

5-2020

## **"More Beautiful Than God!": Hair and Makeup Design for Eugene O'Neill's *Ah, Wilderness***

Jackson L. Jones

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The University of Southern Mississippi

“More Beautiful Than God!”:  
Hair and Makeup Design for Eugene O’Neill’s *Ah, Wilderness!*

by

Jackson Jones

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Honors College of  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of Honors Requirements

May 2020



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## **Abstract**

This thesis follows an undergraduate theatre designer's process of designing and realizing hair and makeup for the University of Southern Mississippi's Spring 2020 production of Eugene O'Neill's *Ah, Wilderness!* The student conducted a thorough script analysis, researched Edwardian style and society, and collaborated with the production's artistic team to produce effective hair and makeup designs and fulfill practicum requirements.

Keywords: Hair, Makeup, Design, Theatre, *Ah, Wilderness!*, O'Neill.

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## Introduction

“Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,  
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse – and Thou  
Beside me singing in the Wilderness –  
And Wilderness is Paradise Now” (qtd. in FitzGerald 5).

Eugene O’Neill uses this quote from *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám* as an analogy for the characters’ journeys in his play *Ah, Wilderness!* The stanza is about finding beauty in the wilderness, much like how O’Neill’s play is about embracing the future and the self. Eugene O’Neill (1888-1953) was a Pulitzer and Nobel Prize winning playwright who legitimized American drama on the world stage. He is best known for his tragic critiques of oppressive American society, but in 1932 he tried his hand at comedy. *Ah, Wilderness!*, published and first performed in 1933, is considered O’Neill’s only comedy. Taking place in New London, Connecticut on July 4, 1906, it is the story of sixteen-year-old Richard Miller, a self-righteous poet and bohemian and the son of a local newspaper owner. Richard’s heart is broken when David McComber, his girlfriend’s father, delivers a letter that declares the end of her affections. When Richard’s newfound cynicism is not taken seriously, he spends the night at a bar with a prostitute to prove his masculinity and hard-heartedness to his family and himself, but he discovers he wants to accept the wilderness of the future, change, and his true emotions. He realizes he can only prove himself by being himself.

This play was chosen for the University of Southern Mississippi’s (USM) Spring 2020 theatre season because one of its central conflicts is the battle between the future

and the grip of conservatism. David McComber berates the Millers, a family with mixed political views, for their more liberal opinions on sex, politics, religion, and morality. This play explores the anxieties and results of embracing the future, and was therefore a prime choice for a season during a presidential election year. The play, with its loveable characters and low stakes, is also an opportunity to laugh, relax, and reminisce whilst the world rages on outside of the theatre. However, it is that sense of calm that allows the audience to clearly reevaluate if they are truly living as themselves or conforming to societal expectations.

I am a USM senior Honors College student, theatre major (BA), and history minor. For my undergraduate Honors thesis project, I designed hair and makeup for USM's production of *Ah, Wilderness!*, which ran for five performances from February 20-23, 2020. This thesis provides a script analysis and historical survey of Edwardian style and society. It then details how these findings guided the design process and the methods of executing the designs for fourteen actors playing fifteen characters. It describes the imagination, research, and collaboration used to bring O'Neill's characters to life through makeup and hair. The major collaborators for this project were director Louis Rackoff, costume shop manager Kelly James-Penot, and costume designer J. Theresa Bush. A complete roster of the artistic production team, cast, wardrobe crew, and costume maintenance crew can be found in the appendix.

#### Creative Project:

To render and execute hair and makeup designs for USM's Spring 2020 production of Eugene O'Neill's *Ah, Wilderness!* that effectively express the characters and are unified with all other design elements.

## Methodology

My creative project used the following methodology, which is specific to USM's production schedule and hair and makeup design practicum requirements. The first step in the hair and makeup design process is to become familiar with the script and characters and begin conceptualizing their appearance. Questionnaires written by J. Theresa Bush guided my first three readings, and I recorded my responses in concept journals. The first reading is purely for enjoyment and recording any images or feelings evoked by the text. The second reading and journal are for listing more specific themes, motifs, or sensual details, and the final journal is for noting hair and makeup specifications or look changes. These readings and concept journals are the first steps in understanding and visualizing the characters.

The next step is to conduct a more thorough script analysis, so I responded to the questions in the first chapter of *The Costume Designer's Handbook* by Rosemary Ingham and Liz Covey:

- Where are they?
- When are they?
- Who are they?
- What happened before the play began?
- What do the major characters think of their world?
- What is the function of each character?
- What is the dialogue mode?
- What is the play's action?
- What is/are the theme(s)?

These questions help costume designers and hair and makeup designers better understand the characters' physical characteristics and limitations, as well the influence of their personality, setting, relationships, and role in the story on their appearance.

A scene/character breakdown is then created. A scene/character breakdown is a spreadsheet that shows how characters' appearances change from scene to scene. It includes all the look changes in the script and changes the designer introduces, and is subject to modification as the design process continues. The final scene/character breakdown is made into a hair/makeup plot that tracks look changes and is assimilated into the costume plot so that the actors and wardrobe crew know when and how to change costumes, hair, or makeup. The script analysis and scene/character breakdown are due to the costume designer roughly five months before the show opens. An early deadline guarantees that the hair and makeup designer is on track and in a position to collaborate with all other designers.

The designer then researches the author's purpose and inspirations and evaluates the production's goals to make style decisions. I read excerpts of O'Neill's biography to discover the origins of *Ah, Wilderness!* and mark parallels between its characters and figures in O'Neill's life. I incorporated my findings with those of the costume designer and director, and with the director's dramatic action statement (DAS). A DAS is a one or two sentence long statement that uses active language to describe the overarching action of the play and its characters. Hair and makeup design is an allied art to costume design, so I reported to the costume designer and director and had to unify my concept with theirs. Being an allied artist also means that the hair and makeup designer does not attend

all design meetings, but should attend at least one to understand the style and color schemes the director and principle designers will be using.

The designer then conducts any necessary historical style research. This includes period hair and makeup norms, influences on fashion, fashion taboos, and socio-economic effects on personal style. This research should include visual examples such as paintings, photos, and advertisements that help the hair makeup designer visualize the characters more clearly. *Ah, Wilderness!* takes place in 1906 and required an understanding of Edwardian personal style. However, more character specific research and analysis can make the final designs more distinguished and revealing.

This more specific research begins by reviewing the concept journals and character and script analyses to determine what might influence the characters' personal styles. I determined who in O'Neill's life inspired his characters, which revealed how he might have envisioned them. It is also important to research the occupations or education of the characters. A character's job or schooling will largely impact how he, she, or they present themselves everyday. The characters' belief systems should also be researched, including religions, political views, artistic influences, and moral and philosophical standards. Other research topics might be more specific to the play. In *Ah, Wilderness!*, sexuality, women's rights, and marriage and relationship norms are major themes that I thought might impact how some characters present themselves. After reviewing the literature, the hair and makeup designer can make specific choices about each character's appearance, create a mood board, and write a design concept statement.

A mood board is a collection of images that communicates the mood, style, and physical features a designer felt or imagined while reading the script. Some of these

images will most likely be incorporated into the designs. For a hair and makeup designer, one page of images for each character will suffice. These images are reviewed with the costume designer and narrowed down to make sure final design choices are specific and unified with the other design elements. The hair and makeup designer must then write and submit a design concept statement. A design concept statement is much like a DAS in that it is a short statement that describes a designer's goals and tactics. At USM, the hair and makeup designer's final mood board and design concept statement must be submitted to the costume designer approximately four months before a production opens. With a clear design plan, the designer creates a makeup morgue, a collection of reference images for character specific facial features and hairstyles. The makeup morgue is used during both the design process for rendering and the design execution as a reference for the actors and wardrobe crew.

Three months before opening, the hair and makeup designer must complete all hair and makeup renderings. These renderings are then scanned, labeled, and printed, and the designer signs all copies and originals either physically or digitally. Based on the designs, a pieces list is created. A pieces list is a detailed spreadsheet listing every product necessary to achieve each character's hair and makeup look. A pieces list also specifies whether an item will be constructed, pulled from stock, provided by the actor, or purchased, as well as estimated costs and places of procurement. The pieces list is subject to change. A final design package consisting of the labeled renderings and the pieces list is submitted to the costume designer and costume shop manager approximately two months before the production opens.

Once the final design package is submitted, the process of executing the designs can begin. The designer attends all production meetings, and the director reviews the hair and makeup designs, either approving them or requesting changes, after which it is time to prepare for hair and makeup fittings. Preparing for fittings might include reviewing hair and makeup tutorials and practicing on the self, a volunteer, or a wig. Four weeks prior to technical and dress rehearsals, a period called tech week, the designer conducts inventory, creates a shopping list, and determines which actors need haircuts. Three weeks prior to tech week, all online orders must be submitted to the costume shop manager, and all hair and makeup fitting requests must be submitted no later than two weeks prior for ease of scheduling. Some actors may require early fittings along with regular fittings if his, her, or their look is more complex or time consuming than others. It is imperative that the hair and makeup designer attends all salon appointments and fittings to teach the actors and wardrobe crew and to make design changes if necessary.

The designer must attend all dress rehearsals, take notes, and help the actors and wardrobe crew if necessary. By the Monday before the show opens, designers must set up a lobby display of their work for public viewing. During tech week and the show's run, the designer must perform maintenance duties such as restyling wigs or procuring last minute supplies. Designers must also attend a photo call, a chance to document moments that best represent their work, and a Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) response, a chance to receive critique and perhaps a nomination from a representative of the KCACTF. After the production closes, the hair and makeup designer is responsible for striking all stock supplies, cleaning the makeup room, and taking down the lobby display.

## Script Analysis and Historical Research

The first step of theatrical design is reading the script and freely visualizing the characters and world of the play; my reactions to *Ah, Wilderness!* were recorded in concept journals. The first reading and concept journal were for initial reactions such as thoughts or images the script evoked. During my first reading, I noted the conflict of the past versus the future and how O'Neill discusses conservatism versus progressivism in America, meaning historical context would be necessary for analysis and design. O'Neill's detailed setting and character descriptions made imaginative interpretations difficult, but certain character features came to mind. For example, Richard, the protagonist, idolizes Oscar Wilde and bohemianism, so his hair might be modeled after Wilde's or be free flowing to reflect bohemian ideals. Many of the visualizations were nothing more than caricatures because I was not yet familiar with style of the Edwardian Era, the play's setting.

The next concept journal was used to record themes, motifs, and sensual details discovered during the second reading. One major theme discovered was the danger of trusting established capitalist and religious systems without question. Lily pines after Sid despite his alcoholism, and the conservative David McComber deceives Richard. I deduced that the play might be an allegory for the Great Depression, with characters representing antiquated American institutions and varying levels of patriotism. Sexism and feminism emerged as major themes, so understanding Edwardian sex, marriage, and gender norms would be essential for creating effective designs.

The second reading also inspired more specific images than the first. I realized that Richard imitates the behavior of those he admires, so he might also imitate their



style. The need to reveal age was also noted. Arthur is immature but thinks himself a man, and Mildred is only fifteen but is wise and independent despite her age. Their hair and makeup would need to reveal both their youth and their transition into adulthood. Similarly, Lily is only in her late 30s or early 40s, but she has been worn down by sorrow and is emotionally trapped in the past. Her hair and makeup would need to be conservative, modest, and somber. Another important discovery was that Act Two, Scene One, set in the Pleasant Beach House bar, contrasts any environment Richard has seen before, so the bartender and patrons would need to look totally different from his family.

The third reading's purpose was to list specific hair and makeup needs or changes. I decided Tommy Miller would be sunburnt because O'Neill describes him as such and it would suggest he plays outdoors and is youthful and carefree. I also decided Lily should undergo some hair or makeup quick change when she changes her outfit for a date with Sid. Character ages and Belle's blonde hair, however, are the only specific hair and facial features supported by the dialogue. These physical traits were easy to realize because they are implied or mentioned in the script, but most were subject to creative license and would only be realized after further analysis, research, and casting.

After these three readings, I conducted a more thorough script analysis. I responded to questions in the first chapter of *The Costume Designer's Handbook* by Rosemary Ingham and Liz Covey, which prompted answers applicable to hair and makeup design:

- Where are the characters?
  - The seaside town of New London, Connecticut, USA.
- When are the characters?

- July 4-5, 1906
- Who are the characters?
  - An upper middle class family with bi-partisan political views.
  - A conservative father and his secretly rebellious daughter.
  - A self-serving but caring bartender, salesman, and prostitute.
- What happened before the action of the play began?
  - David McComber found sensual poems that Richard sent his daughter.
  - Sid and Lily were engaged, but broke up due to his drinking and debauchery.
  - Sid was fired from the Waterbury newspaper.
- What do the major characters think about their world?
  - Richard is an outsider by choice who thinks capitalism and modern religion are broken. He is guilty of imitating his role models, but considers himself morally and intellectually superior to his family and friends and is grossly self-righteous. For the first half of the play, he has an external locus of control.
  - Nat Miller recognizes the benefits of both conservatism and liberalism and supports his politically diverse family. He is dependent on capitalist, Protestant advertisers and subscribers to profit from his newspaper, but will not hesitate to defend his beliefs. Nat appreciates the philosophies of Richard's idols, but is wary of being too accepting of ideas considered taboo in 1906 America.

- Essie Miller is afraid of the outside world corrupting her family and is wary of those who flaunt or are too promiscuous. Her conservatism does not come from an appreciation of tradition, but from a desire to protect her family and an apprehension to boasting.
- What is the function of each character?
  - Each character offers a different opinion on conservatism and progressivism in America.
- What is the mode of vernacular?
  - Naturalistic and poetic using Edwardian vernacular.
- What is the play's action?
  - Richard rebels against his family to legitimize his opinions and emotions.
- What is the play's theme?
  - Accepting the self and change to find happiness.

Before moving on to historical research, I incorporated costume designer J.

Theresa Bush's findings and director Lou Rackoff's interpretation and dramatic action statement (DAS) into my analysis. A dramatic action statement is a one or two sentence statement that uses active language to describe the overarching action of the play and journey of its characters. Rackoff thought O'Neill wrote *Ah, Wilderness!* to present his idealized American dream and childhood, and that the wilderness O'Neill references is the future. O'Neill's surrogate character, Richard, has the choice to determine his fate. He can either maintain an external locus of control and fall to addiction like his creator, or he can accept that he is in control and capable of loving and being hurt. O'Neill suggests that every character has the potential to either embrace change and the self or continue

imitating others and repressing his or her desires and beliefs. Rackoff's DAS for *Ah, Wilderness!* was "to embrace the wilderness."

Next I read from Robert M. Dowling's *Eugene O'Neill: A Life in Four Acts* to identify parallels between O'Neill's life and his play. Discovering the play and characters' origins and the author's purpose would help me better understand character backgrounds, beliefs, and relationships, all of which could influence physical appearance. Eugene O'Neill was born on October 16, 1888 in New York, NY to Ella O'Neill and famed vaudeville actor James O'Neill (Dowling 24). O'Neill's older brother James O'Neill Jr. was born 1878, and his older brother Edmund died in 1885, when James Jr. accidentally infected the two-year-old with measles (28-29). For much of O'Neill's young life, his father toured the country playing the lead role of Edmond Dantès in Charles Fechter's staged adaptation of *The Count of Monte Cristo* (26-27). Eugene grew up in the family's cottage in New London, CT, affectionately named Monte Cristo Cottage by James Sr. This would become the setting of *Ah, Wilderness!* (32).

The seed for *Ah, Wilderness!* was planted in 1931 when O'Neill and his wife, Carlotta Monterey, visited the remains of Monte Cristo Cottage. A year later, on the morning of September 1, O'Neill awoke with the complete concept for *Ah, Wilderness!*, a comedy that would serve as his next God-replacement play. In this genre, an ideology takes the place of God in the characters' lives (219). In *Ah, Wilderness!*, God has been replaced by nationalism and conservatism, but Richard discovers that love is truly God. In Act Three, Scene Two, Richard finally recites an original poem to his girlfriend, Muriel McComber, and declares she is "more beautiful than God!" (O'Neill 117).

Accepting a future of vulnerability may be like the wandering into the wilderness, but Richard realizes that it is the only way he can find happiness.

O'Neill compared the play to "wishing out loud" for the childhood he never had (Dowling 219). The play contrasts not only his actual childhood, but also America's socio-economic reality in 1932. The play's idyllic setting and conclusion forced O'Neill's contemporary audience to contrast the story with the realities of the Great Depression and consider why it occurred, how it could have been avoided, what it revealed, and how to prevent it from happening again. Though it is structurally a comedy, *Ah, Wilderness!* is laced with hopelessness. In the final scene, Nat and Essie claim that Richard and Muriel are just a fling and that Sid and Lily will remain trapped in their cycle of love, disappointment, and forgiveness. The low-stakes conflicts make it easier for the audience to digest the need to break toxic cycles, be they personal, political, or socio-economic. The play was met with high acclaim, opening at the Guild Theatre in New York on October 2, 1933 and running for 289 performances (219-221).

There are several parallels between figures in the playwright's life and the characters in *Ah, Wilderness!* Most obviously, Richard Miller represents a young O'Neill. Both are lovesick poets disillusioned by their family's values, the American dream, and materialism, and both share a tendency to admire and imitate writers with leftist ideologies like socialism and philosophical anarchism (Dowling 18-19). Nat Miller is most likely not symbolic of James O'Neill Sr. Rather, I believe Nat was inspired by editor-in-chief of the liberal *New London Telegraph*, Frederick P. Latimer, who employed O'Neill and published his poems, believing he would someday become a novelist. O'Neill might have seen Latimer as more of a father figure than James Sr. (58-

59). Essie Miller, Richard's mother, appears to be an idealized version of Ella, one that is cautious within reason, respectful and sympathetic towards her son, and not addicted to morphine (28-30). Dowling believes Muriel is based on the young O'Neill's eighteen-year-old girlfriend Maibelle Scott, to whom he sent poems and hundreds of love letters (59-60). Arthur, Richard's older brother, embodies O'Neill's older sibling James Jr., called "Jamie" by friends and family and "Jim" by Eugene (29). O'Neill believed James Jr. imitated others and wasted opportunities instead of embracing his true potential, similar to how Arthur copies what he believes are mature and masculine qualities when he is actually a caring, sensitive brother and singer at heart. O'Neill's friend, Saxe Commins, recalled how he lamented about his family, especially Jim, after the death of their mother in 1922.

Jim could have been a fine writer, a poet and certainly a barbed satirist or a romantic actor in the best tradition or even, highest in Gene's esteem, a clear and persuasive thinker. But no, Jim was too bedazzled by Broadway, by round-heeled women, by his autointoxication with his own boasting while his sycophants urged him on. ... If only he, Gene, had Jim's gifts, then perhaps the O'Neills might be redeemed from the father who allowed himself to be trapped by success. The old man was a Sisyphus and Monte Cristo was the stone he was condemned to push uphill into hell. (145)

O'Neill rarely wrote about the struggles of the bourgeoisie, but these people and the characters they inspired in *Ah, Wilderness!* are upper-middle class, making the play an even greater diversion from his usual style. O'Neill experienced Irish persecution in New England, combatted wage slavery, wrote about the African American experience,

and convened with sex workers, though not entirely for literary inspiration. These experiences led him to use his plays to give a voice to oppressed demographics and the working class; O'Neill put "virtually every outcast from America's misbegotten landscape onto the world stage" (Dowling 20). Despite his focus on the Millers, he did remember to represent the proletariat in *Ah, Wilderness!* I needed to respectfully present the working class characters while keeping their designs unified with the other visual elements. Belle the prostitute could not be too bawdy, nor could George the Bartender simply be a brute.

Designing theatrical hair and makeup requires more than comprehending the story, however. It requires understanding personal style norms in the play's setting. Edwardian women wore their hair piled on top of the head in a pompadour style, often shaping the hair using wire frames or false hairpieces called rats (Winakor 563). This pompadour protruded to the sides, creating an onion silhouette, while hair at the back of the head was tied into a bun either at the nape of the neck or high on the crown of the head (Hymowitz 97). These hairdos were meant to look carelessly, loosely pinned, as if they could fall at any moment. Brilliantine added shine to hair, and the texture and arrangement of the bun or pompadour could make hairstyles more personal (Lowery 95-97). Older women might have continued using the tight, restricted hairstyles of the late 1800s, and only girls wore their hair down (Bicât 91-92). According to Penelope Byrde, "Young girls wore their hair long and loose until they left the classroom, then put their hair up when they 'came out' in society" (17).

The popular updos reflected the liberating ideologies of the "New Woman" and borrowed from the hairstyles depicted in Art Nouveau and drawings by Charles Dana

Gibson (Lowery 94-95).

Gibson created the “Gibson Girl,” which was considered both the feminine ideal and the embodiment of the New Woman during the 1890s and Edwardian Era. These drawings depicted women as charming and tall with thin waists and voluptuous curves. The New Woman was described as independent, well educated, and active in public spheres. Gibson depicted his



Fig. 1

models out in public, exploring the world, leading courtships, and embracing art, academics, and athletics (“The Gibson Girl’s America”).

Edwardian men had simple hairstyles. The hair was worn short and cleanly parted either at the side or center of the hairline. They also used brilliantine in their hair, as well as Makassar oil for grooming and conditioning. These hairstyles were a trans-ethnic phenomenon in the west. Facial hair was used to express individuality (Lowery 97-98). Some men wore trimmed beards like that of King Edward VII, after whom the Edwardian Era is named, but most men wore mustaches or were clean-shaven (Winakor 553).



During the Edwardian Era, the makeup industry was still in its infancy, and beauty makeup had negative moral connotations outside of the theatre. The damning phrase “they say she paints” referred to women who used rouge and powder (Bicât 93). However, these products were popularized as an adaption for hiding imperfections revealed by harsh gas and later electric lighting. By 1900, a market had been created, coinciding with the era of the New Woman and the legitimization of the female consumer (Peiss 49-50). Crèmes, lotions, powders, rouges, and various other products were advertised and used to cover up imperfections in the skin, hide freckles, fill out the cheeks, and darken the eyebrows, and by the 1910s beauty makeup, especially rouge, powders, and eye makeup, was no longer purely connotative of prostitution (51-53). Kathy Peiss says, “As more women entered into the expanding realm of urban commercial nightlife, they made elements of this racy public style their own” (54).

These women who painted stirred public debate about style taboos. Many believed makeup was only acceptable for disguising imperfections or aging and should appear as natural as possible. Well into the 1910s, women were fired or detained for their makeup, and men especially voiced the belief that cosmetics reflected character. Though many women reiterated these misogynistic sentiments, the Edwardian supporters of beauty makeup believed that the wearer’s intention mattered more than the makeup itself. However, it was generally suggested that those intentions should include appearing nice and attractive for men (55-57). This historical information on makeup and hairstyles gave me options for designing the characters’ looks, so next I researched influences on their actions and personalities that might also affect their style.

Two major movements that influence Richard are socialism and bohemianism. Socialism is an economic and political theory rooted in the teachings of Karl Marx with the goal of creating an egalitarian society. It dictates that capitalism unfairly benefits the owners of capital and that an egalitarian society can be created through a unified people. It can be inferred that socialism and underground left wing movements are especially relevant in the world of *Ah, Wilderness!* The story takes place soon after the 1905 Russian Revolution when, as Michael Newman explains, the potential of socialism was being discussed internationally (Newman, *Socialism*).

A bohemian is defined as an artist or intellectual who “leads a free, vagabond, or irregular life, not being particular as to the society he frequents, and despising conventionalities generally” (Walker). Bohemianism is a reaction to the bourgeois lifestyle, and bohemians are typically not political yet liberal, not religious yet spiritual, and are overall creative (Walker). This lifestyle became more popular in America after 1870, rousing fears among nationalists that its anti-ethnocentric and socialist connotations would corrupt America’s youth. Richard represents this corrupted youth and may be considered a cosmopolitan bohemian, a member of the bourgeoisie who seeks authentic experiences of the foreign and who wants to transform the self by appropriating other cultures. Nat Miller also has an interest in bohemianism but exercises moderation. By the end of the play, Richard also discovers his place in this middle road by embracing new experiences and his artistic nature while recognizing he is no extremist and has nothing to prove. Eventually, Richard abandons the identity of the over-achieving cosmopolitan bohemian, seeing that he has been guilty of simple imitation in an attempt to appear worldly. While Nat’s career, class, and views mean his hairstyle would need to

be more refined, Richard's hairstyle would need to differ from Edwardian grooming norms to reflect his bohemianism.

This need for contrast was re-emphasized with the color-conscious casting of David Neely, a person of color, as Richard Miller. This casting meant Richard might also partake in the black bohemia movement during Bohemia's spread across America from 1870-1920. During this movement, many African American artists and cultural leaders tried to stop the appropriation of black culture and refused to create work that relied on racial stereotypes. Black creators aimed to negotiate race lines by influencing American culture while realistically presenting and legitimizing black experiences and art. Keeping in mind this movement and the color-conscious casting, Richard's hair would need to be uniquely styled while embracing its natural texture. More information on cosmopolitan bohemianism can be found in Levin 285-322, and more information on the black bohemia movement can be found in Levin 322-338.

Nat Miller's personal style might be influenced by his role as a journalist, his views on the Muckraking movement, his race, and his Irish Catholic heritage. Muckrakers were journalists active from about 1903 to 1912, an epoch of the Progressive Era, who exposed and/or clarified corruption, abuses, and discrimination in American business, politics, and civil rights (Chalmers 9-13). David Mark Chalmers summarized their efforts by saying, "They did not uncover corruption - although there were notable original exposures - as much as they brought before the public eye the mountainous details of graft which crowded the public records" (14). Muckrakers Upton Sinclair, who suffered through poverty, and Charles Edward Russell, who admired abolitionists and witnessed poverty abroad, found solace and inspiration in socialism (88-97). Nat was

played by Detalion Dixon, an African American actor, so in the context of this production he might have endured and/or witnessed racial persecution while growing up in Reconstruction and post-Reconstruction America, justifying his literary interests, sympathy for others, and interest in leftist movements. He might have even been a muckraker were he not so cautious and hindered by his traditional, Protestant readers and advertisers. Still, his occupation and sense of duty would suggest he would present himself in a professional manner to dignify the beliefs he represents.

Considering O'Neill's Irish Catholic heritage and that the Millers' symbolize his family, I believe Nat Miller has been persecuted for his religion and Irish ancestry. Anti-Catholic sentiment in America was a step in the domino effect caused by the Protestant Reformation. Starting in the sixteenth century, England established laws discriminating against Catholics, and anti-Catholic laws and opinions immigrated with the English to the original thirteen American colonies. Catholics were most notably oppressed in New England, especially Massachusetts and Maryland. President Thomas Jefferson's division of church and state decreased lawful Catholic discrimination, but prejudice continued (Bridgers 97-98). Throughout the nineteenth century, nativism led to anti-Catholic publications that reflected fears that the Catholic and immigrant elite would take over and their poor would become a burden on or corrupt society (100-104). There were tall-tales of sexual depravity within the clergy, including covenant orgies and confessional seductions. O'Neill exemplifies this thinking through David McComber, who passive-aggressively accuses Nat's children of fornication and flirtation. In 1836, Protestant propagandist Maria Monk gave false accounts of the clergy's behavior in her book *Awful Disclosures of the Hotel Dieu in Montreal*. According to Lawrence McCaffrey,

In her account of convent life in Montreal, Monk told of seductions by priests in the confessional and of frequent sexual encounters between priests and nuns. She described lust tunnels connecting rectories and convents. They also served as burial grounds for infants resulting from clerical orgies. According to Monk, the babies were baptized and then murdered, so that convent secrets would never reach the outside world. (100)

The Irish found more respectable representation in the performing arts in the latter half of the nineteenth century, but it was not enough to erase a sentiment embedded in American culture (McCaffrey 109-111). In the 1880s and 90s, an economic depression and increased immigration recharged xenophobia. Many Americans feared employment competition or that capitalism could not handle such an influx of people. Many business owners feared that foreigners brought Marxist or anarchist ideologies with them and would contribute to labor unrest (108-109). Nativism remained the stance of the proletariat, while the bourgeoisie used Social Darwinism to justify discrimination, limit immigration and naturalization, and prove Anglo-Saxon superiority. Irish Catholics, scrutinized for being both immigrants and pro-Popery, were major targets of nativism at this time (111-114). McCaffrey says, "Since Jews, Italians, Poles, and Blacks presented more discernible physical, cultural, and linguistic contrasts to Anglo Americans, light skinned, usually blue-eyed, English-speaking Irish Catholics were not the main focus of the racial aspect of American nativism, but remained the principle scapegoat for its original and persistent religious dimension" (114). This production's Nat Miller would have been targeted for his race and his Irish Catholic background. In the 1890s, organizations like the Guardians of Liberty, the American Minute Men, the

Convenanters, the Knights of Luther, the American Protective Association, and the Klux Klan fought to stop the blending and tolerance of America's ethnic melting pot (114-115).

Irish Catholics endured the dual neurosis of being both Irish Catholic and American citizens. Many were conflicted between being conservative Catholics and facing discrimination or joining liberal movements to protect their religious liberty and possibly sacrificing core beliefs in the process. Others tried to prove their patriotism, such as those who fought during the Civil War (94-103). Arthur, who teases Richard for his liberalism and anarchism, is an example of someone overcompensating to hide his self and prove his patriotism. The treatment of Irish Catholics in America would have an impact on Nat's personal appearance. He is the victim of Irish Catholic persecution, and, in this production, it can be assumed he has endured racial discrimination. He would have had to overcome discriminatory laws and social oppression to own his own newspaper, one of the primary media outlets available to New Londoners in 1906. This made him moderately wealthy and a key figure in the New London community, most likely to the vexation of his white, Anglo-Saxon neighbors and advertisers. He also had to overcome his internal conflict and find balance between his identities as Irish Catholic and an African American citizen. It makes sense that Nat would present himself in a way that reveals his self-respect and class and embraces his natural hair texture while still appealing to American style expectations. He would want to honestly show the world who he is while maintaining rapport.

Sex, relationship, gender, and marriage norms of the late Victorian and Edwardian Eras are also major themes in the play that could affect character appearance. In late

nineteenth-century America, publishing information on, advertising, or selling contraceptives was illegal in many states, yet the birth rate did not dramatically increase. John D’Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman believe this was due to a social purity movement at the time. With the increased separation between the public and private spheres, couples were more comfortable using contraceptives despite taboos. The call for fewer contraceptives included the promotion of voluntary motherhood, which women took as an opportunity to have more control in their domestic lives; women took advantage of the social movement to make childbearing and sex in marriage more of a choice (D’Emilio and Freedman 174-175).

Couples’ correspondences and surveys by Katharine B. Davis and Dr. Cleilia Mosher suggest that both men and women had ambivalent views on sex, its morality, and its purposes. These mixed opinions originated from embedded societal expectations and gender norms, and a lack of sex education. Women were expected to change or civilize their sons and husbands while also being responsible for fulfilling their husbands’ sexual needs and bearing children, which of course clashed with the increased understanding of consent, women’s sexual desires, and voluntary motherhood (175-178). Men faced their own division of the self. Men were thought to be physiologically more assertive, aggressive, and sexual than women and were expected to be expressive and take charge in courtship (178-180). However, they were also expected to be restrained at home and “respect the supposedly natural modesty of the opposite sex” (179). This division of self is exemplified by Nat’s clumsy lecture on sex in the final scene. Both late Victorian men and women struggled to compromise gender norms with the desire to embrace the self and have honest communication.

*Ah, Wilderness!* is largely about the decision to either conform to society or embrace the self. Essie Miller faces that decision, as revealed by her ambivalent views on sex and marriage. She reprimands her son for being too open about his feelings yet believes Lily should forgive Sid for his exploits, thus conforming to the concept that women should civilize the men in their families while enabling them to be sexually forward without fear of consequence. However, in Act Three, Scene Three she expresses a deeper understanding that her children will be flirtatious, have relationships, and make mistakes, and is proud of Richard for being himself and learning from his experiences. O'Neill also suggests that Nat and Essie have maintained a healthy sexual relationship through their flirtations in Act One, Scene Two and Act Three, Scene Three. Essie's mixed views on sex and progressivism suggest that while her personal style would be more reserved than Belle's or Mildred's, she would still use some beauty makeup, embrace the silhouette of Gibson Girl hair, and be more experimental with her style than Nora or Lily.

Because of Belle, understanding prostitution in late Victorian and Edwardian America was also necessary. At the turn of the century, prostitution was pushed into more urban areas and was largely organized into brothels (D'Emilio and Freedman 181-183). Women largely ran the brothels until World War I, after which male pimps took over the industry. Prostitution was widely criticized for its dangers to public health, both real and imagined, and reformers often used the industry and its supposed dangers as a red herring to keep women in line and out of the cities and work force (213-215). Belle is very independent, respects her self, and takes no disrespect from others, nor does she submit herself to male demands or employment. Her hair and makeup should embrace the look



of the idealized and independent Gibson Girl while also distinctly contrasting the other female characters, making her foreign to Richard's world. Many people in 1906 still believed obvious beauty makeup was the sign of a prostitute. However, keeping in mind the production's impressionistic style and the director's desire for natural looks, the makeup could not be bawdy and the hair could not be too voluminous. After researching Victorian and Edwardian prostitution norms, I had enough information about the script, its characters, O'Neill, and Edwardian style and society to begin designing.

## **Design Process**

Hair and makeup design is an allied art to costume design, meaning the former falls under the latter's jurisdiction; the hair and makeup designer primarily coordinates with and answers to the costume designer, who in turn coordinates with and answers to the director. Bush explained to me how Rackoff's interpretation of the play led to the principle designers' decision to use impressionism and selective realism to visually express the "comedy of recollection" so that it appears natural but with the minimalist detail of dreams and memories (O'Neill 1). The director and designers were largely inspired by painter John Singer Sargent (1856-1925), who was renowned for his portraits and impressionist watercolor landscapes. I was informed of these production design goals at a design meeting on October 1, 2019 and in conference with Bush; Bush and I met regularly to discuss and update the design process. The makeup designs would need to use select, softened features with few hard lines, and each hairstyle would need a character specific, recognizable silhouette. This design process lasted throughout the Fall 2019 semester.

Guided by these aesthetic decisions, I created a mood board. A mood board is a collection of images that communicates a designer's vision and expresses the color palette, moods, or themes the script evokes. The hair and makeup design mood board included photos, advertisements, paintings, and political cartoons that expressed my visual and emotional interpretations of the characters and would inspire the final hair and makeup looks. Some of the images became references for the actors and wardrobe crew. The following images were on Richard Miller's mood board page:



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

I included Figure 2, a photo of Oscar Wilde, because Richard wants to embody bohemianism and admires Wilde, and therefore he might be inspired by the Irish dandy's style. Figure 3, a photo of young Joseph Albers, and Figure 5, *Lord Dalhousie* by John Singer Sargent, capture Richard's class, smugness, and depression. Figure 4, another Sargent piece, embodies Richard's feelings of freedom and surprise at the exciting and frightening world he has just begun to explore. Each character was assigned one page of mood images, and the board was submitted to Bush on October 15 and subsequently edited.

On October 22, I submitted my design concept statement, a paragraph summarizing my design goals and methods. The hair and makeup design concept statement for *Ah, Wilderness!* was as follows:

The hair and makeup designs for the University of Southern Mississippi's Spring 2020 production of Eugene O'Neill's *Ah, Wilderness!* will use the principles of impressionism to capture the play's spirit of nostalgia and to be unified with the costume and scene designs. Rather than using excessive hard lines or detail, each character's design will use select and softened features that simultaneously reveal age, health, environmental influences, social status, and personality as if in the mist of memory. The designs will be based on the personal style norms of the Edwardian Era, with each character's design influenced by his or her personality, relationships, inspirations, and views on conformity. Each look will reflect how much a character wishes to conform versus his or her desire to embrace the wilderness of individuality and modernity.

The next design step was to create a scene/character action plot, also known as a scene/character breakdown. The action plot is a simple spreadsheet drawn on paper that uses dots to show what scenes the characters are in and when they enter in relation to each other. The action plot helps the hair and makeup designer plan look changes and understand the rhythm of the play (Ingham and Covey 29-30). I created my first action plot on September 5, 2019, which was later transferred to an Excel spreadsheet and from then on referred to as the scene/character breakdown. This spreadsheet included more detailed information on character looks and when they changed. There were no restrictions placed on the initial design choices described in the breakdown. Rather, it was an opportunity to be imaginative and develop concepts that could be narrowed down later. The following spreadsheet was the first version of the scene/character breakdown.

Ah, Wilderness! Scene/Character Breakdown									
Character	Act 1			Act 2			Act 3		
	Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 3
	Miller Sitting Room 8 am Pg. 9-34	Miller Dining Room 6pm Pg. 34-61	Pleasant Beach House Bar 10 pm Pg. 62-77	Miller Sitting Room 10:45 pm Pg. 77-92	Miller Sitting Room 1 pm Pg. 93-105	Beach 9 pm Pg. 105-117	Miller Sitting Room 10 pm Pg. 117-129		
Richard Miller	LK #1 CURIOUS REBEL	REP LK #1	REP LK #1	LK #2 ? BRUISES/CUTS	REP LK #2	LK #3 CLEANED UP ?	REP LK #3 ?		
Mr. Nat Miller	LK #1 KIND BUSINESSMAN	REP LK #1/LK #2 DISHELVELED ?	X	REP/LK #3 BEDTIME ?	REP LK #1	X	REP LK #1 OR #3 ?		
Mrs. Essie Miller	LK #1 SMOTHER	REP LK #1	X	REP LK #1/LK #2 BEDTIME ?	REP LK #1	X	REP LK #1 OR #3 ?		
Lily Miller	LK #1 CARING TEACHER	LK #2 FIREWORKS	X	REP #1 OR 2/LK #3 BEDTIME ?	REP LK #1	X	X		
Sid Davis	LK #1 DRINKER	REP LK #1/LK #2 DISHELVELED ?	X	REP LK #1/LK #3 BEDHEAD ?	REP LK #1	X	X		
Arthur	LK #1 JOCK	X	X	REP LK #1	REP LK #1	X	X		
Mildred	LK #1 STANDARD	REP LK #1/LK #2 ?	X	REP #1 OR 2/LK #3 BEDTIME ?	REP LK #1	X	X		
Tommy	LK #1 SUNBURNT	REP LK #1	X	LK #2 BED HEAD	REP LK #1	X	X		
David McComber	LK #1 OLD PRUDE	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Muriel McComber	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Belle	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Bartender	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Salesman	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Norah	X	LK #1 SERVING	X	X	X	X	X		
KEY									
LK # = LOOK # FROM PIECES LIST									
REP = REPEAT									

The scene/character breakdown and design choices were discussed with Bush and edited. For example, in Act One, Scene Two, Nat and Sid are intoxicated after a picnic, so the breakdown describes both of them as looking disheveled. I had planned on using blush and a water and glycerin solution to make them appear flushed and sweaty. Bush and I concluded that Nat would not be as drunk as Sid, and that using the solution or adding blush to either of them would only complicate makeup changes and would be unnecessary. The actors could communicate their characters' conditions effectively through movement and speech.

I then created a makeup morgue. A morgue is a collection of reference images used for rendering, applying makeup, and styling hair. The morgue consisted of photos of varying hairstyles and facial features, including facial hair, wrinkles, and bone structure. Some of these images came from the mood board. The original makeup morgue for Richard included Figure 3, Figure 4, and Figure 6. Richard is a heavy reader and tired of how he has been treated, which could be revealed through dark circles under his eyes.



Fig. 6

Creating the morgue was preemptive to casting, but my images did not include many people of color. Rackoff cast the Millers as a racially mixed family to represent the modern nuclear family and add subtext to David McComber's disapproval of them and Richard's infatuation with his daughter. The morgue was revised for Arthur, Lily, Nat, and Richard, all played by actors of color. Rackoff, Bush, and I noted the importance of embracing the actors' natural hair textures, which was not only to respect the actors but also to reflect the major theme of accepting the self. I also researched the black bohemia movement, and Figure 7 became the primary reference photo on Richard's morgue page.



Fig. 7



It was finally time to render the hair and makeup designs. Using tracing paper and their headshots, I traced the actors' features, outlined the hair, and sectioned off areas of highlight and shadow. I then added color and more detail with Prismacolor Portrait Set colored pencils. The renderings were created between November 23 and December 8, 2019.

***Ah, Wilderness!***

***Tommy Miller***

***Alice McPhail***

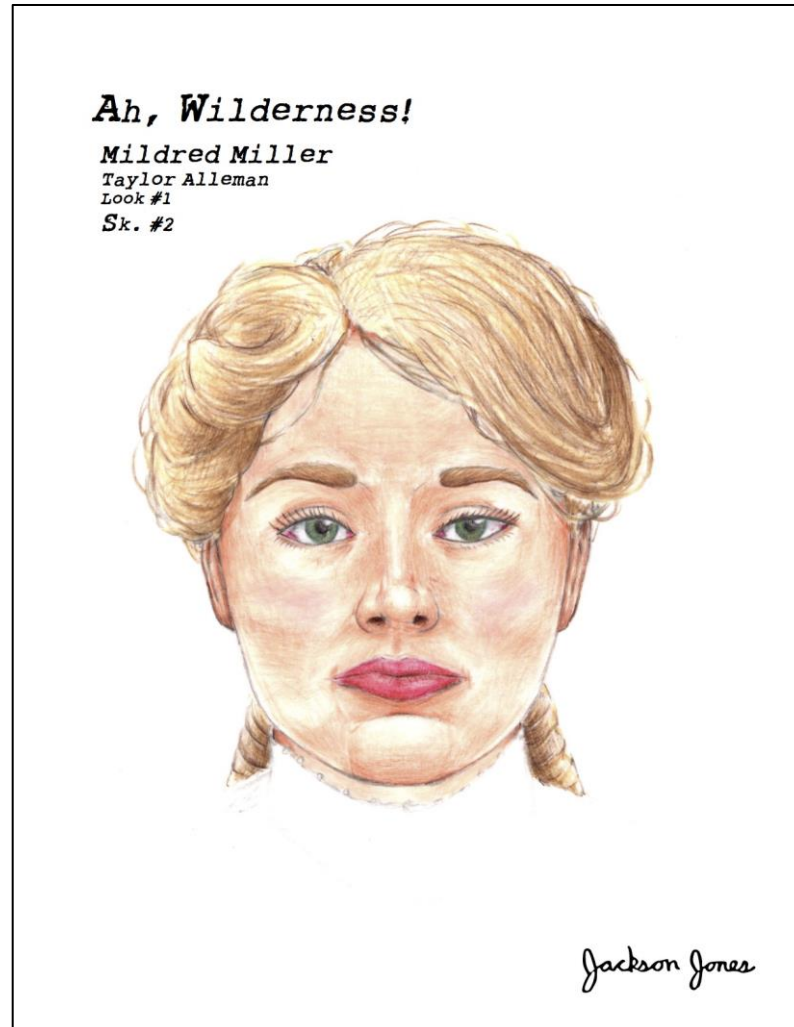
***Look #1***

***Sk. #1***



*Jackson Jones*

Tommy Miller, played by Alice McPhail, is the eleven-year-old son of Nat and Essie Miller, the youngest of their children. O'Neill describes Tommy as sunburnt, which I thought could age him down by revealing how much he plays outdoors. Because he is younger, it is appropriate for his hair to be longer than his father's or brothers'. The hair is also gelled tightly to the side to suggest that Essie helps him style it. It was essential that Tommy have no age lines or wrinkles so that he looks as youthful as possible.



Mildred Miller, played by Taylor Alleman, is the fifteen-year-old daughter of Essie and Nat Miller. Despite her age, she is a flirt with serious opinions on marriage and gender norms. Her style bridges the gap between schoolgirl and Gibson Girl. The hair is styled in a half-pompadour pulled into a ponytail with ringlets and tied with a ribbon. Edwardian girls did not put their hair up until they finished school, so this style combination reveals her youth intertwining with her maturity. The shade of lipstick and rouge is bold enough to clearly be unnatural but not red enough to draw serious judgment. She also has on eyeliner, something her mother would not approve of or wear.

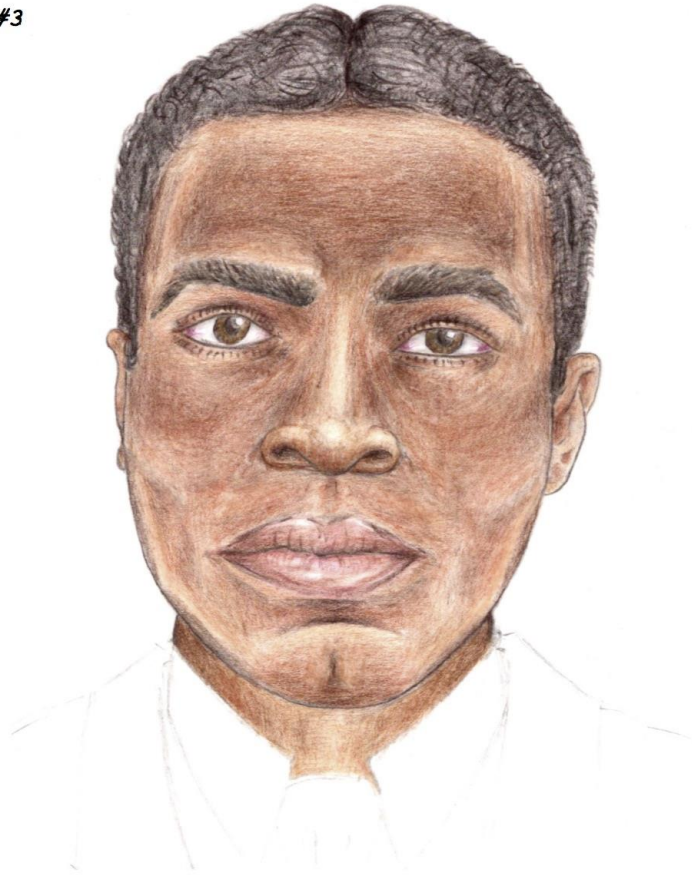
***Ah, Wilderness!***

***Arthur Miller***

*Tony Reimonenq*

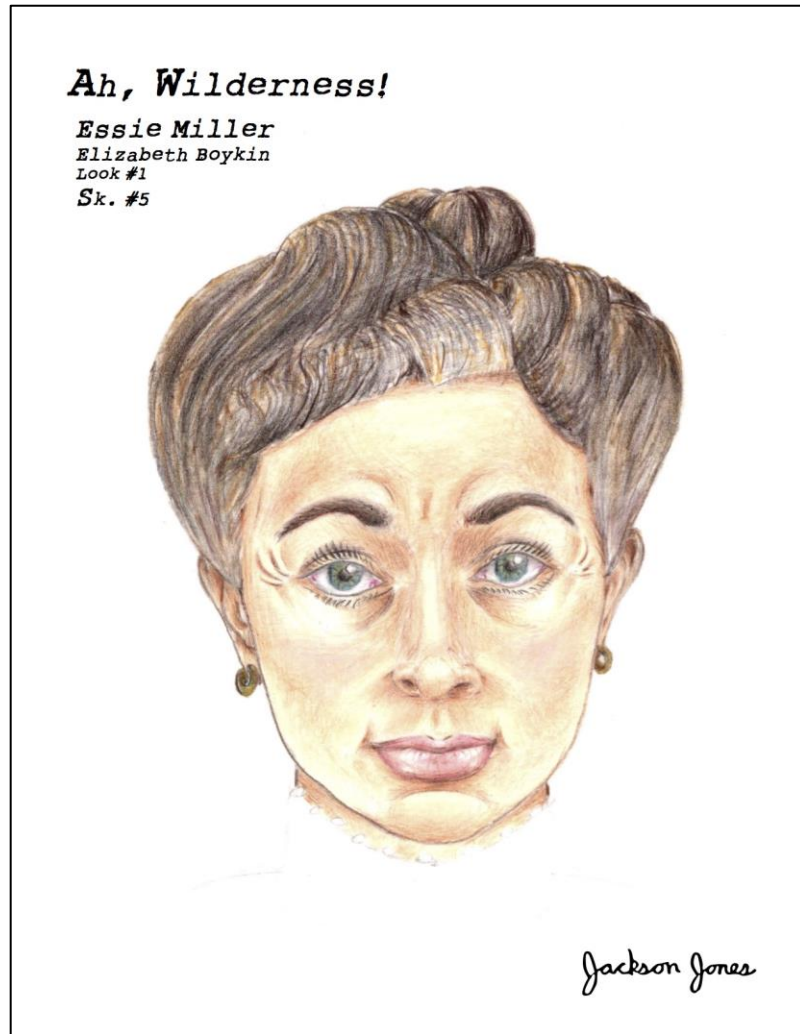
*Look #1*

*Sk. #3*

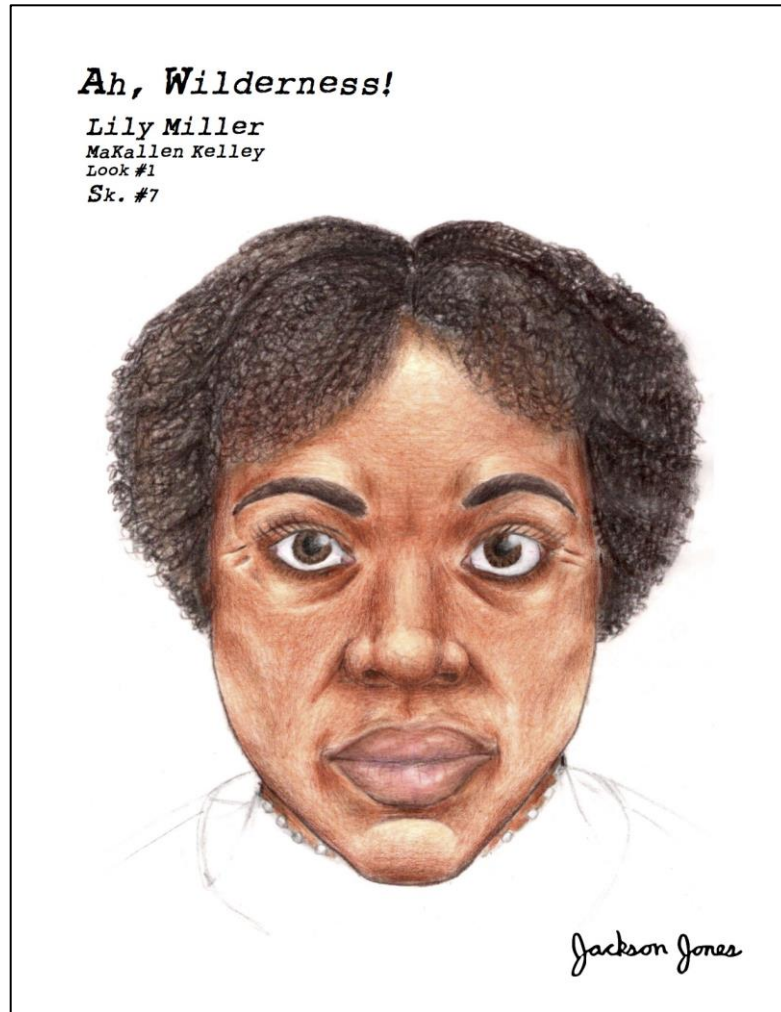


*Jackson Jones*

Arthur Miller, played by Tony Reimonenq, is the nineteen-year-old son of Essie and Nat Miller, making him their oldest child. He is a Yale football player and very patriotic. His square jaw and cleft chin evoke fitness and masculinity, and his hair part is period and distinguishes his style from his father's. Arthur puts on the facade of manhood but is not as mature as he thinks.



Essie Miller, played by Elizabeth Boykin, is the matriarch of the Miller family and in her early to mid 40s. There is some aging on her superciliary arch and eye sockets, but none on the forehead. Her crows' feet are her most distinguishing wrinkles. They arch upward to suggest they were created by years of smiling, creating an aura of positivity. Her hair is graying near the temples and at the center of the hairline. Essie would be against using heavy beauty makeup, but she is somewhat open minded and has on light rouge, mascara, and lipstick in a natural looking shade of pink. Her hair is styled in an Edwardian pompadour that is waved and parted, a style that is modest yet with the times.



Lily Miller, played by Makallen Kelley, is Nat Miller's sister and his children's aunt. She is in her late 30s or early 40s. For years she has pined over Essie's brother and her ex-fiancé Sid Davis, but his habitual drinking and fornication repeatedly disappoint her, so she suffers through a cycle of destroyed expectations. She is stuck in the past, and her style is as well. Her hair is pulled back in a conservative manner, and her somber aging is meant to evoke the memory of sadness. Her frown lines are emphasized, her cheeks lightly sunken, and her crow's feet point downward. In Act One, Scene Two, she pins up her ponytail and wears a lily flower hair clip. A rendering for this second look was not created because it was discussed and evolved during hair and makeup fittings.

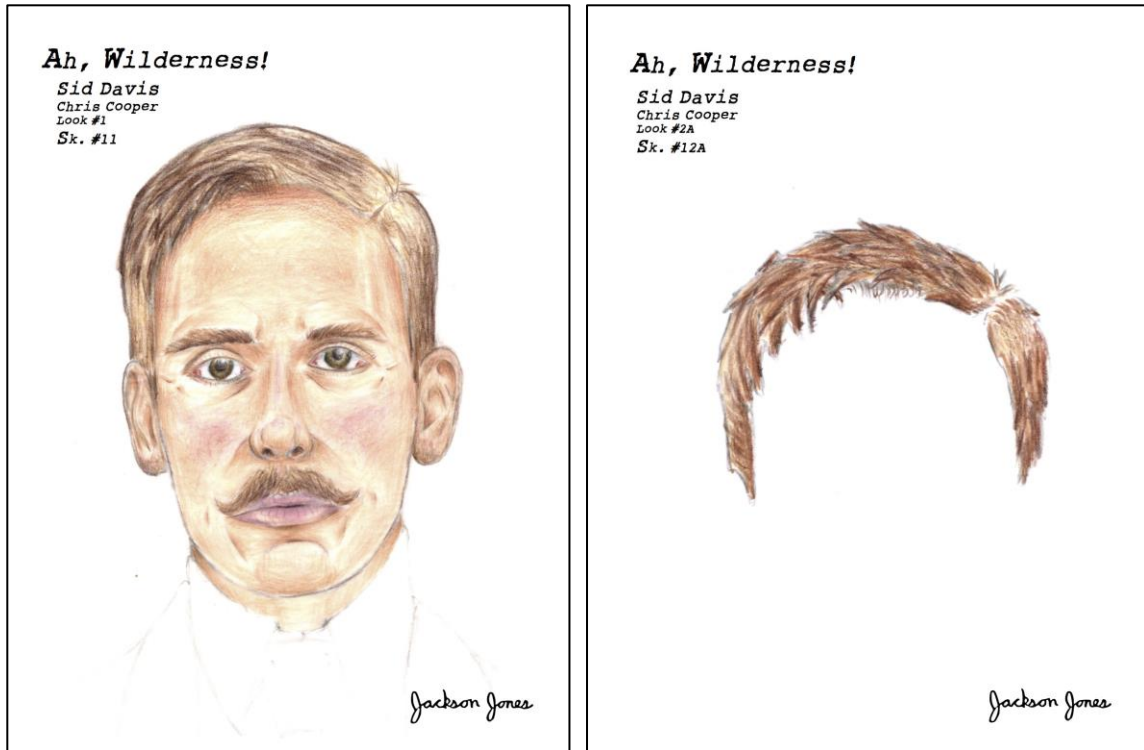


***Ah, Wilderness!***

***Nat Miller***  
*Detalion Dixon*  
*Look #1*  
*Sk. #8*

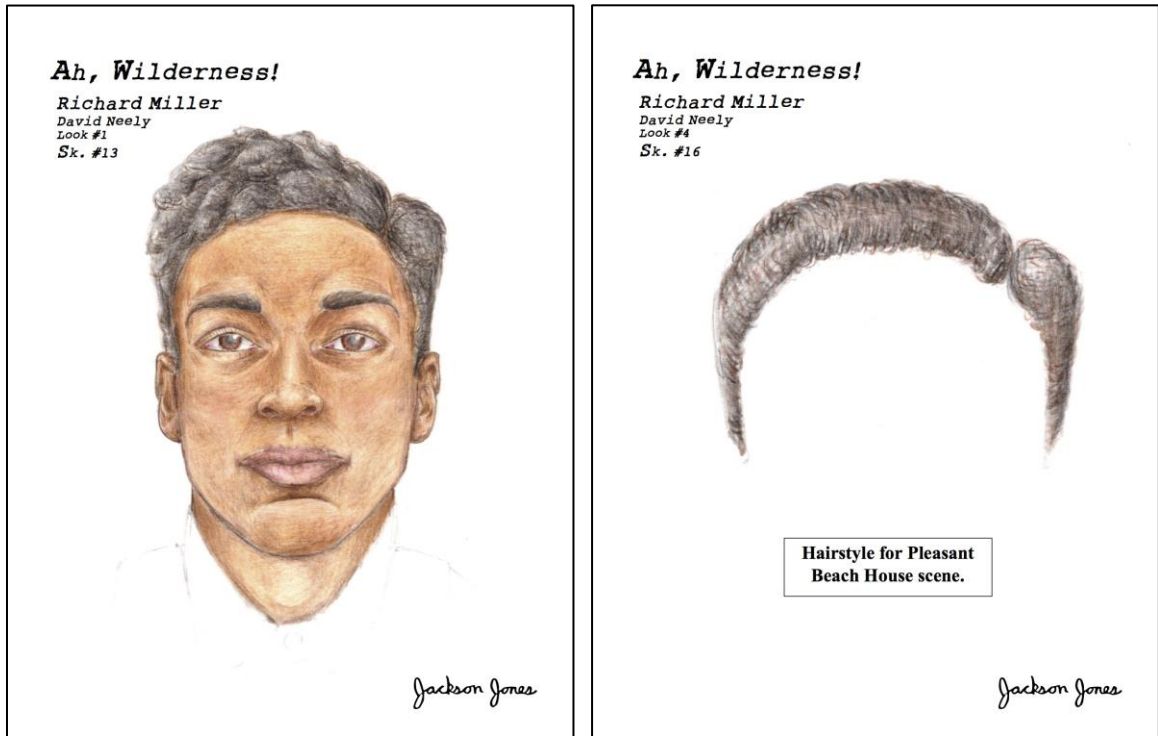


Nat Miller, played by Detalion Dixon, is the patriarch of the Miller family and in his mid 40s. His aging is concentrated around the eyes and cheekbones, and his hair is graying by his temples and on his mustache. His mustache and parted hair reflect his maturity and his concern for making good impressions. He is an enthusiastic reader like his son, so he too has dark circles under his eyes.

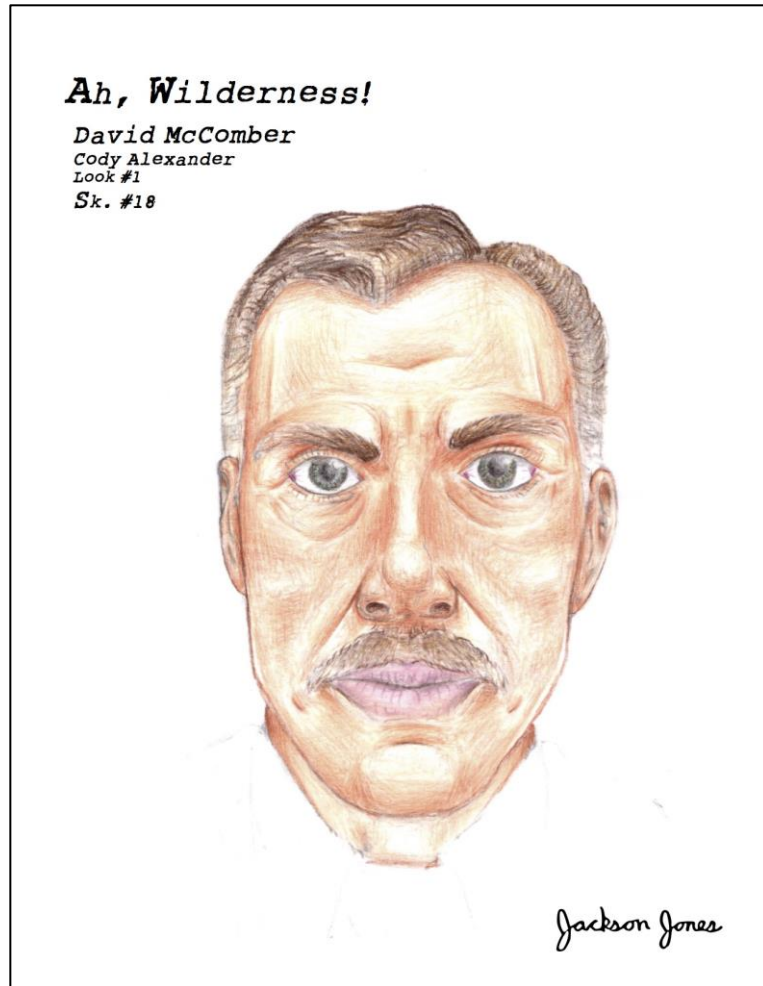


Sid Davis, played by Chris Cooper, is Essie Miller's brother and the uncle of the Miller children. He is in his late 30s or early 40s and has a history of alcoholism. He has some aging around the eyes and mouth, and the redness on his cheeks and nose is the effect of chronic drinking on his blood vessels. His hair is worn short, parted, and gelled, but in Act One, Scene Two it is disheveled to show he has been drinking.





Richard Miller, played by David Neely, is the son of Nat and Essie Miller and the protagonist of *Ah, Wilderness!* He is sixteen years old and a recent high school graduate. His blush reveals his youth, but the dark circles under his eyes show that he is an avid reader and disillusioned with the world. The dark circles also visually suggest that he is a lot like his father. Being bohemian, he embraces his natural hair texture and lets it grow long, but the hair is parted and layered to reveal that he cares very much about his personal style like his idol, Oscar Wilde. In Act Two, Scene One, the hair is combed back into a more socially accepted Edwardian silhouette.



David McComber, played by Cody Alexander, is a dry goods storeowner in his late 40s. He is extremely conservative, disapproves of the Millers, and has no issue offering his opinion on someone to their face. His aging is more extreme than any other characters' to reveal he is more stressed and stern. His emphasized frown lines and jowls suggest he scowls much of the time, and he is the only character with a forehead wrinkle, which makes him look significantly older. His false mustache arches downward so he is perpetually frowning, and, keeping with the theme of conservatism, his hair is styled after an image of President Donald Trump with gelled hair.

## ***Ah, Wilderness!***

***Nora***

***Camille Colley***

***Look #1***

***Sk. #19***



Nora, played by Camille Colley, is the Millers' housekeeper. She develops little during the play and communicates primarily with Essie. Bush suggested that Essie might see Nora as an impressionable daughter figure, so I designed her hair and makeup as a simplified version of Essie's style. She wears mascara, light rouge, and Essie's shade of lipstick. Her hair is styled as a simple Edwardian pompadour with no wave or part that suggests her class without distracting from principle characters.

***Ah, Wilderness!***

***Wint***

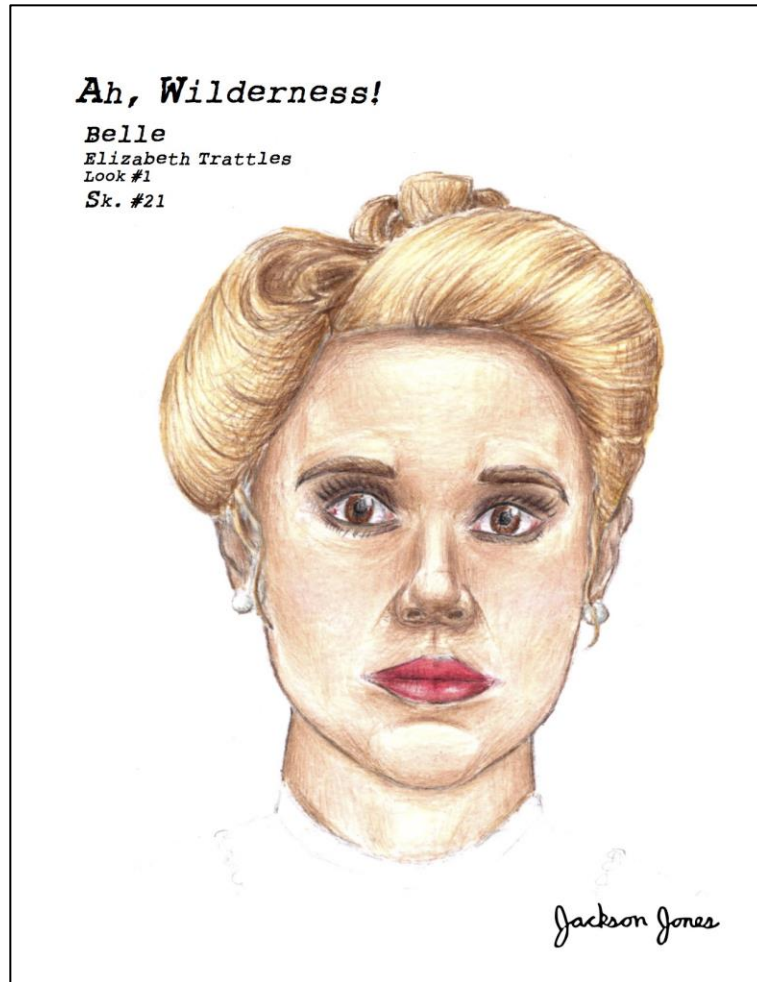
***Liam McCarty***

***Look #1***

***Sk. #20***



Wint Selby, played by Liam McCarty, is Arthur's nineteen-year-old classmate from Yale. He is a troublemaker who, like Arthur, tries to act older than he is. His thin mustache implies he is attempting to look grown, but his blush and hairstyle betray him and reveal his youth.



Belle, played by Elizabeth Trattles, is a twenty-year-old prostitute who spends the evening with Richard. Her hair and makeup embody the Gibson Girl aesthetic while contrasting anything worn by the other women in Richard's life. Her pompadour is parted and elaborately layered, and the bun is divided into a four-leaf-clover shape. Her lipstick is a deep, unnatural shade of red, and she is the only character who wears eye shadow. She is a self-serving but caring, genuine person, so her blush is light to prevent her from looking bawdy or unnatural. O'Neill also describes her as "peroxide blonde," so I planned on fitting the actor with a blonde wig because neither she nor I wanted to dye her brunette hair for a one weekend show (O'Neill 7).

***Ah, Wilderness!***

***Bartender***  
***Cody Alexander***  
***Look #1***  
***Sk. #22***



George the Bartender, also played by Cody Alexander, runs the bar at the Pleasant Beach House in Act Two, Scene One. David McComber's false mustache is removed and false sideburns are adhered. The wrinkles are covered with foundation, and blush is used to make him look livelier and younger than McComber. The stubble and slicked back hair suggest that he puts minimum effort into his appearance, and the scar by his right eye implies that he is a more experienced fighter than Richard.



***Ah, Wilderness!***

***Salesman***  
***Shelby Thames***  
***Look #1***  
***Sk. #23***



The Salesman, played by Shelby Thames, is an entrepreneur in his late 30s who is a patron of the Pleasant Beach House and garners the company of Belle. O'Neill suggests that he spends much of his time in bars and with prostitutes, and Bush's costume design showed him in loose and unkempt clothing. To reveal his character and be unified with the costume design, he has stubble and bags under his eyes, and his hair is crudely parted, suggesting he has a lax attitude towards personal style and first impressions.

***Ah, Wilderness!***

***Muriel McComber***

***Natalie Davis***

***Look #1***

***Sk. #24***



Muriel McComber, played by Natalie Davis, is David McComber's fifteen-year-old daughter and Richard Miller's girlfriend. She appears in Act Three, Scene Two after pretending to get ready for bed and sneaking out. Her hair is therefore let down and messily pinned out of her eyes. Richard compares her to God, so she is designed to look angelic, free, and naturally beautiful, as is if the character is not wearing makeup nor needs it.



After reviewing the designs, Rackoff approved them but did request some changes before their implementation. He wanted Nat to have a goatee, but Wint was not to have a mustache because it might allude to villains of early twentieth century melodrama and make him appear stereotypically evil. The director also wanted Muriel's hair tied into a ponytail with a ribbon. This would help reveal and shape her face under the dimmer lights of Act Three, Scene Two. Finally, he did not want to use a wig or blonde hair for Belle, and instead wanted to use the actor's natural hair and hair color. Having the only wig, she might have been distracting and appeared unnatural.

The final requirement in the design process was a pieces list. A pieces list is a spreadsheet that lists all products necessary to achieve the hair and makeup looks, where to find them, and how much they cost. Items can be pulled from stock, constructed, provided by the actor, or bought. The pieces list and renderings were submitted to Bush and the costume shop manager, Kelly James-Penot, as a final design package on December 18, 2019. As the design needs changed, so did the pieces list. The following spreadsheet is an excerpt from the sixth and final version of the pieces list.

# PIECES LIST

Ah, Wilderness! USM SPRING 2020 February 20-23, 2020									
COSTUME DESIGN BY J. THERESA BUSH HAIR AND MAKEUP DESIGN BY JACKSON JONES									
CHARACTER/ACTOR	SK#	SCENE	PG#	HAIR AND MAKEUP SUPPLIES	Build	Pull	Shop	VENDOR	COST EST
Tommy Miller	1	A1 S1	10	Foundation				Actor Provided	
Alice McPhail				Highlight				Actor Provided	
				shadow				Actor Provided	
				Eye Liner				Actor Provided	
				Eyebrow Pencil				Actor Provided	
				Blush				Actor Provided	
				Powder				Actor Provided	
				Lip Color				Actor Provided	
				Comb/Brush		x		Stock	
				Hair Gel		x		Stock	
Mildred Miller	2	A1 S1	11	Foundation				Actor Provided	
Taylor Alleman				Highlight				Actor Provided	
				Shadow				Actor Provided	
				Eye Liner				Actor Provided	
				Eyebrow Pencil				Actor Provided	
				Powder				Actor Provided	
				e.l.f. Mascara			x	Wal-Mart	\$ 5.00
				Blush				Actor Provided	
				Covergirl 295 Succulent Cherry Lipstick			x	Wal-Mart	\$ 4.70
				Hot Rollers		x		Stock	
				Hair Ribbon		x		Costume Shop	
				Rat Tail Comb		x		Stock	
				Curling Iron		x		Stock	
				Wide Toothed Comb		x		Stock	
				Fine Toothed Comb		x		Stock	
				Bobby Pins		x		Stock	
				Hair Spray		x		Stock	
				Teasing/Smoothing Comb		x		Stock	
				Wide Brush		x		Stock	
Arthur Miller	34	A1 S1	11	Foundation				Actor Provided	
Tony Reimonenq				Shadow				Actor Provided	
				Highlight				Actor Provided	
				Blush				Actor Provided	
				Eye Liner				Actor Provided	
				Eyebrow Pencil				Actor Provided	
				Lip Color				Actor Provided	
				Powder				Actor Provided	
				Comb/Brush		x		Stock	
				Mousse		x		Stock	
Essie Miller	3	A1 S1	12	Foundation				Actor Provided	
Elizabeth Boykin				Highlight				Actor Provided	
				Shadow				Actor Provided	
				Eye Liner				Actor Provided	
				Powder				Actor Provided	
				Eyebrow Pencil				Actor Provided	
				Blush				Actor Provided	
				Bobby Pins		x		Stock	
				Hair Spray		x		Stock	
				Hot Rollers		x		Stock	
				Teasing/Smoothing Brush		x		Stock	
				Wide Brush		x		Stock	

JLJ

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V6 2/12/20

## Design Execution

The *Ah, Wilderness!* hair and makeup designs were executed in January and February 2020. During this time, production meetings were held every Tuesday at 3:00pm. At production meetings, the director, designers, stage managers, assistants, shop managers, and production manager update each other on their progress, address issues, and plan the next steps of production. Meetings were held until tech week, the week prior to opening used for technical rehearsals and dress rehearsals. Tech week is an opportunity for actors to practice on the set and in show conditions and for the designers to make final decisions and adjustments, but costumes and makeup are not worn until dress rehearsals.

A key step in execution was procuring all items on the pieces list with a budget of \$500. Stage management confirmed that actors had purchased Ben Nye makeup kits or had been provided one through USM's stage makeup course (THE 304). These kits contain much of an actor's essential makeup supplies. Then, I took inventory of the hair and makeup stock to determine what supplies were available, running low, or out. Supplies that needed to be restocked were grouped with items on the pieces list under "shop" to create a shopping list spreadsheet, which detailed how much the supplies would cost and where to buy them. Actors who required haircuts were also listed on the shopping list because haircuts were paid for with the hair and makeup budget. All haircuts were at Barber Studio in Hattiesburg, MS. The list was submitted to the costume shop manager for approval on January 13, 2020, four weeks before tech week began, and was edited as needed. The following spreadsheet was the third version. Online orders were completed by January 20, three weeks before tech week, and items available locally were bought on January 31.

# SHOPPING AND SALON LIST

Ah, Wilderness! USM SPRING 2020 February 20-23, 2020									
COSTUME DESIGN BY J. THERESA BUSH HAIR AND MAKEUP DESIGN BY JACKSON JONES									
CHARACTER/ACTOR	SK#	SCENE	PG#	HAIR AND MAKEUP SUPPLIES	Build	Pull	Shop	VENDOR	COST EST
Nat Miller	7	A1 S1	13	Edge Brush			x	DaRemix	\$ 4.00
Detalion Dixon									
Essie Miller	3	A1 S1	12	e.l.f. Mascara			x	Wal-Mart	\$ 5.00
Elizabeth Boykin				Covergirl 415 Rose Quartz Lipstick			x	Wal-Mart	\$ 4.32
				Edge Brush			x	DaRemix	\$ 4.00
Mildred Miller	2	A1 S1	11	e.l.f. Mascara			x	Wal-Mart	\$ 5.00
Taylor Aleman				Covergirl 295 Succulent Cherry Lipstick			x	Wal-Mart	\$ 4.70
Lily Miller	5	A1 S1	12	Fake Lily Flower			x	Hobby Lobby	\$ 7.00
MaKallen Kelley				e.l.f. Mascara			x	Walmart	\$ 5.00
				False Hair Bun			x	Beauty Squad	\$ 25.00
David McComber	12	A1 S1	25	Edge Brush			x	DaRemix	\$ 4.00
Cody Alexander							x		
Nora	13	A1 S2	35	Covergirl 415 Rose Quartz Lipstick			x	Wal-Mart	\$ 4.32
Camille Colley				e.l.f. Mascara			x	Wal-Mart	\$ 5.00
Bartender	16	A2 S1	63	Medium Brown Small Sideburns			x	John Blake's Wigs & Facial Hair	\$ 85.39
Cody Alexander									
Belle	15	A2 S1	63	e.l.f. Mascara			x	Wal-Mart	\$ 5.00
Elizabeth Trattles				Maybeline, Red For Me, Matte Red Lipstick			x	Wal-Mart	\$ 5.64
Muriel McComber	18	A3 S2	108	e.l.f. Mascara				Wal-Mart	\$ 5.00
Natalie Davix									
Shared by Ensemble				Hair Ties			x	Wal-Mart	\$ 6.00
				Black & Gold Hair Pins			x	Wal-Mart	\$ 10.00
Needs Salon Visit									
David Neely									
Detalion Dixon									
Alice McPhail									
Chris Cooper									
Cody Alexander									
Liam McCarty									
Shelby Thames									

I learned how to style Edwardian, Gibson Girl pompadours by practicing on a wig and using variations of the directions in *Historical Wig Styling: Victorian to the Present*. To recreate the Edwardian hairstyle, hair along the hairline and nape of the neck is misted with water and hairspray and rolled on hot rollers away from the skin. Rollers are unnecessary if the actor has naturally curly hair. Then, the hair from the crown of the head is put into a high ponytail, sectioned off, and rolled away from the hair tie. The entire wig is misted again with water and hairspray and allowed to dry completely (Lowery 99-102).



The curlers are then removed and the hair brushed out, but the ponytail remains (103).



At this point, the hair should have lots of volume. The hair at the nape of the neck is then divided in half, combed out, wrapped around and bobby pinned to the base of the ponytail, and smoothed with a comb and hairspray. The hair at the front of the head is backcombed (teased), gathered, and twisted into a coil. This coil is bobby pinned near the ponytail to create the pompadour (103-106). Parting the pompadour, lifting it with a rat-tail comb, or pinning in different locations on the head can change the hairdos shape. Clipping and spraying the hair can also add a wave. The ponytail and any free sections of hair are then gathered into a bun and secured with bobby pins, a hairnet, and finally hair-pins (107-109).





After gathering all supplies, I scheduled hair and makeup fittings. Fittings are an opportunity for the actors, hair and makeup designer, wardrobe crew, and possibly the costume designer to practice applying makeup and styling hair. It is also a chance to determine if any design changes are necessary. It is the best time to train the wardrobe crew how to help style actors' hair if assistance is needed. Fitting requests were submitted to the costume shop manager on January 31, 2020, two weeks prior to tech week, and were scheduled for February 7. Actors Elizabeth Boykin, Taylor Alleman, Camille Colley, and Elizabeth Trattles had practice fittings the week prior because their hairstyles were the most complicated. Natalie Davis could not attend fittings on February 7 and had an early fitting, and David Neely was injured and Liam McCarty absent, so their fittings were technically during the first dress rehearsal. Haircuts were scheduled after fittings on February 14 and 18 so that the actors' hair would grow as little as possible by the time the show opened.

Several crucial decisions were made during the fittings. Belle could no longer have the elaborate, clover-shaped hair bun in her rendering due the length of Trattle's hair. The hair was instead shaped into a large bun, exchanging style for size. Cody Alexander's false hairpieces would need to be trimmed and colored with makeup; David McComber's mustache was too white and wide, and George the



Elizabeth Trattles



Bartender's sideburns were unkempt. Some actors voiced that they would be unable to use hot rollers provided to them due to time restraints or lack of assistance; the hair would have had to been rolled thirty minutes to an hour before call time, the time when actors arrive at a theatre before a show. Alleman was able to use the rollers, but Trattles and Colley found curling irons more efficient. While curling irons were effective, they did not provide the long lasting volume that the rollers did. I also made final style decisions regarding Makallen Kelley's hair. Bush, Kelley, and I had deliberated on how to style her hair in a way that was period, expressed the character, and respected her natural hair texture, and whether or not Lily's rendering achieved those goals. During fittings, we tried leaving some of her hair free at the front of the head, and then tried pulling it all back into a ponytail, as seen below. The latter option was chosen because it was period, did not alter Kelley's hair texture, and looked more styled than the first option.



After fittings, I attended a crew view rehearsal on Tuesday, February 11. Crew view rehearsals at USM are the last two rehearsals in the rehearsal hall and are opportunities for the crew to watch the show before moving into tech week. At this rehearsal, I noted how transitions between scenes might affect hair and makeup changes in the scene/character breakdown. I noted that Sid's hair would need to return to its first look during the intermission rather than between Act Two, Scene Two and Act Three, Scene One because he would be visible to the audience during that transition. I also realized that David Neely's hair could not be styled for Act Two, Scene One because the transition was too short and manipulating his hair texture would have been an unnecessary challenge. The scene/character breakdown was subsequently edited and turned into the hair/makeup plot, which describes hair and makeup changes and was assimilated into the costume plot for the actors' and wardrobe crew's use. The following spreadsheet was the *Ah, Wilderness!* hair/makeup plot.

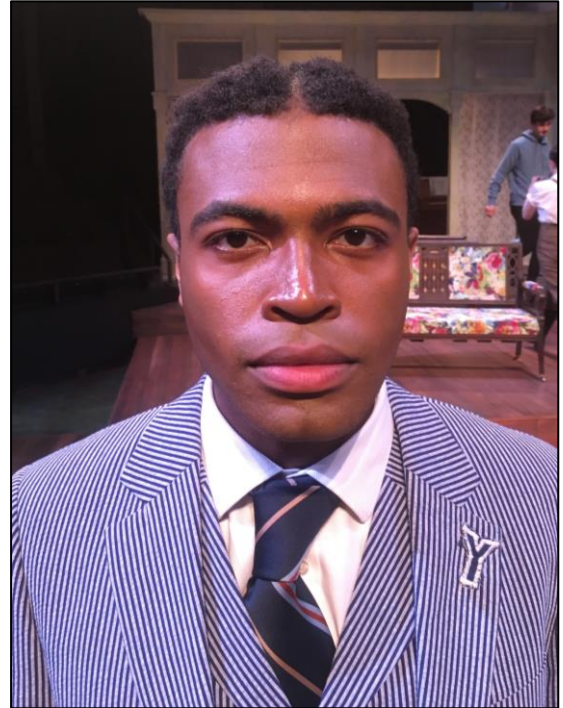
Ah, Wilderness! Hair/Makeup Plot									
	Act 1			Act 2			Act 3		
	Opening	Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 3	Closing
	Beach	Miller Sitting Room 8 am Pg 9-34	Miller Dining Room 6 pm Pg 34-61	Pleasant Beach House Bar 10 pm Pg 62-77	Miller Sitting Room 10:45 pm Pg 77-92	Miller Sitting Room 1 pm Pg 93-105	Beach 9 pm Pg 105-117	Miller Sitting Room 10 pm Pg 117-129	Tableau
<b>Character</b>									
Tommy	x	LK #1 STANDARD	REP LK #1	x	REP LK #1	REP LK #1	x	x	REP LK #1
Mildred	x	LK #1 STANDARD	REP LK #1	x	REP LK #1	REP LK #1	x	x	REP LK #1
Arthur	x	LK #1 STANDARD	x	x	REP LK #1	REP LK #1	x	x	REP LK #1
Mrs. Essie Miller	x	LK #1 STANDARD	REP LK #1	x	REP LK #1	REP LK #1	x	REP LK #1	REP LK #1
Lily Miller	x	LK #1 STANDARD	LK #2 DATE READY	x	REP LK #2	REP LK #1	x	x	REP LK #1
Mr. Nat Miller	x	LK #1 STANDARD	REP LK #1	x	REP LK #1	REP LK #1	x	REP LK #1	REP LK #1
Sid Davis	x	LK #1 STANDARD	LK #2 TIPS	x	REP LK #1	REP LK #1	x	x	REP LK #1
Richard Miller	LK #1 STANDARD	REP LK #1	REP LK #1	REP LK #1	REP LK #1	REP LK #1	REP LK #1	REP LK #1	REP LK #1
David McComber	x	LK #1 STANDARD	x	x	x	x	x	x	REP LK #1
Norah	x	x	LK #1 STANDARD	x	x	x	x	x	REP LK #1
Wint	x	x	LK #1 STANDARD	x	x	x	x	x	REP LK #1
Belle	x	x	x	LK #1 STANDARD	x	x	x	x	REP LK #1
Bartender	x	x	x	LK #1 STANDARD	x	x	x	x	x
Salesman	x	x	x	LK #1 STANDARD	x	x	x	x	REP LK #1
Muriel McComber	x	x	x	x	x	x	LK #1 STANDARD	x	REP LK #1
<b>KEY</b>									
LK # = LOOK NUMBER									
REP = REPEAT									

During tech week, I attended the dress rehearsals on Sunday, February 16, Tuesday, February 18, and Wednesday, February 19. Each night, the actors' call time was an hour before places were called, and within that hour and during intermission I was available in the dressing room to assist actors and wardrobe crewmembers having difficulty applying makeup or styling hair. Copies of the renderings and makeup morgue pages were left at each actor's makeup station for reference. I watched the rehearsals and noted any issues with the hair and makeup applications or look changes. Notes were left at each actor's station for them to review at the next dress rehearsal.

The most common notes were to apply heavier aging makeup, add volume to hair, and control frizz. I decided Essie should not use hair whitener at the center of her hairline because it made her look too old. Rackoff's notes were to add a feather to Belle's hair and to not part Arthur's hair down the middle because he felt it did not fit the character, though I convinced him to allow it. The last dress rehearsal marked the end of my role in the design execution, and all hair and makeup duties fell to the actors and wardrobe crew for the five show run from February 20-23. Following the show's closing matinee, the makeup room and supplies were cleaned and organized. Excluding George the Bartender and second looks, the following photos taken during the post-show photo call on February 21 show the final product of each character's hair and makeup design application under stage lights.



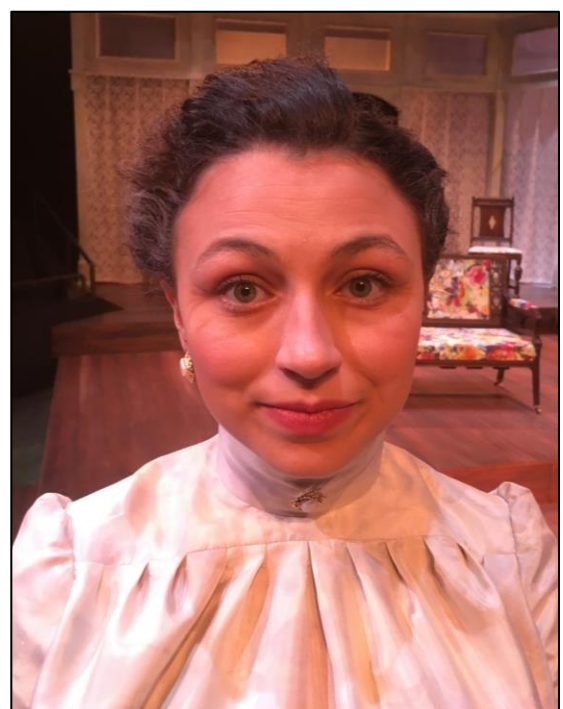
Alice McPhail as Tommy Miller



Tony Reimonenq as Arthur Miller



Taylor Alleman as Mildred Miller



Elizabeth Boykin as Essie Miller





Makallen Kelley as Lily Miller



Detalion Dixon as Nat Miller



Chris Cooper as Sid Davis



David Neely as Richard Miller



Cody Alexander as David McComber



Camille Colley as Nora



Liam McCarty as Wint Selby



Elizabeth Trattles as Belle





Shelby Thames as Salesman

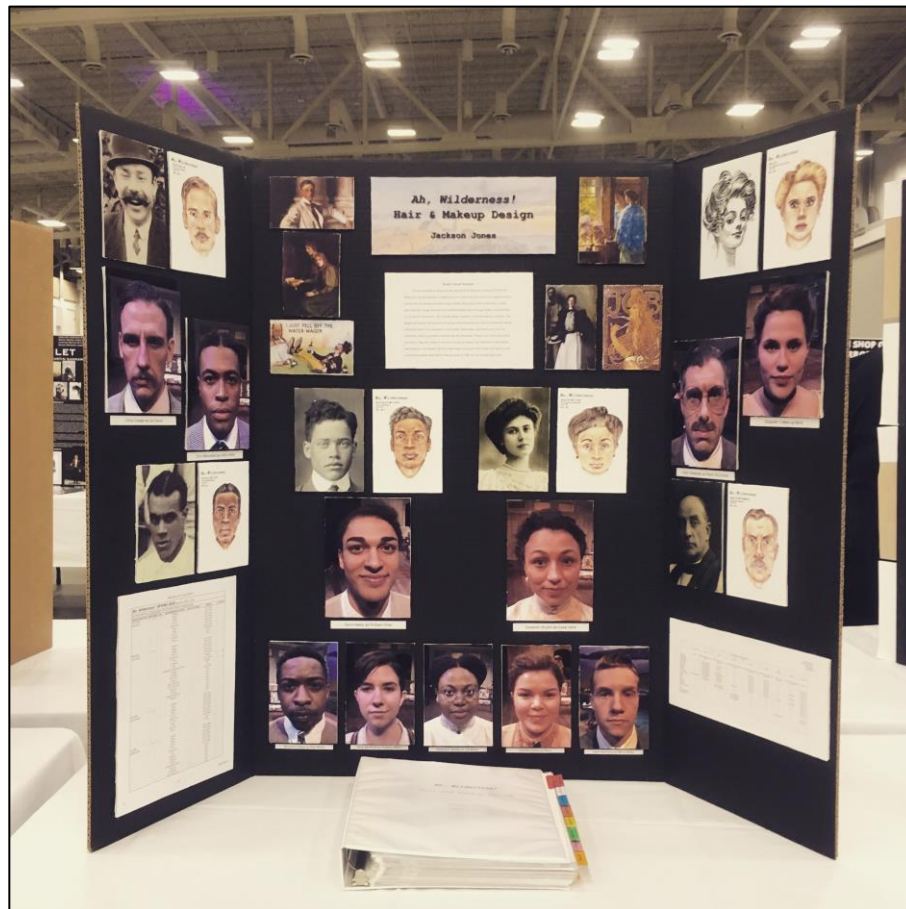


Natalie Davis as Muriel McComber



## Evaluation

Reactions to the *Ah, Wilderness!* hair and makeup designs were overwhelmingly positive. Following the evening performance on Saturday, February 22, a respondent from the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival offered his thoughts on our production. He said the makeup helped define the characters and was impressed that none of the characters wore wigs. I also entered my designs in the 71<sup>st</sup> Southeastern Theatre Conference's (SETC) Makeup Design Competition and placed first. This was SETC's first makeup design competition.



Were I to repeat the design process, I would have created morgues after casting if time allowed, and would have taken more careful inventory. I was alerted

during the show's run that the hair and makeup stock was running low on barrier spray, a product essential for preventing makeup from staining costumes. Fortunately, there was enough for all five shows. I had never used barrier spray as an actor and therefore did not include it in the inventory. This design project taught me more about makeup application than I had ever expected.

I believe my research and renderings effectively expressed the characters and helped tell O'Neill's story. However, I believe the application could have been better. The actors were told during the dress rehearsals whether or not to apply heavier amounts of makeup, but Essie, Lily, and Nat's age makeup was still not very visible under the stage lights. This may have been because the actors had little theatrical makeup experience or because dress rehearsal notes were misunderstood. I could have applied their makeup for them prior to tech week and taken reference photos to show how the makeup should look. This method, however, would have been extremely difficult to schedule or complete during fittings.

Some characters' hair was not as voluminous as in the renderings. Essie's hair appeared too flat on stage, perhaps because she put on a hat in the first scene. Mildred's hair was pulled too tight into a ponytail. I communicated this with the wardrobe crew, but it remained an issue through most of the performances. This might have been because there was miscommunication between the wardrobe crew and me or because the crewmember that styled Mildred's hair was not able to attend fittings. Were USM to produce this play again, I would instruct the wardrobe crew to overcompensate with volume.

In *Ah, Wilderness!*, Eugene O'Neill presents a dream that was never realized. He creates an America with a unified acceptance of individuality, and he wishfully illustrates the emotionally supportive family dynamic he never had. O'Neill's legacy is characterized by loss, alcoholism, and lust as much as it is by prestige and literature, but through Richard he reveals the more peaceful trek his life could have followed. *Ah, Wilderness!* is a play about potential with each character torn between conformity and vulnerability. I believe my hair and makeup designs visually expressed their internal conflicts and revealed the potential O'Neill gave each of them. O'Neill may have had some regrets about how he used his potential, but through his plays he teaches modern audiences to be themselves, love one another, and embrace the wilderness.

## **Appendix**

### Artistic Production Team

Director	Louis Rackoff	Faculty
Scenic Designer	Stephen Judd	Faculty
Costume Designer	J. Theresa Bush	Faculty
Hair/Makeup Designer	Jackson Jones	Undergraduate Student
Lighting Designer	Katy T. Baronich	Graduate Student
Sound Designer	Caleb S. Garner	Graduate Student
Stage Manager	Jameson Tisdale	Undergraduate Student
Asst. Director	Kylie Mason	Undergraduate Student
Asst. Costume Designer	Grace Kolbo	Undergraduate Student
Asst. Stage Manager	Evan Cochran	Undergraduate Student
Asst. Stage Manager	Jessie King	Undergraduate Student

### Wardrobe/Costume Maintenance Crew

Wardrobe Supervisor	Julia Smith	Undergraduate Student
Wardrobe Crew	Alli Hodges	Undergraduate Student
Wardrobe Crew	J'Haiya Jones	Undergraduate Student
Wardrobe Crew	Cayson Miles	Undergraduate Student
Wardrobe Crew	J'Mya Murrell	Undergraduate Student
Costume Maintenance	Abigail Huff	Undergraduate Student
Costume Maintenance	Safari Keys	Undergraduate Student
Costume Maintenance	MiLeyha Otis	Undergraduate Student

### Cast

Nat Miller	Detalion Dixon	Undergraduate Student
Essie Miller	Elizabeth Boykin	Graduate Student
Arthur Miller	Tony Reimonenq	Undergraduate Student
Richard Miller	David Neely	Undergraduate Student
Mildred Miller	Taylor Alleman	Undergraduate Student
Tommy Miller	Alice McPhail	Undergraduate Student
Sid Davis	Chris Cooper	Graduate Student
Lily Miller	Makallen Kelley	Undergraduate Student
Nora	Camille Colley	Undergraduate Student
David McComber	Cody Alexander	Graduate Student
Muriel McComber	Natalie Davis	Undergraduate Student
Wint Selby	Liam McCarty	Undergraduate Student
Belle	Elizabeth Trattles	Undergraduate Student
George the Bartender	Cody Alexander	Graduate Student
Salesman	Shelby Thames	Undergraduate Student

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- Fig. 5. Sargent, John Singer. *Earl of Dalhousie*. Private collection. *John Singer Sargent Virtual Gallery*, [www.jssgallery.org/Paintings/Earl\\_of\\_Dalhousie.htm](http://www.jssgallery.org/Paintings/Earl_of_Dalhousie.htm). Accessed 21 Oct. 2019.
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- Fig. 7. *Joe Brown 1917-04-07*. “Black and African descended People of the Victorian, Edwardian, and First World War Era.” *Lipstick Alley*, [www.lipstickalley.com/threads/black-and-african-descended-people-of-the-victorian-edwardian-and-first-world-war-era.2771818/page-5](http://www.lipstickalley.com/threads/black-and-african-descended-people-of-the-victorian-edwardian-and-first-world-war-era.2771818/page-5). Accessed 26 Nov. 2019.