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DSTP Final Paper
October 26, 2022

Project 1: Lighting in *References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot*

Part 1

Analysis exercise 4: Create an Art Piece



I chose this exercise because in the field of lighting design, visuals are very important and I wanted to tell the story through light. To get to the heart of the play through light and I took to thinking about key points in the story which tends to employ a lot of juxtaposition with characters and action. A dog (coyote) and a cat. A man and a woman. A free soul and isolation. Passion and Domesticity. In the setting of Barstow, California I wanted to consider a desert for inspiration. From clues in the text such as the cacti Gabriela mentions and sand in the fridge, There are many moments that emphasize the isolation and presence of the desert (Rivera 10, 26).

I felt the desert would be important in creating the story behind the plot. To further emphasize the juxtaposition I was very drawn to depictions of a blue desert. Oranges and blues. Complimentary colors on the color wheel and complete opposites. Blue represents the night and Gabriela. The rich dark blue overpowers the colors of the desert in an ever-present glow. This represents Gabriela's dream and her isolation. Although she feels isolated, she feels the presence of everything around her. But it is the absence that drives her story.

When the story opens at night the lights would be blue for Gabriela. Orange would represent Benito. In the design, The presence and absence of orange and/or blue will show the emotional power struggle between the two characters. I chose this specific exercise as it is perfect to reflect the color story that I wish to portray as a lighting designer. For example the scene with Benito and Gabriella during Benito's initial rival, There would be an opportunity for many shifts of color and movement ending with Orange as Benito dominates the scene and conversation (39).

Art is an important inspiration for me when it comes to design in general. Visuals manifest synthesized ideas about light and design.

Analysis Exercise EF IV: Don't Forget Yourself

What is this play supposed to give to an audience? In my opinion, *References to Salvadore Dali Make Me Hot* is meant to portray the complexity of emotion and relationships in an abstract way to leave audiences questioning and thinking critically about the inner self. It works to portray in multiple ways throughout the play. The genre of magical realism (or surrealism) already asks the audience to question what they are watching yet still maintains works that would be seen as “realistic” as those surreal elements are simply a part of the play's world. This complexity opens up the audience to contemplate the blatant symbolism and metaphors that permeate the entire structure of the play.

The play uses its genre of magical realism to take the audience out of a “normal” situation and introduce them to the landscape of the mind. Here, the audience is sucked up in the action of the unrealistic events and is forced to think about what is going on in order to keep up with the direction and pace of the plot. From this, the audience should walk away with sympathy and recognition of emotions and experiences in their own lives even though the action on stage was portrayed in a surreal manner.

I chose this analytical exercise from Elinor Fuch's *Visit to a Small Planet* because, as I said earlier, I find visuals to be immensely important in the portrayal of invisible elements such as thoughts and emotions. When considering lighting design it is crucial to consider what the play wants to get across to the audience. Stage lights have an advantage in using color associations such as red for danger and rage or green for peace and nature. Because of this advantage, colors and lighting for scenes must not be taken lightly in a haphazard attempt to portray mediocre points to the audience without depth.

Depth is important to flesh out the world of a play. It gives a lively, realistic feel in an otherwise unrealistic world. Half-hearted attempts with mediocre lighting can still work for a good play but, depth and conscious placement of various colors, shadows, and highlights can reveal nonverbal parts of the story that would have otherwise gone unnoticed by most. Light and color are ingrained in many people's subconscious thoughts and connections. This can only be used to a designer's advantage when telling a story if considered carefully.

This is one of the areas where the psychology of character and spectator both are important to consider in one way or another. Psychology is not necessarily something you can control but one may have some influence if one understands how a person's thoughts and subconscious works. How can the stage force someone to change their thoughts and attention? The simple answer is the power of suggestion. Then the designer considers what they would like to suggest to the audience. Each production may have a different idea of what it is they would like to suggest to the audience. In this example, complexity and manifestation of dreams and surrealism are used to portray emotions and thoughts characters don't say out loud. The design can influence different ideas and change the tone and severity of these thoughts in the unknowing (or knowing) eyes of the audience.

Part 2

I decided to research security lights. For the scenes that take place outside, I wanted to add some lighting details that may help place the period in the early 1990s. From my research, I discovered that likely it would be the security lights of the 1980s that would be used on the standard subpar military housing. The 1980s development in security lighting was brought on by the invention of metal halide lamps. According to Silva Consultants, these lights could produce a

“true white light” that properly displays the color of objects under its beam (“Use of LED Lighting for Security Purposes”).

Especially in the first scene, where Cat, Coyote, Moon, and Martin are out quibbling this lighting could provide a lovely lighting entrance for Gabriela where she triggers the security lamp (Rivera 1). My design sees the first scene rather visibly dark with the shadows of night and the moon. When Gabriela enters, the floodlight turns on punctuating her entrance as she shoots (7). The white light would immediately lighten the scene but keeping with my design, blue desert, blue lighting would still dominate Gabriela’s newfound presence with hints of orange highlighting the hopes she still holds.

The shape of the floodlight could also influence the direction of the lights on the stage. In my research, for 1980s-style security lights, I struggled to find visual examples. One, however, I found on eBay, had a dual light design in which the lamps could be maneuvered and aimed for the best coverage of the vicinity (eBay, “1980s outdoor security light vintage photoelectric eye automatic antique”). In this example, I could incorporate these lights into my design for specific purposes such as highlighting Cat, hiding Martin, and brightening Gabriela’s supposed fears, the cacti (8).

These sources are rather good, for what I was looking for in detailing the design of lighting. In lighting design, I found it rather difficult to isolate material culture as, especially in magical realism, the lighting of a stage is more for practical purposes and less often accurate to reality. At least, that’s my opinion. In any matter, having had to research a form of material culture from the early 1990s. This detail of lighting does have the possibility of elevating and being useful in a scene even though regular stage lighting could handle this easily.

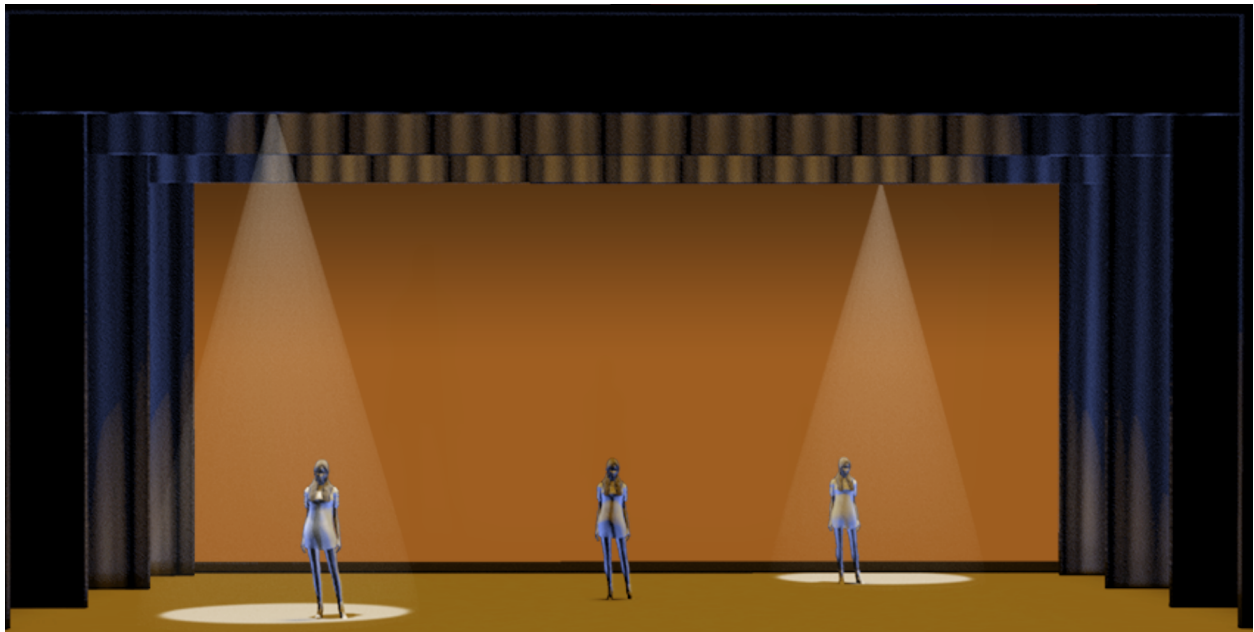
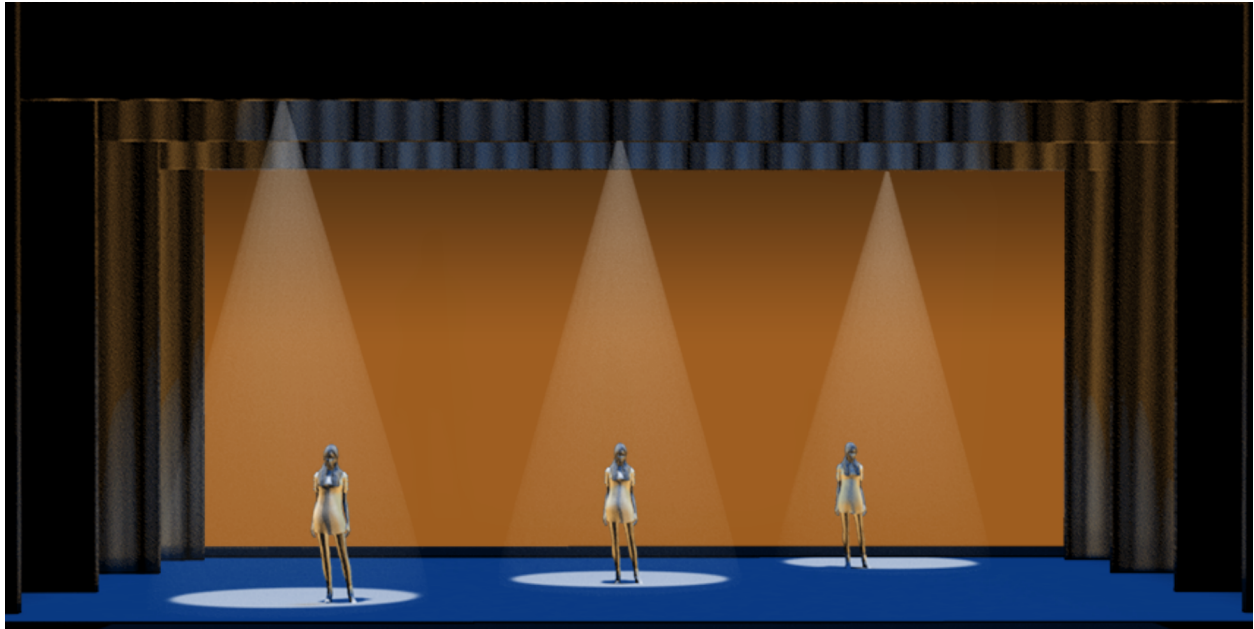
In the end, it could possibly work to make the Ghost of Coyote in the end scene the ghost-like appearance he would not have in the first scene as he was kept in the dark. Costume design could implement some interesting pieces in costume design to create a ghost-like appearance under the bright light of the metal halide lights. This idea would have to include other designers than just lighting. However, in the spirit of theatre, that is how most production works. The individual designers collaborate to create the product in its entirety.

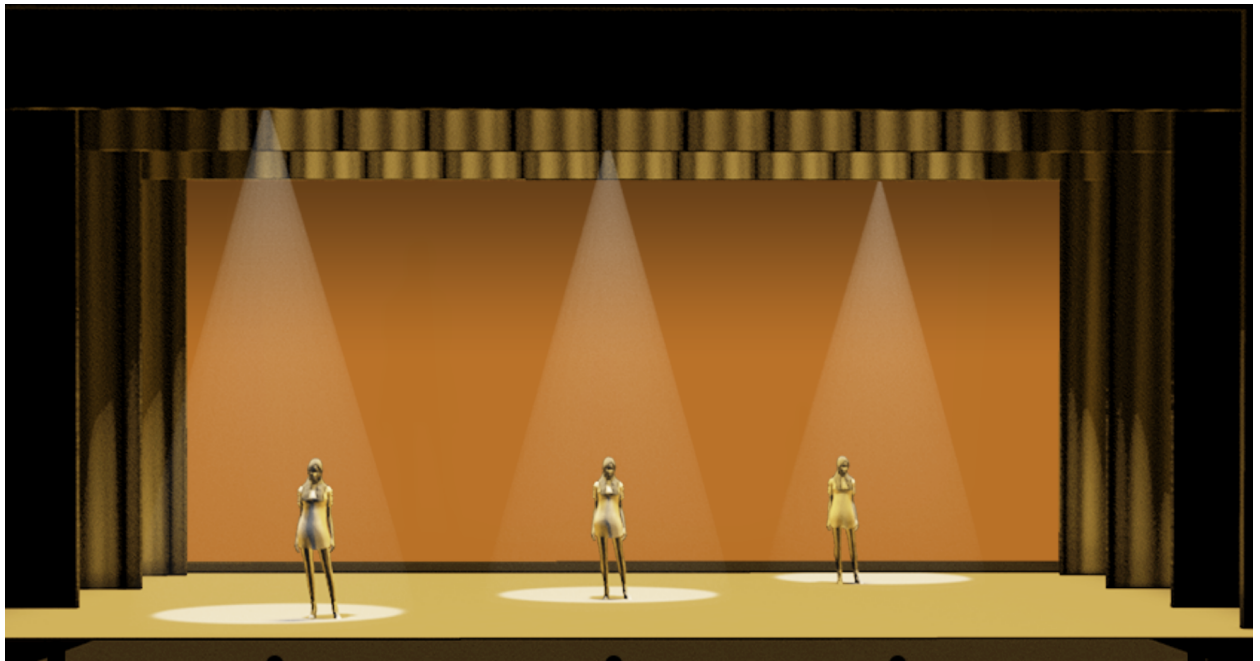
“1980s Outdoor Security Light Vintage Photo Electric Eye Automatic Antique.” *eBay*,
<https://www.ebay.com/itm/125558328124>.

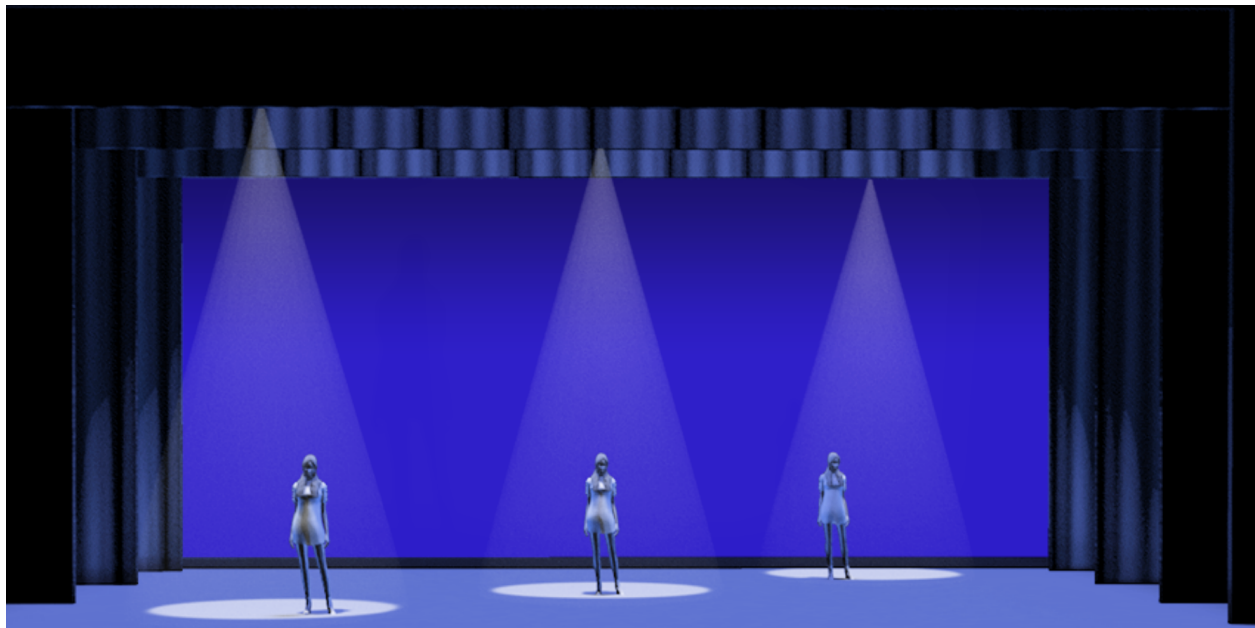
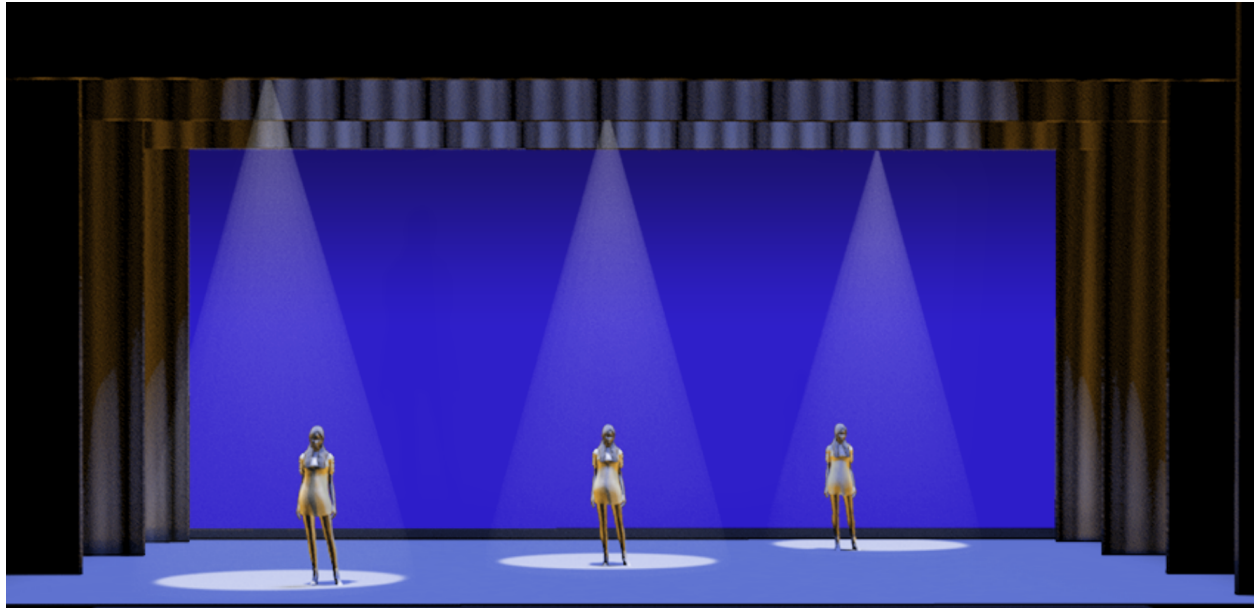
“Use of LED Lighting for Security Purposes.” *Silva Consultants*,
<https://www.silvaconsultants.com/new-security-tips-1/use-of-led-lighting-for-security-purposes>.

Rivera José. *References to Salvador dali Make Me Hot*. Broadway Play Publishing Inc.,
2012.

Part 3 (Examples of lighting using top light, background light, side light, and white spotlight)







Project 2: Costuming in *Peerless*

Part 1

Analysis Exercise *From Elements of Style*: math

$$D/M * L = M * L$$

$$M * L = L(M)$$

Solve for L

Mostly I chose this one for fun and a challenge. It may seem rather easy but I don't want to make it too simplistic. My version of the math problem works with a set of equations containing the variables L and M. The goal is to solve for L under the equation in which it is impossible. The variable of L is inevitably tied to the variable of M which eventually causes the fusion of their identities making L unsolvable.

From the perspective of costume design, I want to focus on the interchangeability of identity and recognition. There are multiple characters in this play that are played by one actor. It is the job of the costume designer to distinguish different characters played by the same actor but also blur the line when necessary. In this equation, I use the twins M and L as my example to begin the deconstruction of character relationships and identity. Equations of this matter can also be applied to other characters of the play such as Dirty Girl/Preppy Girl and D/D's Brother.

With my idea for costume design being minimal change between characters (except for perhaps the dramatic difference between Preppy and Dirty Girl), I hope to have a small-sized wardrobe in this small cast play. In deconstructing their identities to variables, I thought that perhaps the more "plain" the wardrobe, the more the personality can come out of the characters to shock the audience when subversion and revelations pertaining to characters occur.

The equations are useful in organizing what pieces and switches will need to happen in the play. The easiest example is L's switch to M which would be made through the switch of the backpacks.

Analysis Exercise 2: 4 Questions in Reference to Costume Design

1. Why is there a trope for twins to have a combined yet separate identity? (pg.6 M-“We regret to /inform...”/L-“inform you.../that”)
2. How does race play into perceived identity? (pg.34 M-There’s no Historically Asian College I can apply to)
3. How can clothing add to secrets, especially in the case of Dirty Girl? (pg.3 *DIRTY GIRL* appears. *She is a white girl with dreadlocks, wearing a filthy trenchcoat.*)
4. What the h*ll is a Hoopcoming and how do you dress for one???? (pg.41 L-You’ll never guess who asked me after AP Euro if that meant you needed a Hoopcoming date.)

This was another exercise I wanted to revisit. Often when I read plays, I have A LOT of questions that spring to my mind. Especially in a play with such a confusing format, questions definitely arose while I was reading through again. Side note, after reading I found out what a hoopcoming is. It is some sort of strange basketball-themed homecoming, but instead of football, it’s basketball and less formal maybe. Still not clear, but I have a vague idea.

I like this exercise because it allows me to record my questions and contemplate and continue on rather than get distracted or forget. In this case, I tried to think mostly of questions I would ask as a costume designer to help guide my thinking process in designing for this play. And now I get to think about designing for a hoopcoming. To be honest, I had forgotten the whole school dance scene. I forgot about a lot of the scenes in this play.

In considering the answers to the questions I had asked, I have a greater sense of thought in identity that I may overthink/underthink/forget in a manageable way. Oftentimes, there are too many aspects of a character’s identity to consider that I get overwhelmed when trying to organize a design. Breaking it down and asking questions in this style helps organize my thoughts for me.

The careful consideration of a character's identity is integral in designing the costume. I have a personal emphasis on visual storytelling through costuming which reveals hidden aspects of identity, personality, and motive. In most contexts of costuming, identity is important to think about when designing. I find the character's identity extremely important and I desire to portray that through clothes, even taking liberties that may not necessarily make sense outside of costume analysis.

I really do love these questions that allow me to begin looking into characters beyond the hypodermis of the play. I like to get under their skin and see their perspective and learn how to costume to best portray what they see and think.

Part 2

School dance trends of 2013. Who's wearing who? As you may notice, I'm kind of on a hoopcoming bender right now. And now, this is my material research project. I believe that hoopcoming is some kind of basketball-based homecoming. I am unfamiliar with concepts of classical homecoming but the basics that I myself already know are that homecoming is 1) a formal dress affair and 2) less formal than a prom. Most of my knowledge of styles comes from being the youngest lassie of 30+ cousins which granted me opportunities of receiving clothes I would not wear myself but still gives me insight and physical evidence of trends my cousins had lived through.

We know that this play takes place in late fall of 2012 at the earliest and fall of 2013 at the latest given that the rejection letter M receives from the college acknowledges that "[Her] spot in the class of 2018 has been taken" (Park pg.6). I decided that M and L are seniors rather than juniors so that the hoopcoming dance would take place in 2013. I couldn't find any evidence

to suggest their grade and thus worked with my own assumption. Feel free to prove me wrong and I will adjust, or perhaps the director would favor the 2012 approach which I could easily adopt as styles would be similar.

In researching the homecoming styles of 2013 I also looked at the styles of 2014 and 2012 to see where the trends had evolved from and how they would evolve over the coming years. Tulle and sequins appear to be all the rage over these few years. Short poofy tulle dresses with sequined designs garnishing the tops. Large tulle skirts were most popular in 2012 out of these 3 years becoming slimmer or vanishing from the design and giving way to more body-conscious. Chunky jewelry and adornments were also popular accessories.

Based on Fashion Trend Seeker, a blog reporting trends to those who wish to stay up to date, 2013 seems to be the best time for sequins. I love the kitschiness of sequins and feel that they could fit in well with the hyperbolic campiness of the play. These types of dresses are not hard to find. Thrift stores are abundant with dance dresses that have fallen from grace. I have a dress in mind that I think would suit our characters very well from my very own closet.

Lace also appears rather popular in 2013 according to Teen Vogue Blog. For our purposes, however, I am not interested in too much lace on a dress outside of detailing (collars, cuffs, hems). I feel like the detailed lace of 2013 would get lost on the stage and not serve the exaggerated aesthetic I am searching for. Teen Vogue does however offer a more detailed list of accessories and shoes that are missing from the Fashion Trend Seeker site.

Most obviously, these sites give me inspiration and direction for the way I would like the twins' dresses to look as well as the rest of their outfits. In this design, I don't feel like the outfits should be very elaborate and share too much insight into the characters. Because of this, my design for the costumes of L and M for the Homecoming Dance are not lavish but a simplistic

caricature of the setting of 2013. The simplicity of the costumes does not signify the laziness of the designer I must say. I just feel that a simple or “normal” design that does not elevate the ordinary setting and situations at the beginning of the play is better suited to catch the audience off guard and throw force them to focus on dialogue and the actions the characters take.

There is a variety of styles darkening the dance floor of 2013. Fashion Trend Seeker quickly passes over these various styles, “from sequins, to sheer, peplum, thigh-high slits and crop tops” (Fashionprincess). However, the ones that hold the title of “early 2010’s fashion” are definitely the styles we have been describing so far. Short, knee-length dresses, sleeveless and strapless. The “major, metallic touches” of heavy jewels and sequins (Knebl). These are the styles I hope to capture in my design.

Fashionprincess. “2014 Homecoming Dress Trends – Top Homecoming Dresses for 2014.”

Fashion Trend Seeker, Fashion Trend Seeker, 13 Oct. 2014,

<http://fashiontrendseeker.com/2014/08/13/2014-homecoming-dress-trends-top-homecoming-dresses-2014/>.

Fashionprincess. “Homecoming Dress Trends for 2012.” *Fashion Trend Seeker*, Fashion

Trend Seeker, 15 Aug. 2012,

<http://fashiontrendseeker.com/2012/08/15/homecoming-dress-trends-for-2012/>.

Fashionprincess. “Homecoming Dress Trends for 2013.” *Fashion Trend Seeker*, Fashion

Trend Seeker, 17 Sept. 2013,

<http://fashiontrendseeker.com/2013/09/17/homecoming-dress-trends-for-2013/>.

Knebl, Claire. "Let's Get Glam! Your Ultimate Homecoming Shopping Guide." *Teen Vogue*, 6 Sept. 2013,

<https://www.teenvogue.com/gallery/homecoming-dresses-bags-shoes?slide=32>.

Park, Jiehae. *Peerless*. Samuel French, 2017.

Part 3

Please keep in mind that these examples are focusing on style and material more than color. The color plate will be more along the lines of black and white, tans, golds, silvers, or grays. More neutral colors.















These are the hair pieces.

Thank you :)