

Dark Waters

FMP-SK 2021



This show explores the mystery of a dark lagoon. The theme draws reference to the recent Oscar winning sci-fi drama, [The Shape of Water](#), which was inspired by the 1950's film, [The Creature from the Black Lagoon](#). In both films, an amphibian man appears and is captured by scientists. During scientific observation, curiosity is peaked as the creature reveals human emotions. In the process, a love relationship begins between the creature and a woman that has opportunities to interact with him. Although bands may choose to do this more literal character portrayal, the thematic approach can be a broader interpretation depicting the transformation from a dark, isolated lagoon to a curious exploration of the sea's expansive beauty.

Basic Show Layout and Guard Possibilities

Introduction - "The Fear of Unknown"

- Dark and mysterious. Music portrays the slow ebb and flow of the waves in a lagoon
 - Feature one guard person as the main character gazing at the sea
 - Perhaps using choreography and flowing skirt, sheer blue material to represent the sea or elongated sleeve material
 - See images later in the document
 - Could also feature a small group of guard or the entire guard if preferred
 - A stationary tarp could be used to represent the lagoon or inlet
 - If used, the guard soloist or group could be featured on or near it
 - Entire guard could have a costume with a sheer skirt that can remain for the entire show or be removed later in the show

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Part 1 - *“The Creature Appears” or “Curiosity is Fueled”*

- Driving, intense and suspenseful
 - Flags and rifles could be appropriate for the guard in this segment
- An amphibian-like creature can appear in this segment and be seen by the lead female character @measure 76
 - From @measure 92 to the end, both characters can interact with each other but from a distance at first. As this segment climaxes @measures 125-133, the characters can run towards each other ending up face to face by @measure 136

Part 2 - *“Below the Surface”*

- Less dark; it begins suspenseful and curious with the mood turning deliberately majestic
 - The guard (at least a small group of them), could use choreography without equipment at first (perhaps using only the fabric of the skirts or sleeves (portraying how hair and clothing would look underwater?)
 - Another option is to use the fabric of larger flags without the pole
 - Full large flag on the climax phrase and culmination
 - Double flags are an option if desired
 - A sheer streamer could be used with some or all instead of a traditional flag?
 - Ala water sleeves (see image later in document)
 - If using characters to tell the story of the creature and lead female character, a couple dance-like interaction could exist throughout
 - A small fabric flyover could occur over the couple on the ending note of this segment lasting into the first few measures of Part 3
 - Located on the water tarp area if used

Part 3 - *“Now that I’ve Seen, I Want to See More” or “Exploring the Sea Together”*

- Celebratory and dramatic with a sense of mystery/intrigue
 - Sabers and flags to start this show segment would be appropriate
 - All guard can transition to flag for the ending @measure 58 to the end
 - A large fabric flyover effect could occur over the entire band to portray a large wave or rush of water
 - This would be appropriate @measures 68-72
 - See [video example](#)
 - Another option could be [this video example](#)
 - A flag or costume change for some/all could occur underneath the fabric
 - Or, the creature and lead female character could appear embracing as if to live happily ever after in the sea?

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Specific Staging Recommendations

Intro (*Meas. 1-44*)

1-19 - All hold featuring a solo dance character on or near water tarp or focus area

- Other guard (perhaps those that become weapons later on) might surround or support that solo character using body choreography without equipment
 - Enhance with the fabric of a skirt, flowing sleeves or an additional piece of fabric as a shawl
- The musicians should be halted and perhaps kneeling facing away or toward the area where the guard is featured
 - At 13-18, added, swaying like choreography might be added to the wind background material portraying feeling of “waves”
- Woodwinds should be grouped together to ensure they can move to a place for their statement coming up at meas. 24-33
- Battery percussion should be staged behind the winds to ensure a solid pulse

20-23 - All move here keeping focus on the same guard soloist or small group

- More guard might enter the stage or those featured as dancers earlier might become rifles?
- Musicians might march to the quarter note here for visual motion and velocity
 - Another option is for some to move to the dotted half note while others move to the quarter note

24-33 - Halted woodwind feature with guard support (rifles)

- Any other movement from the musicians and remaining guard should be secondary to the halted woodwind/guard group
 - Can march to the quarter or dotted half note if moving or can be stationary performing easy choreography while facing in towards the woodwinds
- The guard not used for 1-19 can begin entering the stage performing small and simple choreography without showing fabric or color
- 32-33 - All brass, low woodwinds and battery should be facing away from the audience
 - Can move to the quarter note or dotted half note if desired

34-44 - Distant but building in intensity

- Great visual duality opportunity representing “waves” of water
 - Some moving in “one” while others move in “three”
- Woodwinds halted prior can now move here and remain facing audience
 - They can move to the quarter note to express wave-like motion and energy
 - Battery percussion can move to the quarter note here as well
- The brass and perhaps low reeds can move to the dotted quarter note

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- Depending on treatment prior, weapons and soloist might move slowly in one while the remainder of the guard can be moving to the quarter note framing or dissecting the winds here
 - Avoid showing any flag color until meas. 51

Part 1 (45 to end)

45-50 - Intense percussion and EFX moment building tension to impact at meas. 51

- Recommend all move to the quarter note to generate velocity and excitement
 - The form can condense and perhaps move closer to the audience to create volume at meas. 51
- It might be effective for all motion to halt at meas. 49-50 for a guard equipment toss and those musicians facing backfield to turn in place toward the audience

51-75 - Intense impact of volume and visual color

- The feeling of sweeping waves should be portrayed visually
 - The moving in “one” vs. moving in three duality will help portray this
 - Perhaps all winds move on the dotted quarter while all guard and battery move in three?
- Flag color should reveal on count one of 51

76-79 - All halt for culmination and impact

- Add easy choreography or stylized foot pose if desired

80-83 - Hold for audience response

- No motion by anyone
 - New tempo established by drum major during at this time

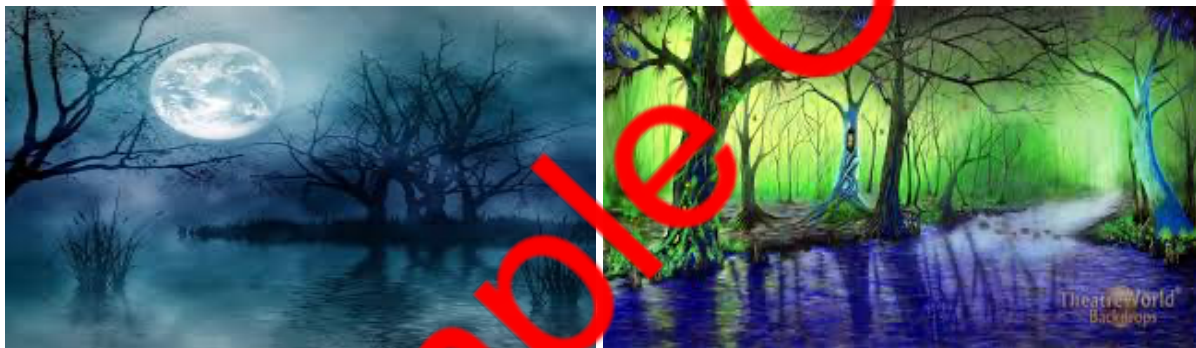
84-93 - New more playful look and feel

- Great opportunity for battery staging focus
 - Use guard, at least one piece of equipment (rifles?) element to help focus them
- These counts provide an opportunity for increased step-size for the winds since they do not play
 - Suggest treating this entire phrase as an “event” rather than a transition
 - For example, a form that quickly develops into another form?
 - Or some type of halted form that allows for added musician choreography; something sequential perhaps?
 - Rifles could enhance this moment with sequential tosses perhaps?
- Use meas. 92-93 to set up the look of meas. 94 since the “polka like” groove begins here

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Visual Imagery (*Inspiration for prop, flag and costume creation*)



Props (*Several approaches to portray this theme*)

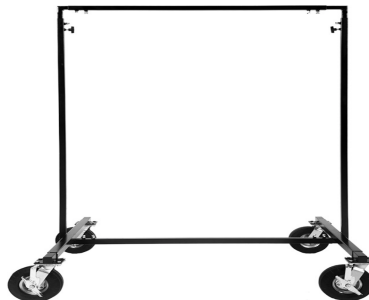
Conservative Approach #1

Frames/Backdrops

Use frames with an image on each side of the frame - four (4) or more are recommended depending on the size of the group and budget. The two images could be:

1. Early in the show - depict the trees/vegetation near a lagoon
2. For the 2nd part of the show - water/waves (example below)

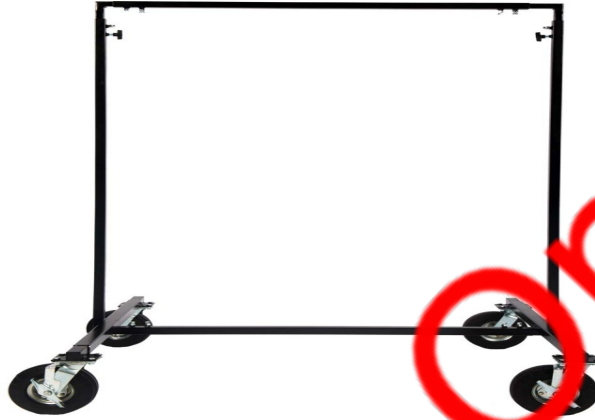
Groups can use the [Corps Design Frame](#) to create stained glass window frames for this show...



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- If resources are available, the larger [Media Monster frame](#) would be good to get this up to 14 feet in height



- The size of the group, placement of backdrops and budget would dictate integration
- Tree props available from [AM Design](#)

FMP Design Images (Circle is a possible water tarp design although any shape is possible)

