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Cabaret: The Design and Production Process

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Cabaret: The Design and Production Process

Jennifer J. Owen, Degree Honors Project, 2001

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Cabaret: A Reflection on the Design and Production Process
Jennifer J. Owen, Degree Honors Project, 4/19/01

I. Introduction

As my senior degree project I have chosen to present a scenic design for *Cabaret*. This design was fully realized at Illinois Wesleyan University on the stage of McPherson Theatre in March of 2001. I received the opportunity to pursue this design by audition in the School of Theatre and it is the culmination of my education in scene design. In this paper I will present a reflective analysis of all aspects of the design, including the effectiveness of both process and product.

II. The Design Process

The textbook definition of initial design work breaks down the process into seven basic steps: commitment, analysis, research, incubation, selection, implementation, and reflection. Though it is obvious that a realized design is not as simple as this breakdown, the definition provides a useful starting point for conversation about design. It is important to note that though this model makes the design process appear linear in nature, each of the steps in the process occurs throughout many different phases of the design. I will refer this definition of the design process throughout my discussion of *Cabaret*.

The design process for *Cabaret* began early in the school year. Initial design meetings in November and December brought together the design team for the first time, though personal commitment and analysis began even earlier. Because theatre is a collaborative art commitment in the design process takes on two forms: individual commitment and commitment as a team to the overall vision of the play. The coming together of the design team marks the beginning of collaboration and group commitment. In these first meetings the director revealed his impressions and ideas about *Cabaret*, which led to the development of the design concept. Thematically, as the director explained, the play is about the loss of innocence of the German people during the Nazi party's rise to power. This idea of the loss of innocence should reveal

itself not only through the character work of the actors but also be revealed in the design of the show: we should “see the decay happen” as the cabaret environment goes from inviting to grotesque. Additionally, the director desired a sense of theatricality in the design: it should be apparent that the Cabaret is a place where a show happens. In a mechanical sense, the design had to facilitate smooth, quick transitions between the multiple locales.

As a developmental tool and starting point for research the director pointed us towards Expressionist artwork of the period, namely work by Grosz and Sheile, among others, and also toward documentary films illustrating the Nazis’ rise to power. The Expressionist self-portrait of grotesque distortion manifests the loss of identity and sense of self-loathing of the German people during this time between WWI and WWII. This contrasted with the Nazi philosophy of celebrating “the beautiful body” and the two ideas together provided a strong historical background for the concept of *Cabaret*.

After this initial meeting it was time for me as a designer to evaluate the information I had obtained, assess the requirements of the script, and begin my own research and development. I became aware of the many challenges I faced as a designer, including the large number of locales, the need for smooth transitions, and the desire to manifest decay through the physical reality of the set. I began research, on both a conceptual and a factual level, hoping to gain a fuller understanding of the director’s view of the play and also to begin informing the design. Through paintings, photography, advertisements, and other artwork, both period and contemporary, I sought to further the ideas brought forth in the first design meeting. Through this exploration of research I began to see the loss of innocence as the idea of children playing adult games, not realizing they are in over their heads until it is too late (fig.1.2,1.11). I found several images of Berlin nightclubs (fig. 1.5,1.10,1.12, 1.13) photographs of strange gymnastic sports that were a part of the celebration of the beautiful body (fig. 1.7,1.9), examples of period architecture and decor (fig.1.8, 1.16,1.18, 1.19, 1.20), and much other informative information.

The most challenging, but also the most exciting, area of research and development was the pursuit of a way to show decay. As I searched through countless sources I found many images to be striking and informative. Distortion was very apparent in the Expressionist artwork with its grotesque figures and use of angular lines (fig. 1.4, 1.12, 1.14, 1.15). Another important idea was that of frames within frames as a way to establish a theatrical distance and focus the stage picture. The most significant image I discovered, however, is the image of fire.

Throughout my research I discovered countless images of fire, be it photographs of Nazis burning books or political posters and cartoons of the Reichstag in flames (1.23, 1.24, 1.28). Georg Grosz's painting "Metropolis" was a central image to the design, depicting an angular, distorted city colored in vivid red and orange, very suggestive of fire (fig 1.26). I felt that the fire image was a strong way to represent decay. This first round of research was quite successful and I returned to the next design meeting able to present some interesting and challenging ideas that later became integral parts of the design. As a student involved with a faculty design team, I also feel that this early research and presentation was an extremely important demonstration of my commitment to the project and of my ability to participate actively in the design process.

Though additional, more specific research continued throughout the process the majority happened within the first few weeks of the design process. The next step after research was beginning to translate the conceptual ideas into a concrete set. Based on the style I had seen in much of the director's previous work, the desire for theatricality, and the need for smooth transitions I felt that a simple and somewhat stylized approach to the design would be most appropriate. As a convention to facilitate the above goals it was decided this production would suggest that the more realistic "book" scenes of the play (namely the apartment, the foyer, the train, and fruit shop) were scenes of a play being performed in the Kit Kat Klub. Because the scenes were now intended as scenes, not "reality" the set pieces served more to indicate locale, rather than create a complete environment. At this point in the process I began to create rough sketches to illustrate my vision of the set and communicate these ideas to the director.

My initial attempts to realize these design goals were not very successful. Many factors affected this part of the design process. I recognize that sketching is one of my weakest abilities as a designer; while my ability to conceptualize had expanded rapidly through the first stages of this design process my drawing skills had not caught up and I had a difficult time finding ways to put my ideas onto paper. This design for *Cabaret* was my first realized design in McPherson Theatre and of a much larger magnitude than any previous design experience; other designs had been in much smaller, black box spaces such as the Phoenix and Laboratory theatres. In these experiences, as well as in class projects, I had worked only with unit set design. This type of design consists of a single set where all of the different playing areas are always visible, relying heavily on lighting to shift focus. Most shows at Illinois Wesleyan are designed in this way because it is often the most appropriate use of the space. In this particular situation, however, a unit set, especially the type of unit set I was visualizing, was not appropriate because it placed far too many limitations on the stage space. Because of the large number of locales a unit set design divided the stage space into several very small areas that were not really useable playing space. Also, a unit set was overly cumbersome and created much too “busy” of a stage picture. In order to accommodate all the needs of the show (various locales, space needed for full cast dance numbers, etc.) I would have to move beyond the unit set. In my early sketches I found it difficult to escape this mode of design because other available options were simply outside my scope of awareness. This point in the process was extremely frustrating for me and I expect it was for the rest of the design team as well.

Through conversations with my advisor about different styles of design, particularly those appropriate to a musical, and about the capacity of McPherson as a space with a fully operational fly house I realized that I needed to approach this design in a totally different way than I was accustomed to. A proscenium style design, which is actually a much more traditional form of design, suited this production the best and I set about developing the design in that way. This required a major shift in thinking: I had been trained to think about a set as positive space,

creating a set from the inside out, and now I had to think in terms of negative space, creating the set by framing it in. At this point the design began to come full circle and I realized my initial thoughts about frames within frames and a simple, stylized design were not that far off. Until this point I had simply lacked the understanding of how to accomplish such a design.

Now that the design was on the right track I was able to begin solidifying, along with the director, what each element of the design should be. I produced additional rough sketches during this part of the process (fig. 2.1-2.5). My goal was to create a basic framework of a design within which the director could have a great deal of freedom. Through careful selection of essential elements the design should clearly suggest each locale without being cumbersome. As the rehearsal and production process proceeded the pieces of the design could be “choreographed”: scenes and transitions were mapped out to create the final stage design.

With the proscenium style design I was also able to explore the use of softgoods to define space, assist transitions, and frame action. Additionally, the director desired a specific sense of movement within the transitions that was best achieved using curtains of different materials and styles. Much of the design revolved around the most important moment in the show, the final moment (fig. 7.16,7.17). The director’s vision of this moment involved all the set pieces disappearing to reveal a huge Nazi flag and behind that a row of concentration camp prisoners. Much consideration was given to this moment in creating the design as a whole. I will discuss specific elements of the design later in my paper.

One problematic issue stood out during this part of the design process: the stage orchestra. Initially both the director and musical director expressed a desire for a separate stage orchestra (in addition to the pit orchestra). Because the orchestra would be a part of the stage picture, two questions arose: who is this orchestra and where do we put them so they don’t interfere with the playable stage space. Many of the orchestra members were older adults, not experienced actors, so it would be somewhat demanding to ask them to function as an onstage part of the production. The disparity between the “look” of the older orchestra members and the

young cast would affect the overall concept of the production. It also became apparent that a permanent stage band would be too cumbersome to facilitate the smooth transitions needed in the show and at one point the stage band was cut completely. Later the stage orchestra was re-integrated at a few key moments and was composed of a few cast members who had previous musical experience. This journey was an interesting example of the collaborative process between director, musical director, and design team.

Once the selection process was complete I began creating the necessary technical drawings to facilitate the implementation of the design (fig. 5.1-5.5). This process was challenging and pushed me to refine my drafting skills. I also created a scenic model, which served not only as a reference for paint and construction purposes but as a way to communicate with the director and cast about the stage space they would work in (fig 4.1-4.5). Throughout this period in the design I was able to develop and maintain a good working relationship with my advisor and technical director and meet all appropriate deadlines.

I believe the design process for *Cabaret* was a satisfactory process. It was not without challenges but I believe that, with the support of the production team and my advisor, I was able to address adequately the challenges I faced. My ability to present myself and communicate my ideas has definitely improved and by the end of the design process I felt I was much more able to solve problems effectively and in the moment.

III. The Production Process

Once the design had been established it moved into the production process. At this point the design drawings are turned over to the technical director to be broken down into technical drawings for construction purposes. Through her careful planning the construction of the show was able to be completed in as timely a manner as possible. As the designer in the shop I was responsible for the construction of softgoods and supervision of painting and properties. My major projects were the construction of the full stage Venetian curtain and the painting of the

metropolis drop. Each of these projects greatly expanded my skills in sewing and painting, respectively, and made a bold statement as a part of the design.

In addition to the work I did myself I was also responsible for supervising the props master, scenic charge artist, and assistant scenic artist. The magnitude of work on this production was very different from my past design experiences. As I mentioned earlier my other designs have been in smaller spaces where construction was primarily my own responsibility. Because of the nature of my personality I sometimes have a very difficult time trusting others to perform tasks; I set very high standards for myself and am concerned about placing those expectations on others. During this process, however, the amount of work was such that I absolutely had to trust my support staff in order to get it done. Though there were definitely moments of frustration, all three performed well and were of tremendous help to me.

Communication was of vital importance in the production process. The technical director and I talked on a daily basis about the progress of the production. Just as important was communication with the other designers on the production. In my design I was able to make very bold color choices which made design choices much more difficult for the other designers. Because of this I made every effort to get swatches and paint elevations to the designers as early as possible and to maintain constant contact. In the event of a problem I worked to resolve it in an efficient manner. Misunderstandings are inevitable, especially in an educational process, but I strove to be as clear and professional as possible.

Technical rehearsals are a crucial time in the production process, and also a very trying one. The integration of multiple elements into the production is never without difficulty and *Cabaret* was no exception. The most major problem on this show was the integration of the doors for the apartment and foyer scenes. Because of the fragile nature of a doorframe and the lack of surface to secure the doors to the originally proposed design solution, flying the door in and out, turned out to be impossible. After days of attempting to adjust the tension, etc., the movement of the doors was switched to manual movement by the crew. Even this solution

required additional changes up until the last days before opening. Some mistakes were simply human error, such as the swastika that I painted backwards (but promptly fixed). Another unanticipated problem was the Venetian curtain. The force needed to operate the rigging caused the batten to pull stage left. Additional experimentation was required to find a solution to this problem as well. This particular incident was somewhat tense due to a miscommunication between the director and myself about appropriate solutions to the problem. Though the conflict was certainly not comfortable I strove to address the issue in a calm and mature way and resolved the problem by the next rehearsal. This interaction was important because it forced me to deal with a very real situation that classroom training could not have prepared me for.

IV. The Final Product

The culmination of the design and production process, of course, is the staged design. The goal is to create a set that takes into account all the ideas developed in the design concept while maintaining a healthy production process. I will now discuss each of the elements of my scenic design for *Cabaret* and how they relate to the design concept.

Within the design there are two “worlds”: the Kit Kat Klub (including backstage)(fig. 7.1-7.9) and the world of the play within the play (fig 7.10-7.15). As a designer I wanted to make these two worlds separate but unified. There were many contrasts between the club and the “play” world. The world of the club was very slick and metallic. The stage space was framed with a spiral stair case on one side and a steel platform on the other: either way the actors entered the space from above, giving the impression of descending down into the nightclub. The metal platform with its ladder and fire-pole is also reminiscent of the “beautiful body” images of my earlier research. Both the platform and the staircase provided an aloof space for the omni-present Emcee to observe the action of the play (fig. 7.2,7.3). The shimmer curtain, metallic frames, and metallic furniture border between glitzy and gaudy as the nightclub and German society go downhill (fig. 7.4,7.8,7.9). The “play” scenes use more natural materials and have a softer texture overall, though the minimalist selection of set pieces is still stylized and sleek (fig. 7.10, 7.11,

7.14). The two worlds are separated by the Venetian curtain, which opens to form a false proscenium for the “play” (fig. 7.5, 7.12, 7.15). Small touches unify the set as a whole, however. The wood doors have a slight silver highlight, the train bench and luggage rack are silver, and the floor is a break-up of warm and cool colors throughout.

The idea of frames within frames is apparent with the two light frames in the Kit Kat Klub and with the Venetian curtain (7.4, 7.5). As previously mentioned, the Venetian acted sometimes as a false proscenium. At other specific moments the frames worked either alone or concentrically to pull in focus. The angular lines of the frames added to the distortion effect as well (fig. 5.3).

As I discussed earlier many factors helped develop the sense of theatricality. The concept of the “play within the play” put the audience into a theatrical mindset; they were, in essence, an audience watching a play in a cabaret. The use of select minimal set pieces furthered the effect of theatricality. The third major factor in this pursuit was the addition of café tables in the first row of the audience (fig. 7.6, 7.7). Though two of the seats were reserved for actors the rest were filled with audience members. Actors dressed as waiters served them drinks and interacted with them frequently. Audience members seemed to enjoy the experience and it added to the idea that the audience at *Cabaret* was the audience in the Kit Kat Klub.

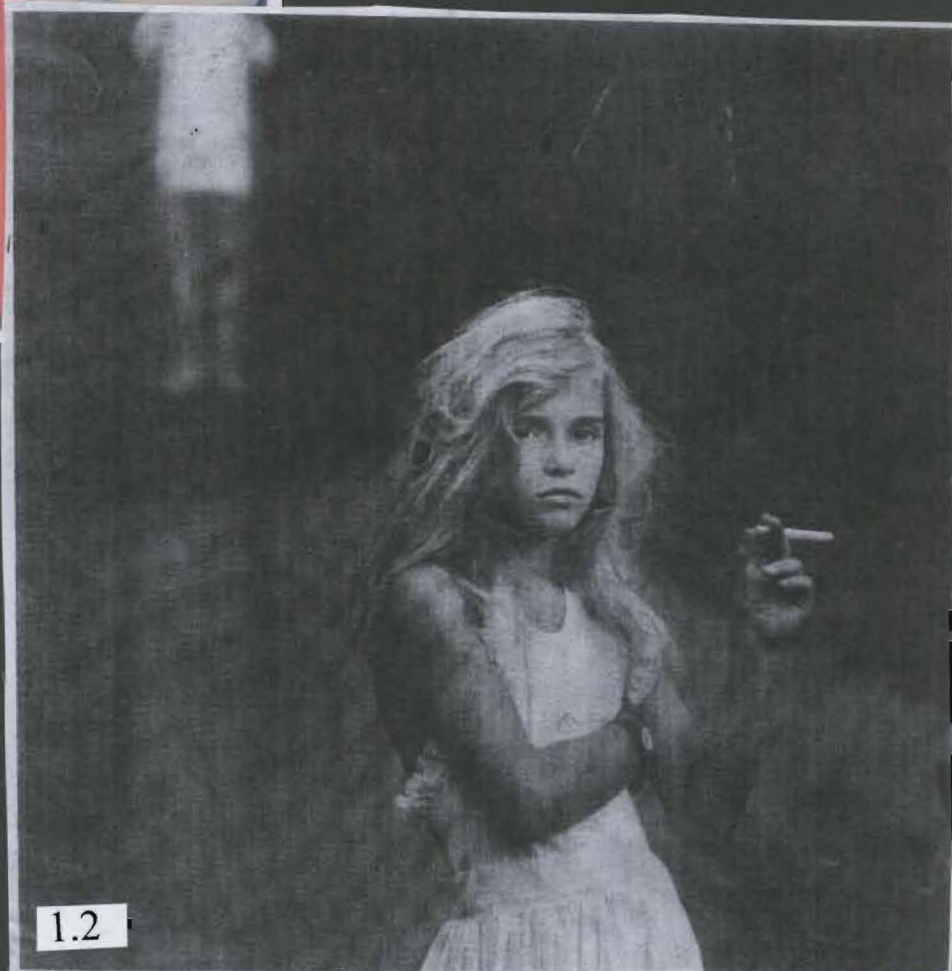
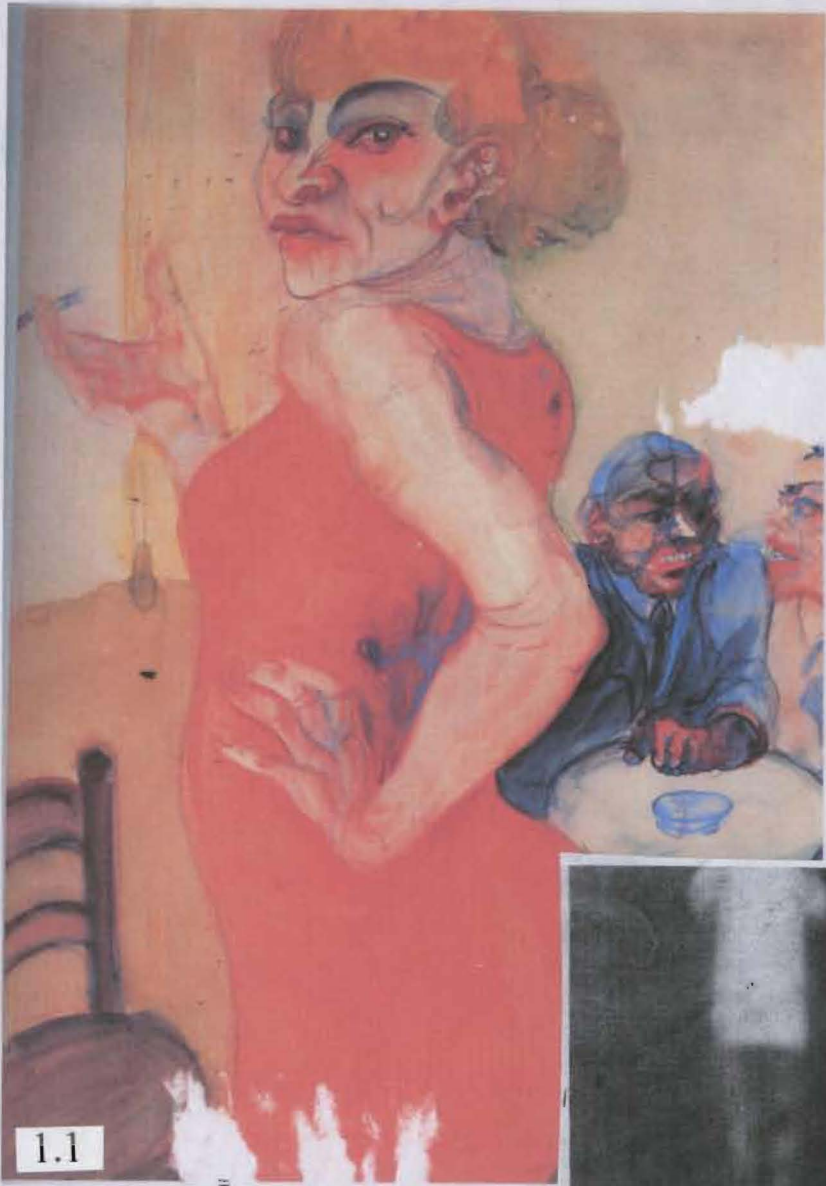
The final major set piece I would like to discuss is the metropolis drop (fig. 6.1-6.5). I feel that this piece is the most significant and innovative piece of the scenic design. The concept of the metropolis drop was drawn from several sources, including a painting by Georg Grosz (fig. 1.26), Expressionist photomontage (fig. 1.22, 1.25), a photo of an actual cabaret show (fig. 1.21), and the fire imagery I spoke of earlier in this paper (fig. 1.24, 1.27, 1.28). The drop served as a representation of the decay of German society. In the first parts of the show the vibrant red and orange colors of the drop were dulled down with lighting: as the show progressed the lights slowly began to bring out the painted colors of the drop until in the final scenes it was glowing in fiery tones (fig. 6.4, 6.5). The image for the drop itself was taken from a photomontage by Paul

Citroen (fig. 1.22). For me this particular design element is an ideal example of the blending of concept, research, design, and craft to create a remarkable product.

V. Conclusion

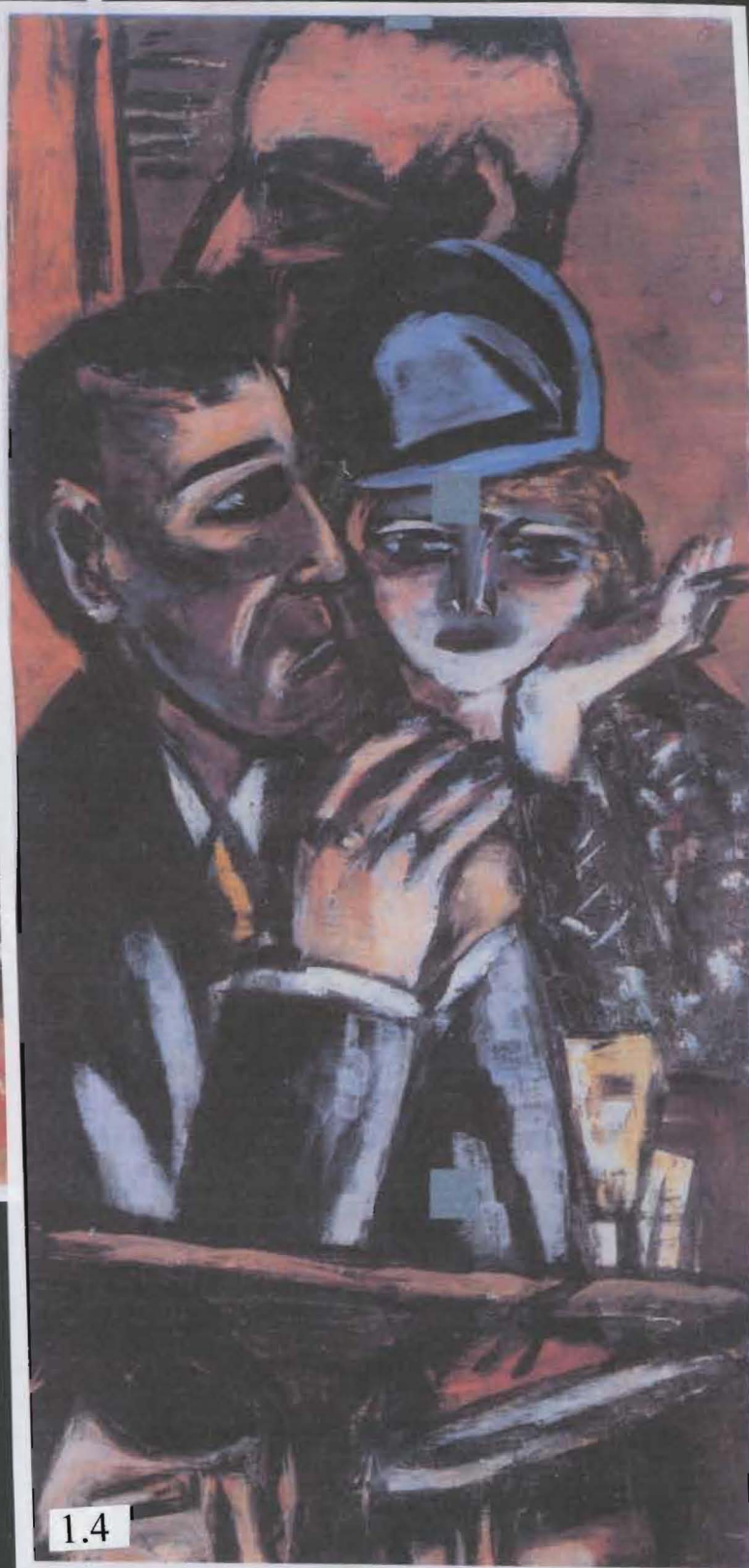
In conclusion, I feel my scenic design for *Cabaret* was successful. I was able to actively participate in the design process with faculty designers, directors, and staff whom I respect greatly. Throughout the process I feel I behaved professionally and was able to react and solve problems in the moment. I maintained a good relationship with my advisor and usually knew when to ask for help, which is not always easy. I was disciplined in my work, set realistic goals (for the most part) and achieved them. The final product functioned well, looked good, and was true to the drawings and scenic model. I have achieved a much greater understanding of what design is, gained focus in my work and, perhaps most important of all, I truly enjoyed this design experience.

Historical and Inspirational Research

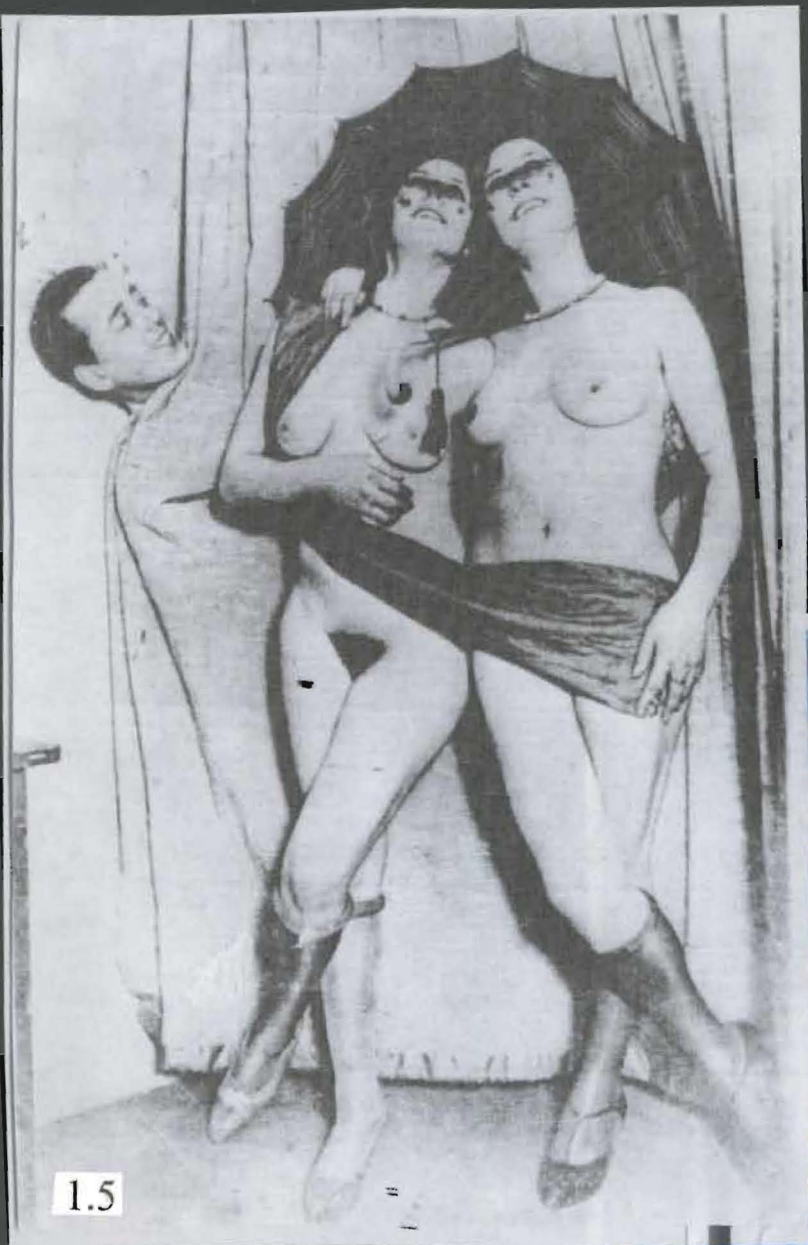




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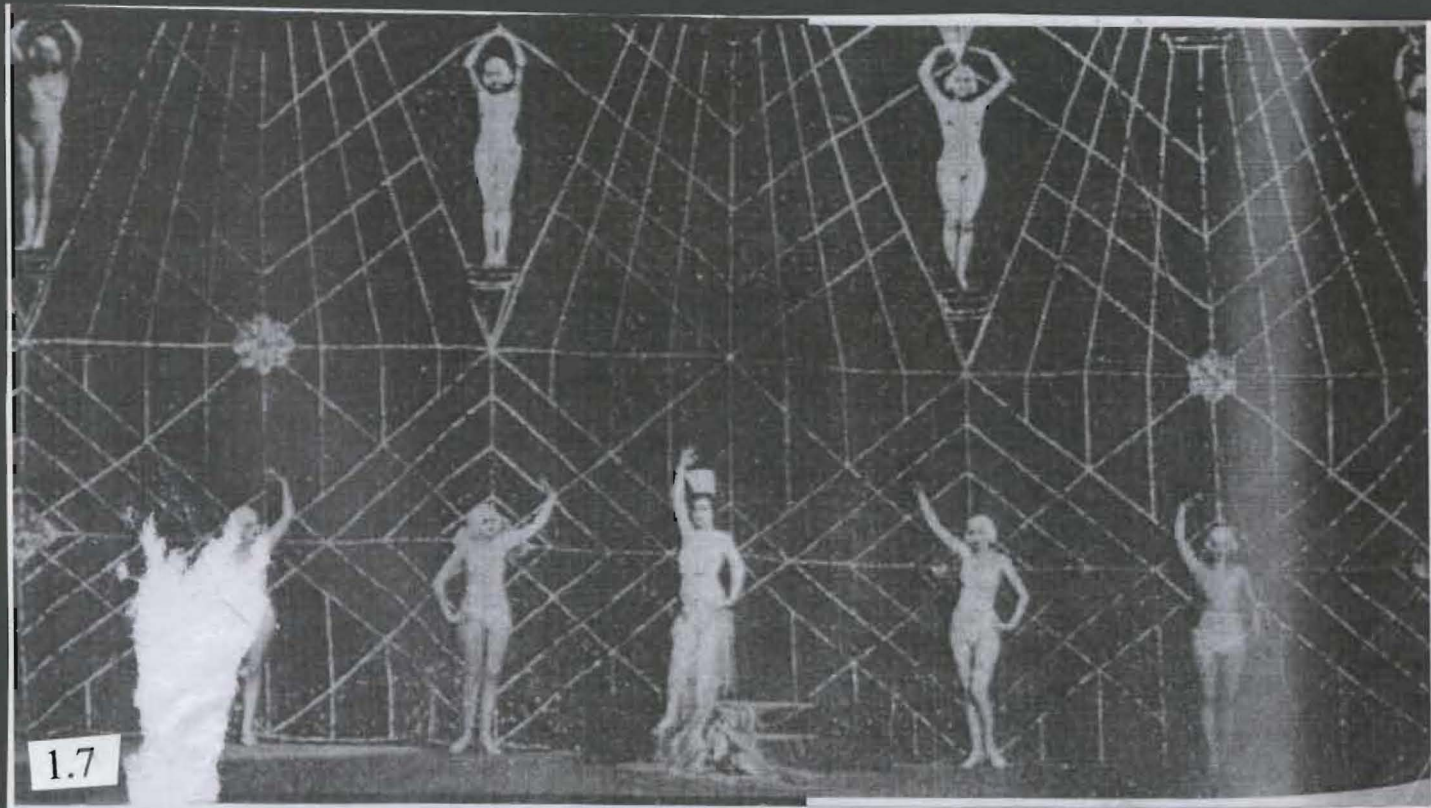
1.4



1.5



pebe





1.9



1.10

KLASSET DIE KINDLEIN...

Auch ein geistlicher Herr ist ein Kind dieser Welt, dem das gelinkte Knie des Tänzers besonderen Genuß zu bereiten vermag. Da sitzt nun Hochwürden am Fortepiano, hrw. Harmonium, greift weit und breit in die Tasten und jubiliert aus freudig geöffnetem Munde wie eine Lärche zum höheren Preise der Sitte und Moral.

Hinter den Brillengläsern funkelt ein gedankenvolles Auge; und der kantige Schädel verrät dem Phrenologen einen bedeutenden Hang zur Pflege leichter Künste.

Was mag in diesem Großhirn vorgehen? Vielleicht dieses: Die Zeiten in USA sind bitter, die Verworfenheit ist groß, die Menschen schlecht, die Kirche leer. Wer aber will über die Leidenschaften sprechen, der sie nicht kennt? Und wenn man sie kennt, soll man sich dann nicht ihrer bedienen, um alle herbeizulocken, die ihnen untertan sind?

Das sind sicherlich jesuitische Gedankengänge. Der Zweck ist: den Tempel zu bevölkern. Das Mittel, die Aufzucht der Instinkte. Und da auch dem Reverend in die Wiege ein gutes Pfund Instinkt gelegt wurde, so freut er sich doppelt an den Zauberkünsten, die er vorführt.

Romano und Julia" soll von den Schülern des Internats "elt werden. Obgleich an Mädchen in den Staaten kein "barrecht, ist es zweifellos pikant, auch die weib-



„Pfadfinder aus Shobergen, als „Ladies von Verona“ kostümiert für ihre Rollen in „Romano und Julia“. Unten: Otto Perlekin schenkt sie mehr oder weniger natürlich aus. Oben: Dieselben Jungen mit Perlekin und frisiert, als versuchen, ihren vorführerischen Ausdruck zu haben“



„Das Cher-Mädchen“ wird frisiert“

lichen Rollen durch Knaben spielen zu lassen. Hei, wie hübsch sich der junge Master Hotbrother als Julia macht, wie das Kostüm ihn umfließt! Hei, wie die Veroneserinnen im pfeifernen Haar teils grimassenschnellend, teils vernonnen von den Jüngern der IV. Klasse verkörpert werden!

Die Heranziehung anderer Jünglinge zu orientalischen Ballettrollen gehört zu den weiteren Späßen des Reverends. Nun wäre gewiß nichts dagegen zu sagen, wenn ein literarischer Pastor Shakespears mit den Schülern einer Anstalt selebriert. Aber, es ist dann doch wohl etwas anderes, ob man sich die Königsdramen oder das lyrische und liebesvolle Spiel des Veroneser Paares vornimmt. Wenn man dann noch hört, daß der Pfaffe das Stück mit wilden Cancanliedern verbrämt hat, um seine Zöglinge in Ballettrollen zu stecken, dann dürfte das Wort „Blasphemie“ an geistigen und geistlichen Gütern fast noch zu milde sein.

Es ist wise von der Natur dafür gesorgt worden, daß die Repräsentanten der Unschuld nicht in den Himmel wachsen; hier sieht man's wieder einmal deutlich. Der geistliche Herr hat sein bedenklisches Vergnügen, die Jünglinge die Arbeit, die Mädchen das Nachsehen und wir einen neuen Beweis für



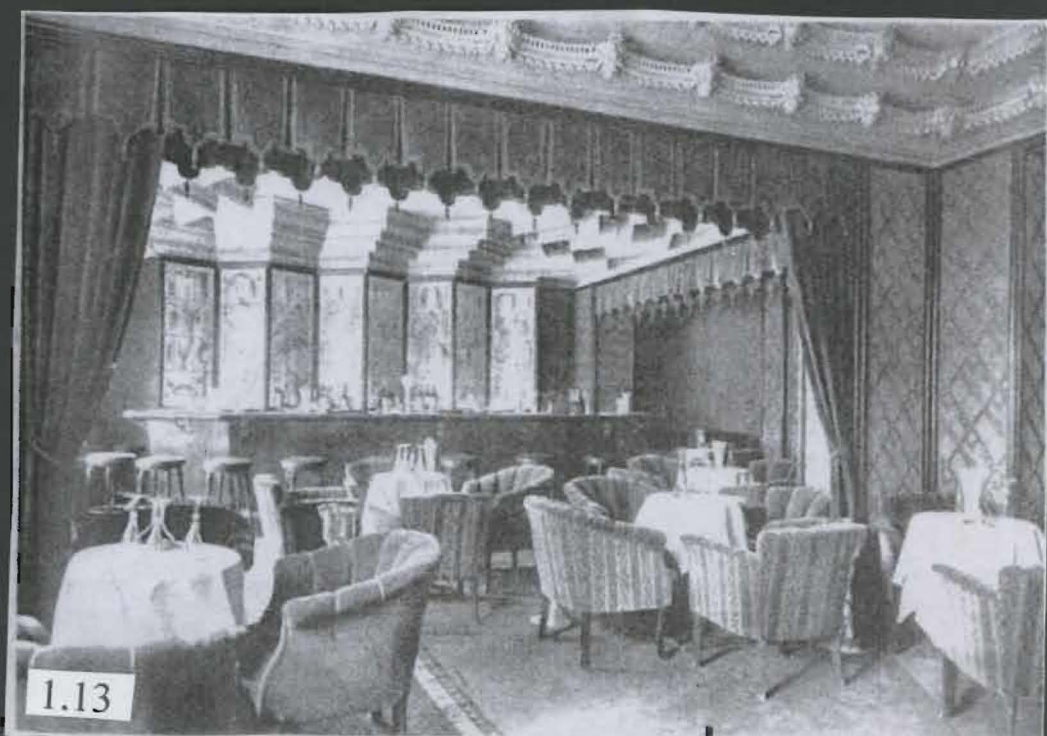
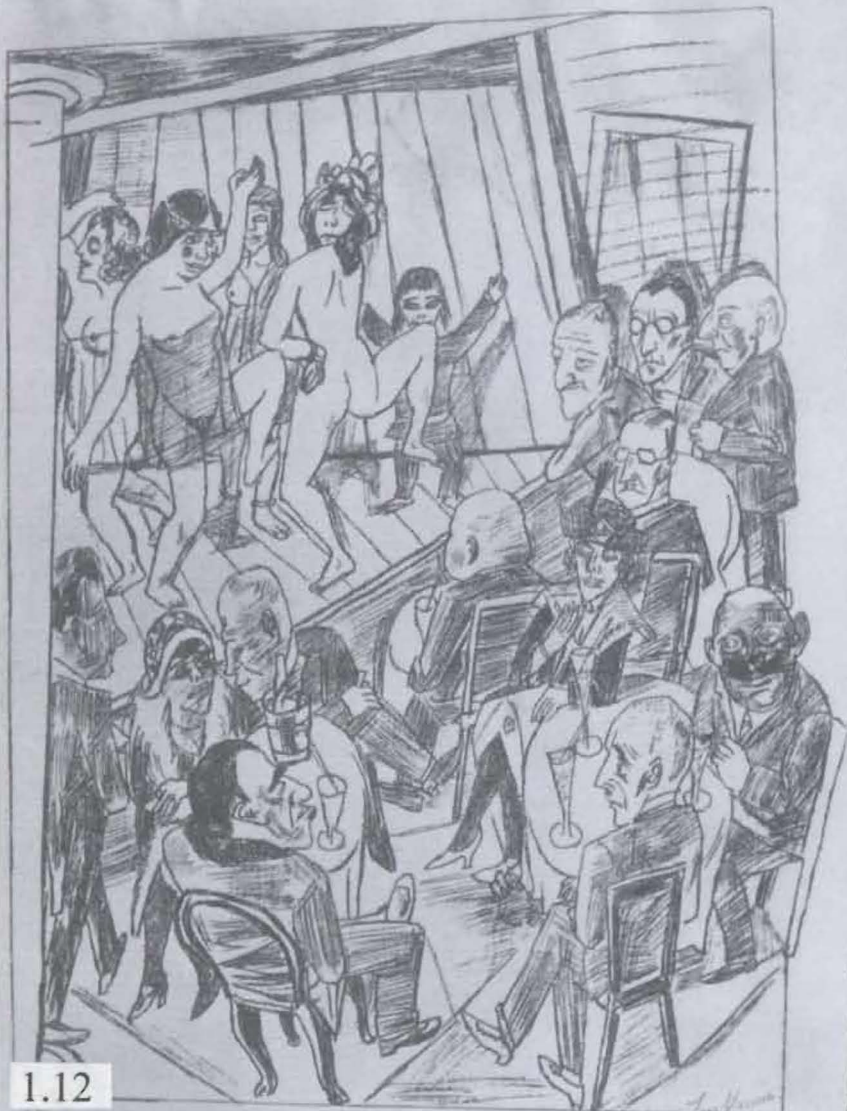
die Tatsache, daß nicht alles sauber und natürlich ist was die Reinheit und Keuschheit auf sein Firmenschild geschrieben hat. (Wir betonen ausdrücklich, daß sämtliche Bildunterschriften wörtliche Übersetzungen aus dem amerikanischen Original sind.)

Bild Mitte: „Bismarck-Campus vor den Pyramiden ihre Bismarck hoch in die Luft“

Bild links: „Pater Nilwell beglückwünscht den Campus“

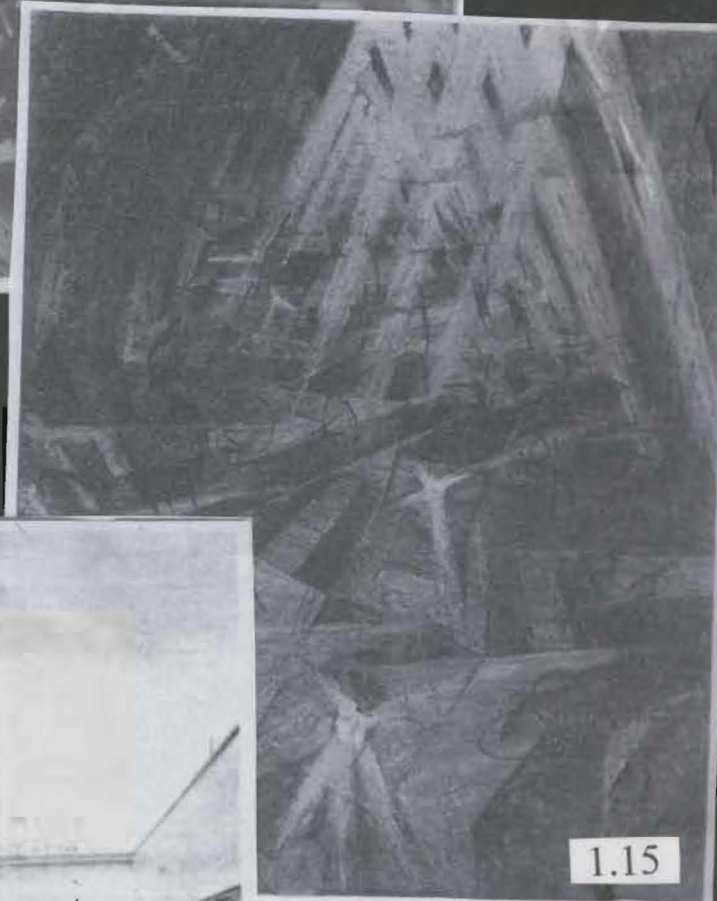
Bild rechts: „Ein Paar beim Capote-Hall mit sechs Jungen, die als orientalische Schachbein ererbtigsmacht sind und zur Melodie der Freunde des wirtlichen Deswicks tanzen. Alle Darsteller in der Kirchen haben der Jungen von Shobergen sind



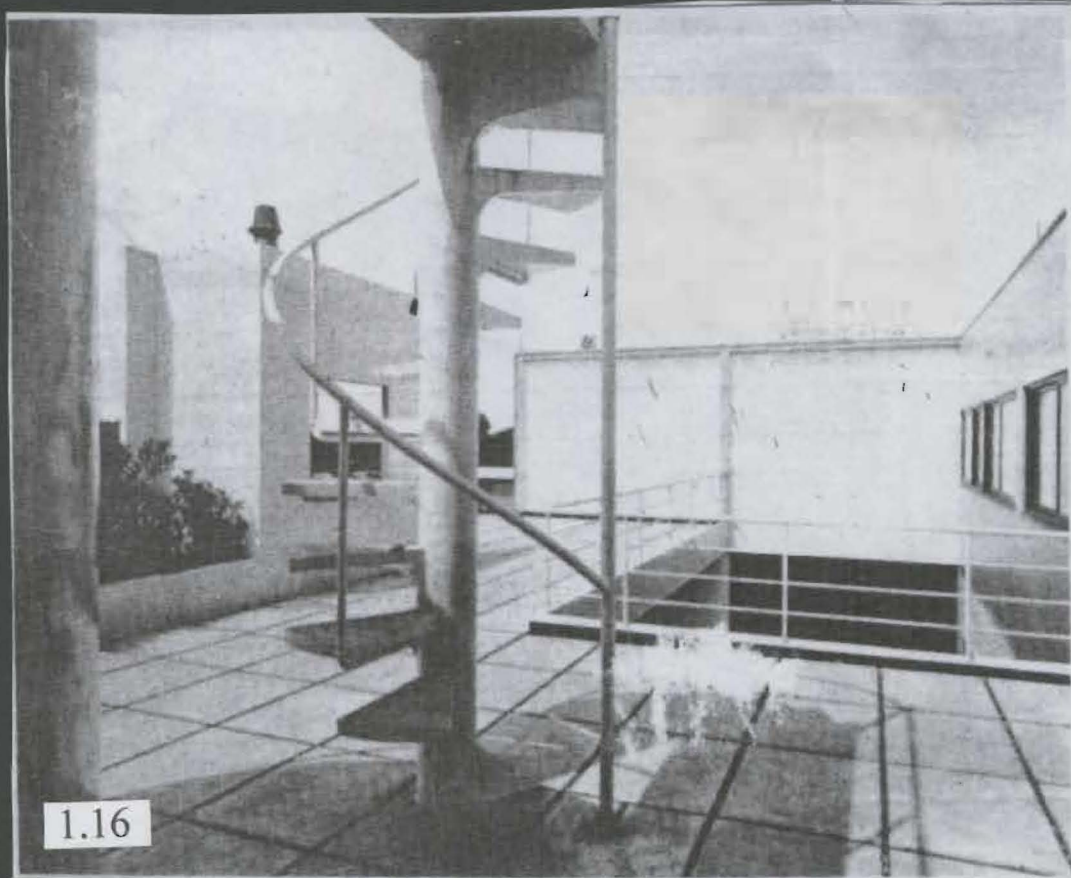




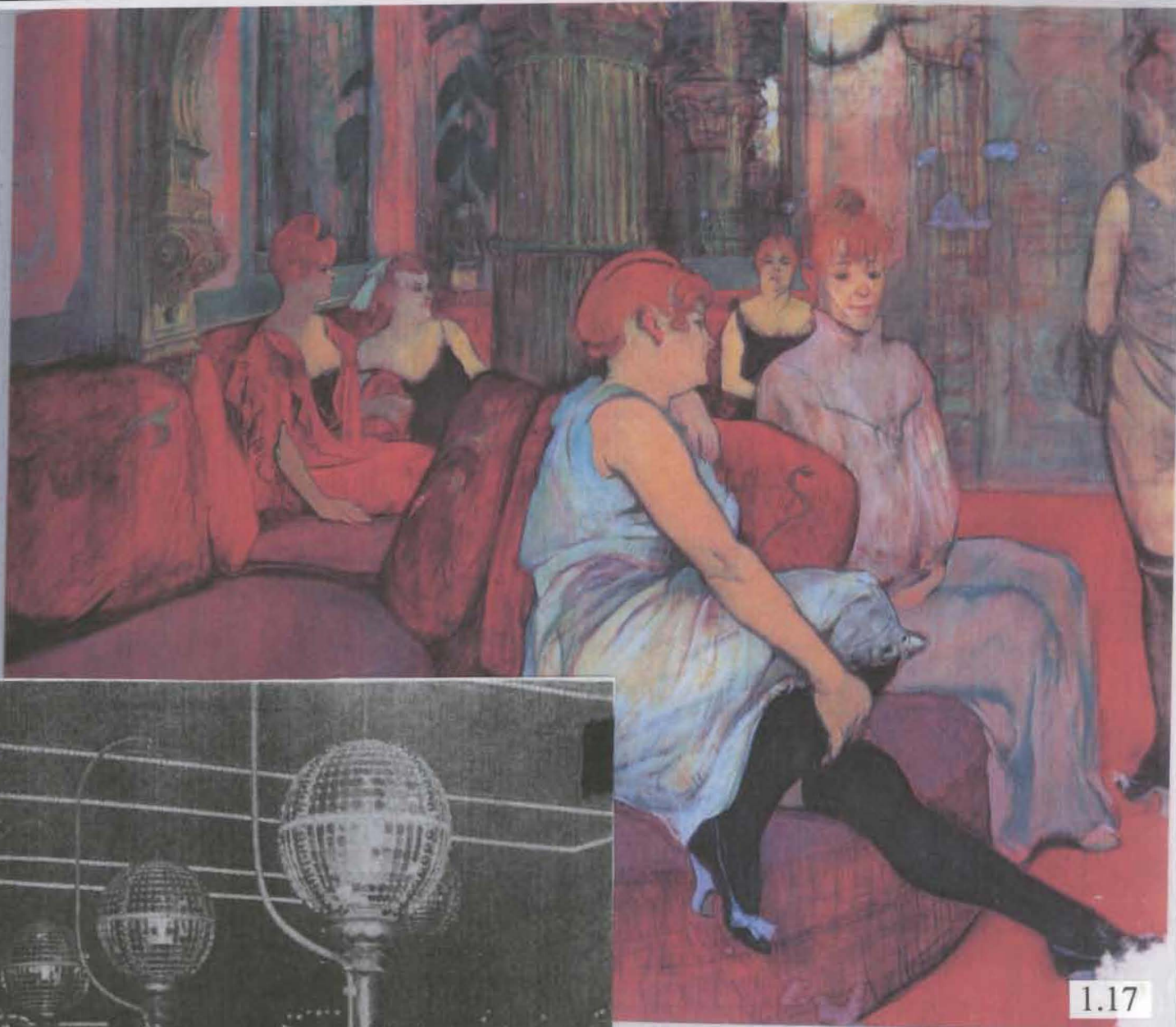
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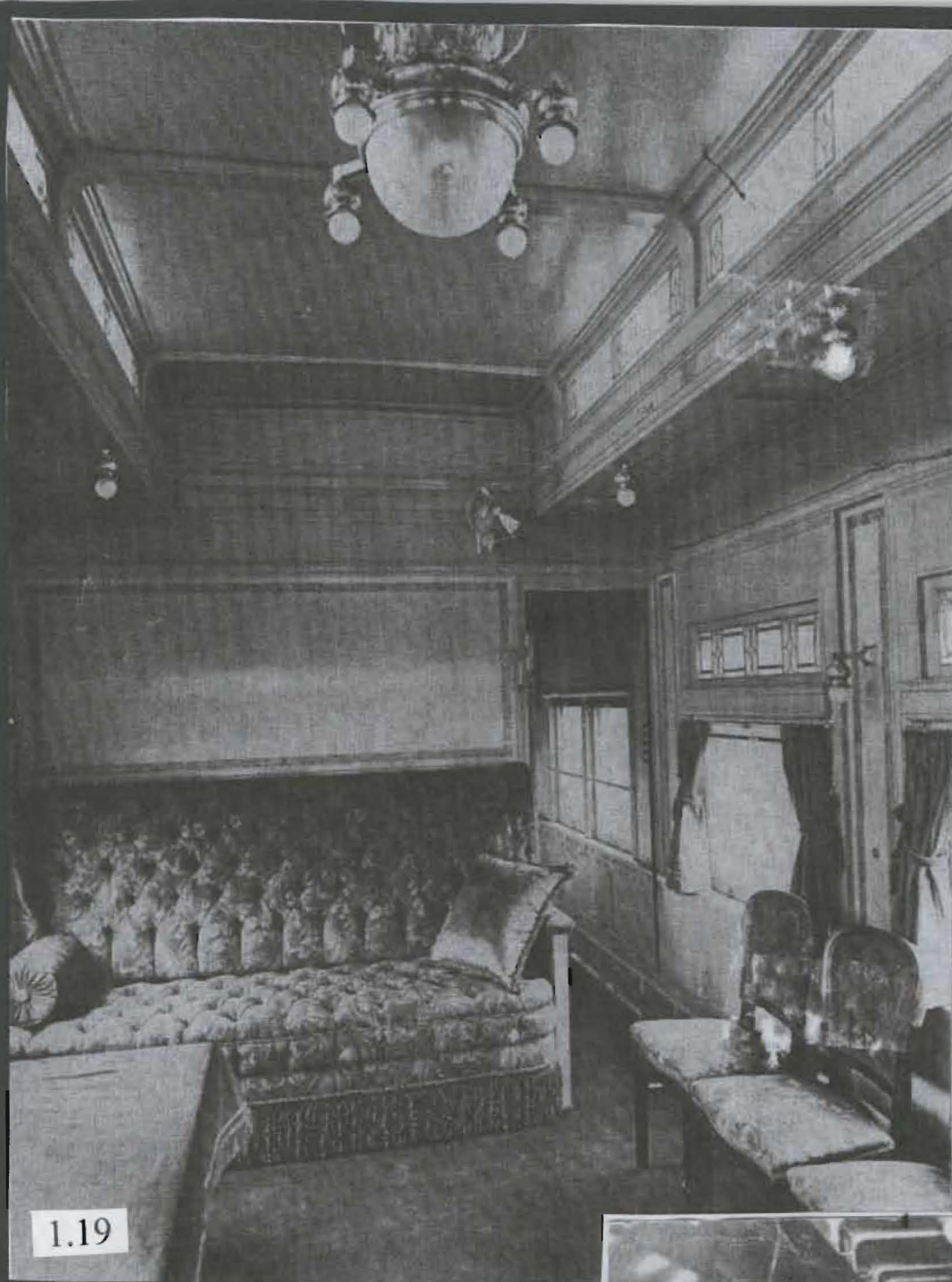
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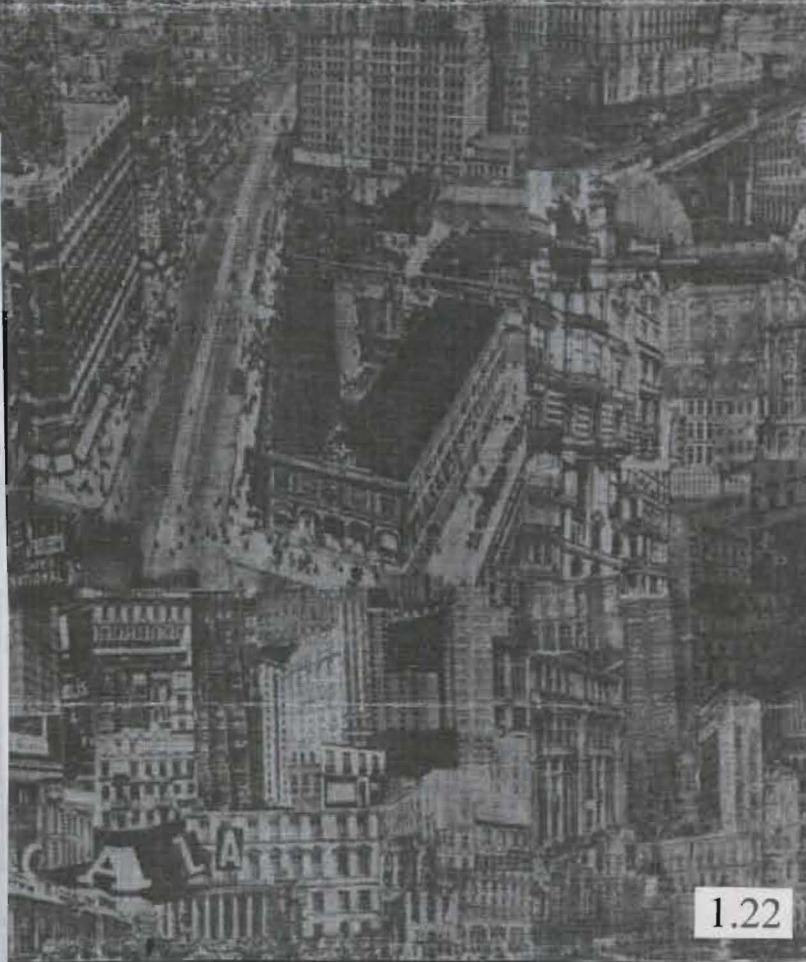
1.17



1.18







1.22

AIZ

GOERING
DER HENKER
DES DRITTEN REICHS

1.23

SONDERNUMMER: REICHSTAGSBRAND

PROZESS/GEGENPROZESS



1.26



1.27

DURCH LICHT ZUR NACHT



1.28

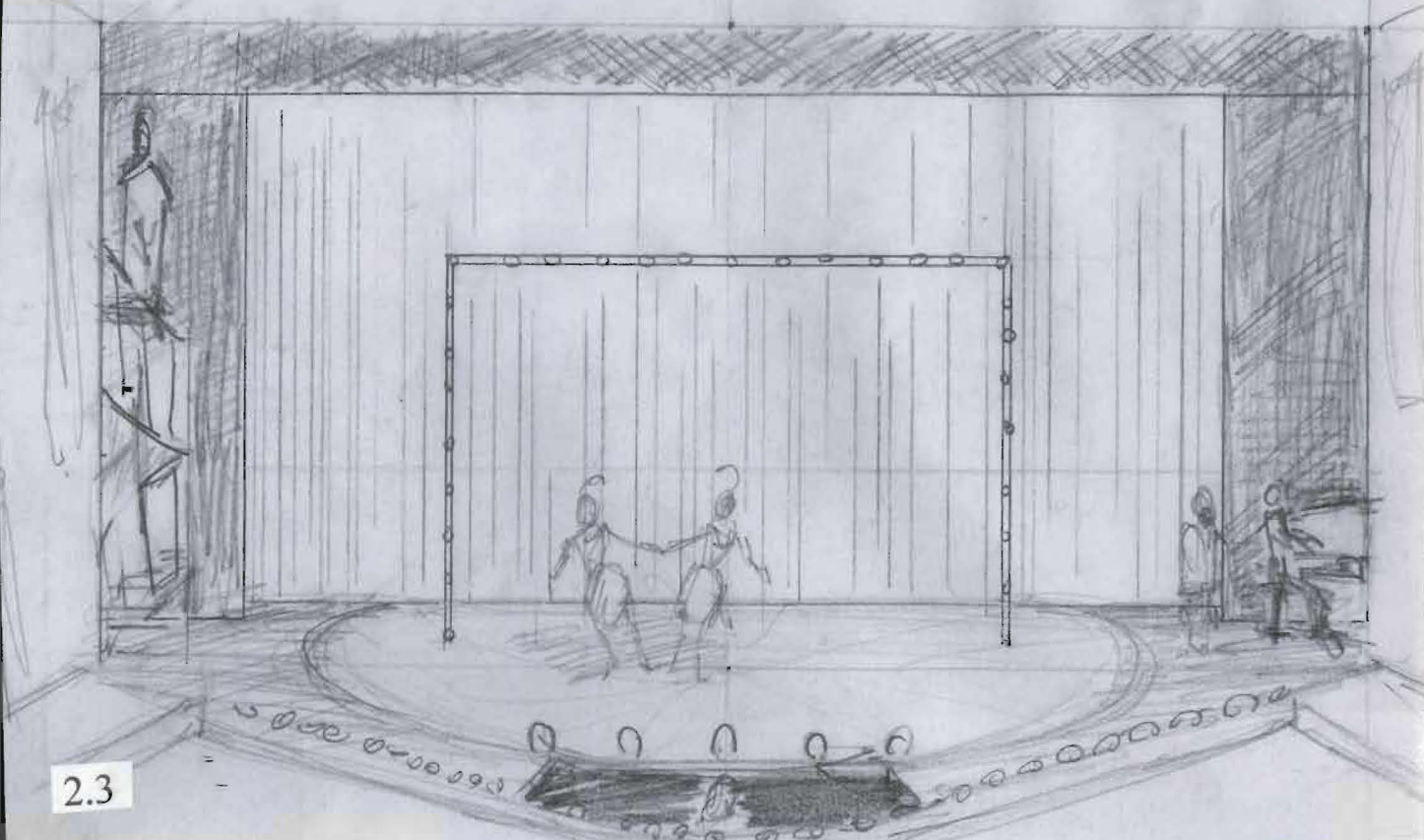
Also sprach Dr. Goebbels: Laßt uns aufs neue Brände entfachen,
auf daß die Verblendeten nicht erwachen!



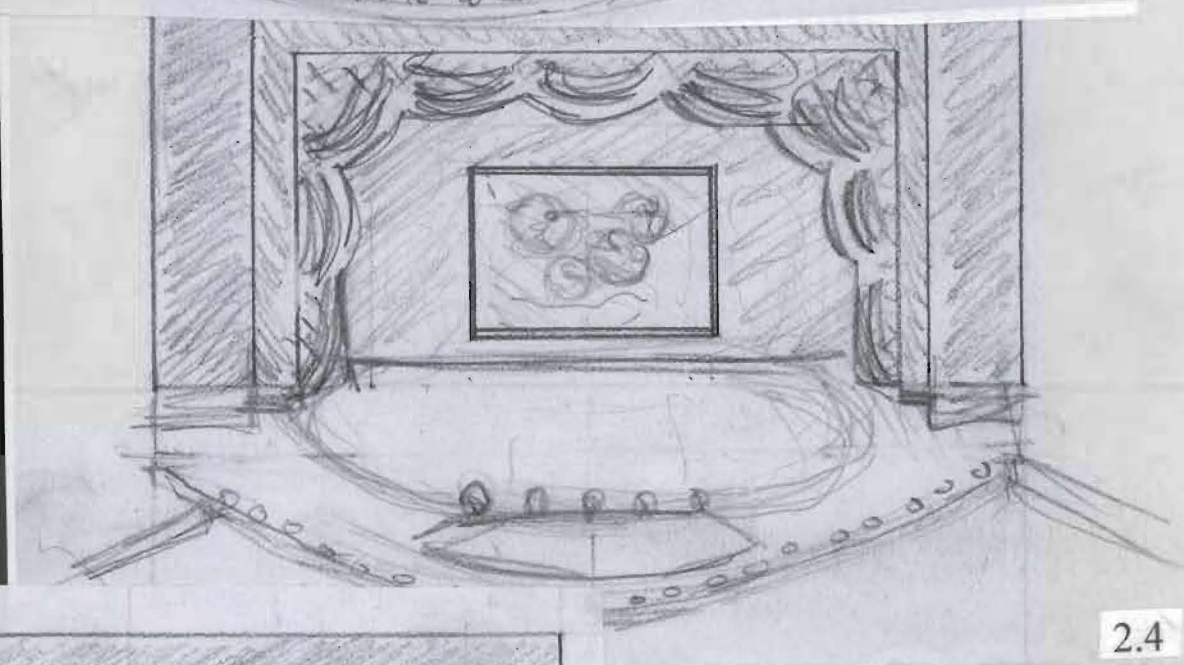
1.29

rough sketches

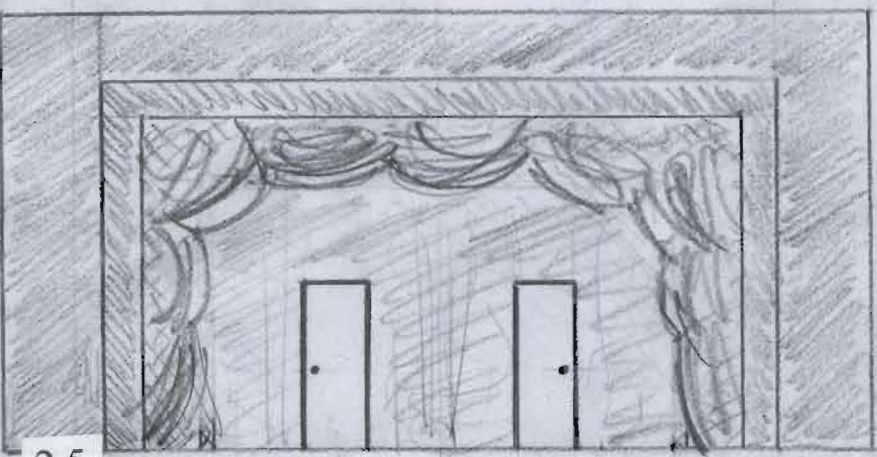




2.3

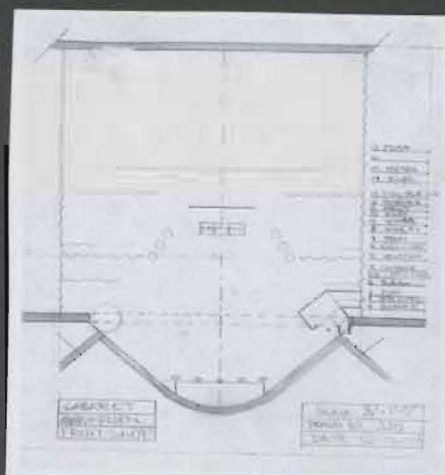
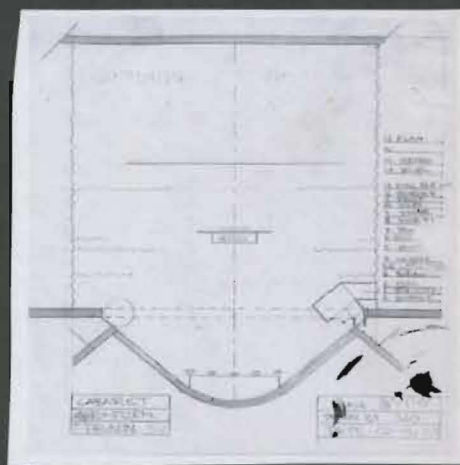
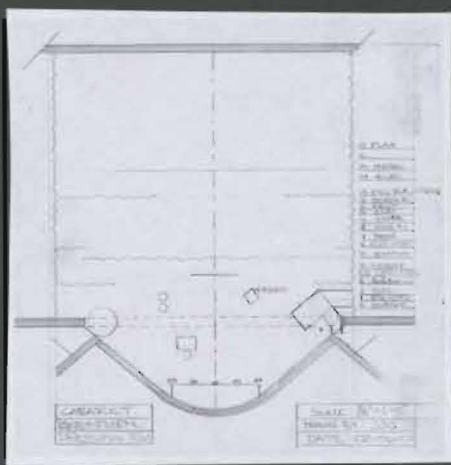
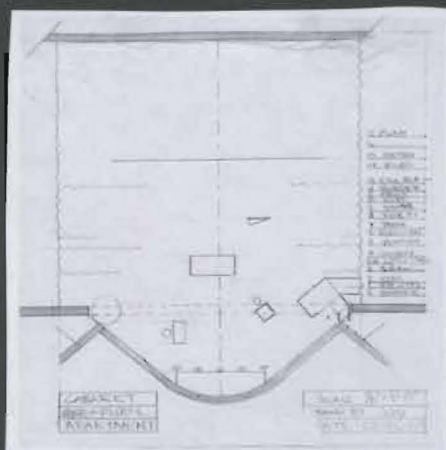
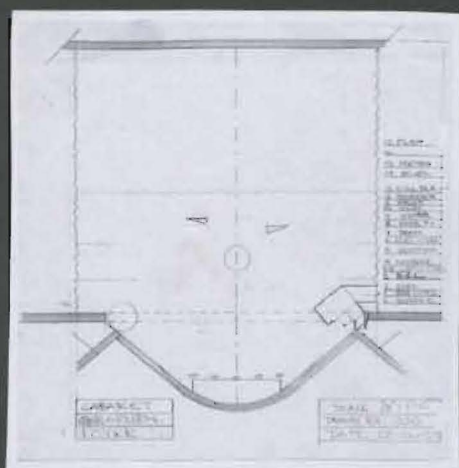


2.4



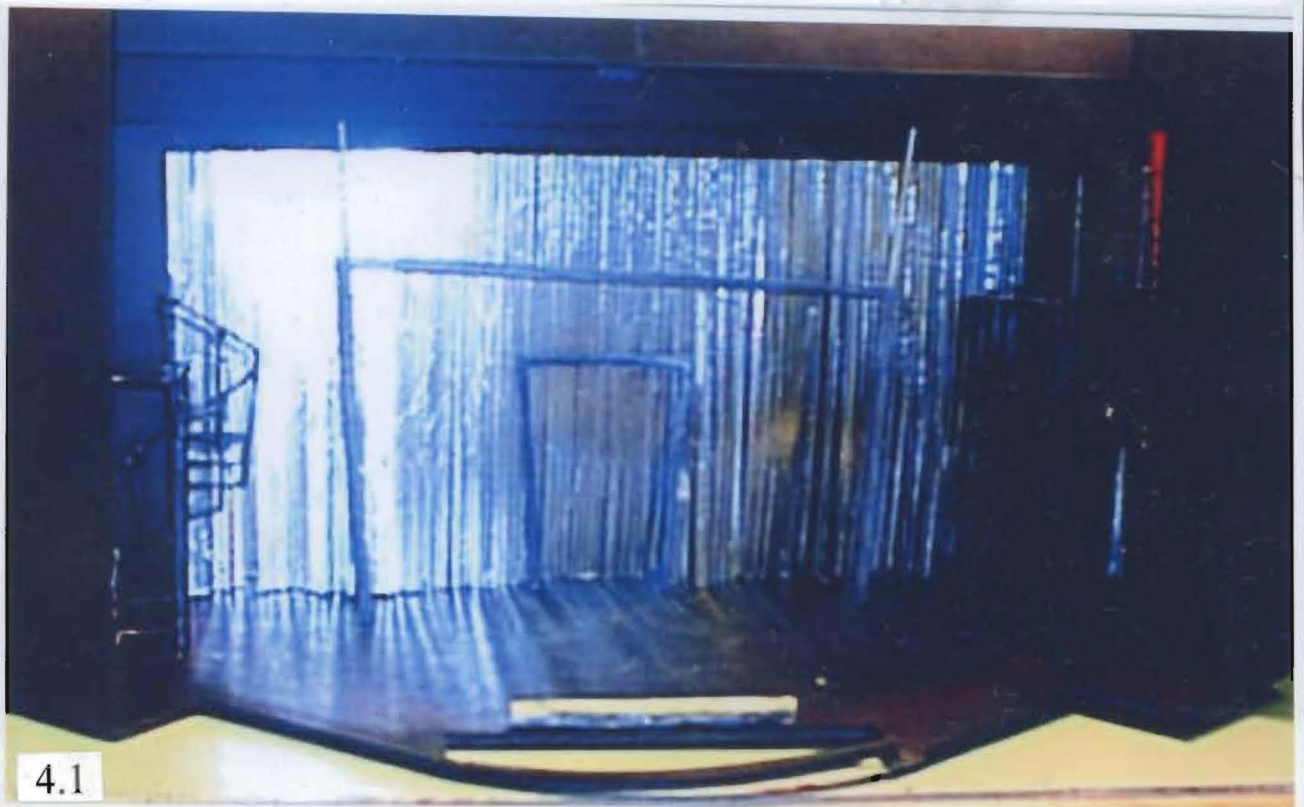
2.5

rough scene groundplans



3.1

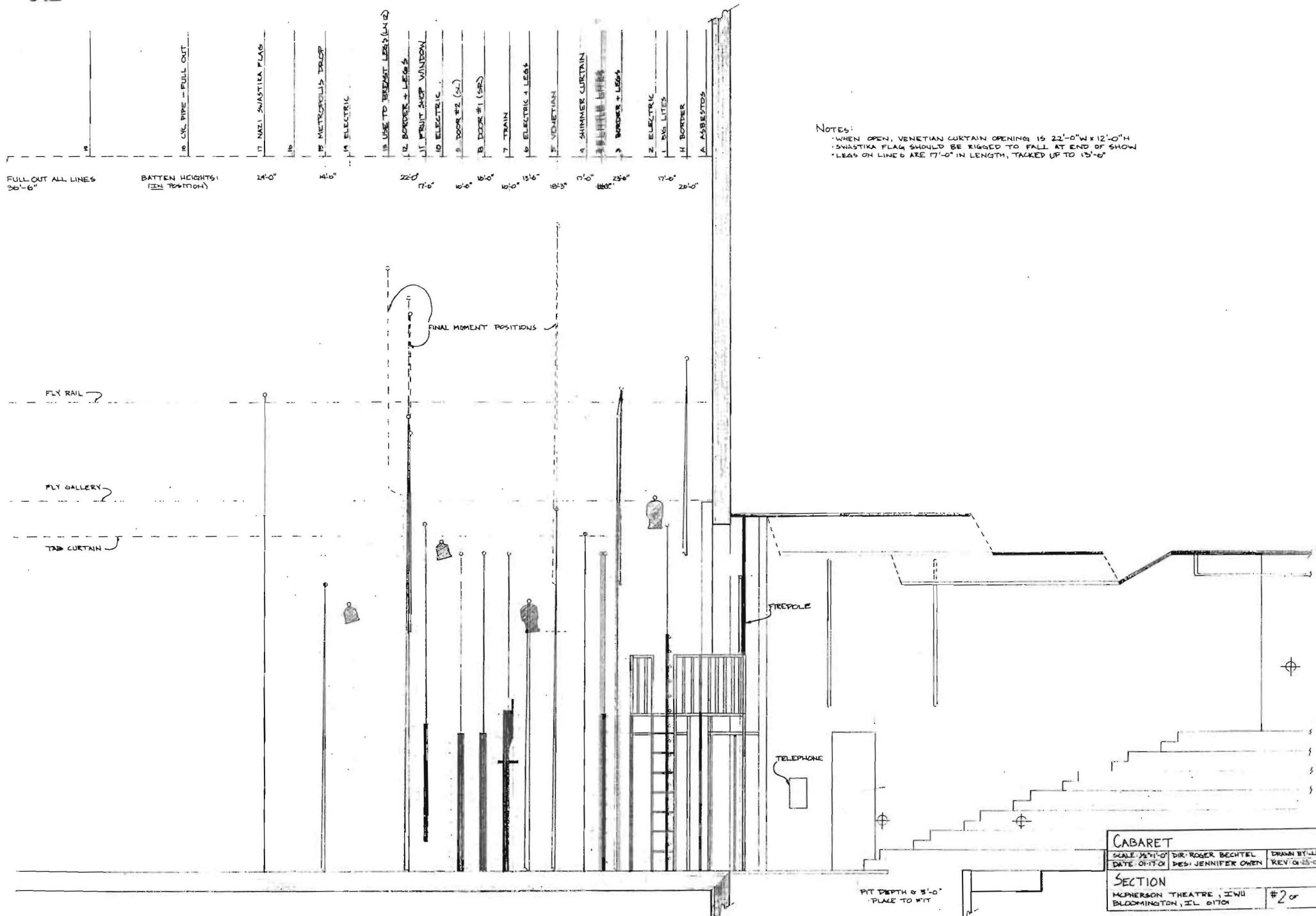
scenic model





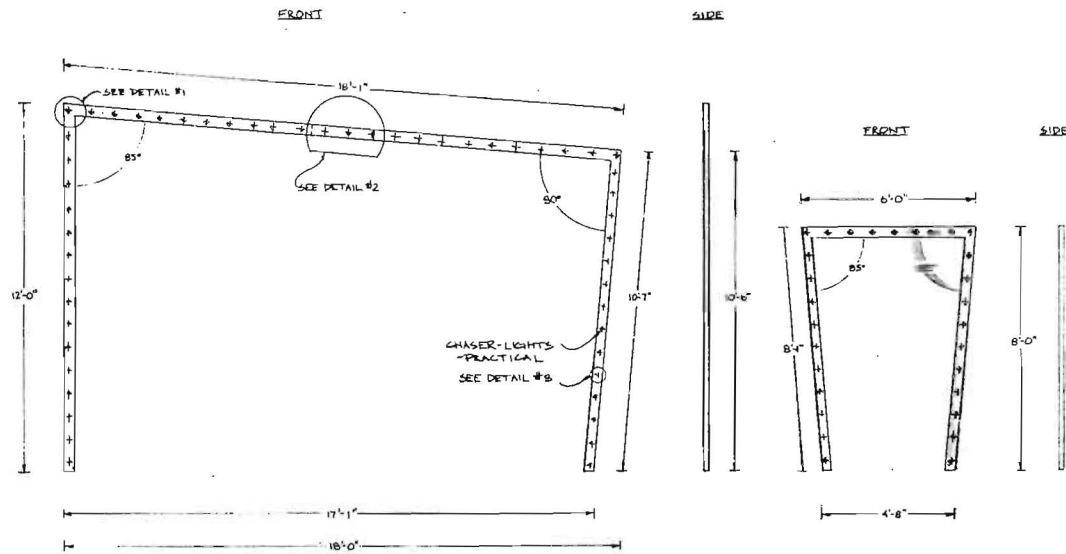


4.5

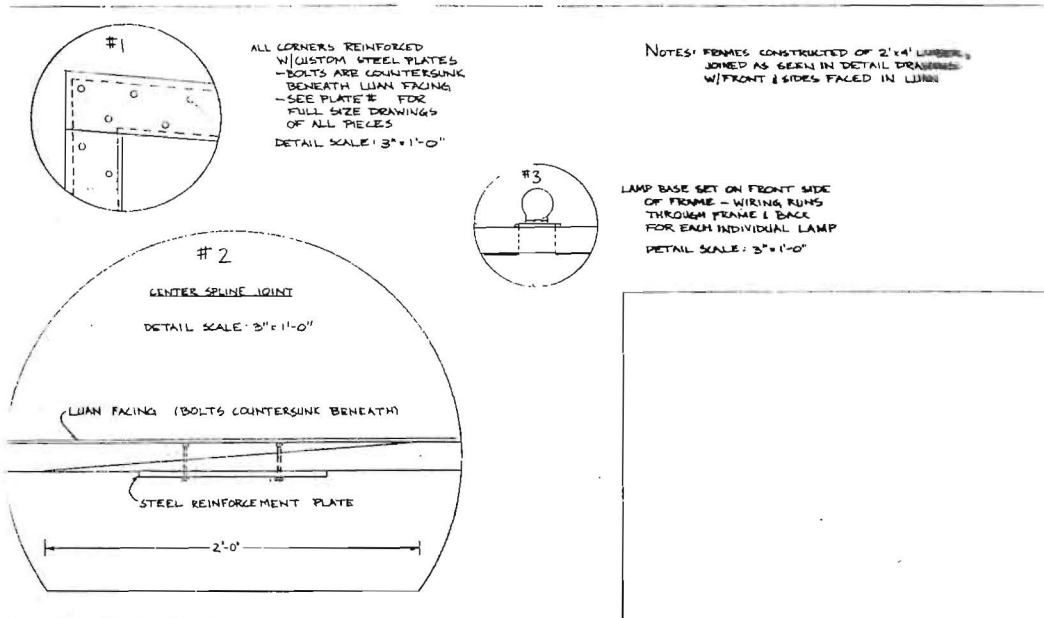
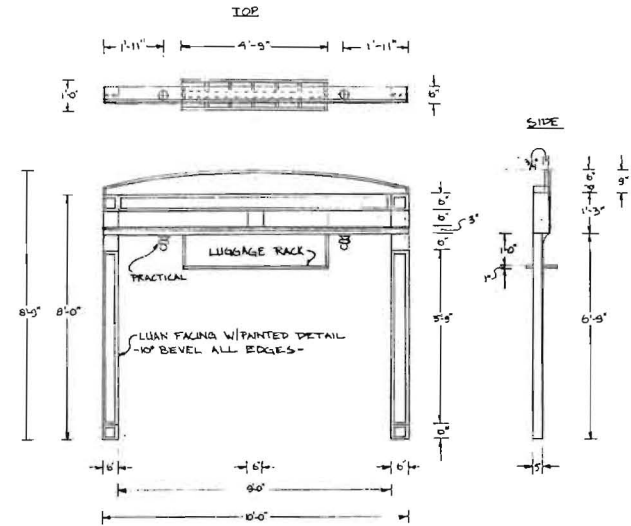


CABARET		
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"	DIR: ROGER BECHTEL	DRAWN BY: JLO
DATE: 01-10-01	DES: JENNIFER OWEN	REV: 01-25-01
SECTION		
MC PHERSON THEATRE, IOWA		
BLOOMINGTON, IL 01701		
#2		

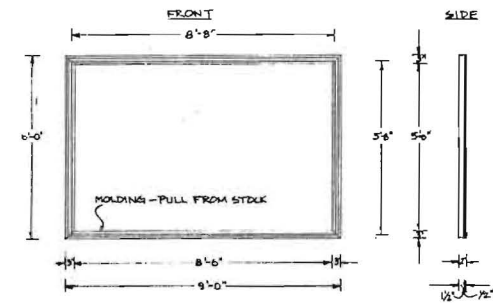
CHASER-LIGHT FRAME ELEVATIONS



TRAIN FRAME ELEVATIONS

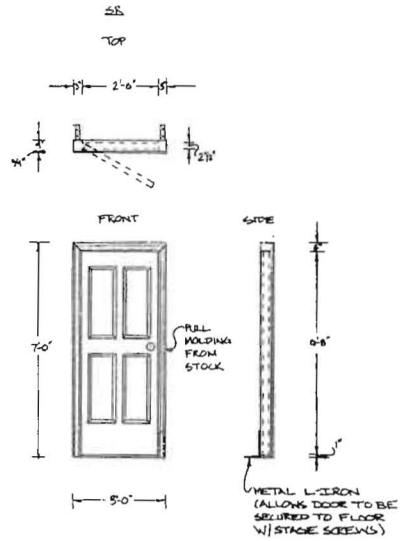


FRUIT SHOP WINDOW ELEVATIONS

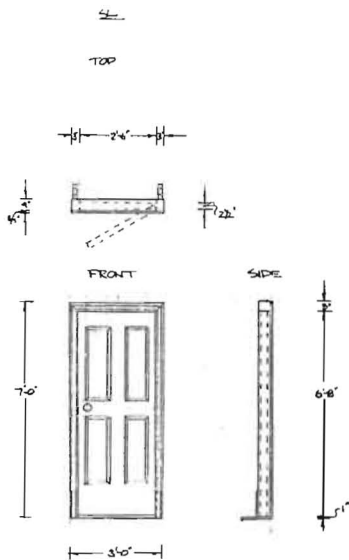


CABARET		
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"	DIR: ROGER BECHTEL	DRAWN BY: JLD
DATE: 01-17-01	DES: JENNIFER OWEN	REV: 11-18-01
ELEVATIONS: CHASER LIGHT FRAMES, TRAIN, FRUIT SHOP WINDOW		
MCMERSON THEATRE, IOWA BLOOMINGTON, ILL 61701		#3 OF

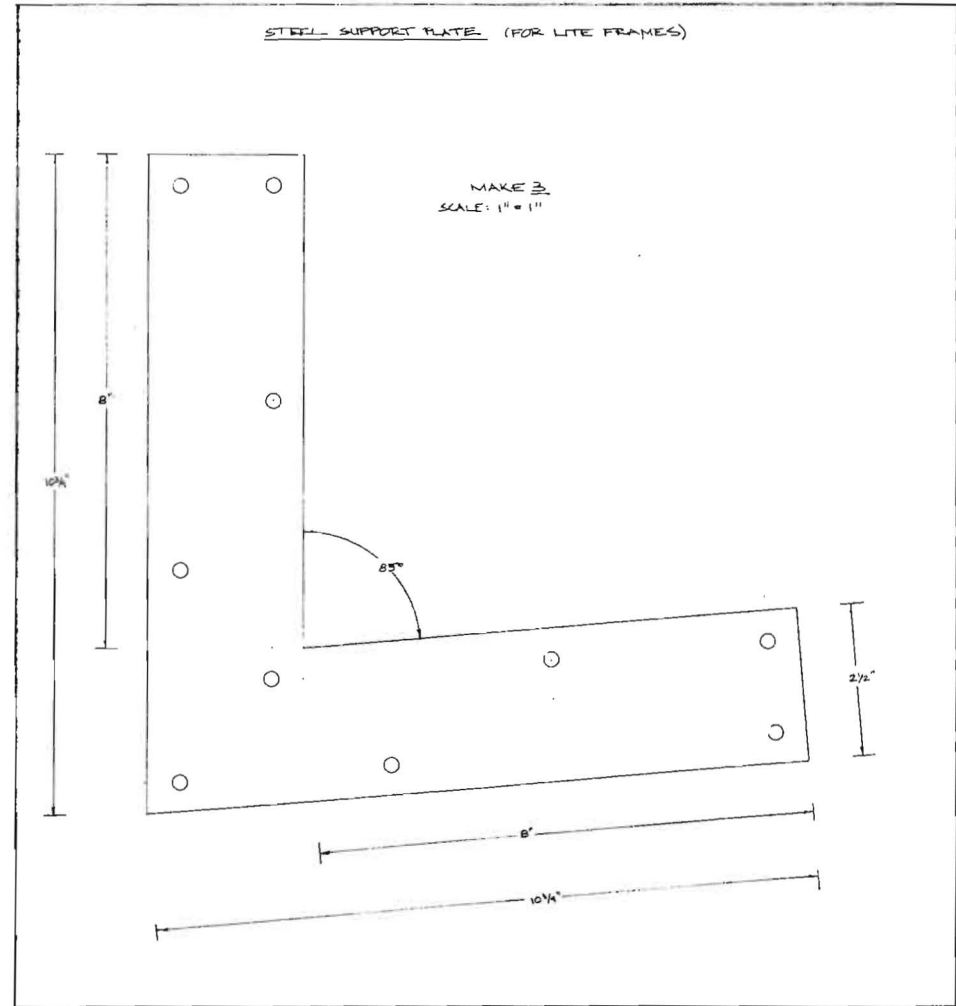
DOOR ELEVATIONS



- NOTES:
- PULL DOORS FROM STOCK
 - DOORS MUST BE SECURED SHUT IN-FLIGHT

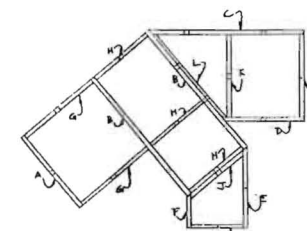
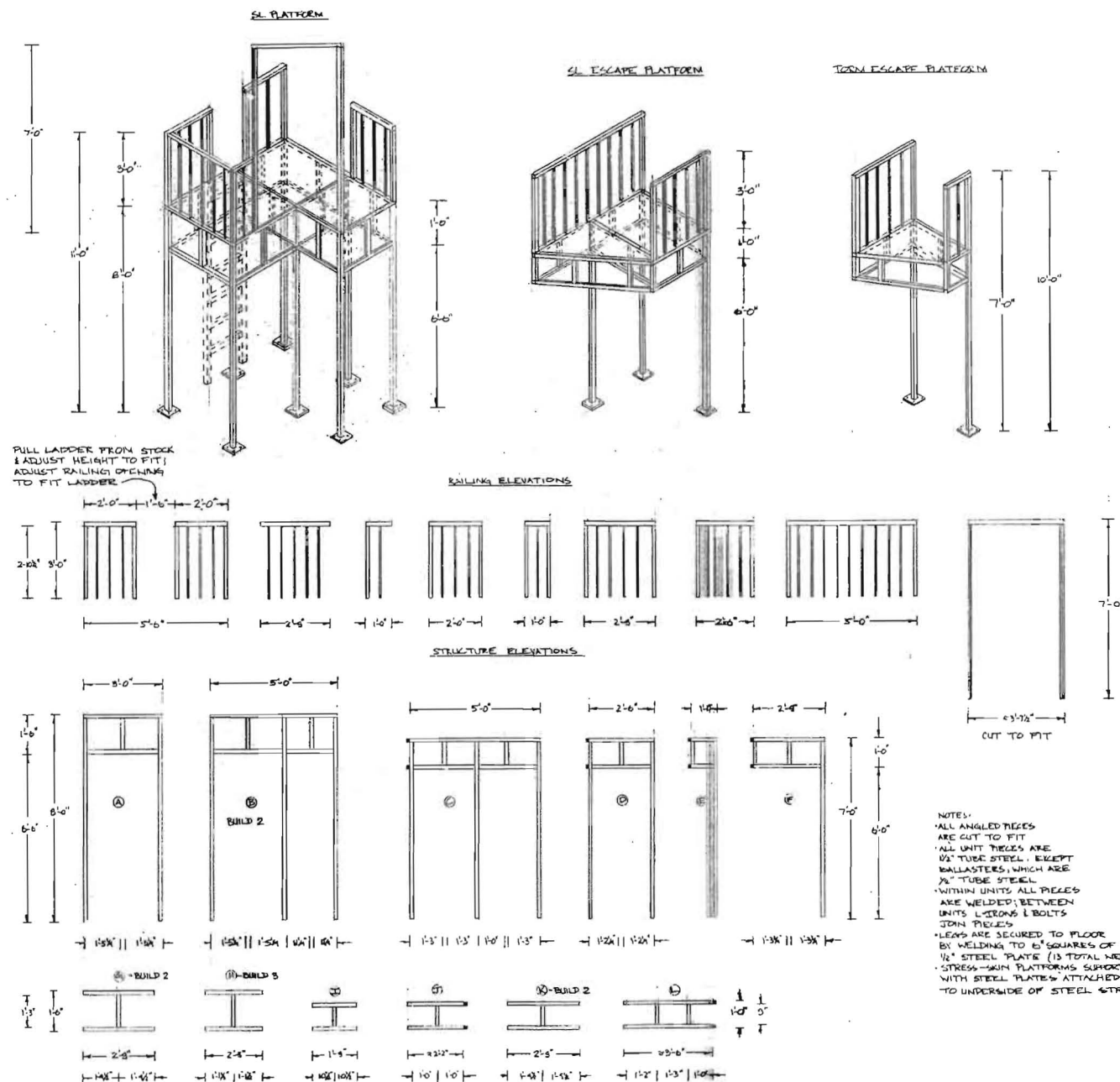


STEEL SUPPORT PLATE (FOR LITE FRAMES)

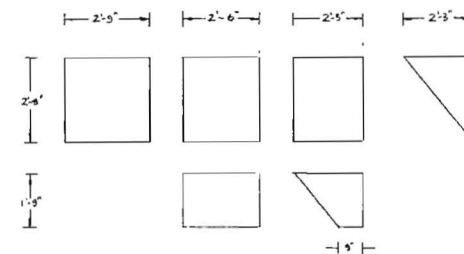


CABARET			
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"	APPROVED BY: ROGER BENTLEY	DRAWN BY JJO	
DATE: 01-24-01	DESIGNED BY: JENNIFER OWEN	REVIEWED	
DOOR ELEVATIONS & PLATE DETAIL			
NORTHERSON THEATRE, IOWA			DRAWING NUMBER 6 OF

ISOMETRIC VIEW



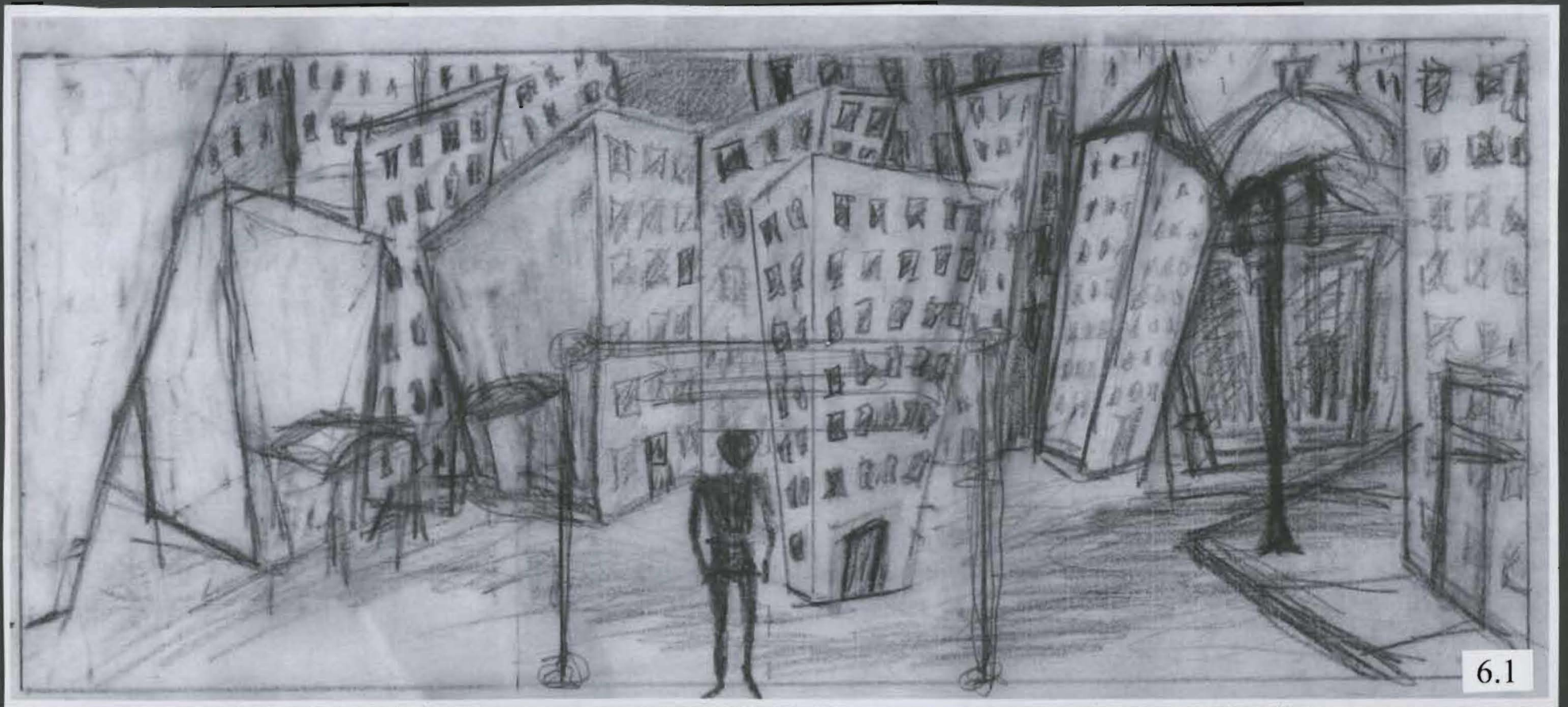
1/2" THICK STRESS-SKIN PLATFORMS



- NOTES:
 - ALL ANGLED PIECES ARE CUT TO FIT
 - ALL UNIT PIECES ARE 1/2" TUBE STEEL, EXCEPT BALLASTERS, WHICH ARE 3/8" TUBE STEEL
 - WITHIN UNITS ALL PIECES ARE WELDED; BETWEEN UNITS, STRONG BOLTS JOIN PIECES
 - LEGS ARE SECURED TO FLOOR BY WELDING TO 6" SQUARES OF 1/2" STEEL PLATE (IS TOTAL NEEDED)
 - STRESS-SKIN PLATFORMS SUPPORTED WITH STEEL PLATES ATTACHED TO UNDERSIDE OF STEEL STRUCTURE

CABARET		
SCALE 1/8"=1'-0"	SIR ROGER BECHTEL	DRAWN BY JON
DATE 10/21/01	DES. JENNIFER OWEN	REV.
ELEVATIONS / ISOMETRIC PLATFORM		
NICHOLSON THEATRE, IWL BLOOMINGTON, IL 01701		#5 OF

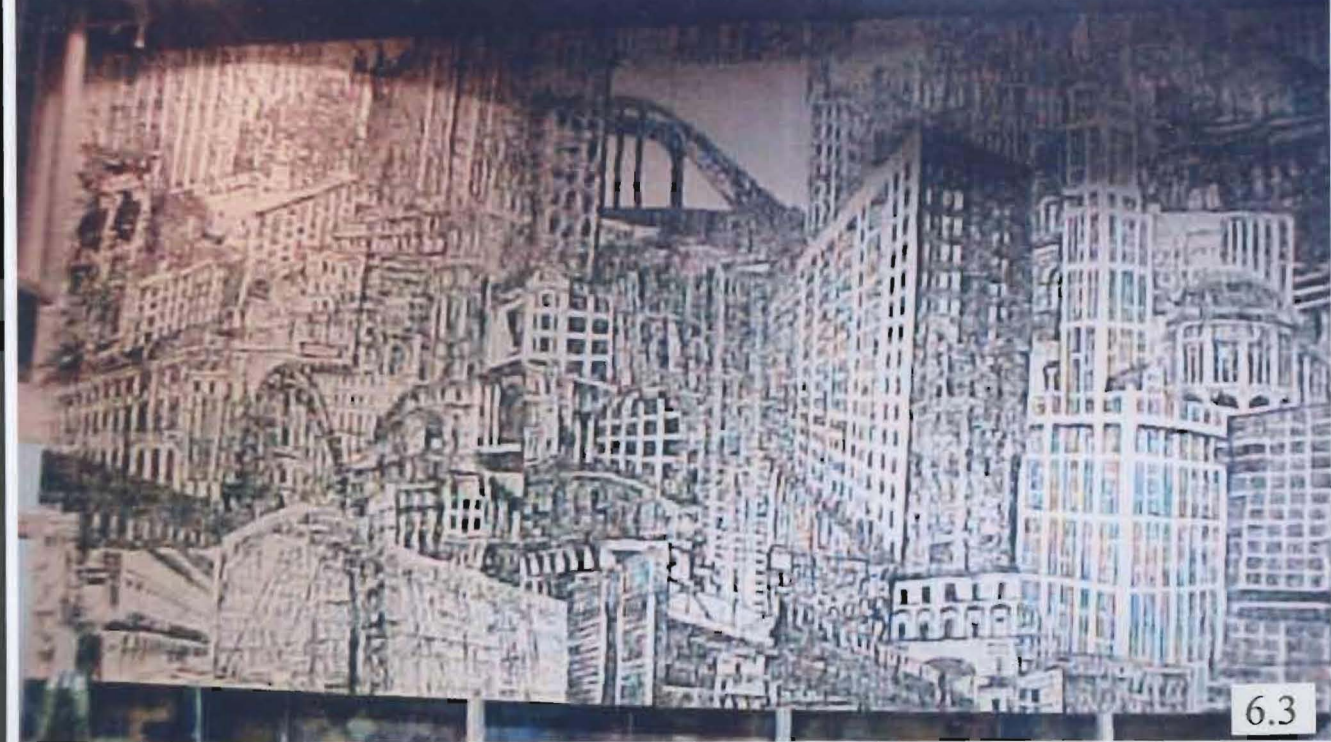
The Metropolis Drop

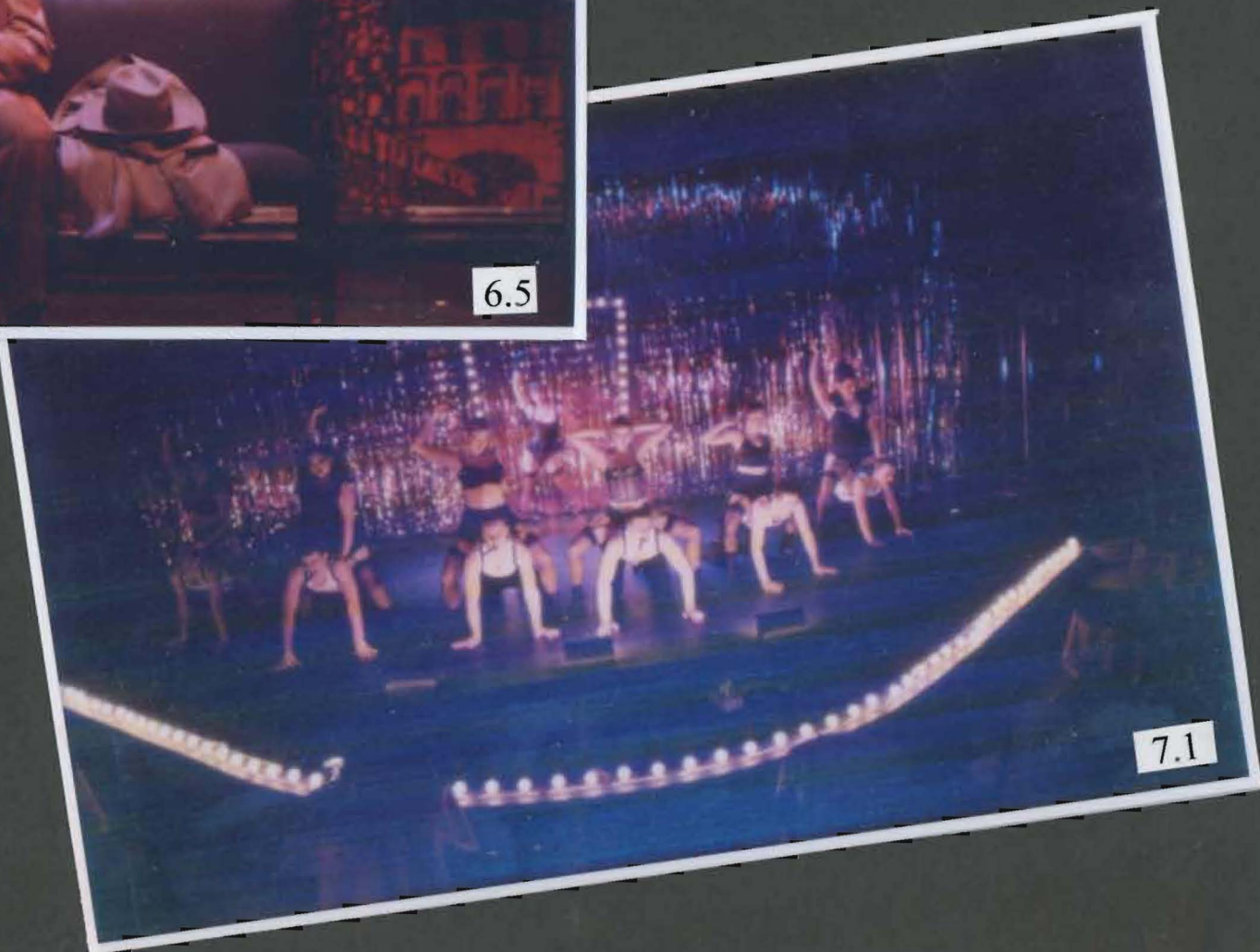


initial sketch

paint elevation









7.2



7.3

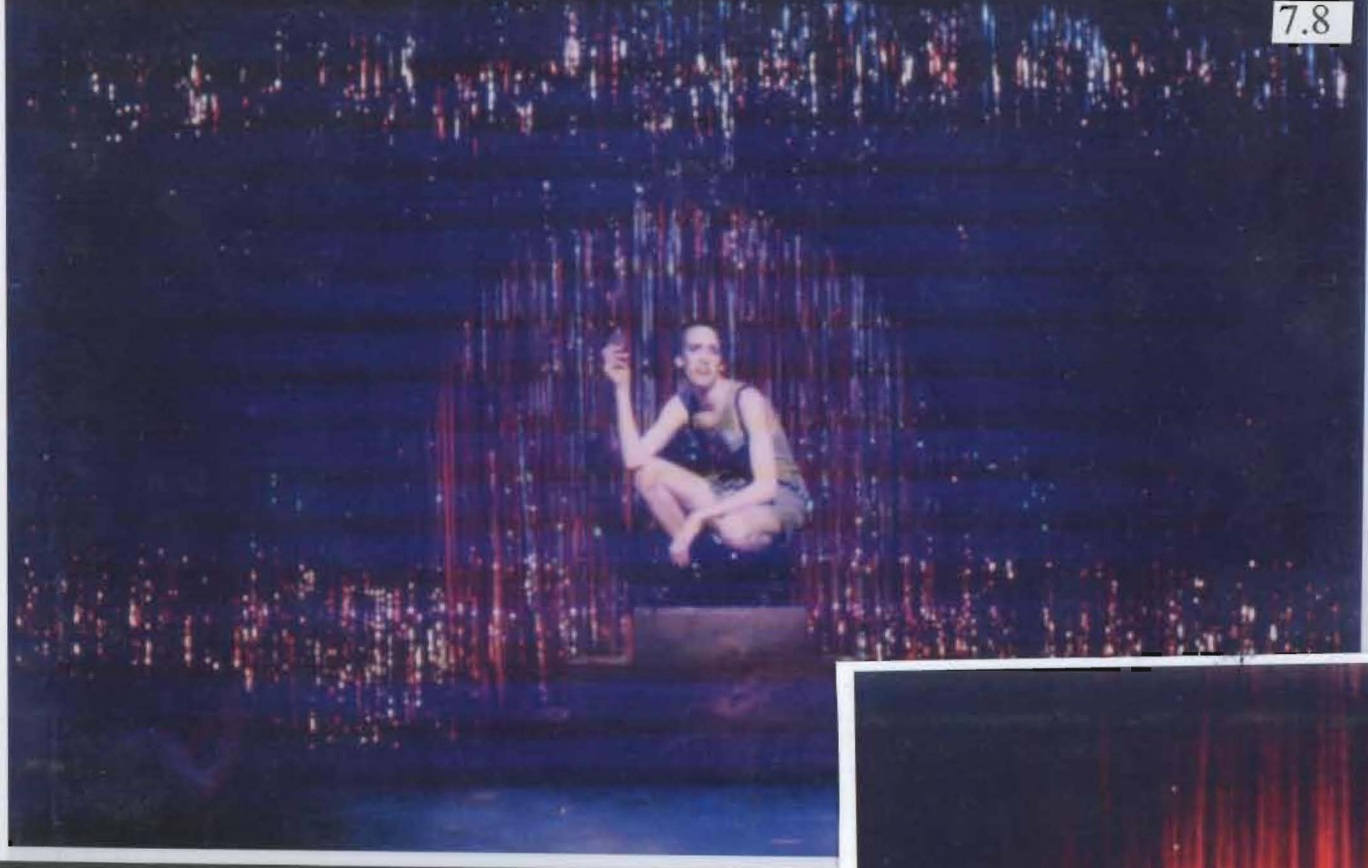
The Kit Kat Klub



7.4



7.8



Backstage



7.9

The Foyer



The Train





The Fruit Shop Party

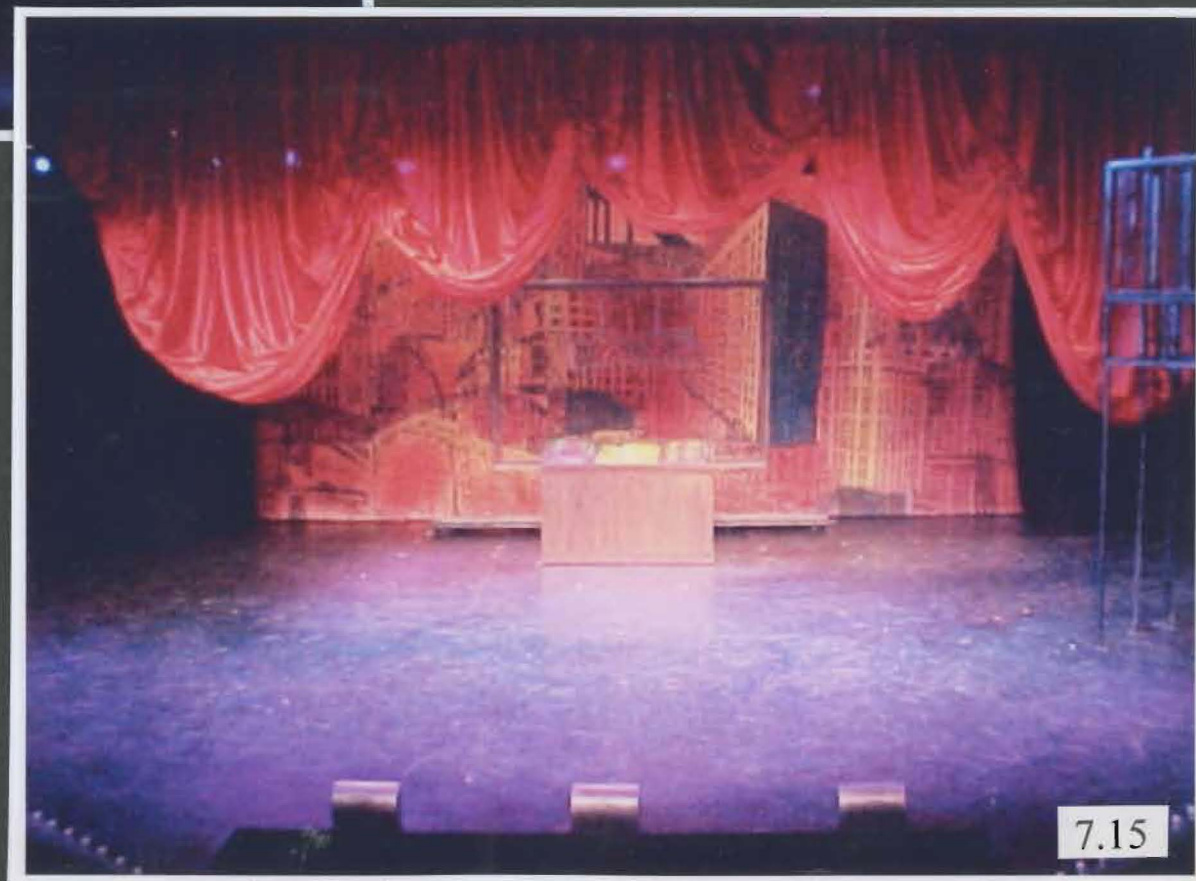
The Apartment



7.14



The Fruit Shop



7.15

7.16



The Final Moment



7.17

Selected Bibliography

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- Lavin, Maud. *Cut With the Kitchen Knife: the Weimar Photomontages of Hannah Hoch*. Yale University Press. New Haven, CT. 1993
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- Mann, Sally. *Immediate Family*. Aperture Foundation, Inc. New York, NY. 1992.

RESEARCH HONORS PROGRAM

Eligibility and Procedures

Eligibility

Students having a cumulative grade average of 3.25 overall and 3.50 in their declared major or in another field in which they have completed six courses are eligible to seek research honors during their senior year.

Declaration of Intent to Seek Honors

Students who are eligible and who intend to seek research honors should declare their intent, in writing, to the Associate Provost during the semester immediately preceding achievement of senior status (or as soon thereafter as is possible, if there are extenuating circumstances).

Declaration of intent is accomplished through completing and filing a RESEARCH HONORS RECORD. This form is available through the office of the Associate Provost. Completion of the form involves identifying a Project Advisor and a Project Hearing Committee, and submitting a proposal no more than one page in length describing the nature of the project.

Project Advisor

The student seeking research honors must secure the cooperation of a faculty advisor in the field in which the research project is to be done. The advisor will be responsible for evaluating and aiding in the direction of the proposed work, including any independent study taken for credit in connection with the project. The advisor will also act as convener of the student's Honors Project Hearing Committee.

Project Hearing Committee

In consultation with the Project Advisor, the candidate will identify a Hearing Committee composed of three faculty members in addition to the Project Advisor. One of these faculty members must be from a field different from that in which the work will be done. The faculty members appointed to the hearing committee must meet with the approval of the candidate, and the candidate must obtain their consent to participate. Approval and consent are indicated by each party initialing the RESEARCH HONORS RECORD appropriately.

Research Honors Content

The form of the research honors project will vary from discipline to discipline. As a general rule, the research should be consistent with the kind of scholarly projects undertaken by professionals within the field in which the project is to be done. The best source of advice as to the appropriateness of the project would be the Project Advisor and members of the Hearing Committee.

Proposal

A proposal describing the project must be submitted as an attachment to the RESEARCH HONORS RECORD. The proposal need not be long—keep it under one page. The proposal should include a working *title* for your project, and at least one paragraph describing the *problem* you will be pursuing in your project. Remember, you are only at the proposal stage. Once begun, projects often develop and move in unanticipated directions. The proposal is meant to demonstrate that you have already thought carefully about your honors research project. It is not meant to unduly limit or constrain the actual project as it unfolds. Once begun, however, changes in the direction or scope of your project should be discussed with and approved by your Project Advisor.

Hearing Process and Decision

It is the candidate's responsibility to set up the meeting with the Hearing Committee. The Project Advisor usually assists in these arrangements. Candidates should pick up the Research Honors Record from the Associate Provost's office prior to the hearing, and bring it to the hearing with them. Candidates for honors must present documentary results of their work to their Hearing Committees at least one week prior to the agreed-upon date of the hearing. Hearing Committees normally require a candidate to give an oral presentation in defense of the project. This hearing must be completed no later than Friday of the last week in which classes are held.

In a closed session following the hearing, the committee members shall consider the merits of the completed project and any associated presentation, and decide by a majority vote (3 to 1 is required for positive decision) whether or not to grant the designation "Research Honors in (field)."

Decisions regarding research honors must be reached and reported to the Associate Provost prior to 5 p.m. on Friday of the last week in which classes are held. At this time a final copy of the honors paper or document should be submitted to the Associate Provost for the University's permanent records. At this time, you will be asked to sign a release so that your paper can be placed in the library.

Credit and Grades for Research Study

Students may receive credit and grades for work done in connection with projects submitted for Research Honors consideration. This is done by registering for appropriate independent study or independent project courses under the direction of the Project Advisor. The Project Advisor alone is responsible for assigning grades for this work, and decisions regarding Honors shall not affect the grading process.