

The Direction of Henrik Ibsen's *Rosmersholm*

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Drama

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University of Washington

Abstract

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Chair of the Supervisory Committee:

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Drama

This thesis paper documents the directorial process of a theoretical production of Henrik Ibsen's *Rosmersholm*, translated by Charles Archer, and adapted and directed by this author. Due to COVID-19, the live performance of this piece was cancelled, so this thesis will focus on the process of conceptualization, research, production design, and directorial preparation for rehearsals. This paper will also discuss how the production pivoted for online presentation as a part of the University of Washington's Online Season, which ran May 6-9, 2021 via Zoom online. This paper is based on my personal reflection journals as I navigated through this production.

Dedication

For all the people who helped make the visions and dreams in my head come to life,
and the ones who never gave up when things got hard.



Knud Baade *Moonlight on the Norwegian Coast* (1876)

Production Info

Virtual Production Artistic Team:

Playwright: Henrik Ibsen

Translator: Charles Archer

Director, Designer, and Adaptor for Virtual Production: Andrew Coopman

Assistant Director: Joshua Barajas

Stage Manager: Em Chan

Dramaturg: Bella Brown

Composer & Sound Designer: Daniel Webbon

In-Person Theoretical Production Design Team

Scenic & Props Designer: Jordan Twaddle

Costume Designer: Guan Lee

Lighting Designer: Chih-Hung Shao

Cast:

John Rosmer: Antonio Mitchell

Rebecca West: Gretchen Hahn

John Kroll: Gabriel Trimbur

Peter Mortensgård: Kristopher Jones

Ulrik Brendel: Matt Standley

Mrs. Halseth: Diana Trotter

Production Info

Rehearsal Start Date: March 20, 2021

Tech Week: April 26 - May 5, 2021

Performance: May 6 - 9, 2021

Original Venue: The Frank & Dolores Jones Playhouse, Seattle, WA

Produced Online via Zoom by the University of Washington, School of Drama

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Part 1:
Play Selection & Director Goals

Play Selection

Like many drama students, I had encountered Henrik Ibsen's works many times throughout my educational career. From reading and performing scenes from *A Doll's House* in my high school drama class to designing a theoretical production of *Hedda Gabler* for a Design Studio in my first quarter of my MFA in Directing program at the University of Washington School of Drama, Ibsen is one of the undisputed masters of modern realism - illuminating the individual life of his characters as emblematic of the society, culture, and time in which he was writing. It wasn't until my second year in my graduate studies that I learned about *Rosmersholm*. As a part of the Professional Director Training Program, we took two dramaturgy classes designed to instruct and train directors to be self-sufficient as dramaturgs and researchers of work. The first was a New Works Dramaturgy class, and the second was a Classics Dramaturgy class. During the second year, Professor Anita Montgomery consulted with me and my colleague to decide on who we would study - and we landed on Ibsen. We proceeded to read most of his canon and learned how to read closer and interrogate classic texts with a dramaturgical eye.

When I was looking for a play for my thesis, I wanted to find a work that would challenge my aesthetic and specificity of concept as well as expand the scope of my resume. Coming to graduate school was the beginning of a journey to not only refine and develop my skills as a director and artist, but also to diversify my repertoire of work. Up until grad school, I had been primarily employed to direct musicals or children's theater. I wanted to make sure that the work I did during my time at the University of Washington demonstrated proficiency and comfort working on texts from a variety of styles and eras. This was only further encouraged by the advice that Professor Valerie Curtis-Newman gave early in the search process: that this will be the play you invite people to see. Beginning in the Spring of 2019, I took a lot of time to reflect on this, and what kind of story would be a launch for my career post-grad into the theater world - my "coming out" party, so to speak. As part of that process, I brainstormed and distilled the key factors into the following criteria for an ideal thesis project:

- A Female-Identifying Character Driven Narrative
- Poetic, Dynamic Text
- A piece from a style and playwright I had never directed
- A piece that allowed me to conceptualize beyond the page
- A piece that was timely and relevant

It is no surprise that a play that checks off all these criteria would be difficult to find, but I was confident that it would present itself eventually through exploration and curiosity, and most likely from an unexpected source. In the Fall of 2019 when Professor Tim Bond, randomly in passing said, in true Tim Bond fashion, "You should look at *Rosmersholm*, it's a totally fuckin' weird play, man." I was instantly intrigued and sought out a copy of it. I found Duncan McMillan's adaptation of the work first, but then, because of the Dramaturgy of Classic texts class, I read the Fjelde translation of *Rosmersholm*. I didn't think my thesis would be a classic work, I thought it would

be something edgy, modern, and most likely written by a LGBTQ+, Female-Identifying, or BBIPOC playwright. I didn't think we needed another production of a play written by a White male playwright from the 1800's, but after I read the text, I knew it was the piece I needed to direct for my thesis production.

So why this show? Why now? Why a play written by a White male playwright from the 1800's? Great questions to ponder. The obvious connection: At the center of this narrative is an election, a standoff between a conservative dynasty in a coastal community and the rising liberals who wish to bring it down in order to create equality between all people. There's a love story - a romance fraught with controversy and haunted by a complicated past. Also, as in every Ibsen play, it's just not that simple. The true core of the story is about breaking free of the chains of the past, shattering the expectations of heritage, and forging ahead for a new beginning, a new hope, a new world... or maybe the rebuilding of a system doomed to repeat the cycle of oppression for all time. All of these are themes and ideas that I was passionate about, curious about, and ready to tackle pulled together in a capstone project that would be my introduction to the theater community.

Rosmersholm offers no easy way out; for the audience and its characters there is no respite from the oppressive nature of the home, the community, and the future that seems to be just out of reach; a future where the working men and women have power, equality, and freedom from the oppression of the rich and privileged. To reiterate, it's a beautifully complex and haunting piece of theater.

For the first time in my directorial career, I was working on a piece where the protagonists fail. Ibsen's works aren't about offering a beautiful vision for an idealistic world, they are about illuminating the realities of the current world in a theatrical way that challenges the audience to see the problems and challenge their long held beliefs. From [The Cambridge Companion to Ibsen](#), Ibsen's work is centered in the continual struggle of the "individual in opposition to a hostile society" in pursuit of truth and freedom (73). I think Ibsen would have appreciated the work of playwrights like Bertolt Brecht, August Wilson, Suzan Lori-Parks, and others who take traditional "realism" and spin it in a theatrical way to open the audience's eyes to something important, challenging, or new.

On a personal note, this play really challenges me to examine my own politics and stand strong in my beliefs. In the time leading up to and during the recent presidential election, I engaged in a lot of political debates and society/cultural conversations with my family and friends, all in the hope of changing minds. But, as we have discovered, discourse of politics in relationship to personal beliefs does not lead to a rational dialogue, but often a heated, personalized, emotional conversation that rarely ends in any sort of true understanding, dynamic change, or open mindedness. That left me with a difficult question: What happens next? I think that is the question that Ibsen is engaging with and what is happening behind the scenes in *Rosmersholm*; the conservatives and liberals are both debating what they think is best for the future while also being unwilling to listen to one another. So then what happens? Those in power stay in power, and the machine that is the system continues, thus the oppressed remain oppressed.

Once the play was selected, the primary focus shifted to which translation we would produce. I read a variety of translations and utilized many of the tools learned in the Dramaturgy for Classical Texts class taught by Anita Montgomery, and eventually ending up on the Jerry Turner translation that was produced and commissioned by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Turner's translation maintained the poeticism I believed Ibsen executes masterfully in his original language, but didn't get too aloof or heady in the 4th Act. However, with the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, things had to quickly pivot and shift, and though we tried to get the Turner translation, it became very clear that we couldn't wait any longer for the rights of production to be attained. So, I went and researched a few free domain scripts and found one by Charles Archer, whose brother was William Archer, one of the primary translators of Ibsen's work in the early 1900's. Choosing this script allowed me the flexibility to adapt, conceptualize, and tweak language based on the production I was making, and having a script finally selected allowed me to get to work on my thesis production.

Development Opportunities

For me, this project, as my thesis, was about full conceptualization from beginning to end. *Rosmersholm* was a development opportunity to conceptualize a show from top to bottom. Since we used a free domain script, and the stage directions are sparse, we were able to really create a new production of this work that elevates the spine of the story even more dynamically. I was able to adapt and adjust as needed while maintaining the integrity of the story that has been written.

Some areas of development include the following:

First of all, one goal I had given myself is being more clear in my articulation with designers. Every project I have worked on with the School of Drama, I have continued to refine and clarify my thoughts to be text-centered, action focused, and more distilled. With the actors, I have figured out how to sort and deliver my directions, thoughts, and notes with clarity and applicability. In terms of my work with designers, I aim to make my conversations and decisions with designers clear and distilled.

Another goal I have is to not solve all the problems before I begin the work in the room. Jeffrey Fracé gave me that note about *FROZEN: A Play* after the show closed, and I appreciated the thoughts he shared. He noted that, in his opinion, my desire to solve the problem of 34 scenes set in, essentially, 31 different locations may have actually gotten in the way and caused some inconsistencies and storytelling that didn't extend beyond the painted floor. I hadn't thought about that before, but there are times in my design process where I focus more on solving the problems than living in the question and letting the answer come in the work, that balance between production-oriented and process-oriented is at times difficult to navigate, but I am continually looking for opportunities to practice that in my process.

During the Spring Quarter, as we were all working at home due to the COVID-19 quarantine, I really focused on living in the question more and letting the process be experimental - interrogating impulses and trying things out with less need to find the “right” answer, which was where I found the most success. Val continually encourages us to embrace experimentation and failure as an opportunity to learn. Something I always like to remember is when she reminds us that, “We never lose, we win or we learn.” Learning to be in the question is where I find the most success as a director. During my Spring 2019 Directing Lab, when I was working on *4 Dogs and a Bone*, I got a lot of practice with experimentation with the actors and staging. Conversely, I realized that my direction of *FROZEN: A Play* illuminated that I hadn’t extended that same process to the design. In the Fall of 2020, I directed Caryl Churchill’s *Love & Information* online as an exploration of making theater during a pandemic and online. This production was a process where I lived in the question a lot longer, up until the day we opened, and honestly, it wasn’t that scary. It was thrilling and I felt like I was making every choice and decision in line with the spine I had chosen. Additionally, directing and devising *RE: Social/Divide* afforded me the same opportunity to interrogate a theme and make theater around it while leading an ensemble through a devised process, all online. Again, the experimentation led to a deeper, more dynamic and cohesive project. Both of those productions illuminated the possibilities of directing work online. Living in that process was an area that I strived to continue through the pivots of *Rosmersholm*.

Finally, I want to continue to “develop the muscle” of making choices - living with the consequences with the full confidence that I will make it work, learn from the experience, and continue to grow. Even in choosing the version of *Rosmersholm*, I started to get stuck in the loop of worrying about taking the “Right Choice.” The fact is that there isn’t one; I was delaying the choice and not able to move forward. Eventually, I called Val, and just said, “Can we choose a free domain script and move on and stop waiting for people to give approval for the rights to produce?” Of course, she agreed and pointed out that I had waited so long to get to that point. That was a moment of realization for me; that making choices was a “muscle” out of practice since *FROZEN*, and since it had been a couple months since being in a rehearsal room, I needed to get comfortable with making choices again. Choices always need to be made - there will be consequences no matter what. The larger question is: Can I make it work? - the answer is: Yes. Implementing the tools I learned throughout the program and analysis skills gained from my dramaturgy work will support me in my process to make the decisions that are best for any current production. Those tools definitely assisted me to have the confidence to move forward with every pivot of this production. So, eradicating the fear of making the “wrong choice” continues to be a huge goal for myself in this continually shifting landscape of theater making. It is also one that I believe I am well on the way to achieving.

Directorial Excitements & Challenges

- I was most excited about the final moment of the play. In researching the play and reading multiple translations, an idea came to me and it really spoke to the core of the play: We are going to have all the portraits of the past Rosmers come crashing to the ground when John and Rebecca jump into the Mill Dam, shattering the family legacy (more on that later). I realized that I would have to earn the final moment with how I built the story leading up to it. That focus became the center of the work I did throughout the process.
- I was also excited about the design of the piece and the world of the play we were building. A few members of the team struggled with getting stuck too much in the Realism of the play, and forgetting about the Theatricality of the piece, so we coined the term “Theatrical Realism” for this project, which unlocked some of the resistances and questions about the piece. Yes, it should reflect the period of the piece. Yes, the room should be functional. Yes, the lighting should reflect the time and world. But it’s not about the Hyper-Realism of those elements because there is some Supernatural/Paranormal elements of the play (i.e. The White Horse of Rosmershom, the Spirit of Beata, the falling of the portraits) that demand exploration. Additionally, since discussing the set and exploring alternative storytelling options for a set in a thrust space, we added a functional window downstage since, due to COVID restrictions, we don’t have to worry about sightlines throughout the entire theater. Also, we continued to explore how the space changes and shifts throughout the piece, which originally resulted in action involving removal and adding of covers on the portraits. I also presented the idea of the space collapsing and condensing as the action of the play continued, almost like the house is oppressing the players and crushing their hopes and desires for revolution and culture shift. Honestly, the budget for a staged production is a huge concern in achieving such an extreme design, but it fits with the spine of the show that I have selected in working with the team. Thus, we used space to crush and squelch Rebecca and John while they tried to liberate, unite, and unburden themselves from the oppressive nature of his home.
- I was also excited about really devoting more concentrated and intention time with this piece throughout the entire process. I am aware that I tend to rush when it gets late because I am worried about an assortment of things. When I first started the program, I was worried about spending an unhealthy amount of time obsessing, fixing, tweaking, etc. my work, and since my process has evolved to effectively balance the time I spend with the work being done in the room. It was exciting to get back into working on a project full tilt.
- One of the most concerning things was the tempo of Act 3 and Act 4. Those acts are very long and some of the dialogue gets a little arduous when reading. My goal was to do the objective, character, and text work with the actors to build tension and release moments and focus on the triggers/heaps (*Backwards/Forwards*) - and to be very clear from the get go. I know I can always

cut text since we are using a free domain script, but, for me, that is only as a last resort.

- Another fear was to balance the Romance plot line with the Thriller/Political plot line. This play is both a Romance and a Political Thriller. When I first read the translated/non-adapted versions of the play, I was really caught off-guard by the Romance narrative really coming through. So, I wanted to balance it in our production so this wasn't a confusing piece in terms of genre. Along with this, I didn't want Romance to diminish the strength of Rebecca as a character, which could occur in Act 4. For me, tackling this aspect was about being very specific with the storytelling in Acts 1-3 in order to maintain her character's core and that the Romance aspect amplifies her strength, resilience, and power.
- Finally, I must admit that I was constantly afraid of my show getting cancelled. There are no answers in sight about a vaccine or where we will be in terms of social distancing, so I was worried that we would not be able to make this production to the capacity I wished. From all of this, I know and can confirm the following facts: 1) I am resilient and I know I will figure things out no matter what, 2) Val has my best interests and future in mind and she will help me launch if this launch is somehow lost, and 3) This is unprecedented and unpredictable and no one planned for this, so it's okay to be aware of this, as long as it doesn't paralyze the work I am doing. I can work with the information I have now and will adapt as necessary.

Part 2:
Analysis & Concept for *Rosmersholm*

The Title: *Rosmersholm*

Rosmersholm as a title centers around the traditional home of the Rosmer family - the place where the oppression of the past meets the present. John Rosmer is ruled by his ancestors and is trying to break free from their expectations, demands, and ideals. Mrs. Halseth talks about the home as an entity, and that it holds on to its dead. Kroll further reminds John that *Rosmersholm* is a pillar of society and a beacon of moral standing.

I think it is essential to address a part of the research in this section as it relates to the title. In my research, I was fascinated to find out that the original title of this piece was *The White Horses*, which highlights another aspect of the play. The White Horse of *Rosmersholm* is folklore of the town and a superstition of Mrs. Halseth. She believes it is the harbinger of death and the spirit of the house. Rebecca claims to see the White horse in Act 3 and it is a horse that comes to pick her up when she leaves before she chooses to end her own life. The final line of the text is Mrs. Halseth saying, "The dead wife has taken them" to the sound of a horse whinny. The White Horse of *Rosmersholm* is the embodiment of death and continues to haunt the home, so I believe that here in the final moments of the play, it is Beata's spirit who has been haunting the home and signifying that the end of a life is near, and that death is returning to *Rosmersholm*.

The Spine of *Rosmersholm* - Why This Play? Why Now?

This is a question I ask myself with every project I take on. Why is it important to produce this play right now?

I'll start with the Spine: To Unburden the Past in order to Build a Future.

Definition of Unburden: relieve (someone) of a burden.

Every character is trying to unburden themselves or someone else from something in the world of *Rosmersholm*. John says "I cannot -- I will not go through life with a dead body on my back. Help me to cast it off." This literal and metaphorical "dead body" is a reference to not only his deceased wife Beata, but to the expectations of the Rosmers past; expectations that he must shed in order to liberate the people. Rebecca fights this battle with him to shed the expectations of the past and demands of the community leaders, but she also is trying to unburden herself from the guilt of her actions with the belief that the ends justify the means, even though she knows that there was selfish intent in her choices. Kroll wishes to unburden his reputation as a tyrannus and controlling religious leader, and he is willing to manipulate and persuade in order to get what he wants. Ulrik wishes to unburden his own failures and free the community in spirit and thought, but he is being dragged down by his addictions and fears. Mortensgård has been an outcast in society since his affair, and he too wishes to unburden his past in order to be a leader that inspires a community. Finally, Mrs. Halseth, who is always the holder of secrets and gossip wishes to unburden herself from any guilt, but also wishes to remove anything that would be in the way of *Rosmersholm* surviving into the future. All characters feel the weight and

pressure of the Rosmer home and the responsibility to persuade the community in the direction they think best. This stress of past and present being a driving force in the action of the play as the characters pursue a future is an aspect of the work that feels relevant and immediate to me and many others in 2021.

I had originally chosen this show as a thesis with the hope of it being produced around the 2020 Election, opening the weekend before or thereabouts. The opportunity to direct such a timely and profound piece in the midst of a national social and political war was important and seemed the obvious answer to this question. The 2020 Election felt very similar to the political war raging in *Rosmersholm* in this small coastal town as it also centered around the problematic belief of party politics. Ibsen's story reveals that the answer doesn't lie in choosing one party over another. It is about shedding, dismantling, and ending the expectations that one vote, one person, one moment will bring a community together. Rebecca, an emancipated woman, came to this coastal town with her adopted (and biological) father to work with the liberals and win Rosmer to the side of free thinking. Kroll as the Conservative leader wishes to keep everyone in their place and keep the community as it is, a structured power system centered in religious belief. Mortensgård as the Liberal leader aims to liberate the minds of the people and uplift the community to true equality. Ulrik wishes to deliver thoughts and ideals that will bring the community, right and left, together and unify them. It takes a community finding common ground. Rosmer explicitly states that he wishes to create "a true democracy" where people are truly free and equal. All these men are vying for their political ideology and all ultimately fail...and then the cycle repeats.

This past fall, the people of the United States, no matter which side of the political line they fall on, were voting to survive and just winning the election was not an answer for cultural peace. Like John Rosmer in *Rosmersholm*, we have to take off the blinders that we have been raised with and taught in order to attempt to see the world as a place that needs radical change to bring about any sort of true equity and equality. People like Kroll (or even Mortensgård and Brendel) rely on what they know of the past and what they are comfortable with; the people in the world of *Rosmersholm* need to be awakened to what is possible when the old world is left behind. However, producing the show in the fall was not possible and in the months following the election, this piece has become more and more timely. The questions around freedom of press, social media as a way to win people to their side, the threatening of people's lives when they don't agree, and the rise of hate crimes across the country during a pandemic when we are all isolated have amplified the central question of this play: Can we ever bridge the gap and come together to change culture? Sadly, one election was never going to erase the hate, ignorance, and inequality that exists in this country - so this text will continue to be a timely text as we pursue social change.

The debate of political mindset and equality has been raging for ages, which is why I decided to keep the play set in 1886. We are still facing questions of equity, equality, and treating people as fellow humans, not just pawns to gain power. *Rosmersholm* posits that it will take a radical action to prove our devotion to creating a different world, otherwise we are lost and the situation is hopeless and doomed to repeat itself. Do I think that throwing ourselves in the river is the

answer? Obviously, no. That was the last resort option John and Rebecca made to prove their love to each other and escape the control and manipulation of Kroll and the conservatives of this coastal town. However, the metaphor is not lost on audiences. John and Rebecca are drowning in hopelessness for a future free of the past. Maybe watching their journey will open the audience's eyes to where we are inevitably headed unless we change course. Or, alternatively incite a "rebellion against this oppressive social system" which "comes when the individual no longer feels at ease with this illusion of a satisfying life," (85). Being at ease, silent, comfortable, complacent... is a danger to the status quo. It wasn't until I started questioning my beliefs at a young age that I was able to figure out who I was to my core and that what I believed was essential to change the world. John and Rebecca are aiming to liberate a town and unite a community, and their journey is full of obstacles, scandal, intrigue, confusion, manipulation and strategy. So, what happens? Where do we go from here? I think this isn't about choosing one candidate over another, or choosing one policy over another. Any of "this or that" thinking is not an answer but has become a violent negation of any sort of opposite opinion. Possibly what we need is a radical third option that breaks the cycle and starts the community over in a more equitable way. Regardless, change comes at a cost and is not achievable without some destruction.

Character Analysis

Spine: To Unburden the Past in Order to Build a Future.		
Character Name	Super-Objective	Obstacle
Rebecca West	To Liberate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rosmersholm and Rosmer's Ancestors- The Past Rosmers hold power over the community and John. Their expectations, privilege, power, status, money, all influence John and his choices to this day. Even Rebecca says at one point that "Rosmersholm has broken me." ● Beata- John's Wife who killed herself haunts this place. She is a Rosmer who was unable to provide an heir, which drove her mad and Rebecca manipulated her. The truth of Rebecca's actions with Beata will come to light. Rebecca desired John, sexually, politically, and socially, and Beata was in the way. ● Kroll - John's long time friend. Since John is easily manipulated and convinced to think or see things differently, Kroll is a threat to her and her mission: To convert John and create equality within the community in order to build a new future. Kroll is a powerful, manipulative man who will do whatever it takes to keep his power. ● John - John is easily swayed by the people around him and his ancestral expectations, that is evidenced throughout the play, so John is also an obstacle. ● The White Horse - The White Horse is the harbinger of destruction and death. Either way, it is the past that continues to haunt her. ● Herself - She feels the guilt and weight and responsibility of Beata's death, so everything she does after is an effort to liberate John because then the ends justify the means.
John Rosmer	To Unite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rosmersholm & His Ancestors - The expectations of his family name weigh heavily on him. He has left behind the legacy in order to build a new future that is built in unity. ● Kroll - Kroll wants power and to keep the working class where they belong. He isn't interested in unity, he is interested in status quo. Though John is his long time friend, he is willing to lose the friendship in the name of a brighter future. ● Rebecca - She presents a future that he wants, and she was willing to do what it takes to get it, even though it cost him greatly. She is an unknown obstacle until she reveals the truth of what happened to Beata and her mind. Rebecca does share his beliefs and desires for the community, but his methodologies vary, so her true strategies being revealed is a problem and a challenge to his belief system. ● The Community - The community expects and believes the Rosmers to stand for a certain ideal and way of life. He knows that coming out as a liberal and a uniter will cause the community to shift. ● Himself - He wants to bring people together, but he himself is conflicted about who he is and what his role is in the world.

Rector Kroll	To Rule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rebecca - Rebecca is everything that Kroll hates: A Woman with knowledge, power, independence and a strong voice. She has convinced John to see the world and community differently, and that means John is no longer his pawn. He doesn't like things he can't control. ● John - John is easily swayed by whoever has his ear at the moment. Though they are old friends, he disagrees with John, yet he needs John's support and name to keep control over this town. ● Peter Mortensgård - His rival in the town. Since Peter runs the Liberal newspaper that has called him out for his actions, Kroll is starting to lose control when he wants the town to be under his thumb. In the end, it is Peter who steps up as the Voice of the People. ● The People - The people of the community are starting to distance and disagree with Kroll and his Point of View. From students in his school to his own wife and kids, people are starting to be in opposition to him and his control/leadership - which presents rebellion that Kroll cannot control or rule over. So, his power is precarious and not guaranteed by the community at this time.
Ulric Brendel	To Save	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Himself - Unfortunately, Ulrik is an alcoholic and so his addiction gets in the way of him delivering on his lofty goals and passionate claims. Though he was once a successful and well-known tutor, he was fired by the Rosmers and then left to live in isolation for a number of years. In his loneliness, he has spiraled and is returning to enlighten the world, but he is unable to do so. For our play, he is also a closeted gay man, which adds some internal turmoil in this world. ● Kroll - Kroll doesn't like Ulrik or what he represents, so he considers him an enemy. However, Ulrik doesn't consider Kroll a threat at all, just another Conservative man in need of enlightenment. It is unclear if Kroll was part of what got Ulrik drunk that night at the inn, but it is something Kroll would definitely do. ● The Rosmers - Having been employed by the Rosmers, he had everything he needed in life. However, when he started teaching more liberal ideas, he was fired. Unfortunately, the Rosmer's influence is far reaching and he did not have the means or support to find employment or build a life after that. The past haunts him in this way and the name has marred him, though he loves John dearly.
Peter Mortensgård	To Illuminate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kroll - Kroll is a politician and ultra-conservative, so Peter runs articles and disparaging pieces about him and his character in the paper. He is Kroll's rival in terms of papers and political/cultural control. Mortensgård is a man of the people, and Kroll is the elite and privileged. ● Rosmer/Religion - Rosmer judged him a number of years before the start of the play for having an affair with an abandoned woman and having an illegitimate child. So when John is ready to pledge allegiance, the religious piece is a complicated aspect.

Mrs. Helseth	To Survive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rebecca - Though Mrs. Halseth sees Rebecca as a friend and equal in status, they are actually unequal in this home. Rebecca is a master manipulator and can lie at any time to get what she wants. She doesn't yet realize that Rebecca is at the center of everything that is changing in Rosmersholm. ● White Horse of Rosmersholm - Life in Rosmersholm is fine in Mrs. Halseth's eyes, which is why she wishes to maintain things. However, when Mrs. Halseth sees the White Horse of Rosmersholm, the Ghost of Impending Doom, she knows things are about to change and something is about to happen. She is a superstitious woman, and knows that things are about to go out of control when the White Horse appears at Rosmersholm.
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Significant Relationships:

- Rebecca & John
 - John and Rebecca are friends, though Rebecca is far more of an independent thinker than John, who is easily swayed and manipulated based on whatever ideas or thoughts are presented to him that sound good for the world. I genuinely believe John wants good things in the world and wants unity and equality - he will take whatever path that looks like until he knows otherwise, which is why he was involved in the Church for long before leaving it and forging this new path with Rebecca. Rebecca wanted him, even lusted for him, when she first arrived, but suppressed her desires in order to achieve her goal of liberating John and community from Conservative control. They read books together, talk about changing the world and community, and connect over their shared passion for knowledge. John hired Rebecca, at Beata's request, to take care of Beata. This is the love story at the center of the text.
- Rebecca & Beata
 - Beata's primary caretaker was Rebecca, and so Rebecca's companionship created more problems for Beata when she realized she couldn't have children. Was there jealousy? Very likely. But Beata was a part of a society that did not value or take care of women's mental health or social standing beyond the conservative beliefs of child rearing and family/home making.
- Rebecca & Dr. West
 - Rebecca's unofficial adoptive father. Rebecca studied with Dr. West as she grew up and took care of him before he died. Rebecca didn't know that Dr. West had visited her mother a year before, which means that Dr. West might be Rebecca's father. It is further implied that Rebecca's mother might have been a prostitute. Because of Rebecca's reaction, there is a possibility that there may have been an intimate affair between the two of them as well. Dr. West left Rebecca all his books when he passed, which included copies of Ulrik's first books. Dr. West was the beginning of Rebecca's liberation and it is because of her adoption and

subsequent caretaking of Dr. West that she was able to find independence and freedom, further elevating her status in the world of the play - especially since she was possibly the child of a prostitute, yet now is the daughter of a doctor.

- Rebecca & Kroll
 - These are the true mental equals of the show. Both are master manipulators who see the power of the Rosmer name and what it can do. Rebecca sees the Rosmer name as an influence in the community that can be liberated and united. Kroll sees the Rosmer name as a tool to maintain power. They battle directly in Act 3, but throughout the play you get the sense that they both are playing a massive game of chess. Rebecca is winning that game until Kroll finds out the truth about her age and heritage, and reveals that Rebecca might actually be related to Dr. West. The scenes where these two are on stage are easily the most fiery and exciting to watch - the tension should be palpable.
- John & Kroll
 - Brothers in Law by marriage. They were also good friends growing up, but since Beata's suicide, Kroll hasn't visited or contacted John. Kroll is a conservative leader in the town and relies on John's moral standing to keep power in the community. Kroll also knows how to manipulate and control John, and I believe he relies on John's family name to keep the community under his thumb. The fracturing of this friendship is a driving factor throughout the text of *Rosmersholm* and is one of the central conflicts in the show. Kroll needs John's family name, but he doesn't need John. Unfortunately for him, John is the last Rosmer, which further explains why his "apostasy" is such an issue and obstacle for Kroll to maintain control over this community. John tries to continue his friendship and to call out his friend to be better and do better, but it futile gesture. Kroll is set in his ways and comfortable in his status.
- John & Beata
 - John and Beata were married, Beata couldn't have children. John believed he was protecting Beata by not sharing about Rebecca, his conversations with her, and his emerging thoughts and beliefs. However, Beata was observant and smart. This leads me to believe that they did not spend a lot of time together as a couple once Rebecca was hired. Beata was either always with Rebecca or alone watching them, hearing them, and thinking about them. I believe Beata knew her function in society, and it wasn't something she questioned. So when the reality that she couldn't have children persisted, she knew she could not live up to the demand of the Rosmer name. I believe that she did not want John to be in ruin, but to live happily and have the life he needed according to his family line. Her suicide was preceded by letters urging Mortensgård to not jump to conclusions or judge John and told Kroll that Rebecca and John must marry at once. Beata clearly saw how much they connected and was willing to sacrifice herself for that to happen. She saw no other way to live in a culture where she had failed to bring

a son to the Rosmer legacy.

- John & Mrs. Halseth
 - Mrs. Halseth is the person who has lived at Rosmersholm the longest and raised John as a baby. Mrs. Halseth is superstitious and, as the primary maid of the home, maintains the home and the staff. Clearly, she and John have a formal relationship although Mrs. Halseth genuinely cares for John. But alas, the house always comes first.
- John & Mortensgård
 - John was the community pastor at the time and, as a leader in the community, condemned Mortensgård for having an illegitimate child - thus destroying his reputation and standing in society. John is a leader of religion and Peter is no longer religious, so there is a conflict with Peter's upbringing, rise and ultimately disgrace within the community. He has been judged, ousted, and put down by religion and the community; yet, he is on the mend and is slowly becoming the voice of the people and a person they again trust. John is a powerful man, and when John says that he wishes to align himself with Peter, he is thrilled at first. Yet John is reticent to say that he has left religion. Peter wants people from all social statuses and upbringings to align with the liberal movement. John's name has clout, but only if John is still and remains a Rosmer of Rosmersholm, not John the Uniter.
- John & Ulrik
 - Ulrik was John's tutor. Ulrik, up to a certain time, was a respected figure in society - a smart, educated man with status and power. However, he was fired by John's Father for teaching radically liberal ideals to John. I believe that is when his alcoholism began. He then self-isolated and lived outside of the community as an alcoholic, ruminating over his ideals and beliefs about the world. When he returns, he comes with a passion and fire to change the world, but is unable to articulate and manifest it in the face of reality because he is crippled by his own thoughts and his addiction. John and Rebecca bonded over his first published works. Upon his return, John and Rebecca take care of him and provide for him, but then Ulrik returns to town and ultimately falls victim to his own addiction once again.

Lens of the Play & Who is the Audience?

The lens of the play and how the audience sees the show are two different things in this production. The lens of the play is Rebecca and Kroll as they play tug-o-war over John's soul and the fight for control and influence of Rosmersholm. Kroll and Rebecca both want John to do what's right in their eyes and they are in a battle for his allegiance.

As the play progresses, we see John being put between these two powerful forces as he tries to navigate building peace and unity in his home and community.

The audience is watching as Rosmerholm, the house itself. Ibsen put in the opening stage description that the walls are filled with portraits of Rosmer's past, which has inspired a major design element. The design concept was to further endow them with presence and power by incorporating and playing with the covering and uncovering of portraits throughout the show and in the transitions. Additionally, Mrs. Halseth, Rebecca, John, and Kroll all reference Rosmersholm as an entity that "keeps its dead" and how the portraits of Rosmer "watch." With that in mind, the team and I decided that the audience is the Rosmers of the past along with the hope that they will witness something that inspires them to change the future. It was our hope to create the set in a way that makes the world feel alive, oppressive, and inescapable to the audience and the characters.

Theme

Themes in the text include the following:

- Expectations
- Faith and Politics
- Idealism
- Freedom vs. Oppression
- Love and Friendship
- Gender Positions in Society
- Madness
- Truth
- Political Control
- Isolation

The primary themes that I wish to highlight and explore in this production were the ideas of Expectations and how Freedom and Oppression inform different relationships. As I have said before, this conversation about equity and treating people with respect is a conversation that happens again and again throughout history. In many cultures around the world, we see countries with power oppressing other cultures and people. Yet, here we are in 2021 and we are still having to wrestle with this idea that equality still doesn't truly exist and that a world built on oppression can't magically change over night. The systems of power in place will remain in place until there is radical universal action to undo it and to build anew. I don't know if that will happen in my lifetime. Although I don't think it truly will, I hope that the groundwork we do now will lay a foundation for lasting change to occur in the future.

What makes the conversation even more dynamic in this text is that everyone is affected by the cycle of oppression. In *Rosmersholm*, we see a system that benefits the most learned, the most powerful, and the most rich - embodying privilege as demonstrated by Ulrik, Kroll, and Rosmer in different ways. Yet, they are also all oppressed in their own ways as well. Rosmer as a Black man, not only faces racial implications of his status in community, but also the oppression of ancestral expectation and religion. Rebecca West, though educated and emancipated, is a

woman in a time where women don't have power. Kroll, though the least oppressed in this text, is still impacted by classism as someone not born in the upper class. Mortensgård is not only oppressed by class, but also religion; he has to rebuild his life because of an affair he had with a local married woman. Ulrik is the most educated and published, but he is an alcoholic and is also a closeted gay man - which is an imagined circumstance although one does get the sense that there is more than meets the eye within his character. Mrs. Halseth is, obviously, oppressed by class and being a woman at this time. In short, every character is oppressed, but also exerts their own oppression on the people around them - the story is full of interrelational oppression. The societal oppression of race, gender, and class is also present throughout the piece. I get the sense that every character is in survival mode, trying to find their place in the world or struggling to change the culture for what they believe and hope to be better.

World of Play

Setting in the text: Rosmersholm, an old family seat near a small coast town in the west of Norway. Late summer.

Rosmersholm is the town seat, which means the Rosmers have been around since the establishment of this coastal town. As a coastal town, the area is self-sufficient and contained, usually isolated from major cities. It is a fishing town, surrounded by mountains. I imagine that *Rosmersholm* takes place in the Rogaland county area of Norway, whose major city is Stavanger.



Rosmersholm is referred to as many things alluding to its moral standing

in the community and how much the community follows the Rosmer family lead. This home has been occupied by many who hold power and privilege in the community from generals to pastors to mayors, and the people look to them for what to think, feel, and believe.

The Community is in the midst of a big political and culture shift. The Liberals are gaining traction in their community, and many free thinkers have started to inspire the people to question the current social and cultural structure. The Conservatives are beginning to lose power and in their struggle to maintain power, they buy the county newspaper. Even Kroll's immediate family is starting to question traditional beliefs and ideals. The community is looking to Rosmer to lead the way, but with John Rosmer's recent shift in beliefs and ideals, Kroll's power is in question.

Rosmersholm is an oppressive place, with Rosmers of the Past always watching from the walls, judging, condemning, observing. This is a major aspect and part of the in-person production

design. We played with a few ideas regarding the set where the room gets smaller as the play continues, but the primary design piece was the walls of portraits. Paintings were to be covered and uncovered by the staff to demonstrate the tension between the desire to move forward and the desire to remain where the world is currently. The Ceiling or Cornice piece could also get lower and lower as the show continues to further demonstrate the condensing and collapsing space and the threat to crush the people who don't live in accordance with the Rosmer expectations. The plans also contained a functional window unit DSL that would provide another play area and create a clearer internal and external world. That would also have served as the place John and Rebecca used to escape in Act 4.

The World of *Rosmersholm* is heavily reliant on the actions of those within the home. Rosmersholm has its own energy and liveness, it has its own mission to ensure the survival of power and status in the community. It is the moral compass of this coastal town, and it looks to crush the wills of anyone who would do harm to the Rosmers or their family name and reputation.

Script Adaptation

For this production of *Rosmersholm*, I adapted the ending and text for the in-person production. Besides trimming the script for tension and tempo, I changed the ending of the play in order to add a final beat for the action of the spine. The spine of this show is "To Unburden the Past in order to Build a Future," and the force exerting the most pressure in this play is the Rosmers past. A year before Ibsen wrote *Rosmersholm*, he wrote the following:

There is still much to be done in this country before we can be said to have achieved full freedom. But our present democracy scarcely has the power to accomplish that task. An element of nobility must enter into our political life, our government, our members of parliament and our press. I am of course not thinking of nobility of wealth, of learning, or even of ability or talent. I am thinking of nobility of character, of mind and will. That alone can make us free. And this nobility, which I hope may be granted to our people, will come to us from two sources, the only two sections of society which have not as yet been corrupted by party pressure. It will come to us from our women and our working men. The reshaping of social conditions which is now being undertaken in Europe is principally concerned with the future status of the workers and of women. That is what I am hoping and waiting for, and what I shall work for, all I can. (Ibsen, 1885).

This quote inspired me and the work I have done on this script adaptation. As stated earlier, I am interested in his play for many reasons, but one primary reason is the frustration I have around conversations about equity and equality seemingly needing to happen again and again throughout history. There is a cyclical nature to progress that makes it frustrating, and I don't understand why it seems like we have to continually explain what's wrong with a world that doesn't see, treat, support, or value people equally.

So, in adapting the script I wanted to see what the gesture of this last moment in the show was; I arrived at the power that rests in Mrs. Halseth. Mrs. Halseth is a working class woman, someone who has been a witness to the shifts and passing of time in Rosmer's home. She is also the character who begins and ends the play - the only one who stays and survives and lives at Rosmersholm. Ibsen's quote directly references the women and the working men that will change the world.

As the audience watches Rebecca and John fail in their mission, the tug-o-war for John's allegiance and soul has been lost and the world is doomed to repeat as the conservatives come into power. Rebecca and John, whether driven by their love for each other, their desperation for escape, their frustration with the world, or some combination thereof decide to jump into the mill-race. Since they die just as Beata did and there were no Rosmer children, their actions end the family line. I pondered what would happen to the home when they jumped, and that's when I came up with the idea that all the picture frames come crashing down - all the Rosmers fall from the walls as the family line is terminated. In my plans, Mrs. Halseth, surrounded by the carnage of destruction, would pick up a frame as the rest of the house staff came rushing in to see what happened. The audience would then witness the momentary hesitation around the question in Mrs. Halseth's mind, "Do we rebuild or do we start over?" This final gesture is congruent with my spine of the play regarding what comes next. The solution isn't in the radical actions of the few, but in the collective decision of the larger community. John and Rebecca's death clears the slate and severs the "tug-o-war rope of struggles" for power in the town. The audience is then left to ponder the beginning of the next phase - and will it be something new or merely a repeat of what has already happened.

Part 3:

Design Process for In-Person
Production & Research Images

Design Concept

The design for *Rosmersholm* is centered bringing the history of the home to life and how each of the characters relates to the home. The Home of the Rosmers has been around for generations. It has survived war, storms, and decades of life. Since the world of the play is Rosmer's home, we aimed for a design that illuminated its oppressiveness, its power, its dominance in the community, and its effect on the people living in the home.

Scenic/Props Design

Rosmersholm is described in many ways. A home that "clings to their dead," or perhaps a home that the dead cling to. It's coastal, old, and a pillar of the community. Everyone looks to Rosmersholm as the symbolic leader of this community - the moral compass and the anchor of perspective and strength. When

working with the designer, I wanted the audience's perspective to be the Rosmers of the future and past; the audience watches the action through the portraits and walls of the home. I wanted the portraits to be the majority what people saw to amplify the overwhelming nature of generations of expectations and beliefs falling on Rosmer's shoulders. The sitting room being the center of action for Acts 1, 3, and 4 allowed us to build a space that felt oppressive and vast.

We started with the home and then did some research into internal spaces of Norwegian upper class homes prior to 1880. That research revealed a huge space for the traditional sitting room - something that didn't feel airy, but instead felt like it could swallow up anyone in the space despite a wall full of windows (some examples seen here). I also referenced a photo from a TV show called *Penny Dreadful* that captured



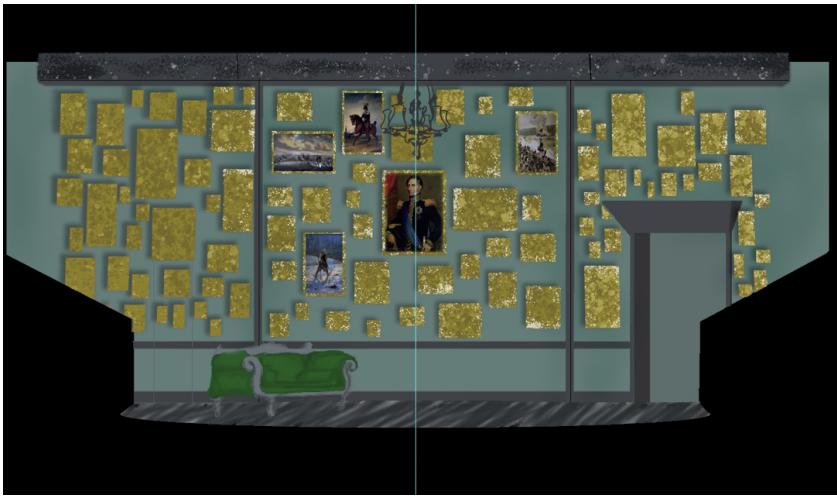
the wall of portraits as seen below. However, as the design came together, we realized that there was even a more dynamic way to make the space oppressive and heavy with the portraits and that was by leaning them forward, which was a classic design aesthetic throughout history. Here is a sample of that concept:



Combining these ideas, we arrived at a design that connected the audience perspective, created an oppressive and heavy space, and yet also showed a space with escape routes and windows. We used a cornice piece to frame the space above the audience and create imaginary walls to define the play space. At one point in time, we played with the cornice piece moving in and collapsing the space during the show, almost like Rosmersholm was crushing it's residents, but quickly found that was not within our budget capabilities. The color of the space was determined by imagining how old this space was. Some basic research shows that counties were established in the early 1600s, and even though their control changed hands between the sovereignty of Denmark and Norway (with an average of 3-5 generations per 100 years), there was a potential of at least 8 generations of Rosmers, possibly more living in the house. That further informed our choices in terms of how populated these walls with images of Rosmer men of power. To further emphasize the repeating image of The White Horse, we wanted to include that in the design of not only the portraits, but also in the wall paper itself, as seen here. This is a visual



representation of the walls for the final set design.

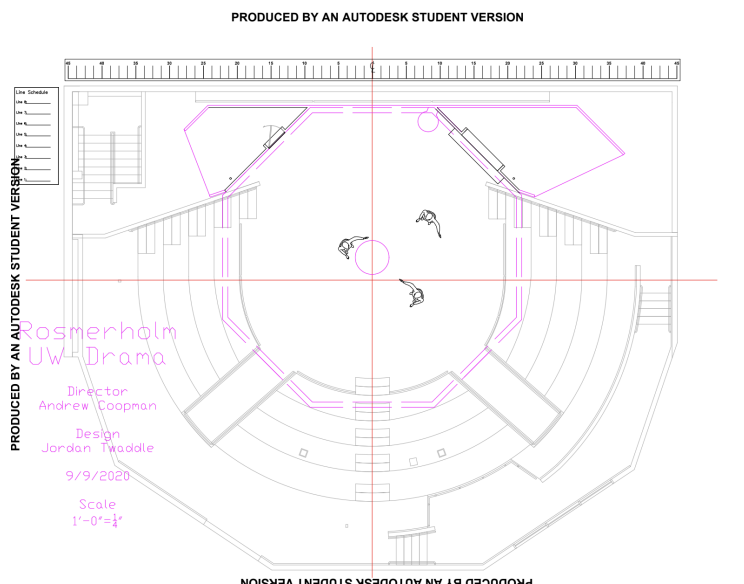


These designs addressed the primary space, but there is a transition into and out of Act 2, which is Rosmer's personal quarters of office leading to his bedroom. For the design of this space, the scenic designer and I decided to work closely with the lighting designer, using light to cut out a small square space within this space. This was to keep the portraits shadowed, but in view, and also to create an intimate space within this large home. I

knew that I wanted to make sure the transition was fluid and easy to keep the tension and momentum of Act 1 moving into Act 2, so ease of transition was the highest priority beyond the visual storytelling of the space. Through easily moveable furniture pieces and using the perimeter of the stage as a holding place, we were able to get the transition to be relatively easy to choreograph quickly and efficiently.

The final part of the design arrived after looking at the ground plan, which I found was a lot more empty than needed to accommodate for the quick transition into Act 2. When looking at the ground plan and checking it against Jon Jory's "Checklist for Ground Plans," I realized that there were vast open spaces that had no justification to be used. So I went back to the scenic designer and asked for a few chairs, a coat rack, an upstage table for papers and mail, and a small table to put a chess set on, which is something that we see Rebecca playing during the action of the show. Once we added those pieces, we arrived at a ground plan that allowed for sensible movement in the space and gave a lot of business for the actors to play with during the eventual staging of the piece.

Below is the final ground plan and section that ended up being built and installed for photos in the Jones Playhouse, which is included in Part 5 of this thesis paper.



Costume Design

In working on the costume design with the designer, we wanted to highlight some of the repeated imagery throughout *Rosmersholm*, specifically the White Horses and Brewing Storm. At first, we were really invested in the question of how to keep the costumes away from sinking into the background, so the designer and I landed on these initial designs, which highlight the era in which the play takes place and also pulled the eye of the audience.



However, when we looked at these designs together, the colors were too bold and projected a sense of character that almost felt archetypal; there was no mystery in the presentations of these characters. The colors in Rebecca's costumes were a bit too vibrant and overtly sexy and the color psychology of the red suggested her guilt from the moment the lights were up. The red

of the initial dress was just too strong of a piece in this space. Kroll in green in contrast highlights his greedy nature. Basically, when we looked at all the costumes next to each other, there was almost too much standalone color that didn't work within the world of the play that was being designed in other areas.

So we started over in some ways and landed on a color pallet that has a bit of dreariness to it, the colors feel muted, restrained, like their being held down to not be too loud. We also played with how close some characters came to being the same color as the Rosmer home. The seafoam green stood out against the aged teal walls, but you could feel that if the characters were close in color to the house, that the house was squashing their will and spirit to live. Additionally, we wished to include references to the White Horses in pieces like walking sticks or brooches, just to surround the characters with this eerie feeling of being watched or fleeting glimpses of this mysterious thing. The final designs fit the world of the play and also communicated the intention of the Rosmer home. Suddenly the space felt more oppressive and dangerous in the theoretical design because these characters were at risk being crushed and destroyed by Rosmersholm if they were unable to serve their purpose in maintaining the power of the Rosmer name. Final Designs will be in Part 5 of this Thesis Paper.

Additionally, the color pallet shift in Rebecca also captured the lasting effect of the Rosmer home, and that, even as she plans to run away from the home, she cannot escape its impact on her life and wellbeing. For the men, whose costumes brought colors in smaller pieces, the closer they were to the teal green of the home and the less color they had meant moving Rosmer's and Kroll's costumes into a black and white dichotomy at the end of the text. Putting Rosmer in a gray coat in Act 2 also reflected his struggle to find clarity and grounding in this new world that he was venturing into with Rebecca, and that, partnered with the lighting and scenic design's cutting of the space made Rosmer feel like he was being contained.

Overall, the costume design landed in a creative space that felt cohesive with the world of the play and still captured the class and opulence of the time in the beautiful clothing. The costume design was also, I believe, successful at heightening the stakes of the danger at Rosmersholm in the walls and eyes of the Rosmers past watching.

Lighting Design

Something that the lighting designer and I were very excited about from the beginning of this project was trying to figure out how we could use lighting to create a trapped feeling within *Rosmersholm*. We started with the windows as a primary lighting feature of the space and the shadows that it could cast which would support the mood of each act. We also had a lot of specific conversations about the time of day that each act took place and did some research on the



weather and sunsets/sunrises in Norway at the end of the summer, which, from our research, is very close to Seattle in late Spring - overcast with a chill in the air. Additionally, we knew that there was a chance that we would perform the piece in Hutchison Hall, which contains grand windows like the ones in the design and the research. Included is one research image that captures the mood of Act 2, but also captures the design opportunities presented by the windows by using go-bo's and shuttering the lighting fixtures. Here we see a man looking out a window that offers a view of the outside world, but there is a trapped feeling too. Maybe the window can't open up, maybe the escape out the window means death, maybe they can't go outside (ironically all too real and timely in the world we live in right now). The most striking aspect about this research image was the effect that the window had on the floor by projecting bars like a jail. It makes this human feel even more trapped and contained and that although there is only glass between them and the outside world physically, mentally there is no possible way out.

Another part of the design we wanted to capture was a view of nature streaming through the windows. In Act 1, Kroll comments that Rebecca has brought in flowers and plants from the

outdoors; something that was, before the beginning of the play, unheard of because of Beata's illness or desires.

Since the Knud Baade painting also captures the natural world and the feeling of hope far in the distance, we wanted to see how nature would come into this space. So the designer and I wanted to offer glimpses of hope with the breakthroughs of sunlight. The quality of light and sun in Norway is something magical and special and fills the heart with hope, which we intended to capture in the final design of this project.



Unfortunately, research images and theoretical design were as far as we got before the production pivot, but photos of the design will be taken after the virtual production opens.

Music & Composition

The Composer I was working with is the same composer that I worked with on the beginning of *Dead Man's Cell Phone* by Sarah Ruhl. We both enjoyed the experience and wanted to see a projection all the way through production. He also wished to take on Sound Design, so that it was cohesive.

In creating the world of the play sonically, we researched composers from the time and looked for what instruments and styles were prevalent. We wanted to capture the era in the music, but put our own contemporary, eerie twist highlighting the paranormal aspect of the play and the idea that this is a conversation that we keep having over and over again throughout history. We found some quartets by Edvard Hagerup Grieg, one of the most well-known composers from Norway in history. His work highlighted the sounds of the violin, cello, and viola, but the energy

of the time was very buoyant and lively. From our research, his work didn't have a lot of mood to it, but typically had a romantic and harmonic nature. The composer and I took the elements from this music, specifically the instruments and chord progressions, and started creating our own version of music in that time that captured the dark and stormy nature of the text. Where we landed contained a lot of sustained chords and dissonance within the composition. We talked a lot about where the music would go, and I decided that it was needed during the scene transitions and the final moment, but I didn't imagine any music during the play except for that, and he agreed. We tried a few pieces in trial readings of the script, but it distracted more than supported. The final moment, however, needed the musical finale to highlight the climax of the play. I described the last moments of Act 4 like a horse galloping faster and faster towards a jump that might kill them, and the composer captured that not in the tempo but in the tension of the music within the chords and the grandness of that final moment before the jump. The music starts out thin, like it can't breathe, and, though it has a brief moment of being almost romantic before it builds and builds to an inevitable climax of dissonance, terror, and tragedy. He was planning on taking this piece and using it to inspire the music between the scenes as well so that, musically, it all feels together and connected and further creates a sense that the climax of these two characters is inevitable, and that the Rosmersholm wins every time unless some sort of radical action is taken.

I am so glad that the composer decided to stick with the project as we pivoted online, but it has definitely made the sound design more difficult in terms of clear and clean sound. We continue to communicate and collaborate.

Research Images

Mood Images - Paintings by Knud Andreassen Baade

For *Rosmersholm*, I was really struck by the work of Norwegian Painter Knud Andreassen Baade, whose work spans the latter half of the 19th Century. Below I will share many of Baade's paintings that specifically capture the mood of the production in my mind, but the primary image is the one below (it can also be found on the dedication page of this document). *Moonlight on the Norwegian Coast* was painted in 1876, 10 years before *Rosmersholm* was written. The mood of this piece is dark with a light shining through. It captures the loneliness of making a major shift in your ideology and the distant hope that shines through over the vast expanse of sea, the troubles and challenges. What I find most interesting about this piece is that the man in the portrait is covered in shadows and leaning against the boat - one can't help but wonder "Has he just arrived? Or is he about to go? And what's stopping him?" John Rosmer's shift in political and personal beliefs takes time and the events of the play begin when he finally shares his new beliefs with his dearest friend and is faced with resistance. Baade's painting captures Rosmer's difficult choice to stay or go; stay in the darkness or travel towards the light over the tumultuous sea. This painting has become central in the design and direction of my production of *Rosmersholm*. Additionally, I'll share some of Baade's other paintings that further capture the mood of the production below.



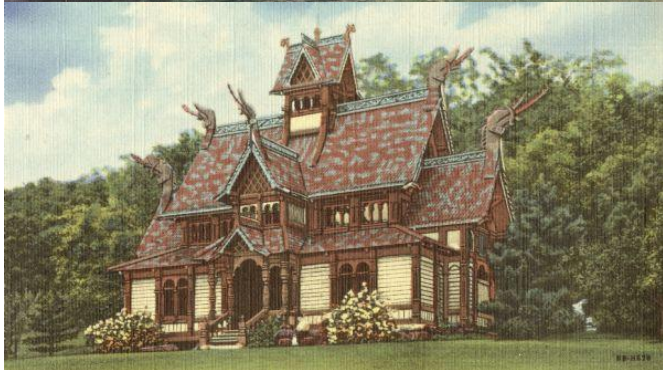


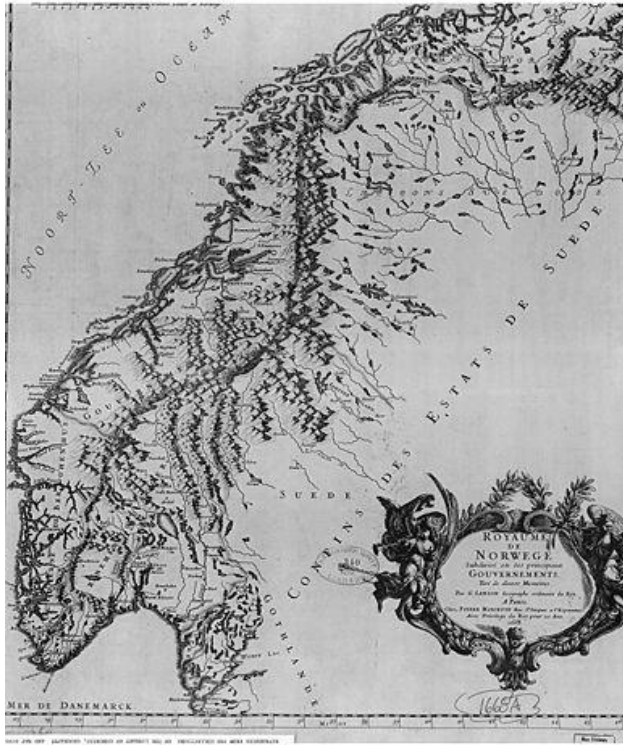




Norway World of Play Research

Below is image research about Norway including interior spaces, natural landscapes, and anything essential to the world of the play, including, as seen below, what the Rosmers' home would have looked like..









Norway Nature Research

References to the nature of Norway were something that the team and I were interested in bringing into the design. Norway is a lush and beautiful landscape, and Kroll remarks in the first act that Rebecca has filled the room with flowers since his last visit because nature “bewildered” Beata. That made us wonder if Rebecca was trying to bring nature into the space and how that invasion would seem so obtuse within the Rosmer home, a home that “clings to their dead.” Here is some image research of Norway’s natural landscapes.

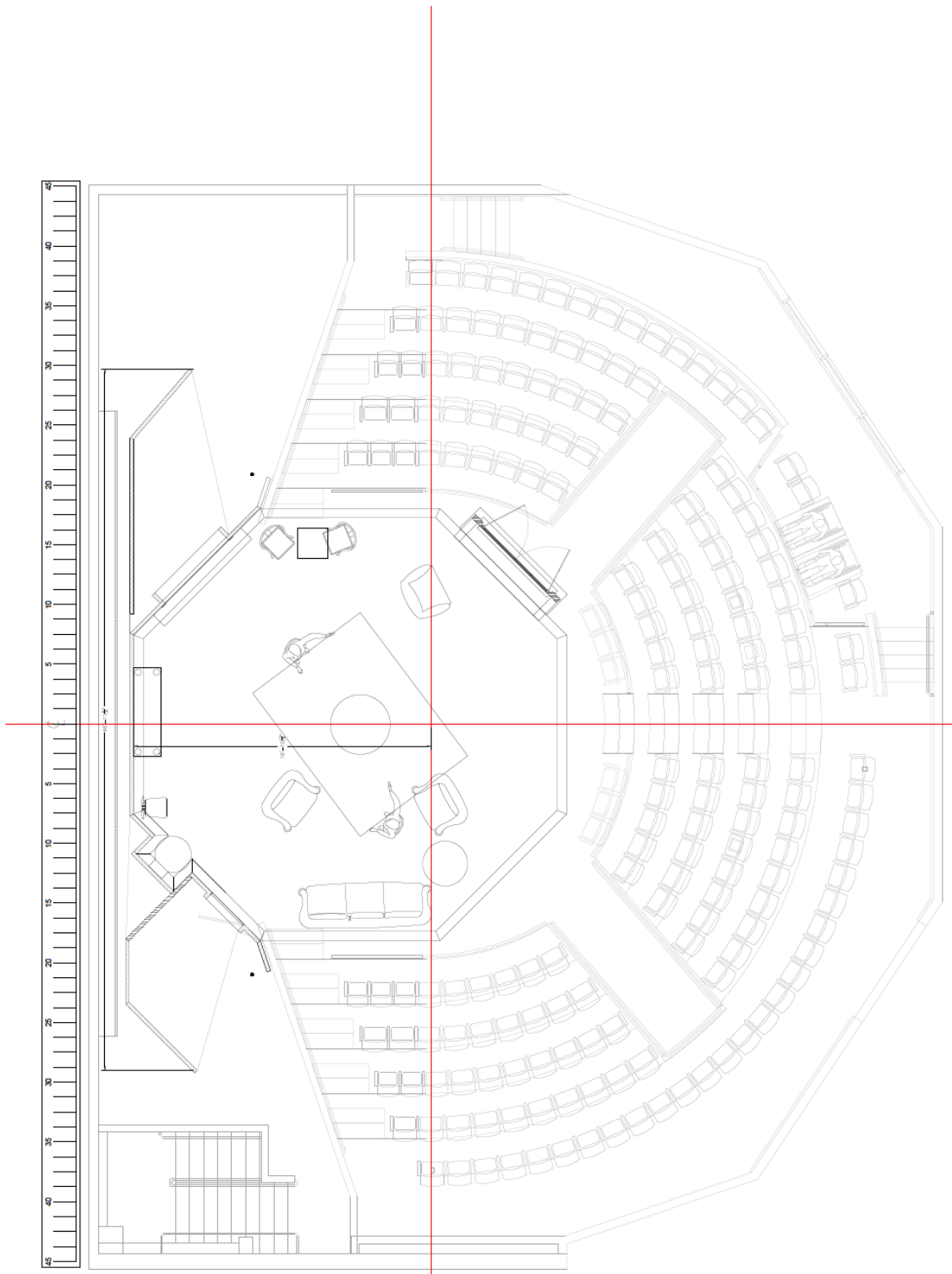




Part 4:
Final Designs
for In-Person Production

Final Scene Design





NAME	Rosmerholm
DATE	2024-12-01
PROJECT	ARCHITECTURE
SCALE	1:1000
REV	01

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Final Costume Designs

Rebecca West



John Rosmer



Rector Kroll



Ulrik Brendel



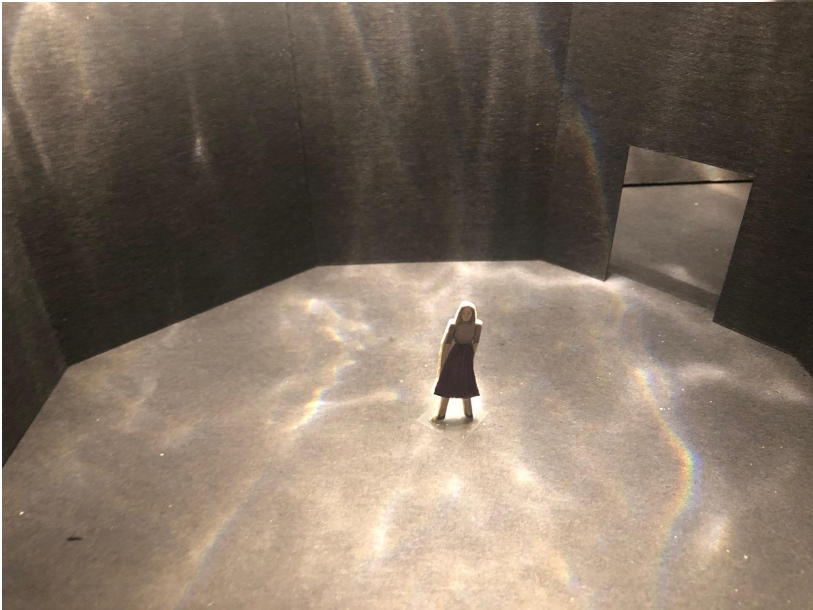
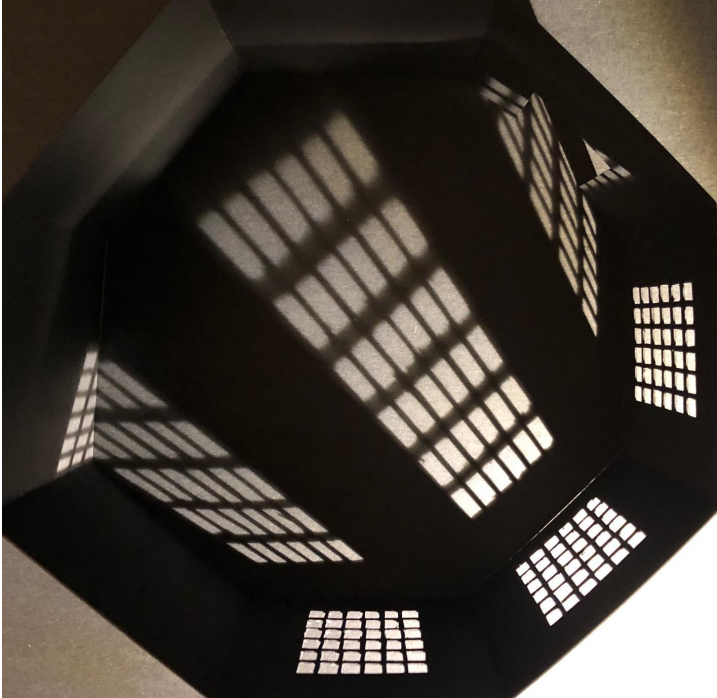
Peter Mortensgård

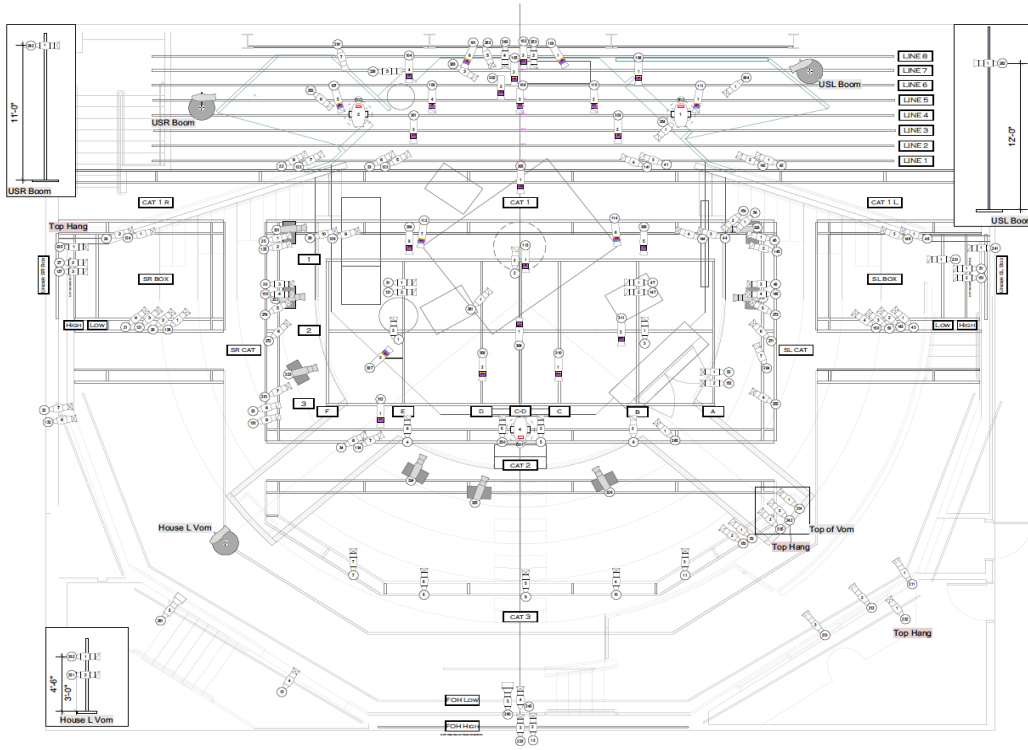


Mrs. Halseth & The House Staff



Final Lighting Mock-Ups & Lighting Plot





Legend

Conventions

[Symbol]	84 90"
[Symbol]	84 14"
[Symbol]	84 19"
[Symbol]	84 26"
[Symbol]	84 36"
[Symbol]	84 50"

Position On show deck

LEDs

[Symbol]	Lust 2- 20"
[Symbol]	Lust 2- 36"

Position On show deck

Movers

[Symbol] Station Plazzo
[Symbol] Marchion

Notes

- Station Plazzo MODE-2 (#4ch)
- Practicals: Chandelier not shown in this plot. Need one circuit for it. The position is shown in dash line circle.
- Please have ample diffusion (RT15R14) available at focus call.
- Please feel free to call or text designer with questions.

Key

Accessory
Channel - [Symbol] - Color
Unit Number

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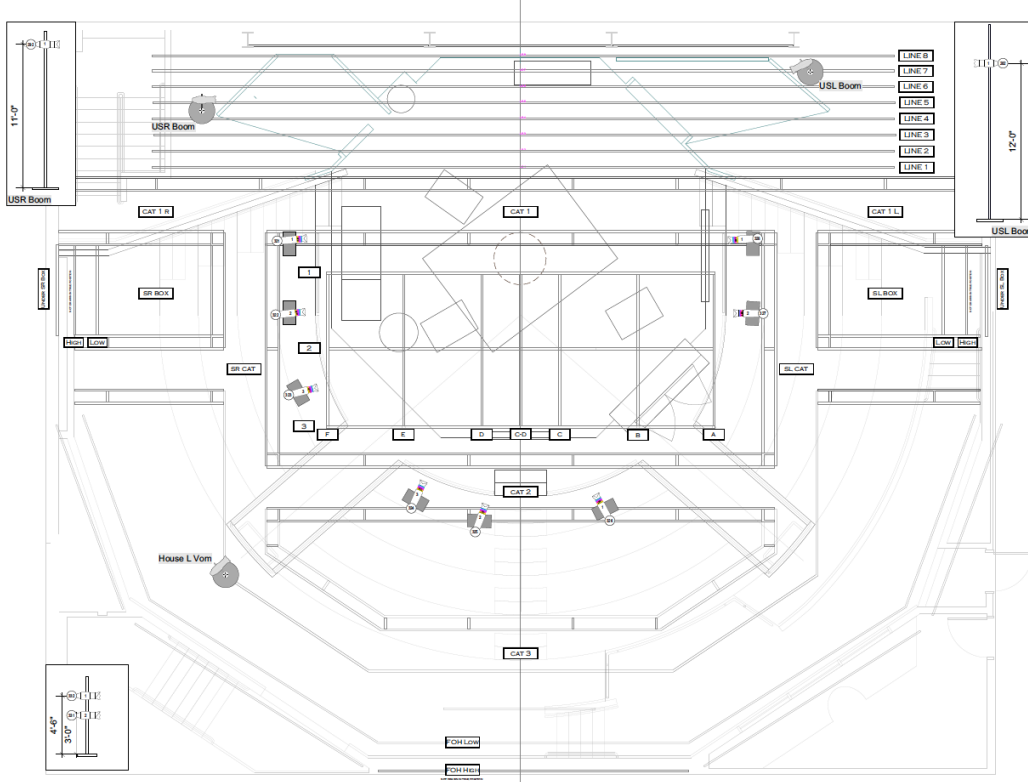
Jones Playhouse
University of Washington

Rosmersholm
1200 1st Ave
Seattle, WA 98101

Deck Plot

VERSION: 10/20/19 SCALE: 1/2"=1'-0"
Created: 10/20/19
Revised: 10/20/19
Drawn by: Channing Breen
Checked by: Channing Breen
DATE: 10/20/19

CHANNING BREEN P. 206.963.9636 E. channingbreen@gmail.com



Legend

Conventions

[Symbol]	84 26"
[Symbol]	84 36"
[Symbol]	84 50"

LEDs

[Symbol]	Lust 2- 50"
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Notes

- Please confirm with the designer about the final positions for booms and shin bases.
- Please have ample diffusion (RT15R14) available at focus call.
- Please feel free to call or text designer with questions.

Key

Accessory
Channel - [Symbol] - Color
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Part 5: Self-Reflection

The road through this thesis project has not been an easy one, but I think I am a stronger director on the other side of it because of the pivots and adjustments I have had to make along the way. In this section, I will discuss the challenges and journey of this production from my perspective.

Pre-Show Pivots and Adjustments

First of all, I'll acknowledge that the School of Drama made it very clear to me that the production paper and theoretical production design process was the actual thesis project, and the virtual production is a volunteer choice. I wanted to produce a show to end my journey with University of Washington, and I did so knowing that the virtual production was my choice.

That being said, there were many shifts and pivots throughout the production, and because of the resiliency I bring to my work and the processes I have cultivated throughout my time at the University of Washington, I was able to still persist and make a production that told a story and, as Val always says, "doesn't suck." When the pandemic hit, we knew that the production wouldn't be able to be carried out as originally intended. The School of Drama explored many options, and it was a creative exercise to practice envisioning the show in a variety of ways. It started out as a socially distanced production where all performers would need to remain 6 ft. apart, which challenged me to get even more specific and creative with my compositions to tell a story of intimate connection without physical contact. At one time it was a film shoot, which challenged me to think of the way in which it was shot and where I would put cameras in the space. Then it became a virtual production, which, though I have had a lot of experience with between *Love & Information*, *RE: Social/Divide* (my devised piece), *I & You*, some virtual readings and many online classes, I am still figuring out the best way to use the medium... and what I have come to realize is that there is, obviously, no single right way. Every story needs to be told in the way that suits the story, and when the medium is virtual theater, that doesn't change the interrogation of how to tell the story similar to how we, as directors, figure out what space, audience arrangement, and conventions to use when we craft a production. So I experimented with those previous productions and in rehearsal with different conventions such as virtual passes, actor focus point, camera position, and relationships between spaces, and what I arrived at is, I believe, the most effective set of conventions for this script, specifically that the Camera is in the Center of the Room between performers and all performers are in the same "Room." I also, through some experimentation, found that staging this piece like it was a production In-the-Round really helped with the storytelling. I remember in preparation for *Dead Man's Cell Phone* that all the audience needs is a performer's face to look at, so in staging *Rosmersholm* I kept that in mind as well.

In December, we received an e-mail from the department about our support for the thesis productions. Mine said that I would have no Design or VMix support, but I got "Production Support," which I, at the time, understood to be the agreement for both thesis projects in the coming Spring. I am glad we were able to find some clarity in what that meant in the coming months, and I was confident in my ability to figure something out for this production. Before we began production, I asked Andrew Smith to join me in this production as Design Advisor. As I

proceeded to design the production, Val and I both agreed that having someone's eye on the choices I was making would be a supportive and good decision for my process. I started out early in Winter Quarter 2021 asking the production department questions about what was and what was not possible with this production. I asked about the costumes Guan had designed for the in-person production and was told that it wouldn't be a problem. Later in the Quarter, we had a conversation in Directing Seminar to check about spaces with Jeffrey, and was told that I would have 218 by April 21 without question. It was frustrating over the next couple of months to see those choices and decisions change and shift as I started the production. Since I was personally designing, adapting, and directing the show, I had set up a timeline for myself with the designs and the change in what was and was not available to me definitely set me behind. However, I am an artist that always looks for what is possible in the face of the seemingly impossible, and I took the opportunity to streamline my costume design to be clearer and more impactful in this medium. The spaces remained for the production, and I figured out a scenic design that created a semi-connected and uniform space as much as possible within this virtual platform.

In-Rehearsal Reflections

This rehearsal process has shown me just how much I have grown over the past 3 years. My direction has become clearer and more action based, my point of view has solidified, and I have stepped into a personal creative process that is in line with my values: Creativity, Curiosity, and Exploration. The performers in this process embrace that unknown quality of theater making in this time, and their work has been a joy to work with. In reflection at the end of each

This process has also been a great example of something that Val teaches us: "That mostly everyone is mostly afraid most of the time." The performers struggled with removing the blocks of performing on Zoom, citing performance location and lack of physical proximity as an issue for not learning lines. Though I understand that struggle and desire, it is also not the only reason, and as I called it out through the production, I kept this in mind. For example, I saw Antonio and Gretchen struggling with lines and getting frustrated and no matter how hard I tried to adjust the objective to clarify and connect their work with their lines, it wouldn't click. So I stopped rehearsal and had a conversation with them, addressing that I believed there was a fear of being perfect for their "first mainstage performance at the University of Washington." They both realized that that was true - I took time to dismantle that viewpoint and the work continued. I think it was a great practice for me as a director to look at what is beyond the performance or struggle in front of me and see the actual fear or problem and address it. I also used Alexander Technique encouragements that I had seen from Cathy to help the performers move past their fear. Once coordinated and aligned, they were able to play and stay present enough to remember the lines, play the objective, and nail the event.

Tech Rehearsal Reflections

Having to manage most aspects of design I knew would be a complicated process. So in preparation for tech rehearsals, I gave myself permission to focus on one element at a time, similar to how Val encouraged me in Year 2 to focus on different Viewpoints elements one at a time when watching the compositions (which I applied to the staging in this piece as well). I did notice that my pattern of problem solving had developed a quick response system in myself during the first technical rehearsal. Some of the performers were eager to know every aspect of their performance on day one of tech (costumes, props, lighting, sound, etc.). I started answering the questions that I could, but I knew that my rehearsal goal for day one was simply to align and identify all OBS transition cues and all sound cues. I did take the time to look at each costume, but one of the performers pushed back and interrogated my choices, which was fine because I knew what I wanted. However, in listening to the questions, I wanted to experiment and try what they wanted so that I could confirm my choices (since I had already seen my primary choice and “you don’t know unless you try, right?”). Since it was my first look with the costumes, I appreciated the experimentation, and the performer approached the camera after the show and asked me to choose which costume. I told them, but realized that I had answered too quickly, so I said, “Give me 48 hours, I’ll let you know Monday.” In reflection, I think this quick answering is tied to the constant problem solving I have had to do with this virtual production. Something wasn’t available? I’ll make something else work. I don’t have full support? I’ll redesign and streamline the visual storytelling. The lights aren’t working? Let’s simplify and figure out what is possible with what we know how to use. The point is that my quick problem-solving has trained me to follow my gut, which is a strength, but I also need to continue to remind myself that I can step back and think before a decision, which is also a strength. I’m glad I noticed this on Day 1 of tech, because, for the rest of the technical rehearsals, I was able to decipher which decisions needed to be made immediately and which could take some time all while experimenting with the options. I guess this is one of the perks to being my own design team.

Being the full design team and directorial team was difficult, as it meant wearing many hats over the course of the week and not really being able to wear all the hats at once. I made parameters around myself that I would release “hats” as I went through the week. Costuming was first because once they were mailed out and on the performers, those decisions were done. I made a few adjustments that clarified the look on the second day of tech. Scenery and Lighting was next. Scenery was about clarifying the spaces and figuring out connective tissue between spaces and in the background of the OBS screen, making sure all the spaces felt relatively of the same world. Lighting was a deep collaboration with Andrew Smith with him taking the lead, but I learned a lot and was able to refine the lighting over the course of the tech process. The Director hat always stayed on, and was always watching the feed for clarifying story notes, but the amount of divided attention lessened as the tech process went on. By the final 3 runs, I had only the director hat on, and I was able to deliver the acting notes and honed in the story telling.

Final Reflections

Once we did the preview show, I handed off the show officially to the stage manager and the tech team and was able to walk away from the process. I think having to balance so many parts

of a production on this platform differently than I would on a typical director contract has taught me a lot. First of all, I have the confidence that I can make a full production on my own if needed. Though my resources were limited, I was able to find the pieces necessary and essential to crafting a clear production. Secondly, I feel more confident in communicating with designers. I had always had respect and understanding of the designers' job because of the 218 projects and design courses I took during my time with the School of Drama, but having to take a full main stage show on really forced me to step into each role and understand the world they operate within, which only helps me use language more clearly moving forward. Finally, the fact that this was a completely virtual production meant that I had to create a new set of staging rules for myself. Every production a director tackles requires them to look at the text and the space they are in and figure out how to tell that story to the best of their ability for the audience. Rules of Proscenium spaces are different than those of a Black Box or Arena space, obviously. Zoom is a new frontier, and because of the 8 productions I directed virtually over the past year and a half, I had a set of experiments and gathered information that helped decide the best storytelling conventions and tools for this show.

We are taught at the University of Washington to do the best we can with the time we have. But this is different somehow, and Val helped me see that. As Val said after my preview to me in class one day, "It's not only that you did the best you could in the time you had, but you made the best possible version of this production." I have to say that I agree. I think this is the best production I have made online yet, and it was because I constantly engaged with the experiment of virtual theater. And I think I made the best thing I could.

I said a year ago that it felt like my launchpad had eroded away with the cancellation of *Dead Man's Cell Phone* and the looming reality of *Rosmersholm* not being an in-person production. Reflecting back now, I realized that although that was true, I did something with it. Instead of letting it erode away, I built something new, something better. The pandemic has been horrible, awful, and one of the most devastating events of my generation, but it is also the reason that I was able to connect with theaters across the country, make so much work, and really figure out who I am as an artist. I am not going to say I am thankful for the pandemic, but I am thankful that the past three years of experiences, lessons, and interrogations has led me to the resilient, scrappy, innovative, creative, and dynamic director that I am today. I entered into this program with the goal of becoming an excellent director - after this production and the three years of education and mentorship that I have received, I am confident that I am now not only an excellent director, but a uniquely excellent artist who is ready to move forward in their career. I am really proud of the production I made, and I do believe that I made the best version of this piece at this time. Now I cannot wait to rest and then dive into making my future work and career.

Part 6: Appendix

Directorial Analysis Documents

	Charles Archer Translation (1904)	Eva Le Gallienne (1951)	Kenneth McLeish Translation (2003)	Rolf Fjelde Translation (1965)
French Scene C - The Rosmer Name	Pg. 17-18	Pg. 354-356	Pg. 14-16	Pg 508-509
Rebecca	I wonder that you and your friends don't set up an opposition to him.	I'm surprised you and your friends don't start a paper of your own.	I'm surprised you and your friends don't start an opposition paper.	I'm surprised you and your friends haven't launched an opposition paper.
Kroll	That's just what we're going to do. We've to-day bought the <i>County News</i> ; there was no difficulty about the money question. But-- (<i>turns to Rosmer</i>) Now I come to my real errand. The difficulty lies in the conduct of the paper-- the editing-- Tell me, Rosmer,-- don't you feel it your duty to undertake it, for the sake of the good cause.	That is precisely what we intend to do. Only today we purchased the <i>County News</i> . Financial backing is no problem to us, of course, but-- (<i>turns to Rosmer</i>)-- and now I come to the real purpose of my visit-- What are we to find an editor? That is the vital question. Tell me, Rosmer-- don't you feel it your duty, for the good of the cause, to undertake this task?	Oh, we're going to. Today we bought the 'County Telegraph'. No trouble about the funds. The thing is... (<i>turning to Rosmer</i>) The real reason I came... The <i>vital</i> question, the editorial <i>thrust</i> ... What I'm saying, Johannes, for the sake of everything we're trying to do, if you'd consider.	That's exactly our next move. Today we bought the <i>County Herald</i> . The money part of it wasn't my problem. But-- (<i>turning to Rosmer</i>)-- and here's my real purpose in coming out here. The management, the editorial direction, you see-- that's the rub. Tell me, Rosmer-- don't you feel compelled to take it on, for the good of the cause?
Rosmer	(almost in consternation).!!	(almost in consternation)!!	(taken aback) Me?	(in sudden alarm) Me?
Rebecca	Oh how can you think of such a thing?	You can't be serious!	You don't know what you're asking.	You're not serious!
Kroll	I can quite understand your distaste for public meetings, and your reluctance to expose yourself to their tender mercies. But an editor's work is less public, or rather--	I can well understand your dislike of public meetings, and all that they imply. But this position would enable you to keep in the background-- or rather--	I know you hate public meetings-- and the people who go to them, I'm not surprised. But an editor's more private, in the background, how shall I put it...?	That you're averse to public meetings, and the kind of rough-and-tumble that goes on there, is understandable enough. But an editor's activities, being more removed, or, should I say--
Rosmer	No no, my dear friend, you mustn't ask me to do this.	No, no! -- Please don't ask me to do this.	It's impossible. Don't ask me.	No, no, Kroll, you mustn't ask this of me.
Kroll	I should be quite willing to try my own hand at that style of work too; but I couldn't possibly manage it. I have such a multitude of irons in the fire already. But for you, with no profession to tie you down-- Of course the rest of us would give you as much help as we could.	I don't do it, Kroll. I'm not suited to it.	I'd do it myself, but I simply haven't the time. Too busy. But you, a man of leisure... Of course, we'll give you all the help we can.	I'd like very much to take a stab at it myself. But it's simply beyond me. I'm overloaded already with any number of things to do-- while you, on the other hand, since you're not professionally involved anymore-- And of course the rest of us would help you as much as we could.
Rosmer	I cannot, Kroll. I am not fit for it.	I can't do it, Kroll. I'm not suited to it.	Lars, I can't. I wouldn't know how.	I can't, Kroll. I'm just not up to it.
Kroll	Not fit? That's what you said when your father bought you your church.	That's what you said when your father procured you the ministry here--	That's exactly what you said when your father found you this parish.	Not up to it? You said the same thing when your father got you this parish--
Rosmer	And I was right. That was why I resigned it.	And I was right. That's why I resigned it.	And I was right. Why d'you think I resigned?	I was right. It's why I resigned the ministry.
Kroll	Oh if you're only as good as editor as you were a clergyman we shan't complain.	If you're as good an editor as you were a clergyman, we shan't complain.	If you're as good an editor as you were a pastor, we won't be complaining.	Oh, if you're only as able an editor as you were a pastor, we won't complain.
Rosmer	My dear Kroll -- I tell you once for all-- I can't do it.	Once and for all, my dear Kroll, I cannot do it.	For the last time, Lars, I don't accept.	My dear Kroll-- once and for all, I tell you, I won't do it.
Kroll	Well, at any rate you'll lend us your name.	Well-- but you'll lend us your name, at any rate?	All right, at least let us use your name.	Well, in any case, you will let us use your name.
Rosmer	My name?	My name?	My name?	My name?
Kroll	Yes, the mere name, Johannes Rosmer, will be a great thing for the paper. We others are looked upon as confirmed partisans-- indeed I hear I's denounced as a depraved fanatic-- so that if we work the paper in our own names, we can't reckon upon its making much way among the misguided masses. You, on the contrary, have always kept out of the fight. Everybody knows and values your benevolence and integrity-- your delicacy of mind-- your unimpeachable honor. And then the respect due to your former position as a clergyman still clings to you; and, to crown it all, you have your venerable family name!	Yes, the mere name, Johannes Rosmer, will be a great help to the paper. We are all of us looked upon as hopeless reactionaries. I believe I myself am supposed to be a desperate fanatic! This will make it difficult for us to reach the people-- poor misguided wretches they are! You, on the other hand, have always kept aloof. Everyone knows and appreciates your integrity, your humanity, your fine mind and unimpeachable honor. Then, too, you are esteemed and respected as a former clergyman. And think of what the name "Rosmer" stands for in this part of the country!	Johannes Rosmer: what a coup for the paper! The rest of us, we're activists-- I gather some people call me a fanatic. If our names are on the paper, the brainless masses won't touch it. But you've always kept out of the struggle. Everyone knows you, respects you: your decency, high-mindedness, integrity. The fact you were a pastor. Your old family name.	Why, merely the name John Rosmer would be an asset to the paper. The rest of us are rather well known as strong party men. I hear I'm even being mackracked now as a raging fanatic. So, with our own names on the masthead, we couldn't count on the paper having much impact on the poor, muddled masses. You, on the other hand-- you've always kept yourself above the struggle. Your noble, forbearing nature, your scrupulous mind, your unassailable integrity are known and prized by everyone in this country. Then there's the honor and respect you've restrained from your time in the ministry. And, to top it off, there's the aura of the old family name.
Rosmer	Oh, my family name--	No doubt--	The family name.	Oh, the family name--
Kroll	(points to the portraits) Rosmers of Rosmersholm--clergymen and soldiers; government officials of high place and trust; gentlemen to the finger-tips, every man of them-- a family that for nearly two centuries has held its place as the first in the district. (<i>Lays his hand on Rosmer's shoulder</i>) Rosmer-- you owe it to yourself and to the traditions of your race to take your share in guarding all that has hitherto been held sacred in our society. (<i>Turns round</i>) What do you say, Miss West?	(pointing to the portraits on the wall) Rosmers of Rosmersholm-- clergymen and soldiers, high-ranking officials; worth, honorable gentlemen all -- A family that for nearly two centuries has held its place as the first in the district. (<i>Lays his hand on Rosmer's shoulder</i>) You owe it to yourself, Rosmer, to all the traditions of your race, to defend those things that have always been held most precious in our society. (<i>Turns around</i>) Don't you agree with me, Miss West?	(pointing to the portraits) The Rosmers of Rosmersholm. Clergymen, soldiers, respected politicians, gentlemen to their finger-ends, a family people here have looked up to for two hundred years. Johannes, you owe it too yourself: your breeding, your standing, to protect everything that, till recently, has been finest and most sacred in this society of ours. (<i>To Rebecca</i>) Don't you agree, Miss West?	(gesturing toward the portraits) The Rosmers of Rosmersholm-- churchmen and officers. Trusted public servants. All of them, men of unflinching dedication. And that line, for nearly two hundred years, has held forth here, in this very house, as the foremost family of the county. (<i>Lays his hand on Rosmer's shoulder</i>) Rosmer-- you owe it to yourself and the heritage of your ancestors to join in defending all those things that, up till now, have been held sacred in our society. (<i>turning</i>) What do you say, Miss West?
Rebecca	(laughing softly, as if to herself) My dear Rector, all this strikes me as ludicrous in the extreme.	(laughing softly, as if to herself) I'm afraid it all strikes me as utterly ludicrous--	Doctor Kroll, I've never heard anything so silly.	(with a small, rippling laugh) Dr. Kroll-- all this strikes me as ridiculous beyond words.
Kroll	What do you say? Ludicrous?	Ludicrous?	Silly!	What? Ridiculous!
Rebecca	Yes, ludicrous. For you must let me tell you frankly--	Yes, ludicrous. I think I'd better tell you--	It's time I told you--	Yes. Because now I'll tell you exactly why--
Rosmer	(quickly) No no-- be quiet! Not just now!	(quickly) No, no-- don't! Not just now!	(sharply) No. Leave it. Not now.	No, no-- just drop it! Not yet!
Kroll	(Looks from one to the other) My dear friends, what on earth--? (<i>Interrupting himself</i>) Hm!	(Looks from one to the other) But, my dear friends, what does mean--? (<i>interrupting himself</i>) Hm!	(Looking from one to the other) What on earth's going--? (<i>Interrupting himself</i>) Hum, hum.	(looking from one to the other) But, my dear friends, what in the world-- (<i>breaks off</i>) Hm!
Scene D: The Thinker	Pg 24	Pg. 359-360	Pg. 20-21	Pg. 513-514
Brendel	(to them all) Is the local public at all familiar with my occasional writings?	(to them all) Is the public in these parts at all familiar with my infrequent writings?	(to them all) Your people here: are they familiar at all with my various writings?	(to them all) Has the present company any intimate knowledge of my scattered writings?
Kroll	No, I must candidly confess that--	No; I ust honestly admit that--	I must confess I--	No, I frankly have to admit that, uh--
Rebecca	I have read several of them. They belonged to my foster-father.	I've read some of them. My foster-father had them in his library.	I've read some of them. My foster-father--	I've read quite a few. My foster father owned them.
Brendel	Fair lady, then you have wasted your time. For let me tell you, they are so much rubbish.	Then you wasted your time, fair lady. They're all so much trash, let me tell you.	Rubbish, dear lady, rubbish. Take it from me. A waste of your time.	Beautiful lady-- then you've wasted your time. Let me tell you, they're less than trash.
Rebecca	Indeed!	Indeed?	You think so?	Oh?
Brendel	What you have read, yes. My really important works no man or woman knows. No one-- except myself.	Those that you've read, yes. My really significant works no man or woman knows. No one--- except myself.	Absolutely. The ones you've read so far. The ones to come, my true <i>oeuvre</i> , what man or woman on earth knows anything of that? No one, save only-- myself.	The ones you've read, yes. No man, no woman-- on one knows my greatest works-- except myself.
Rebecca	How does that happen?	Why is that?	Why's that?	Why so?
Brendel	Because they are not written.	For the simple reason that I have never written them.	I've still to write them.	Because they remain unwritten.
Rosmer	But, my dear Mr. Brendel--	But my dead Mr. Brendel--	My dear Mr. Brendel--	But, my dear Mr. Brendel--
Brendel	You know, my Johannes, that I'm a bit of a Sybarite-- a <i>Feinschmecker</i> I've been so all my days. I like to take my pleasures in solitude; for then I enjoy them doubly--tenfold. So you see, when golden dreams descended and enraptured me-- when new, dizzy, far-reaching thoughts were born in me, and wafled me aloft on their sustaining pinions-- I fashioned them into poems, into visions, into pictures-- in the rough, as it were, you understand.	You know I've always been a bit of a sybarite, my dear Johannes; a <i>feinschmecker</i> . I like to enjoy things in solitude; then I enjoy them doubly--tenfold. Glorious dreams come to me-- intoxicating thoughts-- bold, lofty, unique ideas, that carry me aloft on powerful pinions; these I transform into poems, visions, pictures-- all in the abstract, you understand.	Johannes, dear Johannes, you know me: I've always been, one might almost say, a <i>Feinschmecker</i> ; a sybarite. From my earliest youth I was solitary, took pleasure in my own company, double pleasure, tenfold. When golden dreams swept down on me, and engulfed me, when new ideas, new dioxing, horizon-stretching thoughts were born in me, when I soared aloft on their beating wings. I fleshed them into poems, visions, pictures. Blueprints, sketches in the mind, you understand.	You recall, <i>mein Johannes</i> , that I'm something of a sybarite. <i>Ein Feinschmecker</i> . And have been, all my days. I love to savor things in solitude. Because then my pleasure doubles, yes, ten times over. So you see-- whenever golden dreams poured over me and engulfed me-- whenever new ideas unfolded, dazzingly and boundlessly within me, lifting me to the heights on their soaring wings-- then I formed them into poems, visions, images. I mean, into their equivalents, you understand.
Rosmer	Yes, yes.	Yes, yes.	If you say so.	Oh, yes.
Brendel	Oh, what pleasures, what intoxications I have enjoyed in my time! The mysterious bliss of creation-- in the rough, as I said-- applause, gratitude, renown, the wreath of bays-- all these I have garnered with full hands quivering with joy. I have sated myself, in my secret thoughts, with rapture--oh! so great, so intoxicating--!	The joys, the ecstacy I have reveled in, Johannes! The mysterious bliss of creation-- in the abstract, as I said before. I have been showered with applause, gratitude and fame; I have been crowned with laurel wreaths; all these tributes I have garnered with joyous, tremulous hands. In my secret imaginings I have been satiated with delight-- with a rapture so intense, so intoxicating--	Oh the joy I've known, the exhilaration. The mysterious rapture of creation-- in sketches in the mind-- the applause, the cheers, the votes of thanks, the laurel crowns, I stretched out my trembling hands and grasped them all. And then, in my secret thoughts, with what rapture, what soaring ecstasy--	The ecstasies I've relished in my time, John! The mysterious beatitude of creation-- or, again, its equivalent-- the plaudits, the acclaim, the celebrity, the laurel crowns-- all these I've gathered in my grateful hands, trembling with joy. In my most secret imaginings, I've known such exaltation-- that my mind goes reeling into space.
Kroll	Hm!	Hm!	Ahem.	Hm--
Rosmer	But you've written nothing down?	But you've never written down any of these things?	But you wrote nothing down?	But nothing written down?

	Not a word. The soulless toil of the scrivner has always aroused a sickening aversion in me. And besides, why should I profane my own ideals, when I could enjoy them in their purity by myself? But now they shall be offered up. I assure you I feel like a mother who delivers her tender daughters into their husbands' arms. But I will offer them up, all the same. I will sacrifice them on the altar of Emancipation. A series of carefully worked-up lectures-- over the whole country--!	Not a word. The vulgar business of writing has always nauseated me-- filled me with disgust. Besides, why should I profane my own ideals, when I can enjoy them by myself in all their purity? But now they must be offered up. I assure you I feel like a mother must when she delivers her young daughters into their bridegrooms' arms. Nevertheless-- they must be offered up-- offered upon the altar of Freedom. I will start with a series of carefully planned lectures-- all over the country--	Not a single word. The scribe, his bending toil, I shudder at it, shudder. In any case, why cast my ideas abroad when I could enjoy them myself in purity, untrammelled? But now it's time to offer them. I feel as a mother must feel, when she entrusts her daughter to a husband's arms. But still I give them, on the altar of equality I offer them. A lecture series, carefully structured, all over the country--	Not a word. It's always sickened me, that slave's labor of being my secretary. And then, why should I profane my own ideals, when I can enjoy them in their purity, all to myself? But now they're going on the block. Truly-- I feel just like a mother giving her budding daughters into their bridegrooms' arms. But I'll sacrifice them, nevertheless, on the altar of liberation. A series of well-devised lectures, throughout the country--!
Brendel				
Scene N: A Conditional Alliance		pg. 378-379	Pg. 45-46	Pg. 535-536
Rosmer	Well, in that case I may tell you that I have emancipated myself entirely and on every side. I have broken with all the dogmas of the Church. Henceforth they are nothing to me.	I'd better tell you myself, then. You see-- I've freed myself in every way: I no longer have any connection with the church, or with its doctrines; they no longer concern me in the least.	I've left the Church. Freedom of thought, in everything. I've rejected Christian teaching. From now on, it's of no importance.	Well, then I ought to explain that my self-liberation is categorical. Across the board. I've cut all my ties with the church. Its doctrines mean nothing to me now.
Mortensgård	(looks at him in amazement) Well-- if the skies were to fall I couldn't be more--! Pastor Rosmer himself renounces--!	(looks at him in amazement) What! If the skies were to fall I couldn't be more--! Pastor Rosmer! Is this true?	I'm amazed. If the Moon fell out of the sky, I wouldn't be more... You say you reject...	(gazing at him in astonishment) No! If the moon fell out of the sky, I wouldn't be more--! You, of all people--!
Rosmer	Yes, I now stand where you have stood for many years. That too you may announce in the <i>Beacon</i> to-morrow.	Yes. So, you see-- I am now in full accord with you. In this too I share the opinions you have held for many years. And this too you may announce tomorrow in the <i>Beacon</i> .	I stand what you've been standing for years. You can announce that in the "Searchlight" too.	Yes, I stand now where you've stood for so long. You can report that tomorrow in the <i>Beacon</i> .
Mortensgård	That too? No, my dear Pastor-- excuse me-- I don't think it's wise to touch onto that side of the matter.	No. Forgive me, my dear Pastor, but I don't think it would be wise to touch on that side of the question.	Ah, no. My dear Rosmer... excuse me... this wouldn't be the moment.	That, too? No, my dear Pastor-- excuse me, but that side of it is hardly worth mentioning.
Rosmer	Not touch on it?	How do you mean?	Not the moment?	Not worth mentioning?
Mortensgård	Not at present, I mean.	Not at first-- at all events.	Later would be better.	I mean, not immediately.
Rosmer	I don't understand--	I don't quite understand.	I don't understand.	But I don't understand--
Mortensgård	Well you see, Pastor Rosmer-- you probably don't know the ins and outs of things so well as I do. But, since you have come over to the party of freedom-- and, as I hear from Miss West, you intend to take active part in the movement-- I presume you would like to be of as much service as possible both to the cause in general and to this particular agitation.	Let me explain; you naturally don't know the circumstances as well as I do. Since you've come over to the cause of freedom-- and I gather from Miss West you intend to take an active part in the Progressive movement-- I presume you would wish to help the cause to the fullest possible extent.	Mr. Rosmer, there are ways of doing these things. In my experience... The thing is, now that you've joined our movement-- and Miss West says you want to take an active part-- I imagine you'd like to make yourself as effective as possible.	Yes, you see, Pastor-- you're probably not up on all the fine points of this the way I am. But if you've really come over to the liberal cause, and if-- as Miss West says-- you want to take part in the movement-- then I'm sure your intention is to lend whatever support you can to both.
Rosmer	Yes, that is my earnest wish.	Yes, I'm most anxious to do so.	Naturally.	Yes, I want to very much.
Mortensgård	Well; but now I must tell you, Pastor Rosmer, that if you come forward openly with the announcement of your defection from the Church, you tie your own hands at the very onset.	Then I think I should point out, that is your defection from the church is publically announced, it will prove a serious handicap to you from the start.	Thank you. The point is, Pastor, if you announce right away that you've left the Church, you tie your hands before you start.	Well, then let me just tell you that if you bring your break with the church out in the open, you'll have tied your hands right at the start.
Rosmer	Do you think so?	You think so?	You think so?	You think so?
Mortensgård	Yes; believe me, you won't be able to do much for the cause, in this part of the country at any rate. And besides, we have plenty of freethinkers already, Pastor Rosmer-- I almost might say too many. What the party requires, is a Christian element-- something that every one much respect. That's what we're sadly in need of. And therefore I advise you to say nothing about what doesn't concern the public. That's my view of the matter, at least.	Undoubtedly. You could accomplish very little-- particularly in this part of the country. We've a great many free-thinkers in our ranks already-- too many, I was about to say. What the party lacks is the Christian element, Pastor Rosmer-- something that commands respect. That is our greatest need. So-- in matters that do not directly concern the general public-- it would seem wiser to be discreet. That's my opinion, at any rate.	Believe me, you'd not help the cause at all. We've all the freethinkers we need, we're falling over them. What we need is a Christian standpoint, one people respect. We need that badly. So your views on this matter are nobody else's business, and you should keep them to yourself. If you don't mind my saying so.	Yes, there won't be much you can accomplish hereabouts, you can be certain of that. And besides-- we've got enough freethinkers as it is. I almost said, we have more than we know what to do with. What the party needs is Christian elements-- something everyone has to respect. That's where our shortage is. The best advice for you is to stay close-mouthed about anything that doesn't concern the public. At least, that's my opinion.
Scene O: A Proposal		Pg. 387-388	Pg. 55-56	Pg. 545-546
Rosmer	(comes nearer) Rebecca, if I were to ask you-- will you be my second wife?	(comes nearer) If I were to ask you--? Oh, Rebekka! Will you be my wife?	Rebecca, if I asked you... my second wife--	Rebecca-- if I asked you now-- would you be my wife?
Rebecca	(for a moment speechless, then cries out with joy) Your wife? Your--?!	(for a moment, speechless, then cries out with joy) Your wife! Your--! I!	(Rebecca is silent for a moment, then shouts with joy) Marry you?	(speechless for a moment, then cries out in joy) Your wife! Your--! I!
Rosmer	Come; let us try it. We two will be one. The place of the dead must stand empty no longer.	Yes, let us truly belong to one another-- let us be as one. The empty place must remain empty no longer.	The two of us, one. The gap she left, completed.	Yes. Let's try. The two of us will be one. There mustn't be an empty place for the dead any longer.
Rebecca	I-- in Beata's place--!	I-- take Beata's place--?	I'm to take Beata's place?	I-- in Beata's place--?
Rosmer	Then she will be out of the scene-- completely-- for ever and ever.	Then it will be as though she'd never been.	She'll be gone forever.	Then she's out of the picture. Completely out. Gone forever.
Rebecca	(softly, trembling) Do you think so, Rosmer?	(softly, trembling) You believe that, Rosmer?	(Suddenly, trembling) Do you really think so?	(her voice soft and tremulous) Do you think so, John?
Rosmer	It must be so! It must! I cannot-- I will not go through life with a dead body on my back. Help me to cast it off, Rebecca. And let us stifle all memories in freedom, in joy, in passion. You shall be to me the only wife I have ever had.	It must be so! It must! I refuse to live my life chained to a corpse; help me to free myself, Rebekka! Together we will conquer all memories of the past; in freedom, in joy, in passion. You shall be to me my first, my only, wife.	IT must be! I can't-- won't-- go through life with a corpse on my back. Rebecca, help me. Let's blot out the past in freedom, in joy, in passion. You'll be the only wife I've ever had.	It has to be so! It has to! I can't-- I won't go through life with a corpse on my back. Help me cast it off, Rebecca. And then let's drown all these memories in joy, in freedom, in passion. For me, you'll be the only wife I ever had.
Rebecca	(With self-command) Never speak of this again. I will never be your wife.	(wishes self-control) You must never speak of this again! I can never be your wife.	(controlling herself) Don't ever talk of this again. I won't be your wife.	(controlling herself) Don't speak of this ever again. I'll never be your wife.
Scene T: Rebecca's Confession		Pg. 405-406	Pg. 78-79	Pg. 367-368
Rebecca	She had got it into her head that she, as a childless wife, had no right to be here. And then she imagined that it was her duty to you to yield herself.	She had become obsessed by the fact that she was childless-- and never could have children; because of that she felt she had no right here. She was convinced it was her duty to efface herself-- her duty to you, I mean.	She had it in her head that because she couldn't have children, she had no right to be here. She felt that she owed it to you, to blot herself out.	She'd gotten it into her head that a childless wife had no right to be here. And then she convinced herself that her duty to you was to step aside for somebody else.
Rosmer	And you-- you did nothing to dissuade her of the idea?	And you did nothing to dissuade her from that thought?	You didn't try to stop her?	And you-- you did nothing to discourage that idea?
Rebecca	No.	No.	No.	No.
Kroll	Perhaps you confirmed her in it? Answer! Did you not?	Perhaps you confirmed her in it? Answer me! Didn't you?	You encouraged her. Didn't you? Answer me!	Maybe you even reinforced it? Answer! Didn't you?
Rebecca	I believe she may have understood me so.	I dare say that's how she understood it.	She may have thought so.	She could have understood me that way, I guess.
Rosmer	Yes, yes-- and in everything she bowed before your will. And she did efface herself! (springs up) How could-- how could you play this ghastly game?	She always gave way to you in everything; you dominated her completely. And then-- she did efface herself! (springs up) How could you play this horrible game, Rebekka?	She was completely under your control. And she did blot herself out! How could you do it? Play games like this-- how could you?	Yes, yes-- she bowed to your will in everything. And gave up her place. (springs to his feet) How could-- how could you play this hideous game?
Rebecca	It seemed to me I had to choose between your life and hers, Rosmer.	I had to choose between your life and hers.	Two lives were at stake, Johannes. I had to choose.	I felt it was a choice because two lives, John.
Kroll	(severely and impressively) You had no right to make that choice!	(severely and impressively) What right had you to make such a choice!	What right had you to choose?	(with austere authority) What right did you have to make that choice?
Rebecca	(vehemently) You think then that I was cool and calculating and self-possessed all the time! I was not then the same woman I am now, as I stand here relating it all. And then there are two sorts of will in us, I believe! I wanted Beata away, by one means or another; but all the same I never believed that it would come to pass. As I felt my way forward, at each step I ventured, I seemed too hear something cry out within me: No further! Not a step further! -- And yet I could not stop. I had to venture the least little bit further. Only one hairsbreadth more. And then one more-- and always one more-- and then it happened.-- That is the way such things come about.	(vehemently) You seem to think I acted with shrewd deliberation-- that I was cold and calm about it all; but I was a very different person then. And, anyway-- most people's minds are divided, it seems to me. I wanted Beata out of the way-- somehow; but at the same time it never occurred to me that the thing would really happen. A voice inside me kept crying out "Stop! No further!"-- but I couldn't resist the impulse to go on. And I went on-- step by step-- in spite of myself. I thought: a little further-- just a little further; a tiny step more-- and then another; I couldn't stop! And suddenly-- there it was! That's the way these things happen, you see.	(with force) D'you imagine I was icy then? Cold, calculating...? As I stand her now, tell you now? I was different then! We have two kinds of will in us, we humans. I wanted Beata away, I didn't care how, but I never imagined she would go. I was inching forward, one step at a time. And at every step, a voice said, "Stop! No further!"-- and I couldn't. I had to go on. One little step more. Another, another... and then it happened. That's how things are.	(vehemently) You think I went through all this with ice in my veins? That I calculated every move! I was a different woman then than I am now, standing here, telling about it. Anyway, I think a person can be of two wills about something. I wanted Beata out of here, one way or another. But even so, I never dreamed it could happen. With every step ahead that I gambled on, it was as if something inside me cried out: "No further! Not one step further!" And yet I couldn't stop. I had to try for a tiny bit more. Just the least little bit. And then again-- and always again-- until it happened. That's the way these things do happen.
	(A short silence)	(a short silence)	(pause)	(A short silence)
Rosmer	(To Rebecca) What do you think will become of you now? After this?	(To Rebekka) What will become of you now? After this?	What'll happen now? To you?	And what do you think will happen to you? Now, after this?

Rebecca	Things must go with me as they will. It doesn't matter much.	I don't know. It doesn't greatly matter.	It doesn't matter.	What happens to me doesn't matter. It isn't very important.
Kroll	Not a word of remorse! Is it possible you feel none?	Not a single word of remorse! I sware say you feel none?	Don't you feel remorse?	Not even a word of remorse. Don't you feel any?
Rebecca	<i>(Coldly putting aside his question)</i> Excuse me, Rector Kroll-- that is a matter that concerns no one but me. I must settle that with myself.	<i>(Coldly putting aside his question)</i> You must excuse me, Professor Kroll-- that concerns no one but myself. I shall deal with that in my own way.	<i>(coldly)</i> I'm sorry, Doctor Kroll: my business. I'll deal with it.	<i>(coolly disdainful)</i> Excuse me, Dr. Kroll-- but that's nobody else's business. I have to settle that with myself.
Scene A: The White Horse	Pg. 4-5	Pg. 346	Pg. 4-5	Pg 498-499
Halseth	Will he venture across the foot-bridge?	Will he bring himself to cross the foot-bridge, do you think?	Use the foot-bridge?	Will he dare go over the footbridge?
Rebecca	That's what I want to see. <i>(After a pause)</i> No, he's turning. He's going by the upper road again. <i>(Leaves the window)</i> A long way round.	That's just what I want to see. <i>(After a pause)</i> No, he's turning back. Today, again! He's going by the upper road. <i>(Leaves the window)</i> A long way round.	That's what I want to see <i>(pause)</i> No. He's turning. The other way again. <i>(Coming from the window)</i> The long way round.	That's what I want to see. <i>(pause)</i> No, he's turning back. Taking the upper path today. <i>(Leaves the window)</i> The long way round.
Halseth	Dear Lord, yes. No wonder the Pastor thinks twice about setting foot on that bridge. A place where a thing like that has happened--	Well -- Good Lord! -- you can't blame him for not wanting to cross that bridge, Miss. When you think of what happened there--	I'm not surprised. That bridge... after what happened... if he never sets foot on it again.	But, my heavens, it must be hard for the pastor to set foot on that bridge. Not there, after what happened.
Rebecca	<i>(folding up her work)</i> They cling to their dead here at Rosmersholm.	<i>(folding up her work)</i> They certainly cling to their dead at Rosmersholm.	<i>(folding the shawl)</i> They cling to their dead, at Rosmersholm.	<i>(gathers up her crocheting)</i> At Rosmersholm they cling to their dead.
Halseth	Now I would say, Miss, that it's the dead that cling to Rosmersholm.	Do you know what I think, Miss? I think it's the dead that cling to Rosmersholm.	Or the dead cling to Rosmersholm.	To my mind, miss, it's the dead that cling to Rosmersholm.
Rebecca	<i>(looks at her)</i> The dead?	<i>(looks at her)</i> How do you mean -- The dead?	What d'you mean?	<i>(looking at her)</i> The dead?
Halseth	Yes, it's almost as if they couldn't tear themselves away from the folk that are left.	It's as if they kept trying to come back, as if they couldn't quite free themselves from those they've left behind.	As if they can't tear themselves away.	Yes, it's, so to say, as if they couldn't quite tear themselves free from the ones that stay on.
Rebecca	What makes you fancy that?	What an idea! What put that into your head?	What makes you think that?	Where did you get that notion?
Halseth	Well, if it weren't for that, there would be no white horse, I suppose.	That would account for the White Horse, you see.	Well, the White Horse, Miss.	Well, I mean, otherwise you wouldn't have this white horse that comes.
Rebecca	Now what is all this about the white horse, Madam Halseth?	What is all this about a White Horse, Mrs. Halseth?	What White Horse?	Mrs. Halseth, what exactly is all this about a white horse?
Halseth	Oh, I don't like to talk about it. And, besides, you don't believe in such things.	It's no use talking to you about it, Miss; you don't believe such things.	I know you don't believe in that sort of thing.	Oh, why talk about it? Anyway, you don't believe in such things.
Rebecca	Do you believe in it then?	Do you believe them?	Do you?	Do you believe in it?
Halseth	<i>(goes and shuts the window)</i> Now you're making fun of me, Miss.	<i>(goes and shuts the window)</i> You'd only make fun of me, Miss.	<i>(closing the window)</i> You'll just make fun of me.	<i>(goes over and shuts the window)</i> Oh, I'm not going to make a fool of myself, miss.
Key Lines				
Rosmer	I will try to bring together men from both sides-- as many as I can-- and to unite them as closely as possible. I will devote my life and all my energies to this one thing-- the creation of a true democracy in this country.	I want to bring men together regardless of which side they may be on. I want them to unite for the common good. I intend to devote my whole life and all my strength to this one end: the creation of a true democracy.	I want to try to unite people, from all sides. As many as possible. Unite them. I want to devote my life, my strength, to it: the fight for true equality.	I want to bring people together from all sides. As many as I can reach, as honestly as I can. I want to live and use all my vital energies toward that one end: the creation of a true democracy in this land.
Kroll	So you don't think we have democracy enough already! For my part, it seems to me we're all in a fair way to be dragged down into the mire, where hitherto only the mob have been able to thrive. (30)	Haven't we democracy enough already! It's my opinion that we are all of us rapidly being dragged down into the mud where, hitherto, only the common people have seemed to prosper. (363)	Don't you think we've all the equality we need? What do you want? Are we all to be dragged into the gutter, where only the rabble used to thrive? (26)	Don't we have democracy enough! For my part, I think we're all on our way down into the muck and mire, where only the lowest of the low can thrive. (518)
Mrs. Halseth	Miss West -- the carriage is-- <i>(looks around)</i> Not here? Out goether at this time of night? Well-- I must say--! Hm! <i>(goes out into the hall, looks round, and comes in again.)</i> Not on the garden seat. Ah, well well. <i>(goes to the window and looks out.)</i> Oh good God! that white thing there--! My soul! They're both of them out on the bridge! God forgive the sinful creatures-- if they're not in each other's arms! <i>(shrieks aloud)</i> Oh-- down-- both of them! Out into the mill-race! Help! Help! <i>(Her knees tremble, she holds on to the chair-back, shaking all over; she can scarcely get the words out.)</i> No. No help here. -- The dead wife has taken them. (Pg. 114)	Miss West-- the carriage is-- <i>(looks around)</i> No one here? They must have gone out together-- at this time of night too! <i>(Goes out into hall, looks round, and comes in again.)</i> They're not out on the bench. Ah, well-- <i>(Goes to the window and looks out)</i> Lord bless me! What's that white thing out there--! It's them-- out on the bridge, and in each other's arms! <i>(Shrieks aloud)</i> Ah! Over the railing-- both of them-- down into the mill-race! Help! Help! <i>(Her knees tremble; she leans on the chair-back, shaking all over; she can scarcely get the words out)</i> No! No one can help them now. It's the dead wife-- the dead wife has taken them. (421)	Miss West, the carriage is-- <i>(She looks round)</i> Not here? The pair of them out this time of night? Really! <i>(She goes into the hall, looks round, comes back)</i> Not in the garden. Well, well. <i>(she's at the window)</i> Ah! That white thing... They're on the bridge. God save them, they're in each other's arms <i>(shrieking)</i> Ah! Dows, both of them. The Miss race. Help! Help! <i>(She is overcome. She holds the chairback to support her trembling. She can scarcely speak)</i> No use. No help. The dead one took them. (99)	Miss-- the carriage is-- <i>(glances about)</i> Not there? Out together at this hour? Well, really-- I must say--! Hm! <i>(going out in the hall, looking around, and coming back in.)</i> Not in the garden. Ah, no. No. <i>(goes to the window and peers out)</i> Oh, sweet Jesus! Over there, the white--! My Lord, it's them, both, on that bridge! God have mercy on the sinful creatures! Embracing each other like that! <i>(screams)</i> Oh! Falling-- both of them! Into the water. Help! Help! <i>(her knees shaking, she holds on tremulously to the back of a chair, barely able to form her words)</i> No. No help now-- the dead wife-- she's taken them. (585)

Act	Transition	Act 2						
French Scene		I	J	K	L	M	N	O
Location		John's Study, Morning Day 2						
Event Title		Rebecca's Note	An Untimely Visit	An Accusation	The Battle for Life Begins	Betrayed	A Conditional Alliance	A Proposal
Key Event		Rebecca tells Rosmer that she sent a note with Ulrik to Mortensgård.	Kroll returns to speak to Rosmer and sees Rebecca in her Night Wrapper.	Kroll reveals Beata's visits to him before her suicide.	Kroll threatens Rosmer.	Mortensgard arrives at Rosmersholm.	Mortensgård reveals Beata's letter before her suicide.	Rebecca rejects John's proposal.
Page #'s		36-38	38-39	39-47	47-50	50	51-58	58-66
Rebecca		x	x					x
Rosmer		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Kroll			x	x	x	x		
Mrs. Halseth	x + crew (2-3)				x			(OFF)
Ulrik Brendel								
Mortensgård						x	x	

Act	Act 4				
French Scene	V	W	X	Y	Z
Location	Sitting Room, Rosmersholm, Evening Day 3				
Event Title	Mrs. Halseth's Opinion	The Why	The New World	The Contract	Crashing Down
Key Event	Rebecca lets Mrs. Halseth believe that she is pregnant.	Rebecca confesses that she loved Rosmer.	Ulrik reveals that Mortensgard is now the leader of the people.	John and Rebecca decide to jump into the Millrace.	Mrs. Halseth sees John & Rebecca die in the river.
Page #'s	94-96	96-105	105-108	108-114	114
Rebecca	x	x	x	x	
Rosmer		x	x	x	
Kroll					
Mrs. Halseth	x				x
Ulrik Brendel			x		
Mortensgård					

Research for Virtual & In-Person Production

Henrik Ibsen & Norwegian History

In the Winter Quarter of 2020, I had the opportunity to study Ibsen's works with Anita Montgomery, which as I have stated above was a major catalyst for the rediscovery of my love for Ibsen. His poetry, his political viewpoint, his dynamic and dramatic storytelling all invite the audience into a really exciting theatrical experience.

At the core of his work is a vital conversation about the human experience in relation to the world. Ibsen's plays have a central pattern, stories of "the individual in opposition to a hostile society," (MacFarlane 73). *Rosmersholm* is a clear example of that as Rosmer faces making a decision of allegiance that impacts his entire community in the midst of political turmoil, either siding with the power-hungry conservatives or the freethinking radicals of the time. While Rosmer only wants to bring people together, his community is tearing him apart trying to get his name and support for their mission. But in rediscovering Ibsen, I have seen his feminism shine through as a playwright since the women were typically placed as the "revolution of the human spirit," (82). Throughout his work, the women of Ibsen's are central to the storytelling and the social change that happens within the worlds of the play. Nora in *Doll's House* left her husband, a choice considered absurdly radical at the time full of social consequences and implications for the future of Nora. *Hedda Gabler* featured a woman trying to survive in a patriarchal society. Rebecca West as an emancipated woman is afforded some freedoms, but not all and thus manipulates people in order to change the community. As MacFarlane wrote in the *Cambridge Companion to Ibsen*, "Rebellion against this oppressive social system comes when the individual no longer feels at ease with this illusion of a satisfying life" (85). Everything changes when the individuals realize that their world isn't what it seems, and it was Ibsen's hope to awake people through his work to the central themes of his work: Truth and Freedom (88). These themes have been central to my work on this piece because it's what makes his work so timeless and resonates with audiences, and me, even today.



In researching this play, I also did some research on historical events that I believe were relevant and contemporary in the time because Ibsen was influenced by contemporary events. *Rosmersholm* premiered in 1886, but was written in 1885, the year that the Liberal Party won control of the Parliament after being founded in 1884. 1884 was also the year that the Norwegian Association of Women's Rights was founded, beginning the movement towards women's equality in Norway.

Norwegian Mythology

Henrik Ibsen as his work grew and aesthetic expanded incorporated more mythical or non-real elements in his work. When one examines *Doll's House* or *Hedda Gabbler* to *Wild Duck*, *Lady of the Sea*, *Peer Gynt*, or even *Rosmersholm*, we see more realism approach to play expand into a more theatrical realism, bordering nonrealism. In *Rosmersholm*, this means references and manifestations of ghosts, White Horses, and even Mermaids.

The White Horse, as I mentioned in my title analysis, is a harbinger of death in this play. In doing so research, the horse in Norwegian Mythology and other mythologies support this analysis and add a depth to the metaphor. Ibsen was a well-educated and well-travelled man, and I believe that his research in other countries included research into other mythologies, though his home and core connections to mythologies root back to Norway. This metaphor of a White Horse having almost been the title of the play has been a cornerstone in my work on the play. In many religious traditions, the White Horse represents death. For example, one of the 4 Horseman of the Apocalypse rides a White Horse which represents conquest. In Norse Mythology, the Nokk is a horse of water that represents Truth and Death. In some legends, it is believed that if you lie, the Nokk will pursue you and drown you. Also in Norse mythology, a White Horse is a signifier that death is near, often depicted as the coming of Odin, who rides an 8-legged White Horse. What I am most interested in continuing to research is the Kirkegrim, which is a live animal buried in the foundation of a church or major building that is also known as the "Punisher of those who Misbehave." Also, the Fylgje, which is a family familiar that attaches itself to a family line or individual, and, when seen, is a signifier of death and destruction.

In *Rosmersholm*, the White Horse is also the embodiment of the dead. Mrs. Halseth reports seeing the horse often and says that "It's the dead that cling to Rosmersholm." In this specific story, I believe that the Spirit of Beata is embodied in the White Horse. It's almost like the White Horse absorbs the dead and they become a part of the house, haunting those and making sure that the living continue the name and life of the Rosmer family. The design team and I plan on incorporating the visual of horses in multiple places. From Horses in the portraits on the wall to decorative wallpaper that looks like horses to horse heads on canes or pillars, we are looking to bring the visual metaphor of the White Horse into the space as a signifier of Rosmersholm's oppression, captivity, and eventual space of death.



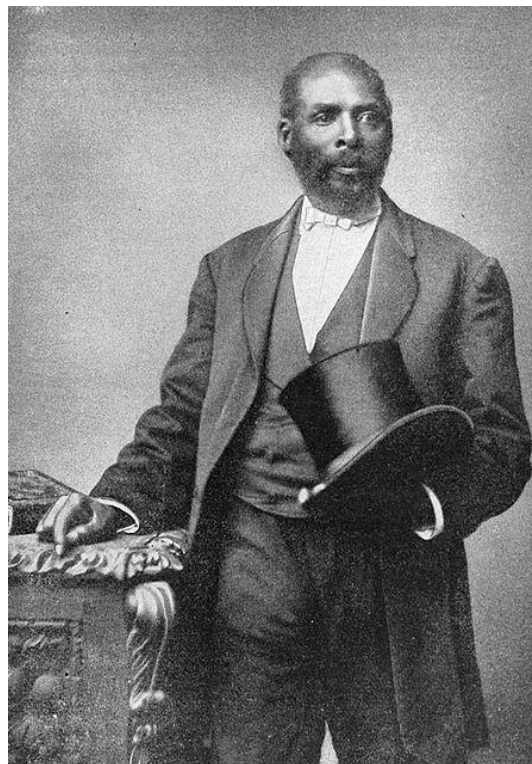


Character Research Insight - John Rosmer

In prepping for this work, I did character research on every character in this play and provided each performer a packet of articles, to support their storytelling. For Rebecca, I found articles on Emancipated Women in the 1880's and what that meant socially, culturally, and globally. For Kroll, research into Temperance Societies, Political strategies, and religion were essential. Ulrik's research centered in Temperance societies as well as tutor and philosophical research into Kierkegard, and since I had reimagined this character as also a closeted homosexual, I did some research on queer identity in the late 1800's. Rosmer was a much deeper dive, and that is what I wish to discuss in this section.

During Winter Quarter 2021, Valerie Curtis-Newton brought in Justin Emeka, a graduated MFA in Directing student from the University of Washington School of Drama. Emeka had contributed a chapter to the book *CASTING A MOVEMENT*, which discussed the importance of directors, dramaturgs, and theatre practitioners bringing in historical and real-life based research to ground the world of the play when it came to multi-cultural and intersectional performance. Emeka wrote for directors who wish to incorporate Black and Brown actors into Classical plays from the canon of White playwrights that they must approach the work by "re-interpreting the text through a Black or Brown experience; finding ways to support that interpretation with creative and historical cultural references; and using archetypes to help actors shape characters that can transform the expectations of both artists and audiences," (Banks 37).

I knew in casting a Black man as Rosmer, I would need to do some research in order to support his work in the world of the play. Beyond the basic given circumstance research of how to buy a church and his education as an upper class man and head of the community, I researched into how a black man could become a Rosmer. Two paths quickly emerged, the first was that a Rosmer had gone to war and had sired a child in another country, a story told through many examples, and so Rosmer had to bring the child home, which was a colonial approach to the narrative. But in the world we currently live in, I was interested in a story that told the story of someone trying to live in a society that kept him in a box of expectations and the weight of his own identity, a story of stepping into identity and truth even if it meant breaking with the traditions of the time. Between the research on how churches were established in smaller towns and the responsibility of a county seat, what emerged was the second story of Rosmer, which was the story of a black son of a black pastor. This was the path I wished to take Rosmer on, which lead me to a man named John J.



Jasper, a black pastor who was a Black slave pastor who, eventually, studied to be a Baptist preacher in America.

John J. Jasper was exactly the anchor and pivot point that the performer needed to root this character in the world of the play. From there, the rest fell into place through conversations and research. Rosmer's father would be a John J. Jasper reference point, a man who had learned to read and write, studied to be a pastor and was freed in the early 1800's. From there, he would begin his mission of establishing churches, joining in missionary work around the world, which would eventually bring him to the small coastal town where the Rosmers lived. After an unfortunate death, the son of the pastor would be adopted by the richest, most successful family in town to bring the boy up in the world as a favor to the pastor, which would be the Rosmer family. This is why John feels such a tug-o-war with the past. Not only does his leaving of the church break the traditions of the Rosmer family line, but it also breaks with the religion and profession of his biological father. Every move in the play then becomes about legitimizing this Black son of a pastor as a member and leader of this community. The Rosmers give him a traditional Norwegian name - Johannes Rosmer; they marry him to Beata, a prominent member of the community and sister of John's dear friend Rector Kroll, a leader of the Church; the Rosmer Family buys John a pastorship so that he can continue the work of his biological father and be a contributing member of this community.

Finding this research and anchor point really gave the performer a lot to work with and also helped us throughout the staging and work of the text. For example, Rebecca at one point in Act 2 says to Rosmer, paraphrased, to leave all thoughts of Beata behind and that he can do anything he set his mind to, which is not true of a Black man in this position and this world. Rosmer himself even talks about his great vision and then realizes that it will come true for everyone, but in Act 3 realizes it won't for all, "not for me" he says. Grounding Rosmer in a real life example was immensely helpful in his character text work and mine and through many conversation and collaborations, we arrived at a Rosmer that was being pulled in so many directions and felt the weight of his ancestral expectations.

Other character research can be found below in the Article by Character Breakdown. All performers had access to all articles in a Google Drive, so we essentially had a Dramaturgy binder in the Virtual Space with us at all times that the performers could use at their leisure. Every once in a while, I would encourage a performer to check out what was in there for some inspiration.

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Rebecca West

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