

Culminating Project: Theoretical Lighting Design  
Project name: Big Sweater - BLUSH tour

After finally finishing my culmination project, I have concluded that there are a couple of skills that I need to improve on in order to become a successful lighting designer. For my culmination, I decided to do a theoretical lighting design for the band Big Sweater and through the process of it, I stumbled upon a couple of challenges.

At one point during the process of my project, I had to revisit my old skill of hand drafting. This was important for my project, since I had to create perspective drawings of the set in order to visualize how my design would look. It helped me determine where equipment would be placed on the set, as well as the band members. With this being in place, I was then able to determine the different kinds of looks I wanted in terms of beam angles and color scheme. My challenge here was that my drawings appeared 2D rather than in a 3D perspective. With 2D drawings it creates an unrealistic perspective which was not what I needed. Because of this, I had to sacrifice some time and re-teach myself how to draft to perspective.

I also realized that I have to touch up on my programming skills. For my project I was using the grandMA2 to program lights and cues. Already taken Lighting Control Systems two semesters ago, programming on the grandMA2 was no longer fresh in my mind. Luckily, I was able to find video tutorials and self teach myself along with the process of programming my cues. Along with this, not only did I have to program my cues but also incorporate that into a 3D visualizer to demonstrate my design. The program I used for the 3D visualizer was the grandMA3D. Using the 3D visualizer was something completely new to me but surprisingly easy enough with the help of online tutorials. I was able to make it work, considering how relatively new this part of the project was to me.

Finally, one of the major challenges for me was being able to explain my lighting design to someone who has no idea about lighting. To explain lighting, not only did I have to explain its technical aspect, but also its creative aspect. As someone who has a passion in lighting and wants to pursue the creative side of it, I want to be sure that I

was able to explain and express my creativity to people, because designing lights has meaning to me. In one of my lighting designs, for example, one of the feelings that I wanted to make clear and have a connection with lights was confusion. I decided that using a moving fixture such as the Martin Mac Quantum Profile was the right choice. The reason for this, is that the fixture has a “swirl” gobo that represents confusion to me. To support this representation, I wanted to project this gobo with dark colors such as dark green, blue or purple. These colors to me compliment the feeling of confusion because being confused is not a “bright” or “fluorescent” feeling.

Overall, besides having to improve on my drafting and programming skills, it all comes down to time management. Culmination was not the only class that I was taking during the semester, I had 5 other classes to also dedicate my time and effort while trying to successfully complete my project. It was extremely hard and stressful however, I feel confident and prepared for the upcoming projects along with its challenges while pursuing a career as a lighting designer. Time has proven to be a lot more valuable as deadlines for the project were slowly getting closer. Not being able to do one part, affected me by not being able to do the other and doing them all at once was more than I ever thought to handle. It was difficult trying to break it down to such a short amount of time, but being able to get as much work done, helped in my confidence to finish more, until it was finally done.