



The Lacy Project
Directorial Approach
By Micah Patt

Aristotelian Analysis

Plot Synopsis

The Lacy Project takes place over the course of one evening. Lacy, a young woman and daughter of a globally acclaimed photographer, prepares for her birthday celebration and the impending arrival of her mother. She lives in an apartment in New York City with her aspiring photographer roommate, Charlotte, and goes to 'raves' with her drug-addicted friend, Giselle. Lacy's unwillingness to grow up is increasingly evident as she is confronted with real-life issues for the first time. Lacy begins the play as a girl who does not respect the personhood of Giselle and Charlotte by eating Charlotte's food and forcing her to do menial tasks and sleeping with Giselle's long term significant other. By the end we see her rush to Giselle's aid when she overdoses and support Charlotte's opportunity to study abroad and learn photography with Lacy's mother.

Character

Charlotte and Giselle act as foils for each other. Giselle dresses scantily, does drugs, dances to EDM, and lives off of her parents' money, while Charlotte works 50 hours a week at an office job to pay rent and fund her passion for photography. They both pull on Lacy to act according to their individual values, and their conflicting personalities and objectives drive the dramatic action. There are also two dolls, Olivia and Harriet, who are played by actors. Lacy has the doll versions and they show Lacy's fall from innocence. Olivia, the flouncy barbie-esque doll, is thrown from the apartment window by Giselle and finds her way back to deliver a final speech.

Thought

Directing *The Lacy Project* at *The Lost Colony* was a perfect environment because I think the thematic elements and thought of the play related to the audience of early 20-somethings spending the summer partying. The back of the play reads “Lacy has to navigate between image and reality, sex and friendship, self-indulgence and responsibility”. Those conflicts are particularly relevant to an audience of college students at summer stock. The last scene of the play includes a monologue by the doll Olivia, who has been thrown out of the window and found her way back to the apartment. She expresses to Harriet all that she has seen on her journey home, listing among other things “the best minds of my generation destroyed by sadness” (59). This line stuck with me because I think my generation as a whole has little hope for the future of society which results in an unrelenting sadness that pervades all of us.

Language

I believe that *The Lacy Project* is one of the most well written plays of this generation. Alena Smith's writing juxtaposes poetic imagery with slang and conversational elements. It was a challenge to grasp the underlying meter. I am including two passages because I think they are excellent displays of this:

On Right: Picture from a late night rehearsal!



Olivia: "Moving through the streets you can lose your soul as easy as a glove or umbrella. The city is a chaos of neon non sequiturs. I saw a woman with no lower body but an electric fan. I saw a white buck molting antlers on an oriental carpet. I saw a wizened old mermaid curled up dead beside a shopping cart, a hubcap woman with a long plastic arm, a looming darkness on the horizon. Everything can be obtained, Harriet. I picked up hints. I could guess. I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by sadness, skeletons in nightgowns, elbows scraped and bleeding, grisly crime scenes decorated with stickers. Birth control pills, cut-out stars on bedroom ceilings, there will be time, there won't be time, to murder and create" (59)

Giselle: "Hip-hop is dead. I gang bang my shit on hip-hop's grave. I know it's not the same, I know it can't ever be the same as it was back in the day, before Jay Z sold out, when Sergio and I would drive up to Vermont on the weekends... Wu-Tang or Nas or Mobb Deep on the system, and the world turned into something cold, pure, hard as ice, slick, crystal. Rolling the windows down even though it was freezing and the wind whipped my face and down the back of my neck and we'd smoke a blunt sprinkled with white dust and the mountains were white and the trees were white and even the pavement beneath the wheels whizzed by so fast it was white and the beds under my nails were white and my thoughts went skiing down the mountain of my brain so the top was all clear and I'd be bopping my head from side to side like oh, shit, man, life is fuckin empty, empty, empty, and I'm a fuckin unstoppable machine and the Gravediggaz with their raspy voices rapping "Suicide, it's a suicide," and I felt like I had committed suicide and now I just got to enjoy the afterlife in all its fucked-up empty white voided-out glory. No one makes hip-hop like that anymore but at least I make something that respects it. Peace." (26-27)

Music

The text utilizes music to indicate Giselle's state on drugs, and there is a full rap/dance number that leads into the emotional climax of the play. I think the music helps to keep it contemporary even with the poetic language. On the night of the show, Rachel Finazzo, the actor playing Giselle, asked if she could interact with the audience during her dance number, and she ended up bringing someone on-stage to dance with her. I loved this breaking of the fourth wall because it not only added to the trippiness but also contributed to the catharsis of watching Lacy forced into adulthood because it could have been any of us.

I utilized the concept of "rose-colored glasses" throughout the rehearsal process as vivid imagery for actors and designers. This came into play in the final moment where Olivia and Harriet break out dancing to a song not specified in the script. I selected "Just a Girl" by No Doubt because the first line is "take this pink ribbon of my eyes", which not only relates to the literal ribbon Lacy's mother would tie around her head for her birthday photos, but also the overarching theme of a fall from innocence.

Spectacle

For this play I had an all female-identifying production team, and they were all fantastic at building the world and bringing my vision to life. We had a black box space but there were some wooden planks hanging from the ceiling so our scenic designer, Emmi Frankum, brought in sheets to tie down and build the set. She also brought in two large picture frames painted gold to act as windows, which tied in the theme of photography. It looked like a fairy doll house. Throughout the play, as Lacy lost her rose colored glasses, the lighting subtly shifted from a light pink tint to a red to a stark prison lighting. At the end, Lacy tore down all of the sheets, leaving her with the mess she made, forcing her to take responsibility.

Rehearsal Process

The Lacy Project was the first project that allowed me complete artistic agency. I worked three jobs so I would be able to purchase any necessary costumes/props/set pieces out of pocket, and had a team of designers who were all excellent and on the same page with the world we wanted to create!

We had all of our rehearsals from 10:30PM-12:30AM because of the demanding schedule of *The Lost Colony*, so it was imperative to keep up morale and build a cohesive ensemble. We had “check-in” questions every day and did a brief movement warm-up to get everyone in the zone. I am still very close with everyone involved, and it is my proudest production to date.





Visuals

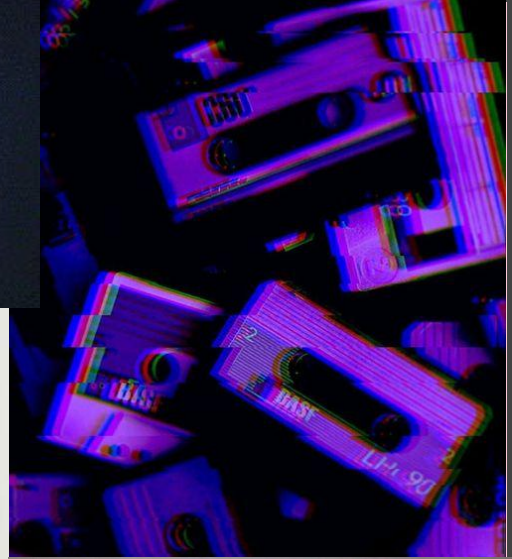


Above is the color palette shared with the design team so we could all create a cohesive aesthetic.

Here is the playlist utilized for warm-ups and pre-show: [Rehearsal Playlist](#)

The following two slides are examples of visual inspiration/collages I developed alongside the design team using Pinterest boards:

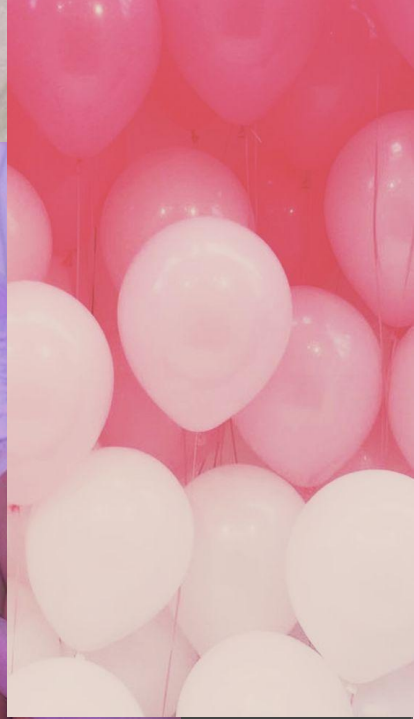
Giselle Visual Inspi



FIND WHAT YOU
LOVE
AND LET IT
KILL YOU



Lacy Visual Inspiration





Production Photos



Thanks!

Please reach out with any questions! :)

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