

Concept Statement

My vision of this play consist of three distinct cultural circles. The sister dragons of fire and ice to represent Oedipus lineage, the tiger, the dragons mortal enemy, to represent Creon's lineage, and the sun a physical sign for those who are empowered by the voice of the gods.

In my initial meeting with the director four points became evident. First, although this adaptation is very modern, the director wanted strong elements of Greek theater incorporated in the design. Second, he intended to use Suzuki choral work and movement along with masks for the chorus. Third, he saw the need for three distinct social circles: Oedipus line, Creon's line, and those who were “the voice of the gods” - Tiresias, the boy, and the Chorus. Four, the director saw Tiresias as a “high priest” adorned by a “gift from the gods”.

I felt the use of Suzuki and masks moved the play to a multicultural world. That led me to research Ancient Greek fashion along with Ancient Japanese fashion. The costumes utilized the fluidity of Ancient Greek fashion, the line and symbolism of Ancient Asian fashion, and the wrapping and braiding that is culturally important to both. I wanted to show through the costumes a sense of foreshadowing through color. In Ancient Japanese culture the color white means death therefore all characters who die in the play wear white. I took in other color meanings as well and used them accordingly: red is represented as anger/danger/fire, black is power, purple is wealth, and yellow is beauty, blue is the status quo . The color green is mentioned several times in the script as representing someone corrupt so I chose not to use that color in my design.

Looking at old Japanese prints I saw that several incorporated dragons and tigers fighting. This image spring-boarded my concept for the show. Oedipus's family crest is two dragons intertwined; a fire dragon and an ice dragon, when the two brothers started a war against each other that split the family crest into two separate dragons. Polyneices, the brother not buried, and Antigone represent the red dragon. Antigone for her fiery temper wears it as a symbol of her royal status on her cape. Eteocles, the buried brother, and Ismene represent the blue dragon. Ismene for her lack actions towards her unburied brother wears the blue dragon on her kimono sleeve as her symbol of royalty. These items were removable so that once disgraced, Creon could rip them off, publicly disgracing the girls and symbolically removing the girls social status. The use of a tiger for Creon, his family, and his guards seemed appropriate as a tiger tends to mark his territory much like Creon is trying to make his mark on the monarchy in the play. For those connected to ritual I chose the sun, a symbol that appears frequently in the ritual surrounding Dionysus, whose statue was omnipresent and the center of the set. “glory be to brightness to the gleaming sun”- *Burial at Thebes* - Chorus.