

ABSTRACT

A Director's Approach to
Ken Ludwig's *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery*

Edward E. Vermeulen-Wise, M.F.A.

Mentor: David Jortner, Ph.D.

This thesis documents the production process and the directorial approach to *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery* performed at Baylor University in the spring of 2021. The work explores Ken Ludwig's biography, how his writings are inspired by the comedies in the Great Tradition, and an analysis of the play. As subgenre of comedy, mysteries share many of the same qualities as comedies in the Great Tradition. Ludwig's adaptation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles* shares a pedigree with the greatest mysteries ever written, wrapped in a comic guise influenced by the works of Shakespeare, Sheridan, and Goldsmith. Additionally, this thesis explores the challenges that arose in the design and rehearsals processes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A Director's Approach to Ken Ludwig's *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery*

by

Edward E. Vermeulen-Wise

A Thesis

Approved by the Department of Theatre Arts

DeAnna Toten Beard, M.F.A., Ph.D., Chairperson

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Approved by the Thesis Committee

David Jortner, Ph.D., Chairperson

Marion Castleberry, Ph.D.

Steven Pounders, M.F.A.

Theresa Kennedy, Ph.D.

Accepted by the Graduate School
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J. Larry Lyon, Ph.D., Dean

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DEDICATION

To my wife, Elizabeth. Thanks for putting up with all my nonsense.

CHAPTER ONE

Ken Ludwig's Biography and *Baskerville's* Production History

Introduction

This thesis documents the production process and the directorial approach to *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery* performed at Baylor University in the spring of 2021. Chapter one examines Ken Ludwig's biography and body of work, how his writings are inspired by the "Great Comic Tradition,"¹ and the *Baskerville's* critical reception. Chapter two examines the relationship the mystery genre shares with melodrama and comedy and provides an analysis of the play. Chapter three details the development of the director's concept and design process of Baylor Theatre's production. Chapter four explores auditions, rehearsals, and the filmed performance of *Baskerville*. Chapter five reflects on the audience reception of the production as well as an analysis of my strengths as a director and opportunities for growth. Additionally, this thesis explores the challenges that arose throughout the production process due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

There were many concerns that accompanied directing a play during the COVID-19 pandemic. This meant navigating a changing season calendar, adhering to strict protocols for rehearsals, streaming performances, and limited audiences. These concerns extended to play selection as well. To limit potential exposure, the play I was to direct needed a small cast. Ken Ludwig's *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery* seemed an

¹ Ken Ludwig, "Comedy and the Great Tradition," July 24, 2020, accessed October 10, 2020. <https://www.kenludwig.com/posts/comedy-and-the-great-tradition>.

excellent option, featuring dozens of characters performed by only five actors. I thoroughly enjoyed my first reading of *Baskerville*. I was entertained with the play's stylistic approach and comedic sensibility. Quickly moving from location to location and doubling of characters made for a fascinating dynamic. Dramaturgically, I was excited about exploring the history of the source material and its writer. As a farcical mystery period piece, *Baskerville* had a lot to offer.

However, as person of mixed cultural heritage, I was concerned this century old story of imperial era British escapism didn't reflect the world of people like myself. I believe contemporary American theater has a responsibility to make space for different perspectives. I believe theatre should explore serious societal concerns and give voice to marginalized communities. But that isn't what *Baskerville* is about. I was also concerned directing this play may be seen as frivolous and would not be taken as seriously. I had to ask myself, why *Baskerville*? Why direct this story, now?

Reading Ludwig's essays on comedy helped put some of those fears to rest. He has dedicated his career to the serious study of comedy's rich history and has a deep love and respect for the theatre. Ludwig's approach to comedy is in no way frivolous. He has the audacity to say that comedy is not an inferior artform. Ludwig draws inspiration from the likes of Shakespeare, Mozart, Puccini, Sheridan, and Goldsmith. Exploring this pedigree was exciting to me. But I once again asked myself, how does this play reflect the world around me, especially now with the world suffering under the effects of a global pandemic?

Like Ludwig, I believe comedy has potential that extends beyond mere entertainment. I believe one could dedicate a lifetime to studying comedy. Watching

performances by Buster Keaton, the Marx Brothers, Monty Python, and Steve Martin isn't just entertainment for me, it's an education. I admire the mastery that goes into their craft. But comedy is more than that. It provides comfort. When grieving a loss, I can be found in the theatre watching comedy. When I feel uncomfortable, I crack jokes. Comedy can heal. The limited number of theatres still operating during the pandemic embraced this belief, creating comedy heavy seasons. Perhaps Ken Ludwig's *Baskerville* is the right play right now because people need the healing power of laughter more than ever.

This chapter will explore Ken Ludwig's biography, tracing his early appreciation for comedy at an early age through to his life-long study of works drawn from what he identifies as the Great Comic Tradition. Additionally, this examination will draw on how the Great Comic Tradition influenced his writing in various genres from musical comedy to mystery. Finally, this chapter will look at Ludwig's development of *Baskerville*, the generic questions surrounding the play, and its production history and critical reception.

Ken Ludwig Biography

Ken Ludwig's relationship with theatre developed from an early age, primarily from the influence of his mother. Louise Rabinoe worked as a chorus girl on Broadway prior to marrying Jacob Ludwig. After their marriage, the couple settled in York, Pennsylvania where Ken was born on March 15, 1950. Although Louise Ludwig left her Broadway career to start a family, she continued to perform in community theatre in York. In an interview with Rob Weinert-Kendt, Ludwig recalls watching his mother perform, "she was in all the community theatre things, and my brother and I would go and sit in the front row and watch her in one show after another. That became her way of

living this dream she loved so much.”² Young Ken’s fascination with theatre was further cultivated by his family’s yearly visits to his grandparents in Brooklyn, where they would see one Broadway production each year. Ludwig recounts seeing Gore Vidal’s *Visit to a Small Planet* at the age of six as a defining moment for his future as a playwright. “This is it, this is all I want to do,”³ he recalls.

Ludwig’s decision to become a playwright was not a foregone conclusion. As an undergraduate at Haverford College, Ludwig double-majored in English and musical composition. Ludwig describes the moment he approached his parents with the prospect of a life in theatre, “When I got serious about wanting to be in the theatre, it was, ‘Well, wait a second, you are going to go get a professional degree, you are going to go have something that you can actually live on.’ Even from my mom. So I went to Harvard Law School.”⁴ Soon after enrolling at Harvard, Ludwig presented his musical compositions to the legendary composer Leonard Bernstein who was serving as artist-in-residence. On the merit of those compositions, Ludwig was invited to join Bernstein’s musical theatre seminar. While Ludwig received his law degree from Harvard, his focus was by no means limited. As Liza Mundy, *Washington Post* critic, writes, “Talking to Ludwig, it doesn’t take long to see that this playwright-lawyer thing is part of a pattern.”⁵

² Rob Weinert-Kendt, “Ken Ludwig’s Love Letter to His Pen-Pal Parents,” Interviews, *American Theatre*, December 16, 2019, accessed October 10, 2020. <https://www.americantheatre.org/2019/12/16/ken-ludwigs-love-letter-to-his-pen-pal-parents/>.

³ Doug Schutte, “Ken Ludwig, Master of the Farce, Passes ‘the Torch’ of Inspiration,” *Southern Theatre*, Summer 2013, 7, accessed October 10, 2020. <https://www.kenludwig.com/posts/2013/07/02/ken-ludwig-master-of-the-farce-passes-the-torch-of-inspiration>.

⁴ Weinert-Kendt, “Ludwig’s Love Letter.”

⁵ Liza Mundy, “Ken Ludwig’s Brief for the Stage,” *The Washington Post*, Sept 7, 1988, accessed October 10, 2020. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1988/09/07/ken-ludwigs-brief-for-the-stage/eae34784-2bc2-420f-a1f9-5fcba7cbad88/>.

Ludwig's theatre studies continued when he attended Cambridge University, where he divided his time between studying law and English. While at Cambridge a portion of Ludwig's graduate studies were dedicated to studying Restoration comedies. Any free time his busy schedule allowed was reserved for reading plays and seeing as much theatre as he could; he writes, "I was devouring two, three plays a day, I was seeing everything in London, seeing everything in Stratford."⁶

After graduation, Ludwig practiced law in Washington D.C. while continuing to write plays. Ludwig states, "I still wanted to do nothing but write and be in show business. But when I got out of law school, I didn't have any money. So I did practice law for a couple of years and wrote four hours every morning—I mean, religiously."⁷ It is during this time that Ludwig developed an appreciation for what he describes as "Comedies in the Great Tradition."⁸ He was especially drawn to William Shakespeare's "high" comedies *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It*, and *Much Ado About Nothing*. Ludwig also developed a fondness for the "laughing comedies" of the latter half of the eighteenth century, notably Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *School for Scandal*, *The Rivals* and Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*. These works had a significant influence on Ludwig's writing, as he recalls in his interview with Weinert-Kendt, "Aside from my obsession with Shakespeare, I was all about Goldsmith and Sheridan, and then Farquhar and the Restoration period... The kinds of comedies I've wanted to write more

⁶ Mundy, "Ken Ludwig's Brief for the Stage."

⁷ Weinert-Kendt, "Ludwig's Love Letter."

⁸Ken Ludwig, "Comedy and the Great Tradition;" In Ludwig's essay he uses 'The Great Comic Tradition' and 'Comedies in the Great Tradition' interchangeably.

than anything in the world are like *She Stoops to Conquer*—I think that’s the greatest comedy ever written after Shakespeare. It’s perfect.”⁹

Three years out of law school, with several plays in various stages of development on small stages, English director David Gilmore approached Ludwig about his new play *Lend Me a Tenor*. Ludwig states, “I gave it to him and he said, ‘I love this play, I want to show it to a producer friend of mine.’ I tried to act as if I was a big shot, so I said, ‘Oh, well, I have producers interested also—who’s your friend?’ He said, ‘He’s Andrew Lloyd Webber.’”¹⁰ Soon after this encounter, Webber arranged for a production of the play with Gilmore to direct. *Lend Me a Tenor* premiered on London’s West End in 1986 and moved to Broadway in 1989. The play was nominated for nine Tony Awards, winning three. As a result of this first success Ludwig decided he could make a living as a playwright. Consequently, he decreased his legal work to part-time.

With his next production, *Crazy for You*, in 1992, Ludwig left practicing law altogether. He recalls, “I got a call out of the blue from a guy named Roger Horchow and I wrote *Crazy for You* for him. So I had that on Broadway and that was the point where I said, okay, you know, I’m just gonna take the plunge and become a full-time playwright.”¹¹ *Crazy for You*, developed from the music of George and Ira Gershwin, received numerous awards, including the Tony, Drama Desk, and Laurence Olivier Awards. Ken Ludwig has since written numerous plays and musicals, with twenty-five scripts available for production as of 2021.

⁹ Weinert-Kendt, “Ludwig’s Love Letter.”

¹⁰ Weinert-Kendt, “Ludwig’s Love Letter.”

¹¹ Weinert-Kendt, “Ludwig’s Love Letter.”

Ken Ludwig's Body of Work

Baskerville shares many similarities with Ludwig's other plays. *Baskerville's* use of elements of farce, inclusion of classical music and opera, and dramatic structure have their roots in his previous plays. It may then be useful to categorize Ludwig's plays to see what qualities they share and how they differ. For this purpose, I will examine Ludwig's body of work as four broadly defined categories: farcical comedies, musical comedies, adventure adaptations, and mysteries. While Ludwig's plays all contain a comic foundation, plays in these various categories draw on traditions of their individual genres, especially regarding their staging conventions.

Ludwig's farcical comedies include *Lend Me a Tenor*, *Moon Over Buffalo* (1995), *Leading Ladies* (2004), and *A Comedy of Tenors* (2015). These plays are quick paced, character driven, and usually set in a single location. The setting allows for multiple entrances and opportunities for farcical humor. Ludwig's farces contain high stakes that add to the dramatic tension of each piece. The farcical approach he takes with these plays serves as a sort of foundation for much of his writing and elements of farce can be observed throughout his body of work.

Ludwig's musical comedies, while obviously being a completely different theatrical form, contain many of the comic sensibilities of his farces, but increase the scope of the world of the play by pulling the action outside of a single location. Additionally, there is an inherent lyrical quality in his musical comedies not present in his farces. Ludwig describes this as "poetic richness."¹² It should be noted that Ludwig provides the book for each of these musicals but has not written music or lyrics. With *The*

¹² Ludwig, "Comedy and the Great Tradition;" this is explored further in the next section.

Adventures of Tom Sawyer (2001) he collaborated with composer, Don Schlitz. In *Crazy for You* and Gershwin's *An American in Paris* (2008), Ludwig developed the books to existing music of George and Ira Gershwin.

Ludwig's adventure adaptations feature comic retellings of literary classics. These plays move at an exhilarating pace, are epic in scope, and, like Ludwig's musicals, have an increased scope as they explore many unique locations. Ludwig states in his interview with Danielle Mages Amato, "I love the notion of the live stage being a place where we can now and then get the same sheer entertainment value we get from movies. Theatre used to be a place for large stories with vast settings, stories that moved around the globe, from court to forest, from battlefield to tempests in the middle of the ocean."¹³ Ludwig likens these plays to films featuring Indiana Jones, "I'm saying that plays with a more adventurous focus are a part of our theatre heritage we shouldn't lose."¹⁴ Plays in this category are *Treasure Island* (2008), *The Three Musketeers* (2006) and *Sherwood: The Adventures of Robin Hood* (2018).

Ludwig's mysteries are injected with a heavy dose of comedy, especially those based on his original ideas. *Postmortem* (1989) and *The Game's Afoot or Holmes for the Holidays*¹⁵ (2012) share similarities with Ludwig's early farcical comedies in that the action is contained within a single locale. Ludwig's 2017 adaptation, *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express*, is also contained within a single location, but instead of

¹³ Ken Ludwig, "A Whopping Good Time," July 24, 2020, accessed October 10, 2020. <https://www.kenludwig.com/posts/a-whopping-good-time>.

¹⁴ Ludwig, "A Whopping Good Time."

¹⁵ Ludwig reimaged the premise he developed with *Postmortem* for *The Game's Afoot or Holmes for the Holidays*, once again setting the play within the confines of protagonist, William Gillette's, castle.

employing conventions of farce, Ludwig instead accentuated the humor already present in the source material but with an overall darker atmosphere.

In *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery* (2015), Ludwig draws from the formula he used with his adventure adaptations. He increases the scope by featuring numerous often mysterious settings and focuses on a quickly paced narrative. Similar to his Agatha Christie adaptation, Ludwig's approach to the play's comedy was to emphasize the humor already present in the source material. He increases the comic potential by having five actors portray every character in the play but preserves the tone and high stakes of the source material. In "A Note from the Author of Baskerville," Ludwig states "I've tipped the scales a bit in the direction of comedy, particularly in light of all the doubling. But please keep in mind that this tipping of the scales means all the more that the acting and the production should be approached with the intensity and truth of a serious thriller. Characters must seem just as real as they would in any mystery-thriller, and the story must be told with real heart."¹⁶ When looking at Ludwig's plays, as well as his various essays on writing for the theatre, it becomes apparent that Ludwig has invested considerable time to the study of comedy and its various tropes and conventions as they appear across genres.

¹⁶ Ken Ludwig, "A Note from the Author of Baskerville," July 24, 2020, accessed October 10, 2020. <https://www.kenludwig.com/posts/a-note-from-the-author-of-baskerville>

The Great Comic Tradition

Ken Ludwig has dedicated his career to the serious study of comedy and his own writings are inspired by what he describes as the comedies in the Great Tradition,¹⁷ which he states first manifests on stage with the comedies of William Shakespeare:

Four hundred years ago, Shakespeare invented the most original, bracing and astonishing form of stage comedy the world has ever known. He started figuring it out in the early 1590s in *The Comedy of Errors* and *The Taming of the Shrew*. Soon afterwards, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, he nailed it. He had penned the three greatest comedies ever written, his so-called "high comedies," *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*.¹⁸

Ludwig claims, after Shakespeare's death, the plays worthy of the Great Comic Tradition are found in the comic operas of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He writes: "The answer, I think, is that they were written – and that they're constantly performed and adored – but that we don't usually recognize them as the successors of Shakespeare's work." Ludwig identifies *The Marriage of Figaro* and *The Magic Flute* by Mozart, Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, Verdi's *Falstaff*, and Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* as successors of the Great Comic Tradition, saying "The answer, I think, is that Shakespeare's comedies and the great comic operas share a set of identical ingredients."¹⁹ In his essay "Comedy and the Great Tradition," Ludwig lists these ingredients as follows:

1. Each piece contains a broad palette of colorful characters, young and old, master and servant, rich and poor, idealistic and cynical. Similarly, there is wide variety of scenes, often exotic or at least foreign. The broth is rich.

¹⁷ Ludwig, "Comedy and the Great Tradition."; Ludwig borrows the phrase from critic F.R. Leavis, who claims in his book, *The Great Tradition*, only the novels of Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James, and Joseph Conrad contain the moral seriousness to be worthy of the "Great Tradition." Ludwig's qualifications for what makes a play worthy of the Great Tradition of Comedy differ greatly from Leavis'.

¹⁸ Ludwig, "Comedy and the Great Tradition."

¹⁹ Ludwig, "Comedy and the Great Tradition."

2. The story is genuinely compelling. It's a great yarn. We really want to know what happens next.
3. There is more than one plot going on at the same time.
4. The tone is romantic with respect to at least one of the plots.
5. The piece contains broadly comic characters, and the action encompasses broad comic devices, which almost always include disguise and mistaken identity. These are usually accompanied by some degree of boisterous physical comedy.
6. At least one of the characters achieves a depth of emotion that genuinely moves us.
7. There is a genuine sexiness about the piece.
8. The story ends with one or more marriages.
9. There is an element of fantasy, or at least perceived fantasy, in one of the plots.
10. The piece has a poetic richness about it, a quality that ultimately takes us out of ourselves. In Shakespeare's case, it's derived from the poetry itself; in the case of the operas, it comes from the music.
11. The piece has a characteristic rhythm that feels like a long arc, moving from relative stability, through a period of uncertainty and struggle, finally resolving itself in a happy serenity that leaves us feeling fulfilled and content (sort of a classical sonata form writ large)²⁰
12. Finally, the complexity of the piece ultimately leaves us with a sense of exhilaration. We feel not simply that we've had a good time, but also that we have witnessed a piece of life that leaves us with a feeling of renewal and hope. We have partaken of not just entertainment, but of that indefinable something we call "art."²¹

Ludwig believes when all twelve ingredients are present in a single theatrical event, they produce life a changing experience, "they create an experience that tells us something profound about ourselves while, at the same time, leaving us with a feeling of being transformed."²²

²⁰ In his essay, Ludwig expands on this point, crediting Northrup Frye's writings on the comic movement of drama in *Anatomy of Criticism*. This will be examined in more detail in Chapter 2.

²¹ Ludwig, "Comedy and the Great Tradition."

²² Ludwig, "Comedy and the Great Tradition."

Writing Baskerville

Ken Ludwig developed *Baskerville* in a manner similar to his other adventure adaptations. He looked at his collection of books, searching for a subject for his next play rereading a few Holmes stories, and decided to adapt *The Hound of the Baskervilles* as a comedy.²³ While there have been a number of screen adaptations of Sherlock Holmes, Ludwig wanted his portrayal of Holmes to be more faithful to Doyle's original creation, believing recent portrayals to be too muscular and heroic, "for some reason, it seems to be just the right time for Holmes and Watson. Perhaps these days we crave a hero who succeeds despite, or perhaps because of his quirks, his obsessions, and his near-fatal flaws."²⁴ Ludwig's intent in his adaptation was to capture the sense of excitement that he felt when reading great adventure stories, qualities he believes to be absent in contemporary theatre. To do this he draws on the intimate relationship mystery has with melodrama.²⁵ Ludwig, an American uses the shared tradition of melodrama in English and American theatre to tell this distinctly English mystery. Ludwig explains, "In melodramas we sit on the edge of our seats watching exciting stories where anything can happen."²⁶ When trying to decide which of Doyle's many Holmes stories to develop, Ludwig was immediately drawn to *Hound of the Baskervilles*. "I think *Hound* is the best of all the Holmes stories," he explained, "It's clever and crafty, filled with colorful

²³ Ken Ludwig, "Writing Baskerville." July 24, 2020, accessed October 10, 2020. <https://www.kenludwig.com/posts/baskerville-nea-artists-statement>.

²⁴ Ken Ludwig, *Baskerville: a Sherlock Holmes Mystery*, (United States: Samuel French, 2015), 6.

²⁵ The relationship between mystery and melodrama is explored in more detail in the next chapter.

²⁶ Ken Ludwig, *Baskerville*, 7.

characters (and an especially fine villain), has evocative settings, and it moves like lightning.”²⁷

Baskerville was not Ludwig’s first attempt at blending suspense and humor. In his 2012 play, *The Game’s Afoot*, Ludwig first explored the intersection between comedy and mystery within the traditional comic stage form utilized in his farces. In *Baskerville* he tried to go a step further and “stretch the boundaries of traditional comedy by making it less realist and literal. We are used to seeing comedies in living rooms and offices; we aren’t used to seeing them on the moors of England’s West Country.”²⁸

Baskerville *Synopsis*

Act One

The prologue to the first act begins in Devonshire. Sir Charles Baskerville exits their home, Baskerville Hall on a misty night for a stroll in the garden. Soon after, they are startled by the sound of a large creature and Sir Charles attempts to run away but is overtaken by the creature’s looming shadow. The prologue ends with Sir Charles’ scream as darkness covers the stage.

Scene one takes place three weeks later, at 221B Baker Street, the residence of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson. Holmes and Watson exchange theories as to the identity of the visitor who left a walking stick the previous evening. Shortly after, the owner of the stick, Dr. John Mortimer, arrives and produces an old manuscript that tells the legend of a supernatural hound that hunts the heirs to the Baskerville fortune.

²⁷ Ken Ludwig, *Baskerville*, 10.

²⁸ Ludwig, “Writing Baskerville.”

Mortimer narrates the tale of the hound as the action plays out on stage. They explain that Hugo Baskerville, infatuated with the daughter of a local yeoman, kidnaps the young maiden and locks them away in the upper floors of the manor. When Sir Hugo discovers the maiden has escaped, they summon the powers of hell and sets hounds on the maiden's trail. Hugo's drunken guests mount their own horses and follow after their host only to discover the young woman dead and a monstrous hound tearing at Hugo's throat. Dr. Mortimer concludes the tale by describing the death of Sir Charles several weeks prior and informs Holmes and Watson that the heir to Baskerville Hall, Sir Henry, is soon to arrive from America and in need of their help. Holmes agrees to Mortimer's request and the scene concludes with Holmes sending Watson out to purchase tobacco.

Upon Watson's return to the Baker Street flat, they find Holmes surrounded by a cloud of tobacco smoke, deep in thought. Holmes expresses curiosity as to the reason why Sir Charles chose to wait outside rather than in their own house, but his thought is cut short as the two leave to attend the opera. While at the opera, Holmes appears to be in a trance-like state, considering the details of the mystery.

The following morning, Holmes and Watson meet with Mortimer and Sir Henry, and are presented with a message constructed from newspaper clippings warning Sir Henry to keep away from the moor. Sir Henry refuses to be frightened from their inheritance and Holmes reassures all will be well if they follow Holmes' advice, sending Mortimer and Sir Henry back to their hotel. As they leave, Holmes and Watson set out to follow after them. In the scene that follows, Holmes discovers Sir Henry is being followed by a character known as the Man with the Black Beard. The Man with the Black Beard spots Holmes and Watson and makes a hasty retreat in a cab.

Holmes and Watson next visit a district messenger office to seek the identity of the cab driver. There, Cartwright and Milker, two boys in the Baker Street Irregulars²⁹, arrive for an assignment. Holmes tasks the boys with searching hotels for the newspaper that supplied the clippings for the warning message, then Holmes and Watson set out to the Northumberland Hotel, where Sir Henry and Dr. Mortimer are lodging. When Holmes and Watson arrive at the hotel, they discover Sir Henry arguing with the staff about a boot of his that has gone missing. Holmes tells the Mortimer and Sir Henry they will be unable to travel with them to Devon due to another case but ensures them Sir Henry will be safe in Watson's care.

Holmes accompanies the trio to the train station where they are met by the cab driver they had enquired about at the messenger office. The driver claims the Man with the Black Beard identified himself as "Sherlock Holmes." Holmes sends Watson off with a warning to avoid the moor after dark. After a short train ride, Watson and Sir Henry arrive in Devon where they take a carriage to Baskerville Hall.

Once at Baskerville Hall, Watson and Sir Henry meet the servants, Mr. and Mrs. Barrymore. Their attention is drawn to the portraits of the past inhabitants of the manor, including that of Sir Hugo. Once Watson is shown to their room, they begin composing a letter to Holmes, telling their friend of how little sleep they have gotten since arriving at the manor due to the nightly sound of crying.

The next morning Watson walks a path on the moor where they meet Stapleton chasing butterflies with a net. After a brief discussion about the mystery of Sir Charles' death, Stapleton warns Watson of the dangers of venturing into Grimpen Mire. When

²⁹ The Baker Street Irregulars are a group of street urchins Sherlock Holmes employs to run errands and collect intelligence.

Stapleton rushes to chase after a butterfly, Beryl, Stapleton's sister, approaches Watson. Mistaking Watson for Sir Henry, Beryl warns Watson to return to London, but is unable to provide a reason before Stapleton returns and Beryl changes their demeanor. When Sir Henry arrives on the scene there is an immediate attraction between Sir Henry and Beryl. Once Stapleton exits, Beryl warns Henry of the hound, but is startled by a far-off howl and faints in Sir Henry's arms.

Back at 221B Baker Street, Cartwright and Milker arrive to report to Holmes, stating they have been unsuccessful in finding the newspapers. Holmes asks for assistance reading Watson's latest letter as they had temporarily blinded themselves with an experiment. The two boys relay Watson's meeting with the Stapletons as well as the appearance of the Man of Mystery that appears to spy on them from the rocks on the moor. The letter concludes with Watson describing events that play out on stage over the next few scenes.

Watson and Sir Henry discover the Barrymores have been signaling someone out on the moor. They reveal that they have been giving food and Sir Henry's old clothing to Mrs. Barrymore's convict brother, Victor. Watson and Sir Henry set out on the moor to find the convict. Eventually they discover Victor's hiding spot, and a struggle ensues. Watson is struck on the head and the act ends when Victor flees, leaving Sir Henry onstage crying out that Watson has died.

Act Two

The act begins with Sir Henry Baskerville reprising the declaration of John Watson's death. However, Watson has survived, though they are seriously injured and convalesces at Baskerville Hall. There they are surprised with a visit by Holmes. Before

departing, Holmes tells Watson of several possible theories regarding the case as the scenarios are played out on stage. Sir Henry arrives to tell of their plans to meet with Beryl on the moor, though Watson protests.

On the moor Sir Henry professes love to Beryl before proposing marriage. Beryl agrees and they embrace in a passionate kiss, only to be interrupted by an irate Stapleton. Watson arrives to witness the angry exchange and Watson and Sir Henry discuss the strange scenario once the Stapletons have left. Stapleton returns to apologize and asks Sir Henry to have dinner with them later in the week, but requests that Henry refrain from courting Beryl until then. Watson relays another message to Holmes regarding this troubling encounter.

When Watson and Sir Henry return to Baskerville Hall, they are met by the Barrymores. Miss Barrymore discloses the reason for Sir Charles' waiting outside the manor the night of their death was to meet with a mystery woman. Mrs. Barrymore produces a small piece of paper signed with the initials "L.L." Watson and Sir Henry visit Dr. Mortimer who informs them that they know only one woman with those initials, Laura Lyons. Suddenly, Mortimer spots the Man of Mystery watching the village from the rocks of the Black Tor. Watson and Sir Henry rush to try to find the suspicious character.

While exploring the Black Tor, Watson and Sir Henry discover a hut and evidence within suggesting the Man of Mystery has been following them. Sir Henry leaves the hut to search for the suspect. When the Man of Mystery returns to the hut to discover Watson, they reveal themselves to be Sherlock Holmes, who has taken on the disguise to investigate the case from an independent angle. Holmes discloses they have

learned of a close intimacy between Laura Lyons and Stapleton, and that Beryl is not Stapleton's sister, but rather his wife. The two are startled by screaming from outside the hut and rush out onto the moor.

Holmes and Watson discover a body they believe to belong to Sir Henry. However, Sir Henry arrives and they all realize the body belongs to Victor dressed in Sir Henry's clothes. Stapleton arrives on the scene, shocked to see Sir Henry alive. Sherlock tells Stapleton they will return to London in defeat and leave for the train station. However, instead of boarding for London, Holmes meets with Cartwright and Milker who have arrived to deliver a letter.

Holmes and Watson make a visit to Laura Lyons' place of business and reveal the contents of the letter, evidence of Stapleton's marriage to Beryl. Angered, Mrs. Lyons admits Stapleton instructed them to write the letter to Sir Charles, asking to meet, but would not allow Laura Lyons to attend the meeting. Convinced of Stapleton's guilt, Holmes instructs Sir Henry to meet the Stapletons for dinner at which point they will tell the Stapletons they intend to walk home via the moor. Before Holmes and Watson leave the manor, they discover a painting of Sir Hugo who looks identical to Stapleton, revealing Stapleton to be a Baskerville.

Holmes and Watson return to the train station to meet with Inspector Lestrade and the three trio venture out to the home of the Stapletons, Merripit House. Once there, they witness Stapleton exiting the house to check on a large hound kept in an enclosure outside. Holmes' plan is complicated as a thick fog rolls in across the moor and group rushes to get into position to protect Sir Henry from an attack. As Sir Henry leaves

Merripit House to walk along the moor, Stapleton releases the hound. Holmes and Watson save Sir Henry's life by shooting the hound.

The party returns to Merripit House to discover Stapleton has already fled and Beryl has been tied up. Beryl tells them Stapleton's only option is to flee to a mine located inside Grimpen Mire, but they have moved the markers Stapleton uses for navigation. Stapleton screams in the distance and the party rushes to the window to witness them sinking into the mire.

A month later, at 221B Baker Street, Holmes pieces together the clues that helped him solve the case. Sir Henry and Beryl arrive to announce their engagement and the four celebrate by attending the opera. The play ends when the actor playing the lead in the opera dies and a far-off explosion rattles the building, cueing Sherlock Holmes to declare, "Back to work!"

Baskerville Production History and Criticism

Ken Ludwig's *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery* premiered January 16, 2015, at Arena Stage's Kreeger Theater in Washington D.C. The play was a co-production between Arena Stage and McCarter Theatre Center for the Performing Arts in Princeton, New Jersey. Following a brief run at Arena Stage, the production moved to McCarter Theatre Center's Matthew Theatre on March 13, 2015.

Reviews of *Baskerville* were generally positive, especially regarding Ludwig's comedic approach and adherence to the original. *Washington Post* critic Rebecca Ritzel interviewed members of the Red Circle, a group of devotees of Sherlock Holmes formed in 1949, to get their opinion of the Arena Stage production. Peter Blau, leader of the Red Circle, told Ritzel, "Everyone enjoyed it... I thought the play was fascinating; it had a

tremendous amount of energy, with a lot of humor.”³⁰ Kristina Manente, a contributor to the all-female Sherlock Holmes fan site, *The Baker Street Babes*, called the show a “delight,” particularly praising Michael Glenn’s portrayal of cowboy Sir Henry and Wooddell for using “all the traits of Holmes from the books, fleshing them out in a fun way that really fits with the rest of the play, but also doesn’t stray a ridiculous amount from the original stories.”³¹

Not all reviews of the play were as positive. Ken Jaworowski’s *New York Times* review of the Arena-McCarter production expressed his belief that in remaining faithful to the novel, *Baskerville* suffered from, “too much narrative to slog through,” which detracted from the comedy. Jaworowski states, “The mystery inside the mystery of “Baskerville” is why this fairly amusing play isn’t funnier. Indeed, so many of the elements are first rate -- skilled actors and a clever staging at the McCarter Theater Center in Princeton among them -- that it can feel downright puzzling when jokes miss their marks. Sure, there are laughs. But it often seems that they should be louder.”³² Jaworowski doesn’t suggest that the play lacks humor, only that moments of genuine hilarity are often interrupted by too much exposition and dialogue. Referring to the first meeting on the moor between Doctor Watson and the Stapletons, Jaworowski remarks,

³⁰ Rebecca Ritzel, “Sherlockians flock to ‘Baskerville’ at Arena, pronouncing it a bloody good time,” *the Washington Post*, February 3, 2015, accessed October 12, 2020. https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/theater_dance/sherlockians-flock-to-baskerville-at-arena-pronouncing-it-a-bloody-good-time/2015/02/03/b36e28fc-abdb-11e4-9c91-e9d2f9fde644_story.html.

³¹ Ritzel, “Sherlockians flock to ‘Baskerville.’”

³² Ken Jaworowski, “Review: In the Comic ‘Baskerville’ at the McCarter Theater Center, Sherlock Holmes Investigates a Curse,” *New York Times*, March 22, 2015, accessed October 14, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/22/nyregion/review-in-the-comic-baskerville-at-the-mccarter-theater-center-sherlock-holmes-investigates-a-curse.html>

“It's a marvelously madcap segment that is eager to be outrageous, and is the closest the play comes to the unbridled zaniness of comedies like *The 39 Steps* and *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*.”³³ Jaworowski is not the only critic to identify Patrick Barlow's *The 39 Steps* as an influence to the theatricality and humor within *Baskerville*, but he does suggest the play's dense narrative action to be a hinderance to the comic stylization.

Reviews of subsequent productions are generally favorable, focusing primarily on the Barlow-inspired winks at the audience. The West Coast premiere of *Baskerville* took place at the Old Globe in San Diego, California on July 30, 2015. Bob Verini's *Variety* review of the production highlights the theatricality and performance style. While Vernini gives the production a positive review, he expresses some notable concerns, “If the dialogue isn't as funny as it thinks it is, and if a pair of suspects,” referring to Mr. and Mrs. Barrymore, “are vulgarized as a low-rent, unfunny ripoff of Igor and Frau Blucher from ‘Young Frankenstein,’ these are minor annoyances. The farcical to-dos of this ‘Baskerville’ keep threatening to capsize the drama without ever quite doing so, which makes all the difference.”³⁴

Baskerville's United Kingdom premiere opened on December 9, 2017, at the Liverpool Playhouse in Liverpool, England. The reviews from this production were overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the humor brought forth by the character doubling. Critic Jamie Gaskin suggests that Ludwig was successful in his aim to bring audiences to

³³ Jaworowski, “Review: In the Comic ‘Baskerville.’”

³⁴ Bob Vernini, “Regional Theater Review: ‘Baskerville,’ Ken Ludwig’s Sherlock Tale,” *Variety*, August 3, 2015, accessed October 14, 2020. <https://variety.com/2015/legit/reviews/baskerville-review-ken-ludwig-1201555392/>.

the theatre to experience a good time, “The familiar *Hound of the Baskervilles* plot,” he remarked, “is followed fairly faithfully but the style is quite original providing many laugh-out-loud moments. The scene changing is slick and creative often with someone changing to a new character to introduce the new set.”³⁵ Lyn Gardner of *The Guardian* posits that the limitations inherent in the script only add to the comedy of the production, “Drawing on the concept that made Patrick Barlow’s stage version of *The 39 Steps* such a success, the play continually draws attention to its shortage of actors and resources, rather than trying to hide it. A significant amount of the show’s pleasure is drawn from the virtuosity and quick-change skills of the performers.”³⁶ Catharine Jones, critic for *Arts City Liverpool*, suggests the Liverpool production to be, “by far the most entertaining offering in recent years.”³⁷ Jones echoes Gardner’s assessment regarding the script’s limitations, suggesting that the occasional inability of the actors to fully transform from one character to the next in time provided only heightens the experience. Jones writes “There’s inventive use of a modest number of props and sparse set, as well as multimedia projection, while the rapid costume changes are a source of amusement and delight in their own right – particularly when they’re impossible to achieve, which is then covered by a clever knowing nod to the audience.”³⁸

³⁵ Jamie Gaskin, “Review: Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery - Liverpool Playhouse,” *The Reviews Hub – Northwest*, December 20, 2017, accessed October 12, 2020. <https://www.thereviewshub.com/baskervillea-sherlock-holmes-mystery-liverpool-playhou/>.

³⁶ Lyn Gardner, “Deerstalkers and devil dogs: Sherlock Holmes hits stage at the double,” *The Guardian*, July 16, 2018, accessed October 14, 2020. <http://inwebe.com/books/deerstalkers-and-devil-dogs-sherlock-holmes-hits-stage-at-the-double/>.

³⁷ Catherine Jones, “Review: Baskerville at Liverpool Playhouse,” *Arts City Liverpool*, December 13, 2017, accessed October 12, 2020. <https://www.artscityliverpool.com/single-post/2017/12/13/Review-Baskerville-at-Liverpool-Playhouse->.

³⁸ Jones, “Review: Baskerville.”

In preparations for directing *Baskerville*, it is important to be aware of areas of criticism from these past productions. Critics generally favored Ludwig's use of character doubling and the play's 'winks' to the audience, acknowledging its own theatricality. While Ludwig streamlines Doyle's story, the play covers a large narrative plot. This is most evident in the second act as the characters rush from one location to the next, putting together the final clues of the mystery. Careful attention should be paid to achieving a balance between providing expositional plot points and injecting the final scenes with energy and tension. To a lesser degree, some critics have suggested the writing thinks it is funnier than it really is. It is therefore important to strike a balance between the dramatic and comic elements within the production, while maintaining the style and inherent theatricality of the play. Additionally, drawing from criticism regarding characterization, it becomes necessary to invest in fully developed characters whenever possible, rather than relying on broad characterizations played up for the sake of comedy. Ludwig's advice to play the stakes rather than the joke ³⁹ is beneficial in this regard.

Conclusion

Ken Ludwig's *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery* serves as a love letter to the artform to which he has dedicated a lifetime. The play is inspired by the comedies of the Great Tradition, particularly those by William Shakespeare. The play hopes to capture the epic sense of adventure of literary classics from the likes of Robert Louis Stevenson and Alexander Dumas, as well as melodramas from English and American theatrical history. In writing the play, Ludwig's wanted to write a fast-paced, edge of your seat,

³⁹ Ken Ludwig, "A Note from the Author of *Baskerville*."

crowd pleasing mystery that embraces its own theatricality. Chapter Two of this thesis will explore the origins of the source material Ken Ludwig drew from when creating his own interpretation of Sherlock Holmes as well as the theatrical traditions used in developing the structure of *Baskerville*.

CHAPTER TWO

Baskerville Analysis

Introduction

In preparing to direct *Baskerville*, it is useful to examine how the competing genres of mystery and comedy interact with each other. The goal is to find a balance that allows for comedy without contradicting the tone and atmosphere of mystery. This chapter will examine Ken Ludwig's approach to writing comedy, specifically through the influence of Northrup Frye, as well identifying which elements are common between mystery and comedy. Additionally, I will examine how Frye's theories of mystery as a form of melodrama informs Ludwig's adaptation, and how adaptation theory is at play in *Baskerville*. Finally, I will provide an analysis of the play that identifies given circumstances and character roles based on traditional formalist analysis. However, this analysis will give specific attention to the dual structure present in mystery stories.

Baskerville as Comedy

Examining Ken Ludwig's approach to adapting *The Hound of the Baskervilles* in the model of the Great Comic Tradition begins by identifying the shared qualities between comedy and mystery. Ludwig contends mystery is intimately related to comedy, sharing many common themes, motifs, and even structural elements. Additionally, Ludwig claims *The Hound of the Baskervilles* was an ideal candidate for adaptation because many of the elements of the Great Comic Tradition were already present. Ludwig approached his adaptation by emphasizing the humor present in Doyle's original

text, while maintaining the mysterious atmosphere and tone common in Sherlock Holmes adventures. The elements of the Great Comic Tradition that are lacking in the source novella are then included by Ludwig in his adaptation process.

Regarding common plot elements in the Great Comic Tradition, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* has a compelling story and a long arc, where action moves from uncertainty to stability. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* also features elements of perceived fantasy. This is achieved through the inclusion of the legend of the Baskerville curse and the glowing spectral hound that stalks the moors.

Ludwig also makes changes to his adaptation to better reflect the elements of the Great Comic Tradition. He develops the romantic subplot between Beryl Stapleton and Sir Henry to conclude with a marriage engagement. Doyle's novella leaves this romance unresolved with the conclusion of the mystery. The inclusion of this engagement nudges the play toward the tradition in classical comedy to include one or more marriages.

Character is represented in the Great Comic Tradition with characters that feature broad comic stylization, as well as those that achieve a depth of emotional development. While Doyle's *Hound of the Baskervilles* has a colorful pallet of characters, Ludwig writes them as more broadly comic. Additionally, Ludwig introduces the device of character doubling to further exaggerate the physical comedy within the play. In *Baskerville*, many secondary characters are given exaggerated dialects, to both contrast the various roles each actor plays and to enhance the humor. Mrs. Barrymore's dialogue is written with a heavy Swedish dialect, making many of their lines nearly incomprehensible to the characters on stage. Similarly, a German maid, searching for a

missing boot, punctuates their exit from the scene to find “das boot.”¹ As with most of the dialects in the script, these are Ludwig additions.

While there are a variety of colorful secondary characters, each actor also has at least one primary character that allows for a deeper exploration of emotion. Beryl is genuinely fearful of Jack’s plot to set the hound on Sir Henry. Also, Holmes and Watson go to great lengths to protect Sir Henry. This helps to establish the high stakes of the mystery, but also makes Henry, the intended target and central figure in the mystery, more endearing. These themes, motifs, and structural elements, which *The Hound of the Baskervilles* share with the Great Comic Tradition, were what drew Ludwig to choosing to adapt this particular Holmes story. In his essay, “*Writing Baskerville*,” Ludwig states:

I’ve staked my professional life on the proposition that stage comedy is deeply rooted in our common culture... comedy deals with issues of class and marriage, love and friendship, esteem and identity. It also deals with certain recurring comic motifs we see again and again through the ages. These include mistaken identity, disguise, marriage and its consequences, adultery, city slickers heading to the countryside, competing relatives, wily servants, and the attempts of the older generation to thwart the sexual urges of the young.²

Ludwig identifies that virtually all of these elements are present in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s original novella.

Ludwig identifies aspects within the action of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* that coincide with movement into the green world, as defined by the literary criticism of Northrup Frye. Frye identifies the action of the green world as a necessary component to healing the ills of society, a place where “the action of the comedy begins in a world

¹ A reference to the 1981 Wolfgang Peterson film adaptation of Lothar-Günther Buchheim’s book, *Das Boot* “The Boat.”

² Ludwig, “Writing Baskerville.”

represented as a normal world, moves into the green world, goes into a metamorphosis there in which the comic resolution is achieved, and returns to the normal world.”³ In the introduction to *Baskerville*, Ludwig identifies the moors of Devon as representative of the green world, drawing on similarities between Doyle’s rustic locale and Shakespeare’s Forest of Arden, “It replicates one of my favorite tropes in comic literature: city people going into the country where they learn something of value they can bring back to their city lives. It’s the prototypical pattern of *As You Like It* and *The Beaux’ Stratagem* and dozens of other plays and novels. I think there’s a sturdiness to that shift in geography.”⁴ However, this traditionally comic pattern of moving from uncertainty and chaos to order and renewal is not unique to *The Hound of the Baskervilles* but is a common theme in the mystery genre as a whole. Ludwig explains in his essay, “Why Mysteries Grab Us,” “Every mystery play I can think of - from the earliest examples of the genre, like Sherlock Holmes by William Gillette... to more recent examples, like *The 39 Steps* by Patrick Barlow... - has an ending where good triumphs over evil and society rights itself after a period of discord. In a sense, that’s the very definition of a mystery. Order from chaos.”⁵

The commonalities between comedy and mystery extend beyond the tropes present in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Ludwig clarifies that the mystery genre is not

³ Northrup Frye, “Third Essay: Archetypal Criticism: Theory of Myths,” in *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*, Princeton Classics ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020), 182.

⁴ Ludwig, *Baskerville*, 10; This interview between Ken Ludwig and Danielle Mages Amato was originally published in the Old Globe’s Performance Magazine.

⁵ Ken Ludwig, “Why do Mysteries Grab Us?” July 24, 2020, accessed October 12, 2020. <https://www.kenludwig.com/posts/why-do-mysteries-grab-us>.

merely similar to comedy, but rather mystery can be considered a sub-genre of comedy, a concept he draws from Northrup Frye's essays.⁶ In *Anatomy of Criticism*, Frye explores the various modes of literary genres. There he identifies the detective story as representative of the ironic phase of comedy in the form of melodrama. Frye states, "In the growing brutality of the crime story... detection begins to merge with the thriller as one of the forms of melodrama. In melodrama two themes are important: the triumph of moral virtue over villainy, and the consequent idealizing of the moral views assumed to be held by the audience."⁷

Ludwig embraces Frye's assertion that mystery is a form of melodrama, infusing this throughout his adaptation of *Hound*. One such example of melodrama in *Baskerville* is a scene late in act two when Laura Lyons denies having any involvement in the death of Sir Charles. Ludwig introduces Lyons in the stage directions, "Mrs. Lyons appears dramatically. She is distraught and put-upon, out of a melodrama."⁸ In addition to suggestions of melodrama in the stage directions, Ludwig intentionally champions the tradition of melodrama as common ground in British and American theatrical traditions. This is one way Ludwig, a playwright known for writing American plays, justifies writing decidedly British characters and locales.

⁶ Ludwig, "Writing Baskerville"; While Ludwig credits Northrup Frye's *A Natural Perspective* as his introduction to the notion of mystery as a subgenre of comedy. Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* provides a more in-depth examination at mystery as a comic mode.

⁷ Northrup Frye, "First Essay: Historical Criticism: Theory of Modes," in *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*, Princeton Classics ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020), 47.

⁸ Ludwig, *Baskerville*, 78.

Baskerville as *Mystery*

While Frye and Ludwig identify multiple characteristics within the mystery genre that places it under the umbrella of comedy, there are also several characteristics in mystery that diverge from the model of the Great Comic Tradition. Ludwig states the great mysteries have meticulously detailed linear plots that immediately grip the audience's attention. This contrasts with the multiple plots common in classical comedy. Ludwig states, "They're not character studies of a freewheeling nature; that's not their nature... Mysteries take us on a ride, starting at the beginning and driving straight through to the end. Like roller coasters, the best mysteries may twist and turn, climb and plunge, but they're always headed straight forward and zoom on to the finish."⁹ Ludwig's adaptation removes superfluous subplots to maintain a compelling and suspenseful story. Watson and Holmes face challenges throughout the play, including a fight with an escaped convict and the ever-present threat of the spectral hound, but as Holmes begins piecing together the final clues, the play moves at a feverish pace.

While both mystery and comedy endeavor to achieve order from chaos, comedy attempts to include the guilty in the new society.¹⁰ Oliver and Duke Frederick are redeemed and welcomed into the new society in *As You Like It*. The audience accepts this primarily because they failed in their plot and tragedy is avoided. In mystery, the guilty party's actions often result in violence, even death, and therefore they cannot reasonably be accepted back into society. Another key aspect that distinguishes mystery from comedy is that mystery features the intensity and stakes of a serious thriller. In mystery,

⁹ Ludwig, "Why do Mysteries Grab Us?"

¹⁰ Frye, "Third Essay: Archetypal Criticism: Theory of Myths," 165.

violence has consequences. In broader physical comedy, such as farce, comedy is derived from violence that has few consequences. The victim of violence suffers for audience enjoyment but is also seemingly invulnerable. John McLaughlin, in his article, “The Future of Farce,” states, “Violence is as natural to farce as it is to tragedy, the difference being that in farce violence never leads to death, or even to pain. We enjoy watching characters subjected to the most vicious physical abuse, but we are spared the anxiety of seeing them suffer or die”¹¹ *Baskerville* walks a line between the heightened stakes of mystery and the consequence free violence of farce. While Ludwig’s plays draw heavily from farce, his characters are written with the intention that they play the stakes realistically; actions have consequences, and the potential for death is ever present. Ludwig states, “please keep in mind that this tipping of the scales means all the more that the acting and the production should be approached with the intensity and truth of a serious thriller. The characters must seem just as real as they would in any mystery-thriller, and the story must be told with real heart. Comedy for its own sake must be resisted.”¹² Without the threat of death, the climax of the play loses all tension.

Baskerville and Adaptation Theory

As *Baskerville* is adapted from a novella, it is extremely useful to look at theories of adaptation, particularly regarding what is and isn’t retained from the source material, as well as how changes in genre and even time period affects the meaning. In *A Theory of Adaptation*, Linda Hutcheon states adaptation is defined from three interrelated

¹¹ John J. McLaughlin, “The Future of Farce,” *The Journal of Popular Culture*, Spring 1970, 732.

¹² Ken Ludwig, “A Note from the Author of *Baskerville*.”

perspectives: product, as process of creation, and process of reception. Hutcheon describes the first perspective of adaptation, that of a formal entity or product,¹³ as “an announced and extensive transposition of a particular work or works.”¹⁴ Hutcheon states adaptation is an acknowledged transposition of medium, genre, or frame that changes the context of the work, “telling the same story from a new point of view...(which) can create a manifestly different interpretation.”¹⁵ This transposition could also be from factual to fictional, for instance reframing an historical account as a fictionalized narrative.

As a process, adaptation is both a creative act and an act of engagement. As a process of creation adaptation is an interpretive act of appropriation and salvaging. Hutcheon explains adapters are both interpreters and creators that in transcoding a particular story, often change the perspective, values, and aesthetic of the original work, stating, “this is always a double process of interpreting and then creating something new.”¹⁶ Adaptation of longer works, such as novels, require a process of subtraction and contradiction. Often this includes incorporating changes to fit the new medium. Regardless of form, the goal in adaptation is to produce a new work with its own autonomy.

¹³ Linda Hutcheon and Siobhan O’Flynn, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2013).

¹⁴ Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 7-8.

¹⁵ Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 8.

¹⁶ Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 20.

As an act of engagement, adaptation is in extended intertextual dialogue with the source material. An audience's experience is shaped by their familiarity with the various elements that influence the adaptation. Hutcheon explains that, "For the reader, spectator, or listener, adaptation *as adaptation* is unavoidably a kind of intertextuality *if the receiver is acquainted with the adapted text*. It is an ongoing dialogical process... in which we compare the work we already know with the one we are experiencing."¹⁷ Adaptations of works such as Doyle's, having been a part of the public consciousness for over a century, are influenced by not only the source material, but often with other adaptations as well.

In *Baskerville* Ludwig uses subtraction and contraction, not only to condense the action of the novella to fit within confines of a two-hour production, but also to heighten the comedy. Arthur Conan Doyle's *Hound of the Baskervilles* features multiple narrative climaxes due to its monthly serialization. Originally, readers had to wait for the next installment to see the resolution of this dramatic reveal. Ludwig's *Baskerville*, however, maintains a vast majority of the plot elements of the original, but removes the dramatic climaxes. When Ludwig's Holmes reveals himself to Watson in the cave, the moment serves as a springboard for the steady build of heightened tension that continues through to the play's final conflict instead of a climactic moment of its own. It is worth noting the only scene in which Ludwig utilizes a sense of a "cliff hanger" featured in Doyle's original is when Watson is declared dead just before the act break. However, this moment is not featured in Doyle's *Hound*, but is rather a Ludwig invention.

Ludwig uses subtraction and contraction to heighten the comedy in his characterization. Through the convention of character doubling, comedy is achieved by

¹⁷ Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 21.

actors having to switch quickly between characters, often without adequate time for costume changes and by playing a broad range of characters, with different accents, ages, and genders. Restricting the number of performers used to portray dozens of characters is one such way Ludwig achieves relative fidelity to the original novella, while simultaneously creating a new work that straddles genres. Doubling is also more financially beneficial as it only needs five actors rather than a cast of twenty or more.

Hutcheon says of adaptations, “They are just as likely to want to contest the aesthetic or political values of the adapted text as pay homage.”¹⁸ For example, the Victorian sensibility that is representative of the time of the original novella’s publication is used for comic effect in Ludwig’s adaptation. When it is revealed that Sir Henry has survived an attempt on their life, Watson is unable to embrace their friend at a moment of high emotion, which is exploited for comic effect:

Watson: Sir Henry! Henry!
(*WATSON rushes over to him and is about to embrace him – then remembers that he’s English and wrings his hand instead.*)
How good to see you! How marvelous!¹⁹

And so, similar to how the outcry of emotion in Watson’s dialogue contrasts with the physical restraint of the handshake, comedy is derived from how we view Victorian restraint through our contemporary sensibilities.

As an adaptation, *Baskerville* exists in dialogue, not only with the source material, but also other stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and other adaptations of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. While Doyle’s original *Hound* is one of the most famous stories ever

¹⁸ Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 20.

¹⁹ Ludwig, *Baskerville*, 75.

written²⁰ it is possible that while an audience may not be familiar with the plot of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, they are likely aware of the characters of Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson in some incarnation as the characters have significant representation throughout popular culture. According to Hutcheon, all these elements are in dialogue, either explicit or implied, as “texts are said to be mosaics of citations that are visible and invisible, heard and silent; they are always already written and read. So, too, are adaptations, but with the added proviso they are also acknowledged as adaptations of *specific texts*. Often, the audience will recognize that a work is an adaptation of more than one specific text.”²¹ *Baskerville*, and any other adaptation of Sherlock Holmes’ stories, is in dialogue with the original text written by Doyle, but also the various adaptations, whether directly or indirectly, conscious or unconscious. One need not know the origins of the calabash pipe, Inverness cape, or deerstalker cap to be aware of their significance on the image of Sherlock Holmes in popular media.

Baskerville often creates intertextuality through its references to other Sherlock Holmes mysteries. These references, meant to entertain those with a greater familiarity with Holmes’ adventures, are not present in the source material, and unique to Ludwig’s adaptation. Doyle’s *Hound* included a plot element where Holmes sends Watson to Devonshire in their stead because they have another case that threatens to create a national scandal. *Baskerville*’s Holmes excuses himself by stating, “there is a scandal

²⁰ Ruth Rendell, "A Most Serious and Extraordinary Problem," *The Guardian*, September 12, 2008, accessed February 13, 2021.
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2008/sep/13/arthurconandoyle.crime>

²¹ Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 21.

threatening the King of Bohemia that requires my attention at the moment,”²² referring to the events from “A Scandal in Bohemia.” Similarly, Inspector Lestrade dismisses Sir Henry’s case stating they have a more important case in Hounslow, some bleedin’ bastard and his naked mistress,”²³ suggesting they are working on the case depicted in “The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor.”

Analysis

As *Baskerville* is comedy and mystery and an adaptation with a heavily stylized convention, it becomes necessary to expand the analysis of the play using several approaches, rather than a single formalist approach such as the analysis developed by Francis Hodge. Hodge’s method is beneficial for analyzing some elements, such as given circumstances, and also provides useful dramaturgical information about the source material and how Ludwig’s adaptation either reflects or comments on the ideas in the original story. This is also useful information when developing the visual aesthetic representative of the time period, whether it be costumes, scenic elements, or properties. However, Hodge’s method is less effective analyzing the dramatic action of *Baskerville*, which has dialogic action between two competing story structures, one comic and episodic and one mystery. Additionally, analyzing character in *Baskerville* requires examination of each role in terms of action and theatrical devices rather than character development. Even the primary characters, Holmes and Watson, rely on our previous

²² Ludwig, *Baskerville*, 36.

²³ Ludwig, *Baskerville*, 33.

relationship to the icons, and thus the adaptation's intertextuality, rather than anything resembling a traditional character arc.

Given Circumstances

Baskerville is set within the year of 1889. The location of the action shifts between London and Devonshire County in the southwest of England. Queen Victoria sits on the throne of England during a period marked by advancements in science, a growing industrial economy, and expanding British imperialism. Queen Victoria cultivated a public persona with strict moral standards, contributing to the development of a national moral identity. Victorian morality established a strict code of social conduct, promoted chastity, and was dedicated to the preservation of law and order, all themes explored in the plot of *The Hound of the Baskerville*.

Holmes and Watson are both well-educated but share a rented flat to curb expenses. While neither is in possession of great wealth, they both live a comfortable middle-class lifestyle. Holmes often interacts with characters of a lower economic class, occasionally employing a group of street urchins, known as the Baker Street Irregulars, to gather information. While the mystery at the center of *Baskerville* is concerned with inheritance, Sir Henry is notably not a member of the Victorian aristocracy. However, the resolution of the case involves unmasking the usurper and saving the rightful heir of Baskerville Hall, thus restoring law and order and reinforcing Victorian aristocracy.

The London fog, or pea soup fog, that shrouds the gaslit streets of London is the result of industrial pollution. In contrast, Devonshire does not appear to be affected by the pollution of the city, but this mist and heavy fog have a substantial presence on the

moors. In both cases the fog elements of the country and city are emphasized to create a sense of mystery and obscures threats to heroes.

Character

Analysis of character in *Baskerville* must consider how characters serve the action and convention established by the doubling, as many of the characters have been reduced to types, without arcs. There are some notable exceptions (Sir Henry, Jack and Beryl Stapleton have narrative arcs), they also have exaggerated characteristics. Ludwig's Sir Henry differs from Doyle's. In the original story Sir Henry is Canadian; Ludwig transforms them into a gun-twirling Texan, with lines such as, "And it sounds like hogwash to me. A big 'ol hound with blazin' eyes who breathes fire? Hell, I got hounds back home that would eat him for breakfast and spit out the bones."²⁴ Similarly, Ludwig plays up Jack Stapleton's quirky mannerisms and obsessions with both butterflies and killing Sir Henry, bordering on "moustache twirling villainy," while Beryl occupies the role of victimized heroine. Secondary and tertiary characters are often given various dialects for comic effect, but also to allow the three actors playing the various characters to provide a variety to their portrayals.

Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson have even less of character arcs than the previously mentioned characters, though this is by no means unique to Ludwig's adaptation. *Baskerville's* Holmes and Watson have little backstory and remain relatively unchanged by the end of the play. It may be an oversimplification that Doyle's Holmes and Watson remain unchanged throughout their fifty plus cases. Their characters do

²⁴ Ludwig, *Baskerville*, 25.

undergo change, especially regarding their relationships and given circumstances. For instance, Watson marries and moves out of the flat at 221B Baker Street. When Holmes returns in “The Adventure of the Empty House,” Watson, now a widower, moves back to share lodging with Holmes. However, for the most part, Holmes and Watson change very little from story to story. As serialized characters, their cases are what makes each story unique. Fans of Holmes and Watson follow along in their adventures to discover what new mystery will baffle Watson. Satisfaction is derived from Holmes describing the details that allowed them to solve the case, rather from an arc that changes the main characters.

Just as Doyle did with his *Hound*, so too does Ludwig rely on the audience’s prior knowledge of the characters of Holmes and Watson, with little need to establish who they are. Similar to the other characters serving a utilitarian purpose, the detective and sidekick serve the conventions of mystery. As the chronicler of Holmes’ cases, Watson provides narration and comments on the action of the play. As observer, Watson frames the action in such a way as to puzzle the reader or audience. Everything is through Watson’s limited perspective. Additionally, Watson serves as audience surrogate as they require detailed explanation of Holmes’ methods to unravel the mystery established by Watson’s unreliable narrative. It should be noted Ludwig’s play does deviate from the novella as several small scenes are represented without Watson having been present, most notably the death of Sir Charles in the prologue. In the novella, this event is described by Doctor Mortimer, however *Baskerville* uses an approach used by other adaptations by placing it at the start of the story. However, the details of the scene are

incomplete, revealing no additional information than that of the novella. This is done primarily to pull the audience into the story.

One could argue that Holmes has even less of an arc than Watson, especially since they are absent for a significant portion of the play. Holmes' primary role is to dismantle the narrative structure of the story created by Watson. Whereas the mystery is established thru an incomplete narrative, it is resolved by filling in the missing details. This dynamic between the narrative structure provided by Watson and the series of events unraveled by Holmes create a sort of tension common to mystery stories. In fact, discovering which clues Holmes picked up on but the audience missed is part of the appeal of the mystery.

Structure

As a mystery, *Baskerville* contains two competing story structures. It is necessary to identify these structures and how they relate to each other. In a chapter from *The Cambridge Companion to Sherlock Holmes*, entitled "Holmes and Literary Theory," Bran Nicol examines structure common to detective fiction. Nicols references the theories of formalist Tzvetan Todorov when he concludes that detective fiction "simultaneously tells two stories in a way that provides a peculiar tension." Nicols defines these levels in terms from Russian formalism. The first level, the *fabula*, is story in chronological order, the "raw material." The second level, the *syuzhet*, is the plot, often nonchronological in sequence, "to produce suspense, and to withhold or highlight specific elements."²⁵ Nicols then draws on theories from Franco Moretti who states it is

²⁵ Bran Nicols, "Holmes and Literary Theory," in *The Cambridge Companion to Sherlock Holmes* (Cambridge: Cambridge university Press, 2019), 192.

the criminal in detective fiction that creates the syuzhet of the case, “one full of gaps and mystery.” Nicols posits the detective’s job is to fill the gaps of the story to arrive at the fabula, “by countering the criminal’s plot with the story, Holmes’ aim is effectively to eliminate the literary elements.”²⁶ This analysis of the progressions and structure of *Baskerville* will address the two stories at play in the mystery by identifying both the fabula, as the progression of events, and the syuzhet as the narrative structure.

The structure of Ludwig’s *Baskerville* is heavily influenced by the episodic structure of the original novella, therefore an episodic analysis is ideal for examining the play’s narrative structure, or syuzhet. In *Five Approaches to Acting*, David Kaplan defines an *episode* as “an event performed onstage that is understood by its audience complete and by itself, separate from the whole of the play.”²⁷ Each episode is then given its own caption, which should “paraphrase or sum up the onstage event.”²⁸ Kaplan explains that each episode is defined by *transaction*, an offer of something being bought or sold, ending with the *transaction* being either accepted or denied. Each episode is punctuated by a *gest*, or physical action. The example below examines the syuzhet of a scene in *Baskerville* using Kaplan’s method:

1-5: Syuzhet - “The Man with the Black Beard is Discovered”

- Holmes and Watson attempt to observe without being detected, but are discovered by the Man with a Black Beard
- *Transaction*: Stapleton discovers Holmes is on the case and retreats.
- *Gest*: Holmes goes on a tirade for having erred.

²⁶ Nicols, “Holmes and Literary Theory,” 193.

²⁷ David Kaplan, *Five Approaches to Acting* (New York: West Broadway Press, 2001), 71.

²⁸ Kaplan, *Five Approaches to Acting*, 72.

To identify the play's progression of events, or fabula, *Baskerville* is examined using David Ball's *Backwards & Forwards*. Ball describes actions, the play's primary building blocks, to be comprised of two events: a *trigger* and a *heap*, "Each heap becomes the next action's trigger, so that actions are like dominoes toppling one into the next. Sequential analysis means following the play domino by domino from start to finish."²⁹ Analyzing *Baskerville* using Ball's method works well for mystery as it begins with a heap, often the crime itself, then unravels the details of the case by identifying each preceding heap. Ball states identifying the heap first is essential to this analysis of action, "sequential analysis of actions is most useful when done backwards: from the end of the play back to the start. Is your best insurance that you understand why everything happens."³⁰ The example below examines the fabula of the same scene above, in reverse, using Ball's method:

1-5: Fabula:

- *Heap*: Holmes sends their agents to find the cab driver, to discover the identity of the Man with the Black Beard.
- *Trigger*: The Man with the Black Beard is now aware Holmes is on the case and on alert.
- *Trigger*: Holmes slips up and is discovered looking for Sir Henry's follower.

Analyzing *Baskerville* using these two methods is beneficial because it keeps the tension of the two separate structures of mystery intact. Episodic analysis identifies the transactions that create the framework of the play's narrative structure, but also assist in the development of the performance style. Characters serve the transactions of each episode, rather than being concerned with motivation. Cause to effect action is of little concern in episodic analysis. However, cause to effect is essential to understanding the

²⁹ David Ball, *Backwards and Forwards*, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2017), 14.

³⁰ Ball, *Backwards and Forwards*, 18.

fabula of mystery. Ball's method helps to uncover the progression of events. Though, the fabula is meant to be hidden from the audience until the dramatic reveal, it should not be excluded from the analysis as it is integral in creating a mystery's tension.

Conclusion

As a mystery Ken Ludwig's *Baskerville* draws from the genre's intimate relationship with comedy and melodrama. The three genres are constantly in dialogue with each other. As a comic adaptation *Baskerville* is also in dialogue with the source material as well as other adaptations of the same story. While Ludwig's intention is to remain faithful to Doyle's original story, recontextualization is an inevitable part of the adaptation process. Preparing to direct *Baskerville* required examining many of the same aspects of analysis as other plays, through a different lens. Character in *Baskerville* is best examined using an episodic analysis, while structure requires analysis that addresses the conflicting structures that exist in mystery. The next chapter will detail the design process and collaboration with designers.

CHAPTER THREE

Baskerville Design Process

Introduction

This chapter will explore the design process for *Baskerville*, including development of the production concept, collaboration with the design team to produce a cohesive production design, as well as the challenges faced throughout the process. *Baskerville* was greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Baylor Theatre instituted strict protocols put into place for student and faculty safety, and numerous adjustments needed to be made to the production calendar to account for a constantly changing season. The design process for *Baskerville* was affected not only by the changing schedule, but many design decisions were influenced by the COVID protocols, including limitations on set construction, crew for set and costume changes, and ways in which props were tracked and handled. Nevertheless, for all the obstacles that *Baskerville's* design team had to overcome, the design process was a pleasant and rewarding experience.

Director's Concept

The first step in the design process is the development of a directorial concept. A director's concept is the director's vision for the production used to unify all elements of production. The concept is developed by taking all prior research, including period, locations, genre, and the text itself, and distilling that into a single unifying image, phrase, or abstract concept. The primary purpose of the director's concept is to guide the

development of the production by providing structure rather than relying on arbitrary decisions.

I developed my production concept with extra consideration towards criticism that past productions of *Baskerville* struggled to find a balance between the mystery's narrative structure and the play's comic conventions. I focused my attention on images that conveyed the duality of light and dark, joy and dread, laughter and suspense. As a result, I looked to the original run of Scooby-Doo cartoons, *Scooby-Doo, Where are You!* When I initially discovered the show early in the 1980s, somewhere between the age of 5 or 6, I found many of the scenes to be frightening. I recall believing Scooby and the gang's adventures to be an accurate reflection of the period in which it was created; I assumed people in the late 1960s were far more gullible and superstitious than the 1980s.

While I no longer believe *Scooby-Doo, Where are You!* to be an accurate representation of society's beliefs in the supernatural in the late 60s, I did find similarities to the way numerous characters of *Baskerville* responded to superstition and legend. Viewing these episodes, I discovered other aspects of Doyle's *Hound* echoed in episodes of the cartoon. The locations visited by the team of young investigators are always dreary and run down or abandoned and illustrated with dark, cold colors. Often, the culprits were revealed to be a previously introduced character disguised as a ghost or monster trying to frighten people away from that location. Additionally, the series used a specific device that evoked Sherlock Holmes. Just as Doyle had done in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *Scooby Doo* incorporated the use of phosphorescence to fool characters into believing in glowing supernatural beings. This device is used on at least two separate occasions in the show's initial two season run. Finally, I perceived an influence from

melodrama in *Scooby-Doo*. I found this most evident when listening to the score of each episode. While there were often zany sound effects and musical themes, the musical tone was much darker in the opening scene of each episode when establishing the location and supernatural elements. Even today, I find these arrangements to be evocative and eerie.

Scooby-Doo, however, fell short of a fully realized concept and I had no intention of making *Baskerville* resemble the style of the cartoon in any way. However, several themes and images from the show resonated and inspired me. Most notably, I was inspired by how the broad, zany comedy balanced with the mystery. This inspired me; I looked for other areas where cartoons are pushed to reflect a macabre sensibility. I focused on how the artists were able to take something colorful and joyous and twist and corrupt it into something dark and foreboding. I found similarities and aesthetic inspiration in the artwork of Edward Gorey and Harry Clarke. Gorey, in particular, employs dark humor in his illustrations. Coincidentally, his work often reflects a Victorian and early Edwardian aesthetic. The most significant impact Gorey's work had on me comes from the opening animations of the PBS series, *Mystery!*, which frightened me in the same way as had *Scooby-Doo*.

Gorey's art and Scooby's mysteries seemed to cast a sense of eerie danger. I liken it to the horror/thriller trope of a child slowly singing a nursery rhyme to create a sense of foreboding. There's a perverseness in warping something childlike and joyous into something disturbing. Thinking on these ideas I was drawn to a memory of one of the locations featured in *Scooby-Doo*, *Where are You!:* the abandoned amusement park.

I decided on the concept of an "Abandoned Theme Park." However, the visual images in my mind were influenced less by the location in the cartoon, and more by an

actual abandoned theme park I once visited. That park, a small kiddie park, had rusted metal railing and light posts; the walls were crumbling and the floors of the building were covered in rubble with overgrown weeds, a broken tricycle and other abandoned toys. I was struck by one image in particular, a poster of a clown that had been torn and faded. The research images I compiled reflected those visuals I remembered from that kiddie park. The images featured building and rides where color had been bleached out from exposure to the elements, railing and lighting fixtures had been broken, and rust and vegetation had taken over. Some of the images featured a liberal amount of fog or mist, contributing to a drab color temperature, but also providing a sense of unease by obscuring what may lay just beyond our view (seen in Figures A:1-7). Though the images featured color, they were often muted. For me this was reminiscent of the Clarke and Gorey's artwork which featured very little color, but also of the few colored original Sherlock Holmes images created by Sydney Paget. Along with the theme park images, I included a selection of artwork from these three artists (seen in Figures A:8-18).

While the visual images I compiled were not at all similar to the visual look of *Scooby-Doo, Where are You!*, the sound was very much taken directly from the cartoon. The music used to establish each episode's location, and the supernatural antagonist audio world was atmospheric and spooky. Often the music gave a sense of the location as it would blend with atmospheric sounds, such as woodwinds and wind sound effects as the scene opens on an outdoor location. Additional musical inspiration was drawn from the clips from Buster Keaton films. The music used in his stunt scenes, specifically *The General*, creates moments of dramatic tension with its prominent use of brass instruments and timpani.

The Design Process

The design process had an unusual start. Because of the changes to the production schedule, I had only an approximation of “early in the spring semester” for when the production would begin rehearsal, and a performance location had yet to be determined. There was the possibility of performing the show outside for a socially distanced audience, but by mid-November of 2020, many of the details had yet to be defined. I had saved numerous research images but was unsure in what form the production would take place. However, many details came together quickly just as the fall semester was about to end. At the end of November, I was contacted by my costume designer to let me know they would be working on my show and asked if we could schedule a preliminary meeting. Shortly thereafter, I was assigned scenic and lighting designers and a decision was made regarding the date, location, and format of the production. There would be time to prepare over the winter break, but design meetings and auditions were scheduled to begin as soon as we returned for the spring semester. A lot needed to be accomplished during the break.

Baskerville was scheduled to begin rehearsals in mid-February and set to be performed on the thrust stage in the Mabey theatre, rather than outdoors, for a small socially distanced audience. That performance would be filmed, edited, and streamed online.

Costume Design

Collaboration with designers began with a preliminary meeting with the costume design team. The lead costume designer contacted me before I had been informed of production dates, the location, and other designers involved in the production. While

many of these details were set shortly thereafter, that first meeting took place when there were still many unknowns. They wanted to start designing costumes early due to their commitment with another production. I began with providing Sydney Paget's original illustrations from Sherlock Holmes' stories. The faded colors of some of these pieces illustrated my desired to use muted color. From there I referenced the images by Edward Gorey and Harry Clarke. I also made reference to the graphic novel *Snow, Glass, Apples*, an adaptation of a short story by Neil Gaiman, illustrated by Colleen Doran. Doran's artwork for the story was heavily influenced on specific images by Clarke, focusing on character poses and composition. The costume design team responded well to the research images and had an existing familiarity with Gorey, Clarke, and Doran's adaptation of *Snow, Glass, Apples*. The notable lack of color in the many of these images, led to discussions about using color that has been bled out, much like a sun-bleached sign, and decided to steer clear of highly saturated colors.

In this first meeting I also expressed a desire to cast women in the roles of Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson. The lead costume designer was particularly excited about exploring their designs from this angle. They expressed a desire to create designs that focused on multiplicity of gender presentation. From this we decided to explore the idea that costumes for the women portraying Holmes and Watson could simultaneously be feminine and masculine. The costumes for the remaining three actors would be designed with attention to containing markers of both femininity and masculinity.

Beyond the conceptual approach to the costumes, there were several important practical considerations. Holmes and Watson could have only a few minor changes to their costumes depending on setting, such as wearing a top hat and coat to the opera, but

there were not many opportunities to change during the quick transitions between scenes. Watson's costume needed to be flexible enough for the opera, the streets of London, and the moors of Devon. Additionally, the other three actors would need to make many costume changes, often several times within a single scene. To accommodate these changes, the decision was made to give all five actors a base costume design that would allow for various additional pieces to complete each look. As time for costume changes was limited, the goal was that each character portrayed by Actors 1, 2, and 3 needed to be completed with as few pieces as possible using numerous hats, coats, and the occasional pair of glasses or fake beard. Discussions also addressed the need for changes completed in full view of the audience to be simplified even further.

The initial design sketches were created prior to casting, without a clear indication of character. Primarily, they were created to provide a variety of looks, any of which could be assigned to any character. The sketches were rendered in a style reminiscent of Edward Gorey (seen in Figures A:19-23). I did not request that the figures in the sketches resemble Gorey's work, but the costume designer was inspired by Gorey's influence on my concept. Later, other designers commented on how this helped translate the darker aesthetic we were aiming for.

Once casting was complete, colored renderings were created for each base costume along with additional looks for each character as they added or subtracted pieces. Sherlock Holmes's base costume was a pair of slacks, dress shirt with stiff collar, waistcoat, and cravat; all in a style reminiscent of the late Victorian period (seen in Figure A:24). Holmes completed the look they had for a significant portion of the play with a long coat and top hat. On two occasions, Holmes donned the disguise for the Man

of Mystery, consisting of a dark coat and large floppy hat (seen in Figure A:25). As to keep the identity of the Man of Mystery a secret, these changes were completed out of view of the audience. While Holmes' "iconic" deerstalker cap and Inverness cape, popularized by Sydney Paget, are often overused in various adaptations, if there were any one environment where Holmes would logically use this ensemble, it would be in Devonshire. I approached the design team with an idea of saving Holmes' iconic look for a specific moment in the script, almost a heroic reveal, right as the story begins to build towards its climactic conclusion. The head costume designer expressed excitement at this suggestion, stating they believed it would provide the audience with a sort of cathartic experience, finally seeing Holmes in this look (seen in Figure A:26).

While the initial design sketches were created without any specific character in mind for any one image, both the designer and I believed one image in particular would make a great look for Watson (seen in Figure A:27). Watson's base look consisted of long skirt, blouse and necktie and a bowler hat. As the second act begins replaying the closing moments from the first act, a costume change was not possible. Therefore, the only addition to Watson's costume was a long coat they donned in their brief time off stage in the second act (seen in Figure A:28). As a practical consideration, Watson's skirts included deep pockets to hold the few properties they needed throughout the play.

Actor 1 and 2 both had a base costume of slacks, stiff collared shirts, and waistcoats (seen in Figures A:29-30). Actor 3's base costume consisted of a blouse and skirt (seen in Figure A:31). However, unlike Holmes and Watson, these three were hardly ever on stage in only their base costumes. Each character was defined by hats, coats, and other accessories. Actor 1's most prominent characters were Dr. Mortimer, Milker,

Mr. Barrymore and Stapleton. Dr. Mortimer's look included the addition of a top hat, long coat, glasses, and a walking stick. Milker, a street urchin, was achieved by wearing an oversized coat, hat and kneeling into a pair of shoes. Barrymore's costume was completed with a false beard and a dark coat, with one arm tucked inside the coat to give the impression of missing an arm. For Stapleton, Actor 1 wore glasses, a boater hat, and jacket.

Actor 2's most prominent characters were Sir Henry and Inspector Lestrade. Sir Henry's costume consisted of a coat and a ten-gallon hat (seen in Figure A:32), while Lestrade added only a bobby's helmet. Actor 3 had the most drastic changes as their base costume was often covered with various layers. For example, Mrs. Hudson wore a cap and a wrap that completely covered their skirts. Similarly, the German Maid wore an apron that covered a considerable portion of their skirts. As Cartwright and Mrs. Clayton, they wore a hats and oversized coats that covered their base costume considerably. Mrs. Barrymore revealed more of their base costume, wearing only a shawl and cap, while their most prominent character, Miss Stapleton, was completed with the addition of a wide brimmed hat. In fact, In the climactic scene of the play. Miss Stapleton is achieved solely with the base look.

Costuming Challenges

Due to the quick pacing of the show, most costume changes were quick changes. Tech rehearsals began with extensive costume tracking, and a significant portion of tech rehearsals was dedicated to working out issues with costume changes. While some scenes called for smooth transitions to heighten the tension, whenever possible we chose to embrace the chaos of the changes and have more costume changes on stage in full view

of the audience. If there was insufficient time for a full change, the performers would often break character to acknowledge their frustration. In fact, the script specifically included such moments, including Cartwright acknowledging there was insufficient time to change into their costume and Holmes cuing actors to exit to change costumes for the next scene.

Some costuming challenges arose due to COVID restrictions, including adapting the production for filming. COVID protocols limited the size of *Baskerville's* live audience, with a majority of the audience watching a filmed performance. As the costumes contained a variety of patterns, a camera test was scheduled to ensure they did not cause a moiré effect.¹ Additionally, filming considerations necessitated scenic and costumes to collaborate on color value. Scenic elements would primarily use lower value color, while base costumes would be mid-value, and characters pieces would be the highest value.

COVID restrictions also limited how many people were able to handle each costume piece. Protocols dictated that fabric could not be handled by more than one person. This prohibited the use of dressers to assist with quick changes. If the actors were required to touch each other's pieces in a scene, such as taking another character's hat, they were only able to touch the pieces in very specific spots. One scene, as written, had one character applying a bandage to Watson's head. This action was altered so that Watson would apply their own bandage, which necessitated the creation of a costume piece that could quickly and easily be applied to the actor's own head.

¹ An unwanted rainbowing or circular visual effect produced when filming tight patterns in the clothing.

Scenic Design

After meeting with the costume design team, I asked to schedule a meeting with the scenic and lighting designers before the end of the fall semester. While I had yet to receive a calendar of performance dates, I wanted to make sure the designers had time over winter break to begin their process. I provided the designers with several logistical elements to clarify how I envisioned action would move from scene to scene. I sent a breakdown of the twenty separate locations, indicating time of day, atmospheric/weather conditions, and necessary set pieces (seen in Figures A:33-35). I also gave a rough, very tentative, ground plan of staging areas (seen in Figures A:36-37). While we were all aware any aspect of this initial ground plan could change, I wanted to communicate the need to be able to swiftly move between scenes with limited opportunity for scene changes. The ground plan was not to scale, but it did consider a set of platforms we knew would be incorporated into the design.

I provided the scenic and lighting designer with many of the same images I had shared with the costume team, but also included quite a few examples of moorland in addition to the images of abandoned theme parks (seen in Figures A:38-42). Our discussion focused on images where there was play with foreground, midground, and background objects. We were drawn to elements such as pieces of broken railing, benches, and lighting fixtures in the foreground while roller coasters, Ferris wheels and other structures loomed over the landscape in the background. We noted how strings of lights or half-collapsed signs broke up the negative space.

There were additional practical considerations due to limitations brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. An extensive set build would not be possible. I was offered use

of platforms used in a previous production to provide levels for staging as they would represent the rocky moor of Devonshire, the vast Baskerville Hall, and an elevated opera box. We decided the main goal of the scenic design was to add furniture and additional embellishments to the existing platforms. A paint treatment and a masking would then be added to the platform to tie it into a cohesive design.

The Design

The scenic design team provided research images focusing on locations, color, and texture (seen in Figures A:43-49). The indoor location images featured dreary dark hallways and staircases, opulent portrait halls, a cluttered study to represent 221B, dark wood textures, and rich upholstery and wall fabrics. Images of outdoor locations were cold and murky, featuring wet stone country bridges and marshlands as well darkened city streets shrouded in mist. Several of the outdoor images emphasized wrought iron fences and gates breaking up the negative space produced by thick fog. Additionally, images were gathered that explored the use of silhouette and negative space. These included visual illusions where the negative and positive space each produced separate silhouettes, as well as illustrations where object silhouettes are created by drawing in the surrounding negative space.

The scenic design consisted of several platforms of varying sizes, stacked and overlapping each other, located upstage center (seen in Figures A:50). There were three playing levels. The first level was a small section at the downstage center of the unit. While this was a playable space, the platform primarily served as a step to the next level which consisted of three areas. The stage right area served primarily as 221B Baker Street through most of the first act, and a sitting room at Baskerville Hall and the

Coombe Tracy train station in the second act. The center and stage left platforms most often represented the rocky countryside of Devonshire as well as the entryway and staircase of Baskerville Hall. The uppermost upstage platform served as an opera box, an upper floor at Baskerville Hall, and the top of the rocky Black Tor. Behind the platforms, suspended above the stage, were numerous portrait frames. While many frames were empty, some contained period appropriate portraits to suggest the Baskerville lineage, including a portrait of Actor 1 dressed as Sir Hugo. Along with the frames, a railing and balustrade were to be hung behind the platforms as well as a long curtain hung along the up-right corner of the stage. While the curtain and balustrade were included in the final design, the railing was removed so as not to obstruct the moving of set pieces.

The remaining permanent set pieces included a grandfather clock attached to the platform that represented 221B Baker Street, a lamppost to the left of the platforms, and wrought iron fencing that was attached to the railing separating the uppermost left and right sides of the stage from the audience. Other furniture pieces were often left around the perimeter of the stage, including a small table and chairs, hat and coat racks, and a baby carriage. Furniture used at 221B Baker Street was often moved to be used in other scenes, such as the café at the Northumberland Hotel and Watson's bedroom at Baskerville Hall. Additionally, the café chairs were used to represent the train car Watson uses to travel to Devonshire. A counter was placed on wheels and moved across the downstage area of the stage to represent several locations, including Bradley's tobacco shop, the district messenger's office, and the entry to the Northumberland hotel. During the act break, the furniture on the stage right platform was replaced with a chaise lounge to represent the drawing room at Baskerville Hall, and the portrait of Sir Hugo was

removed. This was done to allow Actor 1 to place their face through an opening in the portrait in a scene where Holmes deduces Stapleton's relationship to the Baskerville family.

Scenic Challenges

The two greatest challenges for the scenic design for *Baskerville* were adapting for filming considerations and keeping the scenic elements flexible to enough to represent multiple locations with very little opportunity for scene changes. Discussions regarding filming accommodations began with the first meeting with the scenic designer. Early in discussions, the designer was concerned the scenic elements needed to be flattened, almost as a backdrop, to accommodate for tightly composed camera shots. After discussions with our consultant from the Film and Digital Media Department, we agreed to approach the design as a theatrical production, but each scene would be blocked with consideration to camera positions. While we still wanted to include a degree of play between foreground, midground, and background elements, the depth of field would be limited. To accommodate for low light, the camera apertures did not allow for deep focus. While there was the option of cutting to another camera angle if we wanted to show multiple subjects in focus, it was not possible to have subjects at varying distances to be in focus within the same shot. While we still wanted to stage moments with depth, we knew we had to be selective. For instance, the scene where Watson and Holmes watch from upstage as the opera plays out downstage, or where Watson and Sir Henry spot Holmes on the rocky Black Tor, had to be staged from the perspective of the center camera, as it was the only camera with a wide lens. Additionally, as we had been

counseled that cinematic techniques, such as racking focus, were not possible during filming, we had to specify which subjects were to be kept in focus.

To help the designers identify the sightlines for the camera angles, we established a “10 to 2” scheme, meaning if the stage was a clock, the cameras would be placed at the 4, 6 and 8 o’clock positions, and the ideal playing space would run from 10 o’clock to 2 o’clock. This idea was developed primarily to avoid a center weighted scenic element that served as a backdrop. For this same reason, we decided against using the cyclorama, as it would primarily only appear in camera angles focused on the 12 o’clock position. Any background scenic pieces were designed to radiate out from the center, to help keep the view oriented as much as possible.

The initial renderings of the set design featured the portraits, the railing and balustrade clustered closer together at the back of the stage (seen in Figures A:51-52). However, once the decision was made to forgo use of the cyclorama, we spread these pieces out further across the back of the stage (seen in Figures A:53-54). This decision was more aesthetically pleasing but also had the intention of helping keep the viewer oriented as we cut between angles. Having only a black background behind stage right or left could potentially make it difficult to determine where an action was staged in tight camera shots. The goal of extending the set pieces out from center was to identify where the action was in relation to everything else on stage. A balustrade and a lamppost served as landmarks for stage left, while a large red curtain and grandfather clock were set on stage right.

As rehearsals began, it became necessary to limit the number of set pieces and scene changes whenever possible. Initially, we intended to use a small crew to make

scene changes during transitions, as the actors were often unavailable to move set pieces due to costume changes. However, as the actors became more comfortable with their costume changes, we discovered they were able to complete nearly all the scene changes without aid from the crew. Eventually, we were able to remove most transitions from the play. This made for a better flow, but required we reduce the number of furniture pieces. In the process we eliminated a writing desk, a bench, and an end table. The lamp post, which had initially been set left of center stage, was pushed further up left so as to be out of the way for action in the second act, eliminating the need to strike the heavy set piece.

Lighting Design

Initial lighting design discussions focused on using light cues to establish changes in location. The scenic breakdown I provided distinguish the time of day, location, and weather conditions. This helped to establish several looks for each location, including warm indoor gaslight, rainy London streets, and mist-covered moors of Devon at night. The lighting designer responded well to Sydney Paget's colored illustrations, which guided the development of a color pallet for each of the lighting looks. As many of Paget's illustrations had a slight warm sepia tone, so too did the many of the lighting looks.

A major concern in establishing the lighting color pallet was the selection of the type of lighting instruments and placement. Embracing the warm sepia tone in the design meant forgoing the use of LED lighting. However, this was problematic for filming the production. Having worked on other filmed productions in the season, the designer explained that LED lights were preferential for film because they had a higher output. Additionally, as the Mabey is a thrust stage, the theatre had fewer points to hang light

directly in front of the stage. Normally, the audience would be seated on three sides of the stage in the Mabey, with light coming from several directions. However, to film the production with a three-camera setup, most of the light needed to come from the front. Additionally, as the seating of the Mabey is not as deep as it is for proscenium stage, the lighting positions are much closer to the stage. To avoid harsh shadows, the lights needed to be hung from a lower position.

Early discussions also included using three types of fog. The first was atmosphere haze for to represent London fog and the misty moorland of Devon. The second was large bursts of smoke as Holmes fills the flat with pipe smoke, as well as the steam produced at the train station. The last type was a low-lying fog used during the play's climax. While the first two types of fog were feasible, there were concerns the filtration system put into place may work against our efforts. Also, there was a concern that the low-lying fog would not be possible with the department's equipment. There was the possibility of renting the necessary equipment but were later informed that we would be unable to use any fog effects due to COVID protocols. Projections were also considered early in the design process but abandoned because they would not appear well on film.

Research images provided by the lighting designer consisted primarily of warm interiors as if lit by gaslight, gloomy daytime exteriors on the moor, and dark moody nighttime moor images (seen in Figures A:55-58). These images reflected the color pallet discussed in our initial meeting. Lighting renderings were created to simulate each of these looks. These were digital images that simulated different lighting effects, lighting angles, and gobo patterns (seen in Figures A:59-61). This was done primarily to address

potential harsh shadows cast on the performers faces. Additionally, these renderings included comparisons between a lit cyclorama and a black background.

The lighting design also accounted for the inclusion of instruments to create a green light to signify the presence of the hound. Inspiration for this look was primarily drawn from the use of phosphorous in *Scooby-Doo, Where are You!*, as the villains in the television show had a more prominent green glow than those in Paget's original illustrations. A green glow was added to suggest the hound's presence just as its victims are attacked.

Many of the lighting challenges were directly related to filming the production. Discussions with our consultant from the Film and Digital Media department led to concerns of not having enough light for filming. While our consultant recommended using LED lights, our lighting designer wanted to avoid this because of the color temperature would clash with the design and opted against using LEDs. Also, due to limited hanging locations from the back of the house, and the thrust configuration of the stage, there were concerns that without low angle lights, the shadows on the actors' faces would appear harsher on camera. There were suggestions to place lighting trees at strategic locations in the audience. A light and camera test was scheduled early in the rehearsal process to address these concerns.

In addition to solidifying camera placement and marking out camera sight lines, the camera test confirmed that the limited hang space above the audience was suitable for providing fill light and additional lighting trees would not be needed. Ultimately, nearly all lighting cues were brightened during tech week for filming purposes. This made for a

live performance that was much brighter than we had initially intended. However, the final filmed result achieved the look we desired.

Several lighting cues that were created for effects also had to be changed during tech week. Lights that were placed behind the platforms were used to cast the green glow of the hound. The placement of the instruments created a dynamic backlit effect. However, the light shone directly into the cameras' lenses and the effect was changed so that it was created by fixtures above the stage. The new instrument placement created a dramatic down light that worked well, but with less impact than the original method. Additionally, a light flash that served as a placeholder for gunshots was added to be manually controlled. Unlike the other lighting cues which had their timing programmed into the lightboard, each flash had to be timed separately. Initially, this gunshot cue was intended to cue actors to perform a gunshot recoil. We found that it was much easier for the light board operator to take their cue from the actors. However, timing of this effect was occasionally off. The gunshot sound effects and muzzle flashes were added in post-production, which went a long way to covering up any issues in timing.

Sound Design

Discussion about the sound design began with me sending the director's concept slide show along with several links to *Scooby-Doo* episodes and clips from Buster Keaton scenes. I emphasized silent film, melodrama-esque quality of the music. Additionally, I sent a link to a scene from the original *Star Trek* series, depicting a battle between Captain Kirk and the Gorn Lizardman. The scene featured an iconic score that has been referenced in various other media. I told the designer I wanted a similar sound for the fight scene at the end of act one. The instrumentation was similar to the Buster Keaton

scores in its use of brass during moments of heightened tension. Additionally, the fight choreographer drew inspiration from this scene for some of their choreography.

I asked the designer to focus on developing two types of sounds to serve as a score for *Baskerville*. The first would be used in establishing each new location with atmospheric soundscapes that could potentially blend with specific instruments, such as woodwinds paired with wind sound effects. The second type was music used primarily during transitions and during moments of heightened tension, such as the fight scene.

Sound Design Challenges

A major challenge for the sound design was the need to play all cues for the live performance at a reduced volume. Because adding sound effects in post-production would be much more effective than capturing the sound effects in the live performance, we decided that all effects would be played just loud enough to be heard by the performers. This was to allow more flexibility in editing. Gunshot effects were left out of the performance altogether as it would be extremely difficult to sync sound and lights. Instead, we gave a brief explanation to the live audience and included a flashing light for each gunshot to allow for syncing later.

Dialogue in the script mentioned specific operas, the sound designer had to make sure all music was either royalty free or produced by Baylor University. While live performances often are not concerned with copyright issues with music, filming considerations dictated a strict adherence to copyright laws. While the operas themselves were in the public domain, not all arrangements are. Fortunately, the theatre department had access to a service that provided royalty free music to be used for productions. All music used in the final filmed performance was royalty-free.

A major area of concern for the sound designer was capturing the actors' dialogue from the performance. Sound from the cameras was not sufficient for clear dialogue but did allow for easier synching in post-production. Audio was captured with a separate recording device using area microphones that hung above the stage. While lavalier microphones are often used for filmed stage productions, we were recommended against using lavaliers because of the many costume changes. While the sound captured by the overhead microphones was sufficient for intelligible dialogue, there were also moments where the microphones picked up scene changes and other noise on stage, such as the sounds of actor running across the platforms. As the space directly below the platforms was empty, this served to amplify the noise capture by the microphones. Ultimately, the designer was able to clean up much of the noise on the audio track with one notable exception. A scene change prior to the final scene of the play happened during one of Watson's speeches as they summed up events from the case. Adding furniture pieces to the platform was very prominent in the final video and distracted from Watson's speech.

Properties

Similar to the approach to scenic design, properties design for *Baskerville* was focused on using the minimum number props to tell the story. While early research for *Baskerville's* design included images with an eclectic collection of keepsakes to represent Holmes' study, it became clear that we would not be able to have any non-essential properties for set dressing as areas of the stage had to serve as multiple locations. Therefore discussions with the props designer began with reducing the props to items specifically referenced in the script's dialogue.

There were some exceptions for props that were used to help establish character. As many characters were created with the addition or subtraction of only a few costume pieces, it became helpful to use personal properties to complete a character's look. Doctor Mortimer always carried a cane even though it was only needed for the first scene of the play. Along with a hat and coat, it completed the character's ensemble. While it was not explicitly stated in the script, Watson was given a journal and cane. The journal allowed for stage business while observing Holmes' investigation. Inspiration for Watson's cane was drawn from the original stories, as Watson had suffered injuries while in the army. The specific cane used, with a crook and hook handle, was chosen specifically so that it could be used in the fight choreography with Victor. Mrs. Barrymore often carried a large candelabra as part of their look. Though there is no mention of it in the script, a magnifying glass was given to Holmes as it is an item that is closely associated with the character. While there was no impetus that every prop be period accurate, some attention was paid that nothing appeared too contemporary.

In addition to providing the various properties that served as character pieces and clues for the case, the props designer asked if I was open to allow them to create a large puppet to represent the hound. Being a fan of puppetry, I was immediately drawn to this idea. In addition to the hound, they wanted to create a rabbit and sheep puppet (seen in Figures A:62-63). Though they would be smaller and far simpler, with limited functionality, these would be stylistically similar to the hound. Initial discussions revolved around a more realistically sized puppet for the climax of the play. I expressed that if the designer wanted to create a larger puppet for the legend scene, or possibly add elements to the puppet to appear larger, they were welcome to do so. However, due to

time constraints and other department obligations, this idea was abandoned to focus on creating a single hound puppet of realistic size (seen in Figure A:64).

Properties Challenges

As with other areas of production, many of the properties challenges that arose during rehearsals were a result of complying with COVID protocols. When rehearsals began, the cast and crew were instructed to refrain from touching any prop that was not used by them on stage. When the script called for multiple actors to handle the same prop, each actor was assigned a place they could touch the prop. Doctor Mortimer's cane, which is touched by nearly every member of the cast, was sectioned off with different colored spike tape so that the actors wouldn't touch the same spot. Additionally, several large bottles of hand sanitizer were placed around the stage for use after handling every prop. If an actor needed a prop to appear in a location that differed from when they last used it, the crew was unable to assist in relocating the prop. Ultimately, these restrictions were relaxed. The crew was able to assist with props, but all props were sanitized after use.

Using firearms on stage also necessitated strict procedures. While we did not use live fire of any kind, because the pistols used were capable of firing blanks, we had to follow precautions. One member of the crew was responsible for keeping track of the pistols and was the only person permitted to handle them when not being used on stage. This meant once an actor exited the stage, they handed the pistol to the crew member, who would then give it back if it was used in a later scene.

The hound puppet provided a challenge as it was the last piece to be completed. The actors had very little time to become accustomed to how it functioned. Time was set

aside during tech week for a tutorial on the puppet mechanics as well as coaching the actors on their puppet performance.

Conclusion

Working with the design team on *Baskerville* was a pleasant and rewarding experience. The faculty designers were able to provide guidance when necessary, while still supporting my director's concept. The student designers were also extremely knowledgeable. While I have some experience in sound design and puppet making, the designers were far more capable than I in creating their contributions to the production. Each member of the design team made producing *Baskerville* during a global pandemic, with a fluctuating calendar and protocols more manageable. The next chapter will address the audition process and how the director's concept was utilized to develop to lead the rehearsal process.

CHAPTER FOUR

Baskerville Casting and Rehearsals

Introduction

My objective going into rehearsals was translating my director's concept to establish style of performance and staging. However, unlike the design meetings, which were all virtual, rehearsals for *Baskerville* were held in person and heavily influenced by strict departmental protocols put in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the Fall of 2020, with careful attention to developing protocols, Baylor Theatre began producing theatrical productions again. However, there was continued adaptation to ensure the safest methods. This meant limited outdoor performance, streaming performance filmed without an audience and filmed performances in front of a limited audience. So too was the rehearsal process guided by continual adaptation and following correct protocols. For myself, the spring semester was the first time I had been in close proximity with other people in nearly a year. Reentering a rehearsal space was fraught with anxiety, trepidation, and often indecision. This chapter details the *Baskerville* rehearsal process, from auditions through to the filmed performance, as well as how the production adapted for the changing protocols of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Audition Process

Auditions for Baylor Theatre's productions are often combined, with more than one production casting. This was the case with casting *Baskerville*. Auditions were held in conjunction with the next show on the production calendar. Having been present for joint mainstage auditions at Baylor Theatre as an observer and assistant director, I had a fair understanding of the process. However, the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated several changes to the production calendar to allow for adherence to constantly updated protocols.

Preparing for Auditions

Baskerville's casting was significantly affected by its place in the season between two productions with large casts. As a thesis production, and therefore requiring more time and research for this written portion of the thesis, *Baskerville* was approved for the season several months before production, when protocols required smaller casts. Several smaller cast shows were added to the season to allow more opportunities for actors, necessitating numerous changes to the production calendar. The production immediately before *Baskerville*, as well as the one right after, were added to the production calendar at a time when COVID protocols were being relaxed, allowing for larger casts. *Baskerville* contains a cast of only five actors and was placed between two large shows which limited the acting pool in the department. To better navigate the needs of the individual shows, the directors communicated ideas on potential casting prior to auditions.

Discussion about potential casting began several weeks before auditions were announced for *Baskerville*. The director of the production that preceded *Baskerville* asked for a casting shortlist for our production, as well as the production following ours, so that

we could weigh in on any actors we were considering. I had intentionally tried to avoid considering a cast prior to auditions because I wanted to be open to possibilities I had not yet considered. I hastily put together a shortlist with one or two names for each role, reflecting my goal to include a multicultural cast and casting women for the lead roles of Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson. My directing mentor and I met to discuss some additional casting options, and they provided recommendations of strong comic actors I had not initially considered. Additionally, they suggested I include in the audition notice that all roles were open to any cultural or ethnic background and that there were plans to cast women in the roles of Watson and Holmes. While the cast of *Baskerville* included only one actor from that initial shortlist, the primary benefit was that it initiated discussions with the production that followed as we were both considering some of the same actors.

Auditions

Due to COVID considerations, auditions for *Baskerville* as well as other productions in the 2020-2021 season were conducted differently than they had in previous years. To limit unnecessary exposure, the decision was made to have students submit video recordings for their auditions. The audition notice for *Baskerville* was sent out to the department on January 15, 2021, with a deadline for submissions set for January 25. The notice included two short monologues and instructions for students to record a video performing both monologues, focusing on the clear transition between contrasting characters and an expressive sense of storytelling. The first was a short, dramatic speech by Doctor Mortimer detailing the discovery of Sir Charles' body. The second, a humorous speech by Miss Clayton was written in a Cockney dialect and

described their meeting with the Man with the Black Beard. All audition videos were uploaded into a department Box folder. From the sixty video submissions, a callback list was created, with five people reading for each of the five roles.

Callbacks

Callbacks for *Baskerville* were held over the Zoom conferencing platform on January 29, 2021. In addition to myself, my directing mentor, and the director of the upcoming show were present in one room with students participating from separate locations. We were also present in the callbacks for following production the next day. As was the case with previous callbacks that I have been present for this allowed the directors to benefit from each other's opinions on actors' readings, as well as discuss different casting options based on the needs of each show. I received guidance from both faculty members regarding the pedagogical needs of the students, including the number of roles they have had in past productions. My directing mentor also provided commentary regarding dialects used in the callbacks, and the degree of work each student would need outside of rehearsals to work on dialects.

The stage managers and their assistant stage managers from both productions coordinated the Zoom session, placing the directors in one breakout room, and each group of auditioners into breakout rooms as necessary. I began callbacks for each scene by addressing the actors, discussing what we were looking for in their readings, and then assigning them to their own breakout rooms based on a predetermined paring list. After each group had an opportunity to perform the scene, the stage managers would add the next group to our breakout room. While the technical aspects of this process worked well, and the stage managers did a fine job running the Zoom session, there were a few

obstacles. Tempo and comedic timing were difficult to gauge because of delays in format. Also, many students were sitting in front of their computers, often in dorm rooms or apartments. This occasionally led to subdued performances, or something more akin to acting for film. These students were encouraged to give a performance intended for a larger space. This was necessary because many of the characters in the play are broadly comic, but it also helped communicate the performance style that would be required for *Baskerville*.

The sides provided to the actors were selected because they focused on specific qualities we wanted to see. In addition to comic timing and expressiveness, we wanted to see how Actors 1, 2 and 3 were able to portray a variety of broad characters as well as how Holmes and Watson played off the other actors and each other. One of the sides features Actors 1 and 3 portraying two women, who then exit and the actors return as a pair of street urchins in the Baker Street Irregulars. This side was specifically chosen to allow the performers to create contrasting characters of different genders. Additionally, Actors 1 and 3 read for Mr. and Mrs. Barrymore, parts that are humorous, but also creepily suspicious.

Actor 2 portrays fewer characters than Actors 1 and 3, but they also spend a considerably longer time in the role of Sir Henry. One side that was selected featured Sir Henry meeting the Barrymores. This was chosen to allow the actor to play a boisterous American interacting with more reserved British characters. The actors were directed to be the largest character in the scene, and to consider drawing inspiration from John Wayne and George W. Bush. Additionally, actors auditioning for Actor 2 were asked to read from a scene that required switching between Sir Henry and Inspector

Lestrade with every other line. This allowed auditioners to show contrasting characters, but with the added dynamic of the two characters participating in the same conversation.

In addition to the above sides, which featured Holmes and Watson interacting with the other characters, an additional side was included that featured only Holmes and Watson. Taken from their first scene on stage together, this side focused on the snappiness of delivery. A common note for the actors reading the scene was to focus on the leader/sidekick dynamic between characters. As we narrowed down the candidates for these two roles to three or four actors, we asked to see additional readings of this scene with different combinations. Additionally, we asked the two actors we were favoring for these roles to read each other's roles. While Holmes and Watson are more grounded, they appear to be similar in contrast to the other broader characters. These additional readings allowed for us to focus on more nuanced characteristics that made these characters unique.

Casting

A preliminary cast list was drawn up at the conclusion of *Baskerville* callbacks, and the next evening we attended callbacks for the following production. The faculty members present at *Baskerville* callbacks agreed that the actors gave strong auditions and had earned the roles. The actor we were eyeing for Watson also attended the call back for the next show and was in consideration for a role. Unable to finalize casting that evening, we adjourned expecting to continue discussions the following day. However, shortly after we left the building, I received a message from the director saying they would consider other options and that I was free to cast the actor in the role of Watson. The final cast was

made up of women in the roles of Sherlock Holmes, Doctor Watson, and Actor 3. Actors 1 and 2 were both men.

Rehearsals

The first step in preparing for rehearsals was the creation of the production schedule. Scheduling began by identifying important deadlines, working backwards from the filmed performance. The general calendar dedicated two weeks to blocking, followed by a designer run to allow the designers to see the basic blocking and scene flow. The two weeks following the designer run were dedicated to scene work, with a preview for crew members at the end of the fourth week. The fifth week of rehearsal was the start of tech week, which culminated in a final dress rehearsal and a filmed performance. Both final dress and the filmed performance were open to a limited audience made up from the theatre department. The two weeks following the filmed performance were dedicated to editing the footage for online streaming.

Soon after creating the production schedule, I began creating blocking. While some directors intentionally avoid pre-blocking before rehearsals begin, I thought it was important to develop tentative blocking to better prepare for how each scene would play for the cameras. A meeting was scheduled with our consultant from the Film and Digital Media department to work out the logistics of filming the production. Most designers from *Baskerville*, as well as the following production, were in attendance. A major portion of the meeting was dedicated to adjusting blocking to accommodate the limits of depth of field, zoom width, and camera movement. This translated to action being flatter to keep actors in focus, tighter to keep the action contained in the frame, and with slower movement to keep a pleasing composition while camera operators attempt to follow the

actors. A camera test was scheduled for the first week of rehearsal. One of my goals for the test was to walk through the compositions I had already blocked, to see how well they worked and to discover what adjustments needed to be made. So as not to have to spend too much time adjusting when the cameras were brought into rehearsal, I created tentative blocking with notations for each scene indicating the primary camera for each shot.

Adjusting for Inclement Weather

Just as production was beginning, the schedule for *Baskerville* needed to be adjusted due to inclement weather. Rehearsals began with a table reading on February 15, 2001. The next day, a severe winter storm came through Texas. Many throughout the state suffered loss of power and phones services and all activities on campus were shut down for the week. The department production calendar was altered to push back the filming, editing, and streaming for the remaining productions in the season by one week. Rehearsals resumed in person on February 22. While *Baskerville* ultimately had the same number of rehearsal days, the week the production was shut down delayed several steps in preparation. Installation of the platforms, the camera test, and a meeting scheduled to select furniture pieces had to be rescheduled. Working without the platforms and furniture pieces, and without having defined the edges of the stage necessitated some flexibility in staging the scenes. While the playing areas for each scene were left unchanged, some blocking had to be adjusted to allow for limited space on the platforms and for space lost to large furniture pieces.

Collaboration

As a director, I strive to have a collaborative workspace, however, my greatest discovery during the rehearsal process was that, in an effort to be more open and collaborative, I failed to provide a solid rehearsal structure for the actors. Over the first few weeks of rehearsal I was unclear with my direction, and therefore was unable to effectively translate the plan I had created with the actors. I wanted to leave room to explore possibilities but did not provide the actors with a foundation from which to grow their performances. I gave them information regarding to which camera each scene should be played, but little direction towards development of character and performance style. With the guidance from my directing mentor, I was able to identify and began addressing these shortcomings. Modeling a more productive work ethic and being clearer with my direction allowed more freedom from the actors to be active collaborators because there was a structure to guide them.

Rehearsal Challenges

While the production was able adapt to the new schedule, completing all blocking by end of the second week of rehearsal, a few challenges were identified early in the third week. The first rehearsal off-book suffered from many called lines. The subsequent rehearsal, the faculty run, was much the same regarding line memorization. This, along with a flatness in the staging and lack of specificity of action were concerns. With guidance from my directing mentor and other faculty, we were able to identify where the production was suffering and correct these issues. Feedback from the faculty run also addressed my ineffective use of time and unclear leadership that plagued early rehearsals.

These issues informed much of the post-show discussions with faculty that will be addressed in the next chapter.

Specificity of Action

While the entire show was blocked within the first two weeks of rehearsals, much of the action lacked specificity. In contrast, the scene staged by the fight choreographer was very specific in action. One of the notes I received after the faculty run was that the action was muddy and the entire show needed to have the same degree of precision as the fight scene. The lack of specificity was most evident in the more stylized sequences such as a series of vignettes that are acted out as Holmes narrates possible scenarios. The scene required actors to quickly navigate through several different scenarios, but the action lacked a snappiness and sense of deliberate intention. To address the lack of specificity in the action, the remaining rehearsals leading up to tech week were divided up similarly to the blocking rehearsals. I was encouraged to drill each scene until the action was clear and specific. This meant running each scene multiple times making necessary adjustments, and not moving on to the next scene until I got the performance I was seeking. Additionally, I began to use rehearsal time more effectively. That meant if a scene needed to be worked multiple times, that we immediately reset and worked it again. This led to an increased energy in the room and ultimately brought more energetic performances from the actors.

Depth of Staging

The note I received about flatness of the staging was a result of me erring too much on the side of trying to appease the shallow depth of field of the cameras. The

faculty encouraged a more theatrical staging with stronger use of triangles in blocking. While these adjustments did make for a more appealing stage picture for a live audience, making these changes that added depth to the staging necessitated adjustments to the blocking once cameras were brought into rehearsals. While minimal, these adjustments were necessary to balance theatrical staging and filming techniques.

The most difficult adjustments that needed to be made for the cameras necessitated condensing the action of each scene for a limited field of view. The left and right cameras were equipped with zoom lenses, therefore we were unable to capture wide shots with those cameras. This meant that the blocking of each scene needed to be compressed for the side cameras, while the center camera, with a wider lens, captured movement between scenes. This served a purpose similar to an establishing shot used in film and television, used primarily to orient the audience. The thrust stage of the Mabec theatre made filming more difficult as the cameras were much closer to the action than they had been in the previous production. This resulted in any action blocked too far downstage becoming distorted in the center camera. A third camera operator was brought in to run the third camera so that the camera could be panned to avoid action from being filmed on either extreme of the frame. We limited the number of scenes blocked downstage to avoid unpleasant distortion.

Unified Style

Ultimately, the goal for the last two and a half weeks of rehearsal was to bring a cohesiveness to the style of performance, staging, and tempo. This meant creating a snappiness to the action of the scenes and transitions between scenes. In general, we strove for a tightness in actor entrances, movement between locations, and picking up

dialogue cues. Establishing a quicker pace allowed scenes that deviated from this tempo to have greater resonance and tension. These scenes include the arrival to Baskerville Hall, the moments leading to the fight with Victor, and the appearance of the hound.

Transitions

During the faculty run, many transitions still moved slowly. The plan up to this point was to use the few stagehands to move set pieces. This was decided upon because the actors were already struggling to get changed into their costume pieces in time for their entrances. Tasking them with moving scenery would have further delayed their entrances. To make for smoother transitions, we continued to simplify every scene change. One example was substituting the end table used in 221B Baker Street to serve as an additional café table in the hotel. Previously the table was slightly upstage of the chairs. By moving the table forward, it was accessible to quickly be moved into the café scene. To complete the scene in the hotel, all that was needed was to add chairs.

However, using the stagehands in the set transitions caused dead time in the run. To remedy this, we worked out the logistics of having the actors make the scene changes themselves, which almost completely eliminated the need for scene change transitions. The café table was set up by Actor 3, in character as the hotel maid, while the other characters were in conversation. Then, as the maid and Doctor Mortimer had a brief exchange, the other actors were able to quickly place the chairs with no interruption to the scene. Streamlining this process allowed for an almost instantaneous transition from one scene to the next. Many scenes were established by simply turning and taking a single step. A light cue or the sound cue of a shop bell often aided in establishing the location.

Not all transitions needed to be executed with the same snappiness.² Often, to establish a scene with greater tension, Watson's dialogue slowly painted a picture of the surroundings. Such was the case with the arrival at Baskerville Hall. However, a quick transition out of the previous scene was still desirable so as not to distract from Watson's dialogue. As Watson began to describe the eerie landscape, Sir Henry removed the café chairs that made up the train car. Before Watson could conclude the speech, Sir Henry handed them a suitcase and joined them at the threshold of Baskerville Hall. Adding a character's business, such as collecting the suitcases, made for a more seamless transition. While this transition was not as snappy as other transitions in its movement from one scene to the next, the fluidity was uninterrupted by the simple scenic change.

Characterization

The approach to developing characterization in *Baskerville* was defined by contrasting the relatively straight roles of Holmes and Watson against the broadly comic roles performed by Actors 1, 2 and 3. The theatrical device of doubling these characters and its inherent metatheatricality plays a significant role in creating *Baskerville's* stylization. Performances were developed in part by the broadly comic characters, but also by the physical demands placed on the actors. Overcoming the obstacles created by quick costume and scene changes and often breaking character to acknowledge these challenges significantly influenced characterization.

With the actors making scene changes, it became necessary to streamline the costume changes as well. The costume design team helped immensely when it came time

² I define this snappiness as tightly executed, economy of action that allows seamless transitions from one scene to the next.

to work costume changes into our tech schedule, but the actors still had difficulty changing for several scenes. The solution for these moments was to embrace those difficult scene changes by incorporating it into their performances. The script already had moments of self-referential metatheatricality included. In one scene, Holmes asks Cartwright what took them so long arriving to the Baker Street flat, to which the Actor playing Cartwright, breaks character to respond, “you have no idea.” At the conclusion of that same scene, Holmes must repeat the line, “the Barrymores,” to the actors on stage as a means of cuing them to change for their next appearance as Mr. and Mrs. Barrymore. We chose to lean into this idea of overtaxed actors, barely making their costume changes on time, in full view of the audience. This included a scene which had Actors 1 and 3 running on to stage to receive Watson and Sir Henry at the threshold of Baskerville Hall. The actors run on stage, throwing on the final embellishments of their Barrymore costume pieces, making their way to the center platform, then pause momentarily before slowly making their way to the “doorway” in a manner reminiscent of Lurch from *The Addams Family*. Another example features Actor 3 making their way “off stage” from the opera, then changing into Mrs. Hudson in full view of the audience, as the doorbell to 221B Baker Street rings. The soundboard operator was instructed to continue ringing the bell until Mrs. Hudson enters the scene, turns their gaze towards the booth, and shushes the board operator.

While the actors were encouraged to blur the lines between performer and character, and to make their characters broad and exaggerated, there were some moments that they had to be reined in to fit the needs of specific scenes. As Actor 1 enters the district messenger office as Lucy, the partially deaf wife of Wilson, their voice was loud

and shrill. The actor was asked to play a feminine voice in a moderate tone, without making a joke of them playing a woman. The other actors had to yell to be heard, though still misunderstood by Lucy. While the initial concern was that we did not want to make a man playing a woman to be the joke, the scene ended up being more humorous as the other characters became more frustrated with Lucy misunderstanding them.

Another key aspect to bringing the characterization together as a cohesive whole was to accentuate the decorum of late Victorian England. Ludwig includes several of these moments in the script. As Watson discovers Sir Henry is still after a hound attack, they are unable to embrace their friend because of their Victorian sensibilities. So too are Sir Henry and Miss Stapleton hindered in their courtship because of the era's social norms. This translated to characterization as repressed emotion. That is not to say to refrain from playing emotion, but rather, to play as if they were struggling to contain their emotion. This also affected some character physicality. The actor playing Holmes sat with a very contemporary pose, with widespread legs, leaning forward with their elbows resting on their thighs. This was to appear more masculine. I corrected the posture by saying it was too contemporary, rather than addressing any signifiers of gender inherent in the posture.

Incorporating Puppetry

Puppets were added at various stages during rehearsals. Puppets added early in the process allowed the performers time to grow accustomed to the way they functioned. Stand-in pieces were made available for incomplete puppets but proved difficult to use. The pieces that were closer to completion were easier for the performers to inject personality into. For instance, a rabbit used in act once was introduced into rehearsal

before the fur was added. Even without the fur, it was easily identifiable as a rabbit, and expressiveness showed through early rehearsals. A stand-in comprised of two blocks of foam was made available for the sheep used in act two. Though not much changed mechanically from the stand-in, it lacked signifiers of a sheep and thus the performance lacked expressiveness. However, transitioning to the final puppet was relatively easy. Once the puppet resembled a sheep, the performer quickly brought out an expressive performance.

Introducing the hound puppet was much more difficult. The actors were provided a single wood stand-in piece representing a leg. The mechanics of how it functioned were not very clear, and there was nothing in the way of signifiers to help the performers see it as a hound. During rehearsals we used the same two blocks that served as the sheep to allow the two performers that would be operating the hounds to grow accustomed to moving as a single entity. When the final version of the hound was introduced at the start of tech week, it quickly became evident that the two-person puppet required additional rehearsal time for the actors to become comfortable with its operation. The first obstacle to successfully operating the hound was familiarizing the “rear” operator with the mechanics of how the legs moved. The “front” operator controlled the body and head. As this was the same operator of the sheep puppet, this wasn’t too difficult of a task, but the two performers needed to move as one to make the hound expressive. The properties department was extremely helpful in coaching the actors on the mechanics of how the puppet moved, but also suggesting movements, such as an ear flip, to make the puppet more expressive.

Rehearsing During the COVID Pandemic

The greatest challenge to *Baskerville's* rehearsal process was the act of producing a play during a global pandemic. In addition to all the adjustments that were necessary to comply with the evolving COVID-19 protocols, there was a great deal of personal anxiety, not only in my own potential exposure, but also regarding to what degree I may be endangering the cast and crew. Early in the rehearsals, most activity was distanced, with no physical contact between the actors. Sitting at the café table in the Northumberland Hotel was accomplished by creating distance between the chairs, with the expectation that it would be much tighter in the final performance. This scene, and others like it, became more tightly composed with every subsequent rehearsal, without any specific direction to do so. Every member of the cast and crew seemed to naturally gravitate closer to one another over time. There were often moments when people would approach me well within the recommended distance. Whether this was happening to me or I was witnessing it on stage, I was always struck with great anxiety. Often, I would discover that I was doing the same, stepping within the recommended six feet, only realizing I had done so after I walked away from discussing a note with an actor or crew member. I often found it difficult to give direction on an action when it required actors to be in proximity with one another. I found myself often explaining how it should eventually play out, but for the time being, keeping it distanced. I constantly second guessed these decisions. I questioned whether I was erring too much on the side of caution. The final performance would be unmasked and without social distancing. Safeguards such as daily testing cast and crew during tech week were put in place to reduce exposure. Would it be much more difficult to make the adjustments later? Over

time some members of the production team expressed that physical distance between actors could be reduced as we approached the performance date. I questioned the reasoning involved in this assumption as it seemed to be concerned more with progressing towards a final product rather than the potential risk of exposure. It seemed as the public heard less startling information about the pandemic on the news, they became less cautious. At times, I felt I was the only one that had these concerns. While no one involved in the production contracted COVID during the production, I still wonder if this was a matter of luck, or if in fact I was being overly cautious.

Opening Night

Baskerville did not have a traditional opening or run. On March 26, 2021, *Baskerville* was filmed before a socially distanced audience of approximately 25 people. Immediately following the performance, the performers gathered on stage for photocall, then the cast and crew was dismissed for the last time. The contract with the publisher stipulated that the streamed performance must be comprised of footage from a single performance, that it could not be edited from footage from additional performances. Additionally, the performance was staged as a theatrical performance, with only a few considerations for the filming. This included a disclaimer that gunshots would not be used in the live performance but would rather be added in post-production and reduced volume levels for music and sound effects. This was to ensure more flexibility in the syncing of sound and video later. Additionally, both acts were preceded by a crew member introducing the act and slating³ for the recordings. There were no opportunities

³ The same process used in film production where a clapperboard is used to sync video and sound recordings in post-production

for filming a second take. Any imperfections, including a dropped prop and a minor stumble from a platform, were used in the final video.

Though the audience was small, they responded well to the humor of the production. For the performers, and for myself as well, there is a sense of relief and excitement that the comedy is well received. There were a few moments where the actors needed to hold for laughter, but they had been given opportunity to adapt for those moments. Myself, my directing mentor, the video editor, and other designers provided laughter throughout tech week as the performers brought new energy into comedic moments they had been drilling for weeks. Additionally, with a small preview audience for the final dress rehearsal, the actors were able to benefit from the response of an audience seeing the production for the first time.

Final dress and the filmed performance were the only times the actors appeared on stage without their protective masks. This made for a strange experience for many of us on the production team. This was the first time we were able to see the full physical performances the actors were giving. There was a whole separate level of expressiveness we had grown accustomed to living without. This was all very surprising to see this manifest for the first time in the final dress rehearsal. I believe that having to perform with the masks throughout the rehearsal process made for more expressive performances from the actors as they had to push their performance through the masks.

Post-production

I had limited involvement in the post-production process. In discussions about my role in post-production, the editor asked for time to produce a rough cut before sharing the footage and receiving notes. I believe this process was established because some of

the directors may have had little to no experience with the post-production process. This was not always the case. Some directors took a much more active role, editing scenes themselves. While I have extensive experience in editing video, I decided to take a backseat in the editing. The editor also served as the camera director in rehearsals and performance, communicating to the camera operators via headset. In the final weeks of rehearsals, I stood by the monitor, actively discussing the camera compositions. When the rough cut was made available for viewing, there were very few surprises as I was well aware of the footage that was being captured.

The rough cut of the production was delivered only a few days before the deadline for uploading. The footage featured on-camera sound and no sound effects. The sound designer was tasked with cleaning up the audio captured by stage microphones and readding the sound effects. While most sound effects were played live during the performance, they were played at a low level to allow for easier editing. I provided only a few notes to the video editor after the first cut. These notes primarily focused on cutting between shots that violated the line of action. As *Baskerville* was staged in thrust, the actors often violated the line of action. For instance, Holmes would appear on Watson's right in one shot, but if Watson was downstage of the camera in another shot, Holmes would appear on their left side.

After sound and video were synced, another cut was exported. This included final adjustments to the video brightness, contrast, and color. As there was only a day left before the video needed to be uploaded for streaming, I attempted to triage any adjustments I requested, differentiating adjustments as high priority and low priority, with each note marked with timecode. So as not to overtax the editors, I only gave them 5

high priority notes, and an additional 5 low priority notes if they had time to make the adjustments. The high priority adjustments mostly addressed the newly added sound or unnecessary cutting between shots. I asked for the level of the rain sound effect to come in fast as Holmes and Watson step into the streets of London. The lighting transition was instantaneous, and I wanted the sound to be the same. I gave a note on video, requesting that we linger on a few wide shots a bit longer as the angles we cut to were either out of focus or awkwardly composed. The other notes were drawing attention to some effects there were not complete and trimming dead air from a shot. The low priority notes included a request to have one scene lightened as the final adjustments were too dark, favoring wide shots in two specific moments, and lowering volume on a few sound effects so as to not be too distracting. Ultimately, the editors were able to easily make all these adjustments.

CHAPTER FIVE

Baskerville Reflection

Introduction

This chapter reflects on the strengths of my work as a director on *Baskerville*, as well as areas for future growth. This reflection is based primarily on conversations with members of the Baylor Theatre faculty. These conversations addressed challenges that arose in the rehearsal process as well as the overall success of the streamed video of the performance. On March 26, 2021, *Baskerville* was filmed before a small, socially distanced audience of approximately twenty-five people. The audience was comprised of students and faculty of the Baylor Theatre department. Though the audience was small, the production appeared to be well received as the audience laughed throughout the production. Except for the invited dress rehearsal, this was the only live performance of Baylor Theatre's *Baskerville* production.

The recorded performance was streamed for the public from April 15 thru to April 18, 2021. Due to the strict COVID-19 protocols, my personal interactions were limited to the classroom. The only audience response to the streamed performances that I was made aware of was limited to casual conversation with fellow classmates and a select few faculty members. While many of the comments were positive, students at Baylor Theatre tend to be supportive of each other's work, making it difficult to accurately gauge how successful the production was. For a more critical response to the production, I met with several members of the faculty.

Reception

Gauging audience reception was challenging due to the nature of *Baskerville's* presentation. You can infer some degree of an audience's reception in a live performance of a comedy by the amount of laughter. *Baskerville's* final dress and filmed performance both received laughter from the small audiences in all the appropriate moments.

Additionally, the cast received enthusiastic applause during curtain call. This was to be expected as Baylor Theatre students are very supportive of each other. A fellow graduate student in the audience for the filmed production expressed that *Baskerville* was their favorite production produced by Baylor Theatre. However, this doesn't give a complete understanding of an audience's reception of the production. Those present for the live performance made up only a small percentage of *Baskerville's* audience. Interpreting audience reception for those that watched the steamed recording is significantly more difficult.

After the production had streamed, I received positive comments from fellow students and faculty. Initially, I had difficulty accepting these compliments as there were still several edits I wish we could have made to the final video. Also, the performance the night of the recording suffered from a few mistakes. In live performances, little things may go wrong in one performance, but the next night may run smoothly. Those little mistakes are easy to let go of. When those mistakes are recorded, they seem amplified. Those same mistakes are there for each viewing. The camera overlooks nothing. I ultimately had to admit that I was nitpicking and was able to accept the compliments because the video was well produced.

The comments I received about the production were from a small number of people, as my interactions were limited due to COVID restrictions. The only way to gauge the quality of the production was by seeking feedback from the Baylor Theatre faculty. As graduate students, each project concludes with a feedback session with the faculty. All feedback sessions for *Baskerville* were held one-on-one over Zoom.

Strengths

The final streamed performance of *Baskerville* received almost entirely positive feedback from faculty. Multiple faculty members mentioned the video presentation, design elements, pacing, and performances were strengths of the production. While there were some areas where I wasn't as successful that appeared in the final production, and some missteps I made during the rehearsal process, these will be addressed later in this chapter.

Video Presentation

One of the greater strengths of *Baskerville* was the quality of the video presentation. Faculty and fellow students commended the quality of the streamed performance. One faculty member stated they believed *Baskerville* to be one of the better plays of the semester in the way it was filmed. While I believe there are a few aspects of the final product that could have been improved upon, there were no glaring issues with the quality of the video production. I credit the successes we made to the extensive preparation that went into filming the performance, but also, we benefitted greatly from the experimentation of the productions that proceeded ours.

I wanted to have an active role in *Baskerville's* video production from the very start of the design process. I knew, based on observations from other productions, the editor of *Baskerville* would have a role similar to that of a director on a multicamera television performance. They communicated to the camera operators via headset, framing each camera composition throughout the performance. As I knew I would have a limited role in the assembly of the rough cut, I made a concerted effort to communicate with the editor throughout tech week to guide the aesthetic of the cameras' compositions. As the edit was assembled, I was secure that the editor had high quality compositions to choose from.

The rough cut of the performance, while still lacking the final edits to the audio, and minor visual effects, was very close to the video's final cut. The few notes I requested were separated by high and low priority because I knew there were only a few days between the time the rough cut was released to us and when the final cut needed to be uploaded to the streaming service. All edits I requested were made quickly, without issue. I believe the small number of notes and the ease of their implementation are a direct result of our clear and constant communication throughout production.

Additionally, I also believe my background in video production helped to communicate with the video production team more effectively and informed my understanding of the capabilities and limitations of the equipment and the editing process. This was extremely beneficial when giving notes, as I knew what edits were easily achievable in the limited amount of time, but I was also able to weigh that against other aspects of the editors' workloads, such as video and audio corrections.

Design and Production Concept

Similar to the video presentation, there were multiple positive comments made about the design elements and a sense of style throughout *Baskerville*. The various design elements served the play well. While there were adjustments throughout rehearsals, mostly to simplify scenic and costume changes so as not to slow the pace of the show, the design stayed relatively consistent throughout. I am extremely proud of what the designers were able to accomplish and thoroughly enjoyed collaborating with them on creating the look for *Baskerville*.

I believe my director's concept made for a successful collaboration with the design team. At no point did I feel uncomfortable in my leadership role with the designers. My initial concept was well received and allowed for each designer to make their own contribution to the production while still maintaining a cohesive style.

I believe that through the collaboration with the design team, their own insights helped to bring the overall concept into clearer focus. The idea to have the costumes and set pieces have a patchwork/collage feel stemmed from those early discussions. A descriptor I used early on in discussion was "eclectic." I can't remember which team member translated that to "patchwork," but once they did, it stuck. From the various patterns used in the costume pieces, the different paint treatments of each platform, and the combination of wood, foam and fabric used to create each puppet, patchwork was translated throughout the design.

Some decisions made in the design process produced pleasant unforeseen effects. The discussion of omitting a cyclorama in favor of a black curtain was a practical solution for achieving a consistent look from each camera angle. As the video appeared

much darker than the live performance, the performers emerged from darkness onto the stage, which intensified the sense of mystery and anticipation.

An aspect of the design of which I am very proud, is the balance struck between light and darkness. *Baskerville* appeared very bright in the live performance. I commented to the designer that it would be perfect if we could hand out sunglasses to the audience. We knew it needed to be as bright as it was because we constantly monitored the camera feeds. This attention produced footage that was lit well enough so as not to miss any detail of the action on stage, but dark enough to create a foreboding sepia-tinged pallet.

Energy and Pacing

Establishing an energetic pacing was essential in directing *Baskerville*. The overarching goal was to keep the action moving by tightening transitions and picking up cues. This was done in part to address the negative criticism from earlier productions about how the mystery narrative interrupted the flow of the production. The moments that were best received in those early productions were those that embraced Ludwig's background in farce. Farce thrives on energetic pacing. Our production drew from the influence of farce to accentuate the comedy and moments of heightened tension.

While comedy generally tends to move at rapid pace, I do not believe that quick pacing alone makes for a more humorous production, nor does it create a more aesthetically pleasing style. I believe comedy thrives on the contrast in comic timing. I find there are opportunities to mine comedy from intentionally slower paced moments. However, these moments resonate best when the rest of the production moves quickly.

Our production utilized this concept of comic timing when Miss Stapleton hurriedly runs out on stage to warn Watson to leave the moor. The urgency of the scene is heightened as they see Jack Stapleton approaching. The quick pace is broken as a rabbit slowly makes its way across the back of the stage, drawing the attention of Watson and Miss Stapleton. The rabbit realizes it's being watched, pauses to look back at the observers, then hops away. The actor operating the rabbit puppet was encouraged to take more and more time to let the moment resonate. To contrast that moment, for the very next action to occur on stage, Jack Stapleton's entrance, the actor was encouraged to enter with energetic purpose. We used this same concept during the climax of the play, but for a much more dramatic effect. Just as Sir Henry is about to be attacked by the hound, time slows down. However, the moments preceding and following were intentionally paced quickly. While this stylistic approach to pacing helped to heighten the comedic and dramatic moments, it also helped to provide a foundation for performance style.

Direction of Performers

The most consistent note I received in my conversations with faculty was in praise of the acting performances. While much of that praise was directed to the entire cast, specific attention was paid to performances from the actors who had not previously had lead roles. I don't believe the intention was to suggest that any actor outshone their fellow cast mates, but rather that the actors with less mainstage acting experience rose to the level of the actors that had already established themselves as strong performers. I believe the cast functioned well as an ensemble, raised the quality of each other's performance, and emboldened themselves to take chances and have fun in exploring their

characterizations. I find it difficult to take much credit for their accomplishments as each performer displayed this same degree of talent in their auditions and callbacks. I suspect this is a product of their growth over the last several years in the department as well as the closeness that runs among the students.

Areas where my direction best benefitted the actors' performances were in establishing the broad comic style, pacing, and by drilling scenes to establish a greater sense of specificity to the action. Creating a sense of stylization with the pacing of the production helped to guide the performances primarily in terms of the rhythm of line delivery, but also served to tighten entrances and character changes. The actors were told to make their character changes a part of their performances. If ever the actors struggled to make an entrance in time due to a costume change, the lull in action was openly acknowledged. This created a sense of urgency and contributed to the humor and metatheatrical stylization of performance, rather than detracting from the show's pacing. Urgency was established when the performer, rather than the character, hurried through their costume changes in full view of the audience. However, this also created a sense of chaos on stage, running from one platform to the next, shedding costume pieces with every other line. Early runs of these scenes came across as imprecise and muddy. It became necessary to address this by establishing greater specificity of action.

While early rehearsals suffered from a lack of specificity, we were able to turn this around and allow room for the actors to establish a sense of play by providing greater structure and through drilling of scenes. I was encouraged by my directing mentor to work scenes multiple times because I was often not getting the performances I was requesting. While the performers did an admirable job of taking directing for their

characterizations, the intricacies of action were often a struggle. Scenes were rehearsed to get the correct timing of actor entrances and line deliveries.

Areas for Growth

Two areas that I struggled with early in rehearsal were in time management and leadership of the actors. Feedback following the faculty preview was integral in identifying issues that needed to be addressed with the production as well as my own work ethic in rehearsals. While *Baskerville* was successful and well received in its final presentation as a streamed performance, these obstacles may have hindered its success if they had not been addressed. In my discussions with the faculty, they helped me to identify my habits that created these obstacles. Also, as several of those faculty members had seen the production at different stages in development, they were also able to help me identify the actions that were taken to improve on the quality of the production. Given the opportunity to begin the rehearsal process again or even be allowed additional rehearsal time, I would apply these lessons to my process.

Leadership

My inability to clearly communicate a plan and provide a structure hindered progress in early rehearsals. While I feel that I was successful in translating my concept to the design team, and dedicated significant time in preparation for rehearsals, I wasn't as successful in communicating my plan to the actors. I wanted to create a collaborative space but failed to provide structure. My directing mentor brought this to my attention. They stated it appeared as if I didn't have a plan. While they knew from attending design meetings that I had planned meticulously, this wasn't translating in rehearsals.

Another faculty member described this as a tendency I have towards passivity in the rehearsal process. This was a profound discovery as they pointed out that passivity comes from a place of good intention. As a director I want to be collaborative and non-dictatorial. I want all cast and crew to feel a sense of ownership and craft the production together. However, by not providing a structure that the performers could build on, they were left without a sense of direction. Through this lack of decisiveness, I lost the confidence of the actors. With guidance from my mentor, subsequent rehearsals were more productive. Being specific with my direction provided a clearer vision of my plan, and the actors were better able to make their own contributions.

The lesson I learned from this experience is that I could be more active, modeling efficiency and energy, to which the actors responded well. Additionally, I know that in future directing projects I need to be clearer in my expectations, including off-book dates. Additionally, I need to provide clarity and decisiveness in what I want from the scenes, letting the actors know immediately what works and what doesn't.

Time Management

Often my tendency towards passivity negatively impacted my time management. Much too much time was spent at the top of every rehearsal talking about what we were going to do, rather than running the scenes. As I have discussed previously, these early rehearsals lacked specificity of action. My intention was to block the entire show and incrementally improve on every run by making what I believed to be manageable adjustments. This did not work well, as sometimes those adjustments were not executed as I would have liked. The solution to this issue was that we had to continue working individual scenes, "drilling" them multiple times so that I got the performance I was

seeking. I was advised by my mentor to stay with the scene until I got what I was looking for, rather than giving up and moving forward. This is not to say any actors were incapable of taking direction, only that the play required that all action on stage have the same degree of specificity that was put into the fight choreography.

My primary takeaway is that we were not making the necessary progress early in rehearsals, which resulted in wasted time. In future projects I need to set the standard early of an efficient workspace and provide a sense of precision in my direction. This includes quickly assessing stage pictures and specificity of action and decisively making the necessary adjustments.

Additional Opportunities for Growth

While the areas identified above were addressed during rehearsals, which made for a better production, there are some areas that were not addressed. One faculty member stated that the composition of the camera didn't provide very strong stage pictures. Another stated that the balance between comedy and mystery was never achieved. A third stated that the accents were not very strong. These are the areas that would be addressed given additional rehearsal time.

The lack of strong stage pictures should be approached from two different directions. The first would be to use more wide shots in the final edit. Given more time for editing I would provide more notes as to which scenes should feature wider framing. It would be necessary to provide very specific timecode for those moments. However, before those adjustments could be made, we would need to make that part of our discussions with the editing team during rehearsals. This would also require a shift in philosophy in staging. Many of the scenes were staged tightly for the camera. This is

ideal because it allows a clearer view of the actors faces. However, their performances aren't restricted to their facial expressions and wider shots would give a better sense of bodies moving in space. I believe there are opportunities within the script to open the staging, specifically when moving from one location to the next.

The comment about not finding balance in the comedy and mystery was accompanied with the comment that the farce in *Baskerville* was the most entertaining aspect of the production. I believe scenes featuring Watson and Holmes could benefit from the precision and play we injected into the scenes with the more broadly comic characters. There was a tendency to do less with these scenes because they were so often laden with exposition. I believe the solution to this was provided in an early note from a faculty member. We needed to play up Holmes' impression of their own status and Watson's frustrations with this. While we did address this note, I don't believe we pushed it far enough with characterization and physicality to match the rest of the play.

The final comment will likely, to some degree, have to remain weakness of the production. My mentor also served as the dialect coach for the production. While, additional time would allow for the actors to polish their dialects, it is not a particular strength of mine. However, I would have liked to be present in some of those sessions to develop an understanding of how to coach dialects and fine tune my ear.

Conclusion

Directing *Baskerville* was the most challenging production I have ever worked on. Scheduling issues that arose from a season impacted by a global pandemic, as well as the winter storm that shut down rehearsals, already made for a challenging production. However, the greatest challenge was holding rehearsals while trying to keep the cast,

crew, and my family safe from illness. I often found myself not knowing what to do, not as an aesthetic or conceptual approach to directing the production, but if I was endangering people by asking them to interact on stage. I approached this with far too much hesitancy and I believe that impacted the way the show was staged. As our country and our community appears to be making our way out of the pandemic, I look back on my time directing *Baskerville* not knowing if I accurately remember how I led the production. Was I petrified by fear? Was I too careless in my own interaction? Am I perhaps just using the pandemic to excuse my other failings as a director?

However, we produced a play that was well received, and I was told that my progress as a director was evident and that I should be proud of what we accomplished. Comedy may seem light, but it is not easy. A lot of energy, precision, and dedication went into *Baskerville*. One actor, known for their comic work, said this was the most challenging role they've had so far. But it paid off. Some of the actors gave some of their best performances with this production. It was hard work. Yes, we were tired after every rehearsal. With all the anxiety of directing a play during a pandemic, finding a sense of play was integral to making *Baskerville* work. Hopefully, that sense of play translated to the streamed video and made getting through this pandemic a little more manageable.

Even though cases of COVID are on the decline and many in the industry are eager to get back to live performance, I believe that to stay relevant we must consider the role film has in future theatrical productions. The theatre industry has made streaming performances accessible, and we were able to share our work with friends and family living all across the globe. I would like to explore this more thoroughly, finding the intersection between live theatre and film. I don't know if I want to go back to a mindset

where I felt theatre is only meant to be experienced live. I believe the work we accomplished with *Baskerville* has made us better prepared if the industry leans in this direction, or better able to push our own work in that direction.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Research and Design Images



Figure A.1. Abandoned theme park research image.



Figure A.2. Abandoned theme park research image.



Figure A.3. Abandoned theme park research image.



Figure A.4. Abandoned theme park research image.



Figure A.5. Abandoned theme park research image.



Figure A.6. Abandoned theme park research image.



Figure A.7. Abandoned theme park research image.



Figure A.8. Sydney Paget research image.

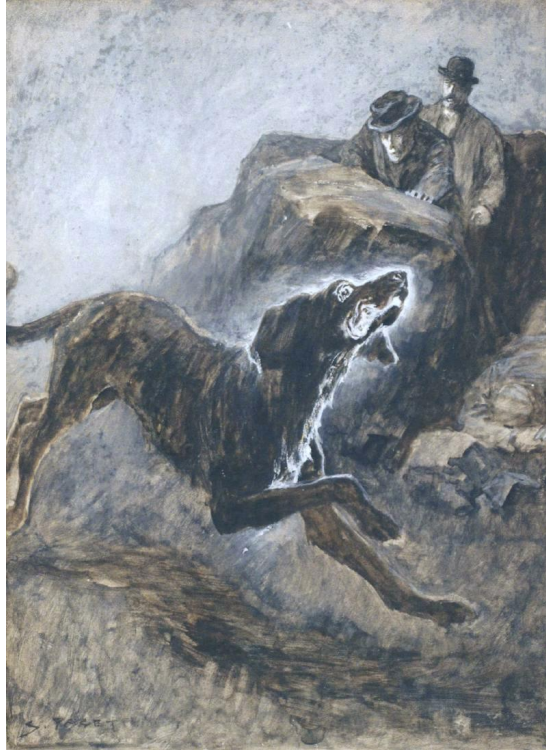


Figure A.9. Sydney Paget research image.



Figure A.10. Sydney Paget research image.



Figure A.11. Sydney Paget research image.



Figure A.12. Sydney Paget research image.



Figure A.13. Edward Gorey research image.



Figure A.14. Edward Gorey research image.



Figure A.15. Edward Gorey research image.



Figure A.16. Harry Clarke research image.

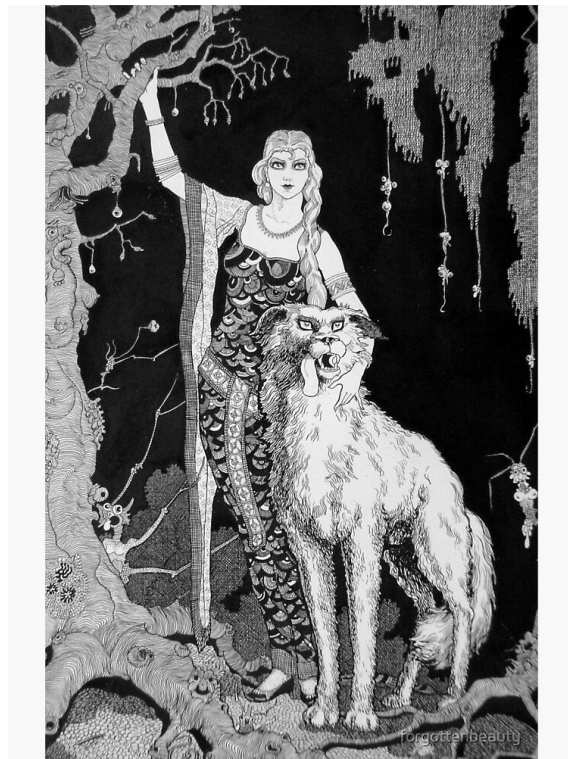


Figure A.17. Harry Clarke research image.

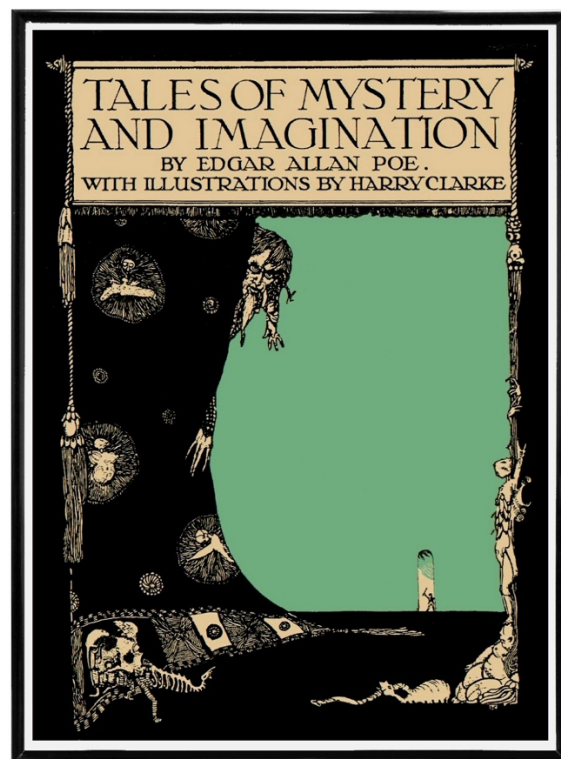


Figure A.18. Harry Clarke research image.

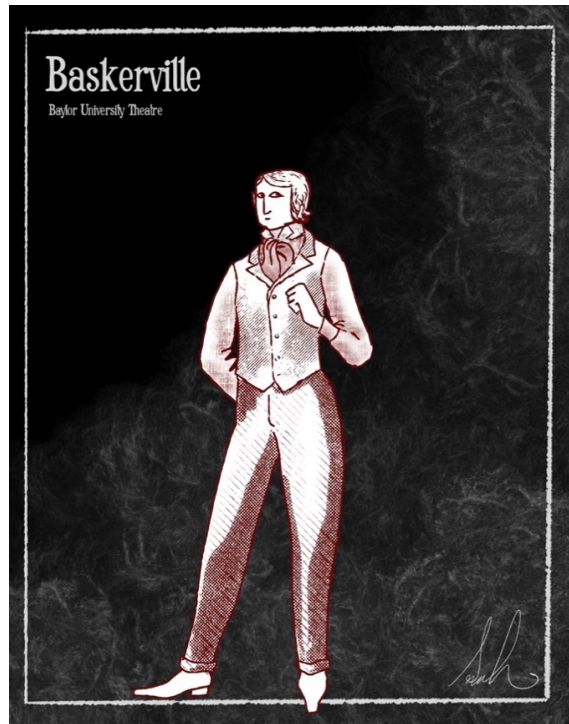


Figure A.19. Initial unspecified character costume sketch.

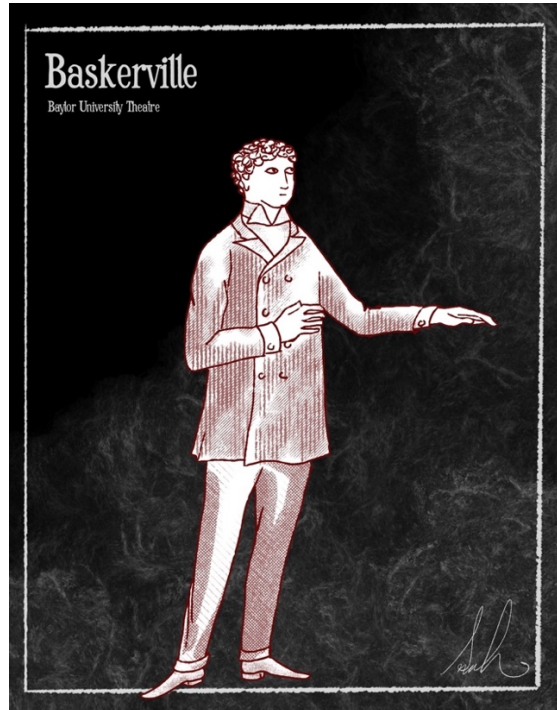


Figure A.20. Initial unspecified character costume sketch.

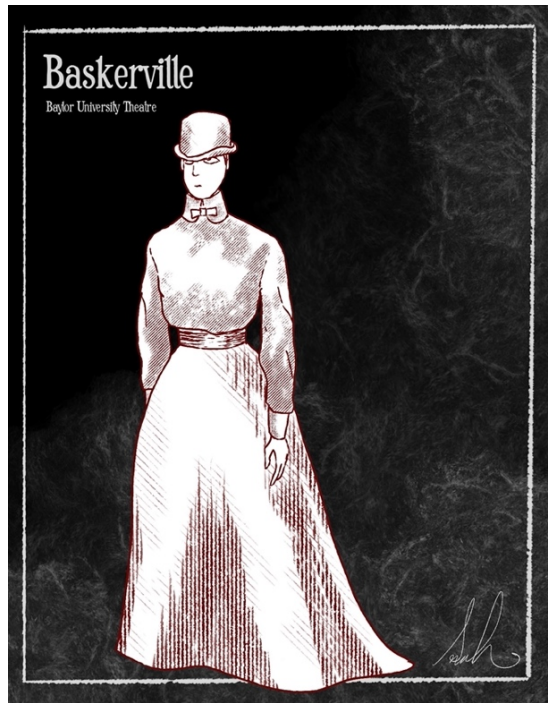


Figure A.21. Initial unspecified character costume sketch.

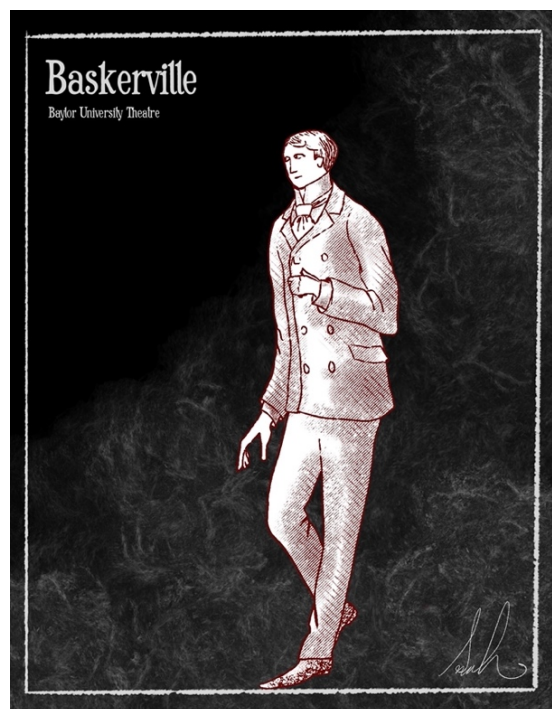


Figure A.22. Initial unspecified character costume sketch.



Figure A.23. Initial unspecified character costume sketch.



Figure A.24. Sherlock Holmes base costume rendering.



Figure A.25. Sherlock Holmes as Man of Mystery costume rendering.



Figure A.26. Sherlock Holmes with iconic hat and cape costume rendering.



Figure A.27. Doctor Watson base costume rendering.



Figure A.28. Doctor Watson with coat costume rendering.



Figure A.29. Actor 1 base costume rendering.



Figure A.30. Actor 2 base costume rendering.



Figure A.31. Actor 3 base costume rendering.



Figure A.32. Actor 2 as Sir Henry costume rendering.

Scene	Prologue											Scene 1											Scene 2	Scene 3
Page	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13											
Holmes		+x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x											
Watson		+x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x											
Barrymore	(x)																							
Dr. Mortimer					+x	x	x	x	x	x	x-													
Baron Carpia															+x-									
Sir Charles	x	x-																						
Daisy		+x	x	x	x	x-																		
Sir Hugo						+x	x	x-																
Bradley												+x-												
Mrs. Hudson		+x	x	x-	+x-																			
Maiden						+x	x-																	
Shepherdess							+x-																	
Floria Tosca															+x-									

Scene	Scene 4			Scene 5		Scene 6								
Page	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25		
Holmes	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Watson	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Dr. Mortimer	+x	x	x-											
Man w/ Beard				+x	x-									
Rita						+x			x-					
Milker										+x	x	x-		
Desk Clerk												+x		
Sir Henry	+x	x	x-											
Bridget						+x			x-					
Mrs. Hudson	+x-													
Cartwright								(x)	+x	x	x	x-		

Scene	Scene 7						Scene 8				Scene 9
Page	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Holmes	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x-
Watson	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Desk Clerk	x	x	x-								
Dr. Mortimer			+x	x	x	x-			+x	x	x-
Conductor										+x-	
Trap Driver											+x-
Lestrade	+x	x-									
Sir Henry		+x	x	x	x	x-			+x	x	x
Baby	+x	x-									
Maid			+x-								
Clayton							+x	x	x-		

Scene	Scene 10		Scene 11	Scene 12	Scene 13					
Page	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46
Holmes				+x-						+x
Watson	x	x	x	x-	+x	x	x	x	x	x-
Barrymore	+x	x-								
Stapleton				+x	x	+x-	x	x-		
Milker										+x
Sir Henry	x	x-	+x	x-				+x	x	x-
Mrs. Barrymore	+x	x	x-							
Miss Stapleton						+x	x	x	x	x-
Cartwright										+x

Scene	Scene 14				Scene 15			Scene 16	
Page	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55
Holmes	x	x	x	x-					
Watson				+x	x	x	x	x	x\
Milker	x	x	x	x-					
Barrymore				+x	x	x	x-		
Victor								+x	x-
Sir Henry				+x	x	x	x	x	x\
Cartwright	x	x	x	x-					
Mrs. Barrymore					+x	x	x-		

Prologue:	Yew Alley Baskerville Hall
Scene 1:	221B Baker St/Tobacconist
Scene 2:	221 B Baker St
Scene 3:	Royal Opera House
Scene 4:	221B Baker St
Scene 5:	London Streets
Scene 6:	District Messenger Office
Scene 7:	Northumberland Lobby
Scene 8:	Paddington Station
Scene 9:	Train/Grimpen Station
Scene 10:	Baskerville Hall
Scene 11:	Watson's Room
Scene 12:	221B Baker St
Scene 13:	Moors
Scene 14:	221B Baker St
Scene 15:	Baskerville Hall
Scene 16:	Moors

Figure A.33. Act One scenic breakdown indicating characters, time of day, and location.

Scene	Scene 1							Scene 2				Scene 3			
Page	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
Holmes		+x	x	x	x	x-									
Watson	/x	x	x	x	x	x-	x-			+x	x	x	x	x	x
Dr. McCann	+x-														
Victor			+x-												
Barrymore				+x-								+x	x	x-	+x
Stapleton				+x-			+x-		+x	x-	+x-				
Man of Mystery*					+x-										
Sir Henry	/x-			+x-		+x	x-	+x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sir Charles			+x-												
Nrs. Malloy	+x	x-													
Mrs. Barrymore			+x-									+x	x	x-	
Miss Stapleton				+x-				+x	x	x-	+x-				
Young Mother															+x-

Scene	Scene 4	Scene 5		Scene 6								Scene 7		Scene 8	
Page	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85
Holmes					+x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Watson	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Dr. Mortimer	x	x													
Farmer			+x-												
Victor							(x)	(x)							
Stapleton										+x	x	x-			
Milker												+x	x-		
Sir Henry	x	x-	x	x-					+x	x	x	x-			
Nrs. Mackeeble		+x-													
Miss Stapleton											+x	x-			
Cartwright												+x	x-		
Laura Lyons														+x	x-

Scene	Scene 9			Scene 10	Scene 11				Scene 12			Scene 13	Scene 14
Page	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98
Holmes	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x\
Watson	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x\
Hugo	+x	x-											
Stapleton		+x-			+x-					(x)	+x-		
Clerk		+x	x-										
Falstaff												+x	x\
Sir Henry	+x	x-					(x)	+x-		+x-	+x-	+x	x\
Lestrade			+x	x	x	x-			+x	+x-	+x-		
Miss Stapleton									+x	x	x-	+x	x\

Scene 1: Moors and Baskerville Sitting Room
Scene 2: Moors
Scene 3: Baskerville Hall
Scene 4: Coombe Tracy Street
Scene 5: Mortimer's House/Office
Scene 6: Black Tor/Hut
Scene 7: Coomb Tracy Train Platform
Scene 8: Lyon's Typing Establishment

Scene 9: Baskerville Hall
Scene 10: Coomb Tracy Train Platform
Scene 11: Moors
Scene 12: Merripit House
Scene 13: 221B Baker St
Scene 14: Covent Garden

Figure A.34. Act Two scenic breakdown indicating characters, time of day, and location.

- Prologue: Yew Alley (Outside Baskerville Hall) – Devon/Night
 - Atmosphere: Murky/Foggy
 - Set Pieces: *Back door, Gate*

- Scene 1: 221B Baker St/Tobacconist – London/Day
 - Set Pieces: *Window, Holmes’ chair, Table*
 - Legend of Sir Hugo: Inside and out of Baskerville Hall – Devon/Night
 - Atmosphere: Thunder
 - Set Pieces: *Upstairs, Ivy covered wall, Table* - Sir Hugo “sprang upon the table and cried” (7)

- Scene 2: 221B Baker St – London/Night
 - Atmosphere: Cloud of smoke

- Scene 3: Royal Opera House – London/Night
 - Set Pieces: *Seats, Raised box*

- Scene 4: 221B Baker St – London/Day

- Scene 5: London Streets – London/Day
 - Atmosphere: Rain, Thunder
 - Set Pieces: *Hansom cab*

- Scene 6: District Messenger Office – London/Day
 - Atmosphere: Rain, Thunder
 - Set Pieces: *Counter, Shelves*
 - Cross to 221B for the paper?

- Scene 7: Northumberland – London/Day
 - Set Pieces: *Counter*

- Scene 8: Paddington Station – London/Day
 - Atmosphere: Smoke
 - Set Pieces: *Platform*

- Scene 9: Train – London to Devon/Day to Dusk
 - Set Pieces: *Carriage seats*

- Scene 10: Outside and in of Baskerville Hall – Devon/Dusk
 - Atmosphere: Darker, Threatening, Mist
 - Set Pieces: *Façade of B.Hall, Portraits (covered Sir Hugo portrait?)*

Figure A.35.1. Breakdown part 1 indicating time of day, location, weather conditions, and necessary set pieces.

- Scene 11: Watson's Room – Devon/Night
 - Atmosphere: Gloomy
 - Set Pieces: *Bed, Nightstand, Curtains*
- Scene 12: 221B Baker St – London/Night?
- Scene 13: Moor – Devon/Day
 - Atmosphere: Sunlight
- Scene 14: 221B Baker St – London/Night?
 - Set Pieces: *"Up here" (46)*
- Scene 15: Baskerville Hall – Devon/Night
 - Set Pieces: *Bed, Corridor, Window*
 - Pinpoint of Light
- Scene 16: Moor – Devon/Night
 - Atmosphere: Ferocious wind
 - Set Pieces: *Stones/boulders*
- Scene 1: Moor and Baskerville Hall Sitting Room – Devon/Day
 - Set Pieces: *Sofa "sit with you?"*
 - Dumbshow using entirety of the stage
- Scene 2: Path on the Moor – Devon/Day
 - Atmosphere: Bright, Beautiful
 - Set Pieces: *Rock/Boulder*
- Scene 3: Baskerville Hall – Devon/Day?
 - Atmosphere: Thunder
 - Set Pieces: *Study? Door*
- Scene 4: Street in Coombe Tracy – Devon/Day
 - Atmosphere: Blast of Wind
- Scene 5: Mortimer's House/Office – Devon/Day
 - Set Pieces: *Door*
- Scene 6: Black Tor – Devon/Dusk
 - Atmosphere: Windy
 - Set Pieces: *Summit of steep hill, Hut at the Bottom, Furnishing (blankets, canned food), Chest, Clearing*

Figure A.35.2. Breakdown part 2 indicating time of day, location, weather conditions, and necessary set pieces.

- Scene 7: Coombe Tracy Train Platform – Devon/Dusk
- Scene 8: Lyon’s Typing Estab. – Devon/Dust
- Scene 9: Baskerville Hall Gallery – Devon/Night
 - Set Pieces: Portraits
- Scene 10: Coombe Tracy Train Platform. Devon/Night
- Scene 11: Moor – Devon/Night
 - Atmosphere: Windy, Fog
 - Set Pieces: *Merripit House, Window, Door*
- Scene 12: Merripit House/Grimpen Mire – Devon/Night
 - Set Pieces: *Window, Mire*
- Scene 13: 221B Baker St – London/Day
- Scene 14: Opera House – London/Night

Figure A.35.3. Breakdown part 3 indicating time of day, location, weather conditions, and necessary set pieces.

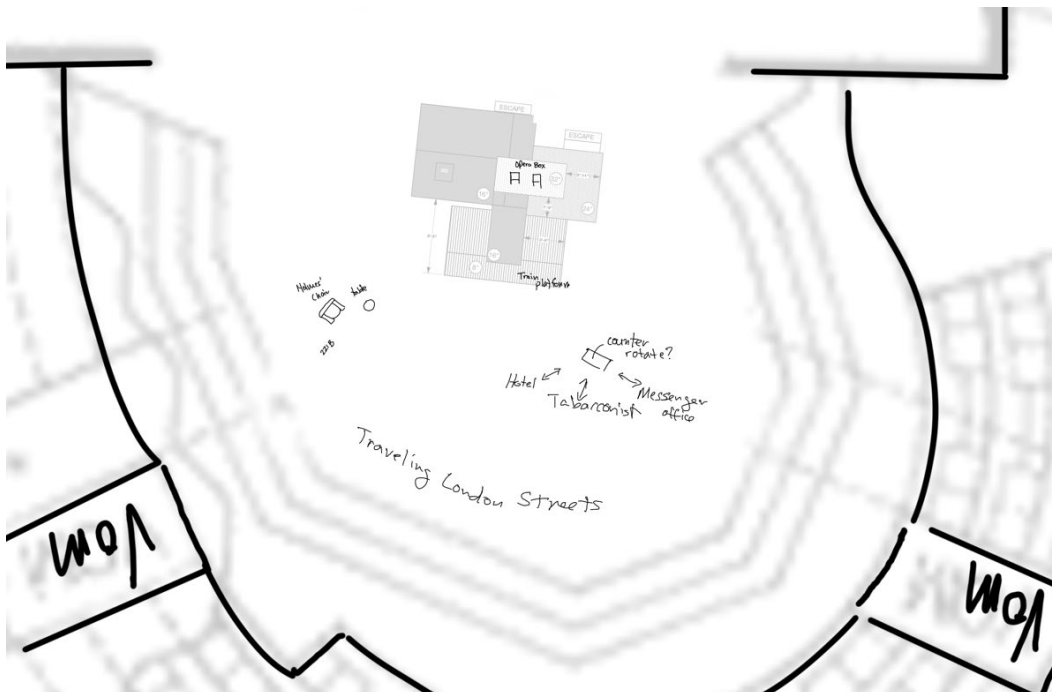


Figure A.36. Preliminary staging ground plan for Act 1.

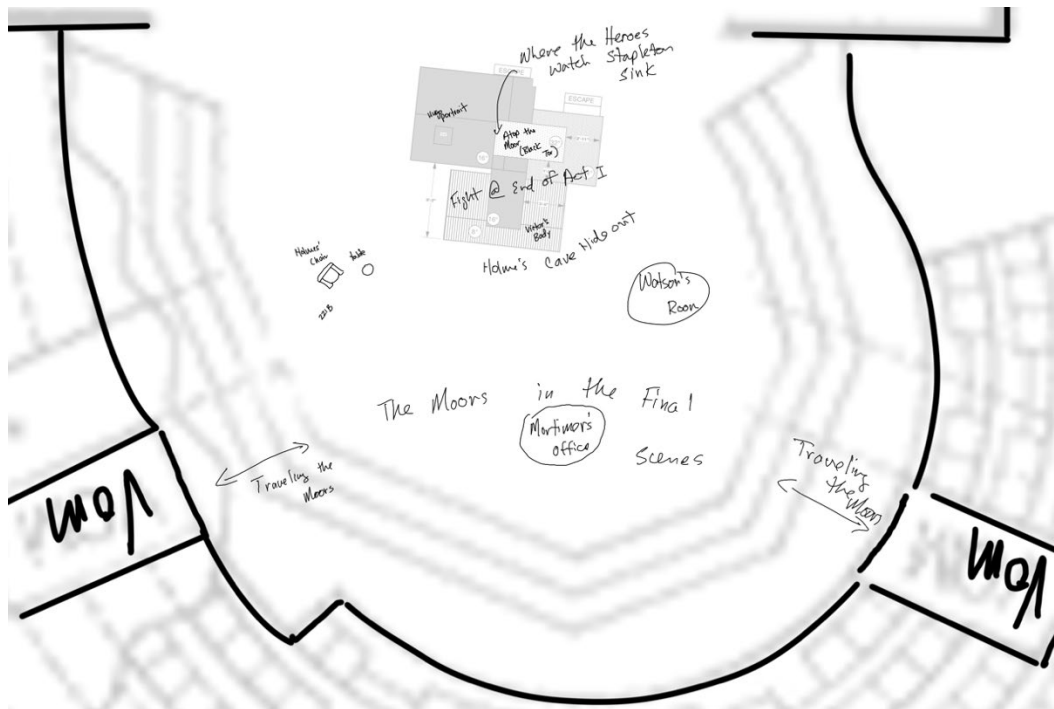


Figure A.37. Preliminary staging ground plan for Act 2.



Figure A.38. Devonshire moorland research image.



Figure A.39. Devonshire moorland research image.



Figure A.40. Devonshire moorland research image.



Figure A.41. Devonshire moorland research image.



Figure A.42. Devonshire moorland research image.

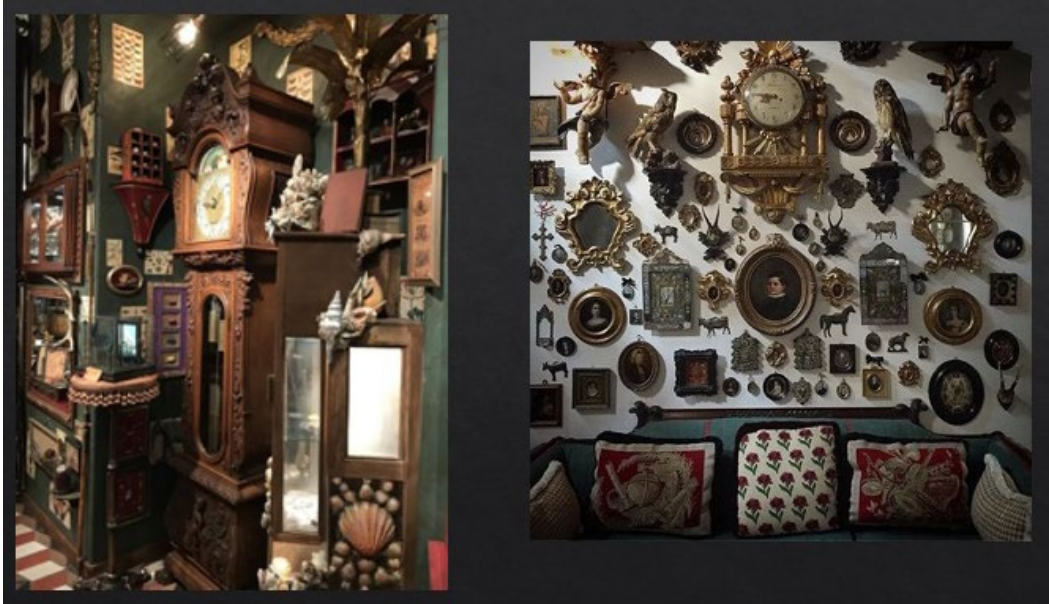


Figure A.43. Scenic design research cluttered office/sitting room.

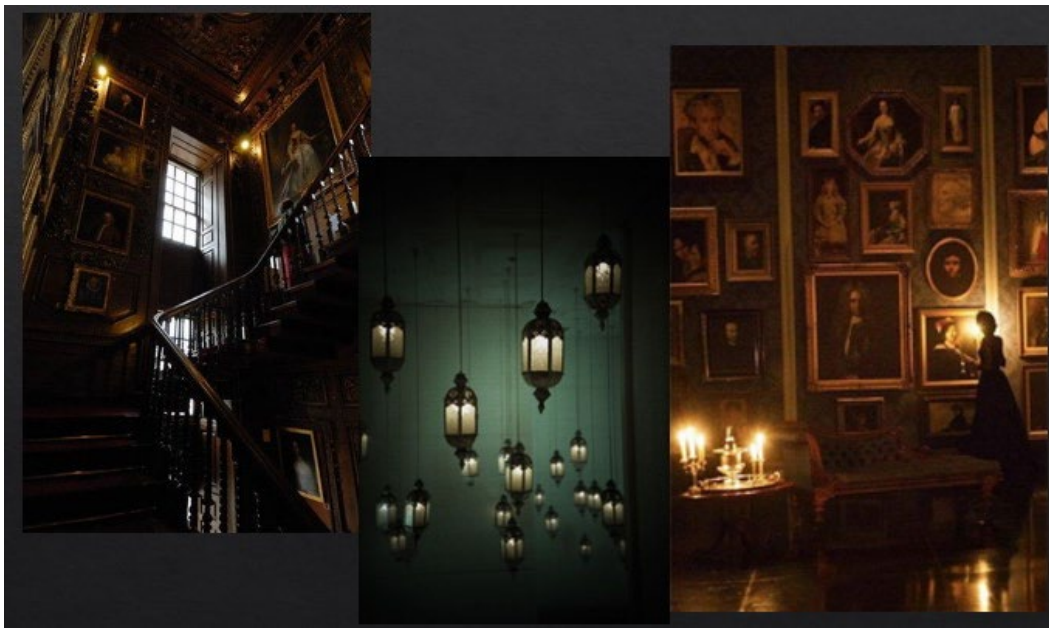


Figure A.44. Scenic design research of indoor light fixtures, wallpaper, and portrait.

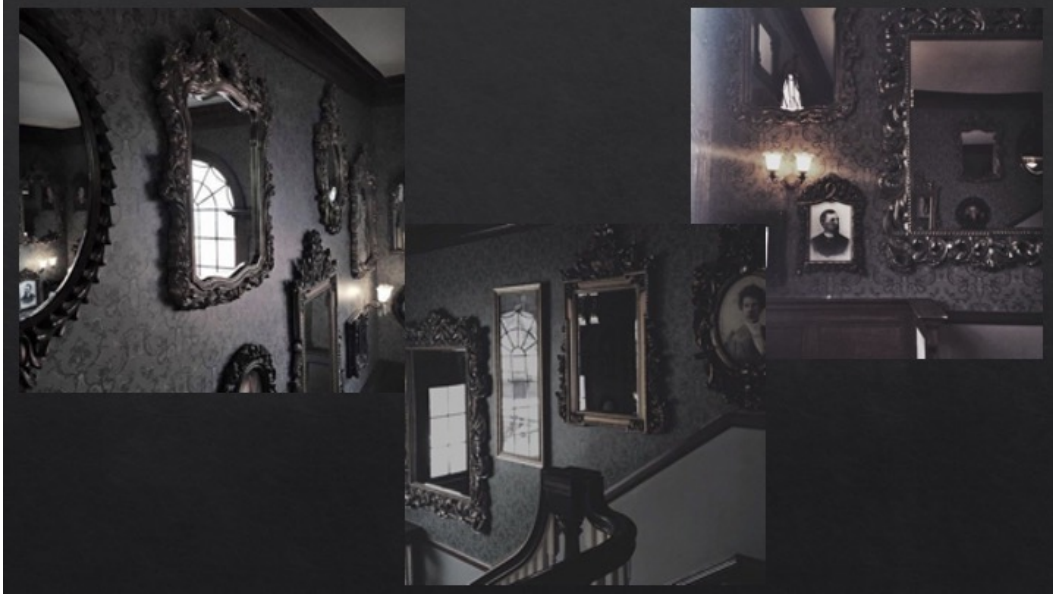


Figure A.45. Scenic design research of interiors featuring picture/mirror frames.

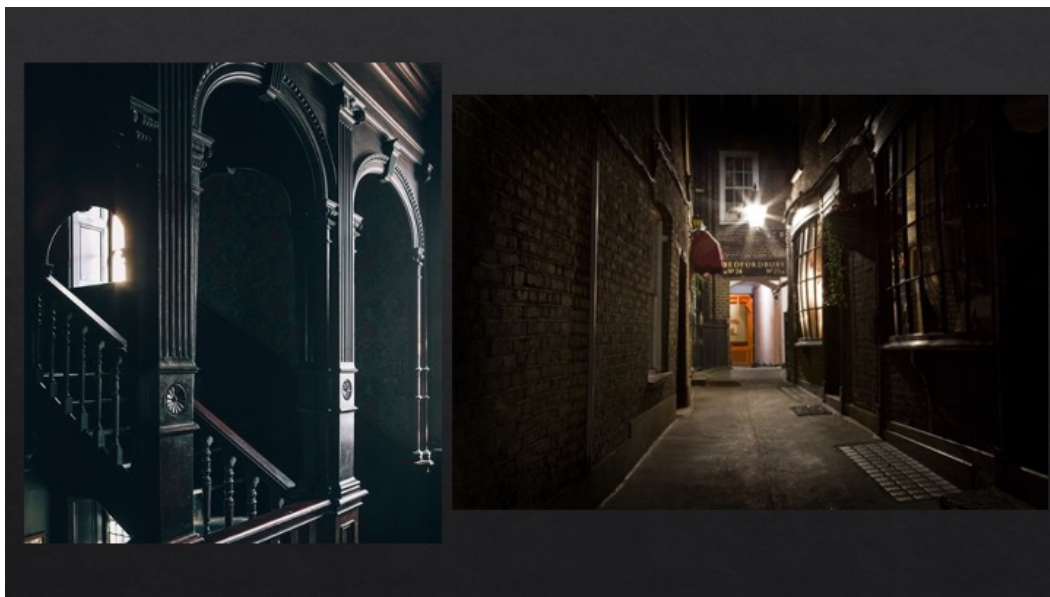


Figure A.46. Scenic design research of staircase and alleyway.



Figure A.47. Scenic design research of wrought iron gates and streets.

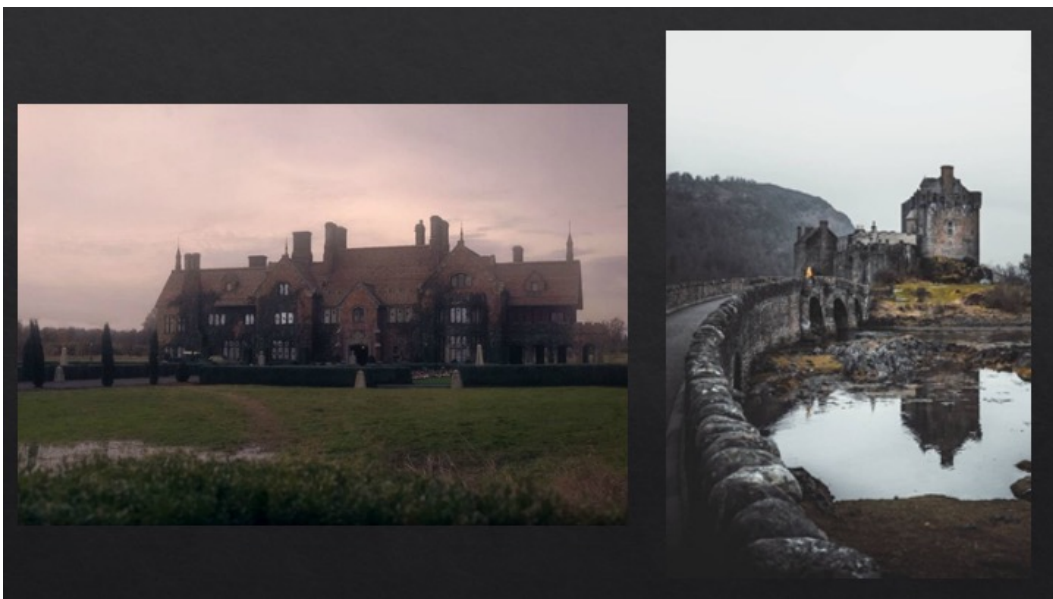


Figure A.48. Scenic design research of exterior locations.

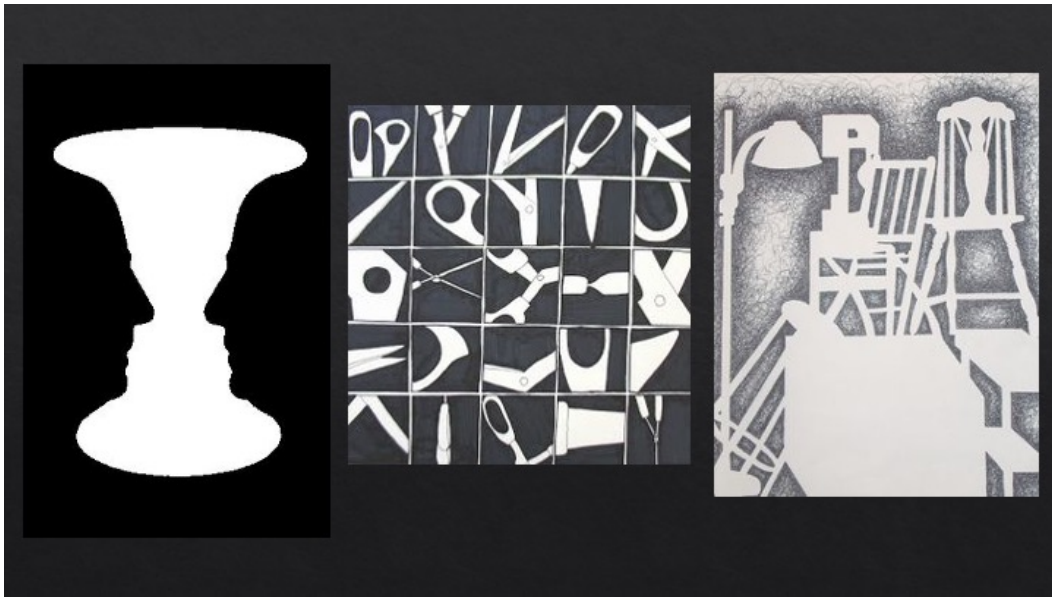


Figure A.49. Scenic design research of negative and positive space.

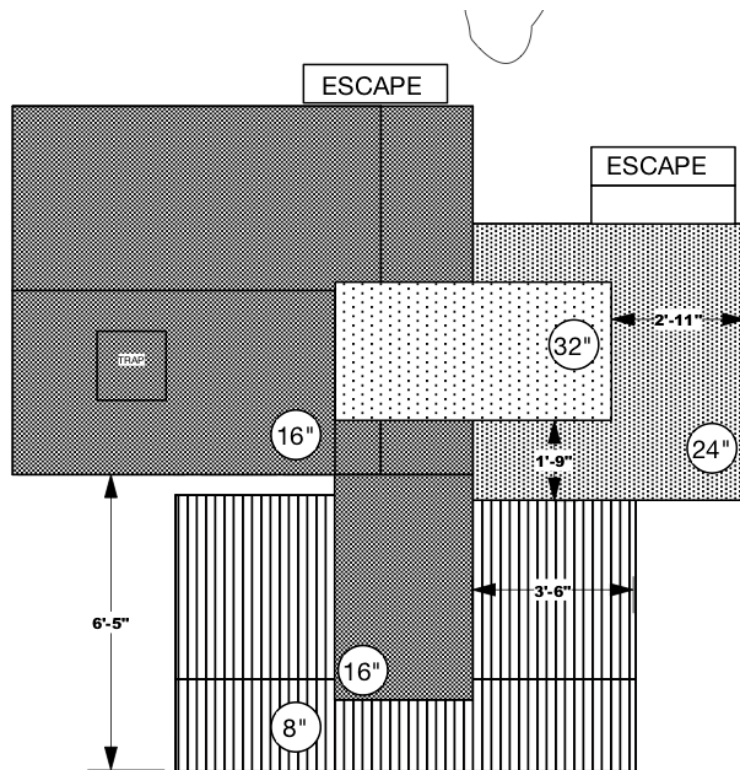


Figure A.50. Stage platform layout and measurements.

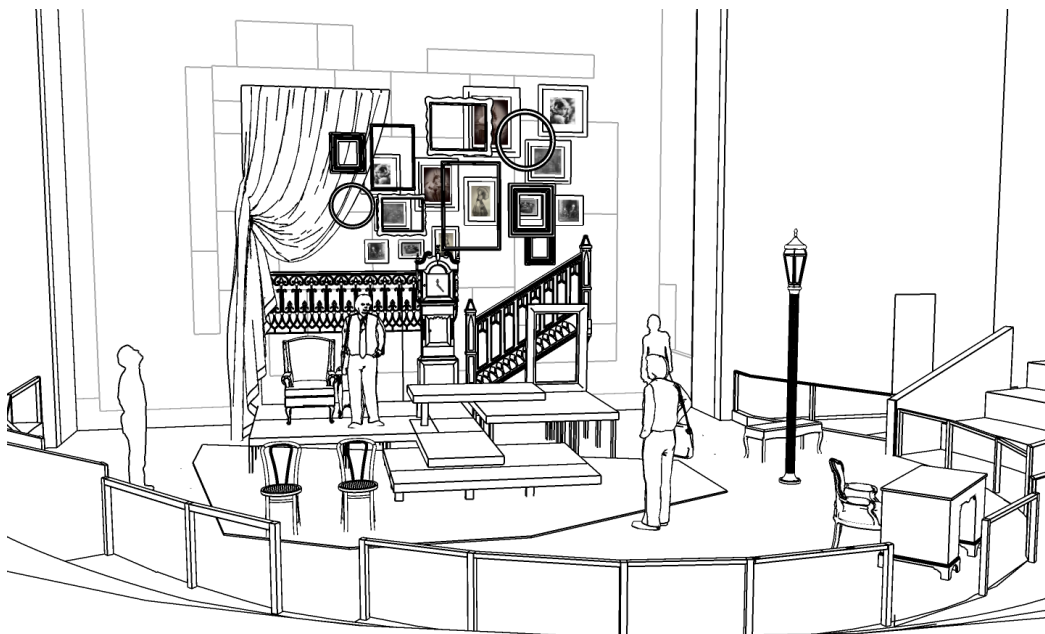


Figure A.51. Initial scenic design renders featuring center weighted elements.

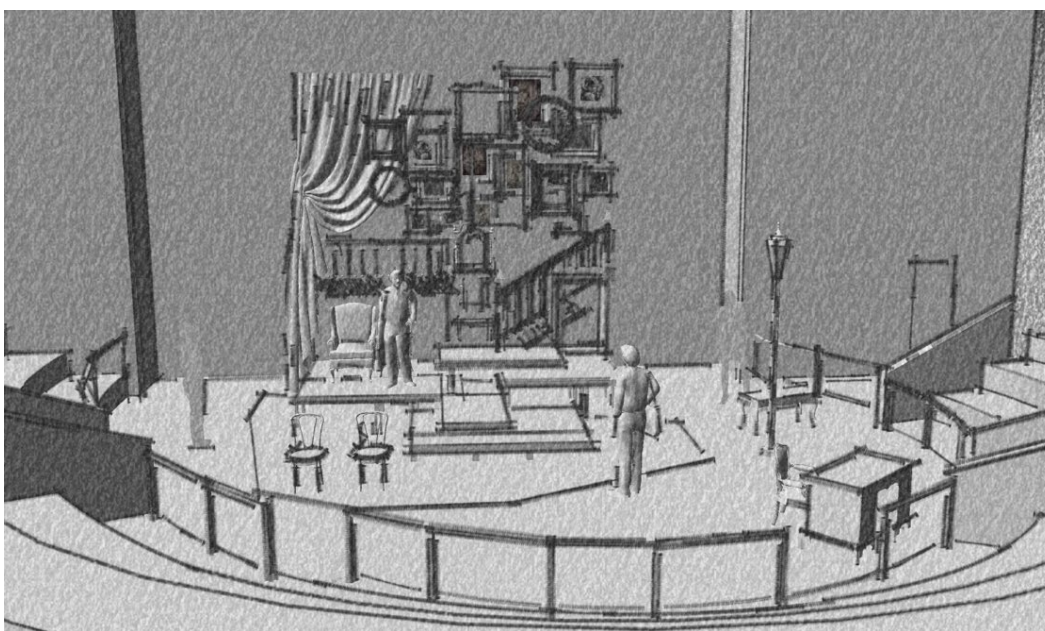


Figure A.52. Initial scenic design renders featuring center weighted elements.

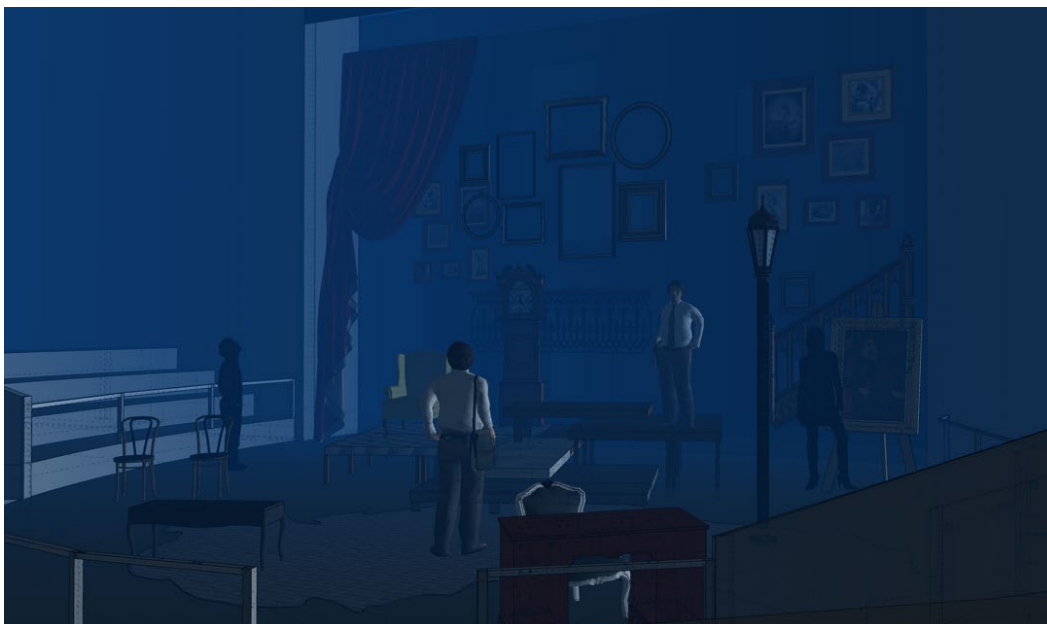


Figure A.53. Final scenic design renders featuring expanded element arrangement.



Figure A.54. Final scenic design renders featuring expanded element arrangement.



Figure A.55. Lighting design research of warm interior lighting for 221B Baker St.



Figure A.56. Lighting design research of warm interior lighting for opera house.



Figure A.57. Lighting design research of warm daylight exterior of Devonshire.

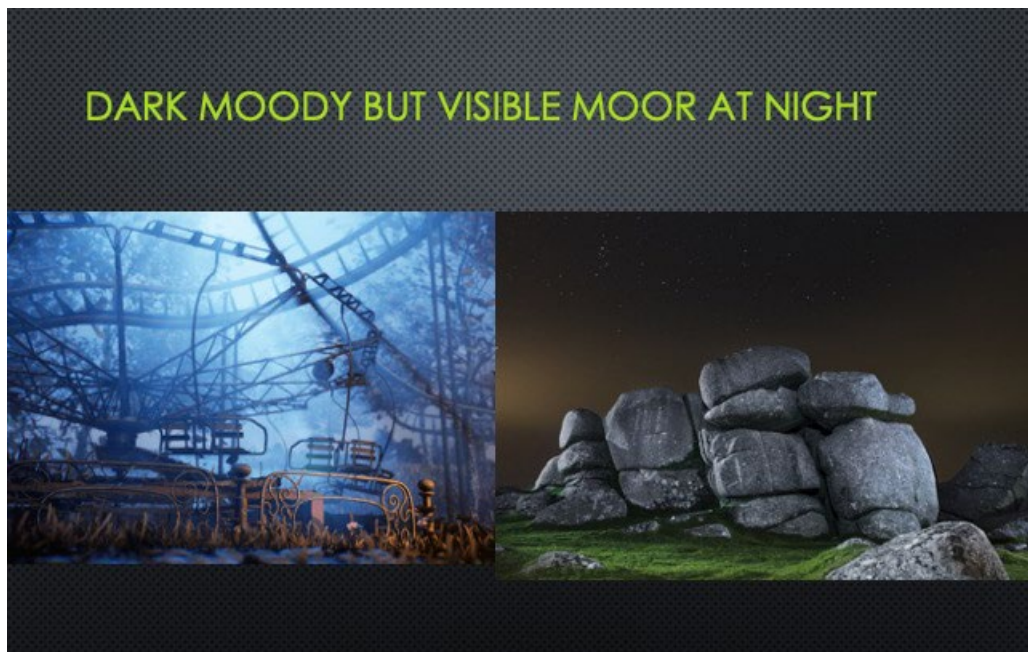


Figure A.58. Lighting design research of dark nighttime exterior of Devonshire.



Figure A.59. Lighting research simulating lighting effects, angles, and backgrounds.

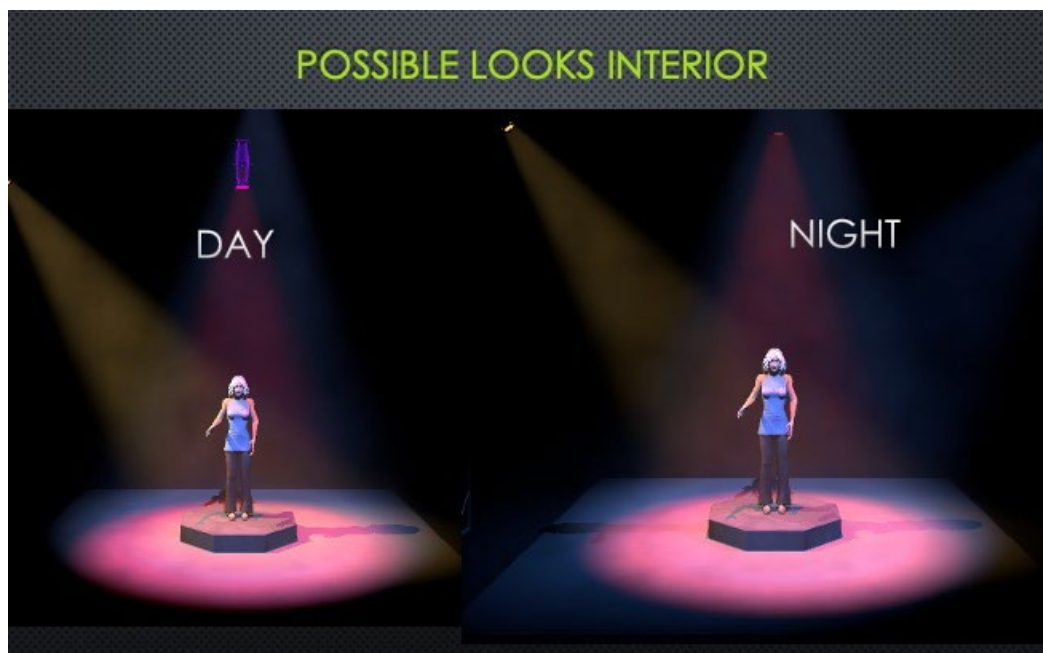


Figure A.60. Lighting research simulating interior lighting.

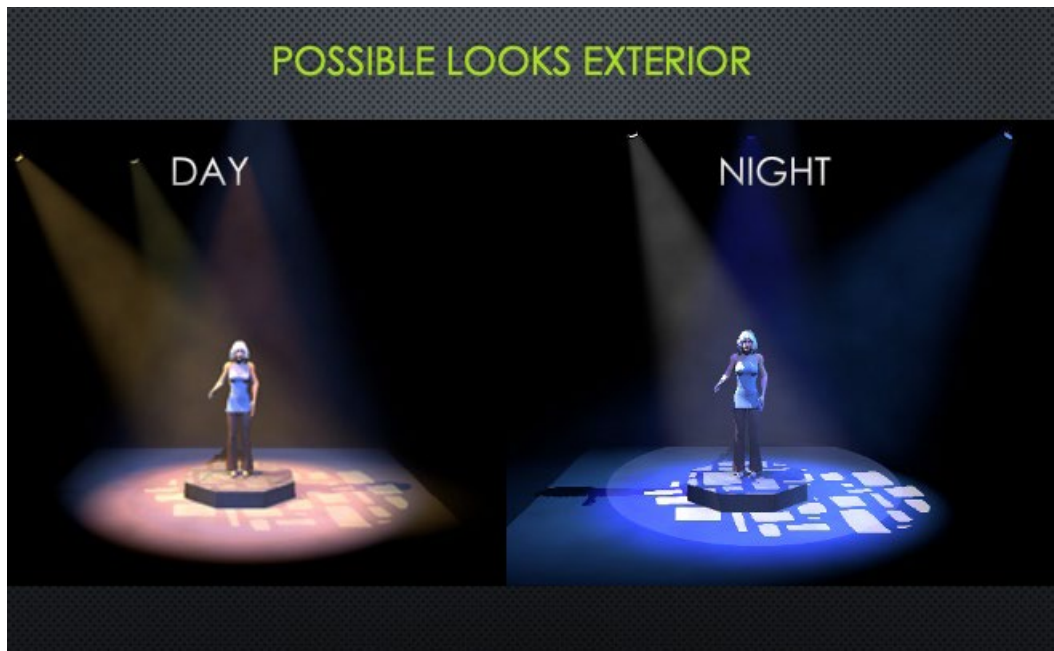


Figure A.61. Lighting research simulating exterior lighting and gobo patterns.



Figure A.62. In-progress rabbit puppet.



Figure A.63. Completed sheep puppet.



Figure A.64. Completed hound puppet.

APPENDIX B

Selected Production Photographs



Figure B.1. 3 Holmes deduces the identity of the cane's owner.



Figure B.2. “The woman was crazed by fear and could scarcely speak.”



Figure B.3. “His features convulsed with such strong emotion.”



Figure B.4. The conclusion of Dr. Mortimer’s consultation with Holmes and Watson.



Figure B.5. Watson agrees to accompany Henry and Mortimer to Devonshire.



Figure B.6. Mrs. Clayton recounts an encounter with the Man with the Black Beard.



Figure B.7. Holmes receives Watson's letter from Baskerville Hall.



Figure B.8. Watson meets Stapleton on the moor.



Figure B.9. “But why do you ever go near the Grimpen Mire?”



Figure B.10. “There it is. That’s the hound.”



Figure B.11. Cartwright and Milker read Watson's letter to Holmes.



Figure B.12. "...buried deep inside her bosom."



Figure B.13. "I got out of bed and saw a shadow in the hall."



Figure B.14. Watson and Henry discover Barrymore signaling someone on the moor.



Figure B.15. “When I was cleaning out Sir Charles’s study, I found der ashes of a burned letter at der back of der grate.”



Figure B.16. Cartwright and Milker deliver evidence to Holmes and Watson.



Figure B.17. "I need someone to arrest the most singular criminal mind I have ever come across."



Figure B.18. “Forgive you? I would forgive you anything.”



Figure B.19. “Henry and Miss Stapleton arrived to inform us they were getting married as soon as the law allowed.”



Figure B.20. “I believe the wheel has turned yet again – and now it’s back to work!”

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