

***PARADE***  
Lighting Treatment

The following is my lighting script treatment for the University of California, Irvine's production of Jason Robert Brown's *Parade* presented in the Irvine Barclay Theatre. This document serves as a sketch of my lighting ideas and how they will contribute to the overall storytelling of the play. I have included a scene-by-scene breakdown as well as selected research images with questions for the team denoted in blue text. Similar to how a Costume or Scenic Designer submit sketches of their designs to the team, this script treatment is a "sketch" of the lighting design.

From conversations with the director and design team, we are interested in presenting the facts of the story and then allowing the audience to form their opinion on whether Leo M. Frank is innocent or guilty of the gruesome rape and murder of fourteen-year-old Mary Phagan. In addition, we want to use the script's built in time jumps to give a different quality of light and sound to the work, depending on who is presenting their point of view of the events that transpired within the Pencil Factory on that fateful day.

This production will employ the use of traditional, hard edged followspots. These will be used to bring out heightened emotion within the musical numbers while allowing the rest of the world to live "naturally".

There are three main turning points which incite action: the reaction to the rape and murder of Mary Phagan, the Guilty verdict handed down by the Court, and finally the Governor commuting Frank's sentence to life in prison. It is important to note how the government, the media, and the courts were able to subdue and coerce the public to be full heartedly on their side in trying and convicting Leo Frank. Each one of these events caused the public to react, sometimes appropriately, sometimes not. Lighting will treat each of these periods of time distinctly.

## ***ACT I***

### *Scene 1*

Act I begins in Marietta, Georgia, the year is 1862. The American Civil War is in full swing, the divide between the Union Army of the North and the Confederate Army of the South is unfathomable. The ideology of the two factions are so far opposite that the two sides may never be able to fully resolve with one another. (*This may have been one reason why Frank's trial went the way that it did; taking the word of a black man over the word of a rich white man from the North, due to the animosity between the two regions.*)



As the musical begins we are introduced to the world of the play with *The Old Red Hills of Home*, a song about the glory of the South before the Civil war.

This is the only moment in the play that takes place before the events of 1913.

This scene will play in front of a downstage scrim adorned with an interpretation of the Edwin Church flag painting. It will be lit with warm, nostalgic tones from a sweeping angle to express the opulence of the pre-war South. The Edwin Church painting has a strong sunset idea that the lighting design will emulate.

Even before the prologue ends we quickly jump fifty-one years later to a Confederate Memorial Day Parade in Atlanta, Georgia, the 'here and now'. The scrim will fly out as the chorus begins to sing and lighting will shift from the lower, more romantic sunset angle to a steeper angle upstage representing late afternoon beauty. The music will switch to a very big band-esque feel that evokes images of patriotism and love for one's country. As we jump in time, we will remain with the warm, nostalgic feel that the beginning of the number has set up.

### *Scene 2*

As we leave the parade and arrive in the bedroom of Lucille and Leo Frank, a northern Jewish boy who married a local girl. The lighting will support the notion of everyday life, even though Leo doesn't feel like he fits in. It is early morning and there will be light shining through an upstage window, though the atmosphere here is cold and tense, but this is the normal for Leo and Lucille.

Scene 3

With the transition we quickly arrive back at the parade with the townspeople in full party mode. We have left the nostalgia of the previous scene and are in the here and now. It is late morning with a cold harsh sun shining down on the action. The dichotomy between what Leo is feeling and the atmosphere around him will be an interesting dynamic to play with. The lighting around Leo will become starker and begin to portray a sense of edge and a longing for the North, his home, as he begins to sing *How Can I Call This Home*. While the rest of the world is 'frozen', Leo will be able to move around followed in a subtle spot to highlight his movement around the stage.

As we shift away from the harshness of the morning, and the stark, cold world of Leo Frank, we see the everyday peripheral world that is very innocent and playful. This is the world that Mary Phagan, and those not directly associated with Leo, live. This world will be lit with lower angles and warmer light to portray a sense of ordinary. These angles also portray the late



in.

afternoon transition between day and evening. Mary is going to get her check before she goes out with her friends that night. During the end of this scene we are potently reminded of how quickly and unexpectedly life can end. *The Picture House* has Mary Phagan making day to day mundane plans, but those plans suddenly end as she is killed when she innocently goes to pick up her paycheck.

Scene 4

Img A

Scene 4 is a split scene between Leo at the factory and Lucille at their home. The home will be lit as it was before with a much more inviting feel (img b) in contrast to the factory that will be lit like an industrial space, (img a). It will have harsh, cold light, a space that is not at all inviting. The stage will be

treated in such as way that there will be space

between the two scenes representing distance. The quality and color of light will help to separate these two spaces from each other. This is the last scene where there is a sense of 'normalcy', a cold normalcy, but from this point on everything will change. The mundaneness is getting to Lucille as she sings about why she desires more in her ballad. Mary will walk from the ordinary into this industrial world, leaving behind her mundane life forever.



Img B

Scene 5

Scene 5 is back at the Frank home; it is the night of the murder. Lighting will portray night by creating a cold outside world that is sliced through with the warmth of unseen incandescent lighting fixtures within his home. There will be a window shining in from USL, opposite of the door to his home. This is the moment that Leo's world comes crashing down around him as the Police come to take him in for questioning. I imagine that at this moment Leo is being overcome with anxiety and the lighting will work to support this emotional shift by bringing the space in around Leo as he is taken away to jail.

Scene 6

Right after Phagan is murdered, the whole tone of the musical changes. The gravity of the situation begins to dominate Frank's world. We are immediately thrown into *I am Trying to Remember*, a heart wrenching song sung by Newt recounting the events of the previous night at the Pencil Factory. There will be harsh lighting reminiscent of an FBI interrogation light hitting Newt during this number. The song is interlaced with Frank interjecting his innocence as he is taken away to jail. As the scene progresses Leo becomes more and more agitated. The end of the scene shifts dramatically as Mary Phagan's mother arrives searching for her missing daughter.

Scene 7

Next we arrive at the Atlanta Police Station in the late afternoon or the early part of the evening. This scene will be reminiscent of the oblique angles and washed out color that we associate with the media craze of the Chicago murders during the 1920s. To express the notion that this is taking place on the steps of the Police Station, there will be naturalistic lighting illuminating the crowd that has gathered to hear the news. After it is announced that there has been a murder, and arrests associated with it, the stasis of the outside world for the rest of the play changes to one of sorrow and anger. The light will shift to a slightly steeper and colder feel as the world around Leo Frank has forever changed because of his actions.

Scene 8

It is now around dinner time the next day at the Fulton Tower Jail complex. The industrial, cold, confined lighting is beating down on Frank as he grapples with his situation. The small amount of moon light that is shining through the window is quickly replaced by the artificial light from within the jail. The world is very confined and it is a world of difference than it was the previous night.

Scene 9



We quickly shift from the contrived, claustrophobic world of the prison to the very organic unfolding of Phagan's funeral. The day is dismal and rainy emphasizing the sadness and hurt that is in the air. This is a somber scene as the people of Atlanta come together to mourn a life lost

way too early. The Mourner's sing *There is a Fountain Filled with Blood* expressing the aforementioned pain. The lighting will support this by creating a world that is somber a world where these characters can live and grieve. The angle of light will lower and color will drain out as Mary Phagan is laid to rest. There will be textured, directional light, as if the sun is trying to push through the dreariness, creating beauty within a sad moment.

### Scene 10

As we arrive at the Governor's mansion we are confronted with the government's intense desire to convict Frank in sharp contrast to the sorrow that the people of Atlanta are going through. The Governor's Mansion is a grand, exquisite place where the lighting will create the elegance of the office with large windows and a grandeur atmosphere. There will be a warm, opulent feel that denotes the status of the Office of the Governor.



### Scene 11

The elegance of the Governor's mansion is replaced by the dreariness of the jail that we saw before. It is very tense as Dorsey interrogates Newt Lee. At this point there will be a strong shaft of light on Lee as he is being intensely interrogated within the walls of the prison. The moment that Dorsey lets him go, the atmosphere in the room shifts and the intensity of the previous moment immediately vanishes. This is the moment that Dorsey decides to go full out against Frank and begins to sing *Somethin' Ain't Right*. This song is about Dorsey trying to convince himself and those around him that Frank is the one who committed this heinous act. As we move from dialogue into song Dorsey is hit with a followspot in order to bring the rest of the world down and create a much more sinister feeling in the space.

Scene 12

We arrive back to the media circus that we saw previously when the Police announced the death of Mary Phagan. The media has already convicted Leo Frank to the public, even though he has not yet had his trial. The upbeat tempo of *Real Big News* inherently creates this energy and the lighting will support this energy with the use of strobes, representing the old reporter flash bulbs, and with quick transitions from Craig to the inside of the jail and back. In order to land us back on the steps of the Police Station, the sun will be shining in as if this were taking place in the late afternoon. The shift in energy from the song to Leo's personal plight will have to be dramatic in order to make Leo's plight that much more potent.

Scene 13

We leave the energy of the media circus behind and we begin to witness Lucille's ballad outside of the jail in the early evening hours. This time the moon is different, it isn't as cold as we have previously seen it but has an air of romance about it. The practicals on the columns are lit creating warmth within the cool outdoor evening, building the world for this slow and somber ballad to unfold. Upstage will be stylized stars shimmering as Lucille starts begins to sing. This is the first time where we see Lucille standing up for Leo on her own. She still has hope that Leo will be found innocent and freed.

Scene 14

Scene 14 is back in the visitor's room of the prison. Leo is still in denial about his predicament. This scene will be lit like scene 11 was, with a confinement and isolation.

Scene 15

The stakes will continue to rise as the authorities look for any excuse to convict Leo Frank of the crime during the trial. High angle light, representing mid day, will stream in and project a window pattern on the floor. This steeper angle will help to denote time of day but also create a shadowy, textured world where characters can move through areas of light and shadow to



show power versus submission. The scenes and songs that surround the murder, but don't directly involve Leo Frank, will be lit with sorrow and the public's growing anger. As this trial took many weeks to finish, lighting will help to support the passage of time by creating difference in time of day through the use of color and angle. These moments will be reflective of the dreariness of Phagan's funeral. The less romantic we go, the more real and gut wrenching it will become to the audience.

The courtroom sequence at the end of the act will be the culmination of an early stage media circus. Lighting will be devoid of color, and will iris in and out of the small vignettes, to bring the audience in and out of each person's version of the events at the pencil factory. At this point a flash bulb will again be used as a framing device, the audience will take on the photographer's point of view of the event. (*This same convention will be used at the end of Act II with the hanging of Leo Frank.*) Seeing the actual



photographs of the event(s) will cause a very visceral reaction within the room of, 'who is taking these photographs and why?' response. At the end of the act when the jury hands down the guilty verdict, lighting will accent the repetition of 'guilty' by hitting with the word or the toll of the bell that surrounds it. The final moment of the act will be with stylized shafts of light surrounding Leo as the final guilty is chanted. The painted scrim will return signaling intermission between Act I and II. As Leo's fate is now sealed the shafts of light will return with us as return to the prison cell during Act II.

## ***ACT II***

### *Scene 1*

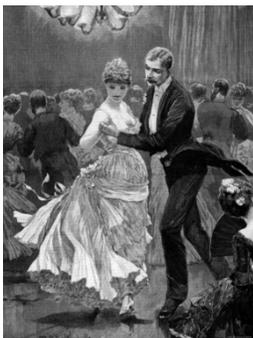
Act II opens the following morning after the handing down of the guilty verdict for Leo Frank. The scene opens in the Governor's bedroom where he appears to be nervous about the events that have recently transpired. The room is confined and isolated with a small practical light driving the interior of the space. The angle of light coming through the window will be from a lower angle representing the early morning sun. This naturalistic source will mix with the incandescent interior light coming from a steeper angle mimicking the unseen ceiling light within the room. It will be lit intimately with the outside pressure of the situation encroaching in on the room, expressing his underlying anxiety of what the future holds. His anxiety might have some validity to it as we learn of White men coming to Leo's defense with *A Rumblin' and a Rolling*. The intimacy of the bedroom is replaced with sweeping angles representing the hot day. There is a lot of emotion stirred up within this number regarding the shift in attitude as this is a White man being lynched instead of a Black man. The song is about how all these White men are coming to Leo's defense but when a Black man is hanged, nobody comes out or even cares. This will be lit with very directional, raw light to highlight the pent up emotion and anger that is felt because this is happening.

As this number concludes we transition back into Leo's jail cell. The stylized down lights representing the prison bars that we saw at the end of Act I have returned. Lucille arrived and has accidentally angered Leo when she tells him that she has spoken to a reporter about how Leo believes that he is innocent. I do not think that the gravity of the situation has completely sunk



into Leo yet, but it has for Lucille. He still is very defiant and still does not believe that this is happening to him. As the act continues his defiance begins to fade. Lucille begins to sing about how she feels about the fact that he is shutting her out of his life and pleads with him to allow him to help. It is a very powerful moment that pulls hope into a world that is very dismal otherwise. The coldness, and the sharpness, of the light will keep Leo confined and separated from his wife further damaging his mental psyche while firmly landing us within the prison walls.

### *Scene 2*



The whole world changes as we are introduced to the Governor's ball. The atmosphere is very festive and the music is very energetic. The grandeur of the mansion has returned and I will light this with very warm, vibrant colors with the stars upstage creating a sense of romance throughout the space. All this is in

sharp contrast to the mundane colors of the jail and the normalcy that the middle class is living in. This will portray the idea that the people in leadership are all out for themselves and are somewhat removed from reality. The lighting will be sweeping, romantic gestures and pastel colors until Lucille confronts Slaton about her husband's fate. At this moment the world will collapse around them as the 'real world' very dramatically encroaches on the Governor's private life.

#### Scene 4

During the next number, *The Glory*, we begin to understand how this verdict has affected everyone, including the politicians themselves. We find ourselves out on the lake in the late afternoon hours. I want to use the natural serenity of a sunset to create the calmness. The sun is warm and very low in the sky as the politicians begin to engage in shady back handed politics. This is the calm before the storm, so to speak.

#### Scene 5

The next scene is back in Leo's jail cell. The scene starts out cold and stark like we have seen the cell before. This changes as Leo gets the news that Lucille has gotten the Governor to reexamine his case. For the first time hope is introduced to the equation. I will shift to more sweeping angles as well as changing the feel to a warmer, homier feel. The cold institutional light will be temporarily replaced with a warm amber light coming through the window. From this point on Leo becomes less defiant as hope that he might not hang, or even get out, begins to dominate his world. He tells Lucille to tell Slaton to visit the factory and talk with the girls about him.



#### Scene 6

As we leave the prison we arrive back at the National Pencil Factory. The girls are recounting their time within the factory, they are portrayed in the factory itself as if they are walking its hallways. The world is cold and uninviting, much like the factory was in Act I. This scene is a mix of the present with Lucille and Slaton, and with the memories of the girls being enacted on stage. I want to be able to differentiate between the two worlds with a shift in angle and color: the here and now will be cold and emotionless where as Leo will always be in shadow unless he is speaking. The lighting will portray this as a misty memory, a moment frozen in time. The factory will be devoid of color with sharp angular angles. The girls are recounting a very dramatic and personal recount of their time there and I believe that it is important to separate this world visually from the present. The convention will allow me to move between Leo and Lucille's present with the recount of the past by the other factory girls. This coldness

will continue with the interrogation of Minnie McKnight as she is being questioned by Lucille and Slaton. Lighting shifts back to hope as we return to Leo and Lucille singing together at the end of the scene.

### Scene 7



Slaton continues his journey for the truth by going to the chain gang where he meets Conley who was convicted as an accessory to the murder and sentenced to a year in prison.

The work of the chain gang is hard manual labor done during the heat of the day. The tempo of the song and the work itself lends to very warm, harsh lighting. Hearing this story creates

doubt in Slaton's mind. This scene will be lit with very open, raw and powerful lighting to accentuate the heat of the day and the intensity of the work.

### Scene 8

The aftermath of hearing Conley's testimony allowed the outgoing Georgia Governor to commute Frank's sentence from death to life in prison. Unlike the previous announcement this one takes place at the Governor's mansion. This scene will bring a sense of relief and will lift the burden that the death penalty sentence brings from both the Governor's shoulders as well as Leo's. As the sentence reduction is announced an airiness will begin to manifest itself as the Governor clears his conscience. The steeper angles will relinquish themselves to lower, more sweeping gestures relieving the harshness of their worlds.

### Scene 9

We arrive next at the new prison with Lucille and Frank about to have a picnic. The atmosphere begins in the colder tones that we saw before but quickly becomes warm and hopeful. With the shift in music we temporarily leave the confines of the prison walls. The world around them will soften as they enjoy a romantic dinner together. This is the last time that Leo and Lucille will ever see each other. As the scene ends we return to the warm and hopeful prison that we left.

### Scene 10

The hanging itself, as we have discussed in our preliminary meetings, will be a prominent moment. After Leo is kidnapped he is taken up to Marietta, Georgia in the dark of the night. There will be no moon out but the



be

prominent lighting source will be the torches that are carried by the mob. This notion will also enforce the anger of the party by using very warm, almost fire like sources. In the end, this event caused the emergence of the revitalized Ku Klux Klan as well as of the Anti-Defamation League. It will make a powerful statement to light this with the iconic torches that the Klan used. In addition, the use of the flashbulb, book ending the scene, will allow the audience to view the event from the photographer's point of view.

### Scene 11

The play ends with a reprise of *The Old Red Hills of Georgia*, book ending the whole piece. We return to a world of stasis; life goes on but events like these change everyone who they come in contact with. Lighting will support this notion by returning to the warm ambers that we saw at the beginning but with some cuts of cool slicing through signifying change. As the play ends the scrim will return signaling the end of the piece.