

Thomas Allen
Senior Capstone
2020

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This book serves as a representation of the work that I have done as a student at the Performing Institute of Minnesota from 2016 until 2020. This Capstone is my last step in earning an endorsement in Visual Arts, and is an opportunity to celebrate my achievements and dedication to the PiM Arts community.

Thank you to all of the staff members and students who were present during those four years. They are fantastic teachers of the arts, supportive community members, and wonderful peers.



Thomas Allen

Multi-Disciplinary Artist

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I am a multi-disciplinary artist with a special interest in technical theater. I am from Hopkins, Minnesota, and am an Alum of the Performing Institute of Minnesota, an arts high school in Eden Prairie.



While I was a student at the Performing Institute of Minnesota (PiM), I majored in Visual Arts and was actively involved in the arts community. Along with participating in the visual arts activities, I also was an extremely active member of the school's technical theater group known as "PiM Crew". As a member of PiM Crew, I did work in as deck crew, as sound board and light board technician, as lighting designer, as stage manager, and was also involved in costume design and creation.



Visual



Arts



BREATHE A
SIGH OF RELIEF



AFTER THE
WAR

JOIN THE ARMY

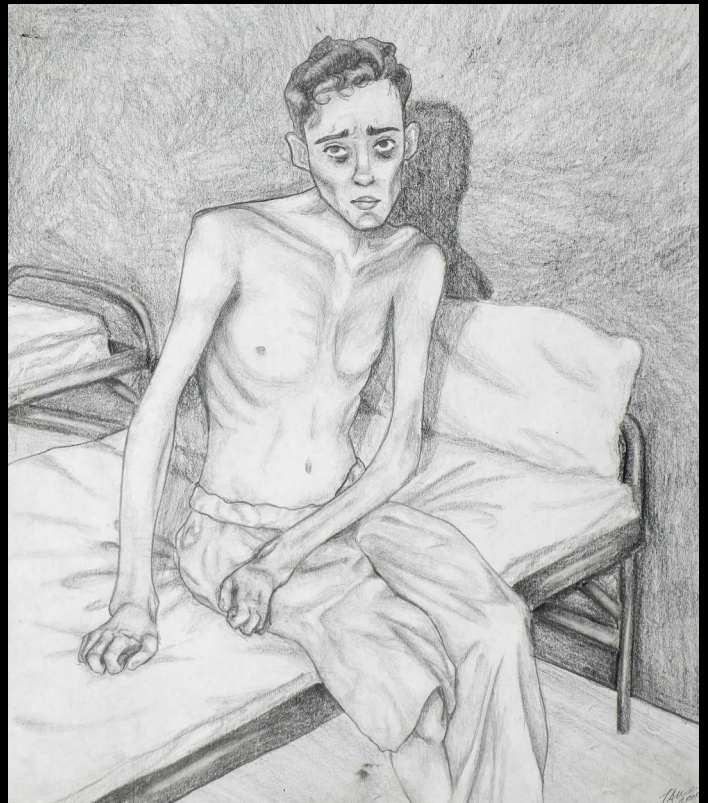
Coming into PiM, I had no formal artistic training. I was unaware of the elements that went into good pieces of art, nor did I have the confidence to experiment with the art I was doing. I learned how to use more dynamic compositions, use better references in a more effective way, and create color stories that were more cohesive.



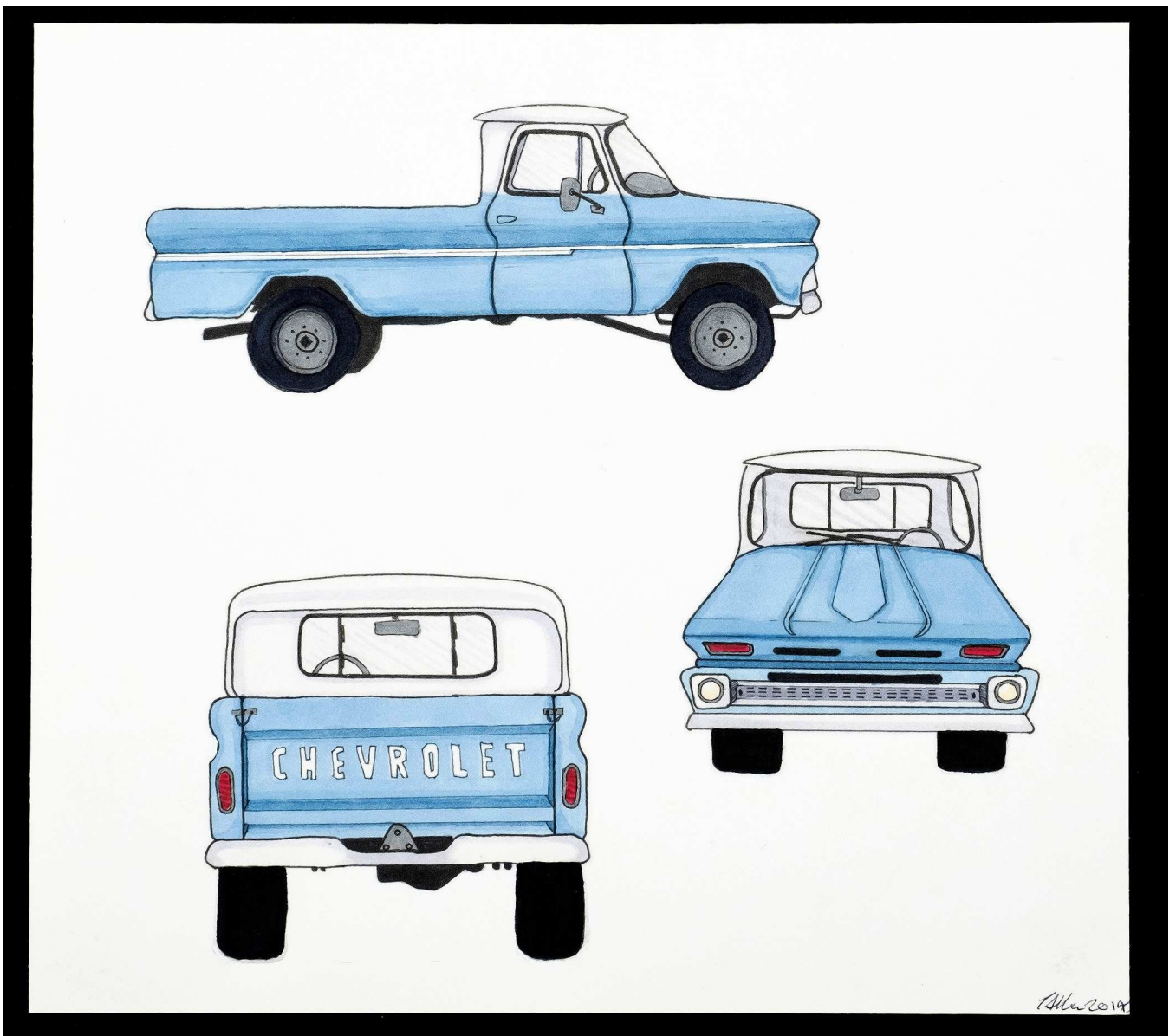


During the time I was working on furthering my artistic abilities, I started to use more complex references and was able to take artistic liberties that I wasn't comfortable taking before. I found I could display my style and get the point of the piece across at the same time.

Once I gained more confidence in my artistic abilities, I slowly began experimenting with more challenging subject matter and themes. I felt that taking bigger risks had warranted better results, and I had the support of my teachers behind me. It was good to be challenged to try new things and push my art further, especially knowing that I was surrounded by people who were there to help build me up.

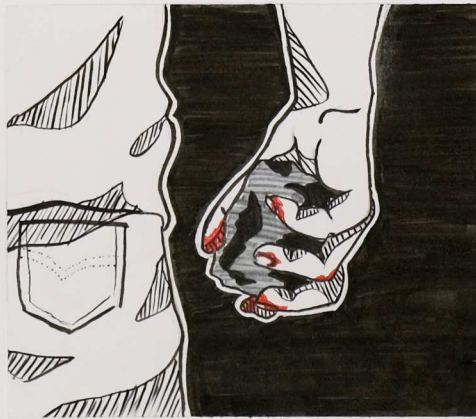
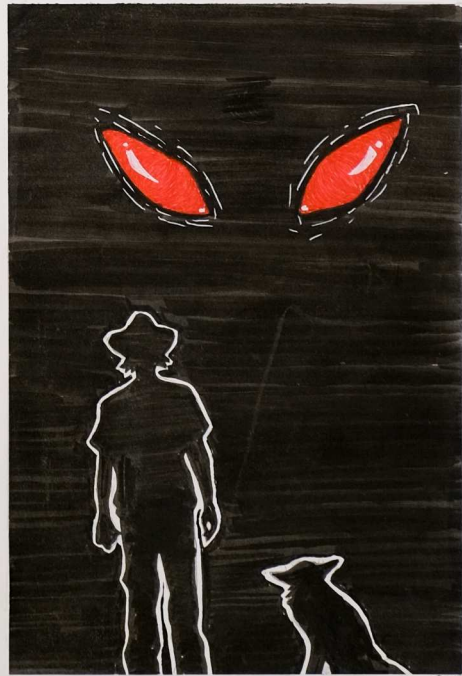
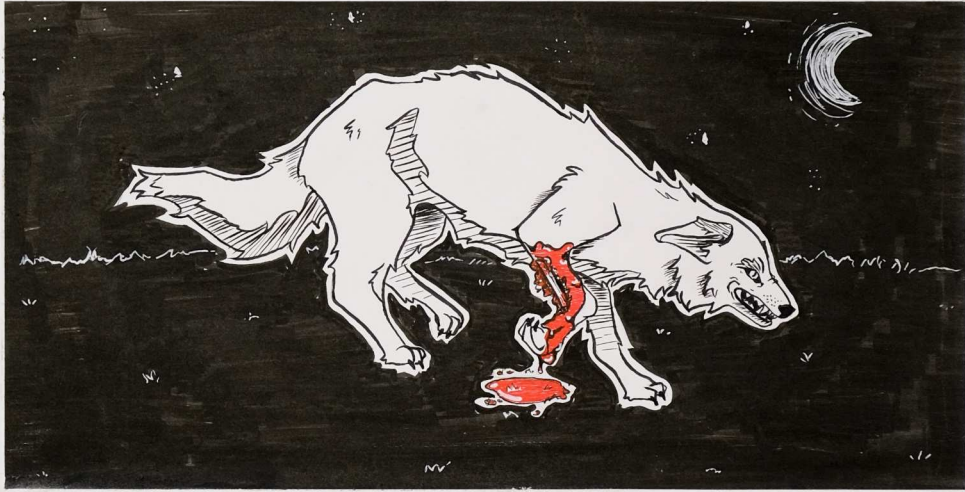




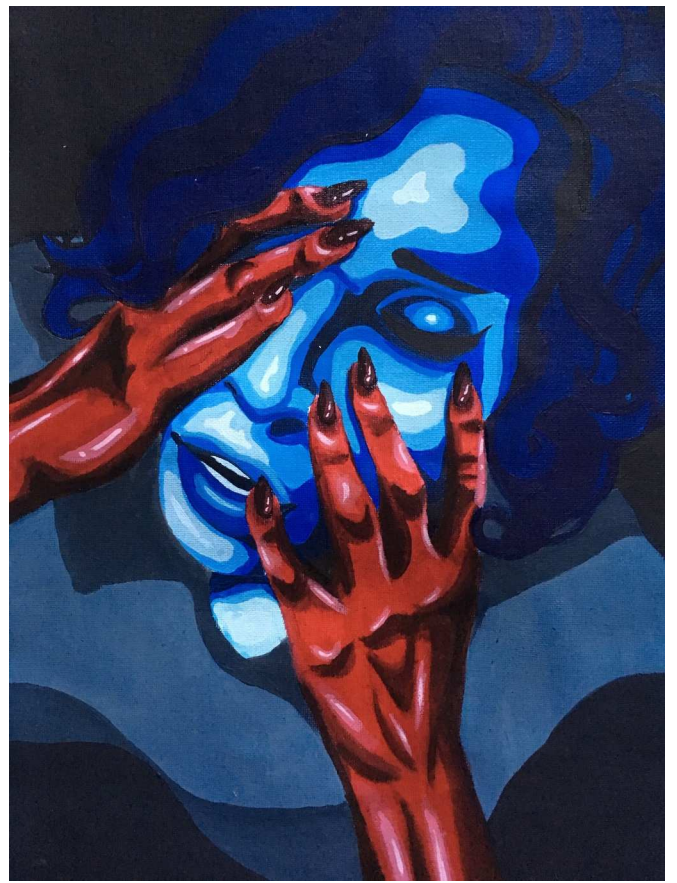


While refining and furthering my abilities I started to do more work with design pieces and narrative art. I was given valuable skills in realism in my art classes at PiM, but there was still support and flexibility to try out less realistic styles and attempt to do more stylized story pieces. It was helpful to have encouragement and be educated on varying styles and have the ability to create in many different formats.

THE HUNT

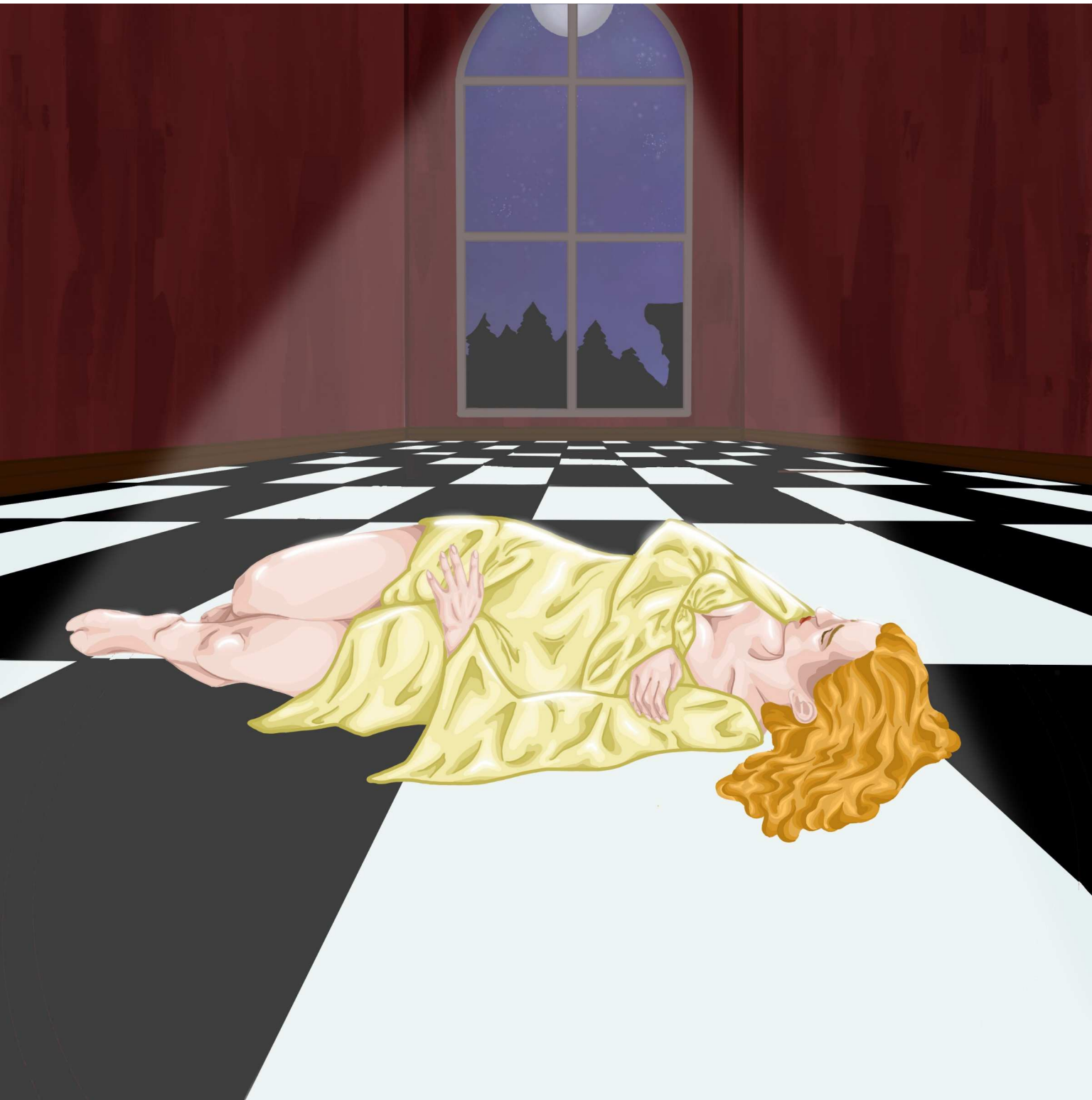


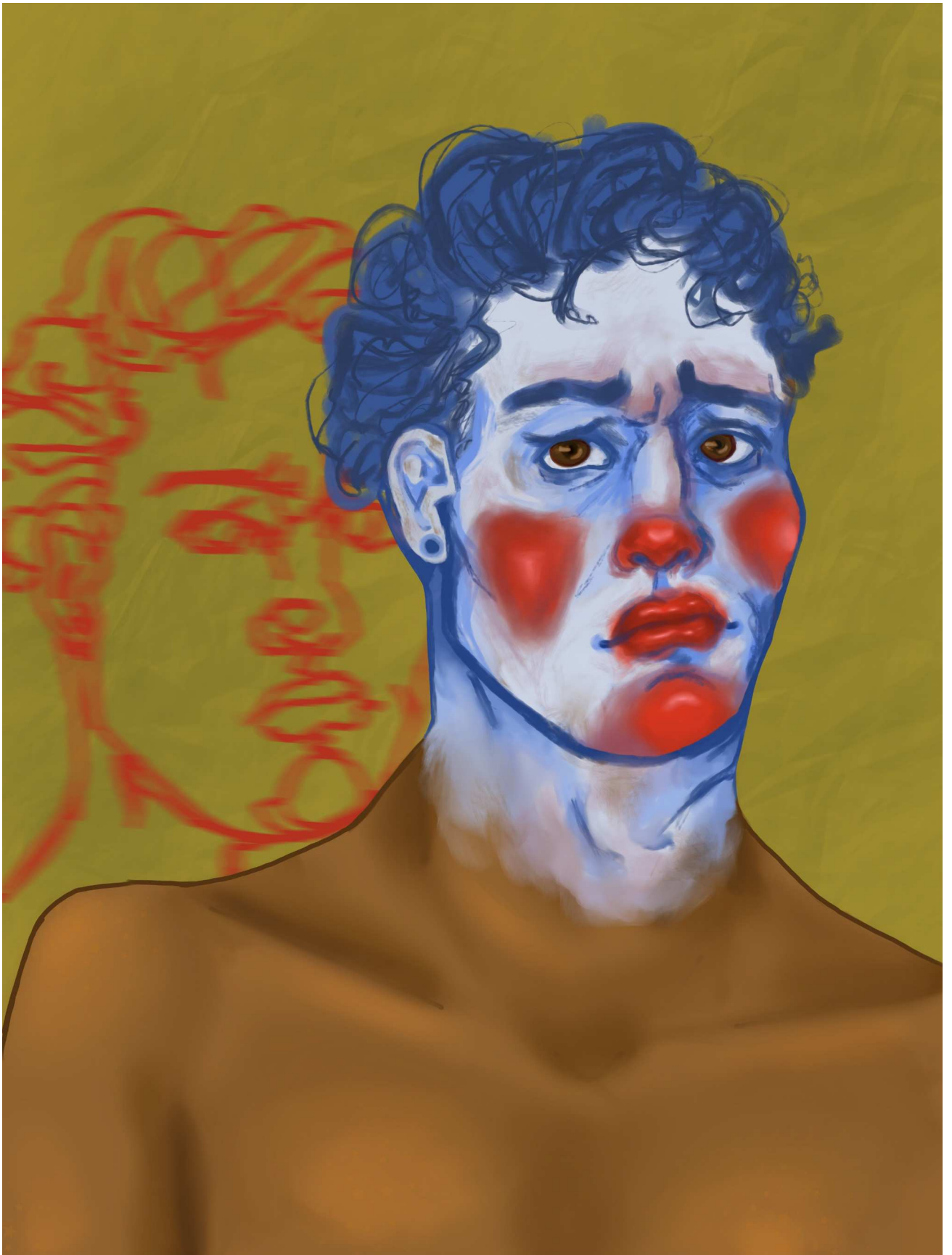




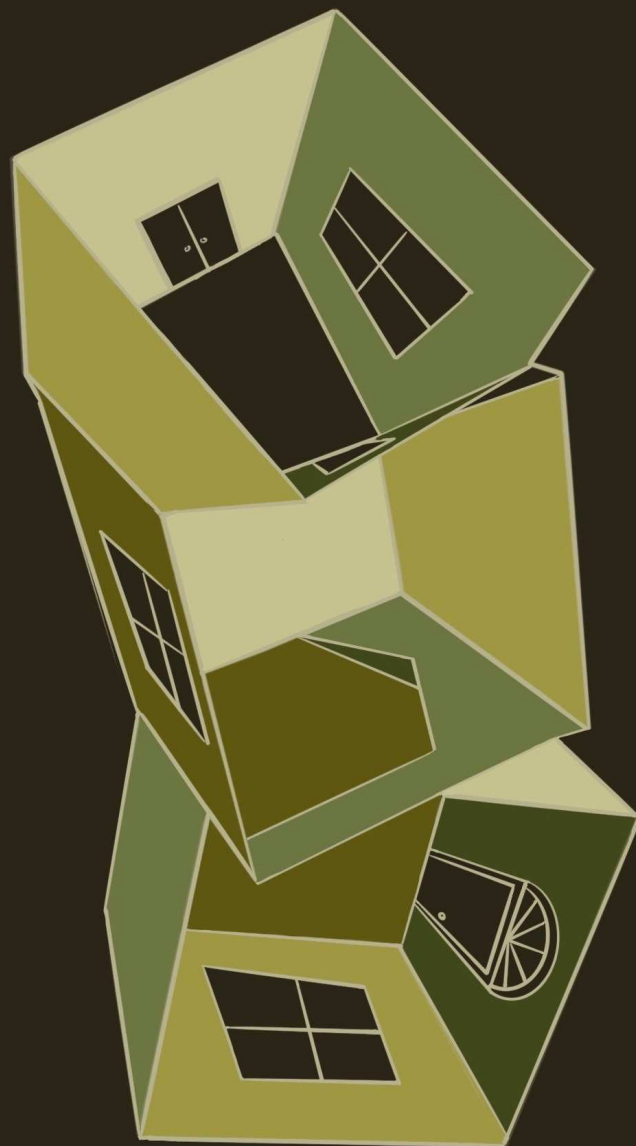
Once I had a solid understanding of color, composition, narrative ability, and effective use of reference images and inspiration, I started to explore more thematic pieces that could work together as a set or collection. Being able to tie together works of art, give them enough resemblance to one another, and have them remain visually appealing was not something I felt I could do before I took art classes at PiM. I was given those tools and abilities through trial and error and the support of my mentors. The strong sense of support made failing and trying again easy.

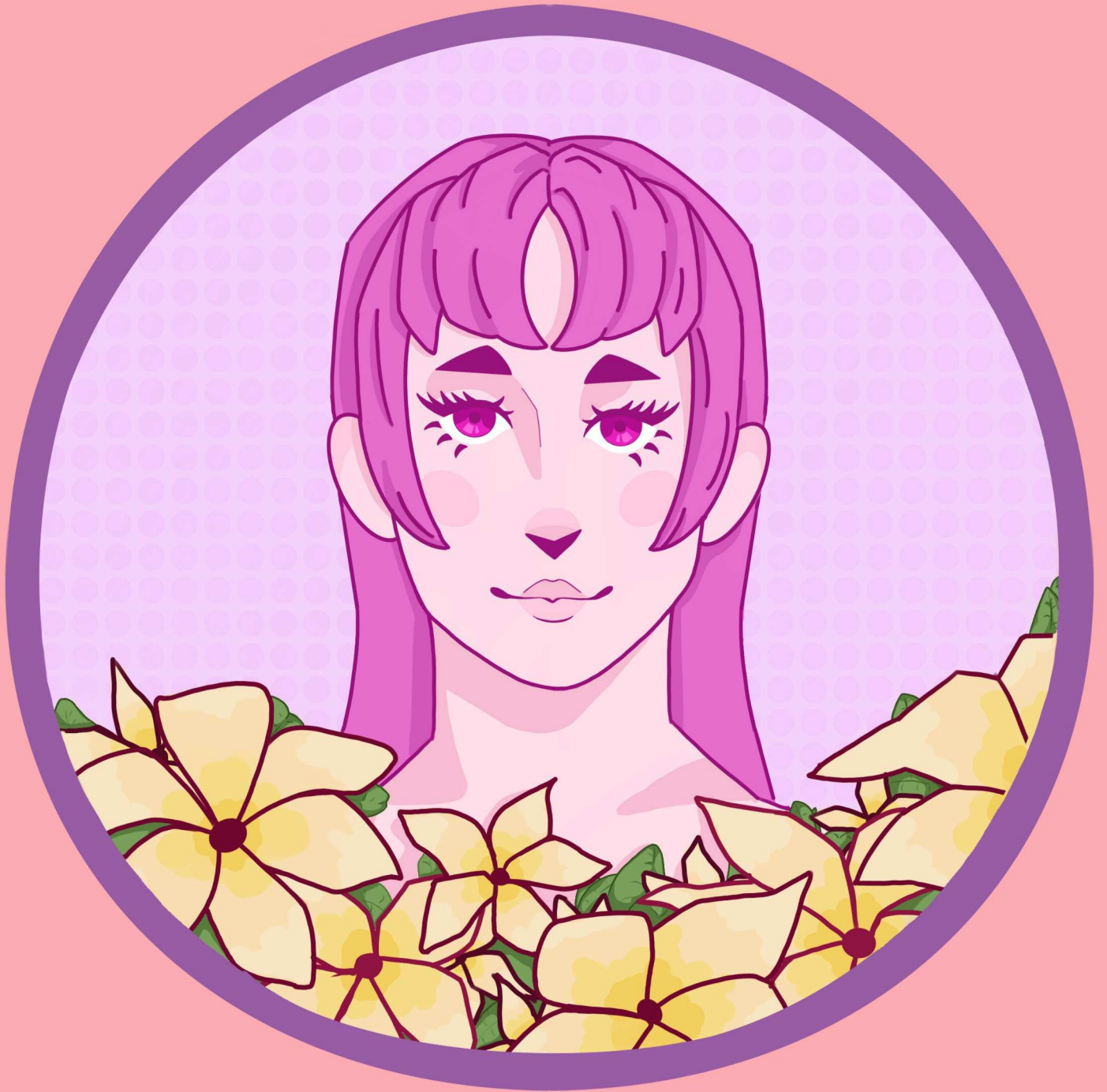


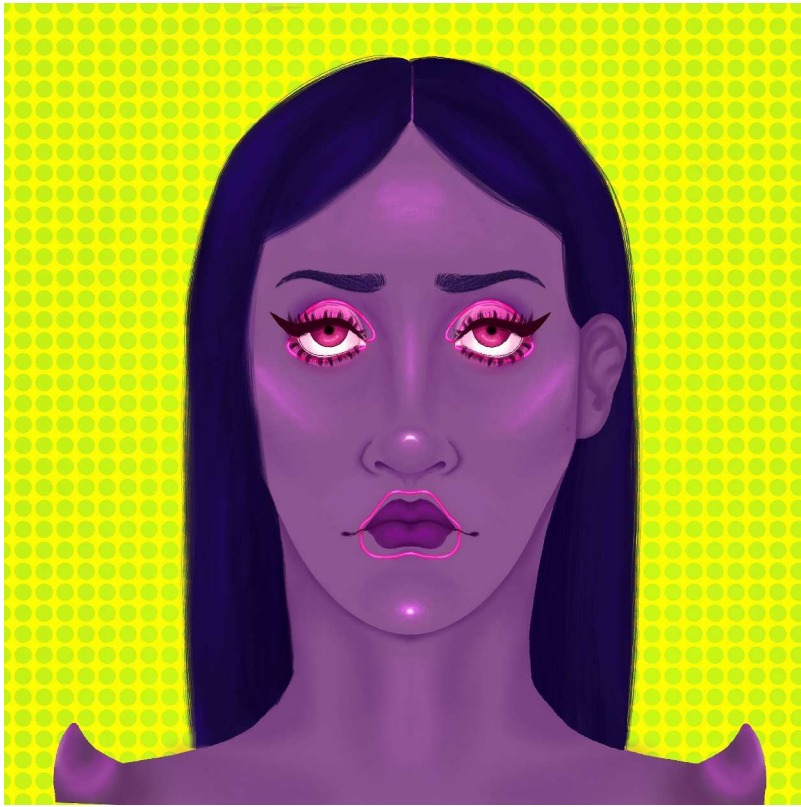




As an artist, I grew very quickly. I had lacked confidence, ability to create refined art pieces, and I was unsure that I was even truly interested in becoming a more refined artist. The community at PiM helped me realize that I valued being an artist, and that even if I didn't want to pursue visual art as a career, it was still a part of me that was worth putting time into. I enjoy making art, and being able to be surrounded by other artists who generally want to help build each other up and support grown helped that passion flourish.







Learning the more technical aspect of creating art was just the start of my artistic journey. Once I knew I could make art, I started to experiment with some different mediums and color palettes, as well as sizes of work. More recently I found I had a knack for digital art and that has taken off well.





After I discovered that I not only enjoyed doing digital art, but that I was at least somewhat good at it, I started trying new styles of digital art. Including styles like digital painting, cell shading, cartoon-like styles, and more abstract design work. I started doing more redraws of movie scenes and fan art to get practice in. I was able to find styles I enjoyed more. Connecting the things I liked already, like movies, shows, or books to the art that I enjoyed doing was a very fun and effective way to further my abilities. I saw a large amount of my improvement happen while I was doing these types of artistic practicing.



1917





Finally being able to confidently do digital art has been very rewarding. I am able to create pieces that I am genuinely proud of and that I would be happy sharing with people. I have made good connections with people through the posting or sharing of things like fan art, original pieces, and work in progress updates. Having learned the tools to create art in many mediums had lead me to make more meaningful relationships with others in the arts community.

1917



1917



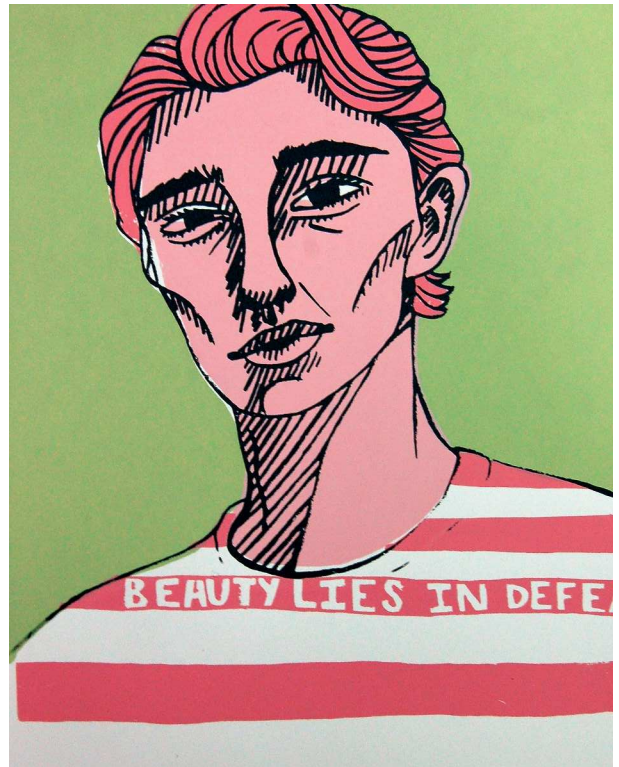
The image shows a page of handwritten musical notation, likely a vocal score, with extensive red ink annotations and watercolor washes. The score is written on a page with a pinkish-red background. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a time signature of 3/4. The lyrics are: "And the low me, All I ask, the heaven a - bove, hope - nor love, Nor a friend to know". The score is heavily annotated with red ink, including large loops and scribbles that obscure parts of the original notation. The annotations appear to be a form of musical shorthand or performance markings. The page is numbered '9' in the bottom right corner.

And the low me,
All I ask, the heaven a - bove,
hope - nor love, Nor a friend to know

pp
colla voce
pp
dim.

portamento

9

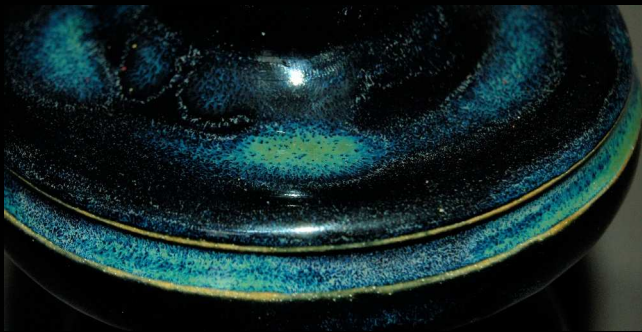


The experiences I had as an artist while at this school shaped the way that I interact with not only the art I encounter, but with everything. I have learned to think more critically about the things presented to me, to see the art in everyday objects, and to be more openly expressive of my opinions and passions. I have gained confidence in my ability to create, present, and collaborate on all types of things. The arts curriculum PiM teaches helped me become more than just a well refined artist. It helped teach me to exist without apology and stand with confidence.





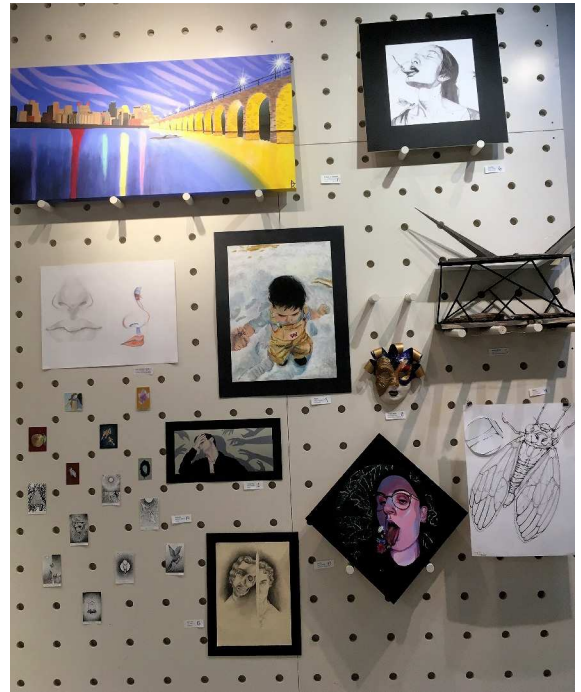
During my years at PiM, I also got to experiment in 3D art forms, most notably ceramics. I had never done wheel throwing before, and the only hand build ceramic projects I had done were not great. My teachers were incredibly good at teaching the basics of 3D art, and made the experience very fun. Although I doubt I will switch to being a mostly 3D based artist, the experience is good to have.

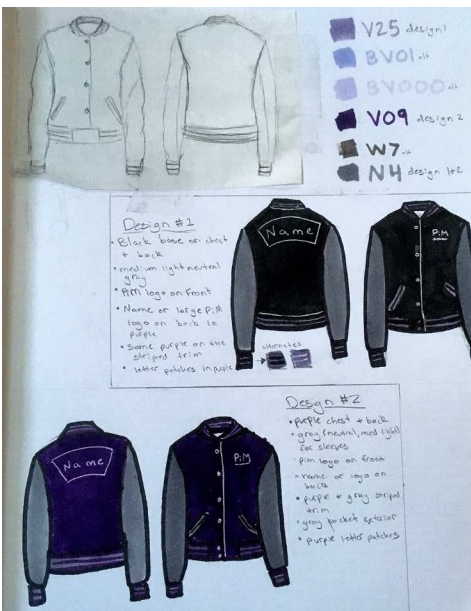


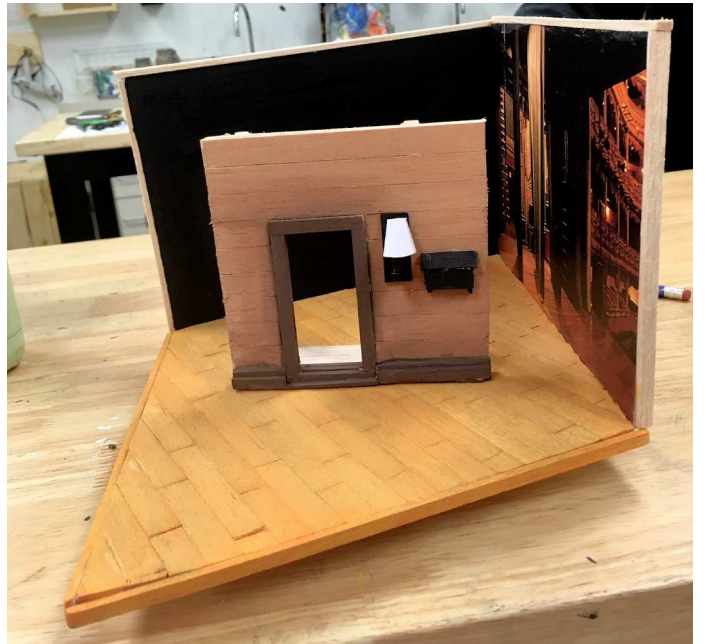
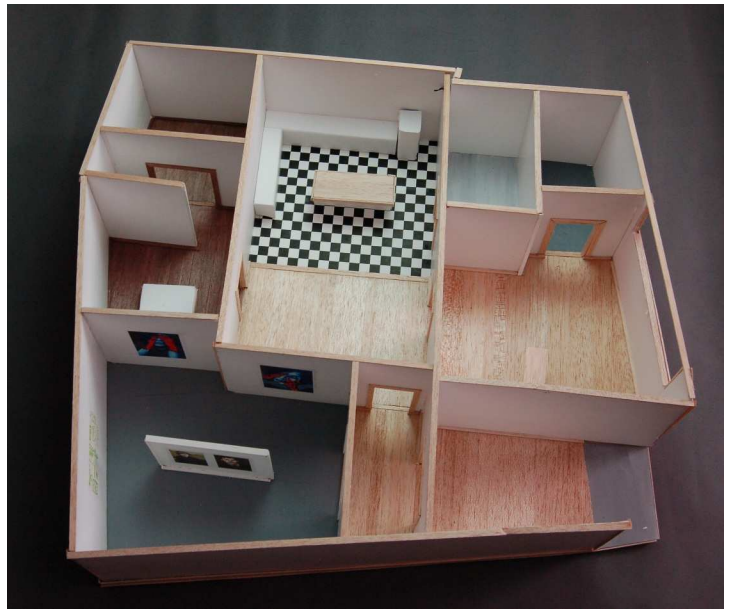


PiM Pop Up Gallery

Being a member of the PiM outreach group was very fulfilling. It was extremely rewarding to be a representative of the visual arts community at PiM and be able to share my ideas on how to showcase the art that our school created. The Pop Up Gallery at the Eden Prairie Center was a great look at what it takes to curate, install, advertise, run, and tear down an exhibit. There is no better way to learn those skills than doing it all hands on with other people who are invested in the arts.









Technical



Theater



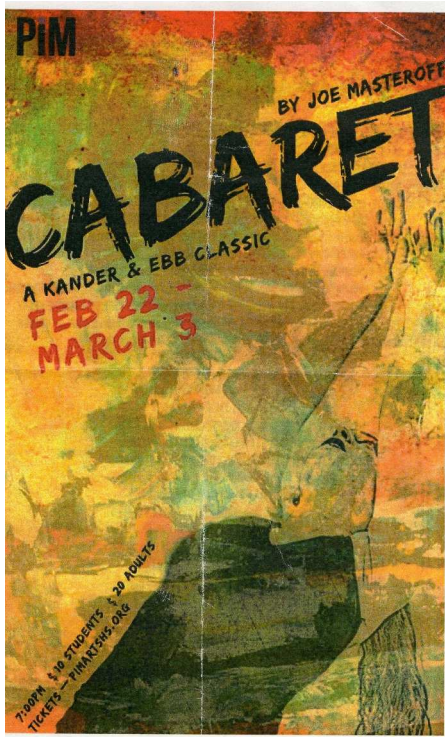
Technical theater wasn't something I thought I would enjoy or want to pursue when I got to PiM. The extracurricular tech crew taught me the basics and gave me a passion for the technical side of live performance.





While I was learning the ins and outs of technical theater, I was able to work in many fields and at a handful of different locations. This made it

possible for me to try out a lot of different equipment and work with people of varying areas of expertise. The drive that my teachers and peers had for technical production inspired me to keep learning and continue to participate in the tech crew. Gaining experience all across the board (pun intended) built a solid foundation for me to pursue work and further education in theatrical production.



Cabaret

Cabaret the Musical was the first production I worked at PiM. I was on the costume design and construction team, and was one of the backstage crew to help with quick changes and repairs. I also helped paint the set and design some small parts for the show.





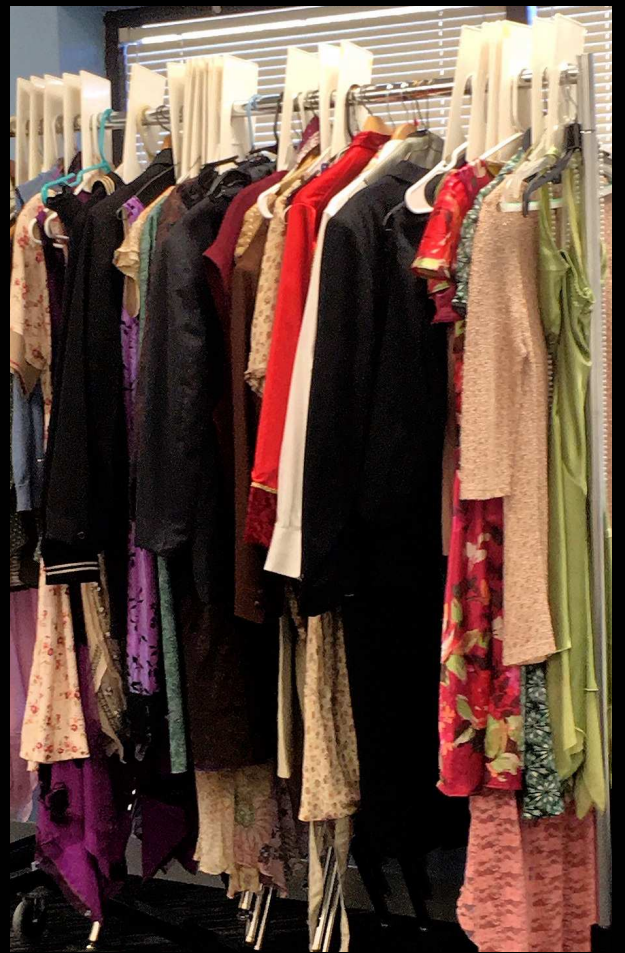




Some of the biggest projects I took on during this production were designs on the gold vest for Emcee to wear in the song titled "Money", as well as the peacock feather pattern and decal for Sally's dress for the song "Cabaret". Both required a lot of planning, designing, and meticulous paint work.



Costume maintenance was also a large part of what I did for Cabaret. Pieces like the gem covered tailcoat Emcee wore and general dress hemming and repairs made up a good portion of the work I was in charge of during the show. Fixing minor costume tears or breaks, tailoring pieces, and styling actors were the first real jobs I had in tech.





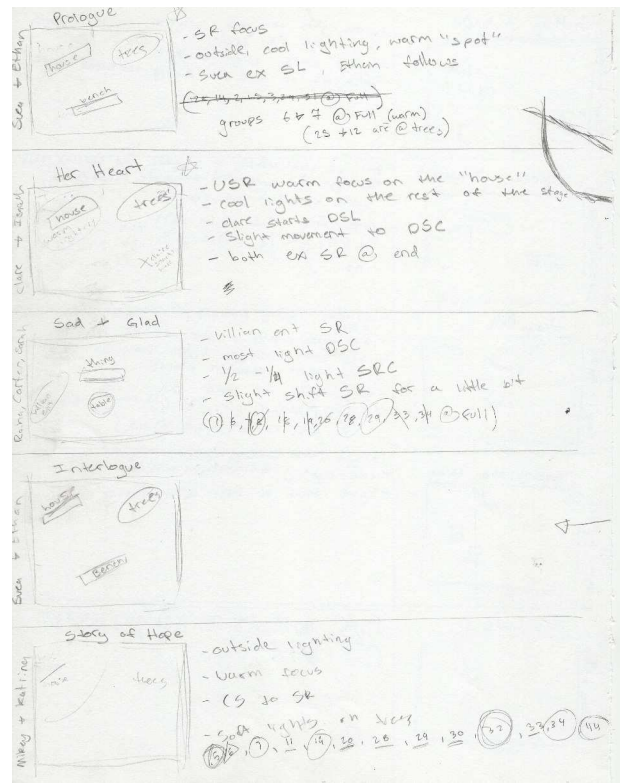
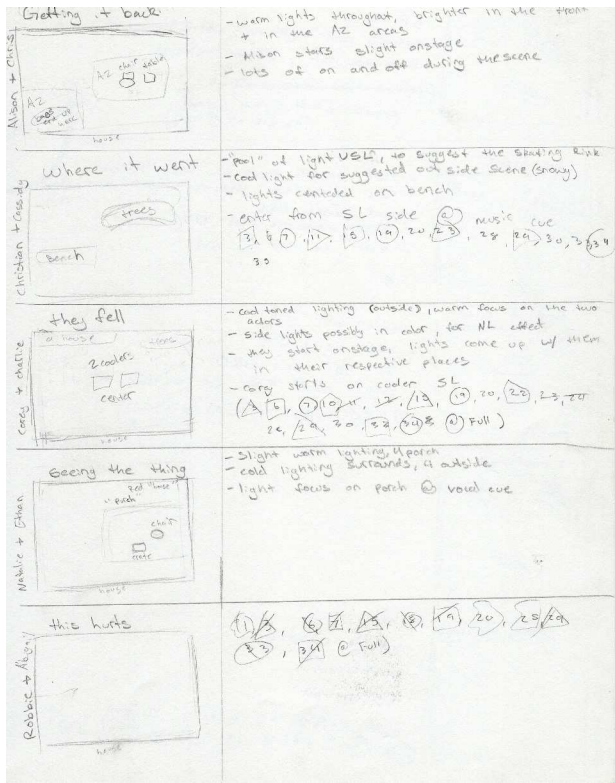
Almost Maine

Almost Maine was the first show that I worked as a board operator and designer for. I was lucky enough to be able to design and run the lights for the show, and it was an incredible experience. I learned how to take the director's vision and create an effective look to compliment the staging. I also learned how to write cues, program lights, as well as run and select projections. Being able to be taught by my peers as well as some more experienced technicians made this show extremely fun to do. My inexperience wasn't looked down upon, and I felt like a valued member of the team as I was learning.









This was the first production I had taken any notes for during the rehearsals. I hadn't needed to know exactly what was happening on stage as a costumer on Cabaret, but for this show I really had to have a good grasp on the movements of the actors, the significance of certain areas of the stage, and the tone the director was going for. It was interesting to translate rehearsal notes that had blocking diagrams for our White Box at PiM into diagrams that worked for Augsburg's Foss Center. The blocking notes and visual aids helps significantly when it came time to program the lighting for the show.

I made a prompt sheet based on what I had programmed, but I did not have the cues written in my working script. I hadn't learned how to do that and I truly wish I had known.

- 10) house out
- 15) prologue up @ sound
- 20) prologue out @ sound
- 25) Her Heart @ sound fade
- 30) Her Heart out after "Hello East" and 1/2 cross
- 35) Sad + glad up @ actor settle
- 40) Sad + glad out @ sound + exit
- 45) This Hurts up @ actor set before music ends
- 50) This Hurts out @ "what did you say" "Ow" + music start
- 55) Getting it back lights up @ sound
- 60) Getting it back lights out @ Kiss w/ projection
- 65) Interlogue up @ Ethan ent + music is already on
- 70) house to 1/2 @ sound
- 75) house to Full after voiceover
- 80) house to 1/2 @ sound
- 83) house out @ sound stage lights on
- 85) Interlogue out @ Nellies cue
- 90) They fell up @ Stage set after sound
- 95) They fell out after 5th Fall
- 100) where it went up @
- 105) where it went out @
- 110) Story of Hope up @ car door slam
- 115) story of Hope out @ Kat. exit
- 120) Seeing The Thing up @ 5 sec left of snow mobile

- Almost, Maine Cues + #'s
- 1 pre show lights up, house @ Full
- 5 house to 1/2
- 10 house out
- 15 prologue up @ sound cue (music is very long)
- 20 prologue out @ ~~sound cue~~ Ethan 1/2 cross SL
- 25 Her Heart up @ sound fade
- 30 Her Heart out after "Hello East" + 1/2 cross SR ^{projection as after "what i do"}
- 35 Sad + Glad up @ actor set (actor seated)
- 40 Sad + Glad out @ sound + ~~XXXXXX~~ before actor leaves
- 45 This Hurts up @ actor set before sound fade
- 50 This Hurts out @ "what did you say" "Ow" + sound cue
- 55 Getting it Back up @ sound
- 60 Getting it Back out @ Kiss w/ projection
- 65 Interlogue up @ Ethan ent, after sound up
- 70 house to 1/2 @ sound
- 75 house to Full after voiceover
- 80 house to 1/2 @ sound

Almost Maine was fairly straightforward when it came to tech, so not having the cues alongside the lines was not the most challenging thing, it was just rather annoying to have to refer to the script and dig for lines or rely on my memory to anticipate a cue.

Bright Star

Having two distinct time periods represented in this show was an interesting challenge to tackle. I got to learn how to differentiate time periods with style, color, and fit of costumes, as well as learn how to do tear away costumes and extremely fast quick changes. I grew to love this show because of its complexity and was motivated to be the best asset to the team I could be. It was rewarding to have costumes look so good and work so well. The audience reaction to the rapid quick changes made me feel like I was important and it helped to make the show run smoothly.







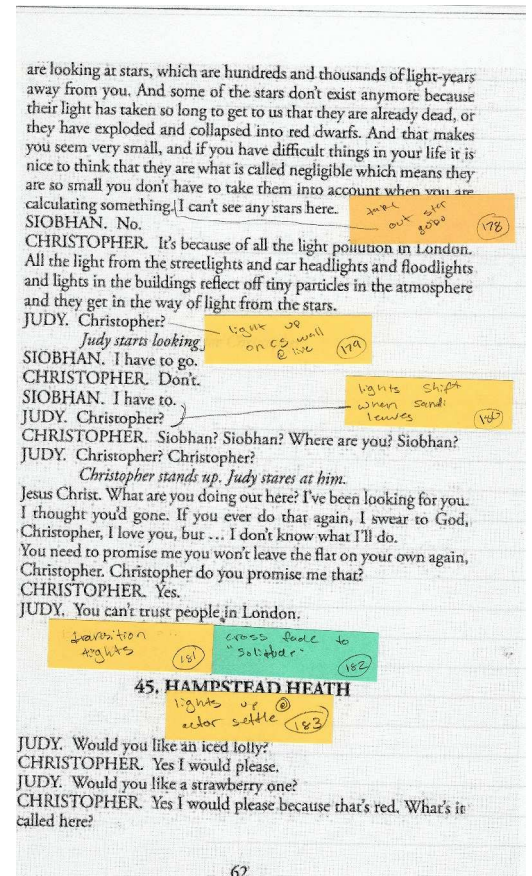
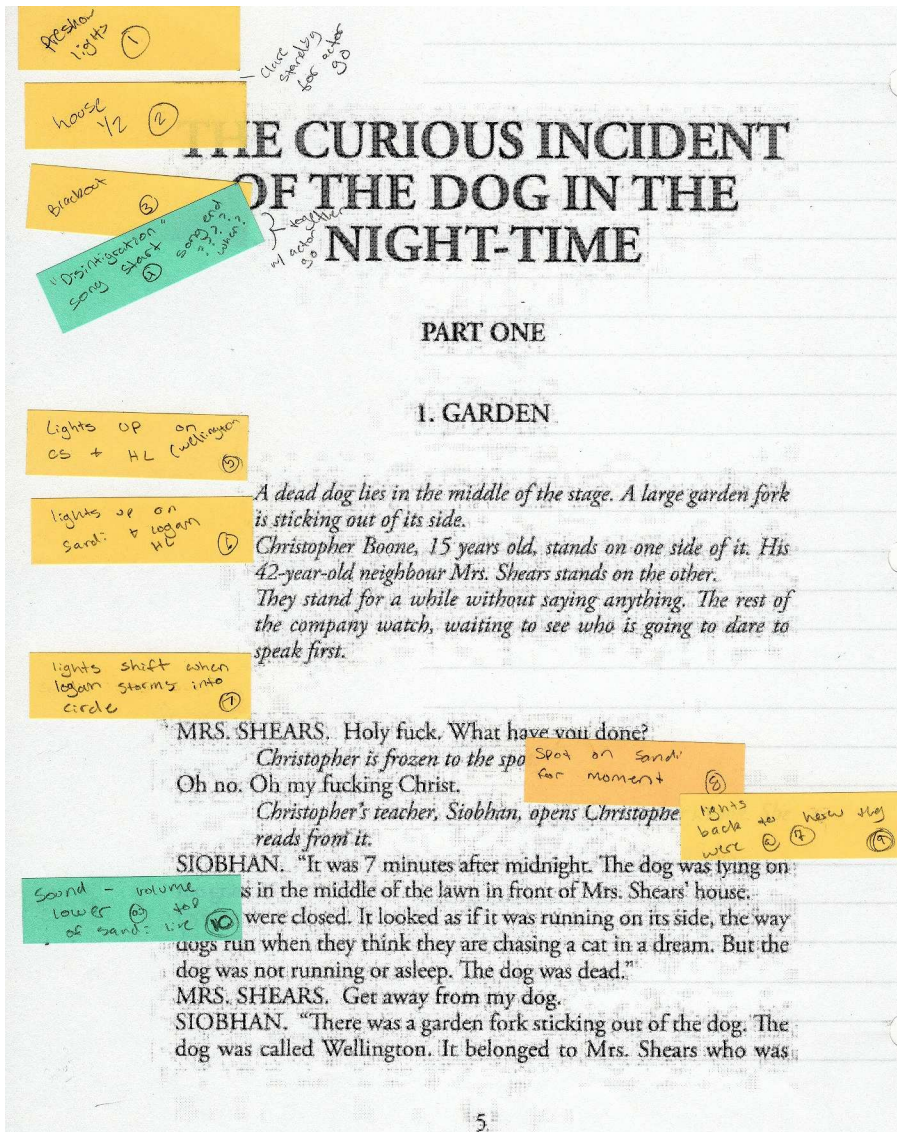


The Curious Incident of The Dog in the Nighttime

This production was my first time being a stage manager for PiM. I got to see the rehearsal process up close, learn alongside the cast, and work with so many new people to help create this tech heavy and all around wonderful production.







During this show I learned how to create a much better prompt book and take more cohesive and useful rehearsal notes. I got to learn the way that college students at a local University were taught to organize their books, and was given the tools I needed to be able to create my own book that worked for the scale, pacing, and organization of the show. I also was taught to make good schedules, attendance sheets, and prop lists.

o Song: Disintegration

Δ lights up (CS, HL) (2)

- Sandi joins semi circle, invites logan onto grid

Δ lights shift when sandi is in

Semi circle (4)

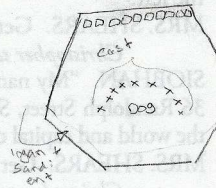
- Cast looks towards logan sharply

@ Mrs. Shears (Jojo's first line,

logan passes back to sandi,

cast sits @ back wall, logan

+ Jojo remain



lights
rdi
adds
logan
notebook w/

SIOBHAN. Well, we're meant to be writing stories today, so why don't you write about what happened to Wellington?
CHRISTOPHER. OK, I will.

jojo + mobby slide on blocks
Sandi removes block + toys
sophia passes notebook down to sandi

9. HOME

ED. Christopher I'm sorry, your mother's died. She's had a heart attack.

It wasn't expected.

CHRISTOPHER. What kind of heart attack?

ED. I don't know what kind of heart attack. Now isn't the moment Christopher to be asking questions like that.

CHRISTOPHER. It was probably an aneurysm.

ED. I'm sorry Christopher, I'm really sorry.

assemble Mrs Shears house
Ali gives logan mini book
Ali draws chalk line, sandi stands breaths

10. STREET

Company removes
Mrs. Shears' house is assembled.

SIOBHAN. "That evening I went round to Mrs. Shears' house and knocked on the door and waited for her to answer it."

Mrs. Shears answers her door. She is drinking a cup of tea.

MRS. SHEARS. What are you doing here?

CHRISTOPHER. I wanted to come and tell you that I didn't kill Wellington. And also I want to find out who killed him.

MRS. SHEARS. Christopher, I really don't think I want to see you right now.

CHRISTOPHER. Do you know who killed Wellington?

MRS. SHEARS. If you don't go now I will call the police again.

company removes or replaces blocks



emri places block OSC + sits w/ bible in hand

11. SCHOOL

restrictions
Lauren Jameson
action on floor
Ali writes where heaven is

CHRISTOPHER. Reverend Peters, where is heaven?

REVEREND PETERS. I'm sorry Christopher?

CHRISTOPHER. In our universe whereabouts is it exactly?

REVEREND PETERS. It's not in our universe. It's another kind of place altogether.

CHRISTOPHER. There isn't anything outside our universe Reverend Peters. There isn't another kind of place altogether. Except there might be if you go through a black hole. But a black hole is what is called a Singularity which means it's impossible to find out what is on the other side because the gravity of a black hole is so big that even electromagnetic waves like light can't get out of it, and electromagnetic waves are how we get information about things which are far away. And if heaven is on the other side of a black hole then dead people would have to be fired into space on a rocket to get there and they aren't or people would notice.

Reverend Peters looks at him for a while before he responds.

REVEREND PETERS. Well when I say heaven is outside our universe it's really just a manner of speaking. I suppose what it really means is that they are with God.

CHRISTOPHER. But where is God?

REVEREND PETERS. Christopher we should talk about this on another day when I have more time.

Kaitlyn removes toy box

12. STREET

company assembles 125 *

SIOBHAN. "The next day was Saturday and there is not much to do on a Saturday unless Father takes me out somewhere on an outing to the boating lake or to the garden centre, but on this Saturday England were playing Romania at football which meant that we weren't going to go on an outing because Father wanted to watch the match on the television. So I made a decision. I decided to do some more detection. I decided to go out on my own. I do not like strangers. So talking to

She Kills Monsters

As a theatrical costumer you have to be able to work with all sorts of genres. Working as the lead armorer on a fantasy themed play was a whole new world for me. I had done some smaller armor crafting, but nothing for a theatrical production. Although it was very labor intensive, the work paid off. I was able to learn how to construct, prime, paint, and prep EVA foam pieces in a short timespan, as well as learn how to do on the fly repairs and adjustments.







Make Me A Song

This show was a good sneak peek at what it would be like to stage manage a musical. Without being too labor intensive, I got to learn to take effective choreo and blocking notes that could translate into lighting, sound, or projection cues.





Matilda the Musical

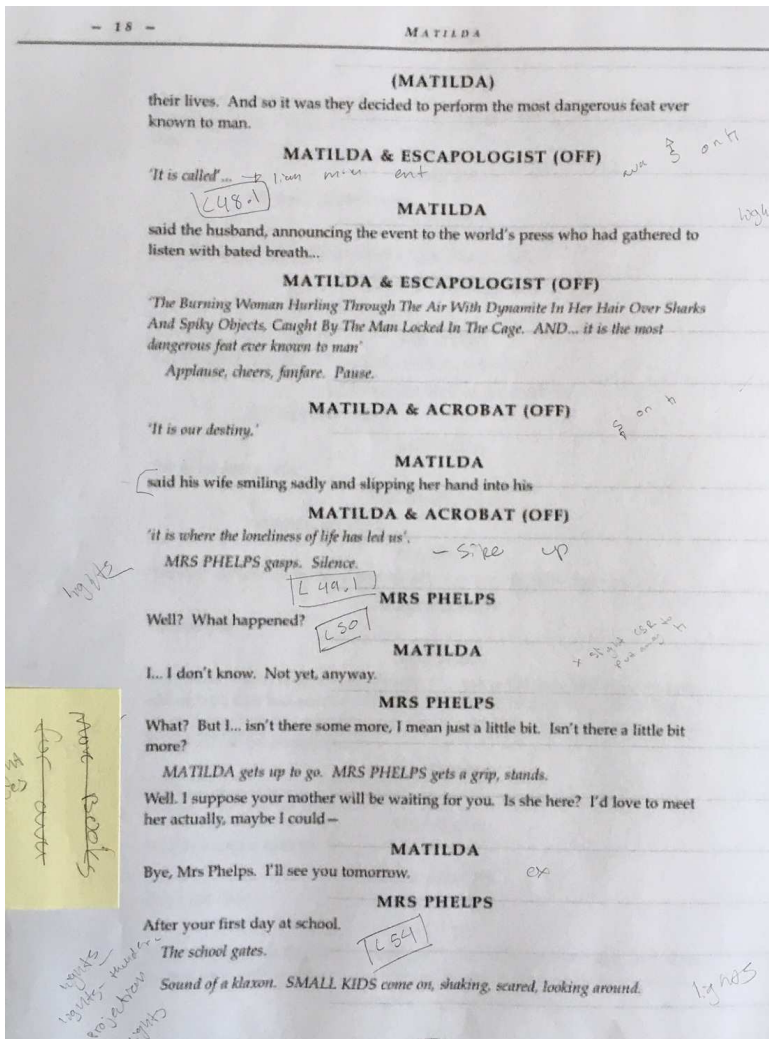
As the stage manager for this production I got to fully appreciate the scale and precision it takes create and run a musical. It was challenging to call cues during fast paced musical numbers, manage all of the moving parts backstage, and keep focused on the show at the same time, but the hands on experience taught me more than I could have imagined. I feel like a more well rounded technician after running Matilda.



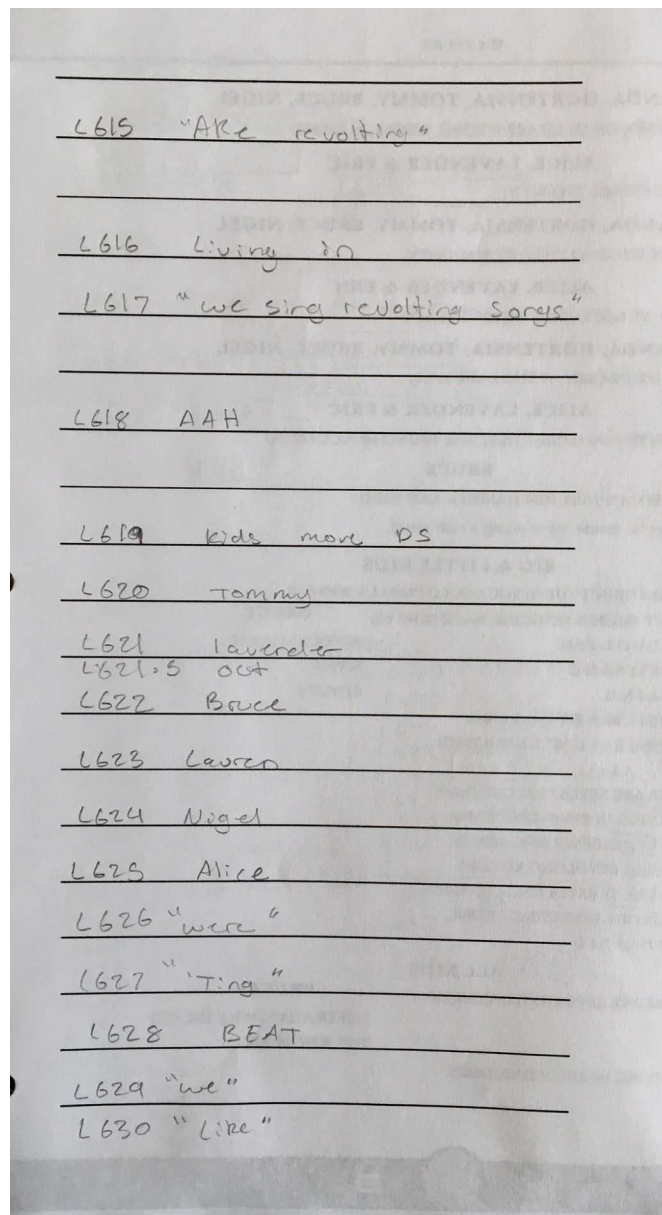
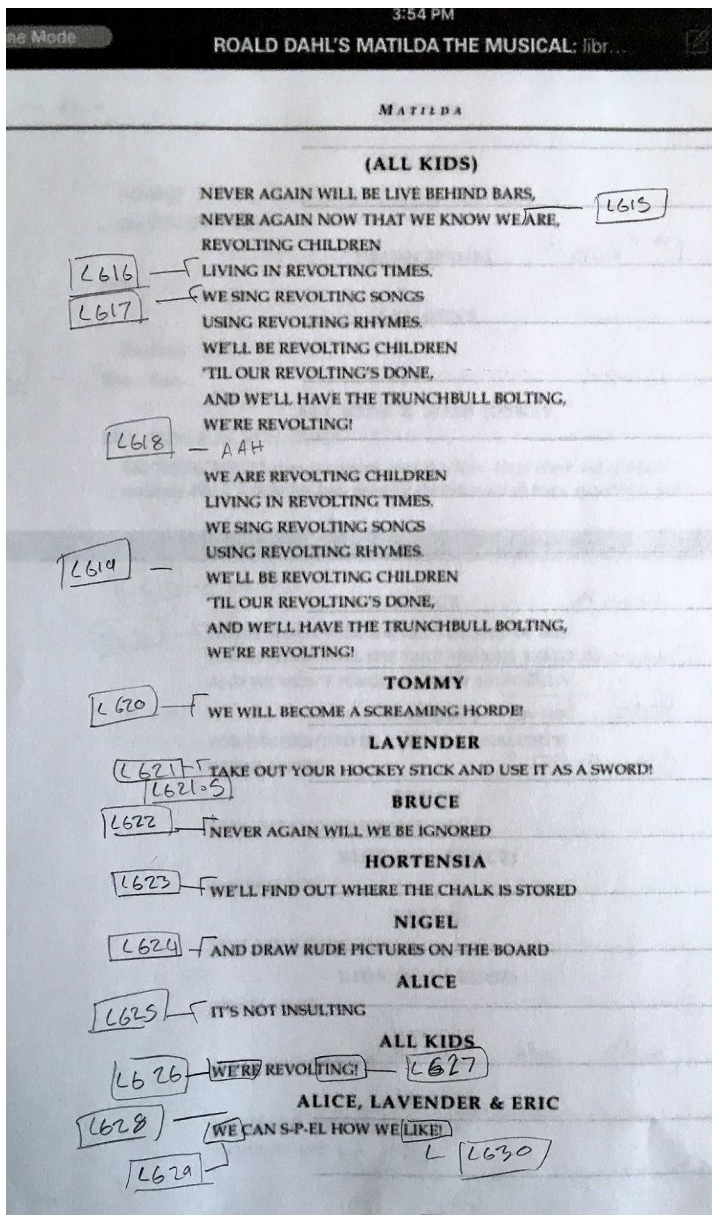




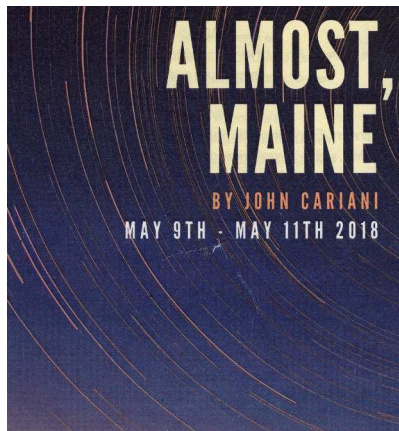




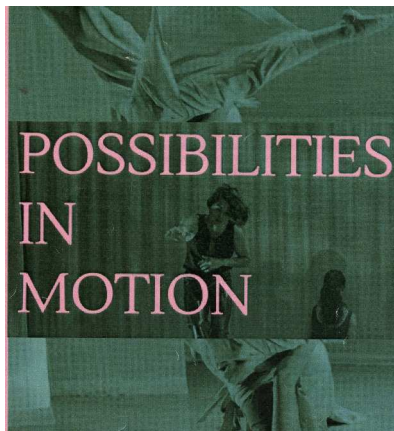
As full runs came along, I started taking more substantial notes in my working script. I was noting all light changes, large choreo cues, sound cues, actors on stage, and costume changes. By the time tech week was wrapping up I had a full book of notes and cues that were ready to be refined and made into a prompt book that matched the cues and timing of the other technician's books.



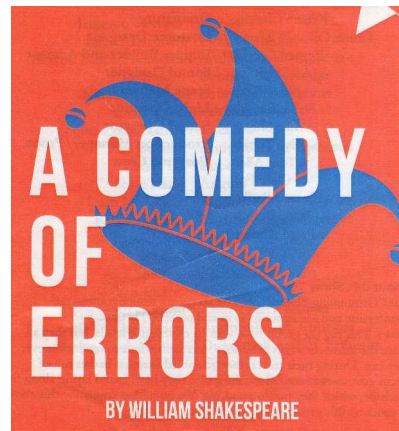
I developed a system of organizing my cues in my book so that they would make sense to other technicians should they need to locate or call any cues. I has the cue number with a categorizing letter next to the line or lyric that it corresponded to on the left had side of my book, then on the lines to the right I had the title or descriptor along with the number so that the cue could be verified as correct after calling.



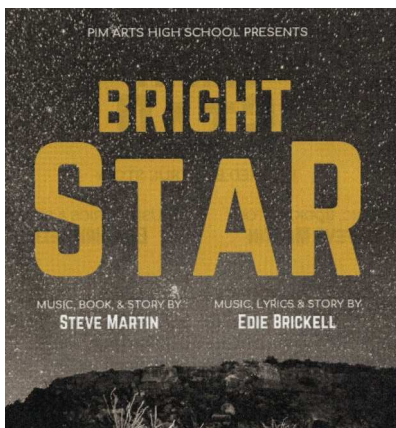
Lighting design



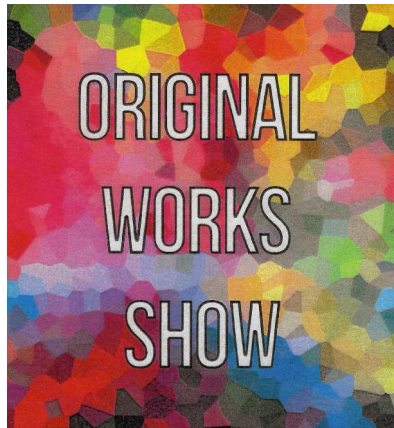
Sound Board



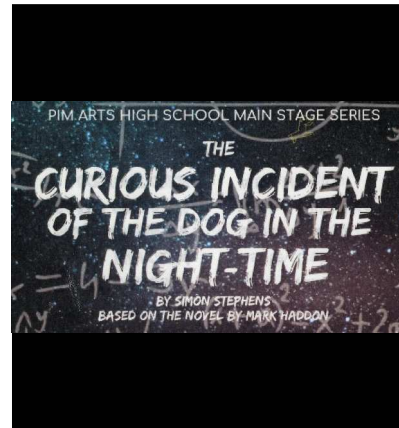
Costumer



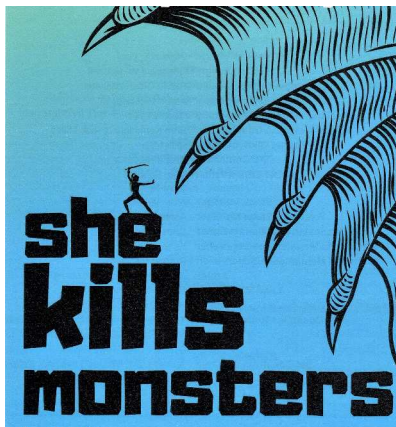
Costumer



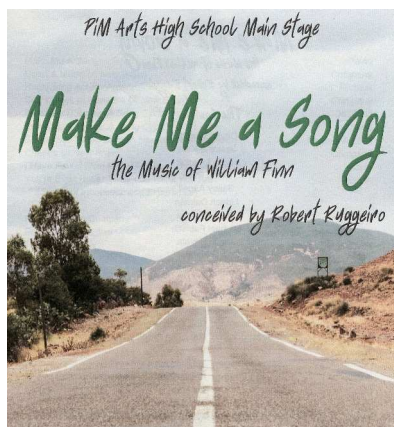
Deck Crew



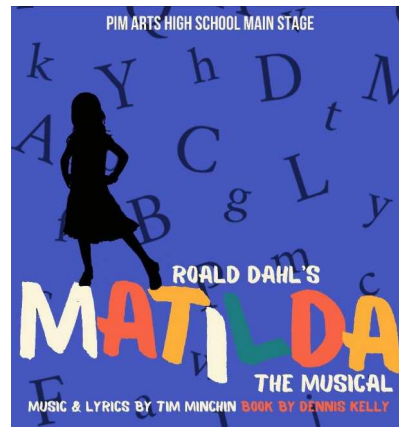
Stage Manager



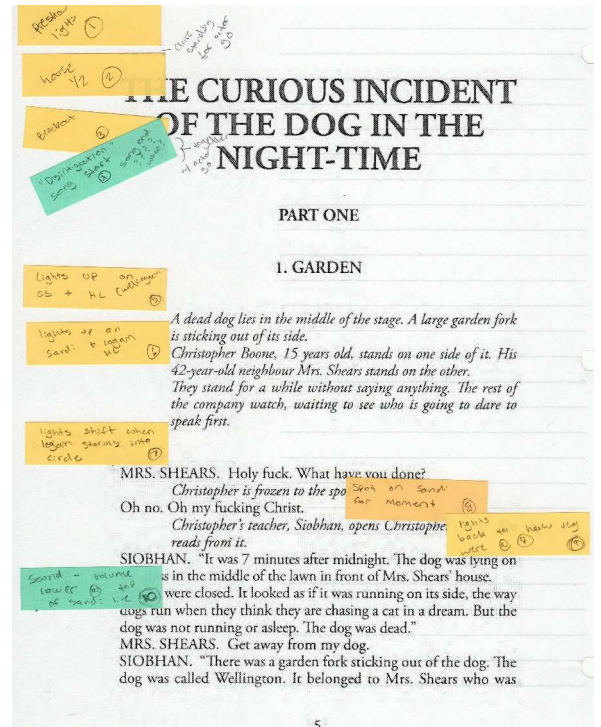
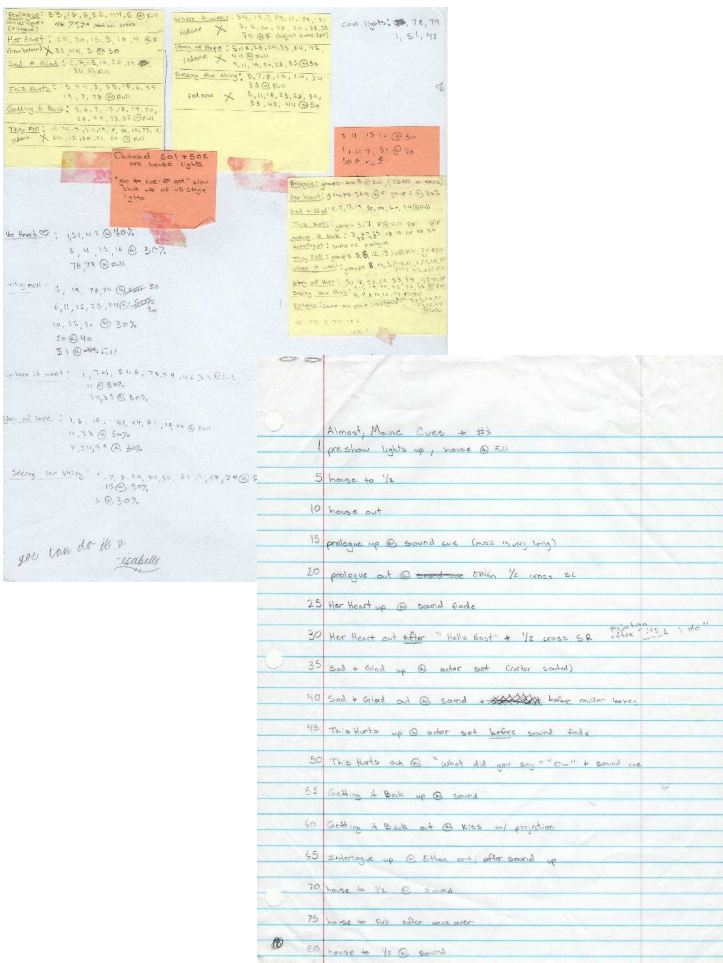
**Costumer /
Armorier**



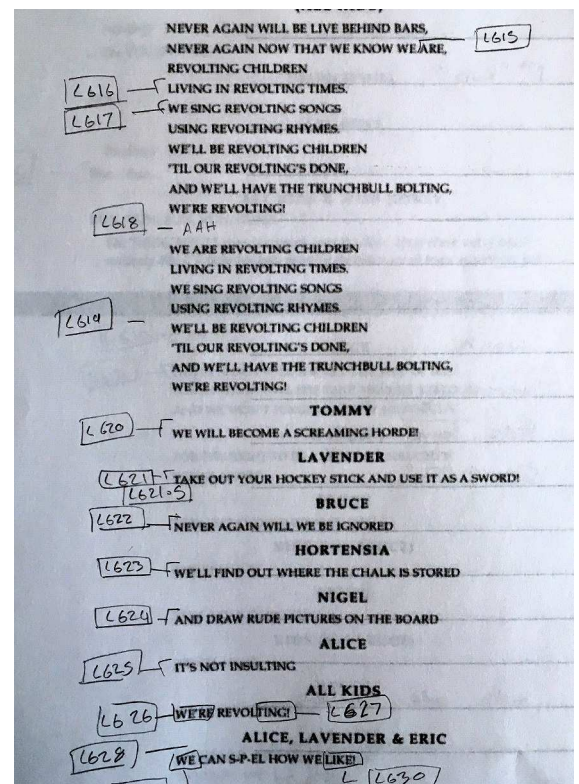
Stage Manager

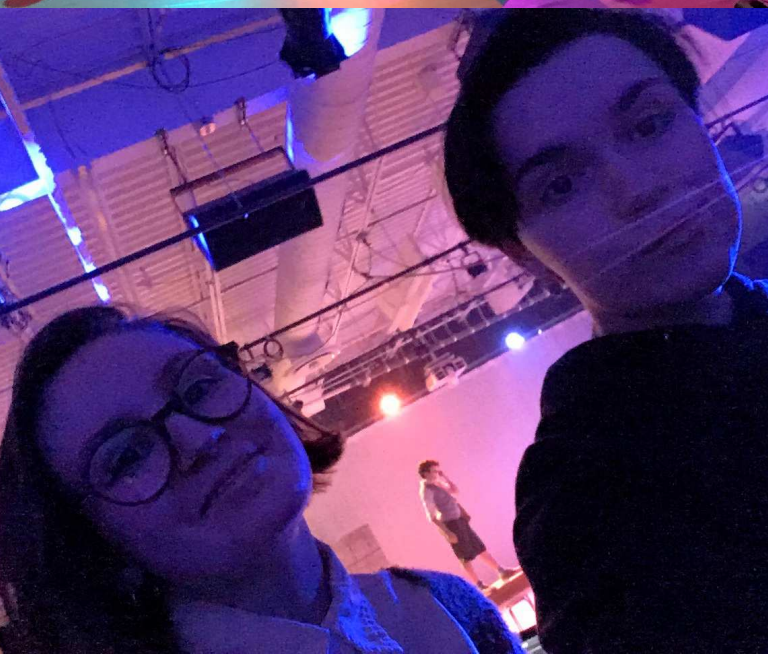


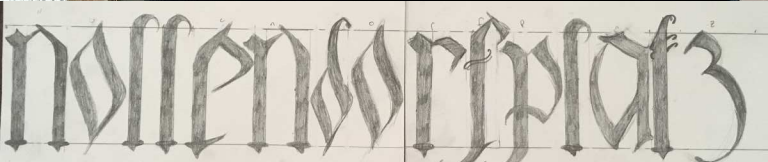
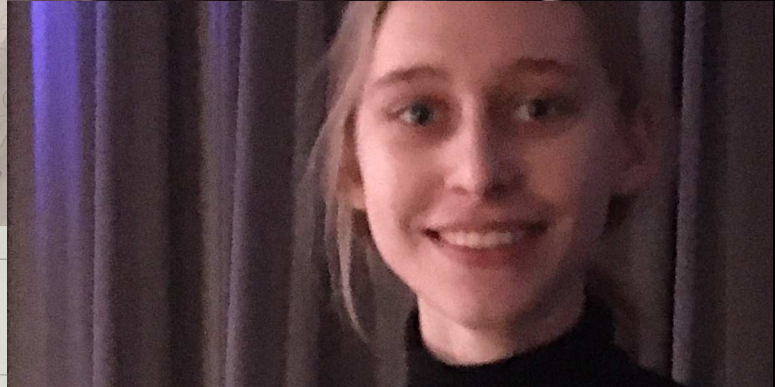
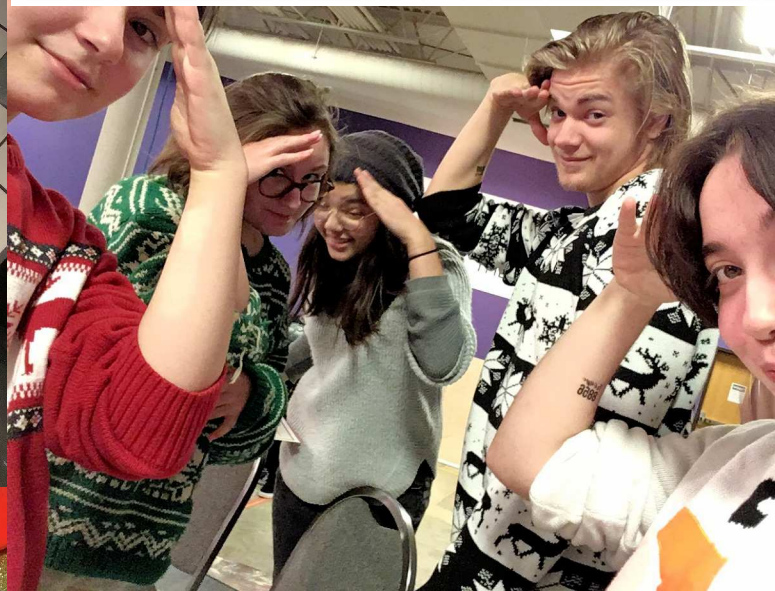
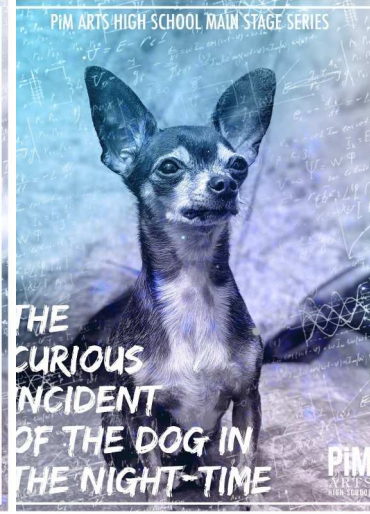
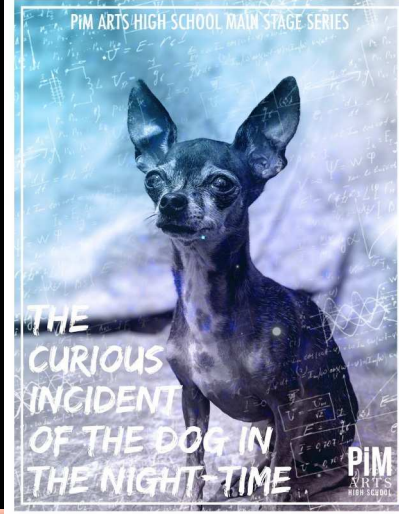
Stage Manager



Throughout my time at PiM I also learned how to take effective production notes and make a manageable prompt book. From show to show was able to significantly improve my methods for making a prompt book, as well as increasing the longevity and quality of my annotations.







My experience at PiM had its ups and downs, but there is nowhere else I would have rather attended high school. The hands on experience, welcoming community, and vast expanse of opportunities is unparalleled. I would have never gotten the level of arts education, critique, and real world knowledge at another school. Not only did I get an incredible arts education, I got a sound education in my core classes, and was able to find self confidence and motivation for my passions. I was never told not to pursue a new art form. I was given the tools to be able to understand that new art form and be the best I could be while still learning. There were always new things to try, new people to meet, and more experiences to have. I would not be the person I am today if I had not attended PiM. I would not have the confidence to pursue Stage Management, nor the knowledge of what a stage manager even does. I have been given the education and experience needed to make a living as an artist and technician that I would not have gotten anywhere else.





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