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# A Visual Concept for Robinson Jeffers' Adaptation of Euripides' Medea

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Lanham,

H. Kevin

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A VISUAL CONCEPT FOR ROBINSON JEFFERS'  
ADAPTATION OF EURIPIDES' MEDEA

A Thesis Presented to  
the Faculty of the  
Department of Communications and Theatre  
Western Kentucky University  
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

by  
H. Kevin Lanham  
April 1978

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A VISUAL CONCEPT FOR ROBINSON JEFFERS'  
ADAPTATION OF EURIPIDES' MEDEA

Recommended 4-26-78  
(Date)

William E. Leonard

James L. Brown

D. Whitney Combs

Approved May 1, 1978  
(Date)

Clara Gray  
Dean of the Graduate College

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A VISUAL CONCEPT FOR ROBINSON JEFFERS'  
ADAPTATION OF EURIPIDES' MEDEA

H. Kevin Lanham

April, 1978

66 pages

Directed by: James L. Brown  
D. Whitney Combs  
William E. Leonard

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The theatrical elements of setting, costumes, and make-up for Robinson Jeffers' adaptation of Euripides' Medea were designed and constructed in an attempt to create an effective visual concept. Through careful script analysis and close communication with the director and production staff, the designer combined the visual elements. As a record of the concept development from generalities to rough sketches and from formal drawings and diagrams to the finished product, the designer uses the accounting to trace both the artistic creation and the physical construction of each set element and costume for Medea.



## INTRODUCTION

The intent of this study is to trace the development of the visual concept for the Robinson Jeffers' adaptation of Euripides' Medea, produced at Western Kentucky University, April 11-16, 1978. It is a record of the designer's attempt to interpret and express visually the essence of Medea, through a unification of set, costumes, and make-up.

The first chapter deals with the necessity of developing a unique environment for Medea through analysis and interpretation of the Jeffers script. Other elements included in this chapter are the technical requirements of the script and the results of the first preliminary discussion between director and designer.

Chapter two presents the development of the visual concept as was achieved through the series of conferences between director, designer, and production staff. These conferences deal with nearly every facet of mounting a theatrical production, ranging from aesthetic considerations to practical matters such as budgeting and scheduling.

A record of the actual construction of the set and costumes comprises chapter three. This record is a daily account of the progress of construction. The

illustrative material (designer's sketches, color charts, and photographs depicting the development of the visual elements) is organized into the appendices.

The conclusion is a brief evaluation of the effectiveness of the visual concept that was achieved for the set, costumes, and make-up. It involves a discussion of what did and did not work.

CHAPTER I  
AN ENVIRONMENT FOR MEDEA

Capturing the essence of a script and communicating this essence visually is the primary goal of the designer. Each script has its own unique requirements which the playwright has imposed on the setting, costumes, and make-up. The designer, within the guidelines provided by the playwright and director, takes these requirements and adds to them personal imagination to create a mood and an atmosphere that will enhance and reinforce the characters and the locale of the play. Only through careful analysis of the script can the designer hope to capture its spirit, its essence, and hope to communicate this essence in visual terms.

After the initial reading of Robinson Jeffers' Medea, the designer realized that a great deal of freedom could be utilized in creating an environment for the play. Jeffers provides minimal information regarding set and costumes. His only comment on locale is, "The entire action of the play occurs before Medea's house in Corinth."<sup>1</sup> There is no mention of costumes in the script.

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<sup>1</sup>Robinson Jeffers, Medea (New York: Samuel French, Inc., 1948), p. 5.

Though there is no Shavian description of set and/or costumes, Jeffers does offer strong suggestions in his poetic verse regarding the mood that the spectacle should reflect. Repeatedly, such words as blood, evil, and despair creep into the dialogue, influencing the designer to think visually in terms of death and darkness.

. . . Death, death is my wish. For  
myself, my enemies, my children.  
Destruction. . . crimson-cloaked in  
the blood of our wounds. . . It is  
for a childless man, utter despair,  
darkness, extinction. . . Did you  
feel nothing, no pity, are you  
pure evil?<sup>2</sup>

The scope of the play, in its dealings with murder, infanticide, and witchcraft, suggests an environment beyond the realm of human existence. Based on the mythological account of Medea, it extends into a symbolic realm characterized by foreboding and desolation.

Cognizant of the prevailing mood, the designer must evolve a unifying concept--a single point of view for the production. This concept would provide physical expression of the mood of the play and at the same time add unity to the various components of the design. Slowly, two images began to take shape that would ultimately influence and add unity to the overall visual concept of death and darkness. These two elements were doors and serpents.

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 13, 15, 42, 79.

The doors loomed larger and larger in importance upon successive readings of the play. Eventually, the doors came to be the single element around which the rest of the set would evolve. The doors are Medea's source of protection and are under her control. Only those whom she trusts (her servants and children) are allowed access to her dwelling through the doors. In the denouement the doors take on added significance, because no one can hope to enter and prevent Medea from slaughtering her children. Even Jason, the bold adventurer and warrior, is unable to break through Medea's firmly bolted doors.

The designer felt that Medea's house should exemplify and reinforce her character. As the serpent evolved into physical expression of Medea's sorceress powers, it became the desire of the designer to incorporate this motif into Medea's house. Consideration was also given to working the serpent motif into her costume.

Another aspect of the play is the allusion of entrapment. By suggesting that the house is located on a barren cliff, isolated from "civilized" Greece, this suggestion of entrapment could find expression. Once the three women enter, they are powerless to leave and must remain to witness the atrocities of the second act. Medea, too, reminds one of a caged animal, fighting with all her will for her own survival and, more importantly, her absolute revenge. The positioning of the house

would be vital in reinforcing this captive feeling. With only one major entrance on stage, access to and escape from Medea's dwelling could be purposely regulated and restricted. This too would aid in physically expressing the aspect of incarceration.

The first act of Medea is not technically demanding. However, Jeffers calls for several magical and difficult technical effects in act two. Jeffers calls for "spears, with snakes coiled around them, at the foot of the columns."<sup>3</sup> These snakes are Medea's door guards, ready to strike on command to protect the entrance to the house. In addition, Medea presents the gifts of a "cloak of woven gold" and a "gold coronet" which consume Creusa and Creon in flame offstage. They are, though, to seem magically alive to foreshadow the powers that the gold possesses. The final effect called for is the slaying of the boys.

These technical requirements are essential to the plot development of Medea and need careful consideration in order to make them convincing. From the beginning, the designer felt it would be advantageous to eliminate the snakes on the spears due to the difficulty involved with their construction and rigging. An alternate plan was needed, but no concrete solution presented itself in this phase of the process. It was decided that the

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

golden cloak and coronet could be made to look "almost alive" by focusing special lights on them. The difficulty involved with the murder of the children is principally a matter of masking. The children are slain just inside the doors, as Medea reveals them to Jason. However, Medea must enter through the doors without revealing the corpses until the desired moment. The designer decided to wait until the first preliminary conference with the director to find definite solutions to this and the other technical problems mentioned above.

As has been alluded to earlier, the costumes, too, must be designed as a part of an artistic whole that expresses and enhances the mood and theme of the playwright's script. The costume serves as an index to the character's environment--an instant indication of the historical period, social class, age, and occupation. On a more subjective level, the costume expresses the psychological state of the character, specifies the style of production, and parallels the structure and progression of the play. These aspects of stage costumes must be considered in order to assure that they are an extension of character and an element of the production that coincides and compliments the overall visual concept.

The first preliminary conference took place on December 5, 1977, and was attended by the director, D. Whitney Combs, and the designer. The first matter

of discussion concerned the number of extras the director wanted in the play. In the original cast of Jeffers' Medea, four guards were in attendance to Creon and Jason. It was decided that two of these could be eliminated without difficulty. The final size of the cast and the assigned ages were as follows:

- |                        |                                |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Medea -- 40         | 9. Aegeus -- 65                |
| 2. Nurse -- ancient    | 10. Woman #1 -- 60             |
| 3. Tutor -- 60         | 11. Woman #2 -- 40             |
| 4. Boy #1 -- 9         | 12. Woman #3 -- 20             |
| 5. Boy #2 -- 6         | 13. Guard #1 -- 25             |
| 6. Jason -- mid-30's   | 14. Guard #2 -- 25             |
| 7. Jason's slave -- 20 | 15. Medea's attendant #1 -- 25 |
| 8. Creon -- 60         | 16. Medea's attendant #2 -- 25 |

It was decided that the three Corinthian women should be members of the upper class with their costumes reflecting their social strata and their ages. Since these women upheld the Greek view of life with its balance and moderation, their costumes were to be based on the Greek chiton--the typical attire of the Greek civilization.<sup>4</sup>

Other costumes discussed at this meeting were those of Jason and Medea. In casting, the director would look for a body "spectacularly handsome" to portray the role of Jason. With a good physical build it would be advantageous to expose much of the actor's body,

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<sup>4</sup>Lucy Barton, Historic Costume for the Stage (Boston: Walter H. Baker Company, 1935), p. 51.



reinforcing the arrogant and vain nature of Jason. It was decided that Medea's costume should include a train to distinguish her from the other women wearing the modified Greek chitons. The director suggested that a white, blood-soaked gown be made for Medea to wear after she has slain her children. This would imply a kind of sacrificial attitude toward the slaying.

Though there was disagreement on the "look" of the setting, the director and designer agreed that it should reflect the mood of the play and at the same time reinforce the actions of Medea's character. The director desired "something that looks thousands of years old, as if it has gone through an earthquake and is decaying, . . . something crude and primitive." The designer agreed with this feeling of decay and primitive background, but thought that the mood could be conveyed with clean lines rather than something free-formed and crude.

The preliminary conference concluded with a discussion of style for Medea. Although no word or phrase was ever coined, it was determined that the mode of presentation would be openly theatrical, i.e., unrealistic light changes pointing up Medea's shifting moods; an evocative, rather than literal, representation of locale; a setting that would suggest something primitive, barbaric, and from the past, but not wholly identifiable with any distinct historical period.

The director's comments and suggestions were a crucial step in achieving an environment for Medea. What had once been merely ideas were beginning to be visible and these ideas found expression in the designer's rough sketches.

CHAPTER II  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE VISUAL CONCEPT

In chapter one the designer sought to describe the environment for Medea through analysis of the script and the first discussion with the director. As the designer worked within the guidelines established by the playwright and director to insure clarity of presentation, solutions to the problems reported in chapter one were accomplished. Many solutions were reached through a series of conferences which the designer had with the director. Subsequent meetings with the director and the production staff were held to check and evaluate the progress of the design. This chapter is an account of these conferences, at which decisions affecting the visual concept were made.

On January 16, 1978, a production meeting was held to discuss budget and style. It was a session attended by William E. Leonard, D. Whitney Combs, James L. Brown, and the designer. The director began the meeting with a discussion of the style he was hoping to achieve with the play. For the most part, his comments were reiterative of the style decided upon by himself and the designer during the preliminary

meeting in December, i.e., openly theatrical in terms of lighting and effects dealing with mood.

The designer introduced his idea of the serpent as a visual expression of Medea's witchcraft and also as a unifying element that could be repeated throughout the design. The production staff agreed that a unifying serpent motif would aid in the physical expression of the essence of the play.

In preparation for the meeting the designer had drawn up an estimated budget for set, costumes, and make-up. (Appendix A) The budget was approved with the understanding that if any unexpected expenses presented themselves, the designer was to check with the production staff before purchasing.

The scheduling of the next conference ended this meeting. The designer was expected to present a scaled floor plan, model, costume color chart, and a tentative technical schedule at the future conference set for February 7, 1978.

A private discussion was held January 31, 1978, between the director and the designer in preparation for the February 7 production conference. The setting was the primary topic dealt with in this discussion. By this time, the designer had constructed a trial model and had drawn a rough floor plan for the director's inspection.

The model (even in its unfinished stage) was tremendously helpful in presenting the designer's ideas concerning levels and perspective. The designer suggested that a small reflective pool be included down stage right. The pool would add interest to the setting and help balance the massiveness of the house stage left. The director agreed and it was decided that the major portion of the floor would be platformed, allowing six inches of depth for the pool.

The dimensions of the doors were set at 6' x 12'. At this meeting the designer suggested that bronze bas relief panels with the serpent motif be worked into the design of the doors. It was the designer's hope that these panels would replace the "snakes, coiled around spears" that Jeffers calls for. By lighting the panels with an amber gelled instrument, the snakes would appear to glow and be controlled by Medea. The director had reservations about using the panels instead of what Jeffers suggested but conceded that the serpent panels might work for the magical effect. (Appendix I)

The director requested that the setting not be a drab gray stone. He felt that warm colors (something on the order of sandstone) would add interest and vitality to the setting. The designer had made no definite decision on the color of the set at this point and agreed to experiment with browns and yellows rather than grays.

As mentioned earlier, the designer wanted to use the serpent motif as a unifying visual element repeated throughout the design. The motif had already been approved on the doors. The designer suggested working the serpent into the entablature (the decorative section above the columns) of the house and working it into a snake mosaic floor pattern. These suggestions met with the approval of the director. (Appendix D)

Upon inspection of the model, it was decided that a wall was needed to tie the house in with the upstage right entrance ramp. The wall was to be kept low in order to expose as much of the cyclorama as possible. (Appendix D)

Near the end of this meeting the designer felt much more comfortable about the progress of the design. The rough floor plan was approved with the understanding that a trial, scaled floor plan be drawn for the next production meeting. The model was to be revised and presented with the trial floor plan.

The scheduling of another private meeting to talk about costumes concluded the discussion. The date was set for February 2. Though costumes had been alluded to in prior meetings, very few definite decisions had been made.

On February 2, each character was discussed in terms of colors that would enhance and reinforce his/her role in the play. Medea had always been seen in

deep blue and maroon. Her costume was envisioned in these intense colors because the designer wished to reinforce the intensity of her emotions and actions. The maroon was used to foreshadow the killing of her children. A golden snake bracelet was also suggested as a physical expression of Medea's sorceress powers.

The Nurse's age was an influential factor in selecting a color for her costume. It was decided that gray would help reinforce the antiquity of this character.

No definite colors were assigned to the Corinthian women at this meeting. However, it was the designer's wish that pastels be used in all three costumes. The pastels would contrast sharply with the intense blue and maroon used for Medea. The pastels would also tie the women together, suggesting that they were a corporate body, promoting basically the same ideology.

Creon was seen in white with touches of pale green. The white would suggest his innocence of any crime committed against Medea and the green would establish an immediate contrast with Medea's maroon and blue. The director suggested that Creon's costume cover the actor's arms in order to overcome the difficulty of making them appear old. Creon also represents the power of Corinth. To suggest his royal position and Greek heritage, it was decided that the chiton and himation (typical Greek garments) be used.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Barton, Historic Costumes, p. 51.

Creon's attendants were to be costumed as soldiers in subdued colors to prevent any visual distraction from the other characters.

Jason was to be dressed as a warrior in leather and armor. A green cloak would be used to indicate his conflict with Medea. Copper was also suggested as a color for Jason to reinforce his flashy, arrogant nature. His slave was to be costumed in colors similar to Jason, but without the copper ornamentation.

No definite decision was reached concerning Aegeus' costume at this meeting. However, both director and designer agreed that the color of his costume should exemplify his sympathetic attitude toward Medea's plight. Some sort of traveling attire was suggested to support the idea of Aegeus being on a journey.

The director suggested that Medea's attendants be dressed exotically and in colors that would connect them with their mistress. Medea's sons were to be costumed in pastel tints of Medea's intense blue and maroon. It was decided that the tutor be dressed in dark browns to symbolize his natural, solid character.

This meeting was vital in establishing the color chart necessary for grouping and identifying the characters. The colors decided upon were indicative of each character and were used to suggest character relationships. The color chart also proved invaluable in selecting materials for the costumes.



The final conference with the production staff occurred on February 7, 1978. The designer presented a tentative technical calendar which met with approval. (Appendix E)

After viewing the model of the setting, William Leonard suggested that a colonnade along the upstage right ramp would aid in unifying and tying in the stage right area with the house positioned stage left. The designer agreed that something was needed and incorporated the colonnade into the design. (Appendix F)

The sightlines inside the house proved to be a disappointment. There were several suggestions for improvement, but it was generally conceded that due to the positioning of the house and the size of the doors, the sightlines (as represented by the scale model) were the best that were technically possible.

With minor reservations the floor plan and model were approved by the production staff. The meeting concluded after the designer had presented a costume color chart (Appendix G) and plans were finalized to purchase material.

On March 23, 1978, a brief meeting was held to discuss properties for Medea. Present were the designer, the director, and the properties master, Jonathan Sprouse. The outcome of this meeting was a finalized prop list. (Appendix H)

During the period of conferences just discussed

the visual concept developed from rough sketches into a completed floor plan and model. The environment for Medea had found physical expression. With the guidance and evaluation of the director and the production staff, the designer believed that the best floor plan and model had been achieved.

CHAPTER III  
EXECUTION OF THE VISUAL CONCEPT

The next phase in the development of the visual concept, the execution, is presented in this chapter. It has been organized into a type of log--a daily account of the progress and completion of the scenic units and the costumes for Medea.

February 3, 1978--

The color chart for costumes was approved by the director.

February 4, 1978--

The director and designer purchased costume material for Medea, the Nurse, and the Tutor. Careful attention was given to selecting material that would correspond with the costume color chart. (Appendix G)

February 6, 1978--

Orders were placed for the leather for armor for Jason and the guards and for jewelry incorporating the serpent motif for Medea. Rehearsal skirts and wraps were pulled for the women so that they could become accustomed to the draped costumes they would be wearing.

February 22, 1978--

The designer labeled the platforms (in storage) needed for the levels in Medea in hopes that this would save time during the first tech night.

February 27, 1978--

The floor plan was painted on the stage floor. (Appendix K) Costume measurements were taken. The designer presented the approved model and costume sketches (with samples of material) to the cast.

February 28, 1978--

The legs were cut for elevating the platforms.

March 1, 1978--

Existing platforms which had been previously labeled were transported from storage to the Russell Miller Theatre and work was begun positioning them onstage. Construction was initiated on the necessary irregular platforms.

March 5, 1978--

The positioning of the platforms was continued. Upson board was applied to the platforms to deaden sound and to provide a better painting surface. Construction was begun on the step units and the stage right ramp.

March 6, 1978--

The available fourteen foot flats were pulled from stock and checked for damage that would need repair. Work continued on applying the upson board to the platforms. (Appendix J)

March 8, 1978--

Header, flat #5, was constructed and covered with upson board rather than muslin to eliminate any movement when the door was in operation. The remaining platforms were covered with upson board and taped. The tape was primed with white paint to prevent any beading up of the basecoat on unpainted tape. (Appendix M)

March 13, 1978--

Construction was begun on the 14'-0" columns. 1" x 6" lumber was ripped to make the 1" x 3" framework of the flats to be constructed.

March 14, 1978--

The styrofoam tops for the 14'-0" columns were glued together and shaped with an electric knife, rasps, and sandpaper. After shaping, the tops were covered with cheesecloth for durability. The two 2'-6" x 14'-0" flats, #4 and #6, were constructed. Flat #12 was pulled from stock and the window opening was covered with muslin. The remainder of the flats were numbered and patched.

March 15, 1978--

The sizing coat was applied to the new canvas covering the window opening on flat #12. Construction was begun on the door frame using 2' x 4's and 3/4" plywood. This is a much heavier and sturdier construction technique than is usually used for stage doors, but was needed due to the size of the doors and the physical demands made on them, i.e., Jason beats on the doors near the end of the play.

March 16, 1978--

The entablature was constructed employing standard flat frames. It was built in four separate sections so that it could be maneuvered into place a piece at a time. It would have been impossible to install on the top of the facade, had it been in one piece. There was also the advantage of reusing the standard 2' flats used in its construction. (Appendix R) The framework for the doors was also constructed. 3/4" plywood was utilized for added strength at the corners and to insure a square fit.

March 17, 1978--

The door panels (made of 1/4" plywood) were cut out and set aside to be finished after the doors were installed. The hinges were placed on the doors. The serpent bas relief for the door panels was cut

out of 1" styrofoam and glued together. The glue was allowed to dry for 24 hours before shaping.

March 18, 1978--

3/16" upson board was applied to the entablature (cornice). The sections were temporarily joined with loose pin hinges and 1' x 3' plates. One of the bas relief styrofoam serpents was shaped and positioned on the 1/4" plywood panel.

March 20, 1978--

The molding for the cornice was ripped and glued together, then set aside to dry. Flats #13 and #14 were joined, stiffened, and dutchmanned. The primer coat was painted on canvas covered flats #'s 1, 3, 7, 9, 10, and 11. 3/16" upson board was applied to flats #2 and #8. They were then covered with muslin to hide the seams. Work was begun on the armor. It was formed out of torn celastic over a clay mold.

March 21, 1978--

1" styrofoam was cut and glued together to form the cornice serpents (Appendix R) The framework for the two 7'-6" pillars and the 3'-0" pillar was constructed. The legs used for masking were rearranged on the appropriate battens and the purple grand teaser was replaced with a black border.

The act curtain was tied back behind the proscenium arch. The molding for the cornice and baseboard was coated with spackling for durability.

March 22, 1978--

3/32" upson board was applied to the pillars, then covered with muslin. Styrofoam was glued together for the smaller pillar tops. The interior step unit was bolted into position. Work continued on the armor.

March 23, 1978--

Flats #'s 4, 5, and 6 were joined, stiffened, and dutchmanned. Construction was begun on the wall running from the house to the stage right ramp. The pool platform was covered with upson board and a thickness piece was added.

March 24, 1978--

The paint for the exterior walls was mixed according to the paint formulas found in Appendix N. Flats #'s 4, 5, and 6 were scumbled with the base, tint, and shade; then spattered with those three colors. The smaller column tops were shapped. Work continued on the armor.

March 25, 1978--

Flats #'s 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 were scumbled and spattered. The smaller columns were primed with



a 50/50 mixture of Elmer's glue and white latex paint. The tops for the smaller columns were shaped and covered with cheesecloth. Uson board was applied to the interior step units and the wall from the house to the ramp.

March 27, 1978--

Material for rehearsal costumes was purchased. Rehearsal costumes for the men were constructed. The 3'-0" pillar was covered with illustration board rather than upson board because of the tight curve. (Appendix Q) The doors were basecoated with an acrylic semi-gloss paint. By using the acrylic rather than a water base paint, it was easier to control the contrast between the basecoat and the woodgraining overbase technique. (Appendix N)

March 28, 1978--

The three smaller columns were scumbled with the basecoat and spattered. (Appendix F)  
Construction was begun on the furniture. (Appendix S)  
The designer traveled to Louisville to purchase the remaining material for costumes.

March 29, 1978--

Construction was begun on the actual costumes.  
The bench and stool legs were glued together and shaped.  
The two stage right pillars were erected.

March 30, 1978--

The doors were hung. Once they were up it was discovered that about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " needed to be sanded off of the inside edges so that the doors would close smoothly. The construction of the furniture was completed and the benches were coated with white paint.

March 31, 1978--

The paint for the interior of the house was mixed. (Appendix N) The interior flats #'s 12, 13, 14, and 15 were scumbled and spattered.

April 1, 1978--

Stage jacks were used to brace exterior flats #'s 1 - 11. The plastic liner for the pool was installed. To protect against leakage, foam rubber was applied to the bottom edges of the pool to serve as a cushion for the plastic. The plastic was then stapled to the platform and the edges covered with  $\frac{3}{16}$ " upson board. Construction was continued on the costumes. The paint for the floor was mixed and the floor was then scumbled. (Appendix N)

April 3, 1978--

The cornice serpents were shaped and covered with cheesecloth.

Costume construction was continued.

April 4, 1978--

Several of the costumes were cut out in preparation for the following tech night.

April 5, 1978--

Graphite was applied to the guards' armor.

The remaining costumes were constructed in order that they be ready for dress parade.

The cornice was scumbled and spattered. The cornice molding was marbleized and attached to the cornice. Handles were attached to the doors.

April 6, 1978--

Dress parade began at 7:00 p.m. The costumes were approved, with minor exceptions, by both the director and the designer. (Appendix P)

The bench and stool were marbleized. The mortar was applied to the stage floor and the border was painted on and spattered.

April 7, 1978--

The floor was coated with an acrylic sealer to protect it from wear and tear. Minor costume alterations were made.

April 8, 1978--

The interior floor was scumbled and spattered. The door sill was installed. The baseboard

molding was precut to fit the exterior flats. The first dress rehearsal with full make-up produced the conclusion that all of the make-up was too subtle and should be heavier.

April 9, 1978--

Water was added to the pool. The masking problems stage right were resolved by hanging legs from batten to batten. The light leaks were corrected stage left.

The serpent bas relief panels were shaped and basecoated with black latex paint. Gold rub-n-buff was then rubbed over the coarse styrofoam, resulting in a scaled texture. The serpent panels were installed in the doors. (Appendix I)  
The exterior baseboard was marbleized.

April 10, 1978--

Repairs and touch-ups were made on the torn upson board using the appropriate paint. The baseboard molding was attached to the exterior flats. A very weak solution of black latex paint and water was splashed on the set with a brush to create the illusion of age and weathering. (Appendix T)  
The final dress rehearsal began.  
The designer breathed a sigh of relief.

## CONCLUSION

This study has presented the development of a visual concept for Robinson Jeffers' Medea. As in any production, Medea presented the designer with a multitude of challenges. All were elements common to every theatrical endeavor, yet the desired results are unique for each production.

One such element or "problem" is that of using the setting, costumes, and make-up to communicate visually the essence of a script. All of the designer's resources combine to create an atmosphere representative of the play's unique qualities. Medea called for an environment full of emotion and the visual elements could be (and were) very expressive in terms of line, color, and contrast. Recognizing the director's vision of "primitive and crude," it was possible to convey a setting with an ageless, barbaric feeling through clean lines and the use of symbolism.

There are many practical considerations beyond the aesthetic in designing and constructing any show, and Medea presented these considerations. Scheduling, budgeting, purchasing, and attempting to foresee possible problems are all elements which weigh heavily in technical theatre. Having been involved in all of

these aspects, the various production meetings and conferences were very beneficial to the designer, when attempting to tie all of them together.

If Medea were presented again, there would be a few minor changes that the designer would make. Using the idea of ceramic tile, the pool would be bordered to add interest and to better disguise the plastic liner. The small "marble" stool used in the second act would either be set so that it was not carried off stage, or it would be painted to look wooden or some other lighter weight material. The men in the cast needed specific work with their costumes to facilitate their movement so that the costumes could truly enhance the characters.

As the designer mentioned in chapter one, the visual elements of a production should work as a unified whole expressing the essence of the script. In this production of Medea, it is believed that the visual elements--the setting, costumes, and make-up--did create an atmosphere within which the actors and the script worked well.

APPENDIX A  
ESTIMATED BUDGET  
(Page 29)

ESTIMATED BUDGET

Costumes

Medea	50.00
Nurse	20.00
Jason	25.00
Creon	25.00
Aegeus	25.00
1st Woman	20.00
2nd Woman	20.00
3rd Woman	20.00
Jason's Slave	10.00
Tutor	10.00
Child #1	5.00
Child #2	5.00
Medea's Attendant #1	15.00
Medea's Attendant #2	15.00
Guard #1	20.00
Guard #2	20.00

(\$8/pr.) Sandals 104.00  
(\$2/hide) Leather 30.00  
Sub-total . . . . \$439.00

Set

Scrim (18'x30')	183.00
Upson board (from <u>La Mancha</u> )	-00.00
Paint, bronzing powder, etc.	75.00
Lumber	150.00
Fabric	50.00
Sub-total . . . .	\$458.00

Properties

Boxes, spears, etc.	50.00
+ Miscellaneous	53.00
TOTAL . . . .	\$1,000.00



APPENDIX B

ACTUAL COST OF MATERIALS  
(Page 30)

ACTUAL COST OF MATERIALS

Set & Properties

Vendor	Description	Cost
Hill-Motley	3/16" Upson Board	136.50
Hill-Motley	Styrofoam, 1/4" plywood, 2x4	115.12
Hill-Motley	3/16" Upson Board, Styrofoam	57.50
Village Hardware	Plastic, wood dough	4.80
Village Hardware	Hinges, bolts	5.75
Remnant House	Cheesecloth	2.50
Porter Paints	1 gal. semi-gloss	15.00
Theatre House	3 gal. burnt umber	39.95
	Sub-total . . . .	\$375.12

Costumes & Makeup

A. Baer	Fabric	73.74
Costume Armour, Inc.	Helmet	44.00
Costume Armour, Inc.	Greaves	30.00
Jewelart Collection	Serpent bracelet & belt	14.00
Tandy's	Grommets & dye	7.96
A. Baer	Fabric	232.85
Nobil Shoes	Sandals	4.17
Woolco	Sandals	8.38
Kroger	Dye	2.84
T.G.&Y.	Fabric	1.99
Crafttown	Braid & Trim	7.72
Woolco	Fabric	11.79
Treasure Island	Copper Bracelet	3.13
Theatre House	Celastic	49.80
Village Hardware	Solvent	4.95
Big K	Hair spray	5.59
C.D.S. #4	Tips & Frost	3.68
C.D.S. #4	Stage blood, whitener	5.11
Houchens	Softener & braid	7.72
So Fro	Buckles	4.57
	Sub-total . . . .	\$523.99
	<u>TOTAL</u> . . . .	\$899.01

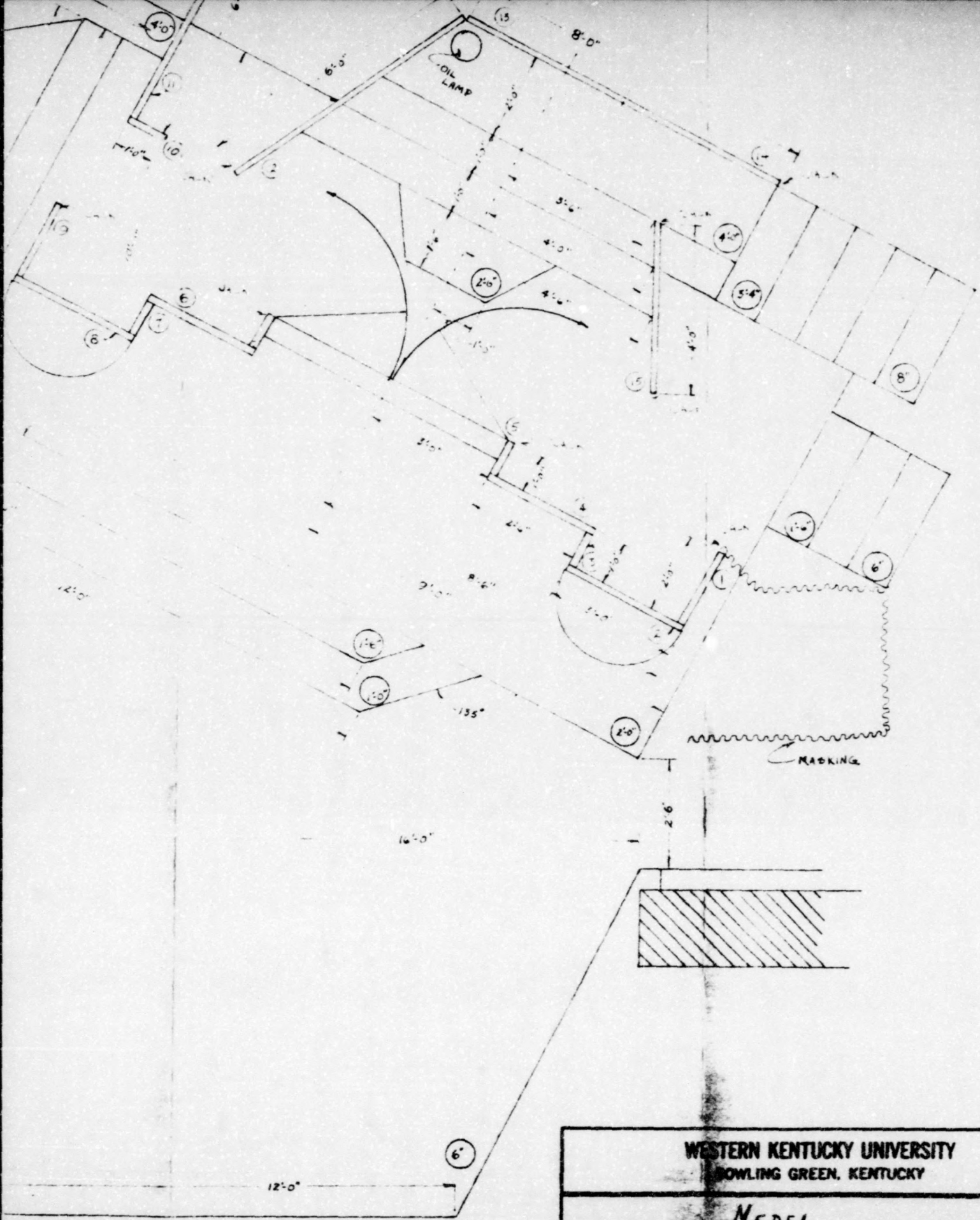
APPENDIX C

FLOOR PLAN  
(Page 31)









<b>WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY</b>		
BOWLING GREEN, KENTUCKY		
<i>MEDEA</i>		
DWG. DATE: 2-15-78	DWG. BY: KEVIN LANNAN	DWG. NO
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"	TITLE BY:	21

APPENDIX D  
PHOTOGRAPHS OF MODEL  
(Page 32)



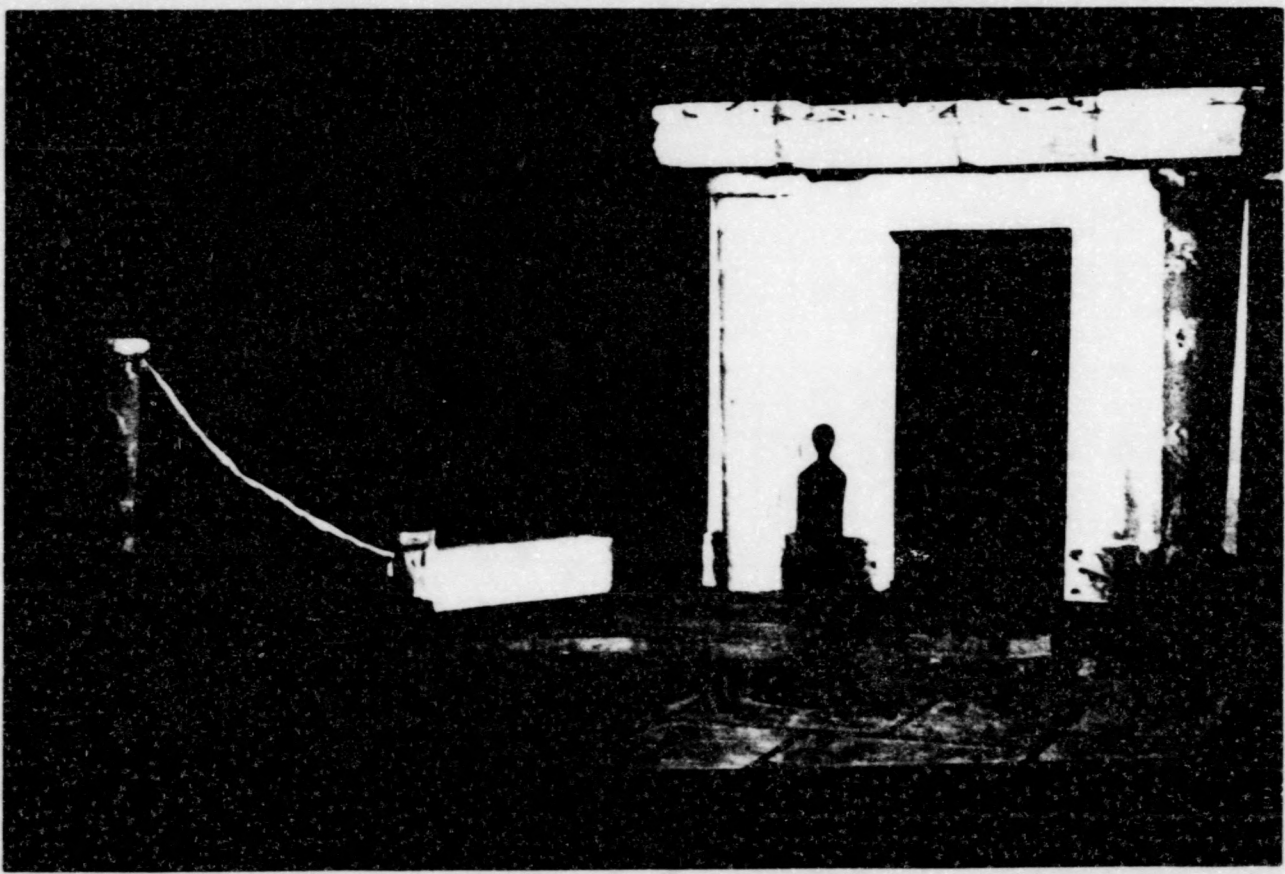
Dark

Documents

- May not  
film well -

Filmed as

Received

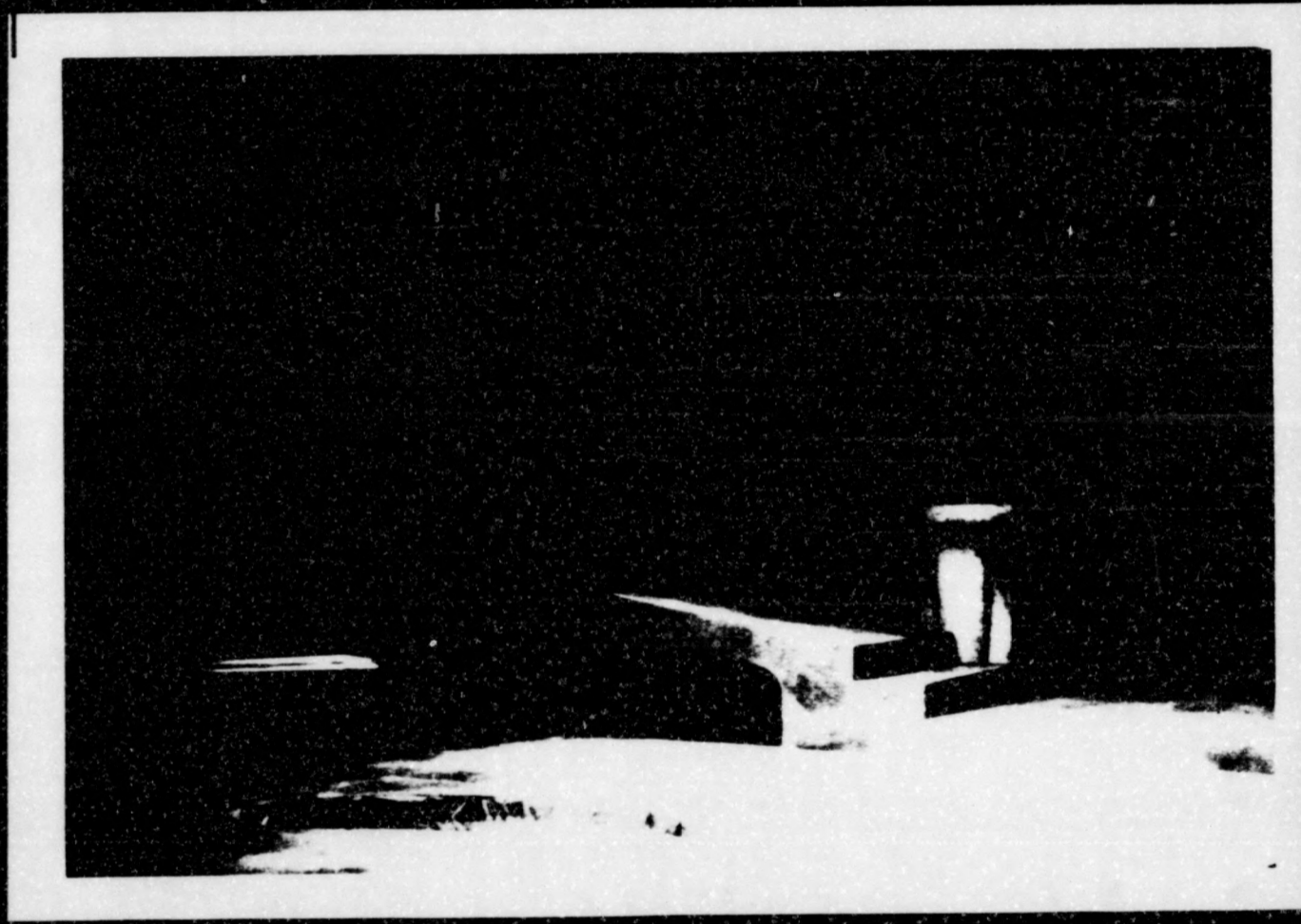
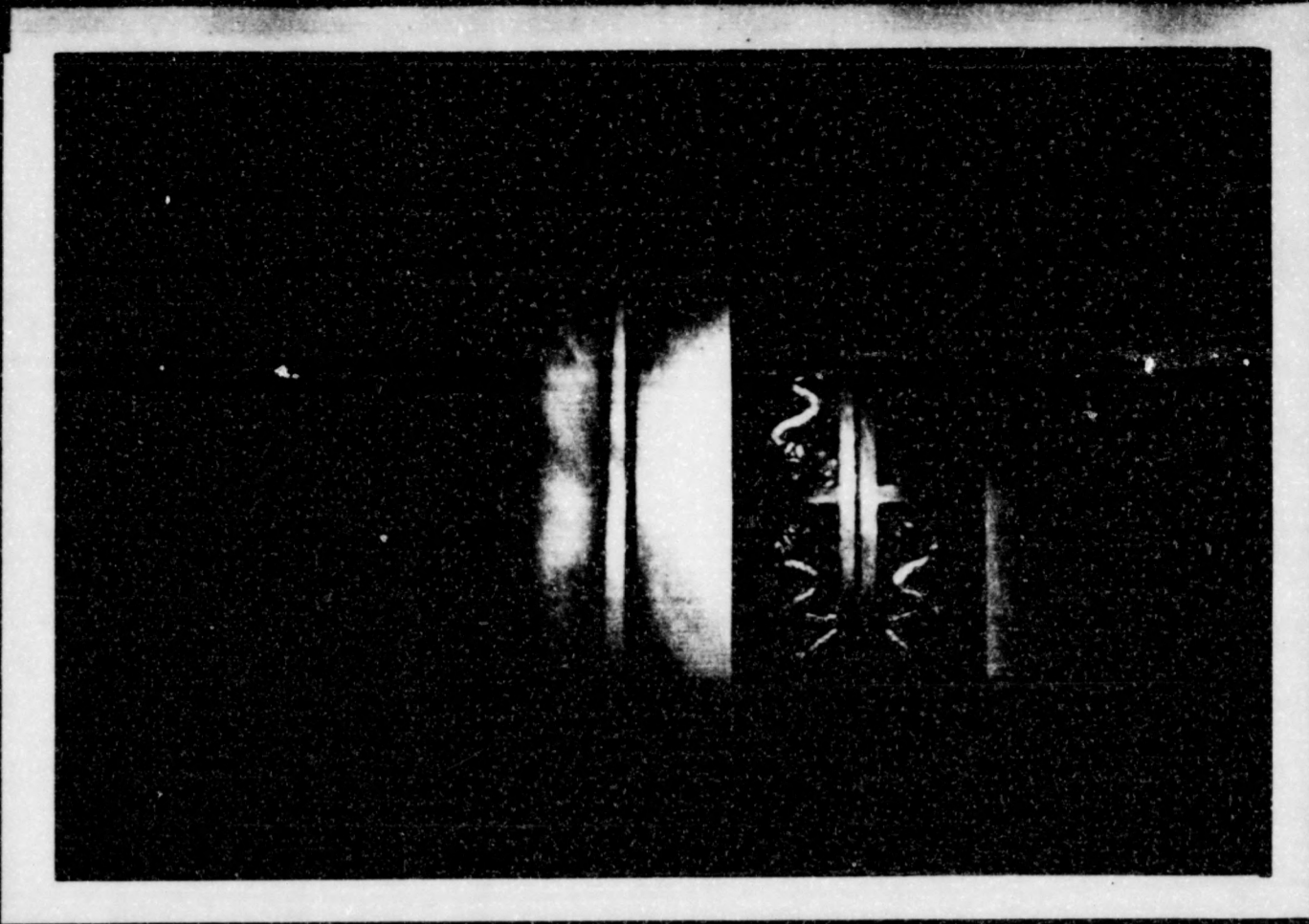


APPENDIX E  
TECHNICAL CALENDAR  
(Page 33)

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
26 Tape Floor Costume Measurements	27	28	1 Match Platforms to Russell Miller Build Irregulars + Legs	2	3	4
5 ← CONTINUE WORK ON → PLATFORMS, STEPS, UNITS, BEAVER BOARDING	6	7	8 PULL FLATS + REPAIR BEAVER BOARD REMAINING PLATFORMS	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22 Base Coat Flats Erect Flats Install Doors	23	24	25 LEAVE OPEN FOR NECESSARY TECH
26	27	28	29 COSTUMES	30	31	1 Apr:1
2 FINAL PROPS + FINAL SOUND	3	4	5 Cue to Cue 1:00 - 5:00	6 DRESS PARADE	7	8 TECH REHEARSAL
9	10	11	12	13	14	15

APPENDIX F

DETAIL PHOTOGRAPHS OF  
STAGE RIGHT AND STAGE LEFT AREAS  
(Page 34)



APPENDIX G  
COSTUME COLOR CHART  
(Page 35)



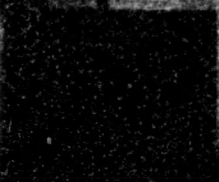
2-MOMAN # 5

2-MOMAN # 2

2-MOMAN # 1

2-MOMAN

2-MOMAN # 5



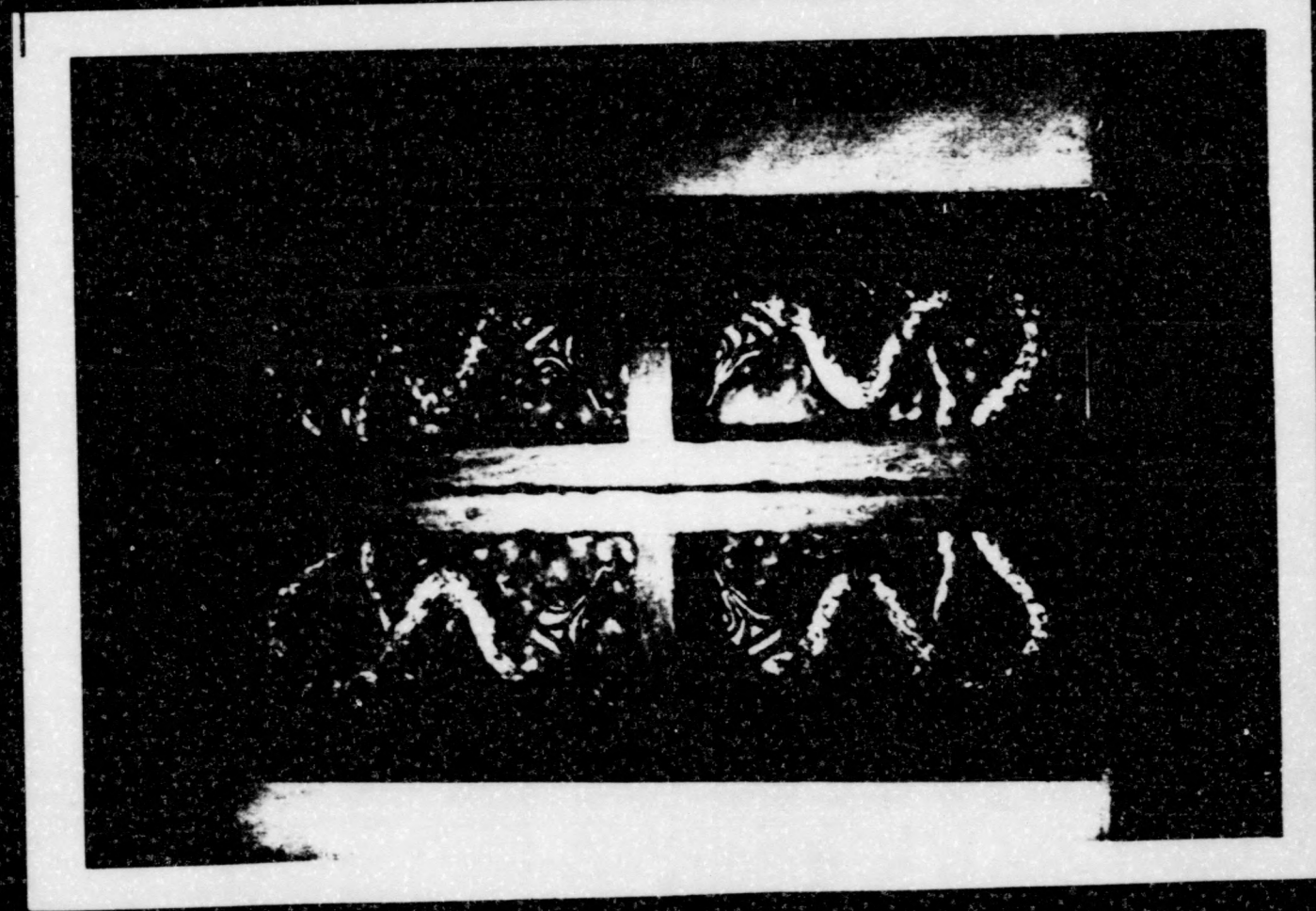
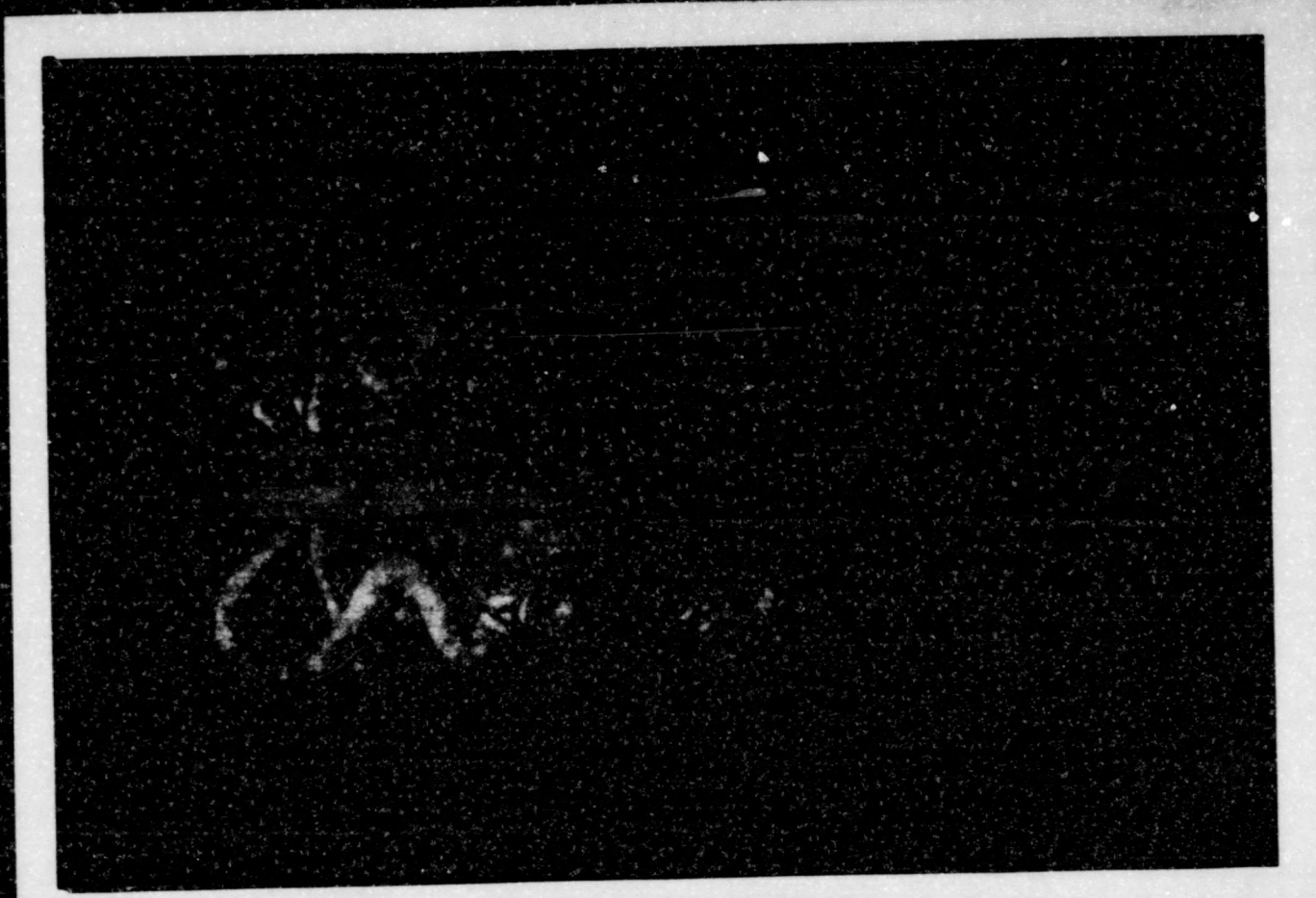


APPENDIX H  
PROPERTIES LIST  
(page 36)

PROPERTIES LIST

Gold crown  
Gold robe  
Two boxes to hold crown & robe  
Toy boat  
Sea shell  
Decorative bow and arrows  
A doll  
Two spears  
Sword for Jason  
Snakes on poles (later cut)  
Aegeus' staff  
Nurse's walking stick  
Medea's wedding band

APPENDIX I  
SERPENT BAS RELIEF PANELS  
(Page 37)



APPENDIX J

FLAT LIST  
(Page 38)

FLAT LIST

<u>Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Notes</u>
#1	2' x 14'	pull from stock
#2	3' x 24'	pull from stock, cover with 3/16" Upson Board, then apply muslin
#3	1' x 14'	pull from stock
#4	2'6" x 14'	construct, cover with 3/16" Upson Board, then apply muslin
#5	2'0" x 6'0" (header)	same as #4
#6	2'6" x 14'	same as #4
#7	1' x 14'	pull from stock
#8	3' x 14'	same as #2
#9	2' x 14'	pull from stock
#10	1' x 14'	pull from stock
#11	6' x 14'	pull from stock
#12	6' x 14'	pull from stock, cover window opening with muslin
#13	4' x 14'	join, stiffen, and dutchman to #14
#14	4' x 14'	see notes for #13
#15	4' x 14'	pull from stock

APPENDIX K

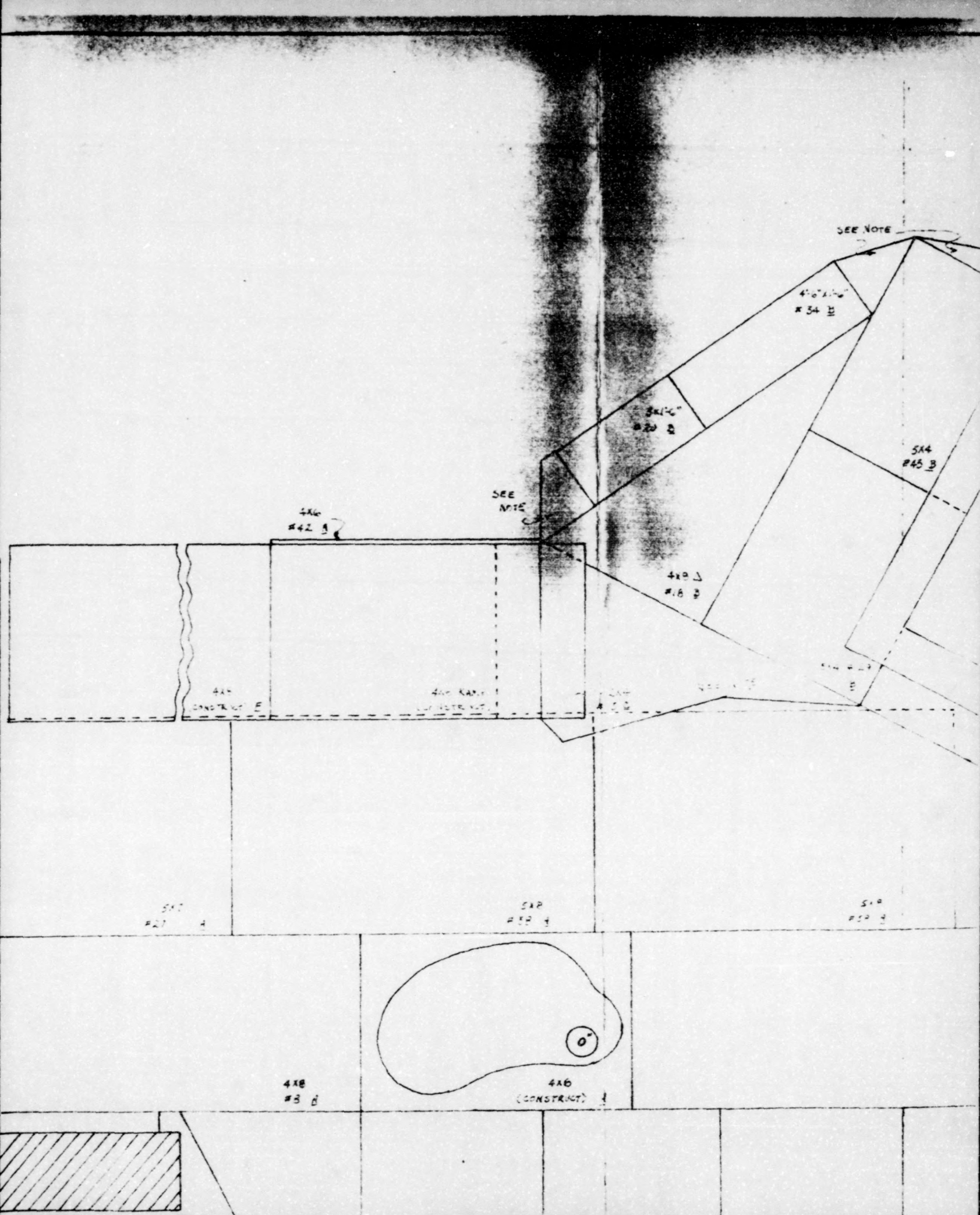
FLOOR PLAN PAINTED ON FLOOR  
(Page 39)



The floor plan was painted on the stage floor to facilitate blocking rehearsals.



APPENDIX L  
PLATFORM DRAWING  
(Page 40)



SEE NOTE

410  
#34 B

412  
#20 B

414  
#45 B

SEE NOTE

416  
#42 B

418  
#18 B

415  
CONSTRUCT E

417  
CONSTRUCT

419  
CONSTRUCT

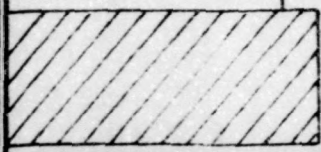
421  
#21 H

423  
#23 F

425  
#25 G

428  
#8 B

426  
(CONSTRUCT) F



SEE NOTE

40' x 10' #34 B

24' x 10' (CONSTRUCT)

34' x 6' #20 B

514 #45 B

645 #25 B

CONSTRUCT

42' x 10' #18 B

51' x 10' #32 B

412 #12 B

412 #12 B

412 #12 B

412 #12 B

512 #12 B

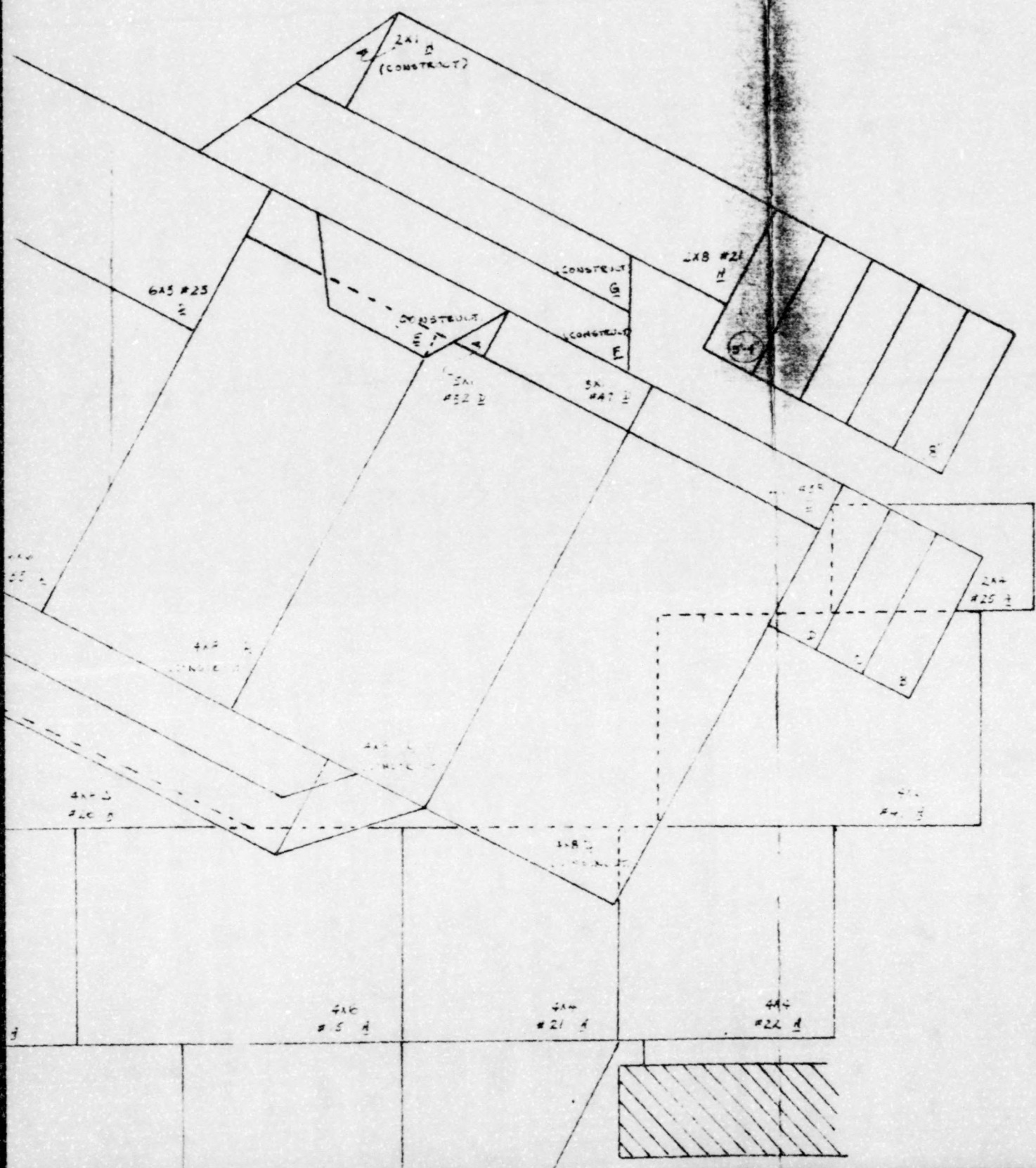
412 #12 B

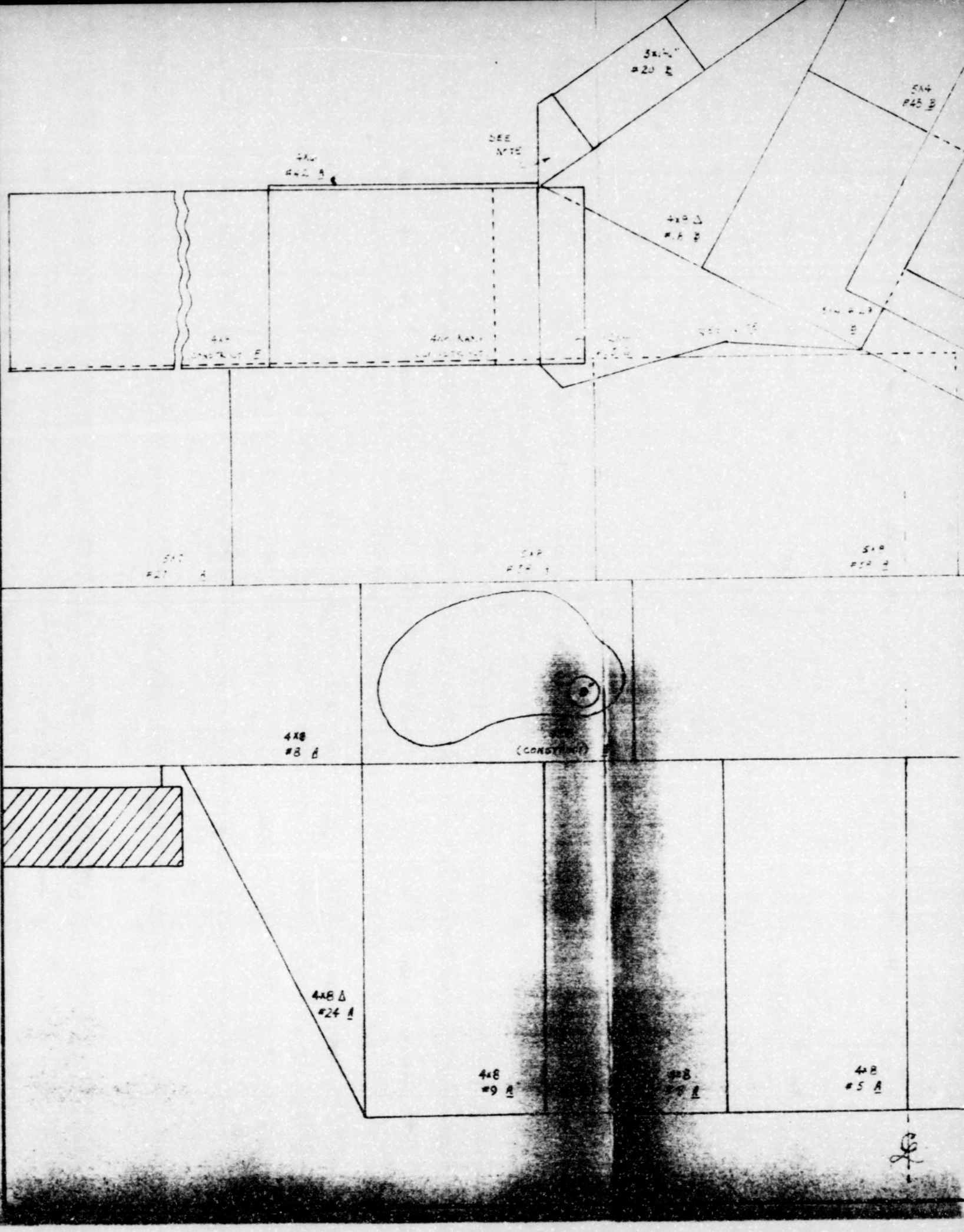
0°

416 TRACT 1

412 #12 B

412 #12 B





5x4 #20 B

5x4 #45 B

SEE NOTE

4x8 #20 B

4x8 #8 B

4x8 #27 B

4x8 #28 B

5x4 #28 B

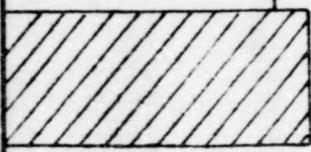
5x4 #27 B

5x4 #28 B

5x4 #29 B

4x8 #8 B

(CONSTR)



4x8 #24 A

4x8 #9 A

4x8 #8

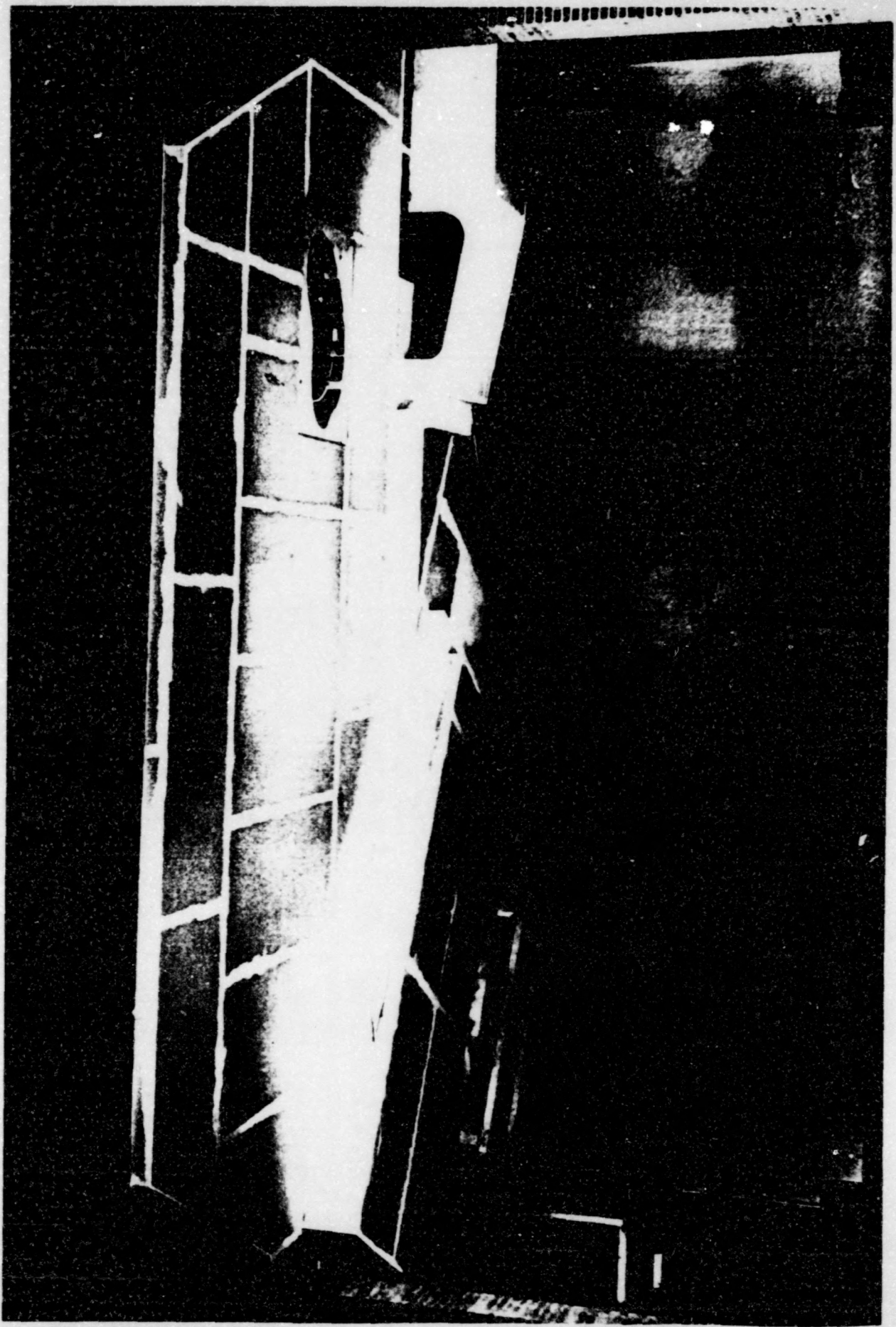
4x8 #5 A





APPENDIX M  
PHOTOGRAPH OF LEVELS  
(Page 41)

The platforms were positioned, legged, and covered with upson board.





APPENDIX N  
PAINT FORMULAS AND SAMPLES  
(Pages 42, 43)

## PAINT FORMULAS

### Floor Scumble

A	B	C	D
1 pt. black	1 pt. burnt umber	burnt umber	1 pt. A
1 pt. navy blue	1 pt. black		1 pt. B
2 pts. white	2 pts. white		1 pt. C

### Exterior Scumble

Tint	Base	Shade
1 pt. base	8 pts. white	5 pts. base
1 pt. white	4 pts. burnt umber	1 pt. burnt umber
	1 pt. golden yellow	$\frac{1}{2}$ pt. black

### Interior Scumble

Tint	Base	Shade
1 pt. base	3 pts. white	2 pts. base
1 pt. white	2 pts. burnt umber	$\frac{1}{2}$ pt. black
	3 pts. burnt sienna	

### Marble Scumble

D	E
1 pt. navy blue	1 pt. burnt umber
1 pt. black	1 pt. black
1 pt. white	1 pt. white

### Marble Veining

F	G
1 pt. navy blue	1 pt. burnt umber
1 pt. black	1 pt. black

### Doors

H  
Acrylic Semi-gloss

Woodgraining  
Burnt umber & black

FLOOR SCUMBLE



A



B

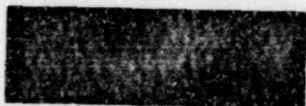


C



MORTAR

EXTERIOR SCUMBLE



TINT



BASE



SHADE

INTERIOR SCUMBLE



TINT



BASE



SHADE

MARBLE SCUMBLE



E

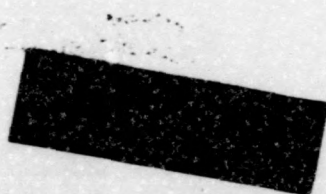


F

MARBLE VEINING

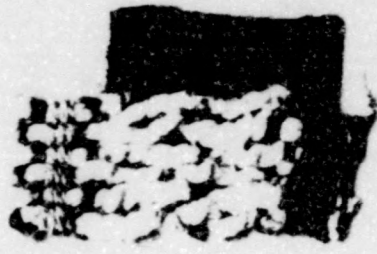
G

DOORS

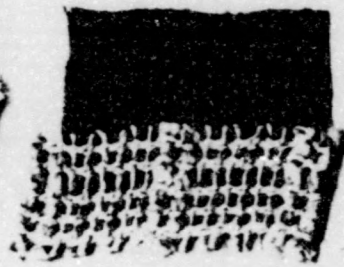


WOODGRAINING

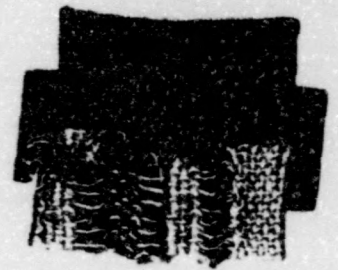
APPENDIX O  
FABRIC SWATCHES  
(Page 44)



WOMAN #1



WOMAN #2



WOMAN #3



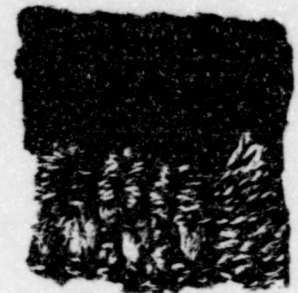
ATTENDANTS



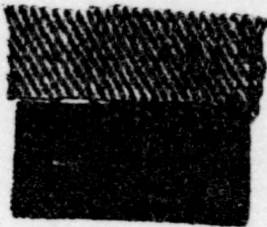
NURSE



MEDEA



TUTOR



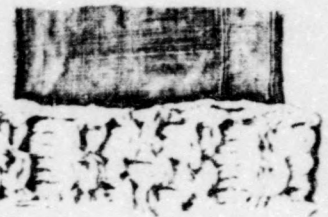
JASON'S  
SLAVE



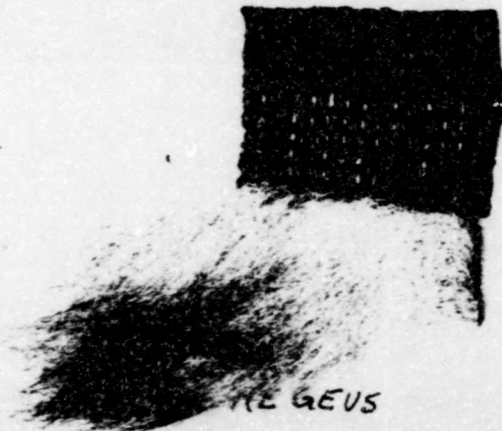
JASON



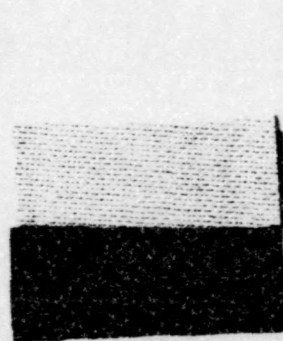
BOY #1



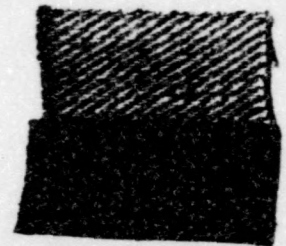
BOY #2



THE GEUS

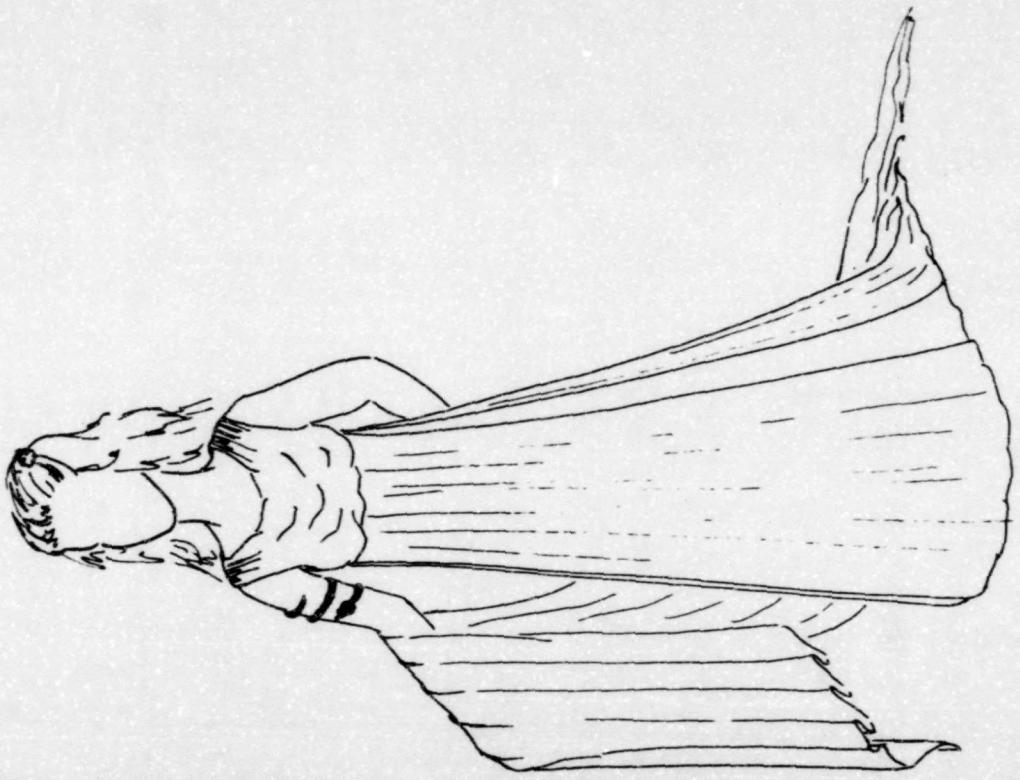
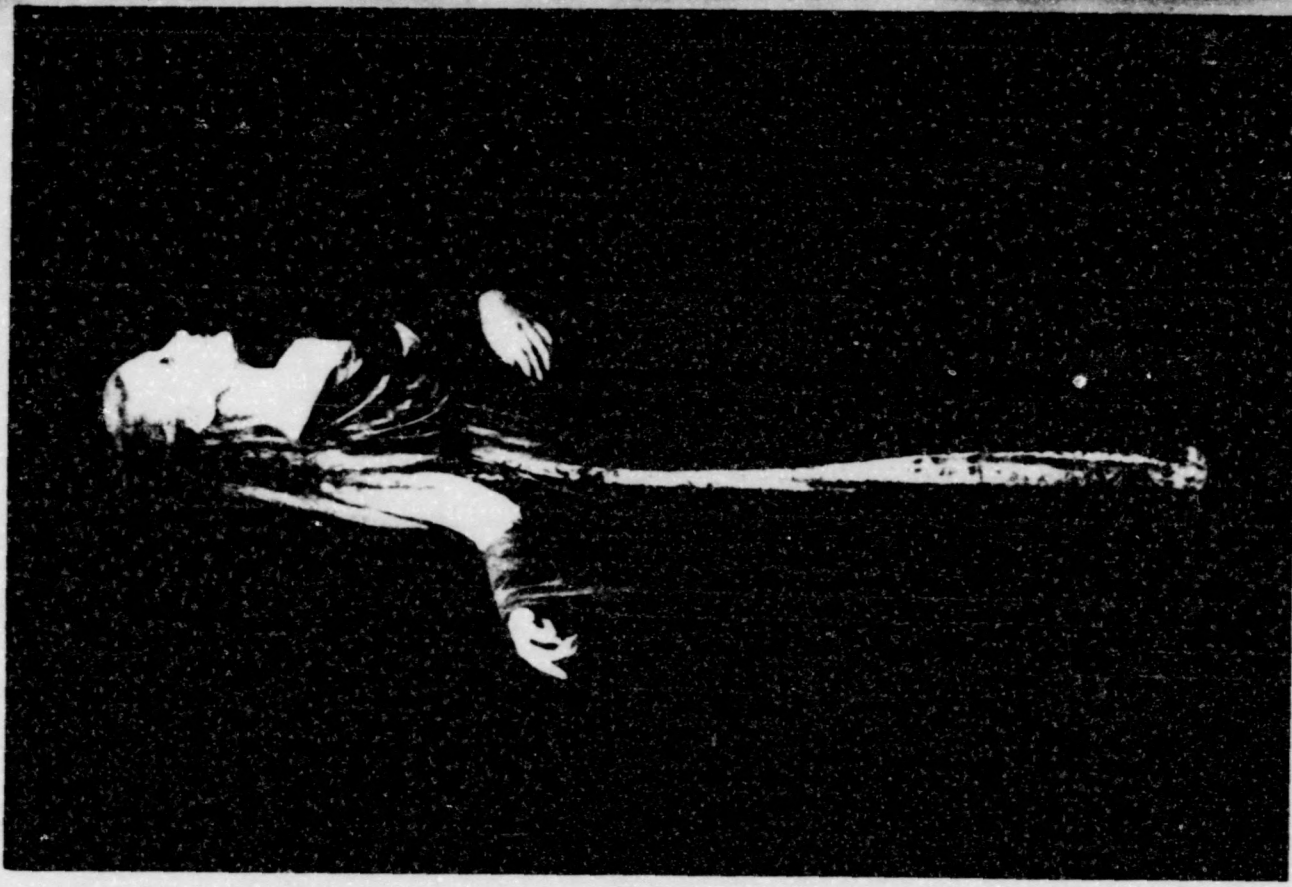


CREON

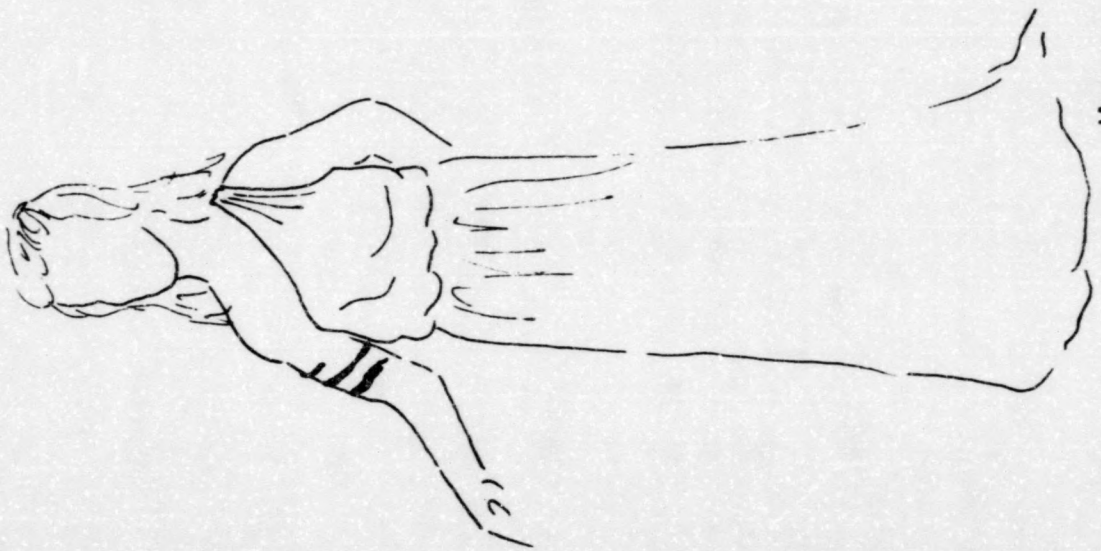


GUARDS

APPENDIX P  
COSTUME PLATES  
AND  
PHOTOGRAPHS OF FINISHED COSTUMES  
(Pages 45 - 59)

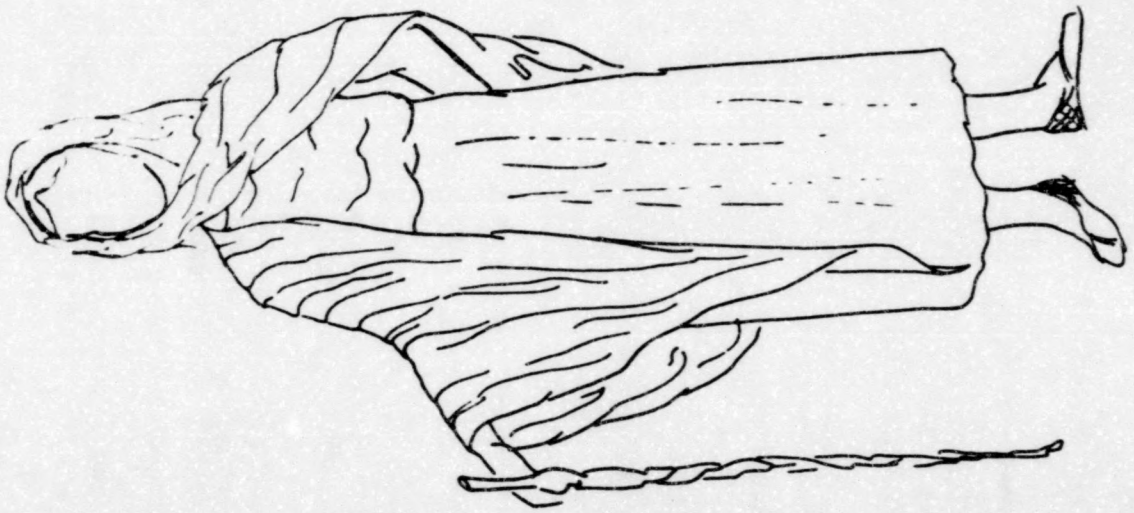
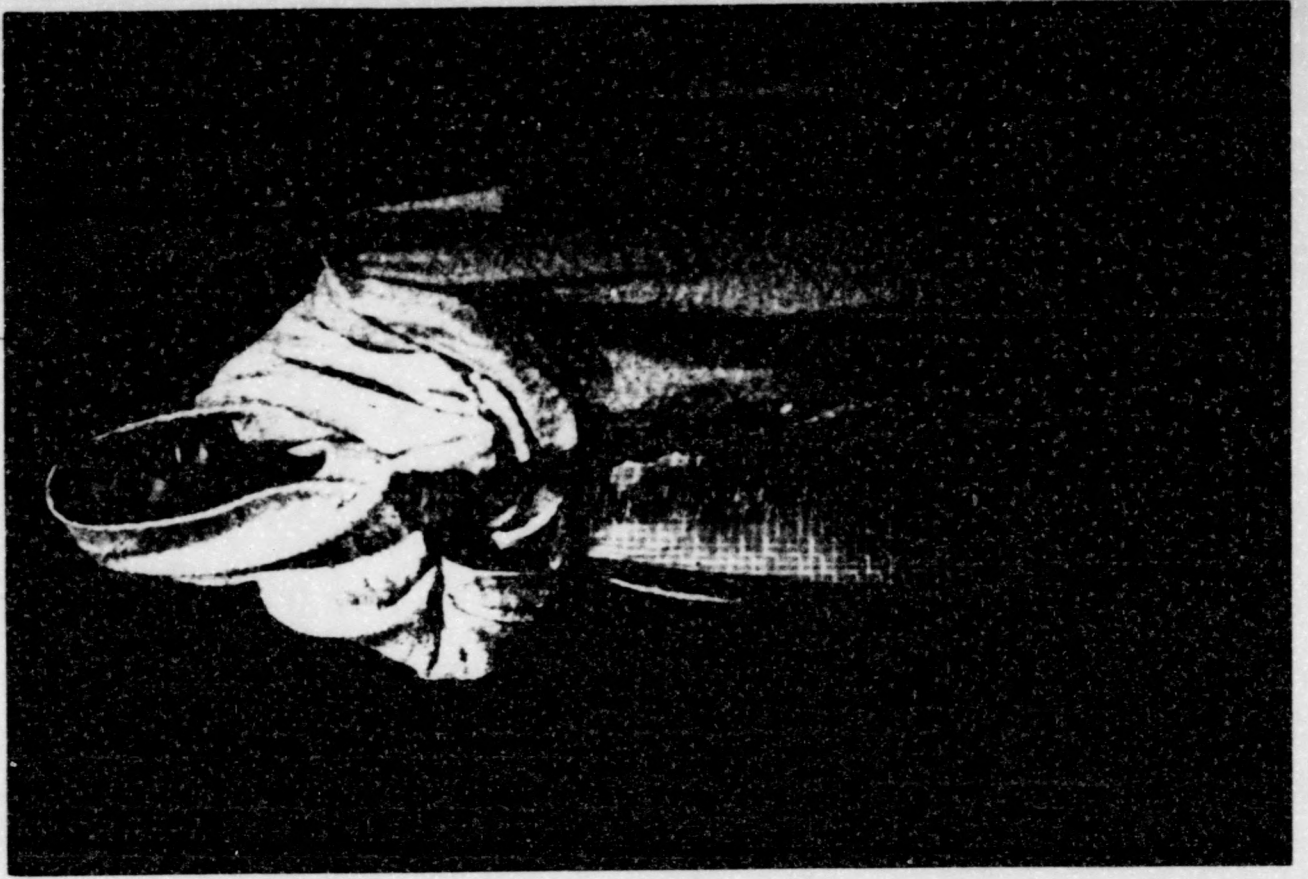


MEDEA

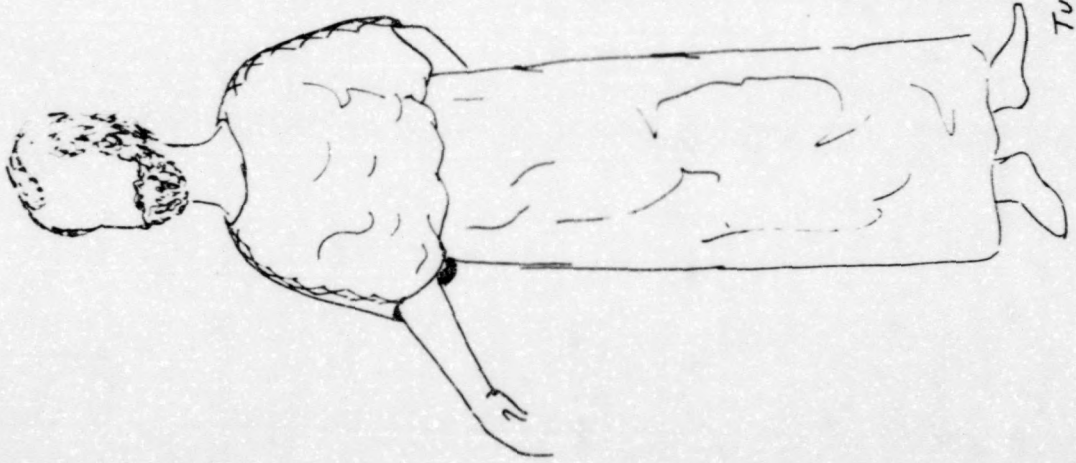
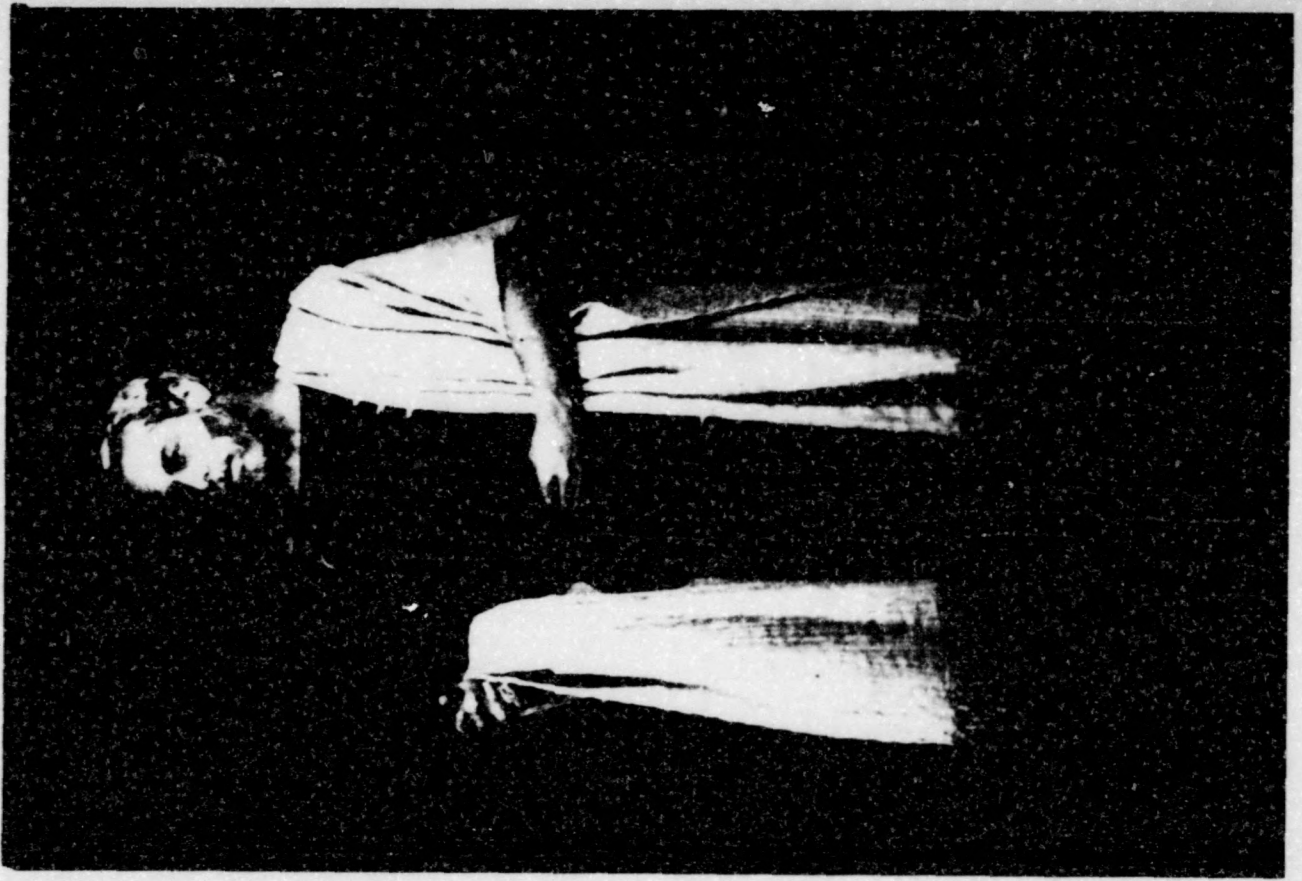


MEDIA

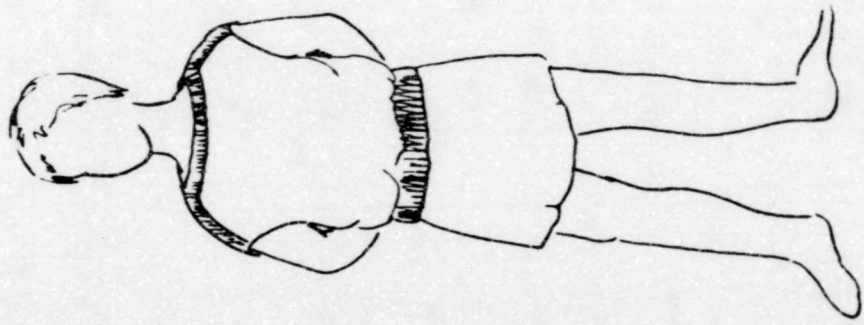




NURSE

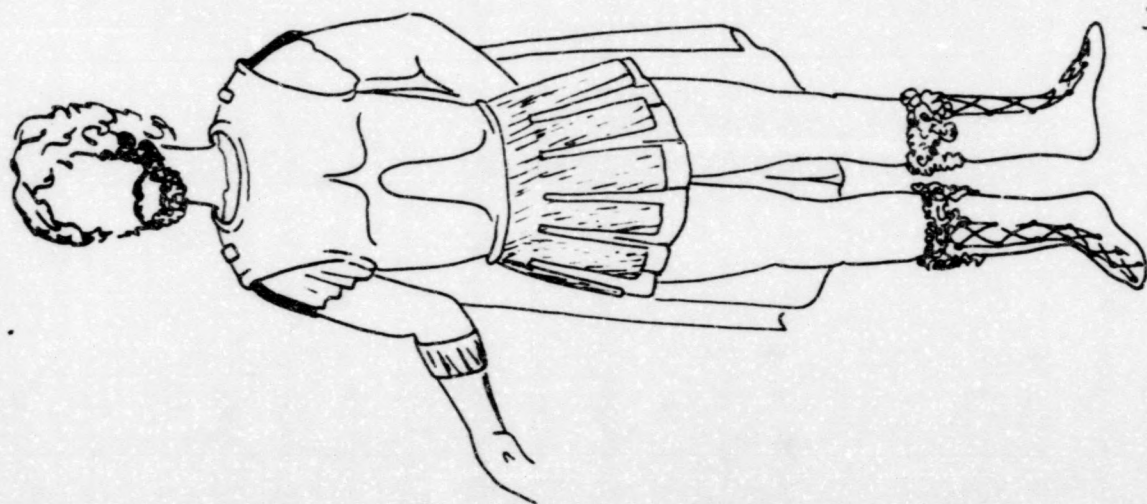
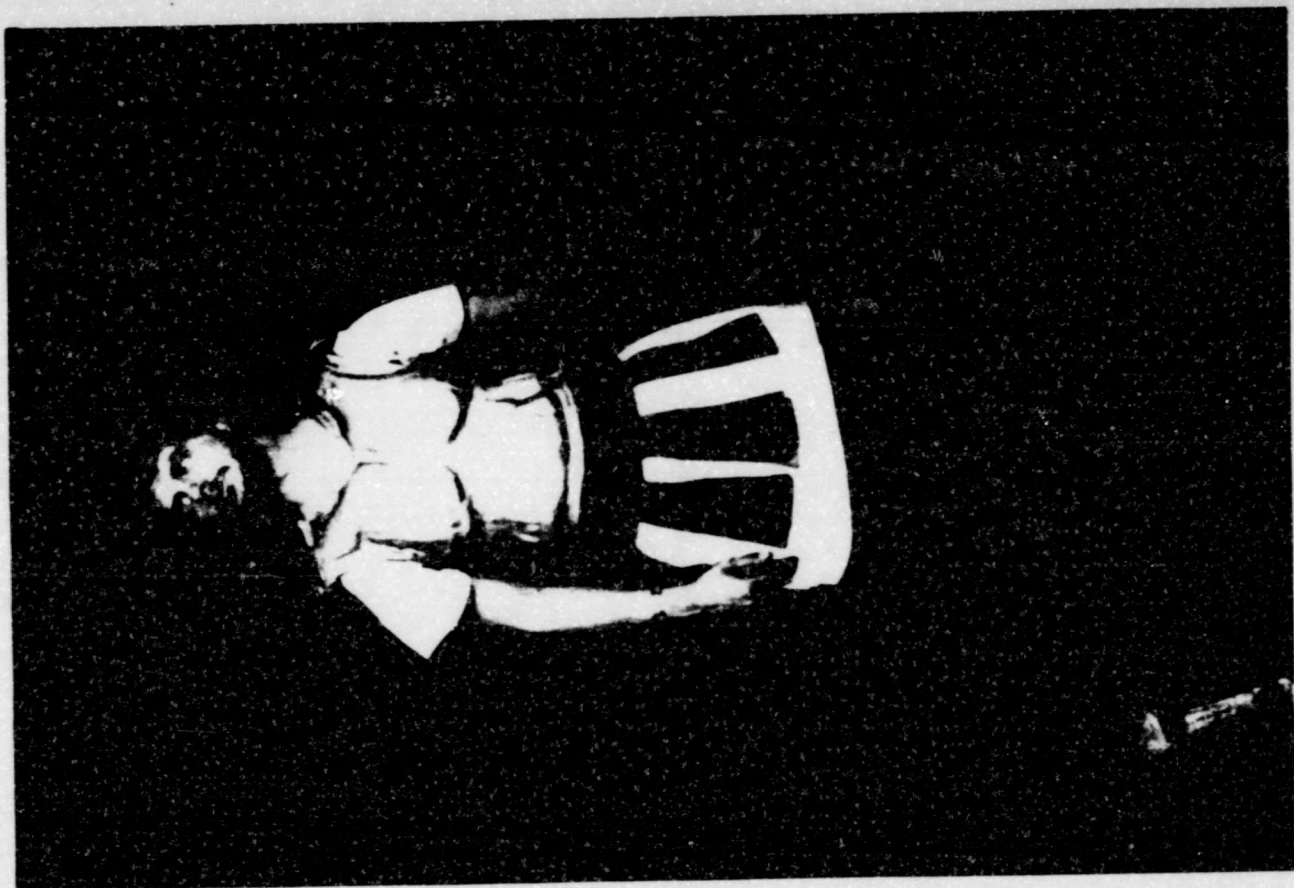


TUTOR

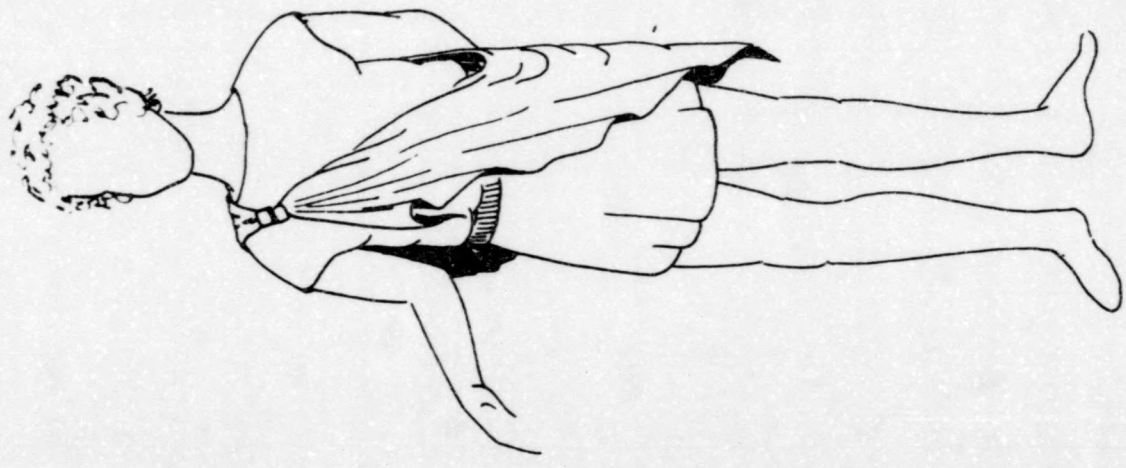


Boys

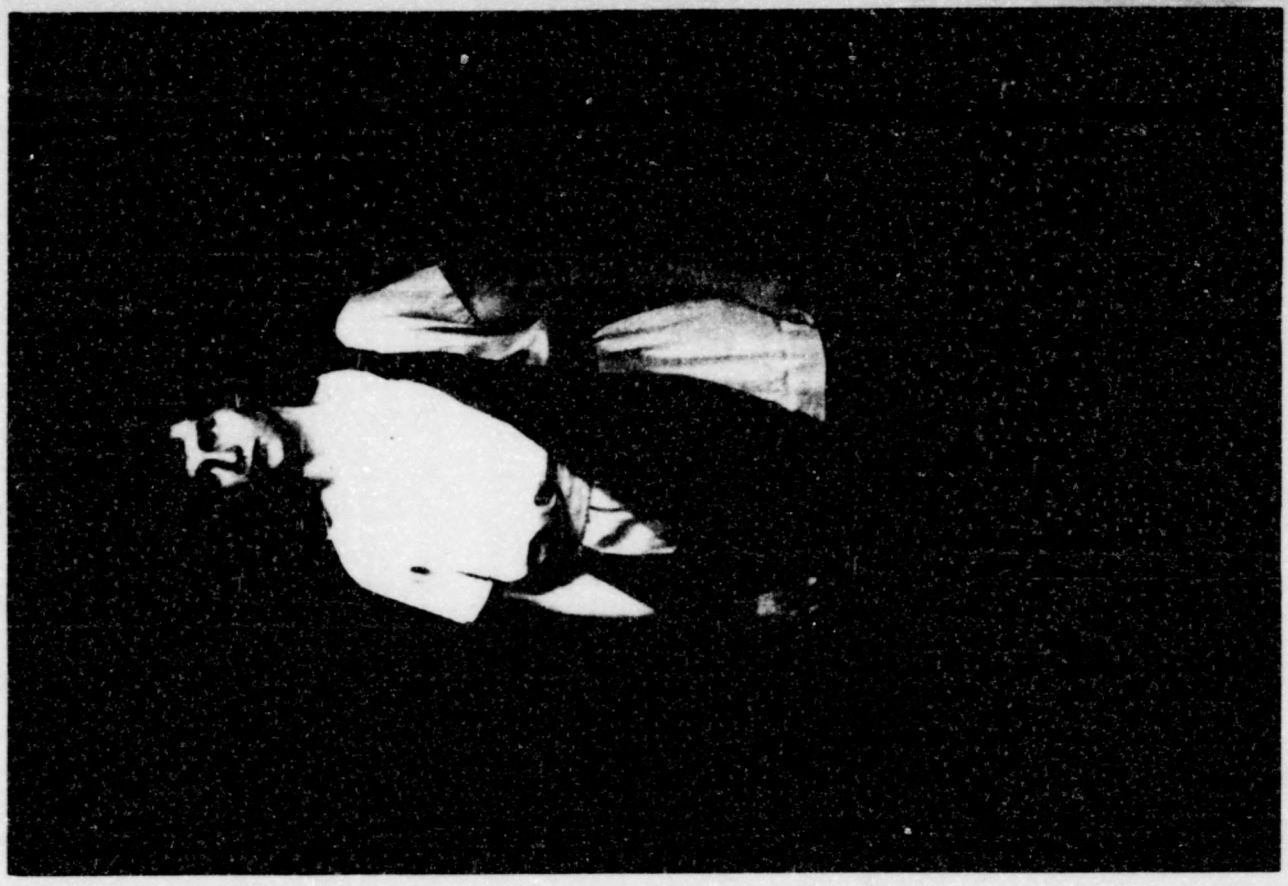


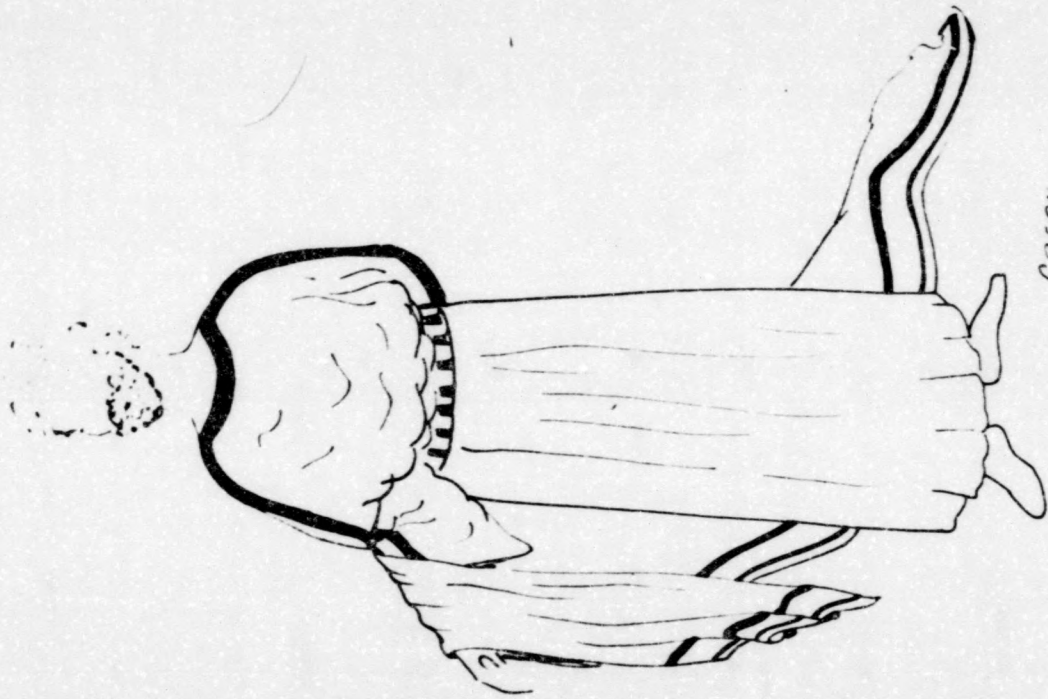
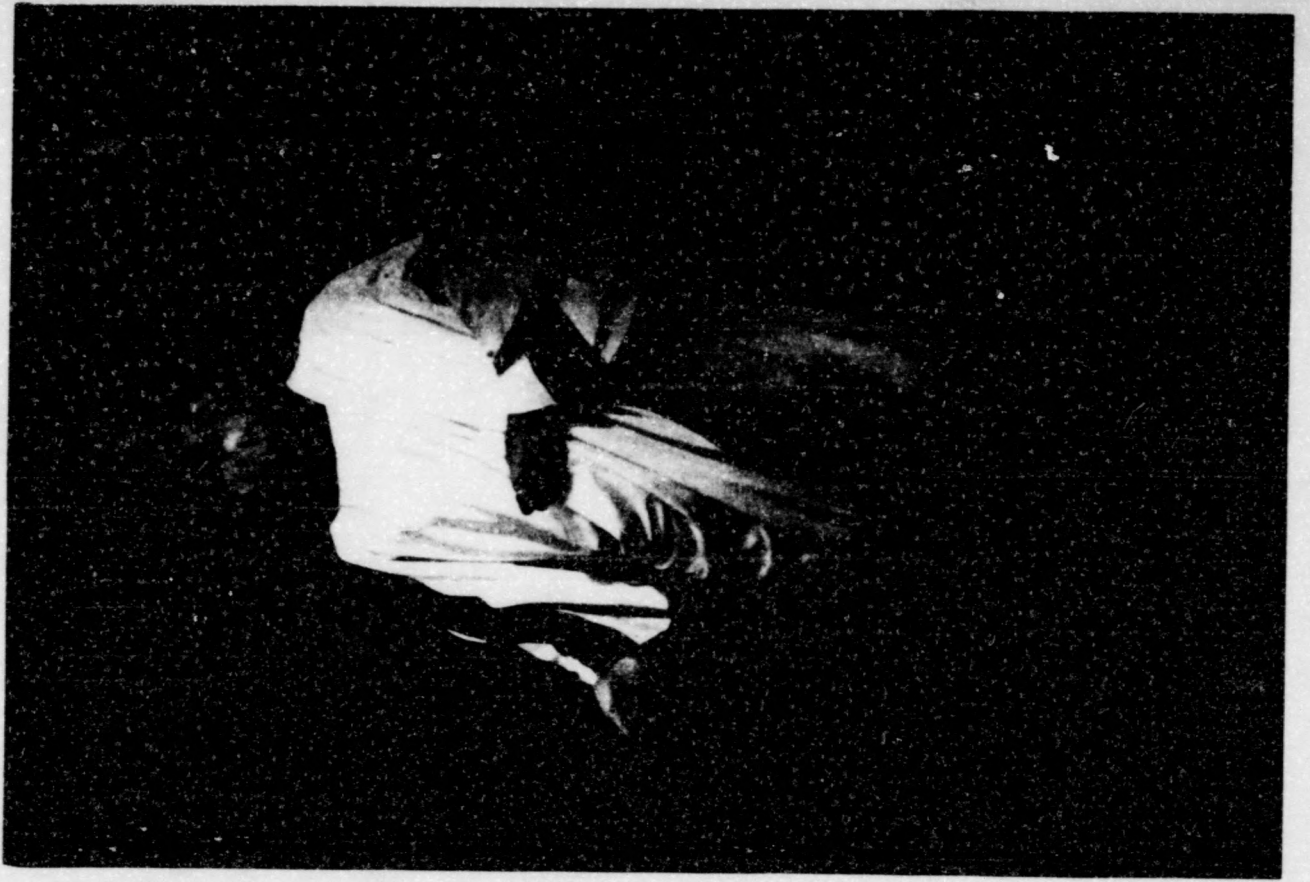


JASON

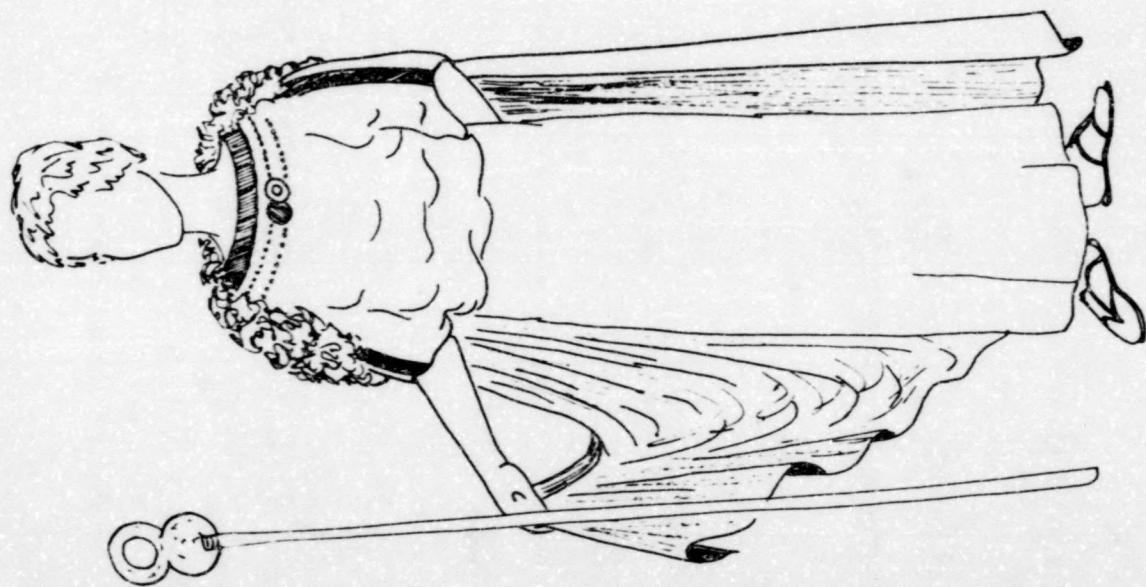
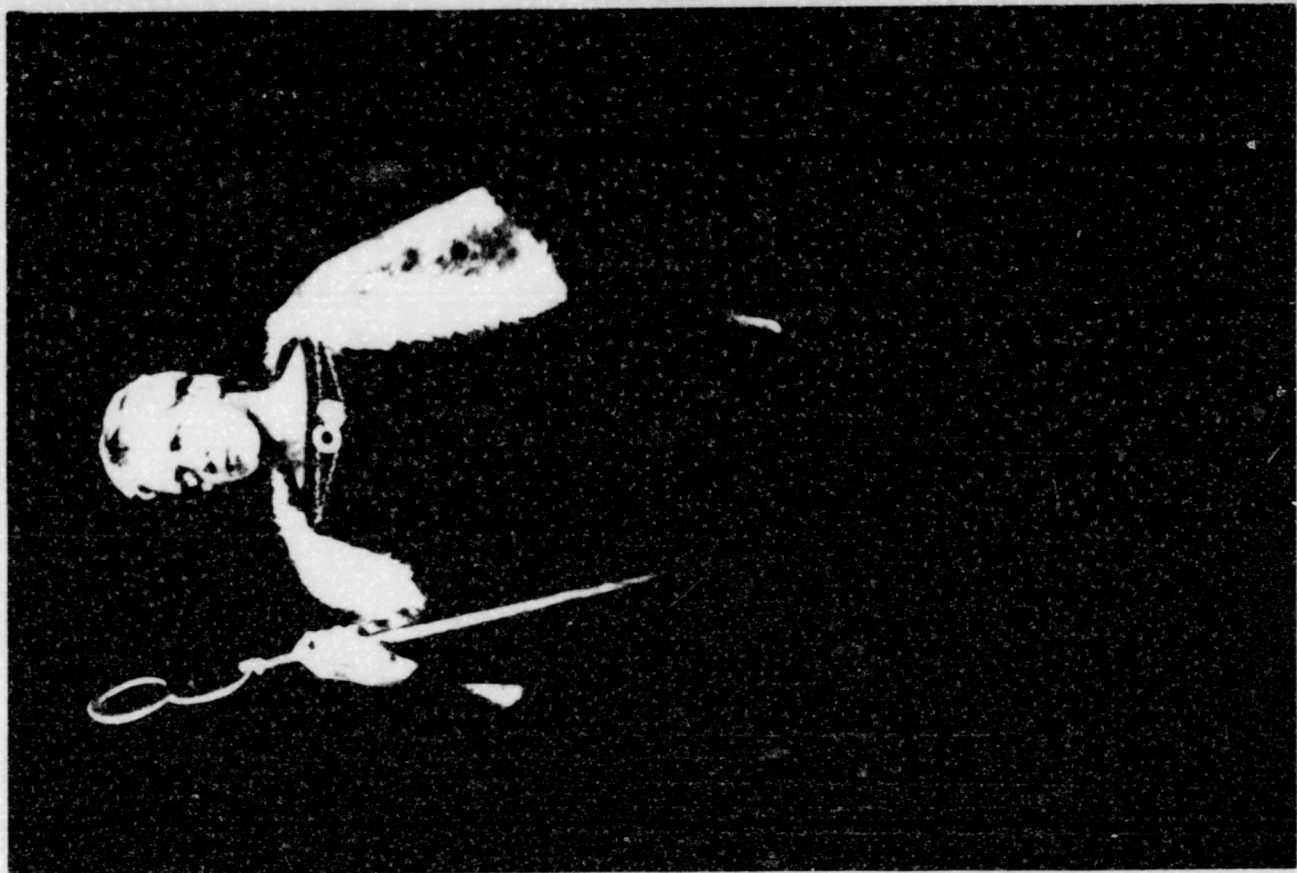


JASON'S SLAVE

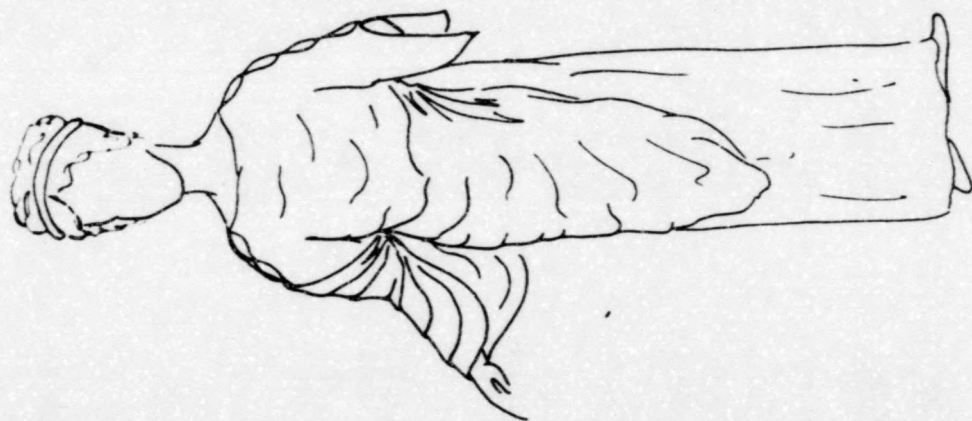
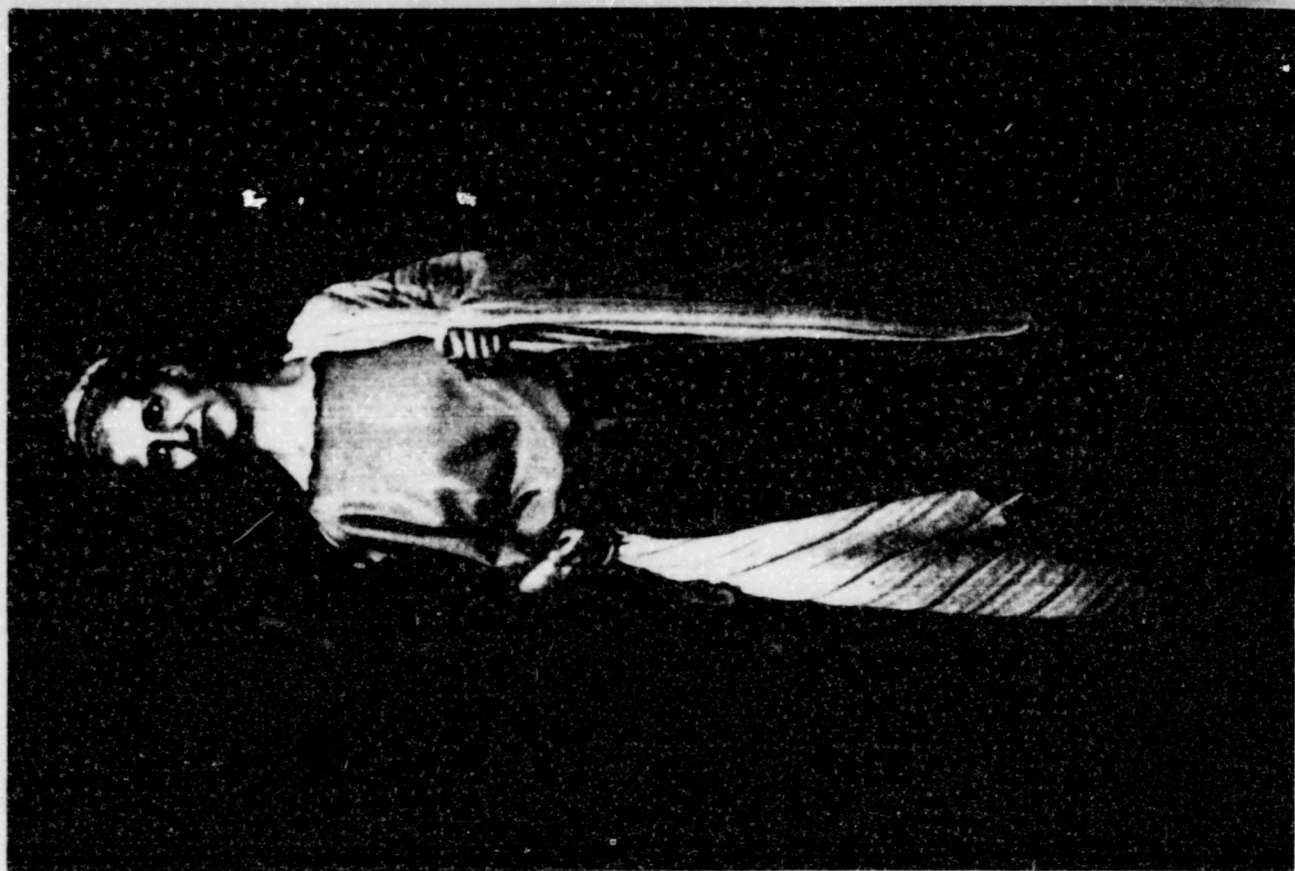




CREON

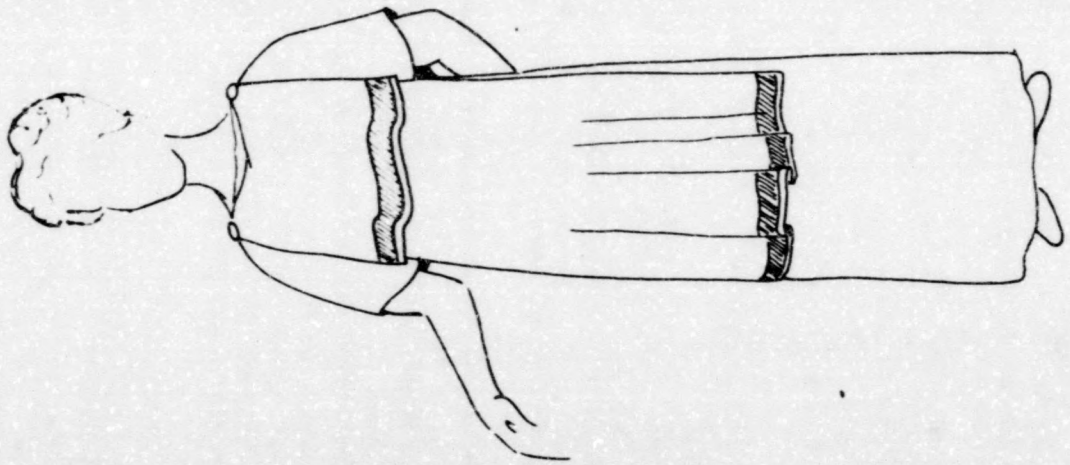
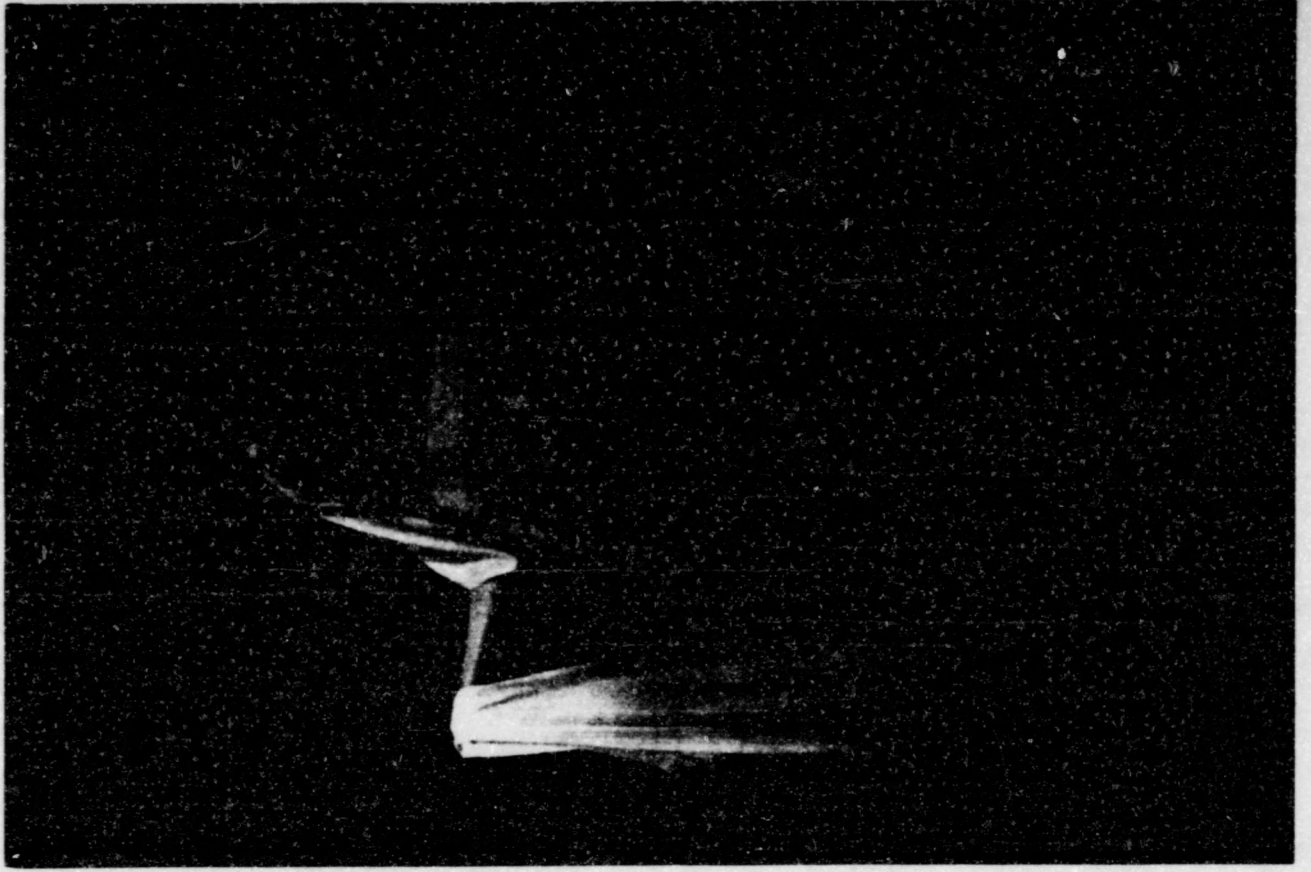


AEGEUS

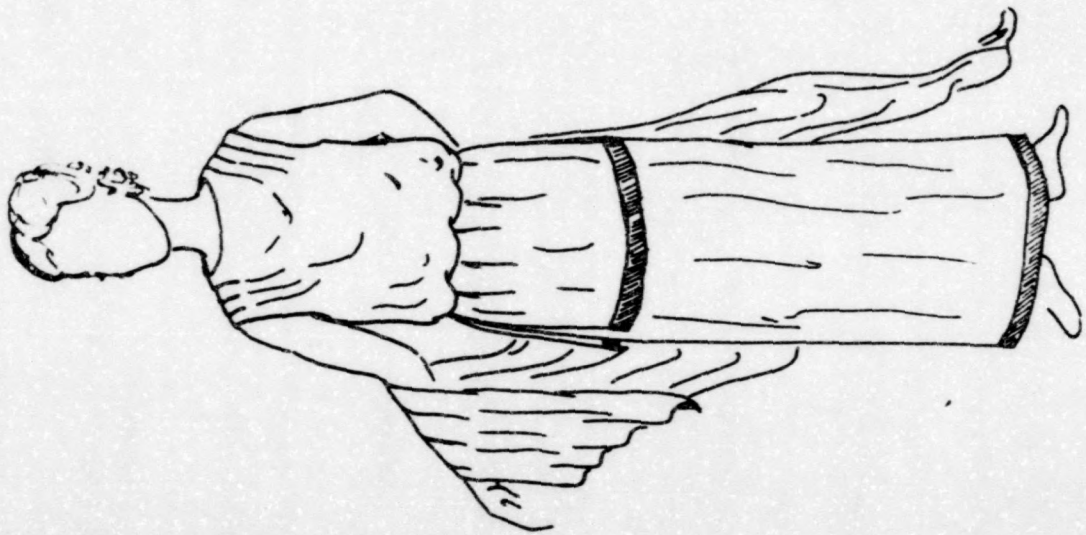
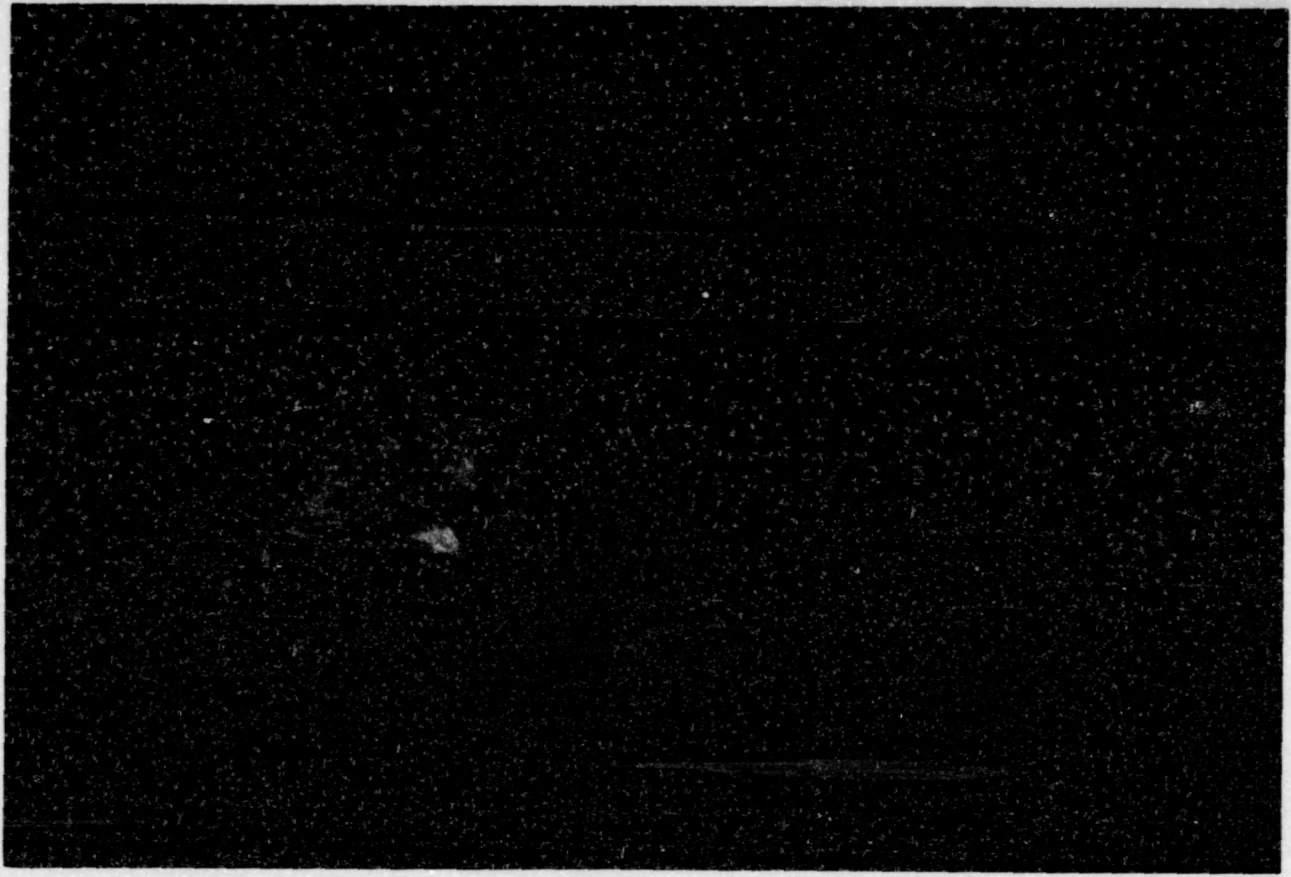


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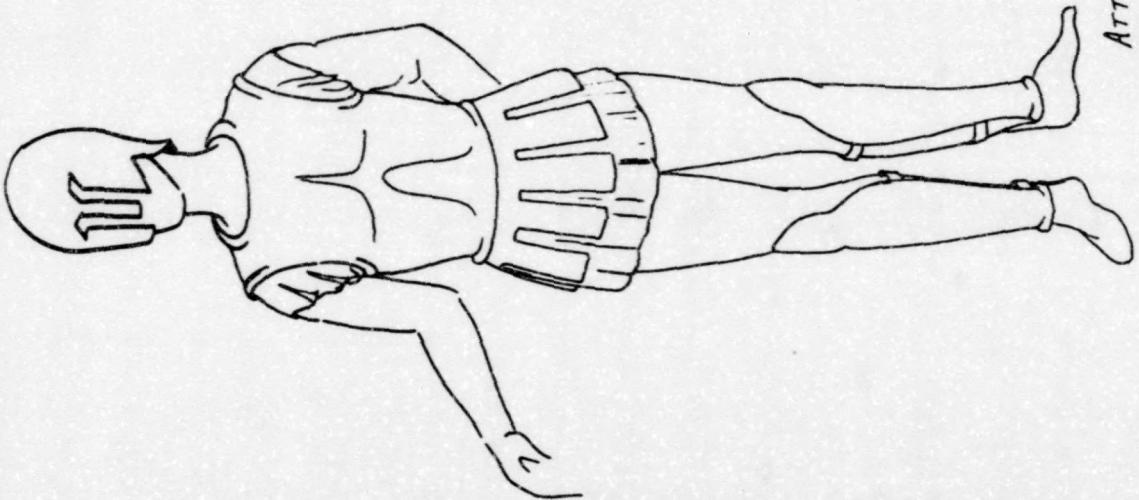
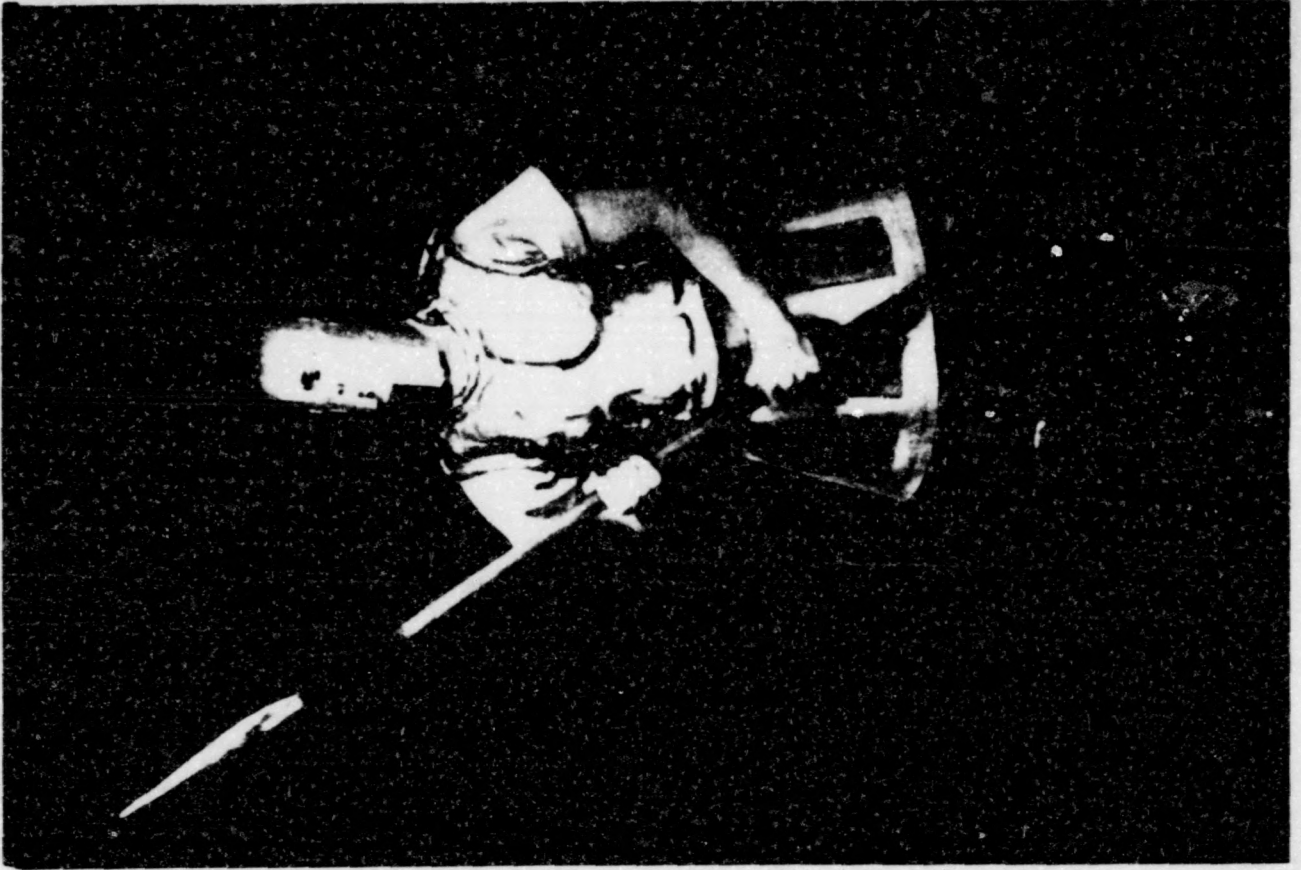




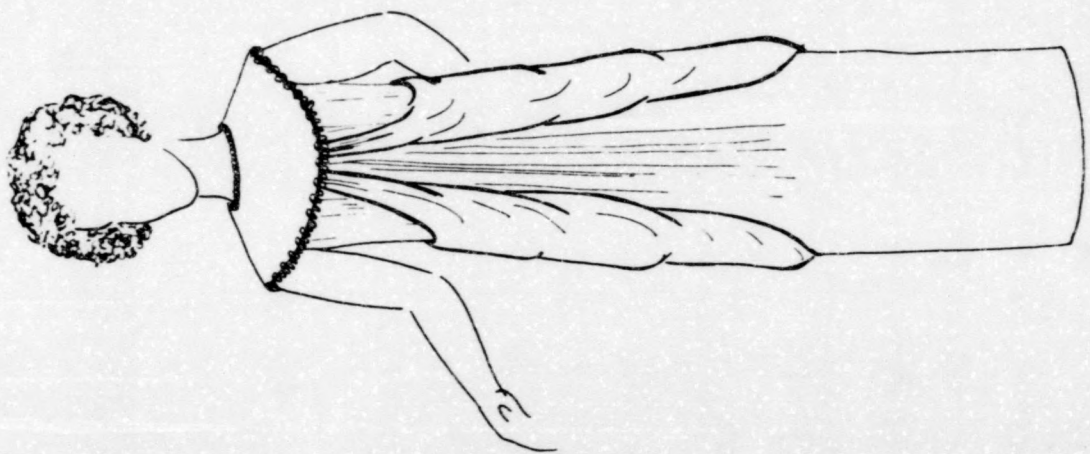
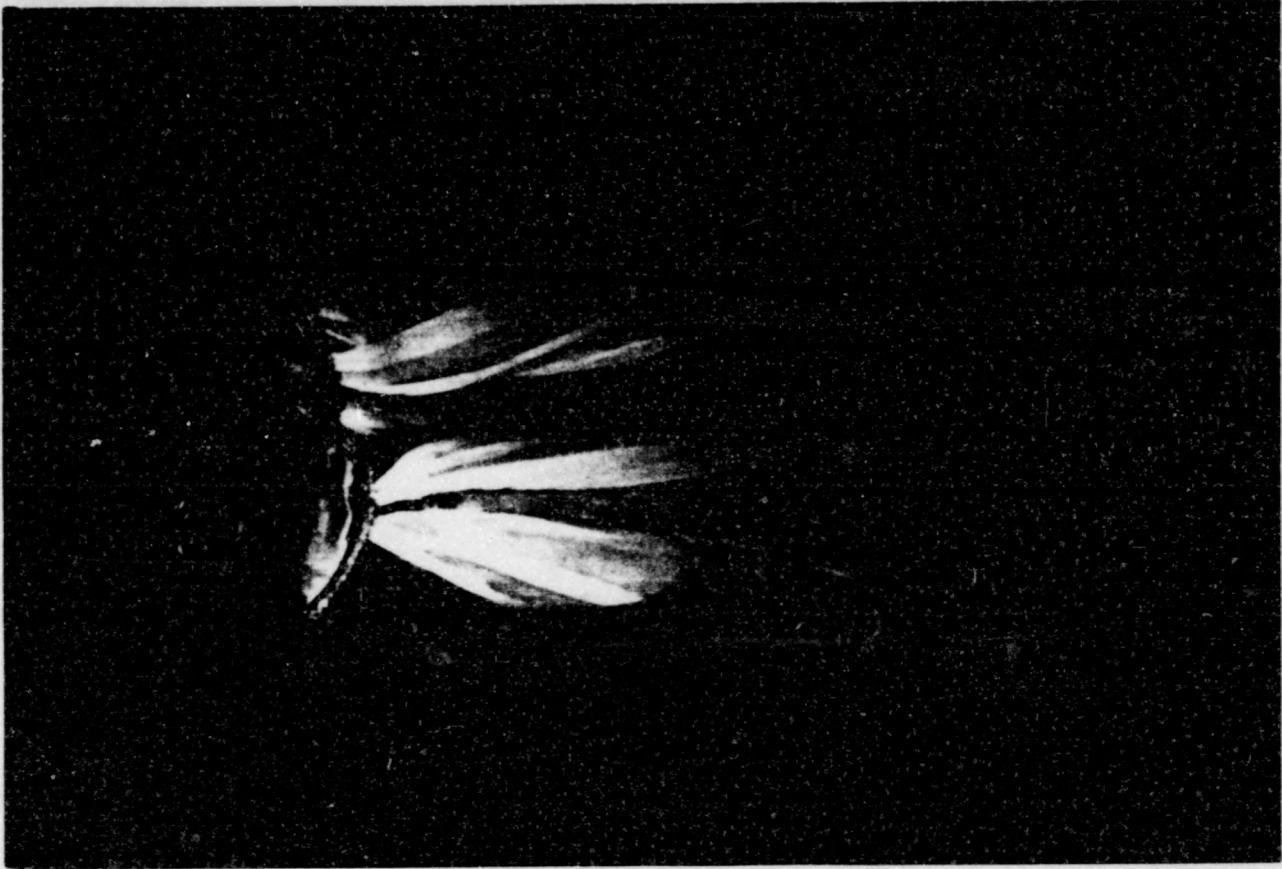
WOMAN #2



WOMAN #3



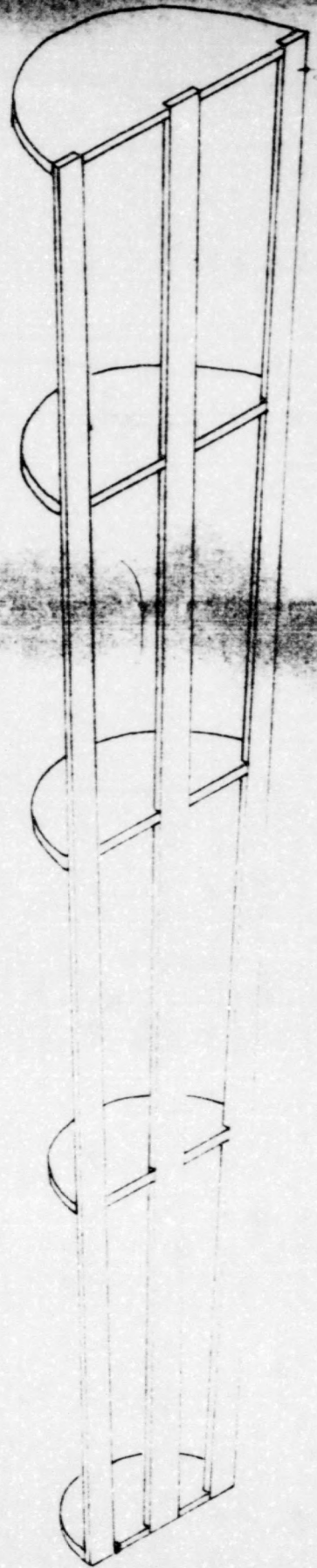
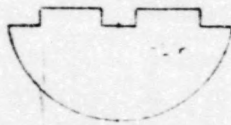
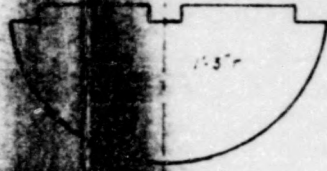
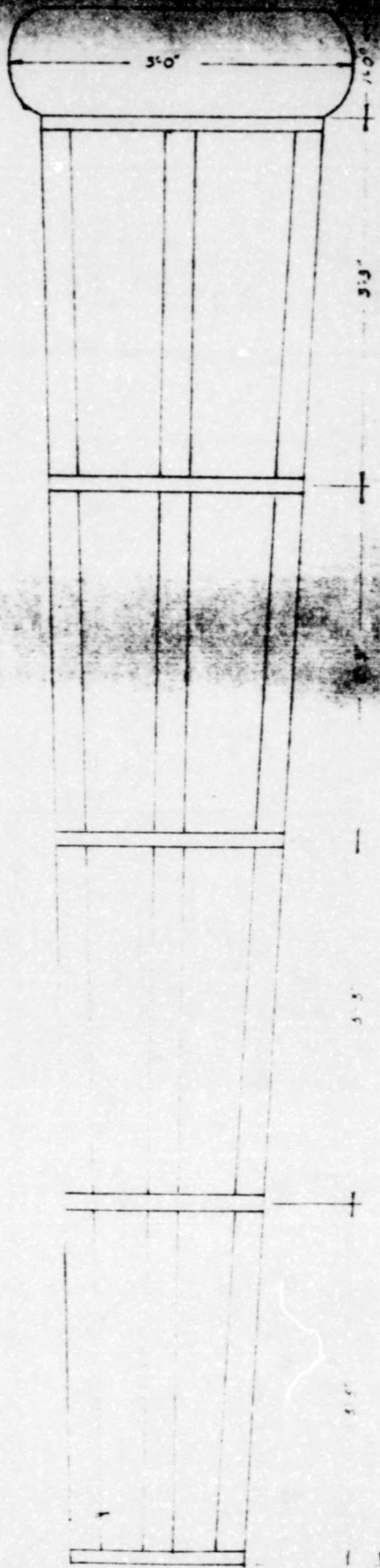
ATTENDANTS  
ON CREON & JASON



MEDEA'S  
ATTENDANTS

APPENDIX Q

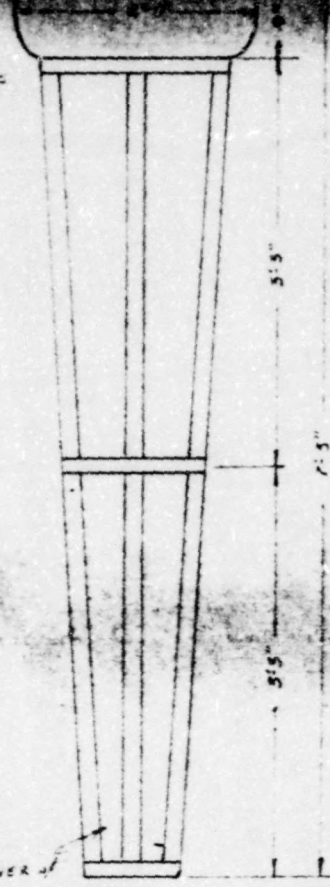
PILLAR CONSTRUCTION DRAWING  
(Page 60)



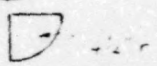
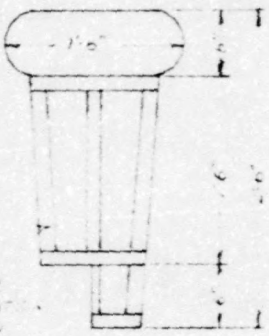
CLASS  
GLUE + ATT  
NO BOA

1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2"  
1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2"  
1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2"

128  
 6108 + 87 A-1  
 W. WC BOWLING



COVER 1/2"  
 1/2" PINE BOARD



COVER 1/2"  
 1/2" PINE BOARD

NOTE: ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN INCHES  
 SMALLER DIMENSIONS TAKE PRECEDENCE  
 UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED  
 1" = 1'-0"

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY  
 BOWLING GREEN, KENTUCKY

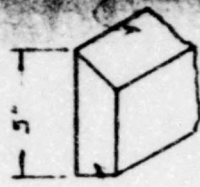
MEDEA

DWG. DATE: 2-20-78	DWG. BY: KEVIN LANHAM	DWG. NO.
SCALE: 1" = 1'-0"	TCR. BY: JL	#2
PART NO:	SECTION:	

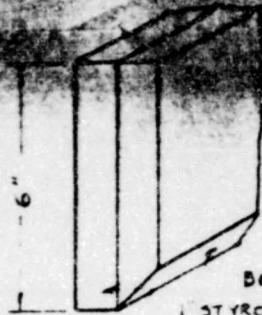
APPENDIX R  
CORNICE CONSTRUCTION DRAWING  
(Page 61)



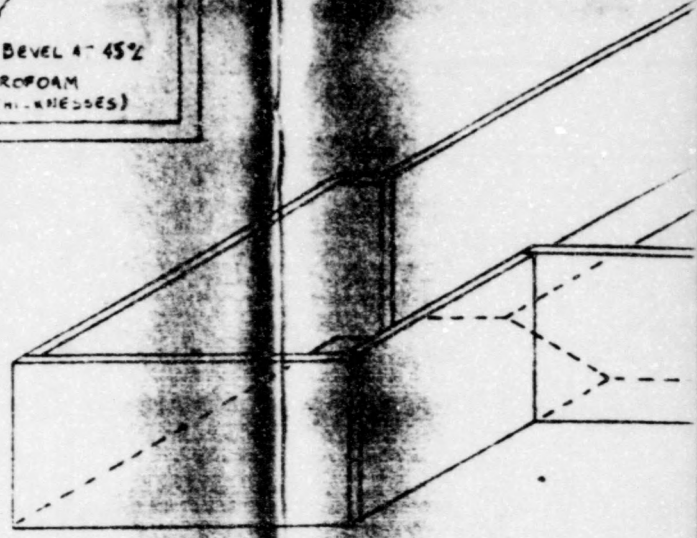
NOTE  
3'-1'-0"



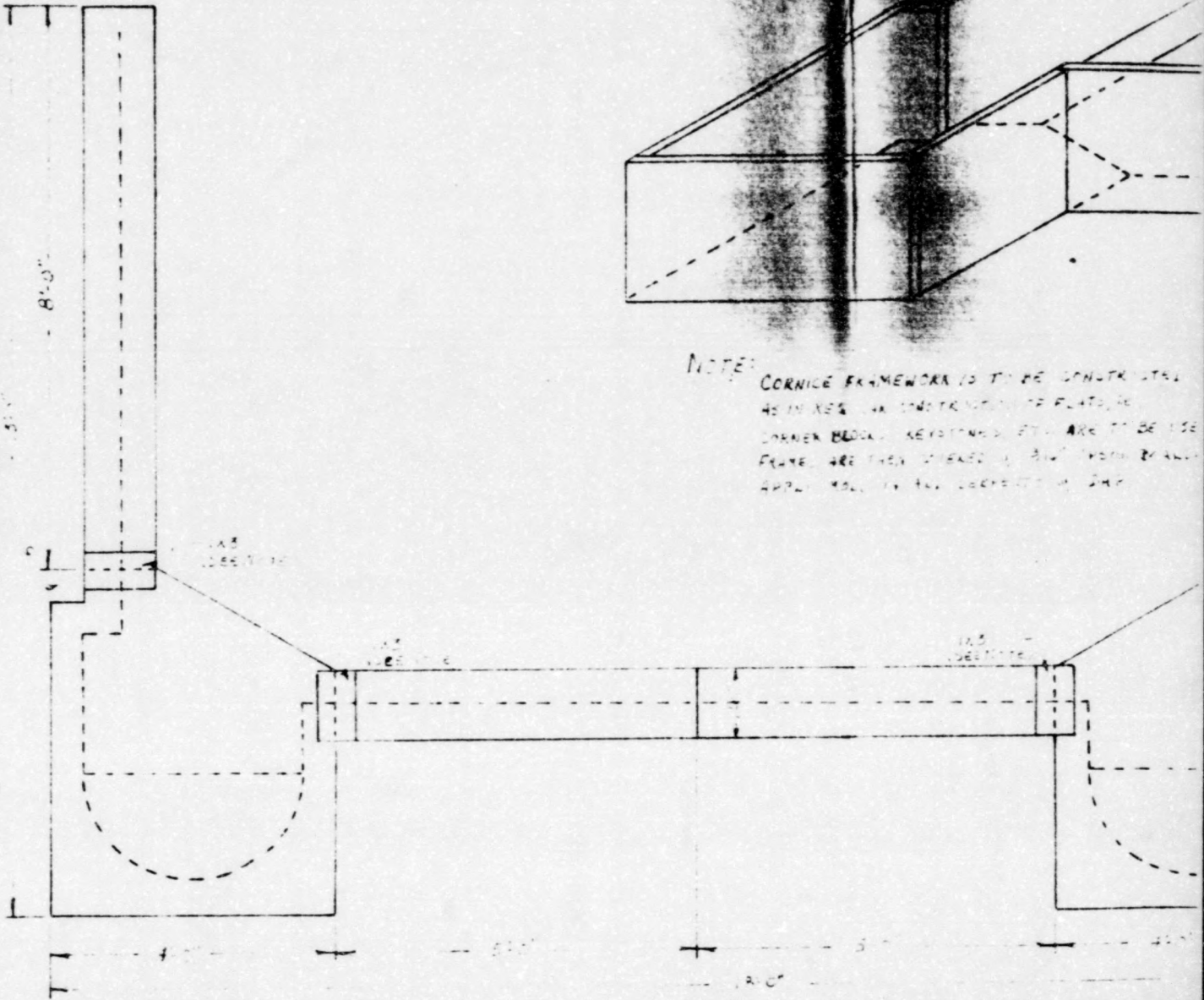
1" STYROFOAM



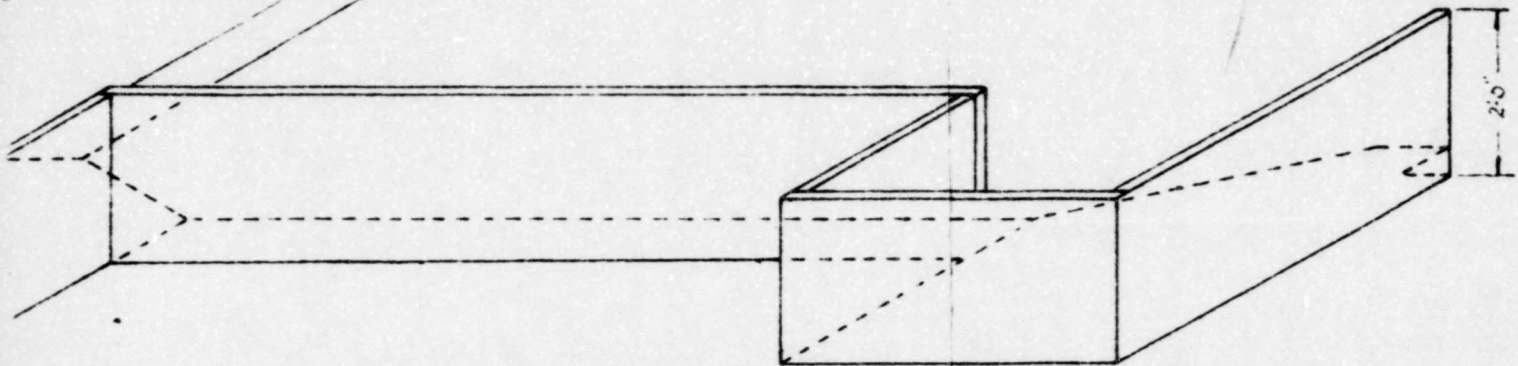
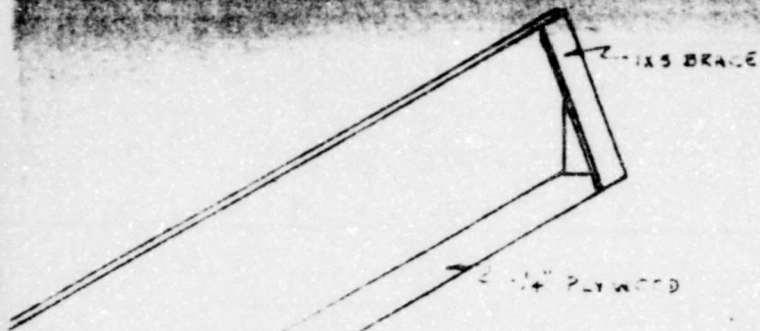
BEVEL AT 45°  
1" STYROFOAM  
(2 THICKNESSES)



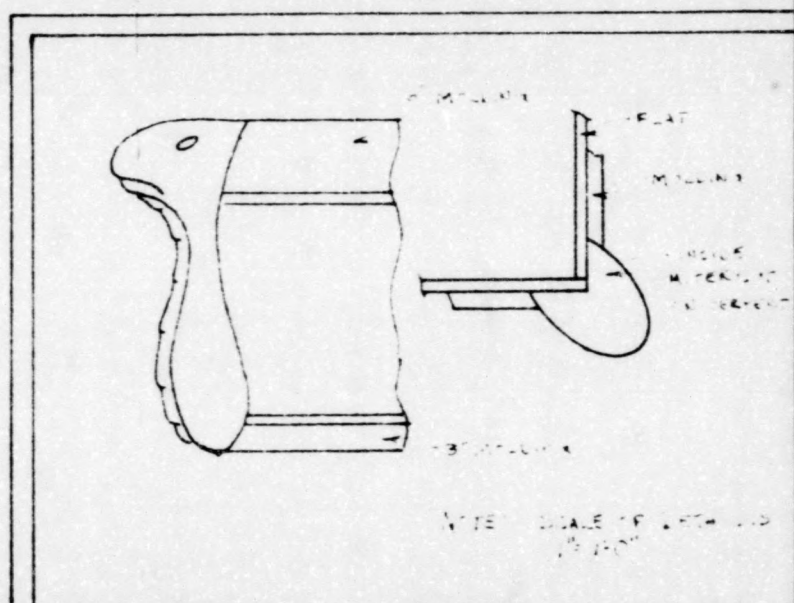
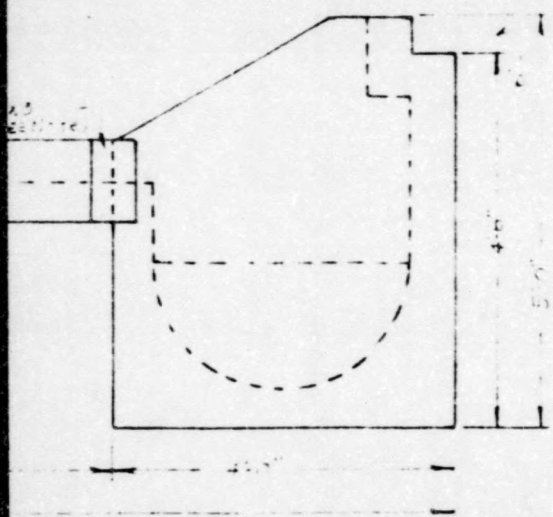
NOTE: CORNICE FRAMEWORK IS TO BE CONSTRUCTED 45 IN XES. ALL DIMENSIONS OF PLATE, AS CORNER BLOCKS, KEYS AND SETBACKS TO BE USED. FRAME ARE THEN STRENGTHENED BY ALL APPLICABLE TO THE LOCATION OF THE



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TO BE CONSTRUCTED  
 USING 1/2\"/>



KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY  
 COVINGTON, KENTUCKY

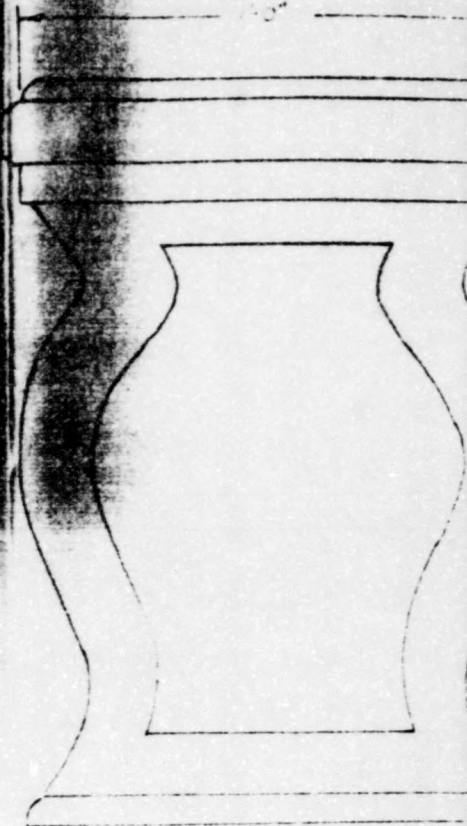
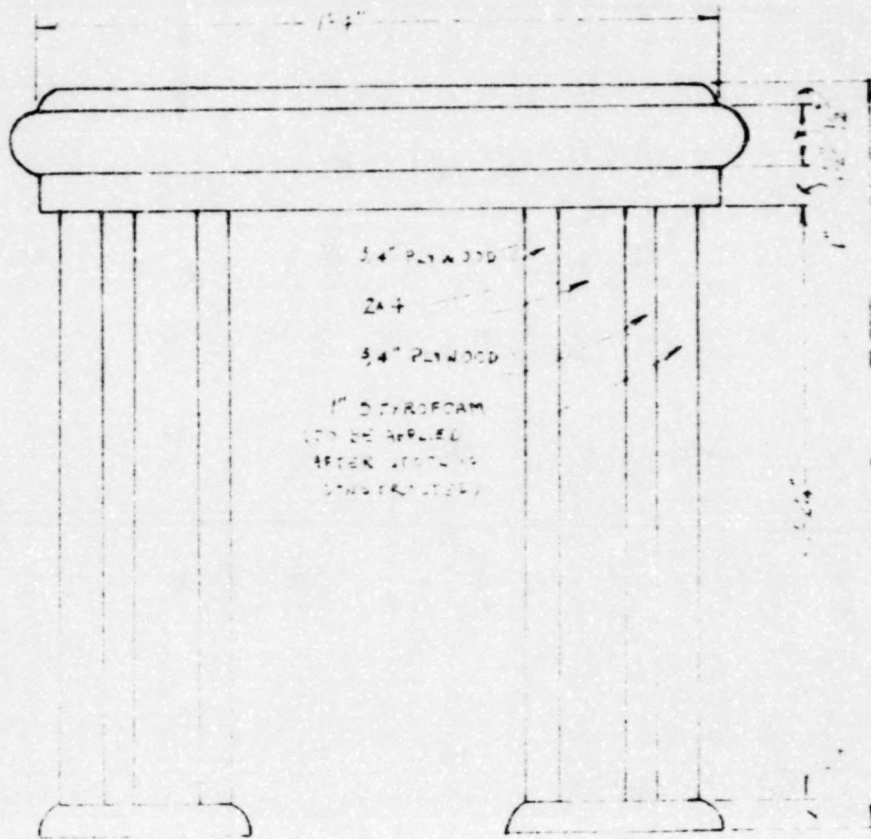
MEDEA

DWG. BY: KEVIN LANHAM  
 DWG. DATE: 3-15-78  
 CSE. NO:        SECT:

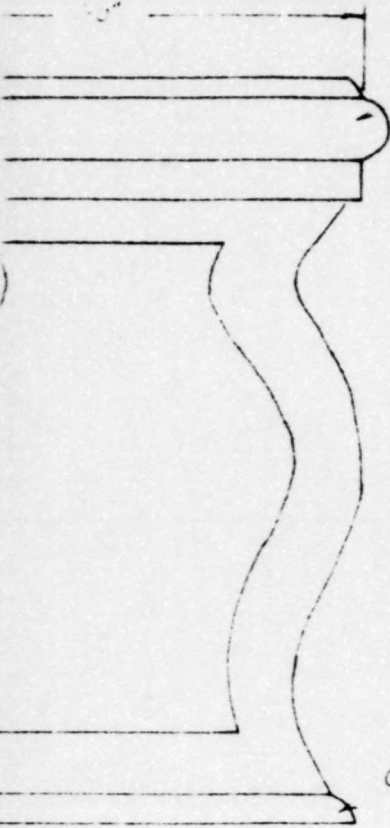
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"  
 PART NO: CORNICE  
 DRAWING NO: #5

APPENDIX S

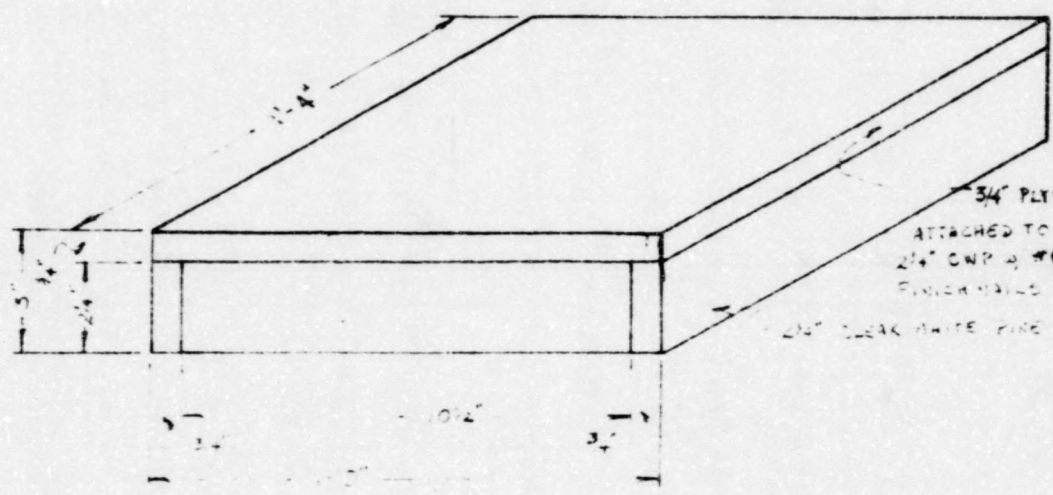
FURNITURE CONSTRUCTION DRAWING  
(Page 62)



**WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY**  
**BOWLING GREEN, KENTUCKY**



1/2" DOWEL KID. RIPPED  
IN HALF, MITERED  
AT CORNERS



3/4" PLYWOOD  
ATTACHED TO  
2 1/4" CWP # 40  
FINISH NAILS  
1 1/2" CLEAR WHITE PINE

QUARTER ROUND  
MITERED AT CORNERS

NOTE: TOP PINE PANEL IS 1/2" X 2 1/4"  
CONSTRUCTION FOR CEILING  
IS SAME AS FOR STOOL

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GREEN, KENTUCKY

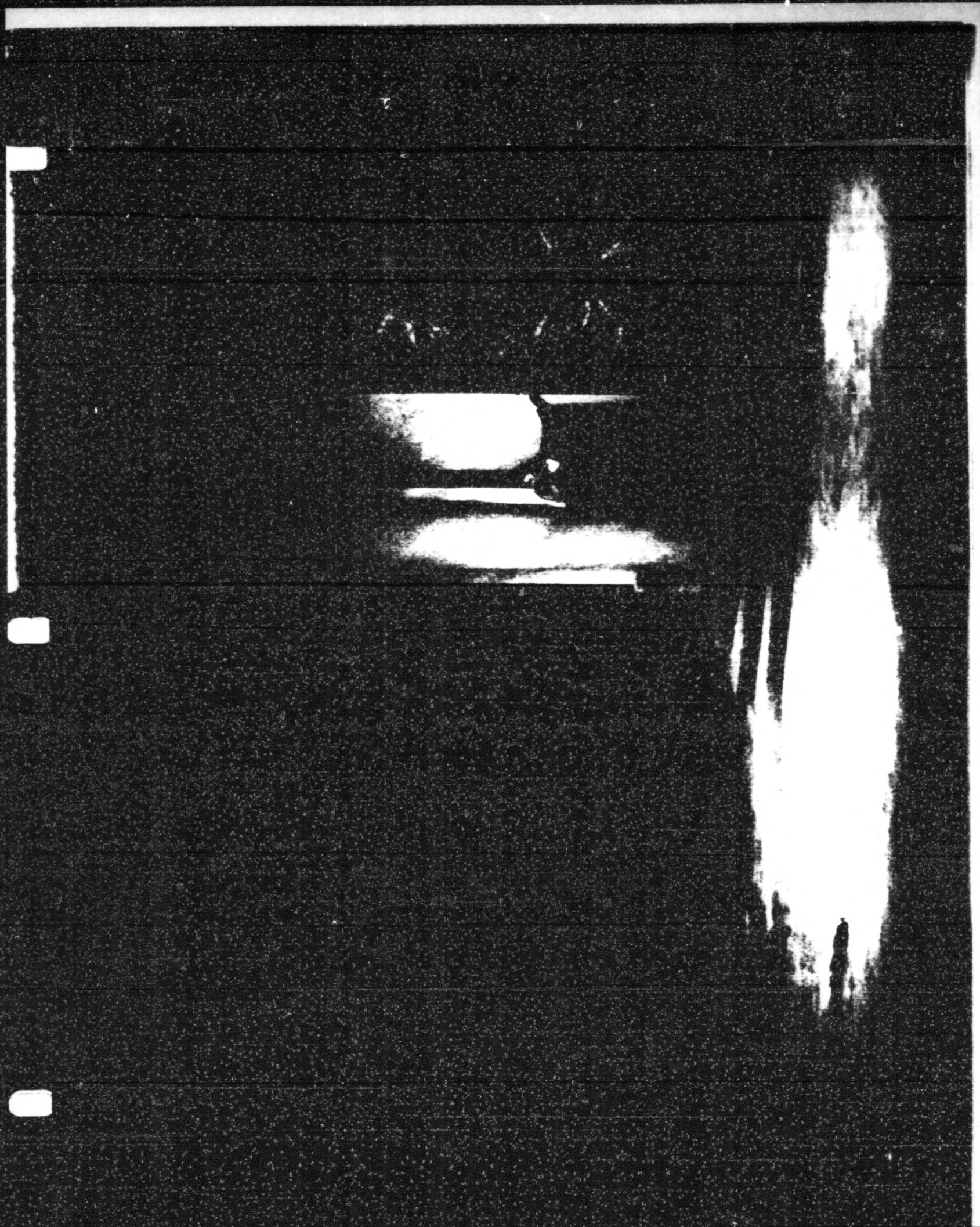
MEDEA

DWG. BY: KEVIN LANHAM  
DWG. DATE: 2-29-78  
CSE. NO:        SECT:

SCALE: 3" = 1'-0"  
PART NO: STOOL  
DRAWING NO: # 4

APPENDIX T

PHOTOGRAPHS OF COMPLETED SET  
(Pages 63, 64)







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