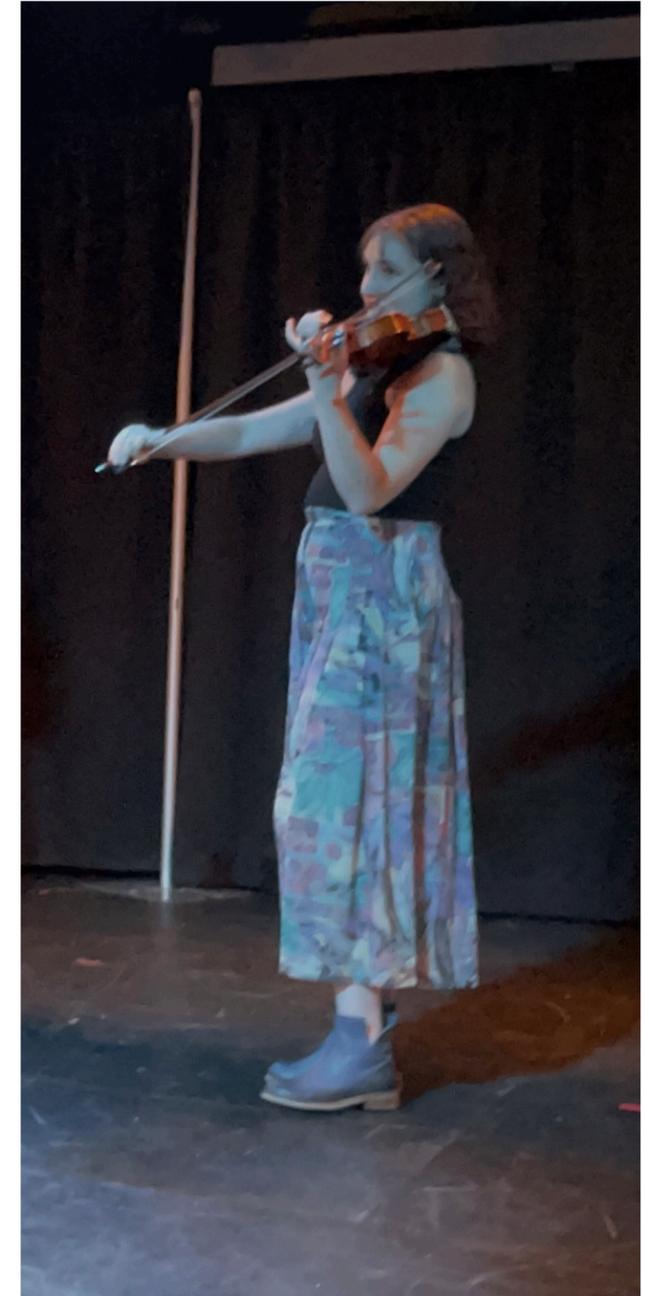




**EMILY SMITH**  
**WORK SAMPLE 2020-2022**

# MELANCHOLY BY SARAH RUHL

DIRECTOR, APRIL 2022



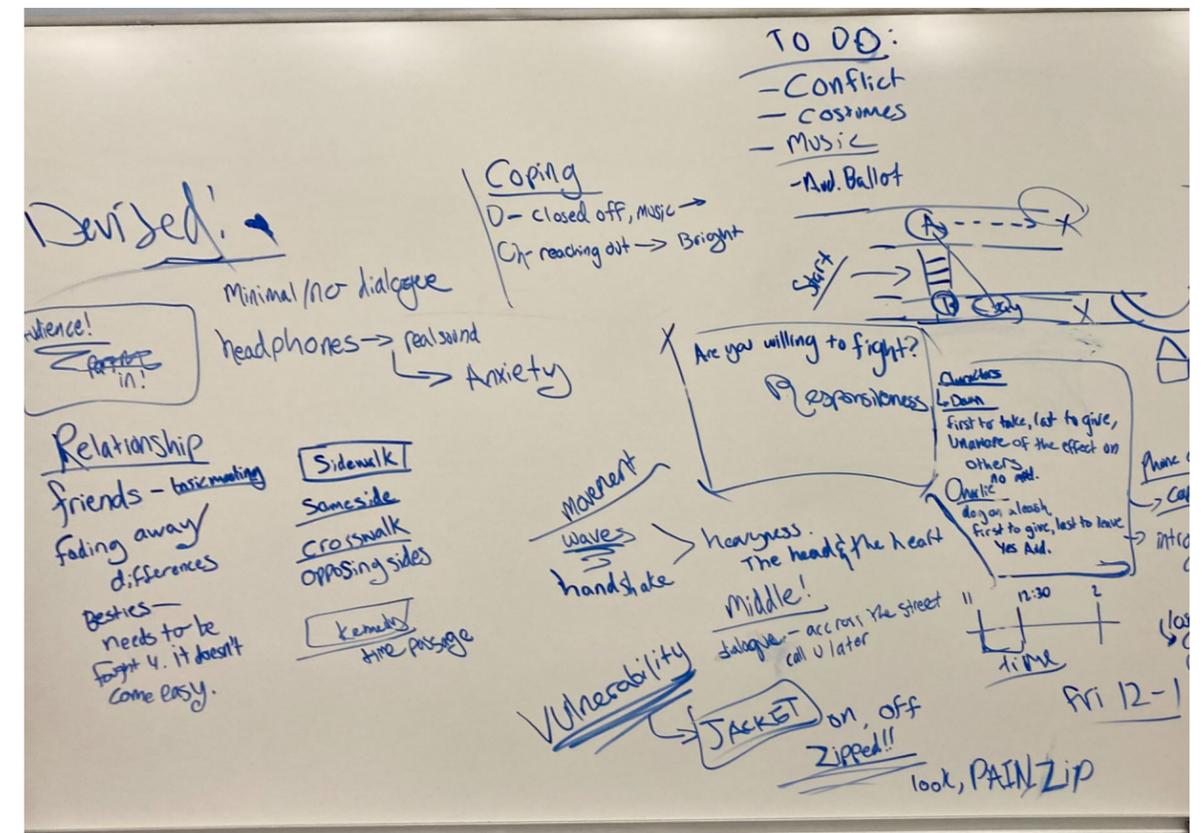
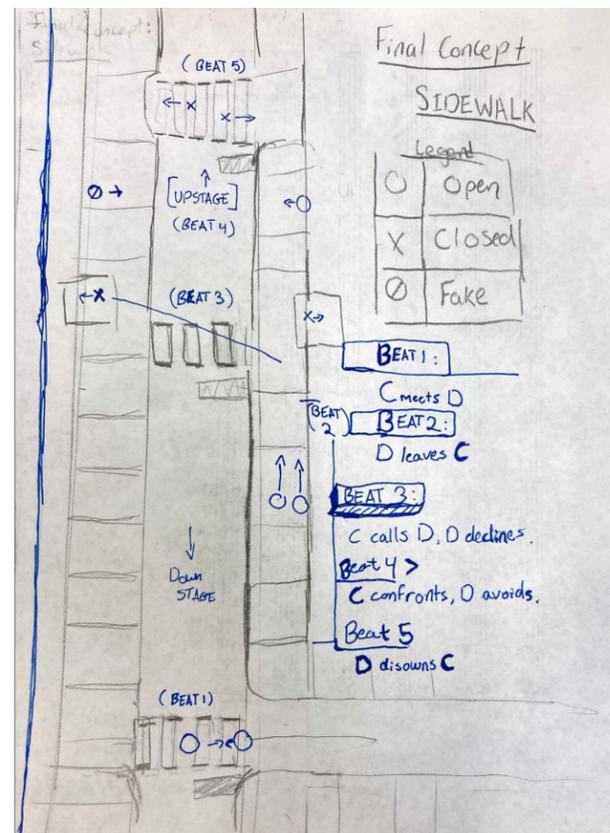
I directed a One-Act cut of Sarah Ruhl's Melancholy play. I ran auditions and callbacks, worked with a composer, movement coach, and costume designer to achieve my best work to date. As I read, the text sang to me- the speech patterns, the nonlinear plot, the over-the-top characters- it drew me in and didn't let me go. I first heard about Sarah Ruhl from Dr. Jim in Scriptwriting I. He was commenting on my writing style, calling it "Dramatic Poetry." It's a form that captures complicated truths from a zoomed-out perspective and sweeping action. Since then I've been reading a lot of her work, namely Dead Man's Cell Phone, Clean House, and Eurydice. So, why Melancholy Play? That's an easy one. I connected with it. I was tired of the subtext and pleasantries of day-to-day interaction, like- just tell me how you actually feel seriously. This play gave me the world as I wished it was expressed. I was also sick of putting out things that others would come and see, sick of the pressure I put myself and my actors through to achieve something I wasn't even passionate about. I knew that if I picked this play, I would get two reactions: 1. Dumbfounded confusion, or 2. A good laugh. Unsurprisingly, these two reactions show up in my interactions all the time. In a way, I felt like I was presenting myself. I often spew out whatever is on my mind, which sometimes unsettles people. Thematically, I fell in love with the depiction of sadness, and the phrase "Sincere Melodrama." Who am I reaching? What is my vision? Proposition one: I am reaching those who feel alone- "to cultivate", as Tilly says, "a sense of gravity." I didn't want my vision to be very convoluted or hidden, but a presentation of the human condition, presented in this medium. My vision was to capture and embody community to such an extent that it becomes infectious "like a disease."

# CROSSWALK

## WRITER AND DIRECTOR, FEBRUARY 2022

I created a found space devised piece following two friends on the journey of becoming strangers. The audience walked behind, hearing muffled conversation. The goal was to convey the relationship through costume and movement primarily. The long hill had three crosswalks, each representing a passage of time.

We narrowed down each person's essence by measuring their response to conflict. The responsiveness directly correlates to the question: am I willing to fight for this relationship? This exercise also prompted the audience survey idea. We didn't want one bad friend and one good friend. We wanted the distance of the sidewalk to tell the story.



# ONE ACT FESTIVAL PROGRAM

GRAPHIC DESIGNER, APRIL 2022

**The Gallery:**  
A Directing Festival in Twelve Acts

Written by Shel Silverstein    Directed by: Tori Denike

## An Adult Evening of Shel Silverstein

Three short plays that Silverstein wrote over the course of his life. Each vignette features plots where nothing is as it seems and innocent/naive conversations can lead you just about anywhere!

Featuring:  
Ellen Adelaide  
Evan Fenne  
Caroline Frawley  
Grace Guerre

*Tori Denike*

Written by Sarah Ruhl    Directed by Emily Smith

## Melancholy Play (A Contemporary Farce)

Synopsis: Bank teller Tilly must save her hairdresser from an unknown disease. In this marvelous melodrama, we explore the complexities of passion, longing, and almonds.

Featuring: Chloe Coulter, Peyton White Julia Baddour, Justin Hopkins, and Matthew Gilleran

Violinist: Virginia Peppiatt  
Student Composer: Davis Ginn  
Costume coordinator: Susie Konstans  
Dialect Coach: Katie Fraley  
Movement Coordinator: Deven Ferrer

*Sarah Ruhl*

Directed by: Caitlyn Campbell

## The Last Five Years

By Jason Robert Brown

Featuring:  
Julia Bibeault and Josh Jordan

Synopsis:  
Moving backwards and forwards in time, this musical explores the relationship of two young lovers, Jamie and Cathy, who come to terms with each stage of their relationship. This work focuses on the humanity, depth, and emotion behind what love is, how we feel it, and how it breaks us.

Pianist: Jayden Smith  
Music Director: Shelby Harrison  
Stage Manager: Jules Robinson  
Costume Designer: Adelia Morris  
Lighting Designer: Caroline Millon

*Caitlyn Campbell*

*Shakespeare's Sister*  
By Annie Wolfzorn

Directed by:  
*Bailey Angel*

Synopsis:  
Narrated by Judith, William Shakespeare's sister, this play—based on Virginia Woolf's article "If Shakespeare Had a Sister"—takes a look at gender roles in Elizabethan England. In Judith's allegorical world, a young boy, after suffering the traumatic loss of his mother, develops a plan to redeem the people and free them of darkness. The characters disappear as Judith tragically performs her nightly ritual of burning the work she has just created, never to be seen, known, or loved by the world.

Featuring:  
Amy Joy James    Savannah Raeder  
Emma Borzumato    Faiga Brewer  
Em Mills    Charlie Nelson

*Bailey Angel*

WRITTEN BY: MELISSA COOPER    DIRECTED BY: NATALIE MEDINA

## ANTIGONE NOW

FEATURING:  
CLAIRE BOOKER  
TREY HARKINS  
LAUREN TAYON  
VICTORIA HERDA  
SAM RISENBERG  
KELBY HORNE  
BRADY BIRWITT

MOVEMENT CAPTAIN: LAUREN TAYON  
ASSISTED BY: KELBY HORNE  
COSTUME DESIGNER: SAM RISENBERG  
SOUND DESIGNER: NORA WEIR  
LIGHTING DESIGNER: SUZIE KONSTANS

*Natalie Medina*

Directed by Cate Bounds    Written by Daphne Silbiger

## Six Years Old

Synopsis:  
Adalaide is six years old, and she knows a few things: Her stupid babysitter Kim is stupid and she does NOT like being treated like a girl. Though Kim takes Adalaide's frustrations seriously and tries to offer support, Adalaide's family and peers discourage her, leaving her to seek out dangerous measures in order to transform into who she was born to be (her hero, Han Solo). SIX YEARS OLD is a comic and poignant play reflecting back on the wild fantasies and serious desires of queer childhood.

Featuring:  
Em Mills    Amy Joy James  
Jack Johnson    Ellen Adelaide

*Cate Bounds*

Music and Lyrics by Ira and George Gershwin

## Crazy For You

by Ken Ludwig

Featuring:  
Dylan Pearson  
Zaina Bozarth  
Jeremy Moeller  
Lindsey Widenfeller  
Trey Harkins  
Maddie Heckler  
Eli Bell  
Kendall Bryant  
Jack Johnson  
Josh Jordan  
Savannah Raeder

Directed by: **Byran Kratoska**

Assistant Director and Stage Manager: Delaney Duffy  
Music Direction by: Savannah Raeder  
Choreography by: Eli Bell, Jamie Bradley, and Maddie Heckler  
Set Design: Jeremy Moeller  
Costume Design: Susie Konstans  
Sound design: Bryan Kratoska and Eli Bell

Synopsis:  
This is a one act version of the wonderful musical Crazy For You. While condensed, this adaptation aims to stay true to the original charm of the story by holding to its roots in both the romantic and comedic aspects of the original show. It is a heart-felt, unlikely love story that aims to bring joy to the audience that is watching it!

*Byran Kratoska*

# MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

DIRECTOR, MARCH 2021

I directed a 15 minute cut of Merry Wives of Windsor set in the late 90's. It included a Non-binary grunge- loving Falstaff, fun costumes, and the spice girls. My approach to Merry Wives is to replicate the original intent of the play. As my research suggests, the play was written like an Elizabethan tragedy, a place where common people could promote a political critique in front of audiences of any class.

The main question that I believe the texts asks is: What is a good and proper life? From this question stems many smaller questions, depending on who you are: What does it mean to be \_\_\_\_\_ ( a wife, a man, a husband, lower or upper class) and maintain your honor, stability and station?



*Emily Smith*

**DIRECTING PORTFOLIO**  
**2015-2019**

# THE TAMING OF THE SHREW, SUMMER/FALL 2019

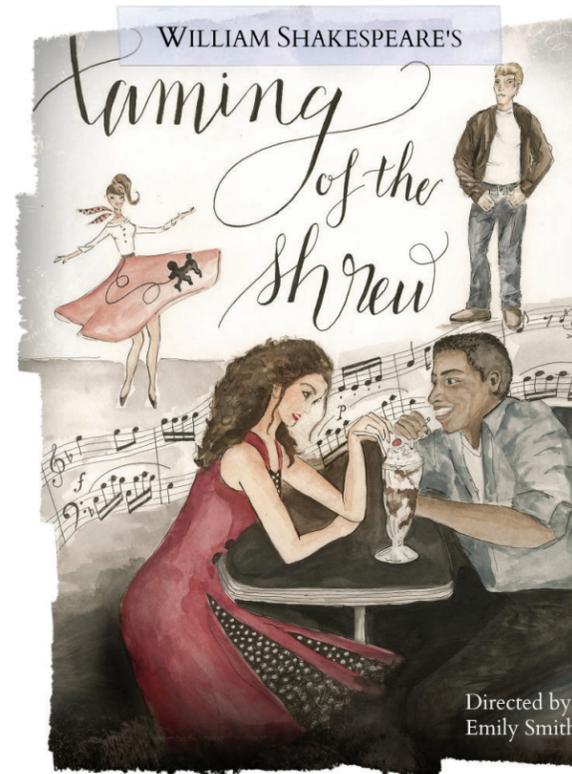
DIRECTOR, SET / COSTUME / PROP DESIGNER, PRODUCER, DRAMATURG



Taming of the Shrew was my first solo production. After solidifying my interpretation, I cast the actors, researched the time period, and began blocking out each scene.

I selected three monologues and collaborated to compose original music to sing the lines. In addition to singing, I included choreography for a few scenes and incorporated it into some of the blocking.

The play is set in the 1950's at Baptista's diner. I wanted each character to mean something; Madame Baptista, for example is more than a single mother desperate to marry off her daughters. She is constantly taking care of people and managing a whole restaurant with too many things on her plate. Her diner provides the "home base" and context for the characters' daily lives. The Induction portion of the play is a new script I made from combining different sources.



Program Design- Emily S, Artist- Lisa H.



The suitors sing for Bianca's hand



Promotional Poster



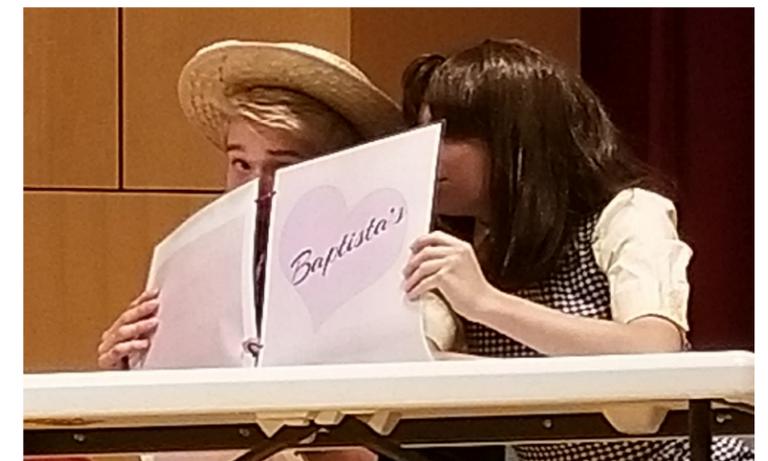
Characters dancing iconic 50's dances like jive, swing, and the twist

# THE TAMING OF THE SHREW, SUMMER/FALL 2019

50s DESIGN AND INSPIRATION



Promotional photo taken by Kirill H.



Tranio uses a menu to hide their identities



Inspiration from *Grease!* for this scene

# THE TAMING OF THE SHREW, SUMMER/FALL 2019

## DYNAMIC BLOCKING



This show features a lot of physical comedy. We used more vertical motion this year, using the dimensions of the stage, and the heights of the set pieces. The dialogue itself is quick-witted, sharp, and powerful. It requires the same energy in the blocking.

Act Two scene one features Kate and Petruchio's iconic duel of wits, wherein the audience hangs on each word in anticipation of the next movement. I wanted their movements to be quick, humorous, and complicated, reflecting their relationship. The show included projectiles such as muffins, water bowls and glasses, hair rollers, and shoes. We ran through these scenes so many times, that even I couldn't tell if they were actually getting hurt on stage.



"If I be waspish, best beware my sting!"

# COMEDY OF ERRORS, SUMMER/FALL 2018

CO-DIRECTOR, SET DESIGNER, COSTUME DESIGNER, DROMIO OF EPHESUS



For this production, I co-directed with a classmate. We took promotional pictures in our own photoshoot in the first few months. While directing, we also made costumes and set pieces, budgeted, and performed in two of the main roles. Being part of the action allowed us to understand the characters and plot well, though it was difficult at times to manage it all at once.



Co-Director bow at show end



Promotional pictures of the twins. photography by Ellie H.



# COMEDY OF ERRORS

## 40'S INSPIRATION



Why the 40's? Many scholars always describe Shakespeare as "before his time." The women in this show were almost tailor made, by William Shakespeare himself, to live their lives in the 40's. The Dromio twins, for example are modeled after factory workers, and the famous Rosie the Riveter.

We symbolized relationships through the use of color. Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse donned a red hue signifying more intensity, discontent. Antipholus and Dromio of Ephesus, however, donned blue, signifying a more content life. We wanted the costumes and characters of the twins to be distinct, but still retaining a resemblance. The difference between them can specifically be seen in the way they act physically. The Syracuse twins, for example, are more confrontational and stoic, whereas the twins from Ephesus are driven mad by the circumstance.

Comedy of Errors is a classic identity swap narrative. The frustration and confusion throughout the show is chaotic and outlandish- especially with two sets of twins to keep track of- but in the end, of course, all is resolved.



Faculty actors in flashback introduction



Antipholus threatens Dromio with bread



# SET DESIGN AND FABRICATION

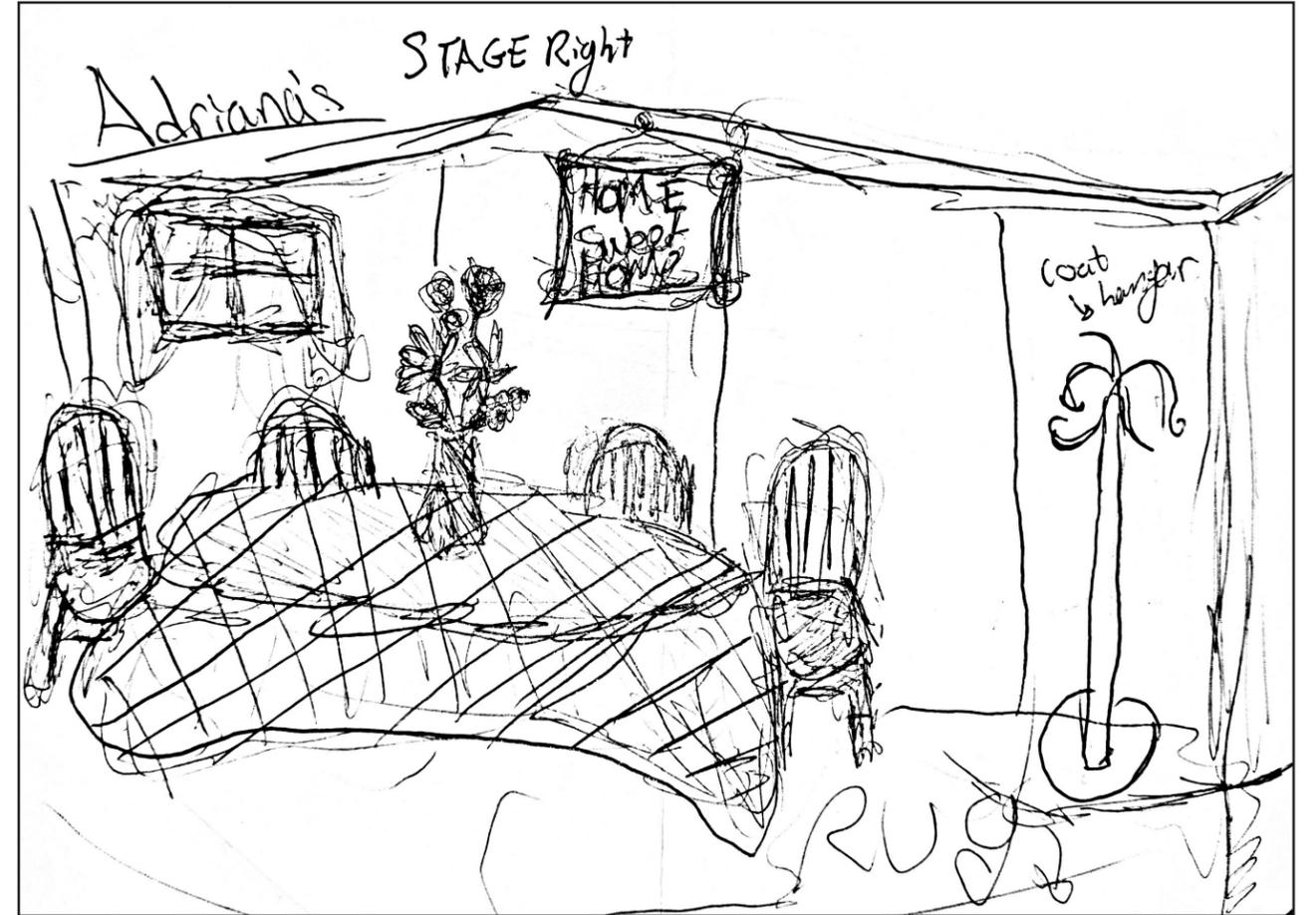
COMEDY OF ERRORS (2018) AND TAMING OF THE SHREW (2019)



Included here are some of the stage designs for the two shows. 1940's style homes and market places were simplistic and welcoming. The 1950's set conveyed a lighter tone with brighter colors and movable set pieces, such as spinny stools and chairs on wheels. *Taming* featured more locations and homes, but each set added to the overall performance.



Taming of the Shrew Diner set



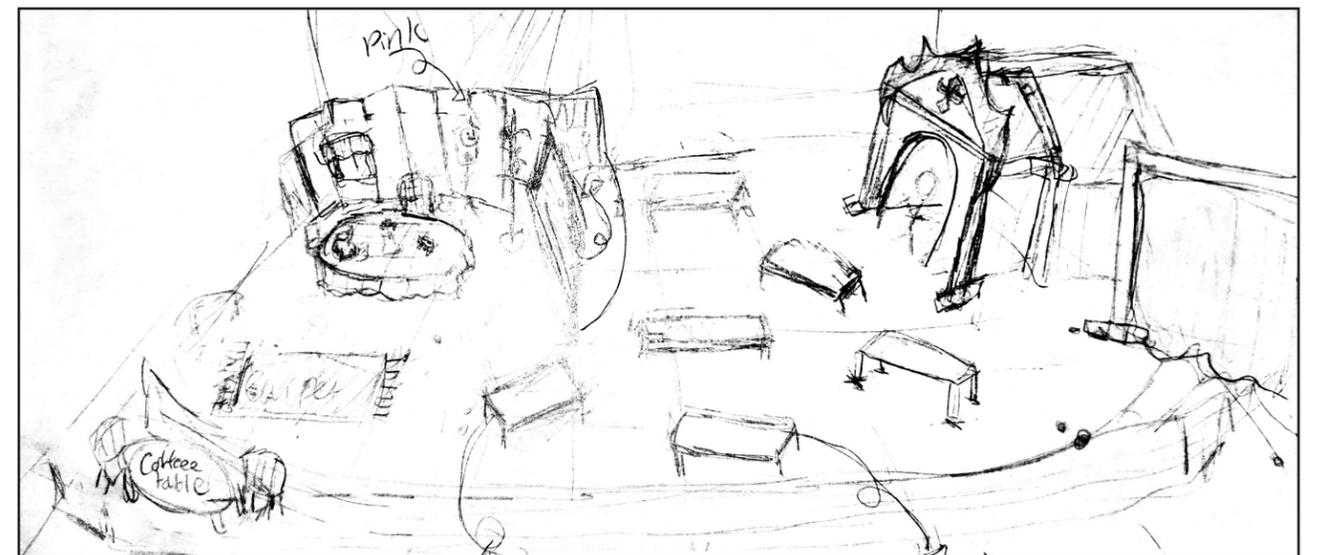
Adriana's home on the set of Comedy of Errors



I organized the construction and made multiple pieces myself



TOTS Counter sketch with dimensions



Complete stage layout for Comedy of Errors before intermission