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An actor's process

Regina M. Morones
University of Iowa

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AN ACTOR'S PROCESS

by

Regina M. Morones

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Master of
Fine Arts degree in Theatre Arts
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

May 2015

Thesis Supervisor: Associate Professor John Cameron

Graduate College
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

MASTER'S THESIS

This is to certify that the Master's thesis of

Regina M. Morones

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the
thesis requirement for the Master of Fine Arts degree in
Theatre Arts at the May 2015 graduation.

Thesis Committee:

John Cameron, Thesis Supervisor

Paul Kalina

Anne Marie Nest-Pinero

To Concepcion Fonseca
Amor eterno e inolvidable

PUBLIC ABSTRACT

My artistic process as an actor is ever changing—always in flux and adjusting to the needs and dominant rhythms of the character and imaginary world of the play. While there may be some overlap, every role is different from the next role and therefore the artistic process serves to help the actor find a way into the life of the character. Actor training in movement, voice, and acting technique provides me with a variety of tools to choose from when developing a character for performance. My artistic process is the exploration and play that goes into picking and choosing which tools suit me best to approach the development of a character. It is my work to use these tools to discover the many connections and themes between the character and the imaginary world of the play as well as how they interact with each other. A significant part of this exploration is doing the character research to answer specific questions such as: Is my character's interaction with others mostly negative or positive? What want, need, or desire lures my character from the beginning of the play through to the end? What is my character's internal rhythm...heavy and lethargic or light and erratic? Moreover, the artistic process is crucial to giving me the freedom to release into the character so that I can successfully make the jump from playing at a character to truly embodying the character.

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INTRODUCTION

I fell in love with acting at the age of 9 when I realized I could use acting to escape the hard and often unfair reality of everyday life. Being one of five siblings, my greatest source of frustration was constantly having to compete with my sisters and twin brother for attention or just to get a word in edgewise. Although I was initially hesitant to try acting due to my extreme shyness, I soon found that acting gave me a voice and a platform on which to express myself in a way I did not think possible. On the stage I could be anything or anyone—free from society’s limitations—where the impossible was now possible, as far as my imagination could take me. I could become a character that was completely different from myself and play in an imaginary world where I made the rules as I went along. The stage became a sacred place where I could create, hope, dream, and feel empowered.

Theatre gave me the opportunity to define who I was outside of my family unit and begin to step into my own power. This newfound freedom I discovered inspired me to seek out theatre that truthfully explores the human condition from the perspective of the marginalized and oppressed—those individuals whose stories aren’t valued and as a result are often overlooked or silenced. The world through the eyes of those being pushed down, kept out, and shut in is unforgiving, harsh, dangerous, unrelenting, jaded but also full of hope, faith, love, and joy. Watching actors wrestle and deal with these contradictions through a character is fascinating and moving. For this reason, I am most attracted to acting that is a bit gritty and rough around the edges. I like to watch actors who take huge risks on stage and bare it all to get to the heart of the character. Baring it all really means letting go of the actor tricks and masks that act as a barrier or defense mechanism so that the actor can be open to release and play in the truth of every moment. This allows for a truthful response within the life of the character and the world of the play that is not prescribed, planned, or controlled.

What is Great Acting?

When I first started acting, my idea of a great actor was someone who possessed the following qualities: energy and presence on stage, a “natural” voice, expressive physicality, and emotional depth. By a “natural” voice, I mean someone who can make the words from a script sound like their own, convey feelings and emotions, good resonance, and have an overall pleasant sounding voice. Looking back, I realize that a great actor to me was someone who could cry at the drop of a dime, laugh to hysterics on cue, fly into a fit of rage whenever necessary, and ooze charisma all at once. I was in awe and intrigued by actors like Angelina Jolie in *Gia*, Cate Blanchet in *The Gift*, and Angela Bassett in *What’s Love Got To Do With It* because they could flip from one emotional state to another without batting an eyelash or breaking a sweat. It didn’t matter to me whether or not this emotional response was connected to anything outside of themselves. Being emotionally available is what I thought was the mark of great acting. Reflecting on this now, I understand why prior to grad school my acting was all about pushing energy and emotion, playing the idea of a shape, and rarely as a response to my environment or scene partner.

After three years of honing my craft in grad school, my definition of great acting has changed drastically. There is so much more to great acting than just being extremely emotional, it comes down to the marrying of play and technique. This combination of play and technique allows for a free-flow of expression by being grounded in the body and connected to the voice. Being grounded in the body and connected to the voice is necessary to have emotional depth, release the affect, play fully, vocal and physical articulation, specificity, free and open sound, and to really see the other person—which leads to living in each moment truthfully. Once these components are set in place the actor can transform into a multifaceted character, and be fully invested in their scene partner. However, there is another very important component most actors

overlook – the actor must also be able to expand their energy beyond the stage into the audience breaking the fourth wall that stands between the audience and the actor. Breaking the fourth wall is necessary to engage the audience as willing participants in the world of the play. On film and television this is equivalent to the actor taking the camera with them by connecting through subtle nuances and maintaining a brightness in their eyes. To me bright eyes are the same thing as soft focus on stage or being aware and responsive to what's happening from moment to moment. People don't go to the theatre to merely sit back and watch a lovely show, they want to go along for the ride. Audiences want to be moved, inspired, terrified, entranced, shaken up, and entertained. They pay big bucks to experience theatre in which the players take them along on their journey. A great actor understands this and will expand out to the audience from backstage before they even step on stage.

I look to the amazing work of actors like Meryl Streep and Jessica Mueller as a prime example. Watching a clip of Jessie singing her heart out in the musical *Clear Day* is mind blowing. She is radiating tons of energy through the screen, expanding out so that every movement and gesture is full, and connected to what she's doing in the moment. Even the quick moments when other actors are singing background you can see Jessie is still present, bright eyed, and keeps the energy churning, then exploding out to us with every note and gesture. Similarly Meryl Streep in the *Iron Lady* is able to capture the life, energy, and heart of Margaret Thatcher on film. When I watched this movie I could feel Meryl's energy radiating through the screen from the brightness and expressiveness of her eyes, the specificity of her movement and speech, as well as the moments of stillness that were always so full. Both of these actors have this in common: they all understand the importance of bringing their audience along on a journey by expanding out to them. Without this 360 degree expansion of energy the marriage between truthful play and technique fall short.

MY STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

One of my strengths as an actor is that I am truly passionate about finding the heartbeat of the character and exploring what makes them tick. It is so important to understand and explore the physical lead, vocal quality, and psychology behind a character's actions to create a three-dimensional person with real hopes, dreams, and fears. This means that everything I do as that character is influenced by that exploration. Therefore every gesture is full of intention and motivated from a deeper want, need, or desire, and then is physically expressed through the body and the voice. When you do this kind of in-depth work it becomes so ingrained in you that it is second nature. It frees me up to not have to constantly be thinking about why I'm doing what I'm doing during a performance, but rather to rely on muscle memory, active day dreaming and prep work to guide me. You do the work with the understanding that it will influence everything you do and then you can switch your focus to being fully present and responsive with the ensemble.

On the flip side of this, my weakness as an actor is doubting and second guessing my work. I let my own fears of inadequacy and failing paralyze me. There is no doubt in my mind that the physical blocks in my body are a direct manifestation of my psychological blocks. The more I let go of the editor inside my head that is constantly judging my every move, the easier it is to work through by physical blocks and decrease the overall tension in my body. However, to overcome these psychological blocks, I panic and start pushing energy and fall into purely aggressive tactics. I lock into what I think should happen which in-turn locks me up physically and emotionally. Consequently, my work then lacks variety, truth, and comes off as defensive. Operating from a defensive place makes it difficult to see the other person or to be influenced by what is going on in the environment. Moreover, it makes my performance flat, predictable, boring, and non-specific.

Voice

When I was a kid I found a lot of freedom and joy through singing. I use to play with words by stretching out the vowels to explore how it might change the sound as well as the meaning behind the word. It was basically my take on improvisational scatting for kids! I could do this for hours and I often did because it was fun. Due to this I have a good sense of breathing from my diaphragm, taking in the right amount of breath for the amount of text I will speak, and projecting my voice to the back row of seats in a full theatre. However, being heard is only the tip of the iceberg. I still struggle with maintaining a free and open sound because of the habitual tension in my jaw stemming from the blocks in my shoulders and hips. While the habitual tension in my jaw has lessened significantly thanks to daily floor work, years of grinding my teeth at night due to this built-up tension makes it difficult to have a full range of motion in my jaw. At its worst, the jaw tension was so bad that my tongue root started to spasm after we worked on trigger points along the jaw line in Anne Marie's voice class. In addition, this built-up tension also results in tightness and squeezing in my scalenes (neck muscles) putting unnecessary pressure and strain on my vocal chords.

My character work as Stumpfemutta in *Out of the Pan into the Fire* is a good example of how tension can get in the way of the actor's work. Playing Stumpfemutta was extremely challenging for several reasons: Getting into the compressed physicality of someone who has been stepped on by a giant (head scrunched into the chest, shoulders pushed up to the ears, and arms retracted back) added to my existing blocks; Speaking in a German accent while in a contorted physicality causes a lot of crunching in the vocal chords; and the pain I was in from Stumpfemutter's harsh physicality made it difficult to find play in the accent or to fully release into the character. Adding more tension on top of my existing blocks was so frustrating and distracting because my body was acting out and almost completely out of my control. The only thing I could

do to help manage the tension was to focus on moving the breath through the body to bring ease back into my movements and vocal quality. Moreover, daily floor work to concentrate on decreasing blocks is a crucial aspect of my on-going process.

Since working with Anne Marie I have been able to increase my vocal range for a richer tone and quality that incorporates a combination of both chest and head resonance. I'm good at finding the right vocal quality for different characters by playing around with creating resonance either in my chest or head. Where I choose to place my voice and resonance completely changes my character and can give it that extra bump up it needs to come to life. I've never thought of myself as someone who is gifted with accents, but learning about accents through the use of the 7 zones, oral posture, the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), identifying vowel shifts, and rhythm and musicality has made it possible to teach myself any accent. I feel much more confident than I ever have when it comes to the ability to learn an accent for a show. I excel at playing characters who have an accent that is a hybrid of two distinct cultures. For instance, I had a great time learning a Puerto Rican South Philly accent for Odessa in *Water by the Spoonful* and I also did good voice work on a Black Boston Brahmin accent for Lucy in *Luck of the Irish*. Both of these accents were challenging to learn but also very gratifying and fun to play with on stage.

Another strength I have is using operative words, breathing through to the end of the line, and good articulation. This has especially been a great help when working on classical text such as Shakespeare, Moliere, and Ibsen. I used to dread working on any kind of classical work because I didn't understand the language or even know how to begin to crack the code. Anne Marie, Careena, and Alan were instrumental in my ability to learn about the rhythm and musicality in the language, luxuriating in the words, speaking on the thought, and managing the breath to support those thoughts. Anne Marie also taught me an amazing exercise to connect to text by using this idea of the focus line. The focus-line is envisioning the breath flowing down the front body,

through the pelvic bowl as you inhale, and then looping around your sex to travel up your back, and flowing out through your mouth again as you exhale. The focus-line is key to engaging the whole body to connect to the voice.

Aside from the many benefits of the focus-line stated above, it has been instrumental in the discovery of my own unique voice. One of my biggest obstacles has been learning to love and accept my own voice rather than trying to make it sound like someone else's. When I started doing theatre, I became very self-conscious about my Chicano accent, and the fact that I don't sound like a "White American" stage actor. I grew to loathe the sound of my voice, especially since my theatre mentor at the time would mock my accent in front of the entire ensemble as an effort to get me to speak properly. To cover up my Chicano accent, I unconsciously put on this generic "White American" stage voice that was in no way connected to me at all. This became a way to mask my voice and try to make it sound the way I thought an actor should sound, but instead it led me further away from my true authentic voice. However, using the focus-line to reconnect to my voice led me to realize I was in fact putting on an "actor voice" that doesn't ring true. This "actor voice" causes me to fall into a predictable cadence lacking connection to what is happening in the moment. I'm so grateful for Anne Marie getting on me about letting go of that mask because it wasn't until after she kept harping on me about it that I actually became aware of it. I honestly didn't believe her at first because I had been operating with that mask for so long that I believed it was my voice.

Movement and Physicality

I've never thought of myself as a physical actor, so I'm always surprised to discover that my process is a lot more physically based than I expected. When it comes to movement, one of my strengths is finding a simple activity connected to the given circumstance in order to make the space my own as well as to activate the space I'm in. For instance, as the Narrator in *Striking 12*, I spent the majority of my time on stage watching the story unfold before me. Activating the space was important to being a part of that world, raising the stakes, taking the audience along with me, and investing in the story I was telling. In addition to this, I find physicalizing text through specific movement exercises such as undulations, eclusions and eclosions, expanding your energy bubble, and playing with speeding up and slowing down your external or internal rhythm is a great way to find where the character lives truthfully in me. While working on *Luck of the Irish*, I found it very helpful to apply the idea of gliding and floating to Lucy's movement to give her a quality of being above everyone else. I also choose to speed up her internal rhythm while making her external rhythm slow, deliberate, and methodical. In making that choice I was careful not to fall into the trap of playing Lucy extremely stiff and rigid based on her upper class upbringing. To achieve this, I did a lot of exercises that focused on articulation in the spine, opening up the hips, grounding in the feet, dynamic alignment, and eclosions and eclusions. These exercises were important to bring life to the character as well as fill every gesture with a clear intention—there is a purpose and motivation behind everything she does. Another good example of filling every moment with purpose and intention can be seen in the diner scene between Lucy and Patty Ann. In order to build the tension and energy in this scene between Lesley and I, we did a lot of exploration with expanding our energy to push on each other's bubble. We also did a cool exercise where we physicalized each line as we rehearsed the scene and acted on any impulse that came to us in that moment motivated by what each other was doing. It was a lot of fun pushing this exercise

to the extreme to see how it would color and change the dynamic of the scene. At one point I flicked Lesley's nipple, she in turn literally jumped on my back, and then we started throwing each other's belongings all over the room. This type of physical exercise took our scene from being stuffy, stiff, and low energy to a forward moving, heated boxing match in which every word and phrase was a deliberate jab at the other. It also got us out of our heads to simply be with each other and respond on impulse.

Movement and physicality is by far a huge challenge for me, especially since I struggle with being comfortable in my body and opening up to being vulnerable on stage. I tend to play it very safe when it comes to movement because I'm trying to get it right by planning a good physical response rather than letting my instincts guide me. This also has to do with my willingness to take risks in my work whether or not it's successful. The truth is you don't know if something works until you do it. You have to be willing to live on that edge and fail big to eventually get to those moments on stage that are gold. I learned this first hand while working on a scene from Ibsen's Hedda Gabler in movement class with Paul. There is a very intense moment at the end of the scene where Loveborg agrees to end his life per Hedda's request, and as he's leaving in her desperation she asks him to promise her he'll end it "gloriously." The build up to this moment is so intense that by the time I got to that last line I was literally ready to explode from so much tension. In that moment I went with my first instinct—I cornered him at the door, grabbed him by the shirt, and yelled "promise me that" in his face like a crazy person. Immediately, all of my classmates burst into uncontrollable laughter and I was mortified. After I got over being mortified I realized I learned the valuable lesson to just do it and go from there. I took a huge risk that failed royally because I backed out of it when things got hot. It's like what Paul told us in clown, when you are in the fire and it starts to get hot stay in it, this is pure gold. If I hadn't embarrassed myself the way I did I would have continued to play that scene really nice

and safe never pushing the envelope to get to that heightened moment in the scene. Since then I have consciously pushed myself to take more risks in my work by playing outside of my comfort zone. A big part of moving beyond my comfort zone is the willingness to play in the unknown.

Another huge struggle for me has been working on my physical blocks. I have noticed a steady decrease in overall tension since I started doing block work, but these blocks are still a huge hindrance for me. The shoulder tension and overall stiff spine are my biggest obstacles because I hold a lot of emotional energy in these areas, which I find not only painful, but also locks me up so that nothing comes in or out. Not being able to let go of this build of tension also makes me moody and irritable which is not a very fun energy to bring into a rehearsal setting. The spine is equally important to developing emotional depth and availability because it is the emotional barometer in the body. It's frustrating to know that I could be more fully emotionally and physically connected to my work if I bring more of my spine into play. Moreover, I will continue to lay on my wooden dowel, practice yoga, and roll on tennis balls to attain overall freedom and ease in my spine and shoulders.

Acting Technique

I came to grad school with very little training in any acting technique beyond the basics of articulation, projection, and knowing what I want in any given scene. Going through grad actor training has made me comfortable with the technical aspect of breaking down a scene into clear objectives, actions, and tactics as well as identifying beats in a scene. This is great because I can do the technical text work on my own, come to rehearsal with a clear understanding of where the scene is going, and bring in my own ideas based on my scene analysis. I constantly strive to be a smart actor who is always prepared with new ideas to try out during the rehearsal process. I have noticed that most directors want to work with actors that bring their unique selves and ideas to the table rather than rely on the director to tell them what to do. I personally don't like to always rely on someone else to instruct my every move because then it's planned and not motivated by an action.

The classes that made the biggest impact on me and that I've learned the most from are John Cameron's Acting Fundamentals/Meisner Technique and Paul Kalina's Clown class. John's class made me understand the difference between waiting for your turn to talk and active listening in which the actor really hears what the other is saying and responds to it. Like most actors, I too have been guilty of getting too wrapped up in saying my line or zoning out while the other person is talking. I always thought I was a good listener until we started doing baby repetition in class. I was so self-conscious that it was very difficult to focus on my partner long enough to make an observation. Since then I've been able to make the jump from passive listening to active listening with my focus solely on the other person. I no longer find myself planning my responses or telling my scene partner how they should respond, it happens organically because I'm fully taking the other person in. It really takes the stress and time out of trying to make something happen—there's always something to respond to even when nothing is happening. When I played the role of

Odessa in *Water by the Spoonful* most of my scenes were set in my house by myself with me having conversations with my addiction support group online. There was only one scene in which I was actually talking to someone face to face. I had to employ active listening to hear the subtle changes and nuances in the others voice as well as understand the subtext so that I could respond truthfully.

Clown class with Paul took listening a step further where I had to quiet my mind to listen to what the nose is trying to tell me to do and use clown logic to do it. This is easier said than done. Putting on the nose heightens all of your senses as well as your fears and joy. I found it hard to distinguish the difference between my voice and my clown's voice. It was a constant struggle because my logical mind kept trying to take over and fix the problems rather than playing in, around, above, and over the problems the way my clown would. Overall, the valuable lesson Clown taught me is that sometimes you have to shut off your mind to be able to hear what the other person and the environment is telling you.

Meisner and Clown also taught me the golden rule: "Never do anything until something happen to make you do it—there's always something." There are so many times I walked on stage with an idea of what I was going to do and how I was going to do it without taking in my surroundings or scene partners. Every night is going to be different from the last performance so an actor has to come in ready for the unexpected and ready to play along with whatever mess they walk into. When working on our clown entrée last semester, I got really frustrated with John (my scene partner) because he would never fully do what we set out to do, but rather than use that frustration in our entrée I would push it down. That was me, Regina, trying to be a good partner and classmate which is fine, however I needed to let my clown express the rage and frustration I was feeling. I let the good actor get in the way of what my clown wanted and therefore stifling the work.

Before taking Meisner or Clown I always struggling with developing truthful emotional depth and being emotionally available when needed. I'm a very sensitive and emotional person in my private life, but my defense mechanism would shut that part of me down once I got on stage. I would usually default to pushing energy and hide my face in my hands or make a crying face to indicate that I'm really upset. I felt like such a fraud when I would do that because I knew it wasn't real or tied to anything the other person was doing to me. The prep work we did in Meisner coupled with min to max work in Clown completely changed the emotional depth and availability in my work. Through this work I was able to identify clear emotional triggers from my life—a strong trigger I discovered is my grandmother's stroke. Since my grandmother had her stroke the only words she repeats over and over is "solo-solo-solo." I found that repeating that phrase to myself as prep before going into an emotional scene will automatically get me there without having to fake it. During *Water by the Spoonful*, when I wasn't on stage I was backstage focused on my prep for most of the show. I had a picture of my grandmother and of my 2-year old niece which I used to portray my deceased daughter in the show. In addition to this, I put together a collage of anything important to Odessa or part of her life. This gave me so much to draw from when Odessa relapsed and almost dies. Another instance where I immediately noticed a huge difference in my artistry due to prep work is when I participated in a reading for Global Express last year. I was reading the role of a Palestinian woman who was returning to her home town for the first time in 20 years to look for the son she left behind when the Jews took over the city. I don't have children but I was able to connect to the character's sorrow and need for closure by allowing my breath to drop low. During the reading, I unexpectedly burst into tears, but I was able to churn the sorrow I felt so that it didn't completely over take me to the point where I couldn't finish the reading. Something like this would have never happened to me before. I hadn't even planned on crying in the scene, it came out of a response to what my scene partners were giving

me in the moment. It is clear to me that this new emotional availability and depth stems from diligently working on my preps as well as the moment before.

WHAT'S NEXT

After grad school I plan to continue working on my craft in a variety of ways. First of all, I will continue to work diligently on my physical and psychological blocks by establishing a consistent daily practice. A diligent daily practice is both crucial and necessary for an actor to effectively change habitual tendencies that hinder truthful, grounded, open and free movement, vocal production, and emotional preparation. Exploration during daily practice is paramount to jumping head first into the work as well as engraining these vital techniques in the body so that there is a shift from conscious awareness to unconscious awareness—muscle memory—making it second nature to the actor. I believe that in order to continue growing and transforming as an artist one must put the training to work in the real world by collaborating with other artist cohorts in the theatre community.

Secondly, I will continue auditioning in the Bay Area, Chicago, New York, and at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival as often as possible. I know I have to stay in the heat to keep myself motivated to continue growing as an artist. I believe the only way to become a better artist is to surround myself with other good artist who are raising the bar and taking risks on stage. The life of an actor/artist is so full of rejection and competition that it is crucial to have the support and encouragement of other artists who are also going through the same thing. For this reason it's my goal to create a network of artist friends in the Bay Area to start a support group where we can give each other feedback on audition pieces, workshop new plays, read some Shakespeare, create collaborative work, and just play. This support system is extremely important and necessary to stay positive and to keep the creative juices flowing during the time when there is no work. Moreover, maintaining a sense of fulfillment and joy in my personal life is key to having a fruitful and successful professional acting career. This means making time to do the things that make me feel great such as biking, yoga, Zumba, traveling, and spending quality time with my friends and

family.

Thirdly, I am determined to handle my professional acting career as I would my own business. This means I have to step into the role of public relations specialist, marketing guru, website manager, life coach, stylist, and accountant. While taking on all of these roles seems like a lot to juggle, it is a necessary skillset to ensure I am building my acting career on a solid foundation that will stand the test of time. So far I have been steadily increasing my network of theatre professionals in the Bay Area, Chicago, and New York. I will make sure to keep in touch with these various theatre companies, agents, managers, artistic directors, and producers in the following years by creating a database where I can send them updates on my artistic endeavors. In addition to this, my artistic website is currently underway and will be up and running by the time I graduate in May.

Last but not least, it is my life-long dream to share my love of theatre with other inner-city youth from East Oakland, California who have never been exposed to the magic of theatre. I want to give them the opportunity to speak their truth and uplift themselves through theatre the same way I was afforded so many years ago. Early on I was introduced to dedicated theatre professionals as well as teaching artists who left a huge impression on me and forever changed the course of my life. Since then, I discovered I could use the magic of theatre to plant seeds of hope, tolerance, and change in my community to promote healing and unity. To achieve this goal I will apply to teaching positions at community colleges, high schools, middle schools, summer camps, and theatre companies in the Bay Area. As of now, I am one step closer to fulfilling this dream. I am excited to say I will be working for the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival as an actor and teaching artists starting in June. Moreover, I'm grateful and eternally indebted to John, Paul, and Anne Marie, for giving me the best of themselves and for always demanding the best of me.

ANNOTATED PERFORMANCE HISTORY

Luck of the Irish

By Kirsten Greenridge

University of Iowa Mainstage

Director – Tlaloc Rivas

Assistant Director – Maritza Pineda

Stage Manager – Kathleen Haines

Assistant Stage Manager – Alisha Lemon

Scenic Designer – R. Eric Stone

Costume Designer – Melissa Gilbert

Lighting Designer – David Thayer

Assistant Lighting Designer – Alex Casillas

Sound Designer – Ray Ockenfels

Dialect Director – Anne Marie Nest

Cast – Diviin Huff (Nessa Charles), Aneisa Hicks (Hannah Davis), Kevin Burford (Mr. Donovan), John Whitney (Joe Donovan), Sasha Hidebrand (Mrs. Donovan), Lesley Geffinger (Patty Ann Donovan), Morris Hill (Rex Taylor), Ruben Lebron Villegas (Rich Davis), Bennett Ruhinda (Miles), Shane Nielsen (Ensemble), Alice Doherty (Ensemble).

Location – David Thayer Theatre

Dates – March 5, 2015 to March 14, 2015

Role – Lucy Taylor, Principal Role

Striking 12

By Brendan Milburn, Rachel Sheinkin, and Valerie Vigoda

University of Iowa Mainstage

Director – John Cameron

Stage Manager – Adriana Fernandez

Assistant Stage Manager – Rachele Ekstrand

Assistant Stage Manager – Samantha Paradis

Music Director – Carl Rowles

Accompanist – Grethe Nothling

Scenic Designer – Josh Kristofferson

Assistant Scenic Designer – Nic Wilson

Costume Designer – Angelina Esposito

Assistant Costume Designer – Hiram Alexander Orozco

Lighting Designer – Cassie Malmquist

Assistant Lighting Designer – Alex Casillas

Sound Designer – Bre Atwood

Accent Coach – Anne Marie Nest

Cast – Sydney Alexander (Diane & Mrs. Palomino), Madeline Ascherl (Space-Invading Girl), Haley Couter (Narrator #2), Caitlin Dorsett (Small Parts Guy), Niki-Charisse France (Little

Matcg Girl), Madison Glanz-Guessford (Erica & Passerby), Felipe Carrasco (Narrator #3), Weiyi Zhang (Lydia), Sasha Hildebrand (S.A.D. Light Seller), Mathias Blake (Boss & Hogwart Spokesman), Yannik Encarnacao (Post Nasal Drip Guy & TV Announcer), Christopher Matheson (Happy Foley), Logan Adam Schultz (Jack), Michael Sotelo (Craig & Johnny), Nate Wasson (The Man Who's Had Enough)

Location – Mabie Theatre

Dates – December 5, 2014 to December 13, 2014

Role – Narrator 1, Supporting Role

Global Express

Where do Broken Hearts Go by Cynthia Enul (Argentina)

Selected Poems by Yeow Kai Chai (Singapore)

Down Sol Plaatje Drive by Sabata-mpho Mokae (Ghana)

Return to Haifa by Boaz Gaon (Israel)

The University of Iowa Special Projects

Location – Theatre B

Date – September 14, 2014

Role – Silvana, Principal Role; August Moon, Ensemble; Chorus 2 – Female, Ensemble; Safiyya, Principal Role.

Unplugged

By SFMT 2014 Summer Workshoppers

The San Francisco Mime Troupe 2014 Summer Workshop

Director – Lisa Hori-Garcia

Assistant Director – Rotimi Agbabiaka

Stage Manager – Karen Krunk

Assistant Stage Manager – Annie Tills

Costume Designer – Kitty Cassetti

Sound Designer – Lawton Lovely

Cast – Katie Valtcheva (Isabella), Stella Ziegler (Arlechinno), Keith Arcuragi (Alejandro), Mike Lion (Pantalone), Annie Simmons (Dottore)

Location – SF Mime Troupe Space

Date – August 12, 2014

Role – Colombina, Principal Role

Four Stories

By Micah Ariel James

University of Iowa New Play Festival Production

Playwright – Micah Ariel James
Director – Nina Morrison
Stage Manager – Katie Burnett
Assistant Stage Manager – Therese Pechacek
Scenic Designer – Hannah Morris
Costume Designer – Melissa L. Gilbert
Lighting Designer – Alex Igram
Sound Designer – Alexandra Johnson

Cast – Kevin Argus (Murphy/Seamus/Parke), Keyla McClure (Sawyer/Duff/Abigail), Ruben Lebron (Frank/Keltie), Valeria Avina (Delaware, Winter/Twain)

Location – Theatre B
Dates – May 5th 2014
Role – Mason/Lennon/Bridge, Principal Role

A Three Way Dream

By Herman Sadulaev
Book Wings: Moscow Russia & Iowa City, USA

Director – Alan MacVey
Production Stage Manager – Rebecca Tritten
Stage Manager – LeeAnn Yeckley
Production Designer – Bryon Winn
Videoconferencing and Livestream Project Lead – Les Finken
Wardrobe Coordinator – Jae Hee Kim
Lighting Designer – Peggy Mead-Finizio
Sound Designer – Andrew Stewart
Sound Engineer – Bri Atwood
Projection Engineer – Brent Garrett

Cast – Haley Courter (Lika), Nate Wassson (Man)

Location – Theatre B
Date – March 13, 2014
Role – Nika, Principal Role

Makeover

By Darrah Cloud (Book & Lyrics) & Kim D. Sherman (Music)
University of Iowa Mainstage/Iowa Partnership in the Arts

Director/Choreographer – Nick Demos
Assistant Director – Ariel Francoeur
Assistant Choreographer – Peggy Mead-Finizio
Stage Manager – Leigh'Ann Andrews
Assistant Stage Manager – Amber Lewandowski

Assistant Stage Manager – Ali Kochman
Writer – Darrah Cloud
Composer – Kim D. Sherman
Music Director – Mark Bruckner
Writer’s Assistant – Ryan Oliveira
Preliminary Scenic Designer – Sam Transleau
Scenic Design Advisor – R. Eric Stone
Costume Designer – Melissa L. Gilbert
Assistant Costume Designer – Angelina Esposito
Lighting Designer – Bryon Winn
Assistant Lighting Designer – Cassie Malmquist
Sound Designer – Bri Atwood
Dialect Coaches – Morris Hill, Anne Marie Nest, Valeria Avina Ortiz, Nathan Wasson

Cast – Allyson Jean Malandra (Ruth Levine), Amelia Peacock (Marilyn), Niki-Charisse Franco (Dorothy), Amy Toruno (Carmen), Michael Penick (Fred Gotovich), Sydney Hayes (Dinah), Dylan Davenport (Frankie as a child), Chris Matheson (Frankie), Nate Wasson (Comte Erich du Arsenault), Bem Alley (Ensemble), Mathias Blake (Ensemble), Katie Boothroyd (Ensemble), Ali Borchers (Ensemble), Haley Courter (Ensemble), Ari Craven (Ensemble), Ariel Davis (Ensemble), Skyler Mathias (Ensemble), Tim Mazones (Ensemble), Melina Neves (Ensemble), Josh Ollendick (Ensemble), Frankie Rose (Ensemble), Michael Sotelo (Ensemble), Taylor Edelle Stuart (Ensemble), Rubina Vidal (Ensemble)

Location – David Thayer Theatre
Dates – Feb 06, 2014 to Feb 16, 2014
Role – Ruby, Ensemble

Water by the Spoonful
By Quiara Alegría Hudes
University of Iowa Mainstage

Director – Tlaloc Rivas
Assistant Director – Maritza Pineda
Stage Manager – Melissa L. F. Turner
Assistant Stage Manager – Rachel E. Winfield
Scenic Designer – Taesup Lee
Costume Designer – Jess Fialko
Assistant Costume Designer – Emma Zhang
Lighting/Video Designer – Peggy Mead-Finizio
Assistant Lighting Designer – Lucas Ingram
Sound Designer – Bri Atwood
Dialect Coach – Careena Melia

Cast – Christopher Rangel (Elliot Ortiz), Valeria Avina (Yazmin Ortiz), Kevin Argus (Fountainhead, a.k.a. John), Morris Hill (Chutes & Ladders, a.k.a. Clayton Buddy Wilkes), Kristin Ho (Orangutan, a.k.a. Madeleine Mays), Jordan Corpman (Ghost/Professor Aman/Policeman)

Location – David Thayer Theatre
Dates – Oct 10, 2013 to Oct 20, 2013
Role – Odessa a.k.a. Haikumom, Principal Role

You Lost Me

By Bonnie Metzgar
University of Iowa New Play Festival Production

Director – Nathan Halvorson
Associate Director – Basil Kreimendahl
Playwright – Bonnie Metzgar
Stage Managers – LeeAnn Yeckley
Scenic Designer – Sam Transleau
Costume Designer – Emily Brink
Lighting Designer – Cassie Malmquist
Sound Designer – Steve Ptacek

Cast – Ali Borchers (Shipwreck Ann/Edna/Amy the American), Connor Hanratty (Joe-L/Hughie the Irishman/Sailor), Josh Ollendick (Alexander McCauley/Pastor Paul/Man from Lloyd's 1860), Alyssa Perry (Mary McCauley/Reika the American)

Location - David Thayer Theatre
Date – May 8, 2013
Roles – Anne Harvey/White Rock Ann, Principal Role

Journey

By Naomi Iizuka
Book Wings: Shanghai, China & Iowa City, USA

Director – Eric Forsythe
Production Stage Manager – Rebecca Tritten
Stage Manager – Leigh' Ann Andrews
Production Designer – Bryan Winn
Videoconferencing and Livestream Project Lead – Les Finken
Costume Designer – Sarah Piphoo
Lighting Designer – Peggy Mead-Finizio
Sound Designer – Bri Atwood
Video Designer – Matt Benyo
Projection Engineer – Brent Garrett

Location – Theatre B
Date – March 12, 2013
Role – Grace, Principal Role

Out of the Pan into the Fire

By Dominic Serrand & Steven Epps

University of Iowa Mainstage/Iowa Partnership in the Arts

Director – Dominic Serrand

Stage Manager – LeeAnn Yeckley

Scenic Designer – R. Eric Stone

Costume Designer – Jess Fialko

Lighting Designer – Peggy Finizio

Sound Designer – Andrew Stewart

Puppet Designer – Josh Christofferson

Cast – RJ McGhee (Angelo), Scott Myers (Thirteen), Frankie Rose (Thirteen), Elizabeth Hinkler (Elsie), Melina Neves (Elsie), Ari Craven (Roland), Aneisa Hicks (The Beauty)

Location – David Thayer Theatre

Dates – February 7, 2013 through February 17, 2013

Role – Stumpfemutter, Supporting Role

Lady M

By William Shakespeare, Adapted by Matt Hawkins

University of Iowa Main Stage

Director – Matt Hawkins

Stage Manager – KatyBeth Schmid

Scenic Designer – R. Eric Stone

Costume Designer – Emily Busha

Lighting Designer – Jess Fialko

Sound Designer – Andrew Stewart

Cast – Allyson Malandra (Lady McDuff), Valeria Avina (Weird Sister), Emily Hinkler (Weird Sister), Elizabeth Hinkler (Weird Sister), Matthew James (Macbeth), Nate Wasson (Duncan), Luke Millington-Drake (Malcolm), RJ McGhee (Banquo), Dylan Davenport (Fleance), Bryan McIntyre (Macduff), Nicole Lane (Macduff's Child), Ben TeBockhorst (Ross), Lesley Geffinger (Doctor/Soldier/Rebel), Scott Myers (Orderly/Soldier/Rebel), Felipe Carrasco (Murderer/Soldier/Rebel), Luke Cunningham (Murderer/Soldier/Rebel), Breeyn Tigh (Murderer/Soldier/Rebel)

Location – David Thayer Theatre

Dates – October 11, 2012 through October 21, 2012

Role – Lady Macbeth, Lead Role

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