

# Amanda Cardwell-Aiken

Realized Costume Design

## *Spring Awakening the Musical*

Adapted for Stage

by Steven Sater and Duncan Sheik (2006)

Based on the Play *The Awakening of Spring*

by Frank Wedekind (1891)

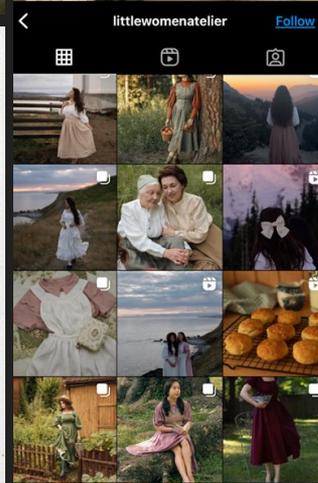


# Concept Statement

My goal for the costume design Spring Awakening was to bring the late 1890s Germany to the American West. My director wanted to create a softer style of intimacy for this show and asked for me to incorporate modern influences into the design. Since the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown in 2020 alternative subcultures have been popping up on social media sites like Instagram and TikTok. Cottagecore and Dark Academia were the two of the most popular that play really well with the themes of Spring Awakening. These aesthetics are inspired by Victorian/Edwardian Revivals that idolize country living and the moody nature of academia. Since the play deals with the male and female dichotomy of coming of age I wanted to use these elements to highlight our ideas of the past that are still present with us.

In this show I used color theory pertaining to the color red. In general, when red is used on stage it has a very drawing pull to the eye so when my director asked if the adults could be in solid red, I paused to consider what implications that would have and I decided that I wanted red to feel like a fairytale warning not just pertaining to the parents.

- On Wendla's journey she starts in almost pure white and ends in a dark red after adding bits of red throughout.
- Using the set as a guide the Adult Characters blend into the trees while feeling like deadened, rotted tree and children stand out in darker looks or with more color. Each of the individual adult characters was then costumed based on if they were being dark and malevolent or offering a warning to the children.
- There were accents of red used with Melchior tying him to Wendla as well as Hanschen before kissing Ernst.
- Ilse starts in red because she's a warning to the other girls of disobedience.



# Research Process

Girl's dresses were similar to adult women in silhouette but were shorter in length generally falling a few inches below the knee. In the 1890s the sleeves on the girls dresses grew and their dresses lost the bustles as well. Smocked, yoked and sailor dress all became popular as seen on a fashion plate from the 1894 edition of Harper's Bazaar. These dresses were often made loose and belted or smocked at the waist to grow with them. Dresses were also covered with pinafore aprons to make sure they didn't soil their clothes especially outside. Young girls began wearing training corsets around age thirteen but there are advertisements for girls as young as one year old. (Shrimpton 49) Girls' hair was long and natural waves especially decorated with large bows. Sometimes hair was cut short until they reached adolescence.

Thom Browne's Fashion Week Spring Season 23 was a big inspiration for my mixed menswear and Little Women Atelier was a big influence on my women's fashion. British Vogue released an article in April 2020 called "Trust us, the pastoral fantasies of Cottagecore are the perfect antidote to quarantine blues." It talked about the rise of the cottagecore aesthetic and a desire for simpler times. We have seen revivals of late Victorian and Edwardian Fashion in the 1970s and 1980s with designers like Laura Ashley and Gunne Sax that focused on a pastoral American West style with lace and ruffles. The Real Mother Goose, illustrated by Blanche Fisher Wright (1935) also uses simplified victorian silhouettes for their cautionary fairy tales which was part of the feeling I wanted to bring to my costume design as a storyteller.

# Contemporary vs. Historical



# Design Process Sketches

I initially started my design process in Spring of 2022 as soon as I heard that Spring Awakening might be on the season selection for the fall. My initial reaction to this was to incorporate a lot of e-boy/girl/alternative/punk elements into this production. Girls in black platform Doc Marten knockoffs and boys in little punk school outfits. I drew up a couple pencil sketches of what the aesthetic could be and waited until it was securely apart of the season and knew that I would officially be doing the costume design. When I met with Jason Spelbring over the summer however it seemed like he was taking a different softer perspective of the show, so I made some changes to my ideas.

Over the Summer I started creating rough sketches for the specific characters using our directors vision for the show. I softened the vision from modern punk elements from Doc Martens to dance boots. I started choosing colors that I thought complimented the characters and started picking what items I would like built for the show.

I finalized my designs before the show was cast so I tried to keep a few options available for characters like Ilse which is why you can see three aesthetic options for her during the song Blue Wind and two hairstyles on one draft of the final renderings. My biggest design choice for this show came with the boys. When the show came to Broadway all of the boys wear a school uniform but I wanted them to keep their independent identities until we got to the reformatory scene. Part of this choice came from research of school houses and reformatories during the period as well as contemporary movies like Tolkien (2019) and the Dark Academic aesthetic from social media.

Initial Sketches  
Spring 2022



Roughs  
Summer 2022



Digital Designs  
Summer 2022



# Wendla

Wendla is the main female protagonist of the show. We see her story from the very beginning in her room all the way through to her death and the return of her ghost. Her tragedy is the central narrative of the musical. Wendla is a bright and inquisitive girl who feels very unsure about her purpose in life. In my design she has a higher social status than the other girls so her costumes are more ornate and decorated with lace and velvet.

## 1.1 Mama Who Bore Me

Look 1 - Combinations\*

We used a red insert lace on shorts and drawstrings with a matching red bow.

Look 2 - Little White Dress

"Let me wear this one, Mama! I love this one. It makes me feel like a little ... faerie-queen."

## 1.3 My Junk

Look 3/4 - Cream Dress with/out Apron\*

The apron would be a delicate and frivolous addition to the outfit reflecting Wendla's station over her friends. After she hears Martha's story of abuse she removes the apron and steps away from her childhood. The rest of the cast removed their before 2.3 Moritz' funeral. The cream dress was originally with purple trim and underlay that we replaced with a crushed red velvet dress and added red burnout cuffs and a waist cincher.

## 2.6 Whispering

Look 5 - Nightgown w/ Red Pashmina

Shawl

Look 6 Red Cape

## 2.9 Those You've Known

Look 7 - Overlay 3D Trim Red Dress

overlaying black crushed velvet as Wendla's Ghost\*

\*= Built



Select Research



Act 1.1 Look 2 progress

MWBM LOOK 1 & 2

MY JUNK

WENDLA

I BELIEVE

WHISPERING

THOSE YOU'VE KNOWN



1.5 Word of your Body



1.8 The Beating



2.9 Those You've Known

# The Girls

## Martha -

Cautious, Obedient, Abusive/Strict Parents  
There is a lingering sadness within Martha, and I wanted to highlight that with a blue floral prairie dress with darker cuffs, collar and a waist cincher. In the original script she also says, "Blue suits me to a t" She is in an apron that is more similar to servants and my goal was to connect it to her for covering up the dark she knows well.



## Thea -

"Free? But how will we know what to do if our parents don't tell us?" (p.44)

## Anna -

Girlish, Romantic, Hopeful

## Ilse -

Free Spirited, Bohemian,  
Before the play starts, she has been ostracized from the other girls because her father kicked her out of the house. So I put her in a loud warning Red with no apron from the beginning of the show and no waist cincher. She is free from the societal pressure to fit in.



MARTHA

THEA

WENDLA

ANNA

ILSE



1.8 Martha's Bruise



2.8 Melchior's Note

# Adult Woman

**Frau Bergmann –  
Wendla's mother**

“Very well, I'll tell you  
everything.  
But not today. Tomorrow. Or the  
day after.”

Pieces - 1.1 Apron, 1.7 Cloak

**Fanny Gabor –  
Melchior's mother**

Liberal Minded, Feminist  
“Melchior wrote an  
essay—every word of which  
was true.”

Pieces - Base Costume

**Frau Bessell –  
Martha's mother**

Negligent,  
Pieces -Wrapper/Robe,  
Nightcap

**Fräulein Großbüstenhalter –  
Georg's piano teacher**

Fantasy,  
-Rip Open Jacket mid song

**Fräulein Knuppeldick –  
Teacher**

“There's not only the  
moral corruption of our youth,  
but the creeping sensuality or  
these liberal-minded times.”

-Mortarboard Hat and Gown



2.4 Totally F'd

2.6 Whispering

# The Boys

**Melchior** -  
Passionate, Inquisitive,  
rebellious, Grey Thinking  
Pops of Red

**Moritz** -  
Depressed, Stressed,  
Restless Dreamer  
"I'll be up all night  
again, haunted by another of  
those... dreams. And still I won't  
get through it."

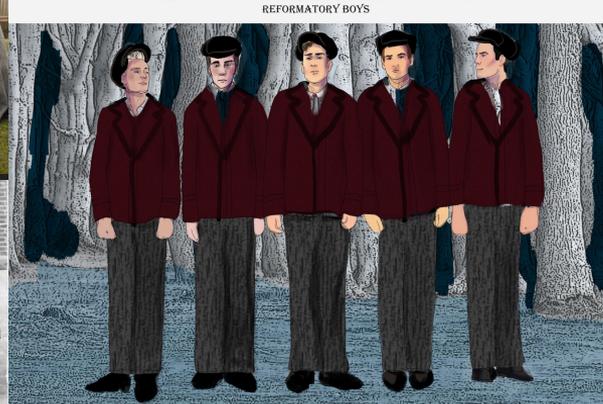
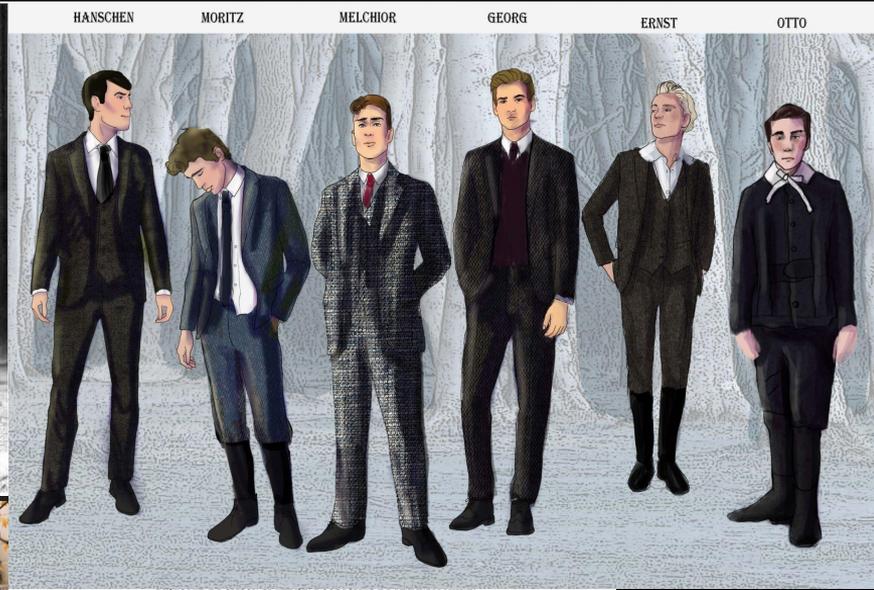
**Hanshen** -  
Skins off the Cream, Power  
"lying there, contemplating the  
coming bliss"

**Georg** -  
Musical, "I'll love your light.  
I'll love you right..."  
He was wigged during the show  
because the actor has long hair  
that we was unwilling to cut.

**Ernst** -  
Innocent, Young, Sweet,  
Sentimental

**Otto** -  
Self-doubting  
"As if she'd return my call"

**Reformatory Boys** -  
Systemic Issues of the  
Patriarchy, They are uniform  
because of how society treats  
them and molds them into their  
Base Human nature



# Adult Man

## Headmaster Knochenbruch –

“We are hardly here today to conjecture about textual conjectures. The boy has made an error.”

Mortarboard and Gown



## Herr Sonnenstich – School teacher

Frock Coat and Mortarboard



## Herr Gabor – Melchior's father

Base Look matching Fanny since we only seem them from the Adult Woman's platform

HERR SONNENSTICH

HERR RILOW

HEADMASTER KNOCHENBRUCH

HERR NEUMANN

HERR STIEFEL

FATHER KAULBACH

HERR GABOR

DOCTOR VON BRAUSEPULVER  
SCHMIDT



## Herr Stiefel – Moritz's father

Black Cutaway Coat open at home and closed for the funeral



## Herr Rilow – Hanschen's father

Morning Robe with cap.

## Herr Neumann – Ilse's Father

Sleeves Rolled up, Vest. This changed due to the quick change needed after the additional character. Instead he wore the male base costume with frock coat.

## Father Kaulbach – Priest

Black Cassock and Lutheran collar

## Doctor von Brausepulver –

Grey Plaid Overcoat

## Schmidt – Abortionist

Oxblood Red Apron and Black Sleeve guards



1.9 Herr Stiefel/You Failed



2.7 Schmidt/Abortionist

# Special Costumes

## Hanschen

We see Hanschen in the bathroom during My Junk with the intention of masturbation before bed. I wanted something a little frilly to show his exposed nature but something that would cover him completely for decency's sake.



HANSCHEN - MY JUNK



ADULT MAN - DARK I KNOW WELL



ILSE - BLUE WIND



## Ilse

I wanted Ilse to have a neoclassical inspired look for her song Blue Wind. I designed a soft blush Ionic Chiton with a purple ribbon and a garland of Ivy in her hair. Inspiration for this look came from her life as a part of the artist's colony, 'Priapia,' where Ilse says, "All they want to do is dress me up and paint me!" (p.67) In Greek Mythology, Priapus was a god representing the phallus and fertility and gives us better understanding of the male artist's Ilse has been around at her time in the colony. The turn of the century introduction to Art Nouveau and artists like Mucha using organic shapes in their posters used photographs of women in ancient Greek styled gowns.



## Adult Man

Special Character Research added to Adult Man in "The Dark I Know Well" We wanted to give Ilse and Martha a moment of agency when they would cut out their abusers. He wanted this new character to be a representation of the patriarchy and dark male nature with inspiration from the Child Catcher and the Beast



1.8 Dark I know Well

# Process Photos

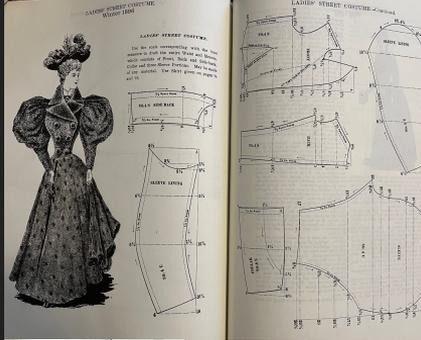
Pull rack before fittings showcasing tight color palette



## Featured Builds

### Adult Man -

Frock Coat and Vest



### Adult Woman -

Walking Suit Jacket and Skirt based partially on authentic historical pattern from 1896

### Wendla -

Apron was made from a gauzy cotton and a lace tablecloth. We dipped dyed it to match the cream dress better and added minor hints of red so it would pop on the dress from the large stage.

The aprons for all of the girls were made by our first year costume construction class as a class project.



Wendla's Dead Dress pattern was partially copied from her main dress in the show. There is 6 yards of lace in the skirt and a bedazzled Floral piece attached over her heart.

# Collaboration

## Scenic Designer: Michael Francis

Over the Summer we discussed the idea of beech trees which was very important to our director. Since the show takes place near the industrial revolution we wanted to emphasize the gnarled society the adults were preparing the children for. They were the ones cutting down the trees and putting the youth on the straight and narrow.



## Projection Designer: Melanie Velara

She had a challenging time working with the scenic design to bring her hand drawn illustrations to life and instead moved to more environmental designs like the moon which was enhanced by lighting and haze.



## Lighting Designer: Alexis Woodward

She blended soft warm interior lighting with cold exteriors and wasn't afraid to bring in a spectrum of color to emphasize the music.



# Collaboration

**Sound Designer:**  
**Brian Garrick**

We worked together to make sure each actor had the best microphone placement for their costume. The Adult Men wore enough hats that we moved his placement to the side of his face instead of the top of the head. Wendla rolled around on the ground multiple times through the show so we added multiple mic placements to her body suit so she could adjust placement based on the requirements of the scene.

**Prop Master:**  
**Kailey Linden**

We worked together to make sure small items like journals would fit in the actors pockets on stage and made sure that choices enhanced the character design, like Father Kaulbach, we added a red bible to pop against his black cassock.

**Intimacy Director:**  
**Alli St. John**

We gave Alli as many rehearsal costume pieces as possible to coordinate the intimate moments in the musical, especially in scene 1.11 when Melchior and Wendla consummate their relationship.



1.6 The Schoolyard



1.4 Touch Me



1.11 The Hayloft



2.2 Don't Do Sadness/Blue Wind

# Paperwork

## Character Breakdown

This was important to understand the Adult Characters and any quick changes necessary through the show.

## Build List

My wish list for student projects and builds

## Pull List

Items necessary to pull either from stock or from nearby theatre companies.

## Piece Breakdown

I start this as I read the script and have an understanding of what I want the actors to wear. Once I've fit the actors I go through and specify my choices as thoroughly as needed.

## Wardrobe Run Sheets

After the Designer Run the Wardrobe Head and I sat down to go over the piece list and changes that happen through the show. Some of the directors choices for staging made a lot of quick changes necessary for the Adult Characters. The additional our director added to Adult Male character in The Dark I Know Well meant a major quick change back into the Headmaster and the platform that the Adult Woman did a majority of her acting on meant less time to change due to traveling up and down stairs.

		Spring Awakening Character Breakdown																					
Character		1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	1.101	1.11	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.101	
Scene	MWBM	All That's Known/B	My Junk	Touch Me	Word of your Body	School yard		DKW	Beat Me	You Failed	Then There Were None	MBN/ I believe	Guilt Only	Sad Blue Wind	Left Behind	TF*	WOYB Reprise	Whispering	Reform/ DR	Dead W	TYK	Purple Summer	
Adult Man		Teacher	Hanschen Dad			Headmaster		Ilse Dad		Moritz Dad			Sermon					x Bergman & Gabor	Doctor			x	
Adult Woman	x Bergman Morn		x Piano	Gabor Mom		x Teacher		x Martha Mom			x Gabor Mom				x Gabor	x Teacher		Gabor	Bergman			x	
Wendia	x		X	x	x			x	x			x	x		x	x		x				x ghost	x
Martha	x		x	x				x				x	x		x	x				x			x
Thea	x		x	x				x				x	x		x	x				x			x
Anna	x		x					x				x	x		x	x				x			x
Ilse	x			x				x				x	x	x	x	x				x			x
Melchior		x	x	x	x			x				x	x		x	x				x			x
Moritz		x	x	x				BG sing		x	x	x	x	x									x ghost
Otto		x	x	x				BG sing	x		x	x	x		x	x				reform			x
Hanschen		x	x	x				BG sing			x	x	x		x	x	x			reform			x
Georg		x	x	x				BG sing	x		x	x	x		x	x				reform			x
Ernst		x	x	x				BG sing			x	x	x		x	x	x			reform			x

Spring Awakening Build List				
Character	Look	Piece	Notes	Assigned To
Adult Man	Base	Grey Frock Coat Red Vest		Adie
Adult Woman	Base	1890s Dress	Mutton Sleeve Jacket and skirt <a href="https://www.gaborflower.com/en/fabric/9817263-gr-ay-476-bark-by-artlovpassion">https://www.gaborflower.com/en/fabric/9817263-gr-ay-476-bark-by-artlovpassion</a> <a href="https://www.etsy.com/listing/957402166/open-air-drfwood-light-gray-1649-28113">https://www.etsy.com/listing/957402166/open-air-drfwood-light-gray-1649-28113</a> attach to Black Blouse	Kenlyn
		Red Ribbon Silhouette		
Wendia		White Victorian Dress	Belted Winged Shoulders, knee length	Jasmine
	Ghost	Dress Overlay		
Ilse	base	Mother Hubbard Dress	Red and Black yoke	Shelby
<b>Lydias Class</b>				
Martha		Apron	Vshaped bottom, yoked, pinstriped	
Wendia		Apron	White Winged	
Thea		Apron	Grey/Black Plaid	
Anna		Apron	Grey Floral, yoked tie/snap/button at back, small wing	
Adult Woman		Apron	winged light grey	
Adult Woman		Apron	red half apron textured	
Adult Man		Bulcher	red	

Spring Awakening Pull List				
Character(s)	Actor	Item	Pallet?	Note
Adult Man	Jack Roberts			
		Black Striped Pants		
		Grey Collared Shirt		
		Red Cravat		
		Black Boots		
		Black Boots		
		Motorboard		
		undershirt		
		Black Socks		
		Suspenders		
		Pocket watch		
		Red Robe		
		Red Tassel Cap		
		Black Robe		
		Black Cassock		
		Black Top Hat		
		Black Coat		
		Bowler Hat		
		Apron		
		Sleeve Guards		

Spring Awakening Piece Breakdown						
Look	Act/Scene	Piece	Full	Rent	Buy	Build
<b>Jack Roberts</b>						
<i>Adult Man - teacher, headmaster, Hanschens Dad, Ilse's Dad, Melchior's Dad, Moritz' Dad, Sermon, Doctor, Abortinist</i>						
	<b>1.2</b>	<b>Teacher</b>				
		Grey Frock Coat			x	
		Black Striped Pants	x			
		Grey Collared Shirt	x			
		Red Cravat	x			
		Red Vest			x	
		Black Boots	x			
		Motorboard	x			
		undershirt	x			
		Black Socks	x			
		Suspenders	x			
		Pocket watch	x			
	<b>1.3</b>	<b>Hanschen's Dad</b>				
		Red Robe	x	x		
		Red Tassel Cap	x	x		
	<b>1.6</b>	<b>Headmaster</b>				
		Motorboard				
		Black Robe	x			
	<b>1.7</b>	<b>Ilse Dad</b>				
		No Jacket just Vest				
		Sleeves Rolled Up				
		Add Feathered Coat				
		Add Top Hat				
		Add Articulating Gloves				
	<b>1.9</b>	<b>Moritz Dad</b>				
		Grey Frock Coat on Open				
	<b>2.1</b>	<b>Father</b>				
		Black Cassock	x	Opera		
	<b>2.3</b>	<b>Moritz Dad</b>				
		repeat				
	<b>2.4</b>	<b>Headmaster</b>				
		repeat				
	<b>2.6</b>	<b>Gabor/Bergmann</b>				
		Black Outway Coat	x			
		Black Top Hat	x			
		Grey Frock Coat on Open	x			
	<b>2.7</b>	<b>Doctor</b>				
		Black Coat	x			
		Bowler Hat	x			
	<b>2.7</b>	<b>Abortinist</b>				
		Apron	x			
		Sleeve Guards	x			
	<b>2.1</b>	<b>Purple Summer</b>				
		Teacher Lock				

## Costume Shop:

Costume Designer - Amanda Cardwell-Aiken  
Asst. Costume Designer - Addie Mulholland  
Costume Shop Manager - Lydia Semler  
Asst. Costume Shop Manager - Maren Lyman  
Cutter/Stitcher - Jaz Gold (Wendla Look 2 Dress), Becca Hulse (Wendla Combinations), Shelby Findlay (Ilse Red Dress), Emma Lovan (Martha Blue Dress), Lydia Semler (Ilse Chiton)  
Costume Construction I (Aprons class project)  
Wardrobe Head - Shelby Findlay  
Wardrobe Crew - Brynn Francis, Damon Fuhriman  
Wigs & Makeup - Cheyenne Davies, Addie Mulholland

## Designers/Run Crew:

Director/Choreographer - Jason Spelbring  
Asst. Director/Intimacy Captain - Jordan Lockwood  
Stage Manager - Katie Bauer  
Asst. Stage Managers - Jas Gold, Rachel Tillotson  
Dramaturgs - Brooklyn Bullard, Berkli Smith  
Intimacy Director - Alli St. John  
Lighting Designer - Alexis Woodward  
Light Board Op - Carter Lee  
Master Electrician - Ky Trupp  
Music Director - Dallas Askoy  
Photographer - Andrew McCallister  
Projection Designer - Melanie Valera  
Projection Op - William King  
Props Master - Kailey Linden  
Scenic Designer - Michael Francis  
Asst. Scenic Designer - Hailey Hammond  
Scene Charge - Audrey Kearl  
Sound Designer/A1 - Brian Garrick  
Sound Board Op - Levi Hopkins  
TD/Production Manager - Amy Critchfield

## Cast List:

Adult Man - Jack Carter  
Adult Woman - Ari Whatcott  
Anna - Meg Roberts  
Ernst/Reinhold - Tucker Eschmeyer  
Georg/Dieter - Timo Rasmussen  
Hanschen/Rupert - Ben Quiroz  
Ilse (Fight Captain) - Ashlynn Rober  
Martha - Grace Garner  
Melchior - Andrew Moody  
Moritz - Preston Rowland  
Otto/Ulbrecht - Julian Carli  
Thea - Matraca Mera  
Wendla - Nicole Fredrick  
Ensemble/Understudies -  
Gretchen Call  
Jonah Newton  
Kaito Yoshida  
Olivia Farmer

# Credits

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