

Thu, Feb 8 2018, 8:01 PM

love &

information

Direction by Brant Russel  
Scenic Design by Matthew Hamel  
Lighting Design by Justin Dudzik  
Costume Design by Brandon Thompson  
Hair/Makeup Design by Rin Schwob  
Sound Design by Edward Mineishi

### Design Concept & Execution

The script for *Love & Information* is fragmented. First impressions led me to believe that I was listening to a fragmented conversation. Just like being a part of a phone call with no service, we experience the full exchange of the dialogue, but without some of the nouns or predicates. The interesting about this script is that the conversations we hear can be interpreted in different ways; whether it's because of the verbiage the playwright used, or the delivery of the lines. The beauty of this script lies within its method of delivering meaning behind the text. The characters' lines mean nothing until the director gives them motivation.

The concept for this production is in response to how information in this new age of technology is not as reliable as we'd like to think. Times used to be simpler where communication was done face-to-face. The need for long distance communication grew and so declined the number of interactions where facial expression, vocal inflection, and physical gestures helped dictate emotions, meaning, and relationships. One of the goals of the production is to put these fragmented conversations and give them life. The set consists of seven areas with two levels; four areas on the top level, and three areas on the bottom level. These seven areas reference the seven groups of scenes (units) within the script. Each area changes to a different location in the transitions between units; reinforcing the fragmentation of conversations and without clear or typical structure. The director has a very specific vision for the sound design, of electronic interference and 8-bit beeping from old electronics presented in a chaotic fashion. My job is to deliver this notion of electronic chaos that interferes with the information that people require in communicating ideas through the use of sound localization from each acting area and an ambisonic speaker system in the house. Now, even as an abstract show such as this needs to have something to hold the show together. The depression scenes complete a whole thought. To me, they symbolize what actually happens when communication breaks down, as opposed to the rest of the scenes that appear to be just symptoms of the whole. Making the depression scenes land firmly will be a huge part of the success of the show.

The greatest challenge of the show is how to make the sound not appear repetitious as we move through over sixty transitions, all of which have the same motivation, the same intention, and a similar source material. Much of the content design will have to be made as flexible as possible so transitions don't sound the same. The illusion of electrical chaos will be limited to how well sound can be localized and distributed throughout the theatre.

My hope for the design, if implemented as intended, will create a disturbing, jarring palate cleanser, if you will. The audience is to never forget that the scenes are not driving the story, but are examples. They represent symptoms of a larger problem as the depression scenes are more representative of the consequences. The depression scenes create the image of the whole show, so isolating their impact is going to be a huge part of the show. Taking the typical sound effect practical from the stage and moving them to unexpected places surrounding the audience is going to be a huge part of the experience.

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The design has been decided from the beginning. The director has a firm vision for the sound of the show so it will be my role as the sound designer to creatively and purposefully implement the digital noise as an outside force that interrupts each scene. I'll be experimenting with a surround sound system in addition to top surrounds. Speakers at the center of each acting area attempt to localize the transitions and add more sources. Programming Qlab will be a feat in itself as I will have to be original in how transitions shape to each scene. It will require several variations of the same cue sequence with seven different cue sequences; symbolic of the seven groups of scenes. The biggest factor in all of this is making each cue sequence purposeful.

Much of this design will need to be based in a theoretical realm. Taking time for paperwork is not a luxury that I can afford with this design. I may need to create a simulated system in the sound shop with E4s so I can mimic the system design and iron out details of the necessary routing. Of course this means I need to have a console file before I can truly begin feeling confident in the outcome of the design.