Abstract
The purpose of this paper is to describe the creation and implementation of the set and costume design for The University of British Columbia’s production of The House of Atreus at the Fredric Wood Theatre in September of 2005. These designs were the thesis project for my Master of Fine Arts Degree.

The House of Atreus is John Lewin’s adaptation of Aeschylus’ The Oresteia. New York based director KJ Sanchez directed the play, and the lighting design was created by Gillian Wolpert. Annabell Woods assisted with the costume design and Ian Giles assisted with the set design. The scenic carpenters were Don Griffiths and Jason MacLean, and the Scene Shop Assistant was Michelle Nelson. Head of costume construction was Jean Driscoll-Bell, and costume builders were Lexa Naicu, Heather Keith, Tsz Ling Schum and Marijka Brusse. The props team consisted of Janet Bickford and Lynn Burton. Lauchlin Johnston and Michelle Nelson also built properties.

This paper will describe the events and design process prior to rehearsals as well as the methods used to create the design during the rehearsal process. Focus will be given to designing a set that evolves as the company develops its presentation. Images and photos of designs are included to show the conception and realization of the designs.
# Table of Contents

**ABSTRACT** ........................................................................................................... ii

**TABLE OF CONTENTS** ....................................................................................... iii

**LIST OF FIGURES** ............................................................................................. v

**LIST OF IMAGES** ............................................................................................... vii

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS** ....................................................................................... ix

**DEDICATION** ...................................................................................................... x

**INTRODUCTION: SYNOPSIS** ............................................................................. 1

**PRODUCTION CONCEPT AND PROCESS** ......................................................... 5

**SET DESIGN CONCEPT** .................................................................................... 7

**SET REALIZATION** ........................................................................................... 12

**COSTUME DESIGN CONCEPT** .......................................................................... 15

**COSTUMES BY CHARACTER** ............................................................................. 16

- Watchman ........................................................................................................... 16
- Clytemnestra ....................................................................................................... 17
- Herald .................................................................................................................. 20
- Agamemnon ........................................................................................................ 21
- Cassandra ............................................................................................................ 22
- Aegisthus ............................................................................................................. 24
- Argonian Citizens (Chorus) ............................................................................... 25
- Iphegenia ............................................................................................................ 29
- Orestes ................................................................................................................ 29
- Pylades ............................................................................................................... 32
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electra &amp; The Maidservants</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cilissa</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Pythia</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apollo</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hermes (and the Henchmen)</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athena</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furies (Chorus)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldiers</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athenian Citizens (The Jury)</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONCLUSION**

**APPENDIX A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Figures

FIGURE 1................................................................................................................. 16
FIGURE 2................................................................................................................. 17
FIGURE 3................................................................................................................. 20
FIGURE 4................................................................................................................. 21
FIGURE 5................................................................................................................. 23
FIGURE 6................................................................................................................. 24
FIGURE 7................................................................................................................. 26
FIGURE 8................................................................................................................. 29
FIGURE 9................................................................................................................. 30
FIGURE 10............................................................................................................ 32
FIGURE 11............................................................................................................. 34
FIGURE 12............................................................................................................. 35
FIGURE 13............................................................................................................. 36
FIGURE 14............................................................................................................. 37
FIGURE 15............................................................................................................. 38
FIGURE 16............................................................................................................. 40
FIGURE 17............................................................................................................. 41
FIGURE 18............................................................................................................. 43
FIGURE 19............................................................................................................. 48
FIGURE 20............................................................................................................. 49
FIGURE 21............................................................................................................. 50
FIGURE 22............................................................................................................. 51
FIGURE 23............................................................................................................. 52
FIGURE 24............................................................................................................. 53
FIGURE 25............................................................................................................. 54
FIGURE 26............................................................................................................. 55
List of Images

IMAGE 1 ........................................................................................................... 7
IMAGE 2 ........................................................................................................... 8
IMAGE 3 ........................................................................................................... 9
IMAGE 4 ........................................................................................................... 9
IMAGE 5 ......................................................................................................... 10
IMAGE 6 ......................................................................................................... 11
IMAGE 7 ......................................................................................................... 13
IMAGE 8 ......................................................................................................... 13
IMAGE 9 ......................................................................................................... 18
IMAGE 10 ....................................................................................................... 19
IMAGE 11 ....................................................................................................... 19
IMAGE 12 ....................................................................................................... 22
IMAGE 13 ....................................................................................................... 23
IMAGE 14 ....................................................................................................... 25
IMAGE 15 ....................................................................................................... 27
IMAGE 16 ....................................................................................................... 27
IMAGE 17 ....................................................................................................... 28
IMAGE 18 ....................................................................................................... 28
IMAGE 19 ....................................................................................................... 31
IMAGE 20 ....................................................................................................... 31
IMAGE 21 ....................................................................................................... 33
IMAGE 22 ....................................................................................................... 35
IMAGE 23 ....................................................................................................... 37
IMAGE 24 ....................................................................................................... 39
IMAGE 25 ....................................................................................................... 40
IMAGE 26 ....................................................................................................... 42
Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the faculty and staff of the University of British Columbia Department of Theatre and Film.

Special thanks are given to my family for supporting me through the ups and downs of this process.
To my family
Introduction: Synopsis

John Lewin's *The House of Atreus* is a modern adaptation of *The Oresteia*. The script is structured so that each act condenses one of the three Aeschylus plays: *Agamemnon, The Libation Bearers, and The Furies*. Lewin focuses on the core theme of revenge as each generation of the House of Atreus seeks to avenge the wrongdoings of the previous generation. This is the curse of the House.

The struggle for power is another theme that runs throughout the play. The characters vie for control of Argos and each other. While the humans decide whom they control, the Furies battle with the gods Athena and Apollo to see who will have power over the humans.

Act One opens with the recent end of the 10-year battle between Argos and Troy. Though this is a victory for Agamemnon (King of Argos), it is not without its sacrifices. While awaiting Agamemnon’s return from Troy, the chorus recalls the sacrifice of Agamemnon’s daughter, Iphegenia, to secure favorable winds that would carry his army safely across the Aegean Sea on their way to Troy. Agamemnon’s wife, Clytemnestra, is anxiously awaiting Agamemnon’s return, but not for the reasons the chorus assumes; she has been plotting revenge for Iphegenia’s murder. Agamemnon soon enters with his new war slave, Cassandra, and Clytemnestra coaxes him to walk across a purple tapestry leading to his palace. Knowing he is offending the gods, to whom such an honor is only given, Agamemnon is nevertheless convinced that he deserves the gesture, and walks across the cloth. Cassandra prophesizes the impending, horrific death of Agamemnon and foresees her own death which is merely moments away. Knowing that life is in the hands
of the gods, she enters the palace and accepts her fate. Clytemnestra re-enters from the palace with bloodied hands and relays her recent murders.

Aegisthus, son of Thyestes, enters and describes his ancestral connection to the House of Atreus: brothers Atreus and Thyestes disputed the throne, and miserable from their feuding and separation, Thyestes visited the House of Atreus to reconcile their differences. Atreus presented a feast for his brother; unaware of what he was eating, Thyestes dined on his own children. Upon discovering this, he cursed the House of Atreus and was driven into banishment. Thus, Aegisthus has been allied with Clytemnestra to ensure personal revenge upon the House. Act One concludes with the union of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus as rulers of Argos.

At beginning of Act Two, Orestes, son of Clytemnestra and Agamemnon, enters his father’s tomb with his friend Pylades at the beginning of Act Two. He prays to Hermes, Lord of the Dead, and makes an offering with a lock of hair but is interrupted by a procession. Leading the procession is his sister, Electra, and as Orestes hides from them he sees her making an offering to Hermes as well. She then prays for Orestes return and Orestes reveals himself. The two of them conspire to kill Clytemnestra and Aegisthus to avenge the death of their father. Knowing they will need to get close to Clytemnestra but will be recognized, Orestes and Pylades plan to disguise themselves as travelers bringing news of Orestes death. They return to the palace, where a servant guarding the gate meets them. Orestes coerces the guard into letting them in the House and Clytemnestra enters to offer them lodging and a bath. Orestes announces his false news to her and she appears to be in mourning. Cilissa, Orestes’ childhood nanny, reveals that Clytemnestra is actually relieved to hear the news that the sole threat to her safety
and power is deceased. Clytemnestra commands Cilissa to tell Aegisthus of the strangers at the door and to hear the news they bring. She also requests that Aegisthus bring weapons and bodyguards. The chorus, however, intervenes by telling Cilissa to withhold the last portion of Clytemnestra’s request. Believing Cilissa’s words are false, an unarmed Aegisthus goes to the chorus in pursuit of the truth. The chorus directs Aegisthus to meet the messengers himself; they know Orestes’ true identity and are pressing for a confrontation. Aegisthus complies with their suggestion and is murdered by Orestes and Pylades. A servant hysterically relays the murder. Overhearing the shouting, but not the message, Clytemnestra enters to question the recent activity. Orestes and Pylades then fully reveal their identity and motives. Hoping to prevent her death, Clytemnestra pleads with Orestes to take mercy on his mother. Orestes scoffs at her claim since she abandoned him at a young age and kills her. Orestes is immediately haunted by The Furies since he has killed his direct ancestor. The chorus advises him to seek refuge at the Temple of Apollo where he can be cleansed.

Act Three begins at the Temple of Apollo where Orestes and the Furies are sleeping. The Pythia, a high priestess, performs a ritual that summons Apollo, who orders Orestes to go to Athens where Athena will judge him. After both exit, the ghost of Clytemnestra appears and wakes the Furies from their slumber. She urges them to continue haunting Orestes and they are riled into action. Apollo re-enters and attempts to banish them from his temple. The Furies respond by clarifying their worldly duty: to haunt those who have killed their kin. They then hold Apollo responsible for the death of Clytemnestra since his oracle prophesized that Orestes would kill her. Both sides debate over who is right and move the argument to the Temple of Athena in search of a trial by
jury under Athena’s order. Pursued by the Furies, Orestes arrives at the Temple of Athena, wanting and awaiting Athena’s judgment. Orestes tries to convince the Furies that he is an honest man but the Furies respond by threatening him with eternal damnation for his actions. Athena enters and listens to both arguments; Apollo enters as Orestes’ counsel while the Furies represent themselves. Each presents their account of the murder to a jury comprised of chorus members. The jury deliberates and their vote results in a hung jury, an equal number of votes given to each side. Athena steps in, casts her deciding vote to acquit Orestes, and the Furies are enraged. She pacifies them by reminding them of their worldly importance and slowly coerces them into the earth where they are no longer a threat. The chorus of Athenian citizens announces the importance of the narrative to the audience and encourages them to head home, remembering the story that has been told.
Production Concept and Process

My initial understanding for this production was that I would the chance to explore a design style in which I would like to focus. I was really looking forward to working with an outside director and creating a world that showed the darkness and treachery of Argos, the battle of Troy and the family that lived in The House of Atreus. With my first phone call with the director KJ Sanchez I found that my initial plan of having drawings ready for an August 13th, 2005 deadline was to be put aside. I was shocked to hear that Sanchez would not be in Vancouver until the end of August and that she wanted the designs to evolve from the rehearsal process.

I was somewhat worried with the new timeline. One month of rehearsal to discern what the design concept would be for my MFA Thesis show seemed daunting. John Lewin’s The House of Atreus has three acts and many characters. Even if the designs were locked down in the first week it would still be a tough and fast paced road for the company and the production staff in the scenery, costume and prop shops.

This collective process would mean that the director, designers and the actors could have input on the overall look of the show. The designs for scenery and costume would come out of the rehearsal process. I would attend rehearsals and watch and see what the actors were doing with their movement and character work. Each scene would need levels, entrances and exits to help tell the story. As rehearsals progressed I would quickly sketch ideas into a notebook and then share them with the design team.

As each designer came up with ideas they would be voiced and mulled over then implemented with changes made to suit the needs of all. For example, columns were made longer to allow for the placement of a projector above the stage. With a projector
above the stage, certain line-sets could not be flown in all the way. The columns were made longer so that they could reach the intended in spike for the scenes they were required in.

One concept that I found was interesting was the use of character work with the chorus members and implementing the character history that the actors created. Each character was given a history and certain traits that were then expressed to me by the actor during our costume fitting. Each actor and I conferred about what the character needed and what the design of the show needed. Using the costume stock at the university we found articles of clothing that would help depict the personality of the character as well as fit within the design scope of the show. This added some time to the process but I felt it was more appropriate for the show than designing a costume without the actors’ input.
Set Design Concept

The first image for the set was like an onion. The layers of the set would peel away with each scene to expose the next scene, eventually ending up with very little on stage. (Image 1)

Image 1

Through discussion and rehearsals a new concept as created: the set pieces would be manipulated in different positions to create each scene. The idea of moveable staircases came out of the idea of making the set adjustable to fit with the ever-changing outcome of rehearsals. Throughout the rehearsal process blocking would have a tendency to change slightly. Making the set versatile in appearance made the rest of the design process easier. I used a simple drafting program called SketchUp (Image 2) to
quickly make some shapes to show the director. With this program I was quickly able to manipulate shapes and textures to get an idea of what direction the design would go. Once ideas were roughed in and agreed upon I could go ahead and draft working drawings for the scene shop. This would prove more difficult as the agreed design often had a tendency to change the following day.

The stair units were light enough that they could be easily pushed by two people and strong enough that they could be walked on in both the lower and on-end positions. The production required four different looks. The first look consisted of the large stair units side by side to create the stairs leading up to the entrance of the main palace and two columns lowered to the top platform to create that entrance. The smaller sets of stairs were used for the Watchman’s opening monologue as well as escape stairs for the palace entrance. (Image 3)
The second scene was Agamemnon's tomb where the stair units were tilted on to their ends to create a more vertical look to match the columns that hung several feet off the ground acting like spires off the ceiling. The columns were suspended off the ground to help depict that the temple was under a great mass of earth or temple structure.
The third scene was Apollo’s Temple. In this scene the lighting designer wanted to use a projection of Apollo to depict where the scene was located. The large stair units were rotated on end so that the bottom of the stair units was facing the audience, making a surface large enough for a projection of Apollo’s face. The smaller stairs were put end-to-end in front of the projection for Apollo to look over Orestes. (Image 5)

Image 5
The last scene of the production is Athena’s temple. The smaller step units were put end-to-end to create a raised platform for Athena to sit on and watch the proceedings of the trial. The large stair units were on end and positioned so Orestes could climb them to escape the furies as they pursue him. The large stair units had the jury of Athenian citizens projected onto them. I found this to be a great effect having the live actors on stage with their projected image simultaneously. (Image 6)
Set Realization

Scenic Carpenters Don Griffiths, Jayson MacLean and Scene Shop Assistant Michelle Nelson were very accommodating with the build of the scenery. The design process for this show necessitated “last minute” drawings. The scenic carpenters were very patient while the designers and director negotiated the final designs.

The scenery was built with a lightweight framing to allow for easier movement for the actors. This lightweight frame was built so that the actors could move it around easily. The pine framing was skinned with mahogany sheeting, adding stability. Seams between each sheet were filled and sanded to create a smooth surface for the head painter. (Image 1) Lorraine West and her assistant painted a neutral base coat on the scenery then scumbled three shades of taupe onto the stair units. Scumbling is a technique used by scenic painters to blend three or more colours on a surface. This uneven colour allows the theatrical lighting to light the surface without washing out the painting.

A high density plastic was used to create points on which the stair units could slide. (Image 2) It was important that the sliders had a low profile so that they would not break the silhouette of the stair units. The smooth plastic also allowed for minimal marking on the painted stage floor.
The columns were built at three different lengths to accommodate the different playing heights and allow for restricted fly movement. Metal pipe clamps were used to attach the columns to the fly pipe. This hardware was intended to be visible to the audience, which fit with an early theme of showing the mechanisms used in the production of the show. However, after some discussion it was deemed inappropriate to show the actual lighting instruments so borders were brought in to mask the lights, which in turn masked the hardware for the columns.

The paint treatment for the columns made them look as if they were cement pillars with a rust washing coming down from the top. I was really pleased with this final treatment. The paint treatment helped to take the locale out of ancient Greece and allowed the viewer to place the action in anytime period.

Lighting instruments were placed inside the columns used in Agamemnon’s tomb. A hole in the bottoms of these columns had to be cut to allow for the light to escape. In addition, some internal structure had to be changed to allow for the lighting hardware.

A forty-five foot long platform was placed upstage to create a simple level that the actors could use. This platform was framed and then skinned with the same treatment as the stair units. The paint treatment for the platform was also similar to the stair units. The floor was painted with a light taupe centre that faded out to a flat black on the offstage edges of the stage. The light colour of the stage allowed for the projections to be seen easier.
Costume Design Concept

No pre-conceived designs were used for this design process. The director wanted the designs and overall creation of the production to come out of the process of rehearsing and creating with the actors. The actors did character work and developed a basic understanding of their characters. From this character work and brief discussions with the actors I was able to get an idea of how I would tackle the design process for this show.

Before the actors arrived for a fitting I had already pulled many costumes from the Theatre Programs' costume storage and filled the costume shop with them. Eventually, the overall plan for which costumes were pulled became quite simple. The design process started with what was available and what fit the actors. A good example of this method was used with the Argonian Citizens also known as the chorus. I had initially planned on the chorus characters being quite homogeneous. I needed to find a group of costumes that were similar in the costume storage. In storage there was a collection of suit coats and tailcoats that were already broken down. There were enough to dress all the chorus members and there were a wide variety of sizes. That became the starting point for the design. From that decision, the actors and myself looked at different items to add or take away to make the characters more personal to the actors' characters. Each actor created a history to his or her chorus member character. This sounded like a great idea at the time but I felt it made the design process somewhat tedious. The added character work added more time and work to create a consistent look for the design. The suit coats gave all the chorus members a masculine look while the actors' hair would indicate gender.
Costumes by Character

Watchman

The Watchman is a simple soldier who main purpose is to set the immediate scene of the immediate scene of the play. The watchman explains how the house is not managed as it once was and contrasts the rule of Agamemnon with the reign of Clytemnestra.

I chose to dress the Watchman minimally for a number of reasons: one to show the lack of supplies affecting the army has and two, to allow for a simple adding of costume for a quick change to Agamemnon. And last to show how cold Clytemnestra can be by sending a soldier out without the proper clothing into the cold night. (Figure 1)
Clytemnestra

Clytemnestra is the Queen of Argos and has ruled the city for ten years. She is tired and broken though she still holds herself with elegance despite her unpopularity.

Prior to rehearsals the actor broke her foot. This made for an interesting challenge, which I think worked out in my favor. The actor’s foot cast was covered with a custom made linen wrap to cover the air cast prescribed by her physician.
Although the actor did no need a crutch to walk I wanted a more mechanical aspect to her. Props were able to find a great old metal leg brace and crutch, which contrasted well with her silk 1920’s gown that we built. (Figure 2) The head of the costume shop, Jean Driscoll-Bell patterned a gown based on a rendering I found on a website displaying the work of Erté. (Image 9) I find the silhouette of the 1920’s quite similar to the silhouette of some of the ancient Grecian wardrobe. The garment itself was made of silks and shear material. The costume shop made a replica gown that we could cover in blood for Clytemnstra’s entrance after she kills Agamemnon and Cassandra. (Image 10) A third copy was made in the same pattern but using lighter purples and pinks. This costume was used for Clytemnstra’s ghost in Act II and Act III. (Image 11) Detailing was added to the fringe of the gown, which did not show up as much as I had hoped. In the future I would add more pattern and texture to such a gown.
Herald

The herald is a simple soldier who brings word of the ten long years they were away. I dressed him simply with just a white t-shirt; camouflage pants and black boots to show that the fleets barely made it back. (Figure 3)
Agamemnon was the King of Argos. Instead of robes and a crown I gave the character an early 20th century generals uniform. I still wanted Agamemnon to look like a warrior who actually fights his battles so I added camouflage pants and worn military boots. (Figure 4) I wanted to stay away from firearms on stage so I introduced a sword and a custom made shield based on a concept sketch I did of the crest of The House of Atreus. (Image 28)
Cassandra

As a priestess of Apollo, Cassandra’s costume had to look somewhat different than the Argonians. I used a gown that was pulled from storage. The gown already had some breakdown that helped with her character. A headpiece was added to accommodate the actor’s decision to pull out her hair in a fit of rage. In her final speech to Apollo Cassandra rips out her headpiece to presents it to Apollo. I attached similar coloured hair to the headpiece so that the hair was visible to the audience. (Figure 5)
Figure 5

Image 13
Aegisthus

Aegisthus wore a military uniform pulled from storage. The uniform did not denote any actual historical army but did have the same silhouette as Agamemnon’s jacket. I added a few decorative medals to his jacket to add authority to his character. The actor wore dress pants that he wore for his other characters so the quick changes could be done. For Aegisthus, he wore a polished dress shoe opposed to the flat black of the other Argonians. (Figure 6)
Argonian Citizens (Chorus)

Though the director did not want any specific time period mentioned, I had to describe what was happening in Argos. The chorus are "...empty of honor, the stay-at-homes," (Levin 2) the costumes I pulled for the chorus of Argonian citizens were a myriad of broken down suit jackets and tailcoats. (Figure 7)

The broken look of the jackets showed that at one time these people had status but were now driven to the dirt. I had to make sure that the look did not become vaudevillian or hobo. Care was taken on who got white gloves or if a garment was too broken down.
One character that was developed by a cast member wore a dirty robe and staff. (Image 17) This look was tried out but was changed because it did not fit with the theme of the rest of the characters.
Iphegenia

Iphegenia is the daughter of Clytemnestra and Agamemnon. She was sacrificed to ensure a safe voyage for the Argonian fleet. Killed on her wedding night she is found in a 1920’s wedding gown with a bridal headpiece.

Orestes

Orestes wore loose fitting dress pants with a white shirt, suspenders and a red sash with animals chasing each other. Electra made the red sash for Orestes when they were young. Orestes was raised by a royal family that was not his own. I wanted to show that he was affiliated with wealth by having him wear the dress pants and suspenders. I also
wanted to show that he was a hard worker and that he admired his father Agamemnon. Therefore gave him scuffed up black boots as well, I had the actor role up his sleeves. (Figure 9)

When Orestes is washed of his sins by Apollo he is cleaned, his hair is straightened and he is given a suit jacket to prepare him for the trial in the next scene. (Image 20)
**Pylades**

Pylades was to be played as a cool and confident friend, one that would have the right answers for Orestes if he ever had a question. The same actor had to make a quick change so the military jacket with Velcro front and black over coat that he wore would go over his next characters dress shirt. (Figure 10, Image 21)
**Electra & The Maidservants**

Agamemnon's Tomb was meant to have video projection from the front and above. For that purpose I used light coloured material for Electra and the Maidservants so that the projection would show. For Electra I found a cream coloured top, skirt and pants. The fabric flowed very nicely. To allude to a classical silhouette, I put the skirt over the actor's bust. The draping of the fabric looked very similar to a peplos of ancient Greece. A peplos is the large cuff that is created by folding the fabric of a tunic at the shoulders and neckline. (Figure 11)

The maidservants had black leggings and cream coloured dresses. I added aprons to show that they were slaves in the house. (Image 22)
Cilissa

Cilissa is a servant in the palace. She was the mother figure in Orestes' childhood. She wore a grey knee length skirt with suit jacket and grey shoes. I wanted a motherly feel from her. So I gave her an apron that was dyed to go with her costume.

The Pythia

In the production the Pythia is the priestess who performed a dance using yoga positions to summon Apollo. The costume that was created for this character was designed to allow her to do her yoga piece. Black leggings with a torn skirt allowed for the ease of movement. I had to work with the actor on the length of the strips in the skirt.
If they were too long they would get in the way of her choreography. If they were too short they would not drape properly as she executed the yoga positions. (Image 23)
Apollo

The director wanted Apollo to act and look like a slick high paid defense attorney. Apollo wore a sharp pinstripe suit with polished dress shoes. The actor’s hair was slicked back and a cigarette case was given to him to incorporate the stereotypical cool calm and collected attitude that the director wanted from the character. (Figure 15)
Hermes (and the Henchmen)

Hermes was a small roll in this play but had to fit with the new gods. Hermes was dressed as an office assistant to fit with Apollo’s theme. I was lucky to find a nice pair of women’s dress pants and a matching vest from a previous show. The henchmen had a similar look but were not as tailored as Hermes was. (Image 25)
Figure 16

Image 25
Athena

The character of Athena was the judge in Act III. Although the director wanted an androgynous look to her, the character still had to appear womanly. To make the masculine side of Athena, she wore dress pants and a suit jacket and a white collared shirt. (Figure 17) Athena’s hair was also pulled back in a tight bun. To feminize the character the jacket had a soft material and the actor’s make up was enriched with blush and red lip liner.

Figure 17
Furies (Chorus)

The Furies wore fabricated pants and tops. The pants were based on a samurai legging while the top was a simple full arm shirt. I watched the rehearsals of the furies and saw how the actors moved and decided that a tattered look would suit with their crawling around on the floor and scratching. (Image 27)
THE HOUSE OF ATREUS

THE FURIES

Figure 18
**Soldiers**

The crew acted as these “walk on” parts. Their role was to hold the prisoner Cassandra. They were dressed in a mix of modern day camouflage military fatigues as well as holding Agamemnon’s shield. These dressed stagehands came quite late in the process.

![Image 29](image29.png)

**Athenian Citizens (The Jury)**

The cast was dressed in modern day clothes for these characters. The actors were filmed sitting on the stair units, the image would then be projected on to the empty stairs
so that the actors would eventually be acting with their own projection. The actors were dressed in lighter colours to help project a stronger image. The filming for this scene had to happen quite early in the rehearsal process.
Conclusion

In conclusion this was a very difficult process both in the execution of the show and the follow up procedure of actually writing the paper. The frustrations and challenges that were experienced have enlightened me to what needs to happen when a show like this is taken on. Looking back at them I do not regret having them, for they have made me realize that I truly do enjoy designing even when it is frustrating. Designing collectively during the rehearsal process requires a patient production crew. They are at the mercy of the creative process of the design team. I am thankful that both the scene shop, costume and prop shops were more then patient with the waiting and eventually the ever changing designs that flew in on a daily basis.

Looking at what was done I realize that a quick hand on the drafting and rendering is vital with this type of production. I believe my ability to sketch quickly was a great asset when communicating with the director and actors. However if my skills at drafting were faster the shop may have had plans as they were created.

I would also like to look at the method of documentation of such process. I found it difficult to take the time to take photos of all the pieces and costumes. In the future I will make sure that I am able to make the time to do so.

I found the overall look of the show very rewarding. The simple shapes of the set contrasted well with the textures of the costumes and the lighting. I enjoyed watching the end result. I found that the setting complimented the story telling and movement of the actors.
Figure 20
Figure 27

The House of Atreus
The Fredric Wood Theatre
The University of British Columbia

Notes:
- Built one of each scale unit.
- Structure should be light weight and strong enough to allow for use on either surface.
- Unit board shims added to allow for easier movement and new profiles.
- Each stair tile is 3" x 3".

The Fredric Wood Theatre
The University of British Columbia

Drawing: Stair Units
Director: KJ Sanchez
Designer: Mike Patton
Drafted by: Mike Patton
Date: December 2, 2008
Scale: 1/2"=1'-0"
Page Number: 9 of 11
Signature:
Notes:
Interior needs to house a lighting instrument at LD request as well as be able to take and hold water for Apollo's Temple.

The House of Atreus
The Fredric Wood Theatre
The University of British Columbia
Drawing: The Architect
Director: K.J. Sanchez
Designer: Mike Patton
Drafted by: Mike Patton
Date: December 2, 2008
Page Number: 11 of 11