SCENOGRAPHY FOR CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE’S
THE TRAGICAL HISTORY OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF
DOCTOR FAUSTUS

BY

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Caleb Stroman

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Doctor Faustus has been of interest to me since the fall of 2008 when I saw the Metropolitan Opera’s live broadcast of their production of La Damnation de Faust. The production was excellent. I enjoyed the designs immensely and how they worked with the production itself and enhanced the opera. The integration of technology and acrobatics into the production was also of great interest and fascination. All of these elements, and the knowledge that I would have to start looking at plays for my thesis, got me interested in learning more about Faust as a possibility to design for.

I discovered there were two different versions of Faust: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s Faust and Christopher Marlowe’s The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus. Knowing a little about Marlowe, mainly that he was a contemporary of Shakespeare, and he was killed in a bar fight over a bar tab, and having seen Goethe’s Faust, I decided to learn more about Marlowe by reading his version. I was quite surprised to find out just how different it was from the opera. I saw more design potential in Marlowe’s Doctor Faustus and it was more interesting to me, personally. In addition, I felt that if I were to design either Faust or La Damnation de Faust, my designs and ideas would be too heavily influenced by the Metropolitan Opera’s production, though I still find some of the visuals to be moving and inspiring.

Another reason for choosing Doctor Faustus for my thesis is because I knew he was a contemporary of Shakespeare. Having designed several Shakespearean plays in various periods, I am familiar with the style and language of the period, and while wanting to remain in the same period, I wanted to branch out from Shakespeare. I had also not designed a show in the Elizabethan period and wanted to do so. I have done a lot of research in that period and wanted to put it to use, and Marlowe’s Doctor Faustus offered an excellent opportunity to do so.
After reading the play, I began my design process by researching Christopher Marlowe and the play itself. One of the first things that I discovered was that there are two versions of the play and some controversy surrounds them. Upon examining the edition that I had read, the Signet Classic version edited and revised by Sylvan Barnet, I discovered that it was a combination of the two versions. In his textual note following the play, Barnet explains the differences and makes the case for combining the two different versions. In essence, the B-text, published in 1616, is longer than the A-text, published in 1604, adding 676 more lines, but removing 36 lines. These deletions appear to have been due to censorship in accordance with a 1607 law prohibiting blasphemy on stage (Barnet 84-85). Barnet believes the A-text to be more of an actor’s version, shortened for the stage, and the B-text is closer to what Marlowe had originally wanted. Therefore, the editor followed the B-text but occasionally drew upon the A-text (ibid. 87).

Having learned that my primary edition was more or less the B-text, I also read the A-text, this version edited by David Wootton. The primary difference that I found was the obvious difference in length. This had a noticeable effect on the number of characters. There is also less action in the A-text. In the B-text, before the scene at the pope’s banquet table, there is a scene in which Pope Adrian has chained up Bruno, the man chosen to be pope by the emperor. This is completely missing from the A-text. Another difference between the two texts is related to the conjuring of Alexander the Great. In the B-text, Darius of Persia is also conjured, and the two fight. Alexander wins and takes the crown and gives it to his paramour. With more action and characters than the Wootton edition, I chose to remain with the Barnet edition as my primary text.
Marlowe drew much of his narrative from *The English Faust Book*, published in 1588. “In the *Faust-book* the legends concerning Faustus were gathered together and unified by the idea that pride will have a fall” (Barnet xii). Taking place in Germany, the book was based on the real Faustus, who was rumored to have been a magician and was denounced by his contemporaries, including Martin Luther. “Thirty-six of the sixty-three chapters in *The English Faust Book* are drawn on in *Doctor Faustus*, and all but four of the first thirty chapters are put to work” (Wootton xii-xiii). Both texts of the play that I read included *The English Faust Book*, or a large selection of it. This was a very useful addition to be able to see Marlowe’s source material and just how much came directly from *The English Faust Book*.

This background information and research on Marlowe and the two versions of the play was a useful beginning and basis for the rest of my research, especially as I moved into researching previous productions. I found very little information, and in particular, photographs, of previous productions. Therefore, I opened my research back up to look at previous productions of *La Damnation de Faust* to see if any of it would be useful. I watched the film of the Salzburger Festspiele’s 1999 production of the opera and found the differences between Goethe’s and Marlowe’s versions to be too extreme for much of the research to be useful.

This background information about the play, and the knowledge that it was based on the historical German man by the name of Faustus, led me to my first step in visual research. I began by finding out if any of the other named characters were historically based and not just fictional. I discovered that Pope Adrian and Emperor Charles V were both real and were contemporaries of each other. This helped to clarify and firmly set the time period—that of Henry VIII. This also provided me with actual images of two of the characters in the play.
With this frame of reference and period setting, I began to search for visual references and sources upon which I would base my scenic design. Quite unusual for me, I didn’t have any conceptual ideas in mind when I began to search. For past projects, I have had a loose conceptual idea in mind when beginning my visual research and find images to support my ideas. This time I decided to begin my research with no preconceived ideas about the scenic design or an overall concept. My research began with looking at some of the more well-known and modern designers, including Adolphe Appia, Josef Svoboda, and Edward Gordon Craig. While inspiring, none of their designs provided any concrete ideas to use as a foundation for my scenic design and concept as a whole. I therefore began to widen my search and looked at Donald Oenslager’s *Stage Design: Four Centuries of Scenic Invention*. I quickly began to get ideas while perusing the designers of the Renaissance. Towering sets and huge arches were very common and appeared in many of the designs and drawings. I found them to be inspiring, and some conceptual ideas began to come to mind. Thinking back to both productions of the opera that I had seen, both had towering scenic designs and the Metropolitan Opera’s production had consisted of many arches. This confirmed to me that I was headed in the right direction. Two renderings in particular stood out, Giovanni Maria Quaglio I’s “Courtyard of a Fortress,” and Francesco Chiaruttini’s “Prison Complex.” Both renderings had very large arches and multiple levels. They also had a heavy and foreboding feel to them that I felt fit well with a play in which a man sells his soul to the devil. Quaglio’s image became my primary source of scenic inspiration as the arches help create more interest, and because the multiple staircases that added more visual interest to the rendering and provided a basis upon which to provide varying levels in my own scenic design. In particular, the foremost staircase that went down into the floor was the one that held my interest the most, as, again, the play dealt with the devil and hell,
both of which are commonly associated with being underground. With this image in mind, I began to form my concept and began conceptual drawings.

My concept was informed by my visual research and the idea that the devil comes from below. Marlowe makes reference to this when Lucifer, Belzebub, and Mephostophilis enter at the beginning of 5.2 and Lucifer says, “Thus from infernal Dis do we ascend/To view the subjects of our monarchy...” (5.2.1-2). Barnet agrees that they probably originally “[rose] through a trapdoor and climb[ed] to a playing area above the mainstage, so that like the cosmic powers they gaze down upon their plaything beneath them” (Barnet xxii). My original conceptual ideas included trusses to allow the devils a place to climb and be above Faustus throughout the play and remain unseen by him. Stairs and platforms eventually replaced this.

My concept was also informed by the idea that while life ostensibly becomes more rich and better when making a deal with the devil, it is the soul that is corrupted. This idea has been explored before, but it was Oscar Wilde’s *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* that came to mind. Wilde’s exploration of the manifestation of a physical representation of what was happening to the soul particularly intrigued me. I wanted to include, at least subtly, some reference and physical representation to the corruption happening within. The cover of my Signet Classic version of *Doctor Faustus* included the painting *The Fatal Hour: Fantastic Subject* by Alexandre Evariste Fragonard which depicts a man pulling back a curtain and the devil being behind him. This revelation of the devil behind the curtain intrigued me and I decided to translate it to my design. By covering all of the arches with curtains and removing them throughout the play—especially when the devils were onstage—to reveal the hard lines and towering presence of the arches was an ideal way to include the idea of the outward and inward self into my concept and
design. The removal of the curtains was further informed while reading Douglas Cole’s chapter on *Doctor Faustus* in his book *Suffering and Evil in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe*:

There are fewer human figures of importance in *Doctor Faustus* than in any other play by Marlowe: men are not caught in a web of mutual betrayal or torment; rather the dramatic light focuses glaringly on one man and one man alone, a man who neither works his violent will upon others to cause them pain, nor meets his own suffering at the hands of other men. *Doctor Faustus* is a man who of his own conscious willfulness brings tragedy and torment crashing down upon his head, the pitiful and fearful victim of his own ambitions and desires. 191

Instead of having all the curtains being flown away throughout the play, I decided it would be more revealing, and more interesting, to have the devils pull them down and drag them offstage with them. In order to reinforce this concept within Faustus himself, I decided that his costume would become more rich and beautiful as the play progressed.

Another part of my concept had to do with the varying devils themselves. I began by researching images of devils in paintings throughout history, and in the Elizabethan period in particular. I found the devils to be quite varied and tended to be ugly and repulsive—as would fit the religious nature of the paintings and beliefs of the church. The strangeness of these images influenced my concept of what the devils were to look like, but it wasn’t until I got to some images that were drawn in response to Milton’s *Paradise Lost* that my concept began to take shape. *Paradise Lost* had already been in the back of my mind while reading the play, especially in 1.3 when Faustus asks him about the nature of Lucifer and hell and Mephostophilis talks about hell being everywhere not in the presence of God after having previously been so. I wanted to infer the notion of the fall and the battle for heaven in the devil’s costumes by placing them in armor. This also works as the devils are fighting to win over souls to join them in misery and Mephostophilis says as an aside “What will not I do to obtain his soul!” (2.1.75).
This desperation can be felt and seen in their lack of full armor and the armor not being shiny or decorated as they had lost the battle before their fall.

As an extension of my research into the images of devils, I researched the seven deadly sins. I unfortunately did not find too much that was immensely helpful. Most of the images were of sinners being tortured in hell with various punishments to fit each of the deadly sins. I found very little in terms of the sins as character and nothing that was period. Therefore, I decided to loosely base the seven deadly sins’ costumes on period clothing, but to overexaggerate them and take them out of whatever color palette I developed. An additional feature that I wanted to include with each of the sins was a unique hand prop. Several of the sins specifically mention an item that could easily be a prop, so I wanted to capitalize on that and emphasize their own words.

Another conceptual aspect of my scenic design comes out of Faustus’s desire for knowledge. In his opening monologue, Faustus goes through each of the areas of study of the time: philosophy, medicine, law, and divinity and dismisses each of them as not enough. He finally comes to magic:

These metaphysics of magicians
And negromantic books are heavenly;
Lines, circles, letters, characters-
Ay, these are those that Faustus most desires.
O, what a world of profit and delight,
Of power, of honor, and omnipotence
Is promised to the studious artisan!
All things that move between the quiet poles
Shall be my command: emperors and kings
Are but obeyed in their several provinces
But his dominion that exceed in this
Stretcheth as far as doth the mind of man:
A sound magician is a demi-god!
Here tire my brains to get a deity
Faustus not only wants knowledge, but he wants to use that knowledge for the power to control people. In order to emphasize this quest for knowledge, and partly because many of the scenes take place in Faustus’s study, I wanted multiple bookcases that remained on the stage and doubled as other scenic elements, as I will discuss later. The ever-present books become more visible as the play progresses and the backdrop is revealed and even more books are seen among more arches. As the adage goes: knowledge is power. But if you include the idea that power corrupts, then knowledge corrupts, and in Faustus’s case, his pursuit of the wrong knowledge does corrupt him and condemns him to hell in the end. My original thought process along these lines was to have the books go up in flames at the end when Faustus is being torn apart by devils. I moved away from this as I felt it was too literal and added nothing new to the play.

For my color palette, I wanted to keep it fairly constricted except for a few exceptions, namely the seven deadly sins, in order to make the costumes blend with the scenic elements and only specific pieces really stand out. I knew early on that I wanted to make Faustus’s costume to be more rich and fancier as the play progressed. I later came up with the concept of making his most rich costume to be very similar in color to that of the curtains that were being pulled down. This would help the scenic concept of representing the state of Faustus’s being: Faustus’s costume goes from worn and drab to rich and full while the scenery goes from rich and full to harsh and cold. I liked the idea of having deep reds and blues throughout the costumes as they are both very rich and can be used quite versatilely in some of the poorer costumes if necessary. I did end up trying to limit their use, especially in the beginning, so that actors would not blend into the curtains that were of similar colors. In the end, the color palette was more varied than I had originally envisioned, because with such a variety of characters, the color palette was forced
to expand in order to keep all the characters from looking too similar. Some of the colors that were used for both the devils and seven deadly sins were also used on some of the nobles. While the nobles were not explicitly evil, they were the ones who encouraged Faustus and rewarded him when he and Mephostophilis showed them their tricks.

With these concepts and other possibilities in mind, I began to work on the designs for my production, starting with the scenic design. Originally, I was going to work on replicating and modifying the Quaglio rendering in my scenic design. I quickly discovered that the size of the Crafton-Pryer stage and the enormity of the rendering were not going to mesh well together and much of what I liked about the design would be lost. I went through various conceptual sketches, all involving arches, before arriving at my final idea. One concept that I was particularly fond of involved the use of the revolve. I wanted to use either a line of arches or two lines of arches in a V-shape and rotate them for various scenes. While creating a lot of interest and multiple playing spaces, it had a few problems that I couldn’t justify in order to keep it, such as the position and size of the revolve in our theatre meant many of the playing spaces were too far upstage. Using the revolve would also make the use of the traps virtually impossible and that was one of the features of the Quaglio rendering that I found most attractive. The final V-shape of the arches was partially derived from experimenting with using the arches on the revolve.

Once I had figured out the basic plan for the arches and their shape, I began to play with adding more levels. One of the first elements that was added was the stage left platform, which I originally planned on being more important and more of an acting space than it ended up being. As other elements were added and developed, becoming more dominate, this platform remained relatively unchanged. The stage right platform and its connecting stairs to the stage left platform was intended to be a minor space used mostly for the devils to hide and observe. It was much
higher to begin with, but was lowered to allow it to be more useful and to help with sightlines. The connecting stairs then became a problem as I could not use the conventional rise and run to cover the necessary distance. I did not want to do any major adjustments to the positions of the platforms or the angle of the arches, so I increased the run of the stairs, eliminating the need for so many steps. This gave me an additional acting space that was centered and raised up. As the upper platform was originally going to be very limited in use, there were no escape stairs. This omission was quickly fixed and eventually the escape stairs became part of the set. As I could not find a way to effectively hide them, making them more prominent was the next step. This was done by directing the stairs onstage instead of offstage. I think that they have become one of the more useful and interesting elements of the scenic design.

Integrating the bookshelves into the rest of the scenic design was something that I did fairly early on in the process. To emphasize the idea that knowledge, and books, has led to the power that has corrupted Faustus, I wanted to use the books as stairs. I did not, however, want them to always be a staircase and be blatantly obvious from the beginning of the play. One of the first ideas that I came up with was to have the stage left bookcase pull out to become stairs in the manner that bleachers pull out in middle and high school gyms. This would create an interesting change to the space and hopefully surprise the audience with a little bit of stage magic. Having the bookcases motorized, and quiet, would be ideal but having the devils artfully pull them out and then exit up them would also be very interesting. The second bookcase that I integrated into the scene design was on stage right. It was added after the stage left bookcase since the scenic design needed more books. Integrating the second bookcase into the rest of the scenic design was a little harder as I did not want to repeat the bleacher idea, nor could I due to the lack of space. The commonly used idea of the bookcase swinging to become a door was the
most effective way that I found to keep the bookcase onstage and usable throughout the play. Since it would already be opening, the backside provided a way of having another look onstage by adding a different texture and color to it. This was most effective in the scenes with the pope. Creating a semiwall behind the pope sets the pope and clergy apart from the other scenes by creating a new playing space and completely changing the color palette. While this color change is quite abrupt and different from all previous scenes, it still fits into the concept nicely. Most of the characters in previous scenes fall into the same color palette as the scenery, the seven deadly sins being the major exception to this. Since the scenery is fairly dark and the pope and clergy are in mostly white, it made sense to make the new background a white marble. This had the effect of making Faustus and Mephostophilis stand out more and added to their motivation to disguise themselves as cardinals.

The final bookcase added was the one at upstage center. It was most advantageous to not keep this onstage because the trap had to be placed behind it in order to be used. The bookcase thus slides offstage right when Faustus conjures Mephostophilis and he enters from behind it. This opens the way to the stairs that lead down and remains open until the final moments when Faustus is being tortured by the devils and they take him away. The bookshelves can be slid open again to reveal Faustus’s mangled corpse to the scholars and can quickly shut as the sight disturbs them.

One element that was in my original design concept that I held onto for quite a while—but ultimately gave up on—was the idea of using trusses. The original concept had a false proscenium made up of trusses and covered by the same curtains as those that covered the arches. The idea was to allow for the devils to really be able to climb over the set and possibly to incorporate some of the acrobatics that I found so fascinating about the Metropolitan Opera
production. In order to integrate the trusses into the rest of the scenic design, I planned to have
the arches consist of the same trussing and have the brick façade be missing in places to reveal
the truss beneath. The thought process behind this was to make the set look more foreboding and
skeletal and reinforce the corrupted nature of Faustus’s soul. Another thought behind the truss
was that it would make for some additional lighting positions and would be interesting to light
them. The truss arches was the first aspect of this concept to go. I wanted to keep all of the
arches intact as the revelation of the truss underneath the brick façade would take away from the
ominous heavy feeling that I was trying to convey. With this gone from the bulk of the set, the
truss false proscenium no longer fit in with the rest of the scenic design. It then became a false
proscenium that was covered in the same brick façade as the arches. This did not do much for
the overall design and affected the sightlines too much. The brick façade was then moved and
attached directly to the proscenium and the trusses removed, but again, this did little to enhance
the overall design concept and was eventually removed all together.

There is very little furniture specifically called for within the text of the play and I chose
to keep it this way to make the transitions smoother as the location can change very quickly
between scenes and the play covers twenty-four years of Faustus’s life. Additionally, since most
of the play is conversation and little else in the way of action, the lack of furniture forced the
actors to stand, thus inviting them to explore the space more. The only scene that I found it
necessary to have furniture was the banquet scene with the pope. Much of the comedy in this
scene comes from Faustus taking the pope’s food and wine and the pope being unable to see
Faustus and Mephostophilis. One would be hard-pressed to do these things without the table and
chairs. The table helped to integrate the costumes of the clergy into the color palette as it is a
cherry red wood, thus tying in the red of the religious figures into the scene.
A second moment in the script that specifically called for furniture was at the very end when we see the two angels on stage for the last time and they show Faustus what he could have had if he had followed the Good Angel and what he will receive having chosen to follow the Bad Angel. The Good Angel says:

Had’st thou kept on that way [divinity], Faustus behold
In what resplendent glory thou had’st sat
In yonder throne, like those bright shining saints,
And triumphed over hell! That hast thou lost

5.2.113-120

I chose to focus on the “bright shining saints” instead of “yonder throne” and made this a lighting cue. I felt this to be a simpler and more powerful way of conveying what Faustus lost rather than simply lowering a golden throne from above.

The final scenic element that was designed was the stairs down into the pit. It began as a device to add to the spectacle of the parade of the seven deadly sins by rising from below view to up above Faustus and then the sins could parade up and down the stairs. Besides the major sightline issues this created, the wow factor that it created would only happen with the first sin’s entrance and couldn’t be repeated for the other six. This idea of platforms and stairs was then developed into a fixed set of curved stairs and a platform. This allowed for the dramatic entrance of the sins from below the stage deck, instead of just walking across the stage, and also provided another entrance and exit for the devils to use.

Once I had gotten all these elements figured out and my model was mostly complete, I shifted my focus to the costume designs. From my earlier research, I had a basis from which to expand my search and really focus in on the costumes. I already had a general concept of what I wanted for Faustus and since he is the central character, I began with him.
Faustus’s costume starts out as a simple brown cloak that he would quickly shed at the first opportunity for something nicer. Since Faustus would eventually end up with a cloak that was similar in color to the curtains, and this time I knew exactly what color they would be, the first tunic that he wears is also of similar color. Since Faustus is seeking knowledge and power and plans to use it for control from the opening of the play, placing him in the color that he would finally end up wearing worked well. The depravity which he flaunts by the end of the play is already in him at the beginning, albeit not as obvious, but public enough that the scholars arrive to try and stop him before he can conjure up a spirit. The brown, loose cloak he starts off in helps to hide what is really underneath. It is something that Faustus probably is not fond of and looking for something more and better, just as he is trying to gain more power through knowledge. He is provided with this opportunity at the beginning of Act 2 when Mephostophilis is trying to win him over and sends devils to him with crowns and rich apparel. There is no specific reference to whether or not Faustus takes any of it, but I chose to have him do so. He trades his brown cloak for a rich, blue, full cloak. This one is much more regal and fancy and the color echoes what we have previously seen on the magicians and the blue of the bunting border drapes above the set. Besides being more beautiful, it is also more revealing of what Faustus is wearing underneath. The blue makes the colors stand out more, especially the gold embroidery. Faustus remains in this until Act 4, with the exception of Act 3, Scene 1 in which both he and Mephostophilis dress as cardinals in order to cause mischief to the pope. They return in their usual costumes for the banquet as Mephostophilis has made them invisible in order to cause mischief. I decided to completely change Faustus’s costume in Act 4 because this was the most appropriate place to make him look more rich and powerful as he is in the emperor’s court. His costume is now a rich, beautiful red coat that, again, resembles the color of the curtains but is
more brilliant and beautiful. It is also trimmed and lined with fur. His tunic is now all black, but beautifully embroidered with black. I chose black to again reinforce the state of his soul and who exactly he made a deal with in order to get this power. Faustus’s costumes were based in a small part on a few paintings of what artists thought he might look like, but mostly based on nobles and the upper class of the period.

The magicians and scholars were both based on images of scholars from the period. I wanted the magicians to look similar to the scholars because in a way they are the same—except that magicians study necromancy instead of divinity. To help the audience differentiate between the two, and to make the magicians exact occupation more obvious, they wear blue stoles with gold stars and moons on them. The fabric choices between the two are polar opposites: the scholars are very heavy and dull, while the magicians’ fabric is glittery and flowing—making them more enticing. I didn’t worry about their costumes overwhelming the entire stage as they are only on stage for a brief moment and not seen again, though they do overwhelm Faustus and become more dominate than him.

As I mentioned above, in my concept the devils were based largely on period paintings of the fall of the angels and devils either tempting or torturing humans. Most of these were very ugly creatures and when Mephostophilis first appears to Faustus, he is sent away, “I charge thee to return and change thy shape/Thou art too ugly to attend on me./Go; and return an old Franciscan friar:/That holy shape becomes a devile best” (1.2.25-28). I wanted to find a middle ground for all the devils between hideous creatures and beautiful angels that they must have once been in order to make them terrifying and unearthly, but still attractive to Faustus. This was accomplished by changing their skin tone to a cool gray for the three named devils, Mephostophilis, Lucifer, and Belzebub, and gray shades of green and blue for additional devils.
They were all given wings—either black, misshapen, or bat wings. All but Mephostophilis were given twisted horns; he was instead given a disfigured face. As I already knew that I wanted to put the named devils in armor breastplates, the rest of the devils were given smaller pieces of armor to help connect them with Mephostophilis, Lucifer, and Belzebub. When Faustus commands Mephostophilis to leave and return to him dressed as a Franciscan friar, I didn’t want him to be completely dressed as a friar. Instead, I wanted him to be wrapped in a cloth that was in the same color palette as the friars, but was a much nicer fabric and had some pattern to it. I also wanted the armor breastplate to stay on underneath so that when he moves, the audience might catch a glance of the armor again.

The Bad Angel was designed slightly different from the rest as he acts quite different from the rest of the devils. He maintains the gray skin and has black wings, but his wings are visibly broken and damaged. His costume, while similar to the Good Angel’s, is actually very different. Whereas the Good Angel is wearing what one might expect to find an angel in—a white flowing robe with gold ties and white wings, and with golden hair—the Bad Angel’s robe is gray, dull, tattered, and torn. He maintains none of the beauty that his costume may have been before the fall. The main reason for costuming the two angels alike is that they are a sort of pair, acting almost like Faustus’s conscience. They never appear on stage separately until the very end and the Good Angel exits after showing Faustus what he could have had.

The pope and his clergy were fairly easy to design for. The pope is based upon a painting of the real Pope Adrian of the period that I found in my earlier research. I was a little bit surprised to find that the pope used to wear much simpler clothing in the past. With this painting, I established my color palette for the clergy to be white, black, and red (with the notable exception of the friars, who wear the typical friar costume that is known so well). The
cardinals and archbishops were based on a conglomeration of various styles found during the time period. Bruno, the rival pope that the emperor had appointed but Pope Adrian had chained up, was costumed very similar to Adrian, but looks as if he is missing something to symbolize that his being chained up is not where he is supposed to be. The color choices for the clergy were, again, chosen to help mesh them with the color palette of the scenic design, but to still keep them from fading into it.

As with the clergy, Emperor Charles V and other nobles were relatively easy to design for based on my research. The emperor is dressed in a costume very similar to a painting I came across several times in my research. He is in gold and black fur and is quite regal. One feature that I did emphasize was his chin. Due to the years of inbreeding of the royal families, genetic defects like Charles V’s chin became more common and more prominent. The other nobles, the Duke of Saxony, King Raymond of Hungary, and the Duke and Duchess of Vanholt, are all based on images of royalty and nobles of the period. They all have very beautiful fabrics that are of brighter hues than those of the clowns, and are more fancy and elegant than those of the gentlemen. Slashing and poofing is seen on all of the costumes except the Duke of Saxony, who has his fur-lined cloak to set him apart. As stated above in my concept, several of the colors from the devils are repeated in the nobles to emphasize their part in Faustus’s fall—the fact that they encouraged him by treating him so grandly and rewarding him for performing their tricks.

Faustus’s servant and student, Wagner, and the clowns were more difficult to design as period research images of lower-class people are harder to come by. The styles, however, were much slower to change than in the upper class and images can be found from periods before and after and still be reasonably accurate. Wagner is the most defined of all of these and that can be seen in his costume, as it is the most tailored of all the clowns. He is wearing almost entirely all
black as he is the most consistently evil of all the human characters. Whereas Faustus takes some minor convincing, Wagner takes none. He is unhelpful to the scholars when they arrive looking for Faustus to try and stop him from first conjuring Mephostophilis. He also takes what he learns from his master, Faustus, to conjure devils to scare Robin into being his servant. Robin is also a slightly more defined character than the rest of the clowns. Part of why Wagner can convince Robin to be his servant is that he is obviously poor with holes in his clothes. I wanted him to be a step above the rest of the clowns, but below Wagner, and is slightly defined, but with holes and patches. The rest of the clowns I combined into two basic costumes as they wouldn’t have had very much actual variation among the lower-class people. Changes in color would be done in order to separate the similar costumes from each other. The hostess of the tavern is the last of these characters and she is also in a very simple costume, but with a deep-cut chest line to allow the men to sexualize her. The color palette for these characters is very subdued and simple: browns, greens, light yellows, and grays, with the hostess having the additional color of red. The clowns should blend into the background for the most part as they are only there to provide comedic relief.

The three gentlemen, Martino, Frederick, and Benvolio, were placed between the nobles and the clowns. Their color palette is much richer and brighter than the clowns, but less patterned and textured than the nobles. Their costumes are more defined and complicated than the clowns and thus much more interesting, but still simpler than the nobles. Benvolio is different, however, as he comes out in his nightgown and cap as the other two have woken him. He remains in this until he exits the stage after Faustus puts horns on him, twice.

Faustus has Mephostophilis conjure Alexander the Great, his paramour, and Darius the Persian for the emperor. For inspiration, I looked at some of the paintings of Alexander and
Darius battling, but found them lacking in interest and excitement and not coming across as two great historical figures battling. I emphasized Alexander by making his armor gold and silver, placing a large lion’s head on his breastplate, and giving him huge feather plumes coming out of his helmet. For Darius, I found the images in my research to not have as much a Persian feeling as one might expect nowadays, so I turned to the recent movie *300* and looked at the character of Xerxes. I took some of those basic elements and applied them to Darius in hope that this would register with the modern audience as being more Persian. One fairly significant change that I did make was to Alexander’s paramour. Instead of being his female lover, it is his male lover and fellow soldier. Knowing that it is thought that one of Alexander’s generals was also his lover; I felt this to be historically acceptable. Marlowe does explore same-sex lovers in some of his other plays, most notably *Edward II*. I found this to be a subtle way of adding this to the production as these characters only briefly appear and without prior knowledge of the play, the audience would probably not think twice about it.

Helen is another historical character that comes forth at the end of the play. I placed her in a simple, but sexy and revealing, chiton as she is the one whose face launched a thousand ships. She also kisses Faustus at the end of the play and sucks out his soul, finalizing his condemnation to hell, so I wanted her to be sexy.

The seven deadly sins were the most daunting and challenging of all the costumes to design as they are a spectacle and could have been large floats if so desired. Also, as stated, there was little visual research on the sins as characters. I decided not to make the sins giant floats because I wanted them to enter from the stairs coming out of the pit and this would not have been possible if they were floats. I decided to base them in loosely based period costume, but with some overexaggerated features and colors so saturated that they were borderline gaudy.
For Pride, I placed her in a huge, beautiful purple gown with lots of gorgeous fabric. Her face, however, would be old, wrinkly, and terribly ugly, but she would not notice as she looked in the mirror, her prop, at herself. Covetousness was the most difficult to design as his description of himself offers very little. Ultimately I decided to go with a doublet that I was familiar with from having built it the previous semester in a period-patterning class. I placed him in deep, saturated greens and golds to represent money and wealth. His belt is also made up of gold coins. His prop is the leather bag in which he says he was begotten, but is now filled with gold and jewels. Envy was another difficult sin to design. I decided to make him extremely emaciated as he says he is “lean with seeing others eat” (2.2.138). He is in similar color to Covetousness—greens and yellows—but less saturated, and the costume is overly big, dirty, and torn. He has a few oversized bracelets that would appear to be gold, but would be obviously fakes. His prop is an old dirty bag with holes in it. Wrath was designed to be a fierce warrior, with bold black and red armor, multiple weapons, and long dreadlocks. He says he “leapt out of the lion’s mouth when I was scarce an hour old . . .” (2.2.46-47), so I placed that lion on him as a hood and cape in the same manner of Herakles. Wrath also says that when he can find no one to fight, he wounds himself, so he is covered in scars and more recent wounds. Gluttony was designed to be an extremely fat man that is spilling out of his clothes. The poofs in his slash and poofs are exaggerated and also spilling out of the slashes. He is wearing a bib that is covered in food stains and he is carrying around a giant turkey leg. Sloth is costumed in oversized clothes that hang about him and hide most of his features, including his face. He is carrying around a large pillow to quickly find somewhere to fall asleep. Lechery is costumed in a bright dress and bodice with the front of the dress being cut away for easy access. This idea came from a sketch of a dress where the front was not fully drawn in order to demonstrate the undergarments of the
period. She is wearing very tall heels and her prop is a large dildo as she say she “loves an inch of raw mutton better than an ell of fried stockfish” (2.2.174-175). In other words, she prefers penis over food.

The chorus was the final costume I designed. I wanted them to be in something period but had a slightly different feel to it in order to set them apart, as they are not in the play. The design of the long black robe with the white top and red sleeves is reminiscent of some of the clergy costumes, but different enough to set it apart. The solid fabrics and lack of texture create a cohesive piece that could easily be seen on multiple chorus members.

My concept for lighting the production was fairly simple. I came up with a system of four front lights that consisted of a saturated blue, L711—Cold Blue; a pale blue, L202—½ CT Blue; a pink, L154—Pale Rose; and an amber, L204—Full CT Orange. I chose to go with a four-color front light system to have more subtle differences in scenes and create a larger variety of looks. This also helped since I could not use as much sidelight as I might normally use due to the arches being in the way. The colors that I did choose for my sidelight were L744—Dirty White and L142—Pale Violet. My top light is L176—Loving Amber and L058—Lavender. My backlight is where I place some of the more interesting colors: L156—Chocolate and L733—Damp Squib, to really give some of the looks a real punch and keep them from looking too pretty. This play is not a pretty play, so I did not pick all pretty colors. There are going to be moments when I wanted the light to be harsh and disturbing, particularly where the devils are on stage. I did place a special for the curtains using L789—Blood Red in order to make them more noticeable and overwhelming. Specials were also placed at the bottom of the pit and focused straight up for when the devils enter and the big reveal of hell at the end of the play. Specials are at the bottom of the stairs with color scrollers to really emphasize them as they parade up and
down the stairs as they go on and back off. I used both sets of moving lights, the XSpots on the bridge, and the StudioSpots on the balcony rail to allow for some special effects during the conjuring and other magic scenes. I also like the bright blue white light of the XSpots to use as a special for the Good Angel and when the Good Angel is showing Faustus what he has given up by choosing the devil.

One of the major looks that I envisioned is with the Good and Bad Angels. While the Good Angel is bathed in the aforementioned white light, the Bad Angel is backlit to be in silhouette. Another look that I envisioned is to have some of the devils on set during various scenes and they're also backlit to be in silhouette. During the banquet scene with the pope, I wanted the crucifix on the wall to be in its own special and really stand out. I also wanted to have a moment where Mephostophilis puts the light out. Most of looks for the production would be about creating shadows and making moments feel more harsh and hard than they might otherwise seem.

Overall, working on this project has been a very rewarding process and I am very happy with the end results. I am very pleased with both my designs and the quality of work that I produced. I really took all the critiques from the past several semesters to heart and I really pushed myself to expand my boundaries and take more and bigger risks. I played with having more color saturation and trying new techniques, both of which worked out quite well. Using photoshopped images as textures on the model worked very nicely and created the level of detail that I could not have otherwise gotten had I painted it by hand. I tried a new method to produce my scenic renderings and lighting storyboards by photoshopping pictures of my model and printing them off and working on top of them with pastel pencil. I am very pleased with the outcome of both sets of renderings.
Weaknesses exist in my project mainly in the costume renderings. I still want to get more movement and flow into my drawings and have them feel less stiff and static. I did find some movement in my sketches, but it did not transfer over when I redrew them for the final renderings. I also think that the lack of movement in my scenic design is a weakness. I would have liked to make the arches on the revolve work or come up with some other concept to still use the arches and have movement and varying playing spaces. Despite these weaknesses, I think that the overall strength of my design and concept works very well for Christopher Marlowe’s *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus.*
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