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Publication Date

2014

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Costuming the Character: From Research to Production

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Master of Fine Arts

in

Theatre and Dance (Design)

by

Amy Sutton

Committee in charge:

Judith A. Dolan, Chair
Eva Wielgat Barnes
Andrei Both
Manuel Rotenberg

2014

The thesis of Amy Sutton is approved and it is acceptable
in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

Chair

University of California, San Diego

2014

DEDICATION

To my family, for all their love and support, I could not have come so far without them.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am extremely grateful to all the talented artists and individuals I have had the chance to work with, and who have guided me, during my three years here at UCSD. I have been fortunate enough to work on many fantastic productions during my time here.

I would like to thank my advisor, Judith Dolan, for helping me find my way in this program, and without whom I would not be the artist I am today.

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Costuming the Character: From Research to Production

by

Amy Sutton

Master of Fine Arts in Theatre and Dance (Design)

University of California, San Diego, 2014

Professor Judith A. Dolan, Chair

The costume design process is extensive, beginning with design discussions and ending on opening night. While the steps toward the final design remain consistent for each show, I find that the design process is unique with each new script, production team, and cast.

The Santa Barbarians evolved from research collaged from magazines to a world of realism, in which each of the principal males characters' unique personalities were expressed through the variations in style.

In *Elizabeth I*, I interpreted Elizabethan costume through a modern eye, working with the team & cast to create a whimsical world of "DIY" costumes. A

particular challenge in this show was transformation of actors for multiple roles, in fast & effective ways.

For *Drums in the Night*, the director and design team worked to create a hyper-realistic world seen through the eye of an escaped POW. I worked closely with the actors to tell a detailed story. Every article of clothing, from an old Army t-shirt to an orange pocket square, was selected with purpose and meaning within the world, to create a very specific characterization.

She Stoops to Conquer presented the challenge of working with a professional director and creating the enticing world of a period comedy. We chose to set the show in the Georgian & Regency periods, which allowed me to define characters' personality, like age & status, to the audience through style choices. It involved detailed research and careful selection of costume pieces, in order to portray the period correctly.