



Queer Representation in Contemporary Theatre

Creative Research Presented by Madalyne Heiken




Overview



Abstract

LGBTQ+ folx do not typically see accurate, non-stereotypical representations of themselves in contemporary media. Through adapting Connor Rodenbeck's poetic short story "SOAK" into a devised creative production, LGBTQ+ folx will have access to media that portrays the queer experience in a truthful, authentic, and human way.



Impact

- Conversations with LGBTQ+ DU students revealed that there are few spaces for folx to gather and celebrate.
- Societal shifts during COVID-19 have made it more difficult to find and participate in queer communities.
- This project begins to rebuild those spaces of expression through artistry, improvisation, and collaboration in a practice known as **devised theatre**.
- This creative project aims to converse with other queer art as part of the trajectory of queer representation in contemporary media and attitudes toward LGBTQ+ people.

Devised Theatre

utilizes improvisation activities within an ensemble to design a performance. Through discussion, ensemble improvisation, voice and body work ensemble members will become embodiments of the characters they portray.



Our Creative Methods

Production Process

Auditions, casting, image work, building moments, character analysis, building tech designs

Performance

Culmination of work; sharing art with our community; ensemble connection

1

Pre-Production

Assembling production team, meetings, common vision, preliminary designs

2

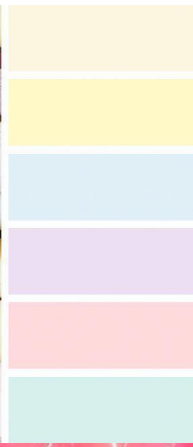
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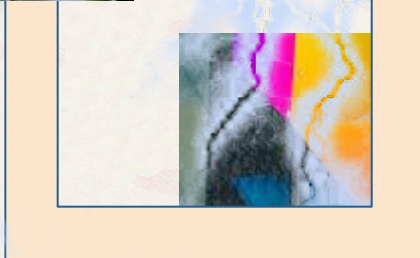
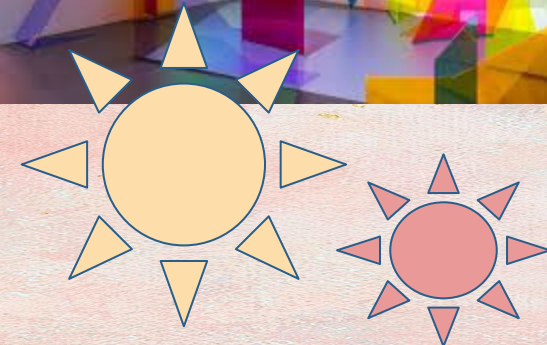
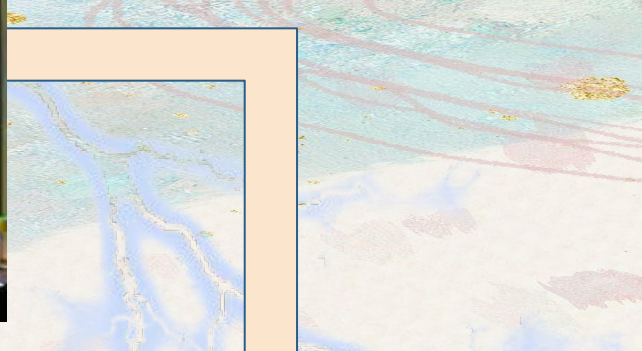
Dress Rehearsals

Bringing everything together, making final touches, preparing for final performances

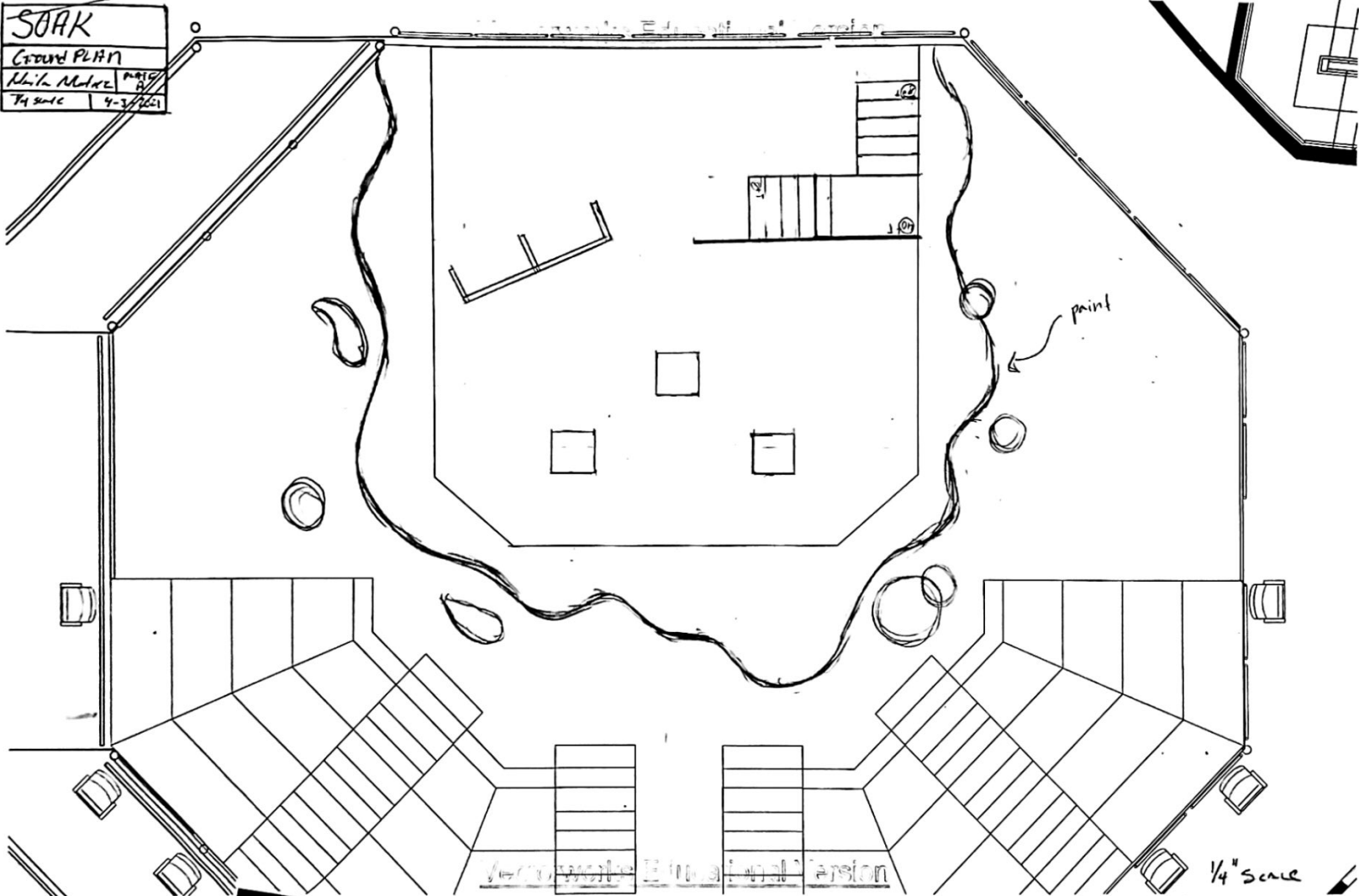
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Scenic

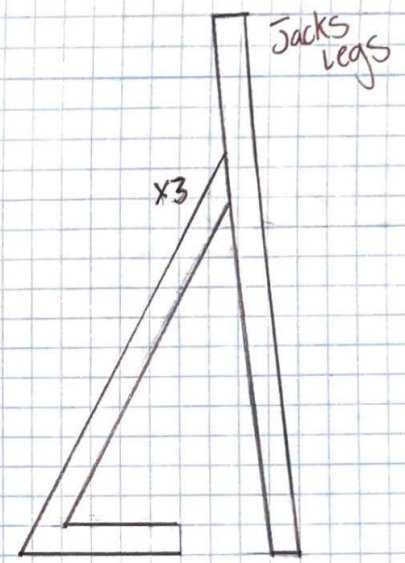
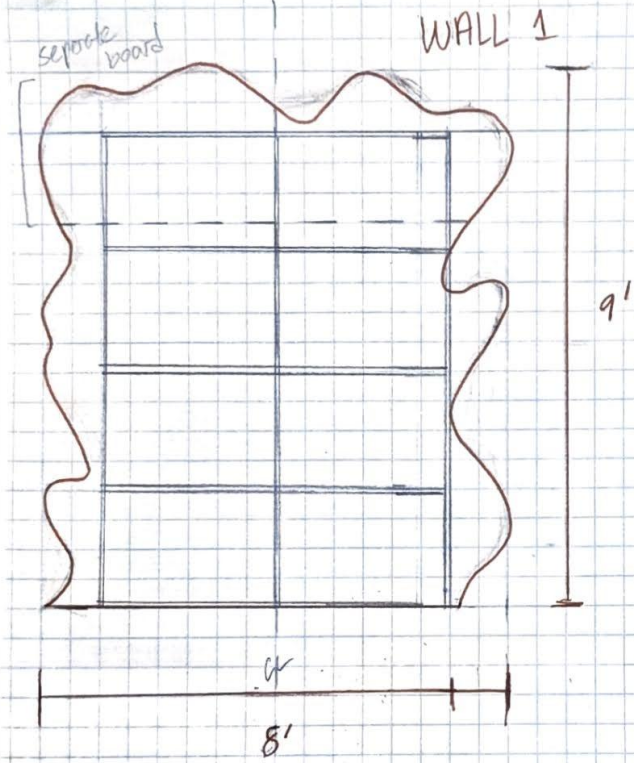




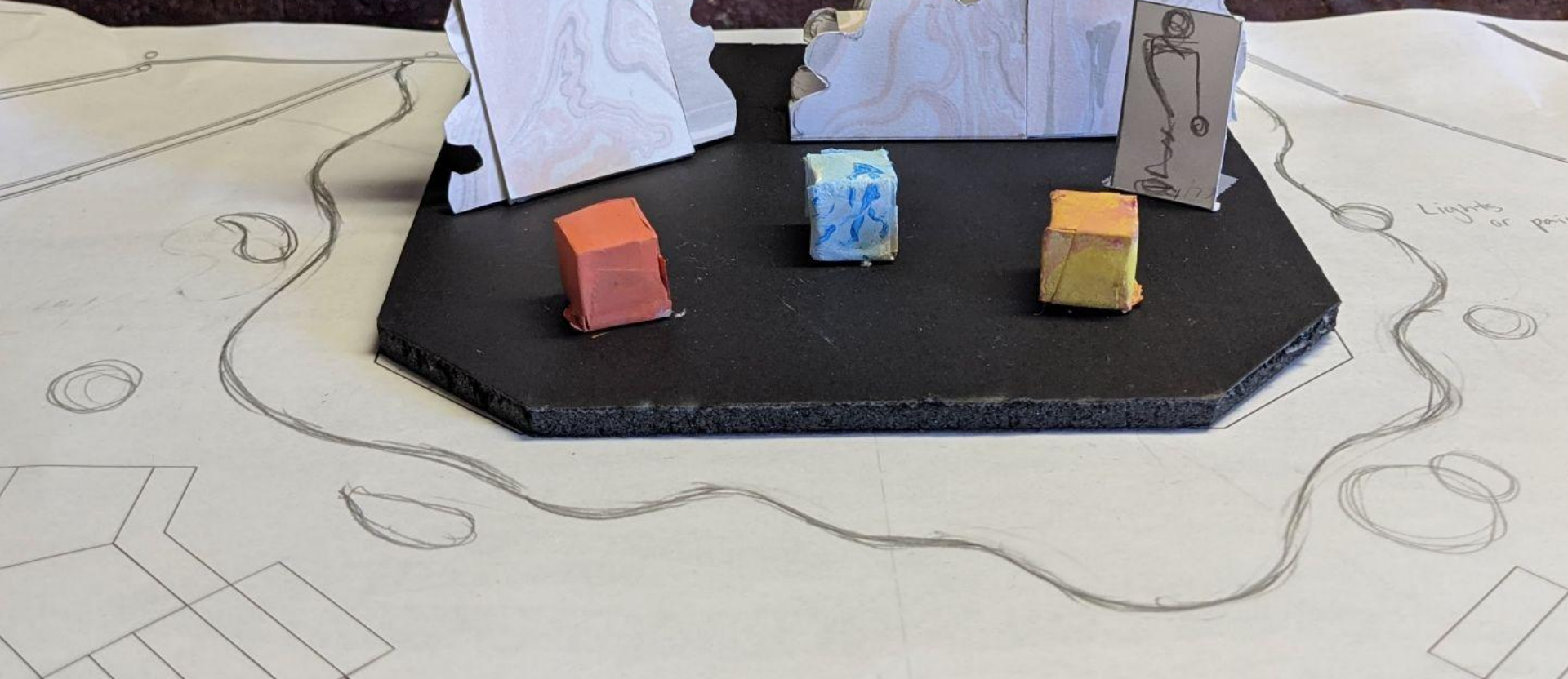
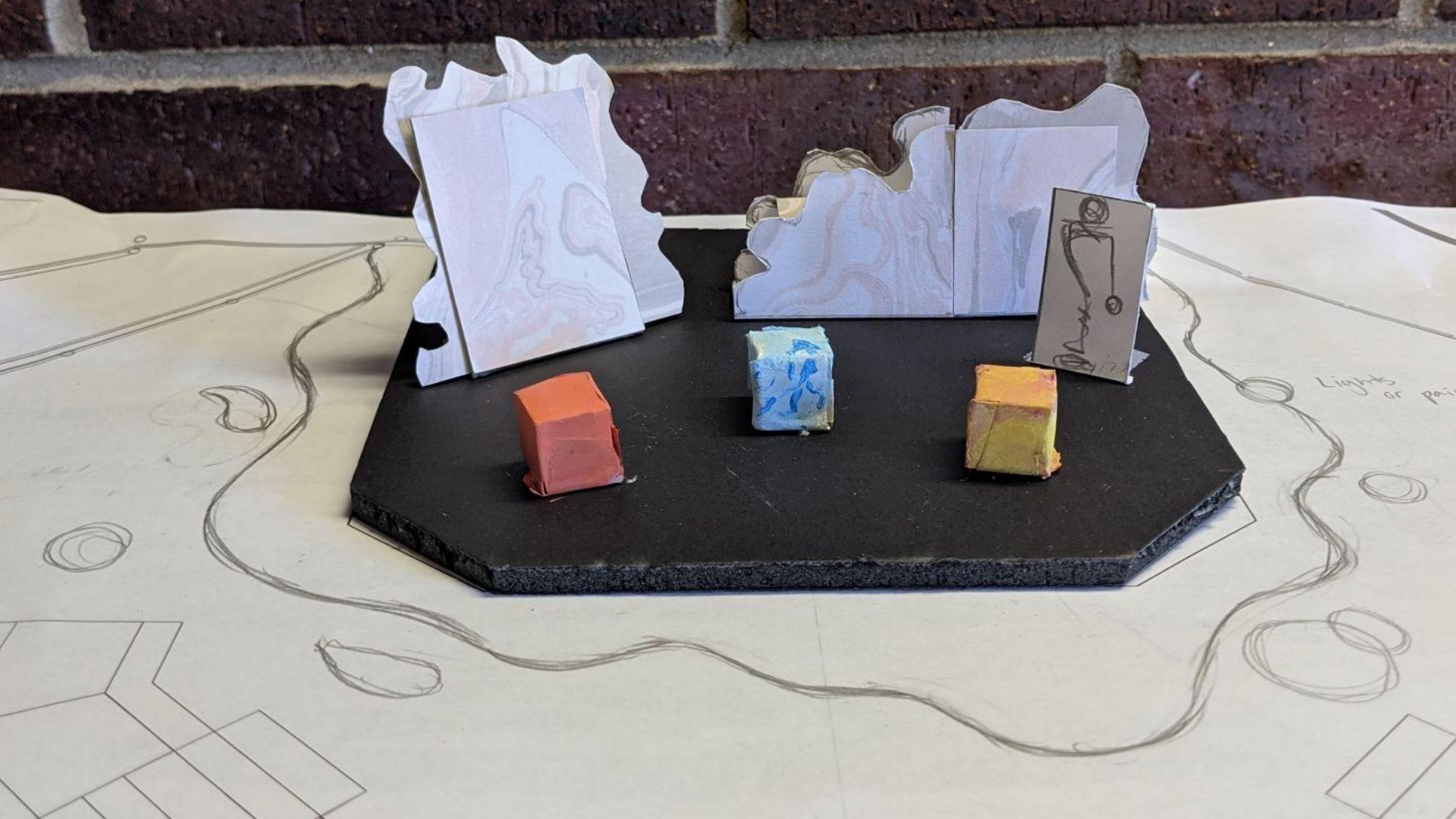
SOAK
GROUND PLAN
M.H. Moller
T9 2010 4-2/2011



1/4" scale



SOAK	
Wall plate #1	
N. 1/2 M	8" plate
1/2 Scale	3-26-2021

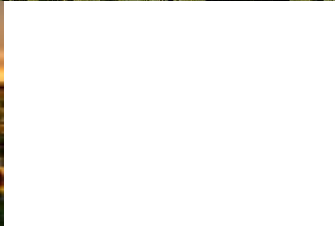
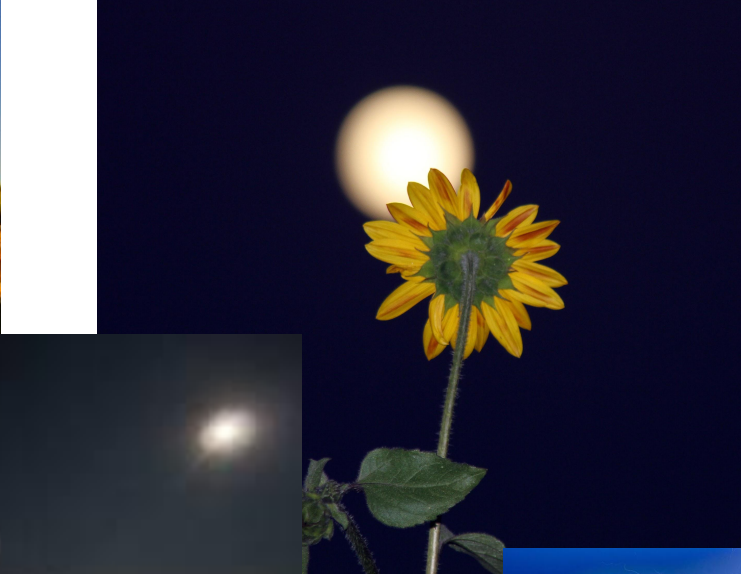


Lights or part





Costumes



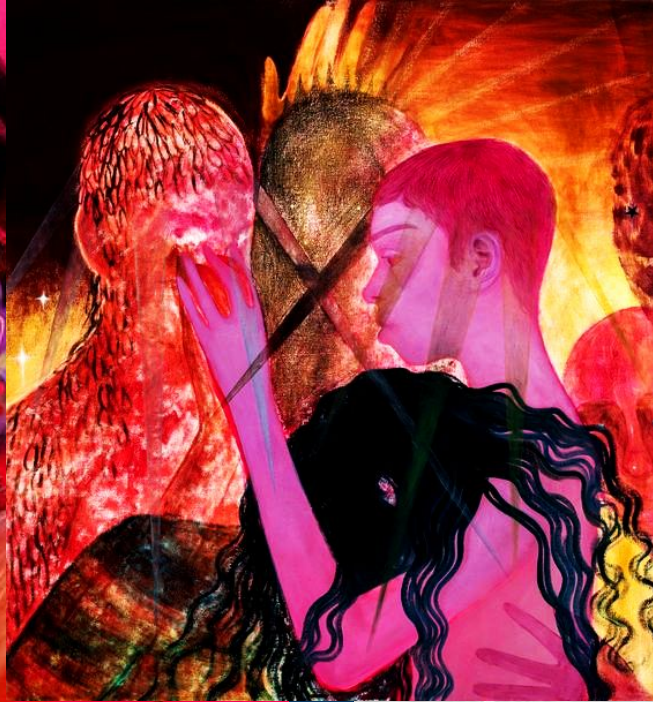
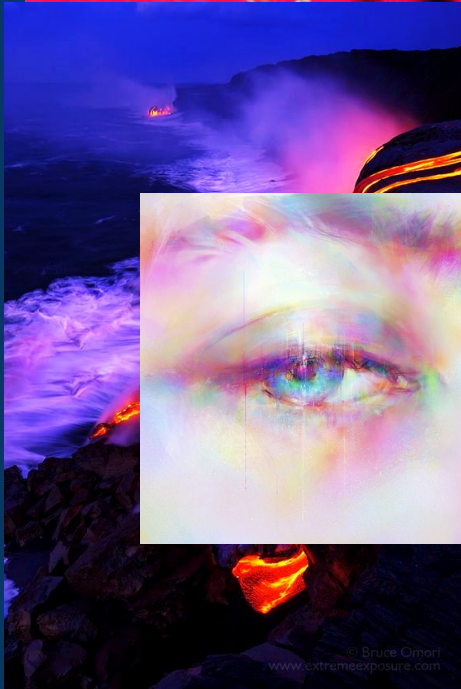






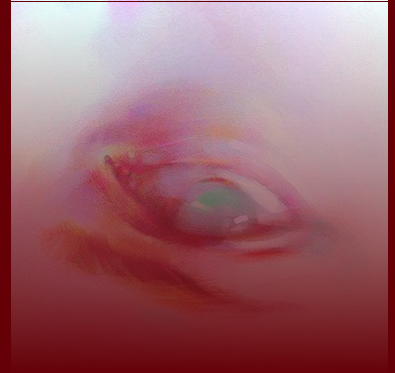
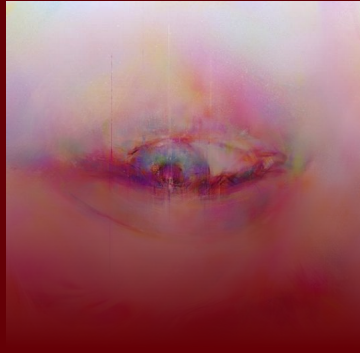
Lighting

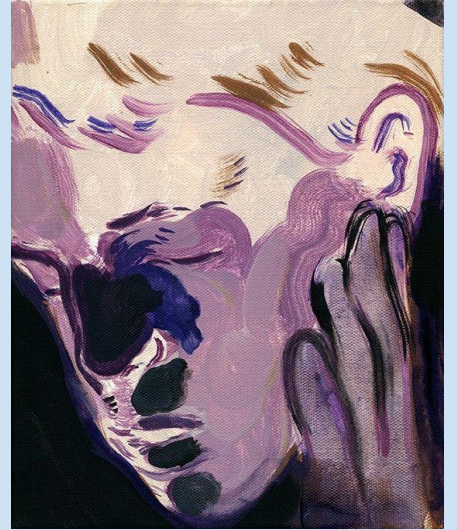


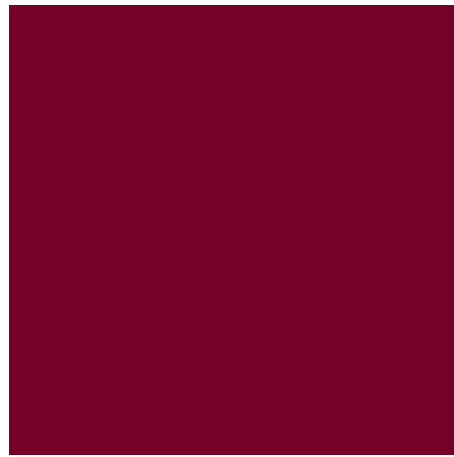












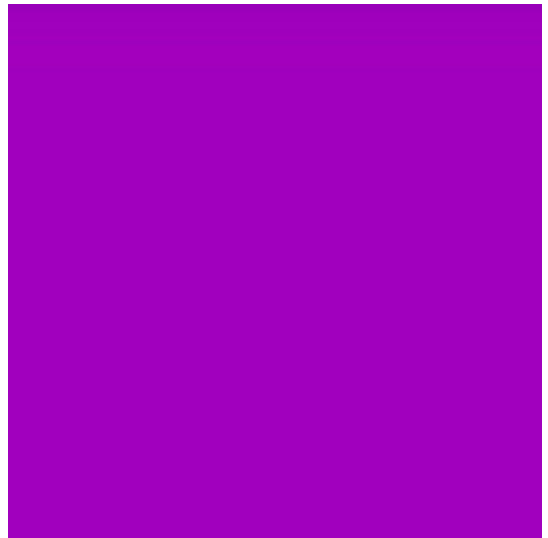
LEE Filters

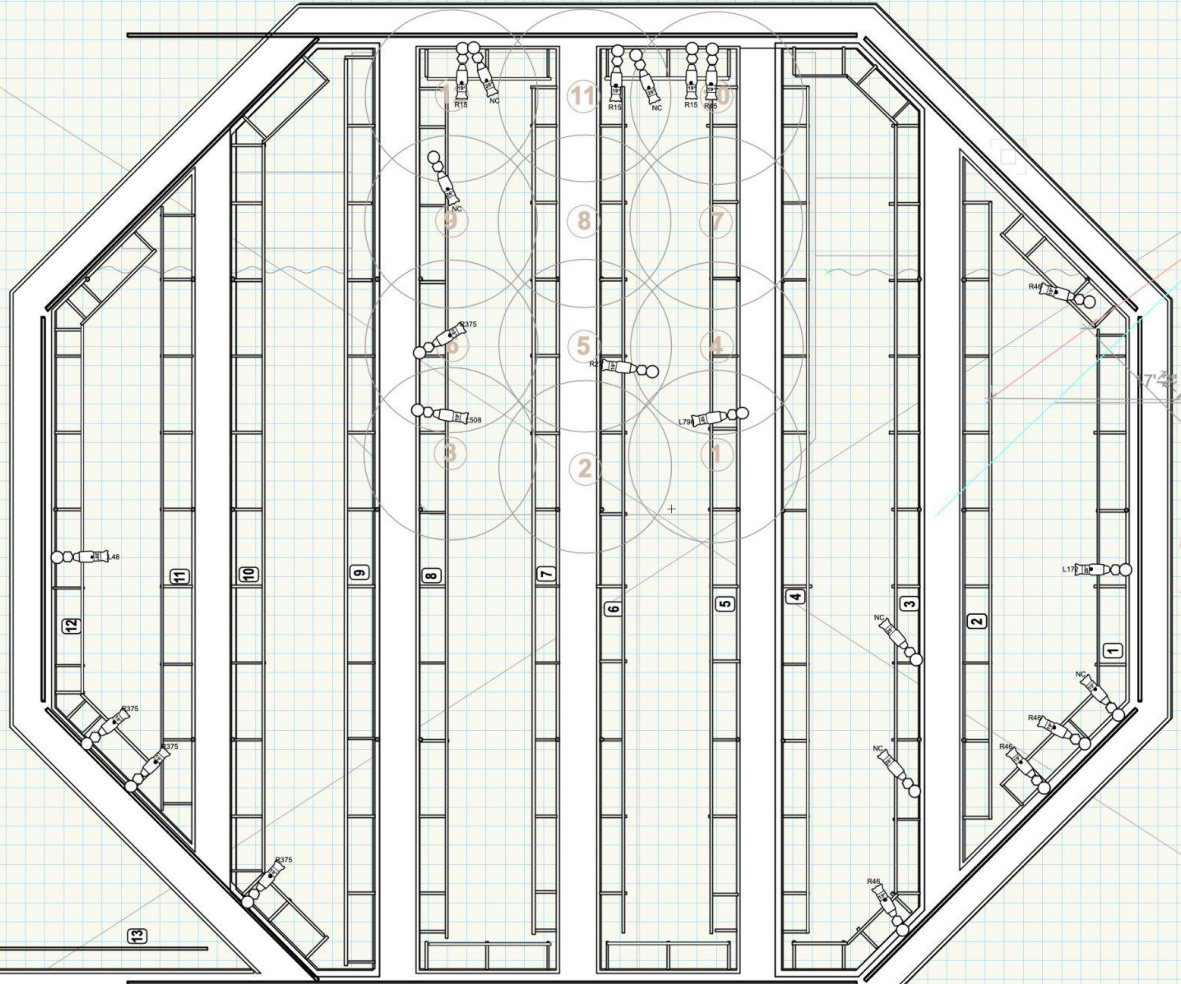


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The Roscolux logo features a fan of colorful filters and the brand name "roscolux" in a stylized font.





Directing

*Movement based, storytelling,
dream-like*

*Embracing all of the senses
especially in sound*

Levels in set design

*Projections of some imagery
mentioned*

*Design playing a large part in
how the story is told; unique;
design to enhance the impact
of the text*

*Characters' masks to match
their names (ex: sunflowers,
lightning)*

*Color of lights to help indicate
character perspective*

*Projections of some imagery
mentioned*

*Some realism within the
abstract*

PALE BOY PICKS A SUNFLOWER FROM A VOLCANO

He scribbled poems on every one of my petals and swallowed them one by one just to be closer.

I think I was in the middle of a bloom. Or a death. I was engulfed in this sea of hard shadows and it reeked of peppermint oil and copper and bleach-- a gaseous texture that's not unlike your hands. Still, I was driving across oceans in an old silver Subaru and I was soaked with sea salt and fish foam. I never did get there. ^{neither} It's not that my roads were gushing or that my irises burst; in fact, I think I felt like sunflowers there with you. I was like pollen and yellow and petals, but floating in the wind, an astronaut in space. But you were never really there with me, a vacancy the depth of a slow, meandering blink. Yes. That's what it was: sunflowers with little bits of galaxies in their sun streams and I held them for you. I just held them.

I could never understand how he saw the sun beneath my skin, behind my mascara and eyeliner and drawn-on freckles. When he told me that he wrote poetry about me, I felt a yellow flicker in my chest, but I pushed it down as far as I could. Maybe it came out when I laughed. I think he was the only one that saw it, so he reached his hand into my ribcage and rummaged for a meadow: long stretches of pollen and petals, striped bees extracting sweet sugar, big sunflower in the baby blue sky swathing tart rays around the clouds, the stems, our legs. ^{circle} It felt good, but I think I always knew he'd never find what he was looking for.

There were icicles last February when we went to that concert. You bought us dinner from Village Inn but I felt like I didn't deserve it so I only ordered coffee and french fries, the former

Snowglobe as metaphor for S.G.
 ↳ trapped but safe
 ↳ wanting to connect

EREN for snow

Always at the cusp of touch

you vomited crime and imprisonment, not the sun. I wasn't enough, never enough, never will be enough. Your ribs were everywhere, and I know that I didn't break them. Who did? He couldn't fix them, and I melted into a puddle of bones and fake eyelashes and red nail polish. As eruption dripped from your oily eyelids, I saw that your meadows were orange and flowing. Leave me, please, I needed him to go or I'd have to. Those galaxies eventually turned to gray as they hit the air, but I still had your petals. I will never be his sunflower. I held them. I let them go.

ending when we started



proud empowering

Exit P.B. through vom

taking control of her space

End



fear of driving from her
 ↳ S.G.'s fear pushing her to leave P.B.
 ↳ desire to run

read poem = reconciliation
 sunflowers on fire = perfect

wants to connect but doesn't know how

sound being muffled
 what does a snowglobe sound like
 7 moments for S.G.

peaceful → volatile

1. trapped
2. P.B. hypnosis, S.G. starts tracking
3. 2 kids in love
4. trapped in car
5. explosiveness hurt
6. overwhelming music (too much)
7. leaving the room red; destruction
 - ↳ lights flicker
 - ↳ snow to flame
 - ↳ red piece under yellow

of each other
 P.B. as sun that S.G. tracks

small → taking up space
 sitting
 untouchable
 afraid
 ↓
 burn in

Performances

Friday, May 28th and Saturday, May 29th at 7pm

Byron Theatre

Email madalyne.heiken@du.edu for details and to RSVP



Thank You!