

ARLENE FELIPE

Costume Design Presentation
USITT Young Designer's Forum 2013

ARTISTIC PHILOSOPHY

Along with celebrating the universal and historical truths in a piece, I enjoy the search for what the contemporary connections and poetic meanings are for our audiences today.

I am interested in work that pulls from a cosmopolitan range of inspiration, embraces the spirit of adventure, explores newness, and challenges convention to create unexpected, yet accessible, dramatic presentations of story and character (infused with a little sense of humor).

I believe that if the process is creative, then so, too, will the product be creative. In this way we can further our tradition of storytelling and invite the audience to imagine. I am heavily influenced by music and words in general, and as a designer I am interested in adding my own visual notes to what is already ready there. I also enjoy expressing the spirit and life of both the character and the piece in my sketches/renderings.

I believe that storytelling and the arts reflect the human experience and have the power to heal. Your favorite songs, books, movies, or performances evoke feeling; they can comfort, relieve, inspire, and educate both the artists and audiences involved.

I look forward to working with like-minded individuals across the visual and performing arts, as well as other disciplines, in costume design, styling, crafts, or in concept development as a member of the artistic team.



THE LITTLE PRINCE

WALK-THROUGH OF REALIZED PRODUCTION

A parable celebrating the wisdom of the innocent, the play is based on one of the most beloved children's stories of all time.

As one of the designers developing this production, it was important for me to view the world through a child's eyes and come up with imaginative solutions in a simple and ingenious way, like children do.

The original text of Antoine de Saint-Exupery's The Little Prince is simple, poetic, quiet, and magical; I strove to make the same notes in the costumes, and pepper in adult sophistication with childlike playfulness.

The colors and sights become more spectacular as the story of the Aviator unfolds. In this design, adult anxieties shape the Planetary Characters, we feature a Fox without a literal tail, communicate a Rattlesnake through fans, and create The Imagination, personified.

THE CLARENCE BROWN CAROUSEL THEATRE (LORT)

Scenic & Projection Design by Libby Stadstad

Costume Design by Arlene Felipe

Lighting Design by Timothy Hart

Directed by Patrick New

October 2012

THE LITTLE PRINCE

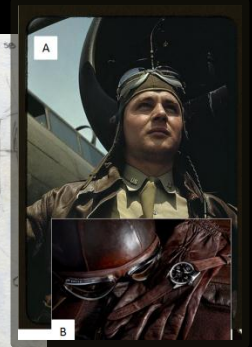
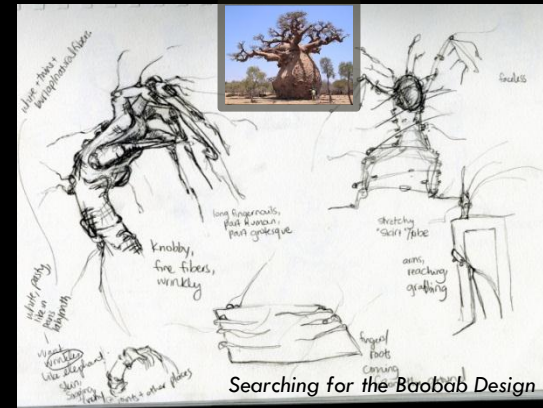
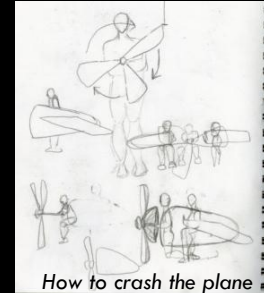
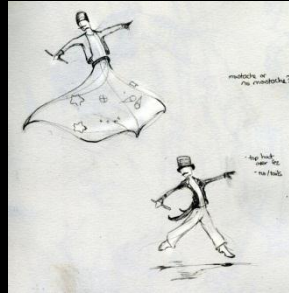
Sketchbook Excerpts

COSTUME DESIGN BY ARLENE FELIPE

+ Just as the Aviator does in the play, I drew and drew...

+ And like children, the team and I worked closely together to conjure up stories for the characters and ideas for the production.

+ Again, I believe that if the process is creative, then so, too, will the product be creative.



THE LITTLE PRINCE

Costume Studies: The Fox, The Snake

COSTUME DESIGN BY ARLENE FELIPE



Pencil Sketch



Rendering



Swatch and Ears

+ "Tail" = Long Rapunzel-like wig, with leaves, berries, twigs, raffia, in her hair. Ears made of feathers are above.

+ I airbrushed her dress, gloves, and L/S Shirt

+ Baggy pauper/fingerless gloves as "Paws"

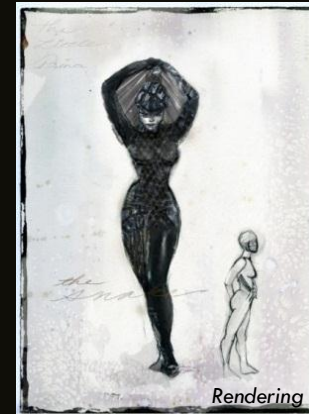


Fans + Rattle on the ground at the Little Prince,
+ Snap open to reveal hood

+ I created and painted the textured spandex

+ Black lace over eyes and forehead to keep hood in place

+ Snake was going to be a puppet, at one point!



Rendering



Swatches



THE LITTLE PRINCE

Costume Study: The Cloud Ensemble

COSTUME DESIGN BY ARLENE FELIPE

+ Emerge as part of the set

+ Bring physical and metaphorical world to life

Additional Roles:

+ Onstage Furniture Movers

+ Onstage Quick Change

+ Baobab and Bird Flock Puppeteers



Ensemble as Parents



Ensemble as A Mountain



Ensemble Member as An Apple Tree



Ensemble as A Wall of Roses

+ I personally airbrushed clouds onto all 6 Actors' costumes (Suit jacket, shorts, shirt, tie, bowler hat and shoes)



+ Here is the very first sketch/idea for the Clouds:



THE LITTLE PRINCE

Costume Studies: The Merchant and Selected Planetary Characters

COSTUME DESIGN BY ARLENE FELIPE



+ Merchant on Earth: physical manifestation of mankind being weighed down by material things.

+ Trinkets and wares are pinned (sewn) to his jacket



The Merchant



+ Planetary Characters represent adults who are so self-obsessed that they are not only on their own planet, but become it:

e.g. *Businessman* (bottom left)

+ So absorbed with Money that his "Capitalist" Belly is the planet as well as his own desk

+ Ticker tape has coiled all around

+ A Banker's Lamp grows out of his Top Hat.



The Conceited Man

e.g. *Lamplighter*

+ Resembles his Lamppost: Metallic look overall, shoes were long and bronzed.

+ Works so diligently that his hair has grown and grown through the top of his hat.

+ Mankind can be emotionally distant from one another and become isolated from the essential and intangible matters in life.



The Businessman



The Lamplighter



The Lamplighter



The Tippler



The Tippler

THE LITTLE PRINCE

*Costume Studies: The Aviator and
The Poppies*

COSTUME DESIGN BY ARLENE FELIPE



+ I personally dyed and distressed all elements of the Aviator's look, except for the scarf and neckerchief



+ The Field Poppies are gossipy, ditsy, and their rumpled shape is in contrast to the elegant line of The Rose.



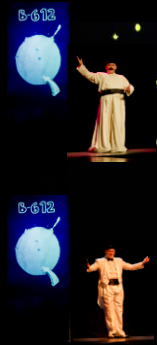
+ One of the Poppies had Three 80-yard Petticoats under her dress!



THE LITTLE PRINCE

Additional Production Photos

COSTUME DESIGN BY ARLENE FELIPE



"Asteroid B-612:" The Field Poppies, The Little Prince, The Rose



BLACK PEARL SINGS!

Costume Design and Crafts

A search for lost African-American folk music leads Susannah, an ambitious song collector for the Library of Congress, to Pearl, a woman with a soulful voice, a steely spirit and a dramatic story. Over twenty folk songs and spirituals create an American musical tapestry that unites these two different women.

The late 1930's/early 40's provided inspiring line for the costumes, and slightly exaggerated details were chosen to accentuate the power of these two sole women in a 600-seat proscenium.

The colors, prints, and patterns for the costumes blossom with Susannah and Pearl's journey from darkness and suppressed gifts to the lightness and freedom of opportunities to share their talents and history.

THE CLARENCE BROWN
THEATRE (LORT)

Scenic Design by Libby Stadstad

Costume Design by Arlene Felipe

Lighting Design by Kenton Yeager

Directed by Kate Buckley

February 2012



Act I: "Texas"



Act II: "Cooper Union"



Act III: "Finale:" Susannah and Pearl



Act III: "Finale:" Pearl

BLACK PEARL SINGS!
Costume Design Highlights
COSTUME DESIGN BY ARLENE FELIPE



Act I: "Texas"



Act II: "New York"



Act III: "Finale"



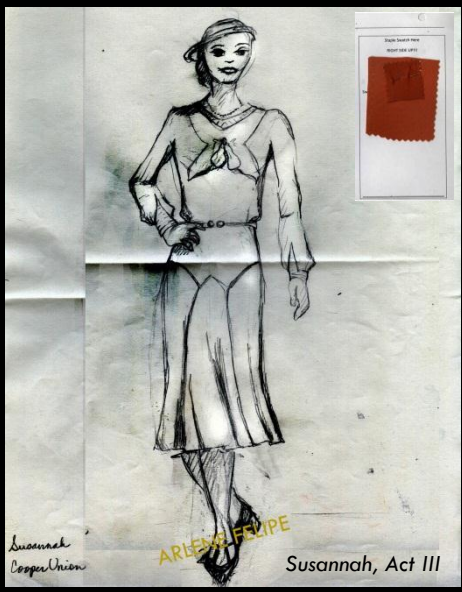
Pearl, Act II



Guard, Act I



Pearl, Act I



Susannah
Copper Union

ARLENE FELIPE

Susannah, Act III



Susannah, Act I

THE BIG TOP

FIT NYC, 2009

Fashion Styling

BY ARLENE FELIPE

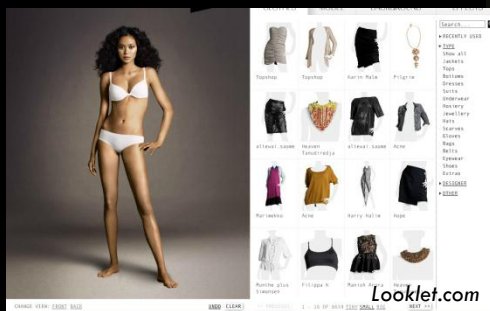
Create and Cast a four-look fashion story by pulling from an inventory of 8000+ items.

This is my final Fashion Styling project from an online class I took through FIT NYC. I immediately fell in love with the gold and black diamond hot pants, used them as my anchor, and quickly narrowed down the millions of possibilities to center everything around circus favorites. Part of the fun of styling and costume is in pulling from stock to create cohesive and playful looks.

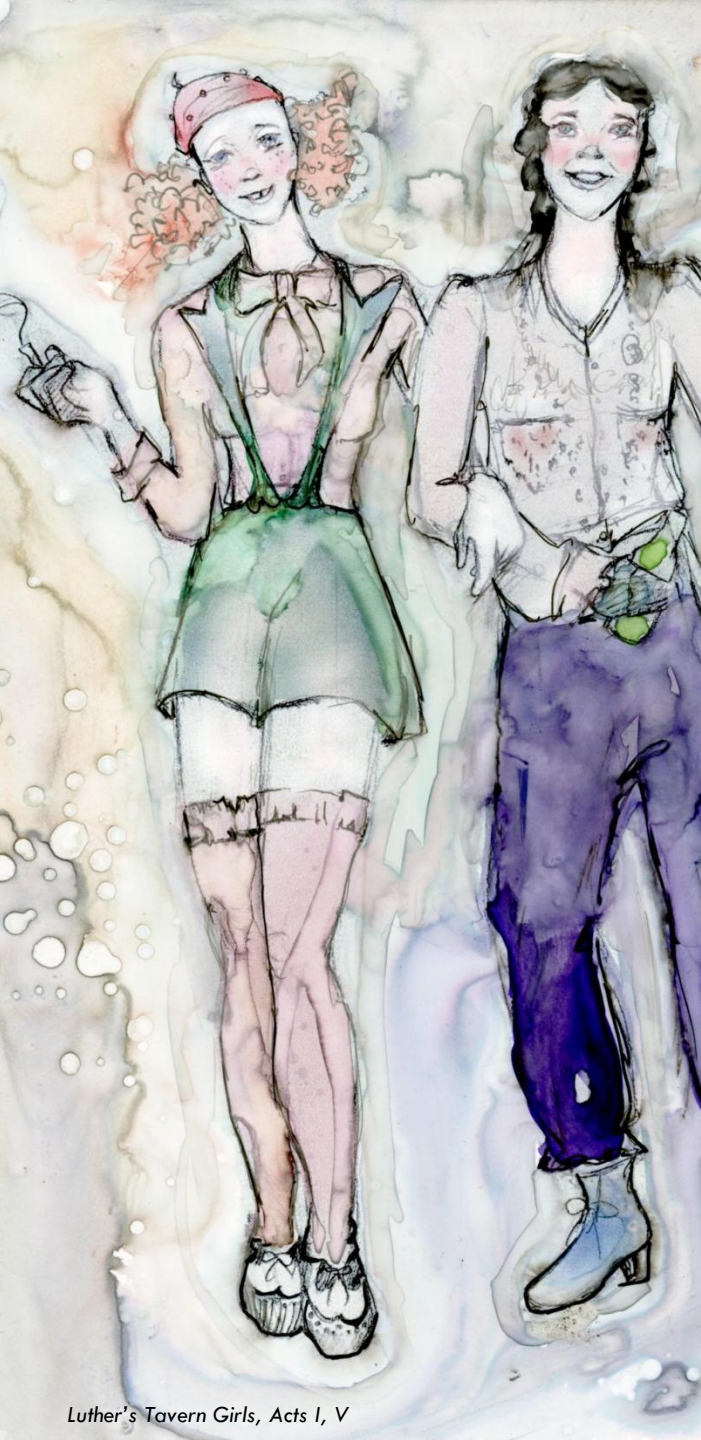


THE BIG TOP
By arlene
HAT Vintage
BRACELET Marlene Singer
BLONDE Jpda/mos
JEANS Cheap Monkey
BOOTS De Marini

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THE TALES OF HOFFMANN

Theoretical Costume Design

BY ARLENE FELIPE

Offenbach's "Hoffmann" remained unfinished at the time of his death in 1880, and scholars have been searching for a definitive version of this piece ever since.

The continuing search and performances worldwide today were ideas that -- when coupled with Hoffmann's mistakes with women, and all mankind perpetually having travails in love -- leave a somewhat haunting quality.

I applied these thoughts to the choices in costume. I imagined a group of rambunctious bohemians performing this opera since its conception; a troupe who tumbles through the various time periods and locations, and pick up various pieces of clothing along the way. The inherent eclecticism inspired me to create something timeless, placeless, and fantastic.



H. Bosch's "Garden of Earthly Delights" served as the parallel and color palette for the opera.



Atmosphere: Luther's Tavern



THE TALES OF HOFFMANN

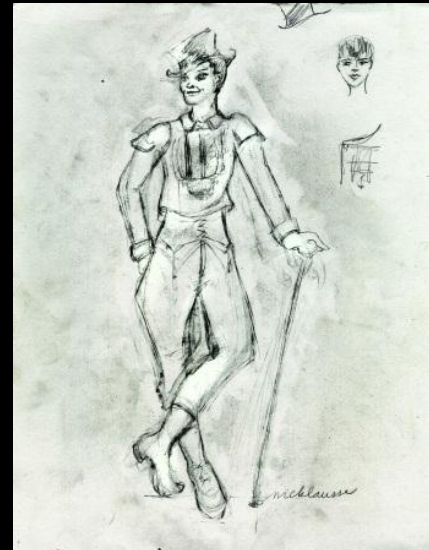
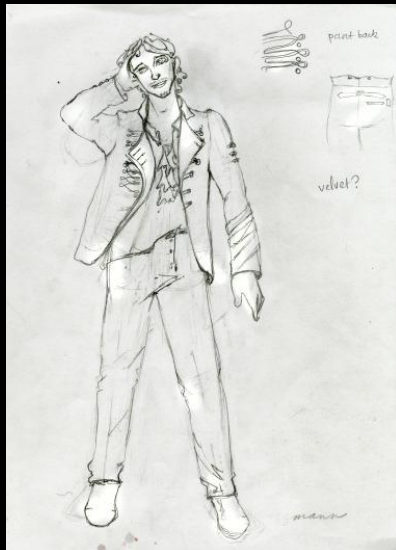
Acts I, V: "Luther's Tavern" (Selected)

COSTUME DESIGN BY ARLENE FELIPE

+ As a designer I am interested in adding my own visual notes to the piece

+ I wanted the rendering style and costume choices to call back to the spirit of the piece: I reference daguerreotypes and allude to the fluid/absinthe influences that bubble into Hoffmann's fantastic stories.

+ As a finishing touch, I splashed alcohol onto the surface -- a great painting technique that also happens to be a substance most fitting for this opera.



THE TALES OF HOFFMANN

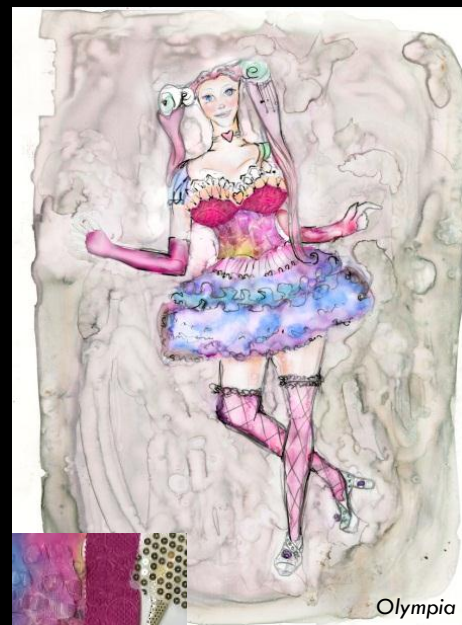
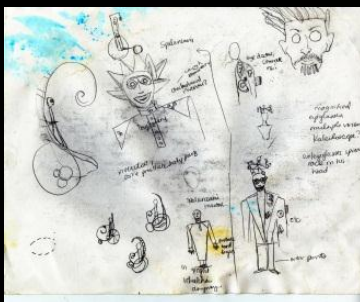
Act II: "Olympia"

COSTUME DESIGN BY ARLENE FELIPE

+ Olympia is a Japanese Love Doll, an automaton of the ideal woman; costume and lucite platforms light up blink as she goes berserk

+ Spalanzani (Green) her creator, is Androgynous, a man wanting to be a woman himself. His lab is kinetic and so is he, in an interesting wheelchair with a mechanical creature

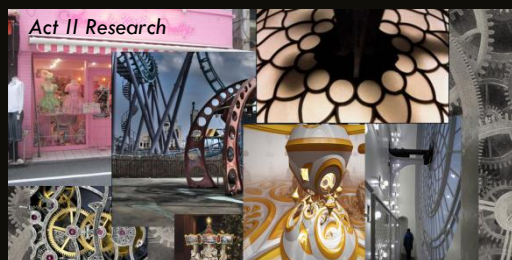
+ Chorus Members are Male World Leaders with their global Stepford Wives (Flamenco dancer, etc.), also of Spalanzani's creation.



Olympia



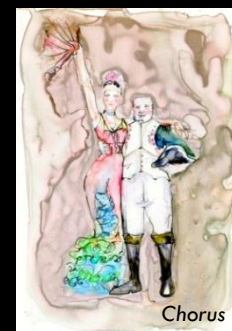
Coppelius



Spalanzani



Chorus



Chorus



THE TALES OF HOFFMANN

Act III: "Antonia," Act IV: "Giulietta"
(Selected)

COSTUME DESIGN BY ARLENE FELIPE

Act III Research



Dr. Miracle



Antonia



Chorus/Deathly Figures

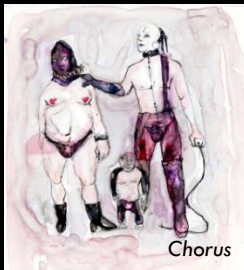
Act IV Research



Chorus



Giulietta



Chorus

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE: A LIVE RADIO PLAY

*Costume Design and Crafts**

Inspired by the classic American film, It's A Wonderful Life, the play is performed as a 1940s live radio broadcast in front of a studio audience. Five actors perform the dozens of characters, produce the sound effects, and break for commercial.

This production ran for two seasons.

**Photos from the 2010 Production were included in the October 2011 issue of American Theatre Magazine.*

THE CLARENCE BROWN CAROUSEL
THEATRE (LORT)

Scenic Design by Mary Pingree

Costume Design by Arlene Felipe

Lighting Design by Travis Gaboda

Directed by Bill Jenkins

November-December 2010, 2011



Lana as "Violet"



Jake and Sally as "George" and "Mary"

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE...
Costume Design Highlights
COSTUME DESIGN BY ARLENE FELIPE



Act II Tableau



Foley Artist #1



Foley Artist #2



Lana Sherwood/Violet



Jake Laurents/George Bailey



H. Jazzbo/Clarence

THE ABDUCTION FROM THE SERAGLIO

STUDY ABROAD / MASTER CLASS:
MIMAR SINAN FINE ARTS UNIV.
ISTANBUL TR, 2011

*Costume Design and Sculpture**

BY ARLENE FELIPE

The assignment was to research, design, and build a paper costume for Konstanze in Mozart's Seraglio within the span of four days.

I drew upon my experiences and travels as a westerner in Turkey to relate to her character, and swirled 18th Century Western Elements with those of the Ottoman Empire in her costume.

"A corset resembling ships' sails falls away to the bitter peppers and Ottoman sleeve, leading to the white sea foam bustle that crashes into watery blue Watteau pleats, with the structure being held together with shipping twine... This is one layer of the storytelling that I incorporated into the design.."

Materials:
Paper, Saran Wrap,
Twine from the Grand
Bazaar,
Bitter Peppers from the
Spice Bazaar



Photos, Research, and Sketch collected/drawn during the trip.



*Annotated Statement and Photos are included here. For complete project, please visit www.arlenefelipe.us

ELEKTRA

*Theoretical Costume Design**

BY ARLENE FELIPE

This translation of Sophocles's Elektra by Nicholas Rudall features contemporary language with no specific design or acting indications; the only revelations are through character interaction/dialogue. Such characteristics also inform our production.

The design was centered around the idea of Elektra's continued suffering and being a crucible of emotion after her father's (Agamemnon's) death by her mother, Clytemnestra. Elektra's passion and environment are uncomfortably torrid and insufferable. Dirt, dust, and sweat scar the costumes and characters of this cursed family.

It is revealed that Aegisthus, in spite of his military dress, gained his status as the new husband through cowardly means. Clytemnestra entering in a bathing suit and caftan, is the antithesis of our heroine and revels in continued wealth, while all that remains of Elektra is vengeance and a dirty silk slip.

Cool water and release isn't felt until Clytemnestra's death, when Elektra bathes in the blood and water of our courtyard fountain, throwing off her clothing in horrifying exultation.



Elektra sketch and swatch.



Clytemnestra



Chrysothemis



Aegisthus



Chorus



Pylades

* 2nd Place, SETC Graduate Costume Design Competition, 2011

THE TEMPEST

Theoretical Costume Design

BY ARLENE FELIPE

Regarded as his farewell to theatre, Shakespeare writes of Prospero's studies, his craft, his magic. Centuries later, I come to ask what is our magic today, and how will we be remembered?

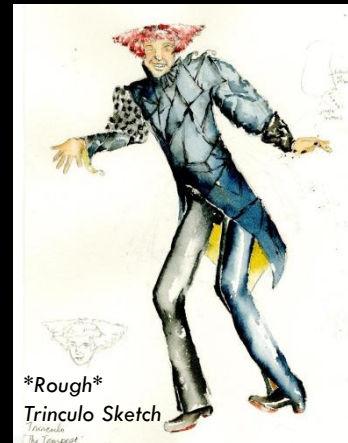
Back in undergrad, one of the libraries was in the process of being renovated. Half of one floor had depths of shelves filled with books, and the other half was barren, empty – an image that's stuck with me ever since.

I was hopeful, and thought those shelves represented books yet to be written, knowledge we've yet to attain. Now I see that the void can frighteningly represent the opposite – erased memories and existences. The magic of technology to convert that information into digital media bits that fit into a pocket-sized device is tricky – it can save the information but just as easily, can be swiftly deleted with no trace.

The idea of compression informs the notion of modern, tailored, austerity for the courtiers. Tangibility, breath, a sense of the organic, and a high mix of textures – such as metal, leather, natural fibers, and knitted wools – comprise the clothing of the islanders.



Atmospheric research and color palette



Caliban



Caliban Research



Merteuil

LES LIAISONS DANGE- REUSES

Theoretical Costume Design

BY ARLENE FELIPE

While reading about the centerpiece “La Machine d’Argent” (above, right) by Francois-Thomas Germain, the phrase “trophies of the hunt” and ultimately the idea of manipulating beautiful nature into cold, hard, and moneyed silver reminded me of the psychology behind Les Liaisons Dangereuses.

Aristocrats Merteuil and Valmont compete with one another in similar sport, but use sexual manipulation to corrupt and destroy individuals, reputations, and virtues.

I reference mid-18th century fashion and express the nature of each character through the color of the base fabric; I am intrigued with the notion of the garments having silvery-blue overlays or overdyed processes to represent the detachment and barrier one has in committing these acts, and represent the façades prevalent in upper-class society.

“La Machine d’Argent,”
“The Silver Machine”



Projected Color Palette,
L to R:
Volanges, Cecile;
Rosemonde, Emilie;
Merteuil, Icy blue/gray
shade for sheer overlay or
dip dye



Projected Color Palette,
L to R:
Valmont, Tourvel;
Danceny; Azolan.



Rosemonde

ILLUSTRATION

BY ARLENE FELIPE

I was twenty-three when I first picked up a pencil to draw, encountered watercolors, and sewed a stitch on my dad's machine. I had been on a medical school track for those first two decades of my life, and it was that Autumn of 2008 when I fathomed and started any sort of training in the arts.

Currently, I am in my third year of candidacy for the MFA in Costume Design, and I give many thanks to my friends who encouraged me, and the talented professors and artists who have given me the chance to continue to explore this field in the first place.

Here's to continuing to be in the company of inspiring individuals in the future...





Rough Gabrielle, v. 1

THE MADWOMAN OF CHAILLOT

** Work in Progress **

Explorations in Line/Pencil

BY ARLENE FELIPE

This satire by Jean Giraudoux presents the idea that beauty and humanity are constantly threatened to be destroyed by power-hungry and corrupt forces for more money, new buildings, new corporations. In Chaillot, it is up to the eccentrics and idealists to preserve that which has character, and rescue and protect what is precious in the world.

In thinking about these polar opposites of character and ideals, I am currently turning towards political cartoons and exploring ways to extract these personality types through costume.. The work is still in progress, and I'm interested to learn more about comic exaggeration and ways to achieve this on stage.



Rough
Gabrielle
v. 2



Rough Constance



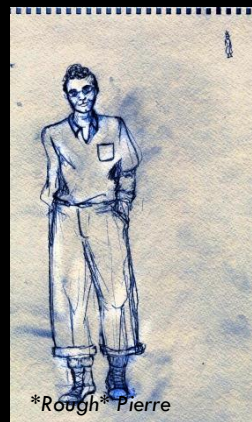
Rough
Capitalist/Businessman



Rough
Ragpicker



Rough Josephine



Rough Pierre

DEATH: COUTURE

REACTION-DESIGN ASSIGNMENT

Costume Design, 2010

Mask Construction, 2012

BY ARLENE FELIPE

*First, choose a Couture Dress
and then adapt the design to
reflect an emotionally
charged word.*

*The word I happened to pick
from the hat was "Death."*

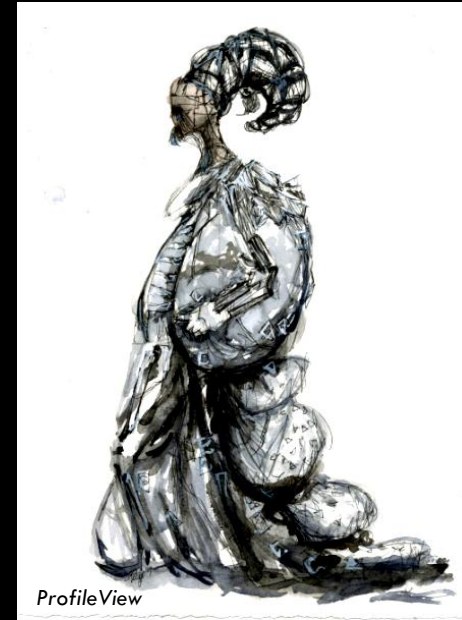
I am personally intrigued by
beauty that can both repulse
and attract. I created an
enigmatic deliverer of death,
and exaggerated a Bill Gibbs
design to give more strength
and a threatening presence to
the figure.

To make the obvious choice of
black more interesting, I
turned to avant garde
designers for dramatic shapes
and treatments.

I revisited this design in 2012
as the basis for a Varaform
Mask, and took expressive
liberties in shaping the horns.



Main View



Profile View



Bill Gibb
Original



Grimy twine, synthetic hair,
organza, and sparkle tulle weave
into and out of the mask.



Process



Process



Final