



Benjamin Adkins, stage crew, builds part of the set.



Quint Wallace moves a hull piece into position.



Jeremy Woodruff plans the scene changes.

BEHIND THE SCENES: TITANIC

by Christina Laird

More goes into the production of *Titanic*, the award-winning musical that BJU students will see on the stage of Rodeheaver Auditorium, than meets the eye.

Besides the almost 100 cast members and orchestra members who will perform the musical next week, plenty of behind-the-scenes workers are crucial to *Titanic*'s success.

Richard Streeter, lighting designer and technical director at Rodeheaver Au-

ditorium, has been doing this job for 22 years.

Streeter said that as the second musical BJU has done, *Titanic* has a much bigger cast and is a lot more complicated than BJU's first musical, *Little Women*. "It's a lot more scenes and just a lot more to work out," Streeter said. "It's a much bigger production—the set's bigger, everything's bigger about it."

Streeter said he is excited for this production because it is a lot different

than ones they've done before in *Rodeheaver*. "I think it will be a good crowd pleaser, something that will be memorable for the students and for the folks that are in it," Streeter said.

Jonah Lawson, a junior business administration major who has been the *Rodeheaver* student stage manager for two semesters, works closely with the director, Dr. Darren Lawson (of no relation to Jonah

Lawson), and with Streeter. But before rehearsals began in February, Jonah Lawson helped build a lot of the set as a crew chief.

"After [rehearsals begin], most of my time is devoted to working with the director, so I don't get a whole lot of hands on experience with the actual set," Lawson said.

Lawson said that as student stage manager, he is responsible for many things. "There's a lot going

on," he said. "It's hard to keep it all straight in your head and make sure everyone's in their places when I need them to be."

Lawson is in charge of running the audio cues, lights and scene changes as well as making sure all of the cast knows what scenes they're doing. Lawson takes his orders from Streeter, who designs the lighting plan, and then he relays them to the rest of the staff.



Quint Wallace paints the scene changes.



Richard Streeter goes over lighting with the crew.

Lawson said he loves seeing the finished product whenever *Rodeheaver* does a production. "Getting done with that last rehearsal is probably the best feeling," he said.

Jeremy Woodruff is a graduate assistant as one of the assistant production managers at *Rodeheaver* to Rodney McCarty, the stage manager. Woodruff manages the production crews and the numerous scene changes within the musical.

Woodruff said the crews have been working on building some of the set

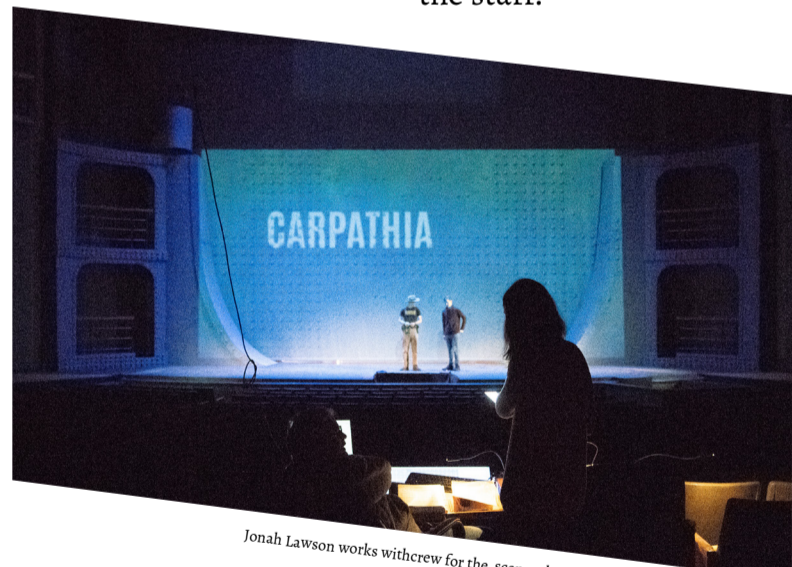
pieces since last summer, especially the hull of the ship and many of the props for the musical. "The hull pieces were built in different sections," Woodruff said. "And each of the ribs had to be basically tailor made."

Woodruff said that though other plays have had large sets, this musical is difficult in different ways. "There's a lot of moving pieces," he said. "There are 20 scenes, which is a lot. Operas typically have around six. I'd say this is probably the most chal-

lenging one I've done."

Some of the moving pieces in this production include the 12 hull-shaped stage pieces, the over 150 light cues, the captain's bridge and numerous small set pieces.

Quint Wallace, a freshman Christian ministries major, has been a part of the floor crew in *Rodeheaver* under Woodruff for two semesters. He said floor crew is responsible for the building and painting of the set piece, among other responsibilities.



Jonah Lawson works with crew for the scene when the Carpathia rescues the Titanic.

"There's a lot of big pieces and sets in this [musical]," Wallace said. "That's been a little bit more challenging to build and get right."

Wallace said the most interesting part of his job is seeing how everything works together at the end. "It's fun to say, 'I built that!'" Wallace said. "At the end of the day, when we finally get to see the whole production, it's fun to see where [everything] fits in."

Heath Parish, a sophomore business administra-

tion major, has been on the floor crew for almost two years. He said the awkward angles of the ship pieces were challenging to figure out how to build, but that he loves seeing the finished product on production night.

"I like just being able to sit in the audience and just look at it and know how it all works," Parish said. "You can see how months of work came together in one night of production."