

Into The Woods
Lighting Treatment

This is a collection of ideas that I have for the lighting of the show, as well as some questions about the staging.

Overall:

- From our group discussions as well as my own readings I believe that the feel of the show is that of magical realism. Though the essence of the environment and the stories stem from the natural, they are still fairy tales. There are witches and elves and giant beanstalks. Therefore the worlds of the play are more enhanced – colors are richer and shifts can be more pronounced.
- The Woods, where the characters all must venture into, is an entity unto itself. It is immense and powerful. A place of mystery and magic. It is also transformative in that it can be comforting and peaceful, then in an instant become something dangerous.
 - At most times I want to keep the expansiveness of the woods present. Even in moments of tenderness or isolation, I still want to keep the woods looming off in the distance. An ever present reminder that the characters are in a place totally other and unknown.
 - Something else to consider is how textured are the portals in act 1? The set is very clean and crisp, perhaps in act one they are treated more with just color and then when we get to act two, and the world starts to break down, there is more texture on the portals that remain.
- Act I takes place in mid-to-late autumn. Colors here are more rich and warm, textures and shadows are softer and more mottled. In this act I'll be using the white of the set as a canvas to color and affect as the determined by the scene.
- Act II lives in winter. The color palate is tighter and more strictly defined. Blues, lavenders, and whites make up the majority of this world. In this act, I'm going to have more of the white set shine through. This is a colder and more stark incarnation of the woods we have come to know. Textures here are sharper and more crisp – it is a more violent world.
 - Aside from color and texture, I see a shift in the angles of light used. In this act I see much more upright used to an unnatural and sinister feel.
- I feel that the narrator is removed from the action of the story. He is always isolated in either a special or a spotlight that keeps him in his own world. This isolation breaks down in act II when the characters turn on him. Only then is he brought into the world of the fairytale.

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- The witch, especially in act I, carries with her a palpable power. She is a dark being and her presence affects the physical world about her. She brings shadows and more cool tones with her.

ACT I

Scene I

- *Prologue – 2:00pm*
 - The cueing for this section – especially the opening few moments – will be very staccato. I want the light to have the same feeling of momentum that the music does. It propels us into the story, starting first with the narrator, then the village, then finally the houses are brought to focus as the narrator introduces them.
 - This first number is warm and clear. mid-day sun illuminates the three houses. Cinderella’s chanting brings our first break from this setting, she becomes shrouded in texture and a vibrancy of color - a sense of an inner power - as she calls the birds. The next big shift in this scene comes with the Witch’s entrance into the baker’s house. She brings a power with her that shifts the environment. It becomes a bit more mottled, and little more shadowy. She is dangerous.
 - Finally the woods are revealed. They are immense and powerful – impressive and slightly scary. Textured light streams in, caught in the mists of the woods.
 - Will the narrator be stationary, or do you see him moving about?
 - How will the houses open up? Will they open together when the Narrator starts the show? Or do they open one at a time as the Narrator introduces them?
 - How do you see the general staging of both prologues? Specifically, how much action do you see taking place within the “houses” vs. downstage of them? As they are now, they are somewhat difficult to get light into. I’m talking with Sheryl and we will certainly have some lighting options for with the units, but it will be much more limited than out of them.

Scene II

- *Cinderella at the Grave – 4:00pm*

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- This song should have a similar feeling as did Cinderella's chanting in the Prologue. It should be evocative of the same sort of earth-magic that Cinderella is in touch with.
- It is more steeped in organic texture and the color of the world will shift to more vibrant ambers and purples.
- Jack Mysterious Man
 - It's later in the day. The sun is starting to come down from in the sky, casting longer shadows through the trees.
- *Hello, Little Girl* – 5:00
 - In another part of the forest Little Red skips through a field. It's a pretty and peaceful place in the woods.
 - The Wolf is the first time we're exposed to evil within the woods. As his song begins the mood of the scene shifts. It gets a bit more abstracted and menacing. The colors get a bit richer. the world almost becomes syrupy as the wolf lets his true lascivious nature out. The scene will swell into this shift with the wolf's groans.
- Baker, Wife, Witch and Jack. 6:00
 - The wolf leaves and we return to a look similar to what it was before the song, though it is a bit later in the day – the sun is starting to set.
- *I Guess This Is Goodbye* – Sunset
 - The sunset is at it's zenith, bathing Jack and Milky White in soft amber light as they say goodbye to one another. This is a very touching and innocent moment for Jack and his best friend.
- *Maybe They're Really Magic*
 - As jack leaves, the majesty of the moment with Milky White is broken. The scene is left a little more sober as the wife makes an earnest plea to her husband.
- The Witch at Rapunzel's tower
 - The sun has just set. The tower is bathed with cool moon light.
- Baker & Little Red / *Maybe They're Really Magic (Reprise)* - Twilight
 - In another part of the woods, the Baker finds Little Red. The mood is starting to shift. With the sun fading away, the woods start to become more imposing – more uncertain. Shadows are getting deeper and the textures are getting thicker.
- Little Red and Wolf
 - This is a scary scene. It's dark and shadowy and sinister. A stark contrast to the innocent tenderness of Jack and Milky White.

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- *I Know Things Now* 8:00-9:00
 - This song is very simple and earnest. I see Little Red pulled out in a spotlight with the woods looming behind her in moonlight.
- *A Very Nice Prince* – 11:30 pm
 - Time has passed. It's almost midnight. I see the Baker's Wife and Cinderella almost in a clearing in the woods. The two of them are bathed in moonlight. The light is almost crystalline as the two women long for the lives they haven't yet captured.
- *1st Midnight*
 - The serenity of the previous moments fades away as the 1st bell of midnight. The world becomes more chaotic as people move in and out, building toward the final chords of last midnight.
 - Night becomes darker and I plan to use lower, boom angles to cut people out.

Scene III

- *Giants in the Sky* – 10:00
 - It's next morning. The sun is streaming through the trees as Jack swoops in from his beanstalk. It is bright and crisp and should match the exuberance of Jack's song.
- Baker and Wife and Witch
 - This will be a continuation of Jack's song. The day continues to build around them.
 - The witch's entrance brings with it a sense of danger. I plan to add some texture and cooler tones here to visually enhance the affect she has on the characters.
- *Agony* – 1:00pm
 - The sun is higher in the sky. It is cool and clear. The princes carry a sense of grandeur with them.
- Baker, Jack's Mother, Baker's Wife, Rapunzel, Cinderella & Step sisters 2-9ish
 - During these scenes the woods should feel like they're closing in. though everyone has made strides toward they're desired goals, each is encountering obstacles that seem insurmountable.
- *It Takes Two* – 9:00
 - It's much later in the day. This song is a sigh of relief. Things are starting to look up again. The oppressiveness that had been building in

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the previous scene will melt away into a beautiful and romantic evening as the Baker and his Wife find each other again.

Scene IV

- *2nd Midnight*
 - Similar to 1st Midnight

Scene V

- Baker and Baker's Wife – 11:00am
 - It is morning by not as cheery as the previous day.
- *Stay With Me*
 - During this song I plan to pull tightly down to the Witch and Rapunzel. It is an intimate and tender moment
 - I want the woods to seem to grow and almost over take them during the witch's dialogue at the end of the song. In those few lines the witch changes from good to evil. She abandons her motherly compassion and instead turns to punishment and vengeance. I plan to echo that transformation in the perception of the woods. To have them become more oppressive and violent.
- Baker & Mysterious Man, Little Red & Jack, Witch and Rapunzel's prince
 - Throughout these scenes the oppressiveness that the Witch stained the woods with should remain, to an extent. People are getting tired and stressed as things are coming down to the wire.
- *On the Steps of the Palace* – 11:00
 - This moment should be similar to *A Very Nice Prince*.
- *Witch's Transformation*
 - This sequence will start in the same sort of state as the two previous midnights. However as the chimes of midnight begin to toll, the energy of the world should pick up finally crescendoing on the final stroke of midnight when a blinding flash of white light and fog reveals the Witch restored to her youthful glory.

Scene VI

- Stepsister try on the shoe
 - This sequence will similar to the houses in the prologue - Clear and without texture. However, when the prince takes a stepsister off with him it will become infused with the same sort of feeling as Cinderella's

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chanting and her mother's grave. More vibrant colors and texture that hint at a type of earth magic known only to Cinderella and her mother.

- *Ever After*
 - The end of act one will be bright and cheerful – the characteristic “happily ever after.”

ACT II

Scene 1

- Prologue: *So Happy* – 10:00am
 - The opening of this act should be similar to the opening of the previous act, though already we can see that something are different. Time is passed. It's colder – colors are more muted. That being said, it is still a happy time. The families are content as they grow accustomed to their newly improved lives.
 - I feel that the flow of the cues at the opening of the number should be the same as in the previous act – first the narrator, then the village, then the individual houses.
 - The giant's landing is the first real shift in this scene. The world loses it's luster as chaos breaks out. The contented glow that surrounded the scene goes away.
 - As the witch enters I do feel that there should be a subtle shift in the world around her, but I don't see it being as palpable as it was in the previous act. She's lost her power.
 - At which point do you see the woods being revealed?
- The Woods
 - The woods in this act are something almost entirely changed. They are cold and unwelcoming. They are much more frightening.
 - I feel that though changed and ragged, the woods, like in act one, have the power to be both imposing and at times comfortable, however it is an uneasy quiet – the calm before the storm or a softness that lures you in before the trap is sprung.

Scene II

- *Agony* – 1:00pm
 - It's later in the day. Cool light streams through bare branches.
- Villagers confront the giant

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- In another part of the woods we find The Baker, his Wife and Little Red. They are in completely unfamiliar territory.
- The world become brighter and more menacing as they turn on the narrator. It's something reminiscent of snow-blindness as the villager's fears flare up and. The things begin to return to "normal" as some of the characters see the error of their ways. After the Giant drops him there is a profound stillness in the woods.
- *Lament* – 3:00pm
 - The beginning of this song is harsh. Low angles of light cut through the stage as the witch spews her anger at the villagers, at Rapunzel and at the world.
 - This harshness softens and we pull in to the witch as her anger turns to despair at the loss of her "daughter" and her failure as a mother.
- Villagers after the Giant leaves
 - After *Lament* the woods that we return to are changed. They are stark and less friendly.
- *Any Moment* - 5:00pm
 - Some of the starkness of the environment has softened to leave us in a cold, but not particularly threatening part of the woods. The sun is beginning to set as the baker's wife and Cinderella's prince find each other. He charms both the baker's Wife and the woods to relax and let their guard down. The environment takes on a slightly romantic feel as the Wife is quickly courted.
- *Moments in the Woods* – Sunset
 - The sun is setting as the baker's Wife comes back to herself. This is a soft moment in the woods.
 - The world gets darker and more sinister as the giant approaches
- *Your Fault* – 10:00pm
 - It's dark, moonlight shines through the trees.
 - As song begins and the characters turn on one another the world shifts. Uplighting illuminates the set giving the woods an almost grotesque feel to them. This is no longer a friendly place but one that is powerful and scary.
- *Last Midnight*
 - A spot picks up the witch as the song starts. A cold, dappled texture lightly fills the stage. As the song picks up the texture grows and the

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witch is picked up in powerful white and lavender backlight – She becomes the ice queen in all her glory.

- In the final moments the witch disappears in a cloud of fog and a violent flash of white light.
- Little Red, Jack, Cinderella and the Baker are left alone
 - After the witch vanishes the villagers are left alone. The lighting is similar to what it was before *Your Fault* but there is an emptiness about the woods now. A feeling of hopelessness fills the space.
- *No More* – 1:00am
 - This is a simple and genuine song. The two men are bathed in moonlight as they have the closest thing to a father/son moment that they've ever had.
- *No One is Alone* – 5:00am
 - The sky is starting to lighten as the villagers prepare for what they must do. The ruins of the woods lie dormant around them, lit with grazing texture.
 - Where do you see the Baker and Jack's tree location
- Killing the Giant
 - The sky continues to lighten. Long shadows fall across the stage.
- Finale: *Children Will Listen* - Sunrise
 - The sun is higher in the sky, illuminating the stage as people start to reenter. It is a new day – one that holds hope for the future.
 - When the Wife enters we'll pull down slightly to the Baker and Wife. She'll be lit from behind giving her a faint ghostly glow.
 - When *Into the Woods* starts again the scene builds. It is brighter and more happy. Bright morning sun shines in and gives a contented glow to the stage – similar to the top of the act.