

Reimagining Shakespeare Monologues: A Multimedia Project

Introduction:

For my fourth year project I would like to create a work that brings together four major passions into one multi-media project; Shakespeare, SFX Makeup, filmmaking and projection design. The purpose of this project is to honor the language and expression of Shakespeare's words through a more experimental and unconventional art form. I do not know exactly how it will look, but I want to create an experience inspired by the speeches and the imagery I see when I speak the words. It is an abstracted and heightened monologue self-tape, using SFX makeup, projection design, and cinematography in place of the words.

Since coming to UVA, I have gotten to discover and explore unexpected areas of creativity. I never would have imagined that I would be so interested in designing projections or working with a camera. This project would involve films of me (or maybe another actor) dressed in costume with SFX makeup that reflects the themes and the language of the speech with added body projection mapping or flat projections. Getting to direct the film with my own camera would allow me to have better control over the project. Although I am aware that I am not going to be able to do this without another person operating the camera, but I want to be in close collaboration with every aspect, which means getting to pick the camera the monologues will be shot on. In the future I want to have a hand in many different aspects of creativity including film, and getting to explore how to balance the operation of the camera with my projections would be incredibly valuable.

Creating contemporary Shakespeare work that combines my love and knowledge of the plays with my other artistic interests is incredibly important to me because I want my future work to be about bringing Shakespeare into something more contemporary and experimental. This past semester at RADA I got to work in a project called "Shakespeare our contemporary" where we got to perform a deconstruction of *Romeo & Juliet* highlighting the theme of body autonomy. The idea was to marry the text with other contemporary media to tell the story. We brought in poems, excerpts from interviews, designed a movement piece, and many people (including myself) wrote new scenes to fit it together. The final result was a really powerful piece that showed how the ideas in the text are still relevant today. In a similar way I want this project to use modern media and technology to illuminate a famous speech.

This project perfectly marries the work that I have done in video design, makeup design, and my Shakespearean training at RADA. It would be very interesting to examine Shakespeare's words through the lens of makeup and projection assets (the videos I will design to project over the actor). I was inspired to create this project by Mona Kasra, who gave me the idea to make a multimedia project. I was also inspired by this art

installation I found called "[Ophelia's Ghost](#)" by Davy & Kristin McGuire. I found it interesting because the work is very expressive and informed by the text although the words are absent.

The current goal is to create at least two videos. I am aware that there may be concerns that I will not be able to direct, act, design projections, and design makeup, but the entire process right now is pretty open ended and my plan is to just figure out what is feasible as I go along. I plan to have another person operate the camera, and another person to help edit the videos. I may end up doing only one, which I am perfectly okay with, or I may have to simplify the makeup or projections. In my eyes this project is more about the exploration and the journey rather than everything going according to plan. I have not done something like this before or seen something exactly like this before, which is exactly why I want to do it.

The monologues I have in mind right now are: Romeo's monologue "But soft, what light through yonder window breaks?" from *Romeo & Juliet* and Gertrude's monologue "There is a willow grows aslant a brook" from *Hamlet*.

1. For Gertrude/Ophelia:

This look that I did a few years ago was inspired by mythical fauns. I would adapt this look to mimic the pond Ophelia drowns in, more like the water and flowers are growing out of her. Also, I did a close examination of the flowers Ophelia gives out to the king and queen for another assignment when she goes mad that I would love to include as part of the look.



2. For Juliet:

I would keep most of it the same but change the pattern of the pearls. I would also potentially add in gems to mimic diamonds. I like the pearls because it mimics the spheres of light (the sun and moon) Romeo speaks of in the text:

"Arise fair sun and kill the envious moon who is already sick and pale with grief that thou, her maid, art far more fair than she."



Other Projection Inspirations: I cannot find anything that looks exactly like what I want to do, this is just to give some examples of body

[-https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18do6tHtd94&ab_channel=THEPERFECTMISSIONMUZ.BYRAJEEVSIR%7BCTETKING%7D](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18do6tHtd94&ab_channel=THEPERFECTMISSIONMUZ.BYRAJEEVSIR%7BCTETKING%7D)

[-https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_ftg_zny1U&ab_channel=DinoDinoulis](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_ftg_zny1U&ab_channel=DinoDinoulis)

Supplies Needed:

Makeup: I would need new brushes, especially if I decide to involve other performers in this work. I do not know precisely which brushes I would get, but I have included a link to provide some context as to how much brushes can cost. Also, I would need good quality creme or alcohol activated paints in order for the makeup to show up with projections laid over it. On the SFX side, I am personally allergic to latex (liquid latex is the standard, cheaper SFX adhesive) so I have to get pros-aid and pros-aid remover. Many of the other materials, such as the pearls and the reindeer moss, come from a craft store, and those items are fairly cheap.

Adobe Products: I would like to purchase Adobe premiere pro so I can work on my project anywhere I want and I can save it to my hard drive from my laptop. I will be using it to create projection assets and edit the videos/

Projector: Pretty self-explanatory. This is one that Mona Kasra recommended for Video Design. It is a good size for what I am trying to accomplish and is fairly economical.

Costumes: Like the makeup, I am still shopping around for exactly what I want, but I have included a couple of possible costume ideas for Ophelia and Juliet. I want something white because I would love to use the Helms or another plain black space and this would give it some contrast. Also, I would like the dress to have a flavor of something older without being a period costume.

Black Magic Cinema Camera- Essential Bundle: I would like to purchase my own camera for this project. In my experience, the majority of UVa student cinematographers that I have worked with do not have their own camera and borrow them from FMS and Overcranked for their projects. Also, getting to choose which camera my project will be shot on gives me more creative control on the final project. I chose this bundle because FMS often uses Black Magics and they often appear on lists of “good cameras for film students”. This bundle includes the BMPCC 4K camera, a 12-35mm zoom lens (24-70mm 35mm equivalent), a protective full cage, a wireless mic system, a variable ND filter, a 512GB SSD with a holder, two 128GB SD cards, and two LP-E6N batteries with a dual charger.

Item		Links
Makeup	\$300	Brushes Pros aide Paint pros aide remover
Creative Cloud All Apps plan	\$250	https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/buy/students.html
Small Projector	\$69.99	https://www.amazon.com/Projector-Video-Projector-Multimedia-Compatible-Smartphone

		/dp/B07MTCMHZX/ref=psdc_300334_t2_B07F9DX2S7
Costumes	\$150-200	Ophelia Juliet
Black Magic Cinema Camera essential bundle	\$2849.00 (plus shipping)	pocket black magic
Total	\$3668.99	

Timeline:

Summer 2022: Purchase supplies, find a cinematographer, start collecting/designing assets for the projections, create color stories and mood boards.

September 2022: Create a storyboard, continue working on assets, find costumes

October 2022: Find location, finish assets

November 2022: Test projections

December 2022: Filming

January 2023: Editing and finding background music

February 2023: Editing

March 2023: Editing

April 2023: Finish editing and final presentations!

Production Details:

Due to the experimental nature of this project, this is just for clarification purposes, and also to give more detail on what I am thinking about. I will be acting in the film, designing the projections, doing the makeup, and directing the camera operator. I will find someone to help me with directing and production design (Mona and I both have a few people in mind) and I will find another person to help me edit. At the moment, I would like to have some indication of the words, whether spoken or alluded to in the sound or projection design. I do not want music, but I would like to have some sort of soundscape using free recordings (or making small recordings of strange sounds myself). For Ophelia, for instance, there would be sounds of water, nature, and maybe breathing. Much of this I can find online or record myself (I have two microphones I can use for this purpose). I have a lot of ideas about where to film this/what it would look like. I would love to use the Helms or any plain black space if possible. There is also a lecture hall with a big plain white wall that Mona recommended. I also have the idea of staging Ophelia in a bathtub and mapping projections onto the side of it (Brown Residential College has a freestanding bathtub we purchased for our halloween event that I would borrow). It would be a lot easier and take less time to have a stationary object to project onto as opposed to body mapping.

Other than that, I would not want this made outside and I would not want to dress the set at all.

Evidence of Participation in the Arts:

I have been heavily involved with the Dramatic arts at UVa from the moment I stepped foot on grounds, and even a little before then. The Summer before my first year, I was hired as a Production Assistant for Heritage Theatre's production of *Pride and Prejudice*. I learned a lot from that program and got an early introduction to the Drama department, which is now my academic home base. During my First year Fall semester, I was cast in the Drama Department's production of *She Kills Monsters* and joined the Student Council Arts Committee, which I continued for two years. I also became Brown College Governance Board's Hauntings Co Chair, in charge of designing and building a haunted house for charity on Monroe Hill. Spring 2019 was obviously cut short by Covid, but I was able to act in an FMS short film, become a member of the UVa Drama Arts Board, and join the cast of First Year Players production of *Kiss Me Kate* before it was canceled due to the University shutting down. Fall 2020, I was part of the ensemble of *Love and Information*, where I was able to explore my love of film. During this production, I got to work with Mona Kasra and was her student in Video Design the following fall. I also put up a miniature version of the usual Brown College Haunted house exclusively for Brown College residents. Spring of 2021, I was accepted to the Miller Arts Scholars program, acted in four short student films, and was an artistic director for a short film. In the Fall of 2022, I was the projection designer for the Virginia Player's lab series musical, and was the assistant director/assistant writer for Spectrum theatre's musical, in which I was also a supporting member of the cast. I also joined the executive board of the Virginia Players. Currently, I am attending NYU Tisch's Shakespeare in Performance Program at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, England. I have completed 28 credit hours courses in the Drama department and I am taking 5 more this semester as transfer credits from my study abroad program.