

KCACTF Response to CSU's *Our Town*
Seen on 4/25/24 by Lara Maerz (THDN Production Coordinator, CU Boulder)
Notes regarding Costume Design by Erin Carignan

I really enjoyed this production of *Our Town* for a variety of reasons, and one of the standouts was definitely the costumes designed by CSU faculty member Erin Carignan. In my pre show discussions with the director and the AD's, I learned about their general approach to the show and we all agreed that the real benefit of this lovely and classic piece is that it's truly timeless. Humans will always seek to build community. Humans will always want to understand their past. They will always want to dream about the future.

Erin's costumes truly embraced the timelessness of this story. With the unique addition of the music ensemble, I really loved that their clothing felt like a mix of modern pieces combined with the more "period" looks of some of the other characters. The color palate variation between that group and the rest of the cast was also noticeable and appreciated. I loved the jewelry some of the female presenting actors were wearing as well - it showed attention to detail and again showed us some more modern looks.

When thinking about the principal / named characters, I knew who George Gibbs was when he hit the stage before it was even made clear to the audience. He had such an "all American boy" look and the often matching color palettes that tied he and Emily together was truly stunning. When considering younger actors playing older characters, Erin's choice to add a mustache for Doc Gibbs and some white at his temples and the beautiful hair on Mrs. Webb helped age the students appropriately. The custom made (or I assume so based on the color varied matching print) dresses for Julia Gibb were just stunning and her wig choice and styling was perfection. Emily was dressed appropriately and the color and print choices really showed the development of her character - the choice to have her end the play in her wedding dress broke my heart and was just perfect.

My favorite thing was the addition of tattoos, small earrings and simple jewelry for the young actor playing the stage manager. As a young Latinx male presenting actor, I really felt that those simple touches allowed his own cultural references in dress to be present yet with the period costume and classic suspenders and newsboy style cap, he WAS the Stage Manager that we all know who love *Our Town*. Erin's affinity for textile manipulation and texture as well as her strong ability to blend color and pattern were all over this show and I so appreciated her specific yet simple styling of every costume to really flatter every actor.