“The Last Days of Judas Iscariot” by Stephen Adly Guirgis

Directed by: Mary Leonard
Sound Design by: Justin Schmitz
Assistant Sound Design by: Simon Payne
Sound Advisor: Ron Stoffregen

Design Concept:

“The Last Days of Judas Iscariot” by Stephen Adly Guirgis offers audiences and production staffs and teams alike, an offer to dissect and divulge the relationship between two extremely important biblical persons: Judas Iscariot and Jesus of Nazareth.

 The script brings to life a myriad of characters: saints, angels, and people of purgatory. The people who reside within hold trials to send the people of purgatory to either Heaven or to Hell. Along the way such characters as: Satan, Sigmund Freud, Jesus and even Mother Theresa make an appearance in the trial of Judas Iscariot. The culmination of the production examines whether we as humans are able to accept love that is given to us and if we are willing to forgive ourselves.

 In the production of “Judas” the director has been given a daunting task of driving the beast of this production. In our beginning phase of introduction to this show, Mary Leonard, our director, has noted that the production setting is similar to her experience of adopting her two children from Vietnam; she also gave us some amazing insight into the whole process, which has greatly impacted my sound design.

 My design is primarily focused on creating the environment of the scene onstage and also enhancing the mood of the production. From early conversations we determined that this show didn’t require much if any underscoring. We determined that the best idea for sound would be to highlight the beginning of the show by creating a rain-scape that would add the voices of the cast as members of Purgatory. The whisperings occur at the 5 minutes to show time point, and provide a mental insight and preparation for the show.

 During the production I’ve primarily kept to the called for effects in the script. The biggest challenge being the “dancing camel music.” Also, I wanted to enhance flashback scenes and also to help enhance the “otherworldly” and “heavenly” aspects of the saints and angels. We were able to incorporate a video playback sequence in the 2nd Act which allows for more creativity. Silence also plays a huge part of the entire sound design. It is most important to highlight the text of the script.

 It is my intent as the sound designer to highlight the intricacies of relationships and to expose the truth of faith that lies within us all.