

FENCES

AT TRIAD STAGE

SCENIC DESIGN RESEARCH AND DESIGN

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APPROACH

- collage authentic voices rather than interpret them in my own language.
- theme of generations as it applies to the lineage of men in the Maxson family
- research the history of the Hill District community to work from the reality of the place where our story is set

CONTENTS

- Timeline of the Hill District and the Maxson family.
- Scenic Ideas
- Scenic Elements/Actor Interaction

TIMELINE: 1900-1919

1904 Troy Maxson is born.

1910 The Great Migration begins and southern Blacks move to Pittsburgh in large numbers.

1910 1712 Bedford Ave is built. It is the Charley Burley home and likely setting for Fences.

1912 Troy's mother leaves the family.

1917 World War I cut off European immigration and created a labor shortage that made employers hire blacks in larger numbers.

1918 Troy leaves the family and begins stealing. He walks to Mobile, AL.

1919 Troy Maxson, at age 14, leaves the South for Pittsburgh.

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1900 IMAGES



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Wylie Avenue Street Scene. April 15, 1912. View looking east of Wylie Avenue near Fifth Avenue. Source: Pittsburgh City Photographer Collection, 1901-2002, AIS.1971.05, Archives Service Center, University of Pittsburgh

1900 IMAGES



TIMELINE: 1920-1939

1920 The culture and nightlife boomed in the Hill and became a major spot for the growth of jazz.

1920 Negro League Baseball began to flourish in Pittsburgh with two teams: The Homestead Grays and The Pittsburgh Crawfords.

1923 Troy meets Lyons' mother and conceives Lyons.

1923 Troy Stabs a man and goes to prison. He learns to play baseball and meets Bono.

1938 The Pittsburgh Housing Authority announced its first low-cost housing project would be located in the **Hill District** and named Bedford Dwellings, an initial step in a \$40,000,000 city-county slum-clearance program.

1938 Troy, age 34, gets out of prison and becomes a baseball player. He meets Rose.

1939 Troy marries Rose.

1920-1939 IMAGES



Houses on Lawson Street, looking northwest from the summit of Webster Avenue. August 18, 1922. Source: Pittsburgh City Photographer Collection, 1901-2002, AIS.1971.05, Archives Service Center, University of Pittsburgh

1920-1939 IMAGES



D.of L- D.300- Wylie Ave.- #1232, Looking West From Logan Street. 7-21-36*29685

TIMELINE: 1940-1945

1940 The housing on the Hill had become deteriorated. Mortgage redlining prevented major home improvements. Even at its height, many Hill District buildings were poorly built and badly maintained and did not have indoor plumbing.

1940 Troy and Rose have Cory.

1941 Troy Begins working for city.

1943 Troy and Rose move into their house. It was paid for in 1958.

1945 Wilson was born April 27, 1945. The Wilson-Kittel family rented two rooms in the back of the house, which had no hot water. They used an outhouse.

1946 The Wilson family bathed in the kitchen, using a large galvanized aluminum tub with water heated on the kitchen stove. A commode was installed in the basement in the mid-1940s, to be followed by a bathtub and hot water heater in 1953.

1940-1945 IMAGES



1940-1945 IMAGES



TIMELINE: 1946-1959

1947 The first player from the Negro leagues joined a major league team.

1955 The city began the four-year, four-month job of moving families out of the 100 acres of Lower Hill scheduled for redevelopment. The Housing Authority of Pittsburgh agreed to handle relocation of 1800 families.

1956 The urban renewal project **razed 1300 homes and 400 businesses** to make way for a Civic Arena. The city did not keep the promise to provide housing for the dislocated residents. Other areas became more overcrowded. Future redevelopment plans were blocked by the community.

1957 **The play opens.** Troy fights to become a trash truck driver even though he doesn't know how to drive. He meets Alberta and starts an affair and conceives Raynell.

1958 Raynell is born. Alberta dies in childbirth. August Wilson's family moved to Hazelwood

1946-1959 IMAGES



1946-1959 IMAGES



1946-1959 IMAGES: RAZING THE LOWER HILL



TIMELINE: 1960-PRESENT

1960 Wilson dropped out of High School and spent all day in the library for 3 years.

1960 Negro League Baseball folded in the early 60s.

1965 Troy dies.

2011 The Hill District is only beginning to recover from the devastation wrought by mortgage redlining, out-migration, disinvestment and urban renewal. The remaining parts of the Hill District are now physically, culturally, and economically separated from Downtown by large expanses of parking lots and a 1960s-era depressed highway.

1960-PRESENT IMAGES



1960-PRESENT IMAGES



1960-PRESENT

Wilson's birthplace
(in rear)



Wilson's mother's house

THE HILL



August Wilson's Hill District

As he grew to manhood in the Hill District, August Wilson educated himself in the neighborhood's schools, at the Carnegie Library on Wylie Avenue and inside the jitney stations, bars, and restaurants where he listened closely to great, local storytellers.

1621 BEDFORD AVE.
Last residence of
Wilson's mother,
Daisy Wilson

1727 BEDFORD AVE.
August Wilson's
childhood home

CARNEGIE LIBRARY
August Wilson
receives first
library card

PAT'S PLACE
Where August Wilson
was influenced by
the conversations of
older men.

EDDIE'S RESTAURANT
August Wilson's
favorite haunt.

**AUNT ESTHER'S
HOUSE**
The imagined
home of a Wilson
character.

**WESTBROOK
JITNEY STATION**
Setting of Wilson's
play, "Jitney"

**ST. RICHARD
SCHOOL**
Where Wilson at-
tended third grade
through seventh
grade.

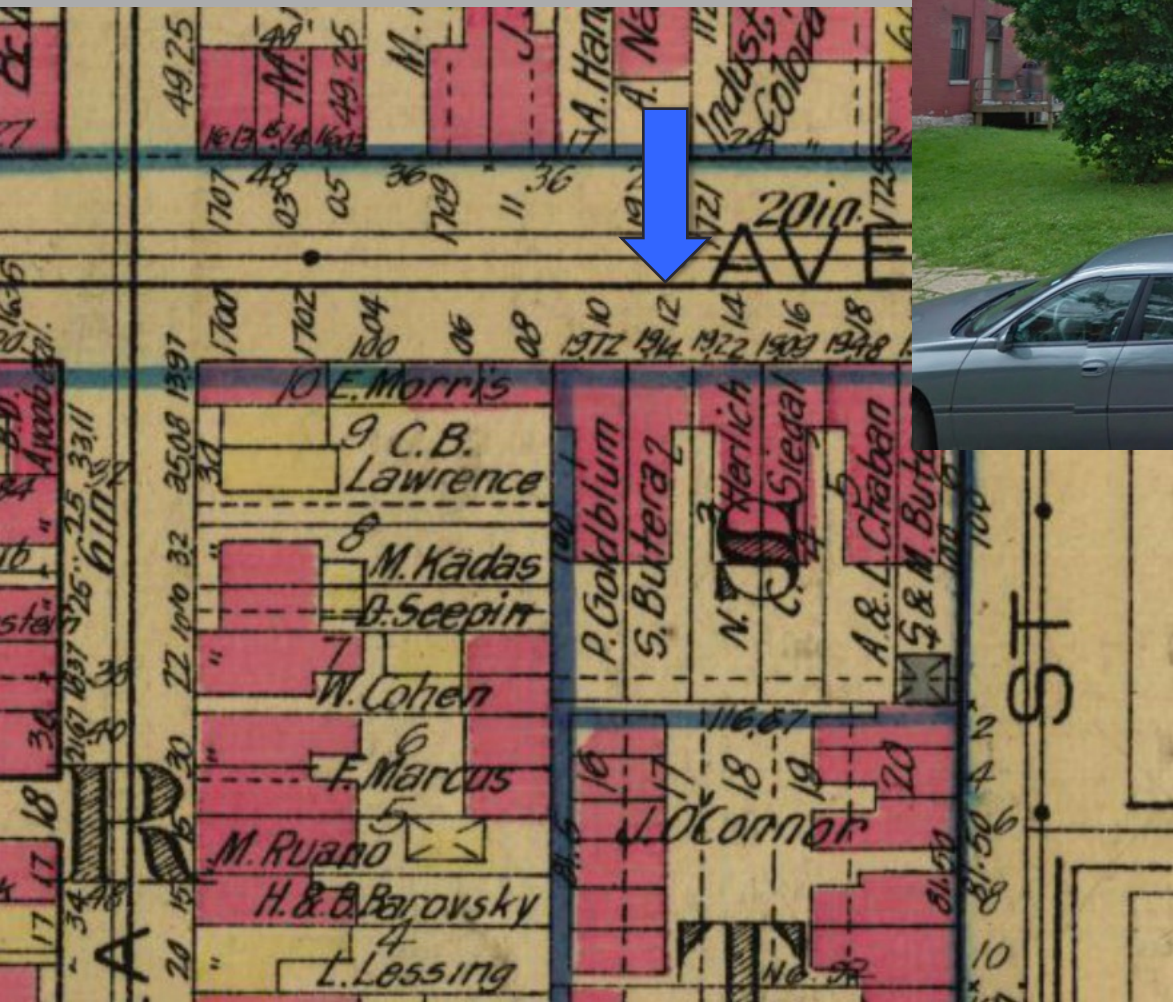
**PITTSBURGH
WEIL SCHOOL**
Site where the
Black Horizon
Theater was
established.

**CRAWFORD STREET
RESIDENCE**
Where Freddy Kittel
renamed himself
August Wilson



Only selected streets are shown.

FENCES LOCATION: 1712 BEDFORD AVE



This was the home of Charley Burley. It is diagonally across the street from Wilson's birthplace.

1712 BEDFORD BACKYARD



SCENIC IDEAS: LAYERING

I explored layering to evoke layers of community history (physical and spiritual) and layers of family history. These layers aren't perfect. They contain hurt and broken pieces as well as exuberant joy. Layers can be deposited as well as eroded to reveal something else.

These layers can be echoed in several ways:



SCENIC IDEA: CONTOUR LINES

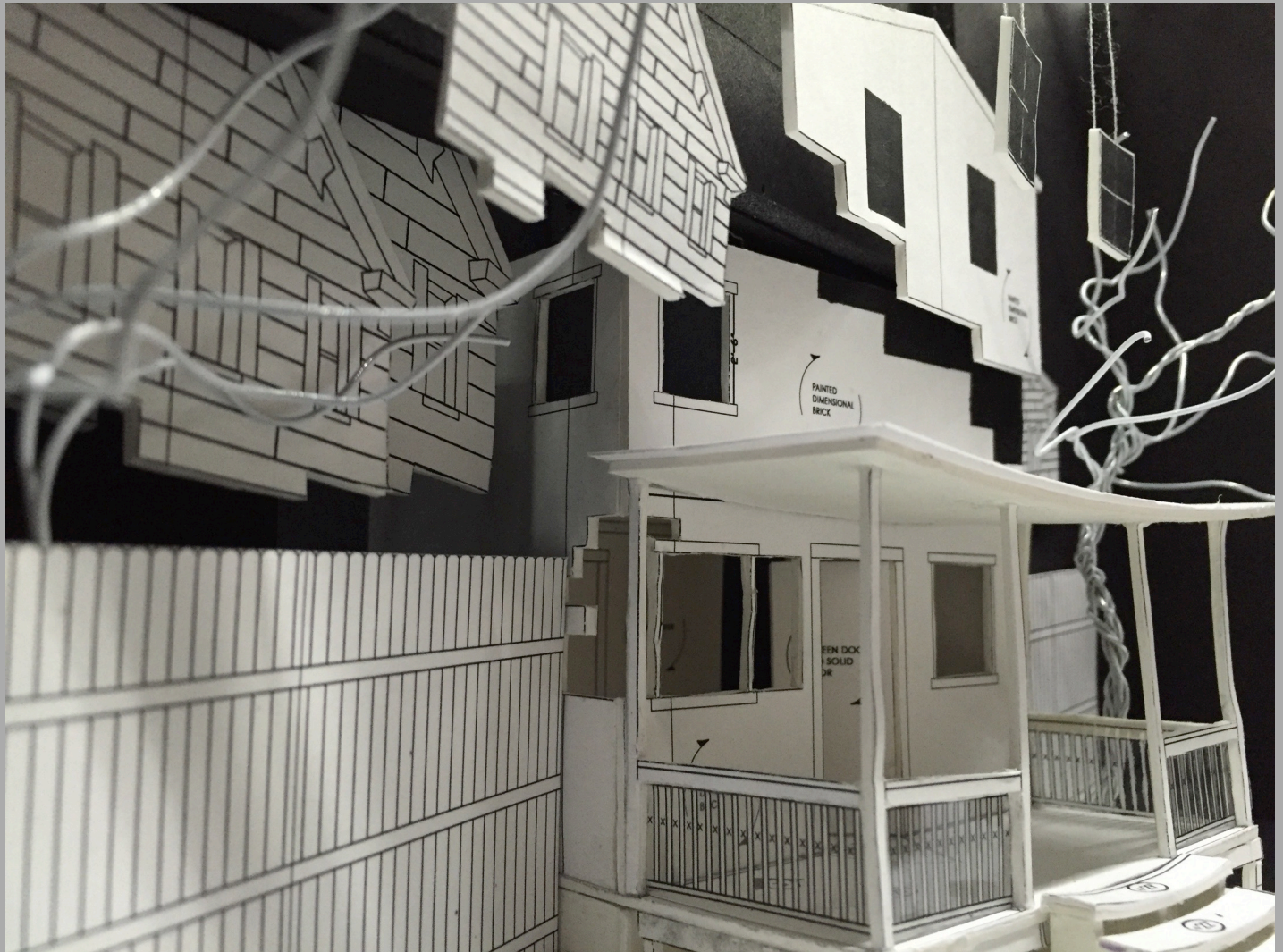
I like the idea of creating a backyard with non-realistic contour lines to echo the topography of the community and the uneven playing field on which the characters exist at a metaphorical level.



SCENIC IDEA: EXPOSED INTERIOR

We spoke about revealing some of the kitchen to see into Rose's world while Troy and Bono talk. This further supports the concept of revealing eroded layers.

African exterior
vs. Christian
interior



SCENIC IDEAS: PATCHWORK TEXTURE, QUILT MOTIFS

Used in painting and in hard scenery,
hard patchwork, not soft.

Continued...



SCENIC IDEAS: PATCHWORK TEXTURE, QUILT MOTIFS

I would take the texture motif into the scenery in several ways. Above and behind the house, I'd like to create a series of sculptures that are echoes of homes on the Hill going back to previous time periods. I would use texture subtly in painting on hard scenery perhaps where paint has worn off or in ways where it is revealed. I would also bring it into the topographical layers of the deck as if the patterns are revealed in the dirt.

The patchwork look will allow us to fragment pieces to break with realism.



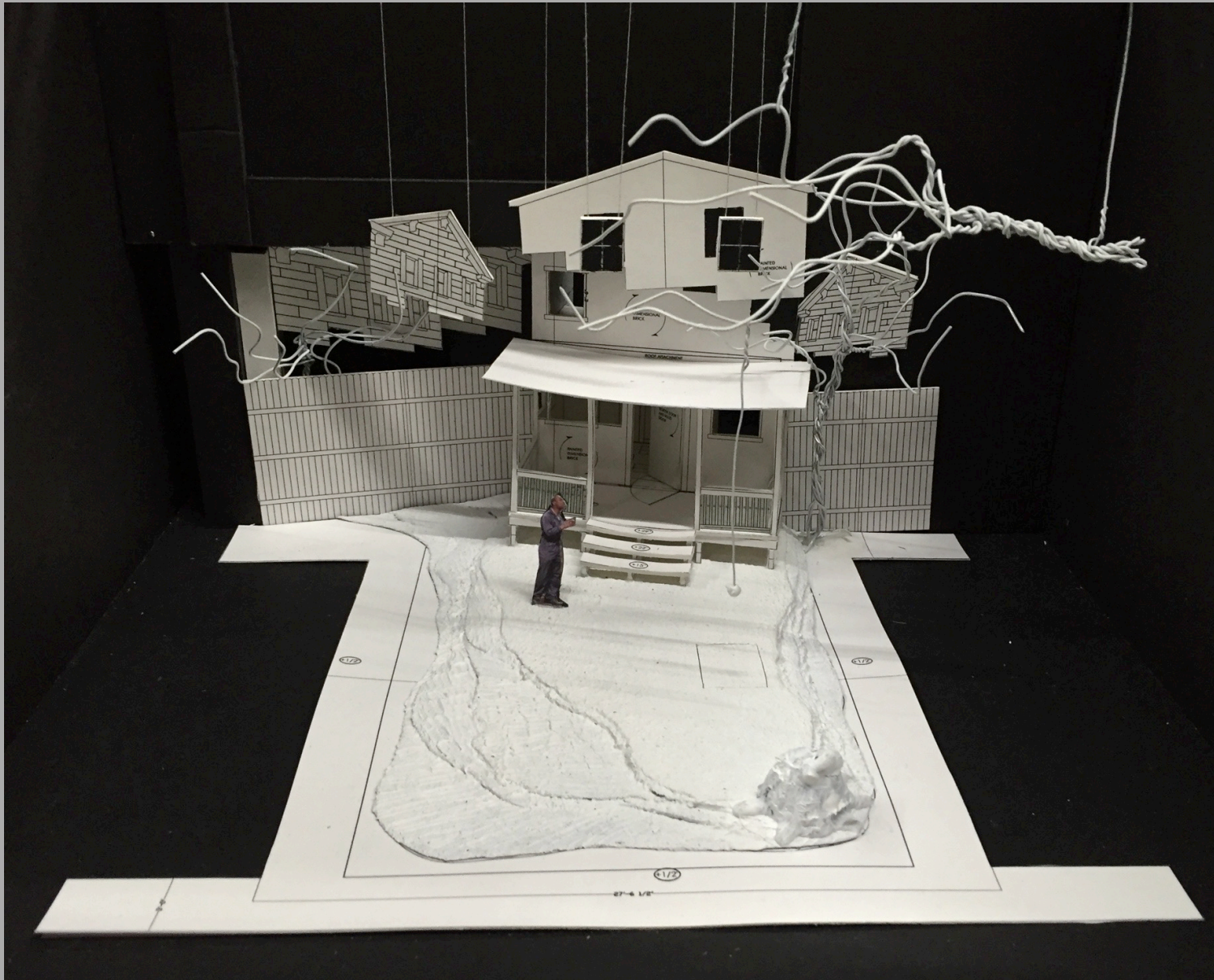
SCENIC IDEA: DECAY

The level of decay is important as commentary on the characters. The research images contain a wide spectrum of deterioration but it is important to set a standard for the Maxson neighborhood. This area was in tension between community pride and corrupt lending practices that prevented large repairs.

The houses are in poor repair but clean and kept. For example, the bricks or screen door may need paint, but they aren't dirty. The grass may be patchy because they can't afford to new sod, but it's not overgrown. The houses are lived-in and tended-to but not maintained where repairs are more expensive. This is a working class neighborhood, not squatters or tenements. Natural forces might destroy or erode architecture, like buckled sidewalk cement, but it is clean and free of garbage.

SCENIC RENDERING



WHITE
MODEL

SHOW DECK

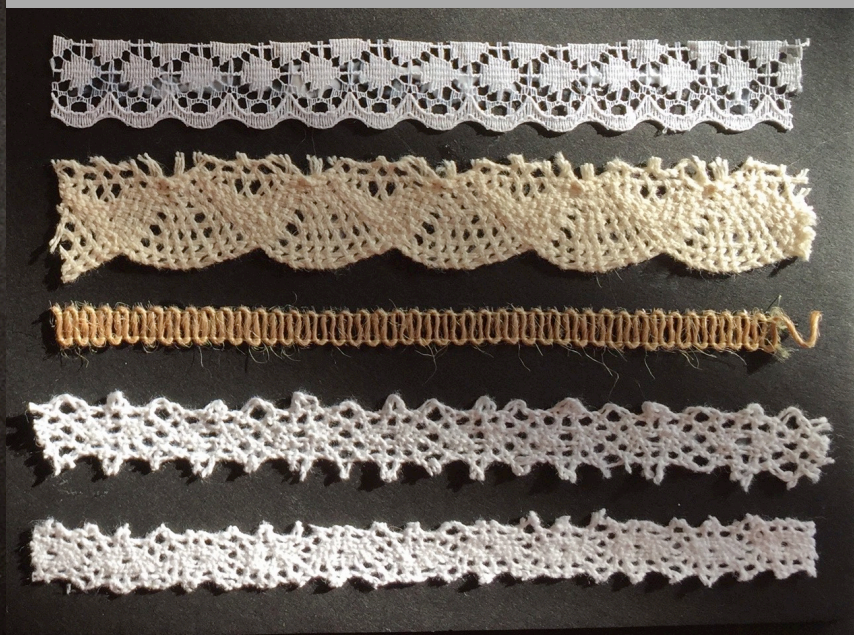
- The deck is 8" high at the highest point which is the height of one stair step.
- It is contoured in undulating layers to reflect the erosion through layers of community history.
- It is completely traversable but you will find pathways that get more traffic. There is lots of opportunity for showing dominance and territory in height and in proximity to special places.
- Each of the bottom 4 layers has a raised texture inspired by African American art.
- The show deck will have glued down grass and dirt texture with a little loose dirt sprinkled on top.

SHOW DECK

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DECK TEXTURES



THE HOUSE

- The house is based on Charlie Burley's house. And other elements are drawn from the neighborhood.
- We decided to show peeks into the interior of the house to give a hint into Rose's world. This allows us to contrast Troy's point of view at moments. Tamera would like to highlight a Christian sensibility for Rose's space and an African sensibility for Troy's territory in the yard.
- There are cut-aways to see into the kitchen; a window downstairs in the parlor and a window upstairs in Cory's room. Except for the kitchen, which is fully realized, we only see lamp-lit faces at the window.

HOUSE EXTERIOR



PAINT ELEVATION
EXTERIOR WALLS

SCALE
 $1/2" = 1'-0"$

DATE
MARCH 14, 2016

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TRIAD STAGE



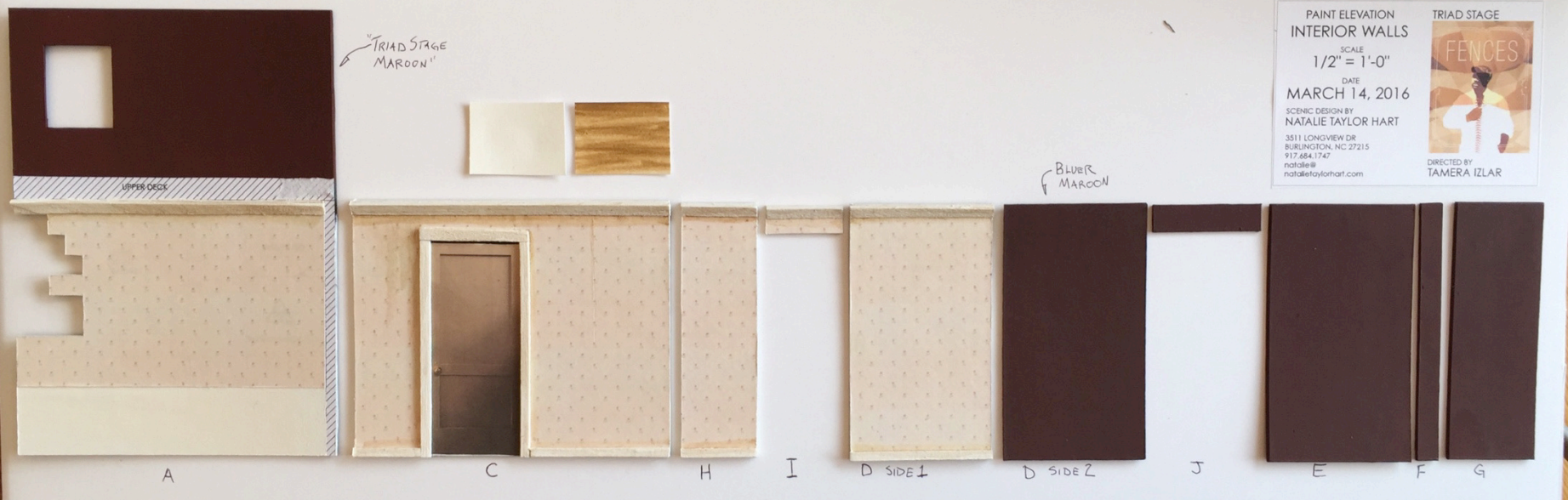
DIRECTED BY
TAMERA IZLAR

PORCH

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INTERIOR WALLS



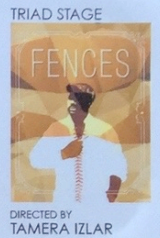
COMMUNITY ELEMENTS

- The roofs hanging around the main house suggest history and surrounding community and the generations of the Maxson family.
- The further we get from the center of the set the more the elements are exploded and non-realistic.
- We want to reinforce community elements in the set dressing, too. For example, a calendar from the local funeral home, a wall thermometer given out by the local grocer. We are open to suggestions!

COMMUNITY ROOFS



PAINT ELEVATION
SR ROOFS
SCALE
 $1/2" = 1'-0"$
DATE
MARCH 5, 2016
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THANK YOU AND I LOOK
FORWARD TO CREATING THIS
WORLD TOGETHER!