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THEA 250-001: Intro to Set Design

Professor Michael Schweikardt

Mood Boards: *Mojada* by Luis Alfaro

### TIME

I've chosen to set this play in approximately Summer 2019. This mood board is arranged primarily to show the constant stress the characters live with as a result of their illegal immigrant status, and the pressure on this subject in the modern world. To do this, I've chosen mostly images of political leaders pushing this anti-immigrant mentality, such as the ICE agent and the deportation bus pictured at the top center, which was part of a political campaign from Georgian GOP candidate Michael Williams. I also chose to make the most dominant picture one of Donald Trump at a rally with a large sign in the background reading "BUILD THE WALL". Both images are intended to emphasize the political pressure against immigrants from Mexico and other South American countries in modern America, and how anxious and unsafe this could make the characters feel.

On the left at the top and bottom are images of soldiers asserting power over civilians and abusing a woman, which mirror the political hatred for families such as Medea's in their home country. The top left image here is representative of how the soldiers status allowed them to rape Medea when they were captured trying to cross the border; another issue indicative of the time period as the Mexican army is currently known for being corrupt.

At the same time, this mood board aims to represent the clash between the "time period" of the characters lives in the US versus their lives in Mexico. As shown in the images of the evil eyes and the Mexican village, although all of these events are occurring at the same time, many areas of Mexico are considered to be "behind the times" in terms of their more traditional practices and lack of access to things as electricity and internet access. Comparatively, in the US, they have access to things such as smartphones; presumably the iPhone X in the image would be the type of phone Pilar would have, being the most modern and expensive smartphone of the time, and the Blackberry would be a more affordable smartphone alternative fitting for Jason. The center left image is also representative of how Jason's status means he is forced to do whatever he can to survive and support his family, including do anything Pilar asks.

### PLACE

The “place” in this show is very difficult to define. In the literal sense, it’s a backyard; however, when explored, the actual setting of this show spans Mexican tradition, modern New York life for the lower classes, and an overall sense of entrapment. The images I’ve chosen for this mood board aim to cover all three.

The first set of images, including the back patio with the fence, townhouse, potted plants, and Mexican farm aim to cover the most literal aspect of place. The location itself is a backyard, which I picture to include a crumbling cement patio, a high and decaying wooden fence, large potted plants, and of course the necessary furniture of chairs and tables and Medea’s sewing machine. The townhouse expands to how the entire house might appear from the front – run-down but with a sense of homeliness – and the Mexican farm represents what Medea’s home in Mexico may have looked like.

The images of Times Square and the construction workers is representative of Jason’s world. Times Square gives an idea of where he aspires to be, but also implies how fast-paced and competitive his world is. The construction workers are representative of where he finds himself when he immediately arrives, and the kind of difficult work he must do to support his family and hopefully try and grow his career and status.

The images of the Mexican restaurant and various traditional Mexican dishes are representative of the sense of Mexican tradition in this household. Within the home, Medea and Tita live a very traditional Mexican life, presumably very similar to the ones they lived back home; they cook traditional foods, explore the idea of Mexican curses and hexes to get back at Pilar, and even painstakingly try to revive the dying banana tree just for a sense of home.

The image of the bird in the cage is my favorite of this entire mood board and is intended to show how cloying this location is for Medea. Although she’s technically free, she never leaves the home and feels incredibly trapped in her current place. It’s also the perfect reference, considering her and Jason’s relationship grew out of her impression of a bird.