

Ashly Montesinos

All Distortions are Intentional Tour 2021
Lighting Design
Culmination Project Reflection Spring 2021

My main focus throughout my years at New York City College of Technology has always been lighting and I have found it to be very interesting. My Culmination Project heavily reflected this interest. My goal with this project was to exercise my skills as a lighting designer and to take my first steps as a lighting designer. By completing this project I was able to gain a lot of knowledge on what a lighting designer does and all the paperwork that comes with it. I based this project on an actual tour that was supposed to take place last year. The tour was called the All Distortions are International Tour and the headlining band was Neck Deep. Unfortunately, it did not happen due to the pandemic. However, I made this tour hypothetically make a stop at the Voorhees Theatre and have come up with all the paperwork for it. Through my culmination project, I was able to produce a professional level lighting package that included a lighting plot, section view, magic sheets, channel hookup, instrument schedule, stage plot, vectorwork renders, and a video of a cued song through GrandMA.

Going into this I was worried because it seemed like a lot to do in a short period of time and it was overwhelming but with the help of my advisor, Miguel Valderrama, I was able to take everything step by step. He was very patient and helpful and answered all of my many questions. Apart from being my advisor I was also taking his Lighting Design class this semester, which was also taught by Miguel Valderrama and what I learned in his class was also very helpful to me. I used a lot of what I was learning in that class and applied it to my project in various ways.

I believe completing this culmination project was a great way to practice the skills that I will most definitely use in the future. I did run through some bumps throughout the time I spent on this project but I was able to overcome them. For example, first I struggled with getting started in Vectorworks because I had not used this software for a very long time. The only time I used it to draft was in my intro to lighting class and that was in my first semester but thankfully my advisor is very knowledgeable in this software and he helped greatly. I also struggled creatively when trying to come up with a stage design for the Voorhees Theatre. It took me some time to finally settle on something that I was proud of. I looked through the band's discography, various pictures and most of all their last album to come up with my final design. I also struggled with putting it all together in Vectorworks but I am once again grateful that my advisor was extremely patient and helpful and guided me in the right direction.

Another part I had trouble with was the 3D visualization through GrandMA. I chose to cue the song Serpents by Neck Deep. There was no specific reason I chose this song out of all the ones that they have but it is one of my favorites. At first I thought I was going to have a lot more trouble than I originally did. I took my Lighting Controls class three semesters ago so I thought that I would have forgotten a lot of what I learned but I actually did not. Once I got the software up and running, I was able to navigate my way through it by using what I learned. This class played a huge role in completing this part of my project. I took a lot of what I learned there and was able to use that knowledge here. I struggled a lot in the beginning with getting started in the software and it was a bit frustrating but thankfully with the help of John Robinson, I was able to complete my cues. Apart from actually cueing the lights, I had to also patch the lights and

create the stage itself. However, I found this part to be the most entertaining as I had a lot of creative freedom and was able to bring my ideas to life.

Apart from the difficulties, what also took some time was the fact that I was constantly changing and adding things to both the 3D Visualizer and my paperwork. I would get rid of some lights or add some or I would change my stage design and its scenery but eventually I settled on the final looks and worked on making them the best I could. Another difficulty that I faced while completing this project was the fact that I was taking 7 classes in total while also attending a part time job. I have never taken this amount of classes in my time at the college but in order to graduate on time, this needed to happen. I feel very accomplished at the fact that I was able to successfully complete my project while attending these classes and having a job because it meant that I was able to organize myself and had great time management skills.

After completing every step of my project I felt proud of my accomplishments. What I gained from this project is immense knowledge on vectorworks, lightwright and GrandMA. I will now be able to use these for any future projects I may come across. I know I will also begin to cue other songs into the GrandMA visualizer in my spare time. I have had little experience with these software's but through this I learned to successfully and efficiently navigate through them. I now also know what goes into every step of producing a lighting package. Apart from this, I was also able to produce procedures and strategies in order to efficiently complete prospective projects.