PHOTOGRAPH 51

by Anna Ziegler
A thesis production for Avital Shira
Costume design by Emma George
From character boards to fully realized production

ROSALIND FRANKLIN

Clockwise from the left: 1. Franklin final rendering by Emma George -- though actor Gina Fonseca's costume changed many times between this rendering and opening, both for pragmatic and storytelling reasons. One of the things that is noteworthy about this initial image is that there was a lot of visual interest on both sides of the garment, something that would have remained a focus for Emma in the design, had she been able to build the dress she planned, as she was aware that the actor's back would always be to some part of the audience, since we were staging in the round. The ultimate outfit is more practical and less high fashion, which I think served our story -- and we still found a way to incorporate a tiny repeating pattern, but through the detailing on the blouse and the pattern in the skirt. 2. Gina Fonseca as Rosalind Franklin in our production. Photo by Benjamin Rose. 3. The historical Rosalind Franklin, here on a trip to Israel, fulfilling her longing for physical activity, adventure, and encounters with the natural world. This outfit ended up looking much like our ultimate costume for Rosalind Franklin. 4. Early costume idea board for Rosalind Franklin, compiled by costume designer Emma George. We discussed how interesting it was that Franklin, who had spent much time in Paris, actually was interested in fashion and dressed in a feminine way; that despite the memory scenes taking place in the 1950s, that post-war rationing meant that many women were still in silhouettes from the 1940s or had made over their older dresses. I gravitated towards a pencil skirt, which might read as a bit more utilitarian or professional and would be faithful to the rationing. We also became very interested in the use of buttons to create tiny, repeating patterns and angles with asymmetry -- puzzles where a pattern was discernible, but it was not easily, entirely solved.

MAURICE WILKINS

DON CASPAR

Clockwise from the left: 1. Wilkins final rendering by Emma George -- we looked at three-piece suits to demonstrate how buttoned up he is, and his emphasis on entitlement and status. The tweediness of the fabric suggests a certain tweediness of the soul. 2. Henry Morehouse as Maurice Wilkins in our production. Photo by Benjamin Rose. 3. The historical Maurice Wilkins, with iconic glasses which we tried to replicate and an intensity in his stare whose essence we worked to capture as well. 4. Early costume idea board for Maurice Wilkins, compiled by costume designer Emma George - we were particularly interested in layers -- his layers of armor that he would use to insulate himself and assert his status. A buttoned-up soul.

Clockwise from the left: 1. Caspar final rendering by Emma George -- we wanted to make sure we captured his youth, ultimately putting him in a sweater vest and then -- as this rendering implies -- saving his formal jacket until after he gets his PhD and travels to London. 2. VonDerrick Taylor as Don Caspar in our production. Photo by Benjamin Rose. 3. The historical Don Caspar, who was Jewish and white. He is one of an amalgamation of people on which the character of Don Caspar is based. Caspar is certainly the most fictionalized of the figures included in Ziegler's play. 4. Early costume idea board for Don Caspar, compiled by costume designer Emma George - we were interested in the looser suiting that might have been available to Americans v. Brits, and I particularly liked the poetic and somewhat dishevelled / windswept look of the Frank Sinatra image in the upper left, which seemed to capture both the flustered geekiness of a youthful graduate student and the poetry of his soul.

FRANCIS CRICK

Clockwise from the left: 1. Crick final rendering by Emma George -- 2. Sebastien Garbe as Francis Crick in our production. Photo by Benjamin Rose. 3. The historical Francis Crick. 4. Early costume idea board for Francis Crick, compiled by costume designer Emma George.

RAY GOSLING

Clockwise from the left: 1. Gosling final rendering by Emma George 2. Thomas McLaughlin as Ray Gosling in our production. Photo by Benjamin Rose. 3. The historical Ray Gosling 4. Early costume idea board for Ray Gosling, compiled by costume designer Emma George - we looked to the sweater-vest rather than a full suit to emphasize Gosling's youth and lower status as a graduate student.

JAMES WATSON

Clockwise from the left: 1. Watson final rendering by Emma George. 2. Fady Demain as James Watson in our production. Photo by Benjamin Rose. 3. The historical James Watson. 4. Early costume idea board for James Watson, compiled by costume designer Emma George.