

EDUCATION PACK



BEETLEJUICE

The Musical. The Musical. The Musical.

michaelcasselgroup

MELBOURNE
EVERY BIT DIFFERENT



tories have been told on these lands for over 60,000 years.

It is a great privilege to continue this rich storytelling tradition as theatre producers. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we create, dream and share, and all Traditional Custodians across Australia. We recognise the continuing connection to land, sea and community.



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WRITTEN BY CLAIRE WEARNE

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*AN ASTERISKED TITLE IN GREEN DENOTES THAT A DRAMA
CURRICULUM ALIGNED ACTIVITY IS OFFERED IN THIS SECTION

ABOUT MICHAEL CASSEL GROUP

Michael Cassel Group produces the world's greatest theatrical productions and live entertainment on stages internationally. The entrepreneurial company has enjoyed a "meteoric rise" (Australian Financial Review), is credited as "a major force in Australian theatre" (Variety), "the new hit-maker in Australian theatre" (Sydney Morning Herald) and been named a "visionary" and "a producer with global cred changing the face of the stage" by The Weekend Australian. Current productions include the Australian premieres of *Titanique*, *MJ* and *Beetlejuice The Musical*. Michael Cassel Group is the producer of the Broadway premiere of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* with Sarah Snook reprising her Olivier Award-winning performance. Also on Broadway, Michael Cassel Group is a co-producer on the new musical *Redwood* and is a co-producer of the smash hit musical *MJ*. In September, Michael Cassel Group will co-produce a brand-new production of *The Hello Girls* at Syracuse Stage in Syracuse, New York. Prior Australian productions include *Hamilton*, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, *& Juliet*, *Dear Evan Hansen*, *Mary Poppins*, *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, *Les Misérables*, *Kinky Boots*, *Singin' In The Rain* and *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*. Previous international productions include the first ever international tours of *Hamilton* and *The Lion King* as well as the recent Asian tour

of *Les Misérables*. On Broadway and the West End, Michael Cassel Group was the co-lead producer of *Almost Famous* and co-producer of *Into The Woods* as well as *Get Up, Stand Up! The Bob Marley Musical*, *The Prince of Egypt*, *Pretty Woman* and *The Cher Show*. Concert tours and major events include *The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo*, *Celeste Barber*, *Not Now, Not Ever: Live on Stage with Julia Gillard*, *Patti LuPone: A Life In Notes*, *Tina Arena*, *Darren Criss* and *Lea Salonga*.

For television, Michael Cassel Group created and produced *A (Very) Musical Christmas*, as well as the accompanying cast recording; the opening celebration of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2020 and The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo at ANZ Stadium. In addition to the group's expanding theatrical interests, the company represents, The Hon. Julia Gillard AC, Liz Hayes, Lord Sebastian Coe CH, KBE, *Strictly You* by Sonia Kruger, Sarah di Lorenzo and Sami Lukis. TixTrack Australasia, a partnership between TixTrack Inc and Michael Cassel Group, provides ticketing solutions for live entertainment and cultural organisations in Australia and New Zealand. Michael Cassel Group is headquartered in Sydney, with offices in New York, Singapore, London and Melbourne.



AWARDS HISTORY

BEETLEJUICE THE MUSICAL AWARDS HISTORY

7 DRAMA DESK AWARD NOMINATIONS INCLUDING:

OUTSTANDING FEATURED ACTRESS IN A MUSICAL
Leslie Kritzer

OUTSTANDING BOOK OF A MUSICAL
Scott Brown & Anthony King

OUTSTANDING SET DESIGN FOR A MUSICAL
David Korins

OUTSTANDING COSTUME DESIGN FOR A MUSICAL
William Ivey Long

OUTSTANDING PROJECTION DESIGN
Peter Nigrini

OUTSTANDING WIG AND HAIR DESIGN
Charles G. LaPointe

OUTSTANDING PUPPET DESIGN
Michael Curry



WINNER

OUTSTANDING
SET DESIGN
FOR A MUSICAL
David Korins

NOMINATIONS

OUTSTANDING
FEATURED ACTRESS
IN A MUSICAL

Leslie Kritzer

OUTSTANDING BOOK
OF A MUSICAL

Scott Brown
& Anthony King

OUTSTANDING COSTUME
DESIGN

FOR A MUSICAL
William Ivey Long

OUTSTANDING
PROJECTION DESIGN

Peter Nigrini

WIG AND HAIR DESIGN

Charles G. LaPointe

OUTSTANDING PUPPET
DESIGN

Michael Curry



WINNER

FOUNDER'S AWARD
FOR EXCELLENCE IN
DIRECTING

Alex Timbers

NOMINATIONS

OUTSTANDING
PRODUCTION OF
A BROADWAY OR
OFF-BROADWAY
MUSICAL

DISTINGUISHED
PERFORMANCE
AWARD

Alex Brightman

DISTINGUISHED
PERFORMANCE
AWARD

Leslie Kritzer



WINNER

OUTSTANDING
SET DESIGN
(PLAY OR MUSICAL)

David Korins

NOMINATIONS

OUTSTANDING COSTUME
DESIGN
(PLAY OR MUSICAL)

William Ivey Long

OUTSTANDING
PROJECTION DESIGN
(PLAY OR MUSICAL)

Peter Nigrini

OUTSTANDING
FEATURED ACTRESS
IN A MUSICAL

Leslie Kritzer



NOMINATIONS

BEST MUSICAL

BEST BOOK
OF A MUSICAL

Scott Brown
& Anthony King

BEST ORIGINAL SCORE
Eddie Perfect

BEST PERFORMANCE BY
AN ACTOR IN A LEADING
ROLE IN A MUSICAL

Alex Brightman

BEST SCENIC DESIGN
IN A MUSICAL

David Korins

BEST COSTUME DESIGN
IN A MUSICAL

William Ivey Long

BEST LIGHTING DESIGN
IN A MUSICAL

Kenneth Posner
& Peter Nigrini

BEST SOUND DESIGN
OF A MUSICAL

Peter Hylenski

ORIGINAL BROADWAY
PRODUCTION

PERFORMANCE HISTORY

2019—2020

WINTER GARDEN
THEATRE,
BROADWAY

2021

SEJONG CENTRE FOR
THE PERFORMING ARTS,
SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

2022—2023

MARQUIS THEATRE,
NEW YORK

2025

REGENT THEATRE,
MELBOURNE,
AUSTRALIA

2023

SHINBASHI ENBUJŌ
THEATRE,
TOKYO AND OSAKA
SHOCHIKUZA THEATRE,
OSAKA, JAPAN

2025

RETURNING
TO TOKYO AND
OSAKA, JAPAN

2025

TORONTO AND
OTTAWA, CANADA

2025

TOUR OF THE
UNITED STATES



'BREATHERS WORRY SO MUCH ABOUT THEIR
STUPID LITTLE LIVES
THAT MOST OF THEM NEVER NOTICE ANYTHING
STRANGE AND UNUSUAL.
UNLESS YOU MAKE 'EM.'

Beetlejuice, - Act 1, Scene 2

CENTRAL THEMES

- GRIEF, LOSS & LONGING
- FAMILY & HOME
- POWER & ENTRAPMENT
- GOOD VS EVIL
- DENIAL & ACCEPTANCE
- DECEPTION & MANIPULATION
- VISIBILITY & RECOGNITION
- SOLIDARITY & BELONGING



BEETLEJUICE THE MUSICAL

PERFORMANCE SYNOPSIS/TREATMENT



Act I

Scene 1

- Mourners gather at a graveyard for Emily Deetz's funeral. Her daughter, Lydia, laments her mother's death and her father's neglect (Prologue: Invisible).

- Beetlejuice introduces himself, mocking life and explaining his predicament: he is invisible to the living unless his name is said three times (The Whole 'Being Dead' Thing).

Scene 2

- Married couple Adam and Barbara Maitland, who are hesitant to have a child, die after being electrocuted by the faulty wiring in their house (Ready, Set, Not Yet).

Scene 3

- A copy of The Handbook for the Recently Deceased falls from the sky for the Maitland ghosts, but Beetlejuice burns it, hoping to manipulate the Maitlands into scaring away the new homeowners.

- When the Maitlands awaken as ghosts, Beetlejuice convinces them they must haunt the house to be left alone (The Whole 'Being Dead' Thing, Pt. 2).

Scene 4

- Charles Deetz moves into the house with his 15 year-old daughter Lydia, and life coach/mistress, Delia, planning to turn it into a model home for a gated community he plans to build and sell.

- Lydia, still grieving, prays for a sign from her mother and vows to make Charles acknowledge their loss (Dead Mom).

Scene 5

- In the attic, Beetlejuice tries to teach the Maitlands how to be scary, but they fail miserably (Fright of Their Lives).

- Frustrated, Beetlejuice abandons them, so the Maitlands vow to scare the Deetzes on their own (Ready, Set, Not Yet (Reprise)).

Scene 6

- Delia tries to comfort Lydia, but her attempts are hollow and the two end up revealing just how little they have in common (No Reason). The Maitlands attempt to spook Lydia, who is enthralled by their presence.

Scene 7

- Lydia meets, and immediately likes, the Maitlands; they bond over feelings of invisibility. She wants the ghostly pair to scare her dad into leaving, in the hope they move back to their former house where Lydia hopes her mum's ghost may be waiting.

Scene 8

- We are introduced to Charles and Delia's covert relationship. Lydia learns that Charles and Delia are engaged and, feeling betrayed and bereft, she flees to the roof.



Scene 9

- Contemplating suicide, she meets Beetlejuice, who tries to manipulate her into saying his name three times (Invisible (Reprise)).
- Lydia outsmarts him and refuses, learning along the way that ghosts can possess the living. She plots with the Maitlands how to convince her father to leave the house (Say My Name).

Scene 10

- Charles hosts a dinner party to impress his potential business investors, but the Maitlands possess the Deetz and their guests in an attempt to scare them all out of the house (Day-O (The Banana Boat Song)).
- Charles' potential investor and dinner guest, Maxie Dean, is delighted rather than scared, seeing a real-life haunted house as a potential 'goldmine'.
- Desperate, Lydia finally says Beetlejuice's name three times, conjuring him into reality and allowing him to take over the house.



SEE MOMENTS FROM THE REHEARSAL ROOM AT THIS LINK,
WHERE MUSIC SUPERVISOR & ORCHESTRATOR, KRIS KUKUL DISCUSS THE
IMPORTANCE OF THE BANANA BOAT SONG AND CALYPSO MUSIC
IN BEETLEJUICE THE MUSICAL.



Act II

Scene 1

- A Girl Scout arrives outside the Maitland/Deetz residence, explaining that she has a heart condition but is determined to sell cookies. Lydia invites her inside (Girl Scout).

- Beetlejuice appears and terrifies her and, excited by his new freedom, summons clones to haunt the house with Lydia, with whom he has now bonded during Interval (That Beautiful Sound).

- Beetlejuice takes Lydia under his wing, teaching her how to live like a ghost. He warns her about the giant Sandworms living outside the house, and gives her The Handbook for the Recently Deceased.

Scene 2

- Hoping the Handbook will help her find her mother, Lydia seeks help to open it from the Maitlands.

- In the attic, Barbara and Adam struggle with the idea of moving on but decide to embrace change (Barbara 2.0).

Scene 3

- Charles, Delia, and her 'Guru' Otho return with a mystical box, intending to exorcise the ghosts.

- Beetlejuice tricks Lydia into reading a passage that accidentally begins exorcising Barbara (The Whole 'Being Dead' Thing, Pt. 4).

- To stop the exorcism, Lydia agrees to marry Beetlejuice, but plans to double-cross him.

- During the wedding, Lydia jumps into The Netherworld in the hope to find her mum, with Charles following swiftly after her (Good Old Fashioned Wedding).

Scene 4

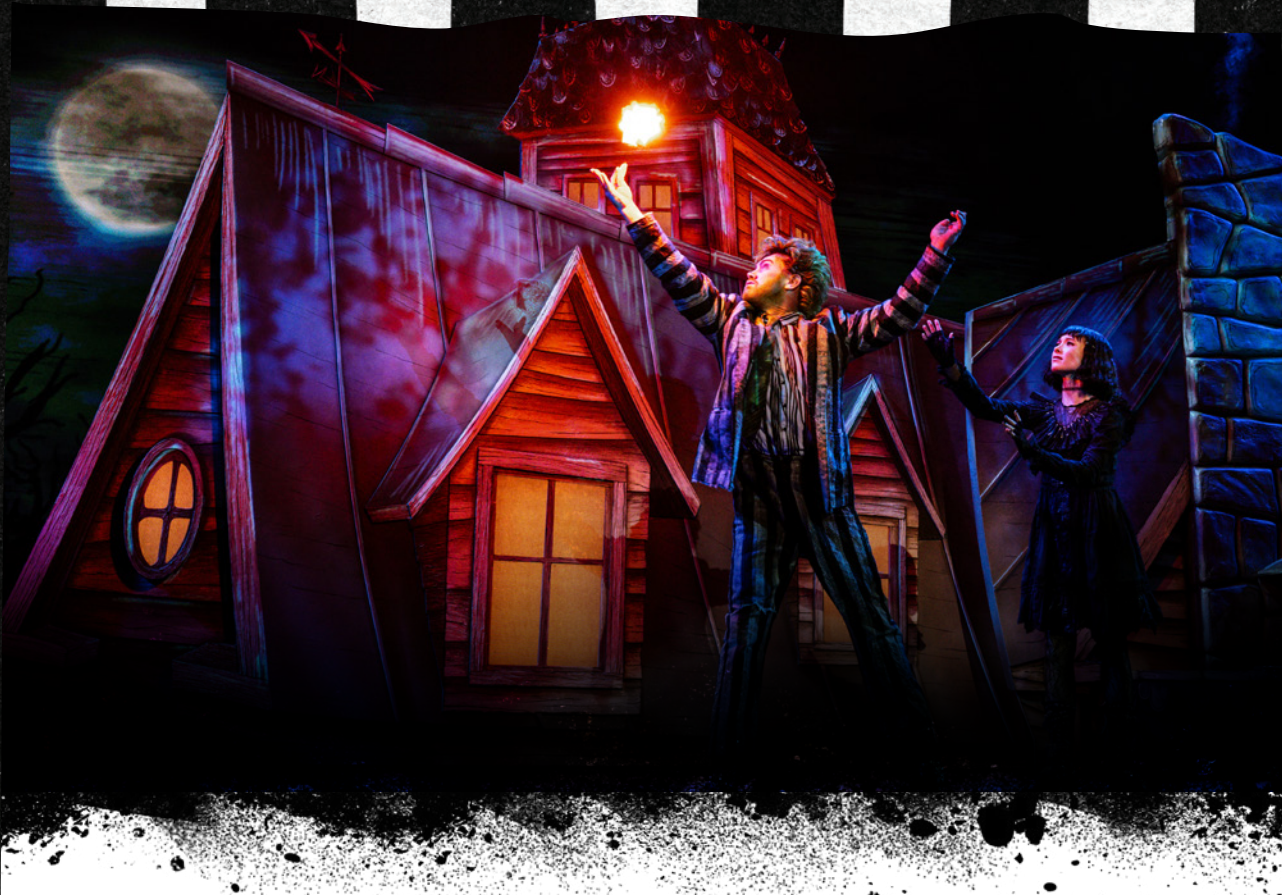
- In The Netherworld, the ghost of Miss Argentina and others encourage Lydia to embrace life whilst she has the chance (What I Know Now).

- Various other 'recently' deceased residents of The Netherworld are introduced, and Lydia also meets Juno, director of The Netherworld, who realizes that Lydia and Charles are still alive.

Scene 5

- Desperate, Lydia flees deeper into The Netherworld, searching fruitlessly for her mother, but is forced to accept that she is truly gone (Home).

- Charles finds Lydia and they hash it out; he admits he is trying to avoid his own pain and grief and she agrees to return to the land of the living if Charles promises they can always talk about her dead mum. She plots to fool Beetlejuice once and for all.



Scene 6

- Back at the house, Beetlejuice has taken control of the house and its occupants, but Lydia tricks Beetlejuice into going through with the wedding (Creepy Old Guy).
- The wedding makes Beetlejuice mortal, allowing Lydia to stab him with bad art, making him 'recently deceased'. Adam Maitland draws a portal door but before Beetlejuice can go through it...
- Juno arrives from the other side, revealing herself to be Beetlejuice's cruel and unusual mother, and tries to take Lydia back to The Netherworld.
- Beetlejuice, having learned to appreciate life, stands up to Juno, but she throws him out of the house.
- Suddenly, Beetlejuice reappears to save the day by crashing through a wall riding a giant rodeo sandworm, which devours Juno.

- With Juno gone, the Maitlands and Deetzes agree to share the house harmoniously. Charles shares a memory of Lydia's dead mother, and Lydia embraces her new unconventional family unit, joyfully moving forward (Jump in the Line, Shake Señora).

Running time is approx. 2 hours and 30 minutes, including intermission.



ACTIVITY

CRITICAL RECEPTION

Evaluative language refers to words and phrases that express a judgment or opinion about something, rather than simply stating facts. It can convey approval or disapproval, and helps shape how a reader or listener feels about a subject. In writing and speaking, evaluative language can include adjectives like *brilliant*, *terrible*, *effective*, or *forgettable*, as well as more subtle cues that suggest a value judgment. It's often used to persuade, critique, or highlight key ideas. Using a highlighter, annotate each of the international reviews of [Beetlejuice The Musical](#) below, looking for evaluative language. Compile a list of these phrases for your own use in your upcoming assessment.

"The contrast between Beetlejuice and Lydia continues throughout the musical, balancing what many postmodern stories can't seem to figure out: how to be vulnerable, sincere, and funny at the same time... Beetlejuice is that ridiculous sort of amoral agent of chaos, who is bad, crass, and disgusting but who is enjoying himself so thoroughly that you can't help but enjoy him. Meta-humor is quite prevalent, especially at the beginning, with Beetlejuice setting up the story for the audience and yelling at people in the crowd. The self-referential humor isn't overdone, and really fits in well with the material and the music theater setting. Having someone on stage occasionally give a flippant tweak to the fibers of the audience's interconnected imagination is quite fun."

[G. E. Tipton, March 16, 2024,](#)
[Music City Review](#)

"The songs that have gone viral on TikTok thus far are earworm-y, sure, but they also lend themselves well to physical cues and micro-acting movements. This sensibility is a must for the stage, but also part of the implicitly defined secret formula for TikTok fame."

[Brendan Wetmore, 03 October 2019](#)
[Los Angeles Times](#)

"This unlikely musical deals with a wide array of themes, ranging from grief and depression to nontraditional families, acceptance of individuals who tend to be outside the standard norm, and even finding happiness in a new normal (something we all have experience with in a partially-post-pandemic world).... Beetlejuice truly hits me in a special part of my heart. I relate to it in so many ways, especially in Lydia's journey through grief. If your sense of humor borders on morbid, like mine, you'll love this show. If dark humor or finding laughter in sadness isn't your cup of tea—fine, but for those who do, be sure to mention to your friends that individuals who enjoy dark humor, "may have higher IQs, show lower aggression, and resist negative feelings more effectively" (Specktor, 2020). If you can, go see it. If you can't, listen to the album on repeat because you will be walking around singing these hilarious songs everywhere you go."

[Carly Breslin, April 27, 2022,](#)
[Psi Chi International](#)

"Directed by a feverishly inventive Alex Timbers, Beetlejuice is a jaw-dropping funhouse!"

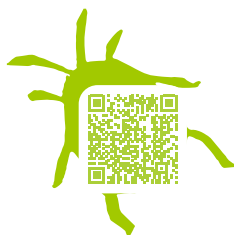
[Ben Brantley, The New York Times](#)



"High-spirited fun, wickedly good tunes and eye-popping visuals make this night of the living dead a scream."

Frank Rizzo, Apr 25, 2019

Variety



"A big, fantastical funhouse of Burtonesque magic."

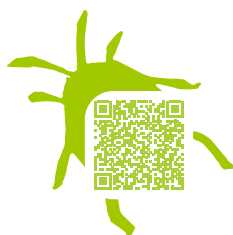
Dave Quinn, September 6, 2019

People Magazine

"A bold, shameless, nutty, brassy, rollicking piece of fun. Prepare for giant Sandworms, dancing skeletons, lots of zingers, and a stage that is a frenzy of visual delight."

Tim Teeman,

Daily Beast



"Inspired by Tim Burton's aesthetics, David Korins' set becomes a fantastic, ever-morphing character unto itself."

Frank Rizzo, Apr 25, 2019,

Variety



"Sometimes a critic just has to admit defeat. And while it rankles to lose so decisively to a narcissistic demon with convict attire, a crude sense of humor and the worst hobgoblin haircut since Drew from 'Rock of Ages,' this battle is over... O-ver. To use a soccer analogy: That's 'Beetlejuice' 1, critics 0... In the seat next to me, an audience member-slash-narrator kept saying 'Cool!', 'Scary!' or 'Creepy!' as if she were a recording stuck on repeat. And from the row behind, my left ear was filled with, 'Wow, wow, and they haven't even gone to The Netherworld yet.' I do not need my house blown down to know which way the wind blows. People love this movie. People love this musical."

Chris Jones, November 9, 2023,

The Chicago Tribune



"'Beetlejuice' has never felt so lively. Audiences can expect a stylish visit to The Netherworld, an eclectic score from composer Eddie Perfect, and, of course, a Burtonesque celebration of outsiders."

Jessica Derschowitz, April 4, 2019,

Entertainment Weekly



PLAY-MAKING TECHNIQUES

A NOTE FROM EDDIE PERFECT

'SUCH A BOLD DEPARTURE FROM THE ORIGINAL SOURCE MATERIAL'
Beetlejuice, - Act 1, Scene 1



Hear directly from Eddie Perfect, the composer and lyricist of Beetlejuice The Musical as he lays out his process according to the VCE Drama playmaking techniques. Make sure to take note of his special advice for performers, too:

Q: When Researching for the role of lyricist for the Beetlejuice The Musical, other than the original Tim Burton film, where did you draw your inspiration?

A: *The script for Beetlejuice The Musical had been in development for three years before I was brought on as composer/lyricist. Written by co-book writers Scott Brown and Anthony King, I was fortunate to be able to turn to the script as my first source of inspiration. Scott and Anthony are incredibly funny writers, and what was obvious from the first page was how surprising and wild the character of Beetlejuice was. Every sentence is a new intention, a new plan, a new hustle. If flattery isn't getting him what he wants, why not try anger? Or charm? Or surprise? This suppleness of tone meant that the lyrics had to be similarly surprising and funny to match. I also wanted to mimic Scott and Anthony's tone- how did the fundamentals of their comedy writing work? Could I match my lyrics to the same fundamental comedic engine? If you look at the comedy of the Beetlejuice The Musical script there is little negative comedy, and characters themselves do not know that they are*

funny. They are simply trying their best to get what they want, survive their extraordinary circumstances, or do the right thing. That meant that when it came to writing lyrics it was important that every character's need or want was very clear. What does Beetlejuice want to have happen by the end of this song? He wants the Maitlands to hire him. What should he do to make that happen? That's what the song becomes.

Q: Did your [Brainstorming](#) process involve other people, or was this part of the process undertaken solo?

A: The first part of writing any song, for me, is about understanding what I think needs to happen from a narrative perspective. There are many ways to understand what the function of a song should be. The first is simply talking to one's collaborators – in the case of *Beetlejuice The Musical*, this was Scott and Anthony, and our director, Alex Timbers. Sometimes I would brainstorm this on my own, especially given the time difference between the US and Australia. I have a few methods for doing this, and the most useful one I have, once I understand what the function of the song is, is to come up with a great song title. A song title usually reflects both the central idea of the song and the lyric that will be sung most prominently during the chorus, with the most recognisable melody. You could write a song in a musical a million different ways, so how do you know which way is the right way? I try to write as many song titles that might accurately reflect the purpose of the song I'm about to write. After I've compiled a list, maybe one or two song titles stick out and seem to beg to be written.

Q: Was [Improvisation](#) involved in the lyric writing process at all? If so, who partook in this stage, and could you please provide an example of a moment in the show it led to?

A: Surprisingly, yes. I write songs directly into Logic Pro X on my laptop, creating arrangements and playing all the instruments into the DAW with a keyboard. For the *Beetlejuice The Musical* score, I would also go hunting for (free) sound effects on the net that might support the action of the song. For *The Whole 'Being Dead' Thing* I wanted the sound

of an audience murmuring and carousing in a jazz club for the "Sinatra" section. But as I was singing the vocals for the demo I noticed that the jazz club sound effect was actually the sound of applause that grew bigger and louder as the waveform went along. I would improvise, as Beetlejuice, in the moment, responding to the applause and it led to a very funny moment in our opening number, where Beetlejuice sticks a jazz microphone in front of a mourner who is sobbing.

Q: Two 'bold departures from the original source material' include the character of Lydia becoming the lead role in the musical, and Beetlejuice being given the capacity to break the fourth wall. Can you please describe how these two developments were decided upon when you were collaborating with Scott Brown and Anthony King during the [Scripting](#) process?

A: Both of these decisions – and they are great decisions – were made before I was on the writing team. The idea of Beetlejuice breaking the fourth wall was a very difficult stunt to land, as there are good versions of Beetlejuice and bad versions. The hardest task was how to deliver a whole bunch of information about death, demons and *The Netherworld* without boring the pants off the audience. Scott and Anthony did a terrific job of trying to make Beetlejuice impart information on what the "rules" are, but it was still a lot of information. In the end, the writers wrote a document called "The Rules", and while we never explain them to the audience, we, as writers, stuck strictly to them so that our world and action was consistent and not confusing.

Q: Do you ever try material out on friends and family as part of your [Editing](#) process? If so, what did your kids think of the show as you were editing it? And what are their thoughts now?

A: It's very important to be able to share your work, either completed or in-progress, with a trusted third party. I make demos of my songs and I would play them in the car to my two daughters when I was driving them anywhere. I could tell a song was a winner if I heard one of them humming or singing it during the day. *Dead Mom* was one of the

earliest demos and my kids still remember the original lyrics. My wife is a terrific sounding board for my work, as is my good friend and fellow writer, Casey Bennetto. A trusted person (and trust is VERY IMPORTANT) can listen and offer gentle feedback and encouragement. Writing for the theatre is an act of communication, and it's easy for a writer with all the information inside their brain to lose sight of what an audience does and does not know or understand. An outside ear can help you be more clear in what it is you're trying to say, and let you know if any vital information is missing.

Q: It is unusual for a lyricist and composer of a mainstage musical to also star in it. Can you describe how the [Rehearsing](#) process for the Australian production of [Beetlejuice The Musical](#) is influenced by having the lyricist in the room?

A: The development of [Beetlejuice The Musical](#) for Broadway was a five year process. I sat in many workshops, labs and rehearsals and tinkered with lyrics; cutting, re-writing, re-shaping, right up until opening night. Obviously a writer can continue to meddle with things after that, but honestly the job in our Australian rehearsals has been about how to best present the work as it is written, and I've wanted to change very little. There are maybe two tiny moments I thought could be better. So far, I've changed the word "and" to a "but" and that's it.

Q: Have the lyrics undertaken any further [Refinement](#) since your first play reading? If so, can you please identify the key changes?

A: The lyrics have undergone such significant refinement since they were first written that it would be impossible to list all the examples. We talk about musicals a bit like wet cement. The show is not "frozen" until maybe three shows before opening night. Until then, everything is in flux. To choose simply one example from the score of [Beetlejuice The Musical](#), [Dead Mom](#) underwent many changes. Originally, Lydia carried around a magic eight ball (A spherical toy containing a multi-side die with stock answers like "The answer is unclear" or "it is decidedly so" etc) that she called "Dead Mom". Whenever she

had a question, she'd shake up the ball and ask. So the song [Dead Mom](#) was originally sung to the ball and the opening lyric was:

'DEAD MOM, DEAD MOM,
I KNOW YOU'RE PROBABLY BUSY
AND EVERY SHAKE JUST MAKES YOU DIZZY
BUT DEAD MOM I GOTTA ASK
PEOPLE SAY YOU'RE IN THE GROUND
BUT I FEEL YOU ALL AROUND ME
ARE YOU HERE, DEAD MOM?'

At some stage the decision was made to make "Dead Mom" a concept rather than a toy, so that Lydia could look up and simply address the empty air as Dead Mom. That meant the lyrics needed to change. Another refinement was in the bridge. Since the song [Dead Mom](#) sits in the place of a musical where the protagonist sings an "I Want" song (a song that expresses the protagonist's greatest want - the thing that will propel the action of the entire musical) it was important that we knew what it was that Lydia wants. It's very easy with a depressed, angsty or angry character to create an "I don't want" song, but that's no good. A character simply telling us all the things they don't want (I don't want to live here in this house, I don't want to pretend to be happy make my father happy, I don't want to live without my mother etc etc) is a drag if we never learn what it is that they actually want. Originally, Lydia sang:

'MAMMA IS THIS IT? ARE YOU
RECEIVING? GIVE ME SOMETHING TO
BELIEVE IN OR I'M DONE!'

But to make it more of a positive want, we amended the lyric to:

'MAMMA IS THIS IT? ARE YOU RECEIVING?
I WANT SOMETHING TO BELIEVE IN
OR I'M DONE!'

It's a very subtle change, but it's fundamental. Lydia is asking for something; she wants to find meaning in the loss of her mother, and a reason to continue to live. So even though we have a list of things that annoy the hell out of

Lydia, and a spiky reaction to everyone and everything around her, we get a tiny moment where the clouds part and this single beam of sunshine comes through – “I want something to believe in”.

Wanting something makes a character vulnerable and relatable. When we want something, and we express it, we open ourselves up to the twin possibilities of getting it or not getting it. It also communicates a dissatisfaction with the way things are, and a desire for change. It is the desire for change that drives the action of a musical. Our protagonist starts in one place and, through effort and struggle and obstacles, they eventually arrive in another (hopefully better) place.

Q: And finally, do you have any tips for budding performers and creatives?

A: What I have learned as a performer is that preparation is the key to finding a great performance. The goal of acting is to be totally free, responding in the moment and allowing something truthful and real to bubble up every time you perform. In order to be able to be as supple and free as possible, you need to know your material inside out. There is a terrific moment for an actor when the material (and by material I mean your lines, your blocking, your choreography, your lyrics, your costume changes, your props, your entrances and exits, your given circumstances, your character’s context and so on) are so drilled in that they have been filed into the rear, reptilian part of your brain where an actor doesn’t even have to consciously think of them at all. It’s like breathing - you don’t have to think about it, you just do it. Once your work is totally stored in the rear hard drive of your brain, it frees up all the RAM in the front of your brain to be able to be in the moment. An actor can then start to notice things, or allow complex or perhaps unexpected feelings and thoughts to arise. Sometimes we have an entirely unplanned and inappropriate reaction to the work, and this can be thrilling for an audience (and an actor). But if you’re worried about where the chair is, or what the next bit of chorus is, or where you put the gun that you need in scene three, you can’t be fully immersed. So preparation is key!



CHECK OUT MUSICAL SUPERVISOR & ORCHESTRATOR, KRIS KUKUL, DESCRIBING HOW IT FELT SEEING EDDIE PERFECT STEP INTO THE ROLE OF BEETLEJUICE FOR THE AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE OF BEETLEJUICE THE MUSICAL.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE



When we began adapting *Beetlejuice* for the stage back in 2010, we knew we wanted to create something as wild, hilarious, and visually spectacular as the film—but also a show that could surprise and delight audiences in new ways. And now, we couldn't be more excited to stage the show in Melbourne at the world-famous Regent Theatre. Even better? We get to bring *Beetlejuice* home to where our brilliant composer and lyricist, Eddie Perfect, first fell in love with theatre.

From the very beginning, we knew that *Beetlejuice* himself had to be the driving force of the musical. He's the show's unreliable MC – a theatrical trickster, an otherworldly con man, and our gleeful agent of chaos. His ability to break the fourth wall lets him pull the audience right into the madness, making them complicit in all the fun, danger, and devilish schemes. He's always one step ahead of the viewer, thrillingly unpredictable and keeping us guessing as to what he has next in store for Lydia and the Maitlands.

But beyond all the outrageous comedy, *Beetlejuice* is also a show with heart. At its core, it's a story about grief, healing, and learning to embrace the weird, messy joys of being alive. In creating the musical, we wanted to recenter the narrative around Lydia's emotional journey. After losing her mother, she's desperate for a sign that life has meaning, something to prove that love doesn't just disappear. That search takes

her to *The Netherworld* and back, where she ultimately discovers the vividness of life and that life's imperfections are the very things worth celebrating. It's a journey that's hopefully moving but still jam-packed with all the mayhem and madness you'd expect from *Beetlejuice*.

And of course, we couldn't tell this story without embracing the haunted house at its centre. One of the things that makes *Beetlejuice* perfect for the stage is that, like many plays, the majority of it takes place in a single location: here, the Maitland's farm house. But that house isn't just a setting—it's alive. It transforms, shifts, and plays tricks on its visitors, just like any great haunted house should.

The Maitlands, Lydia, and *Beetlejuice* are all characters who are, in one way or another, "trapped" inside the house. Consequently, the house acts as a prison, both physically – but also emotionally. So we thought this was an exciting opportunity to do something visually unique for a musical if the house is the literal "stakes" for much of the show and also because we could chart a visual trajectory for the home. Consequently, when we first see it, the house is inhabited by the Maitlands and is a reflection of their folksy taste. Then it is transformed by the Deetzes, replete with their garish decor and eventually into *Beetlejuice*'s lair. In this way, one could argue the house becomes an additional character in the drama.

To be bringing *Beetlejuice The Musical* to Melbourne—where theatre, music, and comedy are such a vital part of the city's

DNA—feels like a dream come true. And for my collaborator, Eddie Perfect, it's even more special. His razor-sharp wit and brilliant musical voice are woven into every note of this show, and now Beetlejuice gets to make mischief in his own hometown.

As we began work on adapting *Beetlejuice* for the stage in 2010, several decisions were made early on that guided us through the next decade of development and to the show you see today onstage....:

1) The character of Beetlejuice should act as MC for our show, welcoming us into the world and breaking the “fourth wall” at will. His character has the DNA of a classic musical theater con man and, as such, he’s an unreliable narrator. Just as he might trick the Maitlands or Lydia, the audience can’t necessarily trust everything he says either. It’s a fun, dangerous, and perilous relationship across the footlights.

2) We wanted to lean into the emotion of the story, which caused us to focus on Lydia’s story even more than the film does. Lydia is on a quest: to find a reason to live. When we meet her, right after the recent passing of her mother, Lydia wants some sort of sign that there’s something more to her existence, because presently she can’t see any. Eventually that leads her on a quest that takes her to The Netherworld and back. Through that journey, she discovers the vividness of life and that its imperfections are the very things worth celebrating.

3) Finally, we decided to think of the musical as a “haunted house” show. The movie is unique in that it largely takes place in a single location, just as so many stage plays do, so we wanted to embrace that in the adaptation. The Maitlands, Lydia, and Beetlejuice are characters who are all “trapped” in the house and, consequently, the house acts as a prison, both physically and emotionally. In many ways, the house itself becomes an additional character over the course of the show, undergoing multiple physical transformations as it is remodeled to reflect the tastes of its shifting owners.

—Alex Timbers, Director



ACTIVITY

MEET THE CREATIVES



REFERRING TO AT LEAST THREE OF THE CREATIVE BIOGRAPHIES ABOVE, HIGHLIGHT DESCRIPTIVE WORDS AND RELEVANT TERMINOLOGY WHICH MAY BE OF USE IN YOUR ANALYTICAL RESPONSE. PLEASE LIST AT LEAST 12 SUCH TERMS IN THE TABLE HERE BELOW:

HERE IS A SAMPLE TABLE DRAWN FROM EDDIE PERFECT'S BIOGRAPHY. YOU WILL SEE A COMBINATION OF DESCRIPTIVE, EVALUATIVE AND THEATRICAL TERMINOLOGY HAS BEEN SELECTED:

RESPECTED	PROLIFIC	DIVERSE	STAR	EARNED	TOP
WRITER	COMPOSER	PERFORMER	PREMIERE	HIT	CREDITS



PRE-SHOW CONTENT

SOME TIPS PRIOR TO ATTENDING BEETLEJUICE THE MUSICAL



Before You Arrive

It's a great idea to prepare for the performance by gaining an understanding of the following show-specific information and talking points.



Content Warnings

- Death
- Drug use
- Explicit & Threatening Language
- Murder
- Sexually explicit material
- Sexual Harassment
- Suicide
- Underage Marriage
- Vaping & Smoking

For school groups, the age recommendation is ages 14+/ Year 9+. The production contains course language, mature themes, sexual references, exploration of death (including the death of a parent), references to suicide and drug use.



VOCABULARY

HERE ARE SOME TERMS WHICH ARE RELEVANT TO BEETLEJUICE THE MUSICAL. THEY APPEAR IN THIS PACK, OR IN THE SHOW ITSELF, AND WILL BE USEFUL TO COMPREHEND WHEN ANALYSING THIS PERFORMANCE.

Absinthe - An aniseed flavoured spirit that gained notoriety for allegedly making 19th-century artists hallucinate, when in reality, they were probably just very, very drunk.

Arrhythmia - When your heart decides to try out jazz improvisation; without warning, it skips, races, or stumbles! An unpredictable and medically curious break in the rhythm.

Bait-and-Switch Trick - A deceptive tactic where a promised product or deal is replaced with something a lot less desirable.

Betelgeuse - A giant red star chilling in Orion, waiting to explode spectacularly—and the way our main ghost's name is actually spelled.

Brigadoon - A gloriously implausible and slightly twee slice of musical theatre where a misty Scottish village appears once a century, love conquers logic, and time politely waits for a romantic ballad to finish.

Chiaroscuro - An effect of contrasted light and shadow.

Con Man - A professional liar with a charming smile, a conveniently vague backstory, and just enough confidence to make you hand over your wallet while thanking him for the privilege.

Connive - To scheme or plot behind someone's back, usually with the kind of subtlety a cartoon villain would admire.

Disavowed - When someone denies association or responsibility for something often publicly. E.g; someone totally pretends they don't know you after you embarrass yourself in public.

Dooickey - A catch-all term for any random object you can't remember the actual name of (see also: thingamajig, whatchamacallit).

Double Cross - The act of betraying someone, especially after previously gaining their trust. "Congratulations, you've been thoroughly screwed over."

Edgar Allan Poe - A 19th-century American writer who turned gloom and doom into high art, crafting haunting poems and chilling short stories with inimitable flair, making literary brooding irresistibly stylish.

Effervescent - Either a sparkling personality or an over-shaken lemonade.

Electoral College - America's very own "why-make-things-simple" system for electing a president, where electors from each state cast votes based on the popular vote.

Extorted - When someone "encourages" you to hand over your money, usually with a threat attached.

Flying Piece (Set Design) - A scenic element that dramatically swoops in from above, making audiences gasp and stagehands pray it doesn't come crashing down mid-show.

Forsaken - Abandoned or given up on, often in a dramatic or emotional sense... as in, 'The universe is so unfair...'

Gravitas - That quality that makes people listen to you and nod seriously, even if you're making it all up.

Iconoclasm - Attacking or rejecting otherwise cherished or revered beliefs, values, institutions or practices.

Idiosyncrasies - Those charming little quirks and habits that make a person unique, like alphabetising your cereal boxes or talking to your plants in a British accent.

Juilliard - A prestigious American performing arts school where passionate students go to learn how to make great shows.

L'chaim - A Hebrew toast meaning "to life!"—usually shouted right before downing some very strong alcohol.

Lolita - A literary reference derived from Vladimir Nabokov's novel, often used to position a young girl who is perceived as sexually precocious, and contentiously, as the 'bad guy' in the story.

WHEN READING THIS PACK, YOU MAY NOTICE THAT A WORD IS UNDERLINED WITH GREEN DOTS; THAT MEANS IT IS DEFINED IN THIS LIST!

VOCABULARY

Lowbrow - The fine art of entertainment that requires zero brain cells but delivers maximum enjoyment; think fart jokes and reality TV brawls.

Mai Tais - A dangerously pineapple alcoholic tropical drink that guarantees you'll send at least one embarrassing text.

MEAA - The Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance (MEAA) is the union for people who tell stories, make art, and pretend to be other people for a living, because even actors, journalists, and musicians need someone to fight for their lunch breaks and fair pay.

Moxie - A captivating personality type, demonstrating a mix of guts, determination, and audacity.

Misogynistic - The art of confidently explaining things to women that they already understand better than you do. A misogynistic mindset is like dial-up internet: outdated, slow, and incredibly annoying when it keeps making noise.

Namaste - A respectful greeting in Hindu and Buddhist cultures, often used in yoga, meaning "I bow to you", often appropriated by Westerners without a sense of its meaning or significance.

Narcissist - A person with excessive self-love and a lack of empathy for others; that one person in every friend group who somehow makes everything about them, good or bad.

Nietzsche - A German philosopher best known for saying "God is dead" and being difficult to pronounce. (It does NOT begin with an 'S'.)

The Netherworld - The supernatural waiting room for souls, mythical or supernatural realm of the dead usually featuring three headed dogs and swampy rivers of the damned.

Oeuvre - The elegant French term we've adopted into English language for the complete body of work an artist creates over their career—like their creative fingerprint, but with more sequels and a unifying aesthetic.

Offstage cover - A theatrical guardian angel; unseen, unheard, and ever-ready; prepare to be blown away by an unexpected icon!

Ornery - Someone who is stubborn, grumpy, and generally as pleasant as a cat being forced into a bathtub.

Portal - A magical, mysterious doorway to another dimension. In this show, the 2 LED frames around the stage are referred to as 'portals'.

Pottery Barn - An American homewares store where you can spend a small fortune on furniture that looks like it belongs in a catalogue (because it does).

Prenuptial Agreement - The "just in case" contract couples planning to wed sign as a 'get out jail free' card, ensuring that when love turns out not to be eternal, your assets stay yours.

Renderings - Fancy drawings that make buildings, costumes, or ideas look so good that everyone agrees to go ahead and make them in real life!

Slumlord - A landlord who thinks maintenance is optional and hot water is a privilege, so neglects the maintenance and safety of low-income rental properties to maximize their own profits.

Taboo - That action, subject, or behaviour everyone agrees not to talk about, which only serves to make it so much more interesting. (Beetlejuice's middle name!)

Tallyman - A person who keeps count of things, like money, votes, or your excuses for using ChatGPT.

Trader Joe's - A cult disguised as an American grocery store, where people will fight to the death over the last bottle of seasonal pumpkin spice oat milk.

Triscuit - A cracker so aggressively dry and textured, it feels like eating woven straw but kind of in a good way.

Unreliable Narrator - A storyteller who twists the truth, leaves out crucial details, or sees reality through a funhouse mirror, like a kid insisting they "barely touched" the chocolate cake, while covered in crumbs.

Wagon (Set Design) - A sneaky little platform on wheels that lets giant pieces of scenery glide across the stage like they're performing their own choreographed number.

VOCABULARY

Wake - A funeral-adjacent gathering of the bereft and grieving where people pretend they always had nice things to say about the deceased.

White Whale - An obsession that slowly drives you mad... a metaphor for an obsessive, elusive goal, inspired by Moby-Dick, like trying to unpack the symbolism

behind the Maitlands choosing to use Charles and his dinner guests as full-scale glove puppets in a culturally questionable rendition of The Banana Boat Song, of all things...

Wiccan - A modern witch who's probably cooler than you and knows way more about herbs.



'A MIND-BENDING BURTONSCAPE'

- Stage direction, Act 2, Scene 4

A BURTONESQUE BIO

Director and visionary behind the film incarnation of Beetlejuice, Tim Burton, is the crowned prince of quirky cinema. He has made a career out of blending the macabre with the whimsical, wrapping darkness in a candy-striped bow. From the gothic fairy-tale vibe of Edward Scissorhands to the wild claymation of The Nightmare Before Christmas, Burton's oeuvre is unmistakable: haunted mansions, outsider heroes, and enough stripes to paint zebra crossings the world over. But part of his massive commercial success stems from his consistent challenge of convention and conformity; his delightfully off-kilter worlds challenge the suburban dream, 'normality' is framed as an alien construct and even threatening, with his audiences intentionally positioned to align with fabulous misfits. With early cult favourites like Pee-wee's Big Adventure and the blockbuster Batman, Burton quickly earned his spot as Hollywood's go-to guy

for beautifully twisted visions of eccentric free spirits, striving in worlds where they don't necessarily belong.

But Burton's wondrous worldview didn't form in a vortex, it is deeply rooted in his own early life and framed through his unique creative lens. A self-described introvert who found solace in drawing and horror movies, Burton often felt like an outsider growing up in the sunny suburbs of Burbank, California. Many now recognize that his experiences align with traits commonly associated with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and this perspective has likely shaped his distinctive aesthetic. His deep focus, love of solitary work, and vivid visual storytelling are hallmarks of artistic expression often found among people with ASD. Centering characters like Edward Scissorhands, Jack Skellington, and of course, Lydia, shares the viewpoint of visionary, determined and often solitary outliers of the world.



HEAR FROM ASSOCIATE
DIRECTOR CATIE DAVIS
AS SHE DESCRIBES THE
TIM BURTON 'EASTER EGGS'
HIDDEN THROUGHOUT THE
SHOW AT THIS LINK.

Through platforming these nuanced, honest and unique perspectives, Burton has brought the unconventional into the mainstream. He offers his viewers a world where human cruelty is often overshadowed by courageous individualists on a mission, encouraging self-acceptance and belief in the power of unity.

It was while finishing [Pee-wee's Big Adventure](#) that Burton first encountered the early, darker script for [Beetlejuice](#), a story cooked up by Michael McDowell and Laurence Senelick, inspired by some pesky real-life neighbours. Rather than ghosts being spooked by humans, the writers flipped the script: dead people trying to scare away the living. The original Beetlejuice character was more murder-y maniac than mischievous misfit, but a rewrite then saw an initially reluctant Michael Keaton suggested for the titular role, and he and Burton brought the chaotic ghost to 'afterlife'. Burton loved the idea of the ghosts being the sympathetic characters, and on set he gave Keaton free rein to improvise; this led to that iconic gravelly voice and sleazy charm. [Beetlejuice](#) went on to become a cult classic, and helped to establish Burton as an international powerhouse in film-making.

That same offbeat spirit and reverence for the outsider would live on decades later, when director Alex Timbers took the reins of [Beetlejuice The Musical](#). When describing this inspiration to [Vanity Fair](#), Timbers describes how he “embraced the kind of Burton aesthetic and spirit and energy of the film,” breathing theatrical life into the story — a vision closely aligned with Burton’s own, especially his deep connection to Lydia Deetz. “I love the Lydia character,” Burton shared in an interview with [Screen Rant](#). “That was the character that I connected with, this kind of teenager that I remember being.” Lydia takes centre stage in the musical, her perceptiveness, determination and courage exemplifying Burton’s ethos that forging your own path and embracing your own [idiosyncrasies](#) isn’t just brave, it’s vital.



CHARACTER BIOS & KEY QUOTES

Here is a selection of evidence from the script said either
TO, BY or ABOUT the characters themselves to help establish their identities.
Enjoy the original character sketches created by Costume Designer, William Ivey Long.

MAIN CHARACTERS

LYDIA DEETZ

A clever, death-obsessed teenager, grieving the loss of her mother and searching for a way to reconnect with her, only to get tangled up with a certain striped nuisance. Lydia is nobody's fool; she is a sardonic, driven and sharply observant central protagonist, desperate to have her grief acknowledged, more vulnerable with her audience than her housemates, and more astute than any of her elders.

Key quotes:

Stage directions - 'LYDIA, 15, dark, smart and struggling.' - *Act 1, Scene 1*

'You're invisible when you're sad
clocks tick and phones still ring
the world carries on like mad
but nobody sees a thing.'

- *Act 1, Scene 1*

'I'm tired of trying to iron out my creases
I'm a bunch of broken pieces'

- *Act 1, Scene 4*

'My whole life is like a darkroom.
One... big... dark... room.'

- *Act 1, Scene 6*



'Positivity is a luxury that few can afford.'

- *Act 1, Scene 6*

'I, myself, am strange and unusual.'

- *Act 1, Scene 7*

'Being young and female doesn't
mean that I'm an easy mark
I've been swimming with piranhas
I don't need a shark.'

- *Act 1, Scene 9*

'I am alone. Forsaken. Invisible.'

- *Act 1, Scene 9*

'I've already been to hell and back.
Learned a lot along the way. And I think
I'll take a chance on Life. And people.'

- *Act 2, Scene 6*

BEETLEJUICE

A crude, narcissistic demon of chaos who desperately wants to be seen, heard and valued, and will do anything (including trying to trick a teenager into underage marriage) to achieve his goals. Imagine if your intrusive thoughts got a stripey suit, a brilliant Broadway contract, and zero impulse control—that's Beetlejuice.

Key quotes:

'I'm a dead guy stuck in the world of the living. With nothing and nobody to share it with. All I want is for someone, anyone to look my way and say: 'I SEE you. I ACCEPT you. I FEAR FOR MY SAFETY around you.'

- Act 1, Scene 1

'No one's like me. That's the problem.'

- Act 1, Scene 5

Barbara 'That needy pervert.'

- Act 1, Scene 5

'You won't believe how far I'll go.'

- Act 1, Scene 9

Adam 'This is a DANGEROUSLY unstable individual—'

- Act 1, Scene 9

'I'm a demon straight from hell'

- Act 1, Scene 9

'Did I mention my mom's a DEMON?
(it all pours out)
And she was IMPOSSIBLE, ya know?'

- Act 2, Scene 1

'You know how it feels to get everything you ever wanted and STILL feel like no one will ever love you?'

- Act 2, Scene 1



'I live to connive.'

- Act 2, Scene 1

Charles 'Stripey Ghost Man?'

- Act 2, Scene 3

'I'm tired of being alone.
And LIFE is the only way out.'

- Act 2, Scene 3

'He's the loneliest guy I've ever met.'

- Act 2, Scene 5

Adam 'you have pinched me... groped me... and harassed me...'

- Act 2, Scene 6

'I am a very SEXUAL being.'

- Act 2, Scene 6

Lydia, Delia & Barbara 'Creepy old guys...
gum disease skin like grilled cheese
Saggy old asses. Cute and vile...'

- Act 2, Scene 6

Lydia 'I know that on the outside,
he's disgusting, and even on the inside
he's disgusting...'

- Act 2, Scene 6

Juno 'You're the embarrassment! To the DEAD! So DESPERATE for someone to love you, you act like a damned FOOL.'

- Act 2, Scene 6



BARBARA & ADAM MAITLAND

Stage directions - 'The world's most risk-averse people.' - *Act 2, Scene 2*

Barbara Maitland

An initially anxious homebody of a ghost who, along with her husband, struggles to be scary enough to haunt her former home. Barbara's maternal yearning is partly fulfilled by the arrival of motherless Lydia, and she 'upgrades' herself into a fierce and courageous protector.

Key quotes:

Stage directions - 'BARBARA MAITLAND...
A lapsed professional doing the 'hipster homey' thing...' - *Act 1, Scene 2*

'And now Barbara the Doormat
She's coming back in a new format
Time to let go
Say 'hello'
to Barbara 2.0'
- *Act 2, Scene 2*



Adam Maitland

A lovable but dorky ghost and substitute father figure for Lydia, Adam is an all-round good guy who is proof that even in death, some people are just destined to be aggressively wholesome and mildly confused. He may be a ghost now, but his real supernatural ability is making every situation 10% more awkward with unnecessary logic.

Key quotes:

Stage directions - 'ADAM MAITLAND...
A sweet, flannel clad man with an endless array of hobbies...' - *Act 1, Scene 2*

'I've always wanted to
run a struggling coffee shop.'
- *Act 1, Scene 7*

'tragic and static
and trapped in the attic'
- *Act 2, Scene 2*

Beetlejuice 'Adam... You're boring.
But you're sexy.'
- *Act 2, Scene 6*



CHARLES DEETZ

Lydia's determined but oblivious father, more focused on his real estate dreams than on dealing with his wife's recent death. Avoidant and desperate, Charles is the kind of guy who calls himself a "visionary" while ignoring every glaring red flag—both literal and supernatural.

Key quotes:

Stage directions - 'CHARLES DEETZ, late 40s, the tightly wound, highly compartmentalized human pocket-square'
- Act 1, Scene 4

Lydia 'Daddy's in denial
Daddy doesn't want to feel...
But Daddy's lost his mind for real'

Charles 'I'm not comfortable with feelings.'
- Act 1, Scene 8

Lydia 'That's your answer for everything.
Move forward, feel nothing.'
- Act 2, Scene 5

'Because it hurts too much!'
- Act 2, Scene 5

Charles 'I changed a lot.'
- Act 2, Scene 6



DELIA SCHLIMMER

Lydia's eccentric life coach and Charles' secret girlfriend, who believes toxic positivity and crystals can solve everything. Delia is living proof that you can make a career out of being blissfully unaware and aggressively enthusiastic at the same time. Through her determination to belong, Delia harnesses unexpected courage and loyalty, eventually gaining Lydia's reluctant acceptance.

Key quotes:

Stage directions - 'DELIA SCHLIMMER, late 30s: Her daffy self-help bravado masks helplessness just a few shallow mantras beneath the surface. Everything she says sounds like an affirmation.'
- Act 1, Scene 4

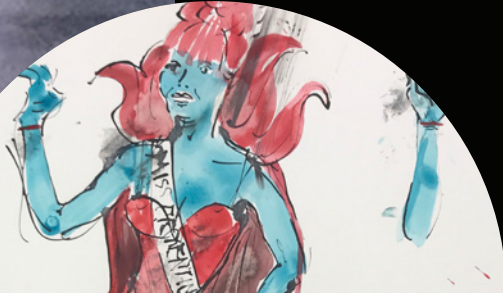
'Lydia, I know I am paid to care about you.
But I'd like us to be real friends.'
- Act 1, Scene 6

Beetlejuice

'You people don't strike me as the orgy-ing kind! (then, pointing at Delia) except this one.
This one's done some stuff, I can tell.'
- Act 2, Scene 6

'I'm part of this, too. I don't GET it,
but I am PART of it.'
- Act 2, Scene 6

SUPPORTING CHARACTERS



MISS ARGENTINA

A glamorous, raucously talented but eternally exhausted The Netherworld receptionist who regrets her own demise.

Key quotes:

Stage directions - 'A deceased beauty queen with a clipboard.' - *Act 2, Scene 4*

'I was hot, I went to parties a lot...
But I was completely obsessed,
An unhappy beauty queen.'

- *Act 2, Scene 4*

OTHO

A self-proclaimed "guru" who assists Delia with her new-age nonsense but mostly just scams people.

Key quotes:

Delia 'My guru Otho says 'Depression is like an ugly sweater. It's ok at Christmas, but the rest of the year? You gotta put it away.'

- *Act 1, Scene 6*

Stage directions - 'a snazzily dressed con man with swagger.' - *Act 2, Scene 3*



JUNO

The strict, chain-smoking caseworker in The Netherworld, who is later revealed to be Beetlejuice's overbearing mother.

Key quotes:

Stage directions - 'An old crone with a voice like road tar... she's got a tracheotomy. SMOKE wafts out.' - *Act 2, Scene 4*

Beetlejuice

'Ugh! Why are you
so hard on me, MOM!'

Juno - (to Beetlejuice)

'I WISH YOU WERE
NEVER BORN!'

- *Act 2, Scene 6*

SKY THE GIRL SCOUT

An overly cheerful Girl Scout with a heart condition, whose attempt to sell cookies at the Deetzes' haunted house goes horribly wrong.

Key quotes:

Stage directions- 'An adorable girl scout, 10.' - *Act 2, Scene 1*

'I was born with arrhythmia, my heart is defective.'

- *Act 2, Scene 1*

'Don't worry! I am always prepared!'

- *Act 2, Scene 1*

MINOR CHARACTERS & ENSEMBLE



MAXIE DEAN

A wealthy, shallow and misogynistic businessman interested in Charles' development plans, but only because of the ghostly attractions.

Key quotes:

Stage directions - 'The mythic MAXIE DEAN. He speaks in shrill Long Islandese.'
- Act 1, Scene 10

'I'm rich, Chuck! I never leave home without (lawyers). Oh! And speakin' o' luggage, have you met my fourth wife?'

- Act 1, Scene 10

'My baby's got a body that doesn't quit and a brain that doesn't work.'

- Act 1, Scene 10



MAXINE DEAN

The butt of Maxie's misogyny, Maxie's equally opportunistic wife is not here to be scared—she's here to be seen, preferably by people who matter (and ghosts don't count).

Key quotes:

Stage directions - 'model-wife.'
- Act 1, Scene 10

'He is so mean to me. I'm his fifth wife.'

- Act 1, Scene 10

'I was kicked in the head by a dressage horse.'

- Act 1, Scene 10



JUNO'S LACKEYS

A group of The Netherworld enforcers who work for Juno, ensuring that ghosts follow the afterlife's strict rules.

VARIOUS NETHERWORLD RESIDENTS

Includes ghosts, sandworms, and other bizarre creatures who contribute to the musical's chaotic supernatural context.

ACTIVITY

CREATE A MIND MAP ANALYSING THE DIALOGUE ON PAGES 27–32.

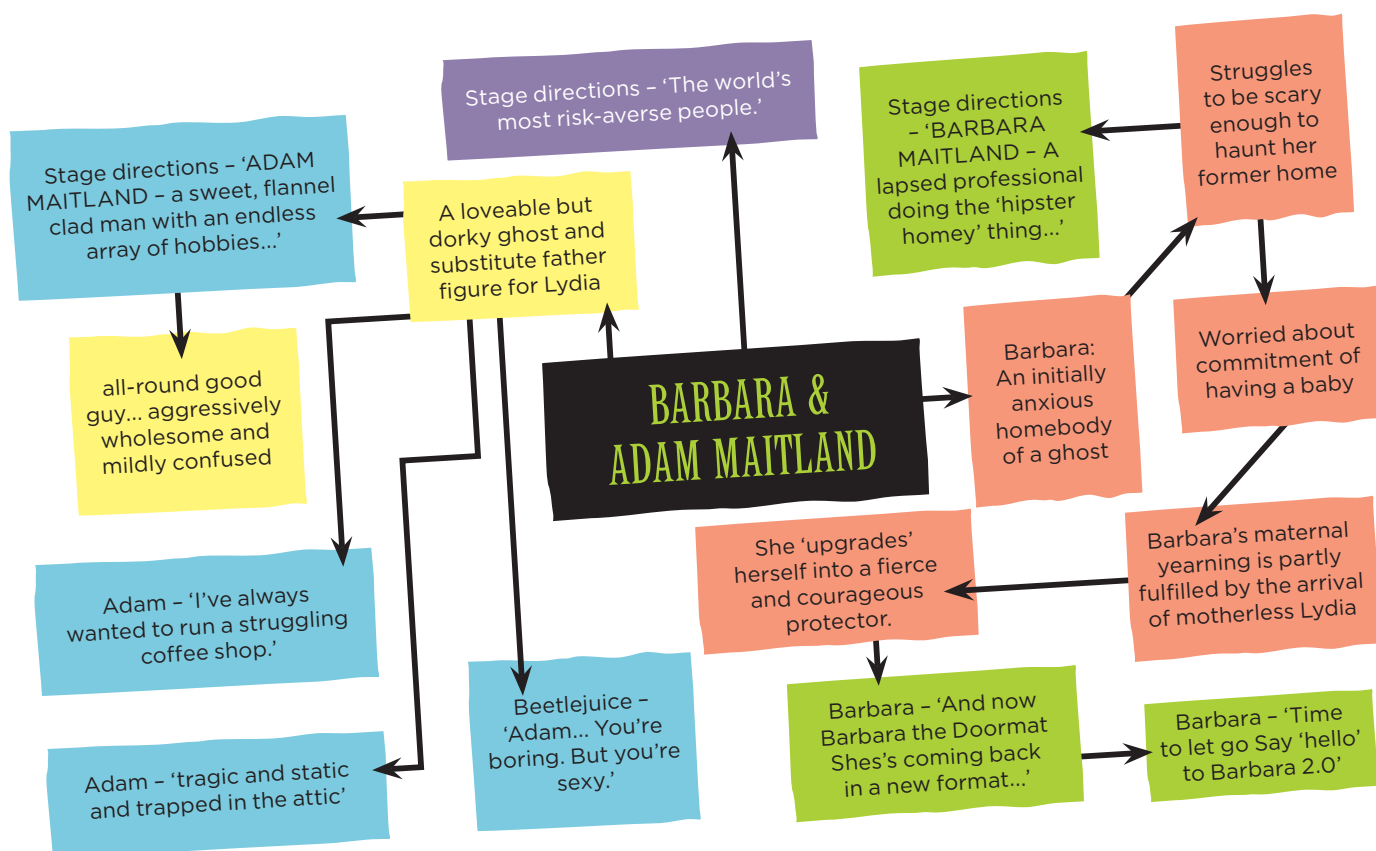
Using the example based on the Maitlands provided below, create a separate map for each character, inserting the provided information into each box. Analyse each character's dialogue to identify and explore your preconceptions about them. Introduce a colour code system, eg:

Preshow:

- Pink - how others see the character
- Red - how the character sees themselves
- Blue - connection to other characters (linking relationships)
- Green - ghost or deceased

Then, you will have a connected character mind map which will pick up on visual patterns, through colour coding, and connections that the characters have with each other.

Be ready to revisit this activity in Part B of this pack, which is to be explored after you have attended the show. You will be able to complete the Character Analysis sections above, by adding crucial information about how Performance Skills, Expressive Skills and Dramatic Elements were evident in the live performance.



LYDIA

- PERFORMANCE SKILLS
- EXPRESSIVE SKILLS
- DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

BEETLEJUICE

- PERFORMANCE SKILLS
- EXPRESSIVE SKILLS
- DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

BARBARA & ADAM MAITLAND

- PERFORMANCE SKILLS
- EXPRESSIVE SKILLS
- DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

CHARLES DEETZ

- PERFORMANCE SKILLS
- EXPRESSIVE SKILLS
- DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

DELIA SCHLIMMER

- PERFORMANCE SKILLS
- EXPRESSIVE SKILLS
- DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

MISS ARGENTINA

- PERFORMANCE SKILLS
- EXPRESSIVE SKILLS
- DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

OTH0

- PERFORMANCE SKILLS
- EXPRESSIVE SKILLS
- DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

JUN0

- PERFORMANCE SKILLS
- EXPRESSIVE SKILLS
- DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

SKY THE GIRL SCOUT

- PERFORMANCE SKILLS
- EXPRESSIVE SKILLS
- DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

MAXIE DEAN

- PERFORMANCE SKILLS
- EXPRESSIVE SKILLS
- DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

MAXINE DEAN

- PERFORMANCE SKILLS
- EXPRESSIVE SKILLS
- DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

JUNO'S LACKEYS

- PERFORMANCE SKILLS
- EXPRESSIVE SKILLS
- DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

VARIOUS NETHERWORLD RESIDENTS

- PERFORMANCE SKILLS
- EXPRESSIVE SKILLS
- DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

KEY PRODUCTION AREAS

Costume & Makeup

The costume designs in *Beetlejuice The Musical* evoke the film's iconic aesthetic while crafting a fresh, theatrical language—because why simply recreate when you can reimagine with flair? Six time Tony Award winning costume designer, William Ivey Long, interpreted these ghouls through an undeniably fashion-forward lens, blending the twisted whimsy of Tim Burton's artistic vision with unexpected inspirations, from the eerie elegance of Louise Bourgeois' spider motifs to the avant-garde runways of Milan and Paris (think Thom Browne, Prada, and Gaultier, but make it undead). Beetlejuice's signature suit isn't just stripes—it's a centuries-old disaster, custom-painted with the grime of his chaotic afterlife, yet tailored for high-energy antics and demonic quick-changes. Lydia's goth aesthetic sidesteps cliché, instead channeling a rebellious, updated take on her darkly poetic spirit. And when the dinner party descends into supernatural mayhem set to *Day-O*, the pinstriped suits—stitched together from an eclectic mix of fabrics—nod to Alexander McQueen, setting the scene as deliberately off-kilter as the ghostly madness about to unfold. The result? A vibrant, theatrical love letter to Burton—equal parts eerie, exuberant, and impeccably stylish.

Beetlejuice The Musical also serves up some truly scene-stealing makeup looks. First up is Beetlejuice himself, rocking the “undead but make it fashion” aesthetic—pallid green-tinged skin, deep eye sockets of doom, and that signature smirk that says, “*Yes, I haunt people for fun.*” Lydia's goth look is a perfect mash-up of teen angst and chic rebellion, with smudged eyeliner, a deathly pale complexion, and just enough shadowy flair to make Edgar Allan Poe proud. Then there's Delia, whose eyeliner, brows and lipstick pop so hard, we can still sense her desperation for acceptance right in the back of the balcony. And finally, Miss Argentina, the fluorescent teal receptionist from The Netherworld, whose bold blue-green full body paint, glittery eyebrows, and retro-glam lashes scream, “*You'd better not die on your day off.*” Together, the costumes and makeup turn the stage into a runway where the afterlife never looked so alive.



ACTIVITY

Stage makeup

Stage makeup design tells a story: aging a character, bruising them, ghostifying them, or turning them into a talking, terrifying beetle demon. It's art with a flair for the dramatic... and a very heavy setting powder. Designs for the stage are generally louder and bolder because it has to shout all the way to the back of the balcony. While fashion makeup is all about up-close elegance and precision (perfect for selfies and slow-motion runway turns), stage makeup is designed to survive a full-on lighting assault, various onstage meltdowns, and quick costume changes. It's not about subtle contouring—it's about ensuring that a vivid sense of character is created, that the product and implementation can last the duration of the performance, and that the actor can still emote authentically when wearing it.

Read the following section of dialogue from the script of Beetlejuice The Musical:

(Lydia turns, sees Beetlejuice.)

LYDIA 'Who the hell are you?'

BEETLEJUICE 'Can you see me?'

LYDIA 'Yeah. You look like a bloated zebra that a lion ripped apart and then didn't eat cause something was obviously wrong with it, so it just rotted in the hot African sun.'

BEETLEJUICE 'You can see me!'

- Act 1, Scene 9

Using the bare face chart provided and Lydia's description of Beetlejuice above, create your own theatrical makeup design for an actor playing the titular role. Annotate it to link to the quote above, and to provide extra information about your creative decisions.



ACTIVITY

Props

Props are like secret storytellers in a performance. They might seem like simple objects, but they're packed with meaning and help the audience unlock what's really happening on stage. A single prop can reveal a character's emotions, hint at hidden dangers, or even set the mood of an entire scene. Think of a flickering lantern in a dark forest or a crumpled love letter left on a table; both instantly spark curiosity and tell us something about the world and its characters without a word being spoken. Carefully chosen and then meaningfully utilised by the actors, props aren't just decorations. They become powerful tools that guide the audience's attention, build tension, and sometimes deliver surprise laughs or shocks right when you least expect them.

The following characters are all residents of The Netherworld. Each of them carries a key prop in Miss Argentina's number, What I Know Now during Act 2.

Indicate which prop you predict belongs to which character by drawing a line between them and then justify your idea in a simple sentence in your workbook. Analyse what the prop might symbolise about the character's death or their role in The Netherworld.

MISS ARGENTINA

WOMAN IN TOWEL

GRIDIRON PLAYER

SHRUNKEN HEAD GUY

REDNECK YOKEL

JOCKEY

JUNO

LARGE RIFLE

HELMET

CROP

FIREWORKS

CLIPBOARD

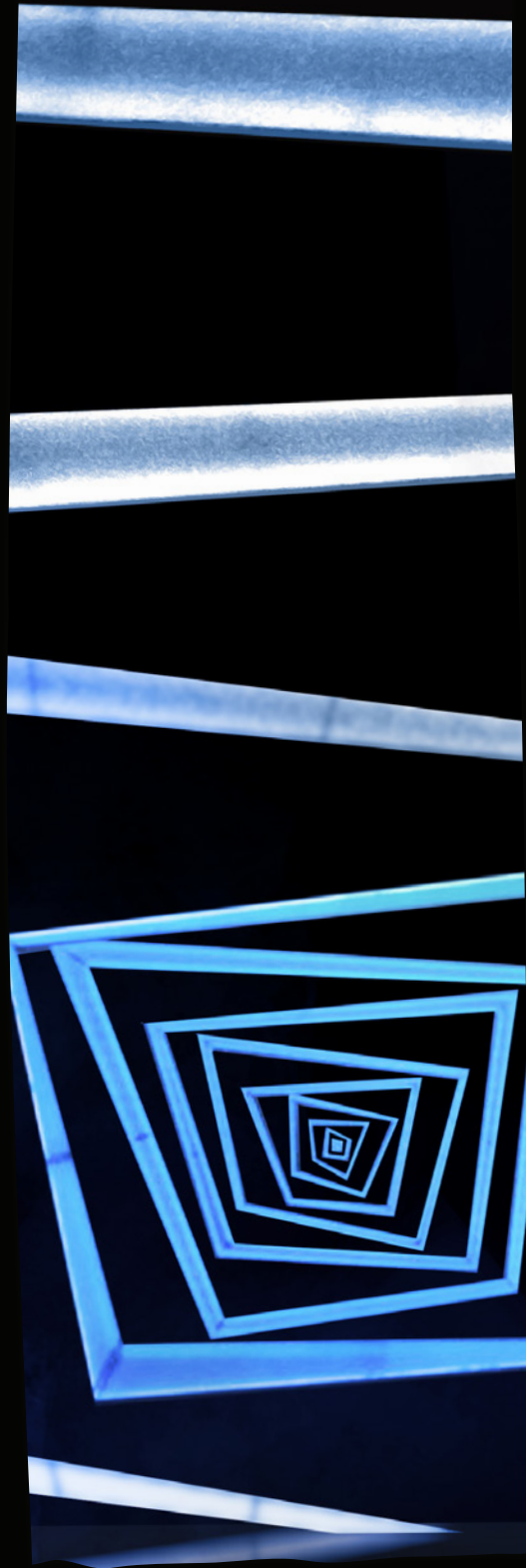
CIGARETTE

TOASTER

Set Pieces

Stage Direction
'Burtonesque Mise en abyme'
- Act 2, Scene 4

According to set designer David Korins, Beetlejuice The Musical was never just about building a set—it was about crafting a living, breathing (and occasionally decaying) character in its own right. From the very beginning, the goal was to honour Tim Burton's unmistakable aesthetic while channeling it through a distinct theatrical lens, all while meeting the unique, headache-inducing demands of live performance. Inspired by Burton's love for a DIY, handcrafted feel, every single piece of scenery was meticulously hand-drawn, ensuring the show maintained an intentionally low-tech, storybook-like quality—right before it explodes into something completely deranged. The house itself goes on a visual rollercoaster, morphing from the Maitlands' quaint Victorian haven to the Deetzes' sterile, big-city nightmare, then twisting into a grotesque Beetlejuice-infested swamp, and finally, a game-show fever dream dripping in chaos. Engineering such an ever-shifting, surprise-packed set was nothing short of theatrical madness—but for Korins, tackling the challenge of making death look this lively has been 'one of the most thrilling, life-affirming projects' of his career.



ACTIVITY

When watching Beetlejuice The Musical, we notice that the bulk of the action takes place in various locations around the Maitland/Beetlejuice/Deetz house. This single location goes through a number of vividly contrasting visual transformations throughout the performance, each of which suggest something key about the owner at that point in the narrative. Using the completed example below as a reference, start by examining the other Set Design renderings here below, then fill in the tables underneath each one, identifying PRODUCTION AREAS and SYMBOLISM, and listing EVALUATIVE LANGUAGE which you might draw upon for your 3.3 SAC or the end-of-year written examination.



PRODUCTION AREAS	SYMBOLISM	EVALUATIVE LANGUAGE
Abstract set design aesthetic- mid- restoration Victorian house, looks less like a literal place and more like a surreal fever dream, using shapes and colours, to evoke emotion rather than reality.	Foreshadows the surrealist nature of the fictitious powers at play in the real-world context of Connecticut, America.	Evocative
Realistic props and set pieces – detailed inclusions like brown mantel clock, dining set and green wallpaper patterns create the suggestion of a 'complete house'.	The warm green and brown colour palette symbolises that the Maitlands are comfortable, cosy types who are very much 'alive' at this point in the show. No 'unnatural' elements are at play here, yet. Skewed design of wall panelling creates warped audience perspective, foreshadowing the vision of an unreliable narrator who will soon take over this world. The roof and the walls are disconnected, suggesting Magic Realism could be apparent here.	Entrancing
Two downstage wagons- two- fireplace & one - chest of drawers		Accurately rendered
Upstage wagon (staircase and 2 x doorways)		Clever
Flying piece- Ceiling and roof line, establishes the presence of the attic for future scenes.		Transformative

ACTIVITY

DEETZ HOUSE

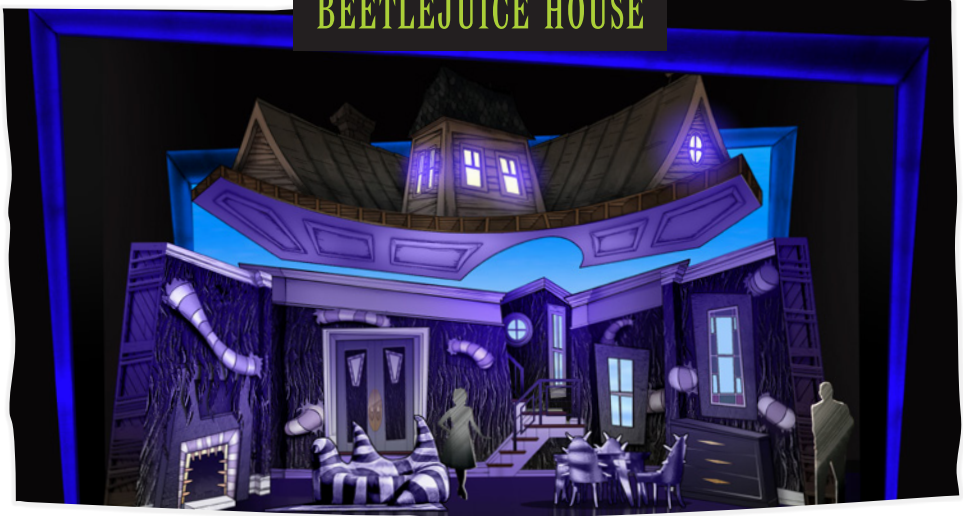


PRODUCTION AREAS	SYMBOLISM	EVALUATIVE LANGUAGE



ACTIVITY

BEETLEJUICE HOUSE

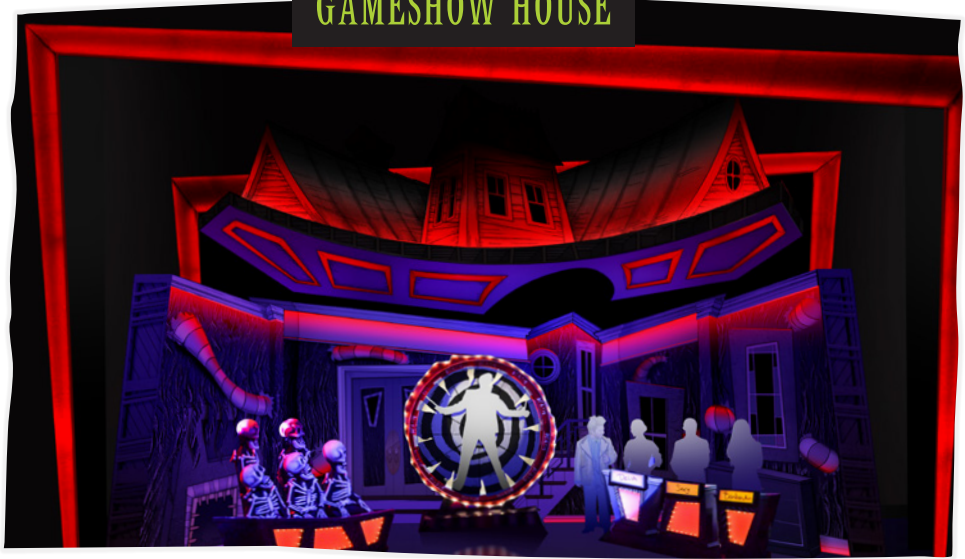


PRODUCTION AREAS	SYMBOLISM	EVALUATIVE LANGUAGE



ACTIVITY

GAMESHOW HOUSE



PRODUCTION AREAS

SYMBOLISM

EVALUATIVE LANGUAGE



APPLICATION OF SYMBOL

Symbolism - Objects, sounds, actions, or images that represent an idea, emotion, or concept beyond their literal or surface meaning. Symbolism can be used to explore complex themes and ideas, such as the nature of reality, the human condition, or the relationship between the individual and society. Symbolism in theatre may also involve the use of non-realistic or stylised elements, such as costumes, set design, lighting and sound to create a heightened sense of theatricality, and to reinforce the symbolic meaning behind the performance.

According to VCAA's Drama Study Design, application of symbol '*creates meaning that is not literal. Application of symbol allows actors to communicate ideas and themes through action, gesture, language, vocal or facial expression, object/prop, costume, set pieces, heightened or lyrical movement or other means. Application of symbol may assist transformations.*'

Here are some key symbols evident in Beetlejuice The Musical:

BLACK ATTIRE: A timeless symbol of mourning and mystery, and effortless cool, black clothing has long been associated with both grief and power. It conveys authority in the boardroom, rebellion in the streets, and elegance at any funeral—whether you're genuinely grieving or just looking fabulous. In some cultures, it's a mark of solemnity; in others, it's just what you wear when you wouldn't be seen dead in colour.

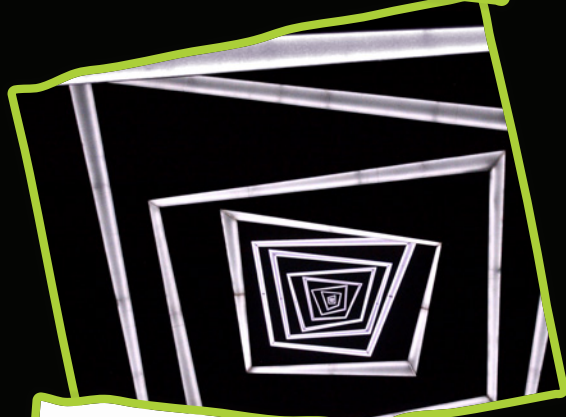


RED WEDDING DRESS: A red wedding dress symbolises passion, defiance, and, depending on the context, either deep love or a deep thirst for vengeance. In many cultures, it represents good fortune and prosperity, while in others (especially if you're being shipped with a creepy old guy), it screams, "This marriage is cursed!" It's the bridal equivalent of a mic drop—dramatic, unforgettable, and slightly alarming.



RED ROSE: A red rose traditionally symbolises love, passion, and deep affection. It's long been associated with romance, desire, and admiration, but can also be seen as a classic symbol of a heartfelt gesture. In some contexts, it can also represent courage, respect, and sacrifice. The red rose has often carried layered meanings tied to beauty, transience, and emotional intensity, and we see Lydia clutching to a single stem during her opening number, Dead Mom.





BLACK AND WHITE STRIPES: Stripes of black and white often symbolise duality, chaos, and the blurred line between order and madness—whether on a prisoner's uniform or a certain mischievous demon's suit. They create an optical illusion of movement, making them a perfect choice for those who want to look like they just stepped out of another dimension. In storytelling, they often mark someone as a trickster, a showman, an outsider, or just slightly unhinged.

DOORWAYS: A doorway is the ultimate symbol of transition, representing both opportunity and uncertainty—whether stepping into the unknown or fleeing from it. It can signify a passage between life and death, reality and fantasy, or just the difference between inside, where it's safe, and outside, where the unexpected may happen. In ghost stories, doors are never just doors; they're portals, barriers, or the one thing standing between you and the horror you really should have left alone.

GREEN: Here is what David Korins, Beetlejuice The Musical's scenic designer, has to say about the symbolism behind his use of the colour green: 'Green is a really interesting colour. True green, like Crayola crayon green, is the colour of life. If you tip it a little, (make it) more acidic, like hot neon yellowy-green, it gets really sickly, really fast. If you tip it the other way, it gets to be olive green, which is also really sickly. You can see it wilt, and I thought it was interesting to define the characters in (the Maitland's) world with a colour that meant life and then watch it get bleached out and turn grey, and then watch it become dead, like black... and then The Netherworld lured you in with this green light, but it was kind of a sickly version; intoxicating but maybe more like 'absinthe intoxicating'; you probably shouldn't do it but, you do it anyway.'

HOME: Home represents safety, belonging, and the place where you can take refuge amongst people who truly see you. It can be a literal shelter or a metaphorical refuge, depending on whether you're running toward it or running away from it. In fiction, it's often what the protagonist seeks, what they lose, or what turns out to be haunted, making their journey much more complicated.

ACTIVITY

Using the following lines, referring to images you source online and throughout this pack, write a short evaluative paragraph, describing the symbolism evident in William Ivey Long's costume designs for Beetlejuice The Musical.





PERFORMANCE STYLES & CONVENTIONS

Musical Theatre

Beetlejuice The Musical joyfully embraces many of the core conventions of musical theatre, all while cranking the volume to eleven. At its heart, it sticks to the traditional structure: songs that drive the plot, reveal emotional subtext, and define character arcs: think Lydia's yearning ballad Dead Mom, or Beetlejuice's chaotic opener The Whole 'Being Dead' Thing. The show also features integrated choreography, ensemble numbers, and recurring motifs, all typical of musical theatre.


It also leans heavily into heightened theatricality: characters break into song at the drop of a hat, the extravagant design elements (costumes, sets, lighting, and projections) are bold and stylised, and there's a clear arc of transformation, particularly in Lydia's journey from grief to connection. Of course, no musical is complete without a big Act I finale which lands like a cliffhanger, and a triumphant (if not slightly twisted) conclusion.



Comedy

Conventions of the performance style of Comedy are evident through its humour, exaggerated characters, and clever use of satire and irony. The show thrives on physical comedy, witty wordplay, and slapstick moments—especially through the chaotic antics of its title character, who turns death into a punchline and mischief into performance art. The plot follows a classic comedic arc, with misunderstandings, identity mix-ups, and ultimately, a resolution that restores order while celebrating the absurd. It also employs stock character types common to comedy—like the clueless adults, the precocious teen, and the lovable trickster—while using music and visual spectacle to heighten the ridiculous. Even in its darker themes, Beetlejuice The Musical uses humour to make the morbid feel light-hearted, showcasing comedy's unique power to transform discomfort into delight.

The conventions of comedy are evident in this musical's mix of over-the-top characters, fast-paced humour, and farcical situations. Beetlejuice himself embodies a classic “trickster” figure: breaking the fourth wall, making bawdy jokes, and constantly undercutting any seriousness in the plot with sarcastic asides. His opening number, The Whole 'Being Dead' Thing, immediately sets a morbid but absurd tone; he pokes fun at mortality, breaking the fourth wall and spurring the audience on to acknowledge their own mortality. The juxtapositioning of Lydia's goth teen persona plays off the cluelessness of her stepmother-figure, Delia, whose New Age babble and obsession with crystals also provides ample comedic fodder. The show leans into physical comedy too. Let's think of the iconic possession scene where dinner guests dance uncontrollably,



and the moment when multiple Beetlejuices pop simultaneously into the space in what feels like a choreographed fever dream. Slapstick can be seen too; let's never forget the comic possibilities of a dancing roast pig or prawn fingers.

Some of the more suggestive and lewd verbal humour evident in the script is met head-on by Lydia's cutting witticisms, this feisty female protagonist challenges problematic archetypal gender roles. The cutting, satirical lyrics of Creepy Old Guy make a mockery of societal norms and clichés around marriage. Its chirpy upbeat melody mocks the tropes of wedding songs and rom-com endings, with the female vocalists in this number playing off the ego of their target. They harmonise over the horrors of female objectification with peppy descriptions such as: 'Cute and vile, yellin' 'Hey baby, smile!'. And then, there is the classic 'bait-and-switch' trick, which is funny because we're led to believe one thing is going to happen, only to be surprised (and in this case, relieved) when something completely different occurs instead. The humour comes from the sudden twist. This technique works especially well because humans love to feel clever, and when a bait-and-switch catches us off guard, it gives us that satisfying "Ohhh, I see what Lydia did there!" reaction. It is misdirection turned into a laugh.

Metatheatre

Metatheatre refers to moments in a play or musical where the show acknowledges its own theatrical nature, breaking the illusion to highlight that what's happening is a performance. Beetlejuice The Musical gleefully revels in this convention, pulling back the curtain to remind the audience they're watching a performance. From the outset, Beetlejuice breaks the fourth wall; he addresses the audience directly, narrates the action at points, while overtly ridiculing Broadway conventions and theatrical tropes. The show constantly references its source material, the 1988 film, and embraces its pop culture legacy with tongue-in-cheek humour. Beetlejuice is a self-aware antagonist, fully conscious of his roles within the story and often manipulating the action like a chaotic director. The game-show absurdity in Act 2 resembles a show-within-a-show; another convention of metatheatre.

Gothic Theatre

Beetlejuice The Musical playfully borrows from the conventions of Gothic theatre, a style known for its eerie atmospheres, supernatural themes, and exploration of the macabre, often balanced with moments of dark humour. The show embraces these elements with gusto. At its core, the narrative revolves around death, the afterlife, and haunted spaces, all of which are classic gothic tropes. The central setting, a Victorian-style house brimming with secrets, shifting appearances, and ghostly residents, directly echoes the traditional gothic motif of the ominous, sentient building. The personification of the haunted house is evident as the space transforms vividly before our eyes. In Gothic Theatre, buildings and objects are often personified to heighten the sense of mystery, unease, and emotional intensity. Houses may seem to "breathe," "groan," or "loom" over characters, as if they have moods or intentions of their own. This crumbling mansion, complete with creaky staircases, and flickering candles, become almost like a silent character, reflecting the inner turmoil of the humans who inhabit it. This technique of a sentient building blurs the line between the living and the non-living, making the world feel unstable, eerie, and alive with extra, unseen forces.

The presence of spirits like the Maitlands, The Netherworld bureaucracy, and of course, the mischievous title character, Beetlejuice, taps into the supernatural side of the genre.

Visually, the production leans into gothic imagery: dramatic lighting contrasts, exaggerated shadows, cobwebbed corners, and morbidly whimsical set pieces. Costumes and makeup heighten the gothic aesthetic with pale complexions, vintage silhouettes, and grotesque, otherworldly designs. Thematically, it toys with ideas of mortality, the uncanny, and what lies beyond — but always with a wink, aligning with the gothic tradition of mixing horror with humour. Even Lydia, the brooding, death-obsessed teen protagonist, fits the archetype of the gothic heroine: isolated, misunderstood, and drawn to the supernatural. Beetlejuice The Musical gleefully showcases Gothic conventions, giving them a satirical, high-energy, and irreverent twist for the modern stage.



ACTIVITY

Performance Focus

Create a solo or group short performance based on the concept of 'home'.

- A character with a strong sense of longing for something unattainable
- Interaction between characters with conflicting motivations using satire
- Demonstration of an actual person, either alive or dead, who claims to have experienced reincarnation



A WELL MAINTAINED
SUBURBAN HOME

Stimulus Material

Performance Style

Comedy with Elements of Gothic Theatre

Conventions

Students are required to select one convention from the following list and apply it throughout their performance:

- Exaggerated movement
- Song
- Puppetry
- Application of symbol

Dramatic Elements

Students are required to select one dramatic element from the following list and apply it throughout their performance:

- Conflict
- Contrast
- Mood
- Rhythm



A MOMENT
OF CONNECTION
OVER FOOD



THE COLOUR RED



THIS SONG,
OUR HOUSE,
BY MADNESS

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*AN ASTERISKED TITLE IN GREEN DENOTES THAT A DRAMA
CURRICULUM ALIGNED ACTIVITY IS OFFERED IN THIS SECTION



CAREER INSIGHTS FROM JACINTA JOHN AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR



If wrangling sandworms and guiding the undead sounds like a wild day at the office, then Jacinta John is right where she belongs. As the Australian Associate Director of Beetlejuice The Musical, she helps bring the show's ghoulish gags, big-hearted chaos, and jaw-dropping stage magic to life night after night for Aussie audiences. From puppets to poltergeists, nothing escapes her sharp eye and theatrical flair. We caught up with Jacinta to chat about what it takes to keep The Netherworld running smoothly — and hilariously.

1: As the Australian Associate Director of Beetlejuice The Musical, can you describe the key roles and responsibilities you have and will undertake in this position?

My first responsibility for this particular role has been learning Beetlejuice The Musical while assisting visiting International Associate Director Catie Davis as she guides the cast, creatives and crew through rehearsal in the studio, then in the theatre and during preview shows. Once the production is officially open, the role involves watching and making notes on the show a few times a week, rehearsing in covers and swings, helping stage events for press, and auditioning and rehearsing new cast. I also work in close partnership with all other departments, including Stage Management, Choreography, Music, Lights, Sound, and so on, to make sure the show looks and sounds its absolute best right through the season.

2: How does this role differ to that of Director?

Alex Timbers directed the original production of Beetlejuice The Musical. For several years he collaborated with the writers and designers through a process of workshop, development and a try-out season, before directing the

show's Broadway debut. Throughout this period, the role of the director is one of invention and interpretation, creation and collaboration. At some point (usually through previews) the director decides that the rewrites and reworking part of the process is done, and then they 'lock off' the show. When, as with Beetlejuice The Musical, the show is critically acclaimed and beloved by fans, it might be lucky enough to have a life beyond that initial run, and that is where an Associate Director steps in. It's an associate's job to collaborate with the original Director to re-create that show for audiences further afield, such as in Australia. The key responsibility of an Associate Director is doing that in a way which honours the original production and the original Director's vision.

3: Please describe the career pathway you followed which led you to this role.

I've always been involved in the arts, but my path to this role wasn't clearly laid out. I did a lot of after school theatre growing up in Perth, taking drama classes, doing AMEB exams and performing with the Midnite Youth Theatre Company. I had an interest in classical English and European theatre and so after teaching English in Russia for six months, I went to drama school in the UK to study Shakespeare, Chekov and their contemporaries. When I returned to Australia, I did a degree in Film and Performance at Sydney University, while working as an English-teaching actor who produced independent film and theatre. This is where I also started directing. In my first professional role as a Resident Director, I also understudied the seven characters onstage for an Australian national tour. I enjoyed doing that work, and I think that having an understanding of what it is like to stand under the glare of stage lights in front of a crowd gave me a useful insider perspective from which to communicate with cast and crew. Since that first Resident Directing role, I've worked almost exclusively in musical theatre as Resident and Associate Director on shows such as Matilda, Groundhog Day, Billy Elliot and Moulin Rouge, staging and re-staging productions in Australia and around the world.

4: Are there any aspects of your role which may overlap with those expected of an Intimacy Co-ordinator? If so, can you please identify specific scenes or moments in Beetlejuice The Musical where this process may have been required?

Both Direction and Choreography departments work with the cast on moments of intimacy to an extent, depending on the requirements of the production itself. If intimacy takes place as part of a choreographed number, then the Choreographer will work with the cast to beat through the intimacy in the same way they rehearse dance steps, i.e. to counts. In scenes, we approach moments of intimacy in the same way we do blocking, magic tricks, puppetry, or "fight" sequences, that is: with care, clarity and specificity. This production involves several kisses between cast members. We were fortunate enough to work with a professional Intimacy Co-Ordinator and the cast on how the kisses work within the context of the scenes in which they play.

5: What advice do you have for young actors preparing for auditions?

We're interested in what you bring to the role, so I would encourage you to make a clear choice on how you want to present the material. Prepare that as best you can, but also, prepare to listen and be flexible. If in the audition, the director suggests an adjustment, really try to honour that within the context of your interpretation. A director usually has a pretty good idea of what they're looking for and when they're working with you they're wanting to offer guidance to help you help them realise that.

And the other thing I would say is, know that no matter how wonderfully skilled and talented someone is, they are not going to suit every show and not every show is going to suit them, so the best thing you can do is decide how you want to present yourself in an audition and then when the day comes where that marries up with a project, you'll know it is the right one for you.

PRODUCTION ROLES/AREAS

Lighting

The impressive lighting design originally created by Kenneth Posner, pulled from German Impressionism and gothic architecture to build the world of Beetlejuice The Musical, which saw the show nominated for a Tony Award. Posner's lighting doesn't just complement the set, costumes, and projections—it fuses them into a seamless, eerie spectacle. Bold angles of light and shadow heighten the show's playful tug-of-war between good and evil, while rapid bursts of saturated colour create a manic, surreal, circus-like energy that

feels almost as unhinged as its titular ghost. The lighting complements the set, costumes and projections and fuses them into a living entity, mirroring the psychological tension in the music and even creeping into the audience to blur the line between observer and chaos. Deep purples and sickly greens enhance the ominous surrealism of Beetlejuice's chiaroscuro stripes, a kaleidoscopic clash of dread and delight that makes the afterlife feel alarmingly fun.



Technologies: Digital Projection Design

'Technologies in this study relate to those used in contemporary drama practices and include digital, electrical or mechanical. They may be dependent on the nature of the work created by the artist or the work as it is experienced by an audience, and may range in levels of sophistication and application.'

- VCAA Drama Study Design, 2025.

Peter Nigrini is one of Broadway's pioneering projection designers, and his work in Beetlejuice The Musical pushes all the boundaries—his imagery is bold, bizarre, and mesmerising. When Lydia finally utters the infamous three-word incantation, reality fractures, and digital projections hurtle the audience into a world where chaos reigns supreme. Familiar moments from the film explode into something even more theatrical: the audience witnesses the dull grey living room morphing into a full-stage

circus tent. We sit transfixed as Beetlejuice's iconic stripes consume the entire house, with transformation of space unfolding before the audience's eyes at the climax of Act 1, all with the assistance of digital projections. As Beetlejuice's power increases throughout Act 2, the digital projections continue to do the heavy lifting; the hand drawn stripes, spiralling swirls and ethereal skyscapes symbolise his chaotic control of the setting. These projections help the audience to shift not just between worldly realms, but also indicate a shift in performance style, with the Deetz/Beetlejuice residence showcasing aspects of Magic Realism and Gothic Horror which entirely overwhelm the cartoonish interpretation of Naturalism suggested in the Maitland's house in Act 1. The opening scene where the graveyard sketches itself into reality around Lydia may also feel like classic chaotic Beetlejuice, but on closer inspection, it owes more to The Nightmare Before Christmas... proof that, in the collective imagination, all of Tim Burton's creations exist in one wonderfully twisted universe.



ACTIVITY

Here we see three production stills from Beetlejuice The Musical. Undertake online research into The Nightmare Before Christmas. Annotate the following images, making note of the parallels in design aesthetic between moments in Jack Skellington's world and Nigrini's digital projections:

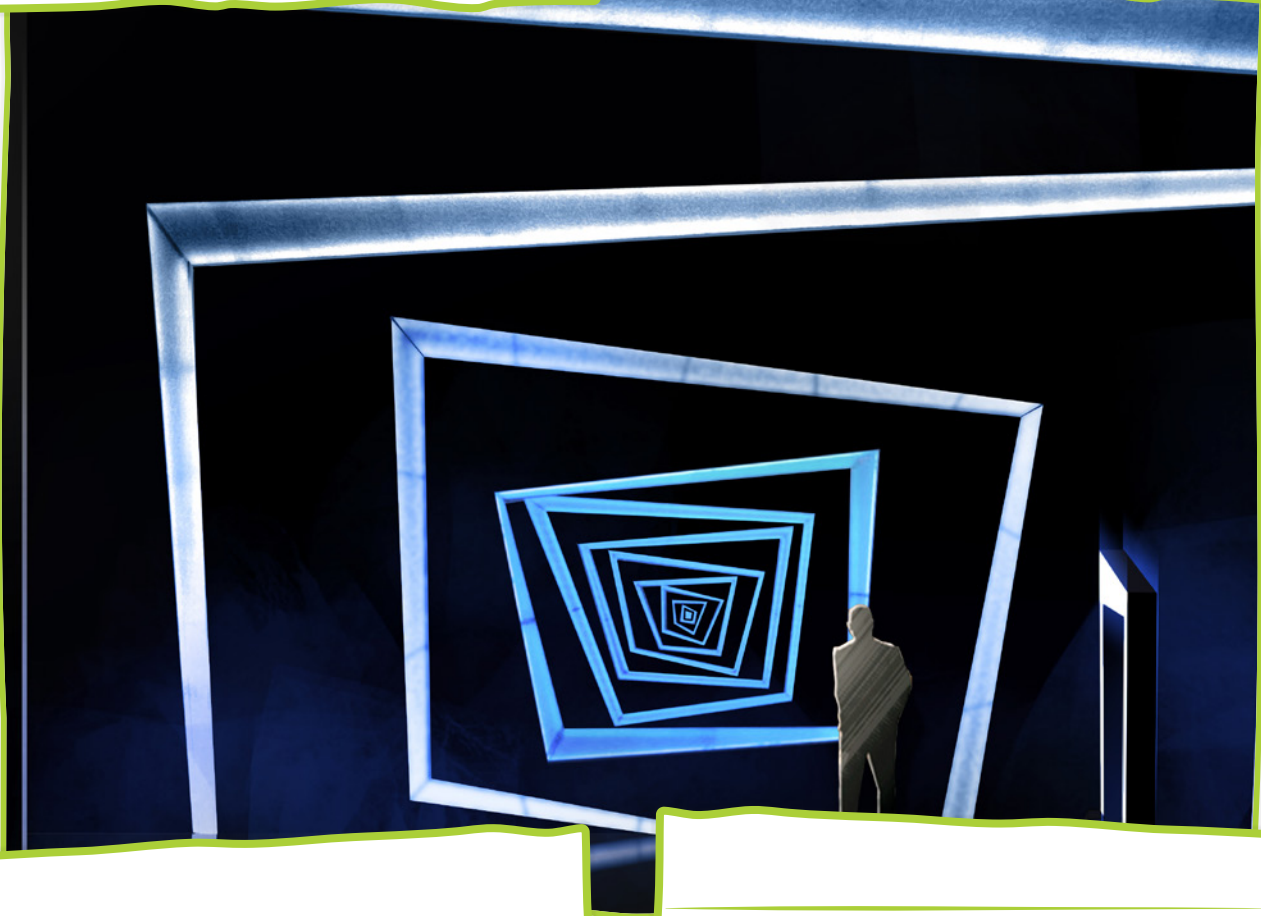


ACTIVITY





ACTIVITY





Puppetry

According to acclaimed puppet designer Michael Curry, *Beetlejuice* was an ideal candidate for a stage adaptation; the original film already carried the spirit of live theatre, filled with tightly framed interiors, practical effects, and wonderfully eerie puppetry. Collaborating with director Alex Timbers on this production was a rewarding experience for Curry, as puppetry proved to be a natural fit for amplifying the show's gleeful absurdity, punctuating the comedy with clever visual gags and surprises.

Notable designs include the giant sandworm, a large-scale, striped puppet that appears at several points in the production, and the elongated face and hand transformations worn by the Maitlands as they attempt to frighten the Deetz family. The show also features a variety of puppetry. The Netherworld creatures, including skeletal characters and monster-like figures, each constructed to reflect the handmade, theatrical aesthetic of the production.

The Shrunken-Head Man is a puppet version of the famous character from the film who appears in The Netherworld waiting room scene, with a tiny, comically undersized head perched atop

a regular-sized body. Various other hand puppets and miniatures appear throughout the show, small puppet elements like grasping hands, creepy dolls, and mobile props are used for quick sight gags and atmospheric effects, maintaining the tactile, hand-crafted feel of the production.

These puppets are integrated directly into scenes with the performers, with actors operating many of the designs live on stage. The puppetry contributes to the show's visual storytelling, providing physical representations of its fantasy elements while supporting sight gags, comedic beats, and set transformations throughout the performance.

The design team operated as a unified, inventive force, merging multiple creative disciplines under Timbers' meticulous and imaginative guidance, no small achievement given the script's relentless energy and bold theatricality from the outset. Curry notes that the success of stage puppetry ultimately depends on the performers, and this cast enthusiastically embraced the opportunity, bringing every outlandish creature to vivid, hilarious life. *Beetlejuice The Musical* stands as a lively example of how puppetry and performance, working in unison, can create a uniquely memorable theatrical experience.



PERFORMANCE SKILLS



We sat with actor Karis Oka and posed a series of questions about her depiction of Lydia in Beetlejuice The Musical. Our discussion specifically drew upon the key Performance Skills outlined in VCE Drama.



FOCUS

'Focus is the ability of the actor to commit to their performance and to use concentration to sustain character(s). Focus may also be used to create an implied character or setting through the manipulation of the audience's attention towards a specific place. The manipulation of focus may assist the actor to develop, establish and/or manipulate an effective actor-audience relationship.'

- VCE Drama Study Design,
Accreditation period from 2025

Q: Can you please give some advice to young performers as to how to retain your focus when acting?

A: 'On a quite literal level, you can't maintain focus if you haven't eaten and slept well - there is no way around this. Like, your brain will just start zooming around from the nerves, so help yourself out and take care of yourself. In the actual scenes, you have to always be hooked into what your character wants. They always want something; that's why they're in the scene. Use every line to get a bit closer to that thing. Focus on your scene partner or the music, and you'll find you think less about what your hands are doing or how you're standing.'

ENERGY

'Energy is the intensity an actor brings to a performance. At different times, an actor will use different levels of energy to create different performance dynamics. An actor may use a certain energy to create pathos. Conversely, an actor may use a certain energy to create a moment of tension or conflict.'

- VCE Drama Study Design,
Accreditation period from 2025

Q: The energy you bring to your character varies in intensity throughout your performance, which shifts the dynamics onstage. Can you please describe one practical way you retain your energy as a performer throughout the whole performance season?

A: 'Sometimes you need to get yourself hyped up to perform, other times you need to find ways to centre and calm yourself. Sometimes you make the wrong decision and go out with way too much adrenaline and spray your energy all over the stage! (Maybe you should've done some deep breathing before you went on rather than listen to your pump up playlist... Luckily it's not brain surgery so we are allowed to make these mistakes.) Check in with yourself and then give yourself what you need so you can do the best you can on that day.'

TIMING

'Timing is used to control or regulate the pace of a performance. Timing may be manipulated in drama to build tension, to evoke feeling for an audience, to coordinate effective synchronisation within an ensemble, and to develop the comic or dramatic potential of a scene.'

- VCE Drama Study Design,
Accreditation period from 2025

Q: Timing can be really useful when defining the mood of a scene. Do you have any tips about how to explore timing when rehearsing a scene?

A: 'I read the scene and see where it naturally ebbs and flows. If it's written well, the pace kind of changes with each new idea that is introduced. I like to write on my script where I think that changes. If it's tricky, I try to find the climax of the scene and work back from that... by knowing where I need to get to emotionally, I see how far away I can start from that. For example, if there's a plot twist or some sort of information revealed in the scene that leaves the character feeling betrayed, I might try to start the scene feeling safe and comfortable, which has its own very different tempo. Keep playing with it until you find something that serves your interpretation of the text.'

ACTOR-AUDIENCE RELATIONSHIP

'The actor considers what impact they intend their performance to have on an audience. The actor-audience relationship is the way in which an actor deliberately establishes, maintains and/or manipulates an audience's moods, emotions and responses to a performance. This may be done through the positioning of the actor in relation to the audience, the way the actor engages the audience, and the emotional and intellectual response to a character's situation by an audience, intended or otherwise. An actor-audience relationship exists as part of a performance but in this study may also be present when the actor is rehearsing and refining work during the devising process.'

- VCE Drama Study Design,
Accreditation period from 2025

Q: Your character has a special place in the heart of the audience- can you provide any advice to young actors aiming to build a relationship with their audiences through their characterisations?

A: 'Don't try to make them loveable - make them real! You make them real by letting them be who is written on the page, and then you bring your whole self to that. We can be entertained by perfect characters, but rarely moved or inspired by them. But ultimately, you could be the best actor in the world and someone in the audience won't vibe with your character because they kinda remind them of someone they went to school with. All you can do is find the character's truth and dial it up to ten.'



ACTIVITY

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

The table below identifies an array of common human motivators. Read through each of them, and highlight which of them are relevant for each character, using the colour-coding system suggested in the header.

LYDIA

CHARLES

BEETLEJUICE

DELIA

BARBARA

ADAM

Fear	Connection	Desire
Understanding	Spirituality	Denial
Self-expression	Love	Escapism
Family	Morals	Belonging
Greed	Comfort	Security
Money	Status	Power
Vengeance	Loss	Truth

ACTIVITY

Next, building on your observations around character motivation, identify:

- A:** What does each character want vs what do they need?
Is there a conflict between the two?
Discuss this as a whole class.

LYDIA
'I AM ALONE.
FORSAKEN. INVISIBLE.'



BEETLEJUICE
'THAT MAKES TWO OF US.'

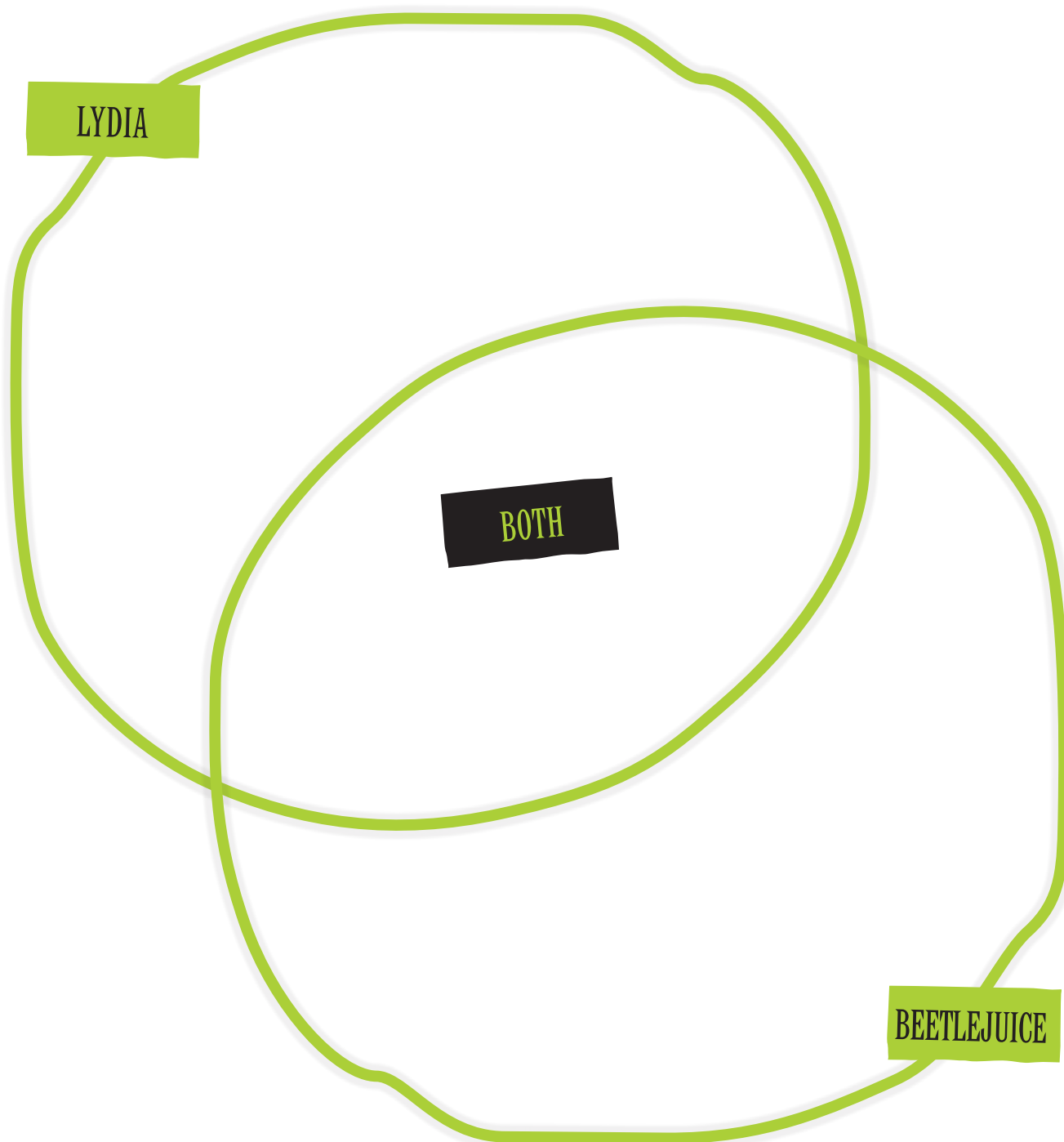
- B:** Read the interesting discussion from the musical's book writers, Scott Brown and Anthony King, outlined below, annotating it for useful analytical and evaluative language.

'What we did want to do was capture the antic, off-kilter spirit of the movie (not to mention the wonderful animated series) and protect the yearning iconoclasm that defines the Burtonesque: that desperate, ornery gotta-be-me-ness, cut with an equally desperate and ornery need for humanity and family. Connecting with other people in spite of (or, in rare, wonderful cases, because of) our individual quirks and weirdnesses — all those nooks and crannies of damage we accumulate as we move through life — that's the whole point of being alive, as far as we're concerned.

So when we realized that's what Beetlejuice and Lydia were both after — that they shared a lot of the same wants and the same crafty ways of going after those wants — we started to crack our version of the story: a story of grief and longing and six dented people who can't quite see each other (because some of them are literally invisible) on a strange and unusual journey from living-death to really living. And also there's a sandworm. A worm with a whole second head in its mouth? You gotta have that. 'Cause that's the Stuff of Life, right? Humanity. Damage. Connection. Sandworms. It all feels like something people — even dead people — can sing about.'

ACTIVITY

C: Brown and King describe protagonist Lydia and antagonist Beetlejuice as having an overlap in motivation. Building off the included suggestions, complete the Venn diagram, identifying the similarities and differences of these main characters.



D: Now go back to the mind maps you created in the Preshow Section of the pack and add further detail about each character. Include detailed observations about Performance Skills, Expressive Skills and Dramatic Elements.



ACTIVITY

EVALUATIVE VS ANALYTICAL LANGUAGE



Using two differently coloured highlighters, annotate the following excerpts from reviews of the American production of Beetlejuice The Musical. Highlight evaluative language in the first colour and analytical language in the second. Afterwards, make a list of language which you plan to use in your own SAC or in the written Drama exam at the end of the year. If you haven't already done so, go back to the other views in Section A of this pack, annotate them, and add them to your terminology bank. Please note, some of these reviews may mention moments which are different to the Australian interpretation; remember you will be assessed on your discussion of the live performance you attend.

'A top notch cast of first rate comedians have come together to craft a musical once in danger of being an overwrought retread of a beloved film... into a ghoulishly good time that pays loving homage to the mythology of "Beetlejuice" the movie while fundamentally reorienting the story and lending it an unexpected punch of pathos amid its crass and crude mania.

Set designer David Korins spent six years developing the design of the Maitland home, which undergoes four major transformations central to key plot developments, and becomes a character unto itself. A veritable funhouse, the set captures the spirit of the macabrely handcrafted world created by Tim Burton for the film while proving a miraculously malleable platform for the musical to unfold. A lot of time—and money—was spent to get this design right, and the investment pays dividends.

In fact, the entire creative team explicitly pay tribute to Mr. Burton in their designs, and that collective expression of a Burtonesque

sensibility—led by Mr. Timbers—gives the whole production a unified visual framework that is extraordinarily effective. I'd venture to suggest that there isn't a better designed show on Broadway right now—the one thing that most critics (and the Tony Award nominators!) seem to agree on.

In sum, the last new musical of the season proves to be its zaniest—finely tuned, though, and not without purpose. Far from being an unimaginative cash grab like "Pretty Woman" (read my review) or a theme park ride, as others have derisively suggested, "Beetlejuice", it turns out, is just a well-crafted lowbrow musical comedy that falls neatly into the tradition of Broadway.

While the crude humor and pop score might not meet the elevated aesthetic standards of some, this critic (and devoted "Beetlejuice" fan) had a blast. '

**Robert Russo, 8 June 2019,
Broadway Production Review, STAGE LEFT**



'A thorough dissection of the musical... yields its winning strategy: Its storytelling sacrifices nostalgia for the new, specifically in ways that align with Gen Z. It's a risk for a screen-to-stage adaptation to not cater to the same audience that applauded its source material when it debuted; yet because of the authenticity and precision of its creative choices, it continues to pay off, especially at a time when the American theater is in crisis...

This Lydia resonates with younger audiences not because she drops hollow buzz words but rather because she is wholly realized as a Gen Z protagonist: clever, socially aware, reasonably nihilistic and emotionally honest. And in comparison to her father, his girlfriend and numerous other characters, Lydia is pragmatic, clear-eyed and merely misunderstood, a feeling any younger theatergoer likely knows well.

Onstage, her obsession with the afterlife is insightfully tied to the recent death of her mother — a pivot that makes Lydia the impetus for the story's momentous events (the movie's iconic "Day-O" dinner takeover is now her idea, and she chooses to say Beetlejuice's name for her own gain) as well as its emotional heart.

The show's only ballads explore the depths of her overwhelming grief; in the touring production, Isabella Esler performs them both with palpable vulnerability, filling the otherwise empty stage with Lydia's frustrations about mourning her mother alone while her father refuses to acknowledge the loss.

The titular demon, famously played by Michael Keaton for only around 15 minutes of the movie, is given lots more stage time as the charismatic narrator of the musical. By making this joke at the very top of the show, he immediately declares its comedic sensibilities — meta, profane and refreshingly irreverent about its esteemed IP — and doubles down with an opening number packed with jabs about the universal inevitability of dying, the musical theater canon and the theater setting itself: "I do this bull— like eight times a week. So just relax, you'll be fine, drink your 50 dollar wine and take a breath, welcome to a show about death."

Ashley Lee, July 20, 2023, Hollywood Pantages Theatre Production review, Los Angeles Times

LANGUAGE LIST



EXPRESSIVE SKILLS

'Expressive skills are used to express and realise character(s). Expressive skills may be used in different ways and will be influenced by different performance styles and contemporary drama practices. They include:

1. **voice**, for example diction, pitch, pace, tone, resonance, muscularity and vocal sounds
2. **movement**, for example gait, posture and stance
3. **gesture**, for example using the body or body parts, usually the hands, to create symbols and meaning
4. **facial expression**, for example manipulating facial expressions to communicate emotions, reactions and meaning.'

- VCE Drama Study Design, Accreditation period from 2025



Take a moment to enjoy this fabulous series of questions and answers from actor Erin Clare, who plays Delia in Beetlejuice The Musical. This discussion specifically drew upon the key Expressive Skills outlined in VCE Drama.

Q: Can you please identify one moment in the show where you use your voice, for example diction, pitch, pace, tone, resonance, muscularity and vocal sounds to establish a sense of your character's status in the scene?

A: 'My character voice for Delia sits in a lower register than my natural speaking voice. This is to really establish a difference in age and status in

the first scene where she is interacting with Lydia, her 16-year-old step daughter. Given the nature of the role as a wellness warrior and 'Life Coach', I use a lot of breath in my spoken voice to create a sense of dreamy calm and musicality whilst speaking. This aims to really land the comedy of the more panicked and guttural sounds I use when Lydia gets through the cracks in Delia's façade. The difference in pitch when Delia knows she is being watched and so presents her state of 'performative calm', and when she uses deeper, more harsh vocal tones when she loses her cool is a great asset to developing the comedy of the scene.'

Q: Can you please describe a movement which suggests a sense of your character's inner conflict, for example using gait, posture and stance?

A: 'Delia is full of conflicting ideologies, which is really fun to play with physically. She is someone who is always presenting as though she has it all together, to be able to be a mentor to Lydia, all with an underlying sense of unease because she might lose everything. To physicalise this façade, I regularly use a broad open posture, sometimes even with





presentational arms, like a game show host. When Delia is challenged or unhinged, it's fun to play with contrast, her body going floppy and limp. The most clear definition of these two physical states is in her song "No Reason", where she erupts into a manic dance solo whilst remembering past trauma, only to erupt into the performative 'Life Coach' façade in the final chorus.'

Q: Please describe a gesture, for example using the body or body parts, usually the hands, which you or another actor uses to create symbols and meaning for the audience.

A: 'Delia uses her hands a lot to aid when she needs to command a room, or present as a 'completely balanced' character. One line I deliver with a repeated physical hand gesture is one of her Guru's Otho's mantras "Every success begins with sucks, but ends with yes...SucksYES". This hand gesture is

then echoed by Otho when we meet him in Act 2, and creates a comedic throughline and connection of both characters.'

Q: Please identify one moment where facial expression is used to help establish the mood of the scene.

A: 'In the final scene of Act 1, Charles and Delia are in a completely high-stakes and stressful situation. They need to get funding from Maxie Dean to cover the cost of Charles' investments. To do so, they need to present as a happy family, all the while Lydia is suicidal and refuses to co-operate. Delia and Charles are tasked with entertaining these guests under duress, and we use our eyes and a painted and pained smile whilst delivering pleasantries to really illustrate the inner turmoil and panic of the scene. That panic is only exacerbated as the scene progresses. The juxtaposition of inner turmoil and a calm and pleasant façade is so fun to play with.'

ACTIVITY

Take some time to unpack what you observed regarding the actors' use of expressive skills in the following four moments in Beetlejuice The Musical. The Expressive Skills outlined by VCAA are in bold in each prompt. You may also benefit from revisiting Section A to refresh your memory of expressive skills evident in this performance. Referring to your memory of the live performance and these production stills, make three key observations which you can refer to in your assessments in response to the prompts below:

1. Act 1, Scene 1 - The opening scene where we find ourselves at the funeral of Emily Deetz. Identify how three selected performers use **facial expression** to establish the performance style of Comedy to contrast with the sombre events of the narrative.



YOUR OBSERVATION



ACTIVITY

2. Act 1, Scene 10 - The iconic Banquet Scene at the end of Act 1. Let’s look at how the actors use **movement** to establish the fact that the Maitlands have possessed them during key moments in this scene:



YOUR OBSERVATION



ACTIVITY

3. Act 2, Scene 1 - Reflect on the moment when Beetlejuice conjures up numerous clones of himself. Describe one or more actor's use of **voice** as an expressive skill to convey a sense of the demonic power Beetlejuice is harnessing here



YOUR OBSERVATION



ACTIVITY

4. Act 2, Scene 2 - Barbara 2.0. Let's examine the use of **gesture** harnessed by Elise McCann and Rob Johnson throughout the entire narrative. Compare the actors' use of this expressive skill between the first time we come across the Maitlands in the Act 1 number Ready, set, Not Yet, with their rebooted selves in Barbara 2.0.



YOUR OBSERVATION



DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

Here, we will **fill in the blanks** in a series of cloze exercises which will help you and your classmates create a collection of snapshots from across the musical to draw upon during your assessments. These paragraphs model analytical and evaluative writing; see if you can play 'Spot the Difference' at the same time as 'Fill the Blanks'.

Climax

- *'Climax is the significant moment of tension or conflict in a drama. It often occurs towards the end of the plot. Other points of climax or anticlimax may occur within a work.'*
 - VCE Drama Study Design, Accreditation period from 2025

Climax is particularly evident during the final confrontation between Lydia, Beetlejuice, and the other _____. The most significant moment of tension occurs when Beetlejuice, having gained _____ over the Deetz household and the boundary between life and death, threatens the safety of everyone involved. _____, with the help of the _____, attempts to banish him by tricking him into saying his name _____ times. This moment of heightened _____, where the outcome remains uncertain, marks the _____'s main climax. The set design becomes increasingly chaotic, with the Deetz household _____ into a distorted, The Netherworld-inspired landscape filled with jagged staircases, warped furniture, and supernatural imagery, reflecting the collapse of _____ between the living and the dead. Special effects such as smoke, levitation, and Beetlejuice's rapid entrances and exits enhance moments of danger and unpredictability, particularly during the climactic 'wedding' scene. Once Beetlejuice is defeated, the central _____ is resolved, allowing Lydia and her family to reconcile during the denouement. The musical also features smaller points of climax and anticlimax, such as during the _____ scene where the Maitlands' haunting backfires comically, and in Lydia's solo number Dead Mom, which acts as an emotional climax for her character. These moments build and release tension throughout the narrative, making the story both engaging and emotionally layered.

Conflict

- *'Conflict generally occurs when a character cannot achieve an objective due to an obstacle. This obstacle may be internal or external, between characters or between characters and their environment. Conflict may be shown in a variety of ways, for example through physical, verbal, psychological or symbolic means. Conflict may be embedded in the structure of the drama.'*
- VCE Drama Study Design, Accreditation period from 2025

Lydia's internal _____ over her mother's death is visually supported by isolated, cool-_____ lighting and sparse staging during Dead Mom, symbolically reflecting her emotional isolation and struggle to be heard within her _____. This is compounded by external conflict between Lydia and her father _____, whose attempts to force a cheerful, orderly home environment are visually represented through bright, artificial lighting and bold, modern furniture set _____ that clash with Lydia's gothic, monochrome costume; this physically and symbolically marks their opposing _____. Conflict is also heightened through the set and _____ effects during the Deetz family's first haunting, where eerie lighting changes, sudden sound effects, and animated set pieces such as moving furniture and transforming walls reflect the _____ struggle to reclaim their _____, complicated by Beetlejuice's disruptive presence. Environmental conflict is also embedded in the show's structure, particularly when Lydia attempts to open the _____ to The Netherworld in the final act: deep blue _____ floods the stage and fog machines create a hostile atmosphere, symbolising her struggle against the _____ between life and death. These layered, visually and physically embodied _____ underscore the characters' obstacles and elevate the _____, positioning conflict as an integral and engaging force throughout the production.

Contrast

- *'Contrast presents the dissimilar, or opposite, in order to highlight or emphasise difference. Contrast may be explored in many ways, which may include contrasting through expressive skills, characters, settings, times, themes, elements, production areas and performance styles.'*
- VCE Drama Study Design, Accreditation period from 2025

Contrast is a key dramatic _____ in Beetlejuice The Musical; woven through both its themes and production design, to highlight shifts in mood, character, and meaning. Thematically, the show balances opposing ideas: life and _____, _____ and order, _____ and alienation, sincerity and irreverence. The Maitlands' cozy, wholesome world is quickly disrupted by Beetlejuice's anarchic presence, while Lydia's _____-stricken search for connection contrasts with the living adults' superficiality and self-absorption. These juxtapositions allow heartfelt moments to land more poignantly amid the show's outrageous comedy.

In production design, contrast is boldly realised through set, costume, lighting, and puppetry.

The Maitlands' _____ begins as a quaint, country-style Victorian house, which is later stripped into a cold, modern, monochrome Deetz residence — visually mirroring the clashing personalities within. As _____ gains control, the house morphs again into a surreal, grotesque funhouse of stripes, neon, and monstrous puppetry, creating a visual dialogue between normality and absurdity.

Even the _____ support this — Lydia's stark, gothic look sets her _____ from the pastel-clad Maitlands and slick city-slicker Deetzes, visually _____ her outsider status. Puppets and digital _____ play their part too, delicate, handmade aesthetics sit opposite over-the-top, monstrous projection designs to highlight the show's tonal shifts. These contrasts reflect its characters' emotional journeys and the show's collision of heart and hilarity.

Mood

- *'Mood is the overall feeling or emotion that a performance may evoke. This may be achieved through manipulation of expressive and performance skills, conventions or production areas.'*
- VCE Drama Study Design, Accreditation period from 2025

In Beetlejuice The Musical, mood is skilfully established and _____ to shift between dark comedy, suspense, and heartfelt pathos, keeping the audience constantly engaged. The irreverent, chaotic mood of the opening is created through expressive performance skills such as Beetlejuice's exaggerated physical gestures, quick-witted _____ to the audience, and energetic _____ timing, which immediately set a playful, mischievous _____. This is effectively contrasted during the haunting sequences, where production _____ like eerie green and purple lighting, distorted set designs, and unsettling sound effects heighten the _____ of supernatural suspense. A particularly striking example occurs during the Day-O dinner party scene, where the lively, absurd possession of the guests combines upbeat calypso music with controlled physical comedy to maintain a humorous _____, while hinting at underlying menace. The mood dramatically shifts in Lydia's solo Dead Mom, where dim, isolated _____, a slowed tempo, and her emotionally raw vocal performance create a poignant, mournful atmosphere, drawing the audience into her personal grief. Overall, the production's deliberate manipulation of mood through the production _____ is highly effective, successfully balancing comedy, horror, and pathos to reflect the show's unique tone.



Rhythm

- *'Rhythm is a regular pattern of words, sounds or actions that may be created by an actor. Performances also have their own rhythm, which may be influenced by the emotional nature of the plot, the pace of line delivery, the dialogue (long and/or short lines), the pace of scene transitions and the length of scenes.'*

- VCE Drama Study Design, Accreditation period from 2025

Through the actor's brilliant use of rhythm during her delivery of Ready, Set, Not Yet, the audience is able to connect with Barbara's inner _____ which rises as she confesses that there is a deeper meaning behind her amateur ceramic creations. Despite an unhurried entrance, once left alone, _____ McCann moves briskly downstage, nursing one 'amazingly _____' pottery prop jug, and hilariously pats it repeatedly, suggesting she is briskly burping it like a _____. McCann's verbal delivery _____ increases rapidly to convey her 'motherly panic' here; this shift in rhythm emphasises her character's 'terror' about 'making maternal mistakes', conveying the intended _____ of her unfulfilled parental longing with aplomb.



Sound

- *'Sound is created live by the actor in the performance. Voice, body percussion and objects can be used individually or in combination to create sonic effects in performance and to enhance meaning. Sound may include silence or the deliberate absence of sound.'*
 - VCE Drama Study Design, Accreditation period from 2025

_____ Perfect and Karis Oka skilfully create live sound as an artistic choice to enhance meaning, establish mood, and heighten dramatic moments throughout their _____. An iconic moment can be seen early in Act ___, when Beetlejuice is first seen in the Maitland's home. When manipulating the 'Handbook for the _____ Deceased' as a puppet he calls 'Book', the _____ sees Perfect adopt a high-pitched, infantile vocal tone to establish the book as innocent and _____-like. This results in the creation of shock when he then slams it loudly shut, throwing it aggressively at the _____. In *Fright of Their Lives*, Perfect intentionally _____ his voice, shifting between deep growls, sharp squeals, and sudden, playful asides to the _____, crafting a volatile, unpredictable soundscape that reflects _____ chaotic personality, unsettling both his fellow characters and the _____. Karis Ora makes use of deliberate _____ to create tension, such as in the climactic wedding scene when she pauses in stunned quiet after Beetlejuice's outburst, allowing the _____ of sound to sharply intensify the suspense before the action resumes.



Space

- *'Space involves the way the performance area is used to communicate meaning, to define settings, to represent status and to create and/or manipulate actor-audience relationships. This may be achieved through levels, proximity and depth. The use of space may be symbolic.'*
- VCE Drama Study Design, Accreditation period from 2025

Let's look back at the use of space in the opening scene, where Beetlejuice is breaking the fourth wall during his first number, The Whole Being Dead Thing. Throughout this song, colour, _____, costume, blocking and use of _____ all contribute to drawing the audience's focus towards the devilish central _____. Whilst Beetlejuice builds a strong connection with us by directly _____ the audience, each member of the chorus of mourners are shielded by identical black twirling and rotating umbrellas which act to conceal their faces; they are not just covered by the props themselves, but also by the deep _____ they cast. This results in Beetlejuice's white, pallid visage glowing luminously in the cool followspots, popping against a sea of swirling choreographed black trench coats. But it is the use of _____ in the choreography of this number which really draws us to this dastardly demon; the chorus are restricted to perform around the edges of the space, whilst Eddie Perfect is largely blocked _____ stage, alongside Emily Deetz's coffin, entrenching the significance of both the lead character and the theme of _____ within the narrative. Similarly, the chorus are blocked further upstage, whilst Beetlejuice remains downstage as he establishes his role as the _____; though he may be antagonistic, unreliable and alarming, this use of space leaves us in no doubt that he is also in charge. The audience is positioned to feel a deep and delightful sense of dread in his opening number, as the symbolic decision of centering Beetlejuice's movements establishes him as ultimately powerful in the setting of the cemetery, the land of the _____.

Tension

- *'Tension is the suspense that holds an audience's attention as a performance unfolds. It may be constructed through mood or the use of other elements. The release of tension may have a comic or a dramatic effect.'*
- VCE Drama Study Design, Accreditation period from 2025

In Beetlejuice The Musical, tension is skilfully constructed and released through the careful manipulation of mood, _____ skills, and production _____, consistently holding the audience's attention. Early in the production, _____ is established in the _____ Waiting Room sequence, where unsettling lighting, distorted _____ pieces, and grotesque ensemble characters create an eerie, otherworldly mood, leaving the _____ unsure of what threats or surprises may emerge. This suspense is amplified by the _____ first attempt to haunt the Deetz family, where the dim, flickering lighting and sudden, ghostly sound effects momentarily create a chilling mood before it is unexpectedly released with comic effect when Lydia reacts with fascination rather than _____. Another effective moment of tension occurs in Say My Name, where _____ considers making a dangerous deal with _____; here, the use of isolated spotlights, a slower musical _____, and the characters' contrasting vocal tones build tension underpinned by risk and moral conflict. The sudden defeat of the antagonist offers dramatic resolution while restoring light-heartedness. This skilful _____ of comic and dramatic effects through shifts in mood ensures that tension is both engaging and thematically _____ to the production's playful yet macabre style.

ACTIVITY

REVISIT THE INFORMATION ON SYMBOLISM IN THE PRESHOW SECTION OF THIS PACK. NOW THAT YOU HAVE SEEN THE WHOLE PERFORMANCE, EXPLORE THE USE OF SYMBOLISM IN BEETLEJUICE THE MUSICAL, BY FINISHING THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

In Beetlejuice The Musical, we see *(insert actor's name)*

_____ extensively blocked
(describe area of the stage the actor is positioned),
symbolising...

The opening of Act 2 introduces us to a Girl Scout attempting to sell cookies to Lydia. This character trope references... *(describe what a Girl Scout represents and then analyse the use of Contrast between her and Lydia.)*

When we enter The Netherworld, we see dead characters holding various different props; these specific items link them between

and

symbolising...

Moments in the sound composition symbolically define the mood when...

Timbers used symbolism when encouraging moments of silence between characters. These occur when *(describe moment)*

representing *(analyse what the symbolism is representative of).*

William Ivey Long carefully considered the symbolism behind the use of colour in his costume designs, electing to comment upon...

OUTCOME 3.3 BASED INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

'In this area of study, students attend, analyse and evaluate a professional drama performance selected from the prescribed VCE Drama Unit 3 Playlist. Students analyse and evaluate the actors' use of expressive and performance skills to represent character and to communicate meaning in the performance. They consider how the actor-audience relationship is established, maintained and/or manipulated to create an effect, and analyse and evaluate how the selected conventions, dramatic elements, production areas, performance styles and contemporary practices are applied in the performance.'

- VCE Drama Study Design,
Accreditation period from 2025

Here you will find practice questions and relevant information around how your knowledge of Beetlejuice The Musical will be assessed during Unit 3 Drama, 2025.

HOT TIPS:

1. Remember to make note of the amount of marks allocated to each question, and make sure you spend your time accordingly.
2. Feel free to integrate the following recommended structure into your responses:

Use the acronym ODE

O - Overview - Give a summary or overview of the answer you are about to provide. Rewrite the question telling your reader what you are about to discuss. For example, if the question was 'analyse the use of 2 expressive skills by one actor in the performance' your first sentence may say 'In the performance of (insert show name), the actor (insert actors name) used the expressive skills of voice and gesture to help portray his character as enigmatic and excited.'

D - Describe - Describe what you saw and heard in visceral detail. You could start by saying 'for example', and then paint a picture of the performance for your reader. Be very descriptive in your response; try using adjectives and similes to help illustrate the moment you are discussing so that your reader has a really clear picture in their mind.

E- Effect - describe the intended effect on the audience. How did this make the audience feel? Surprised? Happy? Was the effect humorous or did you feel scared?

3. There is no point in summing up things at the end of your answer which you have already stated. Remember, responses in a Drama assessment need to paint a clear picture in the assessor's mind. Be descriptive instead of repetitive.
4. Draw upon the evaluative language which you highlighted in the reviews in both sections of this pack.
5. Depending on the requirements of the question, remember to refer to the themes, character descriptions and key quotes presented in Section A of this pack, and the Production Roles explored in both Sections.

1. Choose one scene or moment in the play and analyse how **two** conventions belonging to a performance style evident in Beetlejuice The Musical were used to enhance that scene or moment.

4 marks

2. Analyse how **one** actor manipulated expressive skills to establish and maintain an actor-audience relationship.

4 marks

3. Describe how **one** production area and **two** dramatic elements worked together to enhance the performance of Beetlejuice The Musical.

3 marks

4. Evaluate how **one** actor used their expressive and performance skills to create their character during the performance

3 marks

5. Discuss how **one** or more production area/s from the list below enhanced the intended meaning of Beetlejuice The Musical:

- Sound
- Costume
- Props
- Theatre technologies
- Lighting

4 marks

Here is the link to the Performance Descriptors created by VCAA for this assessment.



EXAM BASED ANALYSIS INFORMATION AND QUESTIONS

Here you will find the relevant information around how your knowledge of [Beetlejuice The Musical](#) will be assessed during the examination in October 2025.

VCE DRAMA — END OF YEAR WRITTEN EXAMINATION

Examination specifications

Description

The examination will be set by a panel appointed by the VCAA. All the key knowledge and key skills that underpin Unit 3, Outcomes 2 and 3, and Unit 4, Outcomes 1 and 3, are examinable.

Conditions

The examination will be completed under the following conditions:

- Duration: one-and-a-half hours
- Date: at the end of the year, on a date to be published annually by the VCAA
- VCAA examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the [VCE Administrative Handbook](#).
- The examination will be marked by assessors appointed by the VCAA.

Further advice

The VCAA publishes specifications for all VCE examinations on the VCAA website. Examination specifications include details about the sections of the examination, their weighting, the question format(s) and any other essential information. The specifications are published in the first year of implementation of the revised Unit 3 and 4 sequence, together with any sample material.

The examination will be in the form of a question and answer book. The examination will consist of two sections.

Section A will consist of short-answer and extended-answer questions and may include questions with multiple parts. Questions will be drawn from Unit 3, Area of Study 3 and will relate to the prescribed plays from the VCE Drama playlist for the year in question. This section may include questions relating to individual plays, from which students will respond to questions relating to **one** play. Alternatively, there may be common questions to which students will respond with reference to **one** play. Section A will be worth a total of 15 marks.

The total marks for the examination will be 50.

Answers are to be recorded in the spaces provided in the question and answer book.

Approved Materials and Equipment:

Pens, pencils, highlighters, erasers, sharpeners and rulers



PRACTICE WRITTEN EXAM QUESTIONS

1. Explain how **one** actor manipulated **one** production area to create meaning in **one** moment.
3 marks
2. Analyse how **one** actor used **one** expressive skill and one performance skill to represent a character in **one** specific moment of climax.
5 marks
3. Evaluate how **one** actor created an actor-audience relationship. In your response, refer to a moment when the actor established the actor-audience relationship, and a second moment where this relationship was either maintained or manipulated by the actor.
6 marks
4. Describe how **one** actor used focus in **one** moment of the performance of this play.
2 marks
5. Analyse how **one** or more actors used a convention of the performance style to manipulate the actor audience relationship. In your response, refer to:
 - **one** moment from the performance of this play
 - **one** convention from the performance style
 - **one** or more production areas6 marks
6. Evaluate how **one** actor used **two** expressive skills to portray one character in the performance of this play. In your response, explain how the actor manipulated the actor-audience relationship.
5 marks
7. Analyse how **two** conventions and **one** production area were used to convey meaning in the performance of this play.
4 marks
8. Explain how **one** dramatic element was applied in **one** specific moment in the performance of this play.
3 marks
9. Describe how **one** actor manipulated **one** performance skill in **one** specific moment in the performance of this play.
3 marks
10. Evaluate the use of **two or more** dramatic elements to enhance the performance in **one** specific moment in the performance of this play.
5 marks
11. Analyse how **one** production area was used to enhance the performance in **two** specific moments in the performance of this play.
3 marks

The end-of-year written examination
(see page 38 of the VCE Drama Study Design)
will contribute 25 per cent to the study score.

DRAMATIC ELEMENTS CLOZE ACTIVITY ANSWERS

CLIMAX

Climax is particularly prevalent during the final confrontation between Lydia, Beetlejuice, and the other characters. The most significant moment of tension occurs when Beetlejuice, having gained control over the Deetz household and the boundary between life and death, threatens the safety of everyone involved. Lydia, with the help of the Maitlands, attempts to banish him by tricking him into saying his name three times. This moment of heightened conflict, where the outcome remains uncertain, marks the musical's main climax. The set design becomes increasingly chaotic, with the Deetz household transforming into a distorted, The Netherworld-inspired landscape filled with jagged staircases, warped furniture, and supernatural imagery, reflecting the collapse of boundaries between the living and the dead. Special effects such as smoke, sudden trapdoor drops, and Beetlejuice's rapid entrances and exits enhance moments of danger and unpredictability, particularly during the climactic wedding scene. Once Beetlejuice is defeated, the central tension is resolved, allowing Lydia and her family to reconcile during the denouement. The musical also features smaller points of climax and anticlimax, such as during the dinner party scene where the Maitlands' haunting backfires comically, and in Lydia's solo number Dead Mom, which acts as an emotional climax for her character. These moments build and release tension throughout the narrative, making the story both engaging and emotionally layered.

CONFLICT

Lydia's internal conflict over her mother's death is visually supported by isolated, cool-toned lighting and sparse staging during Dead Mom, symbolically reflecting her emotional isolation and struggle to be heard within her family. This is compounded by external conflict between Lydia and her father Charles, whose attempts to force a cheerful, orderly home environment are visually represented through bright, artificial lighting and bold, modern furniture set pieces that clash with Lydia's gothic, monochrome costume; this physically and symbolically marks their opposing objectives. Conflict

is also heightened through the set and special effects during the Deetz family's first haunting, where eerie lighting changes, sudden sound effects, and animated set pieces such as moving furniture and transforming walls reflect the Maitlands' struggle to reclaim their home, complicated by Beetlejuice's disruptive presence. Environmental conflict is also embedded in the show's structure, particularly when Lydia attempts to open the portal to The Netherworld in the final act: deep blue lighting floods the stage and fog machines create a hostile atmosphere, symbolising her struggle against the boundaries between life and death. These layered, visually and physically embodied conflicts underscore the characters' obstacles and elevate the stakes, positioning conflict as an integral and engaging force throughout the production.

CONTRAST

Contrast is a key dramatic element in Beetlejuice The Musical; woven through both its themes and production design, to highlight shifts in mood, character, and meaning. Thematically, the show balances opposing ideas: life and death, chaos and order, belonging and alienation, sincerity and irreverence. The Maitlands' cozy, wholesome world is quickly disrupted by Beetlejuice's anarchic presence, while Lydia's grief-stricken search for connection contrasts with the living adults' superficiality and self-absorption. These juxtapositions allow heartfelt moments to land more poignantly amid the show's outrageous comedy.

In production design, contrast is boldly realised through set, costume, lighting, and puppetry. The Maitlands' home begins as a quaint, country-style Victorian house, which is later stripped into a cold, modern, monochrome Deetz residence — visually mirroring the clashing personalities within. As Beetlejuice gains control, the house morphs again into a surreal, grotesque funhouse of stripes, neon, and monstrous puppetry, creating a visual dialogue between normality and absurdity.

Even the costumes support this — Lydia's stark, gothic look sets her apart from the pastel-clad Maitlands and slick city-slicker Deetzes, visually reinforcing her outsider status. Puppets and digital technologies play

their part too, delicate, handmade aesthetics sit opposite over-the-top, monstrous projections to highlight the show's tonal shifts. These contrasts reflect its characters' emotional journeys and the show's collision of heart and hilarity.

MOOD

In Beetlejuice The Musical, mood is skilfully established and manipulated to shift between dark comedy, suspense, and heartfelt emotion, keeping the audience constantly engaged. The irreverent, chaotic mood of the opening is created through expressive performance skills such as Beetlejuice's exaggerated physical gestures, quick-witted asides to the audience, and energetic comic timing, which immediately set a playful, mischievous tone. This is effectively contrasted during haunting sequences, where production elements like eerie green and purple lighting, distorted set designs, and unsettling sound effects heighten the mood of supernatural suspense. A particularly striking example occurs during the Day-O dinner party scene, where the lively, absurd possession of the guests combines upbeat calypso music with controlled physical comedy to maintain a humorous mood, while hinting at underlying menace. The mood dramatically shifts in Lydia's solo Dead Mom, where dim, isolated lighting, a slowed tempo, and her emotionally raw vocal performance create a poignant, mournful atmosphere, drawing the audience into her personal grief. Overall, the production's deliberate manipulation of mood through performance conventions and production areas is highly effective, successfully balancing comedy, horror, and pathos to reflect the show's unique tone.

RHYTHM

Through the actor's brilliant use of rhythm during her delivery of Ready, Set, Not Yet, the audience is able to connect with Barbara's inner tension which rises as she confesses that there is a deeper meaning behind her amateur ceramic creations. Despite an unhurried entrance, once left alone, Elise McCann moves briskly downstage, nursing one 'amazingly glazed' pottery prop jug, and hilariously pats it repeatedly, suggesting she is briskly burping it like a baby. McCann's verbal delivery

speed increases rapidly to convey her 'motherly panic' here; this shift in rhythm emphasises her character's 'terror' about 'making maternal mistakes', conveying the intended meaning of her unfulfilled parental longing with aplomb.

SOUND

Eddie Perfect and Karis Oka skilfully create live sound as an artistic choice to enhance meaning, establish mood, and heighten dramatic moments throughout their performances. An iconic moment can be seen early in Act 1, when Beetlejuice is first seen in the Maitland's home. When manipulating the 'Handbook for the Recently Deceased' as a puppet he calls 'Book', the audience sees Perfect adopt a high-pitched, infantile vocal tone to establish the book as innocent and child-like. This results in the creation of shock when he then slams it loudly shut, throwing it aggressively at the fireplace. In *Fright of Their Lives*, Perfect intentionally manipulates his voice, shifting between deep growls, sharp squeals, and sudden, playful asides to the audience, crafting a volatile, unpredictable soundscape that reflects Beetlejuice's chaotic personality, unsettling both his fellow characters and the audience. Karis Oka makes use of deliberate silences to create tension, such as in the climactic wedding scene when she pauses in stunned quiet after Beetlejuice's outburst, allowing the absence of sound to sharply intensify the suspense before the action resumes.

SPACE

Let's look back at the use of space in the opening scene, where Beetlejuice is breaking the fourth wall during his first number, *The Whole Being Dead Thing*. Throughout this song, colour, props, costume, blocking and use of space all contribute to drawing the audience's focus towards the devilish central protagonist. Whilst Beetlejuice builds a strong connection with us by directly addressing the audience, each member of the chorus of mourners are shielded by identical black twirling and rotating umbrellas which act to conceal their faces; they are not just covered by the props themselves, but also by the deep shadows they cast. This results in Beetlejuice's white, pallid visage glowing luminously in the cool followspots, popping against

a sea of swirling choreographed black trench coats. But it is the use of space in the choreography of this number which really draws us to this dastardly demon; the chorus are restricted to perform around the edges of the space, whilst Eddie Perfect is largely blocked centre stage, alongside Emily Deetz's coffin, entrenching the significance of both the lead character and the theme of death within the narrative. Similarly, the chorus are blocked further upstage, whilst Beetlejuice remains downstage as he establishes his role as the narrator; though he may be antagonistic, unreliable and alarming, this use of space leaves us in no doubt that he is also in charge. The audience is positioned to feel a deep and delightful sense of dread in his opening number, as the symbolic decision of centering Beetlejuice's movements establishes him as ultimately powerful in the setting of the cemetery, the land of the dead.

TENSION

In *Beetlejuice The Musical*, tension is skilfully constructed and released through the careful manipulation of mood, expressive skills, and production areas, consistently holding the audience's attention. Early in the production, tension is established in *The Netherworld Waiting Room* sequence, where unsettling lighting, distorted set pieces, and grotesque ensemble characters create an eerie, otherworldly mood, leaving the audience unsure of what threats or surprises may emerge. This suspense is amplified by the Maitlands' first attempt to haunt the Deetz family, where the dim, flickering lighting and sudden, ghostly sound effects momentarily create a chilling mood before it is unexpectedly released with comic effect when Lydia reacts with fascination rather than fear. Another effective moment of tension occurs in *Say My Name*, where Lydia considers making a dangerous deal with Beetlejuice; here, the use of isolated spotlights, a slower musical tempo, and the characters' contrasting vocal tones build tension underpinned by risk and moral conflict. The sudden defeat of the antagonist offers dramatic resolution while restoring light-heartedness. This skilful balance of comic and dramatic effects through shifts in mood ensures that tension is both engaging and thematically appropriate to the production's playful yet macabre style.



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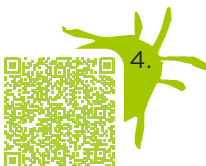


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CURRICULUM LINKS

VCE DRAMA

AREA OF STUDY 3

ANALYSING AND EVALUATING A PROFESSIONAL DRAMA PERFORMANCE

In this area of study, students attend, analyse and evaluate a professional drama performance selected from the prescribed VCE Drama Unit 3 Playlist. Students analyse and evaluate the actors' use of expressive and performance skills to represent character and to communicate meaning in the performance. They consider how the actor-audience relationship is established, maintained and/or manipulated to create an effect, and analyse and evaluate how the selected conventions, dramatic elements, production areas, performance styles and contemporary practices are applied in the performance.

The prescribed VCE Drama Playlist is published annually on the VCAA website.

OUTCOME 3

On completion of this unit, the student should be able to analyse and evaluate a professional drama performance from the prescribed VCE Drama Playlist.

To achieve this outcome, the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 3.

Key knowledge

- performance styles and conventions and their application in a performance
- actors' use of expressive and performance skills to represent characters in performance
- manipulation of dramatic elements and production areas to enhance performance
- contemporary drama practices
- actor-audience relationships
- drama terminology associated with performance styles and contemporary drama practices.

Key skills

- analyse and evaluate the representation of characters within a performance
- analyse and evaluate the manipulation of conventions, dramatic elements and production areas within a performance
- analyse and evaluate the use of performance styles and contemporary drama practices within a production
- analyse and evaluate actors' use of expressive and performance skills in a performance
- analyse and evaluate the establishment, maintenance and/or manipulation of the actor-audience relationship in a performance
- apply relevant drama terminology.

END OF YEAR EXAMINATION

WRITTEN EXAMINATION

DESCRIPTION

The examination will be set by a panel appointed by the VCAA. All the key knowledge and key skills that underpin Unit 3, Outcomes 2 and 3, and Unit 4, Outcomes 1 and 3, are examinable.

CONDITIONS

The examination will be completed under the following conditions:

- *Duration: one and a half hours.
- *Date: end-of-year, on a date to be published annually by the VCAA.
- *VCAA examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook.
- *The examination will be marked by assessors appointed by the VCAA.

FURTHER ADVICE

The VCAA publishes specifications for all VCE examinations on the VCAA website. Examination specifications include details about the sections of the examination, their weighting, the question format/s and any other essential information. The specifications are published in the first year of implementation of the revised Unit 3 and 4 sequence together with any sample material.

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM

DRAMA — LEVELS 9 & 10

CONTENT DESCRIPTORS

Respond and Interpret

1. Evaluate how the elements of drama, forms and performance styles in devised and scripted drama convey meaning and aesthetic effect (VCADRR045)
2. Analyse a range of drama from contemporary and past times, including the drama of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to explore differing viewpoints and develop understanding of drama practice across local, national and international contexts (VCADRR046)

LEVELS 9 & 10 ACHIEVEMENT STANDARD

Students analyse the elements of drama, forms and performance styles and evaluate meaning and aesthetic effect in drama they devise, interpret, perform and view. They use experiences of drama practices from different cultures, places and times to evaluate drama.



michaelcasselgroup



WARNER BROS.
THEATRE VENTURES

BETWEEN

THE

LINES

Arts Education Consultancy

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To learn more about Beetlejuice The Musical, visit our website

<https://beetlejuicethemusical.com.au/>

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