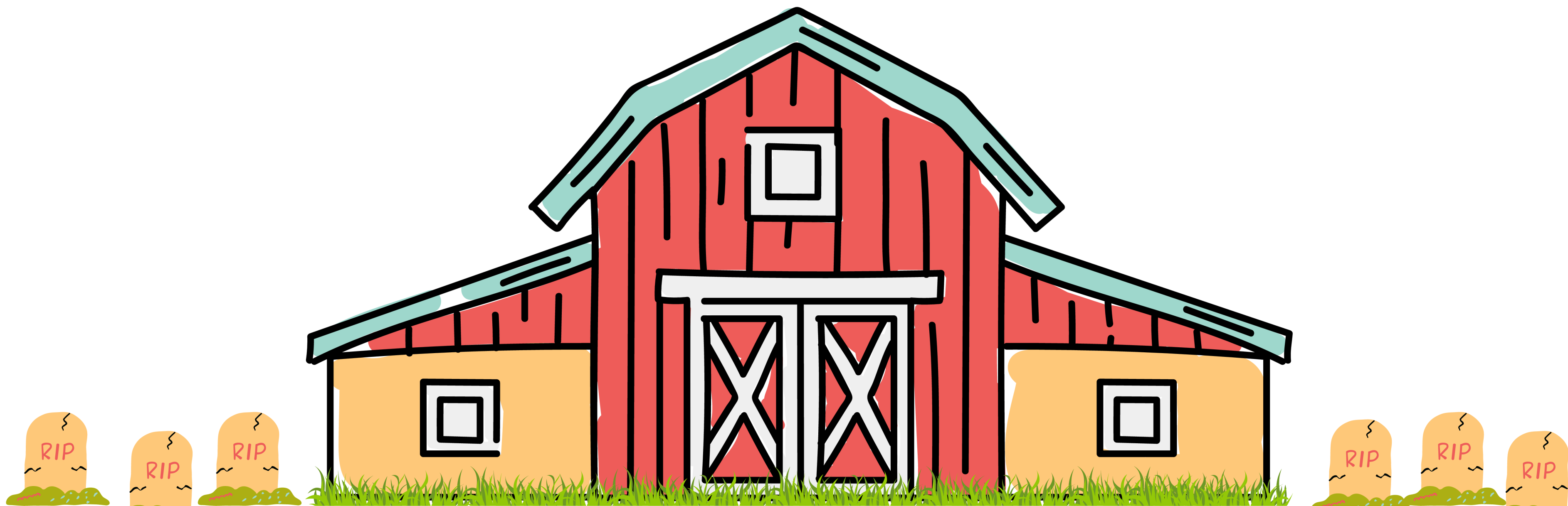


Very Berry Dead

STAGE MANAGER

Drea Brown





Show Challenges and Opportunities

Something that was incredibly unique about this particular production was that it was a world premiere of a work that was written and directed by a guest artist. This was the first time that we'd had a guest artist directing on our mainstage, which brought its own unique opportunities and challenges.

Having our playwright in the room opened up a lot of doors that hadn't previously been options. Though he was very diligent about not making large script edits through our rehearsal process, the actors had a little freedom to play with the words that they were saying and had open opportunities to fully improvise scenes. This made line notes and cues challenging, at some points, but it was an incredibly unique and amazing experience to have so early on.

Another thing that was both challenging and rewarding about this show in particular was that I was the primary facilitator of communication between our director and the rest of our department. Normally, having a professor direct a show means that they are their own department connection, and understand many of the department policies and expectations. Since José was a guest artist with us and I was the person in the room with him, this put me in a position to develop a new workflow that was completely different to anything I'd seen or experienced in our department.



Blocking Examples

Blocking for this show was fairly straightforward, but did have a few quirks. One of the things that I was processing when I started blocking was the system that I wanted to use!

Since this was only my second time stage managing, and the first time tracking this many people, I was rotating through different ground plan setups for different pages. I found that I liked this two-picture setup the best, but there were still times that I would use just one or even three ground plans so that I could adequately capture the movement.

One of the things that I realized was that I prefer to have lines all the way down the page--this setup worked for how much people were moving, but was slightly more inconvenient for me to reference after we'd blocked the scene.

José Pérez IV
*cb off for beginning

Very Berry Dead 12.2.22 B

SCENE 1: After the Funeral

(LIGHTS UP on the kitchen, around noon on a sunny, crisp fall day. Quiet in the house, with some faint sounds of nature heard outside. MA unlocks and opens the front door, enters the kitchen. She's dressed in black funeral attire. The sound of a truck driving up the lane and parking. MA slumps into a chair at the large dinner table. She's exhausted, emotionally drained, and feeling numb. She looks around the kitchen. J.J. enters, also in funeral blacks, carrying a tray of food.)

1) J.J.: (In a rush, anxious. Promptly placing the food tray down on the table, then heading to the fridge) I took the shortcut through Hayley's field, so that should buy us a couple minutes head start. What do you think, put the drinks in the fridge, (opens the freezer) or get ice out the freezer, put it in a big bucket and put the drinks in there? Uhh, I don't know if this is enough ice. Okay. Uh, what if we put the drinks right in the freezer? Is that weird? Will that do...anything? Whatever, let's try the bucket thing. Will you grab a bucket, Mom? (Hurries to exit out the front door, as she's leaving:) And where's everyone sleeping? What are we doing about Casey? 4)

(J.J. exits, goes out to their truck to retrieve drinks, maybe cases of soda and beer. MA remains seated, puts her head in her hands. J.J. enters the kitchen again.) 5)

J.J.: Half and half. Half in the bucket, half in the fridge. (Puts the drinks down on a counter. Opens the freezer, grabs a handful of ice, steps away from the freezer, looking around for the bucket) Mom, where's the bucket?

(No response. J.J. notices how MA is sitting. J.J. finally stops moving around, then walks over to MA.)

J.J.: I'm sorry, I should have... (Reaches a hand out to touch MA, but drops a bunch of ice.) Ah, damnit. (Scrambles to awkwardly get the ice back into their arms) Sorry, just a second. 6)

(J.J. throws the ice into the sink, then plops down in a chair next to MA.)

MA: (Takes a breath) Your father always took care of those things.

J.J.: It's your call now, Mom. What you say goes.

MA: It's too much, J.J.

J.J.: Yeah, it is.

MA: I can't do all this.

5

1) (M) ent. d., ↓ lch 7 |
2) (J) ent. d., drop food @ t.
3) (J) X 2 . fr.
4) (J) ext. d.
5) (J) ent. d., drop drinks @ t.; X 2 . fr.
6) (J) X 2 . t., ↓ lch 1 | dish towel



SCAT: Corral the cattle, wash the cattle, (puts her pinky in her mouth, takes it out with a pop), brand the cattle.

CASEY: Don't do it!

(SCAT launches at CASEY, hollering and brandishing her glistening pinky, threatening a wet-willy. CASEY scrambles away, yelling for SCAT to stop. MARIGOLD blocks the exit to the living room, laughing, and RILEY surprises CASEY by blocking the exit to the mud room, grinning at her. SCAT eventually grabs CASEY and wrastles her to the ground. She holds down CASEY's arms so that she is completely vulnerable to a perfect wet-willy. SCAT slowly brings her moist pinky to CASEY's ear canal. Then at the last moment, SCAT just gives CASEY's cheek a couple of sharp pats, and gives her a giant enthusiastic kiss on the head. Laughing loud, SCAT lets CASEY go. CASEY gets to her feet, embarrassed. MARIGOLD and RILEY are laughing hard.)

SCAT: (Getting up) I know you ain't a kid anymore. Not gonna give an adult a wet-willy. Not unless you don't stop giving your old mom a hard time.

CASEY: (Fuming) Thanks.

SCAT: Can't forget all our traditions, though. Aunt Scat used to play cattle rancher with you kids all around this house, remember that?

CASEY: Sure do.

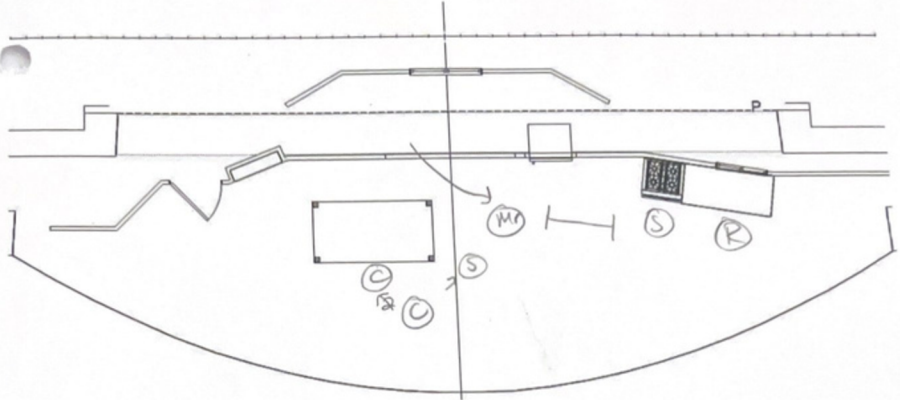
SCAT: You, Caleb, TomTom, Kip, the Twins. Everyone out on the Berry farm! All the adults bringing in the harvest. We'd be canning all day. (To RILEY:) Best apple pie you ever did have around Christmas time. And those apples came from right here, this farm!

MARIGOLD: (To RILEY:) In the summer we'd get the whole family together for a big scavenger hunt.

CASEY: (Unenthusiastic) "Berry-ed Treasure." Get it?

RILEY: (Tickled) I do, and that's awesome.

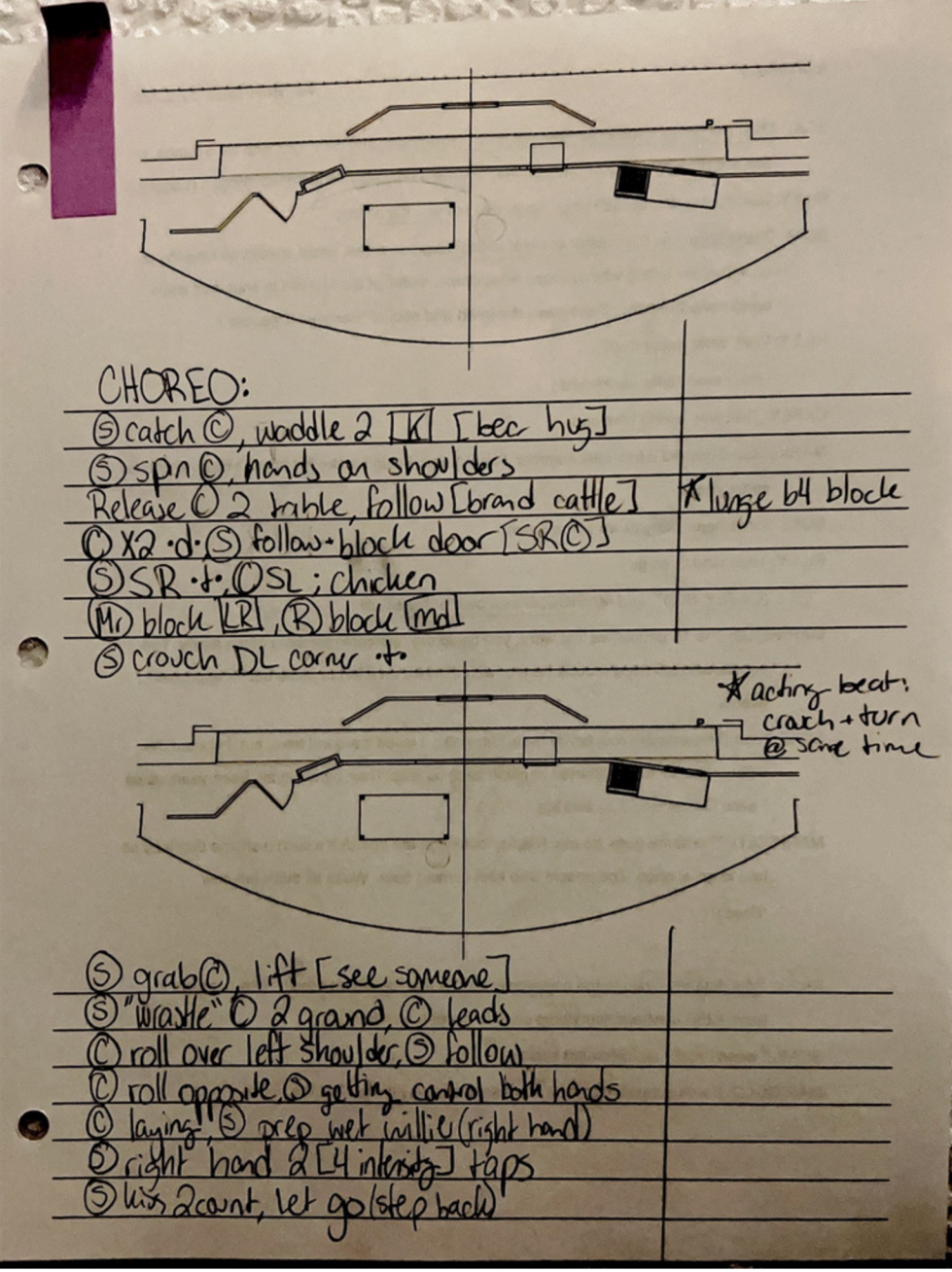
MARIGOLD: There'd be people all over the farm and around the barn and house. (Gesturing to the board) All of these faces! Playin' games! The McGills would come right up to the property line, at the cemetery, cuss out anyone who'd get too close - man, woman, or child! Oh, and then we'd put the picnic tables together and have a big dinner in the orchard before the fireflies came out.



1) S back away from M (Ment) S just keeps moving
2) C 1, land DC +

3) S X2 (M) S X2 (S)
4) S X2 (R)

5) S X2 (M)



There are a couple different reasons that I wanted to highlight this blocking page. One of the big challenges that I did face with this script was figuring out how to 'block' stage combat choreo, as I was also the Fight Captain. What I ended up doing was this! The blocking sheet on the right, the choreo sheet, was underneath the 'normal' blocking sheet for this page. When we needed to review the choreo, I had it placed in my script in a way that allowed us to review the scene and choreo together cohesively. On top of the blocking, we also made sure to take specific and repeated videos of the choreo to make sure that everything was well explained. Since we had understudies for every role, it was imperative that they could also learn the choreo even if we didn't have as much dedicated time to teach it to them.



Very Berry Dead 12.2.22 B

Mr starts	DGL
BSR w/herbs	fog

V (M) loads SQ55
DC 2°

IV (J) amp LQ 109

N(S LR) LQ/15

V J W LQ 119

N(1) whack SQ60
 N(2) LQ123

WISLR LQ125

VIC Amp LG1a-

Mr. Scane SQ70

	207
	LQ143
DDG: color	DD7

SQ7F
SQ7F

Call Script Examples

One of the biggest challenges that I faced with cues was finding a system on how to call cues without lines or music to follow. This was one of a few scenes that had no written lines, though the actors were encouraged to improvise their lines. Though they often said similar lines from night to night, this was not descriptive enough for me to go off of.

Instead, the lighting and sound designers worked with me to place each cue with a visual onstage. The challenge that I found with this method was that since every single cue was a visual cue, I almost needed to have my cues memorized in order to call them properly. One of the things that I tried to do was write cues along a line with the action that it should be called with as well as write in small notes to myself (and anyone else who needed to see my book) as to what the visual was.

Very Berry Dead 12.2.22 B

☐ v ☐ R ext LG158

J.J.: I better go relieve Chris. I'm sure the k

J.J.: (Starts getting herself together) You alright?

J.J.: (Looks back out the window where she had looked for Casey) What're we going to do about Case?

MA: Tell Chris I said, "Hey", "Come on by soon."

MA eventually gets to Pop's picture. Really takes time to look at it. MA slowly goes over to her seat, sits down, and places Pop at the seat next to hers. MA looks

She picks up the picture of Pop, looks at it, then leans forward on the table, wrapping her head in her arms. LIGHTS OUT. (M)

(transition)

45

Other pages in my script, like this one, were much less chaotic. I included standbys in less specific spots because the timing of lines and movements would often shift--I wanted to make sure that I gave myself and my board ops enough time to get ready, but not too much time.

SB LQ 163-169
SQ 105-110
TD 9

④ ⑤ ↓ LQ 1103

④ head SD 105

LQ 1107

LT2169

DQ 9

Director: José Pérez IV
SM: Drea Brown
ASM:

VERY BERRY DEAD	
Written by José Pérez IV	
Rehearsal Report #6	
Date: 1/17/23	
Location: Dance Studio	
Next Meeting: 1/18/23	
Start Time: 7:03	Called: Drea, José, Katelynn, Scout, Brielle, Dana, Zoey, Lila, Noah, Isabel Present: Drea, José, Katelynn, Scout, Brielle, Dana, Zoey, Lila, Noah, Isabel Excused: Unexcused: Late:
Breaks: 8:00-8:05, 9:24-9:34	
End Time: 10:01	
Total Meeting Time: 2:43	
Rehearsal Notes: Ran Sc 7-finished blocking Sc 2-ran and worked Top of Scene 1	

Production Notes
General: 1. Please make sure to fill out the bios and headshots discussion post in the Entire Production Canvas 2. If you have not yet filled out the emergency form in the Entire Production Canvas, please do so. 3. Everyone send very positive vibes to Abbey for stepping in as a stand-in ASM tonight ☺
Costumes: 1. We were able to work with a few of the rehearsal items you pulled for us—thank you so much! Unfortunately, one of the bangles and the necklace did not fit, and the sunglasses broke when they were picked up.

Director: 1. None at this time, thank you!
Hair/Makeup: 1. None at this time, thank you!
Lights: 1. None at this time, thank you!
Props: 1. What options might we have for finger food? We would like finger foods for a platter that JJ brings in at top of show, as well as something that would go along with it that Ma can pull out of the fridge slightly later in the first scene. 2. These do not need to be edible—if there are any food prop options in the prop shop, these would be fine to work with.
Sound: 1. None at this time, thank you!
Set: 1. None at this time, thank you!
Stage Management: 1. None at this time, thank you!
Publicity: 1. None at this time, thank you!

Distribution List: Drea Brown, Peggy Mead-Finizio, José Pérez IV, Eric Durette, Abbey Kuhns, Lucas Inman, Jerry Dennis, Tommy Wedge, Cat Saylor, Halie Krasinski, Paige Tuckerman, Emma Koch

Rehearsal Reports

My rehearsal report templates were something that I built ahead of the show, and was able to just make a new report and go every day. As the process went on, I tried my best to continue streamlining the process--there were some things that I found to be clunky, and required more typing than I would have liked.

I found that I tend to give more information than is necessarily needed, which resulted in a lot more typing (and work overall!) on my end. Without an ASM to keep the report up to date in rehearsals, this meant that I often had to just jot down small notes in the moment and go back through the report at the end of the night--any extra typing meant that I would be working that much longer, so I worked to slim down my notes.



VERY BERRY DEAD	
Written by José Pérez IV	
Rehearsal Report #9	
Date: 1/20/23	
Location: Dance Studio	
Next Meeting: 1/21/23	
Start Time: 5:30	Called:
Breaks: 6:49-6:59, 7:49-7:54	Drea, José, Katelynn, Scout, Brielle, Dana, Zoey, Lila, Noah, Isabel
End Time: 8:32	Present:
Total Meeting Time: 2:47	Emma, Cat, Peggy, Zoe, Drea, José, Katelynn, Scout, Brielle, Dana, Zoey, Lila, Noah, Isabel
Rehearsal Notes: Finished blocking Sc 5 and 6, moved on to Sc 9	Excused:
	Unexcused:
	Late:

Production Notes
General: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Please fill out your bios and headshots if you have not already!Please fill out the emergency form if you have not already.
Costumes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Thank you for your presentation!
Director: <ul style="list-style-type: none">None at this time, thank you!
Hair/Makeup: <ul style="list-style-type: none">None at this time, thank you!

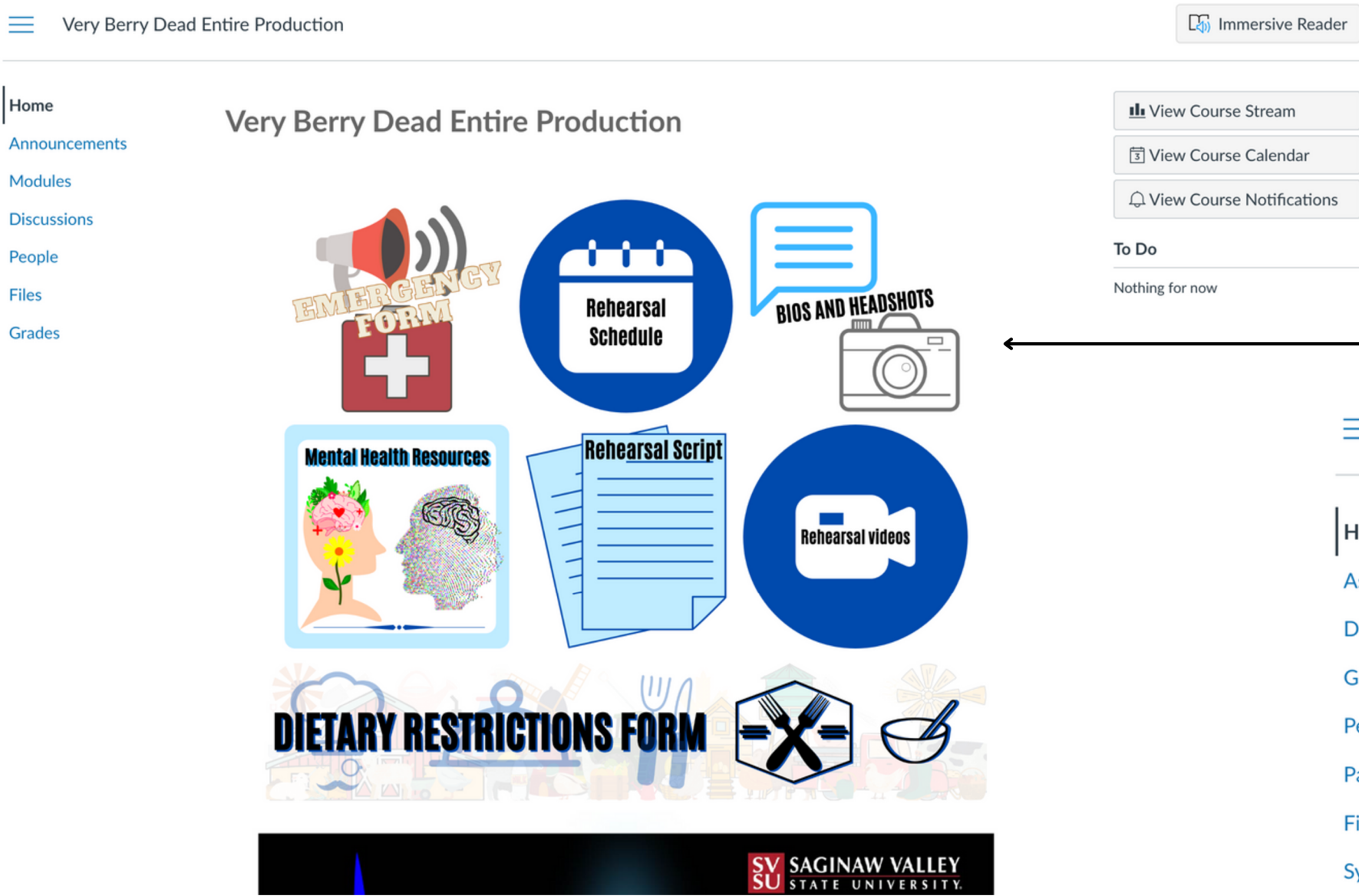
Lights: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Thank you for your presentation!
Props: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Thank you for the note about the pictures!Can we get a REHEARSAL prop of a yardstick?Please ADD a tape measurePlease ADD a set of binoculars with some sort of lanyard to go around a neck
Sound: <ul style="list-style-type: none">None at this time, thank you!
Set: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Is there a way that the folding chair could be reinforced? We were concerned about stability in rehearsal tonight.
Stage Management: <ul style="list-style-type: none">None at this time, thank you!
Publicity: <ul style="list-style-type: none">None at this time, thank you!

Distribution List: Drea Brown, Peggy Mead-Finizio, José Pérez IV, Eric Durette, Abbey Kuhns, Lucas Inman, Jerry Dennis, Tommy Wedge, Cat Saylor, Halie Krasinski, Paige Tuckerman, Emma Koch

One of the things that I am processing is the way that I took attendance. Most days, it was easy for me to copy our ‘called’ list and paste them into present--since we had both our main cast and understudies who could be called at different times, this helped me keep track of who we intended to be at rehearsal. However, in looking back, it was confusing if there was anyone who hadn’t been called that showed up. I wanted to avoid color-coding the attendance and accidentally made it more difficult to quickly look over.

This report was from a little later than the last one, and I started to condense the amount of words that I used to convey a message. The Props section especially was something that I was working on, as I was trying to find a new balance between information that isn’t necessary and answers to questions that might come up.





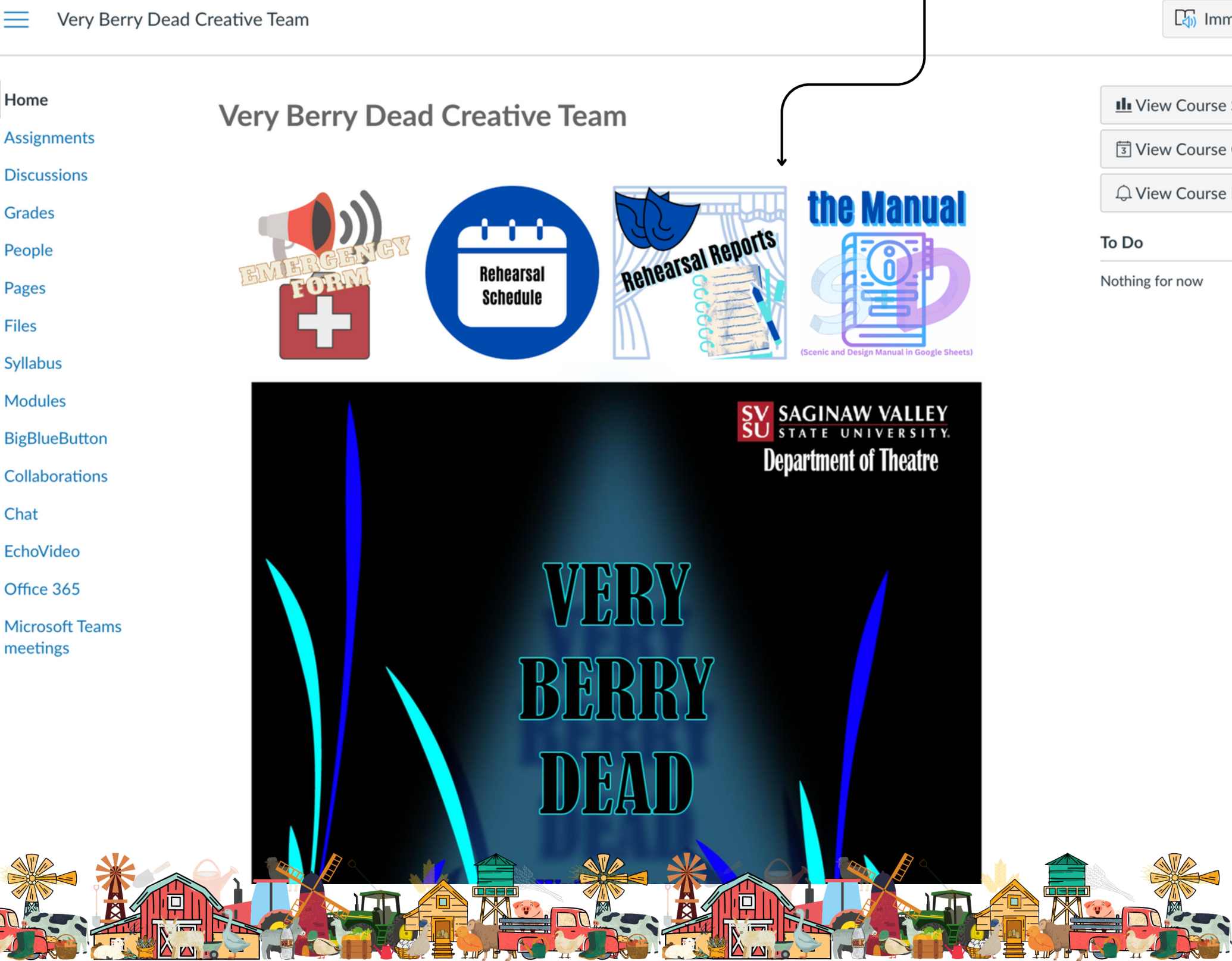
Our biggest communication tools were these Canvas shells, which we largely used as a virtual callboard--they had the majority of the information for the show.

We had two different pages--the Entire Production, which had any information for everyone (pictured above), and the Creative Team (to the right) which had anything for only the Creative Team. This included production meeting reports and reminders, rehearsal reports, and the Manual of initial tech thoughts that the director had compiled.

The pages allowed the director and I to upload our information and tools like rehearsal reports, but also allowed any member of our team to contact each other or upload any of their needed information. The next few slides detail some of the other information that the pages held!

Callboard/Communication Systems

*Each of these graphics was a button that led directly to whatever they said!



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Collapse All

▼ Information

[Rehearsal Schedule](#)[Rehearsal Script](#)[Rehearsal videos](#)[VBD Chair Diagram.pdf](#)

▼ Office

[Bios/Headshots](#)[Special thanks and acknowledgements](#)[Publicity Calendar](#)

▼ Reference Pictures

[Whiteboard.Sc7.Casey's System. Behind the blank side.jpg](#)[Chalkboard.For Sc11.Marigold To Do List.jpg](#)[IN and OUT Chalkboard Preset Pictures.jpg](#)[IN Chalkboard Preset pictures.jpg](#)[OUT Chalkboard Preset Pictures.jpg](#)[Whiteboard.Sc10 \(1\). Casey Save Farm plan without Alex illustrations.jpg](#)[Chalkboard.Sc7. System Chaos w_ Yarn.jpg](#)

▼ Tech Scheduling

[VBD Crew View Schedule REAL.pdf](#)[VBD Tech Schedule REAL.pdf](#)

I was able to start work on the Canvas pages long before we started rehearsals. Though many of the frequently-used pages were added once rehearsals had started, getting a head start on some of the basics like the Emergency Form, Rehearsal Calendar, and Rehearsal Script allowed me to focus on what would best serve our production as we got further.

Our “modules” were divided up by section for the Entire Production, to give everyone easy access to information without having to search too far or ask for the same things.



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External Feeds

KCACTF Respondent and Schedule Tomorrow

All Sections

Hey friends!As you may have heard, either from my announcement at the end of the show or from the...

Reply

Posted on:

Feb 18, 2023, 11:14 PM

Snow Day Cancellation

All Sections

Hey friends!Happy snow day! As you may already know (or have guessed by now), due to the campus c...

Reply

Posted on:

Feb 17, 2023, 11:20 AM

OLLI Talkback tonight

All Sections

Hey friends!As you may have seen on our schedule, we have an OLLI talkback scheduled for after our ...

Reply

Posted on:

Feb 16, 2023, 4:01 PM

Small line edit, Sc8 pg66

All Sections

A tiny line edit I want to make, still thought I'd alert everyone, especially if it might affect any cues. I wi...

Posted on:

Feb 9, 2023, 2:33 PM

Everything about tonight

All Sections

Hey friends.So, there are a few things that have shifted about tonight.By a few, I mean basically everyt...

Posted on:

Feb 8, 2023, 4:11 PM

Crew View Reminder

One of the most convenient things about our Canvas shells was the ability to quickly send out messages to the entire team. Every announcement was in the same place, easy to locate and reference later on. Though we still used email for some communication, our primary communication for large groups was our Canvas.

Announcements, as pictured here, included a myriad of different things—from one of our shows being canceled due to a snow day, to line edits, and just daily reminders or notifications.

Another thing that was incredibly helpful was the ability to put files in our shell for reference. This wasn’t used quite as much for the Entire Production, as we didn’t have too much that we needed to access. However, this was used EXTENSIVELY for the Creative Team, because all of our reports were stored there.

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Search for files

0 items selected

Very Berry Dead Entire Production

course_image

Reference Pictures

Tech Scheduling

Name	Date Created	Date Modified	Modified By	Size
course_image	Dec 7, 2022			--
Reference Pictures	Feb 5, 2023			--
Tech Scheduling	Feb 7, 2023			--
VBD Chair Diagram.pdf	Jan 15, 2023	Jan 15, 2023	Drea Brown	42 KB









VERY BERRY DEAD	
Written by José Pérez IV	
Rehearsal Report #22	
Date: 2/5/23	
Location: Malcolm Field	
Next Meeting: 2/7/23	
Start Time: 11:00	Called:
Breaks: 12:07-12:17 1:44-1:54	Drea, José, Katelynn, Scout, Brielle, Dana, Zoey, Lila, Daija, Noah, Lexie, Isabel, Holly, Alex D, Alex V
End Time: 3:00	Present:
Total Meeting Time: 3:40	Drea, José, Katelynn, Scout, Brielle, Dana, Zoey, Lila, Daija, Noah, Isabel, Holly, Alex D, Alex V
Rehearsal Notes: Worked Sc 4 + end of Sc 11 Dry run—ended on pg 85	Excused: Lexie, Daija
	Unexcused:
	Late:

Production Notes
General: 1. The tech schedule will be posted tomorrow on the call board! I'll also be sending out an announcement about the specifics, so keep an eye out for that. 2. See you on Tuesday, February 7th at 5:30pm for Costume Parade and Crew View!
Costumes: 1. None at this time, thank you!
Director: 1. None at this time, thank you!
Hair/Makeup: 1. None at this time, thank you!

Lights: 1. None at this time, thank you!
Props: 1. We are interested in Sims having an umbrella in Sc 7—we're not quite sure what this will look like, but we are interested in having it open. 2. ADD 4 loose pieces of colorful construction paper, with Manual-esque scrawls on one side and tape on the other—we would like to put these onto the chalkboard during the system 3. ADD a bottle opener—this will be used for the beer bottles 4. ADD saran wrap—we would like to wrap the end of the cigar with saran wrap for safety and sanitization
Sound: 1. None at this time, thank you!
Set: 1. None at this time, thank you!
Stage Management: 1. Glow tape! 2. Send out the schedules and print offs
Publicity: 1. None at this time, thank you!

Distribution List: Drea Brown, Peggy Mead-Finizio, José Pérez IV, Eric Durette, Abbey Kuhns, Lucas Inman, Jerry Dennis, Tommy Wedge, Cat Saylor, Halie Krasinski, Paige Tuckerman, Emma Koch, Becca Dubs, Zoe Gilbert, Alex Dubowski

Your paragraph text

