



Pippin music by Stephen Schwartz and book by Roger O. Hirson (1973)

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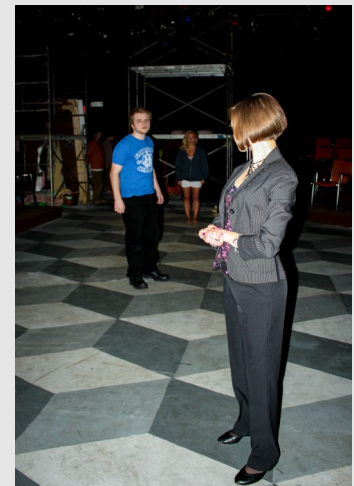


Giant drawings from Leonardo da Vinci's notebooks hung from the scaffolds and were changed through the show.

Revealing the magic of storytelling was key to my take on this classic rock musical. I collaborated closely with the choreographer / music director and the set designer to develop the concept for this production staged in the round. There was very little permanent offstage space in our black box theater, so we decided not to "mask" all the things that go into creating a theatrical illusion— instead, we made them visible and exaggerated them. The troupe of players central to the show supported their storytelling with everything from modern toys and tools to medieval stage tricks, and we allowed the audience to see costume racks and open scaffolding.



At the opening, the company assembled the set and "put on" their costumes; at the end, when Pippin rejects the Lead Player's invitation to live fully in the story, his player's clothes are taken from him and he is left in modern dress.





Having most of the company onstage throughout the show not only supported the concept we had developed for this production, but was also consistent with our department's philosophy that faculty-directed productions were an opportunity for student learning. All students cast in the production— not just the leads— were expected to create fully-developed characters who were imaginatively engaged in the onstage world, and to sustain their portrayal of those characters for the length of the show.



It is common in musical theater for productions to mimic the look, feel, and sometimes even the blocking and choreography of the original production, but we deliberately chose not to follow Fosse's well-known blueprint.



[Pippin]