



Design Process

(ADPA5024)

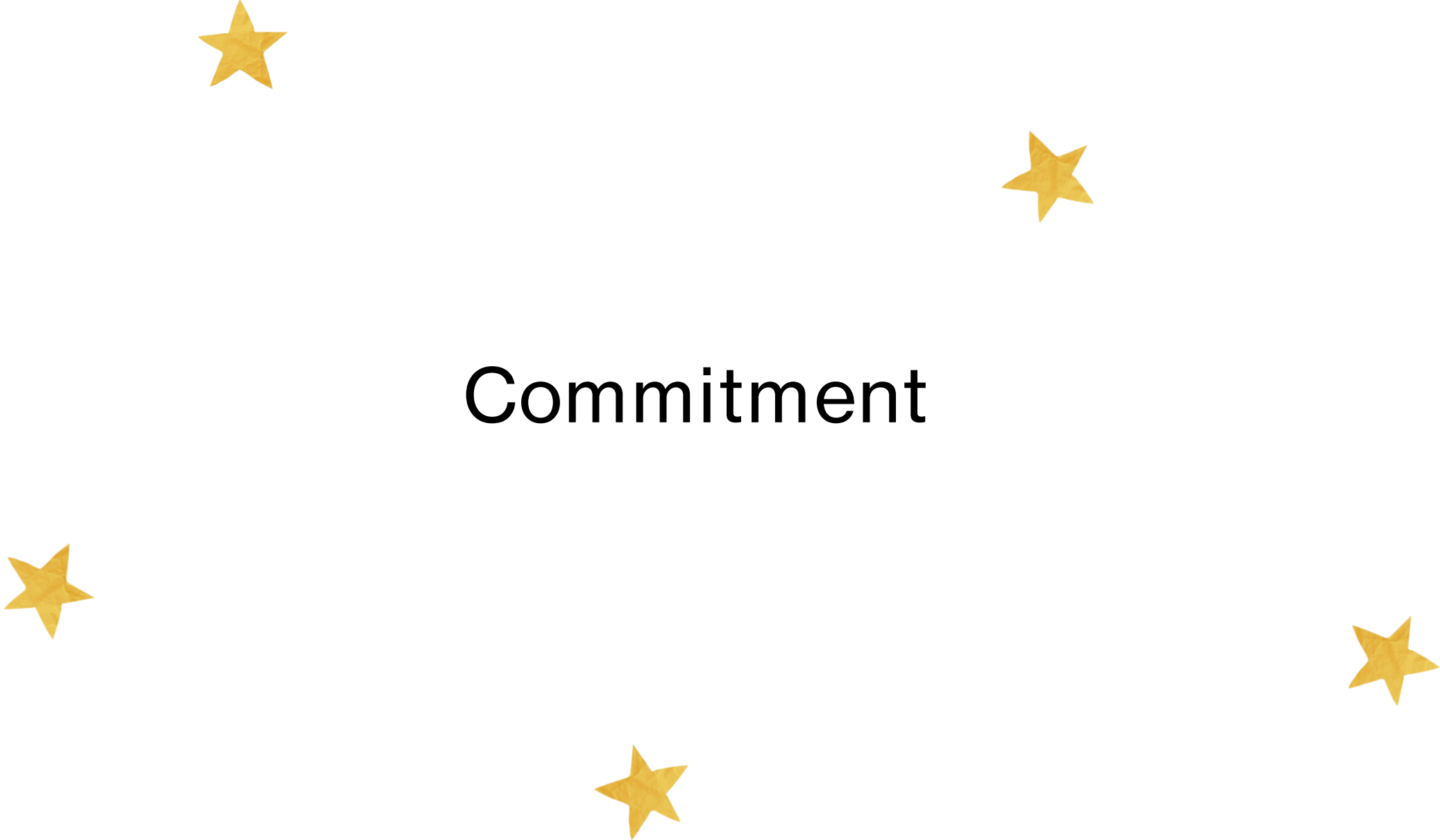
Alice Pearson

Structuring my design process

For my Process Workbook, and to help guide my approach to this module, I decided to follow the 7 steps of design:

1. Commitment
2. Analysis
3. Research
4. Incubation
5. Selection
6. Implementation
7. Evaluation

The first stage of this task was to read *Nights at the Circus* independently, then participate in a table read, this was my commitment to the project. I noted down my initial response and any questions I had to do with the text.



Commitment

Nights at the Circus

Initial thoughts:

Did I like or dislike it?

After my first read, I felt I was entertained and had enjoyed reading the script, but it had left me with some questions. Although it is relatively short, there is a lot to digest in terms of the characters, locations and historical references. The main reason I was confused was because I found the structure of the play quite hard to follow. Characters would sometimes get entrance and exit directions but not always, and sometimes they would enter without having had a cue to leave. Which happens when Lizzie and Fevvers re-enact burning down the Brothel, they are never given a direction to exit but they both enter on the next page (p24). This is most likely due to the staging, which isn't described in directions which is what makes it hard to visualise. I did enjoy the fact it is set in the late 19th century, and I enjoyed reading the characters' varying dialects.

Most interesting moments?

The most interesting moments for me were the story of Fevvers' upbringing in Act 1 and the transition to the circus in Act 2. This could be because I could create an image of these places based off of different plays or films I had seen with these settings. I mostly enjoyed Fevvers' backstory because it paints an interesting image and it was at times humorous.

Things I want to look into further/ didn't understand?

I didn't understand the ending and 'bare white landscape' (Rice and Morris, 2006, p58) as it felt abrupt and vague, to be left up to interpretation which I couldn't decide on. This was until I looked into the novel by Angela Carter in which the circus experiences a train ambush in Siberia.

First Read

The bare white landscape could be in reference to the snowy setting of Siberia and the blizzard that occurs, or interpreted as heaven after the train's derailment - or in the plays adaptation, an explosion. Also in the original novel, Jack suffers from Amnesia, hence the disorienting story structure and ending.

Here are some of my notes of what I wanted to look further into:

- Ma Nelson, upon hearing the name 'Nelson' I thought of Nelsons Column, a monument that commemorates Vice Admiral Nelson for defeating the French and Spanish navies at the battle of Trafalgar. Hence Ma Nelson's Spanish sword
- The Winged Victory, this is what Ma Nelson calls Fevvers, a reference to a Greek statue that I want to look into during my research (see slide: 49)
- I looked at what a 1890s brothel might look like and the setting of East London at the end of the Victorian era (see slide: 18 Victorian London)
- What is a Samson? The name is associated with a biblical figure known for his extreme strength.
- What is the Tivoli's significance? The Tivoli in Copenhagen is an amusement park, in the late 1800s a pantomime theatre was constructed and became home to Italian inspired pantomime, introduced by mime performer Giuseppe Casorti. Thanks to its word-less performance style, it became an international attraction.
- Who is Lizzie's character in reference to? She represents the Suffragette movement, she builds a bomb which was a part of the Suffragette's activism and throughout the play, has strong beliefs in the liberation of women. She is outspoken about how she doesn't trust men and doesn't like them getting close to Fevvers, who is the brothel's symbol of hope and freedom for women in the next century.
- Lastly, the initial themes I noted were, feminism, war, religion, matriarchy, violence and ownership.

The Authors

To gain full understanding of a text, it is crucial to understand the context of when it was written and by who. I looked at those involved in the plays creation and what else they had worked on.

Angela Carter

- The novel of *Nights at the Circus* was released in 1984, and is set in the late 19th century, where we as a contemporary audience, know what the 20th century holds for many of the locations and characters in the play – World Wars, growing industrialisation and technological advancement. We also know that in Britain, the Suffragette movement officially begins in 1903 and women get the vote in 1918.
- Angela Carter was an English writer who was known for her politically driven fantastical fiction works. Another famous work of hers includes her book *The Bloody Chamber* (1979), a series of short stories based off traditional folk lore. In 1984, one of the short stories: *The Company of Wolves*, a retelling of *Little Red Riding Hood*, was made into a horror film under the same name.
- Image: Angela Carter, photograph by Tara Heinemann, (1984)



The Authors

Emma Rice

- Started with Kneehigh Productions as an actor then Artistic Director. *Nights at the Circus* was adapted by Tom Morris and Emma Rice for the Kneehigh and opened at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith in 2006
- She worked for the Globe as Creative Director where she opposed traditional Shakespearian storytelling. Due to artistic differences, she stepped down in 2018, after two years in the role. Her work for the Globe was controversial yet innovative, she aimed to make Shakespeare's works more accessible to wider and more diverse audiences, including younger people and those new to theatre.
- She then founded Wise Children, named after Angela Carter's 1991 novel, as a fresh start for her to produce contemporary theatre despite her public fallout with the Globe. Wise Children has been renamed to the Emma Rice Company earlier this year.
- Tom Morris served as Artistic Director for Bristol Old Vic from 2009 until stepping down in October 2022, and has been the Associate Director of the National Theatre since 2004. Prior to that, he was the Artistic Director of BAC from 1995 to 2004. Throughout his career, he has also worked extensively as a journalist, broadcaster, freelance writer, producer, and director.
- Tom Morris's writing and directing style is known for blending genres, and having the ability to bring stories to life in dynamic, engaging ways on stage. He has worked with Emma Rice on *The Wooden Frock* (2006) as co-writer for Kneehigh Productions, *A Matter of Life and Death* (2007) a stage adaptation for the National Theatre, and more recently *Orpheus in the Underworld*, English National Opera production, with lyrics written by Emma Rice.



Emma Rice, Photograph by Richard Grassie, (2025)



Tom Morris, Photograph by Jon Craig, (2019)

Table Read

In our first session as a class, we did a table read, I read Ma Nelson and Samson's parts. When I wasn't reading my lines, I made notes on anything that I hadn't picked up on in my first read through or any more references I still needed to look up.

	Notes from group table read
	- Inspired by Angela Carter Novel, can borrow
	- Research writer's spec. Emma Rice
	↳ read 'the stage' in the library, subscribe
	- Where is Raykanik
	- What 'delusions' has Jack seen as opposed to Fenners, Fenners' elements, what was common entertainment in the late 1890s?
	- In Breakdown, note directions
	- Research all locations Jack has visited p14
	- What a coloney versus meaning
	- Look at food items, been introduced to another location, wrapping
	- Ma Nelson - Spanish sword - Nelson's column
	- 'world blown to bits' p18 foreshadowing
	- Fenners P19, scored to be 'singularity'
	- Jack's POV - asks qs for the audience, asks lots of questions
	- Jack is on 'unhatched egg' P24, alluding to how Fenners began her life - he has an innocence
	- Act one is a show - show within a show
	- All 'circus' characters are from different locations - what is the significance of this?
	- Fenners is the only one who can come near the Princess
	- P31, where do the tongs originate & from
	- Bulfo's song P33 - sadness, war is another theme, historical battles which one does he refer to here?
	- P37 'enter the space' how is it shown on stage
	- Bulfo describes Heaven as a child's dream - bicycles, sweets
	- Rebirth and want for a new life - new century
	- 'Adam & Eve' P42
	- P43 'adolescent skin'
	- Lizzie refers to everyone as a 'bird'?
	- P48 'to the ends of the earth' foreshadowing
	- Where do women head go?

	- P50 bathroom, more religious ~~spite~~ references
	- P51 lots of action
	- Sybil isn't a fan of Fenners
	- Look into Jack's job, he is a journalist, what is his purpose?
	- P55 Fenners has always been 'looked after' she wants to be 'free'
	- Fenners dagger - Ma Nelson's sword?
	- long pause after explosion, circus is blown up
	↳ enough for scene change
	- 'bare white landscape' - how is this achieved?
	- P59, Rosalind & Orlando - Shakespeare ref
	- P60 - marriage is disrupted as a trap by Lizzie, she explains Fenners is dependent on her and will be lost without her - being the very example of a trapped mother
	- Into theme of ownership - statue that Fenners is referred to
	- white void - heavens?
	- How accurately might you stick to historical accuracy

	Table read
	Mary - stage directions, windjammer
	Kearney - ~~Ed~~ Colonel Kearney
	Annie - Ma Nelson, Samson
	Anne - Vesta
	Charlie - Voice Over, chorus, creatures of Theatre
	Sarah - Mignon
	Carn - Mr Sugar
	Ant ~~Alfred~~ - Jack Walser
	Annie - Fenners
	Mary - Princess, Lizzie
	~~Rosie~~ Lizzie

I found the table read very useful because it was good to hear different voices for different characters. This helps you make better distinctions between them, unlike when you read it all in your own voice. It was also nice to have a class discussion to see how others reacted to it and to hear alternative interpretations of the story.

In industry, table reads are done once casting is complete. For similar reasons, it is useful to hear the script read aloud, and as a designer, you can listen and make notes for a script breakdown. At this stage, for the purpose of visualising the story, you know what each character looks and sounds like.

Analysis



Script Breakdown and Lists

In my own time, I did a script breakdown, this is so I can identify and colour code everything relevant to a designer when it comes to world-building. This is a great way to comb through a script, so it can be taken apart. I highlighted any references to set, costume, lighting, sound and props. Below is an example of this.

Breakdown
Initial qs & table read notes
Set
Costume
Lighting
Sound
Prop
Lists:
Character
Location
Era / times

NIGHTS AT THE CIRCUS

And I've got such a lot
In front and behind.

As you look up at me with your sparkling eyes
All dewy and soft as the sea
Is there magic at work? Is it truth? Is it lies?
No, it's sweet indivisible me.

Curtains shut.

VESTA: Are you still here?

JACK: Well, yes.

VESTA: Got you interested has she?

JACK: No. I'm just writing my story. Your *winged woman*
has arms as well as wings, right?

VESTA: Of course

JACK: Well the wings of the birds are nothing more than
the forelegs - the arms. The skeleton of a wing shows
elbows, wrists and fingers, all complete. A fabulous bird
woman - if such a thing existed - ought to possess no
arms at all. Her arms should be her wings.

VESTA: She's in there in *her dressing room*. Knock on the
door.

JACK: It's a curtain.

VESTA: Try it.

He knocks.

*The curtains open to reveal FEVVERS, crouched on the
piano and feeding herself like an animal. WALSER looks
at her, amazed.*

FEVVERS: What's the matter? Ain't you never seen a girl
eating before?

MORRIS / RICE

was tarts in there with more book learning than you've
got pimples.

LIZZIE: Right girls. Today it's gender politics. Here is
woman. And here is man. And here is a today's lesson.

Men deserve humiliation
They are built for shame
Custom made for degradation
Born to suffer pain.

When they are about to kiss you
Crush them in the rocks
If they say that they will miss you
Piss into their socks

MA NELSON enters *carrying LIZZIE's bag.*

MA NELSON: Our Liz, all this will never do! You'll make
us all redundant if you go on.

LIZZIE: It's just something I find helpful to hum while
entertaining the clients. *→ she doesn't work in the brothel
but lived there and entertained*

JACK: Great. A revolutionary whorehouse. I wish I had
been there, Miss Fevvers. But I'm writing about you.

FEVVERS: Not in a hurry are you Mr Nordic Adventurer?
You sit here next to me. *→ implies they are going to watch
a show*

WALSER gets up and sits next to FEVVERS.

You should know that there's no point in painting the
angel without the landscape. You wouldn't know where
it was macking flying, now would you? Stop thinking
about the destination and you'll have more fun on the
journey.

CHORUS: What's that?

MA NELSON: It's a bag. I found it on our very own
doorstep.

CHORUS: What's in it?

LIZZIE: Look it's a baby.

CHORUS: All covered in egg s
What sort is it?

LIZZIE: It's a girl.

CHORUS: Good. Let's keep he
Hang on. What's that on her
Fevvers. Fevvers. Fevvers.
Let's give er a bath.

LIZZIE: *(Grabbing the bag.)* I'll h

FEVVERS: I didn't have one r
Speaking of which... *Rai*
She offers him champagne.
Put hairs on your chest.

JACK: I've got hairs on my ch

FEVVERS: Can't have us girl
some.
They make him drink.
Look at me, Jack. All titte

LIZZIE: You can see perfect

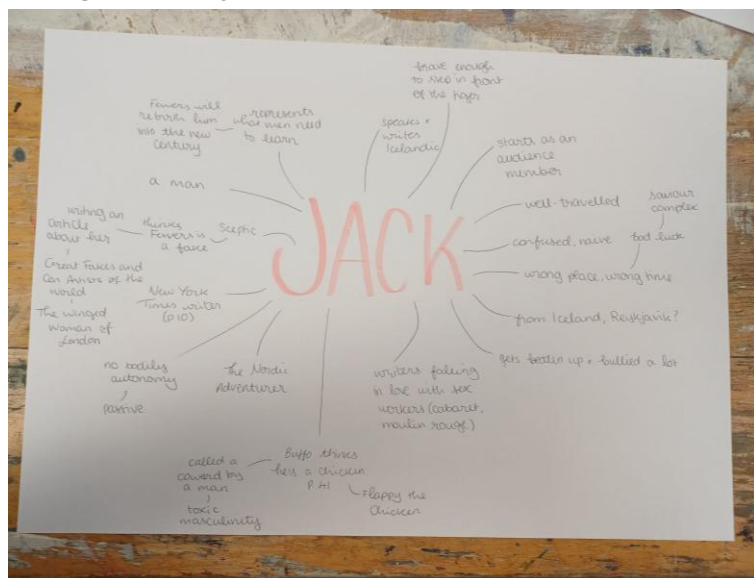
JACK: I'm only doing as I'm

LIZZIE slaps him.

FEVVERS: You wouldn't b
developer. Flat as a boar
fourteen. But then I was

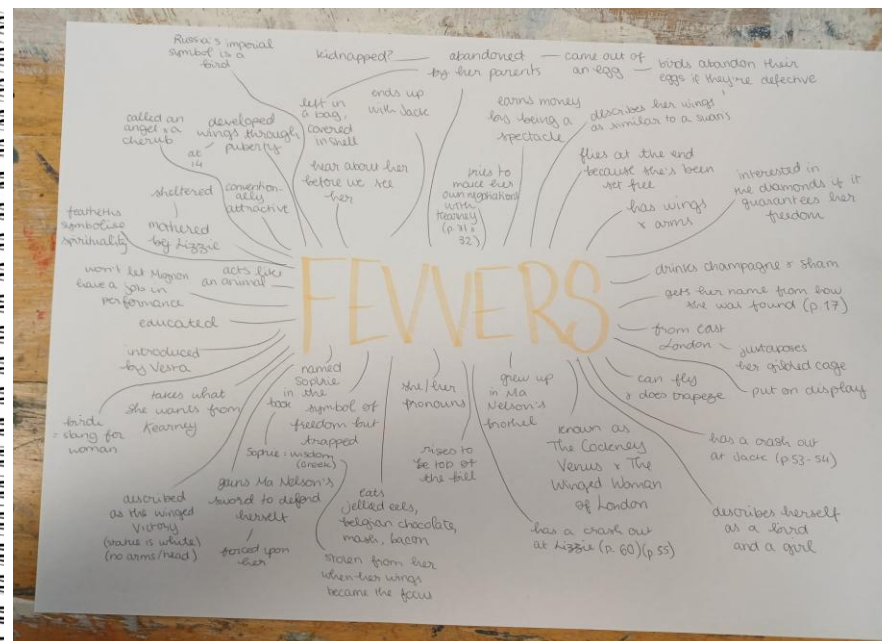
Script Breakdown and Lists – characters

Next, as a class we broke down each character and location in the script, and noted its themes. Here are our class breakdowns along with my notes.

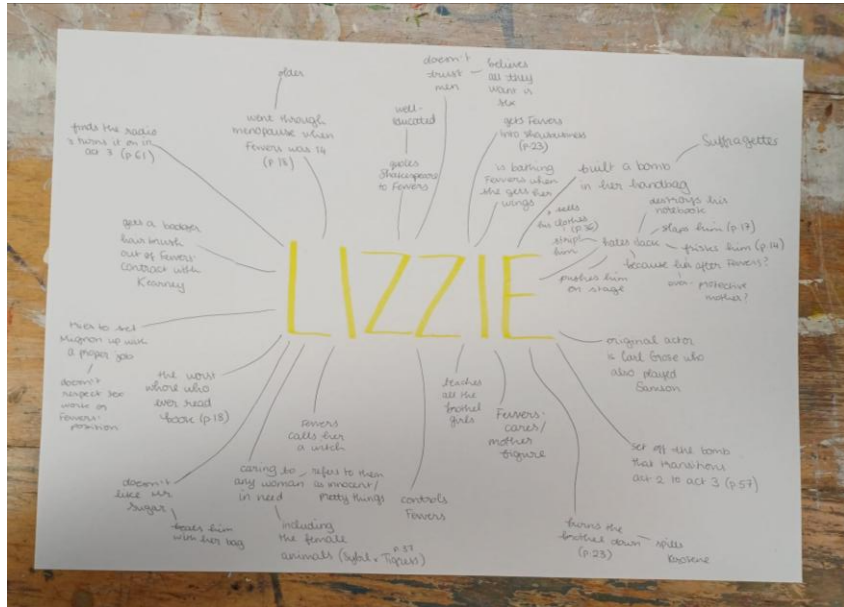


Jack -
Journalist writing article 'Great Fakes and Con-artists of the World' - works for New York Times
Icelandic, from Reykjavik
Called Icelandic Adventurer
not a lot of body autonomy - dressed & undressed, make up applied to him
Gender roles - Protective, saviour complex?
Does he represent us?

Fenvers -
known as winged woman of London
Cahney Venus - working class but also goddess of Beauty
Has wings and arms
Orphan
Wasn't born but hatched
Lizzie is her mothering figure
Lives in
Can fly, uses trapeze - again trapped but free
don't know her age but grown, no longer have 'ribbons in hair'
She was hatched not born - implies she could have been abandoned by her mum as there was something wrong with her, or stolen
For a human has tampered with them
After the barnet burnt down, she loved cabaret then joined the circus where she becomes top of the bill well cultured likes to visit museums with Lizzie
Described as winged Victory
Powdered white - purity, to look like winged Victory, Statue with no head or arms



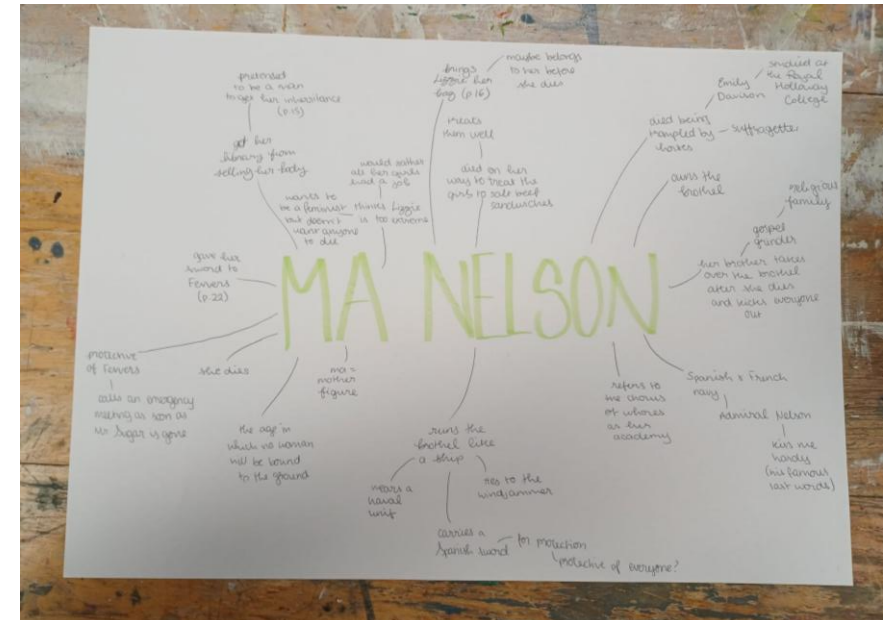
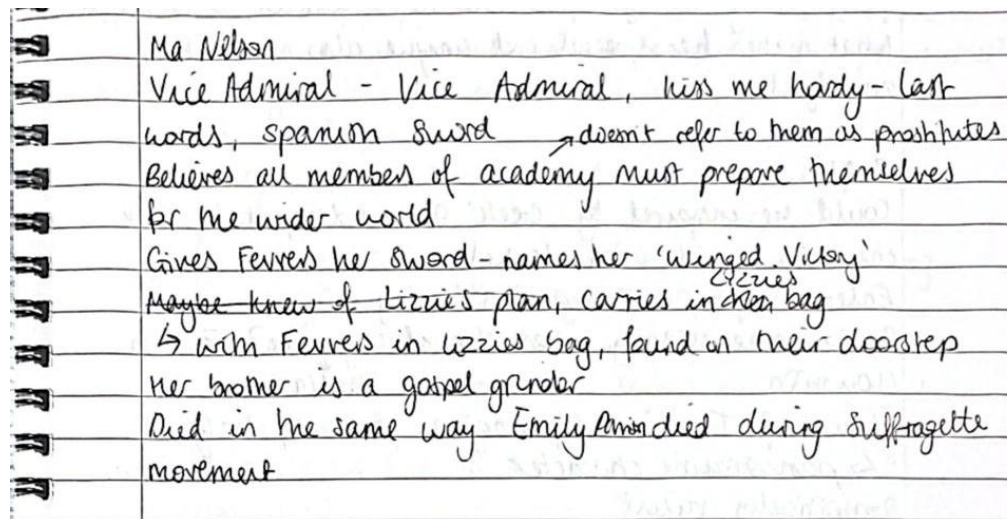
Script Breakdown and Lists – characters



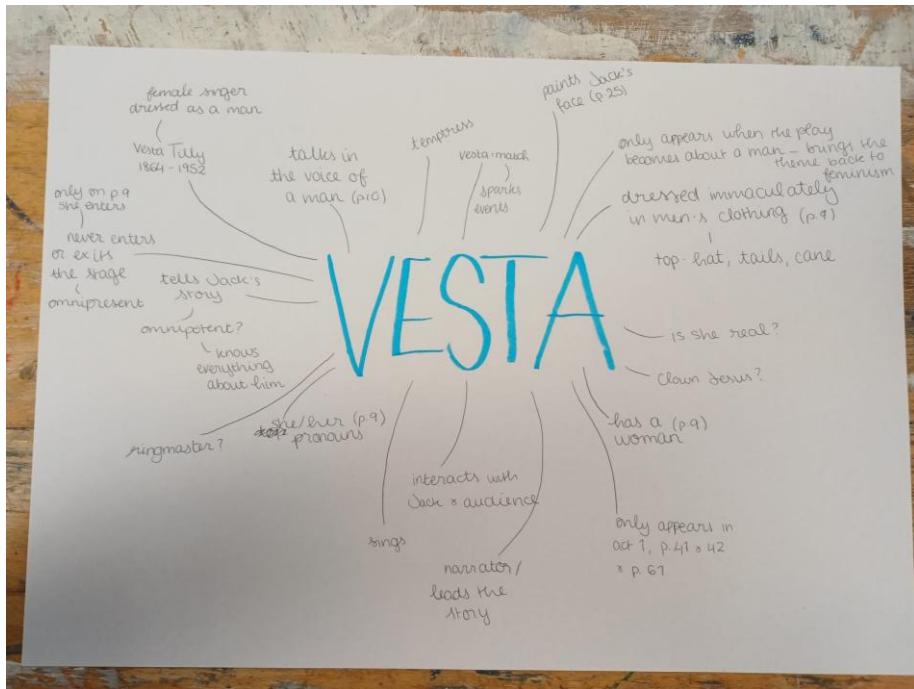
Lizzie

Builds the bomb, starts the fire represents Suffragette movement

Educates the other women in the bracket maternal figure



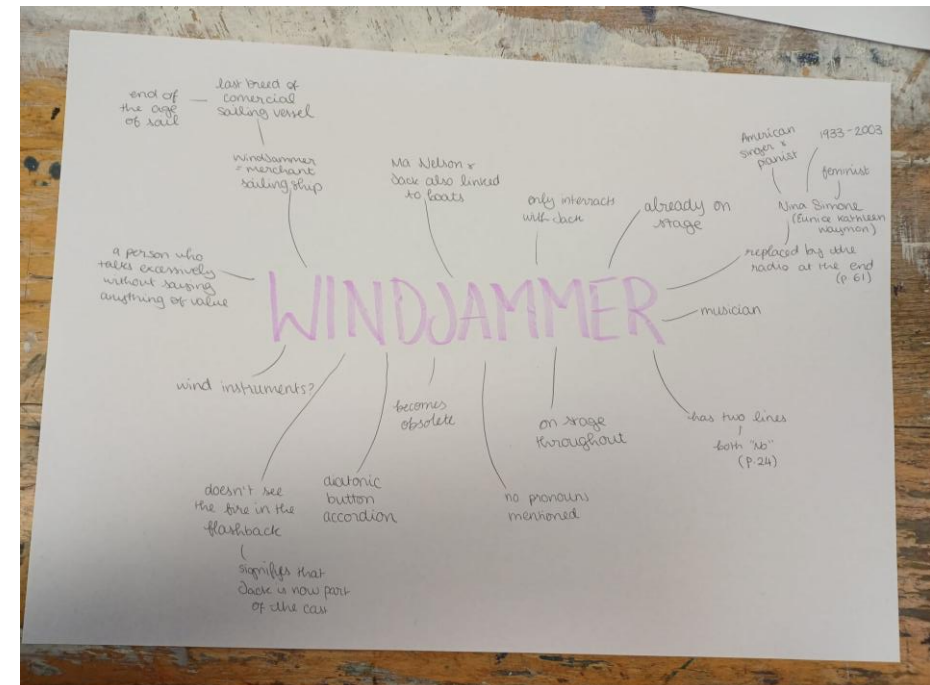
Script Breakdown and Lists – characters



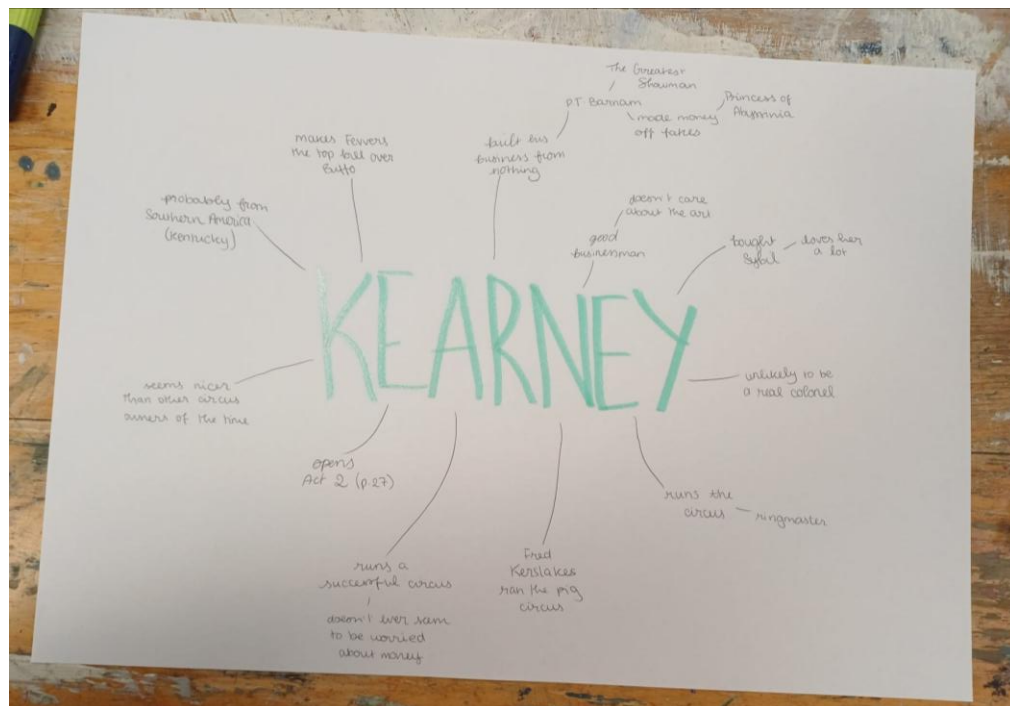
Vesta - look into meaning - Vesta Tilly
 ↳ narrator, all knowing, sports the story, Ringmaster character
 ↳ comes back p.41, sings song & at end, p.24
 Does she leave at all?

Windjammer - multiple meanings
 Merchant sailing ship - last of its kind, invention of steam
 kind of instrument
 19th century
 Only two lines 'No' & 'No'

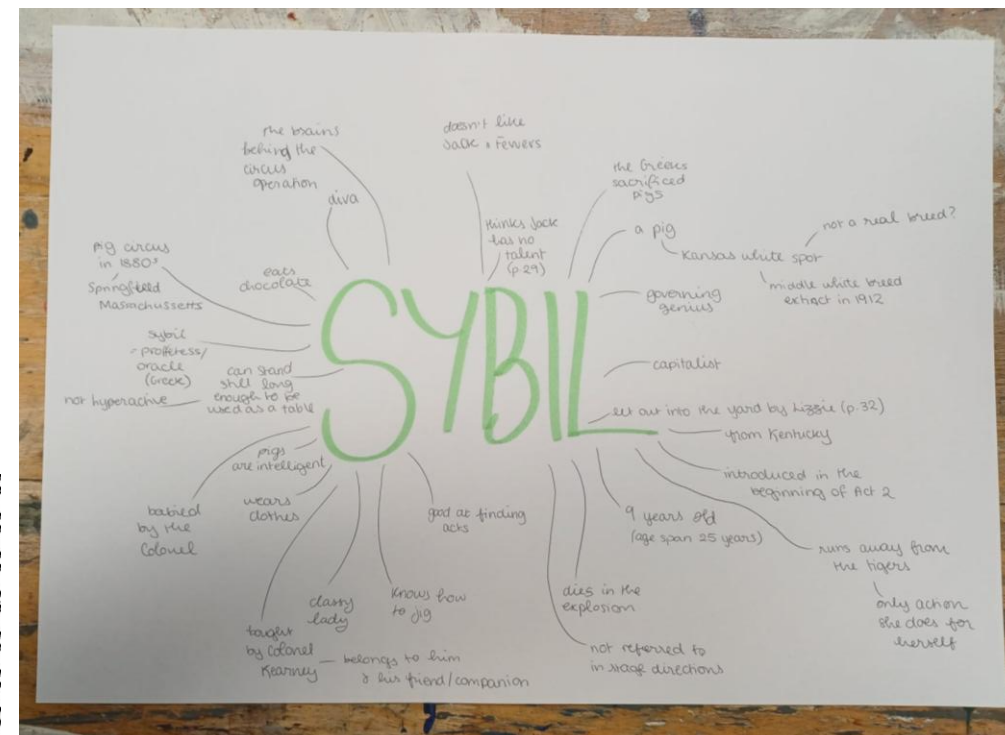
Windjammer only interacts with Jack
 ↳ also doesn't see 'fire'
 ↳ replaced by radio - 'Nina Simone'
 new age of tech, what song plays?



Script Breakdown and Lists – characters

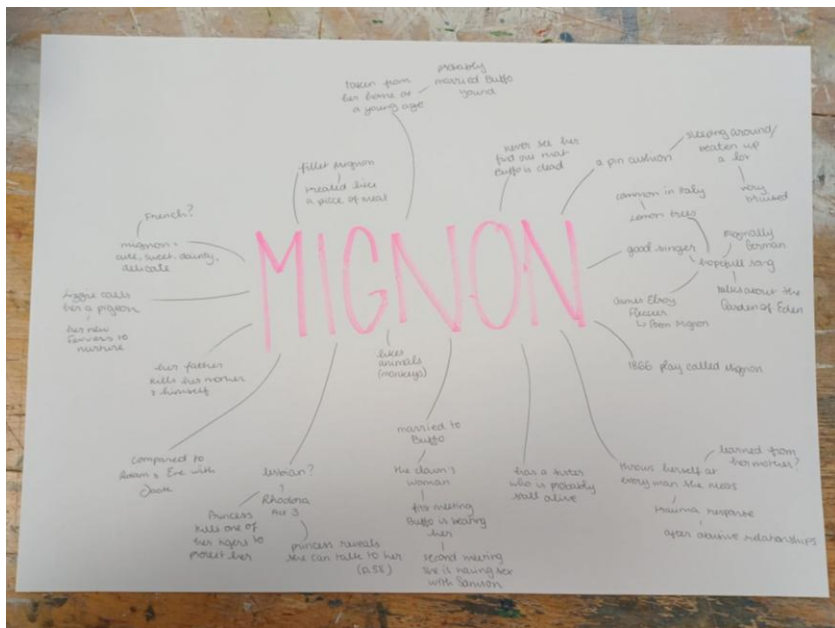


Colonel Kearney - army official
 What is a colonel - Elvis
 Look at other circus owners of the time - Bailey, Burnham
 Built his business from nothing (with his pig)
 Look at circus acts of the time - some acts paid with alcohol



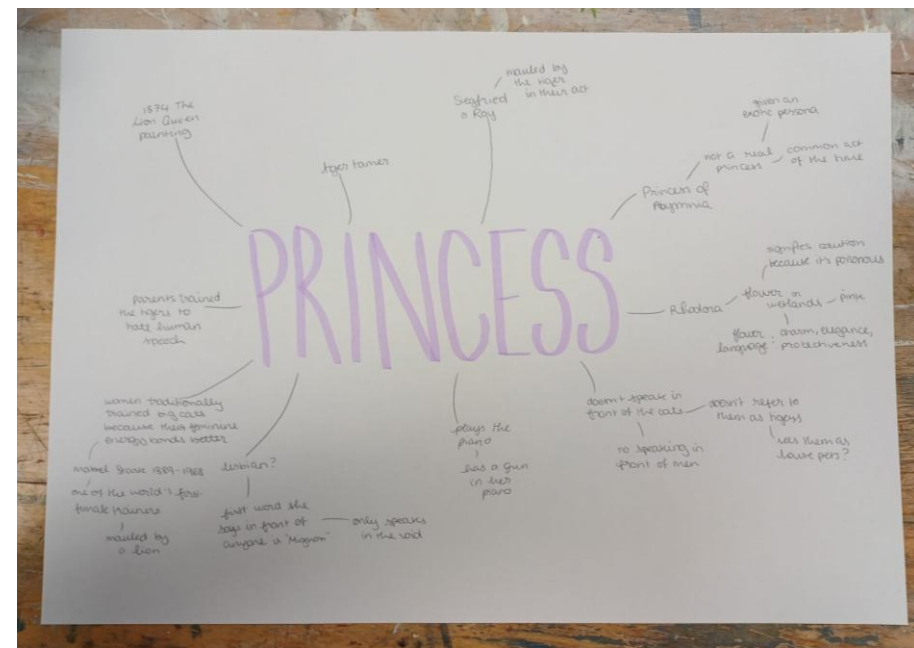
Sybil - 9 year old, Kansas white spot pig - real breed?
 Psychic - can spot showbusiness opportunities
 Described as 'governing genius' behind the show
 Called the 'mystic pig'
 Colonel Kearney bought her in Lexington Kentucky
 Doesn't think Jack has any talent

Script Breakdown and Lists – characters

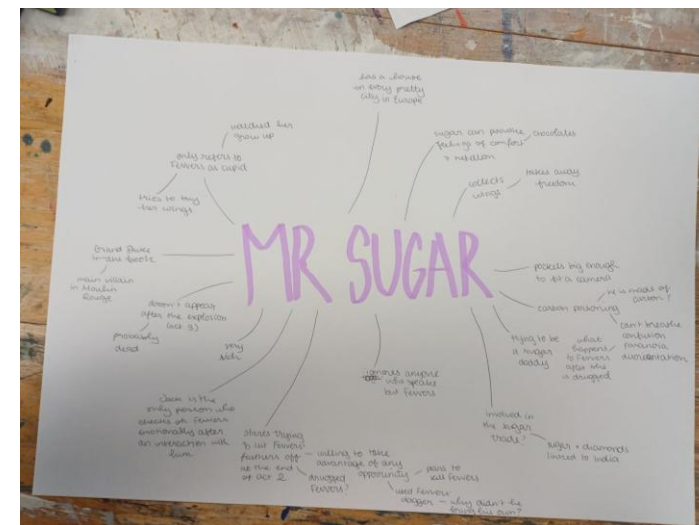
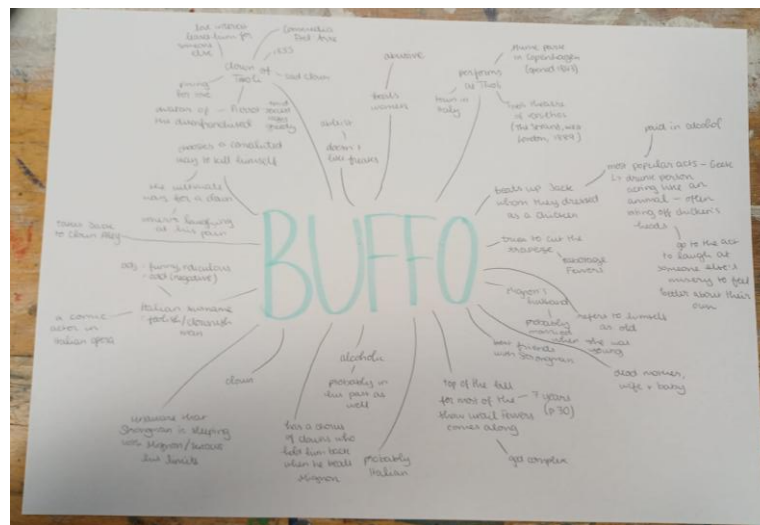
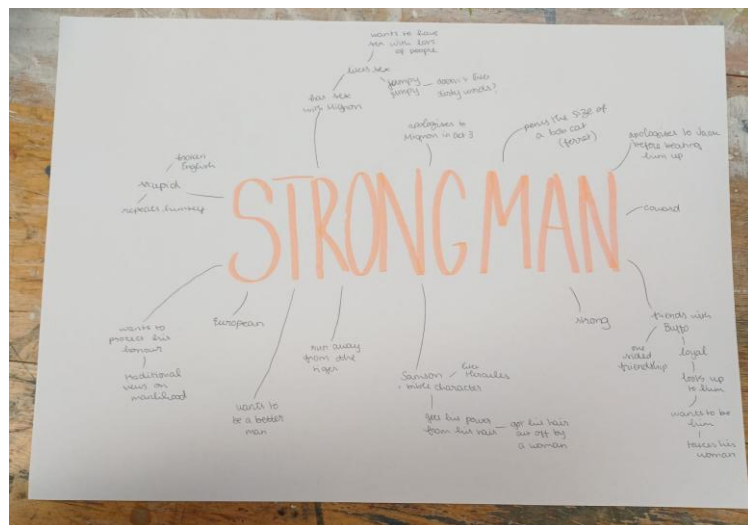


- Mignon
 - Father kills her mother and himself
 - Meets Buffo working
 - Fillet mignon - treated as meat
 - Pin cushion - beaten up and used a lot double meaning
 - Max offers herself to men, common male trauma
 - response to abuse - wants to please men, learnt from mother?
 - Has a good voice - Land of the Cotton trees
 - Abused by Buffo
 - compared to Eve with Jack as Adam, mentions Eden in song - religious
 - Land of Cotton trees' song is from German poem and song Mignon by Goethe - could also hint to Italy
 - referred to as Clowns Women
 - Lizzie calls her a pigeon like Fanny wants to protect her
- pt 3

- Princess
 - She can talk but remains silent for her cats
 - ↳ how women can be oppressed
 - Real name Khodora - P59
 - Sigfried & Roy Tiger attack
 - In Colonel Kearney's intro action of her, she ~~is~~ was found and fostered by Tigers, speaks their language, in return one of her adopted brothers 'bit out her tongue'
 - She is actually from Mar seilles, had parents, Father taught her to love music, mother taught her to play - P59
 - Women seen as more in tune with cats - why?
 - Due to their oppression, women are more likely to be gentle and kind as that is how girls are raised.
 - Has a gun



Script Breakdown and Lists – characters

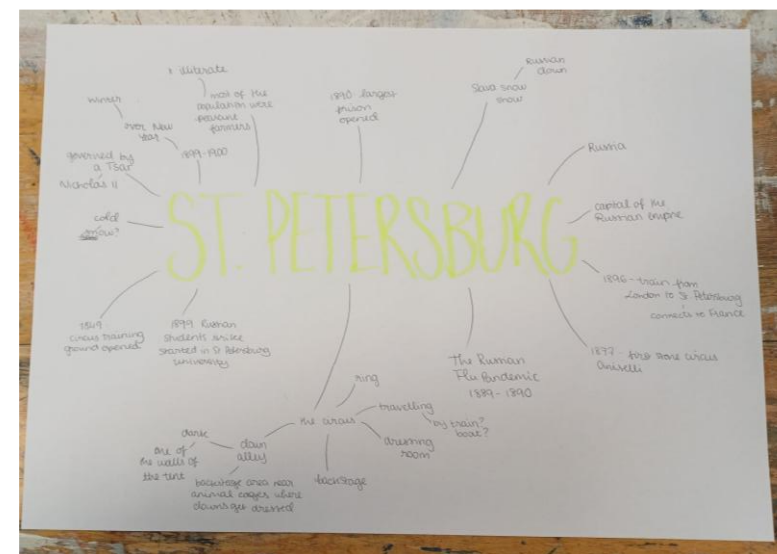
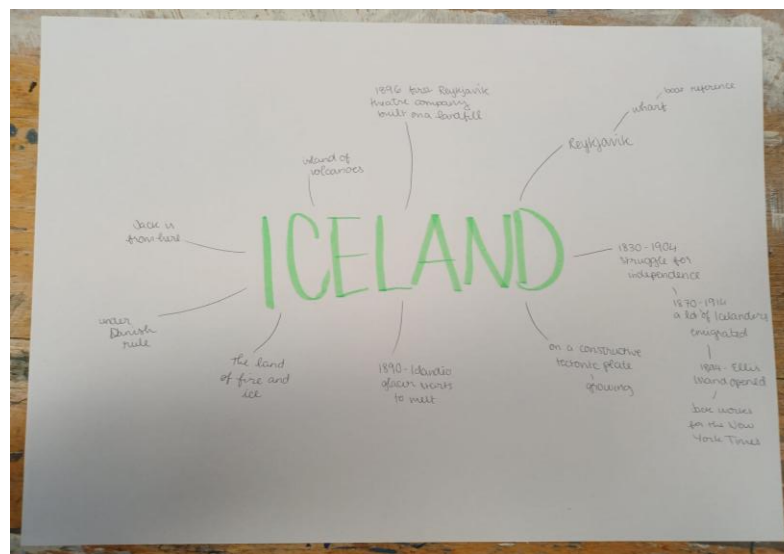
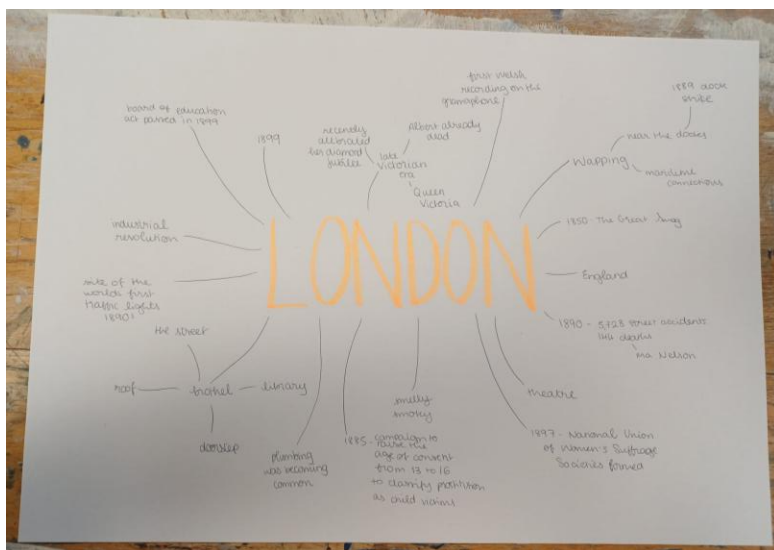


Sampson / Samson / Strong man
Biblical figure, Israelite warrior known for strength derived from uncut hair
Follows orders, loyal to Buffo
Sleeps with Mignon
Seems slow, second language
Apologises to Jack before beating him up
believes Mignon is his woman
wants to protect his honour

Buffo
Could be injured by 'Creoli' act - decapitate live chickens, paid with alcohol
Entertains people through his misery
Buffo name meaning, where does it originate? Foolish clownish
Clown of Turoli - Copenhagen, priest, Italy
↳ pantomime character
Comedically violent
Sees Fevers as a threat
Tries to cut her trappeze - sabotage

Mr Sugar
Wants to buy Fevers' wings, has watched her grow up
Ignores everyone but Fevers
takes a picture of Fevers, what did cameras look like
He is filthy rich, offers Fevers diamonds as big as a wheel
Sugar - signifies exploitation, sugar trade, links to diamonds and India
Oxygenation sugar is sweet
In book - Grand duke
he spikes Fevers
takes the knife from Fevers to cut off her wings
Using her knife to take away what allows her to be 'free'
↳ however in taking away her wings he saves her from being objectified, she never wanted to be different
what makes her special and unique also makes her an object

Script Breakdown and Lists – Locations



Locations

London, Wapping where bromel is located
working class area near the docks coming back to trade
references

Industrial Revolution - London is smog, smelly
At this time there is a campaign to raise the age of
consent

Rock Strike - 1889
↳ class mobilisation

Board of Education Act 1899 to organise
national school system

At this time only wealthy girls were educated at
home

Plumbing - bathrooms outchouse

Iceland - Reykjavik

- known as land of fire and ice
- Struggle for Independence
- 1896 built first independent theatre

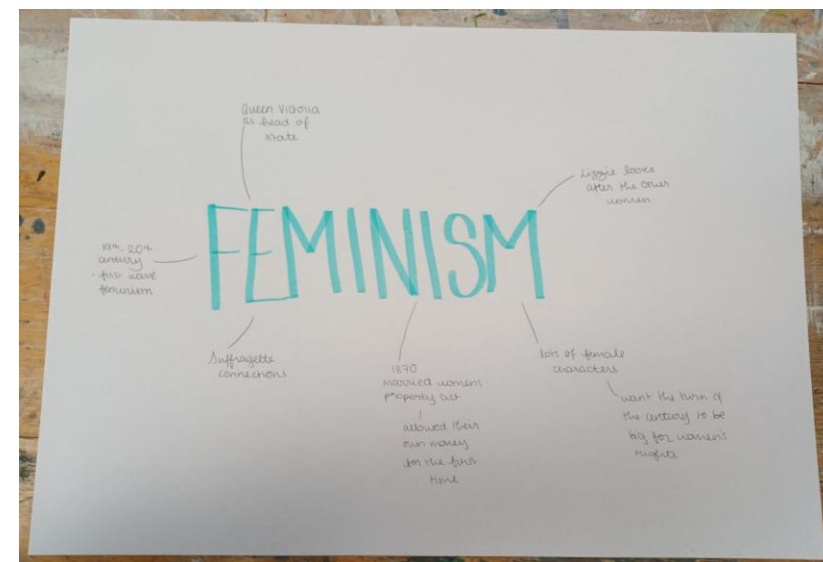
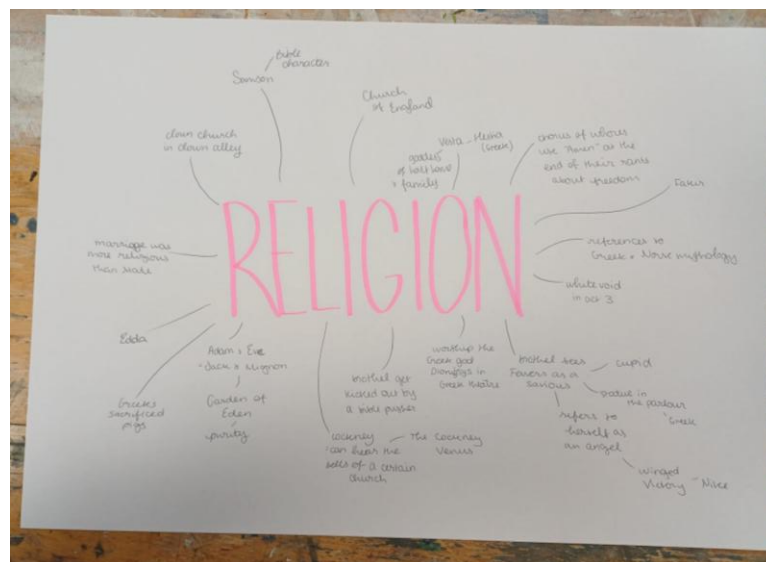
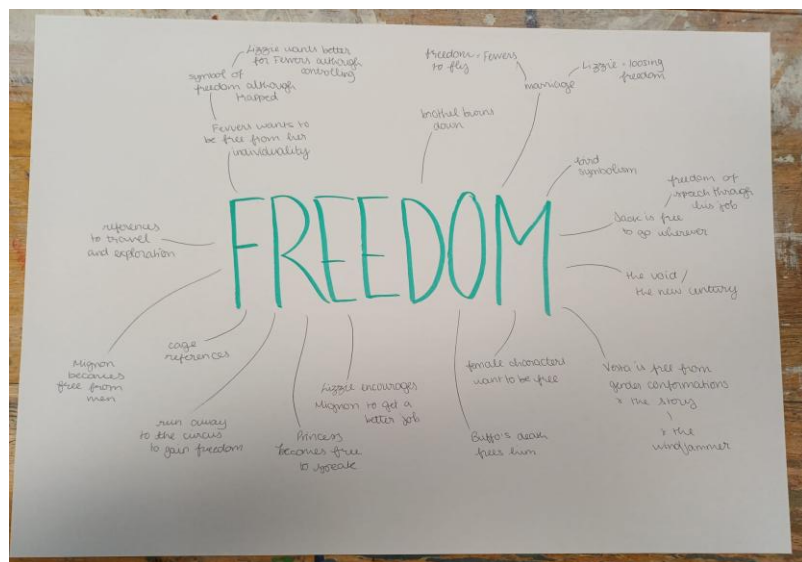
- St Petersburg where Lizzie joins Colonel Kearney's circus
- Nordic express train that connects London & St Petersburg
- have the largest prison
- Russia made up of Empire - autocratic state
- Permanent crises built, people trained to be in crises
- Circus
- Backstage, on stage
- Clown Alley (name of where clowns get dressed backstage)
- Slava Snow Show
- New Years - snowy winter, cold climate

Other locations we noted as a class:

- Calcutta Market
- Kathmandu
- Setzuan
- Damascus Road
- Morrocco

- Wapping – Brothel, Highstreet, Fosters
- London Theatre – Auditorium & Dressing room
- Colonel Kearney's Circus – Ring, Ring door, Clown Alley
- Lexington, Kentucky
- Abyssinia (now Ethiopia)
- Bridal Suite – St Petersburg
- Reykjavik (Iceland)
- Marseille
- Tivoli, Copenhagen
- Mignon's home – Café, pond
- Buffo's home
- Bare white landscape

Script Breakdown and Lists – Themes



- Feminism
- Suffragettes
- Marriage act - have own money
- Religion
- Satanism - biblical character also adam & eve, Eden machine
- Clown church
- White void - heaven?
- Ladies of Academy kicked out by Chapel Crowder
- Purity
- Church of England at that time look into Venus - goddess of sex, beauty, & love
- look at other greek, roman mythology
- Venus - Goddess of family (?)
- Greeks sacrifice pigs
- Fakir - hindu gives up everything or worldly possessions for God
- Freedom
- women of the play aren't free, men are
- birds, wings → allude to freedom
- Travel references - ships, trains
- Marriage is seen as a women 'way out'
- Prunella is free to speak at the end

Other themes we noted as a class:

- Autonomy
- Power
- Control
- Ownership
- Time
- Surrealism
- Girlhood
- Youth
- Innocence
- Abuse
- Sexuality

- Envy
- Gender expression
- Appearance
- Reality
- Social norms
- Sex
- Violence
- Perversion
- New beginnings
- Rebirth
- Sisterhood
- Good vs evil
- New vs old

- War
- Friendship
- Greek mythology
- Journey
- Exploration
- Voyeurism
- Exploitation
- Social pressure
- Class divide
- Money
- Job security
- Matriarchy vs patriarchy
- Misogyny vs misandry

Analysis Questions

These are a series of questions to help break a script down further, through identifying the story structure, key moments and characters motives and desires.

1. What is the PLOT? (what is the story about)

- The play follows Fevvers, a winged woman who has captivated audiences across Europe with her unique look. Her story unfolds as she recounts her upbringing to journalist Jack Walser, who is trying to debunk fake performance acts around the world. We learn that she grew up in a brothel in East London where she was found as a baby. Now she is off to 'Conquer the world' (Rice and Morris, 2006, p 24) as an act in Colonel Kearney's travelling circus. To learn more about Fevvers, Jack follows her to the circus as a clown where we meet the Colonel and his acts. After a 'tricky night at the circus' (Rice and Morris, 2006, p 49), some acts are sabotaged and even killed. Fevvers falls victim to Mr. Sugar who is trying to take away her wings, when Fevvers' guardian, Lizzie sees him trying to cut off her wings, she throws her bag at him causing an explosion. The play ends with Jack and Fevvers coming together after the explosion and flying away together.

2. What is the THEME? (what is the message)

- There are many themes within the text. The most prominent to me being surrealism, freedom, feminism, religion and rebirth. The message of the play lies in the nuance, Fevvers represents the 'new woman' of the coming century who is able to support herself with a job, speak her mind and move around freely. Although her wings allow her to make her own living, they also put her at risk.
- The male characters are not deterred by this 'new' woman, as oppressors they seek to take away her freedoms – literally like the character Mr. Sugar who tries to buy her wings, Jack who is attempting to debunk her special act or more Subtly like Buffo who tries to cut her trapeze down.

Analysis Questions

3. What is the LOGIC? (does the story make sense)
 - The story of Fevvers' life does flow in a linear structure with a flashback in the 1st Act, then her progressing to St Petersburg after her success in the music halls of Europe.
 - The play doesn't include a lot of information of how much time passes between scenes or the exact location of the opening act, but we know the story starts in London and takes place within the year of 1899, with the final act happening during New Years Eve.
4. What is the EXPOSITION? (what are the characters doing/thinking)
 - The exposition of the play is when Fevvers sets the scene of her upbringing, we learn she was left on the doorstep of a brothel in Wapping in Lizzie's bag. She was hatched out of an egg and grew her wings when she reached puberty.
 - A lot of exposition for Jack comes from Vesta who describes his journeys around the world as a journalist.
 - We get more exposition in the introduction to Colonel Kearney's acts – as the play progresses, we learn that his descriptions of his acts aren't to be fully trusted
5. What is the COMPLICATION? (what is the drama in the story)
 - The complication arises toward the end of Fevvers' flashback when *leader of the academy*, Ma Nelson, dies.
 - As a result, the women of the brothel are forced to go their separate ways, and Fevvers must find a way to make her own living.

Analysis Questions

6. What creates the TENSION? (what will happen next)
 - When Fevvers and Jack join the circus, we are introduced to the performers – Princess, Samson and Buffo. We are given a brief introduction to their acts. As top of the bill, Buffo feels under threat.
 - Tension rises during the New Years Eve performance in St Petersburg when Buffo and Samson are caught trying to sabotage Fevvers' act by cutting the rope that holds her trapeze
7. What is the MAIN QUESTION? (what problem is to be solved)
 - We know that Lizzie has a bomb in her handbag, we don't know why or when she intends to use it. It severs as a question throughout the play.
 - A main question that lingers in the background of the story is what does the new century mean for Fevvers and the other characters? The women of the brothel are very hopeful for the future of women's liberation, but we know they are still far from achieving equality even well into the 20th century.
8. What is the MAIN ACTION? (what event hooks the audience)
 - There are a few key moments of action that cause a shift in the play: Fevvers moving to St Petersburg and Jack following her; the tiger attack where Jack saves Mignon, causing other characters to assume they are sleeping together; Jack missing his cue in the final circus performance of the 19th century in which the Princess ends up shooting her tiger, then Samson shoots Buffo. Fevvers is asked to save the show, despite Jacks warning of the tampered with Trapeze, she performs anyway and Jack saves her. Fevvers explodes in fury, exhausted by always being looked after, she almost falls victim to Mr. Sugar who tries to take away her wings.
 - The main action is Lizzie's bomb going off when she throws it at Mr Sugar, causing the circus to collapse

Analysis Questions

9. What is the CAUSE OF THE ACTION? (what happens to the main character)
 - After Lizzie throws her handbag, landing everyone in the white void, Fevvers looks for Jack first. This reveals to herself that despite her cold exterior, she is fond of him and doesn't want to lose him. Once they find each other, Jack is finally able to express his wants and that is that he wants to be with Fevvers.
10. what is the RESULTING ACTION? (the answer to the main question)
 - A white void which could be interpreted as a few things, to me I think it is in reference to the blizzard at the end of the book. Or it can be interpreted as a representation of heaven.
11. what is the CONCLUSION? (how does the story end)
 - In the white void, Fevvers is looking for Jack, and asks Lizzie why you can't have love and freedom together. Lizzie sees love as a currency used to bound women to men. The story has an ambiguous ending, we don't know what happens to Kearney's circus or the performers and Lizzie. We know that Fevvers and Jack fly away together and this is how the play ends.
12. who is the PROTAGONIST? (the main character)
 - The main character could be interpreted as Fevvers or Jack Walser. Whilst a lot of the story revolves around Fevvers' past and journey, Jack Walser is who drives the story forward as an embodiment of the audience. It is with Jack Walser, a journalist investigating 'Great Fakes and Con artist's of the World', we learn about Fevvers' upbringing, her wants and weaknesses. His infatuation with her, along with encouragements from Vesta, is why we end up following Fevvers on her journey.
 - Alternatively, Fevvers is the focal point of the story, we follow her journey from the Brothel doorstep at the beginning of her life, to present day in St Petersburg with the Circus.

Analysis Questions

13. Who is the ANTAGONIST? (could be one or more characters)
 - Mr. Sugar – a character that represents oppression toward women. He wants to be able to buy Fevvers' freedom.
 - Buffo – tries to sabotage Fevvers' performance during the 3rd Act, out of jealousy when he is pulled from top of the bill. He is also abusive toward his partner Mignon.
 - Lizzie – although she is a *good* character, for raising and looking after Fevvers, she ends up impeding on Fevvers' independence. Toward the end of the play when Fevvers admits her feelings for Jack, Lizzie calls her a 'greedy girl' for 'selling herself' and 'throwing herself a way' (Rice and Morris, 2006, p60). This shows how Lizzie views love for men as a sign of weakness, as at this time marriage did take away women's freedoms like them having to have a shared bank account and being expected to become a house-wife.
14. Who is the MOST INTERESTING CHARACTER? (not always the main character)
 - Fevvers – She is the main focus of the story, and she has supernatural abilities. She represents hope for the female characters in the play, free to fly and also make her own living and expresses her wants and needs.
15. Where does the story TAKE PLACE? (location, time period)
 - The story takes place in 1899 at the end of the century, the play opens in a theatre in London where Jack watches Fevvers' show 'the Winged Woman of London' (Rice and Morris, 2006, p 11), we then follow her to the Circus in St Petersburg, Russia.



Research

Locations and Characters



Victorian London

The first act is set in London, 1899 and I wanted to investigate what London looked like at the time. Since at this time, photography was in its early stages, only portraits and few documentary photographs exist from this era and are all black and white film photos. To get a more detailed, visualisation of what late 19th century London was like, I turned to contemporary media: 2009 and 2011 Sherlock Holmes films (set in 1890-91) directed by Guy Ritchie, and 2025 TV Series A Thousand Blows (set in the 1880s), directed by Tinge Krishnan. Although these are fictional dramas, their settings are based off real locations and lot of the costume, scenery and colour is fairly accurate, reflecting the materials, dyes, and trade networks of the time as well as the ways the upper classes displayed status through dress and decoration.

As well as looking at these references, I looked at what interior design was like for the upper and working classes in late 19th century London to get a picture of what Fevvers room and the library looked like. From the script, we can infer that although Fevvers made her own money as a performer, she wasn't at all well off. She grew up in a brothel in Wapping, a working-class area of London where prostitution was one of the few viable vocations for women to earn a living. Also, on page 14, Fevvers is eating Jellied Eel, a cheap meal for the working class of London.



Sherlock Holmes (Warner Bros, 2009) 21B Baker Street, Sherlock Holmes's Quarters



Sherlock Holmes (Warner Bros, 2011) A Game of Shadows



Victorian London

Interior design in the Victorian era for the upper classes included colours such as burgundy, forest green and navy blue, sometimes accented with gold or brass details. Gas lighting became popular in the late 19th century, often combined with decorative lamps and chandeliers featuring etched glass or crystal. Although Fevvers and Lizzie lived in a brothel, it was gifted to Ma Nelson by a customer and it had a library, this suggests they lived above their means, and it may have had lavish features.

On the other hand, working class interiors were simple and practical with sparse decorative elements. They may have had portraits, mirrors and some crocheted doilies or homemade textiles to add warmth, and all upholstery would have been home made. In terms of lighting, many working-class homes relied on candles or oil lamps.

Next, I made a mood board for Victorian London, combining these ideas and references.



Disney (2025) *A Thousand Blows* Stills



Morris, G. For TechRadar (2025) *The Set of A Thousand Blows*



Outside the Workhouse and Blue Coat Boy pub on the set of *A Thousand Blows*.



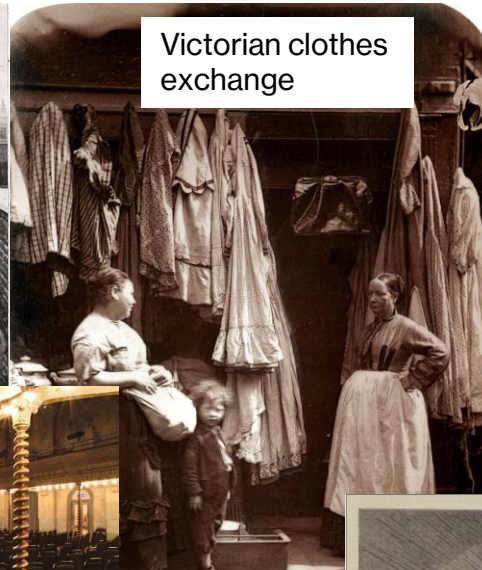
London in the 1860s and 1870s by James Hedderly



Inside An East End Room 1880s



Wilton's Music Hall, Graces Alley 1859



East London Railway, Thames Tunnel Station, Wapping. Illustrated by Frank Watkins 1870



10501-12 DUKE OF YORK'S THEATRE, LONDON. ROTARY PHOTO, E.C.



Ceiling of The Hackney Empire, opened 1901

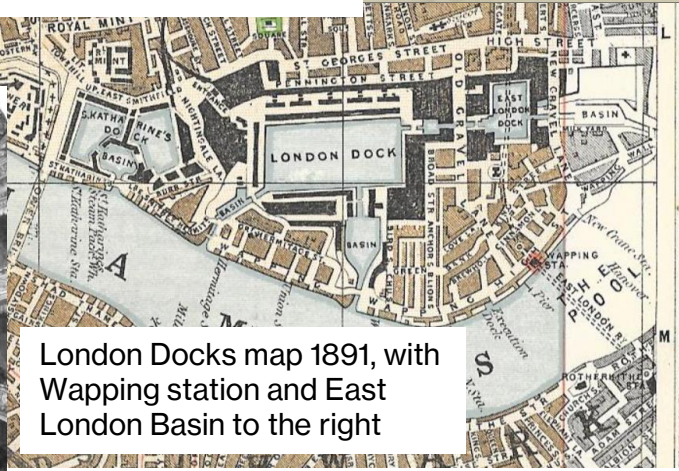
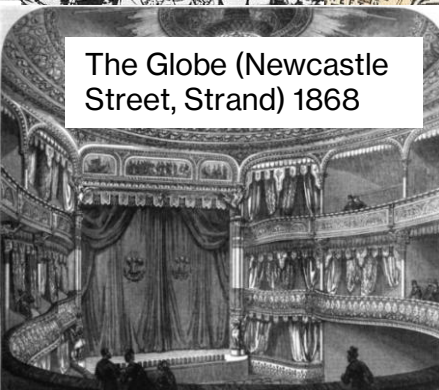


The Globe (Newcastle Street, Strand) 1868



The Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly 1895

Slums of East London, late 19th century



London Docks map 1891, with Wapping station and East London Basin to the right

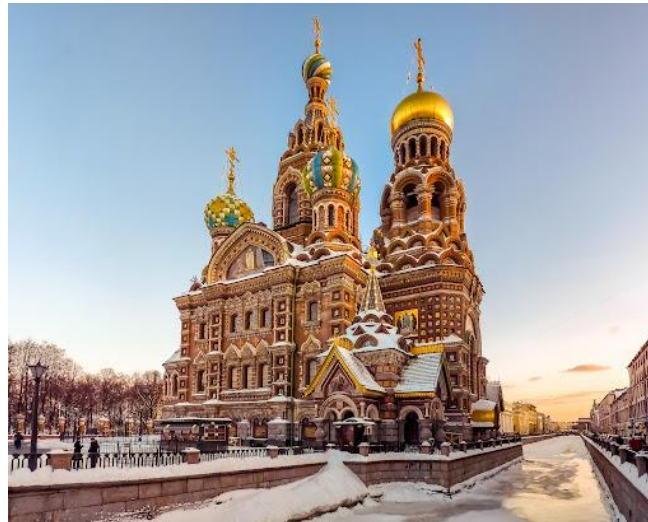
St Petersburg, Russia

The second act of *Nights at the Circus* is set in St Petersburg, Russia. I wanted to find some visual references of St Petersburg in the late 19th century, and the first thing that comes to mind when I think of urban Russian architecture is vibrant spiralling domed structures, in contrast to dark industrial East London. Specifically, The Church of the Saviour on Spilled Blood, which was constructed between 1883 and 1907, in commemoration of Emperor Alexander II who was assassinated at its location on the embankment of the Griboyedov Canal in 1881.

It was built in the style of 16th–17th century Russian churches (like St. Basil's Cathedral in Moscow) to honour traditional Russian identity and commemorate Tsar Alexander II as a national martyr. Most buildings in St. Petersburg were built in Neoclassical Western styles, reflecting Peter the Great's push to westernise Russia. These two cities identify the internal conflict within Russia, of the push and pull between progressive Western modernisation and traditional Eastern ideologies rooted in religion.



Church of the Saviour on Spilled Blood. Parland, A 1889, watercolour.



Church of Our Savior on the Spilled Blood and the Griboedov Canal. Saint Petersburg's Orthodox Cathedrals. Legion Media (2019)



St Basil's Cathedral next to the Spasskaya. Udkwae, k (2012)
Located in the Red Square, Moscow built in the mid 1500s and the Spasskaya which is one of the main towers of the Moscow Kremlin wall which surrounds the official residence of the president of Russia

Circus on the Fontanka, St Petersburg. Russia's first permanent circus venue opened 1877



St. Petersburg was the capital of the Russian Empire for over two centuries, from 1712 to 1918. In these photographs you can see the Neoclassical architecture, similar to many structures in urban Europe



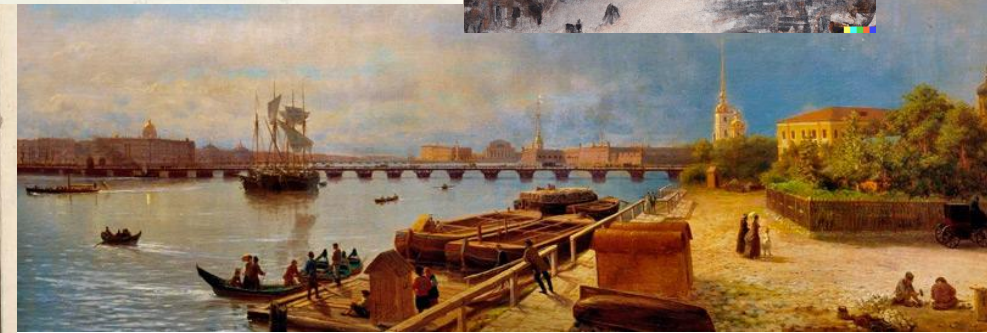
St. Isaac's Cathedral, completed in 1858



Map of Imperial Russia (1894-1917)



The Volga is a borderland, in both a geographical and symbolic sense – a hinge between East and West.



Barge Haulers on the Volga Ilya Repin 1870 - 1873

St Petersburg, Russia

Siberia

In the novel, written by Angela Carter, the story continues beyond St Petersburg into Siberia (the Asiatic part of Russia), a part of Russia known for its harsh winters and rough terrain, where Colonel Kourney's circus continues its tour by train. This is significant as, in 1891 construction of the Trans-Siberian railroad began in an effort to impose Russian influences on Eastern Asia and strengthen global trade. This was a threat to British Imperial trade which relied on steamships that took double the time to transport merchandise from Europe to the Pacific. This could be symbolising the efforts of the western world to conquer the east in the 'Great Game' – a geopolitical rivalry between the British and Russian empires wherein Britain sought to protect its Indian colonies from Russian expansion.

In the novel, the train derails on its journey through Siberia, this could be interpreted as an analogy of the failure of the Russian Empire, built on shaky foundations of exploitation and displacement.

Something else that came up in my research was Anette Meakin who, with her mother were the first Englishwomen to make the journey from London to Japan on the Trans-Siberian railway in 1900. The next year, Annette published her travel account, *A 'Ribbon of Iron'*, which detailed their experiences. This was a big deal at the time as their journey challenged the strict social conventions that kept women confined to the home, while highlighting the expanding opportunities available to women in the new century.



Prisoners building a section of the railway during winter. (1900/1910s), History of Russia: How the Trans-Siberian Railroad Reshaped the World



Annette Meakin in 1890
Explorers Web: *Great Explorers*

Where has Jack been?

Jack Walser is from Iceland, a Nordic country in the North Atlantic Ocean, it is known for its dynamic landscape of Geysers, Hot Springs and Volcanos and as a prime location to view the Northern Lights (and it's where singer Bjork is from).

Last year, I visited Iceland on a family holiday. Whilst I didn't catch the northern lights, I was lucky enough to see a volcanic eruption from the Sundhnúksíggar crater chain from Reykjavik. Due to Iceland's setting where the Eurasian and North American tectonic plates are pulling apart, magma can erupt for days. In this series of eruptions, we saw its fourth eruption which started on the 16th of March, and became the longest in the series, spanning 54 days. Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland, where most of the population reside. It is situated on the southern shore of the Faxaflói Bay, where you can find the Harpa building, Reykjavík's concert hall.

The glass façade of the Harpa building consists of 714 LED lights and can display video or light shows at night. By day, natural light and the changing Icelandic sky & surroundings are built into the design: the facades reflect and refract light differently with time of day and weather.

In the 19th century, Iceland moved away from a subsistence economy of farming and fishing and was able to connect the country to global markets through the advances in steamship technologies. Iceland began exporting more fish, wool, and agricultural products. With this, transportation for Icelandic people was now faster and more reliable, in the 1870s Large-scale emigration from Iceland to North America began and continued until 1914. This could hint at to how Jack became a writer for the New York Times, he could have been a part of the Icelandic population escaping harsh economic conditions.



A photo I took of the Harpa Building at sunset

Where has Jack been?

Images of
Iceland I took
on my holiday



Harpa Building by day



Reykjavik Port

In the city center



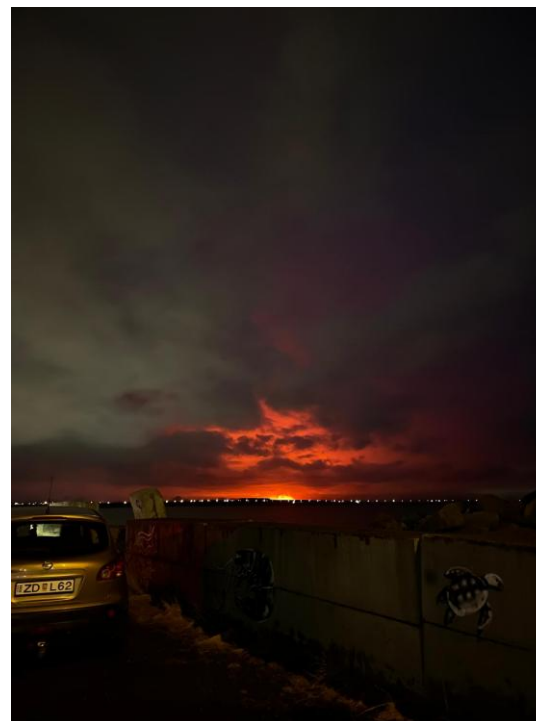
Iceland's dynamic landscape



Port of Reykjavik & HMS Richmond



Gullfoss Falls



Sundhnúksgígar Volcanic Eruption



Hallgrímskirkja Church



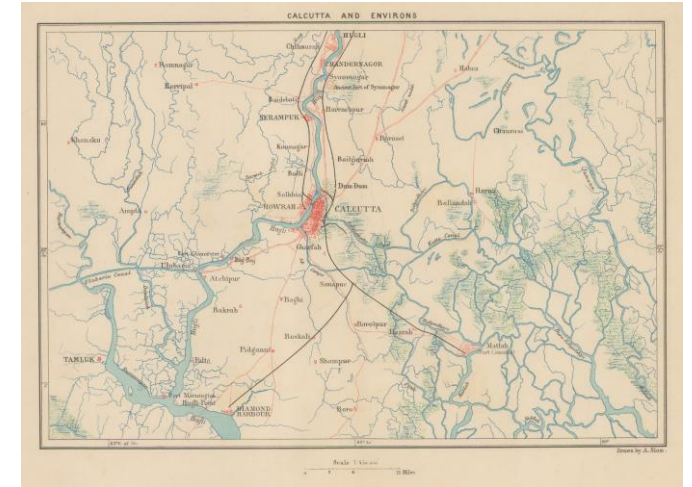
Where has Jack been?

Jack has seen many spectacles on his travels around the world. On page 11, he talks about his experience in the Calcutta market where he saw ‘a child shin up a rope then vanish clean away’ (Rice and Morris, 2006).

The three villages: Sutanuti, Gobindapur and Kalikata, came under the control of the British East India Company in 1690. What started as a private company with a royal charter from Queen Elizabeth I, giving it a monopoly on trade between Britain and the East, became like a government through increasing military and political power. Kalikata, where modern day Kolkata is located, is significant for its position on the Hooghly River. This became a key hub for the transportation of goods like textiles, spices, opium, silk, cotton and tea. From 1772 to 1911, Calcutta was the capital of British India. ‘Kolkata’ is the city’s official and current name, reflecting its original Bengali pronunciation.

In Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, Jack saw a ‘fakir on a bed of nails soar up until he was level with the painted demons on the eaves of wooden houses’ (Rice and Morris, 2006, p 11). Nepal’s economy at the time was based on agriculture, local crafts, and trade with Tibet and India. Although Nepal remained an independent nation, through the Treaty of Sugauli signed after the Anglo-Napalese war in 1816 with the British East India Company, it developed close ties with the British, especially by supplying Gurkha soldiers to the British army.

Kathmandu is known for its wooden temples and stacked pagoda roofs, which represent the layers of the five natural elements: earth, water, fire, wind, and space. To the right is an example of this and the ‘wooden eaves’ Jack was referring to.



Kolkata (Calcutta) and environs in West Bengal
George Virtue 1890
Shows Chandannagar and modern day
Kanchrapara to the north, and south to Diamond
Harbour, Tamluk and the Matla River
The Map House Artworks (2025)



Nepal Architecture: Origin of Pagoda Style
(2025)

Where has Jack been?

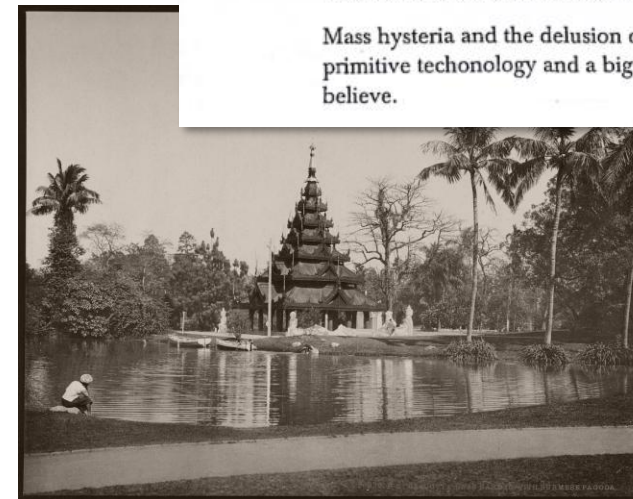
'Historic B&W photos of Calcutta, India (19th century)' Monovisions (2018)



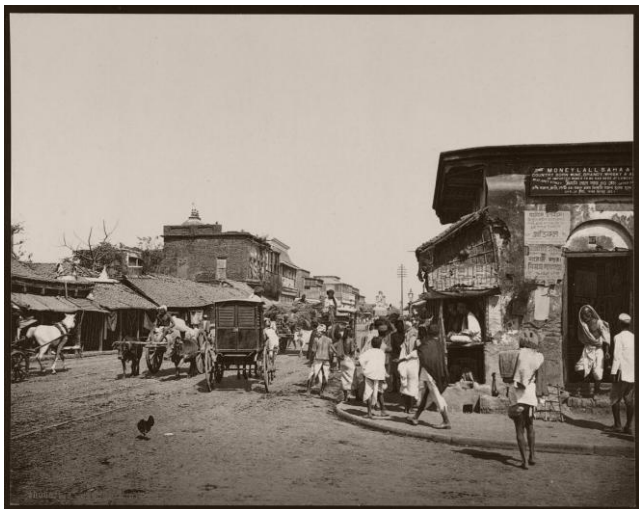
Calcutta. Harbour. Steamers



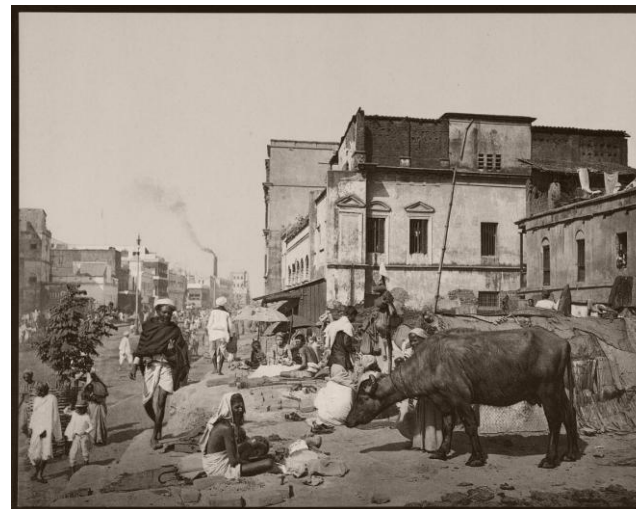
Calcutta. Maliks Ghat



Calcutta Eden Garden with Burmese pagoda



Calcutta. Upper Chitpore Road



Calcutta. Harrison Road



Calcutta. Harbour. Sailing-ships

JACK: I promise you, I'm no stranger to illusion. I've seen a child shin up a rope in the Calcutta market and then vanish clean away. In Kathmandu I saw a fakir on a bed of nails soar up until he was level with the painted demons on the eaves of the wooden houses.

Capital of Nepal ← *Burrainazar West Bengal* → *Hindu practices faith by giving up possession*

The Creatures are struck with wonder.

Mass hysteria and the delusion of crowds. A little primitive techonology and a big dose of the will to believe.

On this site there are many photographs of Kalikata, I chose these 6 as I think they show how busy and lively it would have been at the cross roads of important world trade.

Where has Jack been?

On page 14, Vesta describes the numerous hardships he faced during his travels, which despite them, he still remains untouched and unrefined by the world. She recounts his experience of the 'plague in Setzuan, a nine week blizzard in Morrocco' and his 'dose of buggery in a Bedouin tent beside the Damascus road.' (Rice and Morris, 2006). I wanted to draw their connection to previous themes that keep cropping up: improved mobility and trade connections.

Setzuan

When Vesta mentions the plague in Setzuan, she is referring to the third plague pandemic which originated in southwest China in the mid 1800s. It became an epidemic in 1894 in Hong Kong, it was spread via ships along trade routes reaching India, Southeast Asia and eventually the rest of the world.

Morocco

Morocco is home to part of the Saharan Desert, and whilst there is no major sand storm recorded in the 19th century, they are very common. I found the juxtaposition of a blizzard in Morrocco interesting, it draws a connection to the harsh winters of Russia and Siberia aforementioned.

The Damascus Road

The Damascus Road, in Southwest Syria, connected the city to places like Beirut, Jerusalem and Baghdad. These routes were part of the broader Silk Road network, carrying goods like spices, textiles, and metals between the Mediterranean, Arabia, and Persia. While trade brought prosperity and cultural exchange, it also came with risks as caravans could be attacked by raiders. The Bedouin, nomadic Arab tribes of the surrounding deserts, were closely tied to this world as skilled guides or traders, and at other times raiding caravans during periods of unrest.

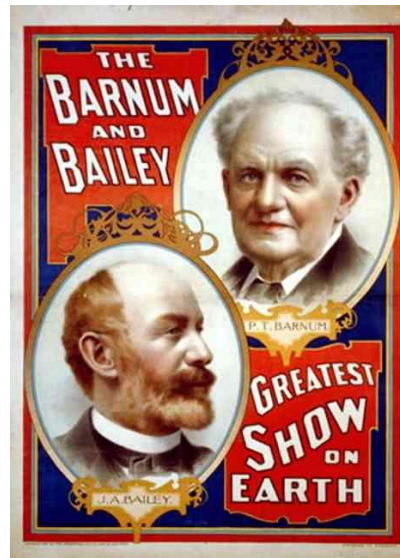
Colonel Kearney's circus

Through looking up famous Circus ring leaders of the 19th century, I found the name Charlie Keith, a highly decorated circus clown who toured the world in circuses and went on to establish his own. Known across Europe as 'the roving English clown,' Keith led his circus troupe on international tours, performing for nobility and royal courts. Using his own patented designs, he built temporary circus structures around the world and is credited with constructing as many as 65 circus buildings during his career.

Arguably the most famous Circus performances of the late 1800s and early 1900s were P.T. Barnum and James A. Bailey's 'The Greatest Show on Earth' which toured the United States and eventually parts of Europe. The concept originated with P.T. Barnum, a renowned 19th-century showman known for his American Museum in New York City, which featured curiosities, theatrical performances, and 'human oddities'. In 1871, Barnum partnered with William C. Coup to launch a traveling circus, uniquely operated by train, allowing it to tour on a huge scale. He famously branded it 'The Greatest Show on Earth' to emphasize its size and spectacle. In 1881, Barnum joined forces with James A. Bailey to form Barnum & Bailey's Greatest Show on Earth.



Poster for Barnum and Bailey's Greatest Show on Earth 1899 (Historic UK, 2023)



Poster for Barnum and Bailey's Circus advertising 'Prodigies of Physical Phenomena' 1899 (Historic UK, 2023)



*Charlie Keith
Photographed 1870 (2012,
V&A Museum)*

Colonel Kearney's circus

The Princess

In the play, Kearney introduces the Princess of Abyssinia to Jack. Kearney tells him that she was fostered by tigers in the Abyssinian jungle and had her tongue bitten out by one of them, which is why she doesn't speak. Abyssinia is the ancient name for Ethiopia, in Eastern Africa. In the late 19th century, Abyssinia was under threat from western colonisation but successfully won in the 1895 Ethio-Italo war, securing independence and sovereignty. Later in the play, The Princess reveals she can speak, but chooses not to for the sake of her cats, she also tells Mignon that she is not really from Abyssinia, that she is from Marseille and her real name is Rhodora.

Samson

Samson is a figure from the Old Testament known for his incredible strength, which came from a vow to God that included never cutting his hair. He used his power to fight the Philistines, enemies of the Israelites, performing great feats like killing a lion with his bare hands and collapsing a temple. His downfall came through Delilah, who betrayed him by revealing the secret of his strength. After his hair was cut, he was captured, but in the end, he regained his strength and brought down the temple on himself and his enemies, sacrificing his life. In *Nights at the Circus*, the character Samson or Strong Man is reduced only to his strength, which is his act and the same can be said for Fevvers.

Buffo

Buffo is a top of the bill clown performer and ring-leader of the Chorus of Clowns. When you look up the name Buffo, it is defined as a type of comic actor in Italian opera. This ties in with the Italian pantomime performances at the Tivoli in Copenhagen. The role of a Buffo is commonly an antagonist who creates humour through being incompetent. In *Nights at the Circus*, Buffo relates a story of how we found he can cheer people up by letting them make fun of him at his own demise, and how getting drunk allows him to do so and it's how he became top of the bill.



Research

Lighting and spaces



Lighting technology at the end of the 19th century

This is research I did once roles and groups had been allocated, to do with the role of a Lighting Designer and to look at anything relevant to our design choices.

In group discussions, Sarah, our Set Designer mentioned she is leaning toward period accurate décor, having the production inspired by its late 19th Century setting. Out of curiosity I wanted to look at what was being used at the time for lighting. Although I am not limited to this technology, I want to get an idea of what the lamps looked like and what effect they produced

How were homes lit

- Oil or Gas lamps – Gas lighting was the main form of lighting in homes for the middle and upper classes in towns and cities. Oil lighting came first, then Gas lighting was introduced around the 1820s for street lights, then by the 1850s was adopted for homes. Oil lamps use a wick and fuel - which was the oil, often Kerosene or Colza oil. Gas lamps required a supply carried to homes by underground iron pipes
- Animal fat candles – more common in rural homes and homes of a lower income, these could be made from Tallow which is animal fat, or Wax which was more expensive
- Electricity - Electric light began to be used in homes in the late 1870s, but it only became widespread for the average household after World War I, particularly after the establishment of the National Grid in the 1920s. Early adopters were wealthy homes and public buildings, most homes continued to use gas or oil lamps until the mid-20th century.

How Theatres were lit

- In the Victorian era, gas lighting was used in theatre performance in the form of footlights, side lights, overhead battens and for house lights (chandeliers)
- In the 1880s, electric lighting had begun to appear in major London theatres. The Savoy Theatre, which opened in 1881, became the first public building in the world to be lit entirely by electricity. It used Joseph Swan's newly developed incandescent bulbs, powered by its own on-site generator

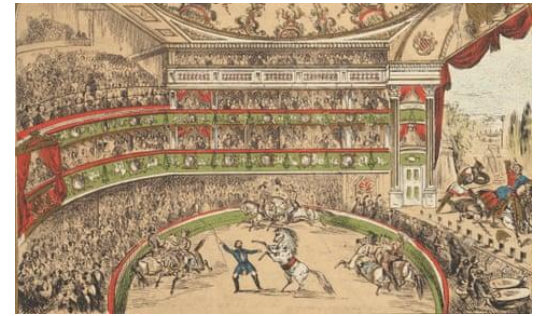
Circus Design

The History of Circus design

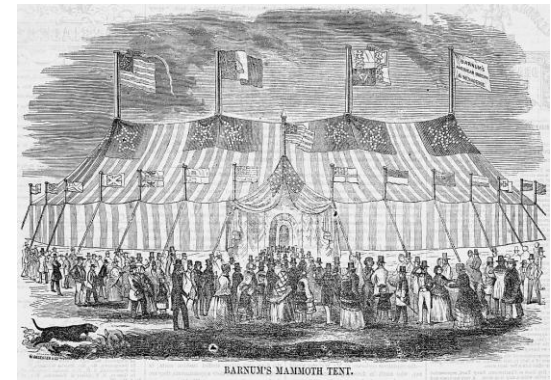
Circuses in Britain started in the late 1700s with Philip Astley, who is often called the “father of the modern circus.” He began by putting on horse-riding tricks in a ring, and the 42-foot diameter was chosen because it gave horses enough space to gallop and perform safely. This size became the traditional standard for circus rings.

As mentioned earlier, in 1879, Charlie Keith designed a new permanent venue, ‘Charlie Keith's New Grand Circus’. The circus opened on April 12, 1879, featuring a pit, promenade, spacious gallery, reserved seating, private boxes, and a waterproof roof. ‘He was frustrated with performing in leaky tents with slippery and muddy floors and wanted to construct a touring circus that was sturdier than canvas. Keith's portable circus was made of planks of wood nailed together and a canvas roof that could be flat packed onto transportation.’ *The Story of Circus*, Victoria and Albert Museum (2018).

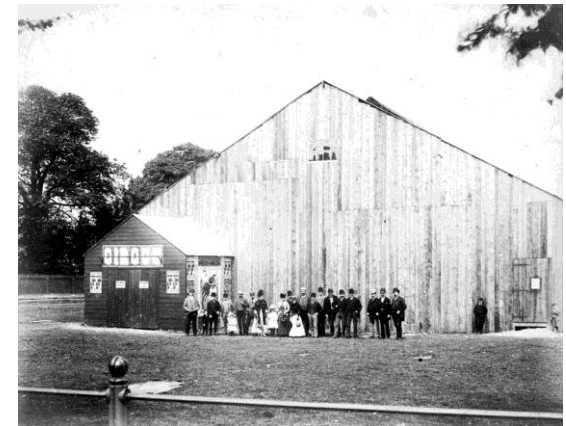
Before Charlie Keith's sturdier structures, and a common association with circuses that still exist today is the ‘Big Top’ tent. American showman and entrepreneur J. Purdy Brown was the first to use this new portable design in 1825 which replaced stationery purpose-built buildings and outdoor venues. At the time, America was going through the ‘Second Great Awakening’ a period of social reform where public amusements were banned in some states due to a wave of Christian revivalism. Upon entering some areas, Brown needed to be able to pack up and move on quickly. The canvas tents were supported by a central wooden ‘king’ pole, ropes, and stakes. With the development of railways in the mid to late 1800s, the traveling circus was able to expand its reach dramatically, moving from town to town with greater speed and efficiency. These changes helped create the golden age of the American circus, where exciting shows and the ability to travel quickly captured the attention of a fast-growing and changing country.



‘Philip Astley's later amphitheatres featured scenery and decorations as grand as any opera house’ V&A Museum, 2015



‘P.T Barnum's Mammoth Tent’ Sketch 1851



Charlie Keith's sturdier circus structure 1890. William Tudor's Circus

Circus Design

To look at a recent example of Circus performance and to get an understanding of the process of putting one together, I watched 'Circus' a 2010 documentary series directed by Maro Chermayeff and Jeff Dupre. The 6-hour long series shows the life of a circus spanning over a year, from its inception and rehearsal period to closing night and what comes next for the troupe of performers. I found it really fascinating how circuses differ from theatre production and the risks involved in circus life. Below are notes I took whilst watching the documentary and some stills.

'Circus' Documentary notes

Big Apple Circus

Developing their show in Walden New York

Once a year they come to Walden to put together a brand new show, a 4-5 week process Steve Smith is Guest director

In this preparation time of 4-5 weeks they rehearse production numbers, transitions, individual acts. Simultaneously, costumes are being made, music crafted and put together for each act, Different acts come together from all over the world - Equestrians, Flyers (trapeze), clowns, acrobats. Some new acts are formed or combined with existing troupes. At the dress rehearsal they must show a completed act with no or very little mistakes to make it to the final circus show.

Glen Heroy is a 'First of May' Clown, a well established stage clown who is venturing into circus for the first time. Glen first worked on his act as a homeless man in New York playing spoons in front of a Macy's to earn lunch money, now he does it all over the country as a clown.

'The flying Neves' Trapeze performers, rig their own equipment. Many performers are self sufficient and set up their own kit. This is expected of them as they know how they like to use their equipment and when they started out they would have been setting up their own acts.

Most performers are born into the industry, Josuber and Monica Neves are a couple both born into 3rd generation circus families, with Monica starting 'flying' at the age of 9.

Equestrian and acrobat Christine Zerbini is the ninth generation of her family to be in the circus. Her family has been in it for 200 years. As well as horses, she has worked with Elephants and Tigers in the ring. For the Big Apple circus, she is performing the Dzhigitovka trick riding.

Those who are not born into circus, join to start a new life for themselves.

Life on the road has its challenges but for most its a welcome relief from what they are running away from, they are fed, housed and paid at the circus. Some bring their family on the road.

The crew bears the brunt of the tough living. The people who put together the circus are the 'ring crew'. Its often a job taken up by young men with not many other options other than joining the army. Although living conditions are not glamorous and ring crew work is gruelling, the young men are thankful to not be living on the streets of New York. Another job behind the scenes is a horse groom, looking after the horses, tacking and cleaning them, they work with the trainers.

Paul Binder is the founder and artistic director of the Big Apple Circus. He shows us around the Walden base, the electrics department, prop building area, mechanic shop, practice ring for animals, the One Ring School house (an on the road classroom for circus children to keep up with their schooling), summertime white tent, the cook house (catering, mainly used by staff, performers tend to self cater - need to stick to a strict diet or have a trailer with its own kitchen). He describes it as a little colony.

Ring crew don't just put up the tent, they hold safety lines, undertake construction, carpentry, grounds work, and instead of being in dressed in their own black clothes, they are dressed by the costume designer for performances.

Costume designer, Austin Sanderson, says you design for athletes in the circus who have special needs, like needing to see their feet or be able to grip another performer.

Two weeks before the circus has their opening night, no one has a day off, technical run throughs take place, lighting sessions, sound sessions (one of the clown acts involve projections on the floor), the opening final number are practiced twice a day.

Front track: the long part of the arena

Stills from 'Circus' Documentary about the Big Apple Circus, (PBS, 2010)



Different types of lighting

I wanted to remind myself of a range of different lighting instruments that I may utilise in my design, these include functional and decorative lights.

Floods

Flood lights are a simple lighting instrument; they can be adjusted to point up, down, left or right. There is no way to control the size of the beam of light or change its shape. Its effect, therefore, is determined by how close it is to the stage. Its limited options for adjustment can cause an unwanted spill of light, pulling audiences focuses from the stage and performance. Its wide wash can also takeaway depth and texture when used on its own.



Flood light (Theatre Crafts, 2025)

Fresnel

The Fresnel is a soft-edged spotlight that offers greater control over the beam angle than a floodlight, though less precision than a profile lantern. The beam size can be adjusted by moving the lamp and reflector assembly closer to or farther from the lens, using either a screw mechanism or a simple sliding system. The shape of the beam can then be refined with the four barndoors attached to the front of the lantern



Fresnel Lights
(Venue Lights, 2019)

Spots

PC focus Spots – These create a sharp edged, precise beam of light. On simple PC lights, the lamp moves in relation to a plano-convex lens (like a magnifying glass, it helps to create a hard edge). Some have a ring of frost around the perimeter of the lens to diffuse the edge, and these may also have barn doors.

Profile Spot – In a profile light, the lens is movable, and the lamp and reflector remain stationary, (whereas in a Fresnel or focus spot, it is the lamp and reflector that move). The lens movement allows for a very hard, precise beam which makes them great to use with Gobos – a 2D stencil made of heat resistant metal, that can be placed in the gate runners to project a shape.



Profile Spot (Simply
Sound and Lighting, 2025)

Different types of lighting

Par Can

PAR (Parabolic Aluminised Reflector) lamps come in different beam angles, giving a range of light spreads. The beam from a Par can is a projection of the lamp's filament, which can sometimes appear as faint lines across the light in the narrow-beam versions. Because the filament is shaped elliptically, the beam is also oval-shaped, and it can be rotated by turning the lamp.

LEDs

LED lights are available in many forms, including PAR cans, strip lights, and moving head fixtures. LED PAR lights provide colour-changing capabilities without the need for filters or gels, allowing smooth transitions. They also produce far less heat and use significantly less energy than traditional tungsten lamps, making them both safer and more efficient for stage and event lighting. Unlike other lanterns, they can be focussed and adjusted remotely.

Festoon

I would be interested in using Festoon (aka string) lighting in my design. These are common in outdoor events and used a lot in Circuses as they are small and can be hung anywhere – from posts, trees or the tent itself. These can be used to create atmosphere and also light pathways and audience seating areas.

Bulb lighting

Cabochon (aka carnival bulb) lighting is also common in Circus and festival settings to create colour and visual interest. These are small lights in a protruding circular lens that look like a jewel or 'Cabochon' gem which is where the name comes from. These are commonly used to light up large lettering or along fairground structures. Like the festoon lights, these could be used as a decorative element in my design.



Par56 Par Can (TS Stage Lighting, 2019)



LED Moving Head Light (Venue Lights, 2025)



Festoon Lighting for events (Letter Light Hire, 2025)



Cabochon LED (Imel Park, 2025)

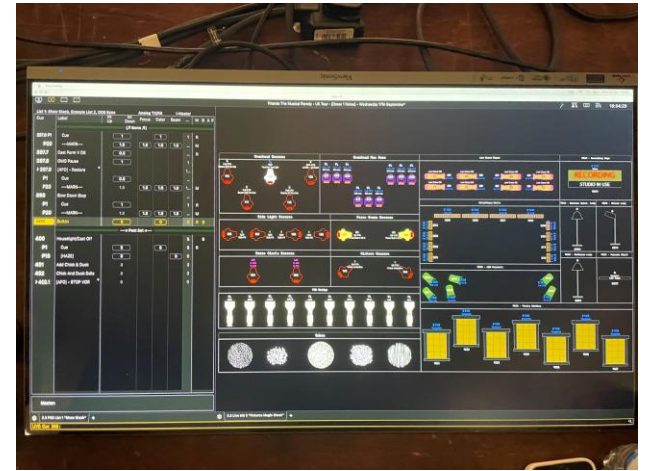
Lighting Designer I am inspired by

Over the summer break I worked for Andrew Exeter on 'Friends! The Musical Parody' Directed by Michael Gynge. For this production, Andrew was the Set and Lighting Designer, in his team was a Props Designer, Associate Designer, Programmer and Assistant Lighting Designer. I worked with him and his team in his studio in London for a pre-visualisation of the lighting design, then went to Nottingham to help out for the opening night of the tour.

In the pre-vis session, Andrew and his programmer worked on formatting the lighting cues for a bigger venue. The show had had a press night at a small venue, and now the programming needed to be updated for the larger venues on the tour. Then, in Nottingham in the days leading up to the first show of the tour, Andrew was working with technicians and the electrics department to rig and focus the lights. During the tech run, Andrew would make notes on where actors weren't hitting their marks or any transitions or lighting placements that didn't look right, to be fixed before the Dress rehearsal.

In terms of his design, I liked how he utilised lots of different forms of lighting from decorative practical lamps, lightboxes and LED Fresnels to varying positions of lights for his kickers, Mac Ones etc.

Other work of Andrew's that I really like, is his work for Oscar at The Crown (2025) Directed by Shira Milikowsky which is an immersive musical performance in a purpose-built night club. This production was not confined to a stage, Andrew Exeter's job was to design the entrance, auditorium and even toilets. His design included VCR style screens, light up IBC containers, neon signs, LED strip lighting and more. I would be interested in considering how the Y Llywfan could be transported into an immersive experience for this project and how this can be used to change the way a story is told.



Andrew's lights displayed on EOS Lighting software with their colour and power for each cue

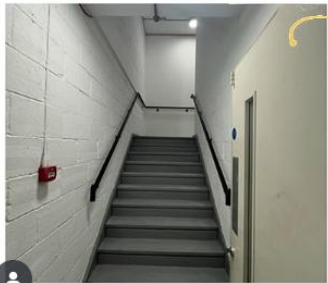
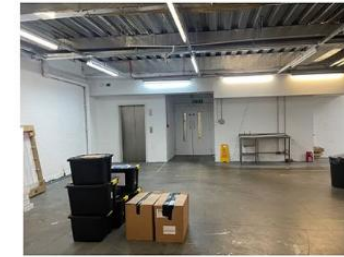


A picture from a rehearsal, here you can see the window frame light boxes and decorative LED Fresnels. The design included studio walls which could fly out revealing a New York building façade and the famous Friends fountain

Lighting Designer I am inspired by

Here you can see the before and afters of the space for Oscar at The Crown. What started as a vacant studio was transported to a post-apocalyptic, dystopian nightclub including Graffiti, burnt-out visuals, plastic strip curtains, flickering CCTV screens, mirrors and neon signs.

oscar @ the crown
venue before + after



Via @andrewexeter.studio on Instagram (2025)

Colour theory

How does lighting and colour effect emotions?

Lighting in theatre and film is commonly known to communicate basic ideas to do with the world of a story - like the time of day and season. Lighting can also be used to subtly convey emotions and effect the mental state of an audience.

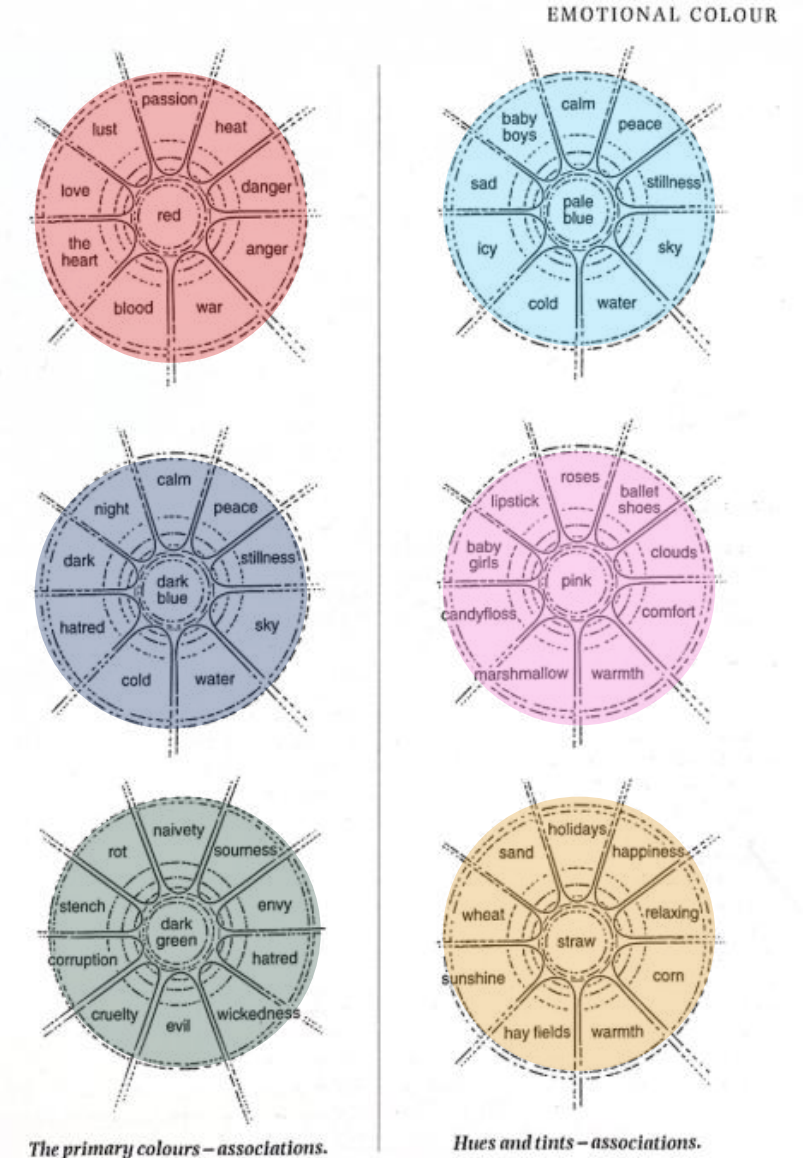
As a Lighting Designer, you should not only consider how to illuminate a stage so audiences can see the performance, but also how colours, movement and intensity have an effect, as these factors alter how we experience a story.

For example, a pale light with subtle movement has less of a dramatic effect than strong colours and rapid movement. Whilst we may feel it has always been engrained in us to feel calm in sunlight and a little on the edge when it is dark, it is learned experiences that give these reactions to lighting and colour.

A pale colour mimicking sunlight will not alter a subject as much as using a colour will, which is why it is most commonly used to light performers. Shades like Amber, Straw and Pinks which mimic natural sunlight also look best on skin tones.

Darker colours are used less because they don't give us as much information, using dark colours can also alter the colour of a subject. Using low lighting can also be used as a storytelling device, to withhold information from your audience.

To get a good understanding of colour theory and how it conveys different emotions, as shown in the diagram to the right, we can look at branding and advertising.



Colour theory

Where colour theory originates

Why do we associate colour with certain emotions?

Biological factors

Light reflects off objects and enters our eyes, where the retina detects the wavelengths and sends signals to the brain to interpret them as colour. Our eyes contain specialised photoreceptor cells called cones that detect different parts of the visible light spectrum: short wavelengths (blue), medium (green), and long (red). The brain processes signals from these cones in the visual cortex, to interpret colour contrasts (like red vs green). Certain colours can also trigger biological responses along with how much light we have and visibility.

Psychological Factors

We may associate some colours with a memory. Our individual experiences heavily influence colour perception. For instance, if you dislike a food item, you may have a dislike for the colour associated with it. The intensity, brightness, and saturation of a colour can also evoke stronger emotional responses. For example, bright, highly saturated colours trigger stronger feelings like excitement, energy, or urgency, while softer, muted tones tend to evoke calmness, nostalgia, or melancholy. In this way, colour can be a powerful tool to influence mood and guide emotional responses.

Learned factors

Our interpretation of colour can alter with context. For example, white when worn by a woman can make us think of weddings, purity, innocence. Whereas in different cultures and contexts, white is associated with hope or can be a sign of mourning. Lighting theory comes into this too: darkness is associated with mystery, fear, or tension, and lightness is associated with safety, clarity, and openness.



Colour Theory: The Role of Colours In Brand Identity Designs (Exdera, 2025)

Here you can see how colours are associated with emotions and how brands use these to sell their brand. For example, we associate green with growth and positivity which is why brands like Land Rover and Spotify use it. Or how yellow is associated with energy, which is why National Geographic and McDonalds may use it



Research

Themes



Research

As a group, certain themes kept coming up in conversation that we agreed we wanted to focus our research and production on. These themes were Feminism, Freedom and the Industrial Revolution. These were still subject to change, but it was a good start to guide our group's focus for research.

1. Feminism and the Suffragette Movement

Nights at the Circus is set in the final year of the century, 1899. For women, the 1800s were a century of firsts

- 1858: First woman to practise medicine in Britain - Dr Elizabeth Blackwell. Studied in the states and permitted to practice as a medical doctor in the UK
 - 1860: First nursing school, established by Florence Nightingale at St Thomas' Hospital, London
 - 1862: The first female art student at the RCA - Laura Herford
 - 1866: Early Suffrage Movement - The first mass women's suffrage petition to the House of Commons brought to Parliament by Emily Davies and Elizabeth Garrett, unsuccessful but marked the start for an organised campaign for the right of women to vote
 - 1868: First women to attend a UK university - The University of London's Senate voted to admit women to sit a 'General Examination', becoming the world's first university to accept women
 - 1870: Married Women's Right To Keep Her Own Earnings
 - 1874: First medical school to train women doctors -- The London School of Medicine for Women (now the Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine), founded in 1874 by Sophia Jex-Blake
 - 1882: A Married Women's Right To Own And Control Property
 - 1886: First female stockbroker UK - Amy Bell
 - 1888: First Woman To Gain A Law Degree In England & Wales - Eliza Orme
- (A Timeline of Women's Rights UK 1553-2020s, Girl Friends of Dorothy Blog, 2024)

Research

And many more firsts like the first Women's Football Match in 1895 in Crouch End and the Local Government Act in 1894 which entitled women who owned property, the right to vote in local elections. Whilst these advancements in gender equality were positive, they primarily benefitted upper-class women and mostly reinforced traditional roles. These advancements were mostly aimed at making women more educated, refined and therefore better wives and mothers, rather than for promoting gender equality for all social classes.

The Suffragists and Suffragettes

The official Suffragette movement didn't begin until 1903 when the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) formed as a reaction to the lack of progress achieved by the NUWSS. This was the National Union for Women's Suffrage Societies led by Millicent Fawcett. It was founded in 1897 but had been working across organisations since the 1860s, their approach was non-violent and involved activism such as petitions and debating.

Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughters established the Suffragettes to create a campaign with a more direct and confrontational approach. Their slogan was 'deeds not words' and took on militant tactics like chaining themselves to railings, disrupting political meetings, breaking windows, and setting fire to post boxes or empty buildings. Some even planted small bombs, though they aimed to avoid harming anyone. A reference to their activism in the play, is Ma Nelsons death, who dies from falling 'beneath the hooves and wheels of a brewers drey' (Rice and Morris, 2006, p 22), much like Emily Davison who walked onto the racecourse at Epsom Derby and was trampled by the King's Horse. Another reference is Lizzie setting fire to the Brothel and her handbag bomb.



Millicent Garrett Fawcett 1870
(Bain News Service/Library of Congress)



Emmeline, Christabel and Sylvia Pankhurst
Imperial War Museum

Research

The WSPU's approach applied pressure on the government to enact change, and as a result in 1918, women over the age of 30 were allowed to vote if they or their husband owned a property over a certain value. The Suffragette movement was put on hold due to the First World War where many women played a vital role in the home effort. Partly thanks to their contribution during the war, equal suffrage for women was achieved in 1928 through the Equal Franchise Act, granting all women over 21 the right to vote on equal terms with men.

Besides the suffragette movement, feminism in the late 1800s also focused on workers' rights. Many women, especially from the working class, fought for better pay, safer working conditions, and shorter work hours. They joined labour unions and strikes to demand fair treatment. Feminists at the time also worked to improve laws around property, education, and marriage to help women have more independence in everyday life. A key example of this was The Matchgirls' Strike of 1888, wherein the workers refused to work until their demands for better pay, safer conditions, and an end to unfair fines were met.



Suffragette Banner 'Deeds not Words' 1910
Museum of London



Women's suffrage: London demonstrators Suffragettes holding signs in London 1912, Encyclopaedia Britannica



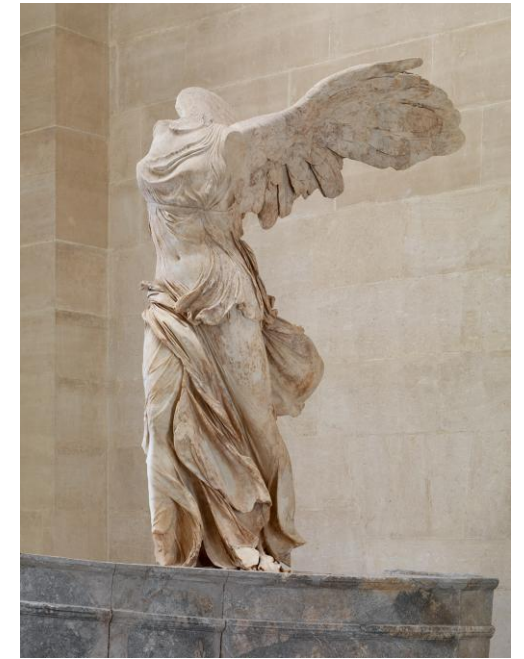
Strike Committee of the Matchmakers' Union
Victorian Web

Research

2. Freedom

In *Nights at the Circus*, Fevvers is a symbol of freedom to the Ladies of the Academy, appointed by Ma Nelson as their 'Winged Victory' (Rice and Morris, p 22). In Ma Nelson's song, she also gives Fevvers her sword 'as a symbol of her freedom from the trade of this house' (Rice and Morris p 22). This is Ma Nelson declaring that unlike herself and the women of the academy, Fevvers will never be a prostitute, and women of the working class in the new age should not have to sell their bodies to live. Other motifs that come up in this song is the colour white and purity, when I read *Nights at the Circus*, I immediately pictured Fevvers' wings as white, this could be that we associate that colour on animals with beauty and purity.

Next, I looked at birds that migrate from Britain to Russia, in case there was any correlation there. I found that Bewick swans arrive from Siberia in the late autumn and go back in the Spring. Bewick's swans make a dangerous migration, facing threats of habitat loss and illegal hunting. It could be interpreted that Fevvers faces similar challenges in losing her home at the brothel, and from Mr Sugar who tries to take away her wings. Looking at the habits of birds can also lead to answers surrounding Fevvers' abandonment, this could be because of her deformity or because Fevvers or her nest were tampered with. It is a debunked myth that a bird will abandon a baby that has been touched by a human - but this idea can show that as a symbol of the 'new woman' Fevvers is 'tampering' with the then social and political climate which favoured men's rights.



'The Winged Victory of Samothrace, one of the most famous statues at the Louvre, graces the top of the monumental Daru staircase.' The Louvre (2025)



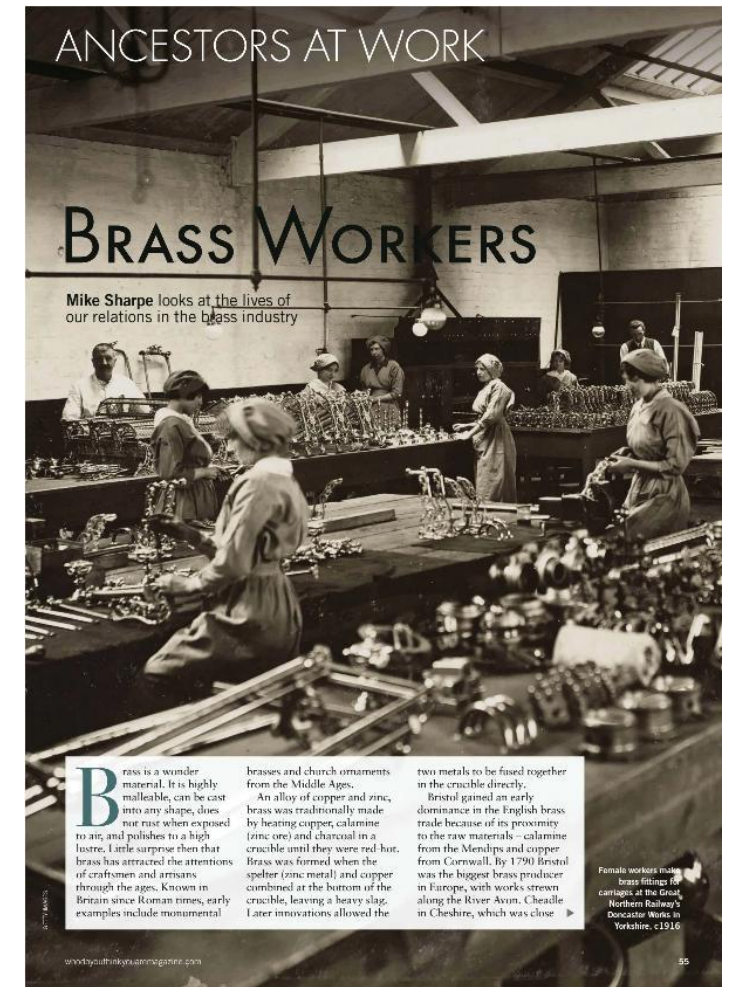
Berwick Swan (RSPB 2023)

Research

3. Industrial revolution/ technological advancements – metals, materials, texture, movement

The Industrial Revolution began in the mid 18th century as a result of Britain's growing Empire. This precedes the setting of *Nights at the Circus* which is set at the end of the 19th century and the end of the Industrial Revolution. Despite this, throughout the play, many references are made to events that took place before Queen Victoria's rule, like Ma Nelson who takes on the name of Vice Admiral Napoleon, known for his naval victories against the French and protecting British trade. As well as this, many references are made to the knock-on effect of the technological advancements of the 1800s like when Lizzie suggests finding a job for Mignon in a 'brassworks' (Rice and Morris, 2006, p 44). This was a factory where brass items were forged and they were important in supplying materials for growing industries, including shipbuilding, electrical equipment, and domestic goods. Just before this, Mignon is also described as 'beaten metal' by Jack and compared to a 'bag of spanners' by Lizzie (Rice and Morris, 2006, p 43).

The Industrial revolution improved travel and transportation greatly, with the invention of steam technology, much faster steamships replaced sailing vessels, train networks were expanding allowing faster and cheaper transportation of goods and people. Over this period, great progress was made in harnessing electricity for practical uses with inventions like the electric generator, electric motor, and light bulb.



Female workers make brass fittings for carriages at the Great Northern Railway's Doncaster Works in Yorkshire, 1916 (Who Do you Think You Are Magazine)



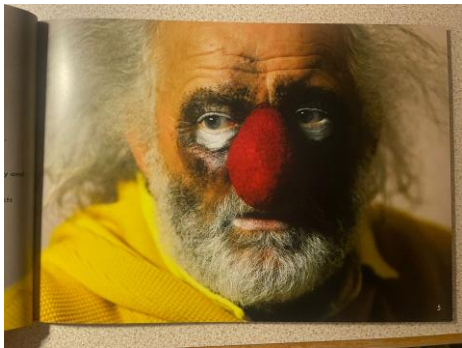
Incubation

Finding inspiration in other places



Slava's Snow Show

A moment that allowed me to step away from my work and let ideas develop, was going to watch the Slava Snow Show at the New Theatre, Cardiff. This is a production staged and performed by Slava Polunin, a renowned performance artist and clown (in this performance, I watched long time collaborator, Artem Zhimo take on the lead). The highly acclaimed show has been on and off stages around the world since its debut in Moscow in 1993, since then it has reached audiences both young and old in the millions, with more than 12,000 performances in over 225 cities. I had no idea what to expect from the show, I did expect to laugh but I didn't expect to cry. The show unfolds like a surreal, childlike dream, blending moments of silliness, wonder, and fear. I left feeling both moved and inspired, wishing I could experience it all over again. In terms of my role for this project, I also noted how the lighting subtly guided the story: soft spotlights, moody blue tones, and striking silhouettes that helped give each scene its emotional depth.



Photos I snapped at Slava's Snow Show 17/10/25

Images from the programme of Slava Polunin, including him performing the famous blizzard scene





Selection

Role allocation and deciding on design approach as a company

Group and role allocation

Our production company

We decided on the company name of Casa Crocodile – an acronym of our names and an animal we could all agree on. Guinea pig and Fox didn't make the cut. Below is our logo, illustrated by Alaya.

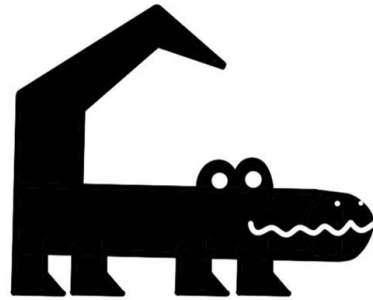
Production roles

Sarah – Set Designer

Alaya – Puppet Designer/maker

Charlie – Prop Designer/maker

Alice – Lighting Designer



As a company we have the task to create a design pitch for a production of 'Nights at the Circus' by Emma Rice and Tom Morris, (2006) that will be shown in Y Llwyfan. As a team we will be breaking down and analysing the script and making a cohesive response to the material, sharing our ideas through mood boards and drawings with references to colour and texture, as well as communicating our ideas verbally.

Independently, we will be looking into the responsibilities of our job role and looking at role-specific research.

The first thing we did as a group was a table read together, this time I was looking back through the script through the eyes of a Lighting Designer, I was noting down anything that inspired me visually or I wanted to explore further. Our next steps as a group included creating a schedule and a group mood board of our initial ideas.

My brief

Lighting – you will need to generate mood boards, colour palettes/atmospheres and designs that work with the script and scenes. You will need to understand how these will integrate with the ethos of other designs, such as such as sound and scenery. You should also give consideration to what equipment could be used to realise your design.

The role of a Lighting Designer

A Lighting Designer chooses the lighting for a production based on the colours and effects they want to use to portray the story. Lighting is a crucial storytelling device that helps evoke emotions, moods, create atmosphere, highlight important moments, guide the audiences focus, and build tension. It can also define a setting and time, for example, with naturalistic lighting and leafy gobos for an outdoor setting, or vibrant strobe lighting for a night club. Lighting can also be used in a stylised way to enhance visual composition, like in dance performances. By applying colour theory and understanding the psychological effects of different colours and combinations, lighting can symbolize themes and convey character emotions. A lighting designer may choose to use harmonious colour schemes to create a pleasing atmosphere or deliberately employ contrasting colours to unsettle and provoke the audience.

Usually, a Lighting Designer will come in after the Set Design is completed. Then, they will design and show their lighting ideas using a software such as Vector Works or by shining a physical light onto a model of the set. They will also produce Mood boards, a Lighting plot, and Cue synopsis.

A Lighting Plot is a to-scale technical diagram of light placements to fit a venue. This includes the venue ground plan, scenery and elevations and each light numbered with its unit number, purpose, colour and channel number. With this, the Cue Synopsis shows what lights are used when and what colour and intensity they are set to. As well as producing the paperwork, a Lighting Designer works closely with the director, set, costume, and sound/video designers to create lighting that supports the overall look and mood of the production. They are deciding on positions, colours, angles, intensities, effects, and any special or moving lights. Then they collaborate with the technical team to rig, focus, programme, and run the lights during rehearsals and performances, ensuring the design is executed properly throughout the show.

My Schedule

Key: **Group schedule**, **room times**, *work shifts*

Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
29 Class 2-5 Table read (2nd read) Analysis 3rd read in the evening	30 Class 10-5 Character, Location and theme lists & breakdowns made in class	1 Analysis questions Submit role preferences by 3	2 Class 10-5 Group & role allocation Research job role & responsibilities Put together any qs for Dave	3 Class 10-1 Group tutorial 10.15 Research group themes	4 <i>Work 9-16.00</i> Continue location/character Research	5 Research lighting designers, circus lighting design Prepare ideas to feedback to group – make mood board with ideas backed up
6 Class 10-5 Individual tutorial 11.30, show PWB Combine ideas with group, decide cohesive design approach, make group mood board	7 Make a clear list of unit changes/beats How might I build atmosphere, what will change throughout lighting wise	8 Decide on how I will present my ideas, make a list of what I need to make i.e. paperwork, drawings etc Look at software	9 Class 10-5 Implementation building/making <i>Work 17.00-22.30</i>	10 Class 10-1	11 <i>Work 16.30-23.30</i>	12

My Schedule

Key: Group schedule, room times, work shifts

Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
13 Class 10-5 Location mood boards	14 Class 10-5 Location breakdown	15 Class 10-1 Sketch Lamp ideas and staging	16 Class 10-5 Play around with physical lights, bring mac Ask Dave about torches, take gels away Start putting together presentation	17 Class 10-1 Write presentation script - Mood boards for each scene/location	18 Lighting plot Work 18.00-23.00	19 Rehearse talking about 3 scenes in more depth – fire, VESTA opening
20 Class 10-5 Group rehearsal	21 Class 10-5 Rehearsal with tutors	22	23 Class 10-5 Presentations Work 17.00-23.30	24 Write up evaluation	25 Complete workbook, hand in	26
27 Work book deadline 10am Reading Week						

Group schedule

This is our group schedule that we hung up in the design room with soft deadlines on completing our research, selection and implementation processes. It also included class times, so we knew when we'd be meeting in the classroom vs in our design space.

Our process was a lot more convoluted than this, jumping between stages of the 7 steps of design, especially research which continued throughout the project.

A group schedule is useful for keeping us all on track and because a lot of my design relied on input and decisions from other team members.

SCHEDULE

Legend:
• = Scheduled class
• = group

M	T	W	Th	F	S	S
		1	2 Research 2:30 Independent research 3:30 Meet w/ Stacy 4:00 Cross referenced / discuss research	3 10:00 - 13:00	4	5
6 10:00 - 17:00	7 CHARUE BOY!	8 Present research ideas / complete	9 10:00 - 17:00 Implementation building / making Selection locked in / Group record book	10 10:00 - 13:00	11	12
13 10:00 - 17:00	14 14:00 - 17:00	15 10:00 - 13:00	16 10:00 - 17:00 Build presentation - put together slide - write script	17 10:00 - 13:00	18	19
20 10:00 - 17:00	21 10:00 - 17:00 REHEARSAL	22 SARAH BOY!	23 10:00 PRESENTATION	24	25	26
27 PNB DUE 10 AM!	Reading week yay!					

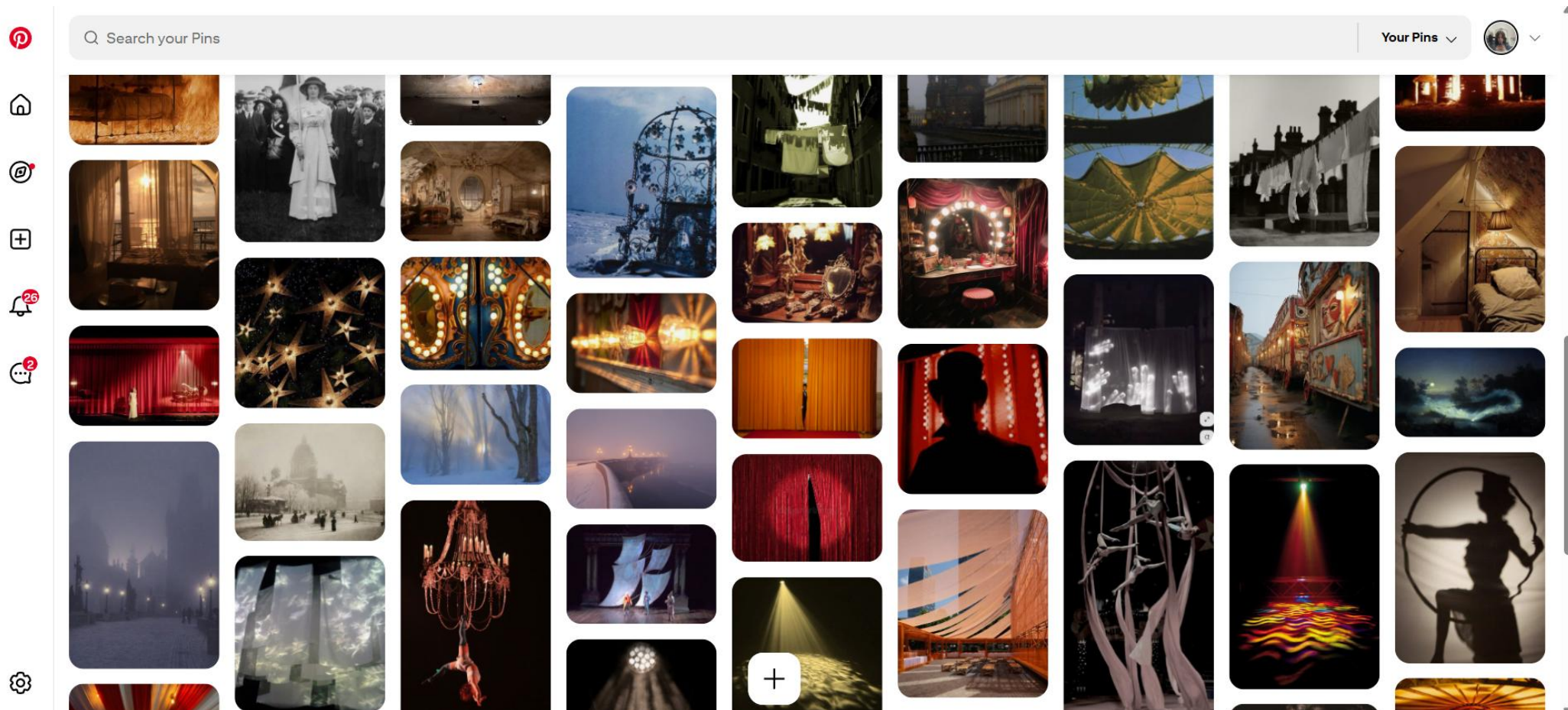


Mood boards

Initial ideas

Mood boards

During my research phase, I decided to put some of my ideas down in a mood board to help me communicate my ideas. I started with a Pinterest mood board, then made a more refined one and a colour palette to show my group where my head was at in terms of colours and visual inspiration. I also made a texture/scenery mood board to help me visualise what kind of surfaces and spaces I might be lighting. Pinterest mood board: <https://pin.it/5zD1XRJOx>





Considering how water and diamonds break up and reflect light into patterns in relation to VESTA's song and MR SUGAR's character

For circus specific lighting, I found a lot of bulb and string lights are used to light the tent

Ways I can use lighting to depict FEVVERS' attic window and rooftop – frames, projections, directional light source

I am interested in using non flat surfaces for projections to create movement, inspired by the sails of a mid 1800s merchant ship, the awnings of a market stall, or washing on a line in an East London alley

Taking inspiration from different lamp styles and shapes - some look like an ornate bird cage

For creating atmosphere – using lights and smoke to reflect the limited visibility in a snowy St. Petersburg or smoky London setting

The textures and colours that may appear in the set

JACK: Fevvers. Do you ever shut up? Look at her.

JACK hands MIGNON to FEVVERS.

Her skin is mauvish, greenish, yellowish from beatings. Fresh bruises on fading bruises on faded bruises. It is as if she has been beaten flat, had all the pile, the shine banged off her adolescent skin. Or as if she has been beaten to the thinness of beaten metal.

FEVVERS: Take her, dear Liz.

Gently LIZZIE takes MIGNON off towards the bath. She gives her a box of chocolates.

CHORUS: You bitter hearted man! GET OUT!

VESTA opens the curtains, revealing FEVVERS, who sings her song. The CHORUS and JACK stay and watch.

FEVVERS: I am only a bird in a gilded cage
With a lock that is copper and steel

powerful imagery of luxury & entrapment

Colour Palette

712A2D

B78450

E1C16E

7DB5BC

777777

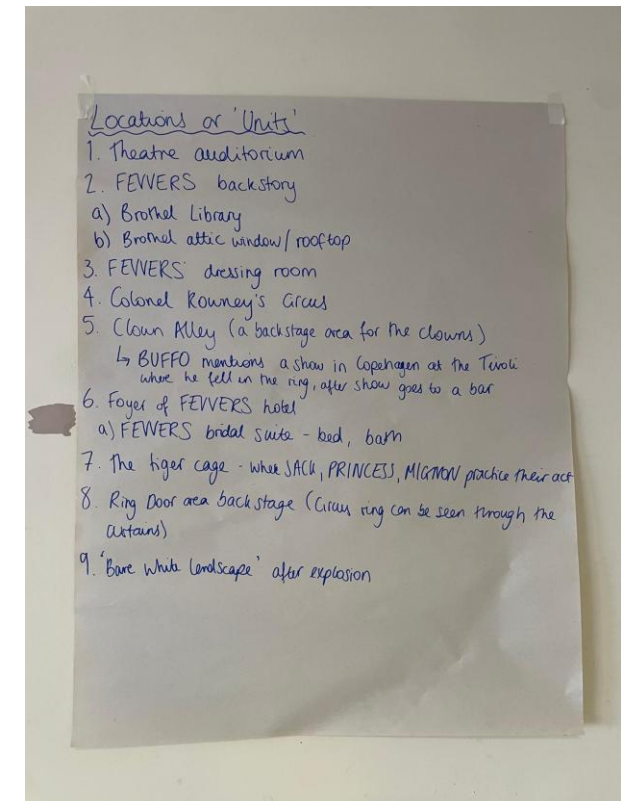
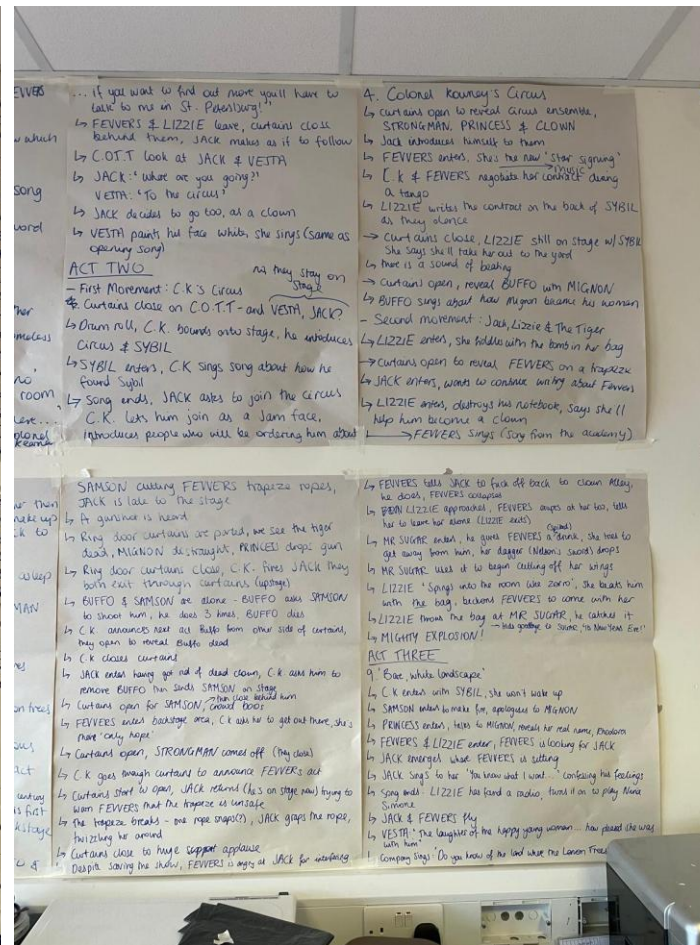
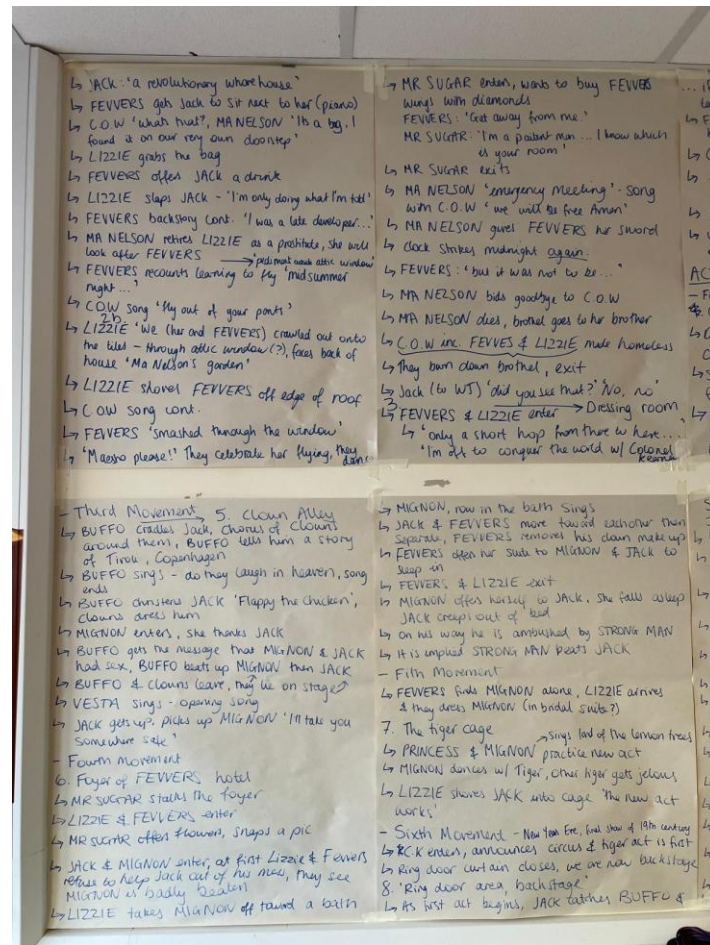
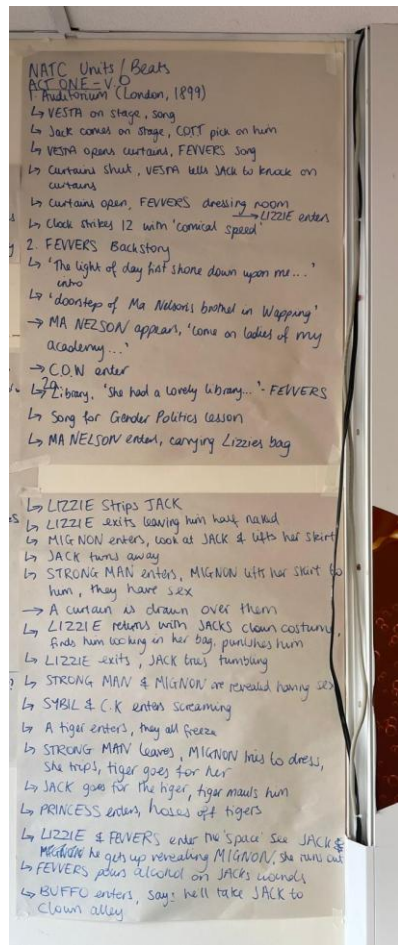
Group mood board

Having presented my ideas to the group, we made a group mood board to combine everyone's influences.



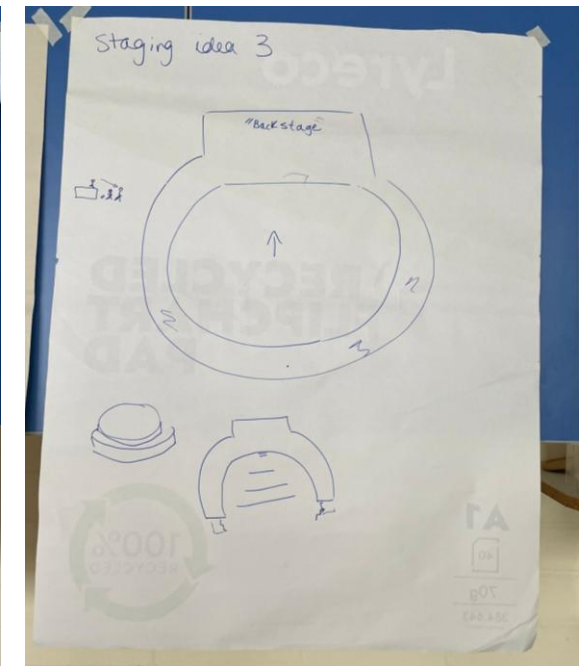
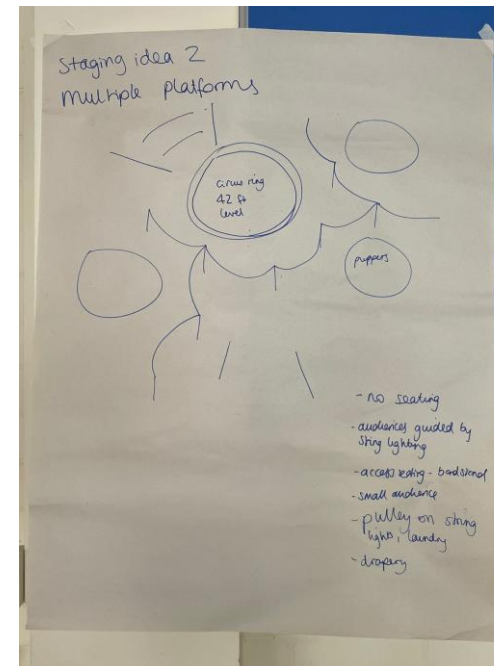
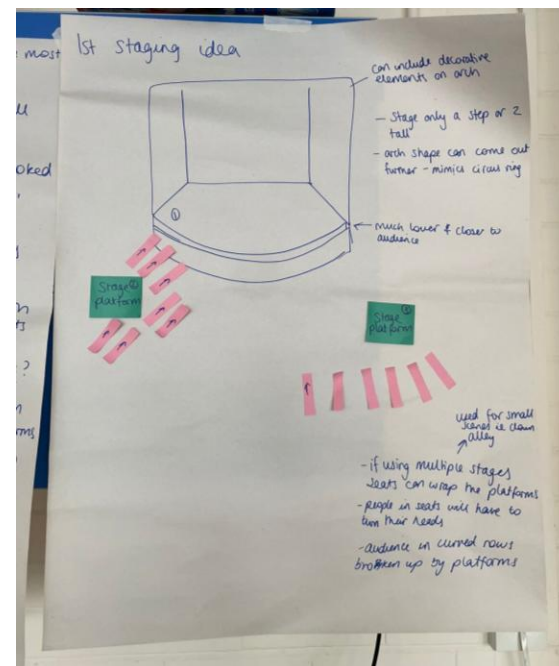
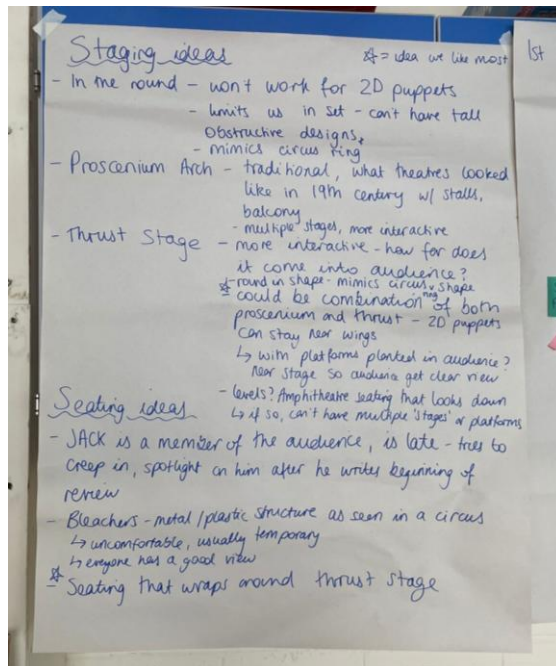
Beats/Unit Changes

Next, we made a list of beat and unit changes, this is so we knew what we needed to consider in our designs. We were able to identify what props come up, any descriptions of scenery and consider questions like does there need to be a 'backstage', and how big do we need our stage(s) to be? We did this on the flip chart in the design room then put them onto the wall. I found this process very useful for my role, to consider where there are any changes in pace or tone that can be shown through lighting.



Deciding on the type of stage and seating

Then, we worked on deciding what kind of Theatre style and stage we would use. We drew a few ideas down, our first idea being a traditional Proscenium Arch and auditorium. We were very drawn to this idea as it was what we had visualised when reading the script, and felt it went well with the period accurate setting we were going for. However, we were challenged to think less literally about the script, and more about how we want audiences to feel. Since we wanted our audiences to feel uncomfortable – which was a common response in our group, we looked at different theatre and staging styles like Thrust and Traverse. We were asked to think more outside the box in terms of traditional sit-down theatre as we had all been picturing. Our final design incorporated an element of immersive and in the round theatre, we had scrapped the idea of seating (other than a few for accessibility) and decided we would allow audiences to move freely, which matched with one of our key themes of freedom and reflects the growing ability to travel at the time.

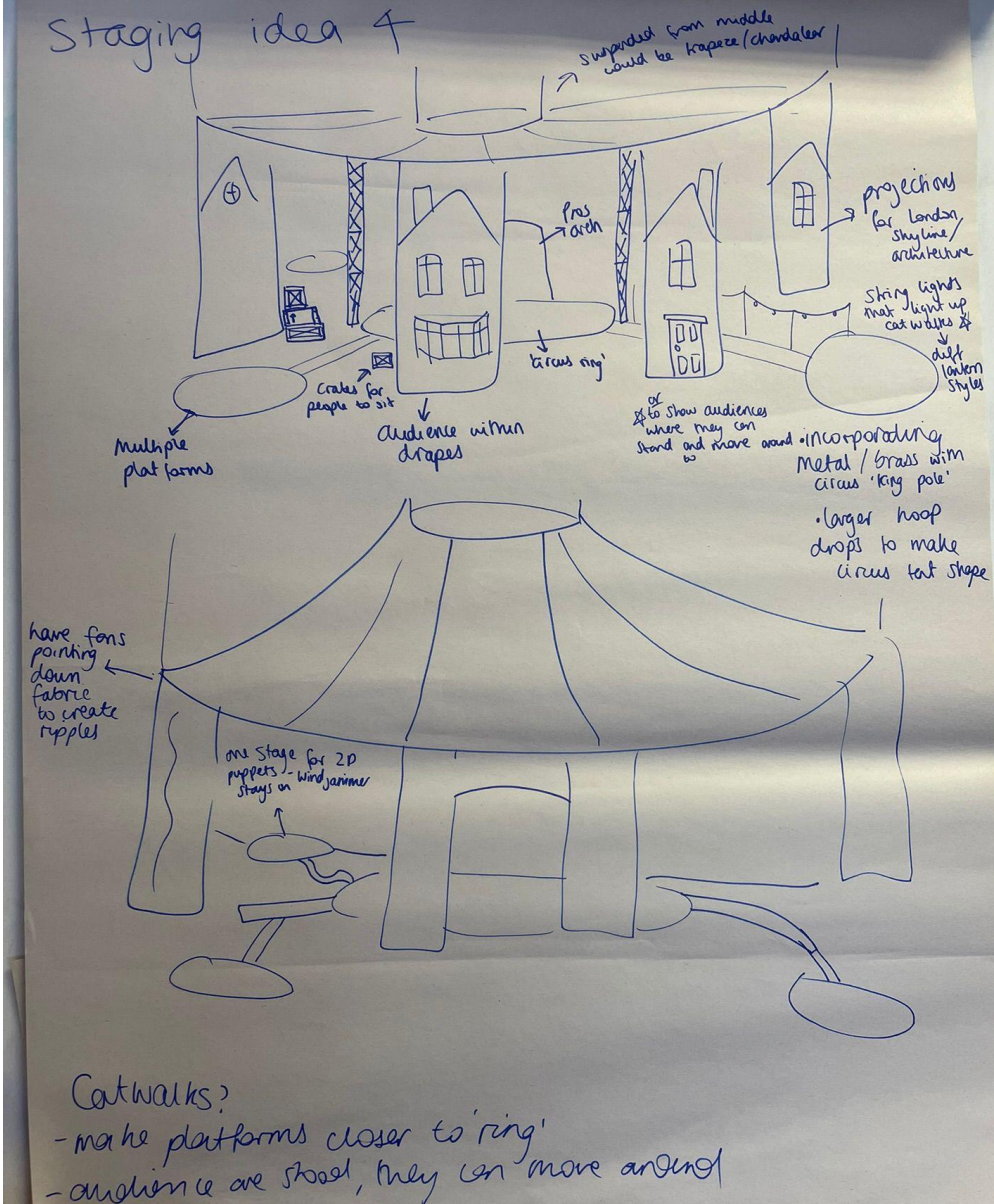


Deciding on the type of stage and seating

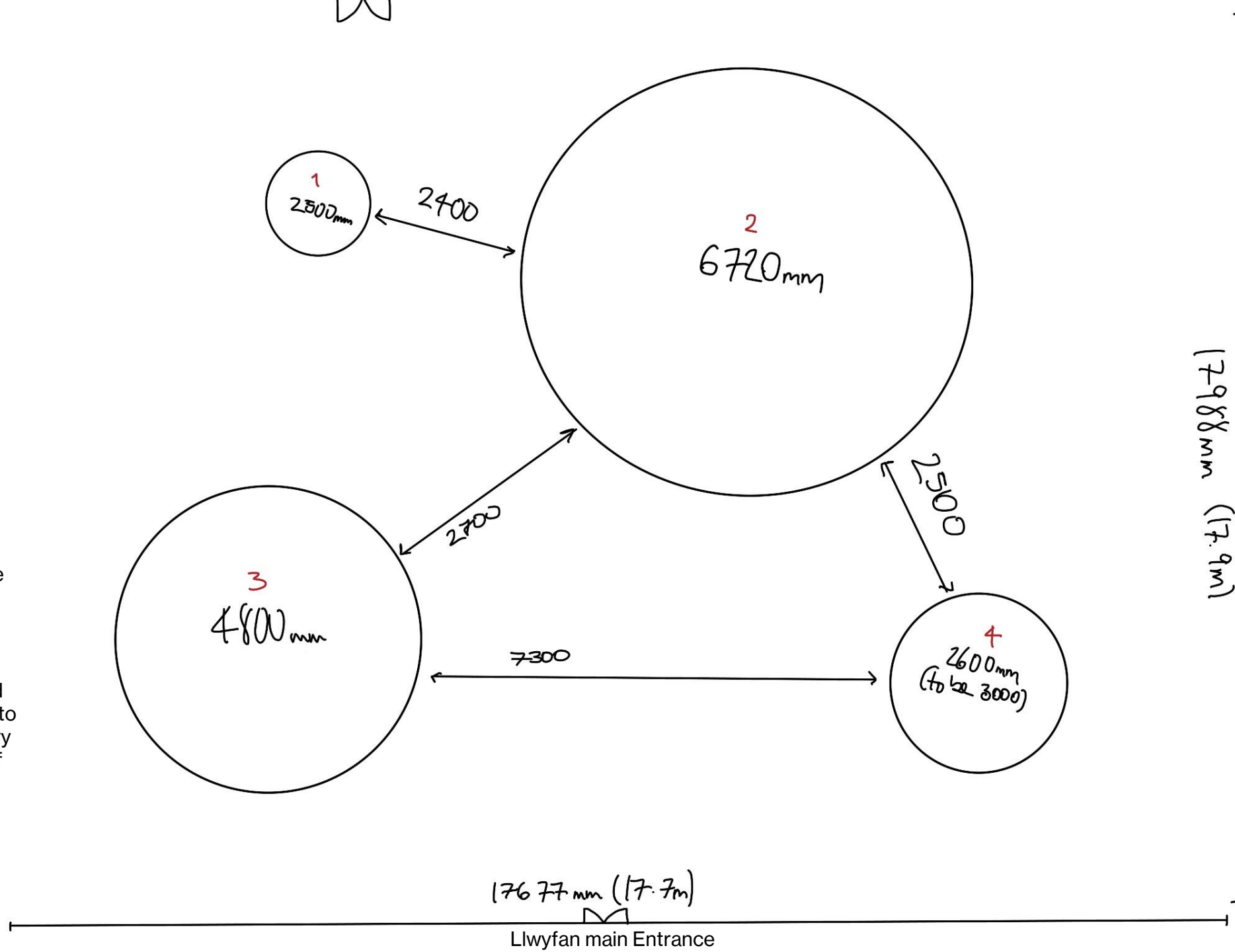
This sketch was the springboard for our final idea, we felt that in the round staging allowed for the most amount of freedom for audiences and is very immersive, and we decided to have more than one stage for this reason. Performers can move through the audience, and enter the stages from any direction, creating a sense of discomfort. Initially we thought of catwalks to connect the stages together, but realised this wasn't necessary, and takes away an element of surprise.

In terms of the tent element, this idea came to me when thinking about Sarah's key inspiration: *The Greatest Showman* (2017) directed by Michael Gracey. I knew she was leaning toward a circus setting for inspiration in her design, so I thought of a 'simple' solution for either hiding a circus tent or making one appear for the second act. That's where my idea of a big top made of two hoops attached from above came from, with the option to have it lay flat, then the larger hoop can drop to form a circus tent.

The idea of drapery to come down from the circus roof, came from inspiration from textures that had come up in my research – sails on a merchant ship, lines of laundry in East London housing, market awnings in Kolkata and a striped circus tent. As a lighting designer this gave me lots to work with, we no longer had a conventional theatre space and would need a way to show scene changes and pull audiences focus, which can be achieved through Lighting. Our next step was to decide on how many stages and their placements. Sarah cut out scrap cardboard to play around with different layouts.



This was a layout we landed on, of four stages, each with a different size. This was still subject to change, but we used this as a foundation to start building scenery and lighting ideas off of. To do this, Sarah and I needed to decide what in the script would happen where.





Implementation

Location breakdown and blocking



Deciding what moods to create for each scene by making a more in-depth location breakdown, then deciding on the blocking, of what can happen and where. With each location breakdown, I included my atmosphere mood board.



1. Theatre Auditorium (for FEVVERS' Show)

Characters

Voiceover

Vesta

Windjammer (on stage throughout)

Jack

Creatures of the Theatre (Chorus)

A finger (sticks out through the curtain)

Scenery

- Stage (Jack is beckoned on stage by 'Finger' and punched)
- Auditorium – an area for the audience, seating or stood
- Curtains opened by VESTA to reveal FEVVERS' song

Props

- Jacks Notebook and pencil
- Vesta: Puppet, 2D – important to remember for lighting, may also be on a smaller stage

Feel/mood

Before show or as it begins

- Anticipation
- Trepidation

Once show has started, VESTA sings about the death of a century with descriptions of a night spent walking by a river

- Cold - Cool tones. Naturalistic (blue moonlight) but dark, building tension for the shows beginning
- Eery – The song has dark themes
- Perhaps projections or create reflection of water on her face from below

Beats

1. The show begins, house lights dim, audiences focus is pulled in
2. VESTA enters – spotlight on them? Her song begins
3. Jack (Out loud and over the music) notes his thoughts in his book, a finger sticks out of the curtain and points at him – another spotlight? On Jack in the audience and the finger
4. Jack enters the stage and is punched, as this happens, Creatures of the Theatre enter too - through the curtain or could clamber onto the stage, now flooding it with light and life
5. The creatures get 'struck with wander' when hearing of Jacks adventures
6. After reading the offensive notes in his notebook they shout at him to 'Get Out!'



1a. Fevvers' show: 'The Winged Woman of London'

Characters

Vesta

Jack

Creatures of the Theatre (Chorus)

Fevvers

Scenery

- The staging for Fevvers show, is she on a trapeze yet, or is that only for the circus part of the story

Props

- Vesta & Windjammer are puppets, on stage throughout

Feel/mood

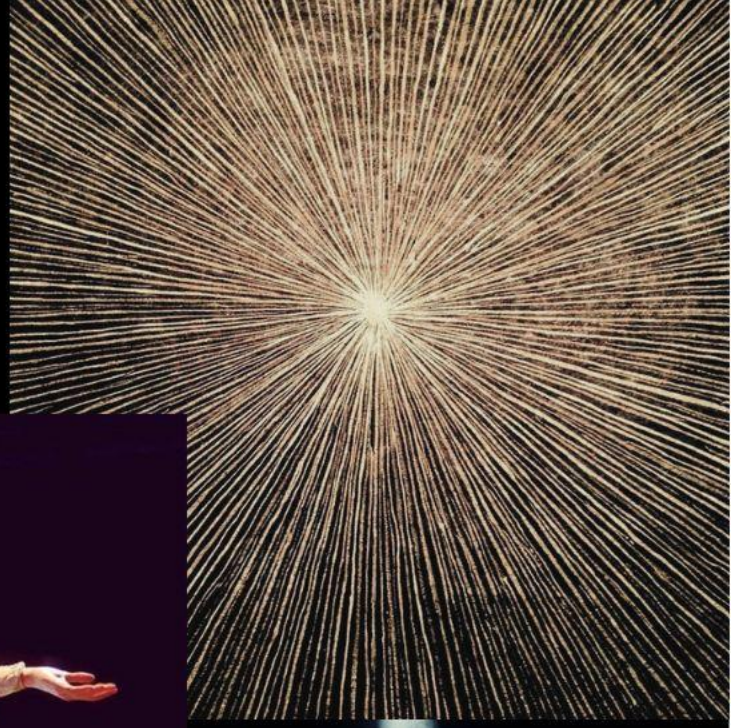
- Seductive - Fevvers is there to entertain the audience
- Entrapment - Fevvers' song has negative connotations, she sings about having a lot more to her than meets the eye and she is searching for an ear
- Curiosity – as an audience we want to know more about the *Winged Woman*

- Her lighting could be soft so she looks heavenly but narrow and from a singular source – can't really see her face or read her emotions.

- Other worldly pristine, unattainable, untouchable, diffused

Beats

1. VESTA opens curtains (or introduces it in someway) for FEVVERS show, it begins - change in mood and lighting for FEVVERS' performance
2. She sings a song, the Creatures joining in and dancing, about being a bird in a gilded cage – themes of death, isolation, exploitation and vulnerability
3. FEVVERS performance ends, curtains close, VESTA (to JACK) 'Are you still there?..'
4. VESTA prompts JACK to knock on FEVVERS' dressing room door, he knocks



1b. Fevvers' Dressing Room

Characters

Vesta

Jack

Fevvers (crouched on piano)

Lizzie (enters suddenly after Fevvers introduces herself to Jack)

Scenery

Curtain (as her door)

Piano (Fevvers is crouched on)

Props

- Jellied Eel

Feel/mood

- Glamorous - hairbrush, make up, vanity mirror. Cluttered, intimate
- Busy – I picture her dressing room as unkept, especially if she behaves like an animal, she may not have the instincts to care for making things pretty, just focusses on practicality

- (When talking about her upbringing, we are in London) feel is no longer glamorous but hazy, black
- Warm and inviting opposed to the lighting of Fevvers' performance

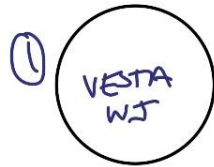
Beats

1. Upon first seeing FEVVERS in her dressing room, JACK looks at her amazed as she feeds herself.
2. VESTA (probably to audience) talks about Jacks experiences in Setzuan, Morocco, the Damascus Road
3. LIZZIE enters suddenly, (to JACK): 'You! Keep your hands to yourself!' – sudden sense of urgency, she frisks him and tells him to sit down and keep quiet until Fevvers is finished with her story...
4. Clock Strikes 12 *with comical speed* (a sign of the beginning of the flashback)
5. Fevvers sets the scene of 'Smokey old London'

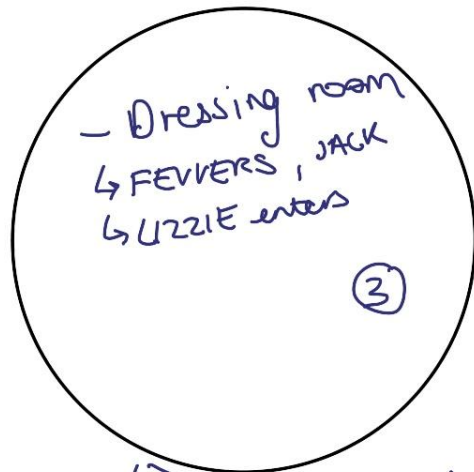


Act 1 - Auditorium

- punched by puppet?
↳ C.O.T.T

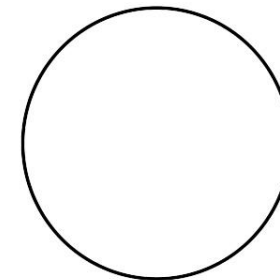
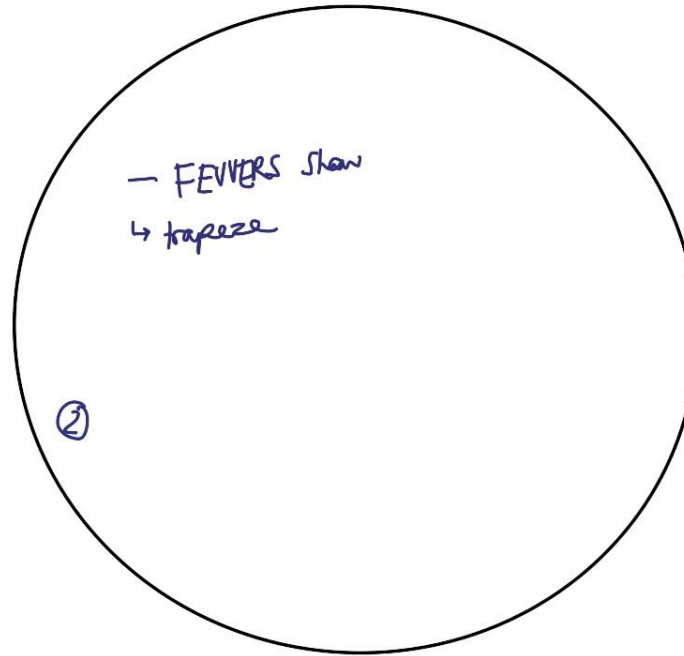


JACK enters
through audience



 Possible set
- piano (on or off stage)
- vanity
- chair lounge
- bar

C.O.T.T.
↓



Other set/prop
- tiger cage
- gun
- crates, barrels

2. Fevvers Backstory

a) Ma Nelson's Library

Characters

Vesta

Jack

Fevvers (Still on piano but maybe now sat comfortably)

Ma Nelson

Chorus of Whores (Ladies of the Academy)

Scenery

- Mentioned is the doorstep to the brothel
- (Jack and Fevvers are sat in her dressing room, they can remain there as this new scene plays out elsewhere) In her dressing room there could be a bar cart – Fevvers offers Jack a drink
- A bath, where Fevvers is bathed as a baby

Props

- Ma Nelson's Sword
- Lizzies bag (carrying baby Fevvers), carried onto stage by Ma Nelson

- Baby Fevvers – could be a prop baby or acted out by FEVVERS herself

Feel/mood

- We are transported to smoky, East London. Greyish, muted lighting - to show a flashback
- Suspense
- Fun - this section of the play is entertaining and lively in comparison to the opening. We are in a supportive, happy environment.
- Fantastical – we are introduced to this mythical being – FEVVERS, there is a sense of wonderment

Beats

1. FEVVERS offers JACK a drink of baby sham
2. MA NELSON enters, flourishes her sword 'for protection!' then bids the ladies of the academy to come and dance
3. CHORUS OF WHORES enter, they dance
4. MA NELSON instructs them to head to the library

2. Fevvers Backstory

a) Ma Nelson's Library

5. FEVVERS: 'She had a lovely library...' This could be a new space that the audiences attention is directed to, meanwhile MA NELSON slips away at some point *
6. The Gener Politics lesson in the Library through song, it has comedic elements and could be displayed as light hearted
7. * MA NELSON enters carrying LIZZIE's bag
8. FEVVERS breaks up her story to offer JACK a seat next to her
9. The Chorus and Lizzie look into the bag MA NELSON brings in, its baby FEVVERS, the chorus suggest giving her a bath as she is covered in feathers, LIZZIE grabs the bag off MA NELSON
10. FEVVERS breaks up the story again to make JACK drink champagne
11. LIZZIE slaps him after he makes an inappropriate joke, the story continues...
12. LIZZIE gives FEVVERS a bath, sees wings coming out of her back, a turning point for the characters

2. Fevvers Backstory

b) Ma Nelson's Brothel Attic Window & Rooftop

Characters

Vesta

Jack

Fevvers (sat next to Jack, they're drinking)

Ma Nelson

Chorus of Whores (Ladies of the Academy)

Mr Sugar

Scenery

- The pediment outside the brothel's attic window (FEVVERS later smashes back through)
- Tiles of the rooftop that they crawl out onto
- Ma Nelson's garden which lies below them

Props

Feel/ Mood

- Suspense again as we are not sure if FEVVERS will make it in her attempt at flying

- It is a midsummer night – how to convey the summer night setting and warmth here, not only from her nourishing, loving environment but the summer warmth. Lizzie does mention it is a chilly night 'soft cool weather'
- Quiet, the dead of night, street lamps are on, no cars
- Sudden euphoria at FEVVERS survival and attempt when she crashes through the window, here tension that was built up is released

Beats

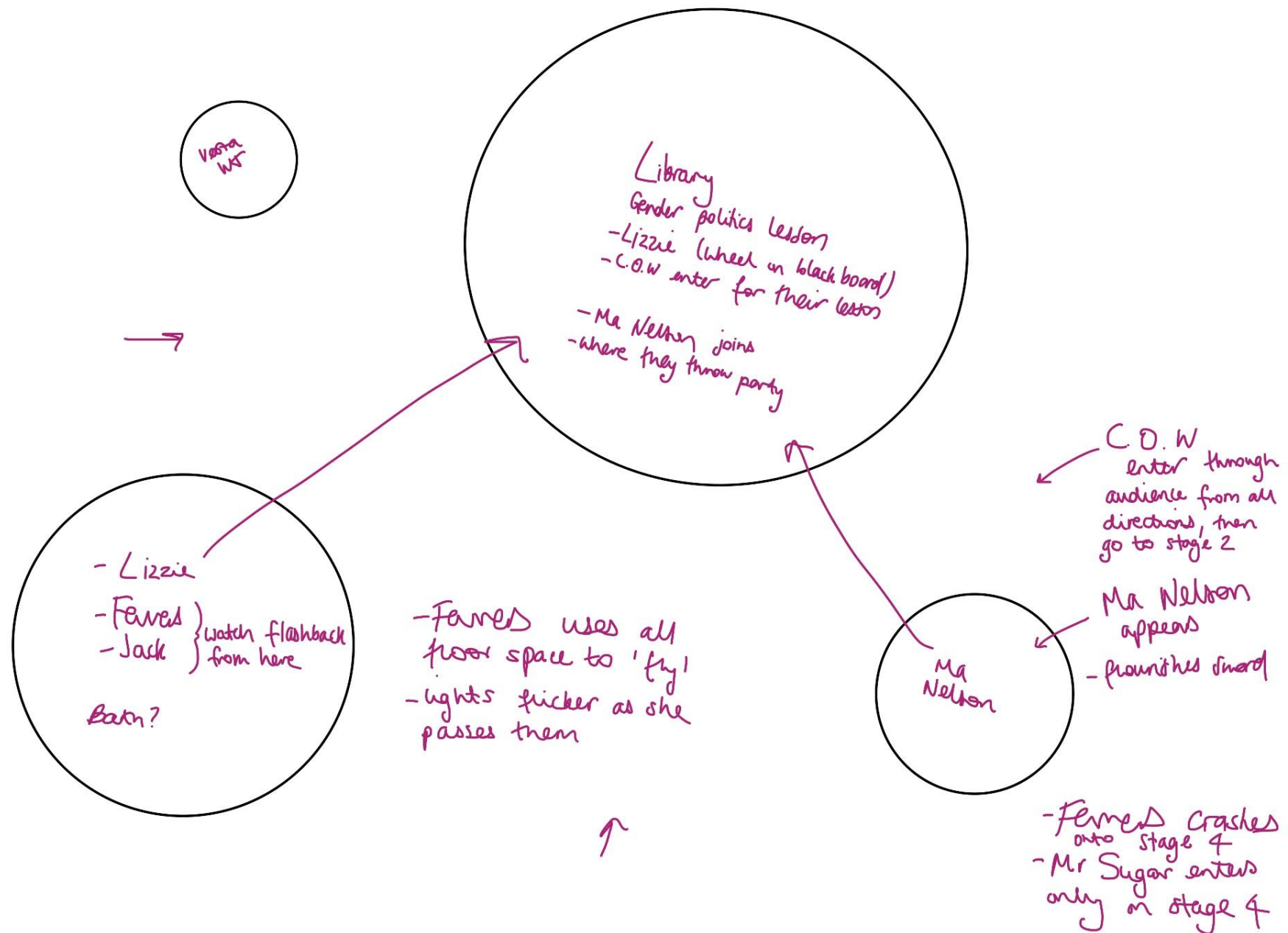
1. Lizzie shoves FEVVERS off the ledge
2. The chorus sings 'Fevvers fly.. Fly for all of us'
3. FEVVERS smashes through window
4. MA NELSON 'Maestro please' celebrating FEVVERS flight, they dance
5. MR SUAGR enters
6. MR SUGAR exits, Jack (to FEVVERS): 'are you alright?'

2. Fevvers Backstory

b) Ma Nelson's Brothel Attic Window & Rooftop

7. MA NELSONs 'Emergency Meeting' then song 'Fevvers is not for sale... By any means necessary, we will be free. Amen.'
8. MA NELSON hands over her sword to FEVVERS
9. Clock Strikes midnight again – Flashback coming to an end
10. 'But it was not to be. Ma Nelson met her end...' MA NELSON leaves, bids goodbye to Ladies of the Academy (emotional beat for Ma Nelsons death)
11. The chorus light their cigarettes
12. They throw them, starting a fire, the brothel burns
13. Sudden beat – fire abruptly goes out, house lights come on
14. FEVVERS and LIZZIE enter
15. FEVVERS: 'Goodnight Mr Walser', LIZZIE and FEVVERS exit, it is now just VESTA, Jack and creatures of the theatre
16. JACK's second 'wait' – decides he wants to join the circus, a sense of curiosity and possibly desperation sets in at
- FEVVERS leaving
17. VESTA sings, same tune as the opening song as opening song, she puts on Jacks makeup
18. Curtains close on CHORUS, immediately there is a drum roll

Act 1: Flashback



3. Colonel Kearney's Circus

Characters

Colonel Kearney

Sybil

Jack

Strong man

Princess

Clown

Fevvers

Lizzie

Scenery

- Curtains (for circus performers entrance)

Props

- A bottle of alcohol – most likely beer or hard cider, given to BUFFO by KEARNEY

Feel/mood

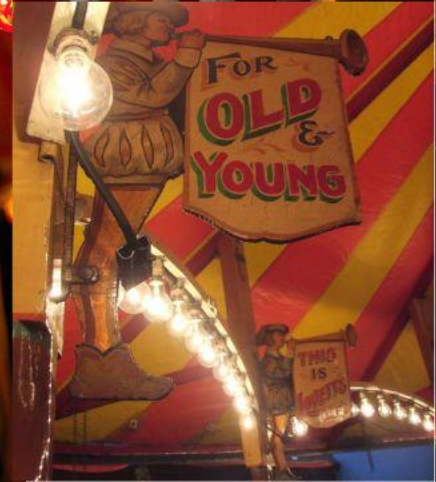
- Exaggerated, over the top performance, spectacle
- There is something off putting about Kearney – we find out later he is exploitative, he pays Buffo in drink, lies about where his acts are from. Maybe he has some overly bright light on his face which makes him look a little creepy, like the Emcee in Cabaret
- child-like excitement, want the audience to feel excited
- Sensual – tango between KEARNEY and FEVVERS
- Intense – when we find out BUFFO beats MIGNON
- Sadness – for MIGNON's story and subsequent pain

Beats

1. KEARNEY bounds onto stage, introducing 'the greatest show this side of the twentieth century' suspense builds as he introduces the 'genius' and 'beauty' behind the circus
2. SYBIL enters
3. KEARNEY sings about how he came across his pig

3. Colonel Kearney's Circus

4. KEARNEY possibly to audience, looks for new talent in the 'house tonight'
5. JACK puts himself forward to be a clown and is given the role of 'Jam face'
6. STRONGMEN, PRINCESS and CLOWN (BUFFO) enter
7. FEVVERS enters
8. KEARNEY and FEVVERS negotiate her contract in a tango, change of mood
9. Curtain closes, LIZZIE is still visible with the SYBIL, she says she'll take her out into the yard for a run around
10. There is a sound of beating, a complete, abrupt shift in tone from the fun circus opening and tango
11. Curtains open to reveal BUFFO with MIGNON
12. BUFFO sings a story about how he met MIGNON, there is not necessarily anything else that happens here other than his song, it could be acted out by MIGNON and him or it could be a moment of focus on BUFFO and reflection for the audience.
13. His song ends with 'And I beat her yes I beat her all the time. There could be a blackout here or curtain fall, something to pull audience attention to:
14. LIZZIE enters



4. Colonel Kearney's Circus – Lizzie, Jack & the Tiger

Characters

Lizzie (in commando fashion (army uniform))

Fevvers

Jack

Scenery

- Fevvers Trapeze – she remains in a sperate space to the rest of the characters

Props

- Jacks notebook
- Bomb in Lizzie's bag

Feel/mood

- Humour – in JACK learning to tumble and MIGNON and STRONG MAN having sex simultaneously
- Chaotic - as FEVVERS sings a lot happens physically on stage in the build up to the tiger entering the scene

- This is broken by SYBIL and KEARNEYS screams and the tiger following them

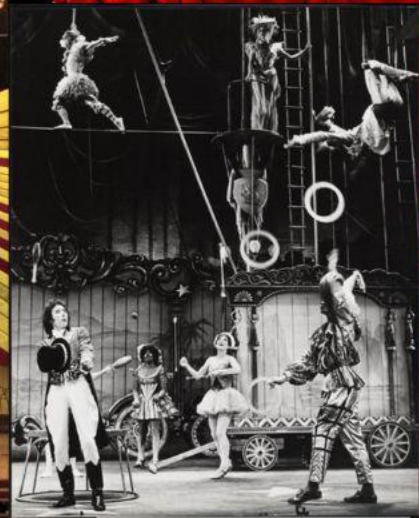
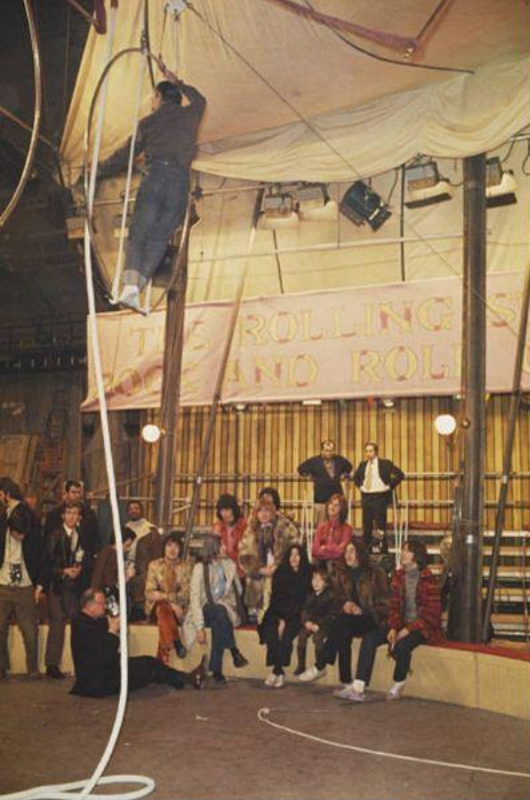
Beats

1. LIZZIE enters, fiddling with bomb in her bag
2. Curtains open to reveal FEVVERS on trapeze, JACK enters, FEVVERS invites JACK onto the trapeze, flirting with him
3. LIZZIE enters the space that FEVVERS and JACK are in
4. LIZZIE destroys JACKs notebook 'You won't be needing that' she agrees to help him become a clown
5. FEVVERS sings (degrading to men) underscoring...
6. LIZZIE strips JACK and leaves him half naked
7. MIGNON enters, JACK introduces herself to him. MIGNON offers herself to JACK, he turns away
8. STRONG MAN enters and has sex with MIGNON, a curtain is drawn over them
9. LIZZIE returns, she punishes JACK for looking in his bag

4. Colonel Kearney's Circus – Lizzie, Jack & the Tiger

10. LIZZIE exits, JACK tries to learn some tumbling, STRONG MAN and MIGNON continue to have sex
11. SYBIL then KOURNEY come screaming across stage
12. A tiger enters, everyone freezes – this can be a long beat, could be supported with another drumroll as the tiger stalks his prey
13. STRONG MAN speaks first 'Don't eat me please' he exits
14. MIGNON tries to exit but trips over her clothes, the tiger lurches at her
15. Jack goes for the tiger at the same time, the tiger mauls him
16. PRINCESS enters, and squirts the tiger with a water gun
17. FEVVERS asks LIZZIE what the racket is about, they are in a sperate space to the kafuffle and go to investigate, they see JACK and his wound, he is positioned over MIGNON
18. JACK gets up, revealing MIGNON – there is a change in tone here when FEVVERS figures that JACK was having sex with MIGNON
19. FEVVERS pours alcohol on his wound then leaves him on the floor
20. BUFFO enters and says he'll take him to Clown Alley

For this mood board, I have combined scene: Lizzie, Jack & the Tiger with the Tiger Cage as they take place in the same area and with similar lighting, to show audiences they are the same space – of the ring during daytime used for rehearsals.



5. Clown Alley

Characters

Buffo

Jack

Chorus of Clowns

Mignon

Vesta

Scenery

- This is usually the area of a circus backstage where clowns get ready, could include mirrors, props, canvas walls

Props

- Jack's chicken clown costume and hat

Feel/mood

- 'Despair, failure, pain' during BUFFO's monologue
- Anger, violence

- Corroding, disintegrating, a space not looked after
- Off putting, uncomfortable

Beats

1. Scene opens with BUFFO cradling JACK, with a chorus of clowns around them
2. BUFFO delivers a monologue about when he found out about the death of his mother and wife and child. How this led him to find that audiences enjoy people's pain
3. Next, he sings: 'Do they laugh in heaven?'
4. Song finishes, he christens JACK, 'Flappy the Chicken'
5. The clowns and BUFFO dress JACK
6. MIGNON enters, she thanks JACK for saving her, BUFFO gets the message they had sex.
7. He turns from sadness and despair to anger, the clowns restrain JACK, BUFFO beats him up
8. VESTA ends the scene with her song 'die old century die...



Act 2 - Colonel Kearney's Circus

1st movement

2nd movement

3rd movement

VESTA
Song

Circus ring

- Jack meets the circus
- Favers & Ch. agree terms in a dance
- C.K. enters w/ sybil then tiger

Bulko & Mignon

Samson & Mignon

Jack gets
mauled



Favers
Jack gets
beaten up

Chain
Alley

mignon enters

'I'll take you
somewhere safe'

6. Fevvers Hotel – Foyer

Characters

Mr Sugar

Fevvers

Lizzie

Jack

Mignon

Scenery

- To show it's a foyer it could have a reception desk, wall of keys, front door, carpet, sofas

Props

- Mr Sugars flowers for Fevvers
- Mr Sugars camera

Feel/mood

- Discomfort – at MR SUGARS presence and actions, he is

slimy

- Inside the space is warm and safe, outside is cold St Petersburg

Beats

1. FEVVERS and LIZZIE enter the foyer of their hotel, MR SUGAR is already there, holding flowers
2. FEVVERS accepts the flowers from MR SUGAR, he snaps a picture without permission, tells her he'll be back for more
3. JACK and MIGNON enter, LIZZIE AND FEVVERS are not pleased to see them
4. JACK hands MIGNON to FEVVERS, they now see she is bruised badly
5. FEVVERS hands MIGNON to LIZZIE
6. LIZZIE takes MIGNON off toward a bath

6a. Fevvers Hotel – Bridal Suite

Characters

Fevvers

Lizzie

Jack

Mignon

Strong Man

Scenery

- Bath
- Bed

Props

- Box of chocolates

Feel/mood

- Gentle, Safe
- Intimate, warm
- Liminal, we are in a room in St Petersburg, but could be

anywhere

- (For Jack when he leaves) entrapped

Beats

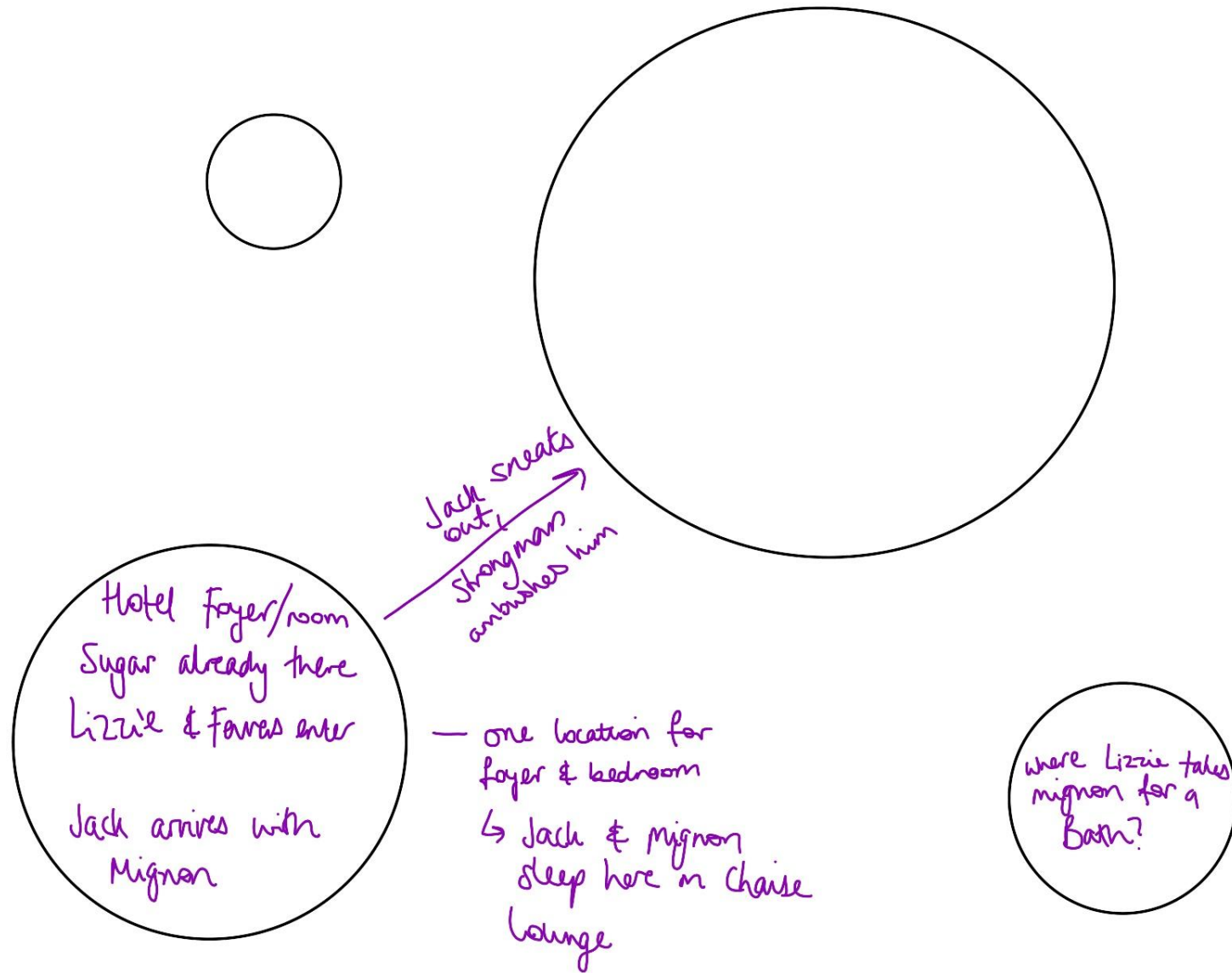
1. MIGNON climbs into the bath as LIZZIE speaks about getting her a respectable job, she is hopeful for the future and believes MIGNON and other young women like her will no longer have to put up with this come the revolution
2. MIGNON, in the bath sings, meanwhile
3. FEVVERS and JACK 'find themselves 'pulled irresistibly into contact' (Rice and Morris, 2006, p 44) with each other then they separate
4. FEVVERS instructs JACK to kneel, he does, she takes off his makeup. She tells JACK that he and MIGNON can have the bridal suite for the night. MIGNON is on LIZZIE's knee
5. Here it is not in the script, but LIZZIE and FEVVERS exit, or are in a different space. MIGNON offers herself to JACK, he makes as though he's hurt himself, MIGNON falls asleep
6. JACK creeps out of bed, leaving MIGNON a flower

6a. Fevvers Hotel – Bridal Suite

7. On his way out (of the room?) – this could be in the foyer or a hotel hallway space, STRONG MAN ambushes JACK and beats him up for sleeping with 'his woman' (MIGNON) (Rice and Morris, 2006, p 45)
8. (Act 2, 5th Movement – The Land where the lemon trees grow) It is now the morning, FEVVERS finds MIGNON alone
9. LIZZIE arrives, they dress MIGNON, they have made a plan for her to make her own money
10. They dance her off to the Tiger Cage



Act 2 : 4th Movement



7. The Tiger Cage (Princess practices new act)

Characters

Lizzie

Mignon

Princess

Jack

Scenery

- A space where the tiger act is rehearsed, in the script this is a tiger cage

Props

- Lizzies bomb

Feel/mood

- Tense, we don't know if the new act will work
- Desire (from Mignon to be free and independent)

Beats

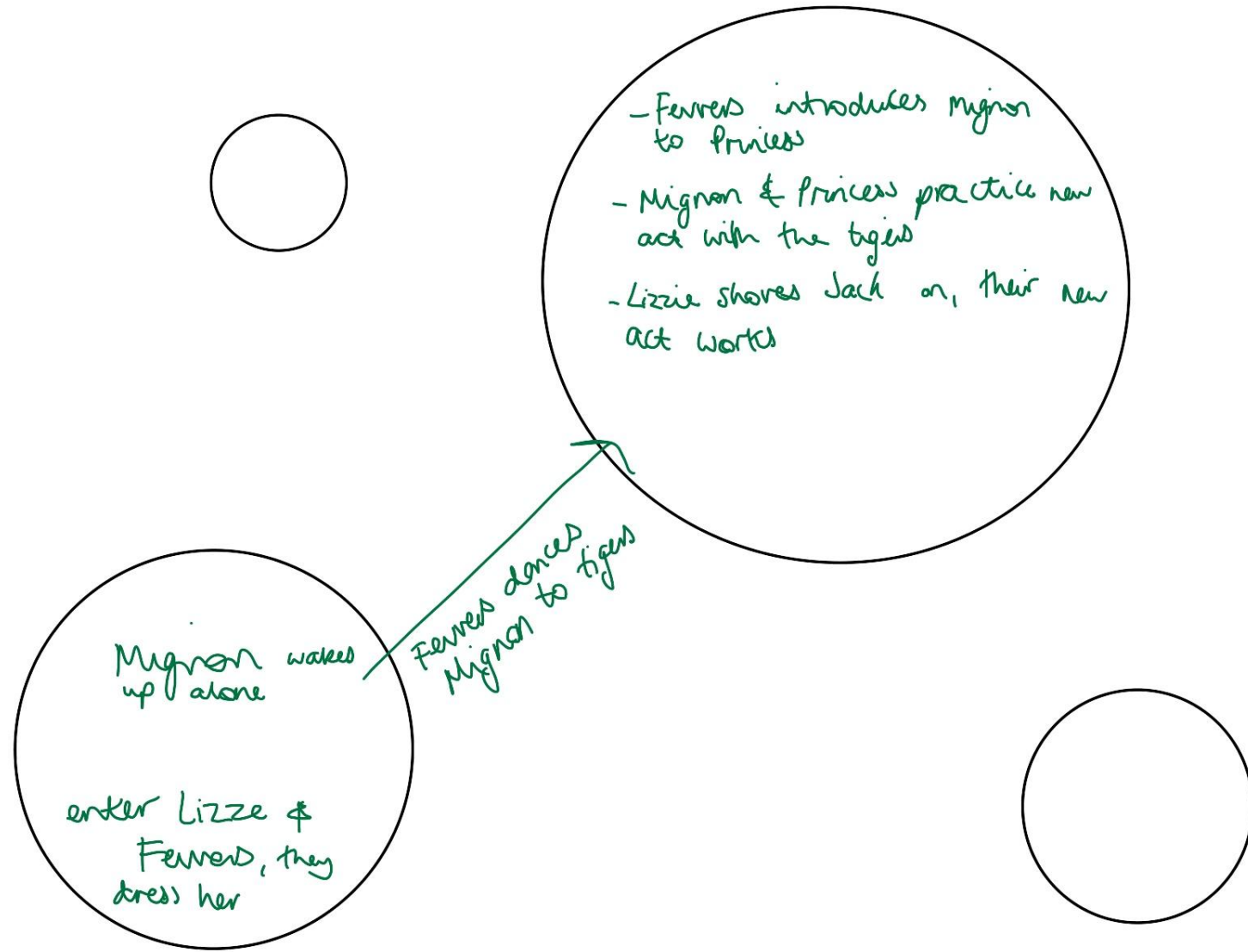
1. FEVVERS suggests the PRINCESS use MIGNON in her act, introducing them to each other. PRINCESS signals at her not to speak. FEVVERS suggests if the tigers don't like talking, why doesn't MIGNON sing
2. LIZZIE assures MIGNON that PRINCESS has a gun in case something goes wrong with the tigers
3. MIGNON sings 'The land where the Lemon Trees grow'
4. Songs ends, Jack compliments her voice
5. FEVVERS now realises JACK and MIGNON were never an item, she now finds it romantic that JACK has followed her
6. LIZZIE fiddles with the bomb in her bag
7. The PRINCESS gets MIGNON to dance with a tiger, the other gets jealous, MIGNON sings again, then hums the chorus, over this LIZZIE suggests JACK join in much to his disagreement

7. The Tiger Cage (Princess practices new act)

8. LIZZIE shoves JACK into the cage
9. JACK and the lady tiger dance, as MIGNON dances with the other tiger, PRINCESS conducts the performance
10. 'CHORUS' (creatures of the theatre) sing the ending of Land where the Lemon Trees grow.

For this mood board, I combined it with 'Lizzie, Jack and the Tiger'

Act 2 : 5th Movement



8. Colonel Kearney's Circus – Backstage

Characters

Colonel Kearney

Buffo

Strong Man

Jack

Sybil

Fevvers

Lizzie

Mr Sugar

Scenery

- Ring door curtains (or some kind of division between the show and audience, and the backstage area)
- Trapeze

Props

- The knife BUFFO uses to try to cut down FEVVERS trapeze
- FEVVERS sword

Feel/mood

- Chaos
- Panic
- Could be dim lighting to up the feel of panic, to convey the sense of feeling your way in the dark, or looking for something when you're in a rush

Beats

1. (Act 2: 6th Movement) KEARNEY enters BUFFO, who is drunk, is arguing with him offstage, KEARNEY does his intro for the nights performances, first up is PRINCESS and her dancing tigers
2. Ring door curtains close behind KEARNEY, who remains in the performance area, we are backstage where BUFFO with STRONG MAN are cutting FEVVERS trapeze
3. JACK catches them in the act, heard from the other side of the curtain's KEARNEY announces JACKS name
4. As BUFFO and JACK argue, STRONGMAN is watching the performance (through the curtains?) he says its getting dangerous. JACK is needed on stage or the tiger will get jealous

8. Colonel Kearney's Circus – Backstage

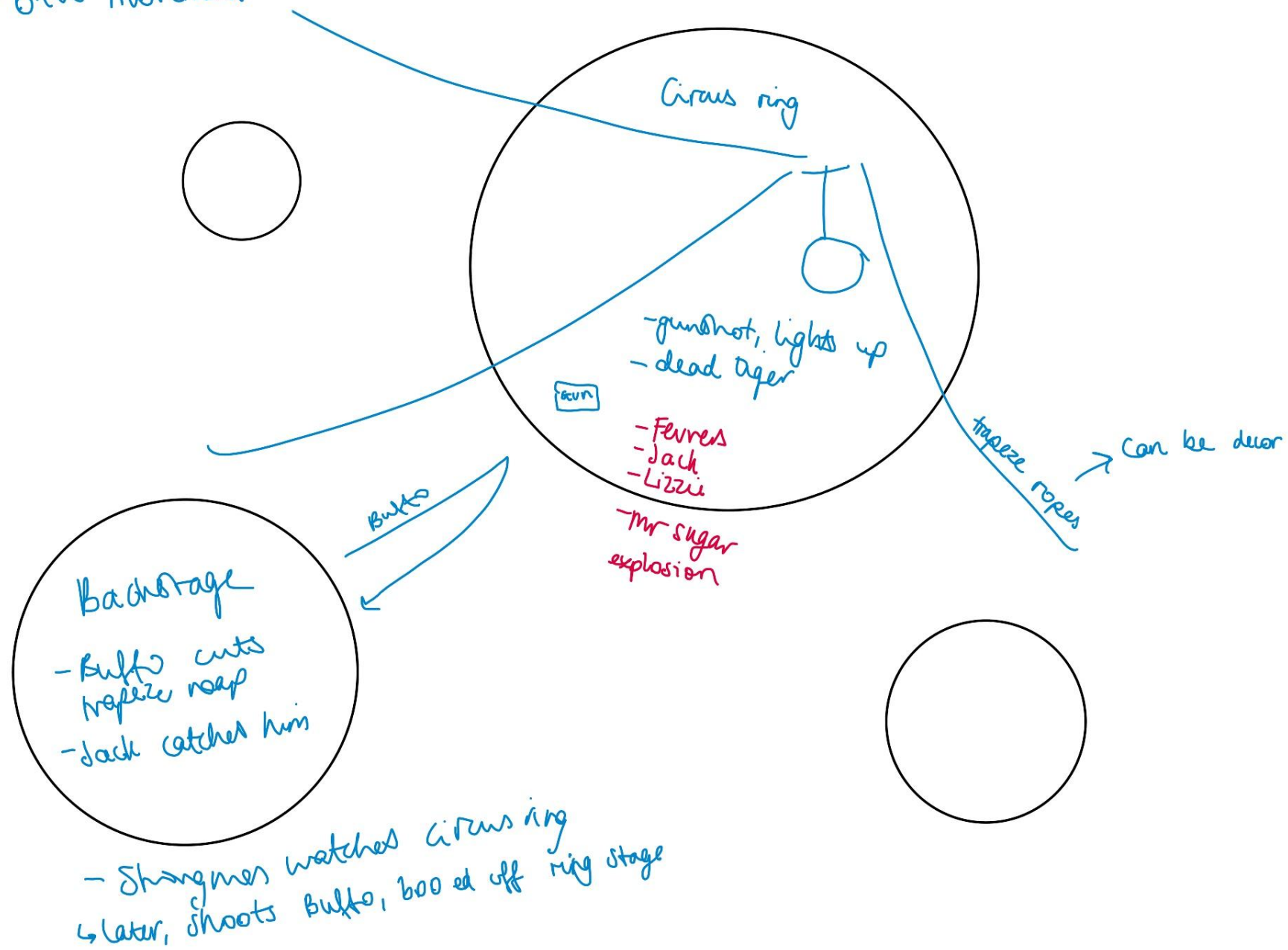
5. A gunshot fires on the other side of the curtains, they are parted to reveal PRINCESS with a gun, a tiger dead and MIGNON distraught.
6. PRINCESS drops the gun to comfort MIGNON
7. The curtains close on the scene in the ring performance area, KEARNEY enters, breathless. He fires JACK and instructs him to move the dead tiger. They both exit through the ring door curtains
8. Beat. BUFFO picks up PRINCESS' gun, gives it to STRONG MAN. They are behind the curtains that go through to the stage.
9. He asks STRONGMAN to shoot him 3 times, with each gunshot, BUFFO grows weaker. STRONGMAN thinks it is a comedic bit.
10. From the other side of the curtains, KEARNEY announces BUFFO's act. The curtains open revealing BUFFO, dead and STRONGMAN with the gun. KEARNEY closes the curtains with horror, entering the backstage area.
11. JACK enters, KEARNEY instructs him to remove BUFFO's body. He then tells STRONGMAN to go on
12. He goes through the curtains, the audience boo
13. FEVVERS enters, KEARNEY asks her to go on and save the show.
14. The curtains open, STRONGMAN comes off, KEARNEY goes through the curtains to introduce FEVVERS. The curtains start to open for her act.
15. JACK returns, he is visible to the audience. FEVVERS tells him to get off stage, he tries to warn her that the trapeze is not safe
16. FEVVERS begins her song
17. The trapeze breaks (possibly one of the two ropes) she hangs there
18. JACK grasps the rope and twizzles her around, the curtains close to huge applause
19. FEVVERS erupts, she is upset at JACK for interfering, she wants to prove she can do it alone. She doesn't want to be a 'double act, she wants to be free' (Morris and Rice, 2006, p 54) She tells JACK to leave, he does. FEVVERS collapses on the floor exhausted.

8. Colonel Kearney's Circus – Backstage

20. LIZZIE enters, she erupts at her too, for adopting her and not allowing her to be free, she yells at LIZZIE to leave her alone, she does. FEVVERS collapses again.
21. MR SUGAR enters
22. FEVVERS thinks its JACK. MR SUAGR sings 'I've come for your wings...' He offers her a drink
23. FEVVERS takes it, she has a strong reaction, she tries to get away from MR SUGAR, in doing so, she drops her sword
24. MR SUGAR uses it to start sawing at her wings
25. LIZZIE enters, suddenly and beats MR SUGAR with her bag, she bids goodbye to MR SUGAR and beckons FEVVERS to come with her. LIZZIE throws the bag at MR SUGAR
26. 'There is a mighty explosion' (Rice and Morris, 2006, p 57)



Act 2: 6th movement



9. Bare White Landscape

Characters

Colonel Kearney

Sybil

Strong Man

Princess

Mignon

Fevvers

Jack

Lizzie

Scenery

-

Props

- Radio

Feel/mood

- Disorientation

- Love, acceptance

- Rebirth

- Truth, revelation

Beats

1. (Act 3) Long pause.
2. KEARNEY enters with SYBIL, the pig wont wake up
3. STRONGMAN enters with a pile of wood to make a fire
4. PRINCESS enters, she sees MIGNON. PRINCESS she reveals she can talk, she chooses to stay silent for her Tigers
5. FEVVERS and LIZZIE enter. FEVVERS calls out to JACK
6. LIZZIE is upset at her for falling for JACK, believes it will take away ger freedoms if she marries him.
7. JACK emerges from the 'white stuff' he confesses his feelings for FEVVERS, for the first time it seems he knows what he wants.

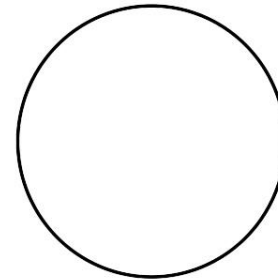
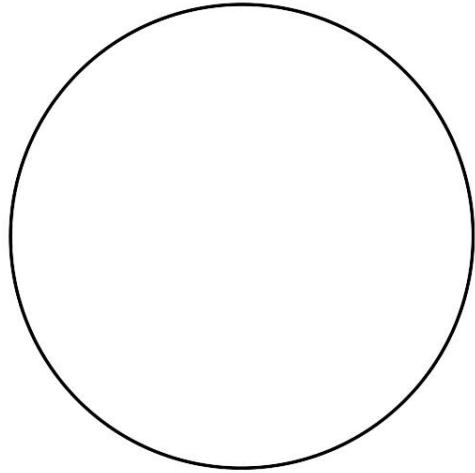
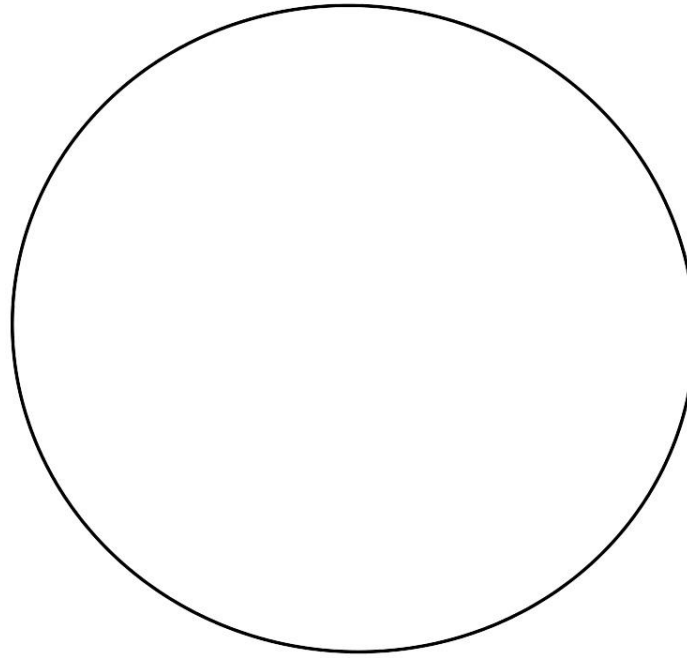
9. Bare White Landscape

8. LIZZIE finds a radio, she turns it on to play Nina Simone
9. JACK and FEVVERS fly
10. VESTA closes the play with a monologue, 'The laughter of the happy young woman rose up...Oh how pleased with him she was' (Rice and Morris, 2006, p 61)
11. The Company sings 'Do you know of the land where the Lemon Trees Grow?'
12. End.



Act 3 - 'Bore white landscape'

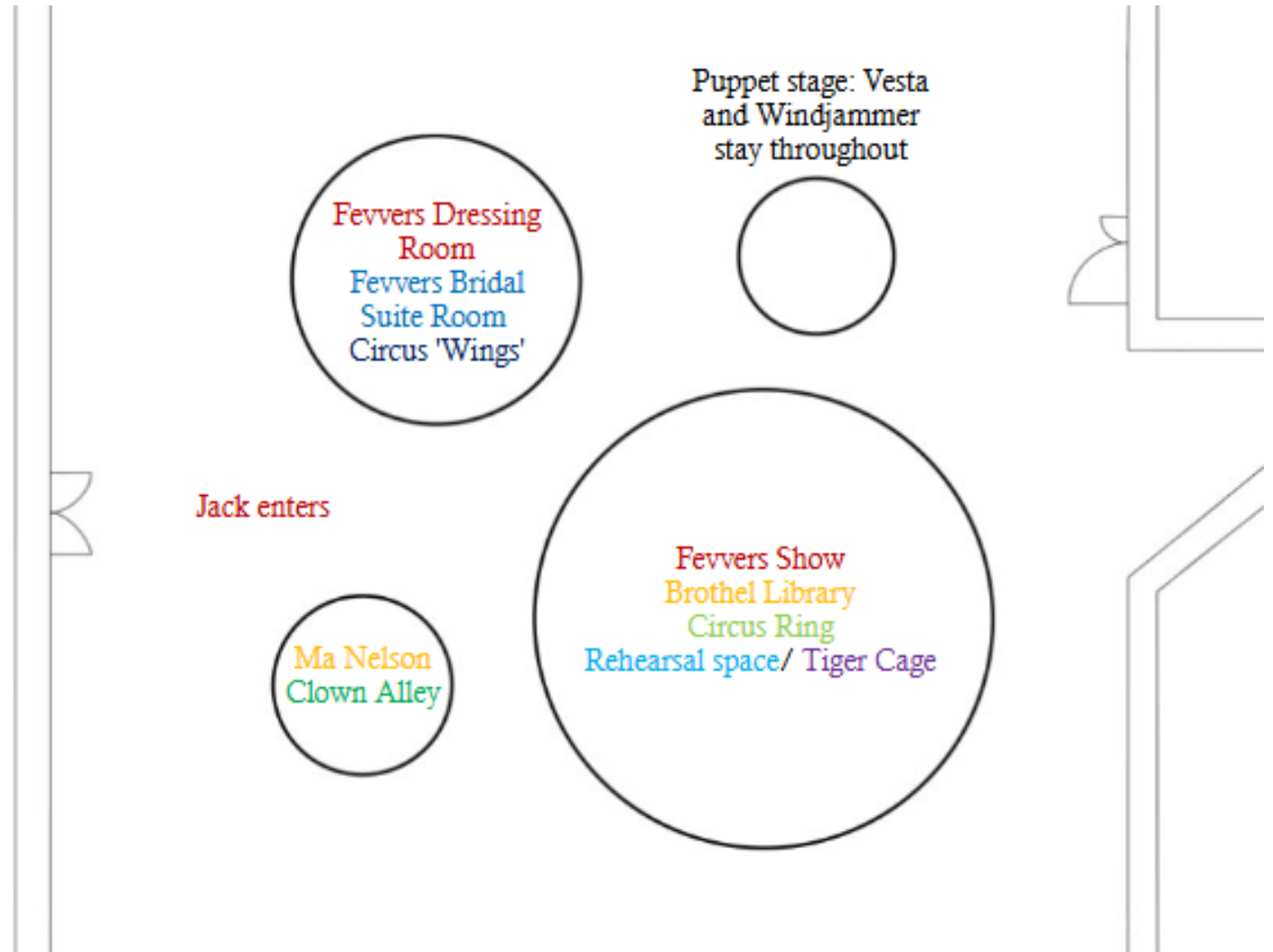
- blackout
- smoke - health & safety
- lights slowly coming in - white
- performers emerge
not necessarily on stages
- ending
 - ↳ festoons back on?
 - ↳ how does Jack & Ferris exit



Blocking

Here is a clearer layout of what scenes happen on which stages. With this information, I was able to begin thinking technically and consider how to create the atmospheres I want to build for each scene with their correlating stage.

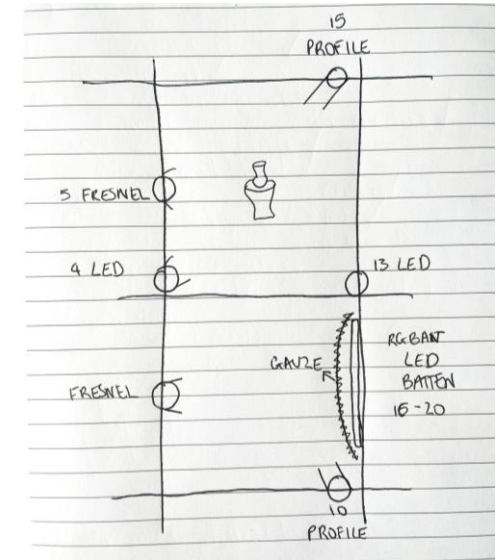
Act 1
Flashback
Act 2
1st Movement
2nd Movement
3rd Movement
4th Movement
5th Movement
6th Movement
Act 3



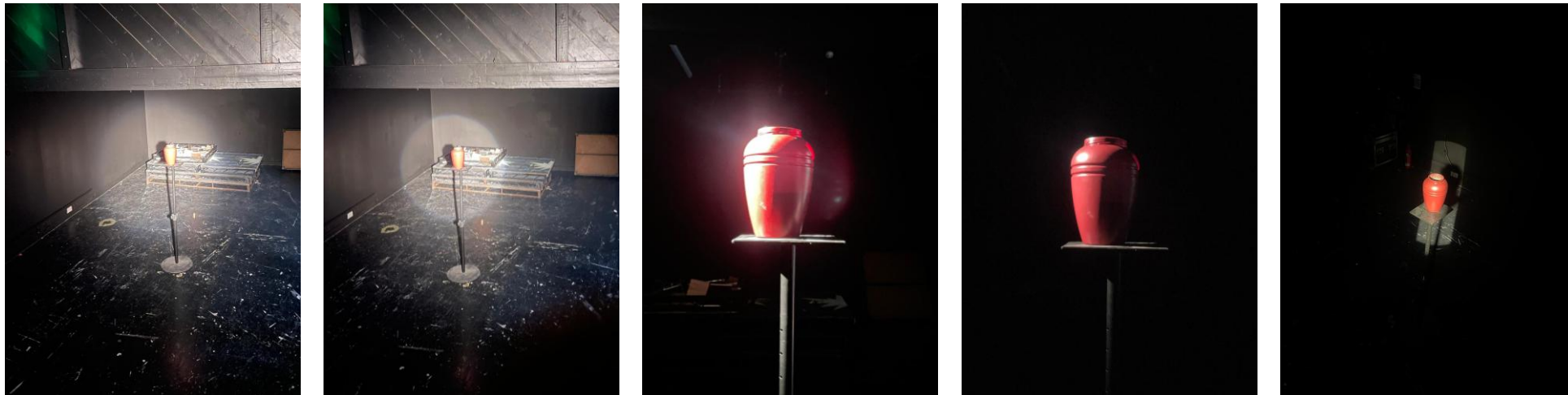
Lighting Sessions in black box room

A week before the presentation, I worked with Callum, rigging some lights in the Black Box theatre to experiment with different lanterns and remind myself of the effects they produce. Dave set up a red vase on a plinth in the centre of the room, so we had a subject to light.

We rigged and focused each light, playing around with different beam settings – using sliders to soften/harden it or change its size. I was particularly interested in recreating some of my design ideas, like using a blue gel to create moonlight, creating a soft white-wash of light from an LED for Fevvers' show and using a tight spotlight to create strong shadows on someone's face. By this point in the process, I felt I was in a rush to finalise my design for the presentation so I didn't play around as much as I would have liked, and I also had to have someone working with me and it wasn't always easy to find someone who was available. However, this was a very useful process for seeing my design ideas up close.



Sketch of our lighting plot



Playing around with soft vs harsh light and using the sliders on a profile

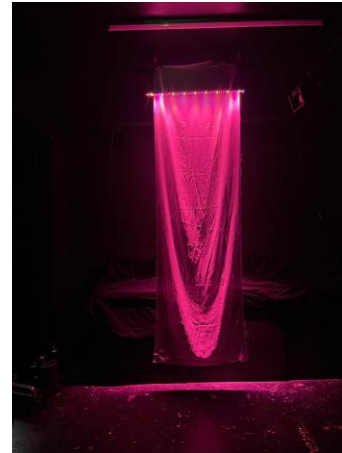
Lighting Sessions in black box room

In my second session in the black box room, I hung two types of white fabric: one similar to Sharks tooth gauze and another with a more synthetic, shiny feel. The name Sharks tooth gauze refers to the fabric's open-weave, which resembles tiny rows of shark's teeth. This material is commonly used in theatre because of its unique lighting properties, which when lit from the front, it appears opaque and conceals what's behind it, but when lit from behind with the front light dimmed, it becomes transparent. To recreate this effect, I positioned an LED batten behind the gauze and a Fresnel in front, experimenting with how its appearance changed depending on the direction of light. I decided the gauze had a much better effect than the synthetic option and wanted to use it in my design along with a way to create movement in the drapes like a fan, to help convey different settings and emotions.

Just a Fresnel positioned in front



Just the LED Batten behind the drape



Sharks tooth Gauze and how it can be lit to appear solid or see through, with different colours shone through it from the LED Batten.



The other synthetic fabric I experimented with; I found it was too thin and the shine on the material made it so you can see a halo around the beam projected at it.

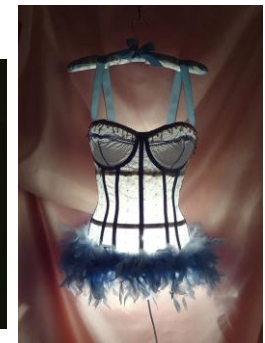


Practical lighting designs

Something I wanted to explore, was adding a decorative element to my design and having the chance to be more creative than technical. At first, I was leaning toward designing a light box for a clock, which is referenced a couple of times in the script, once at the beginning of Fevvers' flashback: 'The clock strikes twelve with comical speed' (Rice and Morris, 2006, p14) then again on p22. But I thought this didn't fit in with our idea, as we have a set design that has no particular front, or central focus. We thought the clock isn't completely necessary, and it can be implied with the use of sound, so we didn't want it to become a distraction in the production. Instead, I looked elsewhere on my mood boards and Pinterest.

Feeling very inspired by all the references to Jack's travels and the effect the industrial revolution had on the British Empire and global trade, I looked at designing a range of lampshades to go over the festoons that aren't on the stages, to create a little variety and visual storytelling. As well as looking at different styles of hanging lanterns from the Mediterranean and Middle East, I also looked at Circus lantern designs and street-lamp designs from London and St Petersburg. I added a bird cage lantern to go near the ring as a reference to Fevvers and the exotic animals that are captured for circus performance. Also, for the brothel setting in East London, I thought lamp shades that look like women's undergarments, references the washing lines outside crowded East London homes and traditional ornate lamp shades of the Victorian era with tassels can display the kind of lighting inside Fevvers' Dressing room. Below are the key images I used for inspiration, on the next slide, is my digital sketches made on Procreate.

Pinterest board: <https://pin.it/3fy5GyVgg>





London



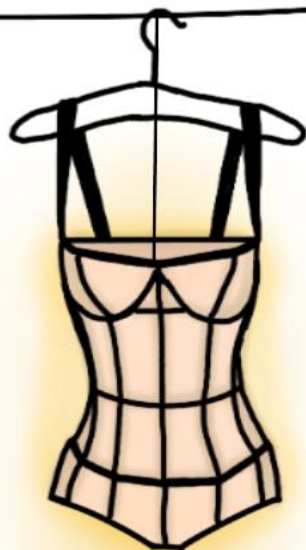
St Petersburg



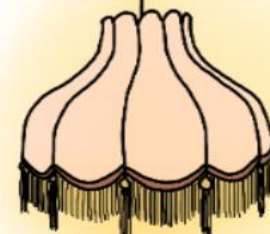
Mediterranean and Middle East



The Brothel



Circus



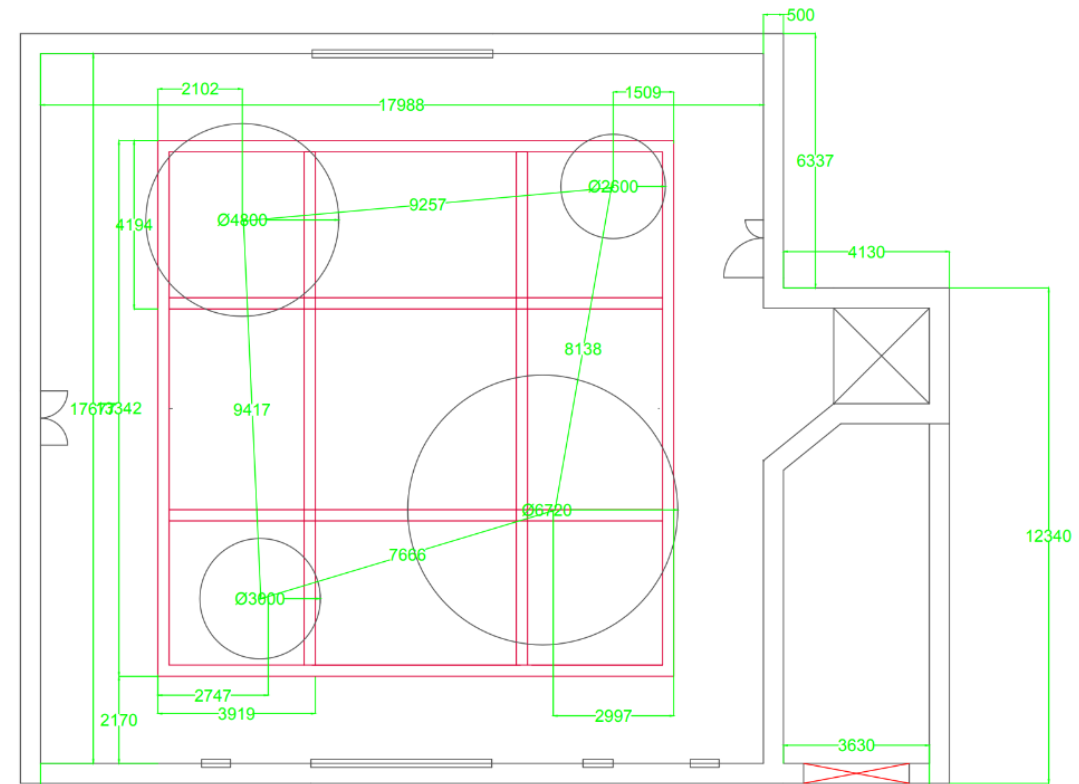
Dressing room and hotel

CAD

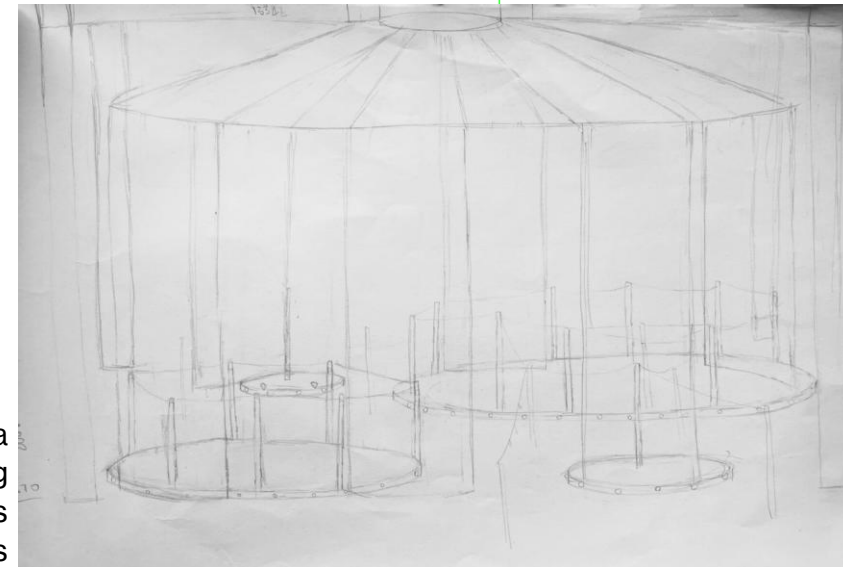
To present my ideas, I decided to make a CAD drawing of the set and put my lighting plot over it. I had also bought small lights that I could use to demonstrate the different angles of lighting and gels I wanted to use on the white card model. I didn't end up including this in my presentation as the CAD drawing took me longer than expected and it cut into our rehearsal time.

I started the CAD process with Sarah, measuring the exact location of the stages on her model so I could put this onto the digital drawing. From a pan view, this looked like 4 different sized circles. They were originally meant to be within the parameters of the Truss and therefore 'tent', but when we measured their location, we realised there were some that went over. Instead of redoing the stage placements, we decided this would be okay and could become part of the design.

From here, I was able to begin drawing where the festoon lights would go, around the stages and between them. I also wanted there to be more festoon lighting around the space, signifying where audiences can go and not go - like behind the puppet stages, where puppeteers would be visible. But we stuck with this simpler approach.



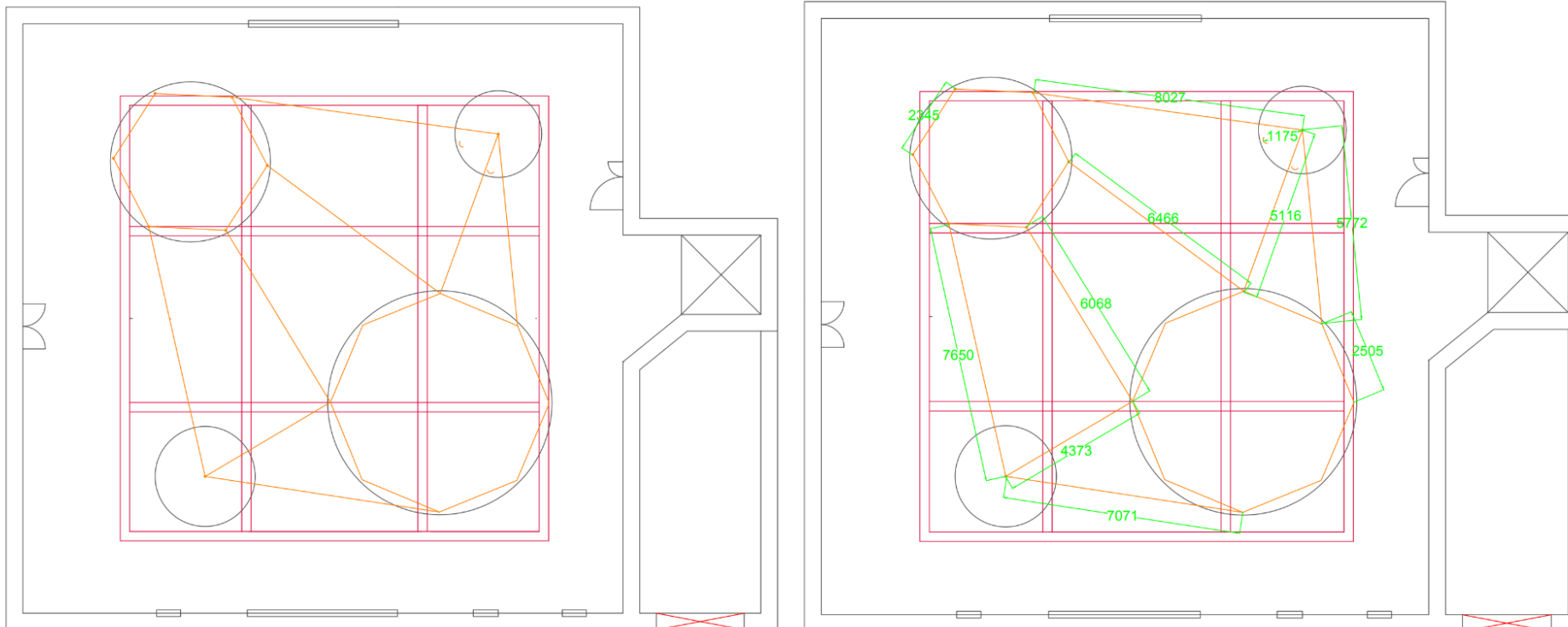
The stage placement (black) and dimensions (green), shown within Y Llwyfan



An early sketch of my idea for the festoon's mapping that go beyond the tent as well as around the stages

CAD

This is a plot of the Festoons (marked in orange) which are designed to be strung from 4000mm tall poles, this also shows the placements of the footlights for Vesta and Windjammer (semi circles on top right stage). In terms of festoon lighting, I would need roughly 85 Meters. I worked out this estimate by adding the length of the festoons that link stages together with the two perimeters of the larger stages = 50,543mm + 20,040mm (larger stage right) + 14,070 (smaller stage left) = 84,653mm or 85 meters. On 'Festive Lights' 85m of 'Warm White Connectable Festoon Lights' can be bought in multiples of 5m, costing a total of £764.83 (as of Oct, 2025). Or multicolour ones can be bought from 'Lights 4 Fun' for £684.99. I also looked at colour-controlled lights, these are sold in quantities of 10 meters, one quantity is £99.99 so these are far more expensive (Lights4Fun, 2025).



Connectable Festoon Lights with Frosted Bulbs on Black Rubber Cable (Festive Lights, 2025)

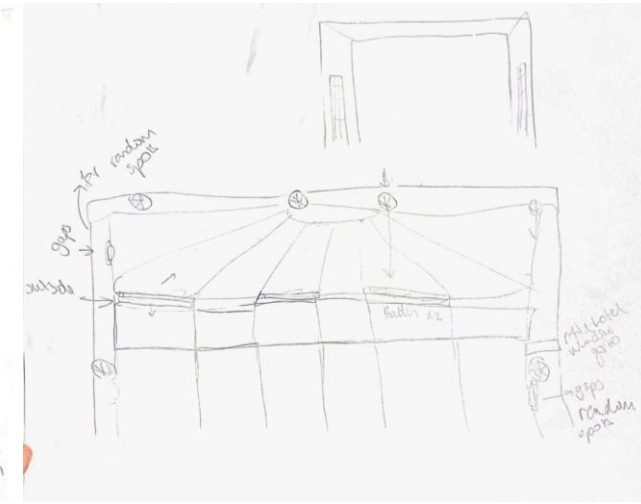
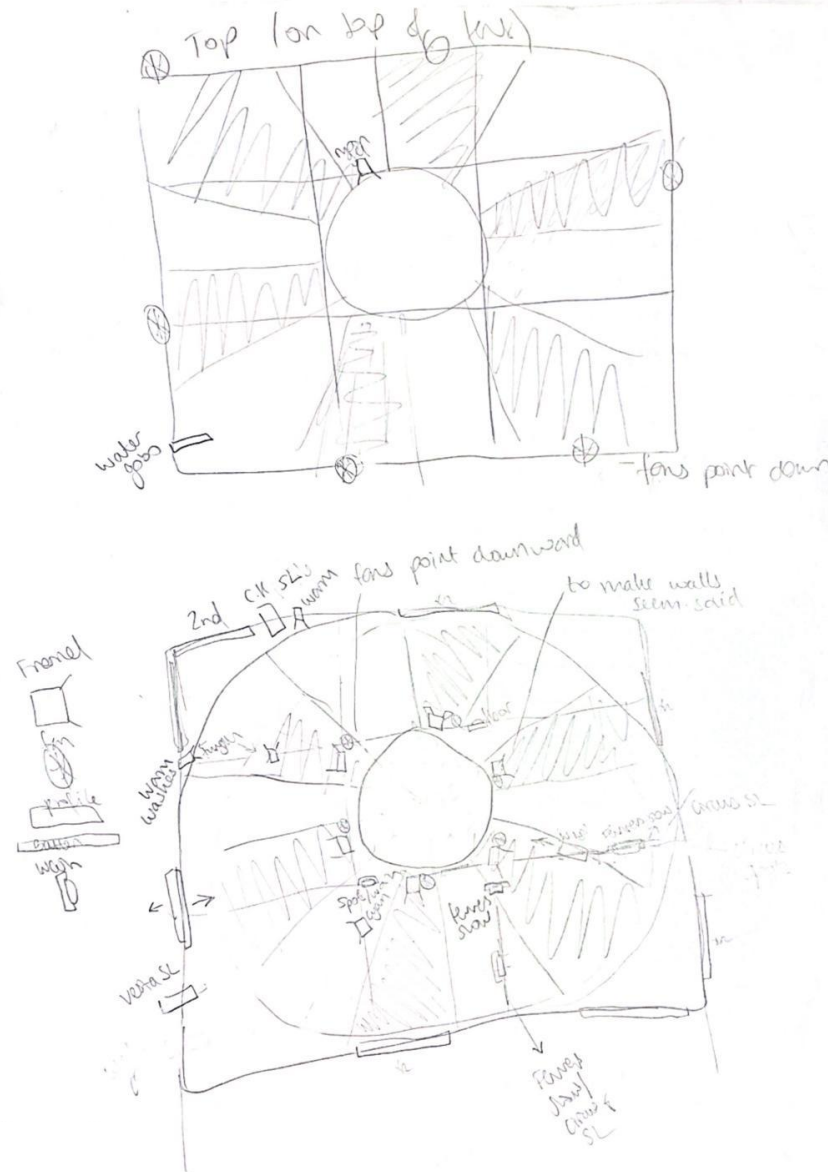


Pro Connect 85m 170 Multi Coloured Connectable Festoon Lights Black Cable. *Lights 4 Fun* (2025)

CAD

Next, for the lighting plot, I sketched this roughly on paper first as I found it a lot easier to edit.

From my sessions in the black box, I knew I wanted LED battens that pointed down the drapery along with fans. Also, Fresnel's for creating washes and Profiles for spotlights and gobos. Originally, the idea was to have the circus tent suspended from hoops that are attached to the truss, with the option of boom poles that can drop from the truss for rigging lights. However, this restricted the placements for lights within the top of the tent. To combat this, we decided to have a second level to the truss that the larger tent hoop can move between, meaning we can light the inside of the tent from higher up. This way the drapery could be attached to the truss instead of coming from the hoops. To counteract the empty space when the roof is flat, the smaller hoop could move up and down instead of the larger one – down to create a flat roof and up to create the circus top shape. This was quite difficult to demonstrate with Sarah's White card model, so she constructed one level of the Truss. The rest of the design can be seen in my CAD drawings.



(Right) Side view with fans and LED battens, and ideas for lighting that could sit lower down, on the legs of the truss. I had to consider where there would be gaps in the drapes for this lower lighting or any spotlights that were to be rigged from the top truss.

(Left) A sketch of the two levels of the truss system from above, the top one for fans and lights that I wanted to come from high up – like the 'moonlight' and Vesta's spotlight. The second level has the majority of my lanterns as shown more clearly in the final drawing.

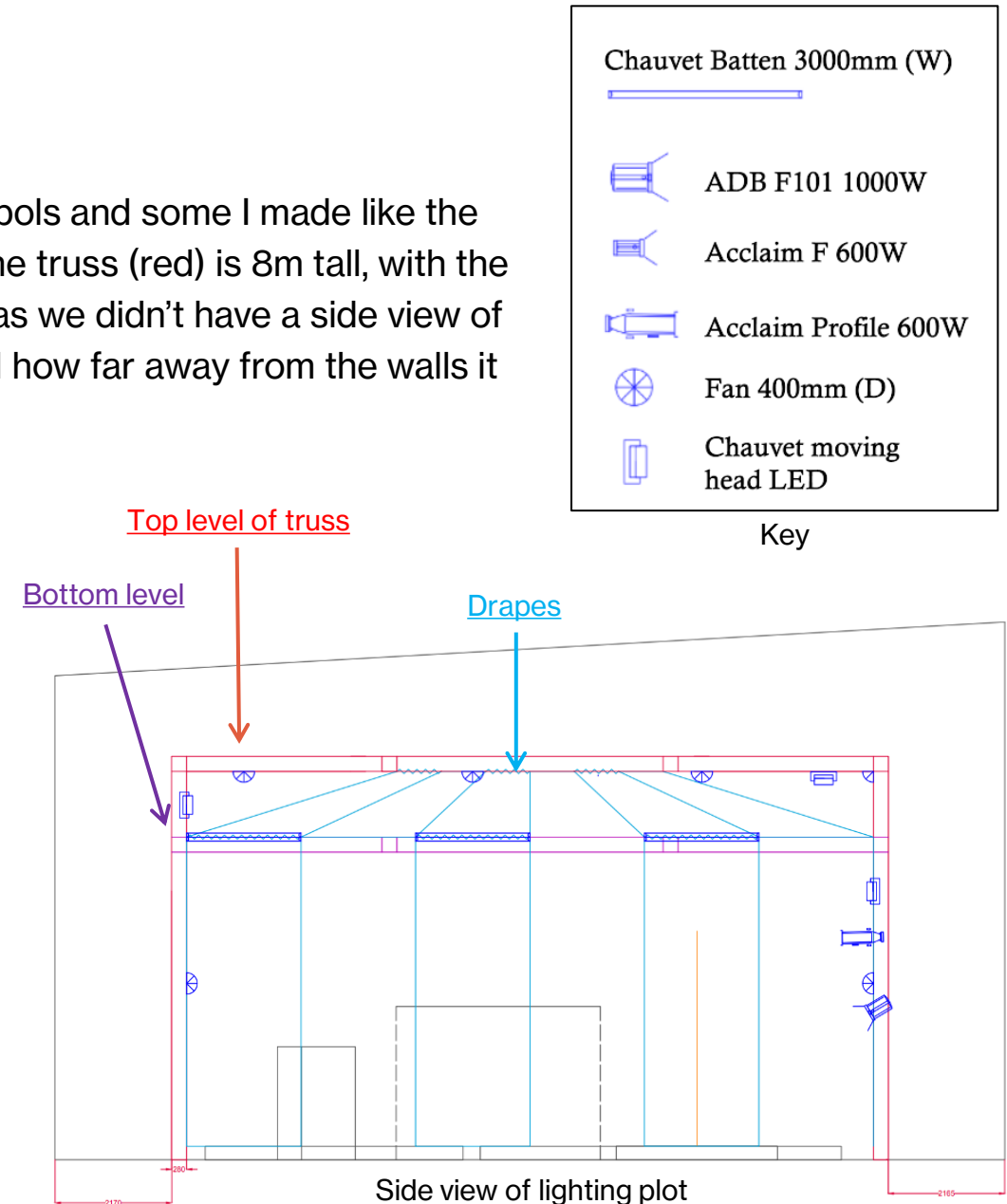
CAD

I translated these ideas to AutoCAD, using some pre-made lantern symbols and some I made like the LED wash heads and fans. I began with the side view. The top level of the truss (red) is 8m tall, with the shorter wall of Y Llwyfan coming to 9m in height. This was an estimate as we didn't have a side view of the truss structure. I constructed the rest of it using the pan view to find how far away from the walls it is, and where our two extra bars go to make the top grid.

The bottom level (purple) sits 1.5m below the top level (red). Here, I also added in the drapes in pale blue at increments of 2125mm. On the top of the truss, I added fans to point down the drapes and LED wash heads where there were gaps in the fabric to add circling spots to the floor. Along the first level of the truss (purple) I added the LED battens, two for each drape, one pointing up to the centre of the big top, and one pointing down the drape. The Chauvet LED batten I used in the black box room are sold in 1500mm length, if I used these, I'd need 4 for each drape, with two side-by-side pointing up, and down to create the width of the fabric.

Lower down on the legs of the truss, I added a lower Profile and Fresnel for casting tighter beams/washes onto the stages. Particularly for Clown Alley (takes place front right), in which I wanted to create long lurking shadows, by using tight beams that hit the chorus of clowns.

I also added fans to blow the drapes inward for the scene that takes place in Fevver's hotel suite in St Petersburg, to mimic an open window.

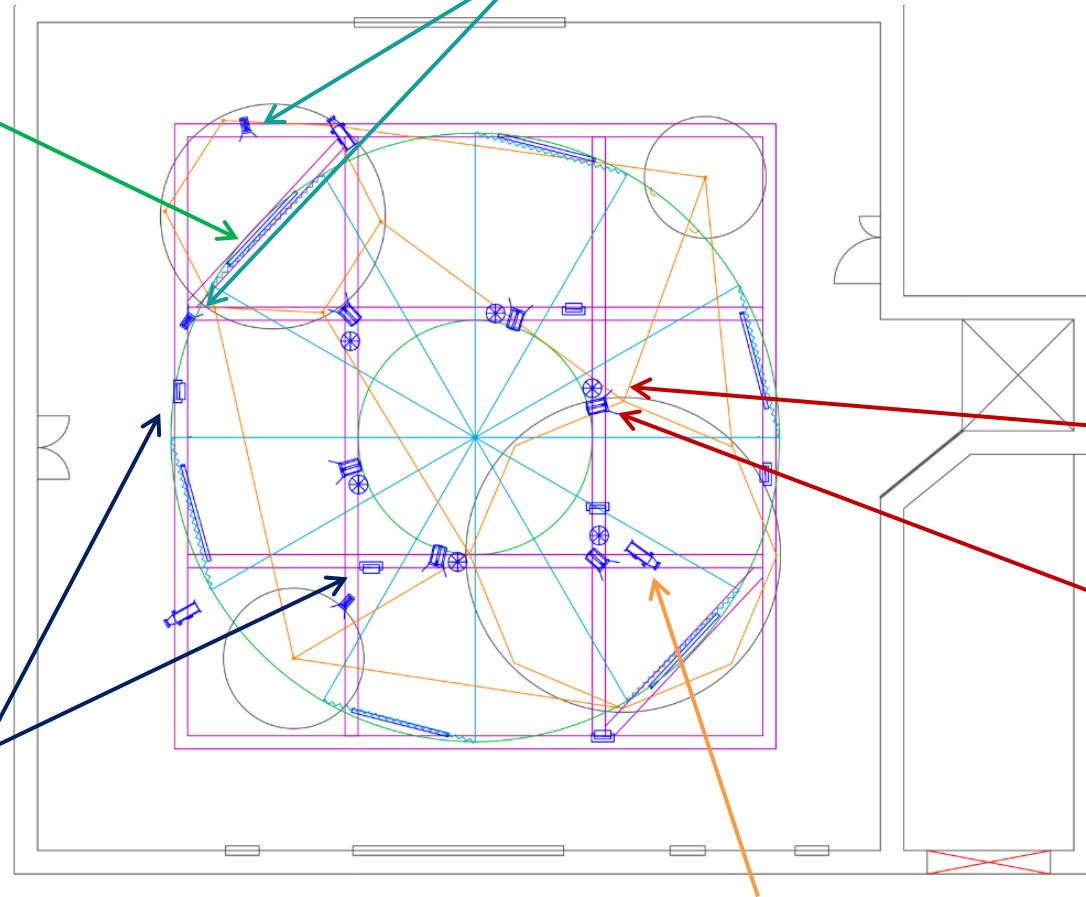


CAD

Where the fabric meets the edge of the truss, there are LED Battens, so the fabric can be illuminated from the outside of the 'tent', as shown when I was experimenting in the black box theatre.

The LED moving heads are used to generate circus-esque spotlights that move around the walls and the floor to add some visual interest and highlight that shift from Victorian London, to the circus. The LEDs for this are placed equal distance apart where there are gaps in the drapery, so they can cover as much space as possible

In some moments in the play, I have kept to era inspired lighting styles of warm interior lighting and amber daylights, for the more intimate scenes like Fevvers' dressing room and her bridal suite (top left stage) this would be created using Fresnels. These are great for casting a wide soft wash of light.



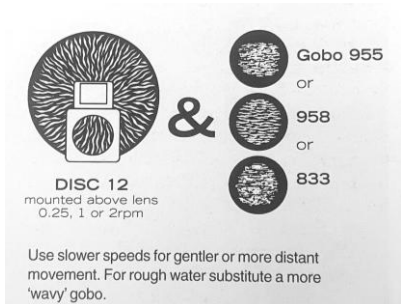
This is a pan view of the first level of the truss where I have placed the majority of my lanterns. These include Fresnels, Profile lights, Led Battens, Moving Head LEDs and fans. For each of the pieces of fabric that come from the top of the circus tent, and travel out to the edge of the truss and downward, there is a Fresnel facing it. This is to cast light from the inside of the tent to make the white fabric opaque. Next to the Fresnels facing the drapes, are also fans, which I thought could be used in the end of the 2nd Act when Lizzie sets off her bomb, to blow the drapes outward in a quick fashion as if from the force of the blow.

This profile light pointing to the top left stage, is to make a wide directional beam of light on the 'backstage' area for the scene that takes place behind the 'ring door curtains'. The circus wings are the main focus of the action during the last movement of the 2nd Act. It is just the other side of a thin divide between the show and the chaos happening behind it. Playing on the idea of being the wings of the circus, the primary light source is shown as spill from the ring itself.

CAD

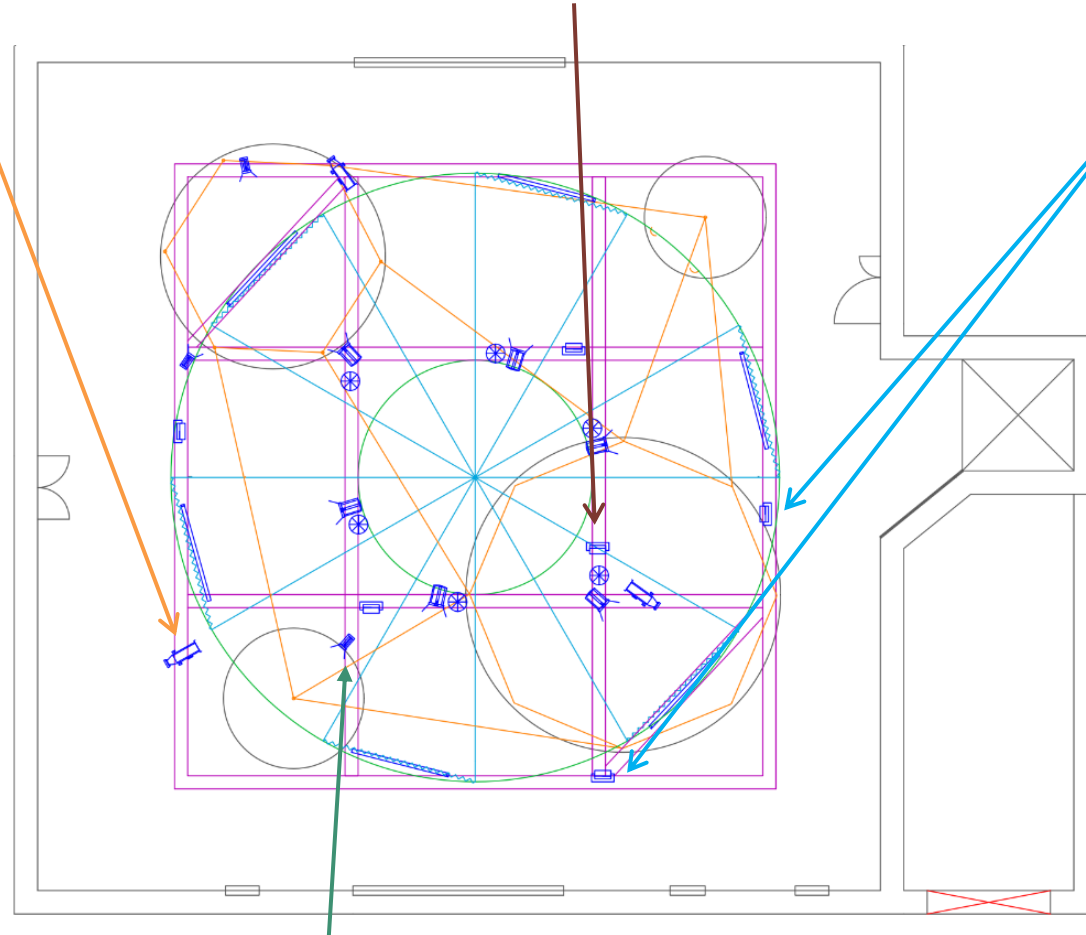
This is a [profile](#) that I would fit with a water style gobo to create the appearance of the reflection of water hitting Vesta.

During Vesta's opening song, I thought there could be some movement in the drapes that hang down and a water reflection, not only does this reference the lyrics of her song but also sets the backdrop of dark, gloomy Wapping, which is on the river Thames. Below is an example of the gobo I would use



Examples of effects ideas for rippling water (from DHA Ltd) Fraser, N. 2002

[LED](#) set to white with a diffused lens, for Fevvers' show, right above the London auditorium/ ring stage. I wanted to make her look 'otherworldly' and ethereal. Her lighting is soft and white but narrow and from a singular source above her.



As well as creating random spotlights to travel the walls and floors, [LED wash heads](#) can also track performers. I decided to use this as traditionally, follow spots are operated manually, but because there is no way for crew to be operating the lights from where they are rigged, I looked into whether LEDs can automatically track performers.

I found there are vision-based tracking systems and an example of this is BlackTrax, where performers and objects are tagged with small, infrared LED markers. A network of special cameras observe the IR pulses emitted by the LEDs, and BlackTrax software calculates the exact 3D position of the tracked object in real-time.

The downside is, these systems are very expensive, and the technology isn't quite there yet as there can be delays. Despite this, it is a good alternative to having manually operated spot-lights.

These extra LEDs are positioned near the ring so they can track the circus performers.

This is a [Fresnel](#) with a gel to create a wash of light for Clown Alley. The colour of the light here is cold and uninviting, inspired by the green patina colour of weathered and decaying copper and bronze. The unnatural colour of the light evokes an uneasy feeling as we associate these lights with public spaces and a lack of privacy. The cyan light is cast by this Fresnel, with a 241 Lee Fluorescent gel (designed to neutralise tungsten light).

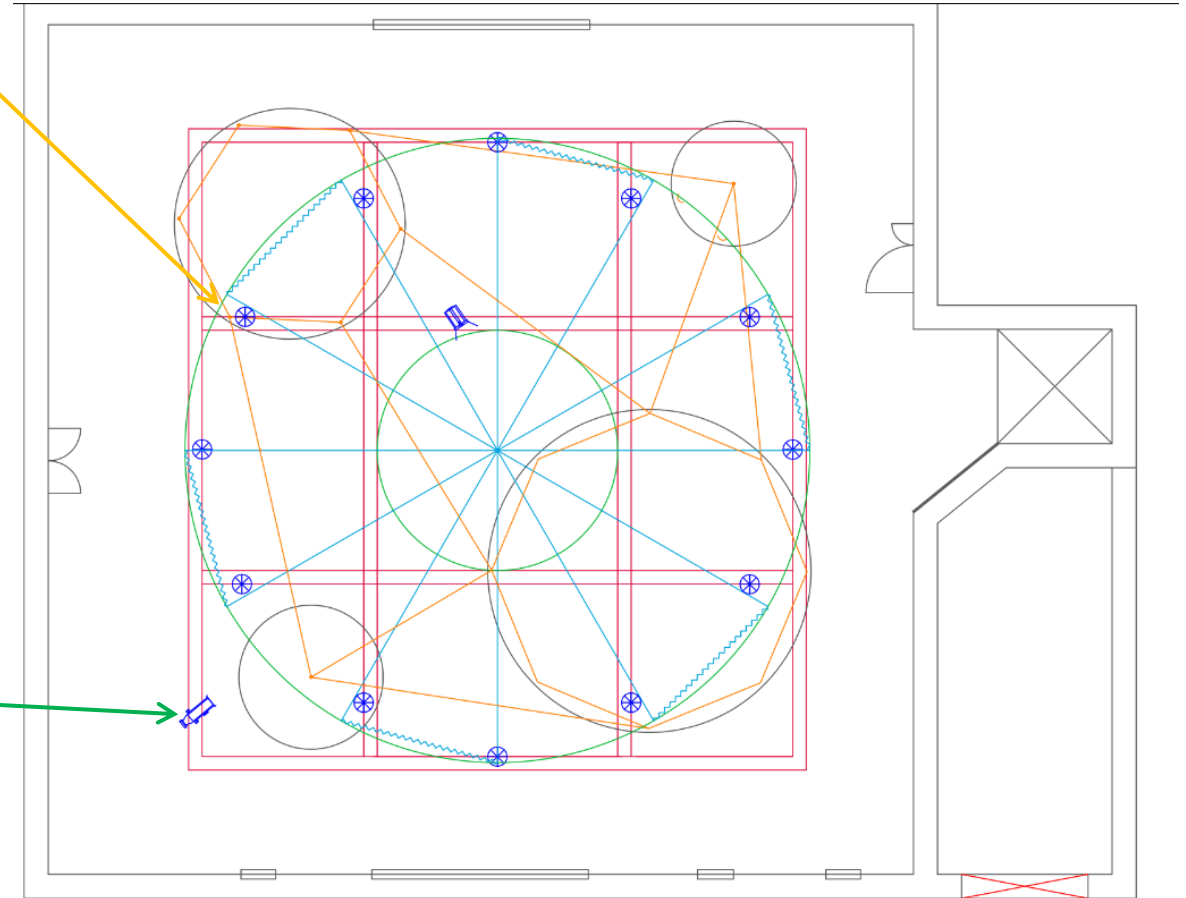
CAD

This is the second level of rigging, which is mostly **fans** pointing down the drapes along with a Fresnel and Profile light.

The Fresnel is used during the scene of Fevvers' backstory, when she takes her first flight. Fevvers and Lizzie climb onto the roof of their home in Wapping, London. The Fresnel is up high to mimic the moon's placement in the sky in the middle of the night, with a dark blue gel. LEE make gels that convert tungsten light, in this case I don't want to neutralise the tungsten with a blue conversion filter, or I'll get white light - I want a more vivid blue to cast a light blue wash of light. This can be achieved with Lee's gel 183 'Moonlight blue'.

This is a **profile** for Vesta's Spotlight, I thought a seemingly random, far high light would signify how she transcends the setting of the theatre auditorium and circus tent. She is lit in this way to grab the audience's attention at the beginning of the show, since we don't have any curtains that open like in a traditional production.

Profiles are typically good for spotlights and gobos as they can be focussed to produce a sharp outline.



Presentation

My preparation for the presentation and completing the CAD drawing ended up happening simultaneously which wasn't how I had intended to go about putting our presentation together. I think I didn't give myself long enough with CAD, because I didn't foresee how long it would take me to get used to the software, and allow the time it took for me to re-do parts due to the software crashing. I also could have given myself more time if we had made some design decisions sooner, like the placement of the stages, which were locked in the week of the presentation.

I decided for my section of the presentation, I would show my mood boards for each scene and talk about how I would use lighting to help convey different emotions and moods. Then after writing a script, I can add on my CAD drawings last, along with an explanation for the technical decisions of my design. As well as this I will show my festoon lantern designs.

My script and the majority of my slides were completed before our rehearsals, in which I was told to cut down on what I was saying, which I completely agreed with as I was talking too quickly trying to cram in what I wanted to say. I felt I didn't want to leave any of my script out, as I didn't have a physical display of my work from the past weeks. As I mentioned earlier, I brought along miniature footlights and a series of gel samples but didn't end up using these as I didn't have a chance to practice on the completed model before the presentation as Sarah had the full time to complete her model which was completely fair. I would have liked to have had more time focussing on just the presentation, running rehearsals and memorising what I wanted to say rather than reading from my flash cards, also practicing lighting the model itself. Because I didn't spend enough time rehearsing, I did trip over my words a lot, I am not sure how my design came across but I hope I explained it well enough for those who didn't know our design at all and got an understanding of my lighting design.

This is a copy of my complete script, with the parts I wrote down onto flashcards highlighted in green: [Document.docx](#)



A series of Rosco sample gels I found in the lighting store



Miniature USB LED lights I bought that I could use to light Sarah's white card model

My slides

MOOD BOARD AND COLOUR PALETTE



During the introduction of our presentation, we took it in turns to talk about our production company, brief, themes and design approach. I spoke about our group mood board and colour palette.

Script

Slide 1 – Charlie

Introduction

'Hello we are CASA Crocodile (an acronym of the first letters of our name) plus an animal we could all agree on, inspired by the name of the production company Bad Wolf. This is our design pitch for Nights at the Circus'

Slide 2 – everyone

Individual greeting

Slide 3 – Alaya

Our brief and synopsis of Nights at the Circus

Slide 4 – Charlie and Sarah

Themes and approach

Slide 5 – Alice

Colour palette and mood board

- This is our group mood board, here you can see a combination of our initial response.
- We were particularly inspired by the settings of the script, looking at St Petersburg and London at the turn of the century
- A big element we picked up on was the references to different textures, like a theatre curtain, circus tent, tiger cage and within this, lots of metaphors to do with metals which ties in with themes of industrialisation
- Using these ideas, we thought about how we can convey the ending of the 19th century, withering and falling apart as the story progresses.
- Which leads me to the colour palette which reflects this, a deep red in reference to the theatre and circus setting, copper and brass colours which rust into a patina cyan and lastly iron, which eventually overtook these previous metals
- Now I will hand over to Sarah who will be talking about the set design

My slides

MY GENERAL MOOD BOARD & COLOUR PALETTE



Visual Inspiration

Colour & Texture palette

This was my general mood board specifically for my lighting design

Script

MY SECTION

Slide 1 (with crocodile) Intro

- As I said earlier, I am the Lighting Designer, I will be talking you through how I plan to create different atmospheres and moods throughout the play,
- And then I will talk a bit about how I plan to achieve this technically,
- I will first show you my general mood board and colour palette

Slide 2

General Mood board and colour/texture palette

- When reading the play through the eyes of a Lighting designer, I was really drawn to the locations stated in the play, not only London and St Petersburg, but other areas of significance when it comes to trade and Britain building its empire – the Damascus road, Kalikatta and Morrocco
- I found the references to metals and this new and exciting age of opportunity links directly with our theme of freedom.
- This is explored not only through the growing rights and opportunities for women, but also in the way technological advancements like steamships and railways gave people greater freedom to travel. These developments didn't just transform travel — they also made trade faster, broader, and more accessible, connecting Europe more closely with the rest of the world during the late 19th century.)
- As well as this, I wanted to find ways to support this surreal, uncomfortable sensation we experience during the play, through creating dream-like settings, both fantastical and nightmarish
- On the right is my colour and texture mood board. This helped me to visualise what kind of surfaces the light will be hitting and what colours will be in the set decoration
- I am next going to talk about the atmosphere and mood I would build for each scene, particularly the first act. I'll be starting with the opening, a theatre auditorium

My slides



Theatre Auditorium



Fevvers' Show: The Winged Woman of London

This was the section of my presentation where I talk about how I will build atmosphere for each scene

Script

Slide 3

Theatre Auditorium and Fevvers' Show

Auditorium and The Winged Woman of London Mood boards

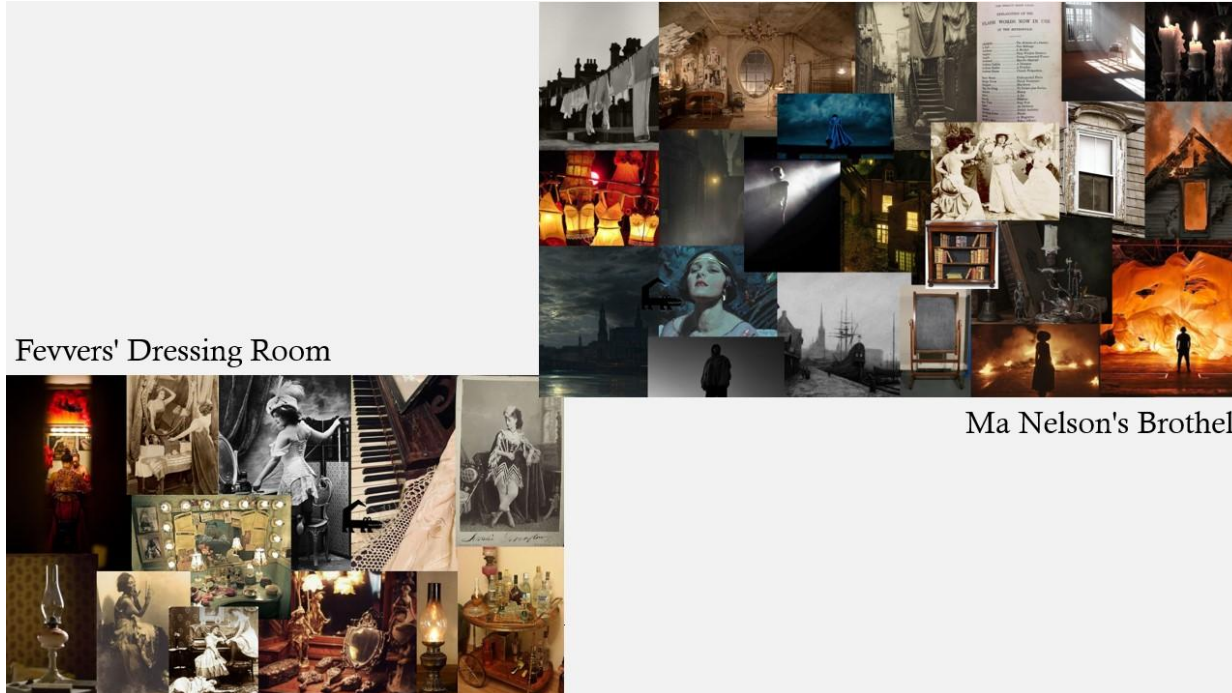
1. Auditorium

- For when audiences arrive, I wanted to create the sensation of nervous excitement for the show to begin
 - The colours of red, orange and yellow are associated with this feeling, as these 'warm' colours stimulate the nervous system and increase energy.
 - This warm inviting wash is created by the festoon lights, that light the audience's way encouraging them to explore the space
-
- For the first act, Vesta our puppet, appears on the back left stage, the festoons dim but not fully, so audiences can still move if they wish.
 - and Vesta is lit from a spotlight to grab the audiences attention
 - VESTA and Windjammer are also lit by footlights, so that when vesta leans over this creates a real sense of inferiority, the footlights also create this divide that no other stages have as their stage is the only one that doesn't get interacted with.
 - During Vesta's opening song, I thought there could be some movement in the drapes that hang down and a water reflection GOBO on the floor, not only does this reference the lyrics of her song but also sets the backdrop of dark, gloomy Wapping, which is on the river Thames.

2. Fewers' Show: The Winged Woman of London

- For Fevvers show, our first introduction to the protagonist, I wanted to make her look 'otherworldly' and ethereal.
- Her lighting is soft and white but narrow and from a singular source –
- We can't really see her face or read her emotions, in theme with her song
- In which she expresses wanting to find someone who will listen to what she has on her mind, and not just take pleasure from looking at her.
- Other worldly pristine, unattainable, untouchable

My slides



Script

Slide 4

Fevvers' Dressing Room and Ma Nelson's Brothel

1. Fevvers' Dressing Room

- For Fevvers' dressing room I pictured it as intimate, busy and unkept, especially if she behaves like an animal, she may not have the instincts to care for making things pretty, just focuses on practicality
- For Fevvers' dressing room, the light is now tungsten, warming up Fevvers skin tone compared to the white unnatural light in her performance, we see the warmth and colour in her face, making her seem more human
- This colour of light would have been most common at this time, most likely from oil or gas lamp fixtures
- When she begins to talk about her upbringing, we are transported to Wapping and Ma Nelson's Brothel

2. Ma Nelsons brothel

- There are lots of beats within this scene which is Fevvers' backstory,
- Ma Nelson appearing, Lizzie discovering the wings on Fevvers' back, the ladies of the academy have their gender politics lesson, then we learn of them all being kicked out and a fire burns down the brothel, I will just talk about a couple.
- The outer setting is gritty East London, which will be achieved with smoke effects and dim lighting, taking away any vibrant colour from scenery or costume. The muted colours also help tell the audience we are now in a flashback.
- When Fevvers attempts her flight – which we thought could be done through her jumping from the piano or stool, she is cast in pale blue, moonlight coming from behind her as to show the summers night setting,
- there is a breeze generated from the drapes to show this soft cool weather, as she makes her daring leap
- Festoon lights flickering as she passes them, moving through the audience
- For the fire in the brothel, this is shown through a change in colour of the drapes that hang down, using the LED battens, turning from their white colour to yellow then bleeding into red, getting more and more ferocious in movement before going out completely and returning to solid looking white fabric.
- This snaps us back into present day within the play

My slides

Colonel Kearney's
Circus



The Circus Wings



Script

Slide 5

Colonel Kearney's Circus

- For these scenes I looked at the lights of a circus and recreated some in my design such as string lights, festival bulbs and lanterns
- The circus is a turning point for the play and I wanted to show it as a spectacle.
- The circus is marked by the drapes now lit in red or white, and multiple LED moving heads make spotlights that dance along the walls. The Cabochon lights glow red and yellow,
- Upon his entrance, colonel Kearney is lit by multiple spotlights that track his movements, each of his top of the bill performers are spot lit too as they emerge onto the stage
- The circus wings are the main focus of the action during the last movement of the 2nd Act.
- It is just the other side of a thin divide between the show and the chaos happening behind it. It's a cramped, tense space where most of the drama is unfolding
- Playing on the idea of being the wings of the circus, the primary light source is shown as spill from the ring itself — strong, directional profile lights that light the 'backstage' space
- When the ring is being used for practice however, it is a time of concentration, the lighting that fills the stage is neutral and bright
- For when the tigers appear, the drapes and cabashon lights glow an angry red, casting black silhouettes, The festoon lights around the ring turn off, the poles now serving as bars on a cage

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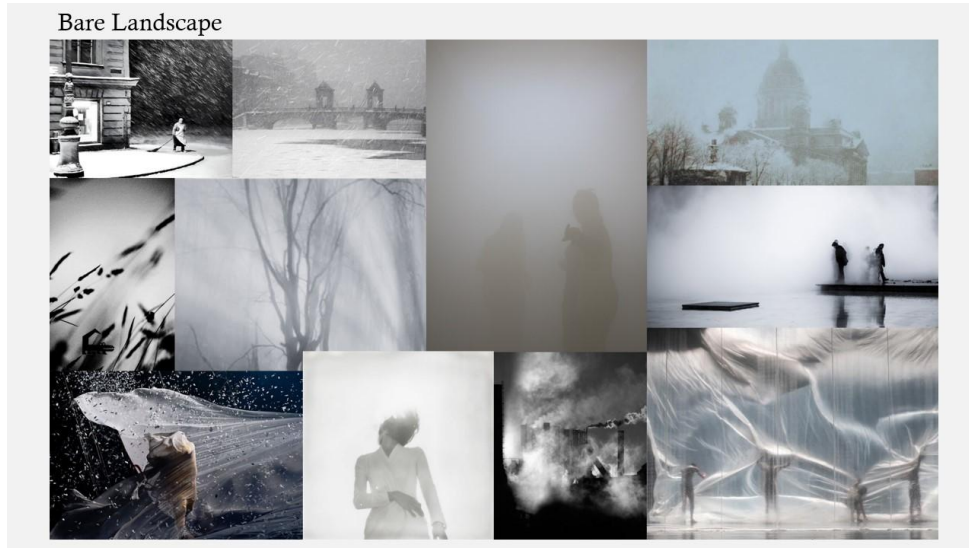
Clown Alley and Bridal Suite

- Opposing the circus's dynamic lighting, for clown alley, I want to lean into surrealist themes, creating long lurking shadows, by using tight beams that hit the chorus of clowns. The colour of the light here is cold and uninviting, inspired by the green patina colour of weathered and decaying copper and bronze
- the unnatural colour of the light evokes an uneasy feeling, we associate these lights with public spaces and a lack of privacy.
- Sticking to surrealism, for Fevvers Hotel room in St Petersburg, I want to create a space that is familiar yet foreign. Using a gobo, I want to cast a white ornate window onto the floor, this with the translucent gauze blowing inward and a soft haze, sets the scene of a winter night in St Petersburg. Outside it is cold, and dangers lurk of Mr Sugar and the formidable Samson, who later ambushes Jack.
- Yet indoors it is a warm, candle lit safe haven for Mignon, Fevvers and Lizzie

And lastly, in the ending of the play, during the scene that takes place in the circus ring, an explosion goes off which marks the beginning of the 20th century

- Described well in Buffo's monologue that takes place here, with feelings of 'Despair, failure, and pain'
Here I want to lean into the surrealist theme creating long lurking shadows, created by tight beams that hit the chorus of clowns. The colour of the light here is cold and uninviting, inspired by the green patina colour of weathered and decaying copper and bronze
- the unnatural colour of the light evokes an uneasy feeling, we associate these bright lights with hospitals, public spaces, lack of privacy. We liked this theme of rusting or wearing metal to show that things are deteriorating, and coming to a close much like the ending of 19th century

My slides



Script

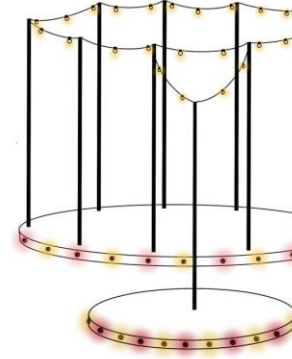
Slide 7

Bare white landscape

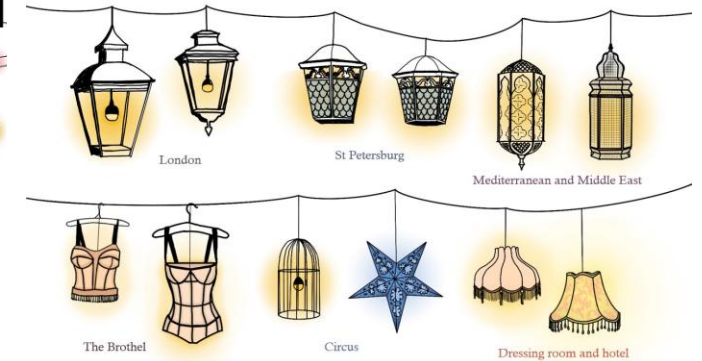
- For this, I want to create a sense of disorientation for the audience, all they know is an explosion has occurred (causing the drapery to be swept backward and the festoons and cabochon lights no longer work.) The room is filled with smoke and bright white light
- slowly, out of the fog, the survivors emerge from the shadows, (they no longer stick to the stages, they appear in the audiences and find their way to each other)
- The play ends with Fewvers and Jack disappearing again, into the white void

CABOCHON LIGHTS AND LANTERNS

- Cabochon lights (Carnival bulb lighting) line the edge of the stages
- Stages and Walkways are lit by Festoon (string) lights
- Around the stages, they are normal bulbs, the string lights that branch off to other stages have varying lampshade designs



As talked about earlier, here I inserted my digital sketches of the lantern designs



Script

Slide 9

For the decorative elements of my lighting design, there are

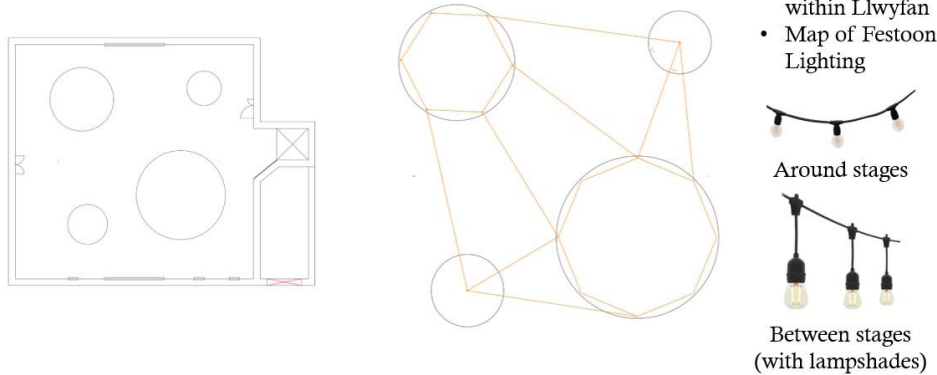
- Cabochon lights lining the edge of the stages, these are colour changing LED bulbs in clear plastic casing, this is so they are visible but not a trip hazard
- The Stages and Walkways are lit by Festoon lights,
- Around the stages, they are normal bulbs but for the string lights that branch off to other performance areas, lighting the walkways, these have varying lampshade designs depending on their location

Next slide

- As you enter the space, on the west is London, with black street lanterns and undergarments hung up to dry. In reference to the brothel
- As you nearer St Petersburg toward the east, the street lamp design changes, and circus star shape lanterns are dotted around the ring
- Also, around the space are lanterns as a nod to Jack's travels and a display of the growing globalisation of the time

My slides

TECHNICAL APPROACH



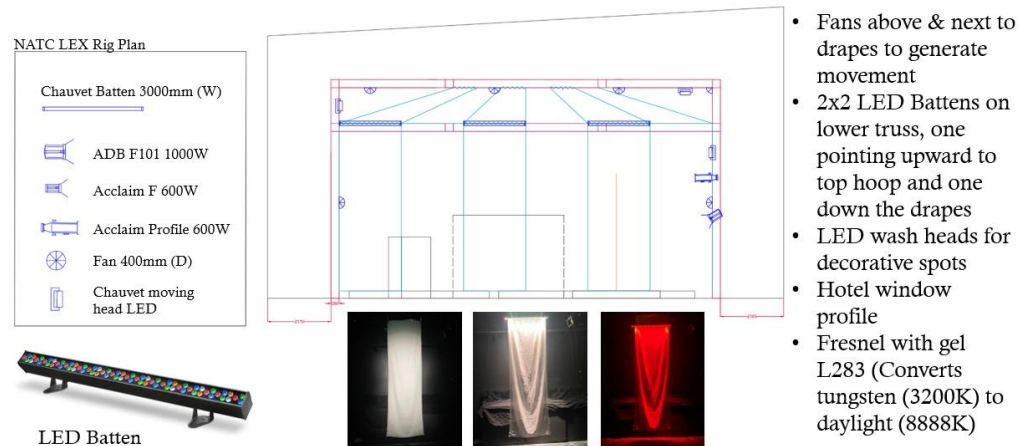
Script

Slide 10

Technical approach

1. For the rigging of the lights, we have two levels in the truss system, one at the top of the circus tent, and one at the level that the larger hoop drops down to
- This is a CAD drawing of that side view, with lanterns rigged on the legs of the truss as well as above
- For the drapes we would use sharks tooth Gauze that when lit from the inside of the tent, it appears a solid white, but when lights are shone from the other side of it, they appear translucent, and carry the colour from the LED battens down the length of the drape
- These would be used especially for colouring the circus tent, in other key scenes such as the Brothel fire and explosion toward the end, I would use these with fans to generate movement.

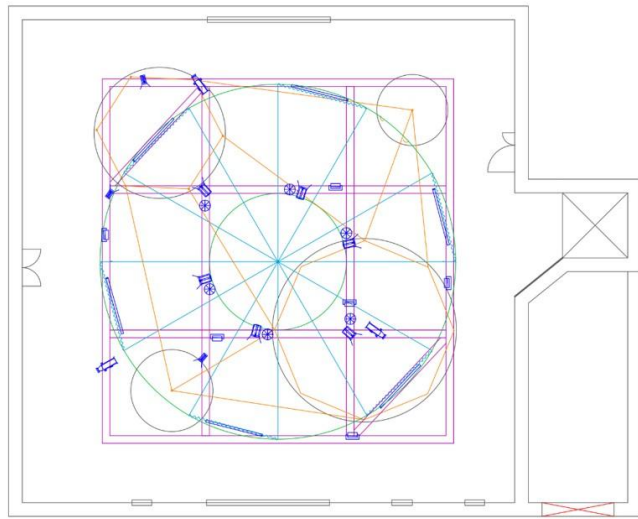
TECHNICAL APPROACH



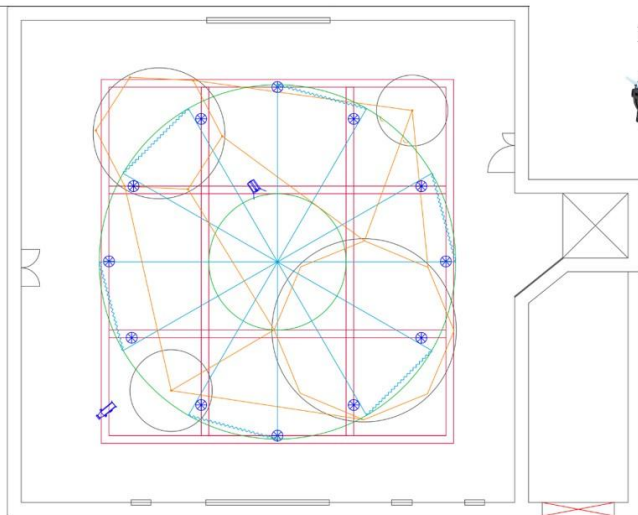
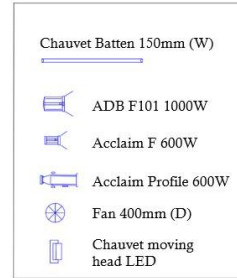
Slide 11

- This shows the placement of the stages within the space and maps out the festoon lights
- This is the first level of the truss

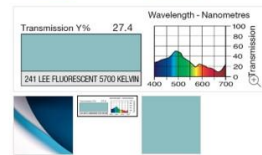
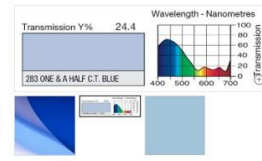
My slides



PAN VIEW 1



PAN VIEW 2



Script

Slide 12

- This is a pan view of the first level of the truss where I have placed the majority of my lanterns which include Fresnels, profile lights, Led battens, moving head LEDs and fans
- As I have covered a little already, in some areas I have kept to era inspired lighting styles of warm interior lighting and amber daylights, for the more intimate scenes like Fevvers dressing room and her bridal suite, this would be created by Fresnels. These are great for casting a wide soft wash of light ??
- The LED moving head lights are used to generate circus-esque spotlights that but also can track performers using infrared LED beacon technology.

Slide 13

- This is the second level of rigging, which is mostly fans pointing down the drapes along with a profile, which are used for spotlights and gobos as they can be focussed to produce a sharp outline – in my design I use a water reflection gobo and a window outline for Fevvers' hotel suite
- For the same reason they are best for spotlights
- for the water reflection gobo in Vestas scenes and a Fresnel with a deep blue gel to create a moonlight – like wash
- For the use of Gobos – for the St Petersburg hotel window, these would be achieved with Profile lights, which can be focussed to produce a sharp outline
- Profile lights are also what I would use for VESTAs spotlight, as these can be focussed accurately

This concludes my lighting design portion of our pitch, I will now hand you over to Alaya who is going to talk to you about puppetry

Evaluation



Evaluation

The final stage in the 7 steps of design, is to reflect and identify where you were successful and areas you'd like to improve on. This is vital for growth, so you know what you can do differently next time to avoid making the same mistakes.

In terms of areas I need to improve on, I feel that this project showed me a few. I found this project very challenging which I think surprised me because I enjoyed the script and I like thinking about storytelling through light and colour. Also, I usually enjoy group work and I have learnt that I work best when I am able to bounce ideas off others, I like my work to reflect not just my ideas and show other influences. Before this project I already knew I don't like taking on a leadership role, but I also didn't feel we would meet deadlines without some direction.

In this group setting, we all had different ways of working, and a few of us preferred independent working styles. I appreciate that everyone has their own approach to their work, but I think group input is absolutely vital for this kind of brief – to ensure you are building a cohesive design but also so the work-load is equal and so you can get more enjoyment out of the process. Next time, if I feel we aren't on track even after some encouragement, instead of completing group work, I'd like to focus more on my independent work, so I don't fall behind.

In terms of scheduling, whilst I did allow plenty of time for research, I spent too long on areas that piqued my interest rather than getting an even spread of research in different areas like looking more into colour and lighting theory and finding more lighting designers that inspire me. Also, I would have liked to have looked further into different Circus performances and spaces too, especially more contemporary Circuses like Cirque du Soleil, Giffords and NoFit State Circus. I did watch videos of performances, but I didn't delve into the making and designing for circus as much as I would have liked. Other areas of research I could have looked into was how costume and sound work with lighting and made sure to consider this within my design.

Evaluation

In my next project, before beginning my research, I would subtitle every area I would like to investigate and set deadlines within my allocated research time. The same goes for allocating deadlines within the implementation time of a project, so you know when one element has to be moved on from, like my CAD drawing which ran into my presentation preparation.

Something I think I was successful in was my visual references to communicate my designs such as my mood boards and lantern sketches. In terms of my design as a whole, I think it suited our set design well, especially the drapes and LED battens, and I think I designed something visually interesting.

A key thing I want to work on is being less afraid of being not so literal with my designs – like using a window gobo for a window. I think some of the settings were clear enough without the more stylised items and could have been communicated in a more subtle way. I also could have been more experimental, much like the other groups approaches which I thought was very inspiring. I liked how they explored different time periods and locations for the setting in their designs.

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