

The set for *Stop Kiss* features the interior of the play's main character, Callie. This spacious, West Village apartment, where Callie interacts with her new friend Sara, seems safe and intimate. The lack of ceiling and windows in this room suggests a limitless, protected space. While the apartment floor is natural, warm wood, the downstage section of the deck incorporates elements of Manhattan streets. The painted signals and intersections that intertwine with the wood planks of Callie's living room floor insert images of the public world into Callie's private space. In scenes that take place outside the apartment, horizontal openings, hidden among the brick walls, allow lighting effects to permeate the interior of the room, suggesting that the danger of the open street is closer than expected. In *Stop Kiss*, an intimate space of love and self-discovery transforms into a space of fear, and vulnerability.



Stop Kiss by Diana Son, produced by University of South Florida, 2019.
Directed by Dora Arreola.



Kiss of the Spider Woman by Terrence McNally, John Kander, and Fred Ebb, produced by Penn State Centre Stage, 2018. Directed by Darcy Evans. Photo by Laura Lyons.

In *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, a homosexual window dresser named Molina transforms the prison cell he shares with political prisoner Valentin into a domestic space. Two beds, some personal objects, and a few kitchen utensils are enough for him to create the fantasy of a loving home. For Molina, caring is loving, and with Valentin to take care of, he has all he needs. Molina's small cell is an independent unit that is part of the larger universe of the prison. The cell is limited on one side by metal bars. This is the only visible wall, and it holds a door that signifies the only realistic access to the space. The other three sides of the cell are open, allowing for the prisoners' fantasies to expand beyond the barriers of their reality. The cell zooms in and out of the audience's view by sliding up and down the stage while interacting with other moving and stationary scenic elements. This facilitates the flow of the performance, but more importantly, it creates spaces of openness and confinement that express different situations of control.