

VISUAL ILLUSION IN PARADISE LOST

LUXI DU

**Master of Fine Arts, China Central Academy of Fine Arts, 2021
Bachelor of Fine Arts, Beijing Film Academy, 2004**

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LUXI DU

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Julia Wasilewski Supervisor	Associate Professor	M.F.A
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Mia van Leeuwen Thesis Examination Committee Member	Associate Professor	M.F.A
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Annie Martin Thesis Examination Committee Member	Associate Professor	M.F.A
---	---------------------	-------

David Miller Defense Chair	Associate Professor	M.F.A
-------------------------------	---------------------	-------

DEDICATION

To my family, whose kindness has shown me the beauty of life. Through you, I have learned to honour existence, find purpose in creation, and discover meaning even in the seemingly meaningless.

ABSTRACT

This paper reports the staging process of *Paradise Lost*, Erin Shields’s adaptation of John Milton’s work, performed at the Theatre of the University of Lethbridge in 2025. Beyond set design, this project was an exploration of space—how space interacts with text, and how scenography can integrate into the play rather than stand apart from it. Given Shields’s bold narrative structure and the subversive choice to portray Satan as a female character, I wanted my design to feel as if it came from the devil’s own hands. I enjoyed the idea of being the “villain,” breaking the rules, and creating an unsettling experience for the audience.

This paper outlines my thought process, from conceptual development to execution. It examines how I interpreted M.C. Escher’s artistic principles and how I used geometric compositions, lighting effects, and projections to create a constantly shifting theatrical space. By combining historical stage aesthetics with visual art, and using illusion and spatial fluidity as storytelling tools, I explored new ways of engaging with Shields’s vision and reimagining *Paradise Lost* through scenography transformation.

DIGITAL TOOLS ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Throughout the writing and creative process, I used a few digital tools to support my work. Google Translate and Grammarly helped me clarify my language and double-check grammar while writing in English. I also used Midjourney to generate reference images that sparked visual inspiration for certain concepts in this project.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 ARTISTIC EXPLORATION OF SPACE AND VISUAL ILLUSION

My personal painting practice often begins with illusion, as a method of generating visual tension. I use illusion to create contradictions, distort perception, or construct unstable spatial orders. This exploration continues into my stage design practice. In *Paradise Lost*, this visual tension takes the form of spatial oppositions: order and chaos, reality and illusion, life and performance. The concept of illusion here is not only a visual trick, but a tool for expressing unstable perception and layered meanings. It also becomes a way to interpret how the audience might come to understand and re-experience the spaces of Heaven, Hell, and Eden.

Another recurring theme in my work is repetition. I use mirrored reflections or duplicated structures to create the illusion of infinite depth, which reflects my fascination with repeated elements. Repetition represents a kind of order, and I often seek to introduce another force to challenge it. This is why I find Maurits Cornelis Escher's recursive patterns so compelling. His work achieves a balance within repetition—a state where things are repeated but never quite the same (see Figure A7). In *Paradise Lost*, repetition becomes a design strategy to reflect shifting power and unstable identities. Repeated symmetrical columns and other elements create a sense of order, but at specific moments, I intentionally break that order to achieve a sense of illusion.

1.2 OVERVIEW OF *PARADISE LOST*: ERIN SHIELDS'S ADAPTATION

In Erin Shields's adaptation of *Paradise Lost*, she largely retains Milton's original narrative structure: after being cast out of Heaven, Satan plots revenge by corrupting God's new creation. Satan enters Eden and tempts Eve to eat the forbidden fruit, leading to the fall of both Adam and Eve and their expulsion from Paradise. Shields builds on this structure, offering a fresh interpretation of the classic text through modernized language and a feminist perspective.

By intertwining traditional religious language with contemporary dialogue, Shields makes

the characters' expressions more relatable and accessible to a contemporary western audience. This linguistic shift softens the original text's sense of religious grandeur and formality, bridging the gap between the characters and the audience. Through more direct and everyday expressions, Shields highlights the characters' emotional conflicts and individual consciousness, infusing modernity and realism into the classic work.

Furthermore, Shields reimagines Satan as a female character, a bold change that adds a feminist perspective. Scholars have interpreted Satan's portrayal in Milton's *Paradise Lost* in various ways. For instance, John M. Steadman describes Satan as a character in transition, shifting from an ambitious rebel against divine authority to a cunning seducer of humanity. Despite adapting his arguments to suit his fallen state, he continues to rally his followers in their defiance, reveling in his role as God's adversary (Steadman 272). Steadman (261) also notes that Clive Staples Lewis emphasizes Satan's vanity, self-deception, and sense of injured merit, arguing that Milton's portrayal gradually strips the character of heroic grandeur and reduces him to a self-contradictory and almost absurd figure. Shields's decision to make Satan female is far from arbitrary. This transformation is supported by the instability in Satan's character, which allows for a reinterpretation of his identity, including his gender.

Historically, Satan's gender has been portrayed in different ways. For example, Kristen Pond, drawing on Jeffrey Ruba's analysis, explains that in Taddeo di Bartolo's *Hell* fresco from late medieval Italy (see Figure A1), Satan is depicted in a feminized way to parody Christ's creative power. Ruba notes that the devil is shown with a vagina, suggesting he cannot generate life like the fully male Christ. This imagery mocks both Satan and the sinners by turning the act of birth into something shameful and grotesque, almost like defecation (Pond). Similarly, Per Faxneld (223) notes that in the nineteenth century, Madame Blavatsky's theosophical writing imagined a hermaphroditic Satan to challenge Christian gender norms. Shields builds on these

portrayals to add a feminist perspective and explore the connection between gender and power. By situating the play's central conflict within a female body, she challenges traditional archetypes and male-centric narratives. Shields observes that most classic literature was written by white men who often portrayed even female characters through a male lens. By making Satan a woman, Shields breaks these conventions, presenting a rebellious and empowered female archetype.

In addition, Shields adds emotional complexity: her female Satan is both powerful and introspective, self-centered yet yearning for connection. Shields describes her as "active but also contemplative; selfish, but desperate for love; relatable, but also bulging with incomprehensible evil" (XIV). This feminine perspective brings additional layers to Satan's character, making her internal struggles and motivations relatable and complex. This portrayal adds depth, turning Satan from a simple antagonist into a nuanced character driven by conflicting desires and emotions.

Visually, casting Satan as a woman opens new creative avenues in stage design and performance. The female Satan combines elegance with authority, creating a unique visual tension that allows designers to explore a broader range of aesthetic contrasts. Shields's adaptation enriches Satan's visual appeal, giving her a compelling and layered stage presence that captivates audiences and brings fresh possibilities to the production's overall aesthetic.

In *Paradise Lost*, Milton presents a gender hierarchy in which Adam holds greater authority and wisdom. As Jillie Orth Reimer explains, Adam considers Eve less capable than himself, both mentally and spiritually, and closer to creation than to God (2). While he praises her beauty and grace, she is still valued more for how she looks and behaves than for her intellect (2–3). Reimer also notes that Eve is expected to obey both God and Adam, while Adam answers only to God, reinforcing her subordinate role (6). In the introduction to Shields's *Paradise Lost*,

Paul Stevens further emphasizes this imbalance, describing Milton's gender relations as "hierarchized and clearly bounded"; although Adam and Eve are loving companions, they are "not equal, as their sex not equal seemed," with Adam "for God only" and Eve "for God in him" (Shields XI).

In contrast, Shields presents a more fluid and balanced relationship between Adam and Eve before the Fall. Her unfallen Adam and Eve share tasks equally and interact as near-equals, breaking away from the clear hierarchy depicted in Milton's work. In Shields's interpretation, Eve displays greater independence and critical thinking, shifting her from a mere "helper" to an autonomous character. This reimagining allows for a more egalitarian portrayal of gender roles, with the characters' interactions reflecting mutual respect and partnership that challenges traditional archetypes.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH

2.1 POWER DYNAMICS IN MILTON'S *PARADISE LOST*

Milton's *Paradise Lost* shows that divine power is not always stable. It is challenged by how characters understand it, how they feel about it, and how they act. Peter C. Herman argues that divine authority in the poem is fragile because it depends on how people respond to it. In Chapter 5 of *Destabilizing Milton*, Herman explains that Milton questions traditional beliefs about God by showing a justice system that can be examined and even doubted. This questioning comes not only from characters like the Son, but also from the readers (Herman 108–115). Herman believes that Milton wants the audience to think critically about divine authority and see that power in the poem is shaped by interpretation and even resistance. This is especially clear in the fall of Adam and Eve. Their decision to disobey is made freely. It shows that human choice can challenge God's control.

Similarly, David Quint also discusses how power becomes unstable in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, especially through envy. He argues that Satan is jealous of the Son's promotion and starts to see the spiritual hierarchy as unfair. Instead of viewing it as a divine order, he sees it as a form of privilege, something that can be resisted or taken away. As Quint writes, "Satan interprets the evidence of his eyes and understands the Son and God himself in sheerly temporal terms" (122). Satan reinterprets the divine hierarchy as a system of privilege, which leads him to rebel. Quint also explains that Adam and Eve's fall reflects a similar kind of tension. Their ability to choose disobedience is not a flaw in God's plan, but part of their moral freedom. The Fall becomes more than a religious event—it becomes a political one, where trust, desire, and doubt reshape power. Through these characters, Milton presents divine authority as something that must be accepted and interpreted, rather than blindly obeyed. In this way, *Paradise Lost* reveals that power is not absolute, but constantly negotiated (Quint 157).

2.2 ERIN SHIELDS'S WORK: STYLE THEMES AND FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

Shields's *If We Were Birds* is highlighted as a feminist adaptation of a Greek myth, focusing on giving voice to the voiceless and addressing themes like power, revenge, and trauma. As Alex Houdeshell observes in her review of *If We Were Birds*, the play confronts deeply uncomfortable truths while resisting simple moral binaries. In *If We Were Birds*, Shields reimagines the themes of sexual violence in Greek mythology by integrating contemporary war narratives. Her use of intergenerational and cross-cultural female choruses challenges the ongoing use of rape as a weapon of war. This approach preserves the framework of classical tragedy while simultaneously critiquing its limitations (Wright, 217–218).

Wright further explains that Shields defines her theatre audience as a "dispublic," approaching her adaptations from the perspective of awakening political awareness. Her audience both participates in mainstream culture and engages in critical reflection (217–220). In Shields's plays, the chorus serves not only as narrators but also directly addresses the audience using the pronoun "you" through onstage calls, prompting them to reconsider gender issues and political responsibility within mythological narratives. Through this approach, Shields transforms theatre into a model for social action (Wright 223–225).

One key aspect in Shields's *Paradise Lost* is Satan's language and actions, which reflect a feminist struggle expressed through complexity. Satan's words combine gentleness and authority, breaking traditional stereotypes about women. In many stories, gentleness is seen as a weakness for women, while authority is often linked to men. However, Satan shows both. Satan talks about "pain" and "rage" (Shields 12), showing deep emotions but using these feelings to take action. This makes her a powerful and complex female character. For example, she encourages her followers with strong leadership:

SATAN. ... Rise with me and fly to shore ... to build a palace fit for royals in this Hell;

a Pandemonium fit for gods, for it is better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven!

(12)

Satan's power does not come from violence or control but from inspiring and uniting others. This reflects modern ideas of leadership, where empathy and teamwork are important. She motivates her followers by sharing their pain and offering hope:

SATAN. I hear your cries. I feel your pain. I too have scars of thunder and wounds of woe, but my rage forbids me from submitting to despair. (12)

Another important theme is Satan's relationship with other women, especially in terms of love and identity. Her connection with Sin shows the importance of relationships between women. In lines like:

SIN. My eyes?

SATAN. They transport me to those glorious days in Heaven, not to mention those passionate nights and meeting you here, my love (26)

Their bond mixes love, dependence, and shared history. Sin is both Satan's creation and her companion, showing how women can have many roles at once—mother, lover, and partner. It also hints at a queer reading, suggesting their connection goes beyond traditional male-female relationships. The relationship between Satan and Eve highlights two very different types of women. Eve appears to follow traditional female roles, but her decision to eat the fruit shows her ability to challenge authority. Satan, on the other hand, fully rejects any form of submission and actively fights against power. By comparing these two, the play shows that women can resist in both subtle and bold ways.

Finally, Satan emerges as a symbol of active power, transforming from victim to leader. Her female identity changes the typical image of women as weak victims. Instead, she takes control of her life and uses her intelligence, words, and actions to change her situation. For

example, she says, "... I will make them suffer. And I promise you, they will curse their creator ...” (Shields 23).

This line shows Satan not only fighting against divine power but also rejecting male-dominated systems. She becomes a symbol of resistance and strength. Satan’s story shows how women can find power in themselves. Her strength comes from her decisions and creativity, not from relying on men. This challenges old stereotypes and presents women as independent and capable of shaping their own futures.

2.3: INFLUENCE OF VISUAL ILLUSION IN STAGE DESIGN AND OTHER WORKS

2.3.1 THE APPLICATION OF OPTICAL ILLUSIONS ON THE STAGE

Theatrical works begin the moment the audience steps into the theatre. The theatre is not only a stage where stories unfold but also a sensory space carefully crafted by artists. In this environment, the audience observes tangible and visible elements, engaging in a dual experience of vision and cognition. This experience relies on a deep understanding of how the "eye and brain" work together. As Richard Langton Gregory explains in *Eye and Brain*, the human visual system does not passively record external information but actively interprets it based on experience. Visual perception is a dynamic process where the brain extracts clues from complex stimuli and uses prior knowledge to form a stable and coherent image. Gregory argues that this ability helps the brain quickly simplify external scenes and grasp the structure of the world, though it also makes our visual perception susceptible to "assumption bias" (136–137). From the perspective of Gestalt psychology, the way perception is organized has a profound impact on our cognitive experience. Johan Wagemans et al. elaborate on the principle of “the whole taking precedence over the parts” (1220). When perceiving a complex scene, humans tend to first grasp the whole concept before focusing on the details. This tendency allows the brain to process complex information efficiently by organizing elements into meaningful wholes while

simplifying unnecessary details (1220). For example, when we see a partial circle, the brain automatically fills in the gaps to perceive it as a complete circle. However, this same principle can be used to create visual illusions. If the missing part of the circle is replaced with unexpected or conflicting details, the brain's assumption of a complete circle clashes with the sensory input, resulting in a perception that feels inconsistent or surprising. This demonstrates how disrupting the "whole-part" pattern can challenge our cognitive expectations, creating powerful visual effects. Such methods can be used in theatrical design to evoke a deeper engagement from the audience.

Visual illusions in stage design act as more than just decorative elements. They provide a valuable tool for storytelling, enhancing the narrative and deepening its thematic impact. Visual shifts can parallel narrative transformations at key turning points in a story, offering a visual counterpart to dramatic developments. A sudden change in spatial stability or perspective can underscore moments of crisis or revelation. When a story revolves around opposing concepts, such as order versus chaos or reality versus imagination, visual illusions can give these abstract tensions a physical form. That's because of the way the brain privileges coherence, and when illusions distort that coherence, they replicate the disorder or paradox in the story itself. Through a breach of the audience's perceptual expectations, illusions set up moments of wonder or disorientation that build on the tension in the storyline. This allows the audience not just to see the struggle, but to feel it, to engage with it at both an intellectual and emotional level. These experiences are not consistent: each spectator's reading is filtered through their individual history and psychological palette. This variance also expands the effect of the story, resulting in a story that is both complex and intricate. During these emotional disturbances, optical illusions further open the audience's experience of the narrative, thus letting the story pass through and remain

behind, on both an intellectual and visceral level.

Designers use a range of physical and perceptual devices to realize these illusions on stage. Perspective techniques, for example, create the illusion of depth on a flat surface, giving the impression of an infinitely extending space. Despite the physical limitations of the stage, this method visually expands the perceived environment, immersing the audience in a seemingly boundless setting. Rotating stages introduce dynamic movement, altering the audience's perception of space and time. By smoothly transitioning between scenes or shifting perspectives, they enhance the sense of fluidity and narrative progression. Mirrors on stage can distort or multiply visual elements, creating illusions of endless space or unexpected viewpoints. They challenge the audience's perception of reality by blending what is real and what is reflected. Scrimms are also employed to reveal or obscure elements on stage through lighting changes. When lit from the front, they appear opaque; when lit from behind, they become transparent, allowing for sudden and dramatic shifts in visual focus. Lastly, sloped surfaces and floor designs use perspective manipulation to create spatial illusions. By altering angles and proportions, these designs can distort the audience's perception of size, scale, or depth within a scene. This technique challenges the viewer's sense of reality, adding a dynamic visual element that enhances the overall impact of the performance.

2.3.2 MAURITS CORNELIS ESCHER'S INFLUENCE ON THE SPATIAL DESIGN

The work of Maurits Cornelis Escher (commonly known as M.C. Escher), particularly his 1944 lithograph *Encounter* (see Figure A7), is deeply rooted in visual illusion and has served as a significant inspiration for my stage design. Through his use of black-and-white contrast, recursive forms, and spatial transformations, Escher explores themes of duality, infinite loops, and spatial paradoxes—qualities that have directly shaped my creative expression.

In *Encounter*, Escher employs his characteristic use of stark black and white contrast as a

key visual language. This duality goes beyond aesthetics, carrying profound philosophical implications. As Bruno Ernst explains in *The Magic Mirror of M.C. Escher*: “Escher believed that without evil, good would not exist; duality was a fundamental part of his life” (Ernst 17). Black and white, while opposites symbolize two forces that coexist and merge into a dynamic order, where harmony emerges from opposition. This concept inspires two aspects of my stage design. First, I adopt white and black as primary colours to represent the contrasting realms of Heaven and Hell, while also using their minimalist visual impact to emphasize the depth of the theme. Second, Escher's use of black and white led me to explore positive and negative space in my design. This approach helped me think about spatial relationships in a new way.

In addition to contrast, Doris Schattschneider notes in *The Mathematical Side of M.C. Escher* that recursion is a central theme in Escher’s work, expressed through repeated patterns and cycles that evoke a sense of infinite time and space (121). Schattschneider also highlights Escher’s fascination with infinity and duality, noting that his works often use recursive forms to embody the infinite, creating dynamic visual narratives (130). Recursion in Escher’s art is not merely a mathematical form but also reflects his perception of time and the human need to divide the infinite into measurable segments, offering a structured sense of progression through endlessness (141–142). In *Encounter*, recursion is depicted through the alternating black and white figures that move toward the center of the composition, transitioning from flat, two-dimensional patterns to fully realized three-dimensional forms. These figures eventually meet and shake hands, symbolizing unity within contrast. This cyclical interplay not only illustrates their evolving relationship but also generates a sense of timeless continuity. For my stage design, I draw on this repetitive approach to reflect the cyclical relationship between Heaven and Hell.

Furthermore, Escher’s mastery of challenging spatial perceptions is another defining feature of his work. He creates the illusion of three-dimensionality on two-dimensional planes,

blurring the boundary between reality and illusion.

CHAPTER 3: SET DESIGN

3.1 INITIAL APPROACH: EMPHASIS ON FORM

In the early stages of my design, I worked from the script's detailed descriptions to build a world that followed its narrative cues. I focused on presenting every named or implied location, such as the Nine Gates, the city of Hell, Eden's dining area, orchards, and ponds as individual physical spaces. For each one, I tried to imagine what it would look like on stage. For example, when reading the line: "Nine doors open. SATAN travels out and into Chaos" (Shields 28), I imagined nine real doors. I kept thinking: what material should they be? How would they open? How could I make the idea of "passing through" visible on stage? The same happened when I tried to show Satan's fall. I thought about how to show the act of falling. Should it be a vertical drop, a sideways fall, or a backward descent into depth? I experimented with each of these, but I couldn't figure out how to connect them with the other scenes. Overall, the scenes felt like scattered beads, which had its own shape and meaning, but they weren't strung together. If every scene needed to satisfy both the demands of performance and logic of storytelling, we would need a huge budget to construct each one separately, which was unrealistic. This left me stuck. At this point, I returned to the play and thought about Shields's (4) setting note mentioned: "The action takes place in Hell, in Heaven, on Earth and everywhere in between. Set and costumes should be minimal and flexible to accommodate quick changes. Time is fluid..." Maybe I could start from a different direction. Instead of trying to build every scene, I began thinking about how each space could transform into the next. I started experimenting with silhouettes and movement-based transitions, looking for visual elements that could shift between meanings. For example, one flat shape might appear as a metropolis in one scene and a forest in another. This approach opened many possibilities, but that also became a new problem. The designs became too flexible. I found myself in a situation where this could work and that could also work, but I lacked a clear

reason to choose one over the other. Without a strong core idea, the space kept changing, but it didn't grow in meaning. I began to feel that what I needed was not just a transition tool, but a system, a visual logic that could guide how all these spaces were connected.

Julia Wasilewski was the one who helped me settle on one of the designs. Looking back, I think the reason I couldn't decide on my own was that I hadn't yet found the "why" behind the design. Still, I pushed forward. I kept developing the version that seemed to meet each scene's needs and allowed for smooth transitions. I even created a storyboard, mapping out how the space would transform in each scene. But during one of our design meetings, the director didn't respond to the version I had invested the most in. Instead, she was drawn to a much earlier draft I had nearly discarded (see Figures A34–A36). I was confused. Although I didn't know why at the time, I realized I might be missing something essential. I continued refining the chosen version, but doubt kept growing.

3.2 MODIFICATION OF DESIGN AND CONCEPTUAL DIRECTION

This creative block lasted for two months until an unexpected conversation helped me find a new direction. I showed my design to a friend, and his first response surprised me: "I like this one better because it's more practical." What caught me off guard was that he pointed to the design I wasn't confident would meet the needs of the play. He explained: "In film, each scene is fixed—you build complete sets for specific shots. But stage design works differently. The physical space doesn't change; you have to create a hundred scenes within one limited space. The real challenge isn't building a hundred sets, but removing functional limits so one space can hold a hundred, or even a thousand, possibilities." His words made everything clear. I realized I had been trying to assign fixed purposes to each scene instead of thinking about how design could break those limits and create flexibility. This became my first breakthrough in design thinking: stage space shouldn't be made up of multiple fixed physical scenes. Instead, it should be fluid,

able to shift, reorganize, and evolve. Heaven, Hell, chaos, the cosmos, and Eden are not isolated zones; they are interconnected spaces that blend and transition through the language of the stage.

The second breakthrough came when I reconsidered the idea that “Hell is the absence of Heaven.” I realized that my earlier design focused too much on presenting Heaven and Hell as visual opposites rather than exploring how they relate structurally. I had thought of Hell simply as Heaven’s opposite. But I came to see that they are not binary opposites. Instead, they represent structure and its breakdown. This changed how I organized the stage space. Hell shouldn’t just be portrayed with darkness, fire, or images of suffering. Instead, it should show the twisted and reassembled order of Heaven.

In the end, I understood that stage design isn’t just about visual effects—it’s about building a logical spatial narrative. How does Heaven’s order collapse? How is Hell created? How does chaos take over? How does the cosmos emerge as a space full of possibilities? These questions can’t be answered by static physical sets. The solutions lie in creating a stage structure that flows, transforms, and allows spaces to blend into one another. The stage shouldn’t simply serve as a background. It should become part of the story itself.

3.3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HEAVEN AND HELL

3.3.1 INSPIRATION: THE HIERARCHY AND JUSTICE OF HEAVEN

Heaven operates through a rigid hierarchy where obedience defines worth. Angels gain security by maintaining loyalty, and continuous praise of God reinforces this sense of belonging. As Chorus of the chosen states, “We give praise to the highest of the highest, light of light, grace of grace. God is merciful to those who do not betray the infinite trust He has placed in us ...” (Shields 30). This shows that devotion to God is not only worship but a means to safeguard one’s place within the order. Heaven refuses to acknowledge its actions as revenge, insisting instead that all punishment is justice. As the angel Zephon says, “Not revenge. We can call it justice”

(Shields 98). This framing maintains moral legitimacy, making Heaven's rule seem necessary for peace rather than a means of control. Justice in Heaven is not about individual fairness—it is about preserving order. This is clear in God's response to humanity's fall: "How can they be ready for laws if they cannot keep a simple promise?" (Shields 35). Obedience is expected without compromise. Punishment is not about morality; it is a tool to uphold the system.

In the end, Heaven keeps its power by controlling the idea of justice. It presents justice as a way to maintain order and makes punishment seem like a necessary part of that system. But in reality, this just hides the strict control behind its so-called harmony. The relationship between Heaven and Hell isn't just about good versus evil—it's about who gets excluded to protect authority. Hell isn't just the opposite of Heaven; it is the place for those who dare to challenge its authority.

3.3.2 HELL: HEAVEN'S PRODUCT, INHERITED STRUCTURE, AND PROTEST

Hell is not an independent creation but a direct consequence of Heaven's collapse. After being cast out, Satan and the fallen angels rebuilt their existence on the remnants of Heaven. Satan recalls, "My immortal form, which had once reflected the radiance of Heaven, now convulsed with the strain of regeneration" (Shields 7). This suggests that Hell is less a new world and more a painful reformation of what Heaven rejected. In this sense, Hell remains tied to Heaven, reflecting its flaws and exclusions.

Satan's ambition goes beyond embracing chaos; she intends to impose a new order: "... Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven." (Shields 11). This desire reveals that Hell is not a complete rejection of Heaven's structure but a distorted attempt to replicate it. Satan further acknowledges this connection when she says: "... You made me for Evil so you could be Good. That was the plan all along. To create a nemesis of me. An antagonist. Someone to demonstrate Evil so you wouldn't have to do it" (Shields 134). This shows that Hell exists to highlight

Heaven's goodness by acting as its necessary opposite.

Although the fallen angels reject God's rule, they recreate a similar power structure in Hell. Satan emerges as a leader, and devotion toward her mirrors religious worship: "Our Satan, who flies from Hell. Hallowed be thy way. For our kingdom come, thy will be done, perverting all of Heaven..." (Shields 29). The political framework in Hell seems democratic, with figures like Belial advocating for peace and Mammon proposing self-sufficiency. Yet, Satan's final plan—to corrupt humanity—shows that their so-called freedom is built on the same hierarchical principles they claim to resist: "Perhaps we could seduce them to our side, wound God..." (Shields 21). This reveals a fundamental contradiction—Hell cannot escape the system it opposes.

At its core, Hell represents continuous protest rather than creation. Satan's declaration, "Henceforth, Evil, be thou my good" (Shields 41), marks a complete inversion of moral values, but this inversion depends entirely on Heaven as a reference. Hell's power lies in opposition, not independence. This protest extends to the human world. When observing natural beauty, Satan's first thought is destruction: "... I saw a breathtaking crest of falling water ...and all I could think about was where to put the casino ..." (Shields 102). This impulse shows that Hell's existence thrives on undermining what Heaven represents, framing destruction as a form of rebellion.

3.3.3 IMPLEMENTATION

With the initial concept of envisioning Heaven and Hell as a unified whole, I began to explore them together, focusing on two main aspects: the relationship between unity and fragmentation, and how different perspectives lead to distinct outcomes.

Initially, I explored various methods to create illusions. One idea I developed was based on rotation, where rotating the set would alter the audience's perception. However, due to budget limitations, this approach was not feasible. As an alternative, I delved into visual illusions related

to perspective shifts, specifically studying the “yes/no” visual illusion (see Figure A9), which manipulates the observer’s viewpoint. This method not only changes the angle from which we observe the world but also breaks the principles of the initial perspective, introducing a sense of disorientation and transformation.

At this stage, the director, Jamie Dunsdon, provided a crucial design insight: imagining Heaven as a Vogue style office space. Building on this idea, I removed the office walls, leaving only the supporting pillars to represent a minimalist, open-concept Heaven. To create a corresponding modern interpretation of Hell, I initially envisioned an underground bar, a place symbolizing indulgence and decay, where people could express themselves freely. However, during our discussions, Jamie Dunsdon pointed out that Hell should have a more political tone rather than a recreational one. Based on this feedback, we reimagined Hell as a headquarters, embodying a space of authority, control, and power dynamics.

Following this conceptual direction, I moved into the practical phase of material and colour development. Julia Wasilewski and I had extensive discussions about how lighting and colour would define the contrasting atmospheres of Heaven and Hell. We agreed that Hell should be dark, and Heaven be bright, making it essential to select materials and colours that could achieve these extremes under various lighting conditions.

I conducted several experiments with shades of gray, deep gray, light gray, warm gray, and cool gray, and tested different textures by applying rags, rollers, and feathers. Eventually, I chose cool light gray with a darker scumbled pattern created by rollers. Under lighting and from a distance, this surface appeared as a unified gray but revealed subtle layers and depth upon closer inspection.

For the floor design, we tested spraying coloured dots onto the surface. Julia Wasilewski mentioned that lighting reveals different colours when reflected off multicoloured surfaces,

whereas black surfaces absorb the light. Initially, the director expressed concerns that the colourful floor might look too vibrant. However, once tested under stage lighting, the floor appeared almost white, softening the black tones and adding brightness without overwhelming the scene.

To further articulate the concept of fragmentation, I implemented a flying system to represent the disassembly of the Heaven pillars. This phase required a more technical and rational approach than the conceptual design. Each pillar was assigned a specific name and categorized by its position. The hanging points for the upper halves of the pillars were carefully calculated, ensuring their movements were synchronized. This process reminded me of musical composition, where transitioning from one state to another is akin to rearranging a chord progression. Therefore, the speed and sequence of these movements became crucial, as they defined the visual rhythm and harmony of the transformation.

3.4 EDEN DESIGN

3.4.1 INSPIRATION

Eden is the scene I connect with the most in my design process. When I read Erin Shields's *Paradise Lost* and came across the arguments between Adam and Eve, I saw my marriage reflected in their words. On the surface, they are an enviable couple, but after eating the forbidden fruit, they argue endlessly over trivial matters. This led me to imagine Eden as a modern home, complete with a living room and bathroom—an everyday space.

Before eating the forbidden fruit, their relationship seemed perfect. They see each other with respect and admiration, speaking politely and even referring to one another in the third person, showing a sense of distance and formality. Their intimacy is gentle and poetic, but after eating the fruit, everything changes. On the other hand, the Eden in their hearts disappears. This loss is not only physical but also emotional. I want to challenge the audience with the question: is

what we perceive as beautiful simply a matter of perspective? When the truth is revealed, the so-called perfection might just be a collection of trash and discarded items—a tribute to what I call a “trash marriage.”

For colour inspiration, I looked at Chinese paper houses used in traditional funerals, especially those printed with bright and heavily patterned surfaces such as artificial brick walls, stylized windows, and flowered doors (see Figure A15). These structures are often small, flat-pack cardboard houses designed to resemble real homes, but they are ultimately made to be burned. What struck me was how joyful the colours appeared, with combinations of pink, mint green, and gold, even though they were actually used in mourning rituals to honour the dead. This contrast inspired me to explore the illusion of happiness within marriage. Eden may look like a paradise, a symbol of love and beginning, but it can also be a graveyard for love. By using these colours and decorative motifs in Eden, I wanted the space to visually evoke both beauty and loss and suggest a connection to death and mourning, not about mourning the dead, but more about grieving lost love or the illusion of happiness. Through this reference, I wanted to suggest that a seemingly perfect marriage, much like the paper house, can be a carefully constructed illusion. It may look ideal on the outside, but beneath the surface, it is fragile, temporary, and easily collapses under pressure.

3.4.2 IMPLEMENTATION

In the implementation stage, I wanted all props and set pieces to be man-made and sourced entirely from everyday waste. My design concept views heaven as a space free from desire. In contrast, Eden after the fall is filled with all kinds of desires: the urge to buy, eat, and seek physical pleasure. By emphasizing this sharp contrast, I aimed to visually present the tension between Heaven, Eden, and Hell.

To achieve this, I collected various items from my married friends—designer handbags,

broken home appliances, and children’s toys. All of these objects symbolize different forms of desire. I arranged them according to specific living scenes. For example, some setups included everyday spaces like a bathroom and a living room with a sofa. Each group of items was placed on a separate cart, carefully organized by colour and material. This arrangement made the collection of discarded objects resemble a cluster of beautiful plants (see Figure C8). The visual harmony of colours and textures was intentional, ensuring that the set appeared cohesive rather than randomly pieced together. My goal was not to rely on traditionally “matching” colours, but instead to create a striking sense of balance by combining clashing, even chaotic hues. I deliberately chose colours that might initially seem incompatible, aiming to evoke a subtle sense of intrigue and emotional tension. When director Jamie Dunsdon saw the installation, she remarked, “I don’t know what it is, but it looks bold—and it just feels right.” That “rightness” is precisely the kind of harmony I sought to achieve: one rooted not in similarity, but in carefully managed contrast.

As David Hornung explains in *Color: A Workshop for Artists and Designers*, visual harmony can emerge not only through shared colour traits but also from a dynamic balance between unity and variety. Too much similarity can feel dull, while a thoughtful mix of “concord and discord” makes a composition both coherent and engaging. This visual tension—achieved through contrast in hue, saturation, or proportion—can strengthen the viewer’s sense of connection, even when the elements themselves are dissonant. In this way, harmony becomes less about sameness and more about how things support and energize each other through their differences (95).

Additionally, I used artificial items featuring natural imagery—such as a monkey-shaped backpack, elephant slippers, and a tiger-print shower curtain. These items represent how modern people convince themselves they are living close to nature. However, these objects are only

symbols of nature, highlighting the idea that the longing for nature in modern life is often an illusion or a form of self-deception.

By using existing discarded materials instead of purchasing new ones, I wanted the design to reflect a process of discovery rather than creation. Through these seemingly insignificant objects, I hope the audience can see how desire and loss are intertwined in the everyday spaces we inhabit.

3.5 SCENE TRANSITIONS

The transitions in this play involved both horizontal and vertical movement. Horizontally, transitions were achieved through the repositioning of props and scenic pieces—a standard method. What made this production distinct, however, was its use of vertical motion. The fly system allowed for dynamic elevation changes, giving the stage a sense of layered space that heightened the separation between Heaven, Earth, and Hell.

At the core of each scene were modular pillar structures. Each pillar was divided into an upper and a lower segment. For example, LA1 (Left Arc 1) formed the top, while LB1 (Left Bottom 1) formed the bottom. During transitions, the upper segments were operated through the fly system, rising or descending as needed. The bottom halves were moved manually by crew members, allowing the same components to create different spatial arrangements. This approach gave us versatility, but it also required great coordination, especially during rehearsals where timing and speed were critical for seamless operation. This required precise organization, almost like composing music.

Initially, I didn't properly map out the pillar system as a whole. Each pillar had its own name and position, and I had a clear "melody" of movement in mind, but I didn't yet translate it into a detailed cue list. I had the overall idea, but I didn't document it in an organized, shareable way. This made initial meetings with the crew difficult, especially when trying to communicate

specific timing and sequence. Later, I restructured my approach, clearly documenting each pillar's role and transition, which made execution much smoother.

In the early stages, I considered using the main drape to facilitate transitions. The plan was to close the curtain during scene changes, allowing performers to act in front while the next scene was set behind. However, the director made it clear that she wouldn't be using the main drape. At first, I didn't fully understand her reasoning, but I respected her choice and adjusted the design accordingly.

Transitions in this production went beyond scenic movement; actor blocking also played a vital role. Given the abstract nature of the scenic elements, such as the box-like structure at the back of the stage, performers often moved through or interacted with these forms to signal spatial change. This structure became a central transitional element. It had a Pandora's Box quality. Once opened, the audience had no idea what would come next, adding mystery and suspense. In the Heaven scene, it became a television screen—God's mode of surveillance. In transition scenes, it became an elevator, marking a vertical passage through multiple levels. The design of Hell incorporated nine levels, referencing both Dante's *Inferno* and the Chinese concept of eighteen layers of Hell. This multi-level use made shifts between realms feel immersive.

One of the most delicate transitions was into Eden. Should the previous scene be cleared completely before the tree appears, or should the tree begin to emerge as the set disappears? These timing decisions affected how the space was perceived, requiring careful adjustment.

Overall, the transitions worked well, especially in the scenes where Hell gradually shifted into the raw pillar form. The visual and physical shifts by actors and set pieces created a fluid rhythm. The final transition remains one of my favorites. When the actors opened the side curtains and led the audience backstage, it blurred the boundary between stage and reality. That moment helped me finally understand Jamie Dunsdon's decision not to use the main drape. The

play didn't conclude with a bow, but rather faded into life, letting the audience leave with Adam and Eve as if they were stepping into the same journey.

This entire process was a challenge not just for me, but also for the technical crew and fly operators. It required not only precision but adaptability. Through rehearsals, we had to ensure both accuracy and tempo of vertical movement. The experience deepened my appreciation for the fly system, and I learned to think about transitions not as pauses, but as part of the story's rhythm and structure.

3.6 THE COSMOS & THE GATE OF HELL

The Cosmos scene wasn't part of the initial design. At first, there were different ideas floating around, and Jamie Dunsdon suggested a more fairy-tale-like aesthetic. But the direction only became clear after Heaven and Hell had taken shape. Since the cosmos is technically part of Heaven, it had to follow the same structural logic, the pillars remained intact, just repositioned. But then came the idea of adding iPad interaction, which changed everything.

The iPad was introduced for two reasons. First, it made the scene feel more connected to modern life, something as vast as the universe being controlled through a device everyone recognises. Second, it was a way to reflect on God's "love" and control. Instead of a natural, divine arrangement, the planets were being moved by Uriel swiping an iPad, following instructions rather than acting on free will. It was almost ridiculous—something as vast as the universe controlled with a simple swipe. It made cosmic order feel less like a divine truth and more like something that could be changed at will.

Then there was the Gate of Hell, the space caught between Heaven and Hell. It wasn't fully part of either, which made it harder to define. Since Sin was created by Satan, I wanted this space to feel more like something left behind rather than something fully formed. That's why the tops of the pillars were removed, leaving only their lower halves. The result was a space that felt

skeletal, almost like a prison without a roof. To make it even more unsettling, I designed a huge, rusted iron gate, something that looked like it had been there forever, impossible to move or escape. This wasn't just a physical gateway but a place of exile, where neither Heaven's order nor Hell's destruction had fully taken over.

3.7 PROJECTION

Projections don't appear often in the play, but each time they do, they play a key role. The first projection shows clouds rising slowly, creating the illusion of something falling. At the same time, an elevator button drops, reinforcing the contrast between upward and downward movement. Later, the projection shifts to a feather drifting down gently. The speed of its fall was adjusted multiple times to match the music and mood, turning Satan's descent into something almost dreamlike.

Another important projection is the graffiti in Hell. These images are bold statements of rebellion, expressing the emotions of the fallen. I included many eye symbols to represent both surveillance and judgment, adding to the oppressive feel of the space. The technical setup for these projections was just as important as their design. Julia Wasilewski, Lee Burckes, and Kelly Roberts gave me a lot of helpful advice. In the end, we used four projectors: two for the large screen, which showed the planets, feathers, and elevator buttons; one for the back of the elevator box; and another mounted on top of the box to project onto the floor and walls. Julia Wasilewski insisted on the importance of the top projector, and she was right; it gave the box depth, making it feel like part of the space rather than just a backdrop.

Setting up the projections was one of the most challenging tasks. The large screen had to be perfectly aligned, ensuring it fit the frame without blocking key set pieces, like the tree in the garden scene. This meant constantly moving around the theatre, checking from the front row, back row, and sides to make sure the projections looked right from every angle. On top of that, I

had never used Cue Lab before, but with time and patience, I figured it out. It felt like conducting an orchestra, carefully controlling every visual cue.

I wanted projections to do more than just decorate the stage. I wanted them to help tell the story. After reading the script again, I decided to add one more projection during the moment after Adam and Eve eat the forbidden fruit. I first considered a starry sky but wasn't sure if it was the right choice. Jamie Dunsdon challenged me to think deeper: Did the image truly add to the story? She pointed out that when Adam and Eve say "more, more," (Shields 124) they aren't just talking about sexual feeling but about humanity's endless desire, for knowledge, for progress, for more. She mentioned the popular television series *The Big Bang Theory* opening sequence, which traces the universe's evolution to human civilization. That idea inspired me. Instead of a simple starry sky, we chose an abstract, explosive visual, something that captured the feeling of expansion, desire, and transformation in a single moment.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

This project helped me realise that scenography can invite the audience to imagine, rather than give them all the answers. It is more about what is left out than what is shown. In this experimental stage design, I explored how theatre is different from film. Instead of adding more objects to make the scene look real, I focused on using fewer objects. I wanted to build a world through audience imagination and subtle suggestions (see Chapter 3). This experience also changed how I think about my own creative process. I have always been interested in illusion and the space between reality and imagination, but this project helped me see that absence itself can tell a story.

Returning to the design of *Paradise Lost*, absence became a central theme. Rather than viewing Hell as a distinct place, I treated it as the void left by Heaven's exclusions. This led me to shift my attention away from constructing clearly opposing worlds and instead concentrate on using visual strategies such as negative space, fragmented forms, and shifting perspectives to suggest transformation and instability. For instance, silhouettes, modular set pieces, and layered visual compositions were employed so that the same structures could be reinterpreted depending on the angle, lighting, and movement. Each moment on stage invited the audience to engage with the environment not as a fixed reality but as a shifting visual metaphor. By destabilizing the perception of space, I hoped to mirror the conceptual instability embedded in the story's themes of loss, rebellion, and authority. This spatial fluidity was key to how the design contributed to the storytelling.

The illusion of Eden became another key experiment. Constructing paradise from discarded materials such as plastic bags, paper scraps, and everyday waste challenged the audience's perception of beauty, authenticity, and permanence. The transition from Eden to Hell was not just a scenic change but a shift in how reality was processed. It asked the audience to

reflect on whether paradise had ever been real or if it existed only as an illusion shaped by collective belief.

After the show, I asked some friends what they thought of the set. One of them had a striking interpretation: he felt that the entire stage looked like it had been designed from a Hell perspective, as if Satan were the architect of this world rather than God. To him, it was not a Heaven that had collapsed, but a space that had never been whole to begin with, shaped by chaos and ruin from the start. Even in Heaven, only a few scattered pillars remained, reinforcing the idea of instability and fragmentation. Since the story begins in Hell, this interpretation made its presence feel even stronger, as if its influence extended far beyond its physical boundaries. This perspective really stayed with me and highlighted how the same stage can evoke completely different meanings for each viewer, which is exactly what I hoped to achieve.

More broadly, the creative process behind this stage design reshaped the way I approach my own work. It deepened my interest in perception, ambiguity, and material contrast. I began to see scenography not just as a form of spatial construction, but as a framework for exploring instability and contradiction. One of the most direct expressions of this shift appeared in my CASA artist residency in April 2025, where I continued to explore materials and stage ideas that balance fragility with structure and destruction with rebuilding. The tension between what is visible and what the audience imagines became central there as well. In both projects, I focused not just on what the audience could see but on what they were invited to imagine.

Reflecting on the process, I feel incredibly proud of this work. It was not just about designing a stage. It was an exploration of how perception is shaped, distorted, and redefined through scenography. One of my biggest challenges was translating abstract concepts such as absence, illusion, and transformation into a physical space. Moving from text to image to stage required constant negotiation between narrative interpretation and visual execution.

Ultimately, my research in visual illusion, negative space, and spatial transformation reshaped my understanding of scenography. This project taught me that stage design is not just about building environments but about shaping experience and guiding perception. If I were to refine this further, I would push the interactive aspects of illusion, making transitions more immersive. The goal would not just be to move from one set to another but to transform the space itself in real time.

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APPENDIX A: DESIGN INSPIRATION AND IN-PROCESS WORKS



Figure A1. Taddeo di Bartolo, *Laboring Satan (detail)*, *Hell*, fresco, ca. 1410–1420, S. Maria Assunta, Collegiata, San Gimignano. <https://edspace.american.edu/taddeocollegiatahell/the-laboring-satan/>



Figure A2. Ceiling fresco at the Church of the Gesù, *The Wall Street Journal*, 11 Nov. 2009
<https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748703740004574512430388384744>

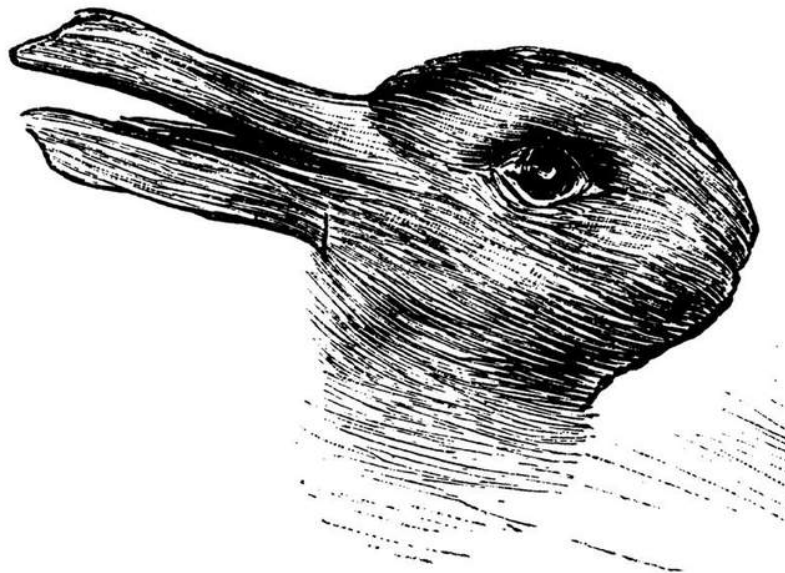


Figure A3. Duck—Rabbit Illusion. *Popular Science Monthly*, vol. 54, 1899. *Wikimedia Commons*,
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:PSM_V54_D328_Optical_illusion_of_a_duck_or_a_rabbit_head_\(cropped\).png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:PSM_V54_D328_Optical_illusion_of_a_duck_or_a_rabbit_head_(cropped).png).



Figure A4. Gustave Doré, *Paradiso, Canto 31*. *Wikimedia Commons*, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Paradiso_Canto_31.jpg



Figure A5. *Jesus Christ Portrait*, Pinterest, uploaded by Dixie Johnston Turpin, <https://in.pinterest.com/pin/933441460335370888/>.



Figure A6. Rob Gonsalves, *Water Dancing*, ARTRKL, 2011 www.artrkl.com/blogs/news/rob-gonsalves.

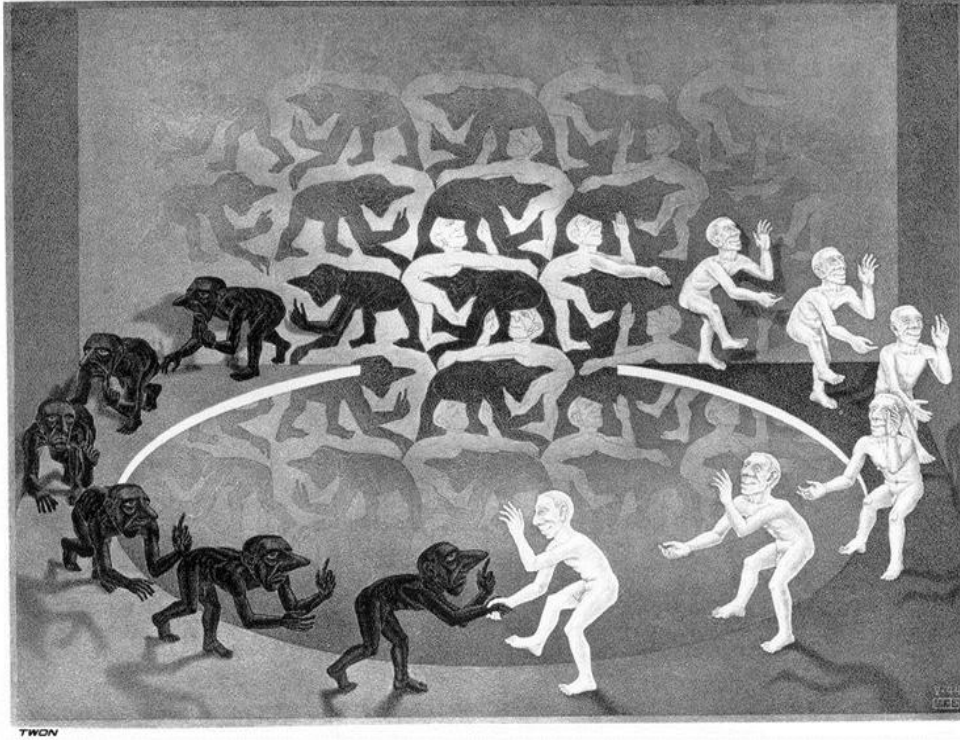


Figure A7. Escher, M.C., *The Encounter*, lithograph, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1944, www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/365239



Figure A8. Ryan Everson, Jason Garcia, *The Designer and the Boundless Promise Sculpture*, University of Oregon College of Design. Photo from <https://design.uoregon.edu/designer-and-boundless-promise-sculpture>



Figure A9. Markus Raetz, *Yes/No*, Sculpture. An Optical Illusion, 2012
www.anopticalillusion.com/2012/09/yesno-by-markus-raetz/.

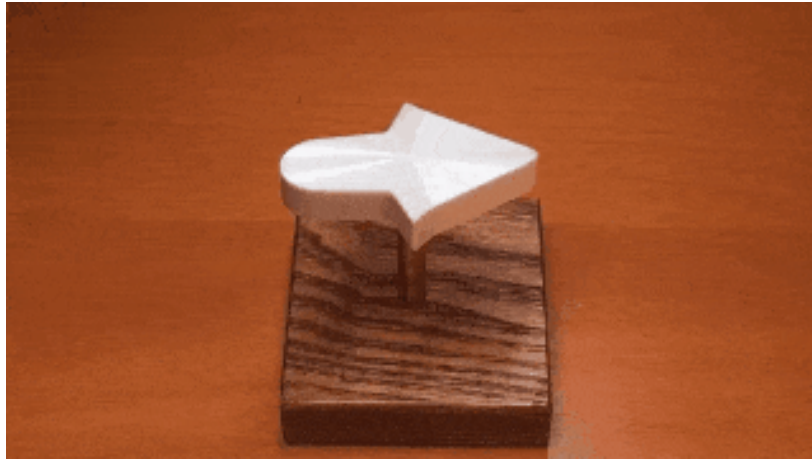


Figure A10. Professor Kokichi Sugihara, *Optical illusion Animated GIF, The Kid Should See This*, www.thekidshouldseethis.com/post/professor-kokichi-sugihara-creates-his-mind-blowing-illusions-with-math.



Figure A11. Sarah Meyohas, *A Clouded Speculation*, C-print (Edition of 3 plus 1 AP), 60 × 90 inches (152.4 × 228.6 cm). Courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen. Image sourced from Frieze, 2021 https://static.frieze.com/files/event/press/MBG_SF%20Pop%20Up%202022_PR.pdf.

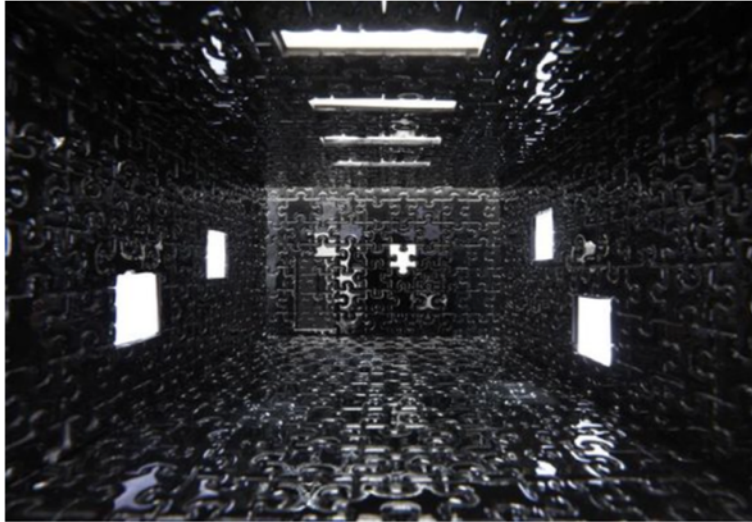


Figure A12. Valentino Fialdini, *Preta*, Photograph, Image courtesy of the artists, 2012 www.valentinofialdini.com.br



Figure A13. Tim Noble and Sue Webster, *Youngman*, Assemblage of discarded wood and a wooden stepladder, illuminated to cast a shadow resembling a standing male figure, Image courtesy of the artists, 2012 <http://timnobleandsuewebster.com/news.html#ngorongoro2>



Figure A14. Fukuda Shigeo, *Images of Illusion*, Screen print, 102.8 × 72.6 cm. M+ Collection, Hong Kong. Gift of DNP Foundation for Cultural Promotion, 2018.
www.mplus.org.hk/en/collection/objects/poster-images-of-illusion-1984-2018722/.



Figure A15. Guo Ya-Yi constructs a traditional paper funeral house (ling cuo) on a temple stage in Zengjiang, illustrating the craftsmanship and cultural significance of Taiwanese paper offerings. *Photoessay1043*, 2015, https://photoessay1043.blogspot.com/2015/04/blog-post_46.html.



Figure A16. Author's collection, Detail of Eden Set Design with colour reference of paper house, 2025

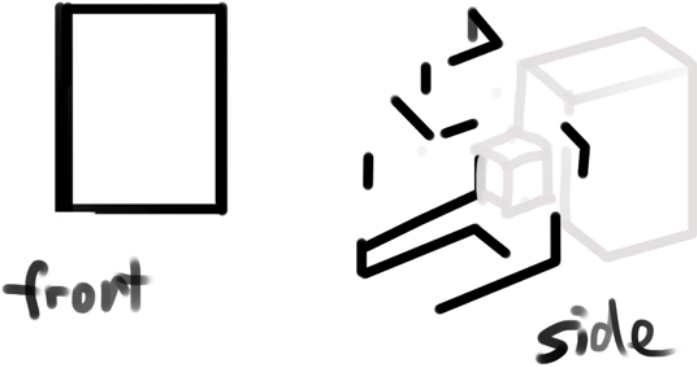


Figure A17. Author's collection, Front-Side Spatial Illusion Principle, 2025



Figure A18. Author's collection, AI-Generated Concept Image Created with Midjourney, 2025

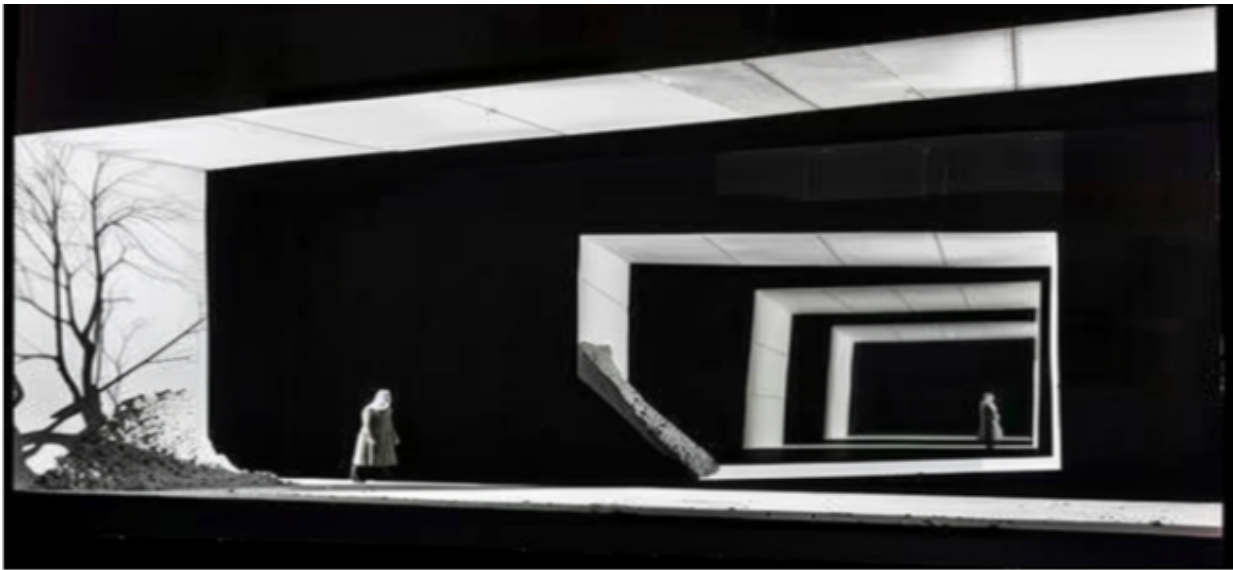


Figure A19. Author's collection, AI-Generated Concept Image Created with Midjourney, 2025

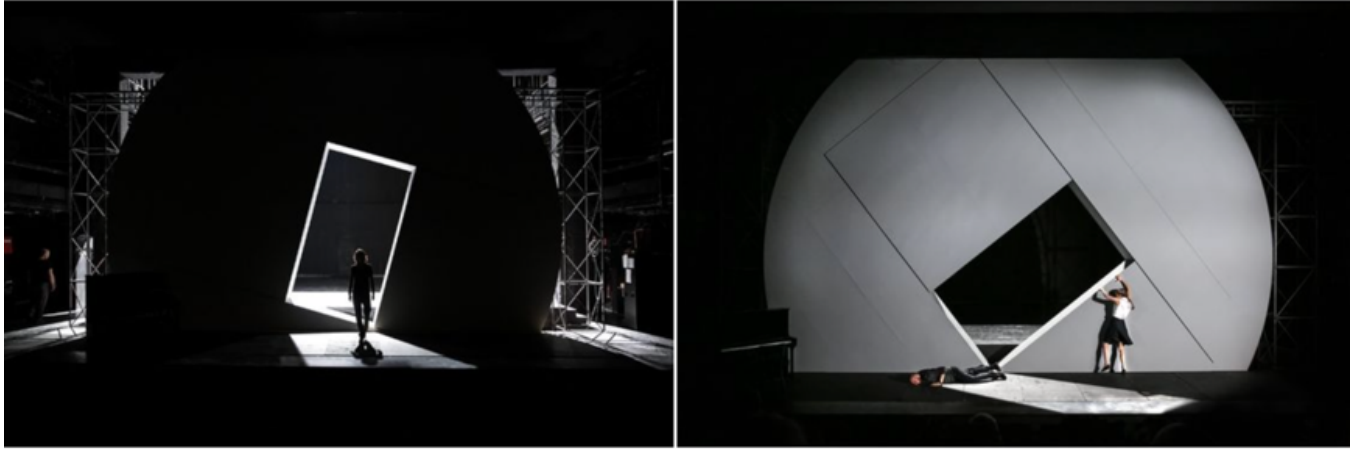


Figure A20. Sebastian Hannak, *Stage design featuring rotating walls from KABALE UND LIEBE drama*, 20 Apr. 2020, Behance, <https://www.behance.net/gallery/95686027/KABALE-UND-LIEBE-drama>.

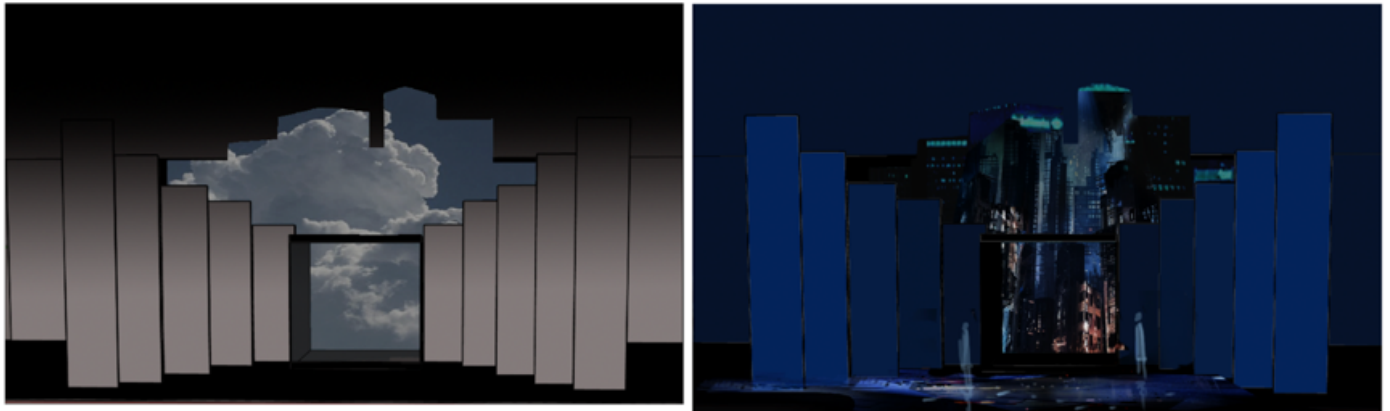


Figure A21. Author's collection, Hand Drawing of Early Visual Concepts for Heaven and Hell, 2025

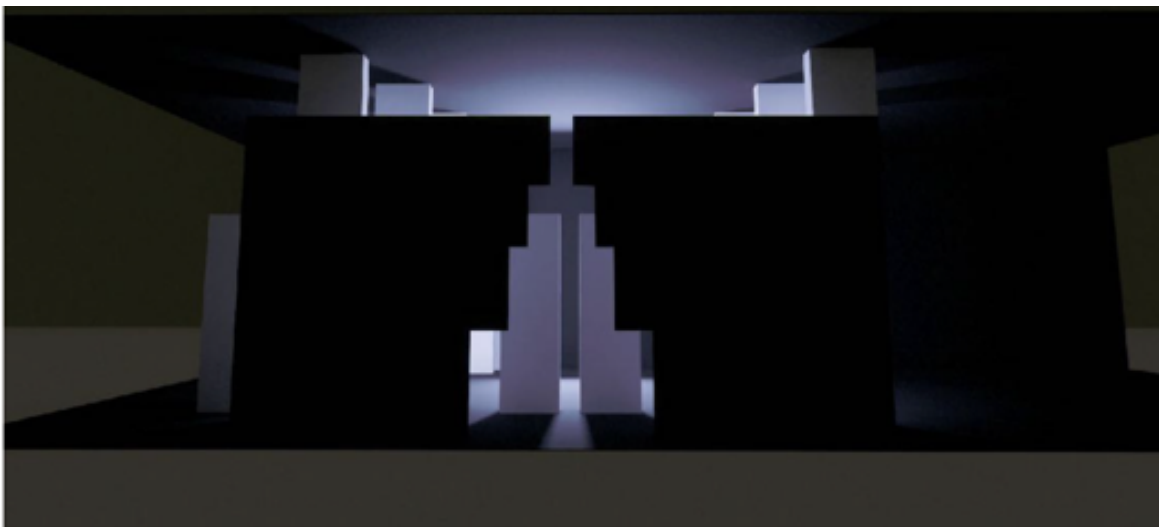


Figure A22. Author's collection, Digital Concept Sketches for Heaven and Hell, 2025

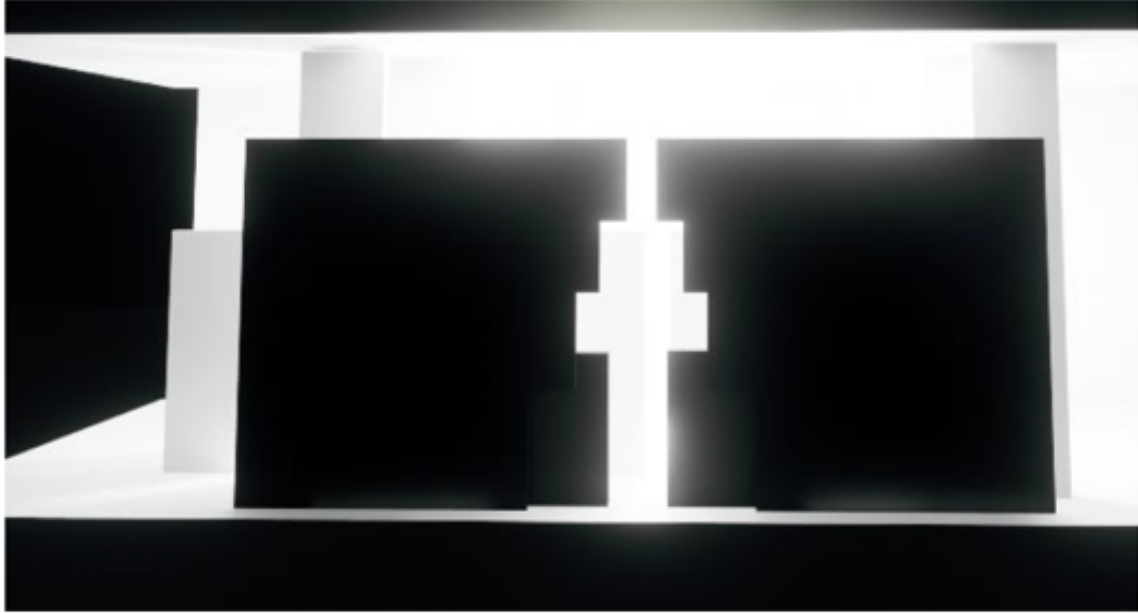


Figure A23. Author's collection, Digital Concept Sketches for Heaven and Hell, 2025

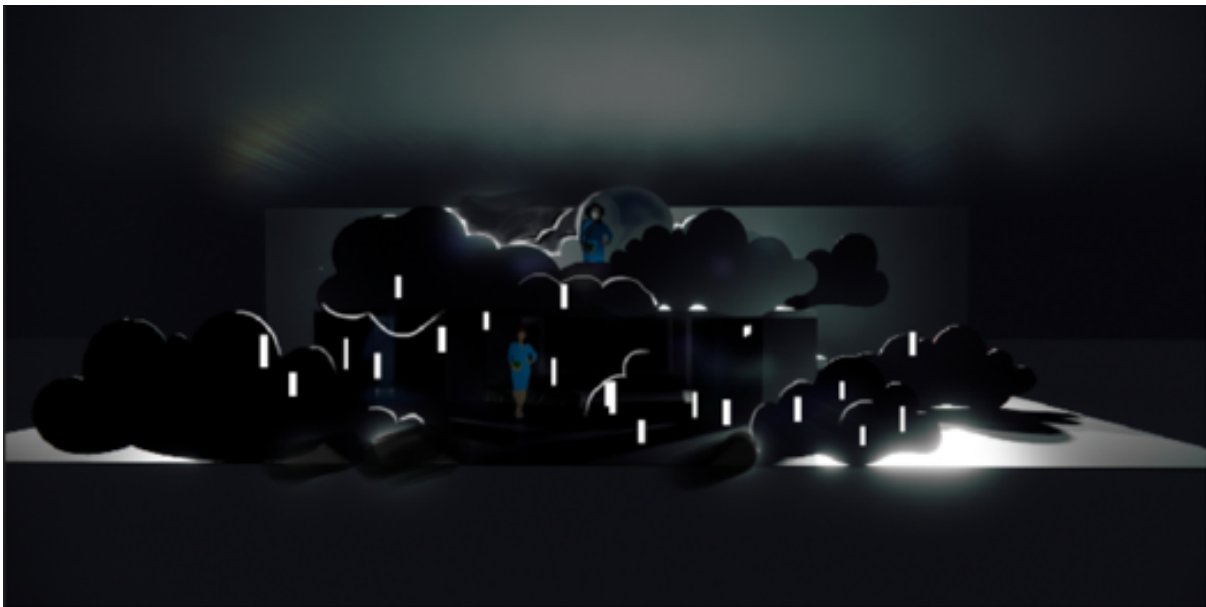


Figure A24. Author's collection, Digital Concept Sketches for Hell, 2025



Figure A25. Author's collection, Digital Concept Sketches for Heaven, 2025

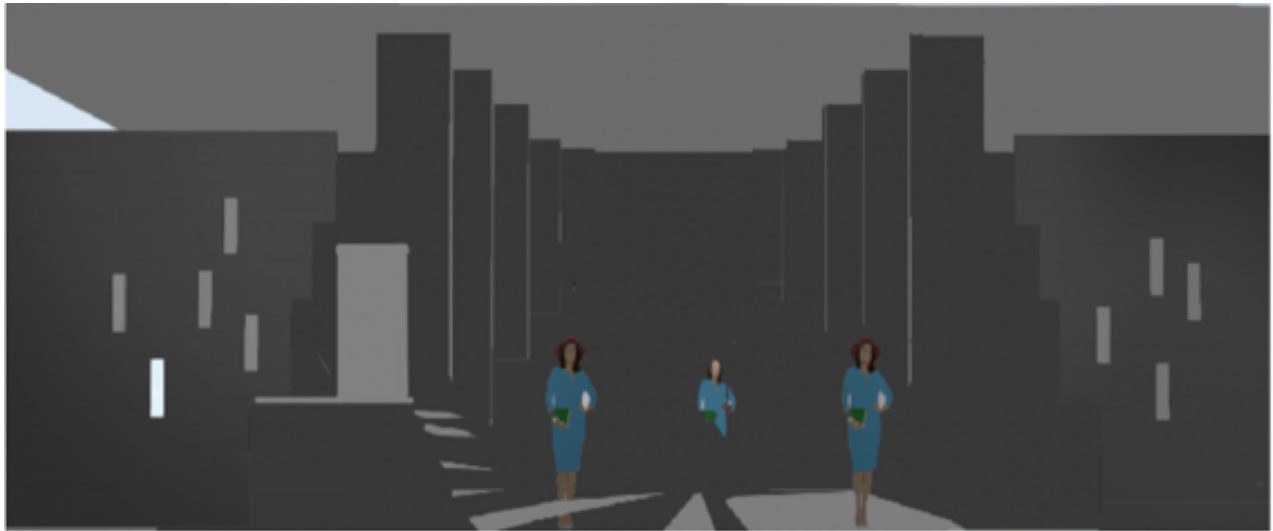


Figure A26. Author's collection, Digital Concept Sketches for Heaven and Hell, 2025

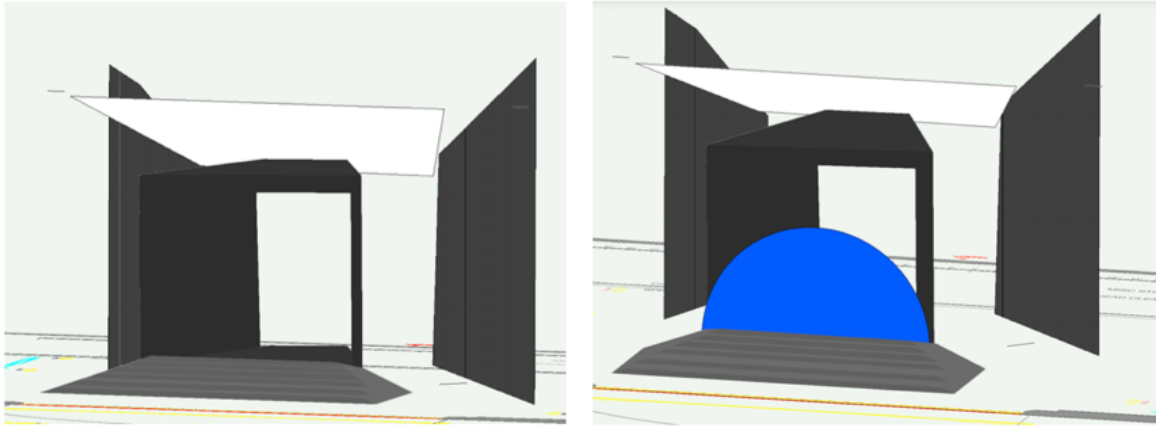


Figure A27. Author's collection, Digital Concept, 2025

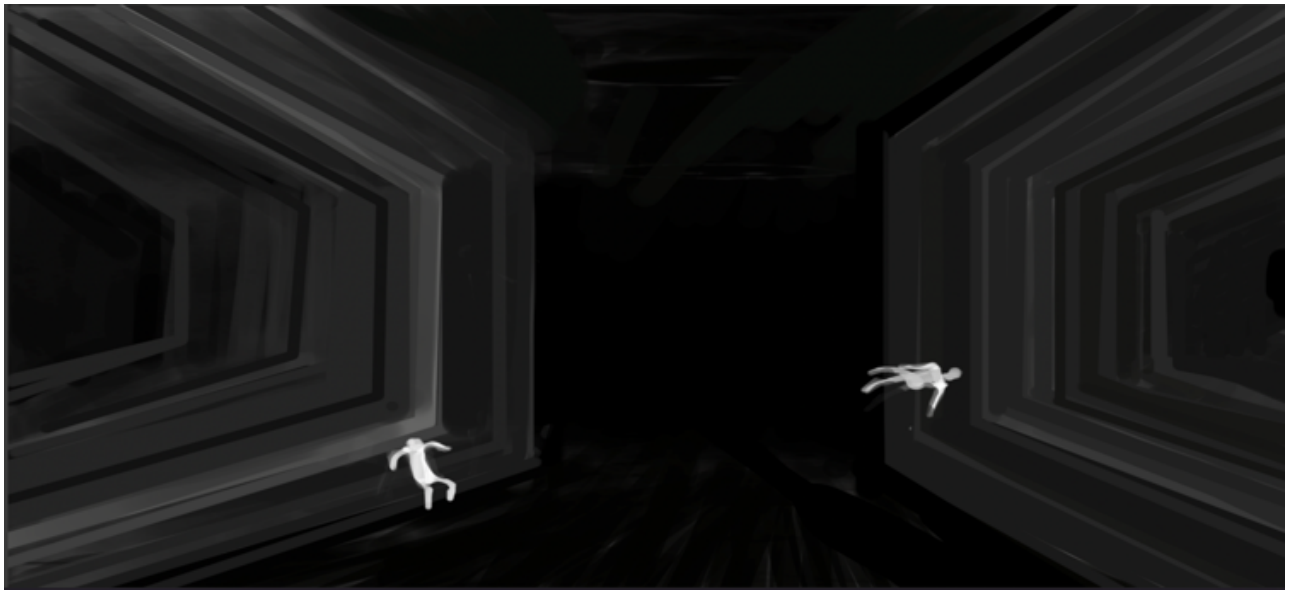


Figure A28. Author's collection, Digital Concept Sketches for Hell, 2025



Figure A29. Author's collection, Digital Concept Sketches for Heaven, 2025



1. Top half is Pandemonium
Bottom half is the Hell,
the edge is lower
edge of the cloud
as the boundary

2. The process to the
Cosmos
She climbs up a
ladder, the light
gradually brightens

3. Cosmos,
the Pandemonium splits into
fragmented clouds. The
structural lines of this room also
become disjointed.

I feel cosmos like a fragmented,
two-dimensional space to me,
so it deconstructs a complete
space into pieces.



4. Through the nine
doors.
During this travelling,
the set pieces
gradually change.

5. Heaven
When the fragments return to
their original positions and are
illuminated, the scene shifts to
heaven. The clouds move to
outside the window, the slanted
surface closes to cover the hole,
and it becomes a table



6. Gardern (before)
We still use the edge shape of the cloud. In the garden
scene, it's like the tree in the garden. The table opens up
even more to reveal the garden scenery inside,



7. Play within the play,
the setup are pulled in front of this scene.

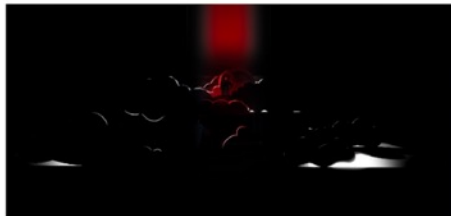


8. Gardern (after)
When the lights turn on, we see the backdrop of fake
flowers and so on.

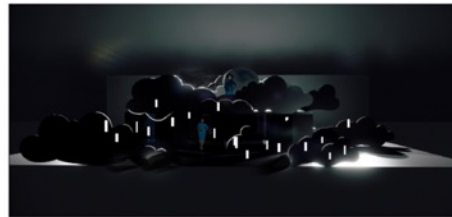
Figure A30. Author's collection, Storyboard Sketch, 2025



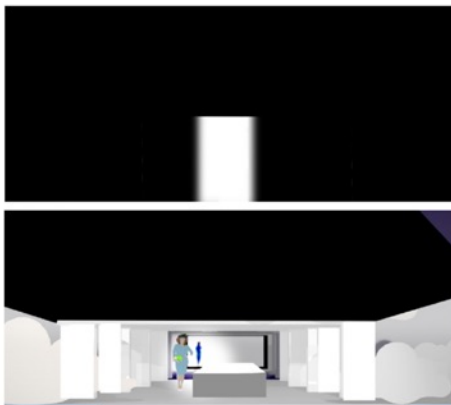
SCENE 3 - THE GATES OF HELL



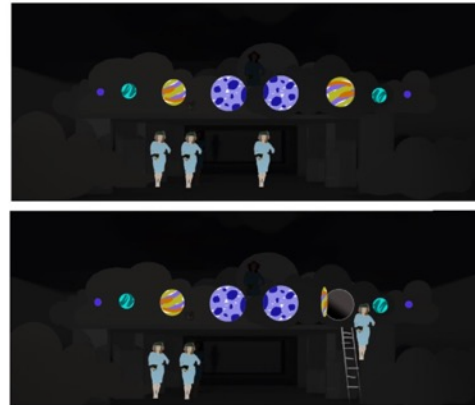
ACT 1 SCENE1- IWOKEUP



SCENE 2 - THE INFERNAL COUNCIL



ACT 2
SCENE 1 - THE HEAVENLY COUNCIL



SCENE 3 - THE GATES OF HELL

SCENE2-FINDING EARTH

Figure A31. Author's collection, Storyboard Sketch, 2025

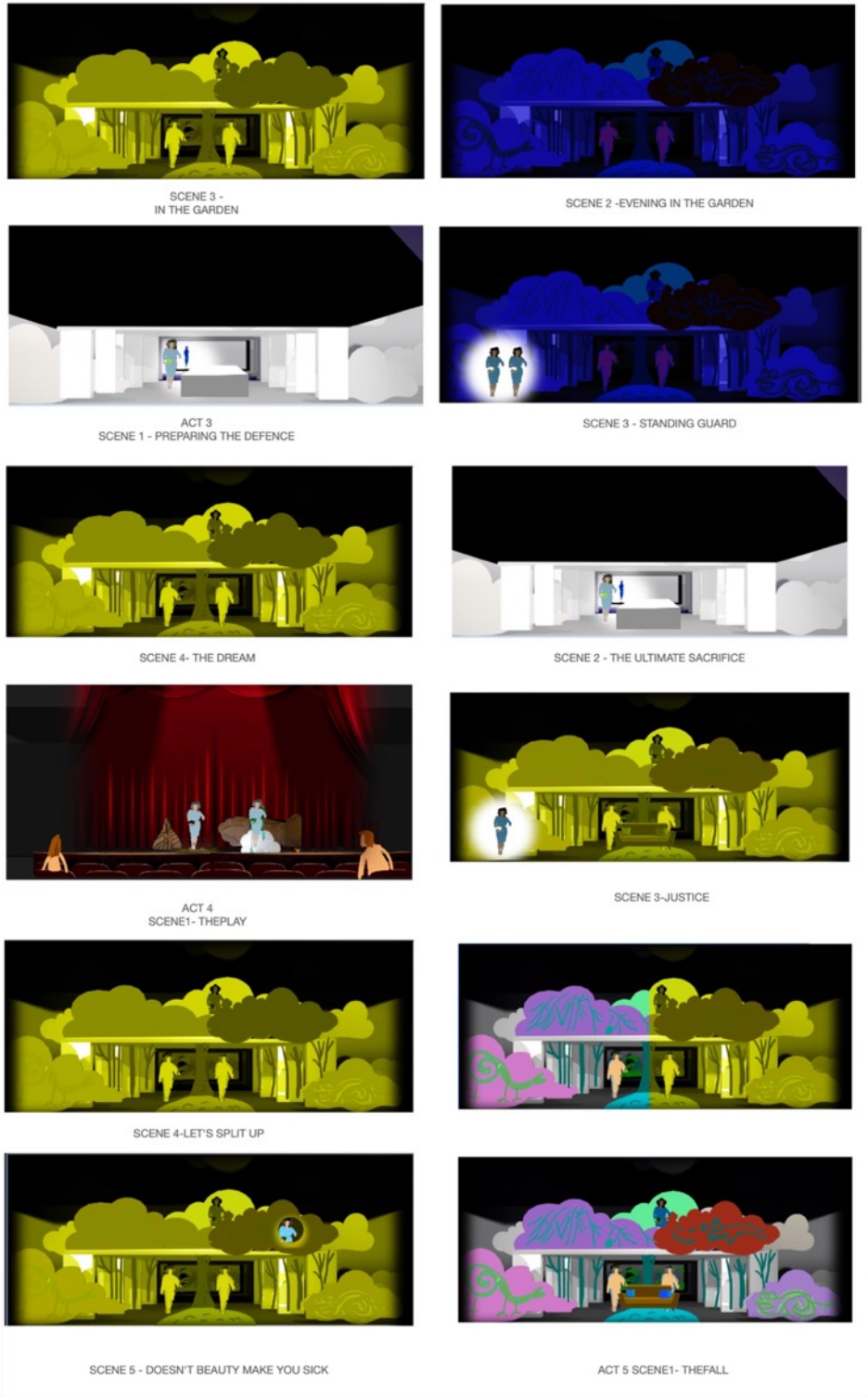
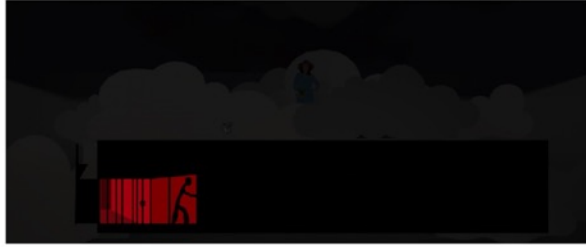


Figure A32. Author's collection, Storyboard Sketch, 2025



SCENE 2 -
SIN AND DEATH'S ASCENSION



SCENE 4-CONSEQUENCES



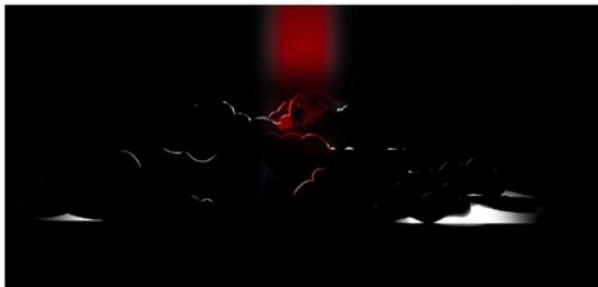
SCENE 3 - AFTERMATH



SCENE 5 - SATAN'S RETURN



SCENE 6 - EXODUS



SCENE 7- SO WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Figure A33. Author's collection, Storyboard Sketch, 2025



Figure A34. Author's collection, Digital Concept Sketch for Heaven, 2025



Figure A35. Author's collection, Digital Concept Sketch for Hell, 2025



Figure A36. Author's collection, Digital Concept Sketch for Eden, 2025



Figure A37. Author's collection, Physical Model for Hell, 2025



Figure A38. Author's collection, Physical Model for Eden, 2025



Figure A39. Author's collection, Physical Model for Heaven, 2025



Figure A40. Author's collection, Physical Model for testing texture, 2025

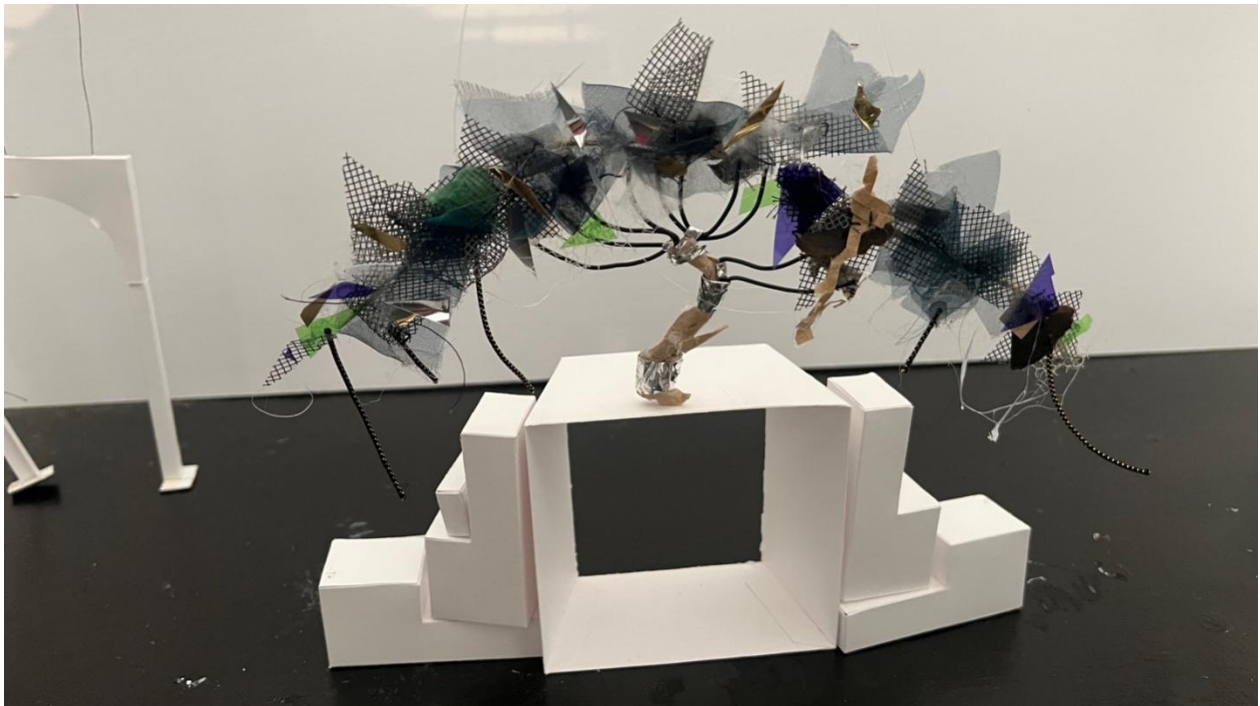


Figure A41. Author's collection, Physical Model for the Tree, 2025

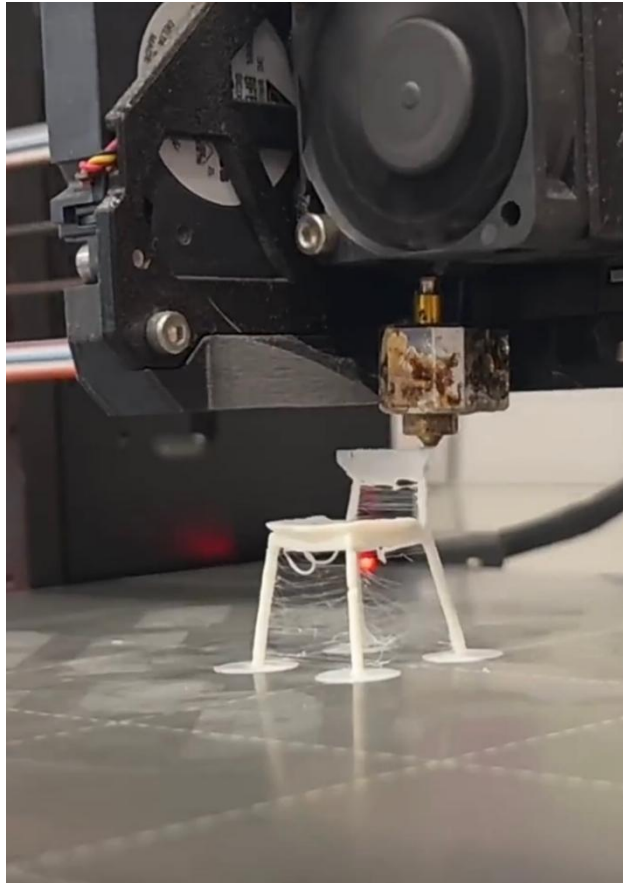


Figure A42. Author's collection, 3D Printed Physical Model, 2025

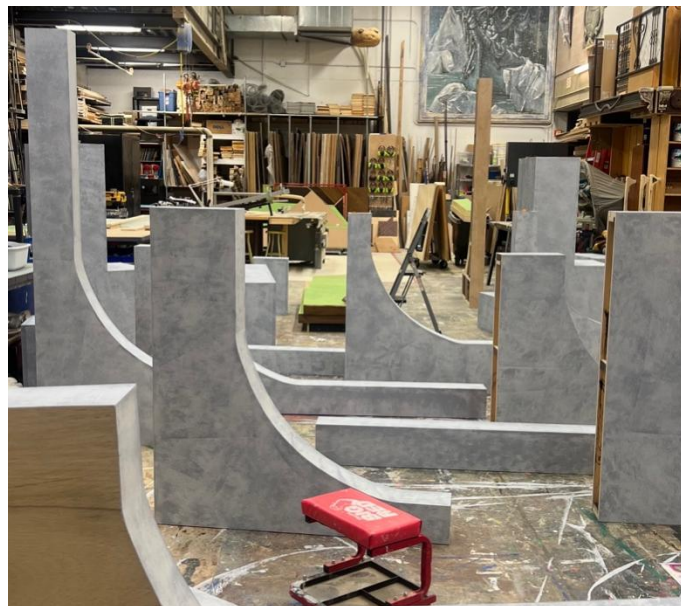


Figure A43. Author's collection, Columns Painting Process, 2025



Figure A44. Author's collection, Backdrop Painting Process, 2025

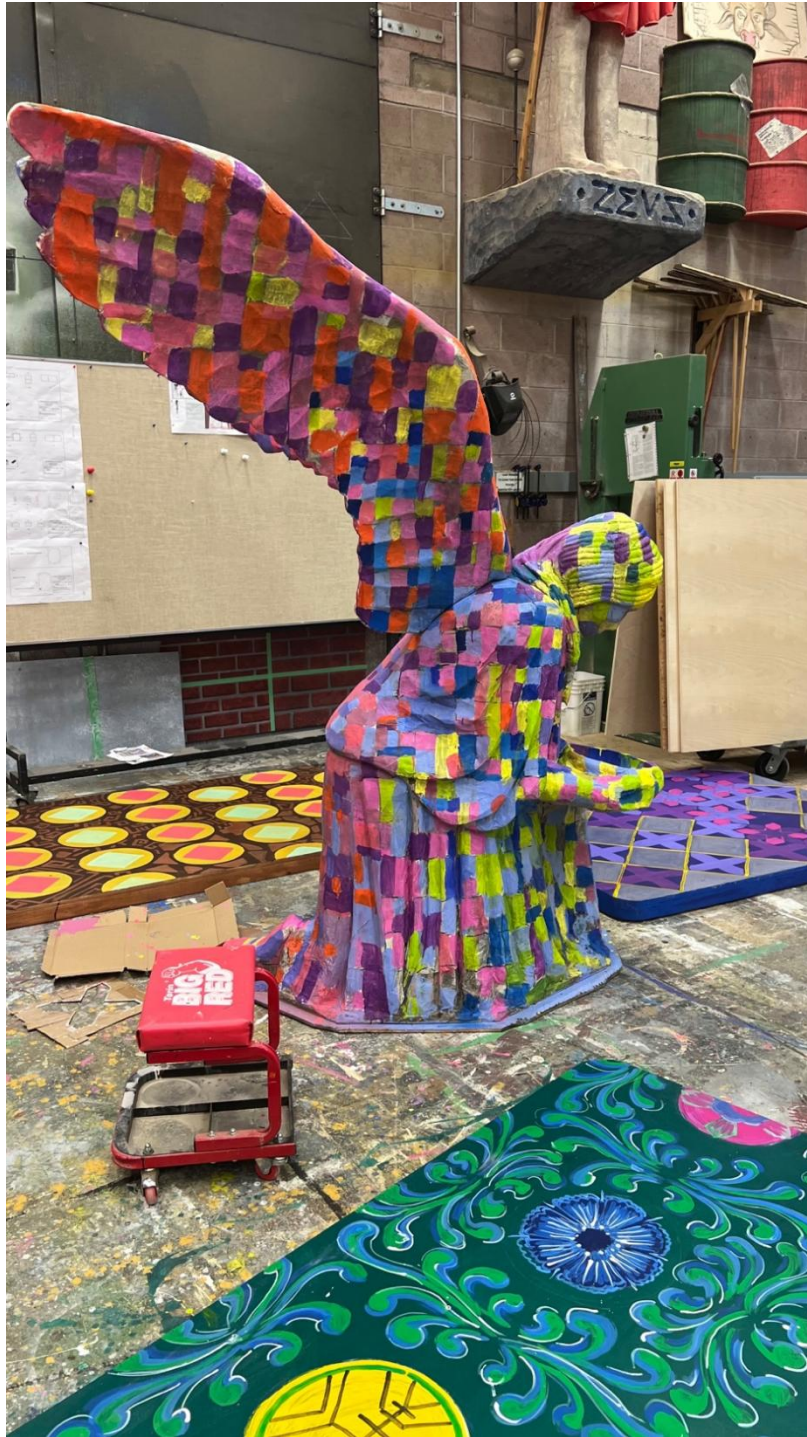


Figure A45. Author's collection, Eden Set Painting Process, 2025



Figure A46. Author's collection, Eden Set Painting Process, 2025

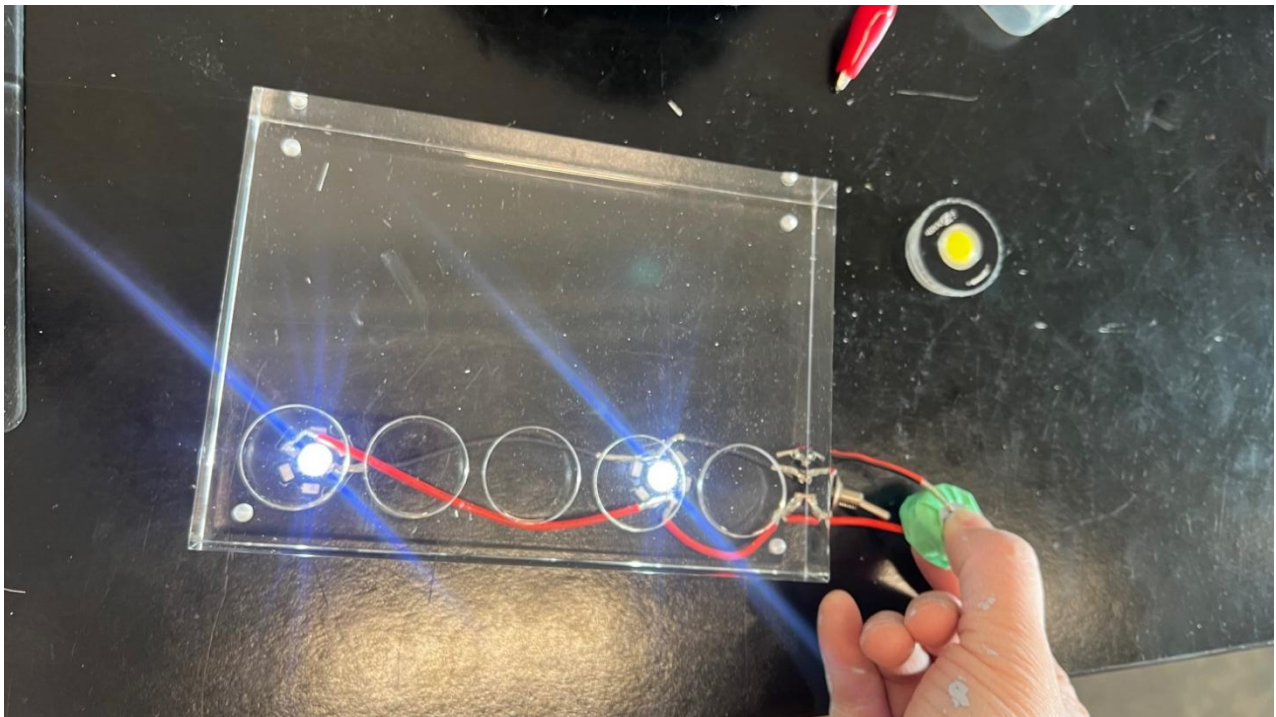


Figure A47. Author's collection, LED Lighting Test for a Prop, 2025



Figure A48. Author's collection, Painted Texture Study for Ground, 2025

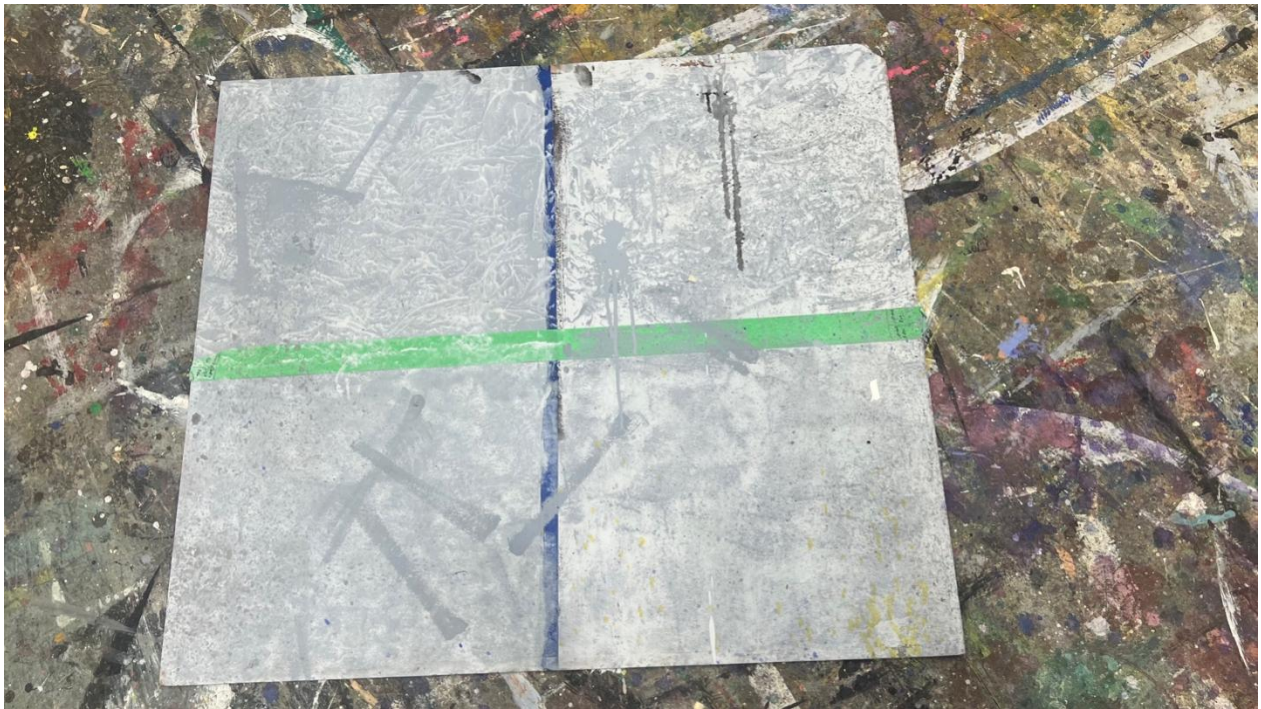


Figure A49. Author's collection, Painted Texture Study for Columns, 2025

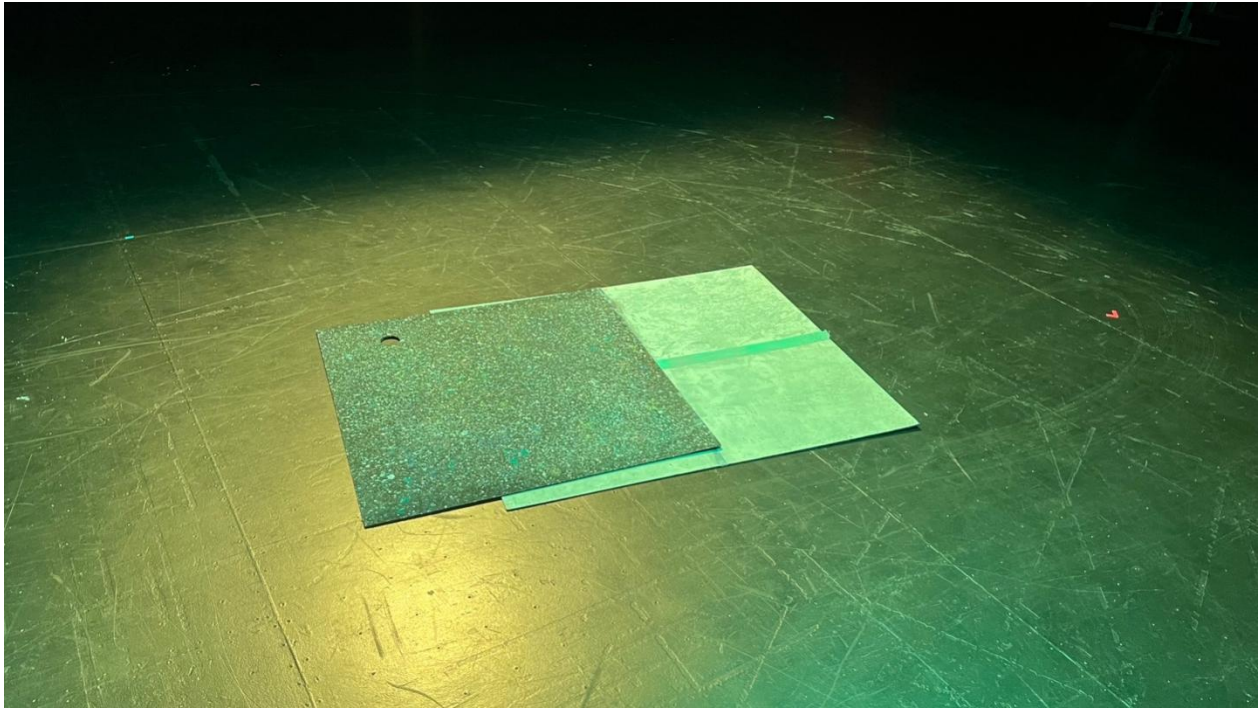


Figure A50. Author's collection, Colour Test Under Stage Lighting, 2025



Figure A51. Author's collection, Process of Building the Tree, 2025

APPENDIX B: TECHNICAL DOCUMENTATION



Figure B1. Author's collection, Rendering of Heaven Set Design, 2025



Figure B2. Author's collection, Rendering of Heaven Set Design, 2025



Figure B3. Author's collection, Rendering of Preshow, 2025



Figure B4. Author's collection, Rendering of Garden, 2025



Figure B5. Author's collection, Rendering of Garden, 2025



Figure B6. Author's collection, Rendering of Garden, 2025

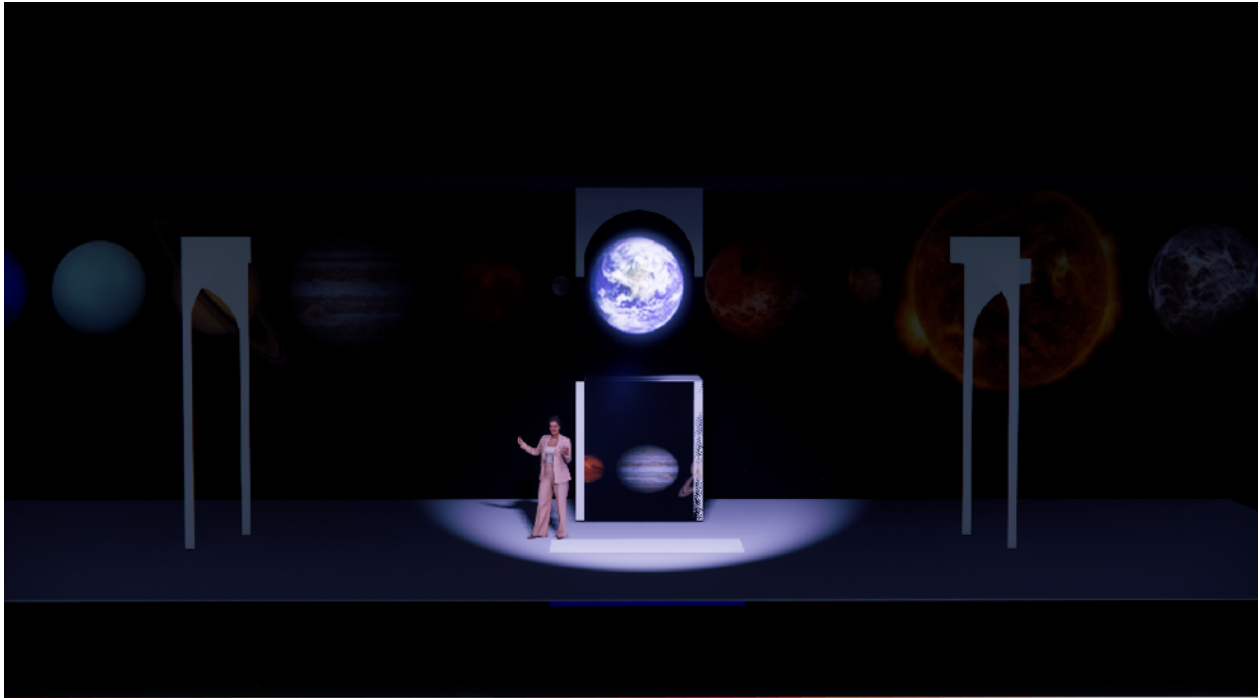
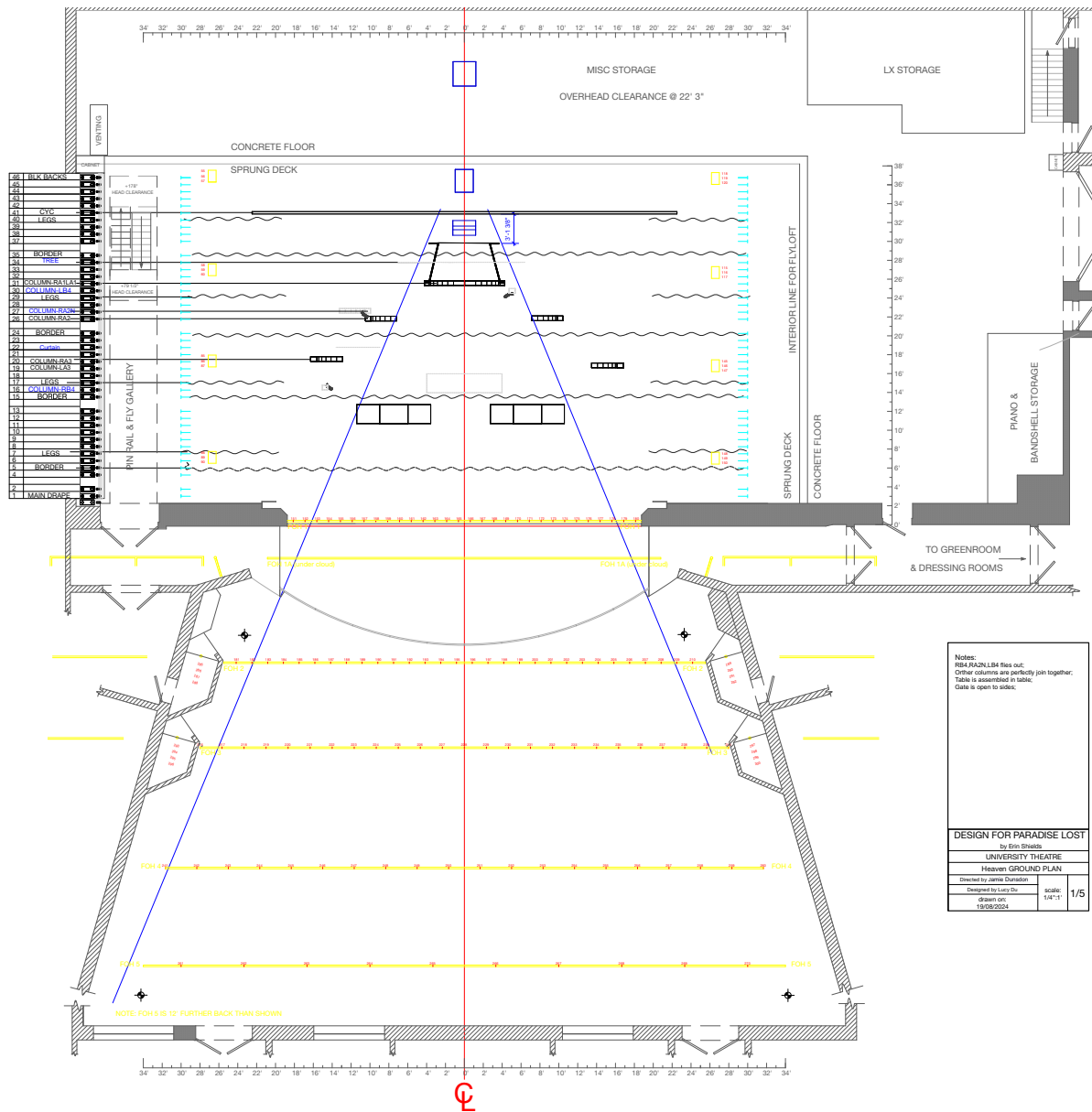


Figure B7. Author's collection, Rendering of Garden, 2025



Notes:
 - PIR RAZN L84 files out.
 - Other columns are perfectly join together.
 - Table is assembled in table.
 - Gate is open to sides.

DESIGN FOR PARADISE LOST
 By Eric Shanks
 UNIVERSITY THEATRE
 Heaven GROUND PLAN

Directed by James Durkin	SCALE	1/5
Designed by Lucy Liu	1/4" = 1'	
Sheet No.	19/08/2024	

VECTORWORKS EDUCATIONAL VERSION

Figure B8. Author's collection, Heaven Ground Plan, 2025

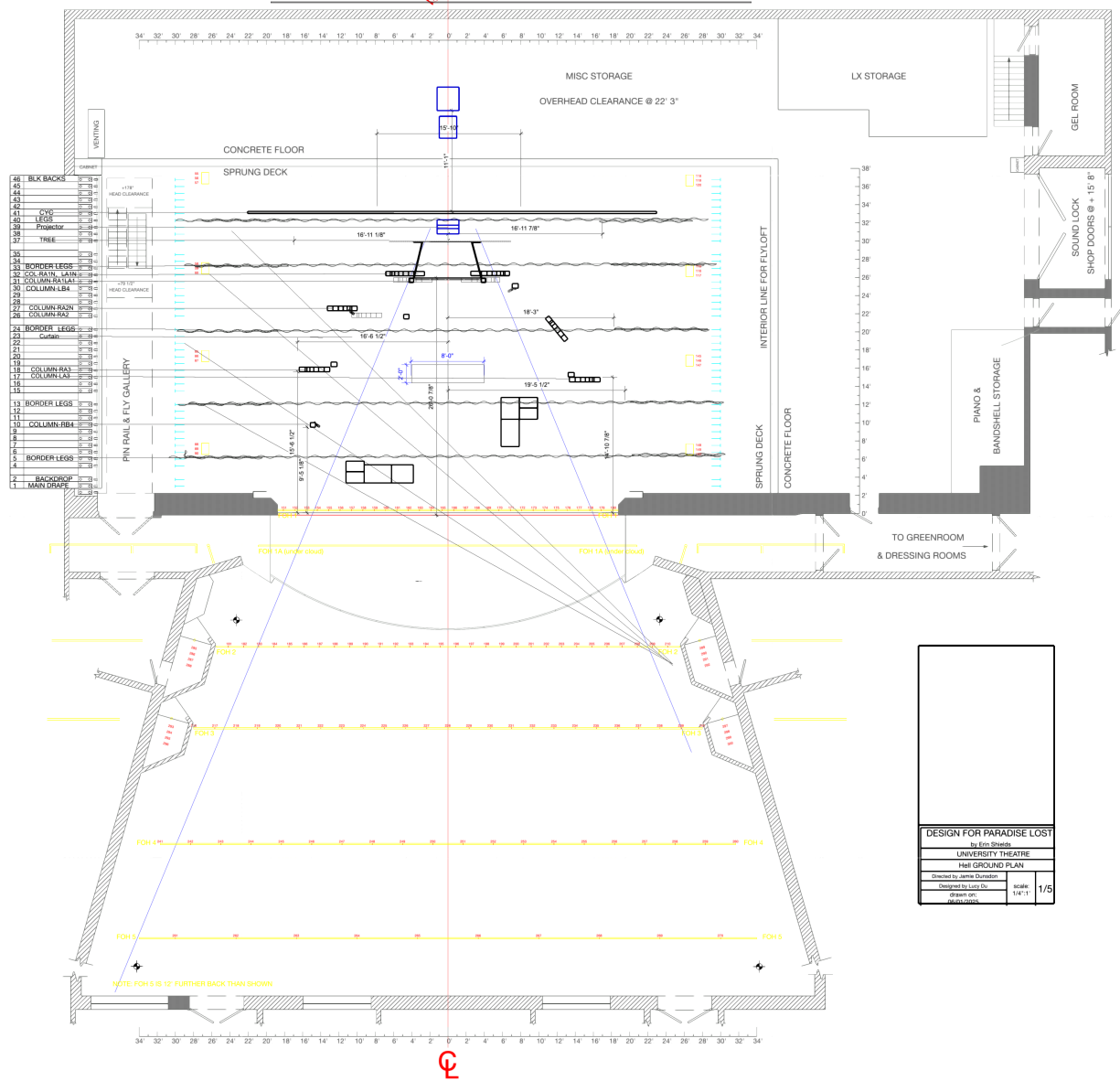
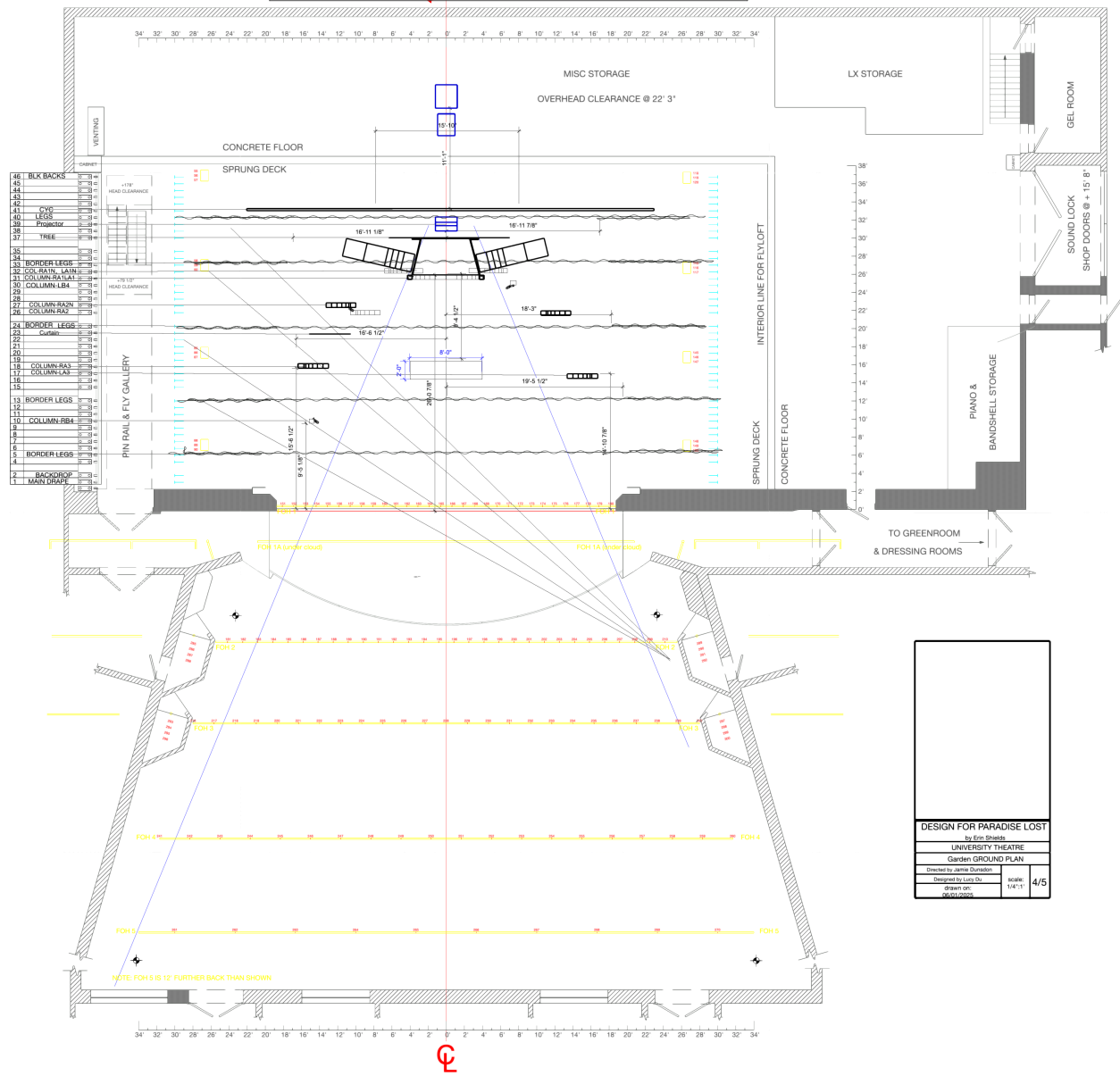


Figure B9. Author's collection, Hell Ground Plan, 2025



DESIGN FOR PARADISE LOST	
By Eden Theatre	
UNIVERSITY THEATRE	
Garden GROUND PLAN	
Directed by Jamie Davidson	
Designed by Luke De	Scale: 1/4" = 1'
Drawn on: 16/01/2025	4/5

Figure B11. Author's collection, Eden Ground Plan, 2025

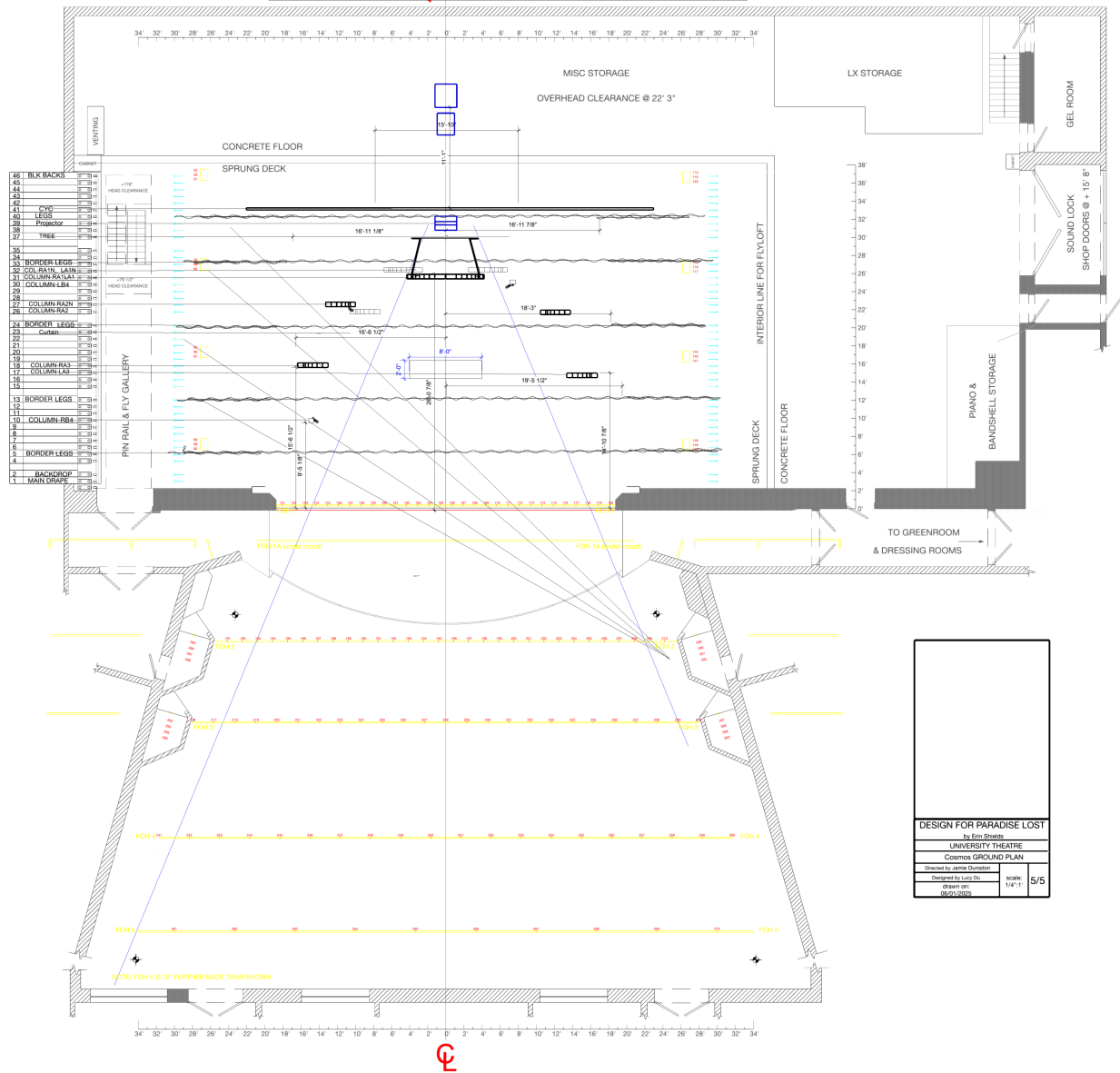
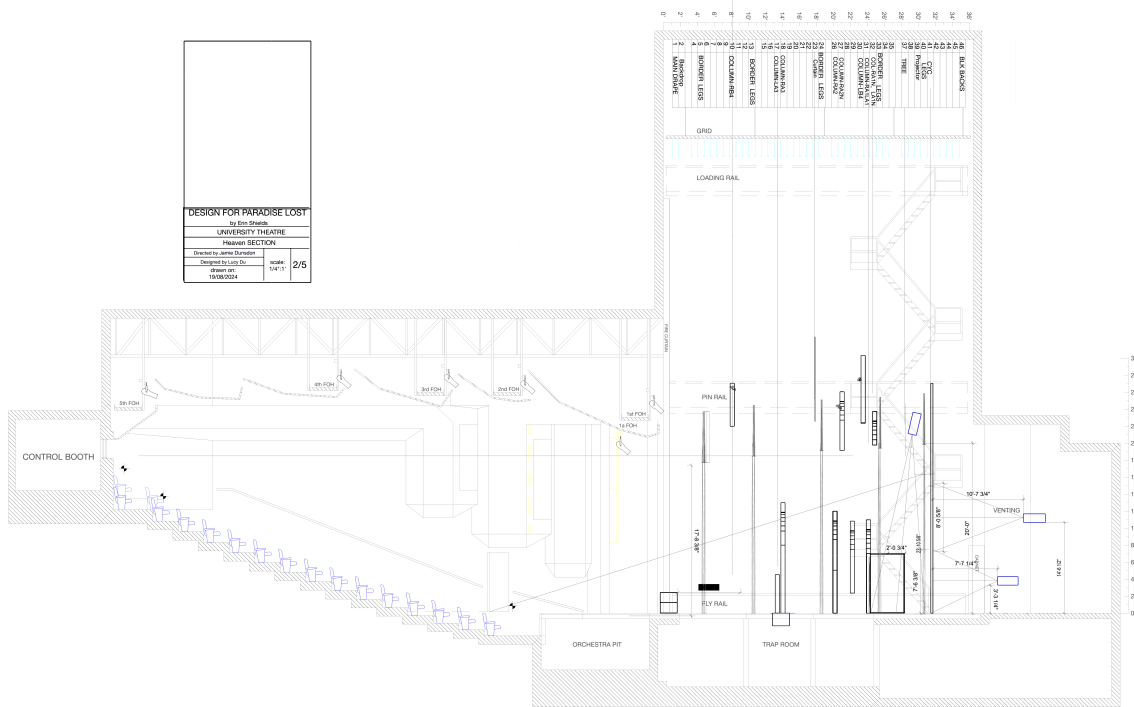


Figure B12. Author's collection, Cosmos Ground Plan, 2025

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Figure B13. Author's collection, Heaven Section View, 2025

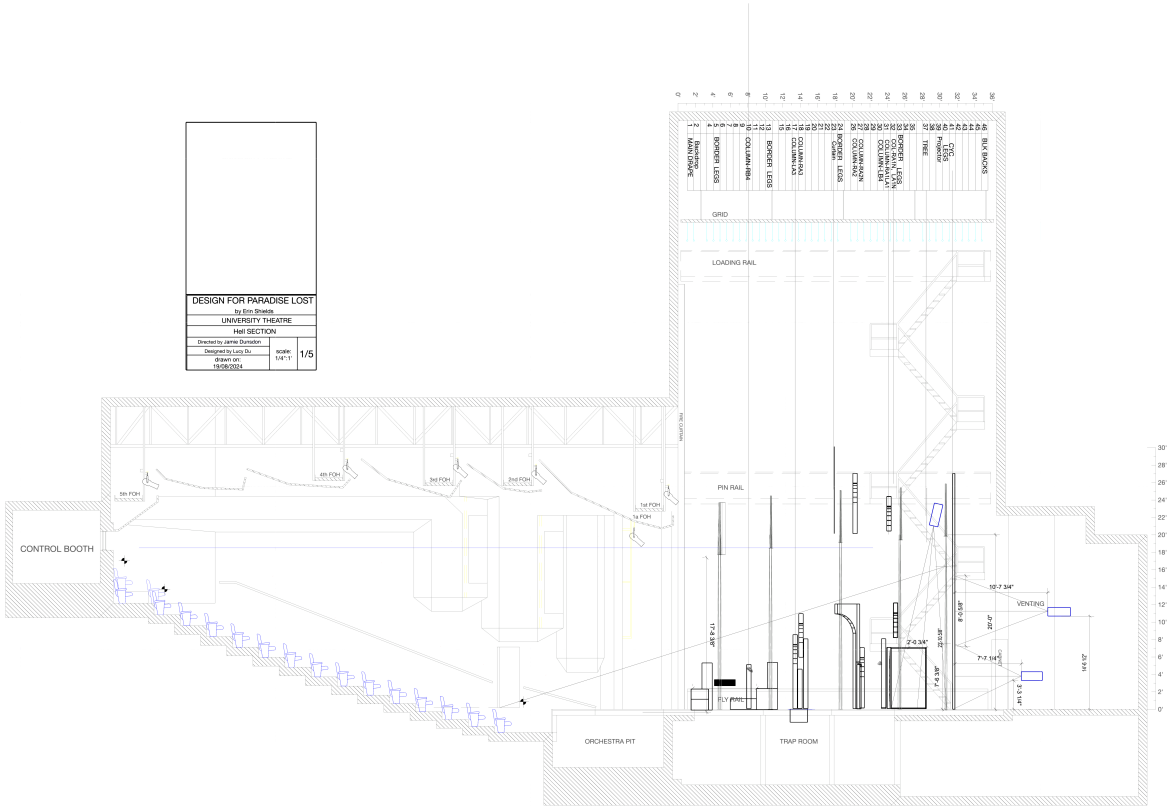


Figure B14. Author's collection, Hell Section View, 2025

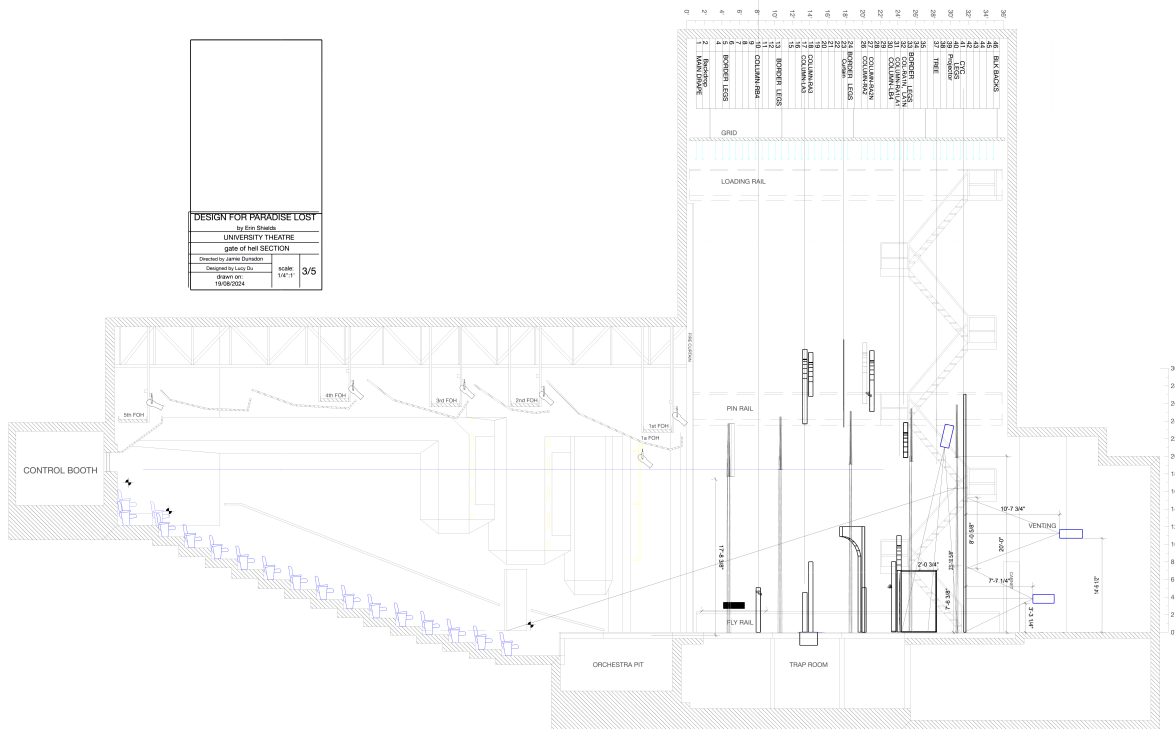


Figure B15. Author's collection, Gate of Hell Section View, 2025

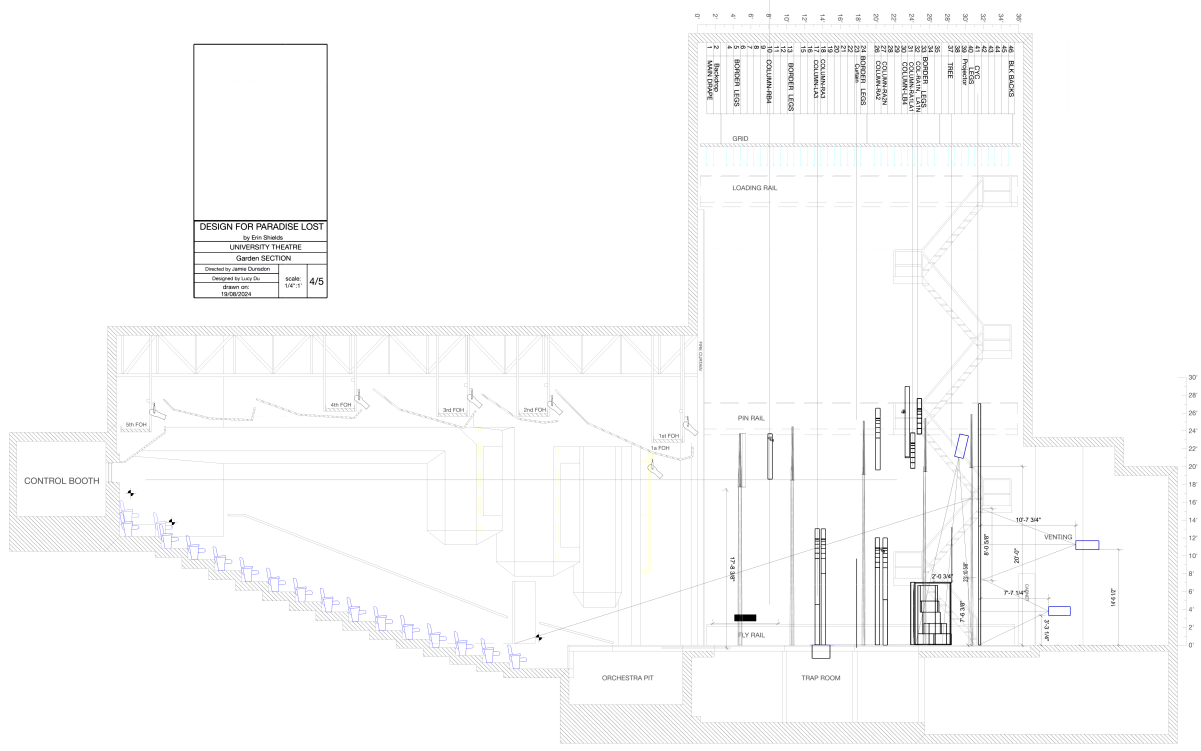


Figure B16. Author's collection, Eden Section View, 2025

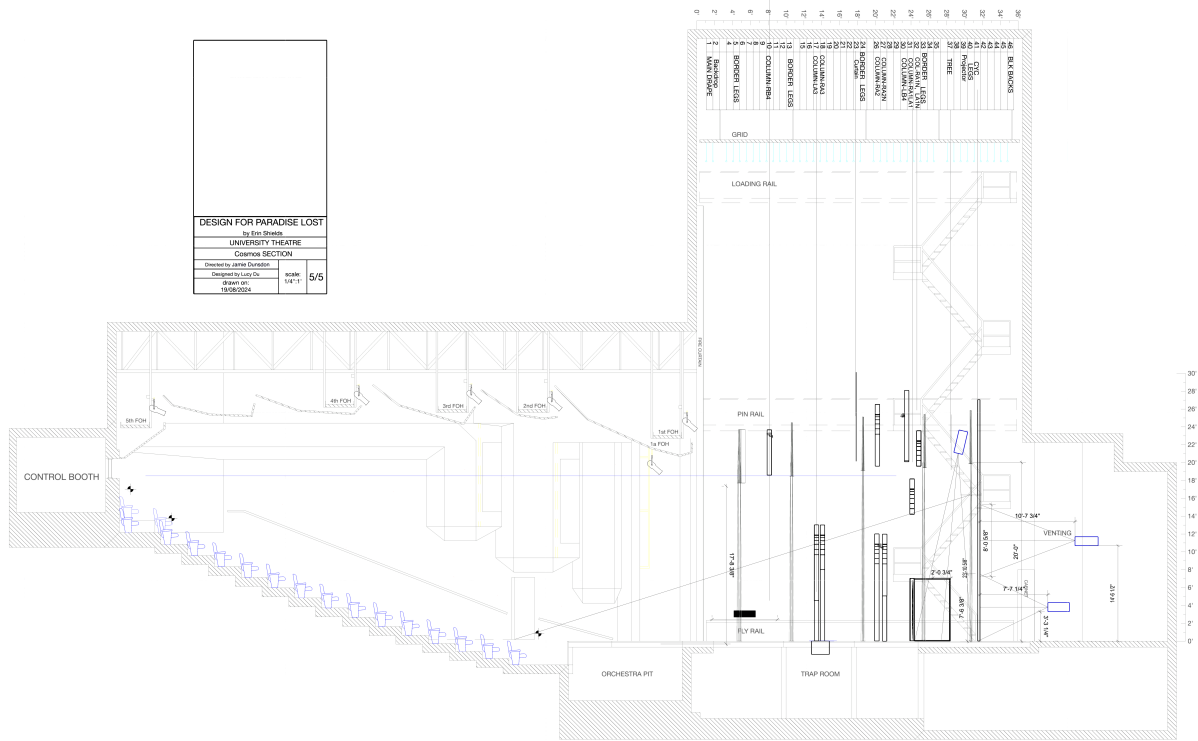


Figure B17. Author's collection, Cosmos Section View, 2025

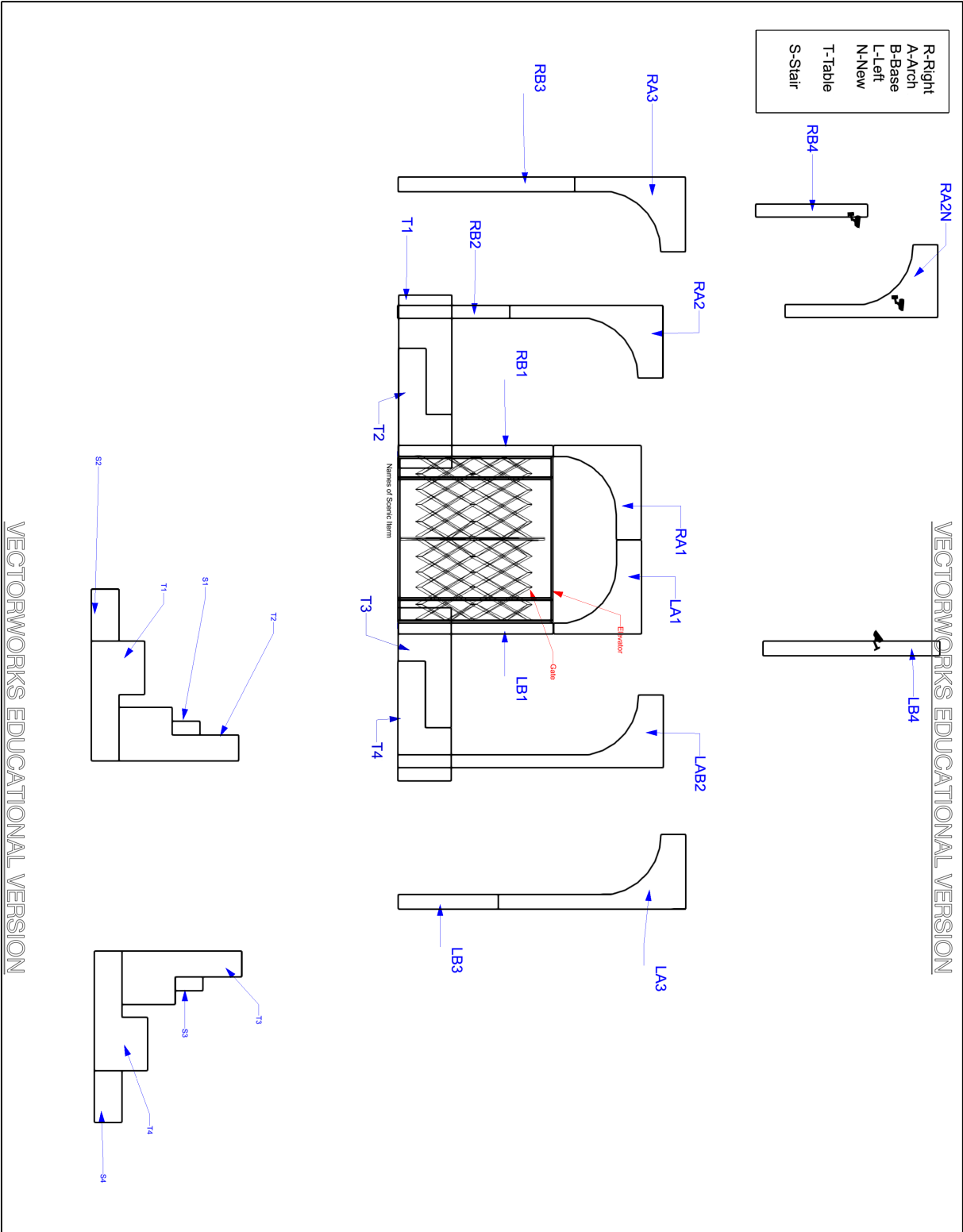


Figure B18. Author’s collection, Labeling System in Stage Design, 2025

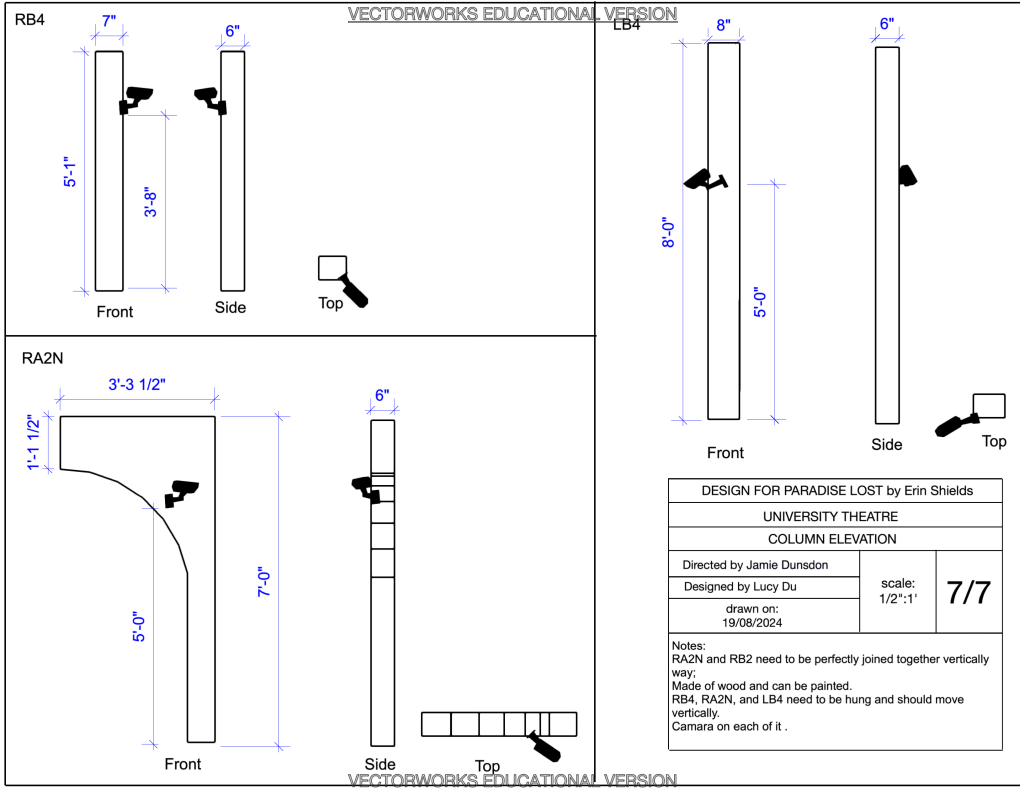


Figure B19. Author's collection, Column Elevation, 2025

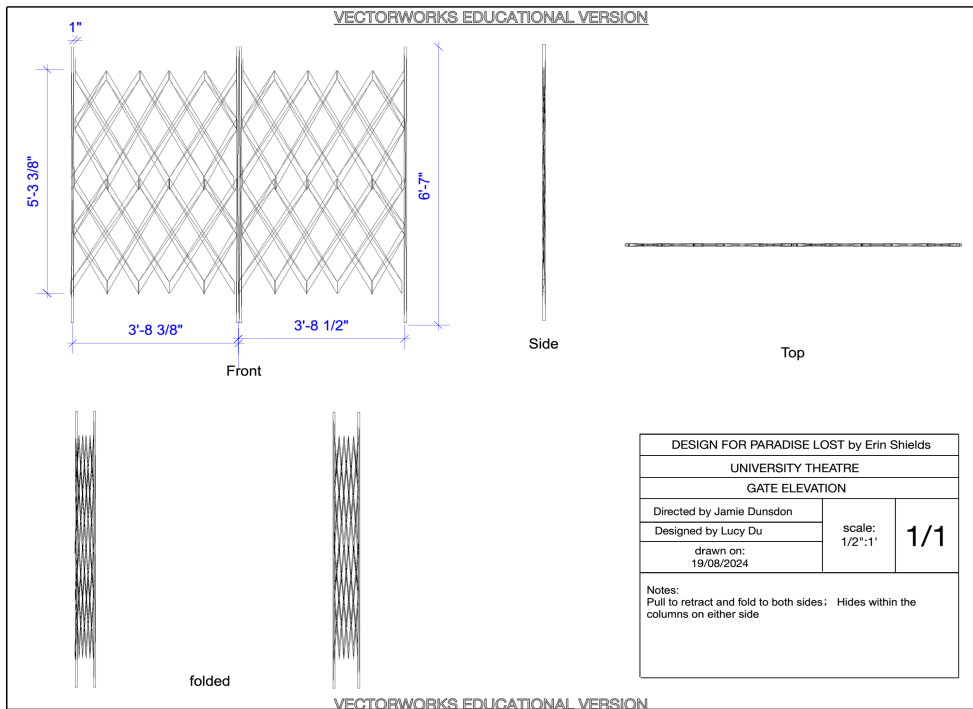


Figure B20. Author's collection, Gate Elevation, 2025

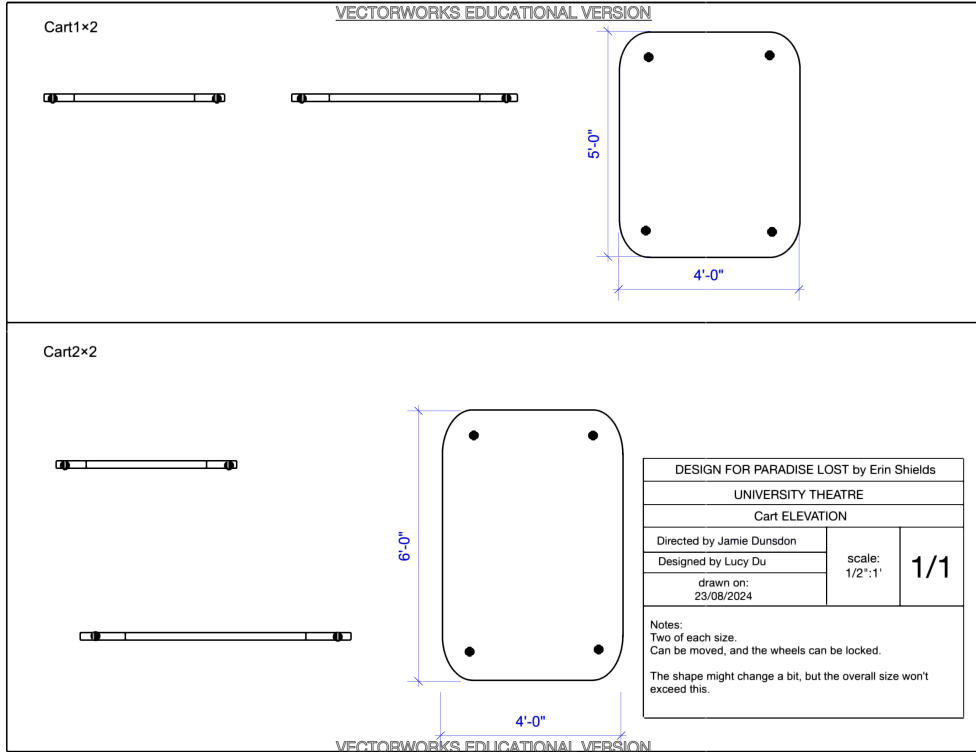


Figure B21. Author's collection, Cart Elevation, 2025

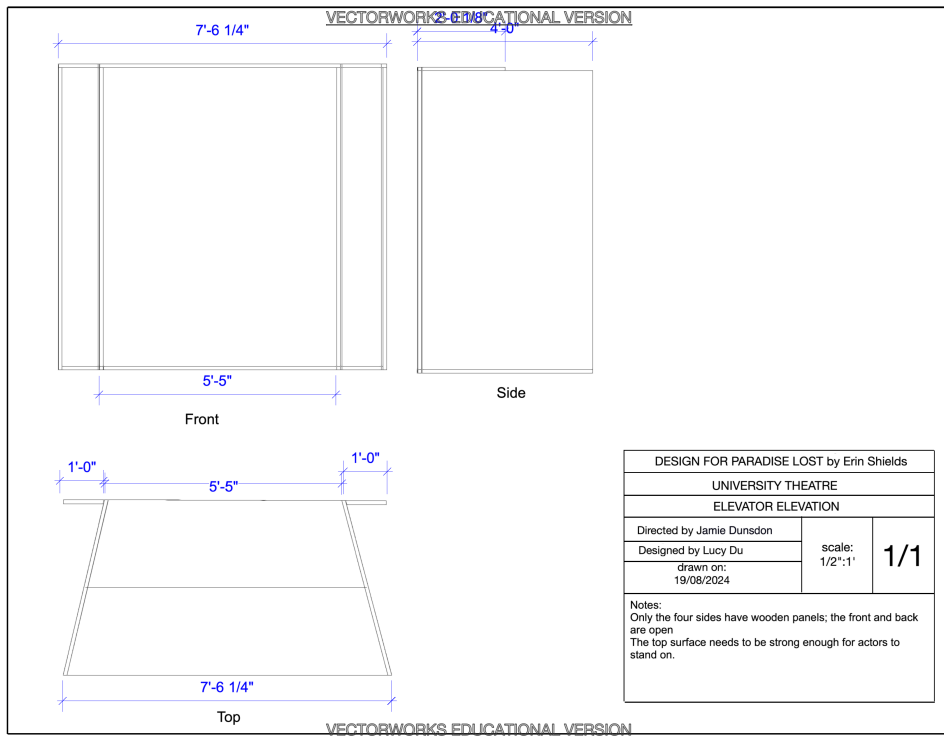


Figure B22. Author's collection, Box Elevation, 2025

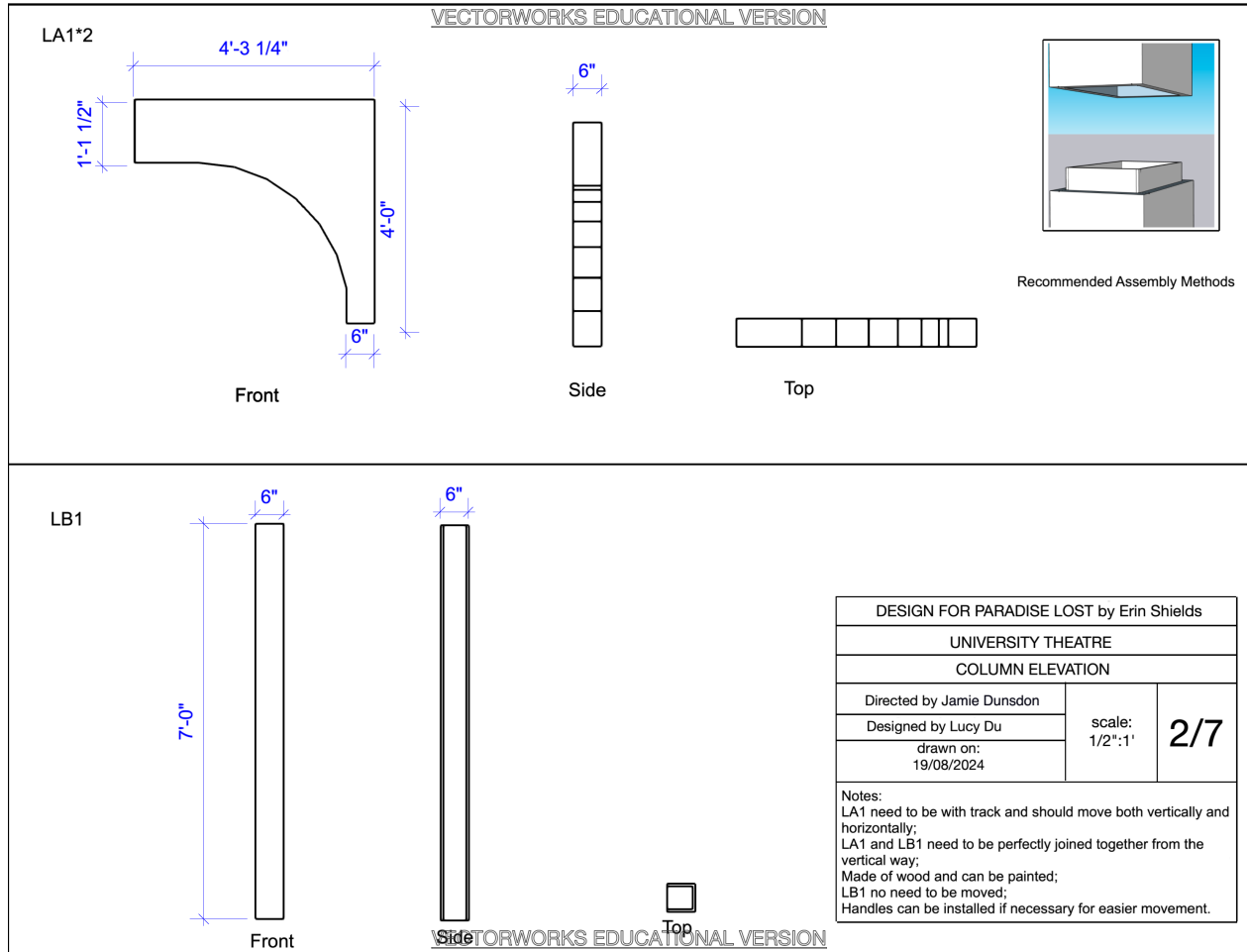
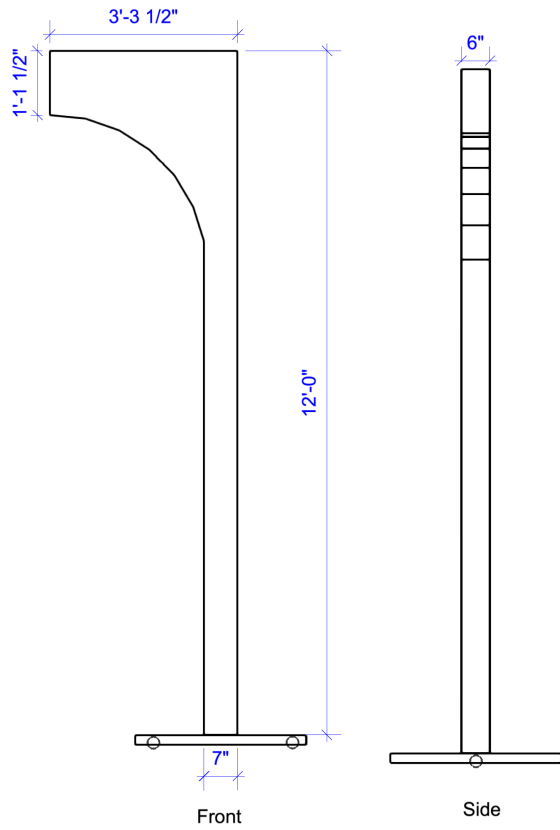


Figure B23. Author's collection, Column Elevation, 2025

LAB2

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DESIGN FOR PARADISE LOST by Erin Shields		
UNIVERSITY THEATRE		
COLUMN ELEVATION		
Directed by Jamie Dunsdon	scale: 1/2":1'	4/7
Designed by Lucy Du		
drawn on: 19/08/2024		
<p>Notes: RAB2 is a single unit that should not be separated. It needs to have wheels to move, and with locks to secure the wheels. A base plate is needed to prevent the column from tipping over. Both sides to be visible.</p>		

VECTORWORKS EDUCATIONAL VERSION

Figure B24. Author's collection, Column Elevation, 2025

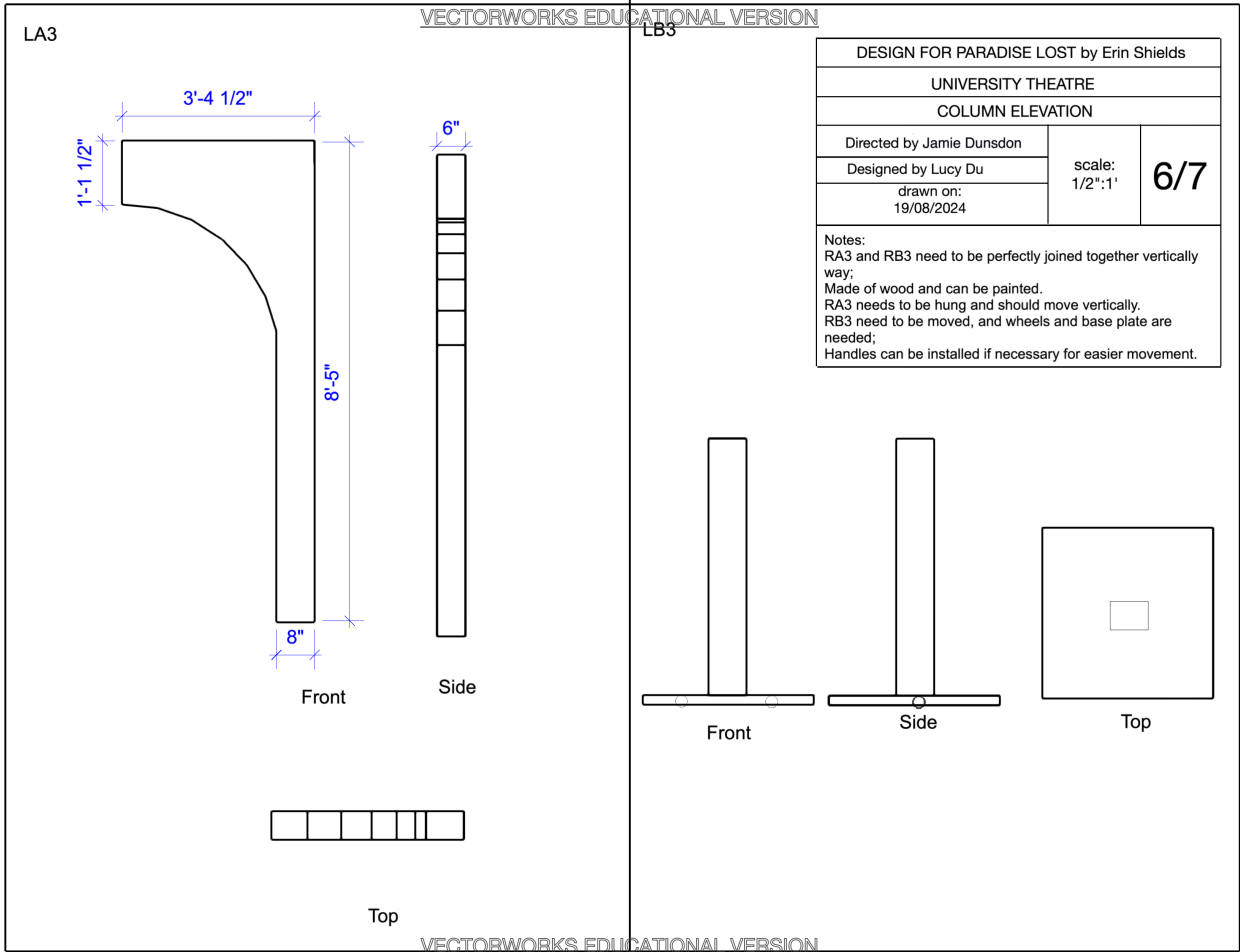


Figure B25. Author's collection, Column Elevation, 2025

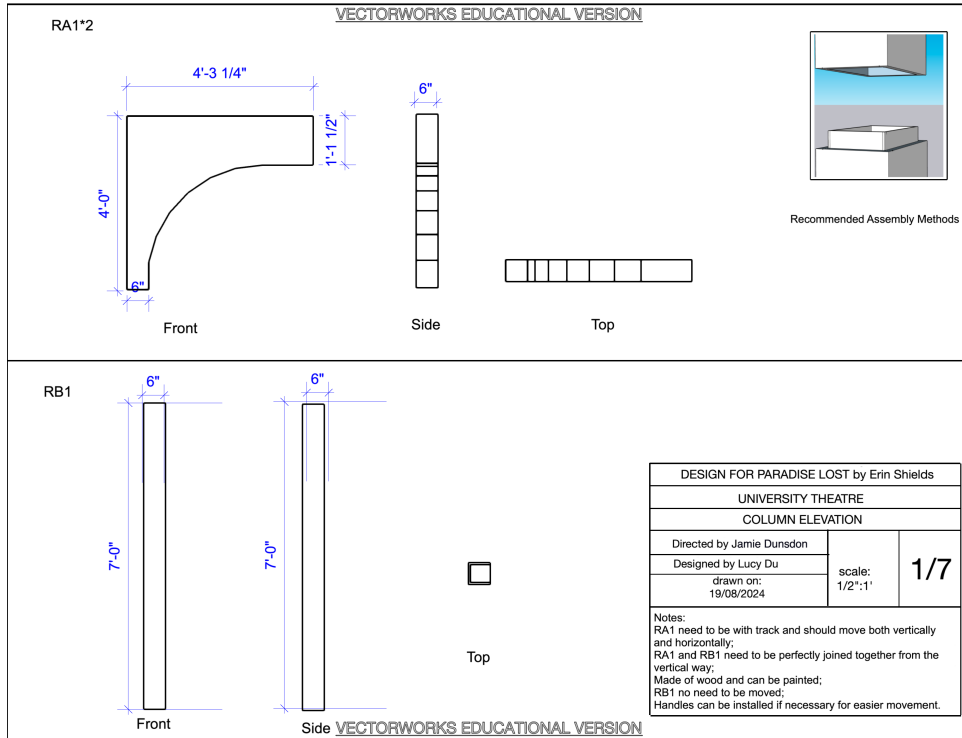


Figure B26. Author's collection, Column Elevation, 2025

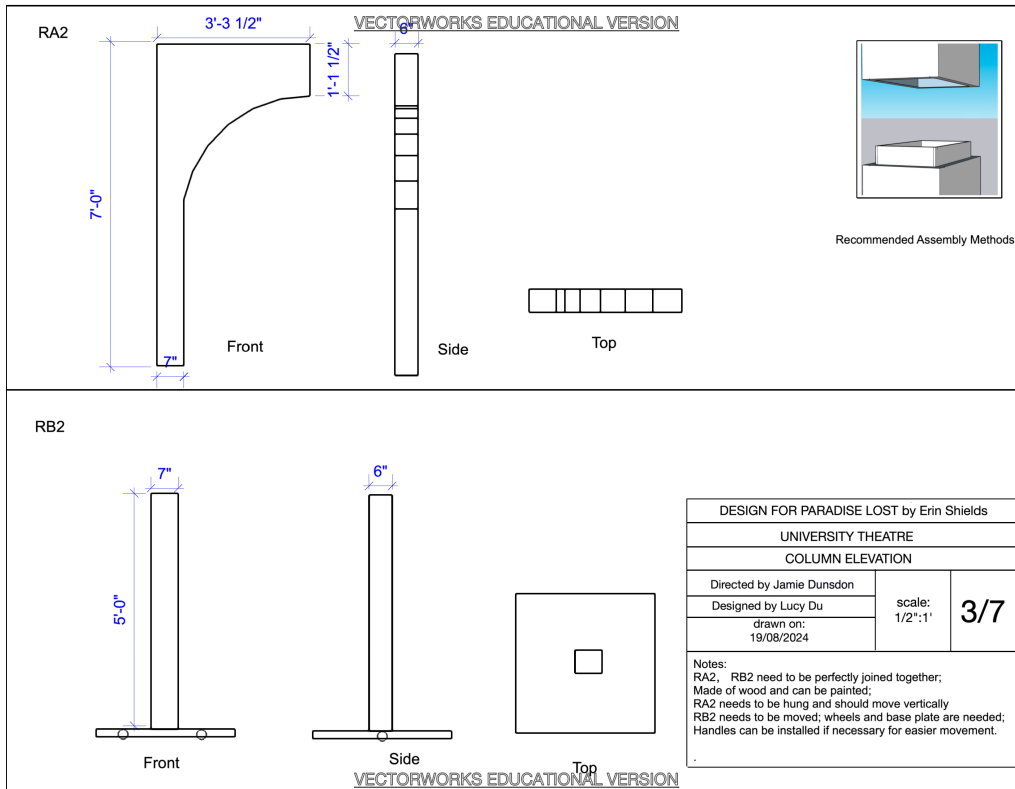


Figure B27. Author's collection, Column Elevation, 2025

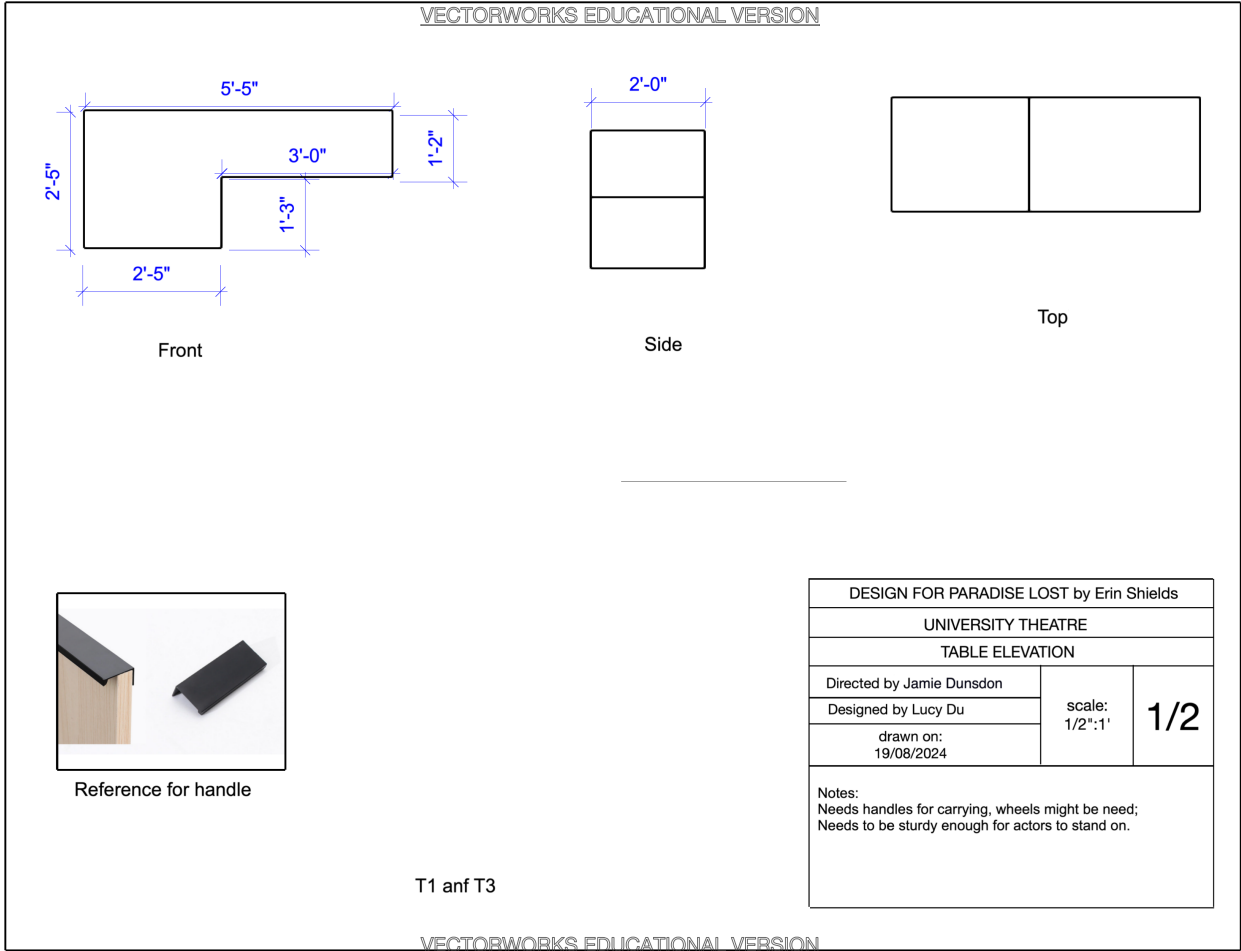


Figure B28. Author's collection, Table Elevation, 2025

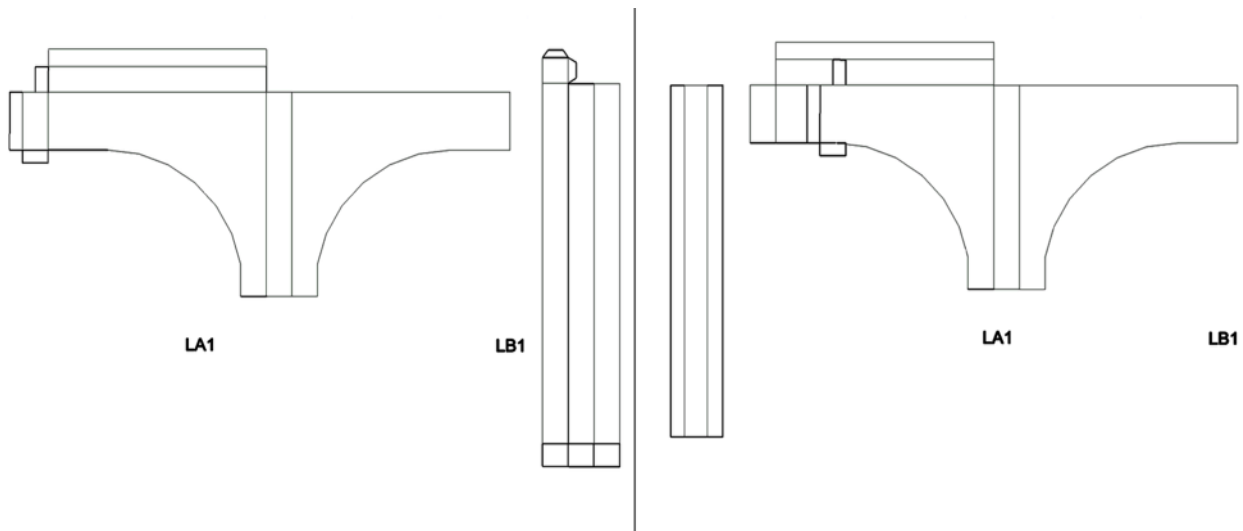


Figure B29. Author's collection, Column Paper Model Template, 2025



Figure B30. Author's collection, Graphic Design in the Play, 2025

PROD NAME
FLY RAIL
RUNNING NOTES

Venue: **UT**
 Dates: **DATE**
 Stage Manager: **SM**

CUE #	Time	LS #	NAME OF PIECE	ACTION	SPEED	NOTES
PRESET						
		1	Main Curtain			
		2	False Proscenium			
		4	False Fly Rope			
		5	#1 Border + #1 Legs	To Trim		
		7	LX #1	To Trim		
		10	Column #RB4			
		11	Feather Drop			
		12	Audio #1	To Trim		
		13	#2 Border + #2 Legs	To Trim		
		15	LX #2	To Trim		
		17	Column #LA3			
		18	Column #RA3			
		23	Curtain			
		24	#3 Border + #3 Legs	To Trim		
		26	Column #RA2			
		27	Column #RA2N			
		29	LX #3	To Trim		
		30	Column #LB4			
		31	Column #RA1N + #LA1N			
		32	Column #RA1 + #LA1			
		33	#4 Border + #4 Legs	To Trim		
		34	Audio #2	To Trim		
		35	LX #4	To Trim		
		37	Tree			
		38	#5 Border	To Trim		
		39	#1 Projector	To Trim		
		40	#5 Legs	To Trim		
		41	RP CYC	To Trim		
		45	CYC Lights	To Trim		
ACT #1						
Scene 1 - I Woke Up						
Feather Drop		11	Feather Drop	In		On First 'Heaven' in Chorus (Pg 7)

Figure B31a. Author's collection, Fly Rail Cue Sheet 1, 2025

PROD NAME
FLY RAIL
RUNNING NOTES

Venue: **UT**
Dates: **DATE**
Stage Manager: **SM**

Scene 2 - The Infernal Council					
1	18	Column #RA3	In		During Building Pandaemonium (pg 12)
	30	Column #LB4	In		
	31	Column #RA1N + #LA1N	In		
2	10	Column #RB4	In to floor		Visual- once Bases are in position (pg 12)
	17	Column #LA3	In to floor		
	27	Column #RA2N	In to floor		
Scene 3 - The Gates of Hell					
3	18	Column #RA3	Out		
	27	Column #RA2N	Out		
	31	Column #RA1N + #LA1N	Out		
4	32	Column #RA1 + #LA1	In		
ACT #2					
Scene 1 - The Heavenly Council					
5	10	Column #RB4	Out		
	30	Column #LB4	Out		
6	18	Column #RA3	In		
Scene 2 - Finding Earth					
7	26	Column #RA2	Out		
8	27	Column #RA2N	In		
Scene 3 - In The Garden					
9	32	Column #RA1 + #LA1	Out		
10	23	Curtain	In		
	37	Tree	In		
ACT #3					
Scene 1 - Preparing the Defence					
11	27	Column #RA2N	Out		
	23	Curtain	Out		
12	37	Tree	Out		
	26	Column #RA2	In		
13	32	Column #RA1 + #LA1	In		
Scene 2 - Evening in the Garden					
	23	Curtain	In		
	26	Column #RA2	Out		

Figure B31b. Author's collection, Fly Rail Cue Sheet 2, 2025

PROD NAME
FLY RAIL
RUNNING NOTES

Venue: UT
Dates: DATE
Stage Manager: SM

	27	Column #RA2N	In		
	31	Column #RA1 + #LA1	Out		
	37	Tree	In		
INTERMISSION					
	2	False Proscenium	In		
	4	False Fly Rope	In		
	37	Tree	Out		
ACT #4					
Scene 1 - The Play					
	2	False Proscenium	Out		
	4	False Fly Rope	Out		
Scene 2 - The Ultimate Sacrifice					
	23	Curtain	Out		
	26	Column #RA2	In		
	27	Column #RA2N	Out		
	32	Column #RA1 + #LA1	In		
Scene 3 - Justice					
	23	Curtain	In		
	26	Column #RA2	Out		
	27	Column #RA2N	In		
	32	Column #RA1 + #LA1	Out		
	37	Tree	Out		
ACT #5					
Scene 2 - Gate					
	10	Column #RB4	In		
	18	Column #RA3	Out		
	23	Curtain	Out		
	27	Column #RA2N	Out		
	30	Column #LB4	In		
	32	Column #RA1 + #LA1	In		
	37	Tree	Out		
Scene 3 - Aftermath					

Figure B31c. Author's collection, Fly Rail Cue Sheet 3, 2025

APPENDIX C: PRODUCTION PHOTOS



Figure C1. Photo credit: Monica Lockett and Matilde Almeida, Archival Photo, 2025



Figure C2. Photo credit: Julia Wasilewski, Archival Photo, 2025



Figure C3. Photo credit: Julia Wasilewski, Archival Photo, 2025



Figure C4. Photo credit: Julia Wasilewski, Archival Photo, 2025



Figure C5. Photo credit: Julia Wasilewski, Archival Photo, 2025



Figure C6. Photo credit: Julia Wasilewski, Archival Photo, 2025



Figure C7. Photo credit: Lucy Du, Archival Photo, 2025



Figure C8. Photo credit: Monica Lockett and Matilde Almeida, Archival Photo, 2025



Figure C9. Photo credit: Julia Wasilewski, Archival Photo, 2025