

CATS



“Cats” theater design takes a Broadway favorite to new creative heights

By Deirdre Kronschnabel | Contributor | @kronschn

“CATS” from cover

cent student productions such as “Parade” and “Little Women.”

“There’s an allowance for freedom and creativity in dance, within the parameters presented in its lyrics and music,” she said.

The loose parameters of the lyrics and music also allow for freedom in the design.

In most productions, there are a certain amount of costume elements that can

be pulled from costume stock, rented from someone else or purchased, but this show is completely built and created from scratch. There are a lot of steps in the process.

Graham graduated from Elon with double majors in acting and design and production, and since then has been attending graduate school in Austin, Texas, for costume design.

While at Elon, Graham starred in performances such as “Noise is Off” but eventually realized she was more drawn to de-

signing productions than acting in shows.

Last spring, Graham was asked to design when Karl Green, assistant professor of performing arts, who usually designs the show, was on sabbatical.

Graham, thrilled to come back to Elon and help with the show, has spent the past eight months flitting between Austin and Elon to oversee fittings, create maps for the shop to follow and demonstrate concepts such as fur placement so that costume elements could be implemented in her stead.

“CATS”

Dates: Feb. 9-12

Times: 7:30 p.m. Friday - Saturday | 2 p.m. Sunday

Location: McCrory Theatre

Admission: \$13 or Elon ID

DIEGO PINEDA | Photo Editor
Freshman Sam Pearson plays Victor, an all-white cat.

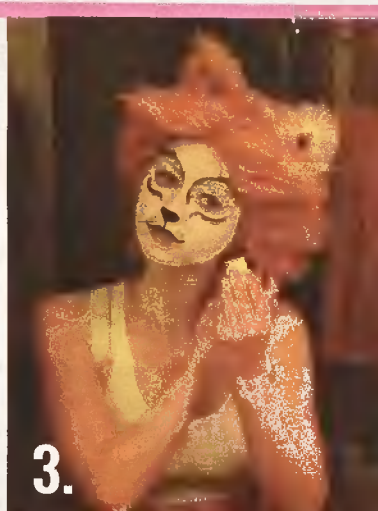
A PURR-FECT FACE



1.



2.



3.

1 DIEGO PINEDA | Photo Editor
I started with my wig prep, which is pin curls that basically flatten all your hair. Once I got all of my hair out of my face, I started with the white base makeup. I wet a sponge and painted it all over.

2 DIEGO PINEDA | Photo Editor
Then I have more detailed brushes for the black that I do. Then I did some pink on the lips and some polka dots.

3 DIEGO PINEDA | Photo Editor
We blended some pink on my forehead and ears once I had on the wig to make sure all the lines were even. And then we did white on my eyebrows to make them look furry and blended.

The makeup also follows a more modern trend.

Graham’s early sketches were homage to the original show, but they didn’t seem to fit. The new renderings are now made up of a clearly defined nose and mouth, with overtly enlarged eyes.

“Instead of trying to put tons of graphic stripes, or tons of graphic spots, we’re trying to keep the face as clean as possible so that the

emotion of the character can come through,” Graham said. “It’s not muddled up with different directions of makeup everywhere.”

Soft-blended color resonates throughout the “Cats” design in the dye, the fur and the intricate painting on top of the unitards.

The makeup is applied by a crew of eight artists, including senior Iris Sullivan, who is working on a theater production for the first time after gaining experience through

makeup for film.

“We really wanted to make the makeup our own and more original, with our own Elon flair,” Sullivan said, echoing Graham’s earlier sentiments.

But Sullivan most enjoys the transformation to the end result.

“My favorite part is getting to know the actors and talking to them,” she said. “When you start putting on all the costumes and the wigs, they get to really see their

characters. Seeing that excitement when everything is done and the final face is on, that’s my favorite part.”

While Sullivan looks toward the actors when the look is complete, Bishop focuses on the audience.

“I always love watching an audience because doing theater and helping people create emotions that they didn’t think they’d come into the theater having is really special,” Bishop said.

The renderings are made up of a clearly refined nose and mouth, with overtly enlarged eyes.