with wall, door, and sand pit	45.00%	4.5	25.12%	\$ 888.74
Altar	Walls with doorways, windows, and wings	0.00%	0	0.00%	\$ -
Stage	Platforms system with moving wall/ceiling	45.00%	4.5	36.63%	\$ 1,295.65
Dressing Room	(x4) Dressing mirrors with wall	5.00%	0.5	3.04%	\$ 107.52
House	Elevated Doorway with steps	45.00%	4.5	26.12%	\$ 923.98
Audience Riser	Raised platforms with audience seating	0.00%	0	0.00%	\$ -
Other	Telephone Poles, Tables, chairs, benches	0.00%	0	0.00%	\$ -
Unit 9		0.00%	0	0.00%	\$ -
Unit 10		0.00%	0	0.00%	\$ -
	General Hardware			10%	\$ 321.59
		Est. Build Days	14	Subtotal	\$ 3,537.48
		Labor Budget	10	Samples	\$ 100.00
		Under / (Over)	(4.00)	Total	\$ 3,637.48
				Production Budget	\$ 3,000.00
	UPDATED:	5/19/23		Additional Funds	\$ -
				Under / (Over)	\$ (637.48)

Fig 45. A copy of scenic build cost-out after scenic cuts.

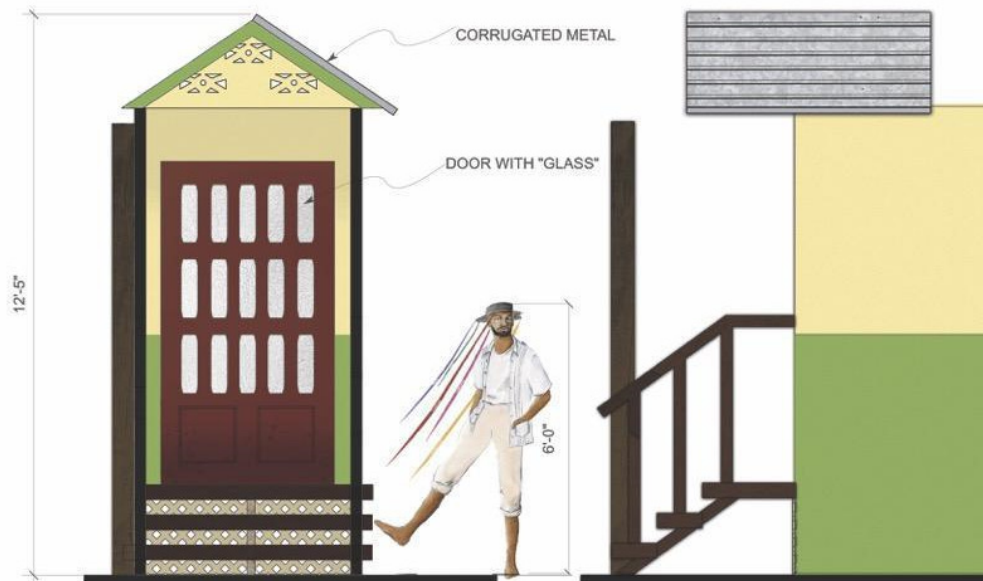
2.3: Paint Elevations



Notes:
 Railing: Semi-flat. Worn wood
 Door is wood, mahogany-like
 Aging on door
 Beams on one side of roof match corrugated metal
 Both sides have a masking wall



Reference Image of Gerson's House



G1 G. HOUSE - FRONT VIEW
 Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"

G2 G. HOUSE - RIGHT VIEW
 Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"

FALL MFA DANCE THESIS '23 - PAINT ELEVATIONS - 05/17 REVISED
 SCENIC DESIGNER - SHARTOYA JN. BAPTISTE
 CHOREOGRAPHERS - JAVI PADILLA & GERSON LANZA

Fig 47. Paint elevation of Gerson's Honduran home.

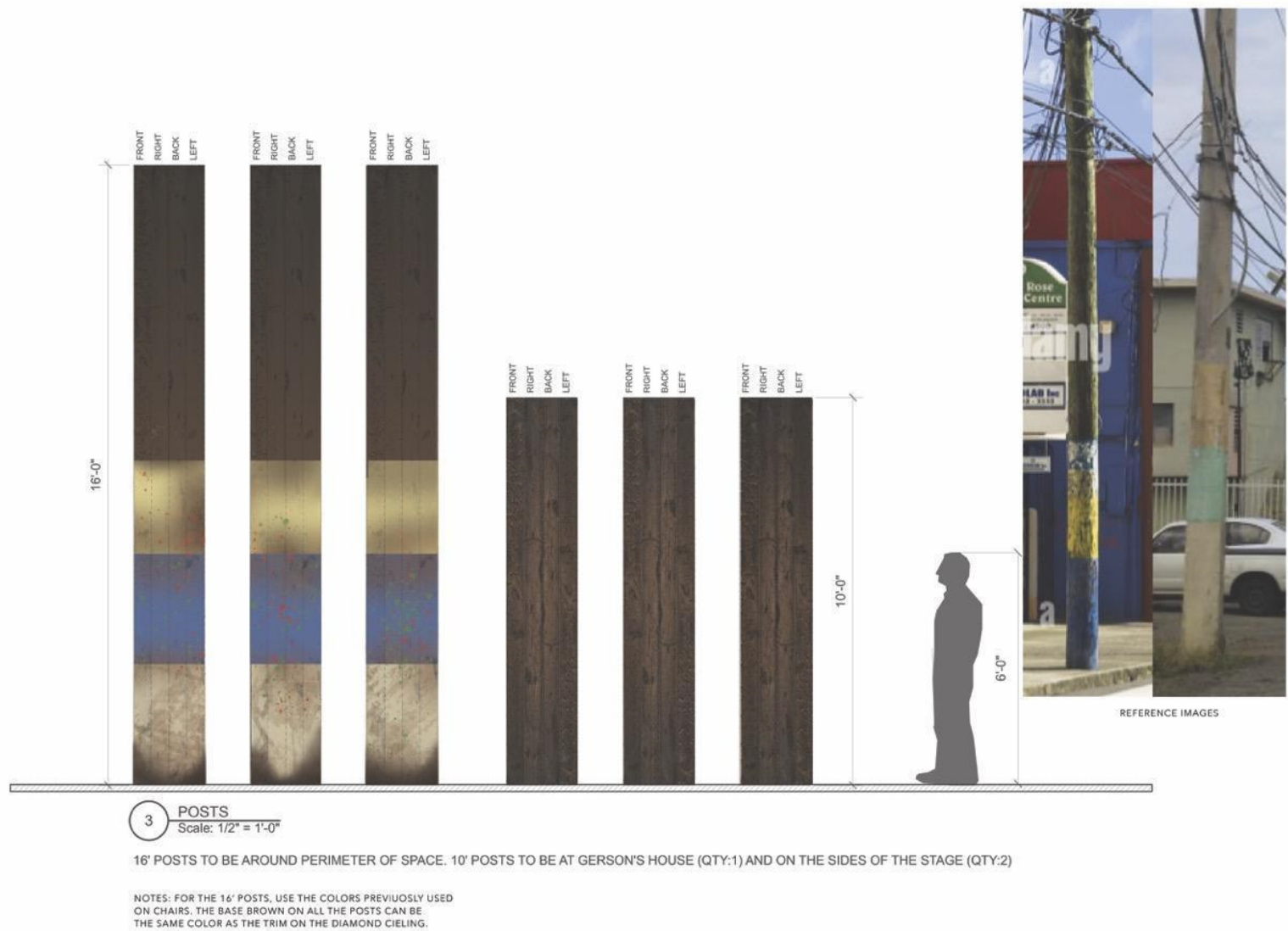
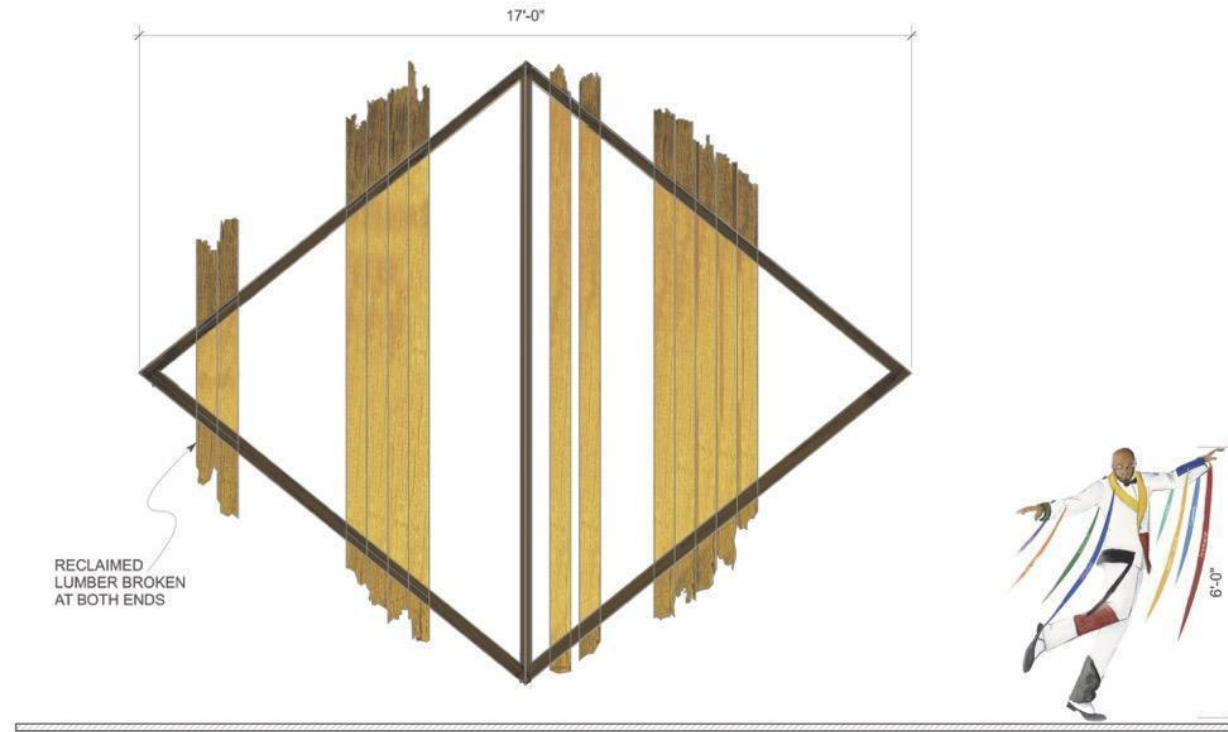


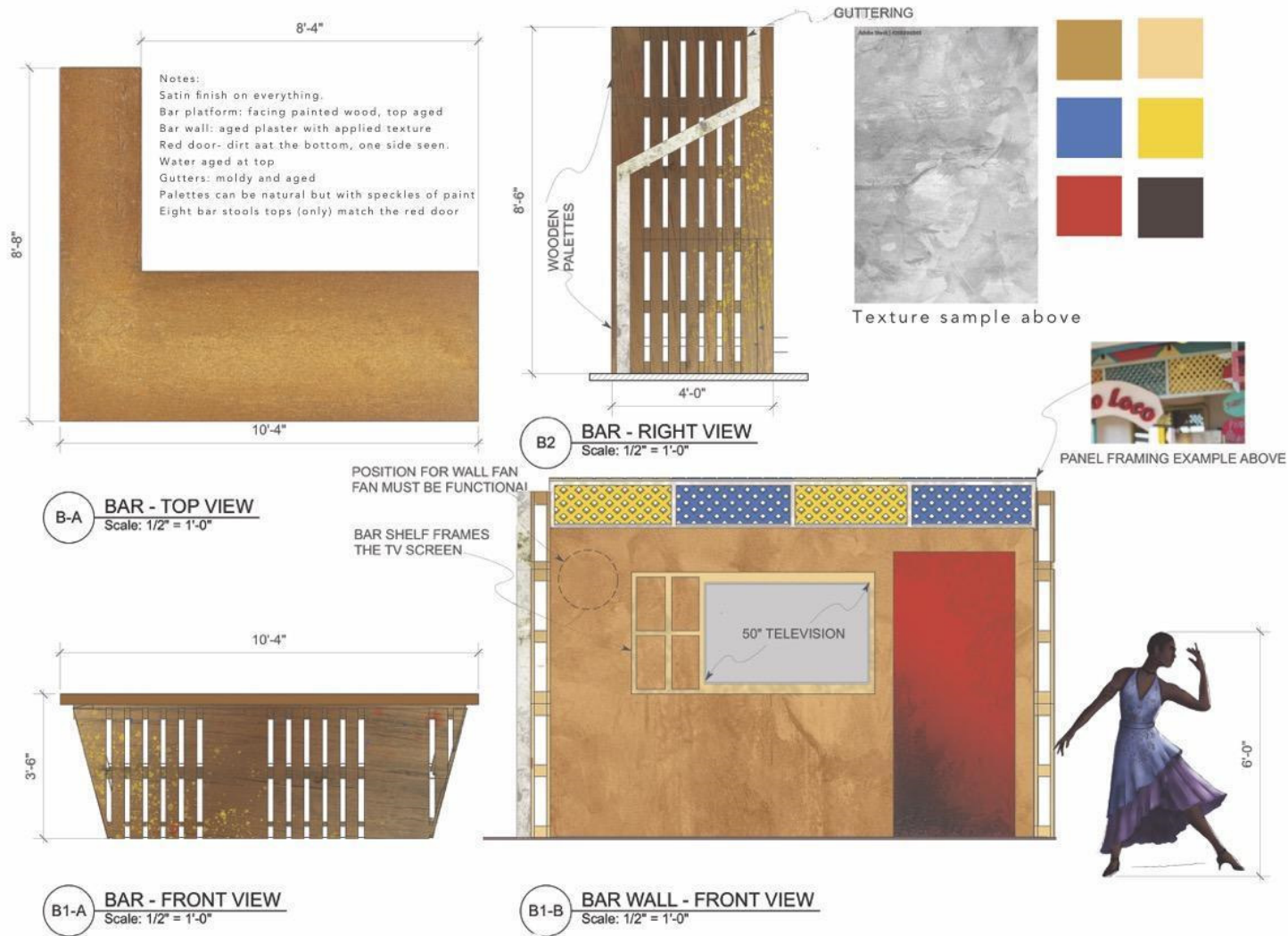
Fig 48. Paint elevation of wooden posts.



D1 **STAGE AND ROOF - FRONT VIEW**
Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"

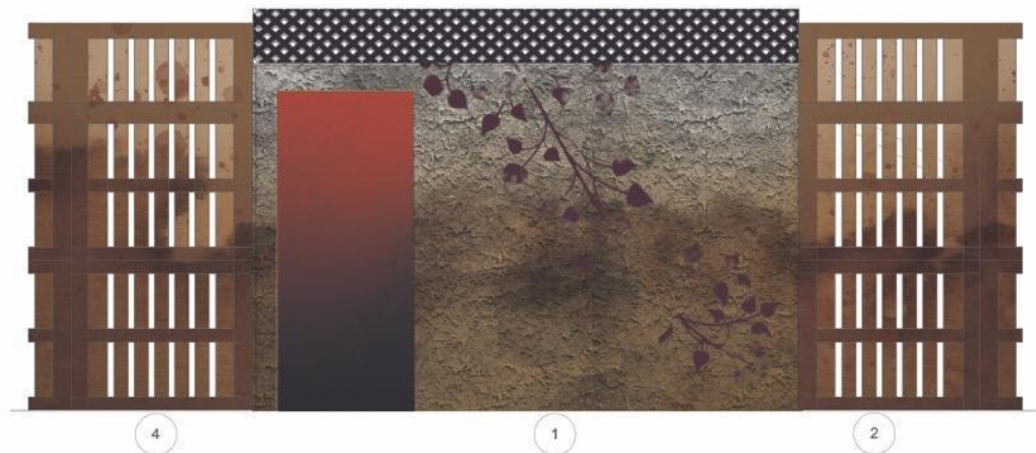
Notes: wood stained or faux finished

Fig 49. Paint elevation of roof unit.

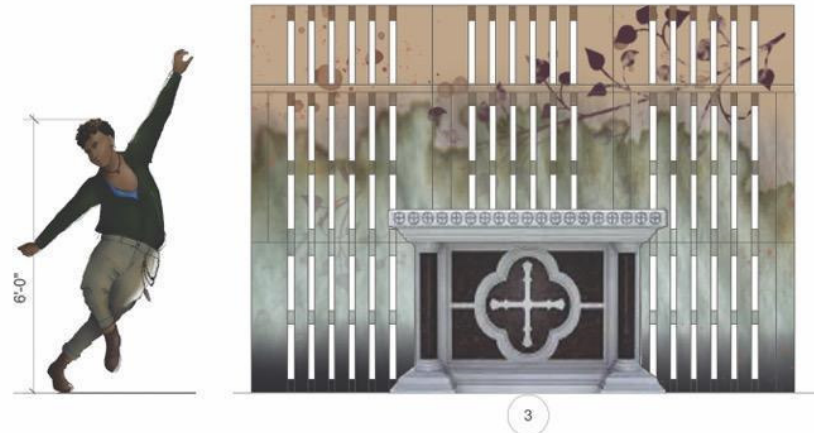


FALL MFA DANCE THESIS '23 - PAINT ELEVATIONS - 05/17 REVISED
 SCENIC DESIGNER - SHARTOYA J.N. BAPTISTE
 CHOREOGRAPHERS - JAVI PADILLA & GERSON LANZA

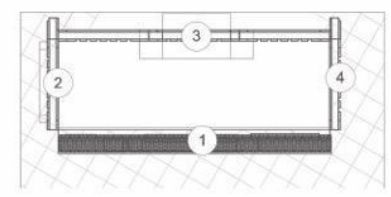
Fig 50. Paint elevation of the bar.



A THE ALTAR INTERIOR
Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"



B THE ALTAR INTERIOR - BACK WALL
Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"



C TOP PLAN - WALL KEY
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

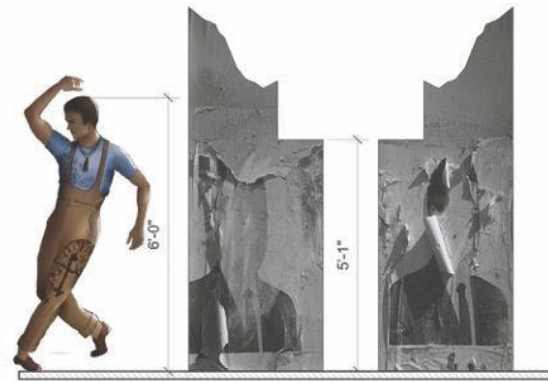
FALL MFA DANCE THESIS '23 - PAINT ELEVATIONS - 05/17/REVISED
SCENIC DESIGNER - SHARTOYA JN. BAPTISTE
CHOREOGRAPHERS - JAVI PADILLA & GERSON LANZA

Fig 51. Paint elevation of the altar.



B-B BAR - TOP PLAN/ VIEW
Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"

Notes:
Altar floor to be glossy, to mimic a flooded or wet room.
Satin finish on tiles for bar floor. Aged and worn.



E3 MASKING WALL 1
Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"

E4 MASKING WALL 2
Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"

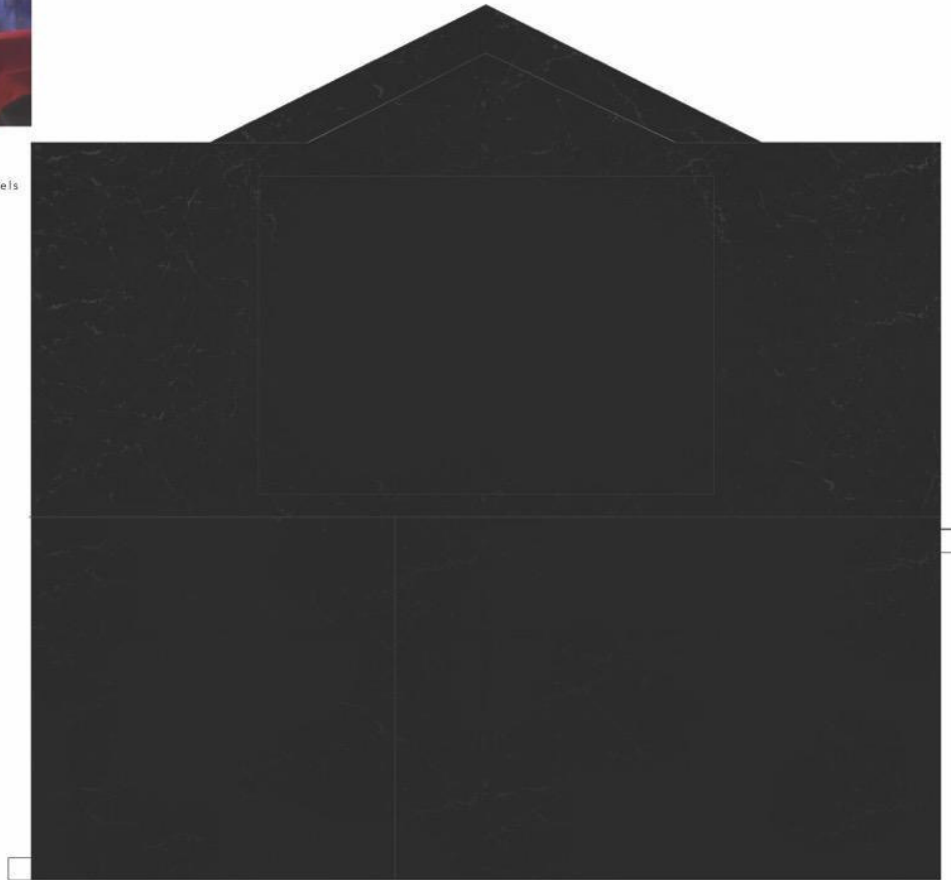
FALL MFA DANCE THESIS '23 - PAINT ELEVATIONS - 05/17 REVISED
 SCENIC DESIGNER - SHARTOYA J.N. BAPTISTE
 CHOREOGRAPHERS - JAVI PADILLA & GERSON LANZA

Fig 52. Paint elevation of the bar and the altar deck, and the masking walls for the dressing room.



Reference image above

Glossy black, weathered floor for 8" and 16" levels
24" and 32" levels can be satin black with little weathering.



D STAGE AND ROOF - FRONT VIEW
Scale: 1/2" = 1'-0"

Fig 53. Paint elevation of stage deck.

2.4: Properties List and Book

The most successful and fun pieces for me were ideas that came to fruition between the cost-out process and the beginning of the build for *FMFA*. The bicycle chandelier in the dressing room, the tappable baby grand piano on stage and the tap box with beans on the audience riser made this design process even more exciting. Working with Tim Jones on these items included also of creative problem solving.

The bicycle chandelier came from the idea of “make do with what you have”. At first, I was interested in using wagon wheels as the main element for the chandelier since we were in an ice factory in Puerto Rico. But after seeing what we had in stock, I was interested in bicycle wheels. The props manager went to a thrift shop and sent me pictures of bicycles which had wheels that could be potentially used by us. Then I thought, what if we just use an entire bicycle (see Fig 103).

Making every surface tappable and changing the sounds of these surfaces for Gerson’s piece were two things that interested me from the concept meeting. Tim Jones found a piano shell and proceeded to modify it to fit a keyboard that was purchased by UMD for this dance piece. It was exciting to know that this climactic moment would be possible! The piano shell was also stuffed with blankets to deaden the sound, another new thing I learned about pianos (see Fig 104). Lastly, positioned next to Gerson’s Honduran home, we made a box that held beans and had Gerson’s personal tap board over it. The hope was to bring a dynamic sound from Gerson’s tapping that was inspired by the authenticity of Honduras (see Fig 105).

FMFA DANCE THESIS 2023				
Choreographed by: Javier Padilla and Gerson Lanza				
Scenic Design by Shartoya Jn. Baptiste sjnba758@umd.edu 443-698-2686				
Prop #	Prop	Quantity	Notes	Update
FURNITURE				
F1	Chairs	72	Variety of chairs from stock. Chairs must be able to fit four chairs around a 30" table. If the requested amount is not feasible, use chairs from the Kogod cabaret seating layout. Chairs closer to the stage to be similar and black, and chairs further away to be multicolored and/or different shapes or types. See SD to clarify the seating layout. More discussion with SD on what colors to paint chairs	
F2	Benches	7	B15 - quantity 3, B053 - quantity 2 - these will be placed next to the elevated audience platform. The other 2 can be anything and will be placed next to board op area. See GP and/or SD for clarity.	
F3	Bar Stools	8	Old/reclaimed wood-looking bar stools. Tops of barstools should have a distressed red treatment that matches the door on the bar set. Location: Bar	8 instead of 4
F4	Filing Cabinet	1	Should be rusty, old, and distressed. Location: Office	
F5	Office Chair	1	Old wooden office chair, no wheels, distressed. Location: Office	
F6	Office Desk	1	Old desk, distressed metal. Location: Office	D16 from stock.
F7	Barrel Counter Top	1	Old wooden rum barrel with circular reclaimed wooden top. Location: Altar	
F8	Piano Shell	1	Piano to be made to be able to take the weight of a dancer. Suggestions: use an electric keyboard in the	
F9	Cabaret Tables	17	All tables from stock. Same tables we use for tech with 30" table top	New addition
F10	Dressing Tables	4	Mirrors to be mounted to dressing tables. Use items from stock. Ensure D20 and D25 are included in the	New addition
F11	Mirrors	3	From stock: M1003, M1004, M1005. Frames painted to look like the table they are mounted to. Location: dressing room	New addition
F12	Dressing Room Stools	4	From stock: SL17. Location: dressing room	New addition
Prop #	Prop	Quantity	Notes	Update
SET DRESSING				
S1	Door	1	Wooden door - very plain, no ornateness. Painted a distressed red treatment to match the tops of the bar stools. Location: Bar	
S2	Clothes	10+	Clothing provided by the costume department. To be hung on clotheslines surrounding set.	

Fig 54. The props list, page 1.

S5	Mannequin Heads	8	Can be left white, but need to be distressed. Do not need to match. Location: Dressing Room	Moved to practicals
S4	Rose Windows	#	Can it be found or one out of foam or rented? Location: Altar	Cut
S6	Beaded Curtains	#	Can be brown, beige, or brown and beige. Must be wooden. Curtains do not have to be identical. Location: The Altar	Cut
S6	Caribbean Flags	1	Hung under lattice on the bar. Location: The Bar	
S7	Milk Crates	-10	Use what we have in stock. Location: The Bar	
S8	Fan	1	To be mounted on the wall of the bar. To be functional.	
S9	Clear Alcohol Bottles	-15	For Bar shelf. To have water in them. Different shapes and sizes are acceptable. Location: The Bar.	
S10	The Altar	1	Fireplace from stock adjusted to look like a church	
S11	Altar Paraphernalia	1	Crochet doily placemat, flameless candles, sage bundles, incense, ram skull, incense. Any items of that nature. Location: On Barrel Counter Top in The Altar.	
S12	Twine/Tendrils/Climbing Vines	1	All different kinds of vines to hang all over the space for Javi's portion of the set. Locations: The Bar, The Altar, The Office, and The Dressing Room.	
S13	Wooden Palettes	3	Locations: The Altar and leaning onto 2 electric poles in space	
S14	Wheel Barrow	1	Location: Leaning onto an electric pole in space. See SD for placement.	
S15	Wheel	+	Location: Leaning onto an electric pole in space. See SD for placement.	Cut
S16	Oil Drum	2	Location: Next to an electric pole in space. See SD for placement. Bump down reflectivity of oil drums	2 needed. Bump down reflectivity of oil drums
S17	Metal Pipes	3	Instead of having electrical poles, can we use pipes we already have in lighting stock? Can they be painted similar to the attached image?	Changed
S18	Baskets	6	All can be pulled from stock. 4 hung above the desk, 1 on the desk, and 1 on the filing cabinet. desk. Location: The Office	
S19	Beans	-	Treated 3 ways: hanging, in small sacks (used as a musical instrument, must be actual beans), and in large sacks (large sacks can be stuffed with something else, does not need to be beans). Please discuss further with SD and Choreographer- Gerson Lanza	
S20	Electricity Meter	+	Location: Gerson's House	Cut
S21	Sand Pit	1	Acrylic sides. Location: The Bar in Act 2. See SD and Choreographer - Gerson Lanza for clarity. More notes in drafting packet.	
S22	Old Computer	1	See MD and SD. MD will be using this as a media element, so it must be "functional to a certain extent. MD may have one in stock. Location: The Office	

Fig 55. The props list, page 2.

S25	Guttering	1	On a wooden palette wall on the left side of the bar. Downspouts of guttering. Location: The Bar	
Prop #	Prop	Quantity	Notes	Update
<u>PRACTICALS</u>				
P1	Festoon Lights	95'7"	To be built by the lighting department. See SD and LD. Total coverage: 95'7"	Total coverage: 95'7"
P2	Bar Pendants	2	Lamp shades with paper notes hanging from them. Location: The Bar	
P3	"Open" Sign	1	LF53 from stock. Placed on the door. Location: The	
P4	Bird Cage Chandelier	3	Use birdcages from stock. Vines and Edison bulbs added to create a chandelier. Location: The Altar	
P5	Lanterns	6	LF7 quantity 1, LF 25 quantity 1, LF8 - quantity 4. The lights inside must be functional. Location: The Altar	
P6	Dressing Room Chandeliers	2	LF37 - quantity 2. Location: The Dressing Room	
P7	Office Chandelier	1	LF4 from stock. Location: The Office	
P8	Broken-	2	Mannequins to be cracked with light coming through-	Cut
P9	Centre Pieces	17	Tea Lights for audience tables	Teal Lights instead
P10	Hanging Bulbs	16	To look similar to Festoon bulbs or the bulbs used in the birdcages. Any in stock? Location: dressing room, 4 above each dressing table. Bulbs to be attached to wheel or found items from stock. See SD for more information.	New addition
P11	Mannequin Heads	8	Mannequin heads to be cracked with light coming through cracks. Location: The Dressing Room. Can we use mannequin heads from costume stock?	New addition
Prop #	Prop	Quantity	Notes	Update
<u>HAND PROPS</u>				
N/A				
Prop #	Prop	Quantity	Notes	Update
<u>CONSUMABLES</u>				
N/A				

Fig 56. The props list, page 3.

2.5: Properties Book

Updated
05.16

F1. Chairs (Quantity: 72)



Description:
Variety of chairs from stock. Chairs must be able to fit four chairs around a 30" table. If the requested amount is not feasible, use chairs from the Kogod cabaret seating layout. Chairs closer to the stage to be similar and black, and chairs further away to be multicolored and/or different shapes or types. See SD to clarify the seating layout. More discussion with SD on what colors to paint chairs

Shartoya.Jn.Baptiste || sjnba758@umd.edu || 443-698-2686

Fig 57.

F2. Bench (Quantity: 7)



Description:
B15 - quantity 3, B053 - quantity 2 - these will be placed next to the elevated audience platform
The other 2 can be anything and will be placed next to board up area. See GP and/or SD for clarity

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Fig 58.

Updated
05.16

F3. Bar Stools (Quantity: 8)



Description:
Old/reclaimed wood-looking bar stools. Tops of barstools should have a distressed red treatment that matches the door on the bar set. Location: Bar

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Fig 59.

F4. Filing Cabinet (Quantity: 1)



Description:
Should be rusty, old, and distressed. Location: Office

Shartoya.Jn.Baptiste || sjnba758@umd.edu || 443-698-2686

Fig 60.

F5. Office Chair (Quantity: 1)



Description:
Old wooden office chair, no wheels, distressed. Location: Office

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10

Fig 61.

F6. Office Desk (Quantity: 1)



Description:
D16 from stock. Location: Office

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11

Fig 62.

F7. Barrel Counter Top (Quantity: 1)



Description:
Old wooden rum barrel with circular reclaimed wooden top. Location: Altar

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12

Fig 63.

F8. Piano Shell (Quantity: 1)



Description:
Piano to be made to be able to take the weight of a dancer. Suggestions: use an electric keyboard in the shell of a piano. Location: Stage

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13

Fig 64.

Updated
05.16

F9. Cabaret Tables (Quantity: 17)



Description:
All tables from stock. Same tables we use for tech with 30" table top

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14

Fig 65.

Updated
05.16

F10. Dressing Tables (Quantity: 4)



Description: Mirrors to be mounted to dressing tables. Use items from stock. Ensure D20 and D25 are included in the four tables that are pulled
Location: dressing room

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15

Fig 66

Updated
05.16

F11. Mirrors (Quantity: 3)



Description: From stock: MI003, MI004, MI005. Frames painted to look like the table they are mounted to.
Location: dressing room

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16

Fig 67.

Updated
05.16

F12. Dressing Room Stools (Quantity: 4)



Description:
From stock: SL17. Location: dressing room

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17

Fig 68.

S1. Door
(Quantity: 1)



Description:
Wooden door - very plain, no ornaments. Painted a distressed red treatment to match the tops of the bar stools. Location: Bar

Shartoya Jn.Baptiste || sjnba758@umd.edu || 443-698-2686

Fig 69.

S2. Clothes
(Quantity: 10+)



Description:
Clothing provided by the costume department. To be hung on clotheslines surrounding set.

Shartoya Jn.Baptiste || sjnba758@umd.edu || 443-698-2686

Fig 70.

S3. Mannequin Heads
(Quantity: 8)



CHANGED TO PRACTICAL.
SEE P11

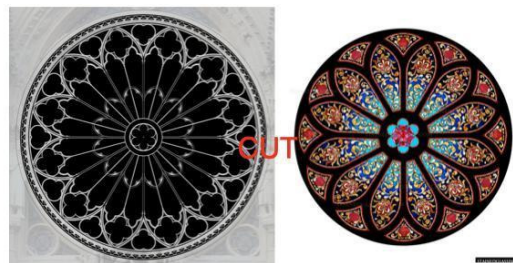
Updated
05.16

Description:
Can be left white, but need to be distressed. Do not need to match. Location: Dressing Room
Suggested Michaels Link: https://www.michaels.com/product/foam-head-eyes-faceless-10039262?cm_mmc=PLASearch--google--MICH_Shopping_US_N_Ptial_N_PMAX_BOOPS_N--&cm_how=site&cm_mmc=google--MICH_Shopping_US_N_Ptial_N_PMAX_BOOPS_N--_prod-10632626&gclid=Cj0KCQwY0Y0BICARhANIEIbafGwIEdDdJkSug6shsSV51IK6to:TAHIVwHCh6:EqKgr9VBOStQzAvH3EALw_wcB

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Fig 71.

S4. Rose Windows
(Quantity: 2)



Updated
05.16

Description:
Can it be found or cut out of foam or rented? Location: Altar

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Fig 72.

Updated
05.16

S5. Beaded Curtains (Quantity: 2)



Description:

Can be brown, beige, or brown and beige. Must be wooden. Curtains do not have to be identical. Location: The Altar

Suggested Amazon Link: <https://a.co/d/8B5X6r>

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S6. Caribbean Flags (Quantity: 1)



Description:

Hung under lattice on the bar. Location: The Bar

Amazon link https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09RGDC1N3?ref=asc_cr_B09RGDC1N3?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=586193729732&hwpso=&hwnets=g&hvrand=9092205848095585640&hwpone=&hwpstwo=&hwpqnt=&hvdev=c&hsvbvmfdl=&hsvlocint=&hsvlophy=9060931&hvtagid=pla-1844036101832&psc=1

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Fig 73.

Fig 74

S7. Milk Crates (Quantity: ~10)



Description:

Use what we have in stock. Location: The Bar

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S8. Fan (Quantity: 1)



Description:

To be mounted on the wall of the bar. To be functional. Location: The Bar

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Fig 75.

Fig 76.

S9. Clear Alcohol Bottles
(Quantity: ~15)



Description:
For Bar shelf. To have water in them. Different shapes and sizes are acceptable. Location: The Bar.

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Fig 77.

S10. The Altar
(Quantity: 1)



Description:
Fireplace from stock adjusted to look like a church altar. Location: The Altar

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Fig 78.

S11. Altar Paraphernalia
(Quantity: 1+)



Description:
Crochet doily placemat, flameless candles, sage bundles, incense, ram skull, incense. Any items of that nature. Location: On Barrel Counter Top in The Altar.

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Fig 79.

S12. Twine/Tendrils/Climbing Vines
(Quantity: 1+)



Description:
All different kinds of vines to hang all over the space for Javi's portion of the set. Locations: The Bar, The Altar, The Office, and The Dressing Room.

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Fig 80.

S13. Wooden Palettes
(Quantity: 3)



Description:
Locations: The Altar and leaning onto 2 electric poles in space

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S14. Wheel Barrow
(Quantity: 1)



Description:
Image from stock. Location: Leaning onto an electric pole in space. See SD for placement.

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Fig 81.

Fig 82.

S15. Wheel
(Quantity: 1)

Updated
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Description:
Image from stock. Location: Leaning onto an electric pole in space. See SD for placement.

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S16. Oil Drum
(Quantity: 2)

Updated
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Description:
Image from stock. Location: Next to an electric pole in space. See SD for placement.
Bump down reflectivity of oil drums

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Fig 83.

Fig 84

Updated
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S17. Electrical Poles (Quantity: 3)



Description:

Instead of having electrical poles, can we use pipes we already have in lighting stock? Can they be painted similar to the attached image?

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Fig 85.

S18. Baskets (Quantity: 6)



Description:

All can be pulled from stock. 4 hung above the desk, 1 on the desk, and 1 on the filing cabinet. Location: The Office

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Fig 86.

Updated
05.16

S19. Beans (Quantity: ~)



Description:

Treated 3 ways: hanging, in small sacks (used as a musical instrument, must be actual beans), and in large sacks (large sacks can be stuffed with something else, does not need to be beans). Please discuss further with SD and Choreographer- Gerson Lanza

Research video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3cdCgGeu3mg>

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Fig 87.

S20. Electricity Meter (Quantity: 1)



Description:

Location: Gerson's House

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Fig 88.

Updated
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S21. Sand Pit (Quantity: 1)



B3 SAND PIT - TOP PLAN/ VIEW
Scale: 1/2" = 1'

CUT



B4 SAND PIT - FRONT VIEW
Scale: 1/2" = 1'

SAND PIT NOTES:
WALLS OF SAND PIT TO BE TRANSPARENT. SAND TO FILL
UP ABOUT 1/2" MUST BE ABLE TO ATTACH TO BAR
SECURELY FOR PERFORMER TO DANCE IN IT.
THE SAND PIT LIVES ON TOP OF THE BAR IN SECOND HALF
OF PERFORMANCE AND BROUGHT IN DURING
INTERMISSION

Description:

Acrylic sides. Location: The Bar in Act 2. See SD and Choreographer - Gerson Lanza for clarity. More notes in drafting packet.

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Fig 89.

S22. Old Computer (Quantity: 1)



Description:

See MD and SD. MD will be using this as a media element, so it must be "functional to a certain extent. MD may have one in stock. Location: The Office

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Fig 90.

S23. Guttering (Quantity: 1)



Description:

On a wooden palette wall on the left side of the bar. Downspout of guttering. Location: The Bar

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Fig 91.

Updated
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P1. Festoon Lights (Quantity: 95'7")



Description:

To be built by the lighting department. See SD and LD.
Total coverage: 95'7"

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Fig 92.

P2. Bar Pendants
(Quantity: 2)



Description:
Lamp shades with paper notes hanging from them. Location: The Bar

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Fig 93.

P3. Open Sign
(Quantity: 1)



Description:
LF53 from stock. Placed on the door. Location: The Bar

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Fig 94.

P4. Bird Cage Chandelier
(Quantity: 3)



Description:
Use birdcages from stock. Vines and Edison bulbs added to create a chandelier. Location: The Altar

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Fig 95.

P5. Lanterns
(Quantity: 6)



Description:
LF7 quantity 1, LF 25 quantity 1, LF8 - quantity 4. The lights inside must be functional. Location: The Altar

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Fig 96.

P6. Dressing Room Chandelier
(Quantity: 2)



Description:
LF37 - quantity 2. Location: The Dressing Room

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P7. Office Chandelier
(Quantity: 1)



Description:
LF4 from stock. Location: The Office

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Fig 97.

Fig 98.

P8. Broken Mannequins
(Quantity: 2)

Updated
05.16



Description:
Mannequins to be cracked with light coming through cracks. Location: The Dressing Room

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P9. Centre Pieces
(Quantity: 17)

Updated
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Description:
Tea Lights for audience tables

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Fig 99*

Fig 100*

Updated
05.16

P10. Hanging Bulbs
(Quantity: 16)



Description: To look similar to Festoon bulbs or the bulbs used in the birdcages. Any in stock?
Location: dressing room. 4 above each dressing table. Bulbs to be attached to wheel or found items from stock. See SD for more information.

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Updated
05.16

P11. Mannequin Heads
(Quantity: 8)



Description: Mannequin heads to be cracked with light coming through cracks. Location: The Dressing Room.
Can we use mannequin heads from costume stock?

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Fig 101.

Fig 102.



Fig 103. Bicycle chandelier hanging in the dressing room during the tech process.



Fig 104. Piano shell on stage during load-in.

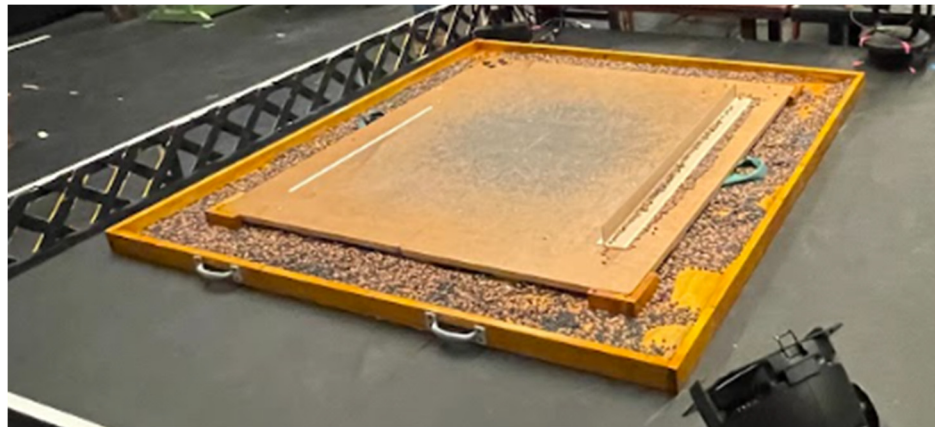


Fig 105. Bean box with tap floor during the tech process.

Chapter 3: THE TECH PROCESS

3.1: Problem Solving During the Tech Process

During the tech process, there were problem-solving moments with each design area. For instance, one of the festoon lights posed an issue for Tim Kelly. The lights were installed in the space about two days before the invited dress rehearsal and casted unwanted shadows for the projectors. Together, Tim Kelly and I repositioned the lights in a way that still connected the spaces together but gave him the space he needed for his design to be successful (see fig. 107).

Another problem that surfaced was the placement of one boom in the dressing room with light fixtures focused on the bar. It was important for Scott to get side light into the bar area, but it was important to make this space feel more realistic and less theatrical. It felt out of place since it was the only boom placed in the dressing room. Instead of fighting it, I embraced it. I asked Scott for another boom in the dressing room but to fill it with multiple light fixtures. I had to give the boom a back-story for being there. The back-story is this boom was stored in the dressing room because the theatre ran out of storage space. This collaboration made one of the moments in Javi's piece so powerful with all the lights from both booms blasting towards the bar area.

Concerning the clothes lines, it only made sense to source the clothes from the costume department. Cody and I have a past and *FMFA* would be our third show working together. With the short-hand communication we built between each other, the collaboration between scenic and costumes was the easiest for me. I asked Cody for clothes to hang on the lines. First, he gave me costumes that were cut from his fittings, which was a smart idea, but surprisingly they looked too eloquent for the world. So, we did another selection together and were more intentional with our choices and this was all solved in minutes.

3.2: Shop Walk-Throughs, Load-In and Tech

I enjoy showing the process of my work. Below you will find photos I took during some of the shop walk-throughs, before and during load-in, and during the tech process.



Fig 106. The bar in the scene shop before load-in began.



Fig 107. (From left to right) Bar, then dressing room during load-in. This is an image Tim Kelly sent when we were brainstorming placements of festoon lights.



Fig 108. The dressing room during load-in.



Fig 109. Some of the birdcage chandeliers inside the altar during tech.



Fig 110. The stage during load-in.



Fig 111. The bar during tech. Photo by Emily Pan.



Fig 112. Gerson's Honduran home during tech.



Fig 113. One of the audience chairs before the paint treatment.



Fig 114. One of the audience chairs after the paint treatment.

Chapter 4: PRODUCTION PHOTOS



Fig 115. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Altar. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 116. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Altar. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 117. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Bar. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 118. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Bar. Photo by Timothy Kelly.

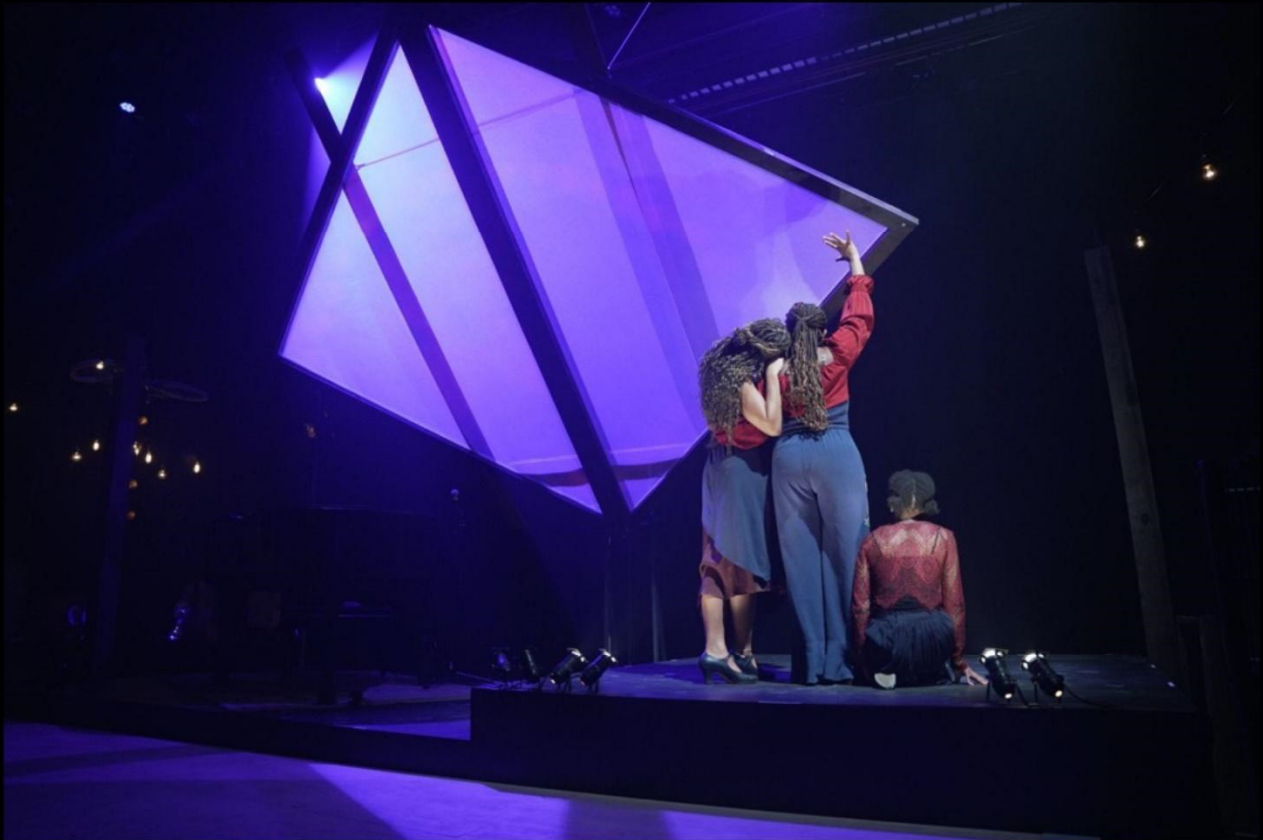


Fig 119. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Stage. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.

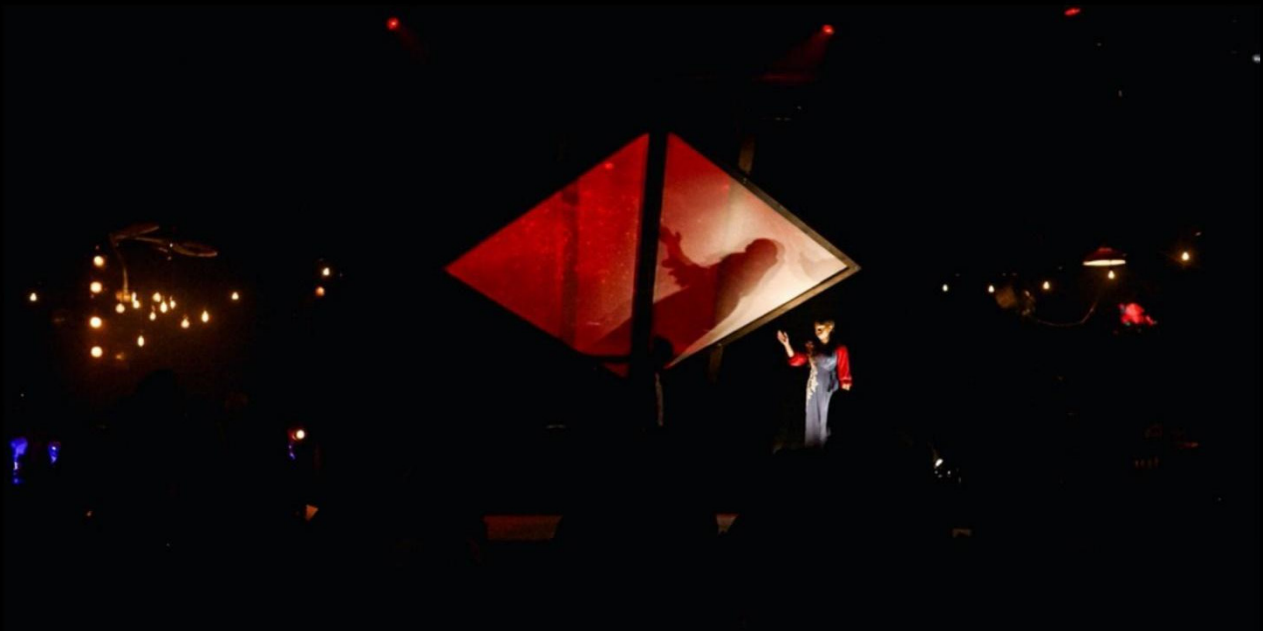


Fig 120. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – (left to right) The Dressing Room, The Stage, The Office. Photo by Timothy Kelly.



Fig 121. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Stage. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 122. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Stage. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 123. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Bar. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 124. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Bar. Photo by Timothy Kelly.



Fig 125. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Dressing Room. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 126. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Dressing Room. Photo by Mary-Kate Ford.



Fig 127. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Bar. Photo by Timothy Kelly.



Fig 128. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Bar. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 129. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Office. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 130. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Office. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 131. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Bar. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 132. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Bar. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 133. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – The Bar. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 134. *El Bodegón de la Bruja* – (left to right) The Dressing Room, The Stage, The Office. Photo by Timothy Kelly.



Fig 135. *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* – Honduras/ Gerson’s House. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 136. *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* – Honduras/ Gerson’s House. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 137. *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* – New York. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 138. *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* – New York. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 139. *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* – New York. Photo by Timothy Kelly.



Fig 140. *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* – Jazz Club. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 141. *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* – Jazz Club. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 142. *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* – Jazz Club. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 143. *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* – Jazz Club. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 144. *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* – Jazz Club. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 145. *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* – Jazz Club. Photo by Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.



Fig 146. *Mi Vida, in Rhythm* – Jazz Club. Photo by Timothy Kelly.

Chapter 5: POST-PRODUCTION PROCESS AND DISCOVERIES

A lot of questions were answered, and discoveries made only during and after the running of *FMFA*. On the top of page 28, I mentioned leaving with the following questions: How can the audience also be involved and collaborate to decolonize? How can we do all this safely and feasibly in one space that is shared with Gerson's story?

The movement and script of Javi's piece encouraged the audience to be part of the decolonization process and build community. The dancers interacted with the audience, they asked questions, gave prompts, and handed props to the audience. There is a moment where one of the citizens of Javi's world is poisoned, and he asks the audience "who did this? Did you do this?" and almost always, the audience points to the culprit - the Witch Hunter. Furthermore, *FMFA* was successful due to true collaboration. The flexibility between both choreographers and collaboration between them and the production team really made this show a memorable process. The use of community problem-solving made both dance pieces live in one space. The guidance and continuous conversation with Driggers and Tim Jones made this design feel supported and cared for. I am so grateful for these moments.

Additionally, this production challenged me in ways I did not expect. I left this process feeling confident in collaborating with others, with sharper critical thinking skills and an overall love for immersive art. In a way, I felt like the younger version of me that migrated to the USA healed during this design process. I do not usually feel attached to any body of work that I create, but for some reason, *FMFA* felt unusually comforting. This dance production reminded me of my love for music videos, concerts, and dance films.

Apart from this production being my first time designing an immersive set, it was my first encounter with designing for dance. With my background in dance, it felt easier to communicate with the choreographers when sharing concepts. However, unlike theatre that has a script with a concrete framework to reference, dance is ever evolving and can be challenging to create when following a thought process rather than stage directions. It is beautiful how a concept someone dreamt of, comes to life successfully. Another reward I experienced was more interaction with performers than usual due to the immersive nature of the space. I knew each of the performers' names and it seemed like they felt comfortable asking me any questions about the set without going to the choreographers.

What a blessing it was to design for Javier Padilla and Gerson Lanza. Their art, their stories and this production will live with me forever.

Chapter 6: POST-THESIS DEFENSE

On Friday March 1st, 2024, I defended my thesis. I was nervous at the beginning of my presentation, but the nerves were quickly replaced with confidence once I began speaking about my research. The end was a bitter-sweet moment. Memories of the past three years came rushing in unexpectedly; the painful memories hit first and hard and lingered, followed by the blurred joyful moments, and lastly the main reason I decided to further my studies stamped itself in my mind. My country, my people, my culture, my family, and people who look like me in America.

Below lives a snippet of thoughts shared from Dr. Stephanie Shonekan - Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities who was one of the people in attendance.

“Sorry I’m a little late... so I’m coming from a meeting that was very important, but very unpleasant. And, as I was leaving and I told them I have to go, I said I’m going to a defense of a thesis... so coming here has really lifted my spirits in so many ways. The tears at the end, I feel them because so much of yourself is in the work. This idea of home, this idea of the Caribbean... I think all of our students bring themselves to the work... and that is why we as faculty, staff and administrators, this is why we have to stretch you know, so that the students can put themselves into the work as Shartoya has so deeply. With Tim’s help and with so much of the support you have here, I mean I couldn’t be prouder.”

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Majic102.1.<https://myhoustonmajic.com/3127619/little-known-black-history-fact-howard-sandman-sims/>