

Project Number: JTS IQP E009

MORE THAN A CLOSET: CREATING A PROPS AND COSTUMES DESIGN LAB

An Interactive Qualifying Project Report

Submitted to the Faculty of

WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of Bachelor of Science

by

Derrick Brown

Megan Faulkner

Lauren Spada

Date: E-Term 2009

Abstract

More than a Closet: Creating a Props and Costumes Design Lab is an IQP project concerned with the costumes and properties design aspect of WPI's academic theatre. The project dealt with renovating the storage space for props and costumes into a design laboratory, cleaning out a substantial mold growth and taking measure to prevent this problem in the future, creating a large set of resources to aid those looking to design for WPI theatre, and updating and taking inventory of existing stock.

Acknowledgements

We would like to sincerely thank Jessica Sands for her support, guidance, and understanding through the duration of our project and Susan Vick for all of her help from afar. We would like to thank Professor James Hanlan for helping us get what we needed to complete our project. We would also like to thank Mary Cotnoir, Margaret Brodmerkle, and Karen Hassett for their patience, kindness, and assistance. We would like to thank Jeffery Solomon and Facilities, especially Mike Lane and Dave Messier, for helping us to complete the space. We would also like to thank Patrick Crowe and Chris Pardy, for their physical labor, all of the ladies who answered our survey questions, Katie Pearson, for opening her home to us and donating hundreds of costume pieces, and Carol Sherry for allowing us access to the Wellfleet Harbor Actor's Theatre's props and costume storage. Special thanks go to the Rho Kappa cast of Alpha Psi Omega who generously bequeathed the funds for our new storage system and desk.

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Authorship

Project Proposal.....	All
Creating a Properties and Costumes Design Laboratory.....	All
Annotated Bibliography.....	All
Play List.....	All
CAD Drawings.....	Megan Faulkner

Project Proposal

The costume and props closet, located in the design studio, is the storage unit for all academic theatre at WPI including: Masque, MW Rep, Student Comedy Productions, and Sunburns Summer Theatre. In recent years, this closet has fallen into disrepair and has become extremely cluttered, therefore it is very difficult to find any particular item within the closet. Props and costumes are often borrowed and returned in poor or filthy condition or not returned at all. Items that are stored in the closet are often stored in a manner that destroys their integrity and renders them unusable. There is no clean workspace, system of organization, or policy on closet use. This created a space that is both frustrating and difficult to use.

In addition to these problems, there is another large flaw in the way that costuming and props are perceived at WPI theatre. For most of the shows, props and costumes are only an afterthought. There is little to no effort put into the design of these portions of shows, and yet they should be held in as high regard as the other design aspects (lighting, scenic, sound, etc.). Costumes and props can add a great deal to the value of a show, and in professional theatre great consideration is given to them.

There are several productions that come to mind when we consider shows that have used costuming to their benefit. In the 2007 production of *Romeo and Juliet*, colors were used to create the sense of divide between the warring families. The Capulets and their servants were all dressed in purple and the Montagues in green. As the play progressed, Romeo and Juliet began to show their growing love by displaying the each other's family color. Romeo donned a purple tie and Juliet wore a green necklace. In the 2009 production of *Dog Sees God*, we can look to the character of CB's sister for great inspiration. CB's sister goes through a myriad of changes during the course of the show. Through these changes we see the outward projection of her internal struggle to find herself in her costume. When we first meet her, she is dressed in all black and as the show goes on we watch her dress more and more innocently. From the same show, based on the comic strip *The Peanuts*, we can see how a subtle detail can have great effect. During a party scene, CB can be seen wearing a white shirt. The shirt has Charlie Brown's signature squiggle across the chest in highlighter. The squiggle is only visible to the audience when a black light is on. This one, tiny detail really brought the show to the next level and added deeper meaning. We should clearly mirror this in our academic pursuits, and yet we do not.

We wish to propose this project as a solution for these problems. The initial goal of this project is to create a professional props and costuming space and to implement the policies necessary to keep it in order. We plan to do this by first evaluating the current closet. As there

are many costumes and props in bad condition, cluttering the space, we plan to evaluate each article and dispose of things that are obsolete, thus creating a useful array of items. To aid our budget, and lessen the financial burden this project places on the school, we will hold a yard sale. We will be selling items from the props closet that are in good condition but that we have no reason to store in the Lab. After this sale, we will inspect the items we are keeping, and we will do what is necessary to return these articles to good condition. This includes restorative activities like washing clothing, mending costumes, and repairing props. After everything is cleaned, we plan to create a catalog of items available for use, such that one can see what is in the closet without having to go through the entire space. This catalog will include necessary information such as size of clothing, quantity of items, and relative location in the closet. During this process we will also be re-organizing the closet. This will include removing the shelving units in the closet and replacing them with more efficient and protective shelving units. Since the closet is also used to hold house and publicity supplies, we will designate a space for the storage of their items. This part of the project ensures that costume/props design can restart with a well stocked, clean, and organized space.

The next part of our project will be intended to set up a system that maintains the new order and cleanliness of the space. We plan to create a set of definite policies regarding the usage of the closet. These policies will cover the topics of: requesting new items for the closet, borrowing from the closet for shows, returning items in a clean and repaired state, and maintaining the organization of the closet. We will outline these policies in a packet that will be given to each production's props master and/or costume designer. In addition to our policies, the packet will contain resources, including suggestions of helpful textbooks, places to shop for costumes, places to clean costumes, and various other helpful tips. At the end of the packet, there will be a contract that lists the responsibilities and expectations of a props master or costume designer in regards to the use of the closet. By signing, designers will agree that they are aware of their responsibilities and will try their best to fulfill these responsibilities. These policies, resources, and the contract will help to ensure that the closet remains clean and organized long after our project is finished.

The final and most long-term part of our project is spreading awareness of the importance of costuming and props for our theatre. We believe that the new space will help with this goal, but we will be taking additional steps to ensure this. One step we wish to take is hosting an instructional "how-to" session about on-stage injuries, aging, and similar effects. This session will get people initially interested in new areas of theatre design, but will also serve to spread knowledge that can be used for shows in the future. Similarly, we will provide links to instructional videos on various other effects that can be implemented on stage, and making them publicly available. Finally, we will be stocking the new closet with books that we believe are very helpful when learning about costume design, stage props, and stage makeup. We plan

to make the existence of these resources known to those who might use them in the future (directors, designers, general theatre persons). We hope this will inspire people to make costuming and props a larger part of our academic theatre experience at WPI.

More than a Closet: Creating a Properties and Costumes Design Laboratory

For as long as anyone can remember, the crowded space off of the Design Studio has been known as the “Props and Costumes *Closet*.” And in all of those years, the space has been used as such, as a dumping ground for the random assortment of items that WPI calls their props and costumes. The mentality of WPI Theatre often views costumes as an afterthought and they are often left out of the preliminary design process. This is why the name of the space is so important, and nothing seemed to fit better than “Lab.” Through our time at WPI, where theory and practice stand as our pillars of learning, we have come to know a laboratory as a place where things are created and creativity is fostered. A lab is more than storage facility. It should be a space where things are cared for, adjusted, and created. A lab is a place where we can experiment without the fear of failure. Prior to our work on the space, this was nearly impossible, due not only to the clutter that left little room to move let alone work, but due to the mold and dust that made anyone who spent time in the closet sick. By dealing with these two problems, we have created a space that we hope will be used for shows, for classes, for projects, and for anyone who wants to learn more about costumes and props.

Problems in the Closet

If we take just one thing away from this project, it will be that nothing is ever as simple as it seems. Over the course of the last five weeks, we have watched our project evolve from the simple and straightforward effort to restore order to the props and costumes closet to something much more than we expected. Through our work, we have learned that life is full of surprises and sometimes, no amount of preparation can prepare you for them. With some perseverance, a positive attitude and a little flexibility, we found that we can achieve our goals.

Our project began simply enough. We would clean out the closet, purge items that were damaged or unnecessary, build a new storage system, and create a place where students could not only complete projects but, create. We hoped to focus our efforts on improving the quality of properties and costume design at WPI. Unfortunately, the universe had other plans for us and so the problems began.

The first sign of trouble reared its ugly head on the very first day. As we began to clear the clutter from the closet, we found the space had been playing host to some pretty nasty mold growth. Immediately, we left the closet to form a new plan. We contacted Facilities right away. They promised to send someone down to assess the situation right away. In the meantime, we purchased gloves and masks so that we could continue our work. The more we pulled out of the closet the more we began to realize that the moisture problem ran deep. The built-in, wooden shelving units were rotted through.

Facilities did not send someone that day or the next. So, as soon as the closet was emptied we began to pull out the shelving units and the plywood platform from the floor. This only revealed more problems. Moisture was seeping through the concrete floor and into the closet. Because the platform covered the floor, it is impossible to tell just how long this problem has existed. We knew that this kind of platform, which had been installed to keep our stock off the floor in case of flooding, could not be a part of our new design nor could the wooden shelving units.

Though our project had a rocky start, we were not deterred from our efforts for getting the space finished so that we could move on to the real task at hand: spreading the word about costumes and props. We began researching mold resistant storage units and concrete sealers. Despite our first major setback, we were confident that we could be finished with the reorganization on time. We would soon find out that this was simply not in the cards for us.

With a few calls from our advisor, Facilities finally came to look at the mold growth. After a quick inspection, we were informed that not only would they contract a specialist to

remove the mold but, they would front the cost of the project. We were ecstatic and our spirits were lifted. Again, we sat down to form a new plan; a plan that would fail as quickly as it was formed.

We were assured that the mold problem would be taken care of quickly so that we could begin our work in the closet again. The mold was, indeed, removed in a timely manner. However, the giant whole in the wall left by the mold removal special would present a whole new set of problems. After another round of phone tag with Facilities, we were scheduled to have new sheet rock put up in the closet. We requested that the wall opposite of the one that had been removed, which was nothing but bare studs, be covered with sheet rock also. Our inquiries as to whether or not this additional work would be done were fruitless. Like thieves in the night, Facilities contracted a sheet rocker to repair the whole while simply ignoring our request for basic cosmetic procedures.

Again, we spent days reaching voicemail box after voicemail box. It was as if the entire Facilities department had gone on vacation at the same time. With little else to do, we began to worry that we would not finish complete our project on time. We could not put anything back in to the space and the design studio was quickly beginning to look like a disaster zone. Although we had our Yard Sale and Bruise Party to occupy our time, the feeling of doom weighed heavy on us.

In last ditch effort to procure Facilities' services, Susan Vick was contacted. Within 24 hours of an email being sent to us, we had Professor Hanlan, Vice President Jerry Solomon, and Mike Lane in the studio accessing the situation and formulating a plan for its resolution. Within 15 minutes, not only had Mike Lane agreed to finishing the unfinished wall but also to sealing the concrete and brick in the space, priming all the surfaces, and installing a dehumidifier.

With our budget, which had been tied up in concrete sealer, newly available to us, we began to purchase the shelving units we needed to complete the space. Through our research into mold prevention, we decided that closed but, ventilated cabinets would be best for our sensitive props, while our costumes would remain in the covered clothing racks, and the rest of the props would be stored on open shelves in clear storage containers. The first things we bought and assembled were the closed cabinets, which were purchased at Home Depot. We had found these online, read many reviews, and decided that they would work perfectly in our space. Although we could not get into the closet, we began to assemble them in the studio.

The cabinets turned out to be a disaster. Not only were the nearly impossible to put together, they were flimsy and unstable, too. We scratched our heads and returned to the drawing board. Luckily, we had kept track of all of the shelving units we researched and were able to come up with new plan. Instead of cabinets we decided on six open, mold resistant

shelving units. We originally planned to create curtains for a few of the shelves from Sumbrella fabric, which is used to cover patio furniture. It is easy to clean and resistant to mold. However, it is extremely expensive and creating the curtains would be time consuming and we were low on both time and money. Instead we settled on curtains made from mildew resistant shower curtains. These would be inexpensive, easy to install, and easy to replace down the line if necessary.

When the work was done, the space was painted, and all the shelves were installed we finally began to restock the closet. We even built a desk and purchased a dress form and portable clothing rack. As the room finally began to take shape, we saw before us a Design Laboratory. Though it will be difficult to break the habit of calling it the closet, the word no longer applies. Despite the obstacles we came across, we did finally succeed in creating a Properties and Costumes Design Laboratory.

Survey Summary

In order to get a better idea of the functionality of the design lab, we conducted a survey of several individuals who have used the props and costume closet in the past. Some of the interviews were conducted online via email and some in person. With the responses of the interviewees in mind, we set out to create what they envisioned. Their responses and ideas really helped us to mold and form our own plans. We balanced their suggestions with what we thought was best for the space and hope that the result is a functional and creative design laboratory.

One of the major issues that came up was the use of the closet. It was clear that everyone who has done costumes and props design in the past feels that the space is too often used a storage area instead of a work space. This made it nearly impossible to find what one needs. This was the first problem we addressed. Through our purging, we were able to free up enough space in the lab for a workbench. We hope this will encourage designers to create instead of simply buy. We also created a storage system that is simple to maintain and straightforward for easy navigation. Another issue discussed in our interviews was cleanliness. A few of our interviewees sighted respiratory problems due to prolonged stays in the closet. We hope that our guidelines for costumers and VP Properties Masters will encourage people to clean the design lab on a regular basis. Before, the space was never cleaned because it was not clear with whom the responsibility of caring for the space fell. Our policies instruct the VP Properties Master to clean the space thoroughly at least once a year and the costumes and props designer to clean the space completely during strike. Four of our interviewee's requested that a catalog of our inventory be made. We have created a catalog with pictures and descriptions of each item.

Of course, there were also suggestions that we were unable to address due to budgetary and time constraints. These suggestions were mostly concerning costume pieces. Many productions at WPI call for the actors to wear all black. Unfortunately, this can be a costumer's nightmare. It is impossible to costume an entire cast in matching dress blacks. To be able to provide this for the theatre we would have to buy shirts and pants in every size. This is not currently feasible.

Costuming Beyond the Little Theatre

Seeing how props and costumes are handled in a professional theatre was an important part of this project. We visited Wellfleet Harbor Actor's Theatre and interviewed Carol Sherry, a professional costume designer, to see how she managed their spaces and designed shows. Carol outlined the process she uses to design shows, starting with the initial costume plot, followed by extensive research into what outfits from that period and location look like, then pairing swatches with those outfits, to finally constructing the costumes for the show. She was also gracious enough to show us a few quick tips and tricks including how to size a jacket and how to "rig" a costume for a quick change. One of the shows that we had the opportunity to see, *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, had over 60 quick changes over the course of the production, with the quickest being less than 10 seconds while the actor was delivering lines off stage. They did this by securing dresses with a concealed piece of Velcro down the back and a panel to make sure that the bottom of the dress remained together. For the men's costumes, they cut up a dress shirt and sewed the collar and cuffs into the jacket and then added a tie. The buttons were then sewn into the button holes and a strip of Velcro went down the front of the jacket to allow the actor to appear fully dressed in a matter of seconds. The rigs on the dresses were slightly apparent from the audience (and may not work in a space as intimate as the Little Theatre). This might have been due to the fact that the dresses were being worn by men. However, the suit rigging looked phenomenal and had the added bonus of cutting down the number of layers an actor needs to wear on stage. This method should be explored in future WPI productions.

The costume space at the WHAT theatre is incredible. They have one "closet" space that houses all of their standard pieces, a wall filled with fabric, another wall filled with buttons and trim, and a huge workspace. Since there are always multiple shows coming up at the theatre, each production has its own dressing room, where all the costumes in progress are stored. This is a great system appears to work well for them as it gives each show its own workspace. The props storage area is located below the stage. This was a little interesting, as the ceiling is extremely low with pipes hanging down and all of us hit our heads at one point or another. While this storage space was slightly cluttered and very small, the assortment of items was astounding. Even though there were no labels or a cataloging system, we had no problem locating specific items. The largest disadvantage to this space is that to reach it, you must climb down a fairly intimidating ladder, which could cause problems when props need to be brought up from storage. It was surprising to see just how condensed their storage system was considering the wide assortment of productions they put on each year. This convinced us that a theatre can have a minimal amount of props in storage without any problems, and led to a massive clearing out of old broken and unused props.

As none of us have worked on costumes or properties design outside of WPI theatre, this trip was one of the most valuable experiences of our IQP. It is our goal to bring the level of professionalism and creativity that Wellfleet uses in their productions to the Little Theatre. We used this trip to adapt our lab to include all of the necessary elements to foster creative costume design.



Picture 1 shows a part of the Wellfleet Harbor Actor's Theatre's props storage.



Picture 2 shows the costume rack for the upcoming children's show.

Cleaning Out the Closet

The first time the three of us stepped foot inside the closet an overwhelming feeling of doom descended upon us. It was instantly apparent that the current definition of the props and costumes closet was the problem. The space had become a dumping ground for all things theatre, whether they belonged there or not. As we stared at the mountain of junk before us, we formulated our plan: a lighter and a can of gasoline. When the initial shock wore off, we came to our senses and dug in. It was obvious that much of the current stock would have to be thrown away or sold in the yard sale. There was too much stuff and not enough space. In order to make the closet more accessible, we would have to be ruthless in our efforts to purge.

Deciding what to keep and what to toss proved to be rather difficult. So, we started simply. We got rid of anything damaged. All of the props that were broken beyond usefulness and costumes that were ripped, stained, or worn were thrown out immediately. Two trips to the dumpster later, we were still staring a giant mound of stuff; much more than we could possibly store effectively. Next, we got rid of anything that had a duplicate. Each pair of items was evaluated and the one deemed most useful was kept while the other was put aside to be sold at our yard sale. After a third trip to the dumpster, we came back in and reevaluated the remaining items. It was still way too much. With a little encouragement from Jessica, we dug in and got ruthless.

Although we cringed as each item made its way to the trash can, knowing we would be criticized by our peers for getting rid of "useful" things, we cleaned out the entire closet over the course of a few days. Standing in the door of the newly emptied closet was a little like standing on the edge of the Grand Canyon. We were stunned by how much space was actually available to us and we could not believe how much stuff had been crammed in there just days before. Through the course of cleaning out the closet, we came up with a few general guidelines to help us decide what to keep and what to toss. We will be sure to pass these on to the future VP Props of Masque so that he or she may keep the design lab clutter-free.



Picture 3 Before: A cluttered mess



Picture 4 After: An organized work space

Organization

Organization of the design lab was by far the most challenging part of this project. It was our goal to create a system that not only made locating items easy but was also easy to maintain. As we were not sure where to start, we did a little research. Through our research we found many different systems used in theatres across the country. Each one was different and most required much more funds, time, and space than we had been allotted. So, we began to use bits and pieces of the systems we liked most to create our own. We kept three major things in mind while designing the new organization system: the students, the costumers, and the space.

We evaluated the students who would be using the space academically. We knew that many of the students who will be using the design lab would be new to WPI theatre. They would most likely have no knowledge of our stock or space. Therefore the organization would have to be simple. From this we came up with our categories. We would sort clothing by gender. This gave us Men's, Women's, and Unisex. Properties would be sorted by Accessories, Personal, Professional, House wares, and Set Dressings. We feel that this system will allow someone with no prior knowledge of our stock to easily navigate the design lab and find exactly what they need.

Next we next evaluated the costumers who would be using this space. Costumers would be working on a production and therefore would have very specific needs. For their sakes, we broke each clothing category into Tops, Bottoms, and One Pieces. The Tops category was further split into shirts, jackets, and vests. The Bottoms category was split into pants and skirts. The One Piece category is comprised mostly of dresses and overalls. However, some costume pieces were also included in this category. Next, we divided all of the clothing items by street wear and costume pieces. We deemed street wear to be anything modern, such as jeans and t-shirts. Costume pieces include items like chaps, scrubs, and old-fashion shirts and jackets. We decided that further break down of the costumes was unnecessary. We feel that, with our policies in place, the design lab will not be overfilled and finding items should be easy. Breaking it down further, to say color or size, would only make the organization system more difficult to maintain. Costumes are now stored in three covered clothing racks.

Accessories were divided into scarves, shawls, gloves, aprons, shoes, belts, ties, eye wear, hats and masks. We felt the rest of the properties fell into too many different categories and sub categories to be easily sorted. So, a shelving unit was dedicated to each category. This system is simple and easy to maintain yet provides the necessary level of organization.

Designing a Functional Space

In order to visualize our plan for the Design Lab, we utilized Solid Works, a CAD program available on campus. This program allowed us to test various shelving units and layouts for the space without having to purchase the units or move anything around. We gained a great deal of freedom due to this, as we could not always access the space due to construction. The following figures display the progression of the Lab, from the initial stages where we had ordered cabinets, to a space designed around a particular desk, to our final design. The final design focuses on easy accessibility of all items stored in the Lab while also creating a large workspace. Using this set up, the room is almost unrecognizable as it no longer strikes fear in the hearts of claustrophobics and it looks three times the size of the original closet.

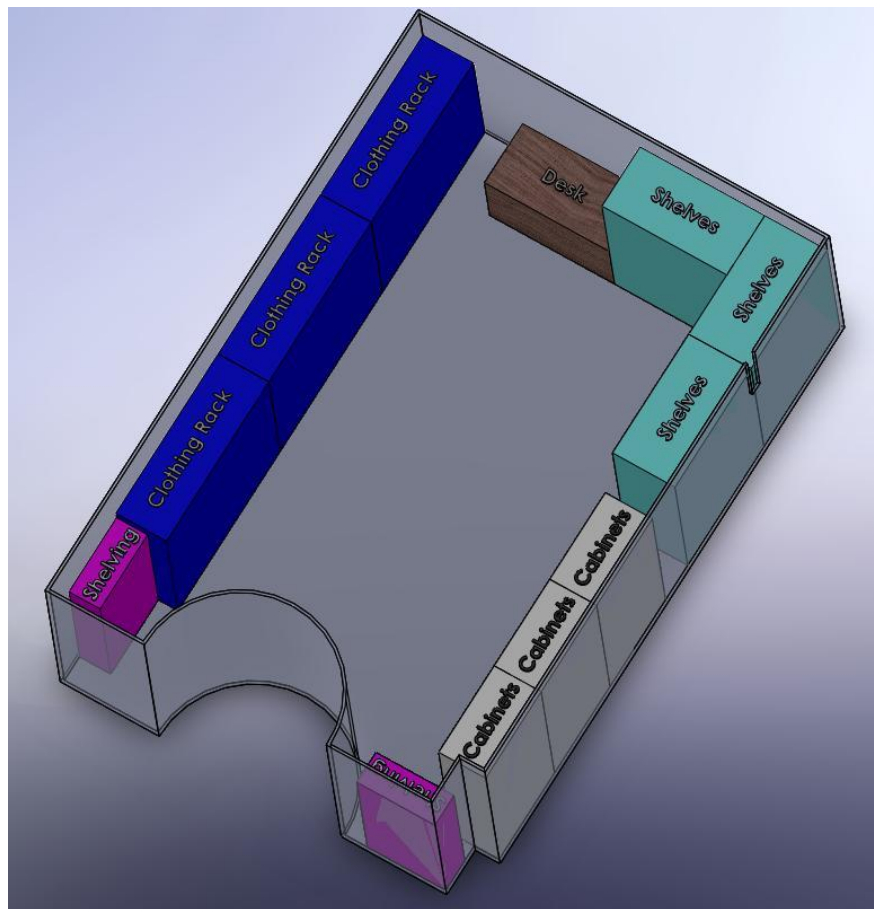


Figure 1 shows the original layout we had planned to have for the space.

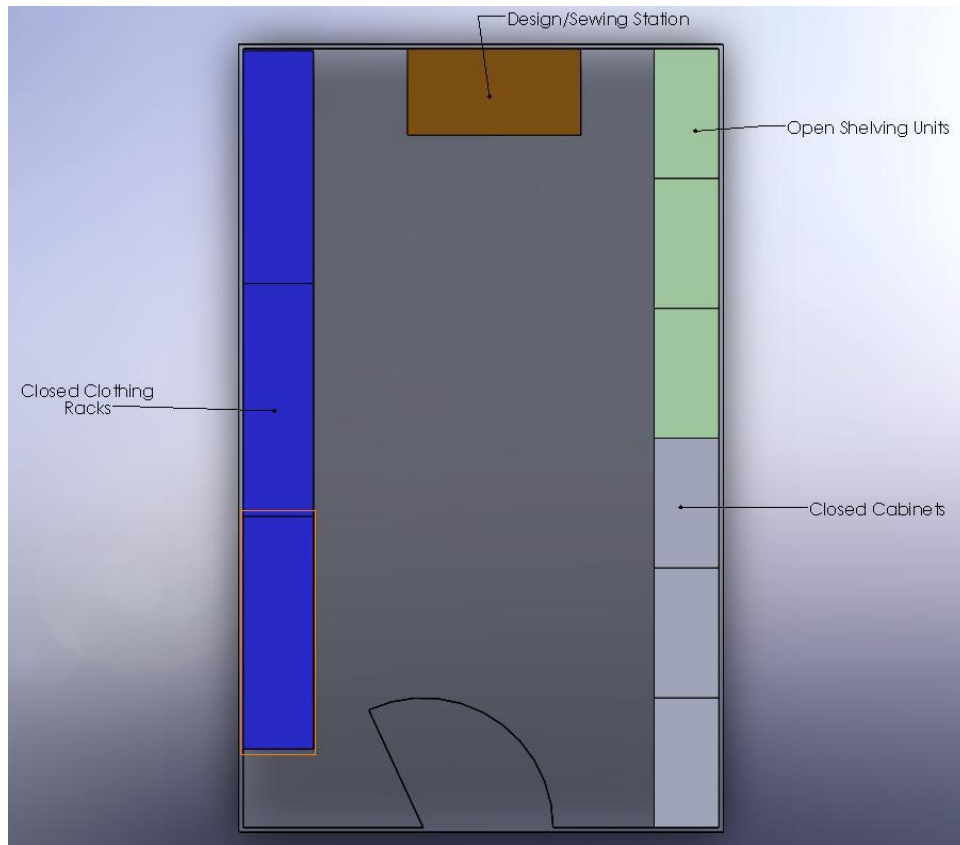


Figure 2 shows the second floor plan we designed, however we could not find the shelving units we had picked out online.

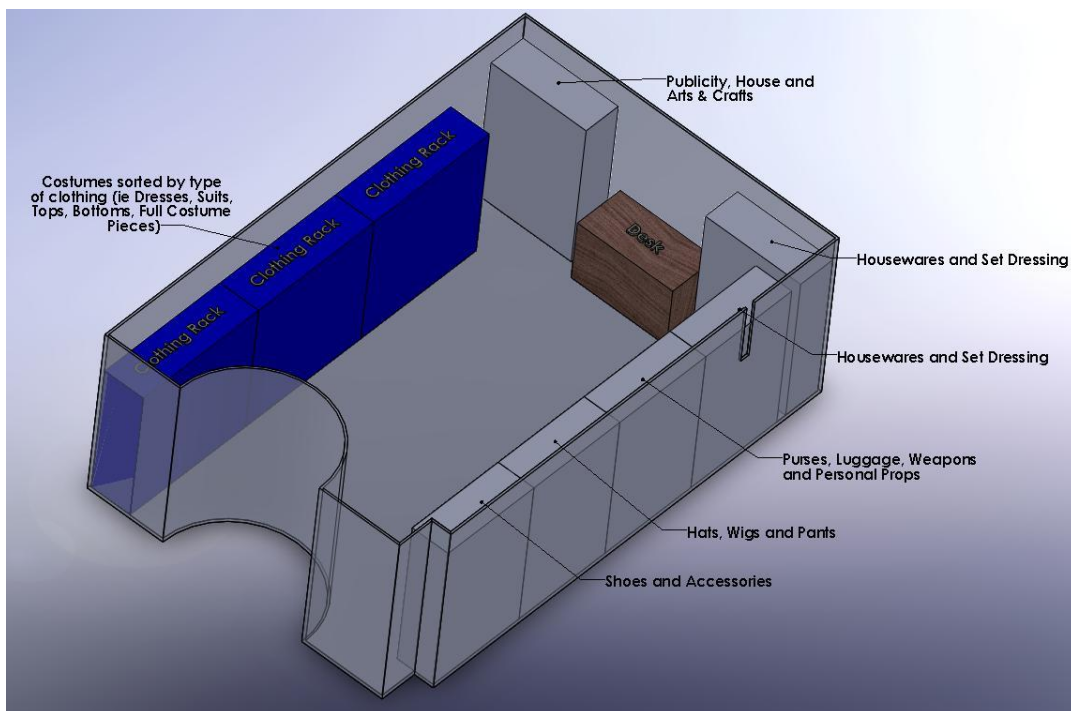


Figure 3 displays what we believed our final floor plan would be. We neglected to consider electrical outlets into this plan though, so the desk had to be moved towards the front of the lab.

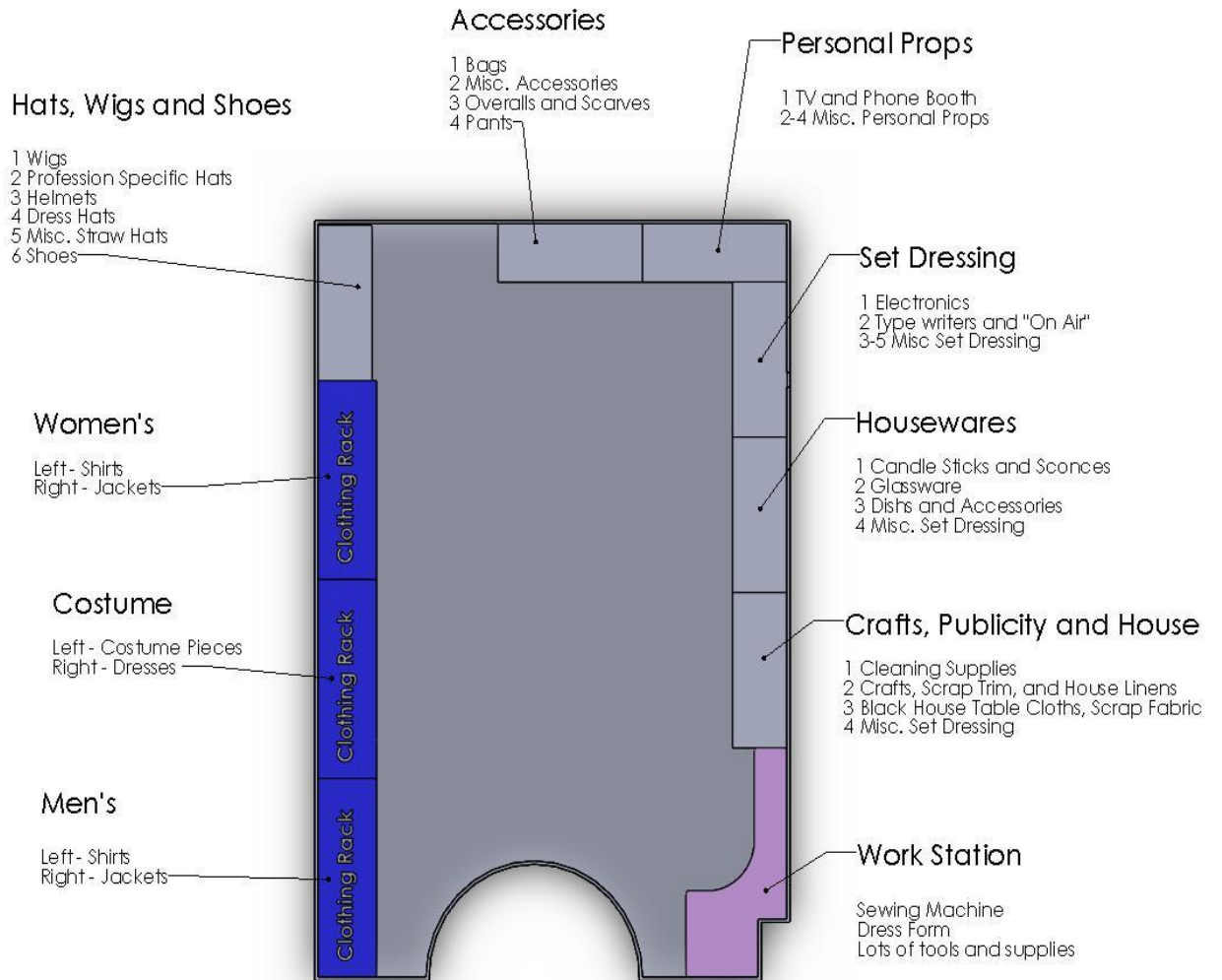


Figure 4 displays the final floor plan for the Design Lab. This will be posted near the lab as a map of the space.

Developing Policies for a New Space

In order to ensure that our project work was not in vain, we developed policies and procedures for the upkeep of our new design laboratory. We came up with borrowing policies for costume and props designers as well as house managers, suggestions for the position of the VP Props, as well as guidelines for maintaining order in the lab. We hope that these policies and procedures will help maintain the work we have done for years to come. We also hope that our guidelines help costume and prop designers to better understand the position and the responsibilities they hold in a production.

In developing these policies, we had a lot to consider. The current state of the closet is what drove much of our discussion. We knew from our survey that a major problem with the old space was that too many people were in and out without any one person taking charge. We decided that the most important part of our policy would be to insure that each show has a design lab liaison. The liaison will be responsible for keeping track of all of the items borrowed for his or her production and for coordinating with the costumes and props designers. This will insure that items are taken care of and returned. We also have created a new policy for the purchasing of new items. In order to keep the lab from filling with clutter, the costume and props designers will have to submit for review by the liaison a list of items they wish to buy. The liaison will help the designers to find suitable substitutions when possible and make sure that items that are unnecessary to keep are disposed of at the end of the production.

So that items do not go years without cleaning, our policies require that the costumes and dishes borrowed from the lab will be cleaned before being checked back in. We have made it the duty of the VP Props Master to ensure that there is always dish and laundry detergent available in the lab. Because our stock is limited, our policies require that designers request approval before altering any prop or costume. The policies also outline the procedure for cleaning the space during strike. These policies and procedures should help future Drama/Theatre students maintain a clean and functional work space.

Yard Sale

Due to limited funding, we decided to hold a yard sale. After sorting through the entire closet, we set aside things that were in good condition but we had no use for. We set a day and time for the yard sale and advertised, through Facebook, to the theatre community. Though there was some resistance, most people seemed excited that we had purged the closet of unnecessary clutter and jumped at the chance to own a piece of WPI theatre history.

The day before the sale we were informed of an alumni event that would prevent us from using the space we had planned to use. After much begging, we finally found another suitable space. We moved our event to Riley Commons and informed as many people as we could of the change. The next morning, as we began to set up our sale, we ran into yet another scheduling conflict. As it turns out, the space is used for weekly yoga classes.

In the end, we agreed to move our tables and the yoga class used the other half of the room. Although they seemed angry at first, many of the attendees browsed our yard sale and one even was kind enough to send out an email to the potpourri mailing list to inform faculty and staff of our event as our previous email to that mailing list did not get sent out.

The sale was open for six hours and many people wandered in and out. At the end of the day one of our theatre alumnus came in a purchased our remaining items for use in the school where he teaches math and advises the drama club. In total, we made \$175.



Picture 5 shows buyers perusing a small section of the items at our yard sale.

Results

The goal of our project was to provide the resources and knowledge necessary to elevate the level of professionalism in WPI's theatre's props and costumes design. We proposed that in order to achieve this we must renovate the costumes and props closet into the Properties and Costumes Design Lab. We planned on implementing a new system that would not only make the space easy to use but easy to maintain. With a more inviting space, we hope to encourage student who have never tried props or costume designing to explore this important and often overlooked element of theatre. We have found that, through our work, we have not only put together a creative workspace but spread our love of costuming and prop design throughout the WPI theatre community.

The first phase of the overhaul was to bring the closet out of the dark ages. We removed all of the props and costumes from the closet and culled items that were in poor condition. What we kept was cleaned and restored. We even received a collection of costumes from alumnus Katie Pearson. Many of these items were kept to help replenish the stock that was lost due to mold. With a fresh coat of paint, a good scrubbing, and some TLC, the closet emerged from its murky past and into a bright future.

In order to bring to reality our visions of a clean and healthy academic space, we took the appropriate steps to prevent future damage due to mold and moisture. The floors and walls were sealed and the new shelving units that were installed were chosen for their mold resistant properties. A desk was also built for the lab. Our hopes are that the desk and available art supplies will encourage students to try their hands at new design techniques, such as drawing costumes and making alterations to existing pieces.

The second phase of our project was to develop an organizational system that would be easy to use. This was important to us because we had seen first hand what problems could arise from a poor storage system. All of the costume pieces were categorized and catalogued. Their size, color, type, and location in the lab, as well as special notes, were recorded in an electronic catalog. Props were similarly catalogued with their specific function, category, and location in the lab. We feel that this system not only allows people to see exactly what is available to them but, also tells them how to locate the items, which has been a major problem in the past. With the catalogue available to the public, it will also be easy to return items to their proper place at end of a production.

In order to address the issue of accountability with regards to the use of the props and costumes, we devised a list of policies and procedures as well as a few forms to ensure that the lab remains in good order for years to come. We created a borrowing form for anyone who wishes to lease items from the closet. This includes House Mangers as well as Costumes and Props designers. The form will be filled out with their assigned liaison and kept in the design lab

until all of the borrowed items are returned. We also created a form for requesting new items. To prevent the buildup of duplicate items in the closet, the designer must submit a list of all the items that they intend to purchase. The liaison will review the list and help the designer to find ways to use existing stock when possible. We also wrote guidelines for the VP Properties. This included a guide to deciding what to keep and what to toss at the end of each production as well as suggestions for their officer position in Masque.

The third and final phase of our project was to make resources available to those interested in props and costume design. These resources are available on the website and provide important information for everyone from beginners to design veterans. We also hope that designers will turn to us as resources for the remainder of our time at WPI. Through this project we learned many new techniques, including creating injuries and rigging costumes for quick changes. We have also read and reviewed several books on the subject of costumes and props. The books are all available either through the Drama/Theatre Resource library or the Gordon Library on campus. In addition to the books, we have also compiled much of the results of our own online research and made the websites we found most useful available to Drama/Theatre students through the theatre website.

Looking back over the last five weeks, we feel that we have completed our project to the best of our ability despite the many obstacles we faced. We learned invaluable lessons about work in the real world as well as expanding our knowledge of theatre. With this came an even greater expansion of our love for our art. We hope that our project will provided the foundation for even further development of costume and props at WPI.

Developing Designers through Theatre Workshop

A striking fact of costume design at WPI is that, more often than not, you see the same people designing show after show. While this certainly has its advantages, one goal of this IQP is to foster interest in the costume and props designing field. Due to the fact that a fairly extensive costume design project is currently a requirement for the Theatre Workshop class, we created a space that would help students to develop their ideas. We have fabric and trim swatches, proper sized paper, art supplies, and accessories and costumes that can be borrowed (following the proper procedure). There are also guides on how to draw figures as that is an area that might stop some people from designing. Hopefully by giving students the tools they need to complete the project, they will be able to explore a design area they might have previously overlooked.

Costume Emergency Kits

Anyone who has worked in the theatre abides by two rules: the first being that there is an inflexible deadline and the other being Murphy's Law. This is certainly true for costuming as almost anything can go wrong, from hems coming loose to buttons popping off, from panty hose running to actors forgetting socks. The list goes on and on. In order to ease the stress of these incidents, we created a "Costume Emergency Kit." This kit is located in the Little Theatre Greenroom and is available for use for any WPI theatre production. The kit includes items such as, fashion tape, safety pins, needles and thread, panty hose, dress socks, shoe inserts, hair spray, anti-static spray, clear nail polish, bobby pins and hair elastics, disposable combs, disposable make up tools and other items that should always be kept in the green room. The kit's maintenance is to be funded by Masque, such that these basic items do not need to come out of any particular show's costuming or props budget. This kit can also grow each year as unexpected problems arise. Once again, this kit is to allow the costume designer to focus more on the actual design of the costumes than worry about show night issues.

Resources

Almost any resource a designer could ever need can be found in the Design Lab, the Props and Costumes section of the Masque website, the Resource Library or Gordon Library. A new designer should first consult with the Vice President of Properties to see exactly what resources are available for their use and to gain an understanding of the policies and procedures for using the Design Lab. It is recommended that before the design process begins, the designer read the "Costumer's Manifesto", which is available online, and *Making Stage Costumes: A Practical Guide*, which is available in the Gordon Library. These two resources contain a wide range of excellent information and guidance that can give both old and new designers an idea of where to start in the creative process. The "Costumer's Manifesto" summarizes what a great costume designer should strive to be, while *Making Stage Costumes* has quick tips and tricks that will make any designer's job significantly easier. This book also contains more advanced resources, including how to perform alterations on clothing pieces and how to completely change a costume piece with subtle additions and accessories.

Additional resources concerning special effects make-up, wigs, period costumes, and costume design are available in Gordon Library, the Drama/Theatre resource library, or online. Links to online videos along with our own picture tutorials can be found on the Masque website as well as in this document. The website is also where you can find the "How To's" we have created that cover everything from tying ties to rigging an outfit for quick changes to faking injuries. The Props and Costumes section of the Masque website is an excellent resource that everyone should explore, whether they are a designer or not.

How to Create Bruises

The following picture tutorial will show the basics of creating stage injuries.



1. Gather the following supplies: isopropyl alcohol, Q-tips, cosmetic sponges, and a bruise kit. These kits are available at party and costume stores.



2. Apply red with a cosmetic sponge to clean skin. Using a clean edge of the sponge, blend out the edges.



3. Using a cosmetic sponge apply a deep purple over the red but don't completely cover it.



4. Using a Q-tip, stipple black into the center of the bruise. Using the clean edge of a sponge, blend the black into the purple.



5. Using a Q-tip, apply yellow around the edges of the bruise. Using the clean edge of the sponge, blend the colors together.

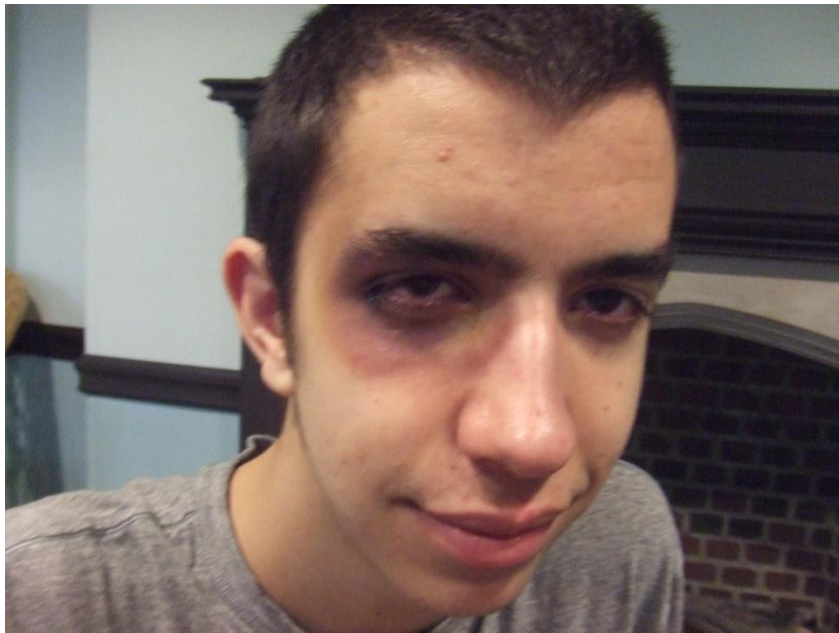


6. Clean all of the makeup with a squirt of 91% alcohol before putting away or using on another actor.

Here are some examples of the kind of injuries that can be created using this technique. These pictures were taken during the Bruise party.



Picture 6 is an example of a black eye



Picture 7 is another example of a particularly nasty black eye



Picture 8 shows that using the same techniques you can create a broken nose effect



Picture 9 displays a bruise surrounding a latex wound

Before and After: A Design Laboratory Tour

Due to the problems we encountered because of the mold in the Design Lab, our "Before" and "After" pictures are quite striking. Initially we planned to just see what needed to get done, and if necessary start the room over from scratch. After discovering the mold however, we had to completely redesign the space, prioritizing moisture control. The following pictures cover the "adventure" that is our IQP, from the initial somewhat toxic stages to the final clean and organized workspace.



Picture 10 depicts the utter chaos of the closet before the renovation. Large containers were marked improperly and stored far out of reach. Shelves were 3 feet deep, and items in the back were rendered inaccessible.



Picture 11 depicts the almost finished closet has shallower adjustable shelving units which allow a great deal of customization and organization



Picture 12 is of Clothing Rack 1, which houses all of the men's pieces. Shirts are on the left while jackets are on the right.



Picture 13 is Clothing Rack 2, which houses the costuming pieces and dresses.



Picture 14 is Clothing Rack 3, where all of the women's tops are stored. Shirts are on the left, while jackets are on the right.



Picture 15 shows the top of Shelving Unit 1 which is home to all of the wigs.



Picture 16 is of Shelving Unit 1. All of the hats are stored in that unit and are organized by style.



Picture 17 is of the bottom of Shelving Unit 1, where all the shoes can be found.



Picture 18 shows the luggage and bags which are found on the top of Shelving Unit 2.



Picture 19 is of misc. but properly labeled boxes filled with accessories which can be found in the middle of Shelving Unit 2.



Picture 20 shows all of the pants in the closet which are stored in drawers. This frees up a great deal of space on the clothing racks for costumes.



Picture 21 is of a few bulky set dressing pieces that are stored in the top of Shelving Unit 3.



Picture 22 is of Shelving Unit 3 which is also home to the "Personal Props" section of the lab.



Picture 23 shows the electronic set dressing pieces that are stored in the top of Shelving Unit 4.



Picture 24 shows assorted pieces from Shelving Unit 4.



Picture 25 displays all of our glassware, candle sticks, and sconces which can be found on Shelving Unit 5.



Picture 26 is of the middle of Shelving Unit 5 which houses the tableware, dishes, and other misc. food style items.



Picture 27 is of one of the new additions to the Design Lab: CLEANING SUPPLIES!



Picture 28 is of the Arts and Crafts supplies which can be found in the middle of Shelving Unit 6.



Picture 29 shows the table cloths for house that are stored in the middle of Shelving Unit 6, as is our supply of scrap fabric.



Picture 30 shows another wonderful addition to the Design Lab: a dress form. We hope that to see it used many times in the near future.



Picture 31 is of our new rolling clothing rack. This rack will be used not only to transport costumes from the Design Lab to the Little Theatre but also from the Little Theatre to the Laundromat as well.

Summary of the Bruise Party

In order to spread knowledge of various make-up practices, we held an instructional “Bruise Party”. During this event, we gave demonstrations on special make-up effects such as bruises, black eyes, broken noses, and aging. We allowed those in attendance to participate by practicing these techniques on themselves and others. We also demonstrated safe make-up use practices. Each person was given their own make-up sponge and it was replaced with a clean sponge often, rather than sharing sponges and using them for too long which can lead to the spreading of sickness. Also, the make-up being used was regularly sprayed with rubbing alcohol, to further prevent the spread of germs.

We believe that this bruise party was a success. We had five or six participants, and everyone seemed to have fun while learning the techniques that we demonstrated. This instructional party method is a great way to bring new ideas into the theatre community, as it gets many people involved and does not feel like a forced issue. People can relax with others, while continuing to learn skills that they can apply in their academic theatre pursuits.



Picture 32 shows a disgusting fake infection created at Bruise Party

Annotated Bibliography

Making Stage Costumes: A Practical Guide

by Tina Bicat

Whether the costume designer chooses to manufacture costumes or find them elsewhere, this book is filled with vital information and should be considered invaluable to our costume design lab. The first sentence of this book states precisely why it is perfect for WPI theatre, "This is not a book for experienced costume designers with time, money and skill at their disposal" (Bicat 9). This book is an easy read with useful illustrations that make certain concepts, such as cutting patterns and specific stitches, significantly easier to understand. If the designer buys or borrows costumes, this book also outlines small alterations that can morph a dress fit for royalty to that fit for a poor girl. Other useful notes about this book include its attention to small details such as the silhouette that a costume creates, which can help inspire design in costuming rather than just accumulating or "making do." I would highly recommend *Making Stage Costumes* to any costume designer, new or experienced, as the short time it takes to read this book can save hours of frustration and foster new ideas.

Make-Up for Theatre, Film & Television

by Lee Baygan

There is one necessity for a useful "how to" guide: clear illustrations. As WPI theatre does not currently have any make-up artists, this book is a great resource to keep on hand for those who are new to special effects make-up. Many of the techniques shown are aimed more towards large scale productions; however they can be adapted to be used in a more intimate setting. While the main focus of the book appears to be on application techniques, it also shows how a small change in the shape of the eyebrows or lips can give the appearance of different character traits, such as angry or sad. With a large variety of different looks and effects included in this book, it could be extremely useful to costume and props designers at WPI.

Stage Makeup

by Richard Corson and James Glavan

While *Stage Makeup* is a great resource about applying make-up, it is also a very dense textbook. Sections range from facial anatomy and color mixing, to applying make-up for various looks. This book is very difficult to read and filled with unnecessary information. This book appears to be aimed more at someone looking to pursue stage make-up as a profession rather than a student designer at WPI. That being said, the book is a good resource to have and can be found at Gordon Library.

Costumes for the Stage: A complete handbook for every kind of play.

by Shelia Jackson

This book is filled with information for creating costumes from many time periods. It also touches on several different cultural periods, such as Ancient Greek, Medieval, and Shakespearean. It includes examples of costumes from the 17th, 18th, and 19th century. Each chapter contains detailed diagrams of costume pieces and discusses appropriate variations for each time period. Instructions on how to create these pieces are also included. This book is available in the Gordon Library.

Drawing the Head and Figure

by Jack Hamm

This book contains all the information necessary for a beginner. It takes the reader through the process of drawing a figure one step at a time and includes useful examples and exercises for practice. This book is a wonderful resource for those who wish to create costumes from scratch. The book is available in the Drama/Theatre Resource Library.

Drawing and Rendering for Theatre

by Clare P. Rowe

This book is an excellent resource for costume designers who have been asked to render their designs. The book explains what is expected of the designer's rendering and all of the elements that should be included. It also discusses the many forms of renderings that can be done and the appropriate materials needed to create them. This book is available in the Drama/Theatre Resource Library.

Wigs and Make-up

by Patricia Baker

This book contains technical and detailed descriptions for make-up and wig use in the theatre. It covers topics such as special effects make up and aging. It also includes instructions for maintenance, care, and cleaning of wigs and head pieces. It is an interesting resource; however, it's not entirely relevant to the WPI theatre program. The information on special effects and make-up, however is useful including aging, injuries, tattoos, perspiration, and teeth effects. The book is available in the Gordon Library on WPI's campus.

Play List

The following is a list of plays that we have seen, read, and/or worked on throughout our years of participating in theatre. These plays have all contributed to our overall vision of how costuming and properties are planned for by a playwright, modified by a director, and fleshed out and implemented by a Designer. This vision that we have developed is what guided our decisions when making adjustments to the way costuming and properties work in WPI theatre.

<u>Playwright</u>	<u>Title</u>
Albee, Edward	<i>A Delicate Balance</i>
Barry, Philip	<i>The Philadelphia Story</i>
Bebel, Nick	<i>A Spy in Size Fours</i>
Beckett, Samuel	<i>Waiting for Godot</i>
Carlson, Tofer	<i>A Letter Unsent</i> <i>Glow</i>
Castonguay, Amy	<i>The Punisher: The Play</i>
Christie, Agatha	<i>The Mouse Trap</i>
Churchill, Caryl	<i>Top Girls</i>
Ciaraldi, Michael J	<i>First Draft</i>
Darensbourg, Catherine	<i>Attic</i> <i>French Vanilla</i>
Dickens, Charles	<i>A Christmas Carol</i>
DiGiovanni, Dominic	<i>Mad City, Inhabited</i> <i>Trusted Download</i>
DiPietro, Joe	<i>Over the River and Through the Woods</i>
Durang, Christopher	<i>Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You</i>
Ehrenreich, Barbara	<i>Nickel and Dimed</i>
Gale, Zona	<i>Miss Lulu Bett</i>

Gilbreath, Dan and Edmund Massa	<i>Space Station Deluxe</i>
Grecian, Philip	<i>A Christmas Story</i>
Greenaway, Peter	<i>The Pillow Book</i>
Guare, John	<i>Marco Polo Sings a Solo</i> <i>Six Degrees of Separation</i>
Hansberry, Lorraine	<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>
Harder, Eleanor	<i>Rememberin' Stuff</i>
Hart, Moss and George S. Kaufman	<i>You Can't Take it With You</i>
Harrower, Shannon	<i>Bower Bird, AKA Crazies in Love</i> <i>Men are from Oz, Women are from Venus</i> <i>The Princess and the Body Snatchers</i> <i>Raccoon a la Mode</i> <i>Screw This Noise</i> <i>Schrodinger's Cat in the Hat (fancy that!)</i> <i>Sympathy for the Devil</i> <i>Union Station</i>
Hellman, Lillian	<i>The Children's Hour</i>
Ibsen, Henrik	<i>A Doll's House</i> <i>Hedda Gabler</i>
Ives, David	<i>Speed the Play</i>
Johnson, James	<i>Something in the Void</i>
Kaufman, Moises	<i>The Laramie Project</i> <i>Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde</i>
Kelly, Tim	<i>It was a Dark and Stormy Night</i>
Knott, Fredrick	<i>Wait Until Dark</i>
Kopit, Arthur	<i>Wings</i>

LaVerriere, Ben	<i>Thirty-Six Situations</i>
Mamet, David	<i>Glengarry Glen Ross</i> <i>Sexual Perversity in Chicago</i> <i>Speed the Plow</i>
Martin, Steve	<i>The Underpants</i>
Massa, Edmund	<i>Love Love Love Three Stories of Love</i>
Miller, Arthur	<i>The Crucible</i> <i>Death of a Salesman</i>
Morris, Vera	<i>Beauty and the Beast</i>
Nakama, Adam	<i>How to Meet Girls, for Voice Actors</i> <i>Walt and Wilde</i>
O'Donnell, Dean	<i>25</i> <i>Footsie</i>
O'Neill, Eugene	<i>Long Day's Journey into Night</i>
Osborne, Christopher	<i>Hangman</i>
Parks, Suzan-Lori	<i>Topdog/Underdog</i>
Patrick, John	<i>The Curious Savage</i>
Pavis, Richard	<i>Infected</i> <i>Sudden Silence, Sudden Heat</i>
Pavis, Sarah	<i>Shot in the Heart</i>
Patrick, John	<i>Curious Savage</i>
Rahman, Aishah	<i>The Mojo and the Sayso</i>
Robinson, Barbara	<i>The Best Christmas Pageant Ever</i>
Rose, Reginald	<i>12 Angry Men</i>
Royal, Bert	<i>Dog Sees God</i>

Russell, Stephen	<i>Daisy Crockett: Frontiersperson, or Be Sure You're Right Then Go Ahead!</i>
Shakespeare, William	<i>Hamlet</i> <i>Julius Caesar</i> <i>Macbeth</i> <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> <i>Othello</i> <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> <i>The Taming of the Shrew</i> <i>The Tempest</i>
Shaw, George Bernard	<i>Pygmalion</i>
Shepard, Sam	<i>Curse of the Starving Class</i> <i>Savage Love</i>
Simon, Neil	<i>The Dinner Party</i>
Sophocles	<i>Antigone</i> <i>Oedipus</i>
Vessella, Steven	<i>To Stop</i>
Vogel, Paula	<i>How I Learned to Drive</i>
Wilde, Oscar	<i>The Importance of Being Ernest</i>
Wilder, Thornton	<i>Our Town</i>
Williams, Tennessee	<i>A Street Car Named Desire</i> <i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i> <i>Glass Menagerie</i>

Musicals

A Christmas Carol
Annie
Annie Get Your Gun
Anything Goes
Beauty and the Beast
Bright Lights Big City
Cats
Chicago
Fiddler on the Roof
The Full Monty
Godspell
Grease
Guys and Dolls
Hairspray
Hedwig and the Angry Inch
Into the Woods
Jesus Christ Superstar
Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat
Kiss Me Kate
Last Five Years
Legally Blonde the Musical
Les Miserables
Lion King
Little Shop of Horrors
Mamma Mia
The Mikado
Music Man
My Fair Lady
The Nutcracker
Oliver
Oklahoma
Once on this Island
Peter Pan
The Phantom of the Opera
Pocahontas
Rent
School House Rock Jr.
Songs for a New World
Spamalot
Sweeney Todd
Thoroughly Modern Millie

Tick, Tick... BOOM!
West Side Story
Wicked

Appendices

The following is a collection of documents relevant to our project.

Design Laboratory Usage Policies

- 1) The Vice President in charge of Properties will be the liaison for your show or you will be assigned one by the VP. All access to the lab must be arranged through him/her.
- 2) A list of items to be purchased must be submitted to the liaison for review before items are bought. This is to prevent the buildup of duplicates in the design lab.
- 3) All items to be borrowed must be checked out with the liaison. A list of the items borrowed will be kept in the lab until all items are returned or replaced.
- 4) All borrowed items are to be returned and checked in by the liaison by the end of strike with the exception of clothing. See below.
- 5) Clothing and tablecloths must be washed and dried before being returned to the lab. Hypoallergenic laundry detergent and dryer sheets will be provided. Non-hypoallergenic materials should not be used. Detergents for darker linens and clothing will also be provided. The liaison will decide whether or not dry clean only items must be cleaned before they are returned during strike. All kitchen wares must be washed and dried before put away. Dish detergent will be provided. Clean clothes should be returned to the lab within five days of the close of show.
- 6) It will be responsibility of properties or costumes designers or house manger to return items, in the same condition they left, to the proper place in the lab. Damaged items should be reported to the liaison for replacement. No alterations should be made to any item without the approval of the liaison. Actors should not eat, drink, or smoke while in costume. It is the responsibility of the designer to inform the actors of costume rules.
- 7) Sewing machines are available for use in the lab or scenic design studio only. The instruction manuals are available for reference. Any broken or missing equipment should be immediately reported to the liaison. The tread and bobbin should be removed from the machine after use and the sewing station should be cleaned.
- 8) Clothing steamers and irons are available for use. They may be checked out and brought to the Little Theatre Green Room for use during shows. The water compartments must be emptied and dried before being returned to the lab.
- 9) An emergency costume repair kit will be available for use in the Little Theatre Green Room. Use of items in the kit should be reported to the liaison for restocking purposes.
- 10) No food or drink is allowed in the lab. Before leaving the lab, close all storage containers, zip up all covered shelving units and clothing racks, and return everything to its proper place. Nothing should be left on the floor or desk. The lights should be turned off and the door locked whenever the lab is not in use. At the end of the show, the lab should be thoroughly cleaned during strike.

Guidelines for a Clutter-Free Design Lab

- 1) Costume pieces that have been stained, ripped, or irreversibly altered should not be kept.
- 2) Props that have be irreversibly altered or damaged should not be kept.
- 3) The catalog should be used to the designer's advantage. Before making purchases, check the catalog.
- 4) Just because an item was newly purchased or altered from the existing stock for a production does not mean it must be kept. Use your best judgment to decide whether or not the item is likely to be used again. Items that are likely to be used again are generic or nondescript (i.e. a white t-shirt, black pants, a clock) may be kept. Items that are unlikely to be used again (i.e. jeans that have been written on, clocks that have been painted, wigs that have been died or cut) should be thrown away.
- 5) If a new item is purchased, check the stock and see if this item could be used to replace an old item. Throw the older item away.
- 6) New items should be catalogued immediately.

Suggestions for Vice President of Properties

The following items have been submitted to the President of Masque for consideration in the rewriting of the duties of the executive positions.

- 1) Tag, categorize, and file all new items added to the design lab stock.
- 2) Ensure a supply of dish detergent and hypo-allergenic clothing detergents and dryer sheets is kept available in the closet for the washing of costumes after the show.
- 3) Regularly check the lab for any standing water, leaks in pipes, water stains on walls/floor, mold growth.
- 4) Enforce the rule that no make-up is stored in the design lab or Little Theatre Green Room, as a new supply of make-up should be purchased for each show and disposed of at the end of the show.
- 5) Purchase replacement items for those used from the Emergency Costume Repair Kit.
- 6) Maintain the organization of the lab.

Survey Responses

1. Please explain capacity in which you have used the costume and prop closet at WPI.

- Costume Designer for Underpants, Daisy, NV
- Props for Mojo
- Props and Costumes for Daisy
- My sophomore year I helped Galia out with many plays starting A-term. I was often in custody of the keys and basically half did costumes before I was elected Props mistress my junior year. I was generally costumes and just helped others look for what was needed for props.

2. What do you feel is the role of the costume and props designer?

- To talk to with the director, get the theme, and find clothing that matches the director's specification.
- To figure out when the costumes and props are needed, figure when they appear in show, and procure
- To dress the stage and actors. Provide costumes that would be used more than once, hopefully.
- The role of the costume and props designer is to make sure the show has all the props and costumes that it needs and that all items have a cohesive look that complements the play's setting
- Creatively dress the characters of each production and ensure the production has the props needed to be the most entertaining show it can be.

3. Do you find it easy to navigate the closet and locate the items you need? If not, please explain what made it difficult.

- It was really, really messy. So, I could only find a couple of things
- The biggest issue is accessibility.
- I only found it difficult to use when it was not properly cleaned after use, then again I had nearly two years in there and knew it better than most. A lot of people have access to it and give the keys away however they wish. This makes it hard to organize and keep it organized. People would leave broken glasses, plates, dirty (to the point of not being able to clean them) clothes, sweat stained shirts, single shoes, etc. I think there is a huge disrespect of the closet
- In my experience it hasn't been easy to navigate the props closet because all of the costumes were out of order and completely random, also there were lots of bins everywhere, mostly stacked on top of each other and out of reach.

4. In your opinion, what would make the closet easier to use?

- Those zip up closet things should be organized either by color or male and female.
- A labeling system that sticks.
- A ladder
- A directory
- Better organization would make it much easier to use. Possibly utility shelves?
- Furniture should not be kept in the closet. That stupid wicker lounge takes up way too much room and people tend to leave set stuff in the closet.

5. If you could change one thing about the closet, what would it be?

- Less cluttered with stuff...it's completely packed. There's stuff everywhere.

- Sewing machines and a work station.

- A labeling system, inventory that's easily updatable--with the condition of each prop or article of clothing, work surfaces

- a catalogue of items, preferably online

6. If you could purchase one item for the closet, what would it be?

- I'd like basic costumes in there, like standard plain black outfits

- Fabric and a steamer

Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
5/24/2009	25	26	27	28	29	30
	- Project Proposal, meeting with Jess, research, and closet evaluation	-Begin closet clean out	-Contact facilities about mold problem, finish cleaning out the closet	-Meeting with Jess, mold specialist in closet, trip to library	- Mold specialist in closet, research	
31	6/1/2009	2	3	4	5	6
	- CAD model of space, sorting and pricing yard sale items	- shopping for new shelving units, cleaning space, Yard sale publicity	-organizing items to be kept, putting together new shelving units,	-yard sale publicity and replanning event	-Yard sale	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	- trip to Laundromat and fur shop, returning unwanted shelves, purchasing new ones	- lunch with Jess, putting together shelves, trip to target	- meeting with Prof. Hanlan and facilities, sorting through art supplies	- meeting with Jess, preparing documents for next meeting	- research, documents, reading	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	-Interview with Lindsey(noon)	- paperwork, cleaning, sorting	-meeting with jess, cleaning, shelving units	-first trip to WHAT, preparations for bruise party	interview with Vickie and Lauren, Bruise party, trip to WHAT	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	-painting, organizing	-painting, organizing, cleaning	-retrieving secret props and costumes	-sorting new items, organization	-cleaning, writing, storing	-writing
28	29	30	7/1/2009	2	3	4
	-final meeting with Jess, online project submission	-final draft submission				

Log of Hours

Date	Details of Work Completed	Derrick	Megan	Lauren
5/26/2009	Project Proposal	3	3	3
	Meeting With Jess	1	1	1
	Closet and Project Evaluation and Brainstorming	0	1.5	1.5
	Organization Research	0	1.5	1.5
5/27/2009	Clearing, sorting, trashing	10	10	9
	Organizational research	0	0	1
	Picture editing and uploading	0	1	0
5/28/2009	Cleaning, sorting, trashing, ripping up platforms and shelves, CAD model of closet, budget	10	10	10
	Meeting with Jess	1	1	1
5/29/2009	Researching Drywall costs, re-evaluating budget	6	10	10
6/1/2009	Sorting, Pricing, Timeline, CAD, Yard sale publicity	0	10	10
	Researching books	3	0	0
6/2/2009	Cleaning	1	0	1
	Reading/Evaluating Books, Meeting With Jess	6	6	6
	Editing Book Order List	3	0	0
	Shopping for Shelving	0	3	3
6/3/2009	Building Shelves, organizing clothes to be washed, cleaning the studio	3	1	0
	researching, writing book reports	5	5	4
6/4/2009	organizing shop, taking apart bad cabinets	1	0	0
	chalking, publicizing yard sale	2	0	2
	Researching	0	2	0
	Rescheduling yard sale, planning	6	6	6
6/5/2009	yard sale	10	10	10
6/7/2009	research	4	0	0
	reading books	0	2	3
6/8/2009	organizing	1	0	0
	cleaning costumes	4	4	4
	returning cabinets, buying new shelves, selling furs	2	2	0
	research	3	3	5
6/9/2009	meeting with Jess, researching storage, building shelves, organizing	10	10	10
6/10/2009	putting together shelving units	2	2	2
	Meeting with Professor Hanlan and Facilities	1	1	1

Date	Detail of Work Completed	Derrick	Megan	Lauren
6/10/2009	storage and organizational evaluation and purchasing	2	2	2
	sorting through art supplies	2	2	2
	brainstorming new name for the space	1	1	1
	Emailing candidates for interview requests	0	0	1
	waiting for facilities	1	0	0
6/11/2009	Meeting with Jess	1	1	1
	Preparing documents	4	0	4
	Reading scenic IQP	0	0	1
	Updating pictures	0	0	1
	Reading	3	3	3
6/12/2009	Compiling/Formatting Play List	0	2	0
	Reading/Writing Annotated Bibliography	0	4	0
	Fixing Up Budget	0	1	0
	reading, writing reports, researching	7	0	0
6/13/2009	writing, editing	0	0	7
6/14/2009	writing, editing	0	0	7
6/15/2009	paperwork, sorting through props/arts supplies cleaning Studio	7	7	7
6/17/2009	meeting with jess, paperwork/research	10	10	10
6/17/2009	research/paperwork, purchasing make-up, organizing props	8	8	8
8/18/2009	shopping for make-up, storage containers, closet stock, paperwork, preparing for bruise party, meeting with jess	10	10	10
	Wellfleet Trip	0	7	0
6/19/2009	preparing for bruise party, bruise party, interviews, cleaning Alden green room	10	10	10
	Wellfleet Trip	0	7	7
6/22/2009	painting, paperwork	8	9	5
6/23/2009	painting, organizing props/costumes in studio, buying organizational materials	10	14	10
6/24/2009	getting clothes from Katie, cataloging, dropping of dry cleaning, painting	10	10	10
6/25/2009	cataloging, building shelves, moving into design lab	10	10	10
6/26/2009	cataloging, working on sign, organizing/building shelves, writing paper	8	11	10

Date	Detail of Work Completed	Derrick	Megan	Lauren
6/28/2009	cataloging, organizing, writing paper	0	10	0
6/29/2009	writing paper	4	6	6
	organizing, cleaning, tour	0	10	10
6/30/2009	writing paper	10	10	10

Total		237	281	268

Meeting Minutes

This is a small sample of notes taken during various meetings with Jessica Sands, our Advisor. Minutes generally included specific tasks that needed to be concluded before our next meeting, as well as general items that needed to be taken care of at some point during the project.

Meeting Minutes, 6-2:

- Jessica will:
 - o Front money for purchasing
 - o Email Katie about secret closet

- You all:
 - o Speak to Karen about Home Depot or other places that take PO's or will invoice
 - o Ask Mary to buy books once list is approved by Jessica
 - o Start writing about books you've read
 - o Publicize yard sale: potpourri @wpi.edu
 - o Talk about organization and labeling: MAP OF ROOM
 - o Have Pat talk to Terry about Concrete Sealer and paint needs
 - o Rework book order so it has:
 - Title
 - Author
 - ISBN number
 - Publisher
 - Links, too
 - And rank them in order, include price, add in ones we should order to have, too
 - Email to Jessica by Wednesday

- No meeting on Thursday.
- See you TUESDAY, JUNE 8th at 1:00 pm in STUDIO!

Meeting Minutes, 6-11

- For Monday at 1:00:
 - o Draft of Table of Contents
 - o Annotated Bibliography
 - o Hours Log - calendar
 - o Project Proposal
 - o Budget
 - o Survey responses
 - o Play List
 - o Yard Sale post-mortem

- WHAT IS THIS ROOM CALLED?

- Props and Costumes Design Lab??
- Keep thinking
- Other notes:
 - Think about –
 - Research
 - Outreach
 - Resources
 - See what to pull from IQP and then add in your specifics
 - Mold issue – how to keep clean and healthy
 - Making costumes less of an afterthought
 - Example – both from the past (Romeo and Juliet, Dog Sees God, Gross) and the future directors – interview, meeting minutes
 - How Lighting effects costumes – collaborative
 - Design Meetings between all the designers and directors and stage managers
 - Bruise Party (blood, tie, etc.) – Videos?
 - Photos of space/Tour
- WHAT IS GOING ON THE WEB SECTION?
 - Videos
 - Photos of space
 - WPI resources – people, how to think about costume design, books,
 - Online resources – links to sites, videos,
 - How to gain access/policies
 - Who to contact?
- Sewing Machines???
- How do we make legitimate changes to our academic program?
 - TALK ABOUT THIS! Come up with answers.
 - Creating inviting space
 - Using space
 - Presentation at Masque meeting in fall
 - Continue work with A-term show
 - Getting people excited about the work you’re doing

Meeting Minutes, 6-16

- We need to make a Borrowing Form
- What should we do if a random person wants to borrow a prop for a short time?
 - Possibility: They can fill out a borrowing form, but can ignore the rest of the forms
- Should we put the full “Properties” or “laboratory” in the official title of the space?

- On the forms to be given to props masters:
 - o The PM should “check list with the Liaison before purchases for shows, to avoid duplication”, rather than the VPP approving all purchases
 - o Dishware/silverware should be washed and returned during strike
- The VP Props should provide dish soap for washing props
- We should read the masque constitution to find the current information on the VP Props
- We should put the books in the budget
- The budget should be broken into sections (Storage, stock, washing, etc)
- The books reviews should be modified so that the last sentence is more formal (“This book is [not] available on campus [at the Gordon library, in the Costume Lab, etc]”)
- For the Project Proposal:
 - o Avoid negative phrases like “Completely Useless”
 - o Add examples of shows that have successfully used costumes. Don’t forget that it’s not all been bad
 - o Include what will be done once school starts
- Make the web resources that will appear on the masque site
- Review the edits on the play list
- In the paper, put the policies in the results section. Also, include a detailed floor map and pictures of the lab, fully stocked
- Put general contact info on the door to the space
- Put the survey and the big ideas that were taken from the answers in the research section, put people’s specific answers in the results section
- We should do more outreach. Possibly talk to schools in the fall when there are actually people there
- In the paper, include what has worked well in the past (specific shows) and ideas for working with directors in the future
- Make a video tour of the lab
- Chris is making the electronic database for us
- We should review the masque resource pages for ideas
- Create a VP Props email alias that will be updated for each new VP Props. Include this on the website, and on the lab door
- Fix the rest of the sewing machines
- We could begin organizing outside of the space, because we are short on time
- We should create a definite/discrete labeling system
 - o We will have a grid system for the shelves, with categories for each rack, and it should be clear (labeled in the closet, and on all paperwork)
- Email jess on Wednesday for a facilities update
- For Thursday:
 - o Create an updated list of what’s left to do
 - o Update the table of contents
 - o Meeting at 10 in the Studio

Budget

Our budget was composed of funds from the Humanities and Arts department, the Alpha Psi Omega fundraiser, and the student project fund. We used the Humanities and Arts and student project funds to complete the majority of the work. This includes cleaning supplies, paint, storage containers, props such as a set of dishes, art supplies, and a costume emergency repair kit. We also used the money to go to another theatre, the Wellfleet Harbor Actor's Theatre, where we were allowed access to their props and costume storage areas. Alpha Psi Omega generously donated the funds needed to install a new storage system. With this money, we were able to purchase six new shelving units and create a desk. The units were assembled in the closet and will store the majority of the properties, while the desk serves as a creative work space.

Funding	
Source	Amount
Humanities and Arts Department	899
Alpha Psi Omega	648
Project Student Fund	150
Yard Sale	175
TOTAL	1872

Itemized Budget

Budget Break Down

Item	Quantity	Price Total (Including Tax)	
Gloves	1	10	
Mask	2	20	
Washing and Drying	N/A	27	
Gorilla Shelving Racks*	6	412.4	*Alpha Psi Omega
Storage Bins - Large	3	18.87	
Storage Bins - Small	3	5.01	
Shoe rack	1	20.99	
Silverware	1	9.44	
Thread	1	1.98	
Paint and Supplies	N/A	119.26	
Make-Up	2	38.28	
Misc. Cleaning Supplies	N/A	35.75	
Food Coloring	1	2.04	
Make-Up Supplies	N/A	8.28	
Rolling Clothes Rack	1	55.64	
Storage Containers	N/A	34.38	
Table Set (dishes, mugs, bowls etc)	1	41.99	
Corn Syrup and Cocoa Powder (for fake blood)	1	5.78	
Supplies for Sign	N/A	45.95	
Sketch Pad and Pencils	1	14.53	
Floor Paint	1	32.95	
Desk Paint	1	19.47	*Alpha Psi
Supplies to Make Desk	1	58.55	*Alpha Psi
Dress Form	1	136.49	
Hem Marker	1	22.04	
Misc Sewing Supplies	N/A	74.1	
264 Miles @ \$.48	1	126.72	
15 Gallons of Gas		40.5	
Total Spent		1438.39	
Total Left		433.61	

Forms

WPI DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND ARTS, DRAMA/THEATRE

THE PROPERTIES AND COSTUMES DESIGN LABORTORY TERMS OF USE

The following policies and procedures outline what is expected of those who use the space. Please read them carefully and fill out and sign the reverse side. Contact the VP Properties or the liaison with any questions.

- 1) The Vice President in charge of Properties will be the liaison for your show or you will be assigned on by the VP. All access to the lab must be arranged through him/her.
- 2) A list of items to be purchased must be submitted to the liaison for review before items are bought. This is to prevent the buildup of duplicates in the design lab.
- 3) All items to be borrowed must be checked out with the liaison. A list of the items borrowed will be kept in the lab until all items are returned or replaced.
- 4) All borrowed items are to be returned and checked in by the liaison by the end of strike with the exception of clothing. See below.
- 5) Clothing and tablecloths must be washed and dried before being returned to the lab. Hypoallergenic laundry detergent and dryer sheets will be provided. Non-hypoallergenic materials should not be used. Detergents for darker linens and clothing will also be provided. The liaison will decide whether or not dry clean only items must be cleaned before they are returned during strike. All kitchen wares must be washed and dried before put away. Dish detergent will be provided. Clean clothes should be returned to the lab within five days of the close of show.
- 6) It will be responsibility of properties or costumes designers or house manger to return items, in the same condition they left, to the proper place in the lab. Damaged items should be reported to the liaison for replacement. No alterations should be made to any item without the approval of the liaison. Actors should not eat, drink, or smoke while in costume. It is the responsibility of the designer to inform the actors of costume rules.
- 7) Sewing machines are available for use in the lab or scenic design studio only. The instruction manuals are available for reference. Any broken or missing equipment should be immediately reported to the liaison. The tread and bobbin should be removed from the machine after use and the sewing station should be cleaned.
- 8) Clothing steamers and irons are available for use. They may be checked out and brought to the Little Theatre Green Room for use during shows. The water compartments must be emptied and dried before being returned to the lab.
- 9) An emergency costume repair kit will be available for use in the Little Theatre Green Room. Use of items in the kit should be reported to the liaison for restocking purposes.
- 10) No food or drink is allowed in the lab. Before leaving the lab, close all storage containers, zip up all covered shelving units and clothing racks, and return everything to its proper place. Nothing should be left on the floor or desk. The lights should be turned off and the door locked whenever the lab is not in use. At the end of the show, the lab should be thoroughly cleaned during strike.

WPI DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND ARTS,
DRAMA/THEATRE

THE PROPERTIES AND COSTUME DESIGN LABORATORY CONTRACT

Designer Name _____

Email Address _____

Phone Number _____

Production Title _____

Production Dates _____

On the reverse of this page are the policies and procedures regarding the use of Design Laboratory. By signing this document you agree to abide by the rules and regulations listed. Your assigned Design Laboratory liaison will contact you to confirm your request and will work with you periodically throughout your project. If you fail to follow the attached policies and procedures, you will lose the privilege of using the Properties and Costume Design Laboratory.

“I have read the terms of use, agree to abide by them, and will contact my liaison if any problems arise during my use of the space”

(name)

(date)

(signature)

