

Department of Theatre and Dance

Production Meeting Notes



Production: Dracula
Stage Manager: Avery Weston
Date: March 27, 2025

Director: (Mary)

- Key themes/ideas:
 - o “God should have made girls lethal when he made monsters of men” quote by Elisabeth Hower.
 - o The monsters look just like us.
 - o The vampires are predators, and their front is different than the reality of what’s underneath.
 - o Ultimately, this play is a revenge fantasy with dream-like elements.
 - o The realness of the horror will drive the true message of the play home.
 - o Wishes we didn’t have to do this play, but it tackles subject matter that is too real to not be discussed.
- Character-Defining Questions:
 - o Van Helsing: What will you stand up for?
 - o Mina: What are your darkest fears?
 - o Lucy: Who is your vampire self?
 - o Marilla & Drusilla: What makes you resentful?
 - o Renfield: What would cause you to be brutally extreme?
- Is thinking about separating Merchant/Miller/Maid from doubling with Marilla and Drusilla to help with blood tracking.
- Will be taking careful consideration when staging any act of violence committed by a male character on a female character.

Scenery

Designer: (Mandy)

- Scenery should be grounded in the period with pieces of the architecture that lend itself to the time.
- Discussed whether or not Renfield’s prayer is always visible and the possibility of it being written on the floor.
- There are two beds, one will likely have curtains around it to distinguish the two.
- Met with Mary to discuss how furniture can help us establish location.
- There may be some opportunity for levels with the asylum.
- Will be thinking about color for the set, so it doesn’t start to turn pink from the blood.
- Key Considerations from Mary:
 - o What can be permanently stained with blood?
 - o There are several different locations and very quick scene transitions.
 - o There are lots of mentions to windows, doors, and mist.
 - o Renfield’s hanging.
 - o Writing Renfield’s prayer.

Technical Director/Special Effects: (River/Nate)

- Mary wants the blood and special effects to be big.
 - There will be a LOT of blood.
 - There are scripted moments with fire. Mary would rather have lots of curtains and droopy fabric onstage than a live flame.
 - Key Considerations from Mary:
 - o Some of the blood will need to be edible.
 - o Renfield’s hanging.
-

Costumes: (Elin)

- Costumes should be grounded in the period.
- Mary wants to follow the playwright's note at the beginning of the script and have everyone in whites/creams, so the addition of blood is very obvious.
 - o Van Helsing can be the exception to being in white. Mary would like her to have a cowboy hat as noted by the playwright.
 - o Mary would like Dracula to be in mostly white, unlike most standard images of the character.
- Marilla and Drusilla are sexual and there is a sexualized component to them, but they are not sexy or desirable.
- Renfield can have some texture/padding.
- The monsters will not have any additional makeup to make them look different from the humans.
- Mary wants blood to be down the actors' chests after eating babies and on their full body and down their legs after more violence ensues.
- Will likely be doubling all costumes so one set can be worn one night while the other set is being bleached and washed for the next show.
- Key Considerations from Mary:
 - o What can be permanently stained with blood?
 - o Mina is visibly pregnant.
 - o Van Helsing's scar.

Lights: (Amber)

- There will be lights!
- Overall vibes are very dark and shadowy.
- There will be lots of fog and haze
- Key Considerations from Mary:
 - o There are scripted moments of mist coming from a door or window.

Sound: (Connor)

- Mary found a playlist on Spotify titled "Dracula's Castle" that she has been drawing inspiration from, particularly "Magnificent, Isn't It" by Benjamin Wallfisch and some of Mozart's darker music.
- Some scene transitions will likely be musical.
- Is thinking about using stylized and exaggerated sounds.
- Mary is leaning towards the screams coming from actors, not a recording.

Props: (Ozzy)

- Will be focused on keeping the weapons as safe as possible.
- Will be paying special attention to tracking bloody v. non-bloody props.
- Key Considerations from Mary:
 - o What can be permanently stained with blood?
 - o Some of the blood will need to be edible.
 - o There is vomit.
 - o A throat gets torn out.
 - o The moving sack – Mary wants to see it move onstage.
 - o Silver powder that is thrown at the vampires.
 - o Plunging a stake into Lucy's heart.
 - o Renfield's hanging.
 - o Writing Renfield's prayer.

Dramaturgy:

- No notes at this time.

Stage Management: (Avery)

- This show will have heavy content warnings.
- We will need materials at the ready backstage to get blood off of actors and costumes as soon as they come offstage.

Other:

- Our next meeting will be on Friday, April 11th at 12:05 pm in Room 70. Thank you!