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A ROMANTIC COMEDY OF BOATS AND GARDENS:
SELECTED PROJECTS IN SCENIC DESIGN AND TECHNICAL DIRECTION

By

Trevor James Flocco

Plan B project report submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

In

Scenic Design and Technical Direction

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UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, UT

2017

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CHAPTER ONE:

Twelfth Night or *What You Will*

By

William Shakespeare

Director: Jason Spelbring

Scenic Designer: Trevor Flocco

Lighting/Projection Designer: Joshua Roberts

Costume Designer: Nancy Hills

Utah State University Department of Theater Arts

Morgan Theater

Spring 2016

Introduction

When this play was given to me as one of my production assignments, I was both thrilled and terrified. I thoroughly enjoy Shakespeare, but I realized that this would also be the largest show of the year; it would be the only production to take place in the Morgan Theater, our largest and most challenging space. This was only my second time designing a realized production and I knew it would be a massive undertaking. However, I knew that having a realized Shakespeare design this early in my career would greatly help my portfolio. Also, my advisor told me that this could have been the best realized portfolio piece I could get during my time at Utah State, so I would need to make the most of it. In this piece especially, my advisor Shawn Fisher wanted me to focus on composition.

Synopsis

The play was originally written to open with Duke Orsino talking about his love for Lady Olivia, followed by a scene with Viola arriving in a shipwreck to Illyria. In our production, director Jason Spelbring wanted to switch the two scenes and add a prologue. It included a funeral procession for Lady Olivia's father and brother, followed by the storm that brings Viola and Sebastian to the shores of Illyria. Therefore, the storm would seamlessly transition into Act I, Scene i, where we find Viola alone on a beach with nothing but cargo surrounding her. As the scene progresses, we meet the sea captain. He tells her where they are and about Duke Orsino, a nobleman of the town. Because Viola believes she has lost her brother, Sebastian, in the wreck, she decides to disguise herself as a man and become one of Orsino's servants. In the following scene, we meet Duke Orsino who is love-struck by Lady Olivia, a countess of Illyria. However, she refuses to get married because she is in mourning for her brother and father. Duke Orsino bids Cesario, who is really Viola in disguise, bring his letters and wishes of love to Lady Olivia.

After some time, Lady Olivia finally allows Cesario in to see her, and he reminds her of Orsino's love. Once Cesario leaves, we learn that Lady Olivia has started to fall in love with Cesario, not knowing it is really Viola in disguise.

At the beginning of the second act, we learn that Sebastian is still alive; a man named Antonio saved his life. Sebastian also believes his sibling to be dead. Meanwhile, Viola learns of Olivia's love for her and we learn that she has started to fall in love with Orsino. In addition to the play's existing love triangle, there is also a set of secondary characters involved in the story. Malvolio is the head servant of Olivia. One night he criticizes other members of the household for being too drunk and too loud. The other members, specifically Sir Toby Belch, Maria, and Sir Andrew Aguecheek, decide to play a practical joke on Malvolio for being so stuck up. They will write a fake love letter to him from Lady Olivia. Later in the act, the prank is put in motion. Malvolio finds the letter and vows to do everything that Lady Olivia has instructed him to do. The scene is hilarious due to Toby, Andrew and Fabian, another servant, following Malvolio around and hiding in moveable topiaries.

In the third act, Olivia confirms her love for Cesario, despite the fact that Cesario is still trying to bring her news of Orsino's love for Olivia. Andrew is also interested in Olivia and when he finds out that she is in love with Cesario, he decides to challenge him to a duel. Having sent Cesario away, Olivia calls for Malvolio. He arrives in yellow stockings, is cross-gartered, and acts very foolishly, as per the instructions from the fake letter. Once Olivia leaves, Toby, Andrew, and Fabian pretend that Malvolio is insane and he eventually is locked up. Viola (dressed as Cesario) comes back and she prepares for a duel with Sir Andrew. Before they start, Antonio arrives on the scene. Believing Cesario to be Sebastian, he attempts to fight in his place, but it leads to more confusion and Antonio is carried off. However, before he is taken away, he

calls her Sebastian, which makes Viola believe her brother may still be alive so she runs off to find him, and does not fight Sir Andrew.

In the fourth act, Sir Toby meets Sebastian. Believing him to be Cesario, Toby argues with him about the duel. Sebastian, being a man with strong fencing skills, starts to fight with Toby and Andrew. Olivia quickly enters and brings Sebastian away, mistaking him for Cesario. Sebastian is also confused but does not fight the fact that a beautiful woman is trying to take him away and marry him. Another scene from the fourth act reveals that Malvolio has been locked up in a dungeon, and is then teased and tormented by Lady Olivia's fool, Feste. He begs to be released and by the end of the play, the prank is revealed and he is released from the dungeon.

In the final act, Orsino finds out that Olivia has been wed to Cesario, when she really married Sebastian and no one knows the difference, and threatens Olivia and Cesario for betraying him. Viola is confused because she did not marry Olivia, Antonio arrives and accuses her of betraying him for not helping him like Sebastian would have, and there is a great amount of confusion. Sebastian arrives and proper identities are revealed. Viola and Sebastian are reunited, and a double wedding is planned; Olivia to Sebastian and Viola to Orsino. The play ends with a song and dance, and a shower of rose petals falling from the sky.

Cast of Characters

- Viola - shipwrecked on the shores of Illyria, decides to disguise herself as a man named Cesario and enters into the service of Duke Orsino
- Duke Orsino - most eligible bachelor of Illyria, has been attempting to court Lady Olivia for a while now
- Lady Olivia - most eligible bachelorette of Illyria, starts play in mourning for the loss of her father and brother
- Sebastian - also shipwrecked on the shores of Illyria, brother to Viola
- Malvolio - head servant to Lady Olivia, a stern priggish man who has secret ambitions to raise his social class
- Feste - fool of Lady Olivia, a character who travels from one household to the other, giving advice in foolish ways
- Sir Toby Belch - uncle to Lady Olivia, a boisterous partier, leads a prank to make Malvolio appear insane
- Maria - main serving woman to Lady Olivia, joins in the plot to embarrass Malvolio
- Andrew Aguecheek - a friend of Sir Toby Belch who means to marry Lady Olivia, but is too idiotic to win anyone's favor
- Fabian - servant of Lady Olivia who joins Sir Toby and Maria's usurping of Malvolio
- Antonio - a man of Illyria who saves Sebastian from the shipwreck
- Curio/Valentine - two men employed by Duke Orsino
- Captain - man who saves Viola from the shipwreck, keeps her secret
- Ladies in waiting - two additional serving women to Lady Olivia

Venue

I found designing in the Morgan Theater to be both intriguing and challenging. It is a thrust theater with a large amount of space upstage of the proscenium. The proscenium itself also has the ability to move on and off stage to allow for more versatility; the walls of the proscenium are on a tracking system, allowing the size of the proscenium width to range from 35' to 62'. The stage is massive, especially when including wing space. The aspects of the theater that made it interesting for scenery are also what made it challenging. The audience is on five sides and the outside sections can see a great amount of back stage area in the wings. Therefore, I had to find ways to mask the fly lines, entrances, and exits. Since the stage is a thrust, it also meant the scenery could only be placed so far upstage without it being a sightline issue. One thing I had working in my favor on my first design at the Lyric was that I had seen plays there before and built shows in that space. Since the Morgan was under construction my first year, I had neither witnessed nor worked on any shows there; it was a very new space to me. I had to keep many factors in the back of my mind as I began to work on my design.

Initial Thoughts/Objectives

From the beginning, I knew that the design of this play would be more unique than many other versions of the play because of its unique approach. Many productions could include an indication of the two homes with romantic gardens or other elements that could evoke a romantically comic atmosphere. Since Mr. Spelbring wanted to focus more on the tragedy of the start of the play which then transitioned into joy and comedy, it does not look like the typical *Twelfth Night* set. I am proud of its unique process and on my ability to collaborate with Mr. Spelbring and the rest of the production team. One of Mr. Spelbring's greatest strengths as a

director is his enthusiasm for the project. As soon as I was assigned the design for this play, we had conversations about the piece and the directions we could take it; he mentioned an old fashioned Christmas card idea that he was eager to explore. Although this idea was either scrapped or forgotten, his energy made me more eager to work on the project. At our first design meeting, he excitedly expressed his idea about a prologue with a funeral procession and a storm. I grew more and more excited to work on the project. The prologue turned out to be one of the driving forces of the show because he wanted to focus on light coming out of darkness and finding joy after loss as some of the main themes of the play.

The play begins with Lady Olivia in mourning, and Sebastian and Viola believing the other to be dead in the shipwreck that brought them to Illyria. Mr. Spelbring wanted to incorporate these losses into the prologue. He had a vision of Lady Olivia's family monument being on stage during pre-show with a storm brewing in the distance. As the play began, the funeral procession for Lady Olivia's father and brother would start. As the procession continued, the storm's intensity built via the use of lighting, sound, and projections. When the procession left, only Feste remained behind; he would push the monument over, bringing the storm to its climax as it crashed to the ground. The monument was made of ship cargo and wreckage which would tie into the very first scene. During the storm, more sound and dialogue was included, layering in lines from *The Tempest* and Sebastian calling out for his sister. *The Tempest* begins with a storm, with a boatswain calling out to his men, shouting orders in the storm; these lines which were added into the soundscape intensified the feeling of the storm. With one final whoosh, the play would begin with Viola in the wreckage from which the monument was built, tying the losses together and thrusting the play into action.

Mr. Spelbring's explanation got me even more excited for the piece, but I still did not fully understand his vision at this point. I understood the play to be a romantic comedy and I did not comprehend his vision that way at first. He also had an image of an ocean liner



Fig. 1.1 - Primary Research Image (Wreck)

that had run aground and stated, “This is our *Twelfth Night*” (fig. 1.1). It is an image that perfectly described his vision of finding light after darkness. It gives a feeling of beauty and decay, and it brought me closer to understanding the vision, but I had not yet fully grasped it. Later on, it became my most influential piece of research in my final design. Mr. Spelbring had several other ideas he shared in this meeting. He discussed the idea of evoking the storm and the shipwreck by using waves that rose seamlessly out of the floor, with entrances and exits between the waves.

We also discussed the possibility of the space being a theater, emphasizing the things we would see backstage such as scaffolding, ghost lights, and the fly rail. Mr. Spelbring wanted to set the play during a time of war, evoking the theme of joy after loss, giving context to Olivia's loss of father and brother; we chose a period loosely based around World War I. The final item we discussed were some of the “needs” of the play: three moveable topiaries, a trap door for

Malvolio, and a crossover space upstage of the set. Over a year later, I still recall this meeting with enthusiasm and excitement with a little bit of confusion. Still not fully understanding the vision, I started to draw my thumbnail sketches.

Design Development

Despite it being my fourth semester of graduate school, I still found certain elements of design, including line, shape, and form challenging to implement in a design.

In addition to working on these elements, Mr. Fisher advised that I

work more on composition, thinking of

the phrase, “a few bold strokes.” I practiced this in my thumbnail sketches by drawing a set of lines that I believed were interesting, and then applied various scenic elements to those lines, thinking back to the discussions our production team had in our first meeting. For example, I



Fig. 1.2 - Thumbnail Sketch

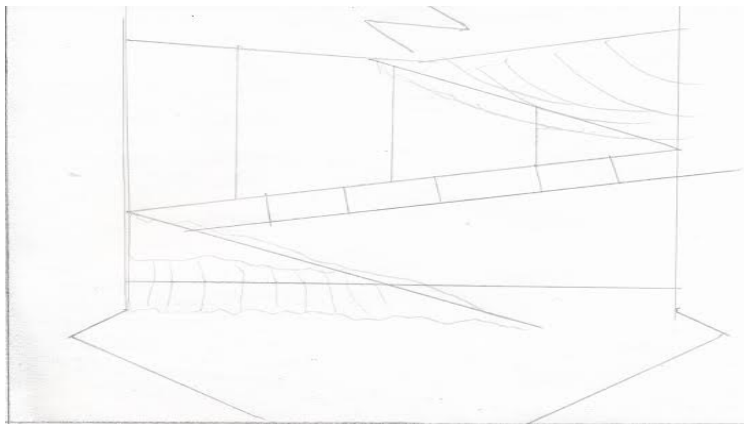


Fig. 1.3 - Thumbnail Sketch

drew the curved lines and drew pieces that could evoke wave or storm shapes based off of the line composition (fig. 1.2). In another, I used a zig-zag shape and applied wave structures and a batton, in an attempt to tie into the “found theater space” idea (fig. 1.3). In a different

sketch, I experimented with a spiral (fig. 1.4). I tried to visualize what Mr. Spelbring was originally imagining with one of my sketches as well (fig. 1.5). Mr. Spelbring picked out the thumbs he found intriguing and I moved into my research.

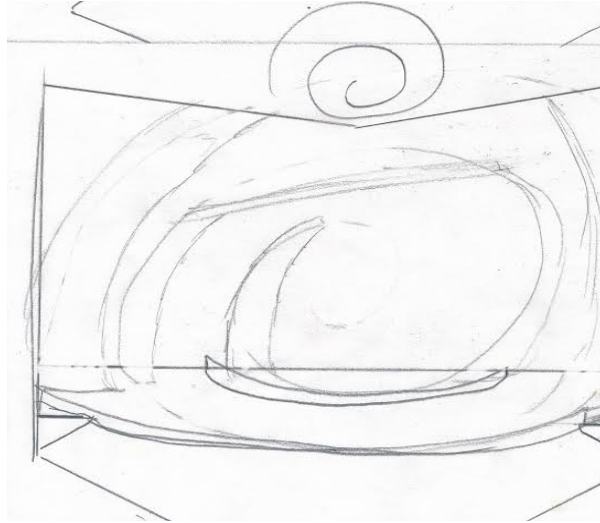


Fig. 1.4 - Thumbnail Sketch

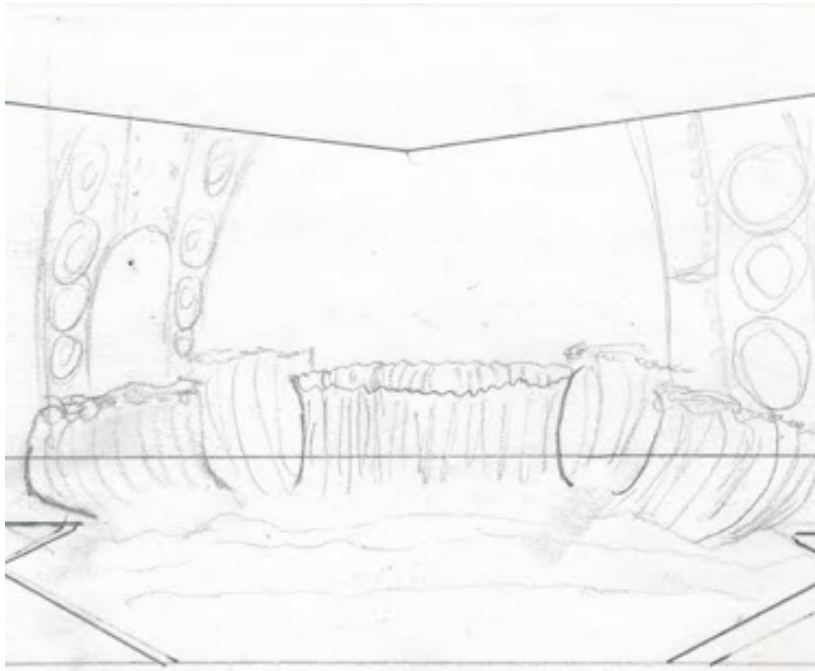


Fig. 1.5 - Thumbnail Sketch

Research

My creativity grew and grew as I went through my research process; I found a myriad of inspiring images involving abstract art, color, texture, and detailing. Items that I searched for included sculptures of waves, rusted rivets, and shipwrecks (fig. 1.10 & 1.11), just to name a few. I started to shy away from the found theater space idea and really delved into this abstract shipwreck and storm idea. I found an image of



Fig. 1.6 - Wave Sculpture Research (Cool)

what appeared to be waves made of rusted sheet metal (fig. 1.6) and I found their shape to be interesting because of its depth. In another research image, a sculpture in the shape of a wave appeared to be made from driftwood, which gave me a strong sense of texture, especially as it related to the shipwreck (fig. 1.7). Other texture related images I found included rusted rivets and



Fig. 1.7 - Wave Sculpture Research (Building)



Fig. 1.8 - Rust and Rivet Research (Old)



Fig. 1.9 - Rust and Rivet Research (Ship)

portholes found on old ships (fig. 1.8 & 1.9).

Another group of research images that inspired my design were images of shipwrecks (fig. 1.10 & 1.11). Their compositions, color, shape, and texture helped to push me deeper into the world of the play.



Fig. 1.10 - Shipwreck Research (Shipwreck)



Fig. 1.11 - Shipwreck Research (Judiberks)

As I continued my research, I had to consider how to incorporate garden topiaries into the abstract idea. I researched gardens and found some interesting topiary shapes (fig. 1.12), continuing to explore how they could be included in this world. I also had to incorporate the 1910s period into my design. I found some period furnishings research but was not yet sure of the “rules of the world.” In consultation with Mr. Fisher, I determined the best way to incorporate the

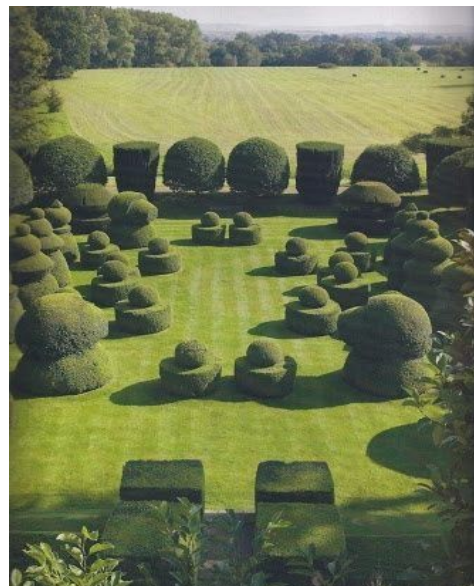


Fig. 1.12 - Topiary Research (Topiary)

topiaries into my design was to use the shape and general color of one whimsical topiary I found in my research (fig. 1.13), then give it the texture and feeling of rusted sheet metal, similar to my ship research. Around that time, Mr. Fisher saw Mr. Spelbring's ship image for the first time, and said, "This could be your set." As I went into my rough sketches, I considered this phrase more and more.



Fig. 1.13 - Whimsical Topiary (Special)

Rough Sketches

As I was ending my first round of research and starting to sketch, I started to fully grasp Mr. Spelbring's vision by recalling the image he provided at our first meeting. I was able to better understand the light after darkness and how the image embodied his vision. I felt like I was growing into the design more as I progressed. It was around this time that I decided to incorporate Mr. Spelbring's image more fully into my design; I took the image of the ship, and deconstructed it into my sketches, making it similar to a wave. I wanted to evoke both a wave and a ship with this unit, and I believe my sketches indicate that. However, this was also the point in the process when I considered the state of our scene shop; it was going to be renovated and added onto, so we were going to have to move the tools and materials out of the space as we were building this show. This made me consider putting less of a burden on the shop and finding other ways to incorporate my scenery without it having to be built. The solution: using fabric to evoke waves and clouds. In addition to the ship, I added the fabrics into my sketches (fig. 1.14 & 1.15). Initially, the ship was going to be one solid unit, but in discussions with Mr. Spelbring, he

asked about the possibility of adding an entrance on stage left. In my sketching process, I explored separating the ship/wave unit into two pieces (fig. 1.15), but in the color model it was changed again to three pieces, which ended up translating into the final design.

Mr. Fisher asked why the ship was so small and why there was so much fabric; I expressed my concern to him about the shop. He responded saying that I should not sacrifice the design at this point in the process without exploring its fullest potential. I decided to explore the size of the ship units in a white model format, which later transitioned into the color model.

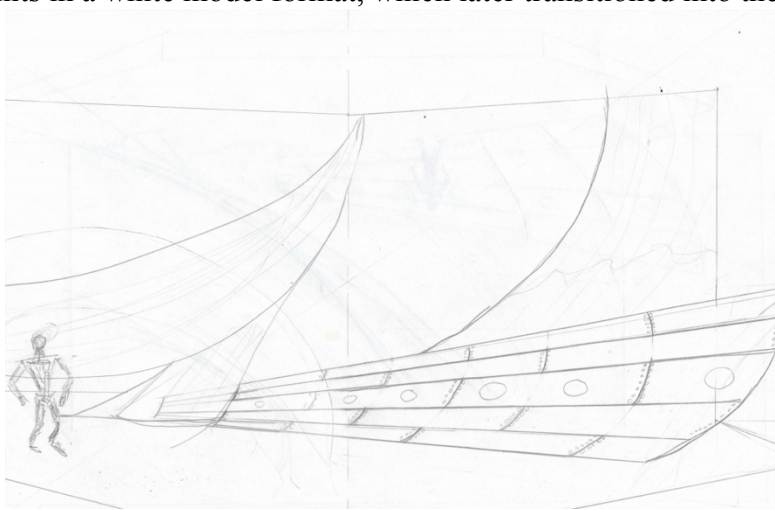


Fig. 1.14 - First Rough Sketch

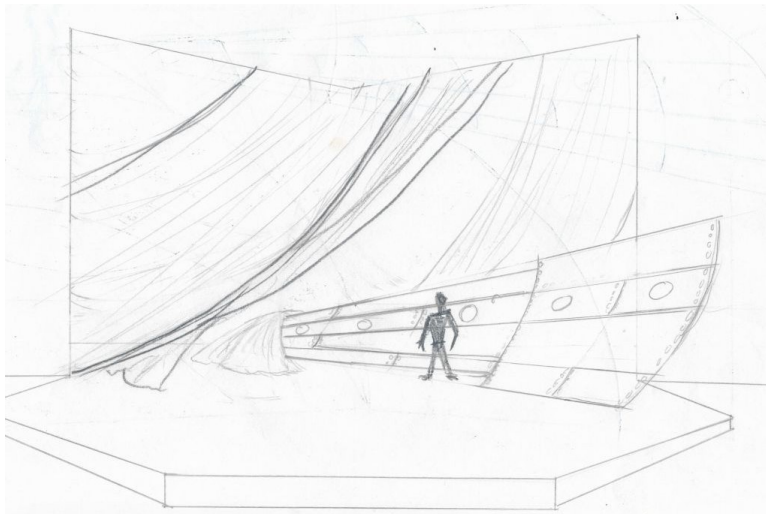


Fig. 1.15 - Second Rough Sketch

Color Model

I decided during this part of the process that I would use three ship/wave units instead of two; this allowed for the primary set pieces to fill the stage a bit more, adding in the “fabric” around them. I explored the shape and curvature of the waves by using pieces of cardstock in a fashion similar to a white model. After determining the size and shape of these pieces, I scanned them into a computer and started to add details in Photoshop. When making the final decisions about color and texture, I referred back to the ship that Mr. Spelbring had shown the production team. I found that the orange and blue seen in the image worked well for the design and incorporated the portholes, sheeting, and riveting into the model. In addition to applying these textures and colors, I decided to put the size of the sheeting in perspective in order to make the units feel larger than they physically were. Something that I had not yet considered was the treatment for the floor; I referred back to the image and considered some kind of evocative water texture. I found a ground plan image of foaming seawater (fig. 1.16), and incorporated the colors of the ship/wave units into the floor treatment (fig. 1.17).

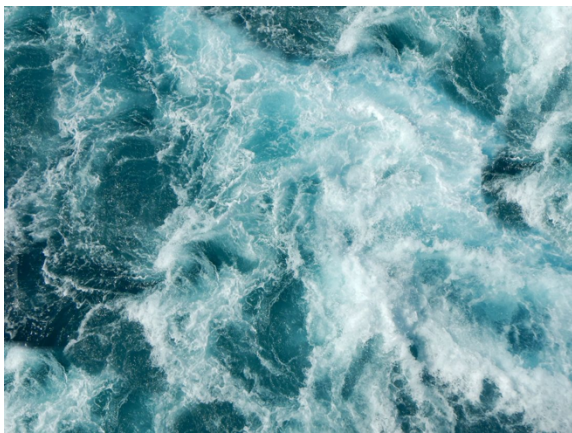


Fig. 1.16 - Sea Foam Research (Free)

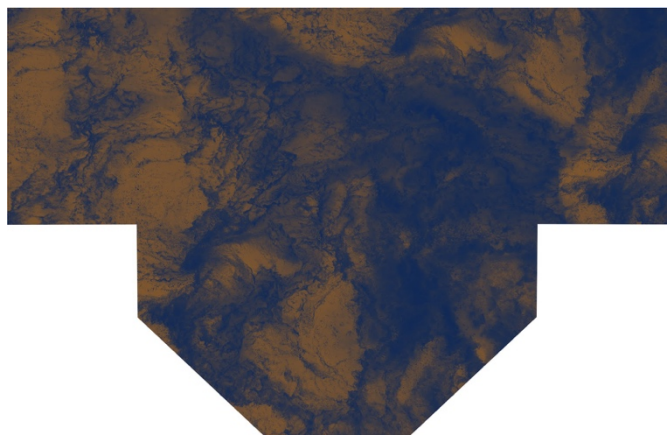


Fig. 1.17 - Recolored Paint Elevation

After completing the ship units in Photoshop, I was able to print out the pieces, cut them and curve them as per the design, and add them into the box. The other pieces that were built into the model were my cloud units. Mr. Fisher advised using cherry netting and butcher paper to build these shapes because fabric is much more difficult to control. The color choices for these units was based off the primary ship image and I incorporated them compositionally to almost follow the ship units, adding a sense of whimsy since the play is, after all, a romantic comedy.

Furniture and Period

In an early meeting with Mr. Spelbring, we discussed the possibility of where each scene would exist in the world of the play. Much of the play exists in gardens, but there were a few other scenes we had to discuss for the sake of furniture and dressing. We determined that the interior scenes of Duke Orsino's could exist in his dressing room. We also discussed the interior scenes for Lady Olivia's estate could primarily exist in a smoking room, since many of those scenes include the frivolity of Sir Toby Belch, Andrew Aguecheek, Feste, and Maria. The last major non-exterior scene to discuss was the dungeon; at one point Malvolio gets locked up in a dark room. Mr. Spelbring wanted this to be a dungeon where we use a trapdoor to give Malvolio a sense of isolation. Earlier in my design process, I had to consider the time period we were aiming for; it was around the time that I was working on my color model that I discovered how to use the time period in a consistent way that would not take the audience out of the world. I decided to use period furnishings for all of the interior scenes of the play, and to use the abstract idea for all exterior scenes of the play. The garden bench I planned to incorporate into certain scenes was designed to be painted like rusted metal with riveting detailing, along with the gate in Olivia's garden to which the dialogue constantly refers. I built some of these furniture pieces in

the model, but I was running out of time leading up to the design presentation. I decided to take a picture of my model and add in furniture pieces using Photoshop. I planned to then present both the Photoshop renderings and color model at the design presentation.

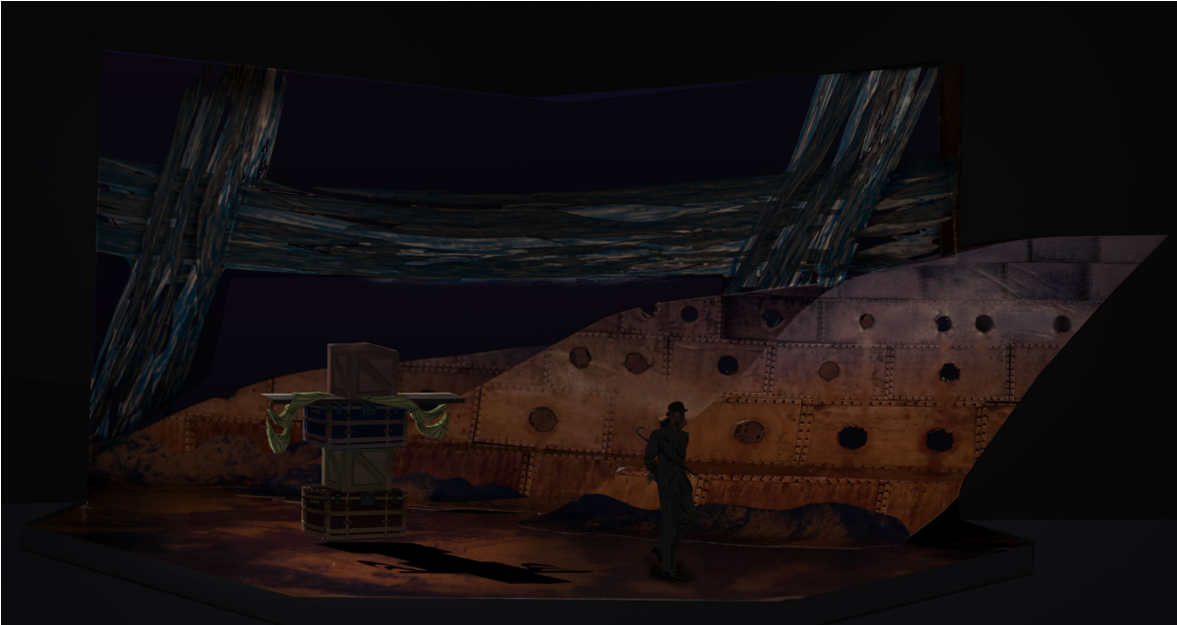


Fig. 1.18 - Model and Photoshop Rendering - Prologue



Fig. 1.19 - Model and Photoshop Rendering – Lady Olivia's Estate

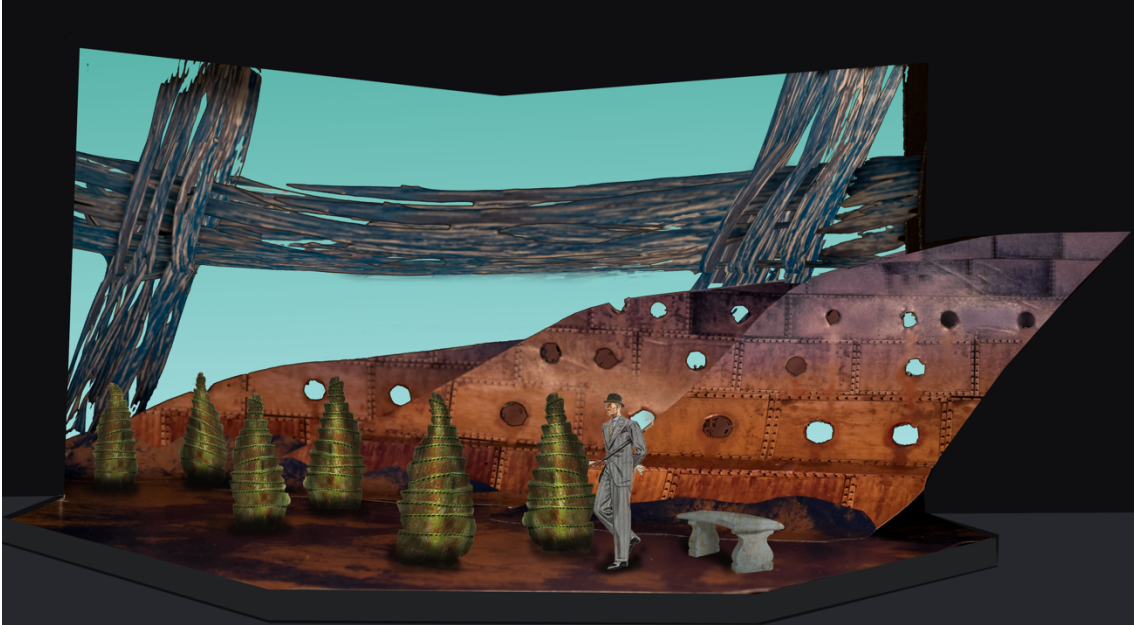


Fig. 1.20 - Model and Photoshop Rendering - Garden

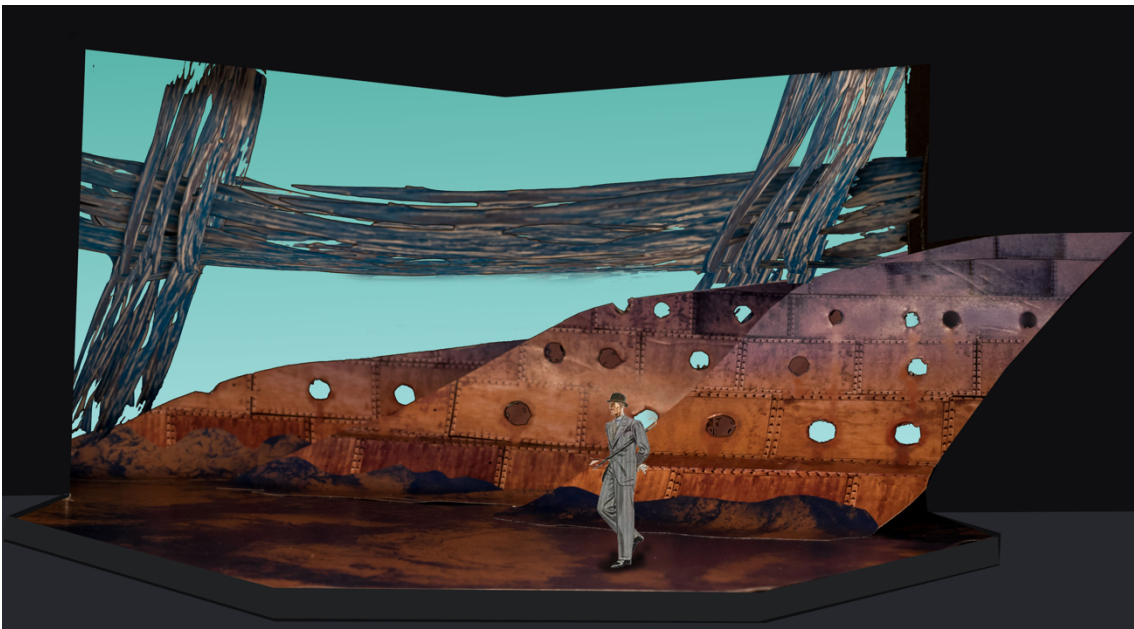


Fig. 1.21 - Model and Photoshop Rendering – Bare Stage

Final Design

Before the design presentation and the first rehearsal, the set had to be approved by our production manager and technical director. Both expressed concern about it being a lot to accomplish due to the shop move, but we discussed a plan as to how much I would be involved in the building process itself; it was then approved. At that point, I started to draft my design packet. In consultation with Mr. Fisher, he advised that each panel be cut in perspective and that I should use the strips of riveting to cover the seams. At first, I knew this would mean a longer build time, but it was crucial to making the ship units look the best that they could be. As I started to draft these pieces, I did not know the best way to communicate them to the scenic shop. Matt Stowe, the technical director, suggested I do a flattened view of all the sheeting with dimensioning, and a side view of the units to indicate the curvature (see Appendix A). I finished the packet, gave it to Mr. Stowe, and we started to plan out how the set was going to be executed.

Execution of Design

In a meeting with Mr. Stowe, we determined that he and the shop would be responsible for the main ship units and the gate, and I would be responsible for the topiaries, cloud units, furniture, and dressing. In regards to the ship units, the first step was to lay full sheets of Masonite out on the floor as per the drafting. Mr. Stowe advised that we cut out the shape of each unit after the sheets were applied to the framing. This gave us a chance to start painting them. Kimberly



Fig. 1.22 - Ship/Wave Unit Paint Treatment

Jackson, our scenic charge, did an amazing job painting this set (see Appendix A). She and her team used a wet scumble treatment to indicate the gradient of contrasting colors that was designed on the ship units. After it was based, she used a sponge to add the rest of the texture needed for the design (fig. 1.22, 1.23, & 1.24). The pieces were

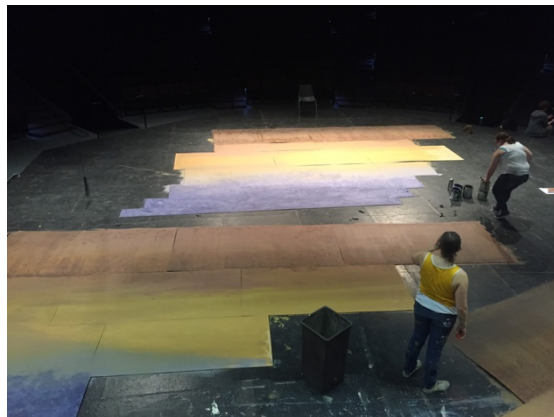


Fig. 1.23 - Ship/Wave Paint Treatment

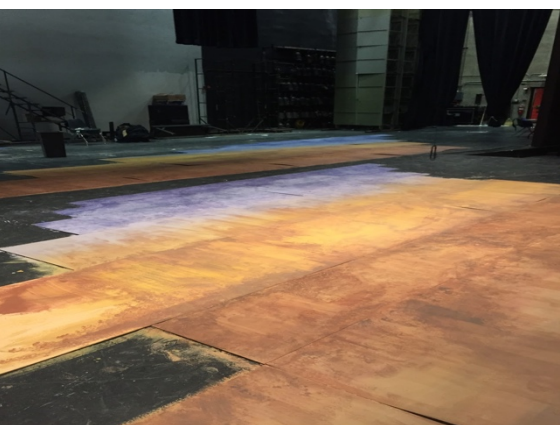


Fig. 1.24 - Ship/Wave Paint Treatment

then labeled and stored to be applied to the frames of each unit in space. After the ship units were cleared from the Morgan, Ms. Jackson and her team worked on the floor treatment. They started out basing the floor blue with rollers and used an interesting technique which I was unfamiliar with to add the orange texture over top: trash bag rag-rolling. It ended up being very effective and fast when it came to executing my design for the floor (fig. 1.25 & 1.26).

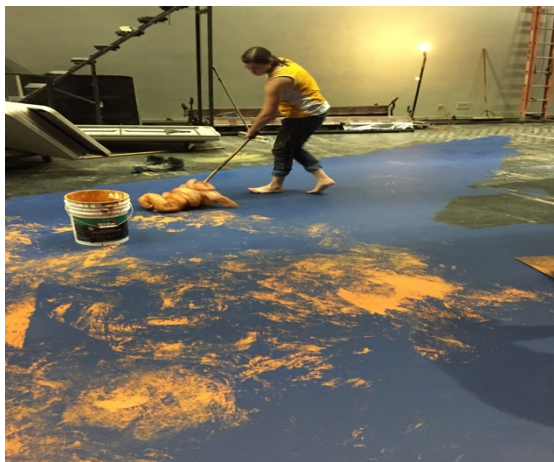


Fig. 1.25 - Bag-rolling Process



Fig. 1.26 - Floor Paint Treatment

I had also started to work on building the topiaries; this may have been one of the most challenging aspects of the design to execute. In hindsight, they could have been built differently, but upon successful completion, I was proud of them. What had made the process difficult was mainly my choice of material. I believed since Masonite was flexible, it would serve me best when creating a curved yet structured shape. Each of the topiaries were comprised of four to six separate Masonite structures. All of those



Fig. 1.27 – Un-based Topiary

pieces were built by cutting out the shape, bending it without snapping the sheet, and adding a support in the middle to hold its shape. I then took those pieces and added them to a vertical post (fig. 1.27), added a base and some bracing, and added casters to the base. I discovered that they were unbalanced and needed to be weighted. Once that was completed, I took three different



Fig. 1.28 - Unpainted topiary units

sized dowels and cut them down for rivets; I also cut down enough for the ship units to be applied later, and then added the rivets (fig. 1.28) and gave them to Ms. Jackson to paint.

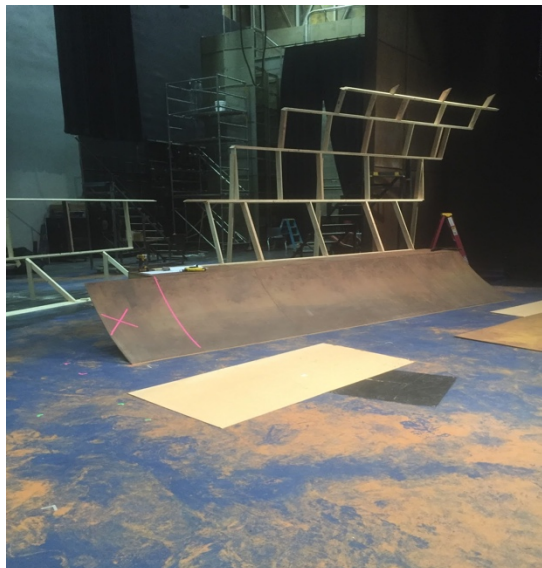


Fig. 1.29 - Skinning Ship Units

After finishing the topiaries, the next thing I needed to address was the furniture; another aspect of the play that Mr. Spelbring wanted to happen was fluid scene changes. This meant that all of the furniture needed to be on casters. At first, I found this to be very frustrating because I believed it was silly. However, as time went on and I continued to watch rehearsals, I realized the importance of having the pieces move so easily because I know less fluid changes would have distracted from the play. Many of the pieces needed more than just casters in order to function this way; there were two chairs that did not have a base for the casters to be attached to, hence they were built. The bench that I chose was not balanced properly, hence a base was built for it and casters were added. I also built two closet valets for Duke Orsino's dressing room, which were later dressed with outfits he could have worn. The final bits of set dressing to complete were the items that comprised the monument in the prologue; I had found a good number of crates and cargo and was able to give them to Ms. Jackson for her team to paint.

While this was all happening, the frames for the ships were being installed in the space and the sheets were being applied as per the initial paint layout (fig. 1.28 & 1.29). The lowest section of the

After finishing the topiaries, the next thing I needed to address was the furniture; another aspect of the play that Mr. Spelbring wanted to happen was fluid scene changes. This meant that all of the furniture needed to be on casters. At first, I found this to be very frustrating because I believed it was silly. However, as time went on and I continued to watch rehearsals, I realized the importance of having the pieces move so easily because I know less fluid



Fig. 1.30 - Skinning Ship Units

largest wave had to be weight bearing so we built up the area three layers deep with Masonite. As we got higher on the waves, it became more and more challenging to apply the sheeting (fig. 1.30 & 1.31). Once all the sheeting was finished, I drew a line to indicate the full shape of the units and the extra was cut away. After that, I indicated where the portholes needed to be and had a carpenter cut them out. I felt I delegated well, alongside Mr. Stowe, when it came to executing the ship units.



Fig. 1.31 - Skinning Ship Units

As I was working on the furniture and finishing the ship units, I was also working on the cloud drop units; we started by painting one of the three rolls of butcher paper, cut them into one-foot strips, and loosely wrinkled them up, giving the pieces more texture. By that time, the ship units were already installed in the space and there was little-to-no room in the shop to lay them out. We ended up using the Morgan and Kent lobby to lay out the cherry netting and apply the paper to it using tape and staples. After they were finished, we brought them into the theater and flew them out around the ship units.

Tech/Dress Process

Some of the final steps of executing the set unfortunately happened during the tech process; it was not until after first tech that we had loaded in the cloud units, and certain things still had to be painted. However, we were still in great shape given the circumstances of the shop and the resources at our disposal. The last steps were completed by first dress, which I was proud of. Something that I had not considered when cutting the portholes was the fact that they would be lit from behind, blinding the audience. The solution I came up with was to take some scraps of muslin, spray paint them, add a watery paint so it looked like rust had dripped down them, and then attach them to the back of some of the portholes (we still wanted beams of light to come through them with the haze.) Another concern I had not considered in regards to lighting was the cloud units; the lights could not be placed originally where our lighting designer, Josh Roberts, had intended because of their flammability. In hindsight, I realize we should have found a way to fireproof them. Something else I considered during the tech and dress rehearsals was the use of the projections in the show; this was partially my fault for not collaborating with Mr. Roberts as well as I could have, but it bothered me that every single scene had projections and that the audience could never see the set on its own. I learned from this aspect of the experience to not be afraid of open conversations with other designers. Regarding the topiaries, I know they could have been built better because one fell over and broke while it was being moved during a tech rehearsal; fortunately, the actress moving it was not injured. I changed the way that it was weighted and it never happened again, but had I expected that to happen, I could have built the topiaries using foam or vacu-form plastic in attempt to make them less heavy. In the end, I was able to take all of the hiccups and snafus from this part of the process and learn something valuable from each one of them.

Final Design and Reflection

As a whole, I am very proud of this design; I felt it was the strongest project I had at the time, and still one of my best projects in my theatrical career. I was able to convey the story through the director's vision using strong composition and detail. It was well received by others, and at one point near the end, Mr. Spelbring approached me, complimenting me on my journey from "not understanding his vision at all" to "understanding and executing it in a beautiful way." The following year, I was proud to bring my design to the Region VIII Festival for KCACTF. Although I did not receive any awards for my design, it was well received by the judges and I felt I had represented myself and my design well.

Looking back on it now, I know I could have improved in certain areas. Ms. Jackson was a phenomenal scenic charge, but I know there were points where I could have communicated with her better. I kept on adding more things to her plate later in the process than I should have, but ever since then, I believe I have been able to communicate with my scenic charges better. I previously mentioned my collaboration with Mr. Roberts; in some respects, we worked well together and it was a joy to work on the process with him, but I know I still could have communicated better with him. One designer that I hardly had any conversations with was Ms. Hills; I had no idea if the costumes she had in mind would work with the colors that I chose and I realize now I could have had a conversation with her regarding color and texture. Thankfully, our set and costume designs worked well together, but I attribute that more to her collaboration in working with my design than mine with hers.

In conclusion, designing the scenery for this play was one of the most challenging and satisfying aspects of my graduate school career. It challenged by way of approaching design, it gave me practice in unconventional scenic construction, and it is a strong portfolio piece. I

learned more deeply the importance of collaboration and resource management. I had an enjoyable time working on all aspects of the design with my fellow students. And finally, my design supported Mr. Spelbring's vision of light after darkness; I helped to create a beautiful production of William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.



Fig. 1.32 - Full stage shot under general lighting

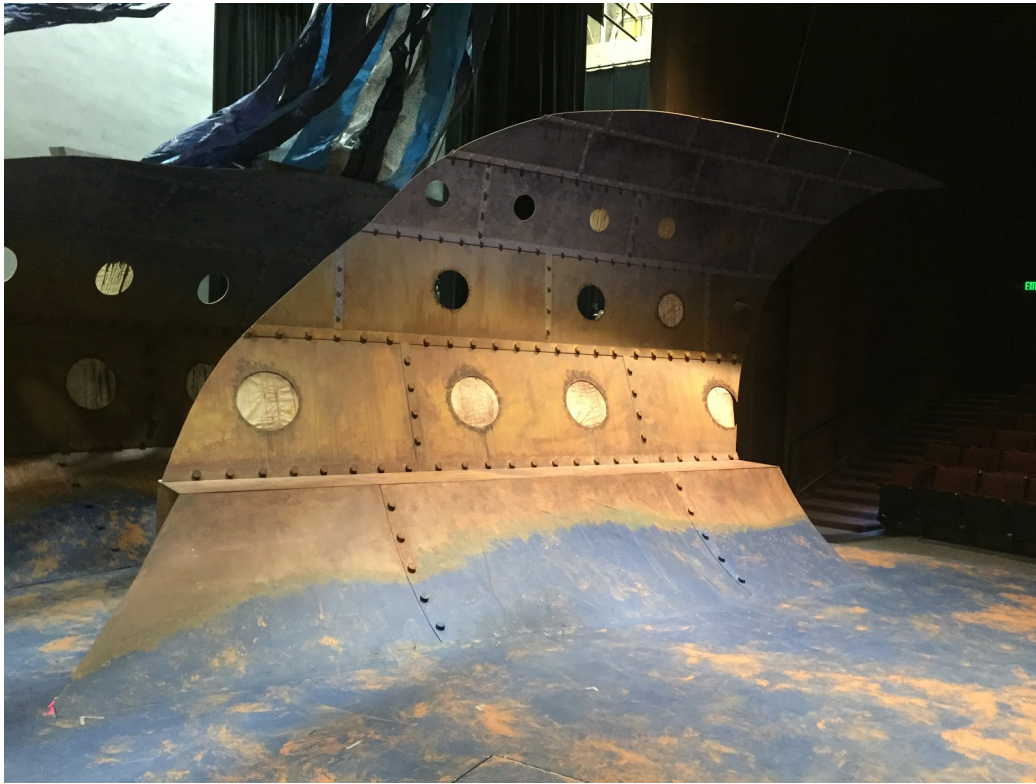


Fig. 1.33 - Close-up of Ship Unit 1 under work lights



Fig. 1.34 - Close-up of Ship Unit 2 under work lights



Fig. 1.35 - Close-up of Ship Unit 3 under work lights



Fig. 1.36 - Close-up of Ship Unit 1 under stage lighting



Fig. 1.37 - Portholes front lit



Fig. 1.38 - Portholes back lit

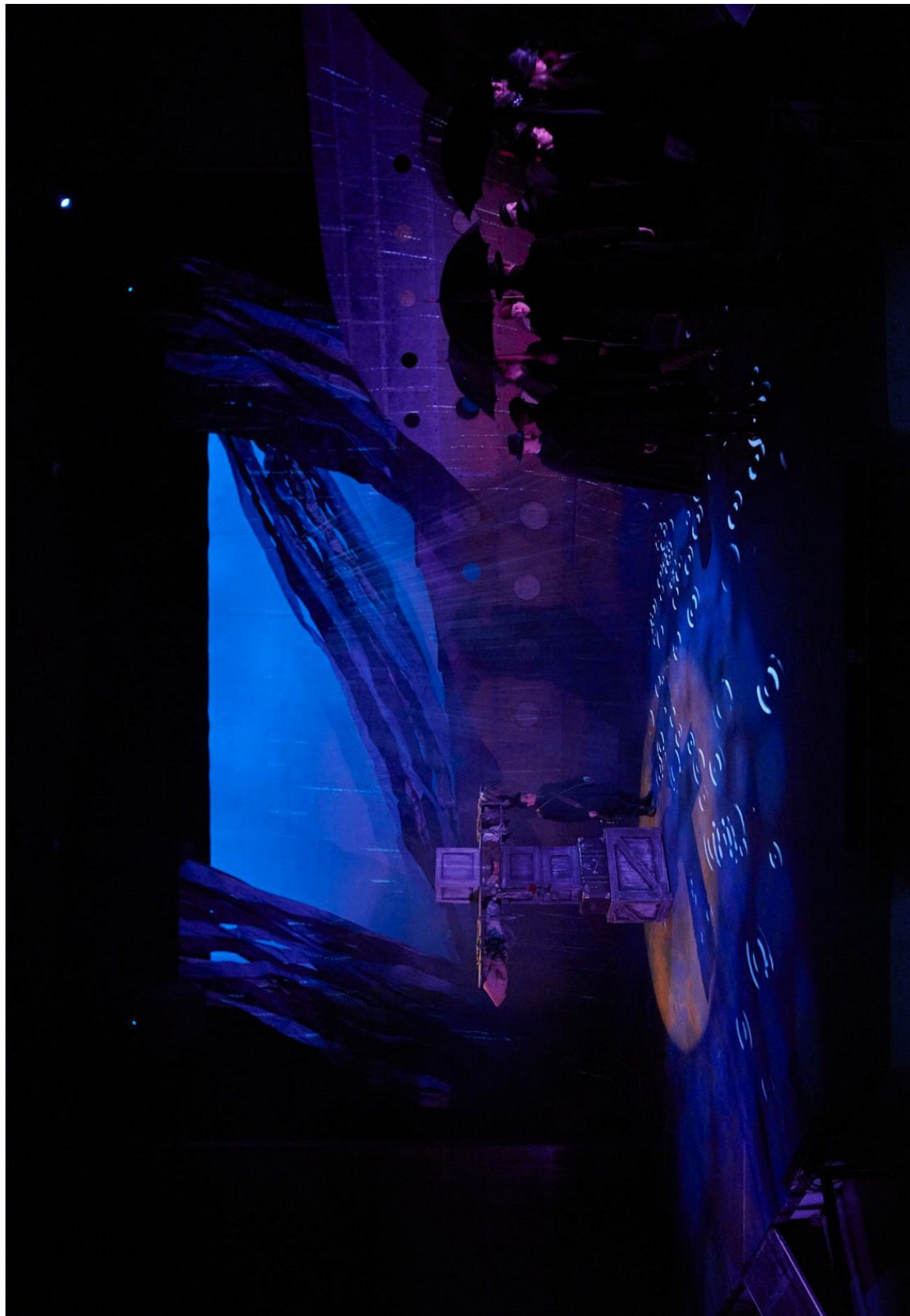


Fig. 1.39 - Production Photo - Prologue (McAllister)

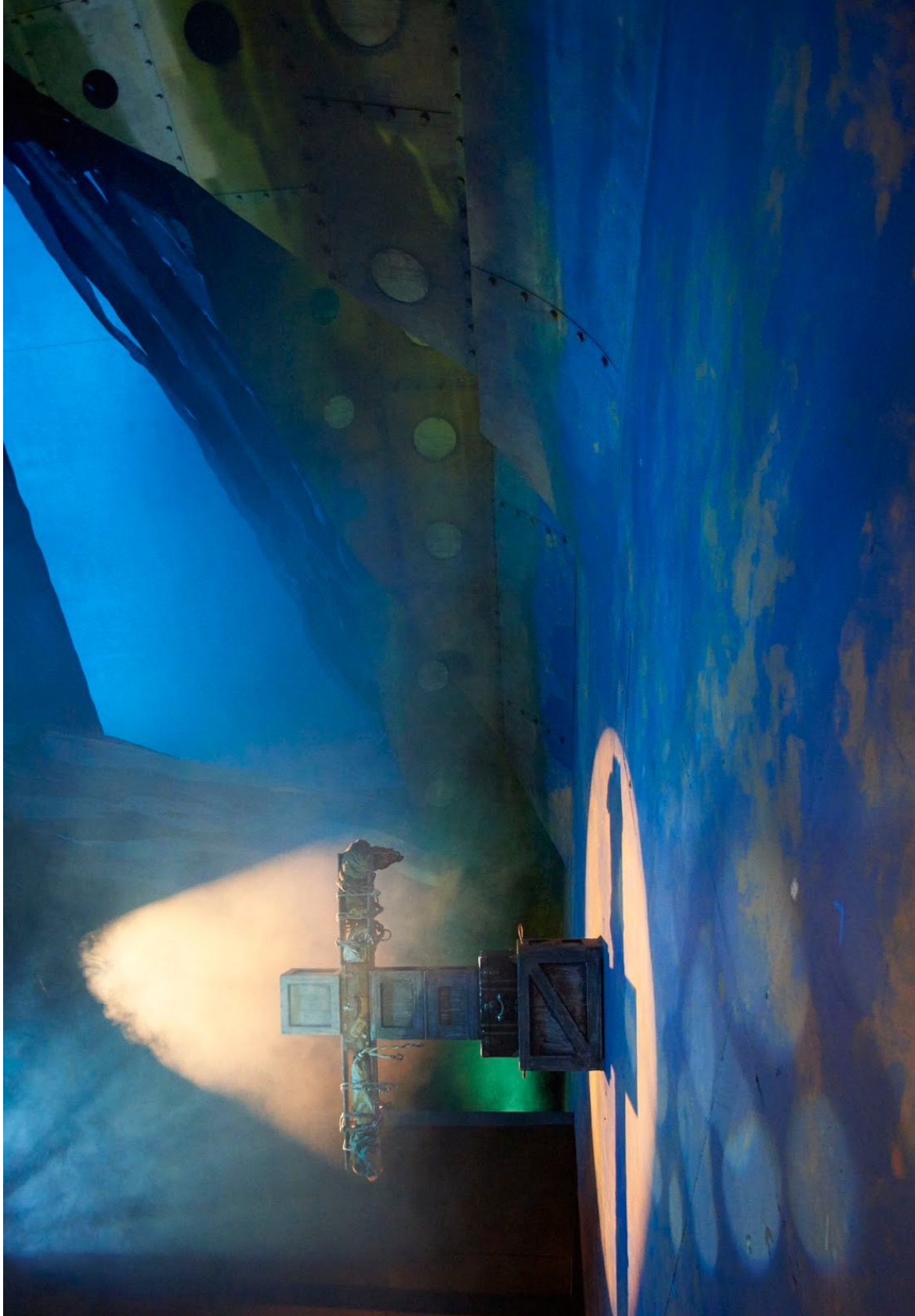


Fig. 1.40 - Production Photo - Pre-show (McAllister)

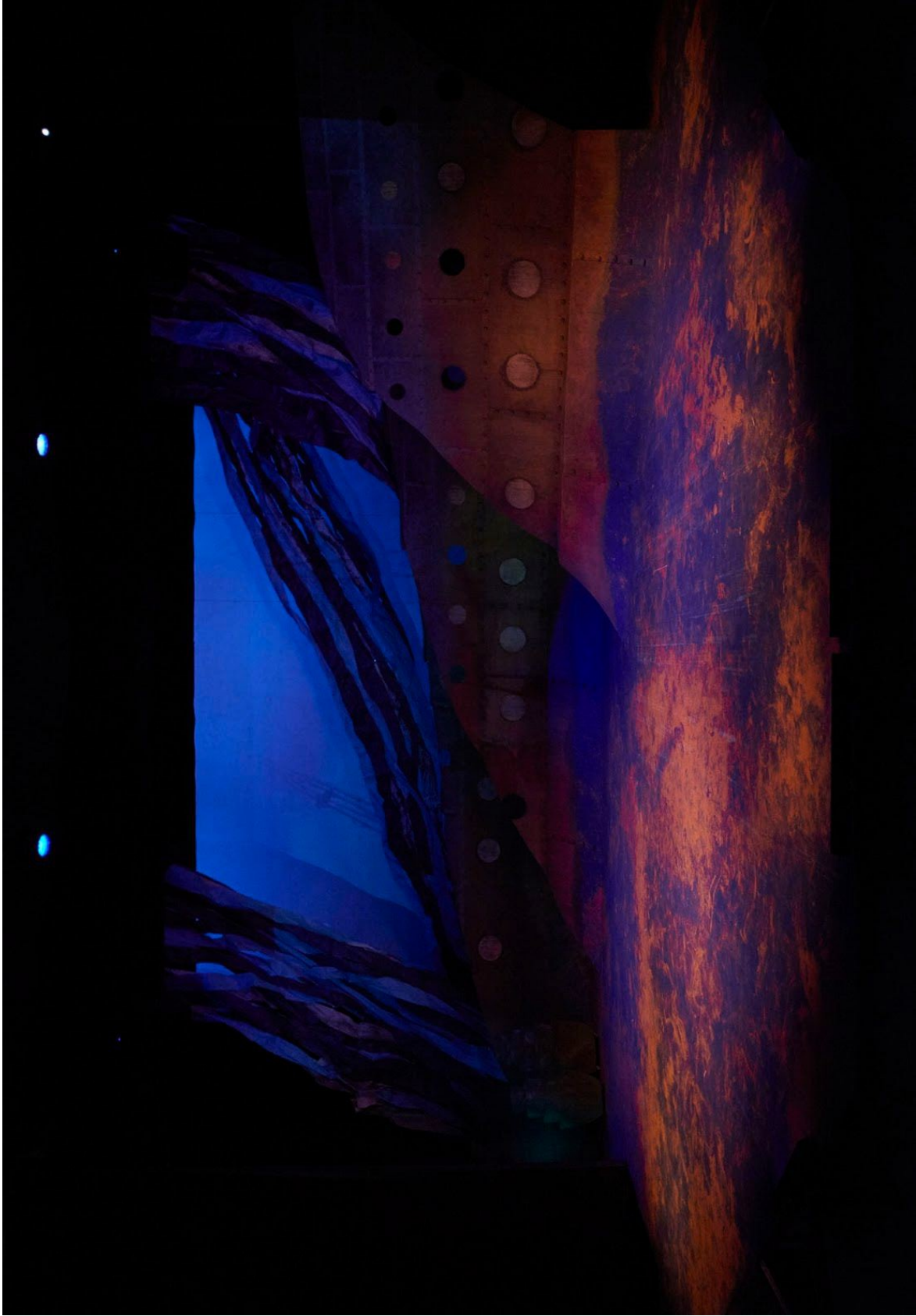


Fig. 1.41 - Production Photo – Full Stage (McAllister)



Fig. 1.42 - Production Photo – Yellow Stockings (McAllister)



Fig. 1.43 - Production Photo – Duke Orsino’s Dressing Room (McAllister)



Fig. 1.44 - Production Photo – Olivia's Garden (McAllister)



Fig. 1.45 - Production Photo – Olivia's Estate (McAllister)



Fig. 1.46 - Production Photo – Finale (McAllister)

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CHAPTER TWO:

Fear Not Beasts of Sand

By

Shawn Fisher

Director: Shawn Fisher

Scenic Designer and Technical Director: Trevor Flocco

Lighting Designer: Patrick Mathis

Utah State University Department of Theater Arts

Fusion Theater Project

Black Box Theater

Spring 2016

Introduction

Designing the scenery for *Fear Not Beasts of Sand* was a unique experience because this would be the first time the play was performed; at the beginning of the process, the play had not yet been written. It was produced through the Fusion Theater Project, which meant that the play would be written, developed, rehearsed, and performed over a year-long period. I have had some experience with this in the past before coming to Utah State, but never to this scale. Shawn Fisher served as director and playwright to the production, but because this was a Fusion show, the entire company developed the piece as a group into what the play finally became. Mr. Fisher also served as my advisor on the production. There were several factors that made this production and process different than any of my other production assignments at Utah State. For example, I went through an audition process; every student who was interested gathered together for a group audition. One of the facets of the Fusion Theater Project is the necessity to relate to current events or social issues; as teams, we debated about various issues that were happening in the world. We also read through a few scenes that Mr. Fisher was working on. Another important facet of Fusion is the nugget: the core idea that drives and unifies all of the work the company produces that year, including our short plays and the main play. The nugget for this year's project was an idea that revolved around addictions that we keep below the surface. From this nugget, our collaboration, and strong writing, *Fear Not Beasts of Sand* was created.

Synopsis

The play begins with Nell and Brooks at the lake house of the Davenport family. They have just left rehab and it was Nell's idea to run to her family's vacation house. We learn that Nell uses poetry to cope with her addiction and issues, and she shares one of her poems with

Brooks. We also gain some insight into Nell's relationship with her mother; she tells Brooks about how she "learned to swim," and why she is afraid of water, despite having grown up right next to the lake. At the end of the scene, Nell breaks a window to get into the house, since the locks were changed. In the next scene, we meet Kitty and Randall, Nell's parents. They discuss the fact they invited their son, Mitch, but not Nell to The Camp (the name they gave to their lake house) because of the fact that she is in rehab and is not allowed to leave. The audience can sense that their marriage is not at its best. At the end of the scene, Brooks comes outside while Randall and Kitty are getting things from the car, and he steals some pills from Kitty's purse. In the following scene, Nell lies to her parents, stating that the people at rehab said they could leave. She also asks if her brother was invited to join her parents for their outing without her and they lie, stating that he is still at Dartmouth, completing his medical degree. We also learn that Randall and Kitty are getting a divorce. Later in the scene, Kitty learns that Brooks stole her medicine; he describes something he learned in rehab where you count to thirteen as you flush the pills down the toilet, or in his case, the lake. He tells them that he dropped the Xanax into the water, but tried to jump in after it, coming up empty. This is a milestone for his process of getting clean. In the following scene, Kitty tells Nell the reason for changing the locks: she did not want friends of Randall's to be using the house without her knowledge. They also reminisce about their Fourth of July traditions of coming to The Camp and participating in the lake community activities. At the end of the scene, Mitch arrives at the house and Nell learns of her parents' lie; he then picks her up and throws her in the water.

In the next scene, Mitch and Randall discuss many things, including how Mitch is doing at school. Brooks enters and the audience learns very quickly that he and Mitch do not see eye to eye. Kitty arrives with Chinese food and Nell complains about not getting the food she wanted.

As the scene progresses, Mitch and Brooks get into a debate about choice and natural selection. Brooks ultimately wins the argument in a speech he gives about dinosaurs and cockroaches and how “survival of the fittest” is not a complete truth in evolution, since cockroaches have existed since the time of the dinosaurs, yet are still around today. At the end of the scene, Kitty and Randall decide to give Nell the choice of whether she wants to go back to rehab or not.

The next scene takes place on Fourth of July evening; Brooks is watching the fireworks from the house at a distance. Mitch comes in and the two of them have a beer. They talk about their life plans, including Mitch’s ideas of where he might practice medicine, and whether or not Brooks and Nell may or may not get married. They start playing a question game and get to know each other better. In these intense moments, we learn that Mitch has been kicked out of school; we discover this because Brooks stole the letter from Mitch’s stuff and waves it in his face. The reason for him being kicked out was that he had an inappropriate relationship with a girl he met at school; Brooks calls him a defiler. Brooks also tells him that his brother died because he was a defiler. At the end of this heated scene, Brooks throws the letter into the water. In the final moments of the scene, the dialogue suggests that Mitch and Nell have a darker past; Nell had shared subtle hints of it in rehab.

In a later scene, Nell takes some pills, but lies to Brooks about it; during her high, she shares a poem with her family that she wrote a long time ago and shared in rehab: “The Beast of Sand.” In an eloquent and fearful soliloquy, Nell describes a dream she has where she and her brother are swimming at The Camp; in one moment, her brother is there comforting her, but soon after she feels the beast of sand beneath the water. By the time she finishes her poem, it is understood that Mitch molested Nell as a child and that it has been haunting her ever since. We also learn that Kitty has heard this poem before and chose to ignore it because she wanted to

keep telling herself it was only a dream. This puts Randall into an uproar just as Mitch arrives back to the house; in his drunken stupor, he tells his parents he got kicked out of school. The scene ends with Mitch leaving, and Brooks holding Nell in his arms; she decides she wants to go back to rehab. In the final scene, it is a few months later, and the house is for sale. A board with all of the names of the family has been removed and is being held by Kitty. She, Randall and Nell reminisce about the time they spent at The Camp and where they are in their lives now. As the play ends, Kitty reads a note from Nell that says, “Thanks for teaching me to swim.”

Cast of Characters

- Nell Davenport - Daughter of Kitty and Randall, escaped from rehab with Brooks
- Brooks - escaped from rehab with Nell, her confidant
- Mitch Davenport - brother to Nell, Dartmouth student studying medicine
- Kitty Davenport - mother to Nell and Mitch, famous family psychiatrist
- Randall Davenport - father to Nell and Mitch, writer

Venue

This production took place in the Black Box Theater. What makes the space interesting to work with is its versatility in regards to the relationship between audience and playing space. I have seen the space where the audiences have been in the round, set up in a thrust, alley style, or on two connected sides. As a company, we decided to put the audience on the north and west side of the space. The reason was because of the entrances and exits in the space and how they would relate to the scenery. Although I enjoyed having the versatility, the Black Box presented a few challenges along the way. The floor is tile, which meant we had to lay down a floor of

particle board before working on the set. Another challenge, (or blessing depending on how one looks at it) is the size of the space. In other spaces that I have designed, there were places to move things out of the way to allow for a better work environment. Because of its size, we were always working on top of each other. It was challenging to the build process, but thankfully the design did not suffer because of the small space. As with any show, the scenic design needs to work for the theater in which it will be performed. I was still grateful to work in the space and found that I enjoy working in black box spaces because of the intimacy; the audience is invested more deeply in the action of the play because they are so close to the characters. All-in-all, I looked forward to designing in the Black Box.

Initial Thoughts/Objectives

As mentioned in the introduction, this process was unique. When we first gathered in September of 2015, Mr. Fisher discussed his ideas for the play and the characters he had in mind. He had determined the general setting would be a private dock tied to a summer home on a lake. From a design standpoint, this was all I had to work with at first. As we started our rehearsal process, we would workshop each scene, discussing ideas on how we could enhance the story and characters, we discovered the house belonged to the upper-middle class Davenport Family, and they had given it the name, “The Camp.” Early in the process, we determined that most of the playing space would be the deck, and that only the exterior of the lake house would be needed for the design. An idea that we also played with throughout most of the process was the fact that someone would jump or be thrown into the lake at one point during the play. I remember having conversations with Mr. Fisher about having an actual pool as large as the playing space and building the set into it. He would always say “no,” because it could not be

done for obvious reasons; the cost, time and architecture of the building. Leaving this idea behind, I started to consider how the set could reflect the world we wanted to create.

Design Development

Since every aspect of the production was approached as a team, we collectively did research on character and setting; some of us found the exact same images, therefore we all seemed to be on the same page. In some regards, I already had some research and ideas about this space because of an assignment I was given in Set Design I, a class I had taken in my first year at Utah State. The assignment was to create a set for a play without a script; however, we still had to include a dock, some sort of home, and a place where a character could jump into the water, either seen or unseen. Despite the fact

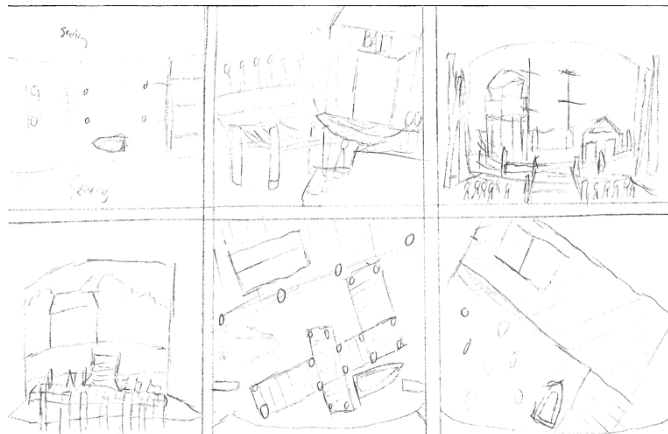


Fig. 2.1 - Thumbs for Class Project

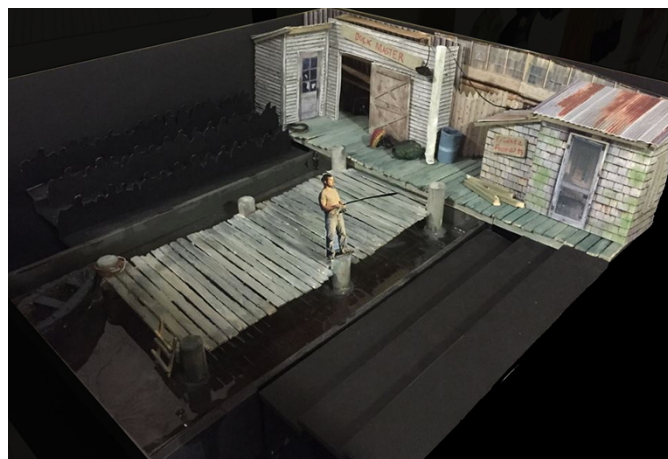


Fig. 2.2 - Model for Class Project

that these were two different environments, having thumbnail sketches (fig. 2.1), research, and the model (fig. 2.2) from this previous project helped me to better understand how this space



Fig. 2.3 - Mood research (Malik)

could exist in the Black Box. However, I did not share this with the group because I did not want my previous project to influence the team in a negative way. Additionally, the details would all be different because the characters were entirely different and their environments would not be the same. And lastly, Mr. Fisher insisted from the beginning that we could not put water on stage.

The company collectively searched for lakeside cottages during our research process. From their images as well as my own, I was influenced by the moods (fig. 2.3) that some of them created. I also found strong imagery of the environments that this house could exist (fig. 2.4 & 2.5). In certain elements of the research, we noticed that a few of the images had a deck with a larger dock that was one step lower (fig. 2.4 & 2.5). We determined that using this idea would be a wise approach in order to create a more dynamic space. As I looked at these images along with many others, I found that there was a large amount of foliage in the environments surrounding these homes. I remember wishing that we were in a larger venue because of how vast these spaces seemed, but since we were in the Black Box, I had to consider blocking. This is important



Fig. 2.4 - Locale/Dock Research (Sessa)

with all set designs, but it is especially so in our venue. Since I knew we would be working in a smaller space, I drew a ground plan of what I had envisioned (fig. 2.6). As a group, we discussed blocking and sightlines as far as the



Fig. 2.5 - Locale/Dock Research (Talk)

angles of the set to the audience itself. As I completed a rough sketch that somewhat corresponded with the ground plan, I explored adding more angles to the upper deck since I imagined the lower dock being more rectangular (fig. 2.7). As time progressed, the ground plan was simplified to a more interesting design by putting the entire space on an angle, instead of lining it up with the architecture of the room. We chose to do this because we realized that the dock did not need to be as large; if it stayed this way, the water would be more difficult to imply. This also meant the actors could stand at the edge of the dock without being right on top of the

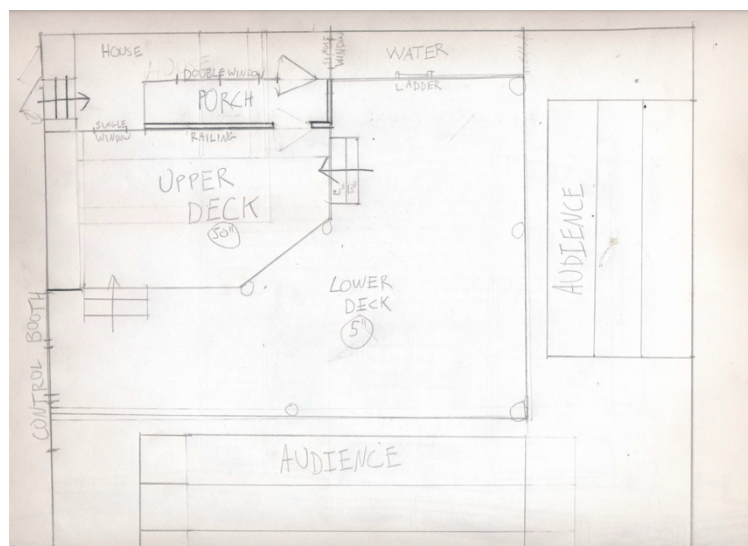


Fig. 2.6 - Initial Ground Plan

audience. I was concerned about the playing space at first, but looking back on it, I am glad for the change. As we finalized the ground plan, we also finalized the entrances and exits; the eastern door would serve as an entrance for any actor exiting or entering from the house, while the

entrance on the north wall would be used for any actor who comes from around the other side of the house. For most of the design process, I imagined a naturalistic setting; much of Mr. Fisher's writing could be best reflected in this design style. As the deadline for my design grew closer, Mr.

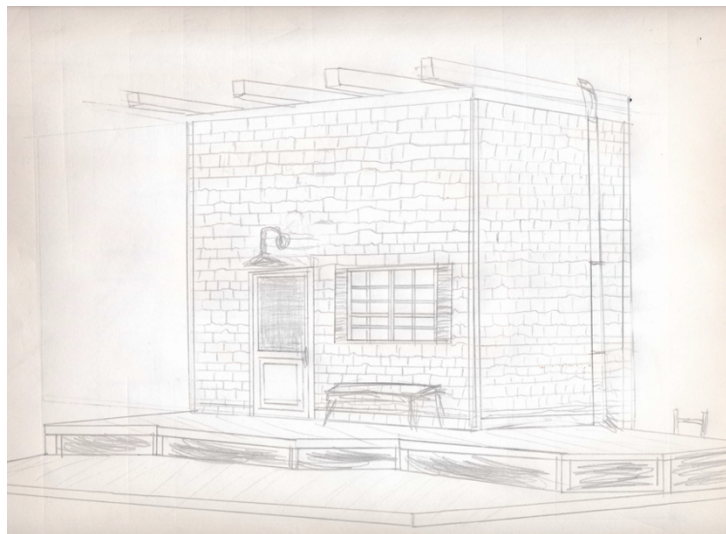


Fig. 2.7 - Early Sketch

Fisher and I discussed the idea of designing the space using selective realism instead of naturalism. Selective realism is a design style that evokes a realistic space while stylizing or omitting certain elements that could exist. We chose to go in this direction because of resources; since Fusion was going to be produced independently of the regular season, we did not have any

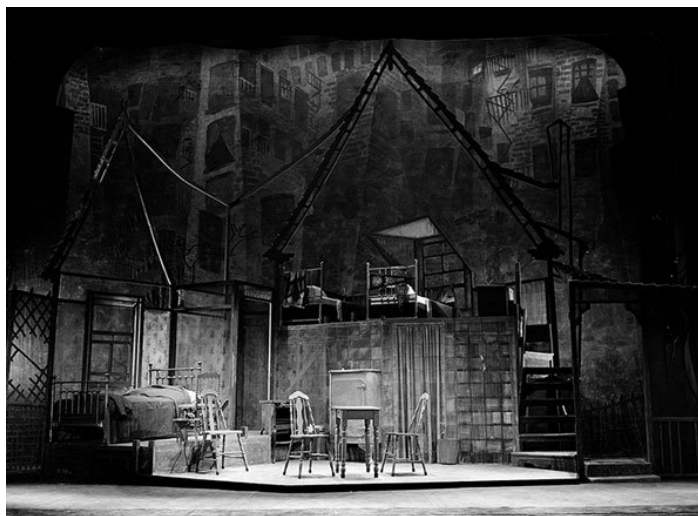


Fig. 2.8 - Mielziner's Design (Life)

additional shop support from the rest of the theatre department. We had also moved out of the scene shop at this point so the only place we could build was the Black Box itself. This aspect of the process was one of my greatest challenges, but it also became one of the

most fulfilling moments because the

company shared in putting most of the set together as a group. At first, I struggled with the idea of selective realism because I was not sure how to best implement it in my design. I was inspired

by Jo Mielziner's set design for *Death of a Salesman* (fig 2.8), but I still had trouble making my own style of selective realism as it related to the piece. Mr. Fisher and I went back to the research and found some interesting examples of exterior trim and cedar shingle combinations (fig.



Fig. 2.9 - Shingle/Trim Research (New)

2.9). This was incorporated into the final design, with sections of shingles missing to evoke the broken Davenport family. Other color and texture that I incorporated into my final design was the deck itself. I wanted to indicate that the Davenports have had the property for a long time and using an old weathered wood texture was my choice for floor treatment. I also incorporated color and texture from my research (fig. 2.10). Other research images that many company members found at the start of the process when thinking about the environment were Adirondack chairs



Fig. 2.10 - Weathered Wood (Laila)

(fig. 2.11). These also ended up making it into the final design, along with some other folding chairs and furniture. I built my model (fig. 2.12) and had a meeting with the company to discuss the design. It was generally well received, but the model

itself lacked furniture; by this time, we had determined most of the furniture pieces to be used, and they just had to be worked with in rehearsal to see which ones we liked best. I planned to include those pieces in my model once the furniture decisions were made. The other main piece of set dressing that was designed into the set was a canoe. I wanted to clarify that the dock was on the water, and



Fig. 2.11 - Adirondack Chairs (Mirror)

tying a boat to the dock was a solution I chose to use. We had a long discussion about how we could best use the space. the design was then approved and the execution process began.



Fig. 2.12 - Color Model

Technical Direction Process

After the design was approved, I started to draft; since time was of the essence, Mr. Fisher suggested I approach my drafting from a design standpoint with additional construction details as needed, since I was also serving as the production's technical director (Note: see Appendix B for drafting). One aspect I had in my favor was that the set would not be a complicated build. As I was drafting, I also started to consider the costs of materials; we had about \$2,000.00 to work with for all of the design aspects, including props, lighting, and costumes, so I wanted to keep the costs of scenery materials around \$1,500 (see Appendix B). The largest cost was going to be the lumber for the decking; I considered using 2"x4" boards

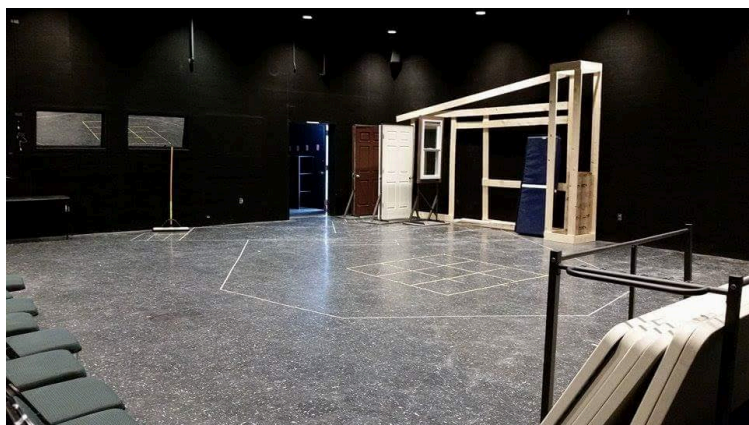


Fig. 2.13 – House Unit

instead of 2"x6" but they would not have served the design as well. They would be too small, and did not reflect the design as well as the larger boards would. After drafting and budget lists were completed, Mr. Fisher, Robin Perry (scenic charge and assistant stage manager), and I

purchased the materials and including a few additional tools that would help us during the build. In addition to managing the monies, I was also responsible for scheduling. I coordinated with Ash Crystal, our stage manager, about the best times that I could work in the space without conflicting with rehearsal. Additionally, we had to schedule a time where we could have the whole company build the set, preferably over a day or two. We chose the weekend and I planned accordingly; I wanted to get as much of the prep work for the set finished before that day. This



Fig. 2.14 – Boards cut with floor laid out

meant completing cut lists and assembling what pieces I could without other people. By the primary build day, I was able to construct the house unit (fig. 2.13) and miter all of the boards that were needed to be cut for the decking (fig. 2.14).

Ms. Perry and Ms. Crystal both stepped up and helped during this process, but the main build was executed by the entire company. I was somewhat concerned about this at first because I thought that having more inexperienced hands building the scenery could slow down the process, but I was wrong.

What had amazed me about the primary build day was the amount of work we were able to accomplish, given the fact that most of the company did not have any building experience. Throughout the day, Mr. Fisher was instrumental when it came to building the set and providing instructions to the group; both of us led the group well. We started out building the framing for the upper deck and legged it up (fig. 2.15). In order to prepare to “skin” the



Fig. 2.15 - Framing Upper Deck



Fig. 2.16 - Skinning Upper Deck

top of the deck, I had pre-made $\frac{1}{2}$ " spacers in order to give the deck a more authentic feeling. We were in the Black Box so simply painting the floor and adding sharpie lines for spacing would not have lent itself well to the space the set existed in. We were then able to attach the 2"x6" boards to the top (fig. 2.16). Most of the day went smoothly, however, one main issue arose: something I did not know regarding materials was the fact that when a board is milled and cut, they leave an extra $\frac{1}{4}$ " or so, hence making the boards all slightly longer than 16'-0", but on an inconsistent

scale. This led to several issues when laying down the main deck. The problem was eventually solved, but it made the day go a lot longer than it should have. I was frustrated with myself for not foreseeing that, but I learned something from it and I have not made that mistake since then. After one long day of building, much of the set construction of the set was complete (fig. 2.17). All that remained were the step units, the pilings, and the shingle sections, along with painting the entire set; all of these were completed the following week. I found the step units to be more difficult than I originally had anticipated; the reasoning for this was because of the odd levels that existed in the scenery. Stairs are supposed to



Fig. 2.17 - Primary Set Construction



Fig. 2.18 - Piling (McAllister)

have equal step heights; the reasoning is because when our legs take the first step, we subconsciously adjust how high we raise our foot for the next step. This is why the stairs had to be perfect, but between the three different step units, none of them were the same. Thankfully, Mr. Fisher was able to help me with this aspect of the process. One of my favorite aspects of the design were the pilings on the edges of the dock (fig. 2.18); one of the main reasons I was proud to have these on stage was because they added more detail, and because building them was unique. I used sonotube on a different production and found it difficult to hide the spiral seams of the material; this would have been even more difficult in the Black Box. I had an idea to build the inner structure inside the sonotube, and then wrap them all with ram board. Normally, ram board is used to be a temporary way of protecting flooring; it is thick and takes paint well, and when the pilings were complete, I was proud of this solution. I had Ms. Perry use the model as her paint elevation. In hindsight, I realize I should have given her proper paint elevations, but she used the model well and made the set look good. The wood treatment consisted of a thin wash, which was then



Fig. 2.19 - Deck Painting Process

layered in with more shades of gray, giving the floor a weathered look (fig. 2.19). This was important to the design because it gave a sense as to how long the Davenports have had The Camp. The play refers to the family having their Fourth of July tradition since Mitch and Nell were children. If it had been fresh wood or a dock that was painted, it would have created a different feeling that would not have served the story as well. The house was then painted, along with shingles, and we added in the finishing touches including a welcome mat, a sign and light over the door, and a board that had all the members of the Davenport family carved into it. This was one of my favorite aspects of the process and one of the reasons why the Fusion project is so unique. The name board was an idea that came about during a rehearsal process and I was told it had to be incorporated into the set somehow; this was after the set was designed (fig. 2.20). This was a classic example of how designing for a new play can be both challenging and rewarding. After the show was struck, I kept the board as a memento and reminder of the unique experience I had working on this show.



Fig. 2.20 - Name Board (McAllister)

Final Design and Reflection

The set served the play well and I was proud to be part of the Fusion process; it gave me a lot of insight as far as working on a new play, designing using selective realism, and balancing the role of set designer and technical director. I had the benefit of working with a fantastic group of people to develop not only this play, but also our own short plays. The group worked well together and I was grateful to have grown closer to each member of the company throughout the process.

When thinking back on my experience, there were things I could have done differently. To begin with, I could have managed my time better. One of my struggles during this process was that I was also working on *Twelfth Night*. From this experience, I learned the importance of time management and since then, have been able to juggle my simultaneous projects a bit better; this is something I know I am going to have to constantly be working on. It is hard to say whether or not I could have used my resources better; the challenge of not having shop support or even a proper physical shop was definitely a good learning experience, and I felt I used my resources to the best of my ability when it came to executing the design.

The play itself was very well received; we had a full house almost every night, and I received some good feedback regarding my design. Several professors expressed interest in taking the set home with them for their own backyards. I was proud of the work that we had done as a company and proud of my work as the designer and technical director. It will be a piece that I will be glad to have in my portfolio because of its unique process. Fusion was one of my greatest experience in graduate school and I was grateful for the collaborative and one-of-a-kind opportunity to be part of the production of *Fear Not Beasts of Sand*.



Fig. 2.21 – Production Photo – Scene 1 (McAllister)



Fig. 2.22 - Production Photo - Scene 2 (McAllister)



Fig. 2.23 - Production Photo - Scene 4 (McAllister)



Fig. 2.24 - Production Photo - Scene 5 (McAllister)



Fig. 2.25 - Production Photo - Scene 6 (McAllister)



Fig. 2.26 - Production Photo - Scene 7 (McAllister)



Fig. 2.27 - Production Photo - Scene 8 (McAllister)

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CHAPTER THREE:

The Matchmaker: A Farce in Four Acts

By

Thornton Wilder

Director: Richie Call

Scenic Designer: Trevor Flocco

Lighting Designer: Jenner Price

Costume Designer: Nancy Hills

Utah State University Department of Theater Arts

Caine Lyric Theater

Fall 2016

Introduction

As I went through the process of designing Thornton Wilder's *The Matchmaker*, I had several challenges put before me as the set designer; in the end, I was able to overcome each and every one. When this show was first announced, it was intended to be performed in the Morgan Theater, our largest space. The Morgan is a thrust stage, seating about 670 people. However, it was changed to the Caine Lyric Theater, a smaller venue downtown. The Lyric is a proscenium space, seating about 370 people. After reading the play, I understood why it was originally intended for the Morgan; it is a multi-scene show that takes place in four completely different locations. Normally, I have a tendency to design unit sets, meaning there are little to no scene changes, and the entire set does not move. Due to the style of the show and what the story calls for, the difference in scenery was vital to the production. This became my first and greatest challenge: I needed to step out of my comfort zone. Every show I have designed at Utah State pushed my limits, but this show challenged me because I had not designed any multi-scene shows in a realized context before. The purpose of our faculty assigning the shows is to give us opportunities that will challenge us and help to diversify our portfolios. *The Matchmaker* did exactly that, and I am grateful that it is in my portfolio and proud that it was my final design at Utah State University.

Synopsis

The Matchmaker is a comedy in four acts; it follows several people who fall in love and all have plans to get married by the end of the play. It takes place in the 1880s between Yonkers and New York City. In the first act, we meet Horace Vandergelder, a widower and owner of a thriving store in Yonkers. The location is his office/apartment above the store. His niece,

Ermengarde, wants to marry an artist, Ambrose Kemper, but Vandergelder insists they are both foolish and does not plan on consenting to their marriage. In a direct address to the audience, he comments on how he lives in a world of fools and that the sane people are in great danger of contagion. However, he comments on how he needs a woman in his life and he's willing to go through a little bit of foolishness if that means having a wife again. Also introduced in the first act is Dolly Levi, a widow, she wants to marry Vandergelder for his money so she can spread it throughout the world, unlike Vandergelder who hoards it. We also meet Cornelius and Barnaby, two of Vandergelder's clerks. Vandergelder treats them poorly, calling them fools and scolding them for anything he can. However, he leaves the store in their hands; he is going into New York to meet with two potential brides-to-be, which Mrs. Levi set up for him. At the end of the act, the clerks, despite having almost no money, decide to close the store early in order to go have an adventure in New York.

The second act takes place in Mrs. Malloy's hat shop in New York. Irene Malloy is one of Vandergelder's potential brides that Dolly has helped him to arrange. In the midst of their New York adventure, Cornelius and Barnaby dash into the hat shop to hide from Vandergelder, whom they have just spotted across the street. Cornelius, having never really spoken with a woman before despite being 33, is mesmerized and love-struck when he meets Irene. However, when the clerks learn that Mrs. Malloy is expecting a call from Vandergelder, they run and hide in a wardrobe and under a table, expecting their boss to walk in at any second. Without knowing this, Irene becomes angry with them for embarrassing her in such a way; she helps to hide them nonetheless. While in hiding, Dolly and Vandergelder enter the store and Irene mentions Cornelius's name. In an attempt to save Irene and the boys, Dolly lies to Vandergelder, saying that Cornelius leads a double life and insists that Irene and Cornelius must have met because of a

chance meeting in New York. Dolly says that Cornelius is a rich, extravagant and mischievous man whom everyone in New York knows. After Vandergelder and Dolly leave, Irene is furious with Cornelius because she feels she has been lied to about why Cornelius was hiding and commands that the boys take her and Minnie, her assistant, out to eat since he is so rich.

In the third act, the mayhem really begins; all of the characters end up at the Harmonia Gardens Restaurant. Vandergelder makes arrangements to have a private area on the restaurant's verandah for him, Dolly, and the second potential bride-to-be. He also discovers that Ermengarde and Ambrose are there and pays a cabman to secretly drive them to Miss Flora Van Huysen's house; she is an old friend of the family. He then leaves with the intention of coming back later for dinner. While he is away, Irene, Cornelius, Barnaby and Minnie arrive and also want a table alone on the verandah. Malachi Stack, a new employee of Vandergelder, arrives and argues with Cornelius and Irene; this eventually leads into tables being knocked over and a chase around the restaurant. By the end of the skirmish, Cornelius and Barnaby learn that Stack works for Vandergelder and hide again, this time with only a folding screen up between the two tables. As the scene progresses, Vandergelder drops his purse, and thinking that it belongs to Cornelius, Stack gives it to him. With his financial anxiety resolved, Cornelius decides to tell Irene the whole truth about him not being rich and working for Vandergelder. She understands and comes up with the idea to put women's clothes on Barnaby and Cornelius to hide them from Vandergelder. In the meantime, Dolly arrives alone. During dinner, Dolly tries to use reverse psychology to get him to propose to her. Her final tactic is to ask him to dance with her. Irene has also insisted that she can teach Cornelius to dance. During the dance, Cornelius and Vandergelder come face to face and he fires Cornelius right on the spot. He sees Ermengarde and

Ambrose as well and his fury only grows. At the end of the scene, he storms off without paying, leaving Dolly alone.

During the final act, everyone arrives at Miss Van Huysen's house. First Cornelius and Barnaby, with Barnaby dressed as a girl; the cabman that Vandergelder hired brings them to the house thinking that they are Ambrose Kemper and Ermengarde. Being the eccentric old woman she is, Van Huysen also accidentally plays into the misunderstanding. She sends Barnaby in for a bath just before the real Ambrose Kemper and Ermengarde arrive at the house. Since Ermengarde wants to keep Ambrose's identity a secret, she tells Miss Van Huysen that Ambrose is Cornelius Hackle, not knowing that the real Cornelius is in the other room. Now Miss Van Huysen is under the impression that there are two Ermengardes in her house and that Cornelius and Ambrose are the opposite person. Dolly arrives at the house with a drunk Irene and Minnie. As proper identities start to be revealed, Vandergelder arrives in a fury, but Van Huysen quickly puts him in his place, forcing him to apologize. As the play comes to a close, Vandergelder consents to let Ambrose marry Ermengarde, Cornelius proposes to Irene, and Vandergelder himself proposes to Dolly, just as she originally had planned.

Cast of Characters

- Dolly Levi – the female lead, a widow, and matchmaker to whom the title refers, late 30s
- Horace Vandergelder – the male lead, a widower who starts out a miser but grows more compassionate by end of play, 60
- Irene Malloy – widow owner of a hat shop in New York City, late 30s
- Cornelius Hackle – chief clerk at Horace Vandergelder’s store, dreams of adventure, 33
- Ermengarde – sheltered niece of Horace Vandergelder, late teens
- Ambrose Kemper – artist with intentions of marrying Ermengarde, early 20s
- Barnaby Tucker – another clerk at Vandergelder’s store, 17
- Minnie Fay – Irene Malloy’s assistant in the hat shop, late teens
- Malachi Stack – new employee of Vandergelder, 40s
- Flora Van Huysen – somewhat senile great dame and relative of Vandergelder, late 60s
- Joe Scanlon – Vandergelder’s barber, 50s
- Gertrude – Vandergelder’s deaf housekeeper, 70s
- Joe – cabman Vandergelder hires to drive Ambrose and Ermengarde to Van Huysen’s house, 30s
- Cook – Van Huysen’s cook and housekeeper, 30s
- Rudolf – head waiter at Harmonia Gardens Restaurant, 30s
 - August – second-in-command waiter at Harmonia Gardens Restaurant, 30s
- Waiters – additional three waiters added to help with scene changes and provide additional waiting support, 20s

Venue

The Matchmaker was originally assigned to be performed in the Morgan Theater, our largest venue on campus. Due to several different factors, the venue was changed to the Caine Lyric Theater, our medium-sized space downtown. Having gone through the process now, I understand why the show was originally meant for a larger space; it is a four act farce that takes place in four very different locations. In our early meetings, we determined that we wanted the four scenes to be different because each space needed to have a different feeling. Despite the fact that it is all a romantic comedy, Mr. Vandgerlder's space had to be the almost opposite of Miss Van Huysen's, and the hat shop and restaurant also needed to create a different mood. One unit set would not have created all of the moods of the piece at once. The issue with having four different scenes at the Lyric is the small amount of backstage space. We also did not want to reuse any furniture from one scene to another, adding to the amount of items that would have to be stored backstage. The lack of space for this type of show ended up being one of my greatest challenges throughout my process.

Initial Thoughts and Objectives

In our initial meeting, director Richie Call threw out a few words and phrases for us to ponder in our designs: theatricality, wedding cake, wedding toppers, 2D musical theater era, fluid, and romantic. When I first read the script, I had gotten the same sense that Mr. Call and Nancy Hills, our costume designer, had about the type of farce the show is; it is not a door-slamming, laugh-out-loud type of farce, but more a sweet, cheer-for-the-lovers kind of farce, with plenty of comic bits throughout. In my reading, I noticed a large amount of set descriptions; there were suggested ground plans for each scene in the back of the script, and I believe this was

another reason why this play was originally meant for the Morgan Theater. Thankfully, Mr. Call told me to focus on dialogue and that the stage descriptions could be disregarded. The final theme that the three of us discussed was the connection to the musical *Hello, Dolly!* The musical is based off of *The Matchmaker*, and Mr. Call did not want to shy away from that, going as far as to include the music from the show during our scene changes. He wanted us to use the show as inspiration, but not to copy it altogether. This gave me a lot to think about as I began my thumbnail sketches, and then continued on to the rest of the design process.

Design Development

One of the facets of design I have struggled with in my time at Utah State is cohesiveness: the ability to take my ideas in a design and unify them, either through color, shape, style, or theme. In the case of this design, another element I used to make the design more cohesive was function. I tried to come up with some sketches of an environment or theme that could exist throughout the whole play. Many of my initial sketches include curtains, relating back to my first meeting with Mr. Call where we discussed theatricality and romance (fig. 3.1). After discussing these sketches with my advisor, Dennis Hassan, he suggested I draw additional general-look sketches, and encouraged me to sketch each scene individually, as if each location stood alone. After exploring Mr. Hassan's suggestion, it was easier to visualize the four different locations with more detail. I was now able to begin my research.



Fig. 3.1 - Grand drape research (Rostron)

Research

Initially, I had some difficulty finding images that could be beneficial to my design; researching words like “love” and “romance” were too vague. Even after adding phrases like “abstract sculptures” or “paintings of love,” I was not satisfied with the research images I found. This was unusual; most plays I worked on, either realized or unrealized, I had at least one strong research image that I was able to use in my designs. I even watched *Hello Dolly!* since we were not supposed to shy away from the connection, but I never found anything that screamed out “this is my



Fig. 3.2 - Wainscoting Research (Wood)



Fig. 3.3 - Detail Research (Bradbury)

key research image.” This bothered me at first, but then I remembered some feedback I once received from one of my advisors, Shawn Fisher. He had told me not to be a slave to my research; just because I found a strong piece of research does not mean I need to include it or copy it into my design. However, certain elements of period had to be included since the play does take place in a specific place and time. For example, I found an image of wainscoting which I later brought into my design (fig. 3.2). I found another image with a silk red curtain that was used in the final act; although much

of it did not make it into the final design, it helped me to better understand the environment of Miss Van Huysen (fig. 3.3). Another image I found that helped me with the fourth act especially was one that included interesting wallpaper and furniture (fig. 3.4). Originally, I had not thought of the hat shop, but I received feedback later in the design process about needing more hats, so I found a few useful images that I later translated into my set dressing (fig. 3.5). Expecting to do more research as time went on, I started to consider how to use the space.



Fig. 3.4 – Detail Research (Short)



Fig. 3.5 - Hat Research (London)

Puzzles of Drops and Panels

As I continued my research, I explored ways to create four different settings on the very small Lyric stage. How can I have full-stage set changes without a functional fly system and very little offstage wing space? Thinking back to my original discussion with Mr. Call, words and phrases that helped were “2D-musical theater era” and “theatricality”; the first of these made me think of more old-fashioned scenery, dating back to the Italian Renaissance, which is the wing and drop system. I knew I was capable of including three roll drops in the Lyric, and that this could be one effective solution to assist in the changing of the scenery. I also considered periaktoi, a scenery method that dates back to the Greeks. These periaktoi are three-sided structures with different images on each side (fig. 3.6). Could I use a multi-sided structure to

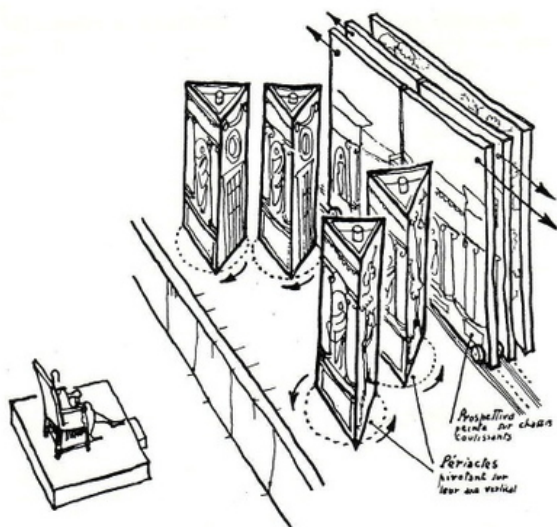


Fig. 3.6 - Periaktoi (Italian)

rotate. Ultimately, the combination of the drops and panels led to the ability to have different locations between the scenes.

The challenge I faced with the drops was that we did not have any place to paint new ones due to the fact that our temporary shop was too small. I looked into the drops we had in our stock. I recalled some that were painted for another Lyric show, and first explored the possibility of using those. One included a dark street in London, another of a wealthy 1800s interior, and the third being the inside of a conservatory. I knew the first would not work for any of them; I had the second and the third as options. Other drops I found were too whimsical or only exteriors; none of them would work, so I explored more options for backgrounds. Thinking back to the theatrical aspect of Mr. Call's vision, I wondered if red curtains could serve as a viable backdrop. I also considered the use of a stationary scrim upstage of the roll drops with Christmas lights behind it to indicate some kind of starry night for the Harmonia Gardens.

create or evoke different locations for the different locations in the play? With such limited space, would periaktoi take up too much room back stage? I explored the use of periaktoi a little bit more but ultimately decided, especially after conversations with Mr. Call, that they would take up too much space. I delved further into rotating scenery and recalled the tracks which were recently installed in the Lyric for us to move panels on and off stage.

Additionally, I knew that they had the ability to

White Model

I started to draft a white model in Vectorworks; it was easier for me to arrange the different possibilities when it came to deciding the treatment for the panels, arches, and drops. Throughout the process of working on my white model, the drops changed constantly. The first background I decided on was the drop for Act IV, in Miss Van Huysen's house; I wanted to use the wealthy interior roll drop because I wanted Miss Van Huysen to have a grand sense about her (fig. 3.7).



Fig. 3.7 - White Model Act IV

After consulting with Mr. Hassan, the rest of the drops and backgrounds were determined. I had not considered the brick drops we have in stock. Since I wanted Mr. Vandergelder's establishment to feel stark, static, and unfriendly, I thought the use of bricks would help create that feeling. A wall of bricks felt too boring at first, so I added a window, flanked by brick drops on either side. I also planned to hang a black curtain behind the window because I preferred that over a white wall or cyc; white would have made it feel more open, whereas black would have made it feel like more of an interior. This left me with Mrs. Malloy's hat shop in Act II, and Harmonia Gardens in Act III. At first, I explored using the inside of the conservatory as the hat shop because it reminded me of a large store front. However, it still looked more like the inside of a conservatory and not a storefront so I decided to use it for Harmonia Gardens. By this time, I

had already explored and decided on the use of red curtains throughout the play in order to coincide with the director's vision of theatricality. For Mrs. Malloy's, I decided to simply close a set of red curtains upstage.

As I was solving the puzzle of the backdrops, I also faced the puzzle of how to treat both sides of the panels and where each panel would be placed on stage; I only had six panels to work with, 12 if counting the front and back. Additionally, the panels could only exist where the tracks were installed. The panels were originally built as rectangles and I wanted to explore additional shapes that could serve the play. I decided to design some of the panels as arches to give the space a more open feel and add romance and grandeur to the set (fig. 3.8). However, I knew I did not want to only use arches so I explored a myriad of ways to combine arches and walls. There was a point where I considered having all the panels on stage at one time in order to construct a whole room, which I later scrapped because it would have been too much on the Lyric stage at a time. I also explored the possibility of changing the treatment during scene shifts; this would have given me more surfaces to work with. I considered the possibility of using the same treatment for different scenes and making them different with dressing. This puzzle ended up being one of the most challenging yet intriguing aspects of my design process; the possibilities seemed endless, but I also had to think about composition and balance when placing the panels. If I wanted the down stage right panel to be an archway, then whatever was on the reverse would



Fig. 3.8 - White Model Act III

also have to be an archway. If I wanted the mid-stage left panel to be a wall that was part of one scene, I'd have to use the other side for a wall in a different scene. I originally designed three of each, since I had learned that three is a strong number when it came to design. Three is strong because of the importance of balance; three objects on stage create a better sense of balance and is normally more pleasing to the eye. However, I found that having an arch on the furthest upstage track would not be helpful in the design, so I decided have two arches and three panels in total; each piece would have a different treatment on either side based off of the design for their prospective act.

This was the point where I decided which scenes would have arches and which scenes would have walls. Some of the decisions were clearer than others; for example, the first act takes place in the room above Mr. Vandergelder's store, making it his space to personify. In the play, he is at a very stagnant and mundane point in his life; he is grounded and stubborn. Having



Fig. 3.9 - White Model Act I

rectangular walls in this scene would better suit his environment. Taking that a step further, each wall was broken up into more rectangles composed by trim and wainscoting. I did this to evoke a feeling of grounded monotony, and designed a wood texture to further emphasize that feeling. I also considered vertical striped wallpaper to evoke a sense of power and slight imprisonment, which I later scrapped (fig. 3.9).

The Harmonia Gardens is supposed to be a romantic place; this is one scene where I knew I wanted to use arches. Originally, I considered marble as the texture for these arches, but later in the process, I wanted to use lattice because I wanted it to feel more like an exterior; marble could have evoked either. I also found beautiful lattice arches in my research that tied perfectly into a garden restaurant (fig. 3.5). This left Mrs. Malloy's hat shop, and Miss Van Huysen's house. I would have to incorporate shelves for the multitude of hats that would need to be present in the



Fig. 3.10 - Lattice Arch Research (Smith)

second act, so I considered having walls for this scene and to paint the hats on shelves in a *trompe l'oeil* style. I thought about doing much of the set in this painting style in order to relate back into one of Mr. Call's key words: 2D Musical Theater Era. Mr. Hassan advised against painting in this style because actual dimensional scenery would be better than painting set dressing on shelves. I considered designing shelves that could be mounted on to a panel, but Matt Stowe, the technical director, informed me that the panels would not function properly with that much weight. If I wanted physical standing shelving of one kind, I had to look other places; later in the process, this problem was solved by using a free moving shelf unit. Thinking back to the treatment for Act II and Act IV, I chose a patterned wallpaper for Miss Van Huysen's because I thought it would have had a more elegant sense about it. The wallpaper idea would not be as

effective on arches, so I determined that Act IV would have walls and that Act II would have arches. I had still not decided on a treatment for the second act at this point, but I knew I could think about that more when it came to my color model.

Furniture

At this point, I believed I had all of the set pieces I would need, so I started thinking about furniture. For Vandergelder's office above the store, the room needed to feel stagnant, as if it needed a woman's touch. I chose a boxy and bulky looking desk to add to the mundane paneling on the walls. I also added a pile of clutter that could have overflowed from the store below in another attempt to show the lack of "a woman's touch." This pile included crates, a barrel, burlap bags, and other items one would find in a provision and hardware store. I also added a stove to evoke the idea that Vandergelder was almost living in this space. In the process of making my white model, I also included a fireplace in this scene, but later realized that a stove and fireplace would be redundant. I designed a railing which led down to the store since the play mentions Barnaby and Cornelius coming up from work through a trapdoor. The next locale was Mrs. Malloy's hat shop; I designed a shelf that could stand in between the columns of an arch for the hats to sit on. I thought that would have been all the hats I would need, but some feedback I received later suggested otherwise. I knew the play called for a table for Barnaby to hide under and a wardrobe for Cornelius to hide in. Originally, this was the only furniture I had. This also changed later because the room needed more hats. In the third act, I needed tables and chairs for the two parties at the restaurant, as well as a dividing screen as mentioned in the dialogue. I liked the idea of having wrought iron furniture pieces because the scene was on a verandah. I also added two statues on pedestals, Venus and Adonis, to add to the romance of the location. I

wanted the final act to feel elegant and beautiful so I included a winged sofa and romantic paintings on the walls. Eventually, I took the fireplace idea from the first act and moved it to the fourth in order to make the space feel warm and welcoming. The white model was the point where I most explored all of my set pieces (fig. 3.11, 3.12, 3.13 & 3.14)



Fig. 3.11 - White Model Exploration



Fig. 3.12 - White Model Exploration



Fig. 3.13 - White Model Exploration



Fig. 3.14 - White Model Exploration

Color Model

As I was finishing my white model, I realized I missed the fact that both Act I and Act IV needed a window, and that Act II needed a physical door. I had originally designed a pair of curtains to go back to the workroom, but in my first few reads of the play, I somehow missed a line about the door. Luckily, the window was an easy fix because the panels for the first and final acts were compositionally similar, with different treatments on either side; I could add a window to one panel and have it be dressed differently with curtains, depending on the scene. In order to address the door issue, I added a rolling unit that could live behind the upstage archway. With these solutions in mind, I was ready to move into the color model. Earlier in my process I determined that a hardwood floor would be a neutral surface for each place to exist. As I was translating it into color, I determined a lighter color would be better because of the nature of the play; it is a romantic comedy, not a murder mystery or tragedy. However, I wanted a darker wood for Mr. Vandergelder since his environment is supposed to feel less inviting. As far as the bricks were concerned, I wanted them to be more gray than red for a similar reason (fig. 3.15).

As I looked at Act II, I tried to solve the issue of the color and treatment of the arch units. I figured I had not used much blue yet so I tried using a grayish blue with hints of pink to add to the femininity. This color palette changed later in the process to something more visually



Fig. 3.15 - First Color Model - Act I

appealing. I considered the different ways I could possibly hang a bookshelf in an archway and evenly distribute the weight. This was a point in time where Mr. Hassan recalled a set piece that the department had been storing off site; he described it as an arched bookshelf with a counter on one side and a niche



Fig. 3.16 - First Color Model - Act II

on the reverse. This piece sounded perfect because it was its own moving unit and it was reversible, just like the rest of the panels. However, one aspect of the unit bothered me at first: the two arch panels were rectangular with arches cut away, while this set pieces was arched at



Fig. 3.17 - First Color Model - Act III

the top instead of being squared off. As a result, I designed a pair of columns, a wall, and crown molding to be added to the shelf (fig. 3.16). On the reverse, I added the busts of Venus and Adonis into the niche and gave it a marble texture in order to tie into the romance of the Harmonia Gardens (fig 3.17).

(Note: By this time, the full-sized statues had been replaced by the busts.)



Fig. 3.18 - First Color Model - Act IV

In Act IV, I already determined that I would use wallpaper to help tie into the period. I chose to use pink and red because it was going to be the location where all the couples finally come together, highlighting the love that surrounds the play (fig. 3.18). I built my color model by moving my Vectorworks units into Photoshop to add color and

texture, and then printed them out and built them three-dimensionally. Once it was completed, I was ready to have another meeting with the production team.

Color Model Feedback

I had a meeting with Mr. Call, Ms. Hills, and Mr. Hassan to go through the model and receive feedback. A few issues were brought up, but in general, the design was well received. The first concern came from Ms. Hills; she believed more hats in Act II would serve the scene better because it would give the space more personality and give a clearer sense of location. All of us agreed with this idea and I made a note to explore how to get more hats on stage without changing the design too drastically. Also regarding the second act, Mr. Hassan believed that the colors I chose for the set pieces did not tie in well with the red curtain background; he told me we could discuss other color possibilities later. He also thought the door floating behind the arch

looked odd and suggested I build the door into a wall that was as tall as the arch cut-out. In the next scene, one concern that Mr. Call had pointed out was that he felt the marble niche was out of place in comparison to the lattice arches; after he said this I agreed with him and made a note. The final note was from Mr. Hassan; in Act IV, he suggested I use a piece of furniture from our stock and build that sofa into my model. I suggested a chaise lounge we had in our storage and he agreed that it would be very appropriate. Thinking back to Ms. Hills' thoughts on more hats, I decided to add hat stands as opposed to more shelving or tables because I figured they would take up less space. I had a conversation with Mr. Hassan regarding the arch shelf and he did not believe adding on to it would make the design any better; therefore, the niche would be unnecessary. This meant I would have to find a different set piece to balance out the composition in the third act. I added another lattice archway into the design which would roll into place. After the final model review with Mr. Stowe, Mr. Duerden, and Ms. Moore, the design was approved and I drafted my design (see Appendix C). The following images are photos of the final model.



Fig. 3.19 - Final Color Model - Act I



Fig. 3.20 - Final Color Model - Act II



Fig. 3.21 - Final Color Model - Act III



Fig. 3.22 - Final Color Model - Act IV

Execution of Design

Assistant Technical Direction

The Matchmaker was designed and executed during my final fall semester. One of the classes I took during that semester was Structural Design for Entertainment, where we learned more in-depth processes for constructing scenery. One of my assignments during the semester was to create the engineering plates for my set (see Appendix C). Since technical direction is my secondary emphasis, I was assigned the role of Assistant Technical Director. The main build drawings were completed by the time construction began; the rest were completed soon after. Since I was the person who did the drawings, carpenters would come to me with questions, giving me a different opportunity to be a leader in the shop. In previous experiences, students came to me with questions regarding design, paint, or props; serving this role for the production gave me more experience to prepare me for potential jobs upon graduation.

Color Changes

Upon examining the color model, Mr. Hassan voiced his concern that the floor was too light, especially in regards to bounce light, hence the floor was darkened. During strike for the previous show, the paint strike crew started the floor treatment for my design, led by myself and Robin Perry, the scenic charge. In about four hours, we were able to base the floor with yellow ochre (fig. 3.23 & 3.24), let it dry, and do a mop



Fig. 3.23 - Beginning Floor Treatment



Fig. 3.24 - Yellow Ochre Base

rehearsal in the space; this would be one less issue to address when it came to the load in and having to work around the set and rehearsal times.

wood-graining technique that Mr. Hassan had taught during a production (fig. 3.25 & 3.26).

Later that week, Ms. Perry and her assistant were able to draw out the board lines, add another layer of dry graining to various boards, and then add two coats of polyurethane. I was proud that we were able to have the floor ready by the first



Fig. 3.25 - Mop Grain Treatment



Fig. 3.26 - Mop Grain Treatment

Another large color change was in Act II. As I was completing my paint elevations for the panels, I recalled how Mr. Hassan suggested we talk about color for this scene. Since the red curtain was the backdrop of the scene, he thought that the blue I had originally chosen would not suit the scene as well as other colors would because the pale blue clashed with the richness and saturation of the curtain. We brainstormed some colors and recalled the gold fringing on the curtains and he suggested yellow. I was hesitant at first, but I trusted him; as time progressed, I

was very pleased with the change. When I made this change, I brought it to both Ms. Hills and Jenner Price, our lighting designer. Both of them supported the change, so I gave the new elevations to Ms. Perry (Appendix C) and she started to paint (fig. 3.27 & 3.28). Mr. Hassan had also suggested changing the hints of pink to hints of rich green to tie in with the rich colors of the curtains. Other than that, the colors remained as they were per the original design.

Rigging

Another set of steps I was relieved to get out of the way early was the rigging. I knew the panels were going to be installed during load-in, which was not a problem, but since I had already obtained the curtains and the drops, we would be able to hang them sooner in the process. This also gave a sense to Mr. Call and the actors of how much space they had for their blocking. After the curtains were up, we attached the drops to their respective rolls; all that remained were the panels and the two rolling units.



Fig. 3.27 - Treatment for Act II



Fig. 3.28 - Treatment for Act II

Rolling Units

What made the process of engineering the rolling arch interesting was that the structure had to all be hidden by the lattice. I designed the arch to be open with the intention that the audience could see through the lattice to the other side. All of the toggles would have to be on a 45-degree angle and line up where the lattice fell on the structure. First, we built the exterior frame (fig. 3.29), then placed the lattice over top of it,



Fig. 3.29 - Rolling Arch Structure

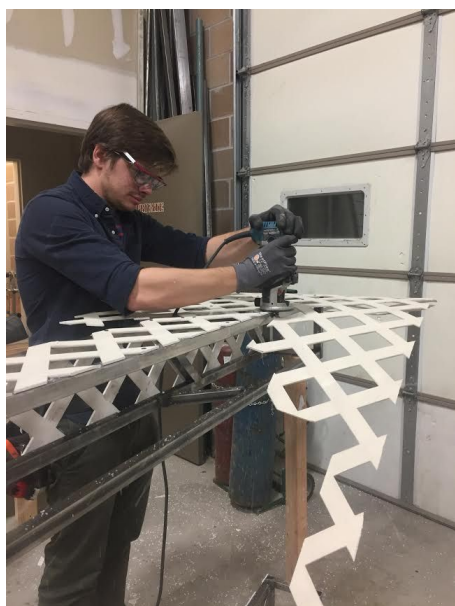


Fig. 3.30 - Skinning Rolling Arch

indicated where

toggles should go, removed the lattice, added the rest of the structure, then skinned the lattice permanently (fig. 3.30), adding trim as the final touch (fig. 3.31). The other piece we had to build was the door unit that would rest behind one of the arch panels in Act II. The tricky part about this unit was that it had to rest on the front edge of a dolly as opposed to in the center; this

caused the weight to be dispersed unevenly. When it came to loading in the piece, I planned to simply add stage weights and bracing; I found out in the tech and dress rehearsals that this would not be enough.

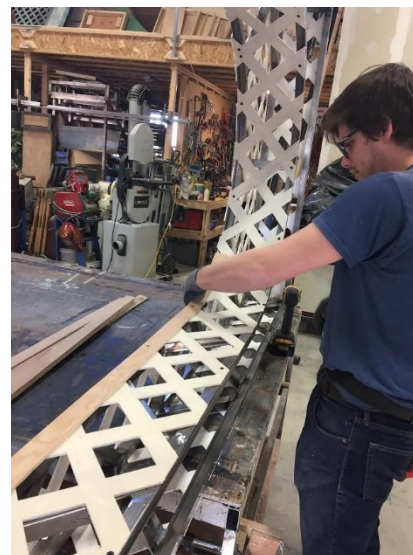


Fig. 3.31 – Arch Trim

Panels

Since we already had three out of the five panels in stock, I assumed that completing the steel structuring and skinning would be quick and easy. Building the arch panels from scratch went very quickly and the painters had lots of time to apply the treatment to both sides of these pieces. (fig.



Fig. 3.32 - Arch Panel Treatment for Act II

3.32 & 3.33). However, the panels from stock were not square anymore and had to be shortened to allow for the changes in the panel tail-down system. Our system is made up of tracking units which have the ability to travel stage left to stage right; these units are called tail-downs. The



Fig. 3.33 - Arch Panel Treatment for Act III

units have a pivoting frame attached to the bottom, which we can attach the full panels onto, giving us the five main set pieces I designed. We had modified the tail downs in the previous show to fit the full stage decking. Because of this, we had to alter our stock panels to fit my design. I had not anticipated this and it put us behind schedule.

Luckily, Ms. Perry and her assistant had time to base both sides of these panels and complete the treatment on one side, but the wallpaper stenciling was going to have to wait until after load-in.

Another part of the treatment that had to wait until

we were in the space was the toning on the lattice. In my research, the lattice was more dimensional than the material we bought; it would have been astronomically more expensive if we had purchased any other lattice. I still wanted the lattice to seem like it was woven together, and Ms. Perry wanted to wait until we were in the space so she could see where the panels would be placed on stage and base her light source off of that. The last item to address in space was the trim on the panels; I did not want anything to get knocked off while we were loading the panels onto the truck. I was nervous when it came to loading in the panels because so much still had to be done and I wanted it all to be ready by first tech, but we had three days and I had faith in the people who would be executing these steps.

Load-In

During the load-in process, there were few set-related items to complete (not including set dressing and furniture-related notes): painting and adding trim to the panels; adding the moving units to their



Fig. 3.34 - Lattice with toning during rehearsal

dollies, including bracing, breaking and counterweighting them; and installing the window to the downstage wall panel. While I was addressing the rolling units with the carpenters, the painters began working on the panels, preparing them for trim. Ms. Perry did all the highlighting and shadow while her assistant started doing the stenciling for the wallpaper. This subtle shading really made the lattice pop (fig. 3.34)

and I strongly considered not adding any foliage over it for dressing. However, the lattice still needed some foliage, so I added less than originally intended. The lattice execution went well, but the stenciling of the wallpaper did not at first; it was during this point in the process where I felt the most frustrated and guilty for how something was executed. I felt guilty because it had to be redone, and I felt frustrated because I knew that there would not be enough time for it to be completed before first tech. After some trial and error and a few tips from Mr. Stowe, the stenciling was completed by second tech (fig. 3.35), giving the carpenters barely enough time to add the trim to the panels before rehearsal.



Fig. 3.35 - Stenciling Wallpaper

Set Dressing and Furniture

Another element of pride in my process was that Mr. Call and the actors had almost all of the furniture ready at the first rehearsal. After checking rehearsal reports throughout the process, I was able to address notes easily and usually able to come up with a solution by the next day for the actors to work with. A few items that had to be built because we did not have them in stock, mainly the hat stands. I had determined with Ms. Hills and Lydia Semler, our costume shop manager, that I would be able to obtain about 30 hats to dress the set, so I gave each hat stand three pegs and then added pegs to the arched shelving unit. Ms. Semler had a connection with the



Fig. 3.36 - Dressing Foliage

Utah Festival Opera and Musical Theatre; she was very helpful when it came to obtaining the hats for set dressing. Table cloths were also needed for set dressing in Act II and Act III. I found some fabric in our stock but none of it was the right size.

Fortunately, the props assistant, Annie Tran, was able to make them quickly and well.

Other dressing that I took care of included the foliage (fig. 3.36) and dividing screen in Act III, and window curtains (fig. 3.37) and picture frames in Act IV. It was possible to see to the other side of the

screens I had borrowed from Mr. Hassan, and would not serve the play as far as the action was concerned; we added a backing of painted lauan in order to mask the negative space. I added red curtains from our stock to the window for Act IV, and also added framed paintings on the walls.

However, I needed to print a painting to go in one of the frames because I could not find any in stock that fit the period and decor. I chose a painting of a man and a woman talking in a garden, giving the scene a subtle hint of love and wooing.

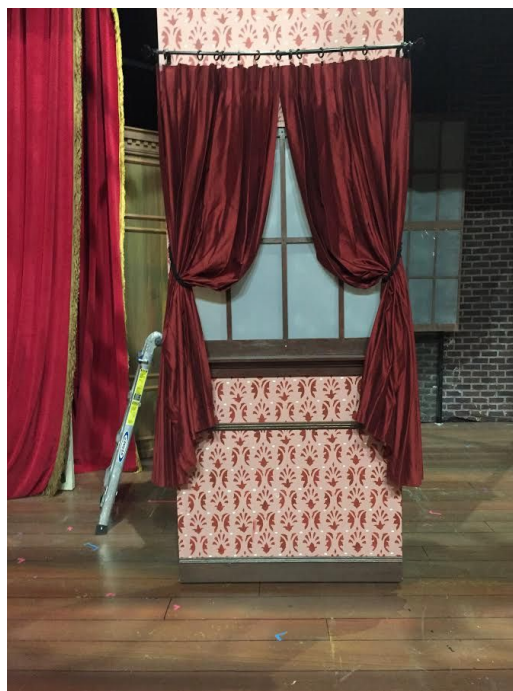


Fig. 3.37 - Curtains for Act IV

Tech and Dress Rehearsal Process

An interesting part of the tech process was the set change rehearsal; it went very smoothly and every change got faster and faster as time went on. However, one piece caused a lot of trouble: the rolling pile of surplus items from Mr. Vandergelder's store in Act I. The fact that it was on wheels meant it could only follow certain paths; after having a discussion with Mr. Call, I broke down the pile into a few items that could be moved anywhere. It went from a pile of five crates, a barrel, some bags and some ropes to one crate with a barrel attached to it, and a bag that sat in front of it. I understood why the change needed to be made, but I still wanted to give a sense of clutter and overflow from the store; hence I stapled a few bags to the bottom of a bench, so it looked like they were shoved there.

Another complication we ran into early was the railing that led down into the trap door; there initially was no way of securing it and it simply rested on the edge of the floor. Mr. Stowe suggested adding some flat iron straps so it could sleeve into the inside edge of the trap door and keep it from tipping over at any point during the performance. Thanks to his suggestion, the railing was more stable, avoiding any mishaps in the future. The scariest part of the tech process was when the door unit tipped forward; an actress had stepped on the front edge and it started to lean forward. Luckily, she was able to counterweight it back by shifting her weight. I went backstage to look at it and initially was not sure that adding two more weights to the original four would have been helpful. Instead, I attached the weights under the platform on the back edge. I also added a ¼" scrap of lauan to the front casters, making the whole unit tip back ever so slightly. The final step was adding hooks to the edges of the wall so it could be quickly and temporarily attached to the arch panel it rested behind. The series of steps fixed the problem; I was proud of the fact that I addressed the issues effectively. Mr. Hassan was unable to be present

during tech week, so Mr. Duerden, Mr. Stowe, Ms. Moore, and Mr. Call provided some feedback on my design. I received most of my notes during the first act; I received a note from Mr. Call and Ms. Moore about the first scene not having enough personality. This originally was my intention, but I agreed that it was not reading as a choice, as much as it was reading as a lack of dressing. I added more dirty dishes and socks on the stove to indicate they may have been drying. I also added some ugly fabric to the windows to imply that Mr.



Fig. 3.38 - Added drapes to Act I 1

Vandergelder may have chosen them and put them up himself (fig. 3.38). After making these changes, the scene felt more complete. Mr. Duerden and Mr. Call had indicated that having a floating window without a wall above or beneath did not read well. What Mr. Duerden advised was to put the brick drops on the back wall, and the window in front of it, indicating there was another building outside, neighboring Mr. Vandergelder's store. This also helped the lighting because it gave the brick wall more depth and shadow.

I took pride in how Ms. Price and I were able to collaborate. This was her first design and she was eager to communicate back and forth about how the set and lights would work together. We had an open dialogue about our designs and she would ask questions, such as, "does this read well?" or "do you think this is a good color choice?" I was grateful to work with her throughout this process.

Final Design and Reflection

Looking back, I know there were aspects of the process that could have gone more smoothly; I could have pushed the build process to accelerate in the completion of some of the units. I could have been more present during the wallpaper painting process and encouraged the painters to take a step back and notice that the stencil was becoming crooked as it went further up the wall. I could have coordinated with Ms. Hills better when it came to the color change in Act II. I told her about the yellow walls but she did not know about the green door and green touches; she believed they clashed with the blue costumes that Mrs. Malloy and Cornelius were wearing. She had not said anything to me about this until my semester evaluation because she did not notice it until final dress and it was too late. Both she and Mr. Hassan suggested I work on my color palettes more in the future when it came to my designs. Another suggestion that Mr. Hassan had made after seeing it during the run was that I could have used more set dressing in the final act of the play. These are all things that I believe I have improved upon when working on my unrealized designs in the other classes that I have had since completing this design.

When I approached this design, one of my goals was cohesiveness. I was able to achieve that goal by having set pieces that functioned similarly but still had variety in treatment to give the different feeling for each location. I faced a number of challenges involving the space, a temporary shop, and the nature of the show, but I was able to overcome them one by one through individual and/or collaborative problem solving. I had a strong amount of exposure in both of my emphases, as a set designer and technical director, and I was able to balance them well without making sacrifices to either process. Mr. Hassan believes it to be one of my best designs because of how I was able to use my resources to effectively create a strong and beautiful design in order to best tell the story of *The Matchmaker*.



Fig. 3.39 - Production Photo - Act I: Mr. Vandergelder's Office (McAllister)



Fig. 3.40 - Production Photo - Act I: Mr. Vandergelder's Office (McAllister)



Fig. 3.41 - Production Photo - Act II: Mrs. Malloy's; Hats for Ladies (McAllister)



Fig. 3.42 - Production Photo - Act II: Mrs. Malloy's; Hats for Ladies (McAllister)



Fig. 3.43 - Production Photo - Act III: Harmonia Gardens Restaurant (McAllister)



Fig. 3.44 - Production Photo - Act III: Harmonia Gardens Restaurant (McAllister)



Fig. 3.45 - Production Photo - Act IV: Miss Van Huysen's House (McAllister)



Fig. 3.47 - Production Photo - Act IV: Miss Van Huysen's House (McAllister)

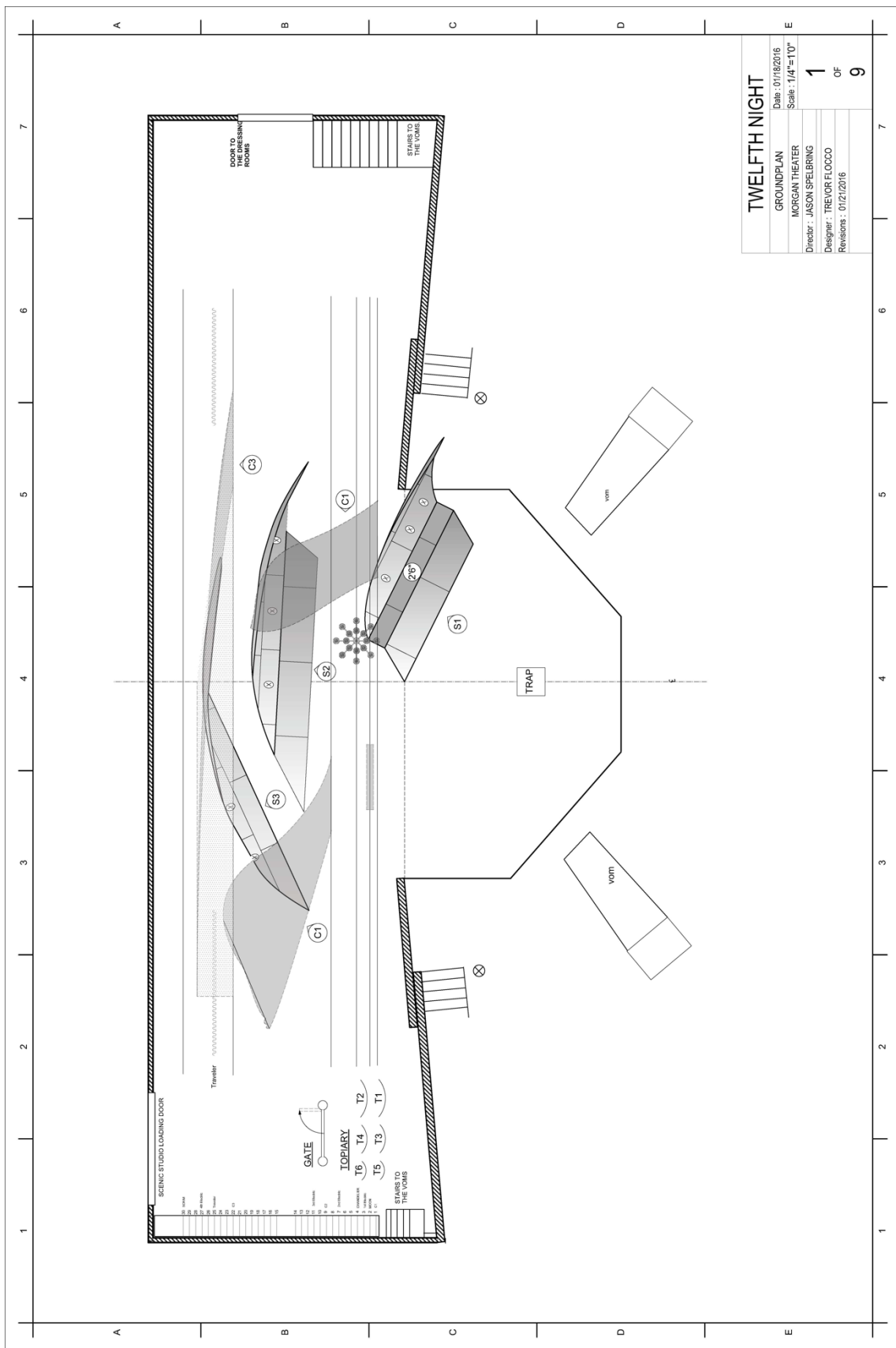
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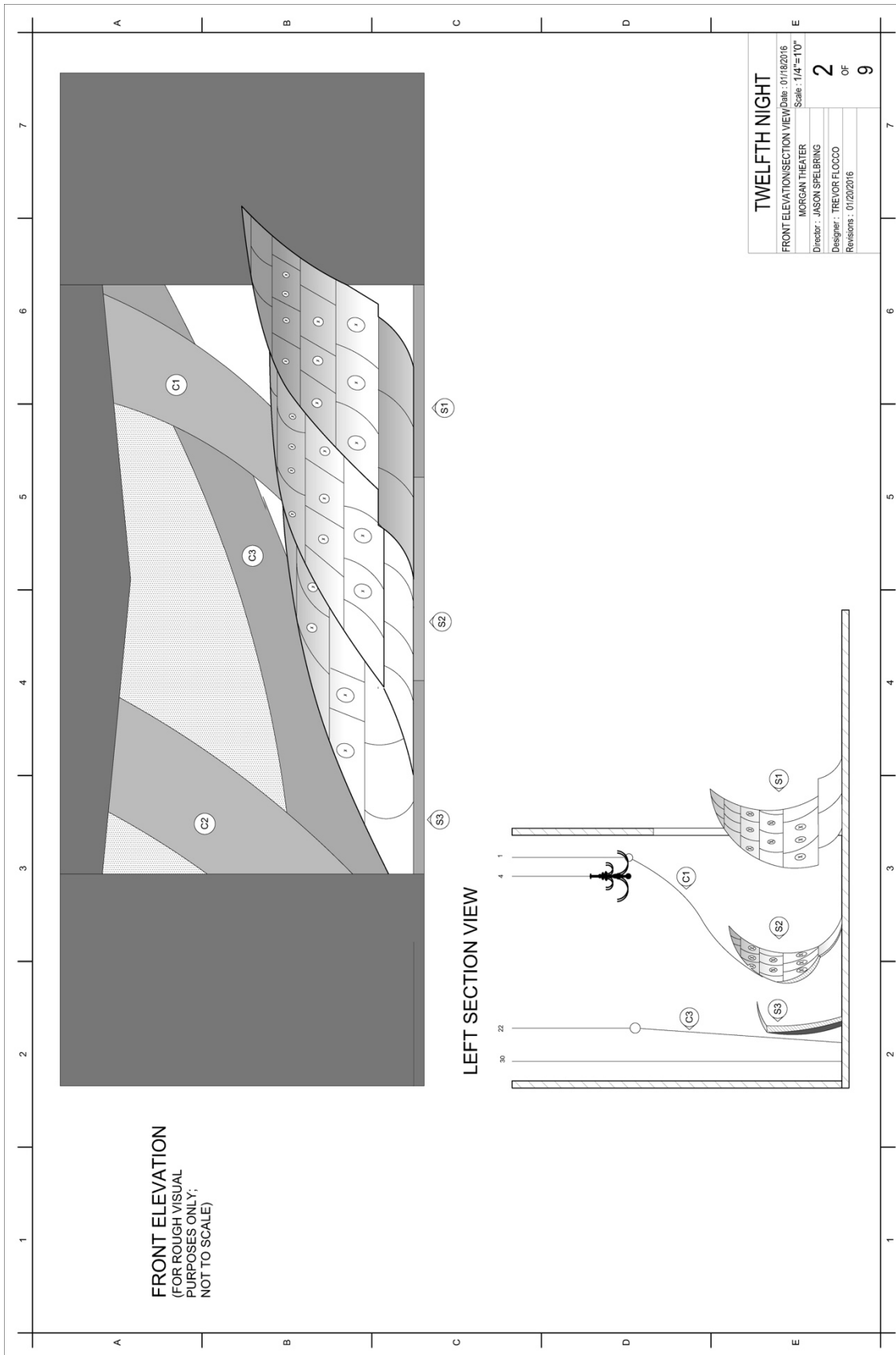
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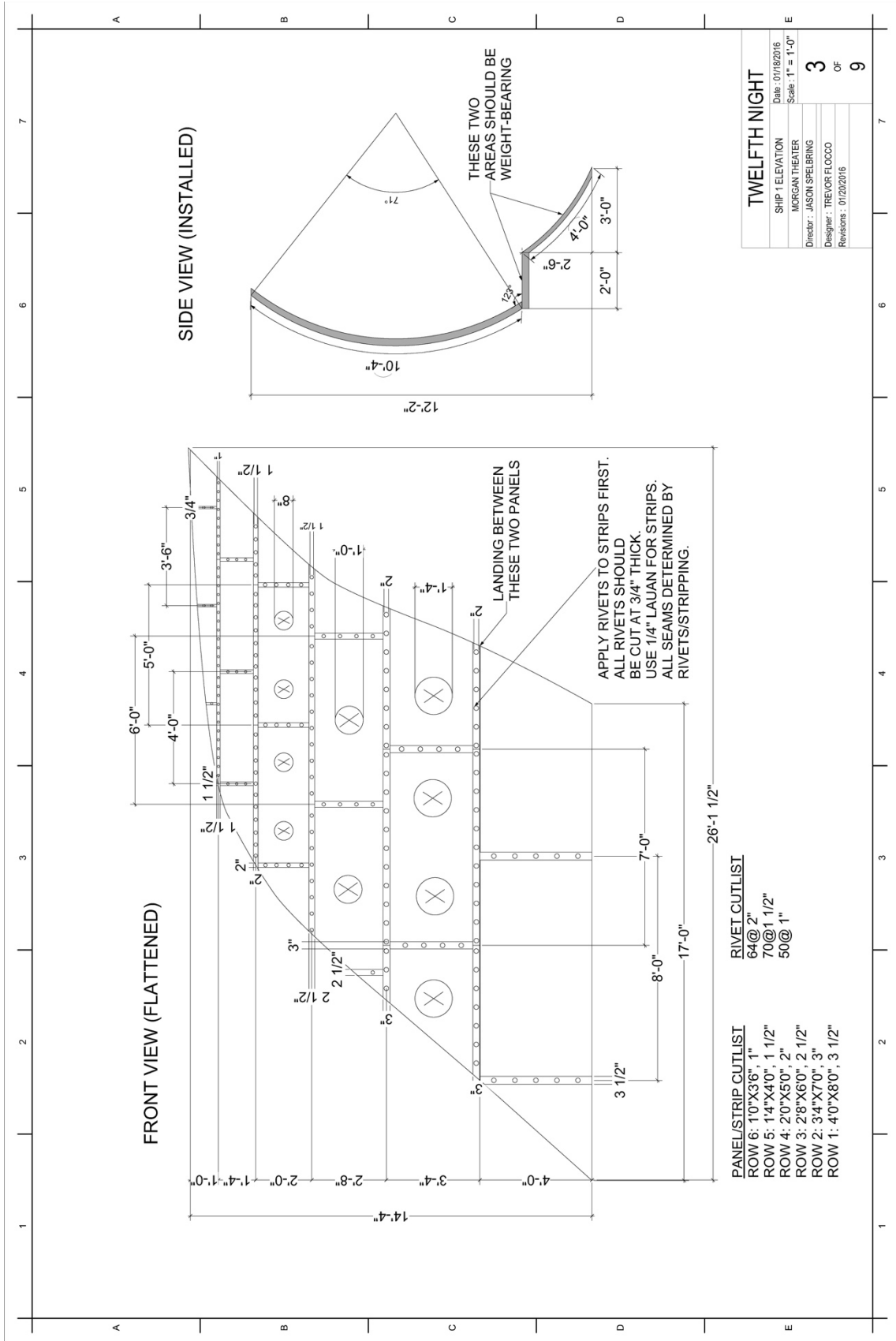
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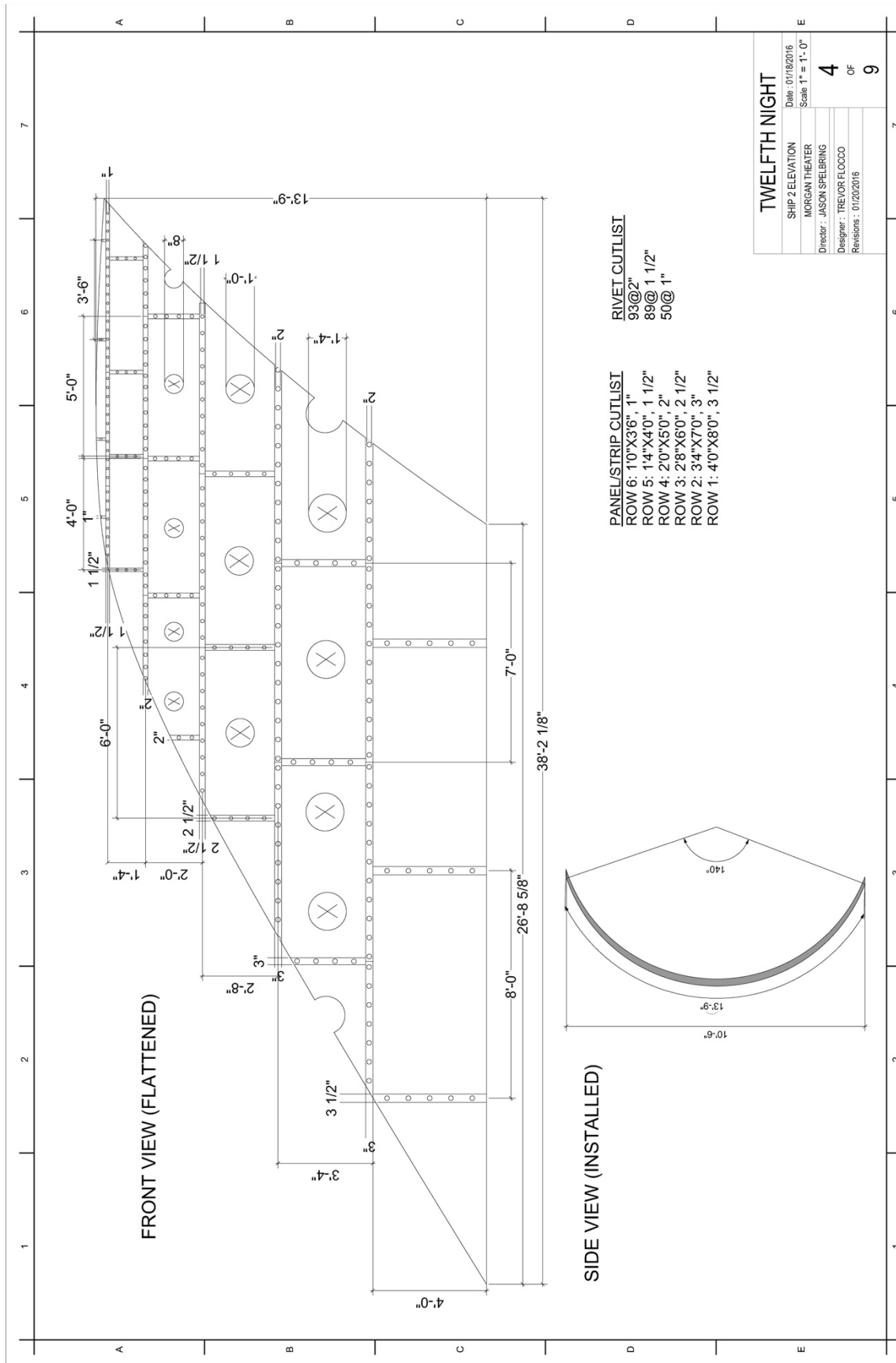
Twelfth Night or What You Will

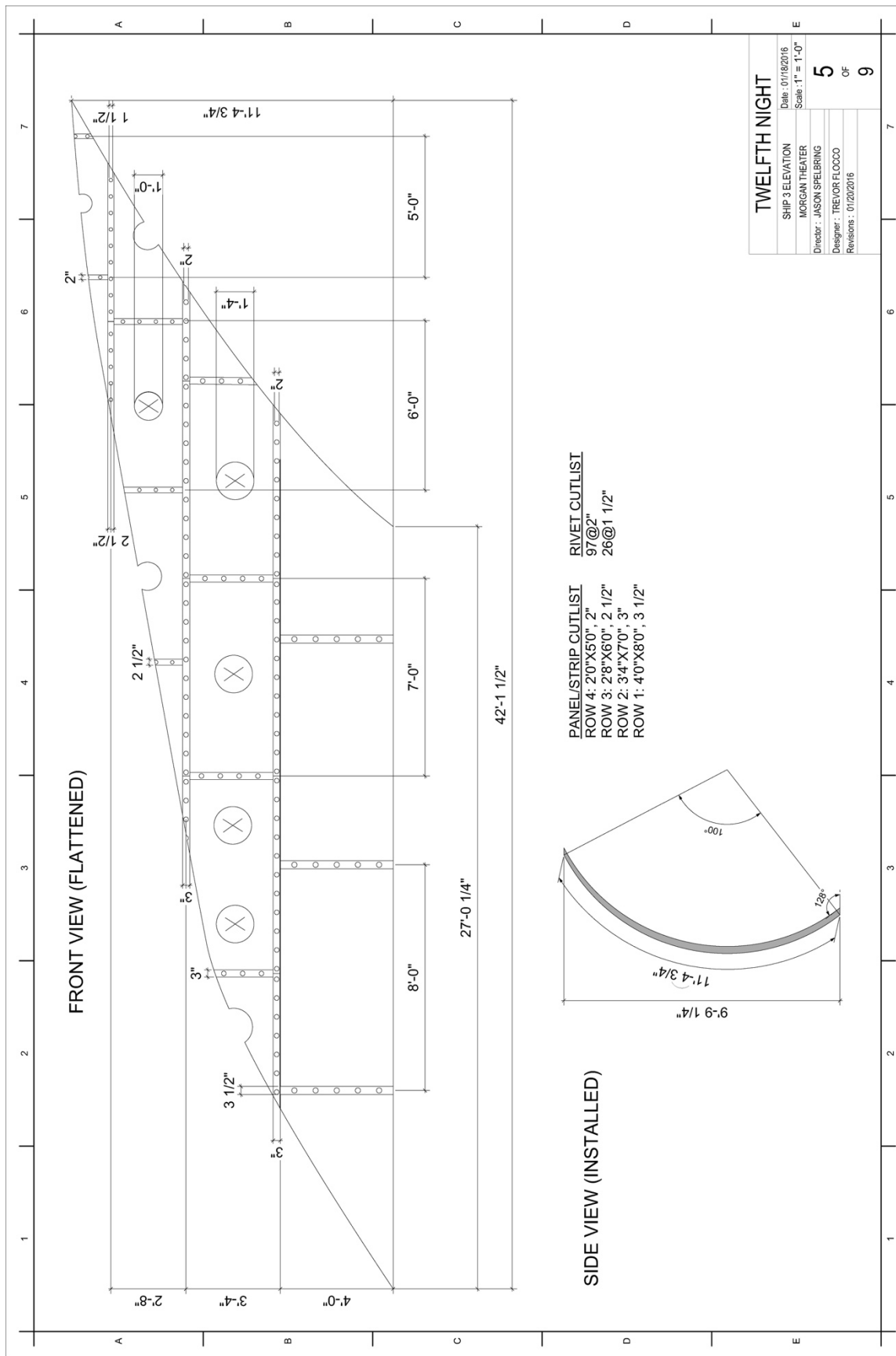
Design Packet & Paint Elevations









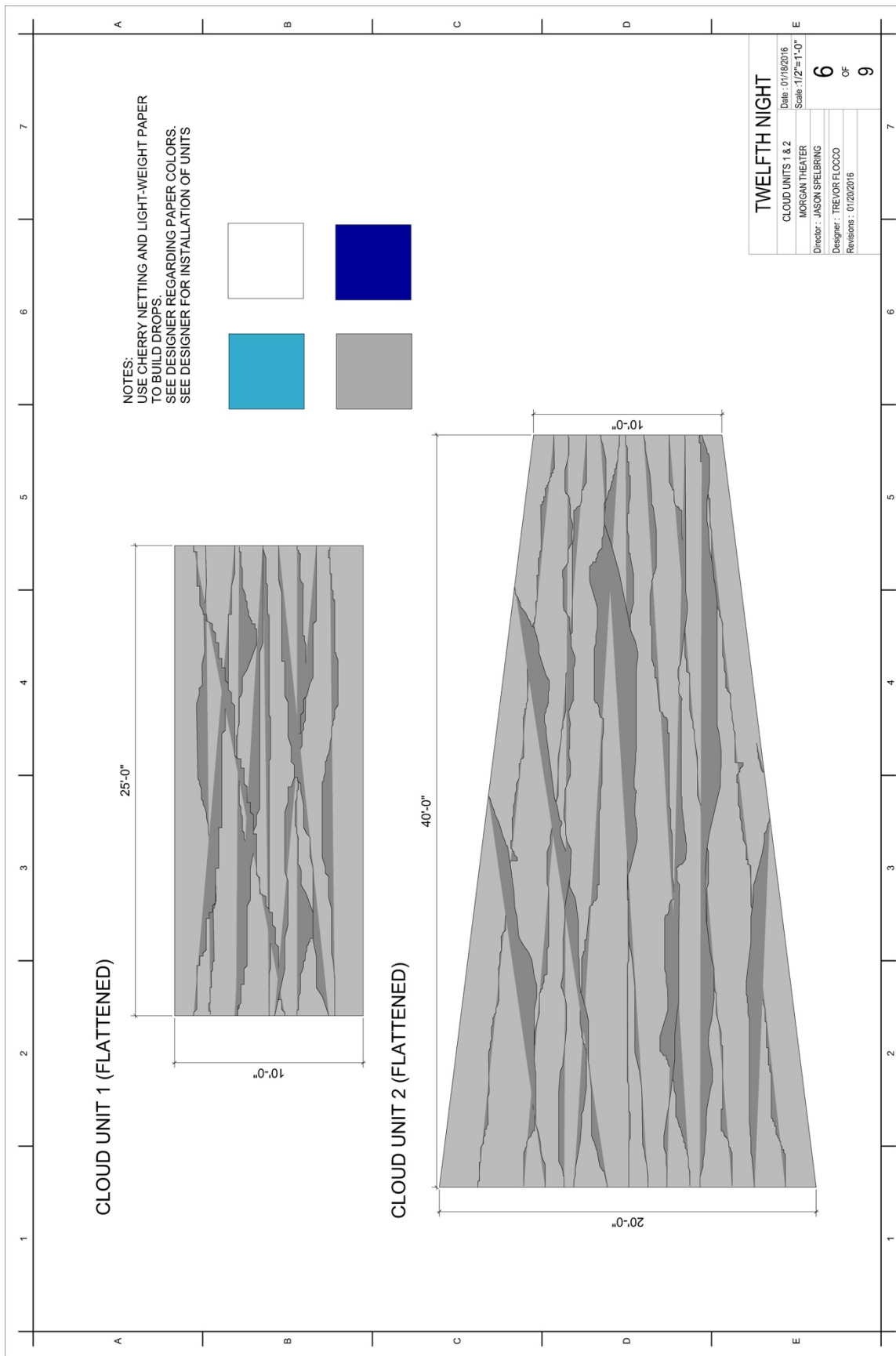


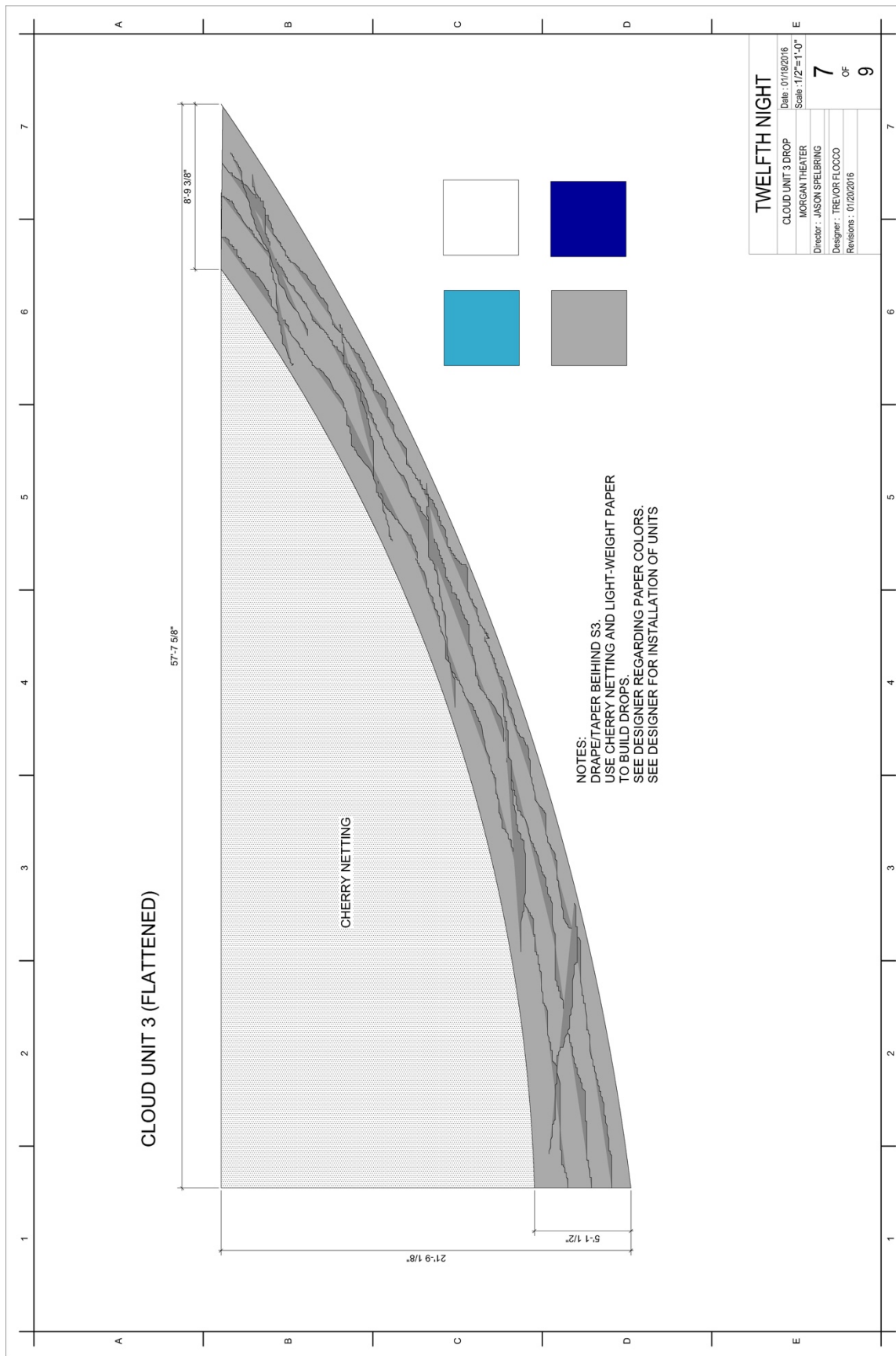
FRONT VIEW (FLATTENED)

SIDE VIEW (INSTALLED)

- PANEL/STRIP CUTLIST**
 ROW 4: 2'0"X5'0" 2"
 ROW 3: 2'8"X6'0" 2 1/2"
 ROW 2: 3'4"X7'0" 3"
 ROW 1: 4'0"X8'0" 3 1/2"
- RIVET CUTLIST**
 97@2"
 26@1 1/2"

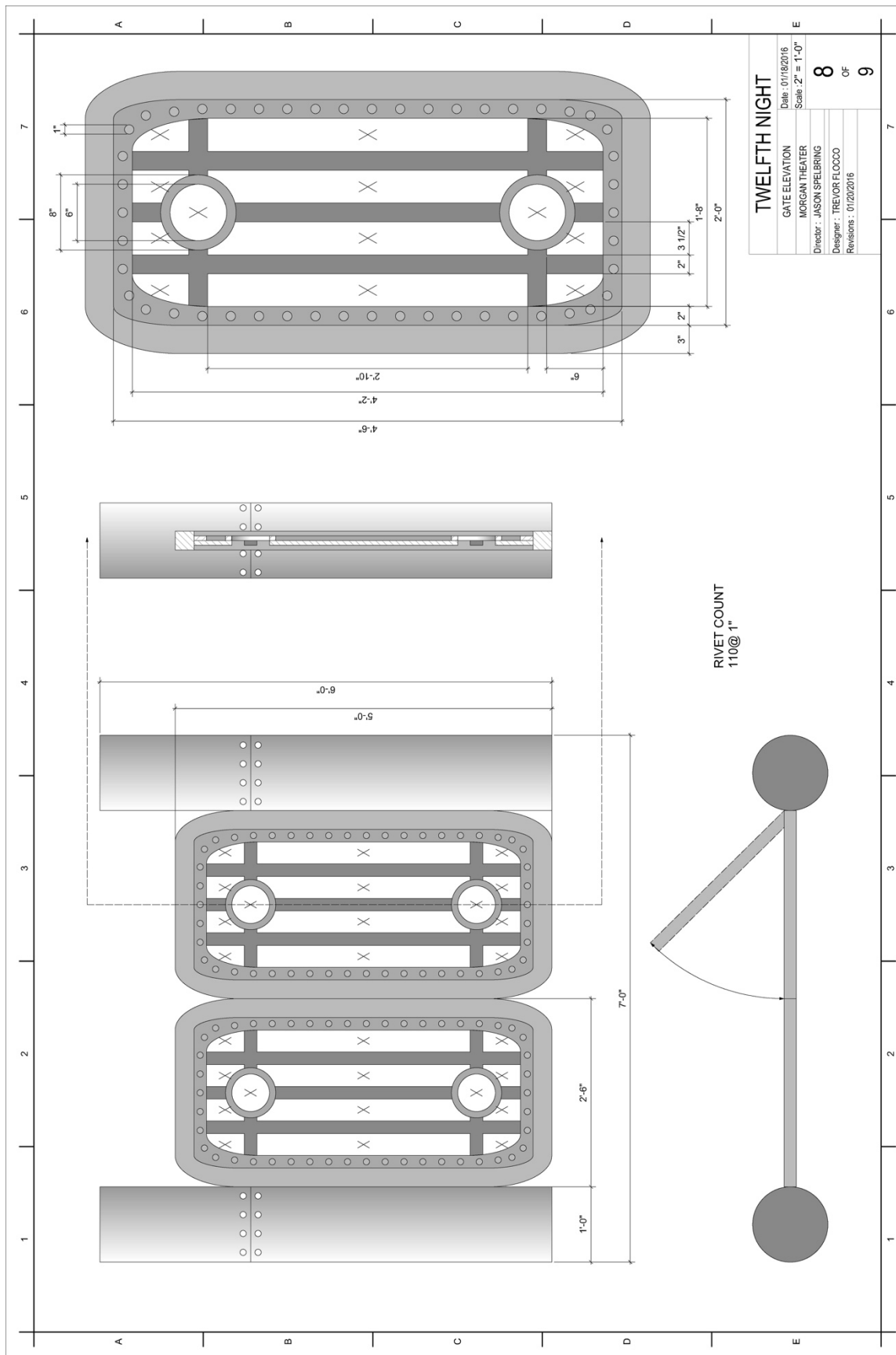
TWELFTH NIGHT	
SHIP 3 ELEVATION	Date: 01/15/2016
MORGAN THEATER	Scale: 1" = 1'-0"
Director: JASON SPELBRING	
Designer: TREVOR FLOCCO	
Revisions: 01/20/2016	
	5
	OF
	9

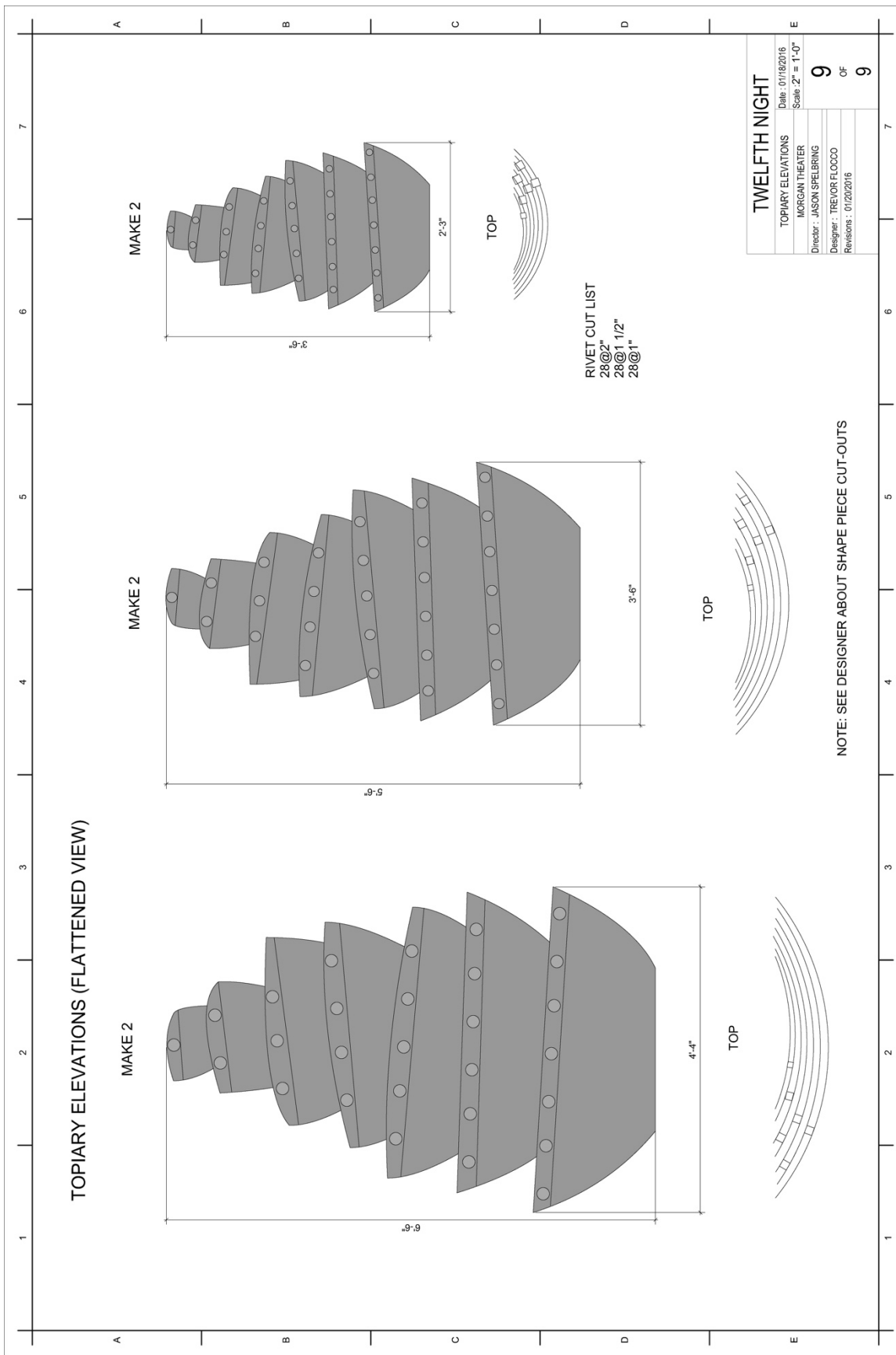


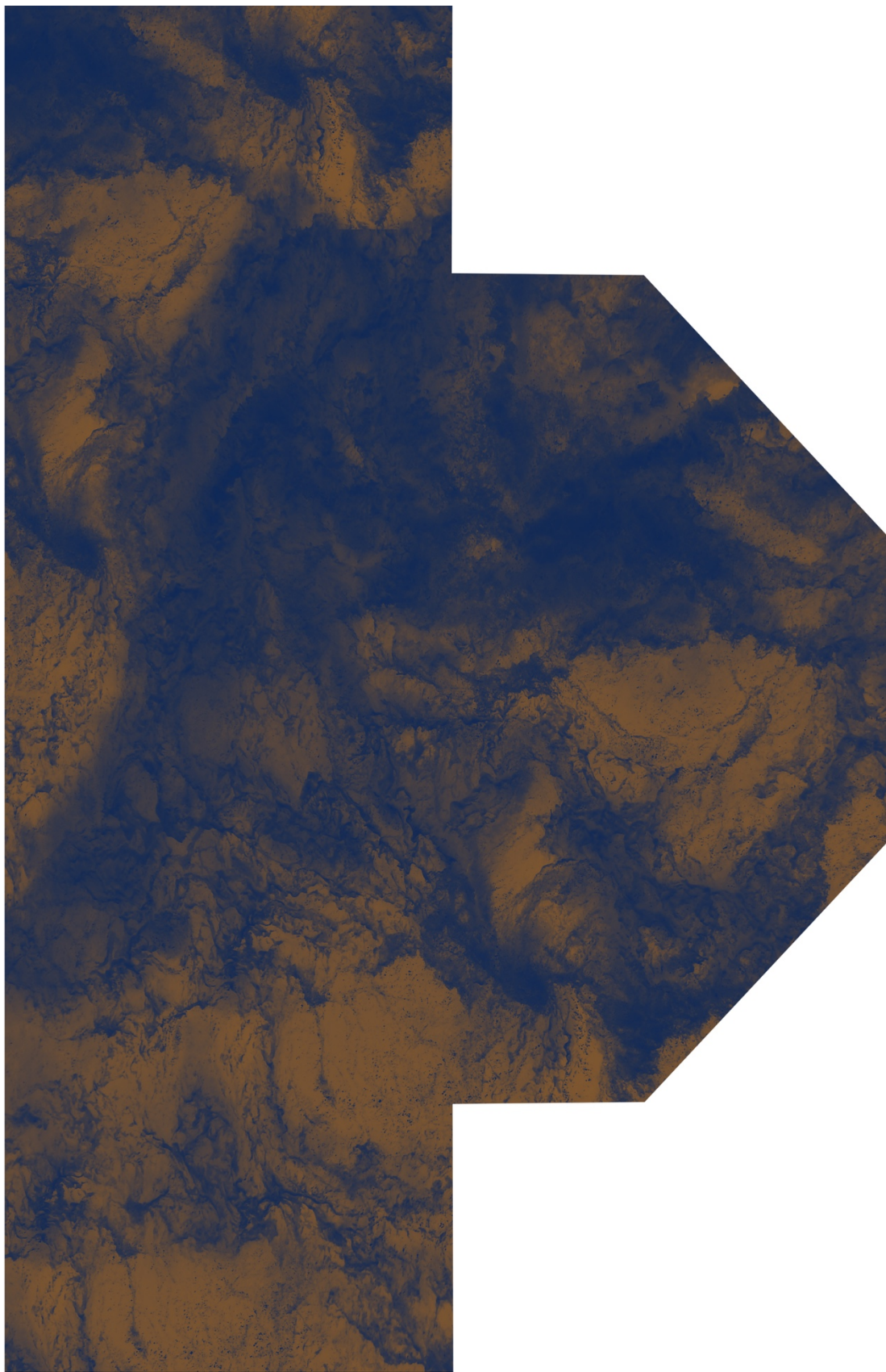


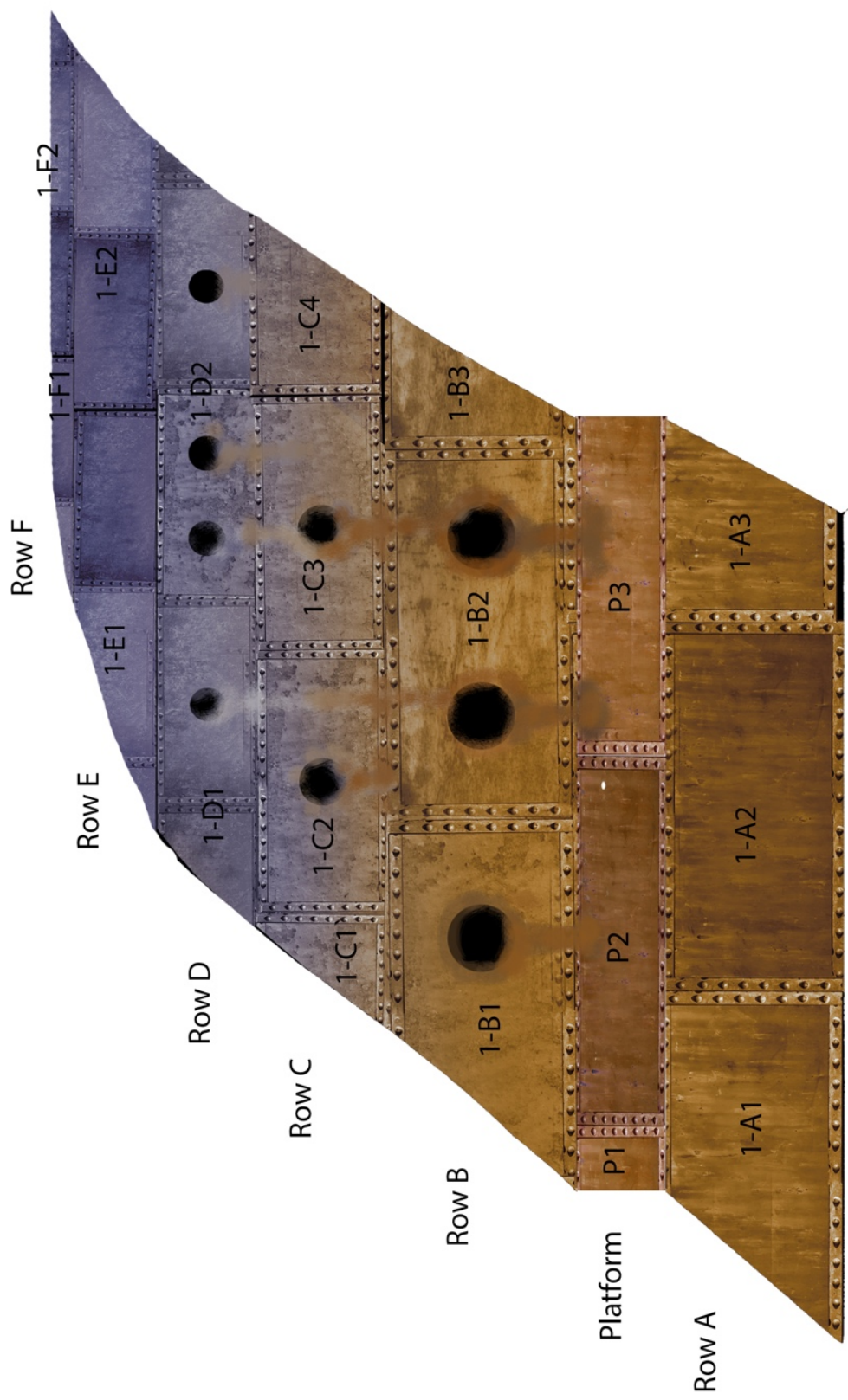
NOTES:
 DRAPE/TAPER BEHIND S3.
 USE CHERRY NETTING AND LIGHT-WEIGHT PAPER
 TO BUILD DROPS.
 SEE DESIGNER REGARDING PAPER COLORS.
 SEE DESIGNER FOR INSTALLATION OF UNITS

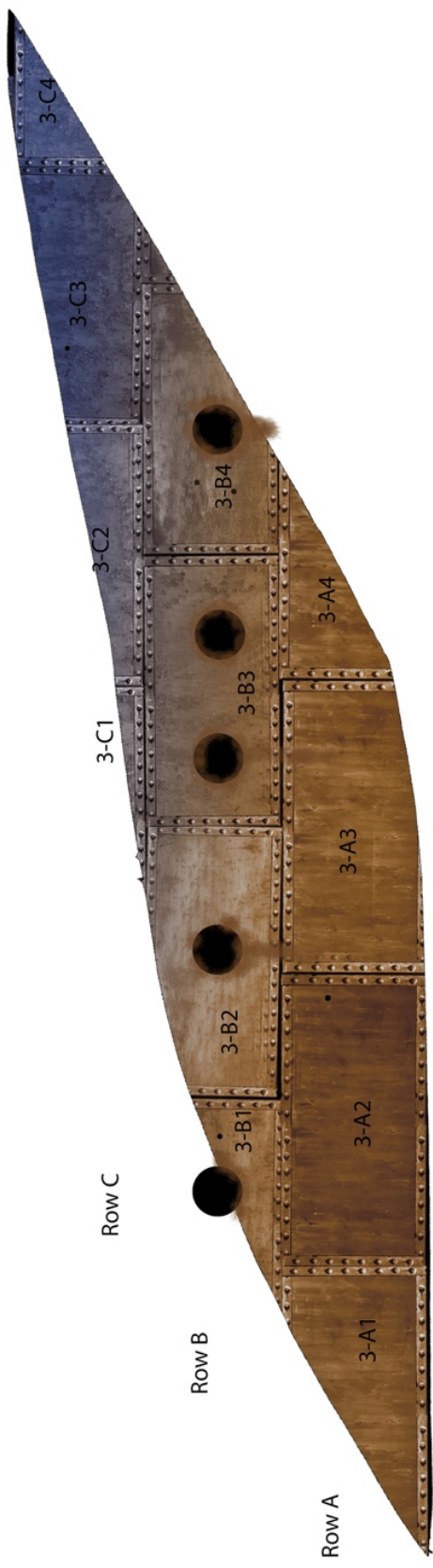
TWELFTH NIGHT	
CLOUD UNIT 3 DROP	Date: 01/15/2016
MORGAN THEATER	Scale: 1/2"=1'-0"
Director: JASON SPELBRING	
Designer: TREVOR FLOCCO	
Revisions: 01/20/2016	
	7 OF 9



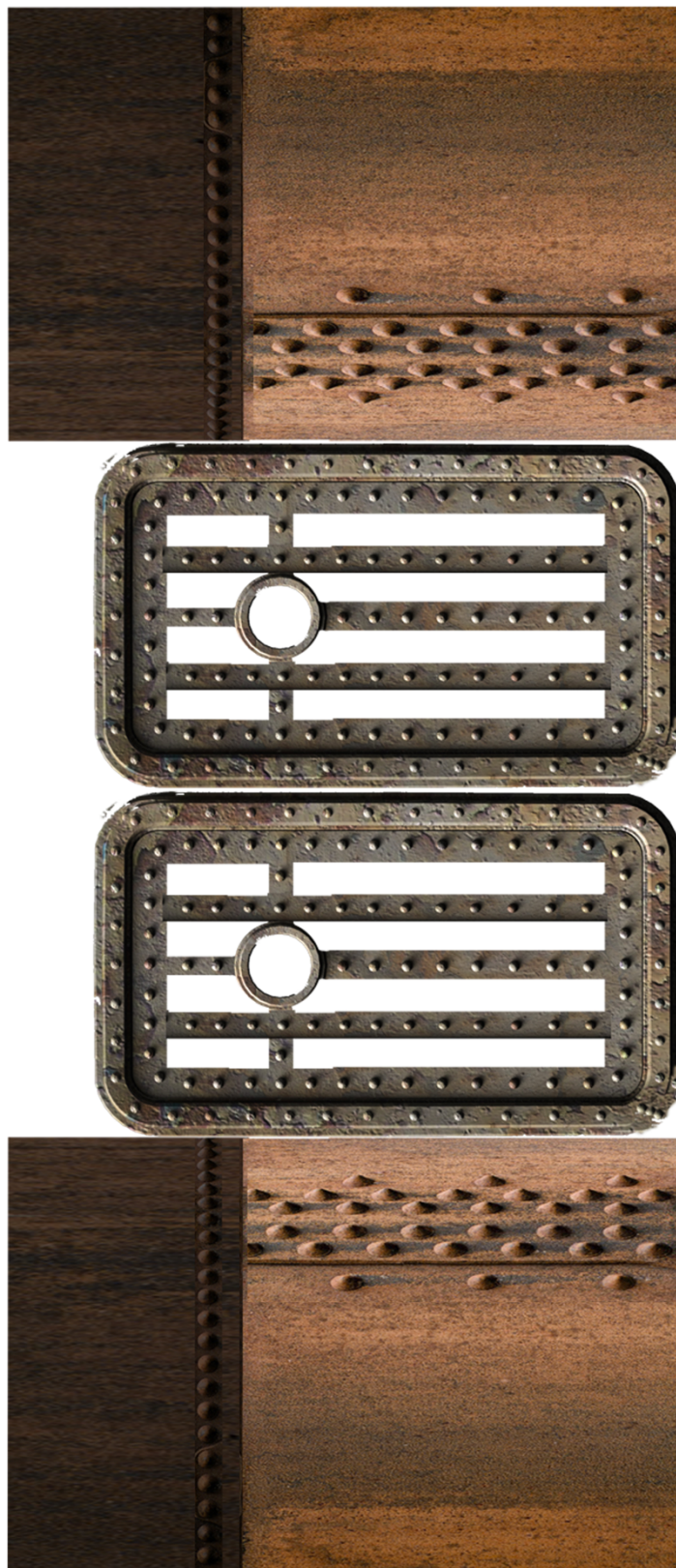








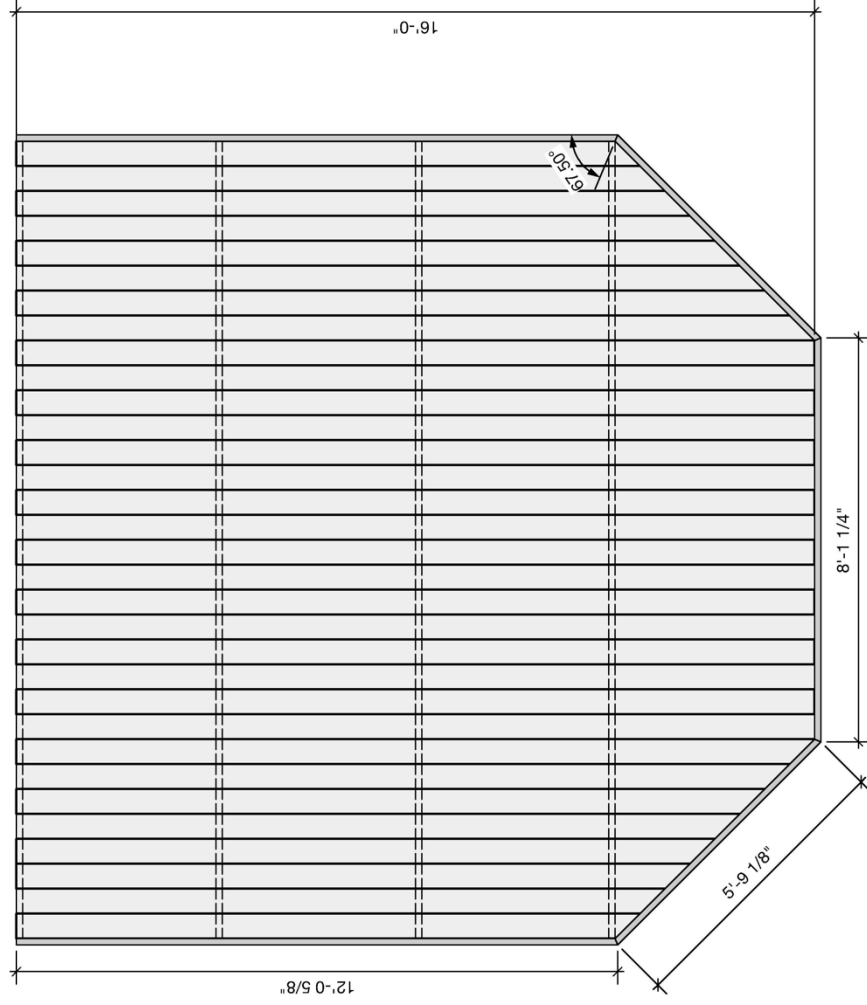




Appendix B

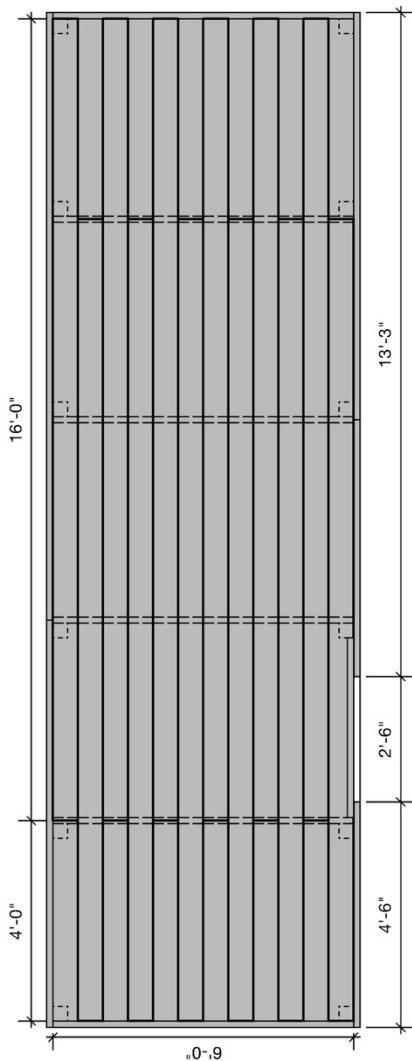
Fear Not Beasts of Sand

Design/Engineering Packet



- PURCHASE LIST**
36 2"x6"x16' BOARDS
4 2"x4"x16' BOARDS
- CUT LIST**
32 2"x6"x16' FLOOR PLANKS
2 2"x6"x12' 5/8" DECK BORDER (MITERED)
2 2"x6"x5'9 1/8" DECK BORDER (MITERED)
1 2"x6"x8' 1 1/4" DECK BORDER (MITERED)
4 2"x4"x16' JOISTS

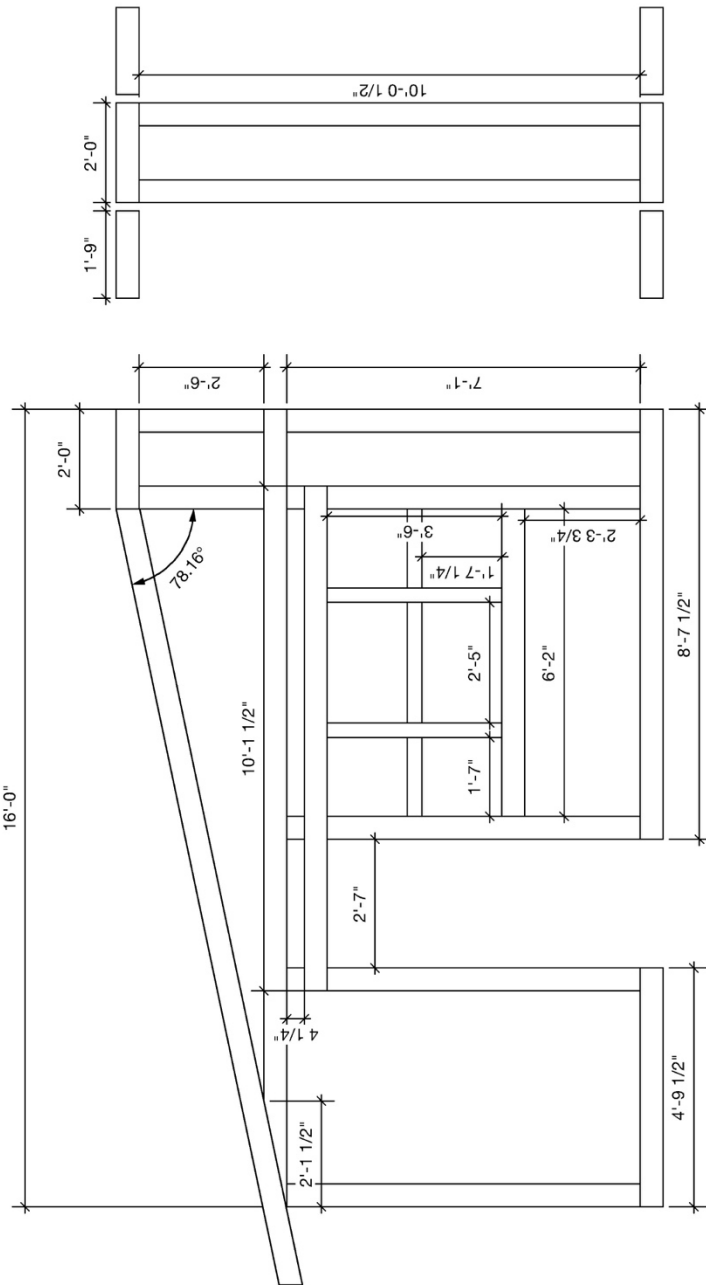
FEAR NOT BEASTS OF SAND	
FUSION THEATER COMPANY	PLATE
LOWER DECK ELEVATION	2
DIRECTOR: SHAWN FISHER	OF 6
SET DESIGN: TREVOR FLOCCO	
TECH DIRECTOR: TREVOR FLOCCO	
SCALE: 1/2"=1'	UPDATED: 4/5/15



- PURCHASE LIST**
 19 2"x6"x16' BOARDS
 2 2"x4"x16' BOARDS
 3 4"x4"x8' POSTS

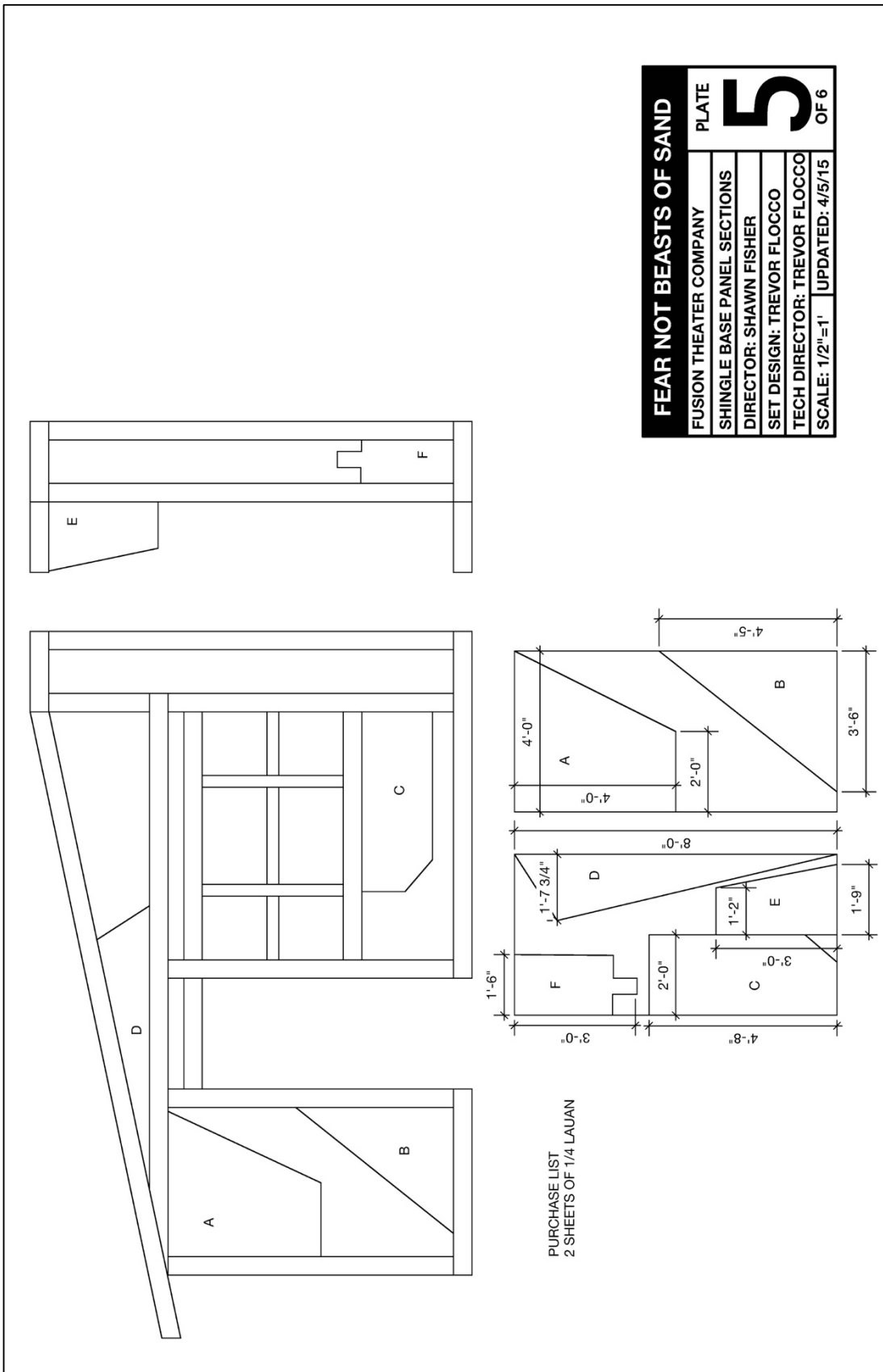
- CUT LIST**
 12 2"x6"x16' FLOOR PLANKS
 12 2"x6"x4' FLOOR PLANKS
 2 2"x6"x12' 1 1/2" DECK BORDER
 2 2"x6"x8' 1 1/2" DECK BORDER
 2 2"x6"x6' DECK BORDER
 4 2"x4"x6' JOISTS
 12 4"x4"x2' POSTS

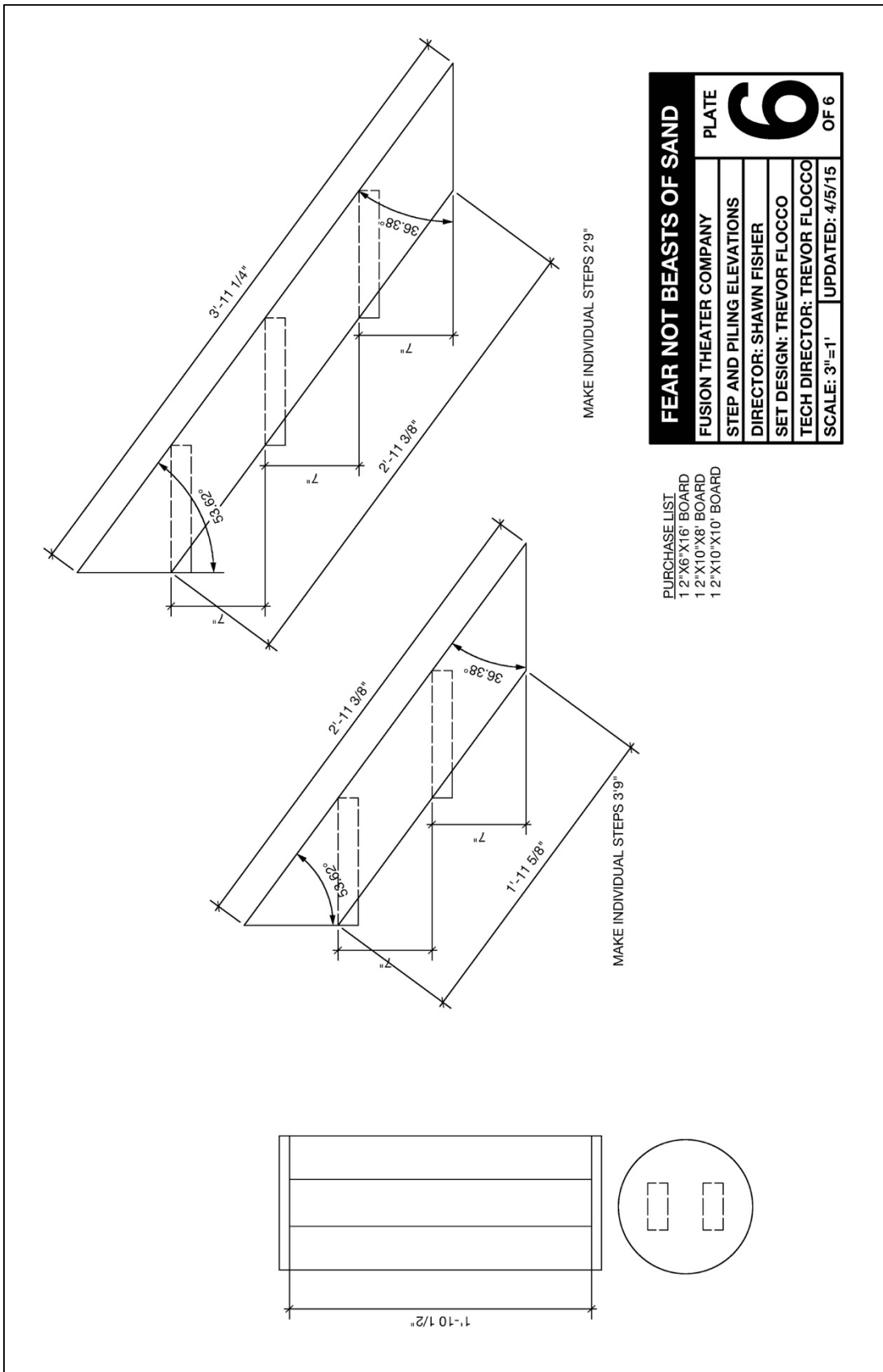
FEAR NOT BEASTS OF SAND	
FUSION THEATER COMPANY	PLATE
UPPER DECK ELEVATION	3
DIRECTOR: SHAWN FISHER	OF 6
SET DESIGN: TREVOR FLOCCO	
TECH DIRECTOR: TREVOR FLOCCO	
SCALE: 1/2"=1'	UPDATED: 4/5/15



FEAR NOT BEASTS OF SAND	
FUSION THEATER COMPANY	PLATE
HOUSE ELEVATION	4
DIRECTOR: SHAWN FISHER	OF 6
SET DESIGN: TREVOR FLOCCO	
TECH DIRECTOR: TREVOR FLOCCO	
SCALE: 1/2"=1'	UPDATED: 4/5/15

PURCHASE LIST
 10 2"X6"X16' BOARDS
 4 2"X4"X16' BOARDS
 SCRAP SHEETS OF CHIP BOARD FROM ESCAPE PLATFORM





PURCHASE LIST
 1 2"x6"x16" BOARD
 1 2"x10"x8" BOARD
 1 2"x10"x10" BOARD

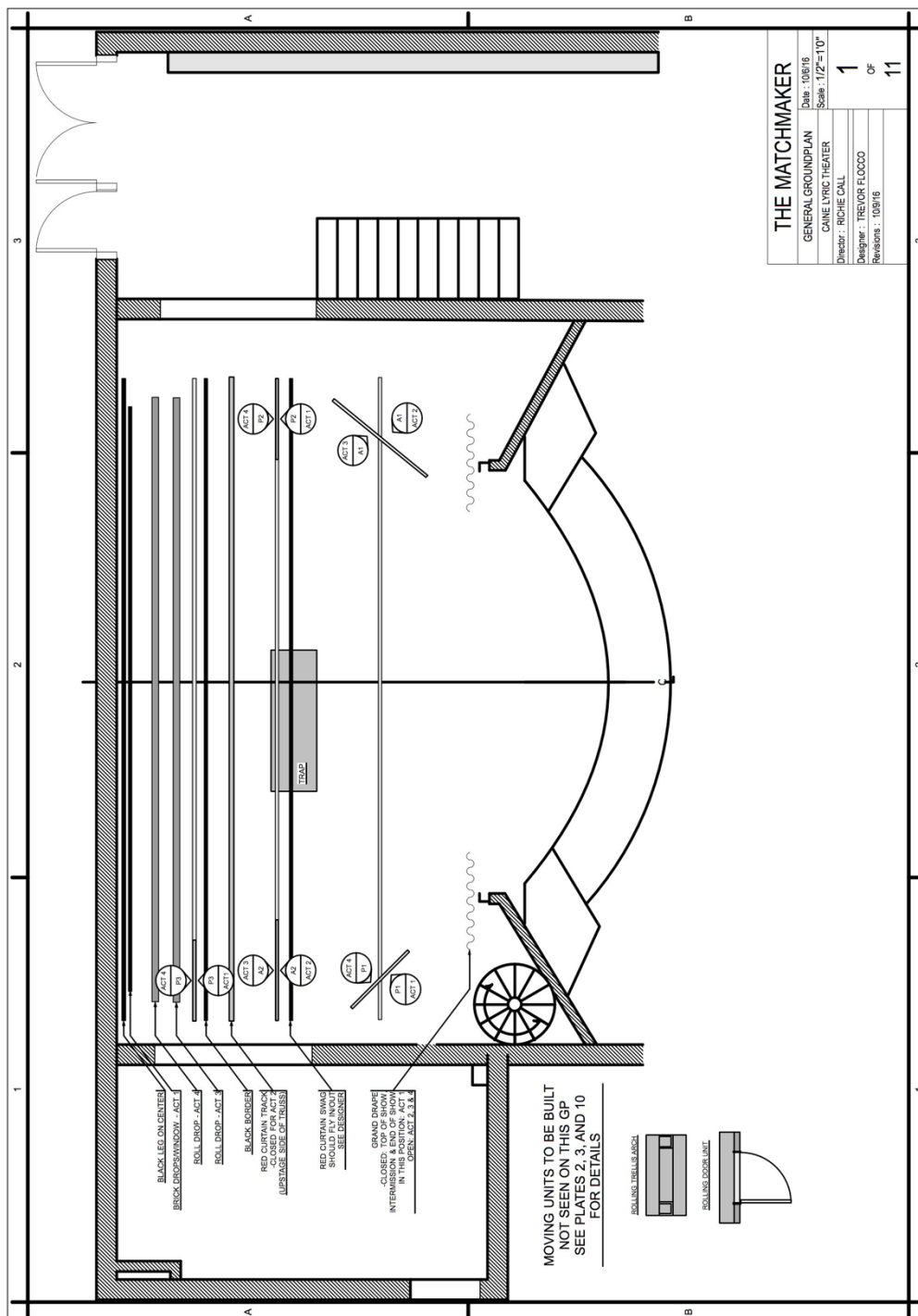
FEAR NOT BEASTS OF SAND

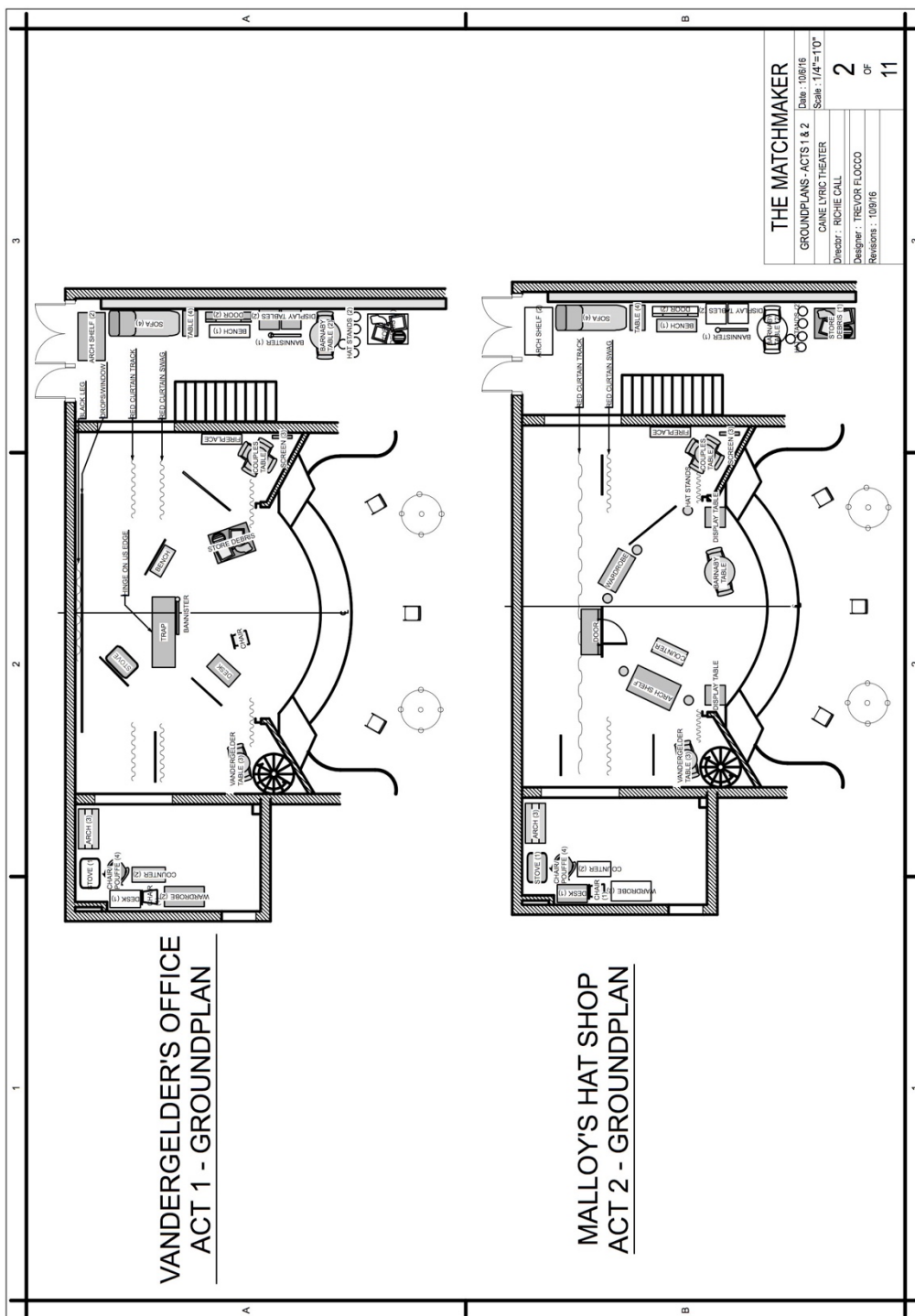
FUSION THEATER COMPANY	PLATE
STEP AND PILING ELEVATIONS	6
DIRECTOR: SHAWN FISHER	OF 6
SET DESIGN: TREVOR FLOCCO	
TECH DIRECTOR: TREVOR FLOCCO	
SCALE: 3"=1'	UPDATED: 4/5/15

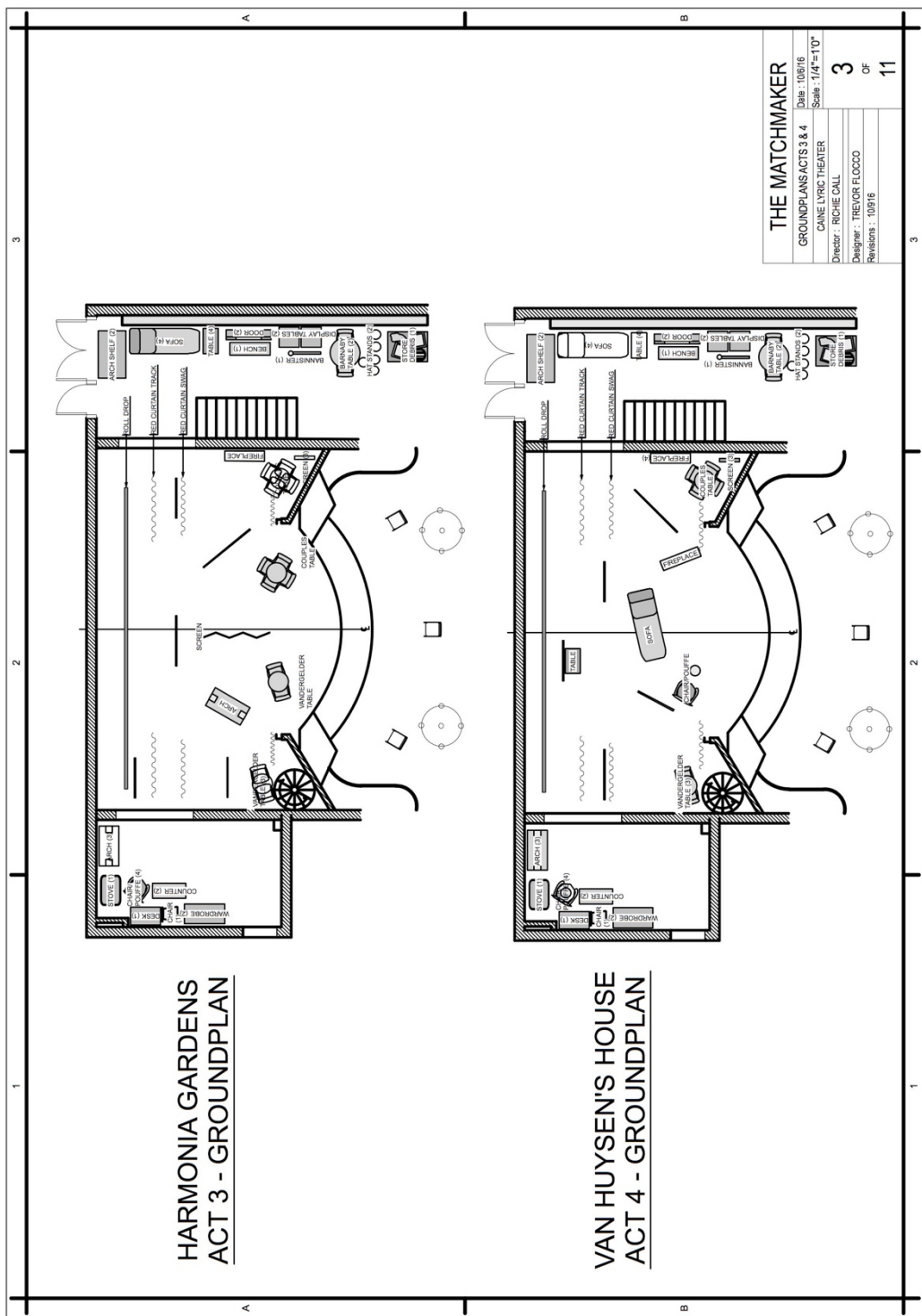
Appendix C

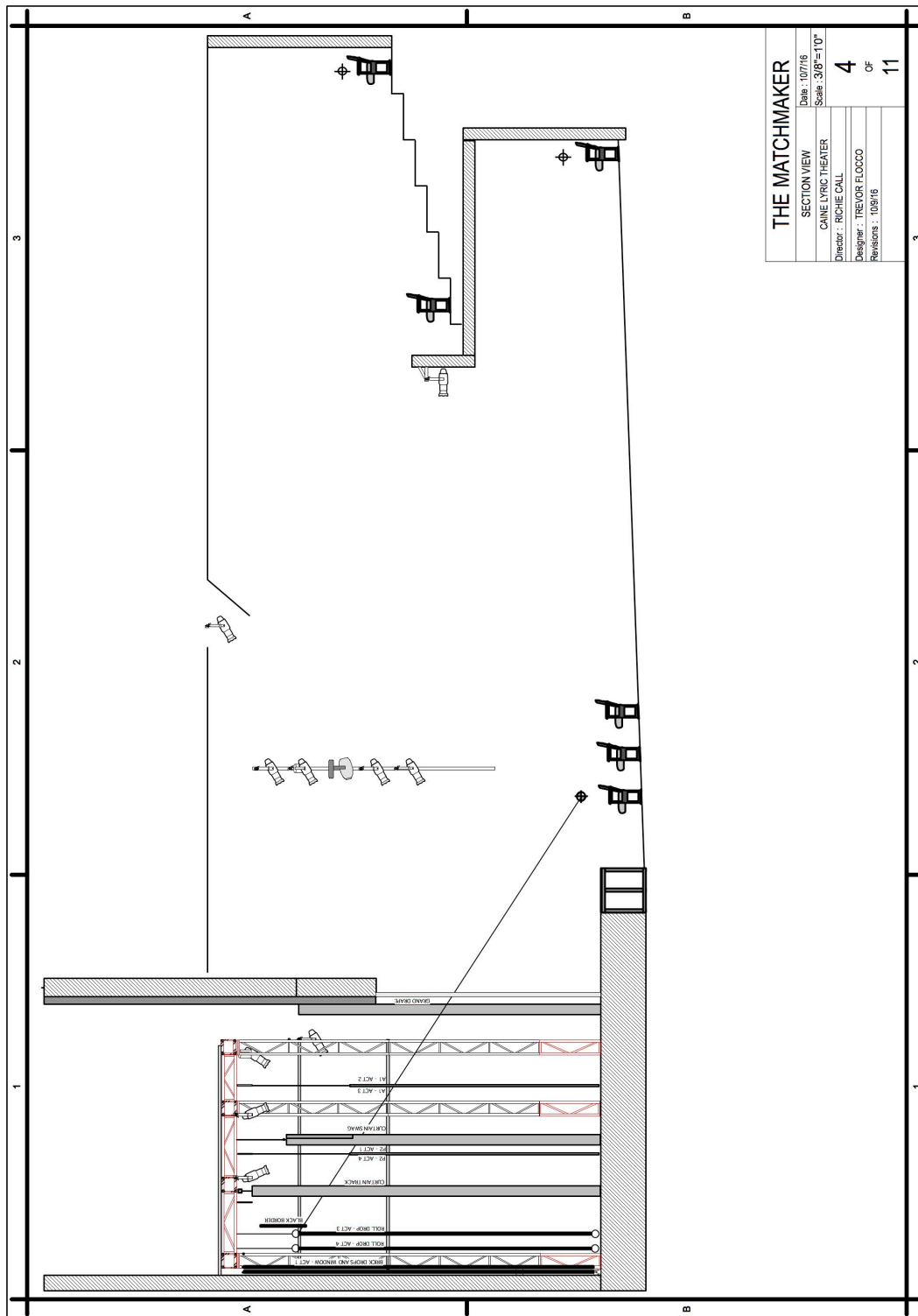
The Matchmaker: A Farce in Four Acts

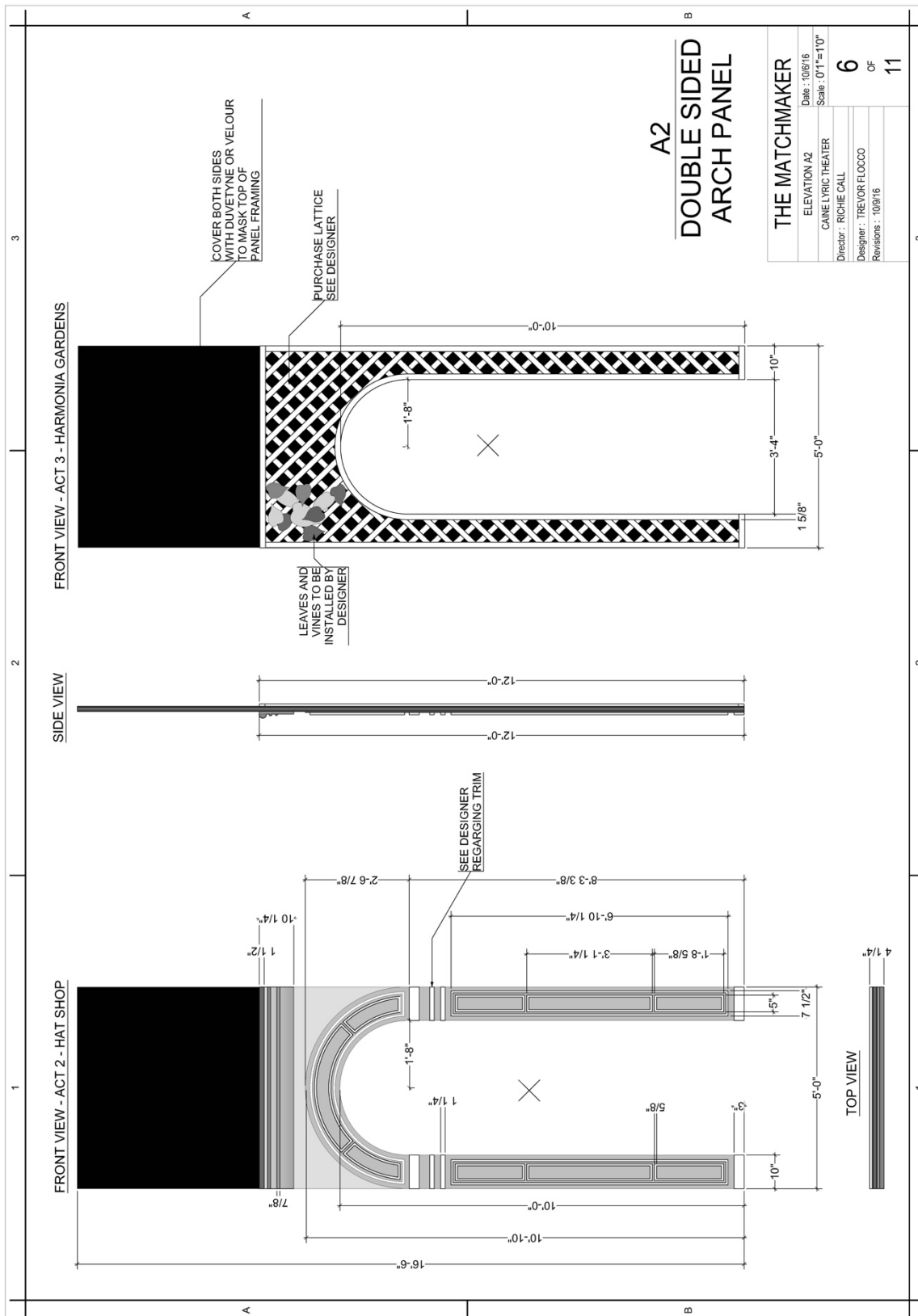
Design Packet, Build Plates, and Paint Elevations





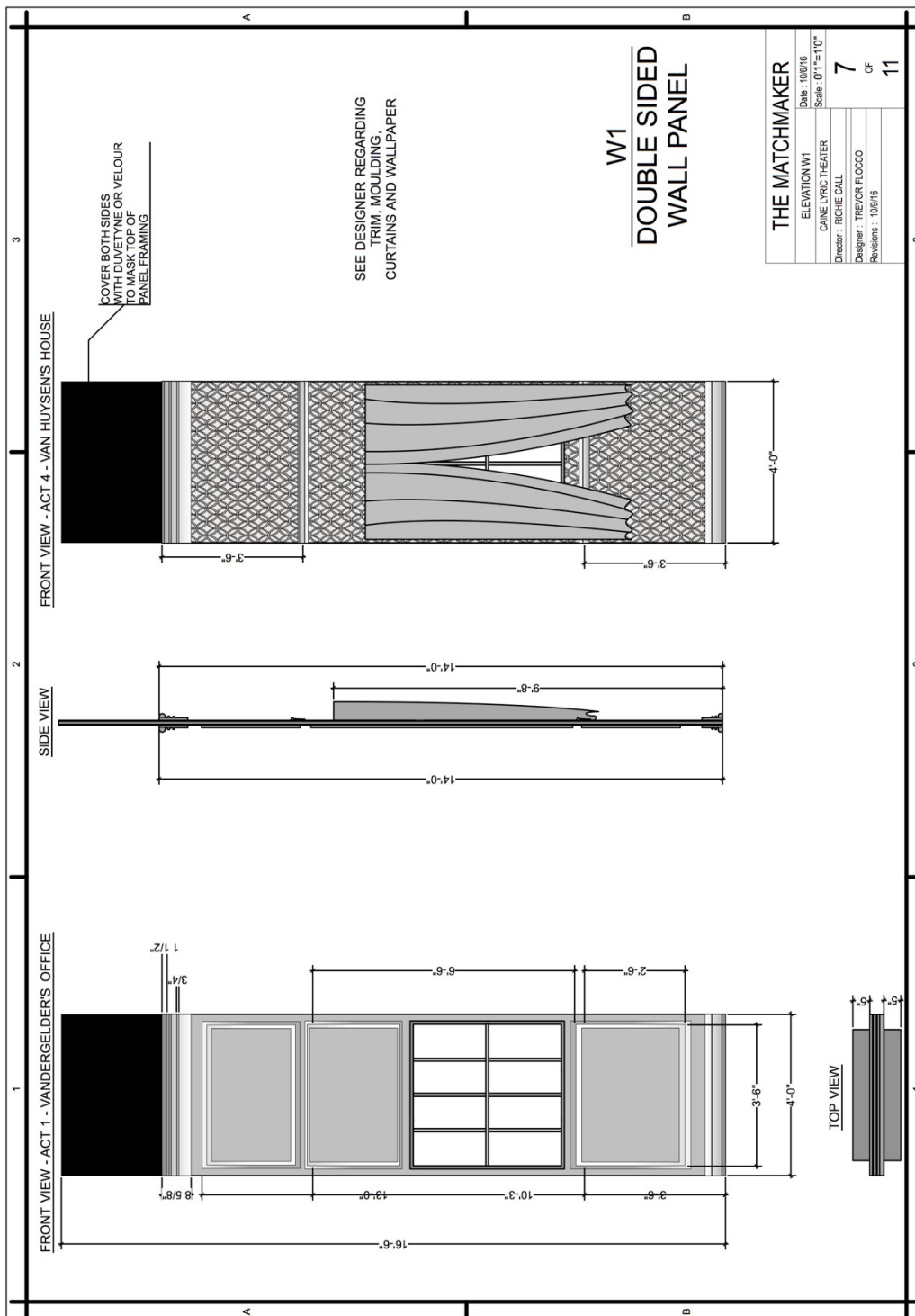


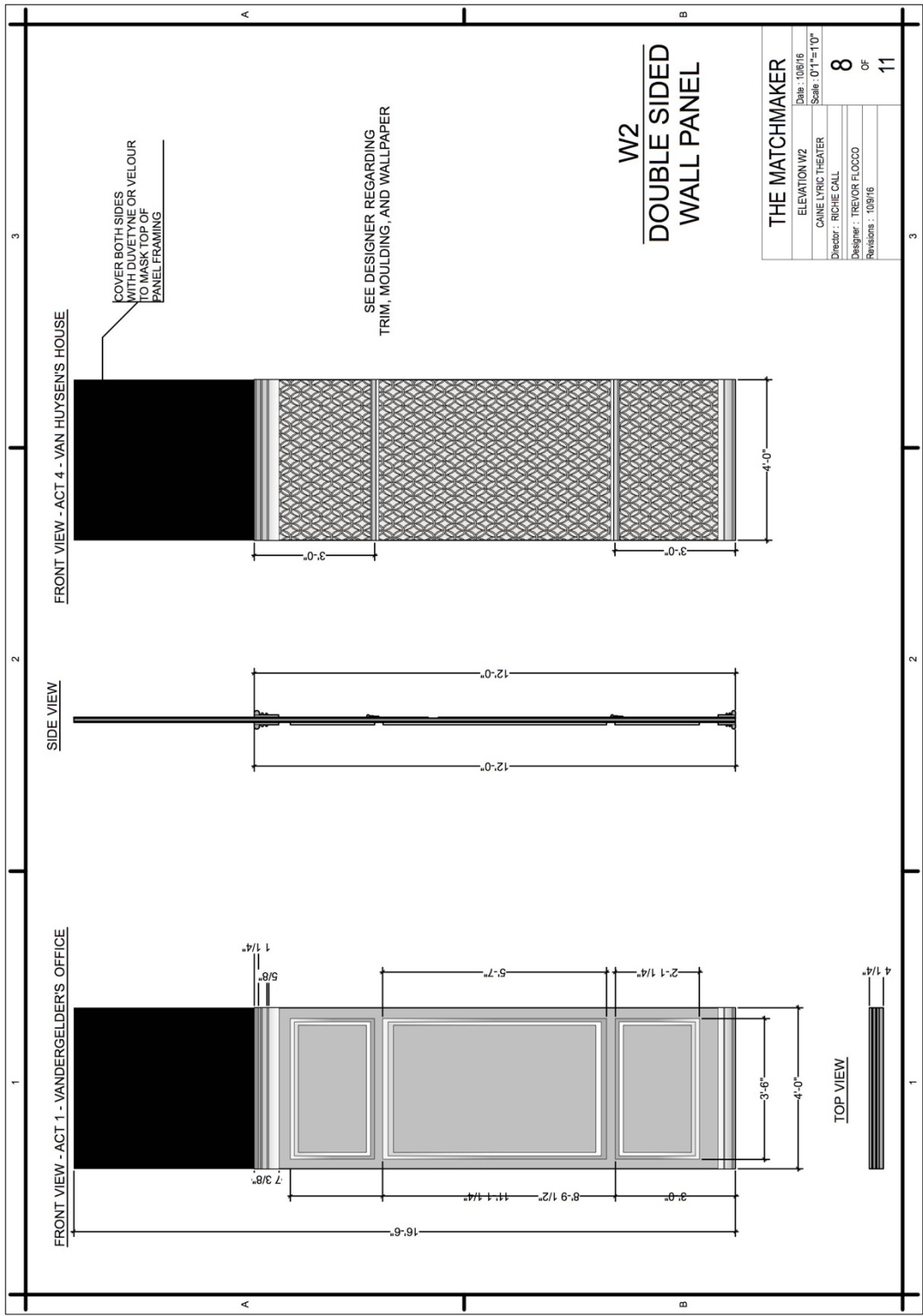


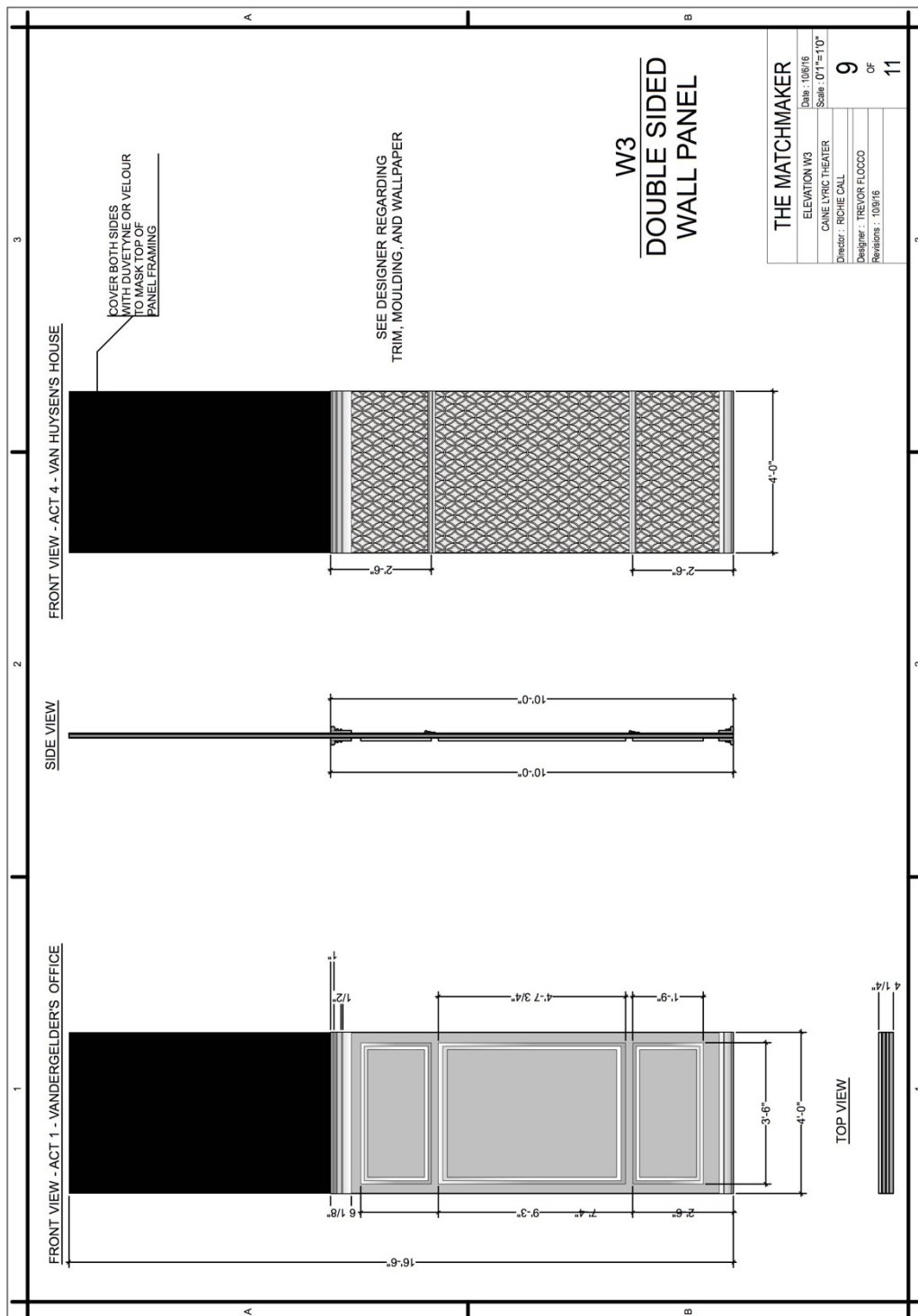


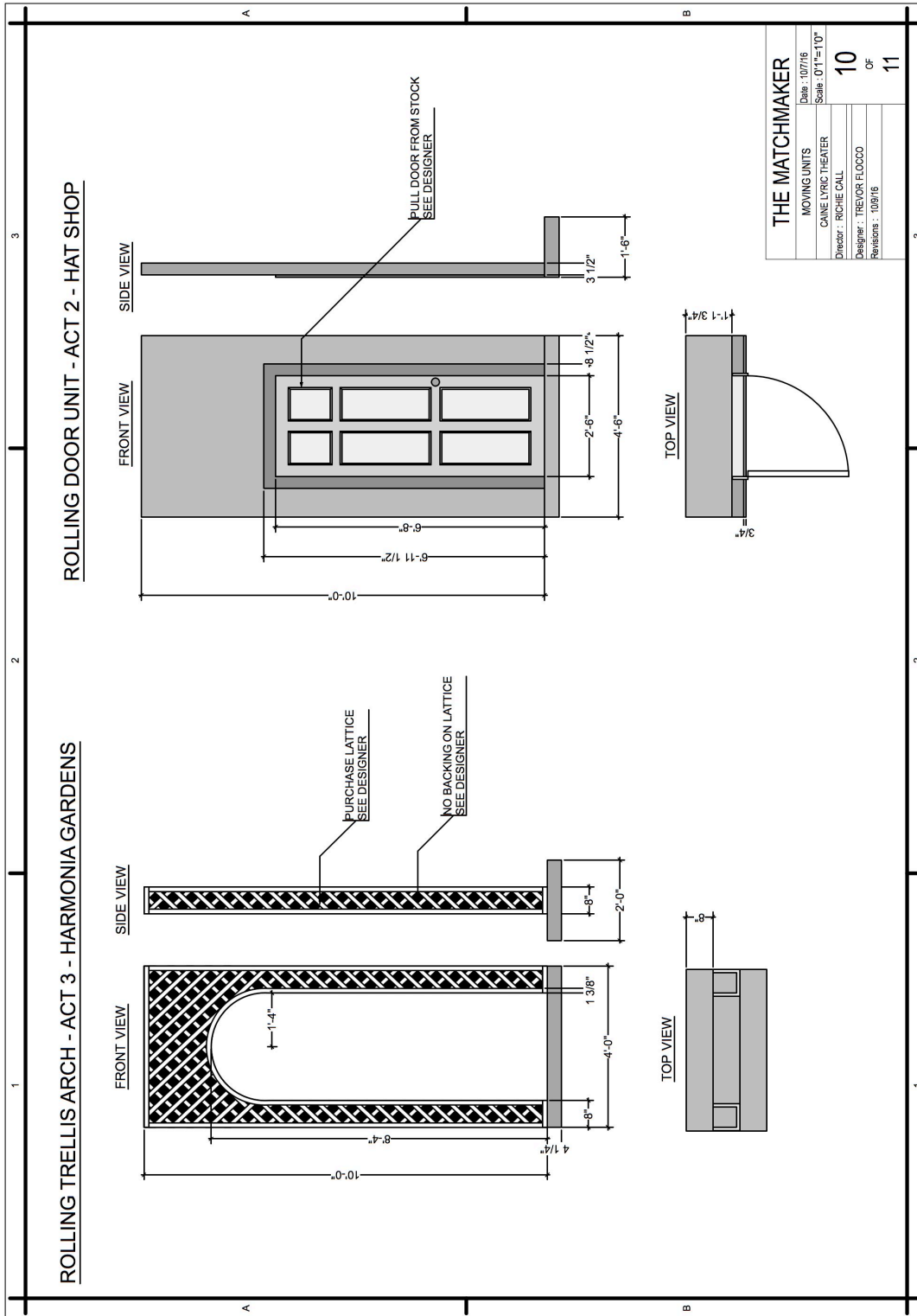
A2
DOUBLE SIDED
ARCH PANEL

THE MATCHMAKER	
ELEVATION A2	Date : 10/8/16
CAME LYRIC THEATER	Scale : 0'1"=1'0"
Director : RICHIE CALL	6
Designer : TREVOR FLOCCO	OF
Revisions : 10/8/16	11









3

2

1

3

2

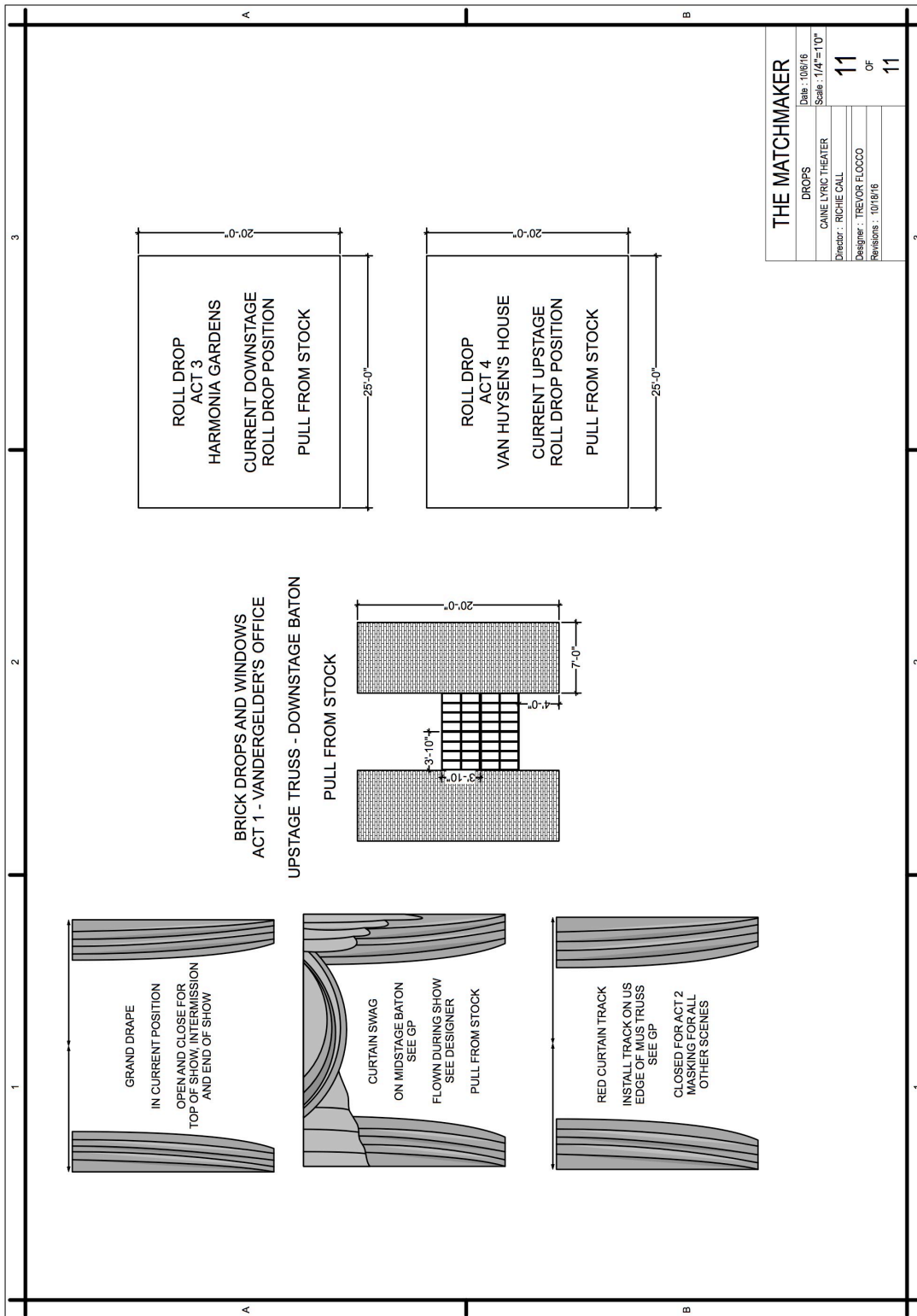
1

A

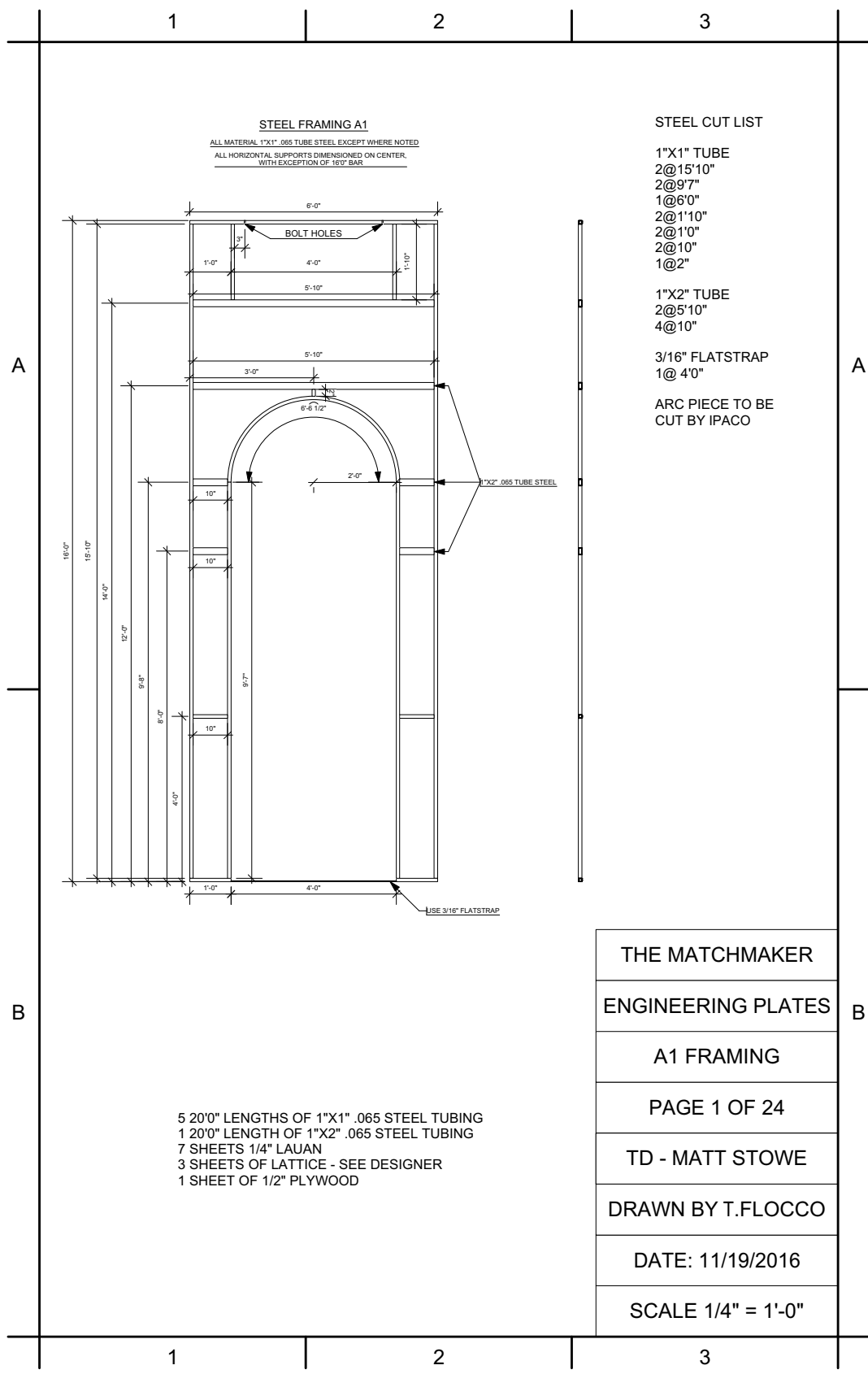
B

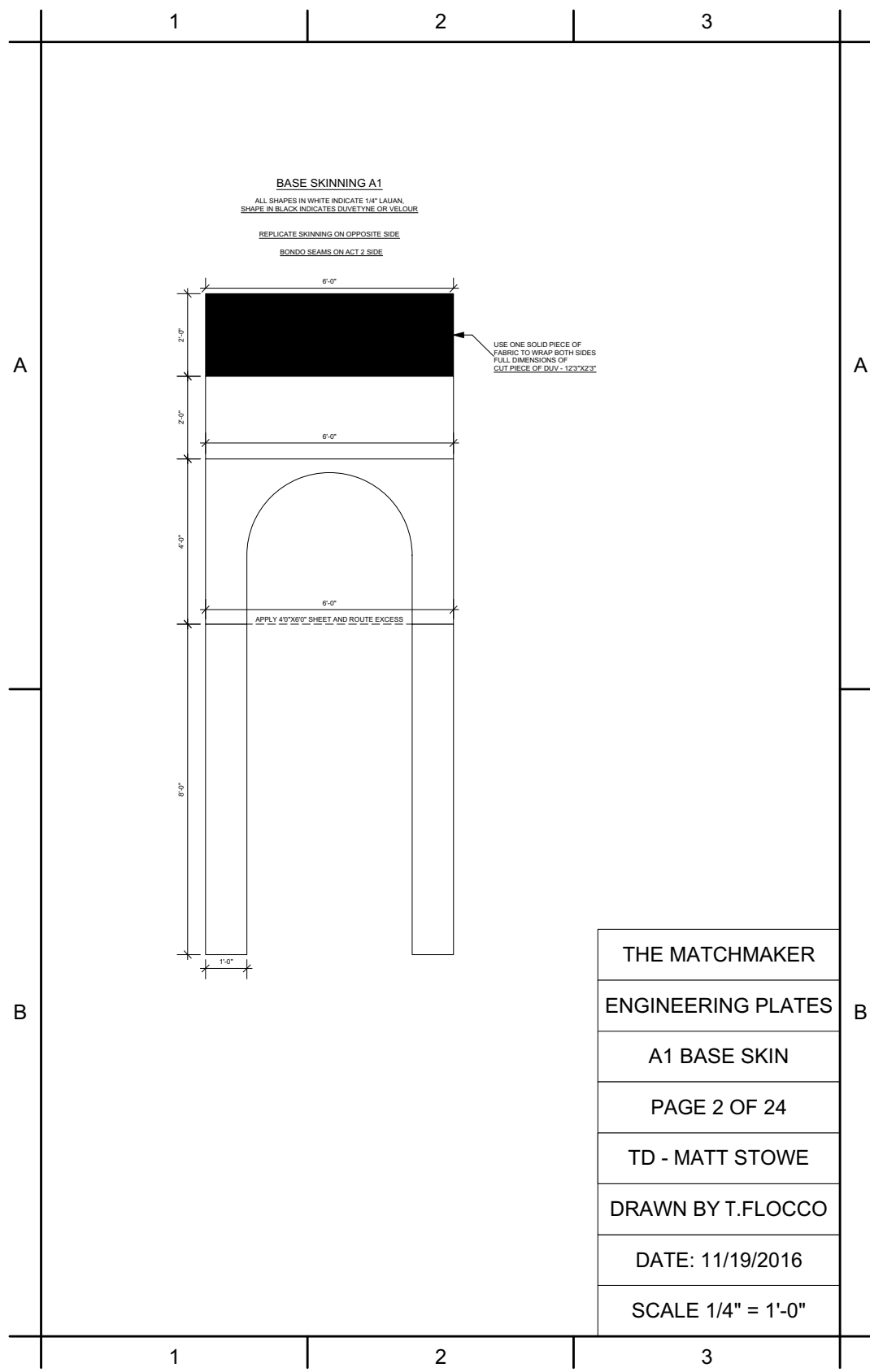
A

B

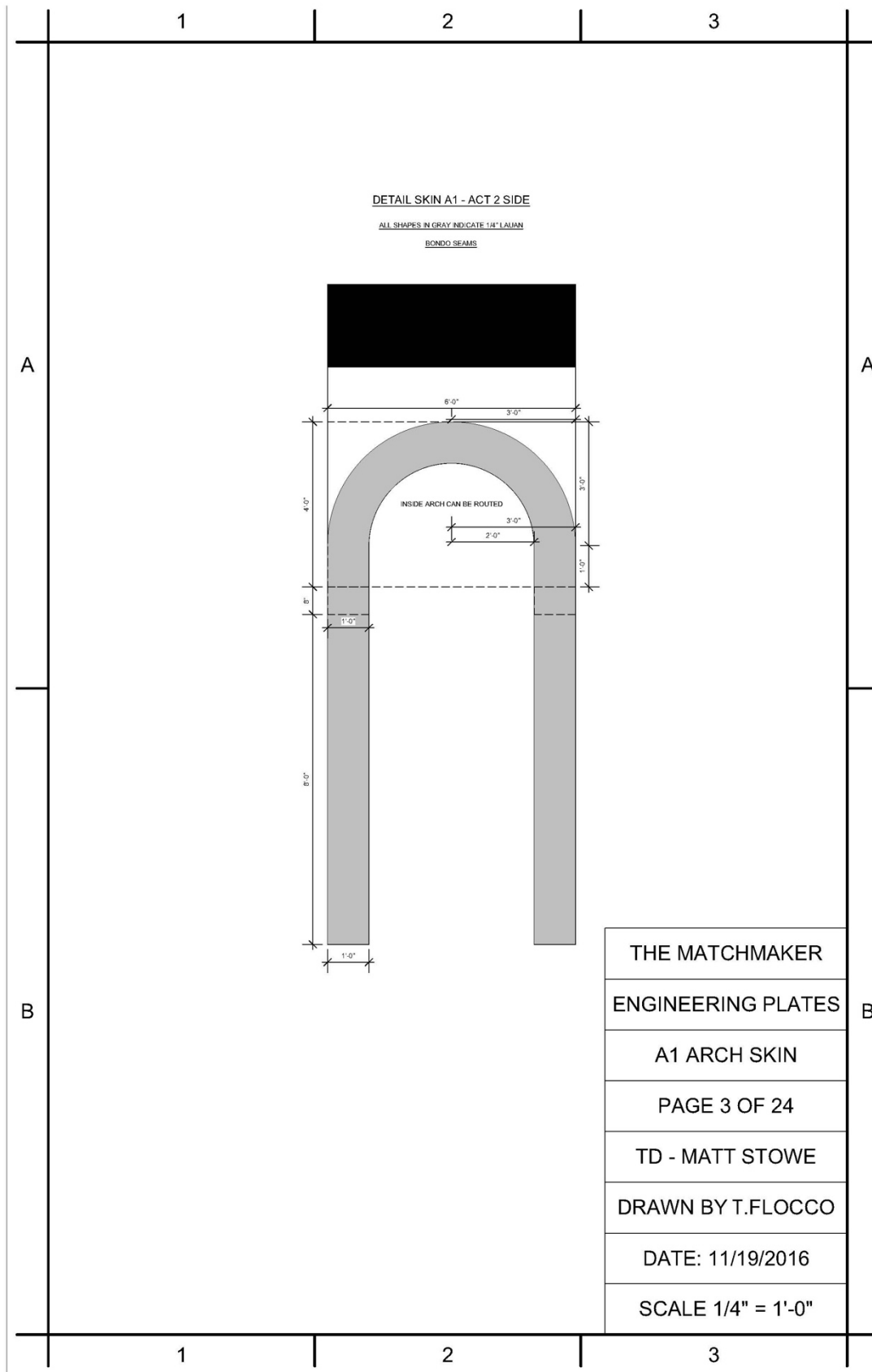


THE MATCHMAKER	
DROPS	Date: 1/06/16
CANINE LYRIC THEATER	Scale: 1/4"=1'0"
Director: RICHELLE CALL	11
Designer: TREVOR FLOCCO	OF
Revisions: 10/18/16	11





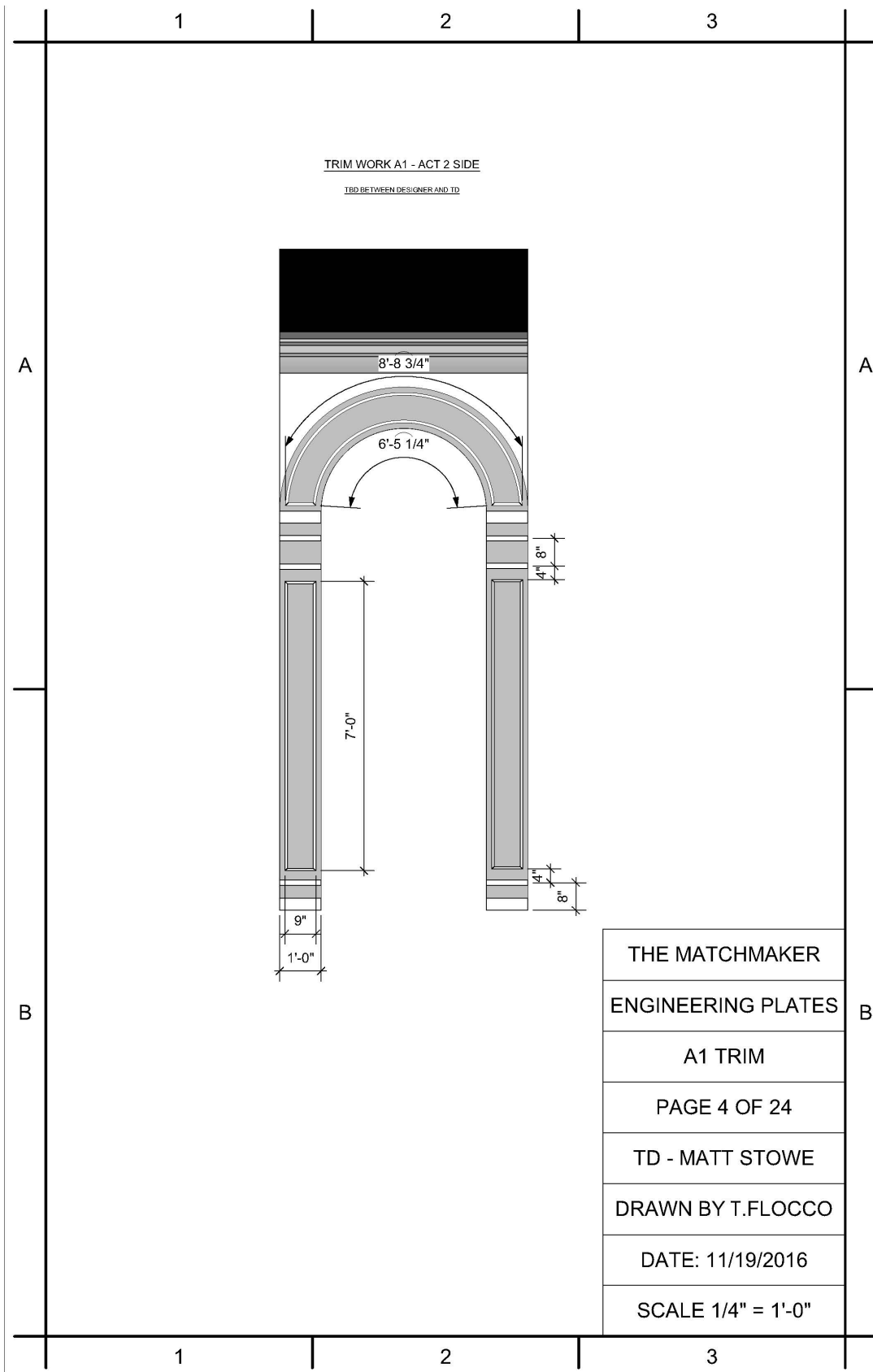
THE MATCHMAKER
ENGINEERING PLATES
A1 BASE SKIN
PAGE 2 OF 24
TD - MATT STOWE
DRAWN BY T.FLOCCO
DATE: 11/19/2016
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



DETAIL SKIN A1 - ACT 2 SIDE

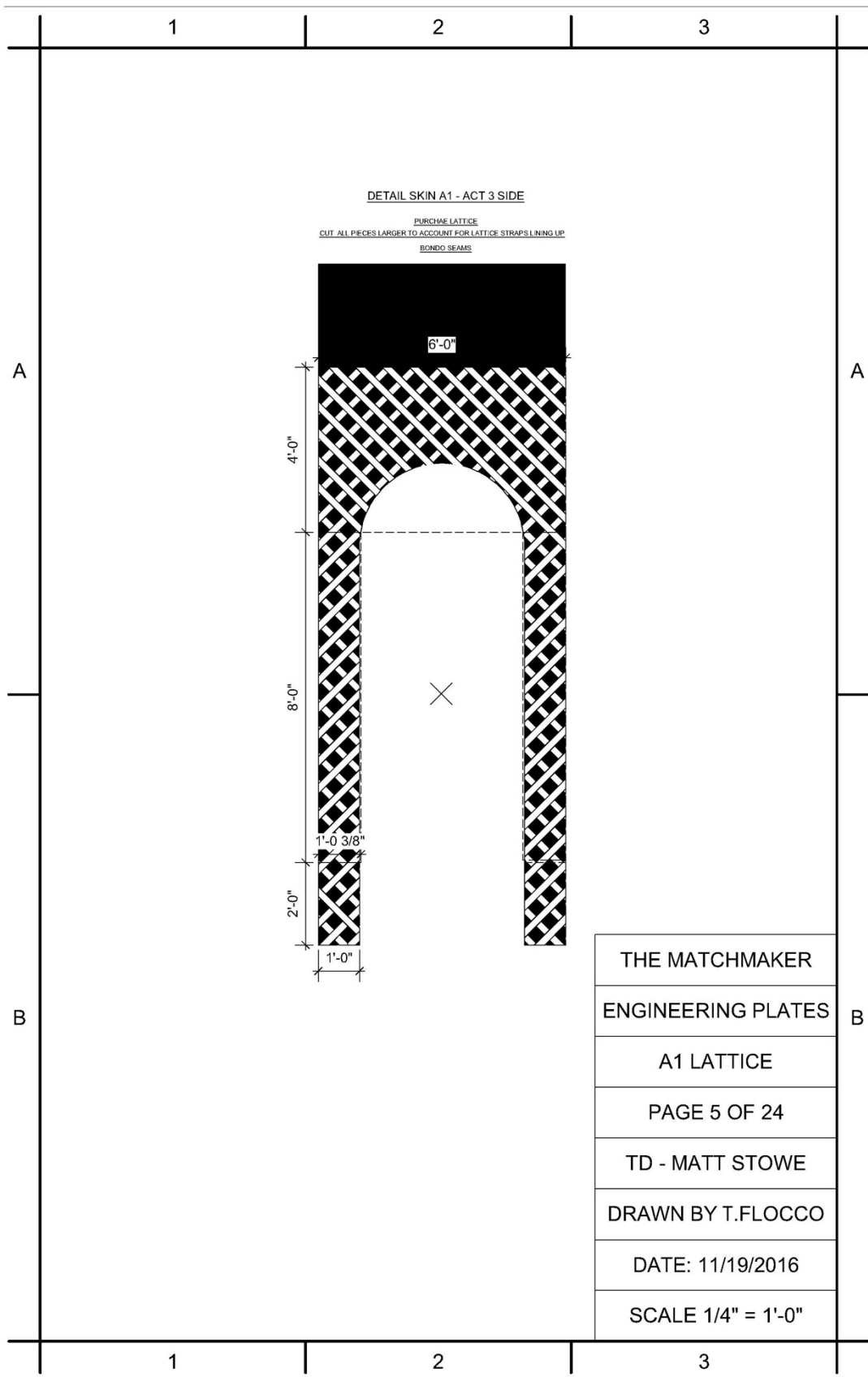
ALL SHAPES IN GRAY INDICATE 1/4" LAJIAN
BONDO SEAMS

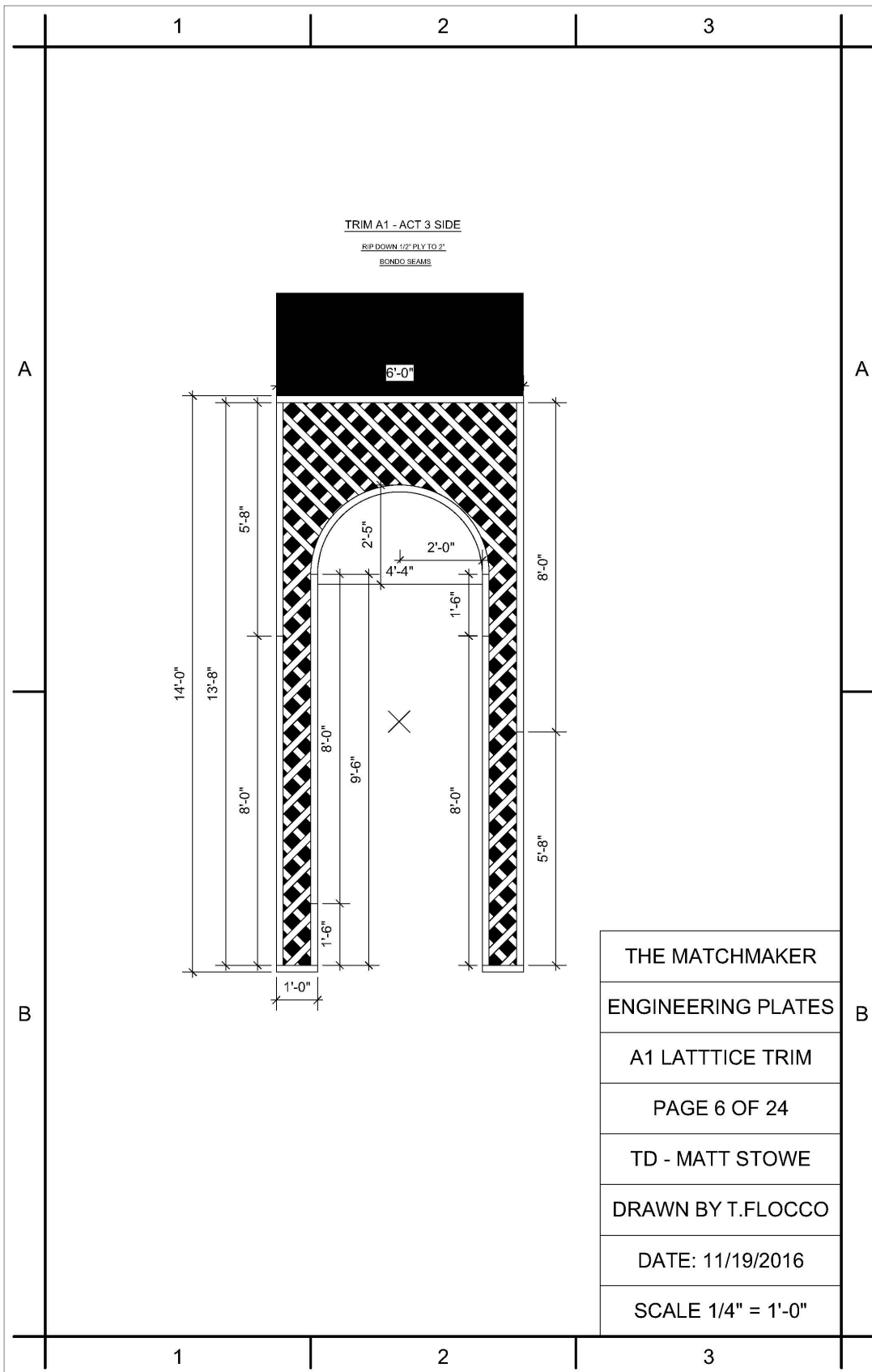
THE MATCHMAKER
ENGINEERING PLATES
A1 ARCH SKIN
PAGE 3 OF 24
TD - MATT STOWE
DRAWN BY T.FLOCCO
DATE: 11/19/2016
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

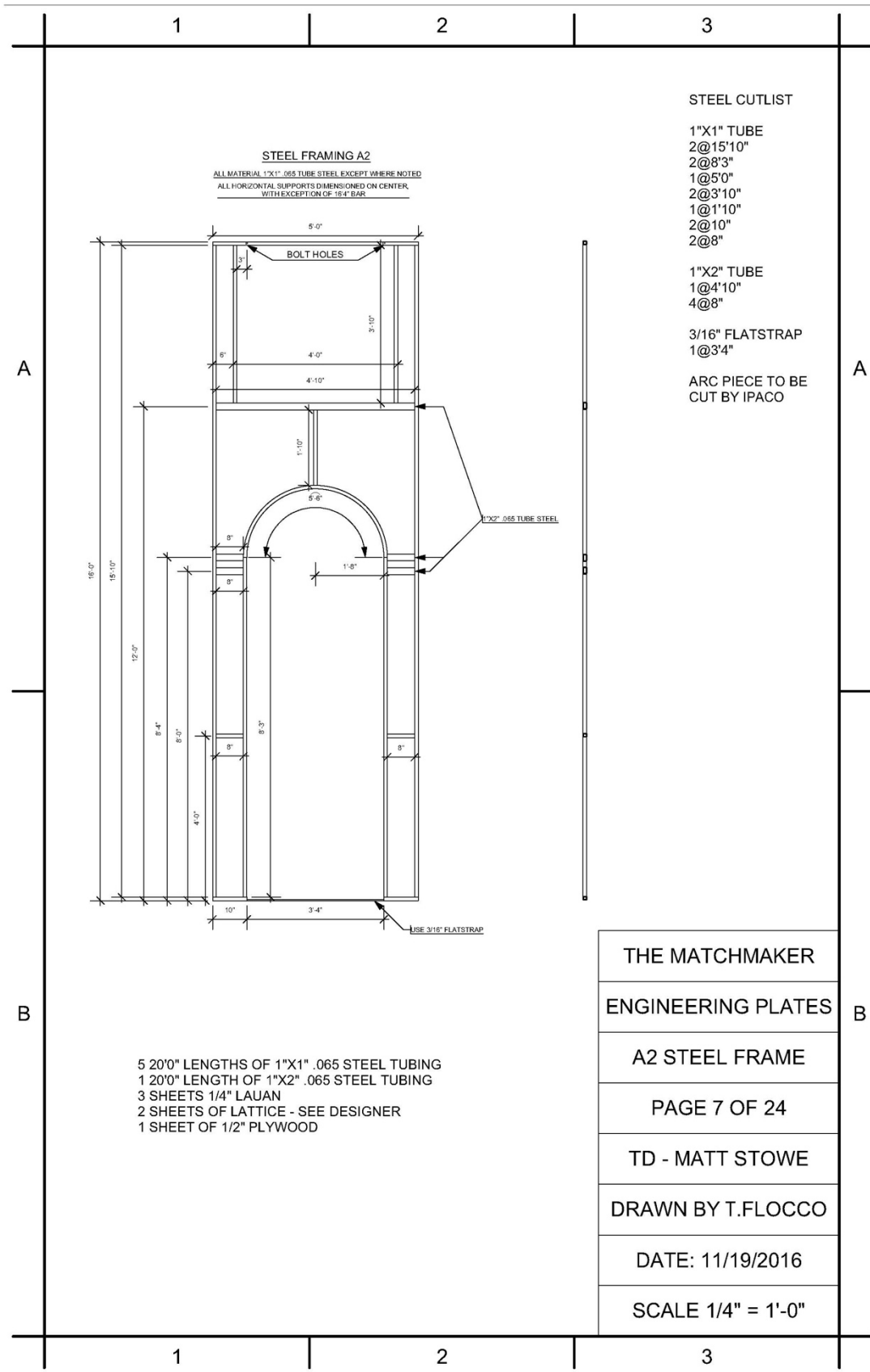


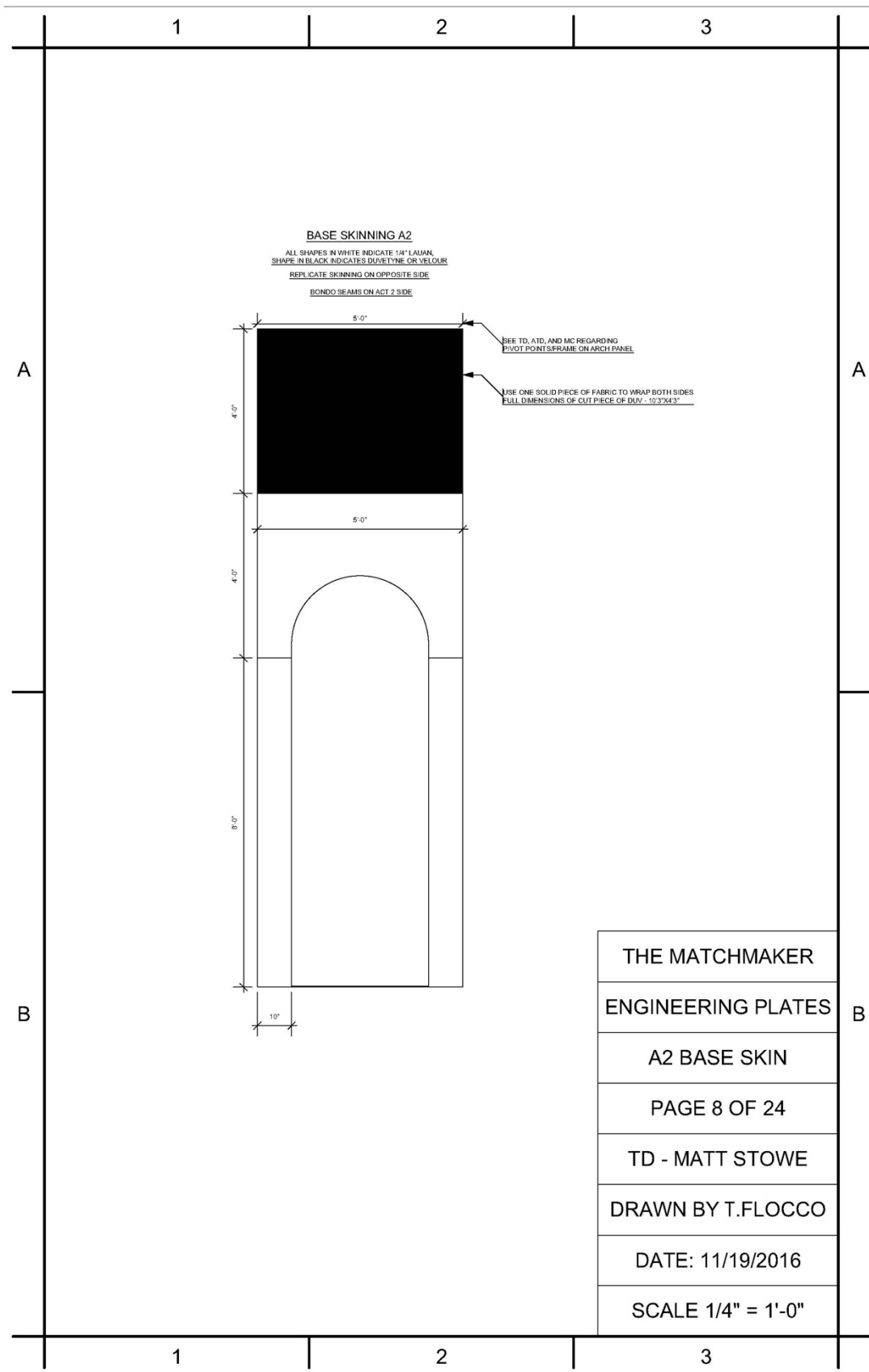
TRIM WORK A1 - ACT 2 SIDE
 TBD BETWEEN DESIGNER AND TD

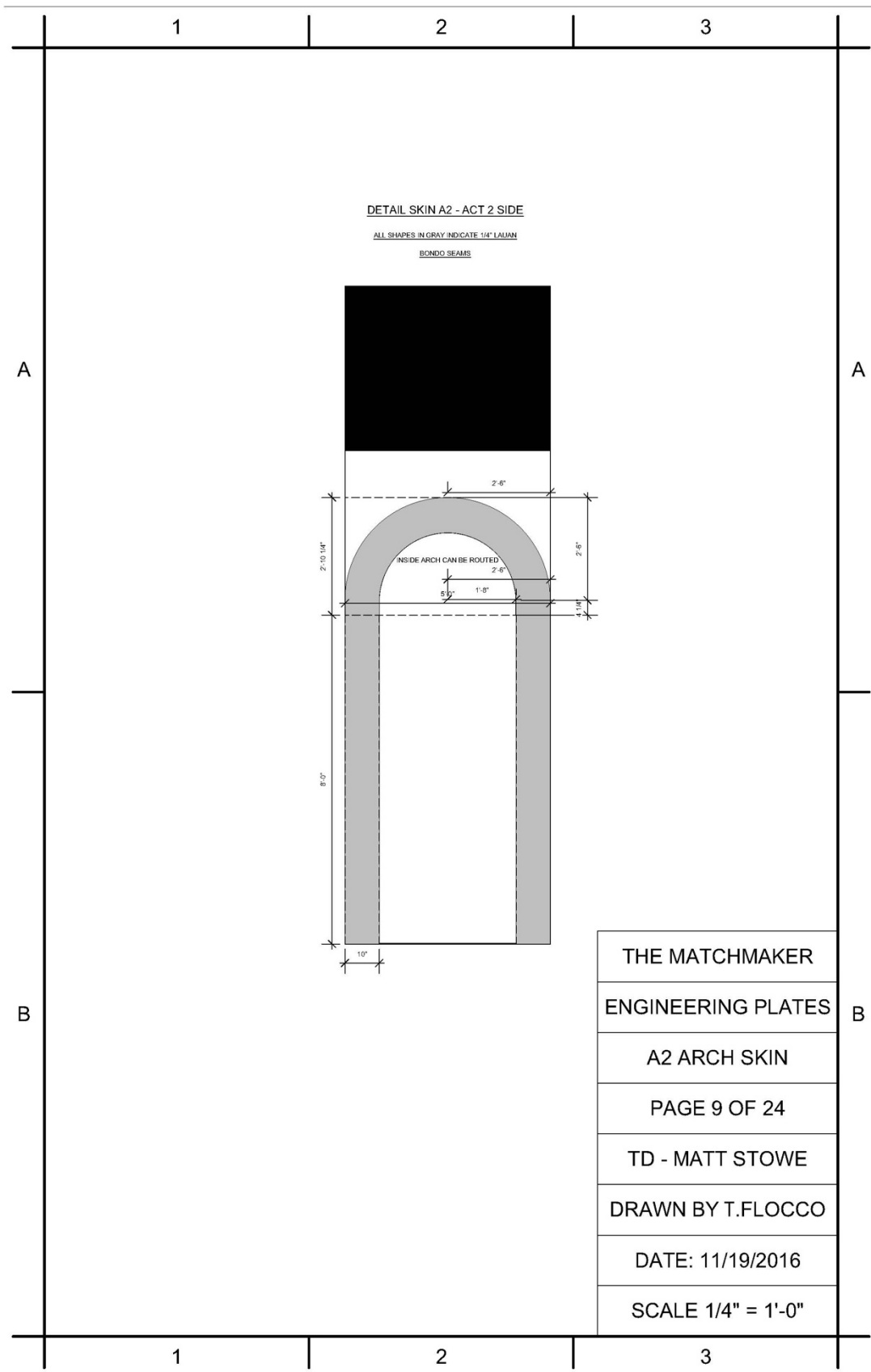
THE MATCHMAKER
ENGINEERING PLATES
A1 TRIM
PAGE 4 OF 24
TD - MATT STOWE
DRAWN BY T.FLOCCO
DATE: 11/19/2016
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

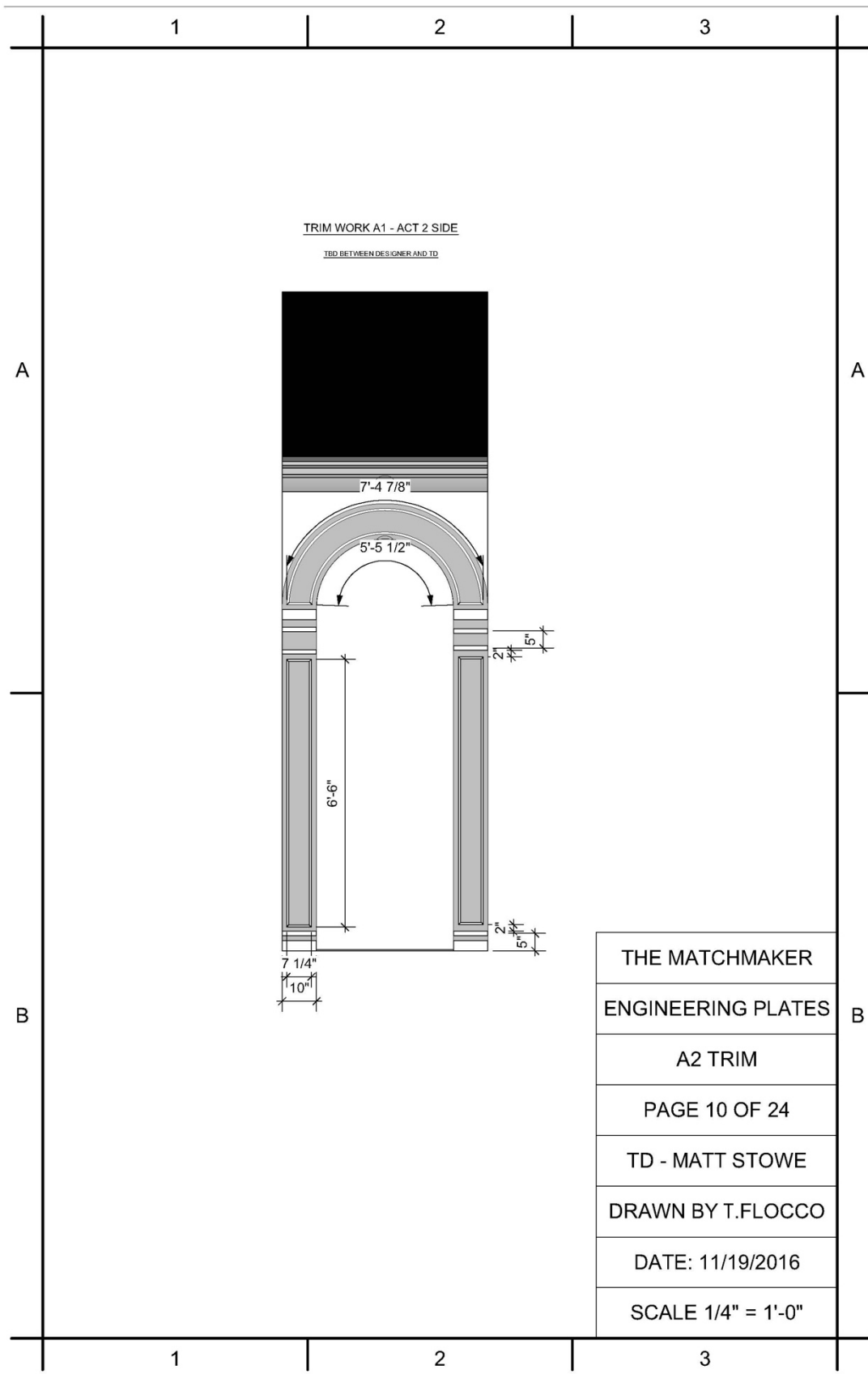


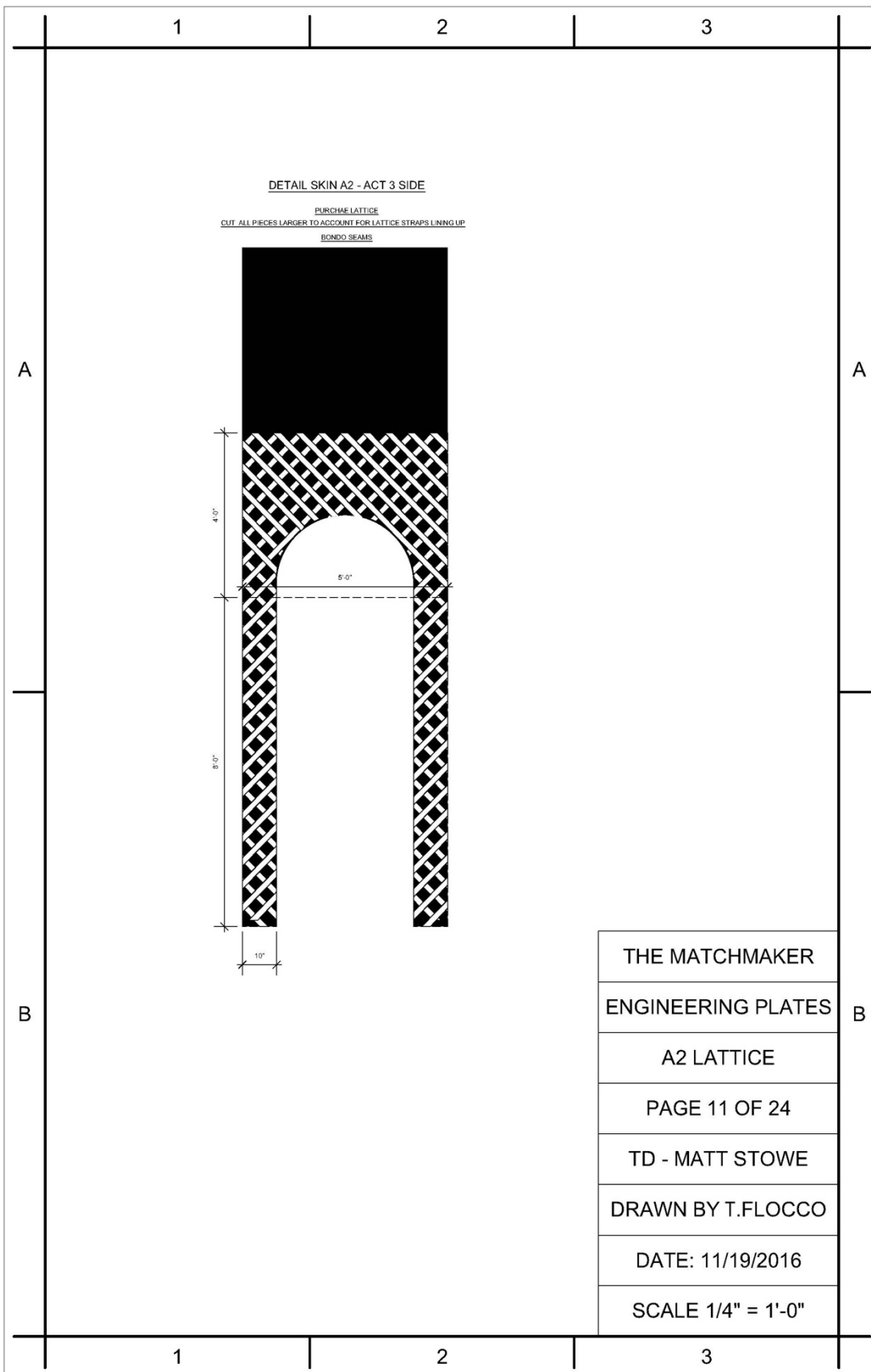


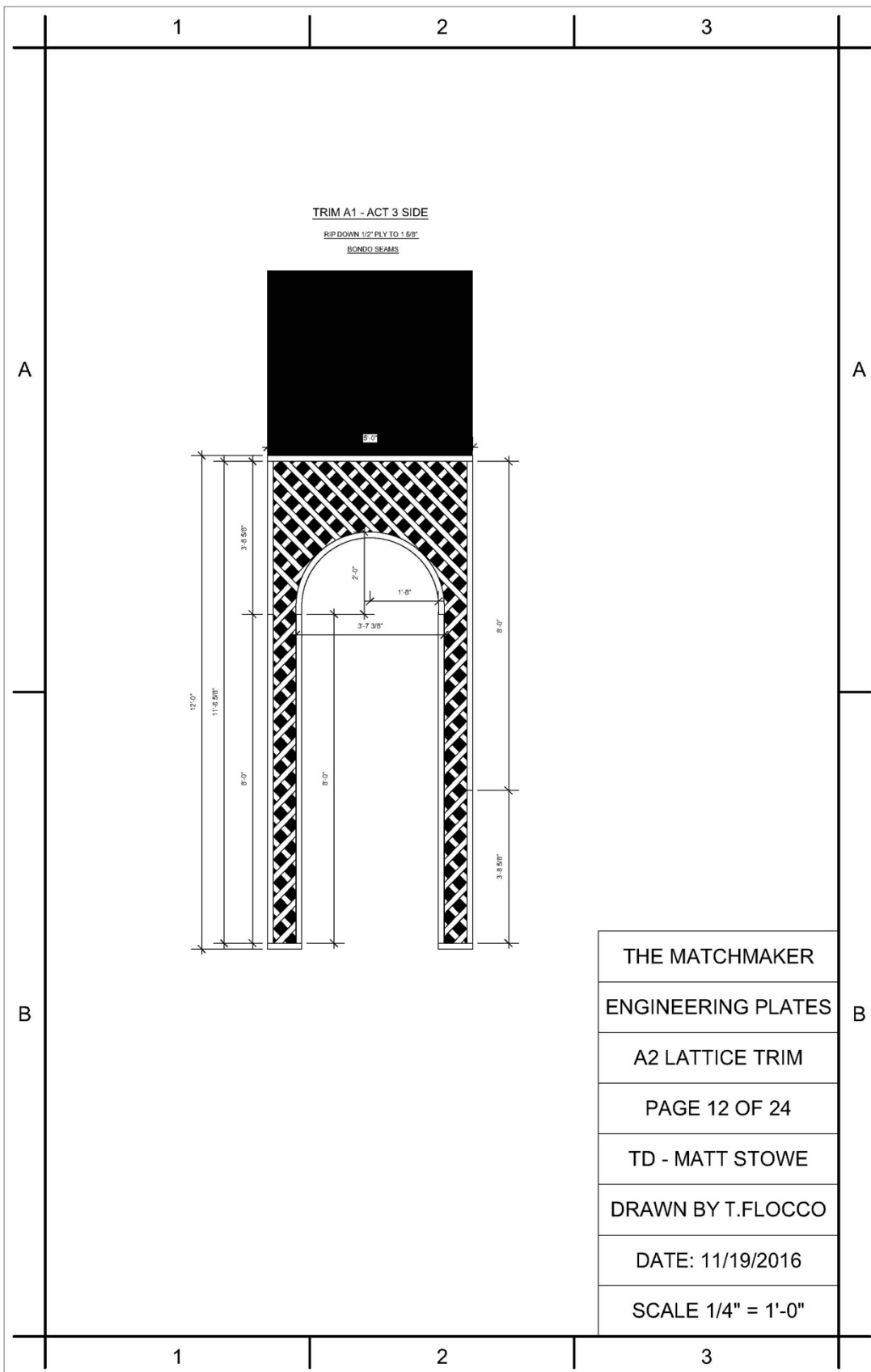












THE MATCHMAKER
ENGINEERING PLATES
A2 LATTICE TRIM
PAGE 12 OF 24
TD - MATT STOWE
DRAWN BY T.FLOCCO
DATE: 11/19/2016
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

