

LIFE SUCKS: A DOCUMENTATION OF THE LIGHTING DESIGN PROCESS

by

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HONORS THESIS

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Thesis Supervisor:

Trad A Burns

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I cannot express my appreciation for my mentor, Trad Burns, and his guidance and encouragement throughout this project. Without his instruction, I would not be the designer I am today.

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ABSTRACT

Life Sucks is a comedic play written by Aaron Posner, based on Chekov's classic: *Uncle Vanya*. Texas State University's theatre department produced *Life Sucks* in the Mainstage Theatre space this fall, for which I was the lighting designer.

In the spring of 2022, the *Life Sucks* design team began compiling research that was shared across design departments and with the director. After attending multiple meetings where we solidified the world we would build, I drafted variations of light plots detailing how the lighting instruments would exist in relation to the scenic elements of the stage. I then generated detailed paperwork that was used to circuit and program the lighting fixtures. After installing scenery and rehearsing in the space, the lights were programmed, and the show was opened.

My final thesis presentation includes the documentation of my design book, drafting, paperwork, research, images of the completed production, and explanations of the process. The purpose of the lighting design is to enhance the scenic, costume, and sound elements of the production, as well as stay true to the director's vision. It contributes to the storytelling, without distracting from other elements of the play.

THE LAUNCH:

Beginning in the spring of 2022, the script for *Life Sucks* was released to the design team to read and analyze. Soon after, the designers and director met for their first Creative Discussion - a meeting to go over our initial findings in the script and to talk about the play as a whole.

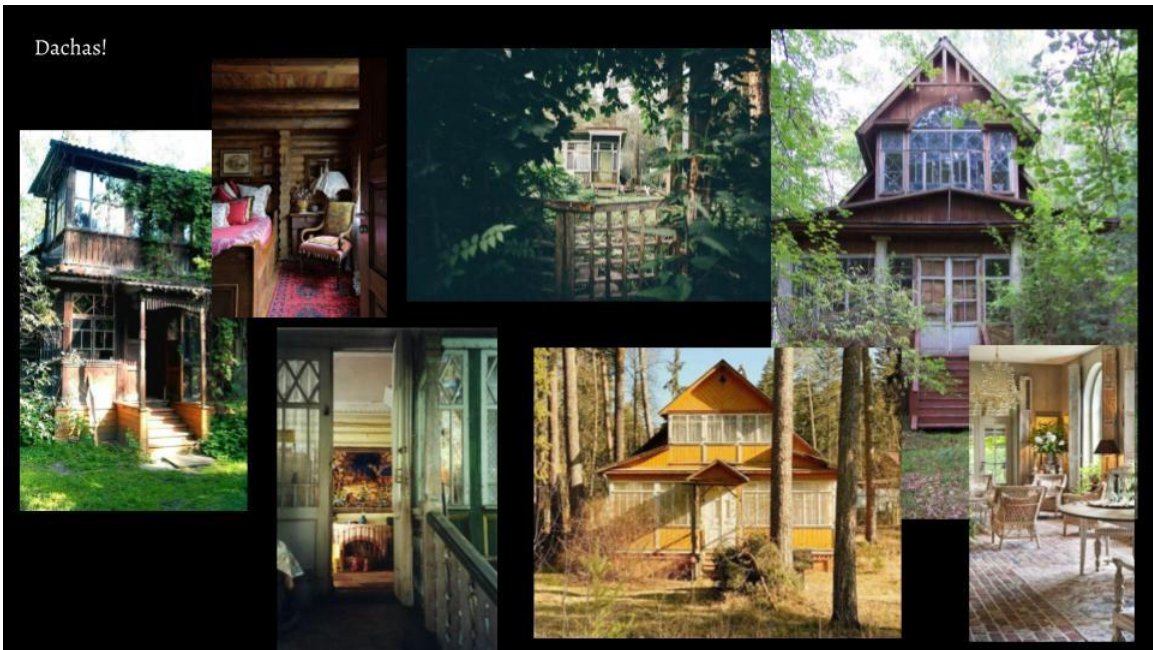
A few weeks after the creative discussion, the design team and director held a Research and Imagery meeting, where each of us brought a multitude of photo research to show our take on the play. These could be realistic images describing how we envisioned certain physical elements of the play, or emotional imagery that captured the feeling of the world. My initial imagery included both real-world images and abstract images that showed the quality of light I was interested in pursuing.

The following pages include the imagery I brought to our first Research and Imagery meeting for Life Sucks.

Early inspiration for the house during the day:



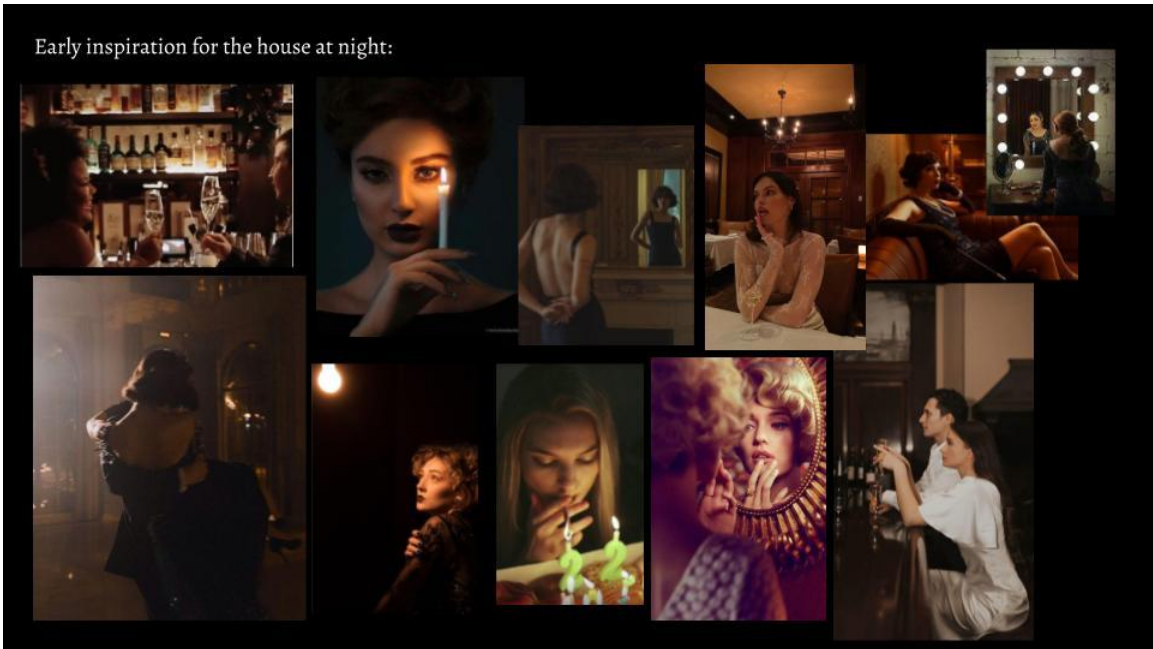
Dachas!



Early inspiration for the garden at night:



Early inspiration for the house at night:



Early ideas to play with:

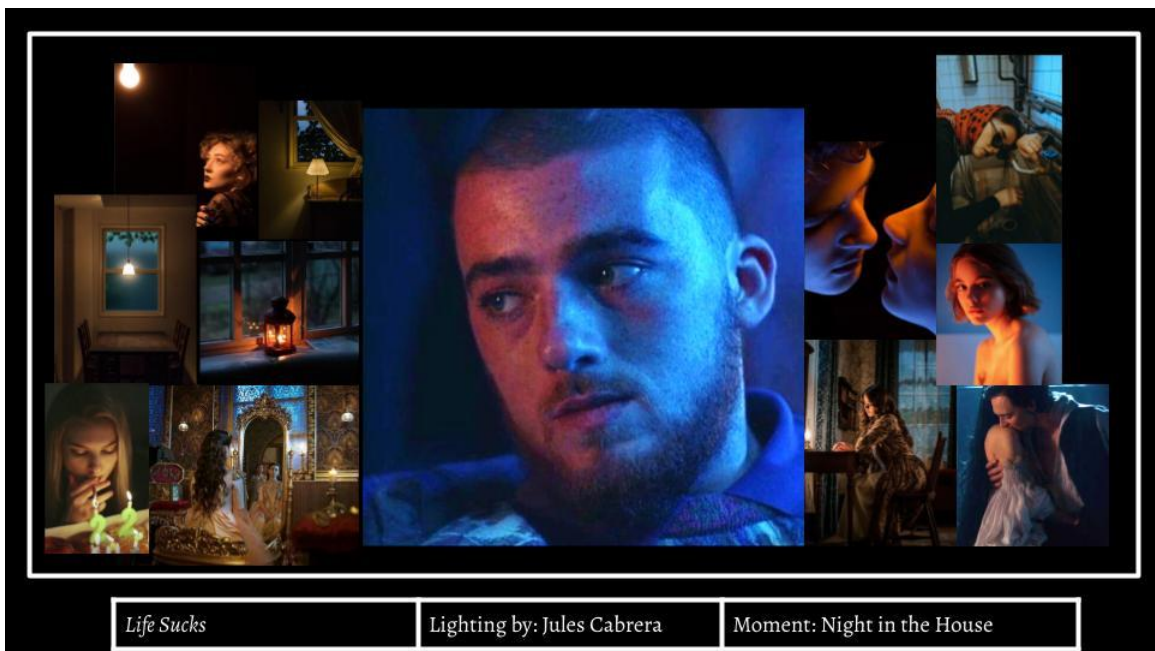
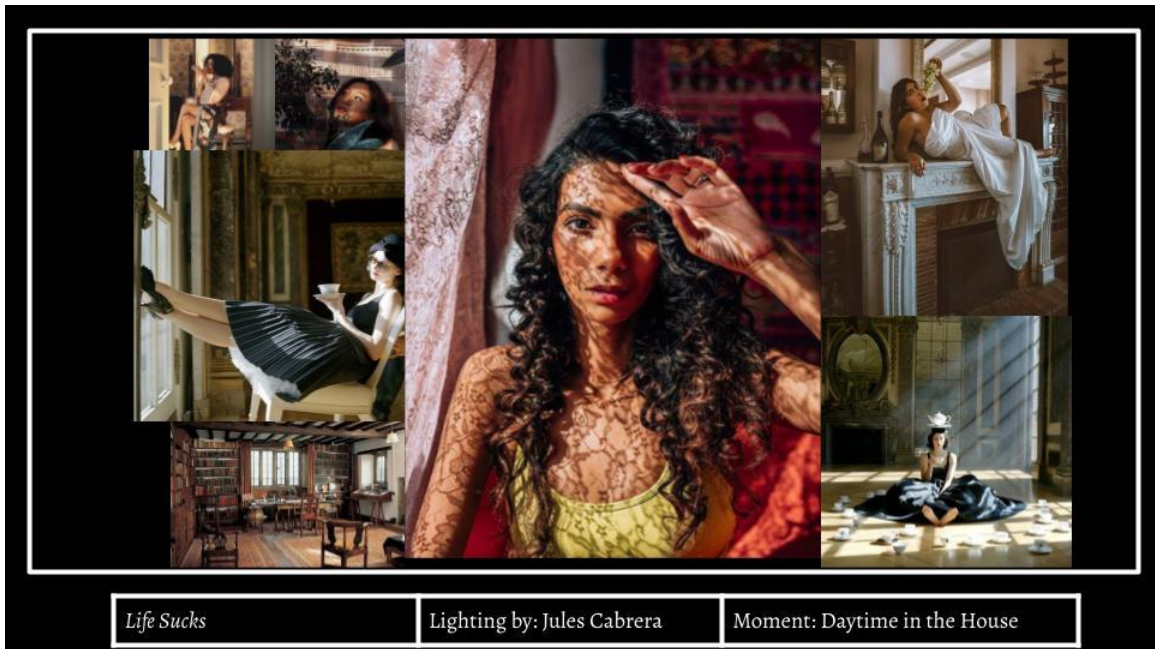


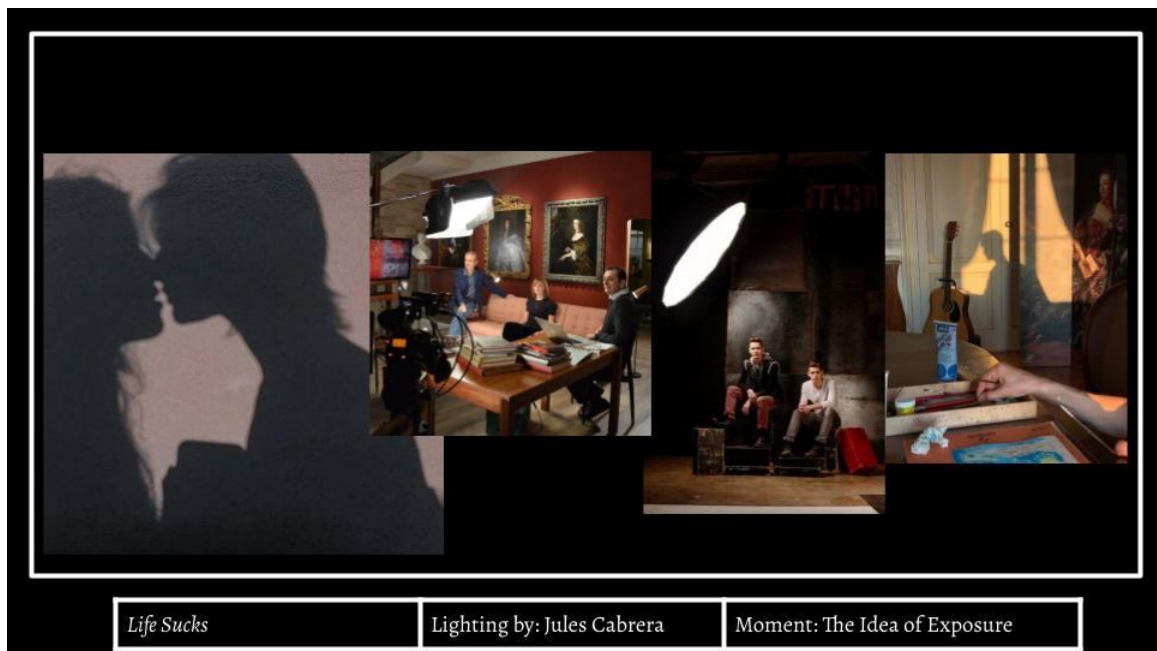
PRELIMINARY DESIGN PRESENTATION:

In the week following the Research and Imagery meeting, I met with the director and kept in communication with the other designers. We each homed in on the direction we saw the world of the play going and adjusted our research accordingly.

Two weeks after the Research and Imagery meeting, we held our Preliminary Design Presentation. This presentation served to communicate how we were proceeding in our design processes. My presentation consisted of imagery responding to the preliminary designs of the scenic and costume designers. I broke down the imagery by act and key moments and was careful to depict a clear color story. The director, other designers, and production staff were all present for this presentation.

The following pages include the slides I presented for my Preliminary Design Presentation:





FINAL DESIGN PRESENTATION:

After several more breakout meetings between the director and the designers, we each fine-tuned our visions for the production in accordance with what the director was looking for. At the end of the Spring semester of 2022, the director, designers, and the entire production team of Life Sucks held our Final Design Presentation.

The purpose of this presentation was to lock in what we would be producing in October of 2022. I broke my research down into acts and moments of the play, similar to the preliminary design presentation, and organized it in response to the final scenic and costume designs.

I also included what I called a “Light Plot Sketch” and a “Cue Score.” The cue score was a detailed spreadsheet, describing when I envisioned each of my lighting cues being placed and what they would do. The light plot sketch was an extremely rough draft of what would eventually become my final light plot - which I was able to use to show what systems of light I would use to achieve the looks I presented in my research. We concluded that meeting and all left for the summer break. Here is where the new variable came into play.

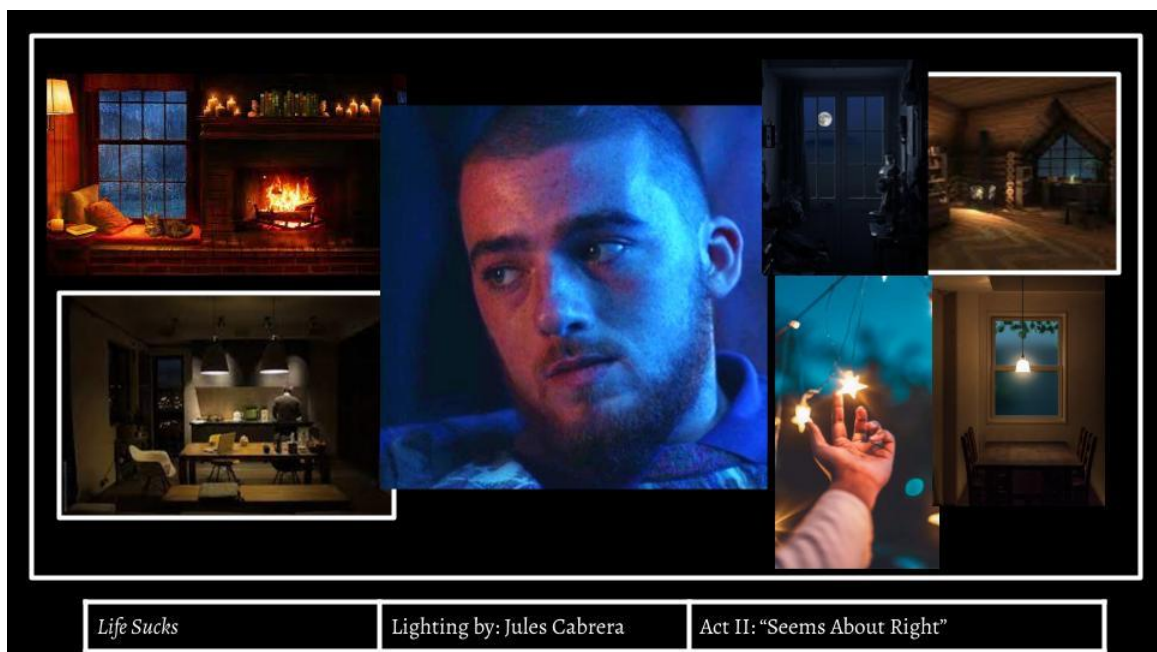
At the beginning of the 2022 fall semester, the design team was informed that our previous director would be leaving the project and a different director would be taking his place. Having already designed most of the show, we all prepared to adapt to a different direction. The play would open on its designated night one way or another, and as designers, it was time to make it work.

The design and production team decided to have an unusual Final Design Presentation “2.0,” where we would be introduced to our new director, Michael Costello,

and would present him with our design plans. Michael met our designs with an open mind and a good idea of where he wanted the play to go. Each of us began making our adjustments (they had to be minor, as the budgeting was already done and the scenery had already started being built), and we proceeded with our process. On my end, I knew I needed to reevaluate my color and texture choices and streamlined my cue score to better fit Michael's direction.

The following pages include what I presented for my Final Design Presentation:

Final Design Imagery:





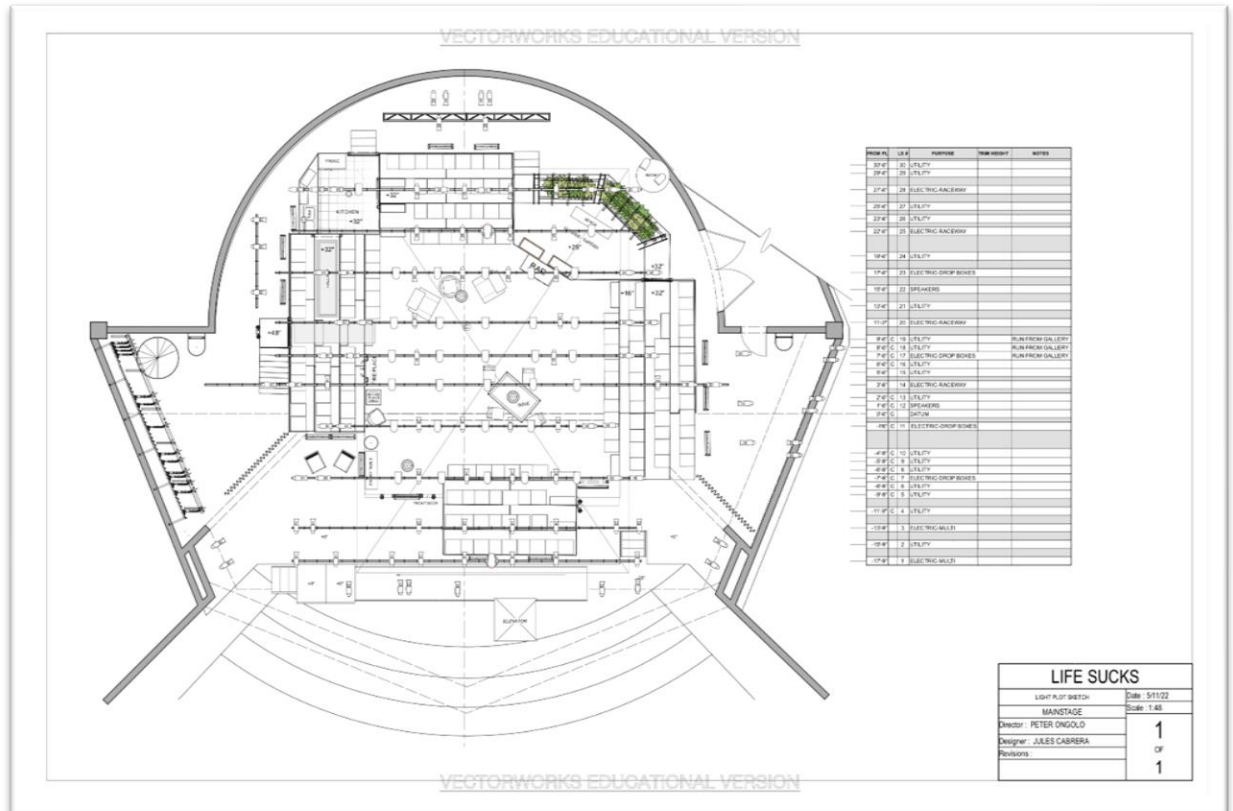


Rough Cue Score:

CUE #	PAGE	TIME	FOLLOW/HANG	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	NOTES
PRESHOW						
1	4	5		PRE-SHOW	STAGE/INTERIOR	
3	4	5		HOUSE TO HALF		
5	4	5		INTO SHOW (HOUSE STILL UP?)	"SUSPENDED THEATRICAL SPACE"	
7	7	5		SHIFT INTO SCENE, LEAVE SPECIAL FOR SONIA	INTERIOR	
ACT 1: GOTTA WORK						
9	8	3		SHIFT FOCUS TO ASTER AND BABS, TOP OF SCENE	INTERIOR	LATE MORNING. EAST SIDE WINDOWS FLOODED. LACE TEXTURE, CONTRAST
11	10	4		BABS LOOKS OUT THE WINDOW AT ELLA	INTERIOR/EXTERIOR	BUMP ELLA, PROF, PICKLES, SONIA OUTSIDE
1.1: VANYA						
13	10	5		VANYA ENTERS	INTERIOR	BRIGHTEN FRONT & BACK LIGHT
1.2: THE ONLY THING						
15	12	5		PROF, PICKLES, SONIA, ELLA ENTER FROM WALK	INTERIOR	SPREAD OUT
17	15	0		ASTER MOUTHS "HOLY SHIT"		BUMP SPECIAL ON ASTER, INTO STAGE LOOK AND BACK OUT IN FOLLOW Q
19	16		3	SONIA LEAVES		SCULPT OFF STAGE AREAS, FOCUS ON GROUP ON STAGE
1.3: IT'S RIDICULOUS						
21	20	1		PICKLES TURNS TO AUDIENCE: "IRIS WAS THE LOVE OF MY LIFE"		STAGE LOOK
23	21	6		PICKLES: "THE TRUTH IS... I DON'T KNOW HOW TO STOP"		SPECIAL ON PICKLES, DIM OTHERS?
25	21	5		PICKLES: "I'M JUST FINE RIGHT HERE"		FADE OTHER AREAS BACK IN
1.4: 3 THINGS I LOVE						
27	21			ACTORS COME TOGETHER AND TALK TO AUDIENCE		OUT OF HOUSE, INTO STAGE. CONES ON EACH ACTOR?
1.5: PUSH BUTTONS						
29	22			ALL LEAVE EXCEPT PROF AND SONIA		SHIFT WITH MUSIC (IS THIS A TIME SHIFT?)
31	23	3		SONIA STEPS UP TO TALK TO AUDIENCE		FOCUS ON PROF AND SONIA AREA
1.6: REPUDIATE						
33	24	3		PICKLES BECOMES PRESENT "DO YOU THINK LOVE LASTS FOREVER"		FLOOD BACK INTO HOUSE
35	25	0.5		PICKLES: "DID YOU KNOW THAT THIS PLAY IS CALLED 'LIFE SUCKS'?"		1/2 INTERIOR 1/2 STAGE
37	26	4		PICKLES: "LIFE DOES NOT SUCK" (REPEATED)		SPECIAL ON SONIA AND PICKLES
39	26	6		TRANSITION TO ACT 2		SHIFT TO BLUES, NIGHT W/ JAZZ, PRACTICALS UP, FAIRY LIGHTS, FIREPLACE, AMBIANCE.
ACT 2: SEEMS ABOUT RIGHT						
41	27	4		TOP OF ACT		NIGHT LOOK, MOONLIGHT, BAR LIGHTS, PRACTICALS, FIREPLACE
2.1: CHANGE						
43	29	5		ELLA ENTERS		EXPAND AREAS FOR ELLA (SUBTLE)
45	30	5		ELLA: HOLDING UP HER BOOK		BRIGHTEN, SWEETEN?
47	31	5		PROF: "AND WERE YOU LEFT... UNMOLESTED?"		SHIFT TO TENSE, RIGID, LEECH COLOR?
2.2: GREY NOSE HAIRS						
49	33	1		PROF: "WELL THAT DIDN'T GO WELL"		POP INTO "STAGE"
2.3: PRE-ABSTRACT						
51	34	5		SCENE SHIFT, ELLA AND VANYA ENTER		GARDEN? SOFTER NIGHT LOOK, MORE BLUE, MOON IS LESS DIRECT
53	35	0		VANYA: "AND YELL 'GET UP'"		BUMP HOUSE @ FULL W "STAGE LOOK"?
55	35	4		ELLA: "JESUS"		FADE BACK TO CUE 41 LOOK
57	36	2		ELLA: "OH MY GOD!"		SHIFT OUT OF SOFTNESS?
59	37	0		VANYA YELLS INTO WINGS: "NEXT!"		SNAP INTO STAGE LOOK FOR SCENE CHANGE?
2.4: A HELLBASKET						

61	37	5	TOP OF SCENE	LIGHTER, WARMER INTERIOR. MORE AMBIENT PRACTICALS, FIREPLACE, AMBERS. LESS BLUE & WHITE.
63	39	3	ASTER SUDDENLY: "OF COURSE I'M SAD"	MAKE SPACE SMALLER, MORE INTIMATE.
65	41	5	ASTER: "O'NIGHT KID. SWEET DREAMS"	FADE OUT OF INTIMATE SPACE, EXPAND BACK OUT.
67	41	3	SONIA: "WHERE DID THAT EVEN COME FROM?"	STAGE LOOK
2.5: OH, HELLO				
69	42	5	TOP OF SCENE	BACK TO THEIR SPACE IN THE HOUSE. LESS WARM THAN WITH ASTER
71	43	0	SONIA SLAPS ELLA	INTENSITY BUMP WHITE & FADE OUT FOLLOW CUE
73	44	2	SONIA EXITS	"STAGE" LOOK
2.6: CODES				
75	44 OR 45	2	SONIA RETURNS OR AFTER ELLA SAYS "THE PLAY WITLL BOG DOWN IF YOU"	SHIFT OUT OF STAGE, BACK INTO INTERIOR
77	49	1	ELLA, TO AUDIENCE: "INTERMISSION"	POP INTO STAGE
79	49	1	END OF ACT	BLACKOUT
INTERMISSION				
81	49	5	INTERMISSION LOOK	INTERIOR AND ACTUAL REAL THEATRE HOUSE LIGHTS UP
83	50	5	HOUSE TO HALF	
85	50	5	HOUSE OUT	
ACT 3: NEEDS				
87	50	5	TOP OF ACT	MORNING??? STILL FEELS LIKE NIGHT TO ME
89	52	4	VANYA APPEARS AND SEES THEM	EXPAND OR ADD SPECIAL FOR VANYA
91	53	0	ELLA: "I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS MY LIFE!"	POP OUT INTO STAGE LOOK, FOLLOW CUE
93	53	0	ELLA KISSES ASTER	BACK INTO 79 A MOMENT LATER
3.1: A QUESTION				
95	54	1	ELLA TURNS TO AUDIENCE TO TALK TO US RIGHT AT TOP OF SCENE	"STAGE"
3.2: A WAY				
97	55	3	VANYA APPREARS	BACK TO INTERIOR, ANGULAR. TEXTURE. SHUTTERS GLASS WITH LACE? MAYBE COLDER THAN YESTERDAY MORNING?
99	56	0	ELLA, TO AUDIENCE: "YOU SEE WHAT I MEAN?"	POP TO "STAGE" AND BACK IN FOLLOW CUE
101	57	5	DURING PAUSE BEFORE VANYA SAYS "OH MY GOD"	VANYA SPECIAL
103	58	3	ELLA: "I HOPE YOU'RE ENJOYING THIS"	"STAGE"
3.3: A PAIR				
105	58	4	PICKLES ENTERS	BACK TO INTERIOR. SOFT
107	60	1	ELLA SAYS "WHAT?!"	"STAGE"
3.4: DON'T SAY A WORD				
109	60	1	ASTER ENTERS ABRUPTLY	BACK TO INTERIOR, ADD FOCUS FOR ASTER
111	61	0	ELLA SLAPS ASTER	BUMP LIKE WHEN SONIA SLAPPED ELLA
113	61	1	MUSIC. EVERYONE ELSE SUDDENLY JOINS.	CONES FOR EACH ACTOR? OR ONE BIG LOOK?
3.5: 3 THINGS I HATE				
3.6: A CONUNDRUM				
115	62	1	INSTANT SHIFT INTO FAMILY GATHERING	INTERIOR
117	63	1	VANYA: "YOU'RE NOT THE SUN"	SNAP, FADE INTO TENSION
119	63	3	VANYA RUNS OFF	FADE TENSION SLIGHTLY WHEN HE LEAVES, GIVE SOMETHING TO THE LITTLE CONVERSATIONS
121	64	1	VANYA RUNS BACK IN	FREEZE, WHITE/LEECH COLOR, STARK
123	64	0	VANYA: "I HOPE YOU ROT IN HELL." SHOOTS	SATURATE, MAKE IT DRAMATIC. RED? IS THAT TOO CLICHE? POSSIBLY JUST STAY IN PREVIOUS CUE.
125	64	3	PROF REALIZES HE HASN'T BEEN SHOT	BACK TO INTERIOR LOOK
127	67	1	BABS: "END OF ACT THREE"	STAGE
ACT 4: AFTERMATH				
129	68	5	TOP OF ACT WITH BABS	NARROW "STAGE" TO BABS
131	68	5	SONIA WANDERS ON UNSEEN BY BABS	ADD AN ISOLATED "STAGE" AREA?
4.1: NOT THE ANSWER				
133	69	0	SONIA, SUDDENLY: "LIFE SUCKS" (THE FIRST TIME)	SNAP TO FULL INTERIOR LOOK
135	72	3	VANYA ENTERS	EXPAND OUT OF SONIA AND BABS
4.2: JOY				
137	73	3	VANYA SPEAKS DIRECTLY TO AUDIENCE	"STAGE"
4.3: EVERYTHING				
139	74	5	ASTER ENTERS	EXPAND FOR ASTER
141	74	3	QUICK BEAT... SMALL CHANGE OF TONE AND ENERGY	CLARITY
143	75	3	ASTER: "GIVE THEM BACK"	SNAP
4.4: WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO FEEL SORRY FOR YOU?				
145	76	5	THE REST OF THE CAST APPEAR EN MASSE	SPECIALS FOR EACH AREA, ISOLATE EACH ACTOR, OR FULL STAGE? SPOTLIGHT?
4.5: THE QUESTIONS				
147	79	5	TOP OF SCENE	INTERIOR
149	79	2	VANYA: "SORRY EVERYONE"	HALF HOUSE HALF STAGE BUMP WHEN HE SPEAKS TO AUDIENCE, AND BACK TO INTERIOR
151	81	3	ELLA, TO AUDIENCE: "WHAT DO YOU THINK?"	STAGE
153	81	3	END OF PLAY	LIGHTS OUT
155	81	5	HOUSE UP, BOWS	

Light Plot Sketch:



DESIGNING A PLOT:

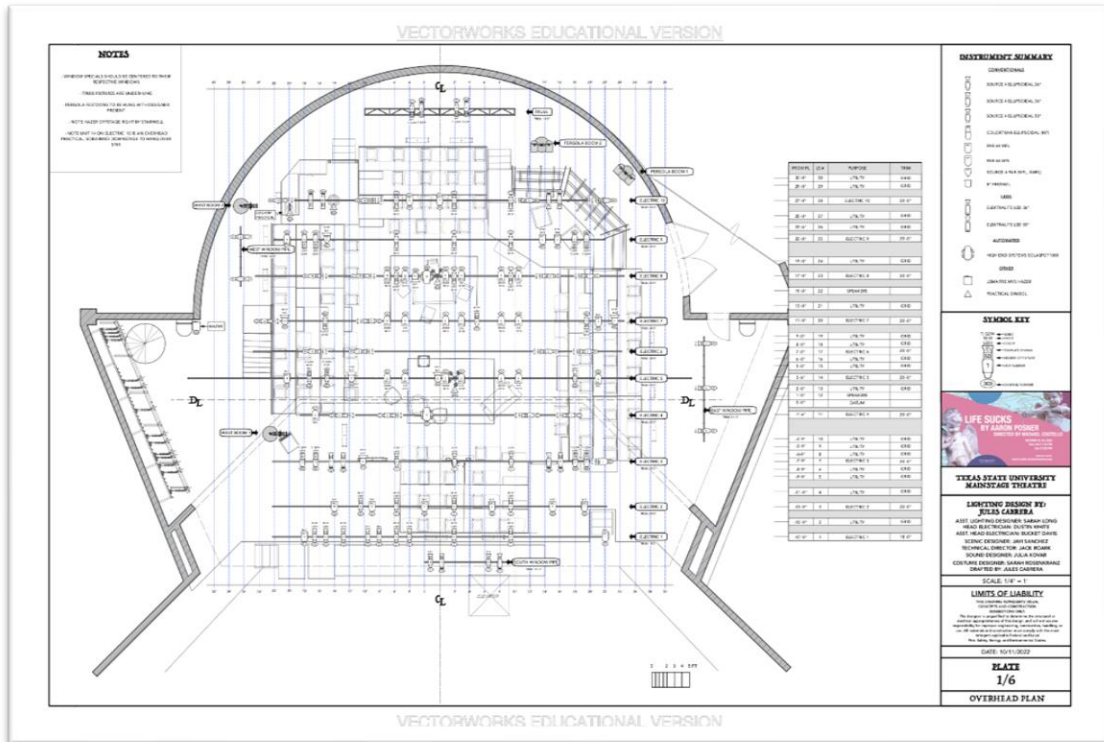
Following the (second) final design presentation, I was able to refine my final light plot based on my talks with Michael and the small changes to the scenic design. This was the most challenging part of the process for me, because there were many things to consider that I needed to be confident about well in advance of seeing anything on stage. Choosing the correct instrumentation, for example, was something I struggled with. I went back and forth between multiple drafts, with different degrees of fixtures and different layouts of how I'd arrange my areas of light. Eventually, I settled on a plot that would do everything I needed, within the inventory of equipment I had at my disposal.

The plot includes 6 different plates: An overhead view, 4 sections, and a “deck view” which shows any practical placed on the stage floor as well as my boom pipes standing around the stage. A “section” shows the stage as if cut down the middle, and since the show was produced in the round, I included 4 sections - North, South, East, and West.

Since so much information is included on these plots, they are often printed on Arch D size paper: 24” x 36”. I’ve included letter-size versions of the plot in this document.

The following pages include the six plates of my final light plot:

Final Light Plot:









THE PAPERWORK:

After completing the plot, I was then able to generate the paperwork necessary for the electricians team to hang and circuit each fixture. Using a program called Lightwright, the lighting supervisors, Head Electrician, and I created a document that included an instrument schedule, channel hookup, color schedule, and gobo schedule. Each of these documents were crucial to making sure lights were hung, circuited, and programmed correctly.













The final pieces of paperwork were the most helpful in the programming and tech rehearsal stage of the production. The first is aptly called a “Magic Sheet” - essentially a simplified, organized version of my light plot that is easy for me to quickly glance at and pick out whichever channel number I’m looking for. The other was my refined Cue Score, which I mentioned earlier in my description of the Final Design Presentation. This spreadsheet was sent off to the Production Stage Manager, who received any updates to my cues up until the show opened so that she could call the show.

The following pages include samples of each of the documents I described above.

6 ELECTRIC

U#	Purpose	Inst Type & Access	Load	Color & Gobo	Chan	Addr	Dm
1	NEAR SHOT	SOURCE4 36DEG	575w	 L203+R119	(34)	1/215	
2	FAR SHOT	SOURCE4 26DEG	575w	 L203+R119	(36)	1/216	
3	FAR SHOT	SOURCE4 26DEG	575w	 L203+R119	(24)	1/218	
4	NEAR SHOT	SOURCE4 36DEG	575w	 L203+R119	(26)	1/217	

7 ELECTRIC

U#	Purpose	Inst Type & Access	Load	Color & Gobo	Chan	Addr	Dm
1	WALKWAY	ALTMAN 8IN FRESNEL+ 10in Barn Door	1kW	 N/C+R119	(354)	1/149	
2	HOUSE LIGHT	PAR64-MFL		 N/C+R119, T:151	(754)	1/151	
3	SOUTHWEST CORNER	SOURCE4 26DEG	575w	 L203+R119	(251)	1/150	
4	TOPLIGHT NEUTRAL	PAR64-WFL	1kW	 N/C+R119	(64)	1/155	
5	TOPLIGHT WARM	PAR64-WFL	1kW	 R3409+ R119	(54)	1/157	
6	TOPLIGHT NEUTRAL	PAR64-WFL	1kW	 N/C+R119	(65)	1/160	
7	TOPLIGHT WARM	PAR64-WFL	1kW	 R3409+ R119	(55)	1/162	
8	TOPLIGHT NEUTRAL	PAR64-WFL	1kW	 N/C+R119	(66)	1/166	
9	TOPLIGHT WARM	PAR64-WFL	1kW	 R3409+ R119	(56)	1/168	
10	SOUTHEAST CORNER	SOURCE4 26DEG	575w	 L203+R119	(252)	1/173	
11	WALKWAY	ALTMAN 8IN FRESNEL+ 10in Barn Door	1kW	 N/C+R119	(355)	1/175	
12	STAIRS AND WALKWAY	SOURCE4 26DEG	575w	 L203+R119	(273)	1/176	

Channel Hookup

10/13/22

Life Sucks LW 2022.lw6

Channel	Position	U#	Type & Acc & Load	Purpose	Clr & Gbo	Dm	Addr
(1)	1 ELECTRIC	2	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/37
(2)	1 ELECTRIC	3	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/38
(3)	1 ELECTRIC	5	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/44
(4)	2 ELECTRIC	3	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/109
(5)	2 ELECTRIC	5	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/111
(6)	2 ELECTRIC	7	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/113
(7)	3 ELECTRIC	6	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/97
(8)	3 ELECTRIC	7	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/100
(9)	3 ELECTRIC	8	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/99
(11)	8 ELECTRIC	4	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/223
(12)	8 ELECTRIC	7	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/212
(13)	8 ELECTRIC	13	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/87
(14)	9 ELECTRIC	5	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/181
(15)	9 ELECTRIC	6	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/184
(16)	9 ELECTRIC	7	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/188
(17)	10 ELECTRIC	5	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/197
(18)	10 ELECTRIC	6	SOURCE4 26DEG 575w	FRONT LIGHT	L203+ R119		1/203


STUDENT: Jules Cabrera / Lightwright 6

(1) thru (18)

Color Schedule

10/13/22

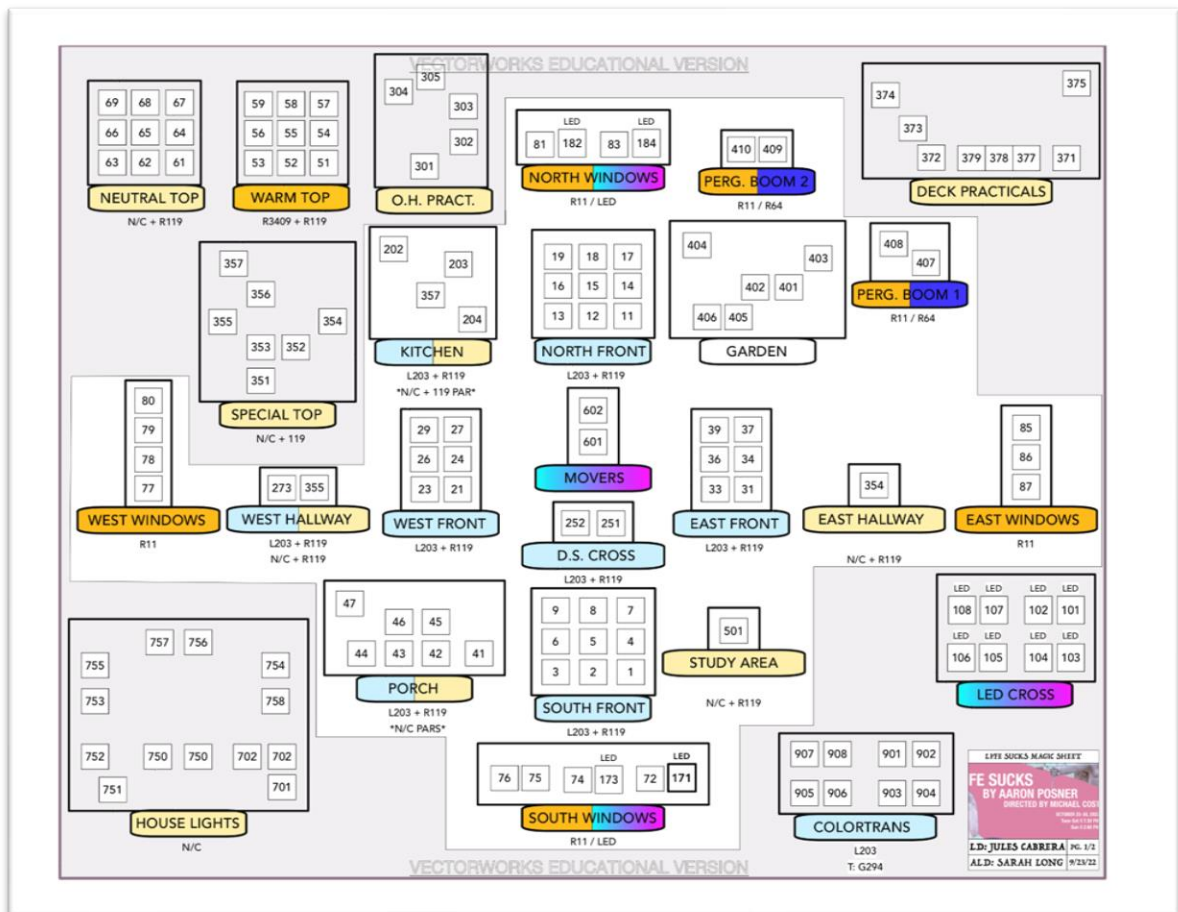
Life Sucks LW 2022.lw6

Color	Position	U#	Type & Acc	Load	Purpose	Gobo	Ch	Dim
 L203+	1	2	SOURCE4	575w	FRONT		(1)	
	ELECTRIC		26DEG		LIGHT			
	1	3	SOURCE4	575w	FRONT		(2)	
	ELECTRIC		26DEG		LIGHT			
	1	5	SOURCE4	575w	FRONT		(3)	
	ELECTRIC		26DEG		LIGHT			
	1	8	SOURCE4	575w	FRONT PORCH		(42)	
	ELECTRIC		36DEG		FRONT LIGHT			
					WARM			
	1	10	SOURCE4	575w	WEST PORCH		(44)	
	ELECTRIC		36DEG		FRONT LIGHT			
					WARM			
	2	3	SOURCE4	575w	FRONT		(4)	
	ELECTRIC		26DEG		LIGHT			
	2	5	SOURCE4	575w	FRONT		(5)	
	ELECTRIC		26DEG		LIGHT			
	2	7	SOURCE4	575w	FRONT		(6)	
	ELECTRIC		26DEG		LIGHT			
	2	8	PAR64-MFL	1kW	FRONT DOOR		(45)	
	ELECTRIC				EXTERIOR SOUTH			
	2	9	SOURCE4	575w	ENTRYWAY		(46)	
	ELECTRIC		36DEG		FRONTLIGHT			
	3	2	STRAND	750w	FOLIAGE	● G294	(904)	
	ELECTRIC		LEKOLITE 36DEG		CROSS			
	3	3	STRAND	750w	FOLIAGE	● G294	(903)	
	ELECTRIC		LEKOLITE 26DEG		CROSS			
	3	6	SOURCE4	575w	FRONT		(7)	
	ELECTRIC		26DEG		LIGHT			
	3	7	SOURCE4	575w	FRONT		(8)	
	ELECTRIC		26DEG		LIGHT			
	3	8	SOURCE4	575w	FRONT		(9)	
	ELECTRIC		26DEG		LIGHT			
	3	12	STRAND	750w	FOLIAGE	● G294	(906)	
	ELECTRIC		LEKOLITE 26DEG		CROSS			

**G294**

Position	U#	Inst Type & Access	Load	Purpose	Color	Chan	Dm
3 ELECTRIC	2	STRAND LEKOLITE 36DEG	750w	FOLIAGE CROSS	L203+R119	(904)	
3 ELECTRIC	3	STRAND LEKOLITE 26DEG	750w	FOLIAGE CROSS	L203+R119	(903)	
3 ELECTRIC	12	STRAND LEKOLITE 26DEG	750w	FOLIAGE CROSS	L203+R119	(906)	
3 ELECTRIC	13	STRAND LEKOLITE 36DEG	750w	FOLIAGE CROSS	L203+R119	(905)	
5 ELECTRIC	12	SOURCE4 26DEG	575w	GARDEN DIAGONAL NEUTRAL	L203+R119	(405)	
5 ELECTRIC	13	SOURCE4 26DEG	575w	GARDEN DIAGONAL COOL	R64+R119	(406)	
9 ELECTRIC	1	STRAND LEKOLITE 36DEG	750w	FOLIAGE CROSS	L203+R119	(902)	
9 ELECTRIC	2	STRAND LEKOLITE 26DEG	750w	FOLIAGE CROSS	L203+R119	(901)	
9 ELECTRIC	9	STRAND LEKOLITE 26DEG	750w	FOLIAGE CROSS	L203+R119	(908)	
9 ELECTRIC	10	STRAND LEKOLITE 36DEG	750w	FOLIAGE CROSS	L203+R119	(907)	
10 ELECTRIC	1	SOURCE4 50DEG	575w	GARDEN BACKLIGHT	L203+R119	(403)	
10 ELECTRIC	10	SOURCE4 36DEG	575w	GARDEN FRONT LIGHT	L203+R119	(404)	
TRUSS	1	ELEKTRALITE LED STINGRAY 50DEG	575w	NORTH WINDOW LED		(184)	
TRUSS	2	SOURCE4 50DEG	575w	NORTH WINDOW WARM	R11+R119	(83)	

Magic Sheet:



Refined Cue Score:

LIFE SUCKS LIGHTING CUE SHEET 10.12

CUE #	PAGE	TIME	FOLLOW HANG	DESCRIPTION	LINE	LOCATION	NOTES
11	9			PRE-SHOW			
13	9			HOUSE TO HALF			
15	9			CAST ENTERS GARDEN PLATFORM		GARDEN	
17	11			CAMERA FLASH		GARDEN	MOVER FLASH
19	12			ACT 1: GOTTA WORK		DAYTIME, AFTERNOON	
21	14			UP ON ASTER AND BABS		GARDEN	
23	16			1.1. VANYA		NT WEST HALLWAY STAIRS	
25	18			VANYA ENTERS		NT GARDEN STAIRS	XT PLATFORM TO NT HOUSE
27	19			1.2. THE ONLY THING			
29	19			GROUP ENTERS	"AND YOU UNDERSTAND, DO YOU? WHERE YOU ARE?"	LIVING ROOM/DINING TABLE	XT THRU SE VOM
31	19			TENSION	"I'LL BE IN BED IF ANYONE NEEDS ME"		XT TO PORCH
33	20			ELLA XT			XT THRU GARDEN
35	23			PROF XT			
37	25			BABS XT			
39	25			1.3. IT'S RIDICULOUS			
41	27			SONA XT	PICKLES: "NO. FIDELITY IS FIDELITY"	LIVING SPACE	SCULPT PICKLES, VANYA, ASTER
43	27			MOOD CHANGE		LIVING SPACE	MORE FEELING
45	28			1.4. 3 THINGS I LOVE			
47	28			BABS NT	TOP OF SCENE	LIVING SPACE	BABS NT SW VOM, GROUP FORMS CIRCLE IN LIVING SPACE
49	28			1.5. PICKN OUTIONS			
51	28			GROUP DISPERSE	ASTER: "OCELOTS?"		SONA + PROF + KITCHEN
53	29			VANYA NT	SONA: "I LIVE HERE WITH MY UNCLE VANYA"		SITS IN SITTING AREA CHAIR
55	29			BABS NT	"AND BABS, WHO'S MY AUNT"		GOES TO GARDEN
57	29			PICKLES NT	"OH, AND PICKLES?"		NT AND STAYS IN KITCHEN
59	29			ASTER NT	"DR. ASTER IS VANYA'S OLDEST FRIEND"	DINING AREA	SITS AT DINING TABLE
61	30			PROF NT	"THE ONE VANYA CALLS THE PROFESSOR, THAT'S MY FATHER"		GOES TO STAND BEHIND VANYA
63	30			ELLANT	"HE AND HIS THIRD WIFE, ELLA"	LIVING SPACE	SITS ON COUCH
65	31			1.6. REPUDIATE		EVENING	
67	32			PICKLES NT	PICKLES: "DO YOU THINK LOVE LASTS FOREVER?"	LIVING SPACE	NT WEST HALLWAY, WANDERS LIVING SPACE
69	33			GROUP DISPERSE (TIME SHIFT A LITTLE!)			DISSOLVE
71	35			SONA + PICKLES AT COUCH			FOCUS TO THEM
73	36			PICKLES TRAVELS AROUND STAGE YELLING AT PEOPLE			WIDEN SCOPE FOR PICKLES
75	36			PICKLES ON TABLE		DINING TABLE	SPECIAL MOMENT
77	37			SONA + PICKLES DISPERSE	"END OF ACT 1"		SHIFT TO ACT 2 (PART CUE, INTERIOR CHANGES, WINDOW LIGHT SHIFTS A BIT)
79	37			ACT 2: SEEMS ABOUT RIGHT		NIGHT TIME SHIFT	
81	37			PROF AND BABS ARE SET		LIVING SPACE	TOPLIGHT AREAS TO DRAW FOCUS, ELLA AND VANYA ON PORCH
83	37			BABS + BAR			EXPAND AREA INSTENSITY
85	37			2.1. CHANGE			
87	37			ELLANT		LIVING SPACE	ELLA NT, BABS XT GRADUALLY MAKE MORE ANGULAR
89	37			PROF + ELLA @ CENTERISH	PROF: "THAT'S A STUPID THING TO SAY"		MORE ISOLATION AT CENTER
91	37			ELLA XT			XT SW VOM
93	37			2.2. GREY JOSEPHARS			
95	37			PROF SPEAKS TO AUDIENCE	"WELL, THAT DIDN'T GO WELL"		SPECIALS
97	37			PROF XT			XT SE VOM

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LIFE SUCKS LIGHTING CUE SHEET 10.12

2.3. PRE-ABSTRACT					
79	37		ELLA + VANYA NT		NT SW VOM, TRAVEL EVERYWHERE
81	40		ELLA XT	VANYA: "ISNT SHE WONDERFUL?"	VANYA SPECIAL, TRAVELS EVERYWHERE
83	40		VANYA XT	"NEXT"	
2.4. A HELL BASKET					
85	40		ASTER NT IN "DARKNESS"		
87	40		ASTER STUMBLES AND FALLS	ASTER: "DUCK A DUCK"	LIGHTS REVEAL ASTER ON THE FLOOR
89	40		SONIA NT FROM W HALLWAY	SONIA: "WHAT'S GOING ON?"	CENTER BY AUTOMAN
91	41		MOOD SHIFT	ASTER: "OF COURSE I'M SAD!"	EXPAND FOR SONIA
				SONIA: "MY MOTHER USED TO SAY THAT OUR HOUSE WAS FULL OF RADIANT INVISIBLE BUTTERFLIES"	DEEPEN, SATURATE
93	43		R.I.B.s		SLOOOOOOW MOVER EFFECT STARTS
95	43		ASTER PSYCHES SONIA OUT W A HUG		BUTTERFLIES BECOME PROMINENT FOR JUST A MOMENT
97	43		ASTER PULLS AWAY	ASTER: "TELL YOUR FRIEND TO RUN AWAY. FAST!"	BUTTERFLIES GO AWAY, BACK IN NORMAL HOUSE
99	44		ASTER XT	SONIA: "OH MY GOD. I HAVE A FREIND?"	SONIA SPECIAL
101	44		ELLA NT		NT SE VOM, BACK TO HOUSE
2.5. OH, HELLO					
103	46		SONIA XT TO KITCHEN		ELLA SPECIAL
2.6. DOGS					
105	47		SONIA NT AGAIN	TOP OF SCENE	BACK TO NORMAL INTERIOR LOOK
107	47		ELLA + SONIA MOMENT	BEAT AFTER "THE PLAY WILL BOG DOWN IF YOU"	ISOLATE THEM A BIT AT CENTER, ON BLANKET
109	49		LIGHTEN MOOD	ELLA: "SO ABOUT THE DOCTOR..."	DIFUSE EDGE OF AREA A BIT
111	50		SONIA AND ELLA STAND GO TO KITCHEN		ADD AREAS FOR TRAVEL
113	50		SONIA + ELLA LAST BEAT	TO AUDIENCE: "INTERMISSION"	FREEZE
115	50		(BLACKOUT) AS THEY EXIT		MAYBE NOT BLACKOUT, MIGHT BE DARK NIGHT LOOK
INTERMISSION					
117	50		INTERMISSION LOOK, AUDIENCE EXIT		HOUSE LIGHTS AND NIGHT TIME LOOK
119	50		END OF INTERMISSION		HOUSE TO HALF
121	50		AUDIENCE SEATED		HOUSE OUT
ACT 3. NEEDS DAYTIME					
123	51		TOP OF ACT		REVEAL ASTER IN KITCHEN, ELLA AT DINING TABLE, NEXT DAY
125	53		VANYA CROSSES GARDEN TO DOORWAY		ADD GARDEN AREA
127	53		ASTER AND ELLA CENTER-ISH SITTING AREA	AFTER ELLA: "I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS MY LIFE"	DRAW FOCUS TO THEM AND VANYA IN ISOLATED SPACES
129	55		VANYA AND ASTER XT		VANYA XT THRU GARDEN, ASTER XT THRU SW VOM
3.1. A QUESTION					
131	55		ELLA TALKS TO AUDIENCE	"I LIKE PEOPLE, I REALLY DO"	ELLA SPECIAL, SLOWLY ADD IN HOUSELIGHT ON AUDIENCE
3.2. A WAY					
133	56		VANYA NT THRU GARDEN PLATFORM		MEETS ELLA AT SITTING AREA
135	57		VANYA HAS HIS REALIZATION	"NOT A THING"	SOME KIND OF BREAK/ CLARITY
137	58		VANYA XT		XT THRU WEST HALLWAY
3.3. A PAIR					
139	59		PICKLES ENTERS		REVEAL PICKLES IN KITCHEN, ELLA AT SITTING AREA
141	59		THEY MEET CENTER-ISH		FOCUS TO THEM AT CENTERISH
143	60		PICKLES XT		PICKLES XT THRU KITCHEN
3.4. DON'T SAY A WORD					

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LIFE SUCKS LIGHTING CUE SHEET 10.12

145	60	ASTER NT	TOP OF SCENE	ASTER NT SW VOM
147	61	KISS + SLAP		STILLNESS FOR MOMENT
3.5: 3 THINGS I HATE				
149	61	PICKLES NT	"THIS SCENE IS CALLED"	REVEAL PICKLES IN KITCHEN, ALL NT
3.6: A CONUNDRUM				
151	62	TOP OF SCENE		SHIFT INTO FAMILY GATHERING
153	65	VANYA NT THRU WEST HALLWAY W GUN		SCUFFLE, CHAOS, INTENSIFY WINDOWS AND
155	65	BEAT AFTER SHOTS	PROF: "YOU JUST TRIED TO KILL ME"	COLOR SATURATION
157	66	ASTER AND PICKLES XT	BABS: "I THOUGHT I HAD SEEN ALL THE THINGS"	DE-SATURATE BACK TO INTERIOR LOOK
159	67	VANYA AND BABS HUG		FOCUS ON BABS AND VANYA
ACT 4: AFTERMATH				
161	68	BABS STARTS TALKING TO AUDIENCE	"MY ZADIE OSCAR DIED IN A PLANE CRASH"	SOFTEN, VANYA XT
4.1: NO LIFE ANSWER				
163	69	SONIA NT	SONIA: "LIFE SUCKS?" (FIRST TIME)	BABS SPECIAL
165	72	VANYA NT		SONIA NT THRU GARDEN, BABS MEETS HER
167	72	SONIA + BABS XT THRU GARDEN		VANYA NT THRU GARDEN
4.2: JOY				
169	72	VANYA ASKS AUDIENCE QUESTIONS	"WHAT'S THE WORST, MOST PAINFUL THING"	VANYA LEAVES GARDEN, TRAVELS STAGE
171	73	VANYA LAYS DOWN ON TABLE		SLOWLY BRING UP HOUSE ON AUDIENCE
4.3: EVERYTHING				
173	73	ASTER NT		TAKE HOUSE BACK OUT, BACK INTO
175	75	MOOD SHIFT	ASTER: "AND THEREFORE, MY DEAR DOCTOR"	INTERIOR LOOK
4.4: WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO FEEL SORRY FOR YOU?				
177	76	GROUP ENTERS EN MASSE		NT THRU SW VOM
179	76	PICKLES' TURN	PICKLES: "I'LL GO FIRST"	SATURATE MORE
181	76	ELLA STANDS FOR HER TURN	ELLA: "WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO..."	BIG INTERIOR SPACE
183	77	ASTER STANDS FOR HIS TURN	ASTER: "WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO..."	WINDOW
185	77	PROF STANDS FOR HIS TURN	PROF: "WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO..."	WINDOW
187	77	SONIA STANDS FOR HER TURN	SONIA: "WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO..."	WINDOW
189	77	BABS STANDS FOR HER TURN	BABS: "WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO..."	WINDOW
4.5: THE QUESTIONS				
191	78	VANYA STANDS AND WALKS AROUND COUCH		MOOD SHIFT, LIGHTEN, BREAK TENSION, DE-
193	80	THE CAST LOOKS AT THE AUDIENCE	SONIA: "SERIOUSLY, WHAT DO YOU THINK??"	SATURATE SOME
195	80	SONIA AND VANYA ANNOUNCE END OF PLAY	SONIA + VANYA: "END OF PLAY"	OPEN UP SPACE
197	80	HOUSE UP		DIM FRONT AND TOP, LEAVE A LOOK W
				WINDOWS AND FOLIAGE FOR A MOMENT,
				END OF SHOW, POST-SHOW LOOK.

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THE PRODUCTION:

Finally, the show entered tech week. This was the most fun part of the process for me - I finally got to see the lights on performers as they created the world of the play on stage, and just as importantly, I got to see the light on costumes. The way the costume designer, Sarah Rosenkranz, defined each character changed how intensity and color or light were perceived on their bodies. It was a challenge to find a new balance when the costumes entered the mix, but it was something I enjoyed playing with. As the week progressed, the production team and director had meetings every night to take any notes others may have for us.

Every day I added cues, took some away, adjusted timing, switched what systems I used in certain scenes, and molded my looks to better fit the moods. Fortunately, I had a director that was open to letting me try things and see if they worked, and then we would discuss what fit and what didn't. Often, we would be on the same page, and I would adjust something or cut something before the director had to say it. Michael's clear vision made my job much easier, which in turn made our discussions extremely productive. I was picking at things until the final rehearsal, but when the time came, I was excited for an audience to see what I had been working on since the previous semester.

On Tuesday, October 25th, *Life Sucks* opened.

The following pages include images of the production "Life Sucks" in the Texas State Mainstage theatre, Fall 2022.









