

PUSHING THROUGH THE PAIN

The technical theater department catches the final missteps before the first night of “Mamma Mia!”

“In theatre, we use the quote, ‘bad last dress, good first show.’ Our last dress rehearsal in this case was preview, and we watched the bed collapse and fall apart on stage ... It’s actually awesome to watch from a technical perspective because you get to see all the specific little mistakes, and in your heart you say, ‘I know exactly what’s going on,’ but the people around me don’t really see what’s happening right now ... (However), there are some things that have to be safe. Like when we were lifting up that 600 pound piece in the center, we were all perfectly focused in. At one point, the flies started going out before they were supposed to, so we were all latching on to keep it from falling.”

- theatre sophomore **Tate Walker** (build crew)

“There’s a gear in the bed that sets a foot down. It acts like a stand to keep the bed up. During opening night, it didn’t latch into place all the way, and it sat at an angle, so it wasn’t able to hold the bed correctly. When the actors actually sat on the bed, the bed collapsed and the whole set slid forward. Me and my ASM (assistant stage manager) were holding each other backstage praying, ‘don’t let it fall over, don’t let it fall over,” but it did fall over, right onto (theatre senior) Blake McCall’s shoulder. Luckily, it was played off by Blake and (theatre senior) Von Markarian so so well. It was a bit stressful working with a rented set, because we didn’t have hands on it from day one. We had to make sure everyone was safe and moving it properly so nothing broke. There was a lot of pressure on the run crew as well, because if something breaks, (the company) was going to fine us for it, so we were extra cautious.”

- theatre sophomore **Nicoli Gerard** (build crew)

“Every five minutes, an actor comes back into the costume shop like, ‘does anyone have a safety pin? I need two safety pins!’ They are regularly coming into the shop asking for us to fix things, and it’s always a rush. You have two minutes to pin together everything you need, and if you get stabbed, you get stabbed. That’s actually a thing that happens. We had two stabbing incidents. Someone left a thumbtack on the ground, and someone stepped right on it with light shoes, so we had to get that removed. The other girl had safety pins connecting the straps on her back. During one show, the pins opened and went into the skin on her back. Those safety pins got thrown away.”

- theatre sophomore **Wren Christopher** (costume department)

There were a few issues with the quick change, because my outfit was three parts: pants, the top, then the boots. We had to figure out a way to put them on quickly as we only had a minute and 30 seconds to change into this full outfit. There were a lot of changes (in the order) too. On opening night, we changed the order of the finale and the speech, which gave us 30 seconds less time. Random stuff like that will happen and you’ll just have to be ready for that ... they would take their wedding outfit off, lift up the pants and put on the boots, throw over the top and tuck it all into a belt. Sometimes the zipper doesn’t go up, so you have to be ready to fix the

zipper. There were probably no thoughts in my head, I was just focused on saying ‘gotta put the pants on, pull the zipper, pin that up, and all the tasks like that.’”

- Theatre junior **Kaitlyn Bradwell** (costume department)

By Ben Seelig