Kent State University
School of Theatre and Dance
Graduate Students and their Faculty Mentors
Earn 6 Peggy Ezekiel Awards
at
USITT Ohio Valley Section - Stage Managers’ Association National Collaborators Conference
October 11, 2020
Peggy Ezekiel Exhibit

- The exhibit is named for one of the founders of the USITT Ohio Valley Section who was tragically killed in the second year of the section’s existence.
- The adjudicated exhibit was created in 1985 to honor Peggy Ezekiel by celebrating the design, technology, and stage management work in the Ohio Valley region.
- There are two levels of awards that acknowledge the excellent work of the exhibit and is not competitive or limiting, nor does every entry receive recognition with an award.
- Receiving an Award of Distinction is the first level of recognition of the high-quality of the work submitted.
- The Award of Outstanding Achievement is the highest level of recognition of excellent work.
- A decade ago, the OVS section added two competitive categories of awards with a finite quantity to be conferred.
  - Those awards are the Board’s Choice Award and the Top Student Awards.
  - There are 10 Board’s Choice Awards chosen from those entries who were awarded Awards of Outstanding Achievement.
  - The Top 3 Student Awards receive a complimentary registration to the USITT National Conference & Stage Expo.
  - All Board’s Choice and Top Student Awards become part of the traveling exhibit which can be displayed at any university within the region and they are displayed as a group at the USITT National Conference & Stage Expo.
- New for 2020, it was a completely online, digital exhibit.
Tetta Askeland, 3rd Year MFA Candidate Scenic Design in Theatre
- Faculty Advisor: Tamara L. Honesty
- Scenic Design for Richard II
- Award of Distinction

Tamara L. Honesty, Assistant Professor of Scenic Design
- Charge Artist for Sisters in Liberty
- Award of Outstanding Achievement
- Board’s Choice Award

Yee Lin Elaine Yuen, 3rd Year MFA Candidate Dual Degree Costume Design in Theatre and Fashion
- Faculty Advisor: Michelle Souza
- Costume Design and Draping for The Goddess of Awaken
- Award of Distinction

Michelle Souza, Assistant Professor of Costume Design
- Costume Design for The Hunchback of Seville
- Award of Outstanding Achievement
- Board’s Choice Award
Concept:

For Kent State University’s production of Richard II our team wanted to capture the power structure created by society and how that establishment was challenged within our story.

With this idea of power being a social construct and Richard being the king of the hollow crown I wanted to show those aspects in the scenic design. I drew my inspiration from tall structures with implied lines, reflective surfaces, and repetition. For me those items represented power and establishment, but also the ability to overturn that power. With the help of larger than life scenic pieces a world was established that engulfs our characters, but also shows how power can be seem larger than life.

For textures, I looked at high gloss and reflective surfaces. These surfaces are often associated with higher quality goods and wealth. Our director, Mark Valdez, spoke about Richard being a cis white male in power. He equated Richard to being a Brett Kavanaugh or a Donald Trump of his time. Due to this correlation I was inspired by Trump Tower. This structure had a lot of lines, textures, and colors that mirrored my previous visual research.

One of the main ideas our team discussed was how to show Richards accent into power. This was established by hanging a crown center stage and having Richard take the crown and ascend the stairs to his throne, which was the only part of the upper level used. To help aid the swift nature of this show rolling stair units and chairs were used to help establish location.

This production that was scouted to open in April was ended during the build phase due to the COVID 19 Pandemic.
Final rendering for Richard II. Created in Procreate.

Groundplan

3D Rendering created in Vectorworks

Section view

Director: Mark Valdez | Scenic Designer: Tetta M. Askeland | Lighting Designer: Alyssa Taush | Sound Designer: Nick Drashner | Costume Designer: Victoria Mason
ABOUT THE PROJECT:

Created by Kent State University in collaboration with the Opera di Santa Croce of Florence, Italy, the Sisters in Liberty exhibit explores the long-standing cultural ties between Italy and the United States through themes of art, architecture, liberty, poetry and the human condition.

The focal points of the exhibit are two statues which captured the dream of self-determination, democracy and liberty that flourished around the world after the American Revolution: Pio Fedì’s 1883 Liberty of Poetry, which stands in the church of Santa Croce in Florence, Italy, and Frédéric Bartholdi’s Statue of Liberty, which was inaugurated in New York in 1886.

Kent State is supporting the themes of this exhibit in several ways, including producing a nearly life-size, 3D reproduction of the Liberty of Poetry that faithfully conveys its size and beauty, which guests are able to view up-close. Kent State is also providing a Wick Poetry Center Listening Wall, which allows users to view historical documents, oral histories and multimedia stories that center on the themes of the exhibit, and then create and share their own poetic reflections.

Sisters in Liberty Exhibit: Liberty of Poetry Replica

Scenic Charge Artist: Tamara L. Honesty

Collaborative Project between Kent State University and Opera di Santa Croce

Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration October 2019-September 2020
Sisters in Liberty Exhibit: Liberty of Poetry Replica

Collaborative Project between Kent State University and Opera di Santa Croce

The original statue was 3D-scanned by a Kent State team and eventually 3D-printed by a large-scale 3D-Printing company, Freshmade 3D. The replica is 80% scale of the original for an overall height of close to 10 feet. From Ohio, I worked with the art historians in Florence to color match the Carrara marble of the original statue before it was in the process of being cleaned and restored (right).

In the sample process of the project (shown below), I determined the prime and painting process using Rosco Scenic Paint and Coatings to paint the Amclad® substrate coated with an epoxy-resin by Freshmade 3D. The process included scrubbing the surface with a Dawn® and water solution twice, rinsing between scrubbing then two coats of FlexBond™ stippled to avoid brush strokes.

Sample 3D-printed draped cloth before painting

3D-printed sample with two approaches to painting and sealing.

Pio Fedi’s Liberty of Poetry Statue in Process of Restorative Cleaning
Photo: Opera di Santa Croce, Florence, Italy

Scenic Charge Artist: Tamara L. Honesty
The replica of the statue arrived in six shipments over a period of a month. The multiple layers of translucent glazes to create the effect of Carrara marble were completed on each piece before the next shipment arrived. Not only was the 10’ statue painted, there were a dozen additional items for the four vitrine display cases. The secret to the success of the paint treatment was alternating warm and cool tones and sealing with paste car wax which was buffed creating an uncanny reproduction of polished marble.

The painting of the entire project was completed in less than one month working only on the weekends. The team consisted of a total of five student painters and myself.

For transport and installation, the statue traveled to Ellis Island in two parts. The pieces were assembled on site and the seams were concealed with caulk and paint.
Design Concept
Human beings have suffered from different catastrophes since 2020, such as the Pandemic, bushfires, and assorted protests around the world. There is a significant impact on various industries that caused the closing of stores or stopping theatrical performance. (Jolly, 2020; McIntosh, 2020).
Throughout humankind's history, people tend to rely on a spiritual goddess from various ancient mysteries during their hard times. In ancient civilization's ritual, the goddess represented the divine feminine power when humankind looked for comfort and supported culturally (Keller, 2014).
The goddess culture continues in modern societies with a contemporary form of shape whenever people need a psycho-spiritual life (Keller, 2014). With the situation which humans underwent lately, the designer aims to portray the latest goddess, representing a need for social awakening in the 21st century through an entire fashion outfit. This design works as a costume in depicting a performing character - The Goddess of Awaken.

Research Pictures
Sculptures of the Goddess Athena in the Acropolis Museum & national Archaeological, Athen, Greece
Design & Construction Process
This design is an ensemble design to challenge the theory of reconstruction and nontraditional seam placement. Through the process, the metallic gold gown is built asymmetrically with a back opening. The golden cape-shape outline aimed to mimic the signature shoulder of the Ancient Greek Peplos on Athena. While the black tulle netting shaded the gown's dimension and highlighted the femininity waistline and sturdy power support as a goddess, the feathered headpieces imitated the triumph helmet with radiative visual illusion. Gold is a color symbolizing success for the winner and shows positive attributes as a warm hue.
THE GODDESS OF AWAKEN

Contribution of this Design
Through this costume, the designer intends to flourish the goddess’ image as a lighthouse to reaccelerate and support human life’s enthusiasm towards success by overcoming global & personal hardships.
About the Play

“The Hunchback of Seville is a story about power. Who has it, who wants it, who gets to have it, who is denied it, and the lengths people go to maintain it.

There is a rich ambivalence to this world, and to all of its inhabitants. This madcap revisionist riff on rampaging colonialism that Castro Smith provides is fertile ground for total insanity. The staid imagery presented of 16th century Spain belies the atrocities of colonialism. Maxima calls it like she sees it: “it’s a freaking horrific bloodbath.”

But this story is not isolated to 16th century Spain. It is every bit the story of America, and the myth of Columbus. Might we question what we teach and know about the “triumph” of Columbus and his patron Queen Isabella? How might we grapple with our country’s complex and devastating relationship to colonialism, capitalism, systematic racism, abuse and injustice? What is our American relationship to these forms of power?” -Courtney Brown, director
Design Concept

In the costume design, I began with strict period research about the Spanish court of Ferdinand and Isabella. I then layered those specific silhouettes, colors, and details with an eclectic mix of Betsey Johnson, punk rock, hipster style, and good old American high-top Converse. Maxima, bookish and worldly (for a woman who has been locked in a tower), bridges Spanish and Middle-Eastern garb, and opts for pants instead of a farthingale. Her fierce individuality also shows in her lack of focus on grooming and traditional “beauty.” She has bigger things to worry about, like the future of the Spanish monarchy!

The portrayal of the older generation, notably Isabella, Espanta, and Abdul, hew closely to historical accuracy. Their materials and silhouettes show a direct line back to my research of 1504 Spain, shortly after Columbus “discovered” the Americas. Younger characters, including the Infanta Juana, showcase an irreverent mash-up of the Renaissance and today. Like the script itself, the costume design is parodic, self-aware, and layered with humor and irony.