



Emerson Stage | Courtney O'Connor

Production Meeting: 5

Date: September 2, 2016

Start: 9:00am on the dot

End: 10:00am on the dot

In Attendance: Alexis Ellis-Alvarez, Caroline Blatz, Elizabeth Cahill, Keith Cornelius, Jaelyn Dentino, Ron DeMarco, Richelle Devereaux-Murray, Derek Epstein, Nadine Grant, Lisa Guild, Janie Howland Elizabeth Kamla, Jessica Kemp, Deb Krasa, Alta Lewis Millard, Courtney O'Connor, Michaela Rubinfeld, Marta Sarrion Arrúe, Abby Shenker, Michelle Slivinsky, Maddie St. Amour, Timothy Sullivan, Reagan White

Next Production Meeting: 10am-11am on September 9, 2016 in the Greene. Currently. Stay Tuned.

GENERAL

- 1) Welcome one, welcome all! It is so wonderful to see so many smiling faces. Welcome to our new recruits! Tim, Nadine, Derek! We're so excited to have you. Strap in for a crazy ride!
- 2) We went through the room to (re)introduce ourselves.
- 3) We've had an incredibly productive three (3) days in rehearsal.
- 4) Courtney would like to thank the Academy... I mean, she sends a serious thank you to everyone who makes it possible to start with rehearsals before classes happen. She thinks it's a huge benefit for actors to learn what the real life is like, and it also helps put up a show so quickly!
- 5) Alta would like to thank her adoring fans, as well as thank you for your patience as she gets back into the Emerson Stage groove!
- 6) In the first week, the rehearsal room has done a full read through, assigned minor roles, had some discoveries with movement, incorporated some of the props, and had a music jam session. Phew!
- 7) The rehearsal room is beginning to block today! How exciting.
- 8) **RECAP:** Our *Caucasian Chalk Circle* is set in a refugee camp. The theater is a refugee camp. It is not set in a post-apocalyptic world.
- 9) As of 1:30am this morning, a new prologue has been written. It sets up the world we're telling our story in and also mirrors the original prologue.
- 10) Keith gave us some great information on fireproofing clothes. Deb/Richelle gave us some great information about clothes. Courtney gave us some great information about her feelings on clothes. It was a great conversation about clothes/laundry being hung in the space. Keith suggests using cotton or inherently fireproof polyester clothing to use as set dressing. Abby is happy limiting the amount of clothing in the space to meet fire codes. We are fairly confident that fireproofed clothing can be laundered out, and there is clothing available that can be fireproofed and never be worn again. There is also always the Garment District to get ahold of a lot of cheap clothing. We will refer to Annie about where laundry can be hung throughout the space so we don't get in the way of her gorgeous lighting.
- 11) Daniel and Abby confirmed that gallery access would be needed on the stage side.
- 12) **Audience Seating:** We will only be able to have accessible seating in the Greene house because there will be no seating on the bottom row of the stage seating.
- 13) Today we brainstormed how to challenge the audience's experience in the lobby and how to get the audience to take action – you know, Brechtian style. The goal is to make him proud. Courtney brought up the lobby display be traditional during house open, but then change the dramaturgy boards, during Act II, into an interactive experience for the audience. Be it iPads to sign up for organizations immediately, videos, pamphlets about how to become involved. How do we insight people into action like Brecht wanted to? Do we connect with groups on campus? Michelle brought up a group of college students who went to Colombia. Jess remembers the Lost Boy of Sudan refugee who now studies film here (he did a talk back after a screening of *The Good Lie*). Emily, Dramaturge extraordinaire, we look to you!
- 14) The Caucasian Chalk Circle Band's cast recording will be available October 3rd. JUST KIDDING, but everyone is going to rock it.
- 15) Courtney encouraged everyone, *everyone*, to come visit rehearsals. Not just designers, and such. If you're on this show, please feel free to be a part of it in more ways than one! It's an incredibly collaborative process.



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SCENIC

- 1) Thank you for showing us your design! It was also rocking that your set could come apart like that. In. Awe.
- 2) Abby reminded us about her concept. The idea is to create a Brechtian Greene.
- 3) As a result, we came up with a set that mirrors the Greene house, with audience members on both sides.
- 4) What would it look like if refugees moved into the theater? Our refugees would also move in with laundry, raid the props warehouse in Medford – they'd take over the entire space.
- 5) Audience members will sit on both sides of the theatre.
- 6) Abby is hoping to have first-hand refugee stories written on the walls, and to have cast members write those stories to have all different kinds of handwriting over the space.
- 7) David suggested that instead of using chalk (which would smear), we paint the walls with whatever text we want and then offer to paint the walls back to the original color. Joe Keener suggested this as well.
- 8) Annie, Abby, Daniel, and Keith will talk about the safety lighting on the side. Daniel and Keith believe they have figured a way to make this possible, but it's a matter of finding the money to do so. Isn't that always the case?

LIGHTING

- 1) **Lighting Finals are DUE 09.08.2016**
- 2) Please see Scenic #8.
- 3) Annie said over email, "I am SO excited to be back and work with everyone and create a beautiful show!!"
- 4) Annie and Daniel, could you confirm and give Keith as much information about the single pair of ministrips that go under the stage risers?
- 5) Annie will begin visiting rehearsals tomorrow (Saturday, September 3rd). She's happy to give her design prezzie at rehearsal if you'd like!
- 6) When Annie is out of town September 9th-September 15th, her trusty cohorts, Sam and Justin, will be there in her place.
- 7) Due to safe traveling, Annie will miss next week's meeting. Jess will be in touch with you, Annie, regarding Load-In preferences!

COSTUMES

- 1) Thank you for sharing your drawings with us! Jess personally *loves* the paint chips.
- 2) **Concept/General Idea: Assign a refugee crisis arbitrarily to each actor. Each actor will not be from the country/crisis, but are intended to be a nod to, not a direct reflection of, all of the crises past and present. As a collective whole, they're just refugees from the world. As the actors tell the story, they will then don on additional pieces of clothing to become the characters.**
- 3) Rachael took us through her drawings. Each actor has distinct color and items of clothing that are reminiscent of different crises. For example, Dante will be wearing a referee shirt in reference to the concentration camps' striped uniforms.
- 4) Azdak is the only actor to not nod to a refugee crisis. She will blend in to the crowd with everyday clothes.
- 5) Some of rises/genocides being referenced are: Armenian Genocide, Trail of Tears, the Holocaust, Irish Potato Famine, Syrian Refugee Crisis, the conflict in Colombia, and Partition of Benghazi.
- 6) All of the costumes will be worn in, dirty, and ragged.
- 7) Rachael's research is on Dropbox. Please be sure to check it out for a great history lesson!
- 8) Rachael is hoping to get you generic rehearsal items to help you begin blocking by 1pm today (09.02.)

PROPS

- 1) Life Jackets. After some discussion, it appears that only a few jackets would be needed for set dressing. We will consider adding more if there is enough mula to do so, but we won't break the bank to have a mountain of life jackets.
- 2) Please accept my sincerest apology for not checking in with your department as a whole!
- 3) Thank you for all of your help this week!



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SOUND

- 1) **Sound Finals are DUE 09.08.2016**
- 2) Annie would love, love, *love* to discuss speaker placement sometime this week.
- 3) Thank you for the stunning video by the Refugee Music Project! For those who were unable to attend, Elizabeth showed us a video of a refugee who learned to play music in a refugee camp. Heart breaking, but beautiful! Click [here](#) to link to the article and video.
- 4) The video above really influenced Elizabeth – how many refugees were not musicians and were displaced and had desire to being playing music to keep their folk music alive.
- 5) The rehearsal room had its first music rehearsal. All of the actors have different backgrounds in music, but even people who have never played before can hit a box in rhythm! Elizabeth even played us a song from their first rehearsal. The musical saw is back, everyone. It's coming back! Along with some other found sounds... like spoons. Regular spoons.
- 6) The goal for sound is not to mimic the music of the refugee camps, but to pay homage to it. To embrace the no time, no place aspect of the music. Not to sound ready, practiced, but like singing Happy Birthday. (see Lary Coen and Courtney O'Connor for more details)
- 7) The idea of playing a very, very low sound from the subwoofers to make the audience uncomfortable as they walk in surfaced again. Fun fact, those low sounds also occur in buildings where people have reportedly seen ghosts. We'll have ghostbusters on speed dial, just in case!
- 8) Elizabeth is composing, and the cast has expressed interest in helping create pieces. Go Ben!
- 9) Elizabeth is also looking to buy materials for the wash bin base that she is going to build (how cool!?) this weekend.
- 10) The piano/spinet we are thinking of using is in desperate need of tuning and three keys stick. Perhaps we might search for other options, or stay with the upright that works in the Greene? Depends on how much fixing keys would cost, or if Brynna or Mindy's pianos work. Note: the janky piano is preferred.

DRAMATURGY

- 1) Courtney just loved your presentation to the cast. She told us how the everyone felt completely overwhelmed in a really positive way.
- 2) Please see General #13. If you find organizations that exist on or off campus that you would like to visit, please let Jaclyn and David know as soon as possible! They'll help get things going.

STAGE MANAGEMENT

- 1) Please let Annie know if there is a time that is any better or worse to come to rehearsal. When do you think she would most useful?

PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT

- 1) Please coordinate with Ron, Keith, et. all about reserving the truck and moving props this coming Monday evening (09.05.2016).
- 2) Connect with Elizabeth regarding petty cash.

GENERAL/COMPANY MANAGEMENT

- 1) How will we sell the stage seating seats? As onstage seating? Immersive seating? As regular seats? As runway seating? The question came up, and Courtney's response is that sell them the way you see fit, but, in the Brechtian vein, she wants people to be caught off guard. Direct quote from Courtney: "We don't want to give it away."

OFFICE OF THE ARTS

- 1) Please see Scenic #8 regarding our idea of painting the walls. Is it possible for us to proceed in this direction?
- 2) Keith told us about the readily available overflow seats in the Semel Trap that we can use in our play space. Are these still available for us to use, and have been fireproofed/meet standards?
- 3) Double-checking that it is okay to kill some seats in the normal house and add stage seating as audience member seating? We would not be adding the head count in the space, just moving audience member location.
- 4) Also checking in again that it is okay to have audience members on the stage. Any EGRESS concerns?
- 5) Please see Production Management #1.
- 6) We would like to have the prologue start before we have the house announcement about cell phones and fire exits (this would occur 30 seconds after beginning). We recall doing this for shows past. Is this still okay if we include all necessary language?