

The following is a script treatment for UCI Drama's production of *A Bright Room Called Day* produced in the Robert Cohen Theatre. This document will present initial lighting design ideas and how it will change from scene to scene. Research images have been included to help support color, angles, intensity and emotion. Much like scenic and costume designers produce sketches, please consider this an initial sketch of the lighting. Questions, suggestions and any feedback are greatly appreciated.

## Overall Lighting Concept

As we are occupying the main character, Agnes' apartment throughout the year, lighting will use this natural progression of time of day and season as an anchor while responding to shifts in emotion and the textural journey of the play. Transitions from scene to scene will flow seamlessly into projection slides as stated in the script. We will avoid blackouts at all costs to keep the pace of the play moving.

## Scene Breakdown

### Part One

#### Prologue

The play begins with an introduction to Zillah as she is sitting at a table as projected slides cycle through rally in support of Hitler. The slides zoom in on a single woman who is not saluting. As we see Zillah and the picture of the woman together onstage, we will start making connections that Zillah is a resistant force for the better. Zillah will be lit with a tight special to pull focus to her and grab the audience's attention as the slides progress. The special will open up to reveal the apartment we are in and set the stage for the rest of the play by slowly revealing the single apartment that we spend our time in. It is a well lived and comfortable apartment. As the slides fade out, lighting will shift to a candle lit apartment a moment



Fig. 1  
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before the stroke of midnight on New Years Eve (Fig. 1). Moonlight streams in through the large window on the east wall. Lighting will support the warm natural glow of candlelight providing a new exciting hope for the year to come with low warm light filling the space. The scene ends with anticipation as the candles extinguish.

### Scene I and II

Six months have passed since we have last seen our characters. The evening sun is starting to set as Husz joins Agnes in her apartment. We can see the vibrant colors of the sun set in the window (Fig 2). The vibrant colors from the sun relate to the lemon that Husz presents to Agnes.

The vibrancy of the lemon brings in a luxury that the characters are not used to having at this time. Husz and Agnes talk about their days on the movie sets and films they are working on. They are anxious with the stress of jobs coming and going.

In the same day, Agnes and Paulinka are talking about the political rallies that keep occurring and how Agnes has started attending a couple of the rallies. Paulinka motions that this is unlike Agnes as she doesn't have a political bone in her body. The lighting will have certain shadows that the practicals in the set cast to help drive the anxious characters as they praise the "*small pleasures in bad times*"

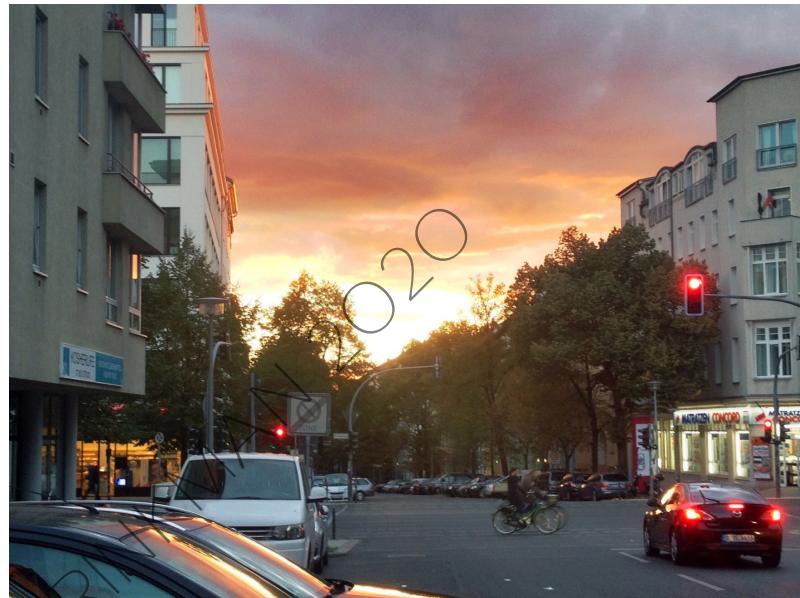


Fig. 2

## First Interruption

We welcome back Zillah to the stage where she is addressing the president in her own letter. As she speaks we can hear an urgency in her voice and a dedication to her beliefs. A tight special opens up on her (Fig. 3). We have pulled attention directly to her and paying close attention to her every word as she recites the letter she has written. The change in lighting from a general wash to a special signifies we are in a different time, but same place. The special will open up to reveal her in Agnes apartment only in the 1980s to help the audience start making the connection that Zillah and Agnes are connected through the apartment which becomes more clear later in the play.



Fig. 3

## Scene III

We can see Agnes caught in the moonlight working at her desk by a table lamp (Fig. 4). The apartment is dim as she works into the night excited about writing a skit for the Nazi party. She gets so wrapped up into her work, she starts yelling brainstorming ideas out loud. We can see her excitement and energy filling the room radiate off of her. She wakes up Husz who comes running into the room. I imagine he would turn on the overhead pendant light to see what all the commotion was about opening up from the small condensed desk to the whole room. This change of light will cause the scene to lose its excitement of Agnes' play in the moment, but the energy still has Agnes captivated.



Fig. 4  
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### Scene III A

Later that same night we can see Agnes asleep at the table lit from the light coming in through the window. The apartment is very dim as the dark of night is at its height (Fig. 5). The window opens and Die Alte enters the apartment. Lighting will shift to a more saturate tone and a more uneasy and un-natural feeling to support the idea that Die Alte may not live in this time period but again has a connection to Agnes and her apartment.



Fig. 5

### Scene IV

Baz and Gotchling enter the apartment without knocking full of excitement ready to inform everyone about the Nazi rally they just attended. The apartment is lit from the bright evening sun setting revealing the honesty of empty promises at the rallies (Fig. 6). The lights fade to a series of projection slides that dictate the slow rise to power of the Nazi Party.

### Scene V and VA

Sitting over morning coffee, Paulinka and Agnes discuss the physical traits of Hitler as observed from a mutual friend. Bright daylight enters the room of a new day that is about to gain tension as Paulinka asks Agnes her beliefs of the devil. Lighting will evolve to a more extreme angle with starker colors to evoke the change in mood from light hearted conversation to the high tensions that the devil brings. We break the fourth wall of the theatre as Paulinka steps in to a bright spot light to tell of her experience of the devil. The rest of the apartment goes dim with a flicker signifying and creating a connection for the audience later when Gottfried enters at the end of act one.



Fig. 6

## Scene VI

Agnes is joined in her apartment by Malek and Traum, two Nazi party officers. They have came to talk to Agnes about the play Agnes wrote for the party. Malek and Traum criticize her play and request she makes changes to better favor the party. The entire scene is on edge as this is the first time characters outside the main group of friends are in Agnes' apartment. The lighting angle will be high to create a higher stress environment as the Nazi party works to gain ground. Malek ends the scene by stating Agnes' play gave him nightmares. The red baby Agnes wrote about in her play, grew and smiled in his dreams, gaining power. This is a direct correlation with the Nazi party and Hitlers rise. We are left on an uneasy note as the soldiers salute and leave Agnes' apartment with the lights narrowing down to agnes leaving her alone in her apartment (Fig. 7).

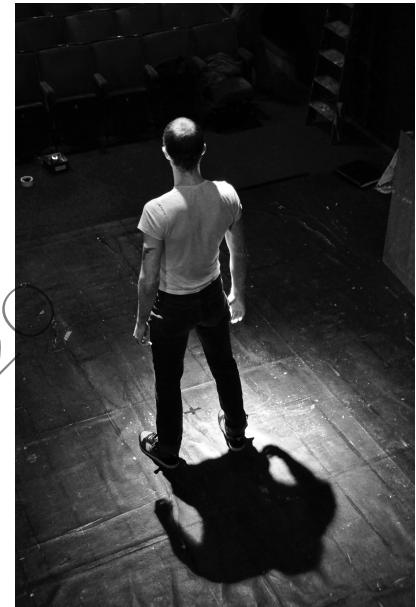


Fig. 7

## Scene VII

A cold fall night has arrived with the second national Reichstag elections. The loss of fascist seats is a reason for celebrations. The scene progresses with everyone drinking and working on collages. Gotching is singing as Husz is vividly describing his life as seen by him in film. The lighting has shifted back to the warmer jovial feeling to support the excitement radiating off the characters.

## Scene VIII



We can see Die Alte sitting at the table lit by the dark moon light coming in through the window. Agnes enters and turns on the light. We can keep the essence of the unnatural feeling already set by Die Alte's first scene by highlighting this scene in a deep lavenders.

## Second Interruption

Another tight special pulls our focus right to Zillah. This special draws the audience out of Agnes world and makes them focus on Zillah and how these problems she is discussing is relevant to our current political issues. This sets Zillah out and makes the audience connect with her easier pulling her forward (Fig. 8). She is more serious this time, and tells us she sees parallels from the current president to the history of Germany. The special sets the tone and opens up slowly to reveal again that zilch is occupying Agnes' apartment and the two of them are connected even though they occupy different time periods.



Fig. 8

## Scene IX

This short scene between Husz and Agnes has an awkward feeling to it as Husz is wishing for sex because he is anxious, but Agnes does not want to because she is also anxious. Lighting will highlight this anxiety by increasing the angle of light as moonlight pours through the window on the cold (Fig. 9) winter night.



Fig. 9

## Scene X

Agnes is alone in her apartment moments before the sun rises. Agnes expresses how important and safe her apartment feels to her. Her apartment is dark as we see the morning sun burst into her apartment (Fig. 10). The scene ends with slides stating that



Hitler is now Chancellor of the German Reich.

Fig. 10

## Scene XI and XII

Baz and Agnes discuss the importance of oranges in the winter. Baz still purchases oranges even though they are more expensive, as a hope and nod to the spring ahead. The lighting in the apartment will emit a warmth even though the window depicts a cold harsh day outside. All of them have been drinking. Husz ends Scene twelve with an emotional speech hoping to freeze time where it is now and live in this moment where they are all together (Fig. 11). Lighting will pull focus to him as he progresses through his monologue to accentuate this feeling of freezing time.



Fig. 11

## Third Interruption

Another tight special comes up on Zillah drawing focus to her in the scene. The rest of the apartment is in a subtle glow helping to establish the location. Her monologue states she never relaxes and that she can work up a sweat simply by reading an article in the Sunday *Times*. She ends her monologue by saying “..eat something indigestible before you go to bed, and listen to your nightmares.” This quote to me directly relates to Malek’s dream he had in scene six. The nightmares are connected and foreshadowing the rise of Hitler. The surrounding lighting will then diminish keeping her in this special to keep the intensity on her and what she is saying.

### Scene XIII

We are back with Agnes, Paulinka and Husz as they are sobering up from the previous night. It is the darkest hour before dawn and the lighting in the apartment is dim, and driven by the practicals on in the apartment. Agnes believes that a year ago they were better people and that the Devil is real. Evil is happening all around them. Husz, hearing talk of the devil, asks the two ladies if they want to meet him. He calls the devil to the apartment.

The lights in the apartment go out in a flicker and we see a bright infernal glow from underneath the audience risers (Fig. 12). In a blast of smoke and intense uplight, Herr Swetts; the devil appears (Fig. 13). The practicals in the apartment flicker with his presence and intensify when he gets near. Lighting goes to black at the end of the scene, and the end of act one.



Fig. 12

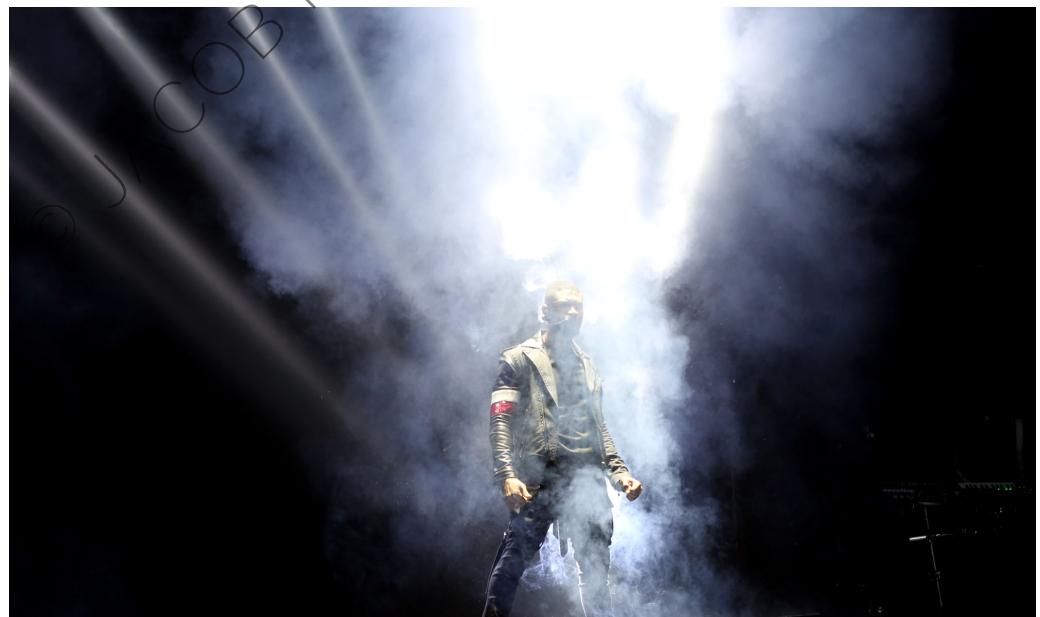


Fig. 13

## Part Two

### Fourth Interruption

We open up with Zillah in cocktail lounge lighting as suggested by the script. Her special is still tight around her, but she is surrounded by saturate colors as she goes through her monologue (Fig. 14).

### Scene XIV

In the middle of the night we are welcomed again by Die Alte. Deep lavender tones light the scene as Agnes enters the apartment to discover her. A fire rages outside the window and we can see the flicker of the flames on the window.

### Fifth Interruption

Zillah is lit in her usual tight special to pull focus to her. The special disappears revealing her in Agnes apartment as her monologue progresses to continue the suggest that Zillah occupies the same location as Agnes and they are connected through this apartment.

### Scene XV

The fire is still burning through the window (Fig. 15). Malek and Traum are back with Agnes and tensions are high between the three of them as they ask why Agnes has not been attending the party meetings. Lighting will shift to a higher angle and implement the use of geometric texture to increase tensions in the apartment.

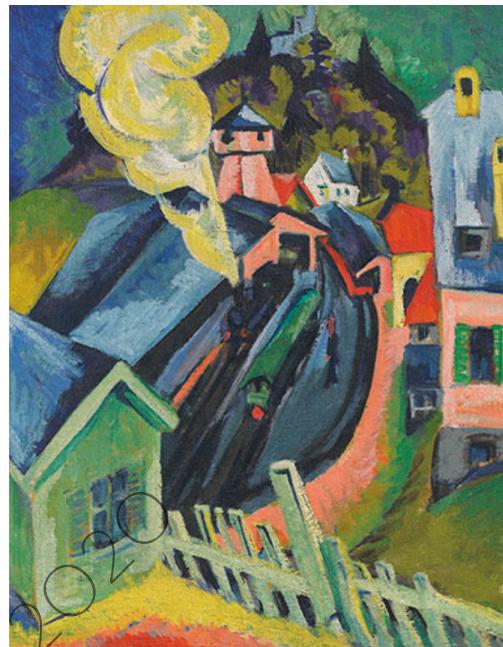


Fig. 14

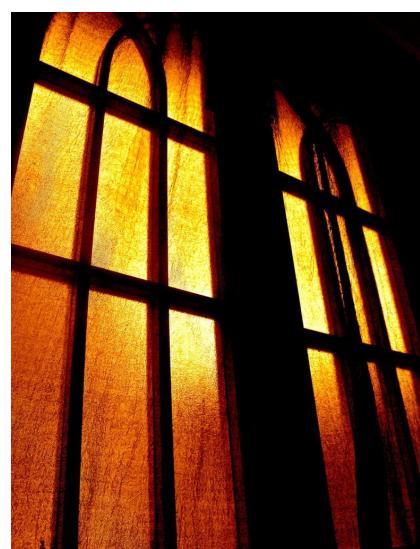


Fig. 15

## Scene XVI and XVII

Pualinka rushes into Agnes' apartment frantic as she has just learned that her doctor has left Germany due to him being Jewish. While bright daylight pours in through the window, the apartment in general still has the higher lighting angle and a harsher color as we can start to see the effects of hitlers rise to power.

In scene seventeen, days later Agnes question why everyone is fleeing Germany when they should be staying to fight. Gotching asks Agnes for use of her apartment so he can help fight against the Nazi rise. Agnes is unsure. Gotchings monologue at the end of the scene, we will condense down to focus on him and what he is asking of Agnes.

## Sixth Interruption

Zllah is lit in her tight special to pull focus to her. The special disappears revealing her in Agnes apartment as she refers to the devil theory of 6-6-6 and how Adolph and Raegan both have three names with six letters in it.

## Scene XVIII

Daylight pours through Agnes window as we open the scene. Baz has just returned from Munich where he went to kill himself. After ending up in the park to take his life, he met up with a Silesian character and relieved his pent up energy with him and in turn decides not to take his life. With a fresh mind he decides to spend the rest of his day at the cinema. It just so happens that Adolph Hitler shows up at the same theatre

where Baz was at. He had a great opportunity to kill Hitler but decides against it because even if he did kill Hitler, the guards would also kill him for the action. The lighting in this scene will continue to be tense and we can start to feel the pressure of hitlers rise on the outside of the apartment. We can see light pouring in through not only the window but in through the doors of the apartment (Fig. 16).



Fig. 16

### Seventh Interruption

Zillah is lit in a special, but we can still see the apartment around her. Agnes is in her room and Zillah can feel the presence of Agnes as she goes about her business. Lighting will lower the angle to help soften up the space and create a more supernatural feeling by using more saturated colors, close to the relation that Agnes has with Die Alte.

### Scene XIX

Die Alte is drunk in Agnes apartment. It is dim and mysterious as Die Alte is warning Agnes about sleeping with a black pillow as they welcome nightmares. She tells her, no matter how bad the nightmares were, she continued to sleep with the black pillow. Lighting will fill the apartment with low sweeping angles to produce a mystery that follows Die Alte. Agnes attempts to kick her out but Die Alte is strong and states to Agnes, "Time is all that separates you from me."

### Scene XX

The following morning we see Husz with a bloody face and clothes torn. Paulinka saved him by slapping a nazi soldier on the film lot. Tensions are high and this once war inventing apartment has become cold and harsh even with the morning sun breaking through the window.

### Scene XXI

That night Husz is tending to his wounds while discussing leaving with Agnes. He got counterfeit visas for the both of them to flee to America. Agnes is stubborn and does not want to leave for fear of not knowing the language and not having a job opportunity there for some time. At this time we can feel the direct pressure of hitlers power coming through the apartment as he is driving the two of them apart. Soft bright light pours in through all the doors and the window to amplify this pressure (Fig. 17).



Fig. 17

## Scene XXII

We have tightened in on Agnes as she looks at the visa left behind for her from Husz. She tears it in half, stranding herself in Germany with no way out.

## Scene XXIII

Paulinka is now preparing to flee to Russia. Agnes is visibly upset as all she is doing is looking out the bright daylight window. Baz ends the scene leaving Agnes. She is now alone in her apartment, it no longer feels like a home but as a shelter from the elements. It is stripped of the color and warmth that we saw at the beginning of the play and the angle of light is high and harsh creating unnatural shadows on the face. Agnes is left alone with Hitlers power at hand.

## Scene XIV

Months later, Gotchling shows up at Agnes' apartment asking for a favor. Agnes is asked to house refugees for some time. The lighting remains tense, cold and condensed to the actors to elevate the tension between them and their once strong friendship now fragile (Fig 18).



Fig. 18

## Eighth Interruption

Zillah's final interruption follows the same model as all the ones leading up to now. She will be in a tight special, but it will stay to this special and not grow to include the rest of the apartment.

## Scene XXV

Malek arrives at Agnes apartment as a fleeing communist. Agnes realizes now that she is all alone and afraid of her outcome. Malek informs Agnes of a house that sits on the border of Germany and Czechoslovakia if she wishes to leave. Agnes ends the scene by asking Malek to be gone by morning. The apartment is cold, and a stranger to the apartment we were first welcomed in from the first scene. The light is bright and harsh with the angle being high as rays of light emit from the window.

## Epilogue

Agnes, Zillah and Die Alte all take the stage. Lit individually, they each go through their ending monologue. Lighting will help drive the action by pulling focus to each character for their monologues. The room begins to grow dark slowly. By the time Agnes finishes her last line, "Welcome to Germany," the stage is barely visible, we are suddenly blinded by a bright light that evolves into the post show look (Fig. 19).



Fig. 19