

ON ACTING @ IU South Bend; Why We Do What We Do When We Do It
Theatre & Dance Area
Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts

"There are so many lessons in the theater to be learned: application, concentration, self-discipline, the use of the voice and body, imagination, observation, simplification, and self-criticism." - John Gielgud

"The word theatre comes from the Greeks. It means the seeing place. It is the place people come to see the truth about life and the social situation. The theatre is a spiritual and social X-ray of its time. The theatre was created to tell people the truth about life and the social situation." - Stella Adler

"[Human beings] will begin to recover the moment we take art as seriously as physics, chemistry or money." - Ernst Levy

"I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being." - Oscar Wilde

"I think I love and reverence all arts equally, only putting my own just above the others; because in it I recognize the union and culmination of my own. To me it seems as if when God conceived the world, that was Poetry; He formed it, and that was Sculpture; He colored it, and that was Painting; He peopled it with living beings, and that was the grand, divine, eternal Drama." - Charlotte Cushman

"Get involved in acting to act, not to be famous or for the money. Do plays. It's not worth it if you are just in it for the money. You have to love it." -Philip Seymour Hoffman

"Allow me to propose a few suggestions about how to handle the natural resistances that your circumstances might offer. Do not assume that you have to have some prescribed conditions to do your best work. Do not wait. Do not wait for enough time or money to accomplish what you think you have in mind. Do not wait for what you assume is the appropriate, stress-free environment. Do not wait for maturity or insight or wisdom. Do not wait until you are sure you know what you are doing. Do not wait until you have enough technique. What you do now will determine the quality and scope of your future endeavors." - Anne Bogart

"Find in yourself those human things which are universal." - Sanford Meisner

"Acting represents all that human beings experience, and if you want it to be 'nice,' you will never be a serious communicator of the human experience." - Larry Moss

"The inner life of the [imagination], and not the personal and tiny experiential resources of the actor, should be elaborated on the stage and shown to the audience. This life is rich and revealing for the audience as well as for the actor himself." - Michael Chekhov

"Nothing so distinguishes great acting -- in any style, in any historical period -- than the feeling that the actor has the potential to 'go off' at any moment, and to unleash an explosion -- a flood of lava, that will be totally uncontrolled and uncontrollable. Great Acting always dances with danger!" - Robert Cohen

"The theater is a weapon, and it is the people who should wield it." - Augusto Boal

"Actor training should be broadly humanistic, involving the study not just of dramatic literature and theatre history, but of languages, literature, and history generally, and should be centered on acting in plays rather than just exercises, improvisations, monologues, or even scenes." - Richard Hornby
"Acting should be bigger than life. Scripts should be bigger than life. It should all be bigger than life."

- Bette Davis

"Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to keep." - Scott Adams

"Theatre, in which actors take on changing roles, has among its many functions the examination of identity. For the individual, theatre is a kind of identity laboratory in which social roles can be examined vicariously."

- Richard Hornby

"With any part you play, there is a certain amount of yourself in it. There has to be, otherwise it's just not acting. It's lying."

- Johnny Depp

"No great artist ever sees things as they really are. If he did, he would cease to be an artist."

- Oscar Wilde

"An actor is looking for conflict. Conflict is what creates drama. We are taught to avoid trouble [so] actors don't realize they must go looking for it. Plays are written about...the extraordinary, the unusual, the climaxes. The more conflict actors find, the more interesting the performance." - Michael Shurtleff

"An actor is totally vulnerable. His total personality is exposed to critical judgment - his intellect, his bearing, his diction, his whole appearance. In short, his ego."

- Alec Guinness

"Without wonder and insight, acting is just a trade. With it, it becomes creation."

- Bette Davis

"Only a great actor finds the difficulties of the actor's art infinite."

- Ellen Terry

"An actor has to burn inside with an outer ease."

- Michael Chekhov

"You have to get beyond your own precious inner experiences. The actor cannot afford to look only to his own life for all his material nor pull strictly from his own experience to find his acting choices and feelings. The ideas of the great playwrights are almost always larger than the experiences of even the best actors."

- Stella Adler

"Whatever you decide is your motivation in the scene, the opposite of that is also true and should be in the scene."

- Michael Shurtleff

"An ounce of behavior is worth a pound of words."

- Sanford Meisner

"One way we can enliven the imagination is to push it toward the illogical. We're not scientists. We don't always have to make the logical, reasonable leap."

- Stella Adler

"We don't live for realities, but for the fantasies, the dreams of what might be. If we lived for reality, we'd be dead, every last one of us. Only dreams keep us going...When you are acting, don't settle for anything less than the biggest dream for your character's future."

- Michael Shurtleff

"For most actors, success is achieved through study, struggle, preparation, infinite trial and error, training, discipline, experience and work!"
- Robert Cohen

"The creation of something new is not accomplished by the intellect, but by the play instinct acting from inner necessity. The creative mind plays with the objects it loves."
- Carl Gustav Jung

"Work for the actor lies essentially in two areas: the ability to consistently create reality and the ability to express that reality."
- Lee Strasberg

"Talent is an amalgam of high sensitivity; easy vulnerability; high sensory equipment (seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting intensely); a vivid imagination as well as a grip on reality; the desire to communicate one's own experience and sensations, to make one's self heard and seen."
- Uta Hagen

"Acting is not a genteel profession. Actors used to be buried at a crossroads with a stake through the heart. Those people's performances so troubled the onlookers that they feared their ghosts. An awesome compliment... Those players moved the audience not such that they were admitted to a graduate school, or received a complimentary review, but such that the audience feared for their soul. Now that seems to me something to aim for."

"The actor is onstage to communicate the play to the audience. That is the beginning and the end of his and her job."

"On the stage it is the progress of the OUTWARD-DIRECTED actor, who behaves with no regard to his/her personal state, but with all regard for the responses of his antagonists, which thrills the viewers."

"In 'real life' the mother begging for her child's life, the criminal begging for a pardon, the atoning lover pleading for one last chance--these people give no attention whatever to their own state, and all attention to the state of that person from whom they require their object."

"The study of acting consists in the main of getting out of one's own way, and in learning to deal with uncertainty and being comfortable being uncomfortable."
-David Mamet

"There are three masks: the one we think we are, the one we really are... and the one we hold in common."
-Jacques Lecoq

"It is a fact that all mankind wears or has worn a mask. This enigmatic accessory, with no obvious utility, is more common than the lever, the bow, the harpoon or the plough. Whole peoples have been ignorant of the most ordinary tools, they knew the mask. Complete civilizations, some of them most remarkable, have prospered without having conceived the idea of the wheel, or, what is worse, without using it even though it was known to them. But they were familiar with the mask.... There is no tool, no invention, no belief, custom or institution which unites mankind so much as does the habit of wearing a mask."

-Roger Cailkis, The Mask of Medusa

"The gesture and the word become identical at the level where they come together. A word must be charged with the impression of the body and not only define itself in terms of itself."

–Jacques Lecoq

"Talent is as common as horseshit in a stable. The cultivation of it is extremely rare." - Eric Morris

"Honesty isn't enough for me. That becomes very boring. If you can convince people what you're doing is real and it's also bigger than life -- that's exciting."

- Gene Hackman

"More than in any other performing arts the lack of respect for acting seems to spring from the fact that every layman considers himself a valid critic."

- Uta Hagen

Once in awhile, there's stuff that makes me say, That's what theatre's about. It has to be a human event on the stage, and that doesn't happen very often.

- Uta Hagen

"The thing that makes you exceptional, if you are at all, is inevitably that which must also make you lonely. Never be afraid to sit awhile and think."

- Lorraine Hansberry

THE CARDINAL RULES OF ACTING IN DRAMA

- 1) The foundation of Acting is THE REALITY OF DOING. (Drama from the Greek *Dran*, To Do)
- 2) EVERY PLAY is based on THE REALITY OF DOING.
- 3) DRAMA is based on Life.
- 4) DRAMA is more interesting than Life because it consists of SELECTED events, each of which takes place for a discernable reason.
- 6) EVERYTHING that happens on stage is SUBORDINATE to the CENTRAL ACTION of the play or scene.
- 7) EVERYTHING that happens on stage does and must take the form of ACTION otherwise its existence is unknown
- 8) That CENTRAL ACTION involves a CONFLICT among two or more forces, and the excitement of the conflict arises from the EQUALITY of the matched contestants.
- 9) The ESSENCE OF DRAMA is people in conflict MAKING CHOICES about their lives.
- 10) THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF DRAMA: A Character with a Commitment to a Personally Significant Objective in an Urgent Situation with an UNKNOWN OUTCOME.

Preface: I write as the current and for the last 21 years architect of the Acting Performance focus of the Theatre & Dance Area and degree programs, and the senior member of the Theatre & Dance Area. I will present here the whys and wherefores of my thinking, feeling, and doing about our program. Much of it, however, as it rightly should be, is not only my thinking, but to be discerned in the through-line and substance of our degree programs. That is, all of our degrees are degrees in Theatre first, with concentrations in other specific areas, including Acting Performance. Some information here will reflect on issues for all of our Theatre students, but my main intent is to explain the whys and wherefores of our doing in terms of Acting Performance. Design/Technical issues are a subject for the Design/Technical faculty.

Preamble: In this day and age, why would we endeavor to teach STAGE acting as the foundation for young actors of all potential media? Why would our program choose NOT to specialize and offer

multiple performance foci such as Stage Acting, Film Acting, Television Acting, Performance Art, Busker, Magician, Clowning, Musical Theatre, and so on. Actually, we are working on a Musical Theatre concentration, but it will be founded on the same core curriculum shared by all of our concentrations.

SOME HISTORY & BACKGROUND

The Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts exists within Indiana University South Bend, a university of approximately 8,000 students. The students are largely commuter students. Campus Student Housing of approximately 400 available units came on-line in 2009. The School of the Arts is comprised of five Areas; Communication Studies, Music, New Media, Theatre & Dance, and Visual Arts. Theatre & Dance is the smallest Area of the School. Our program is relatively small, but it is also relatively complex. Perhaps our program is too complex for its size, but that is an issue for another day as it would side-step are present reality which I am attempting to clarify here.

IN THE BEGINNING

When the Theatre program was created it existed in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The degree conferred was the Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Communication Arts/Theatre. In 1965, Warren Pepperdine was hired as the first Assistant Professor of Communication Arts/Theatre. Theatre was Warren's game and he was largely a one man operation until the second Assistant Professor of Communication Arts/Theatre was hired in 1973.

In 1990 the Theatre program separated from Communication Arts (now Communication Studies) and joined with the Division of Music, along with Communication Arts and Visual Arts to become the Division of the Arts. We became the School of the Arts in 2000 and the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts in 2005.

Our degrees in Theatre are now the Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Theatre with concentrations in Performance, Design/Technology, and Theatre Studies; and the Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) with concentrations in Performance and Design/Technology. There are specializations within the Design/Technology degree program, and there will soon be a Musical Theatre concentration within the BFA Performance degree program.

TOO MUCH CONTEXT

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the largest College, or School, on our campus. And they will never hesitate to tell you that, even if it is unspoken. The Theatre program originated within CLAS. Our degrees, and most others on campus, have deep-roots in the Liberal Arts and Sciences.

A Liberal Arts education endeavors to impart general knowledge for the development of rational thought and intellectual capabilities of undergraduate students. Specifically, Liberal Arts curricula exist in our degree programs as General Education requirements. General Education requirements on our campus are identified as Fundamental Literacies, Common Core, and Contemporary Social Values. All of our degree programs also require two courses in the History of Western Civilization. The BA degree requires two semesters of study in one World Language.

The Fundamental Literacies are comprised of Writing, Information Literacy, Critical Thinking, Oral Communication, Visual Literacy, Quantitative Reasoning, and Computer Literacy. Writing, Information Literacy, and Oral Communication are almost universal across all campus degree programs and are largely fulfilled by specific courses. Writing is accomplished by ENG-W 131 Elementary Composition; Information Literacy is accomplished by COAS-Q 110 Introduction to Information Literacy; and Oral Communication is accomplished by SPCH-S 121 Public Speaking. The other Fundamental Literacies can be fulfilled by courses identified in the Schedule of Classes as “Critical Thinking”, “Quantitative Literacy”, and “Computer Literacy” courses. For Theatre majors “Visual Literacy” must be accomplished by THTR-T 228 Design for the Theatre. To accomplish “Quantitative Reasoning” most Theatre majors take at least MATH-M 111 Mathematics in the World, or other Math courses identified as fulfillment of the requirement. Most Theatre majors accomplish “Computer Literacy” with CSCI-A 106 Introduction to Computing, but again this requirement can be met by other courses identified as Computer Literacy courses.

The Common Core is comprised of The Natural World, Human Behavior and Social Institutions, Literary and Intellectual Traditions, and Arts, Aesthetics, and Creativity. One Common Core course must be at the 300-level. “Literary and Intellectual Traditions,” and “Art, Aesthetics, and Creativity” are accomplished by Theatre majors in taking THTR-T 190 The Structure and Analysis of Drama, and THTR-A 190 Introduction to Theatre. “The Natural World” and “Human Behavior and Social Institution” courses are variable and identified in the Schedule of Classes for each semester.

Contemporary Social Values are comprised of Non-Western Cultures, Diversity in United States Society, and Health and Wellness. Theatre majors must accomplish “Health and Wellness” with a Dance class THTR-D, but not Choreography or Dance History. “Non-Western Culture” and “Diversity in United States Society” courses are identified as such in the course offerings each semester.

All this amounts to establishing that we have not moved very far away from Classical thinking and doing as it relates to the Liberal Arts. And there is good reason for that: It educates people very effectively. It is, and was meant to be, a course of study to help students reach their potential as effective socially, culturally, and emotionally enriched citizens prepared for a lifetime of personal and professional learning and development.

-The BA degree is comprised of 122 credit hours, a minimum of 54 and up to 82 credits are in the Liberal Arts, with 40 credit hours specifically in Theatre.

-The BFA is 128 credit hours, a minimum of 48 and up to 56 credits in the Liberal Arts, with 72 credits specifically in Theatre.

All of this information is offered to exemplify the rationale for our employment at IU South Bend in the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts in the Theatre & Dance Area. We are each engaged here to help in the education of students in Liberal Arts-based Theatre degree programs. The Theatre requirements of our degree programs make them unique and strong programs. Our degree programs also demand college undergraduates engaged in the major to participate in making Theatre every semester of their matriculation. The level of commitment demanded of these students is extensive. These opportunities

provide students with the opportunity to acquire knowledge, skills, and experiences that will enrich their lives. Theatre, a socially based art form, must be made with others. That comprises the power, glory, challenge, and opportunity of the discipline. This may be the singular aspect of our degree programs that makes them so very useful and potentially powerful. It is also why Theatre must be studied and practiced.

The work of students engaged in Theatre & Dance must be effectively taught, graded, and assessed during their journey toward a degree. Our job is to teach Theatre & Dance to students and to make theatre and dance with them. Each faculty member within the Theatre & Dance Area teaches specific courses. Those specific courses comprise various elements of the Theatre degree programs; majors, concentrations, minors, and even service courses for the university such as THTR-A 190, and THTR-T 115. Our jobs also include making Theatre with our students in the co-curricular production season.

CO-CURRICULAR PRODUCTION PARTICIPATION, REQUIRED IN THE DEGREE PROGRAMS

All theatre majors must successfully participate in our co-curricular production seasons each semester. Yes, “successfully participate” is open to interpretation. For Theatre majors to be able to participate in the co-curricular production activities they must be making progress in their studies towards graduation during their matriculation. Perhaps that seems obvious, but considering the other potential obstacles as outside our realm, the social aspect of making theatre can often prove quite intoxicating to many students. When the intoxication becomes too much it can negatively impact student academic progress. All other considerations, particularly school work, can be negatively impacted because students can find it challenging to balance all of their obligations and make theatre.

The minimum requirement for a student to be able to participate in the co-curricular production program is a 2.0 semester grade point average. However, exceptions are sometimes made for transfer students with cumulative GPA's below 2.0. In those instances we have developed individual plans with, and for, those students. Those plans are based on those students making strong academic progress in subsequent semesters, thus improving their cumulative GPA. These cases are watched and managed very carefully. Overall, this approach has been quite successful; there have been more successes than failures.

Our degree programs demand that students participate successfully in co-curricular production activities each and every semester during their matriculation. The Area Coordinator of Theatre and Dance, typically with the approval of the Area faculty, must approve the occasions in which a student may be unable to fulfill this requirement. Academic performance that is below 2.0 GPA is the most substantive potential reason a student might be unable to fulfill the co-curricular production requirement. A student unable to participate for more than a semester puts their ability to accomplish the degree at great risk both academically and in relation to the co-curricular requirement.

Co-curricular Production Seasons are selected for each academic year which includes the fall and spring semesters. In the past 20 years there have been a couple of summer theatre seasons. Those summer seasons rightly existed outside the co-curricular production requirement for Theatre majors.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT; MAY-AUGUST

The summer months May-August are important for both Area faculty and students. For students planning to pursue professional Theatre careers and/or graduate study it is imperative that they explore and gain opportunities outside the program. Such opportunities should be in situations that include other young aspiring theatre artists engaged in making theatre as appropriate to the student's concentration. In the fall and spring semesters students have extensive academic and co-curricular obligations that they do not typically have in the summer. Faculty members, particularly tenure-track faculty, need to gain professional opportunities and credits that provide evidence of their abilities in Scholarly/Creative Activity as they progress through reappointment towards the tenure determination. Lecturers have similar, but specific requirements. Because academic appointments are 10 months, from August to May, summer provides the best time for most of these types of activities. Teaching and Service are the other criteria upon which faculty are reappointed and ultimately tenured. Therefore, each of the criteria upon which a faculty member will be assessed has a significant relationship to the 10 month fall and spring semesters, August-May.

Production seasons are typically comprised of four productions; two within each regular semester, August-December, and January-May. Auditions for casting the productions typically take place in the first week of each semester. This is so student assignments can be made for Laboratories, Practicums, and for the co-curricular responsibilities of Majors that do not have Laboratory or Practicum obligations. All of this is to provide students with as much time as possible to plan for their individual activities and assignments that will take place throughout each semester. In terms of courses in which they are enrolled, the end of the first week of classes is the end of the "Drop/Add" period, which means students can alter enrollment as necessary without financial penalty and limited academic implications. However, we do not advocate students shifting their enrollment based on co-curricular production activities. The "Drop/Add" period is specifically useful for Majors to add or drop THTR-T 349 as it relates to specific co-curricular opportunities. New Theatre majors do sometimes make the mistake of enrolling in night courses. That is a particular issue for those that want to be Actors. Night courses, 5:30-6:45 p.m.; 7:00-8:15 p.m.; 8:30-9:45 p.m., conflict with rehearsal times. 5:30-6:45 p.m. conflicts with Technical/Dress rehearsals for productions; the other times overlap rehearsal. They also create issues for Theatre Design/Technology majors because of Technical/Dress rehearsals and some performances. Those students will most likely be unable to participate in co-curricular production activities unless they alter their course schedules. However, we do not mandate students alter their schedules. Thus, they are already potentially not meeting the requirement for successful participation in co-curricular production activities. These students either failed to enquire appropriately with the Area to learn about activities and responsibilities for the Major, which means they did participate in Orientation and were not advised into courses by our faculty, and other possible scenarios. These types of situations have gotten fewer and farther between but they remain.

Each play of a season and the specific production of each play make unique demands on the student participants. Given that the student body does not significantly change over the course of an academic year (fall-spring) they form a repertory company of sorts for each year. At the beginning of each year, less so between the fall and spring semesters, new students enter the co-curricular production program

by auditioning for casting consideration for the co-curricular production opportunities within that semester.

AUDITIONS FOR CO-CURRICULAR PRODUCTION SEASONS

Auditions for the co-curricular production seasons are “open”; anyone, majors, non-majors, and community members, may audition for casting consideration. However, an audition is required of all to be eligible to be considered for casting in our co-curricular productions. Students with an Acting Performance concentration are required to audition for casting consideration in each semester. Auditions must be fair, effective and useful, and further the education of Theatre majors.

There are two types of auditions in our program: the New Student Audition, and the Prepared Audition. All individuals that have participated in previous co-curricular productions that want to be considered for casting in future productions must present a prepared audition. That is also the case for anyone that has taken and accomplished THTR-T 120 Acting 1. The minimum requirement for a prepared audition is the presentation of two contrasting memorized monologues and a song.

Some returning students try to manage around meeting the prepared audition requirement. These students are both those with Acting Performance concentrations as well as those that have been past participants in co-curricular productions. The “managing around” the prepared auditions often takes a few forms:

- 1) the “I didn’t know I had to present a prepared audition” approach,
- 2) the total avoidance of the auditions hoping no one will notice approach, an issue for Majors only,
- 3) the “I have a conflict with the audition dates but didn’t think to inform anyone” approach,
- 4) the semi-prepared prepared audition approach, or
- 5) the completely unprepared prepared audition approach.

Those five recurring approaches serve as critical evidence in support of the programmatic rationale that all must audition for casting consideration for co-curricular production offerings. They also support the rationale that the student cohort informs but does not dictate co-curricular production season selections:

- 1) Actors audition for casting consideration in all avenues of work in which actors are cast,
- 2) Experience with audition processes is the most important aspect of learning to audition,
- 3) Our productions are not cast based solely on the past work of student participants
- 4) The past work of student participants is a consideration in casting; what they have done, how well they have done it, and what they need to make improvement on
- 5) Auditions provide returning students with the opportunity to exhibit what they have learned in their classes, and in past co-curricular production activities
- 6) A poor audition is almost always the product of poor preparation; the quality of work put into the audition will be exemplified in the presented prepared audition
- 7) Auditions are Open; anyone may audition for casting consideration

- 8) Credibility is a vital commodity in theatre, particularly as it relates to casting, and it must be maintained

Non-returning students, community members, and anyone else that chooses to audition, and that lack memorized audition material must utilize the New Student Audition process and procedures. The sheet of information which comprises the New Student Audition was created to ensure that all who audition present some form of an audition. How the individuals utilize the instructions contained in the New Student Audition reveals useful casting information. That useful casting information includes:

- 1) How well does the individual read and follow simple instructions
- 2) Did they ask questions about the instructions before they entered the audition space
- 3) Did they make choices based upon the instructions provided to them
- 4) Can they use the time provided to them with some effectiveness and care
- 5) No one is penalized for not having a Prepared Audition

The instructions on the New Student Audition sheet are quite simple. They provide an outline including suggestions for the audition:

- 1) To introduce themselves after they have entered the audition space
- 2) To have a song picked out
- 3) To have a personal story, of their choosing, selected to tell
- 4) To keep the story they tell between 1 and 2 minutes in length
- 5) To enter the audition space with an order for their song and story
- 6) Introduce the song and story
- 7) Tell the story; sing the song
- 8) To be prepared for some questions

The New Student (or Community Member) Audition process and procedures provide more critical evidence for the programmatic rationale that all must audition for casting consideration in our co-curricular production offerings:

- 1) Many individuals, despite the instructions, come into the audition space and attempt to read from a folded-up piece of paper they have pulled from somewhere on their person
- 2) Most individuals come into the audition space and do not introduce themselves
- 3) Most individuals come into the audition space and ask the auditors what they would like to see/hear and in which order, as if they had not been provided time and instructions for such determinations
- 4) Most individuals come into the audition space and tell stories that are much longer than a couple of minutes
- 5) Many individuals come into the audition space and refuse to sing
- 6) Many individuals come into the audition space and say they do not know any songs to sing
- 7) Many individuals sing Happy Birthday, or some other song of their choosing, as if they were in a hostage situation of some sort

How individuals choose to follow, or ignore, the instructions provided to them on the Information Sheets provides insight to those making casting decisions. But the process is significantly about providing a fair process for all that endeavor to audition.

All that audition will be asked to undertake other audition activities. Those other audition activities typically include readings from the script of the play being cast, but may include dancing, singing from the score, and other useful activities.

There are typically two nights of auditions in each semester. Callbacks are rarely utilized because the Academic Calendar is quite unforgiving. But the two night audition scenario does create some issues. In the fall semester there are new individuals participating in the auditions for the first time as well as the returning students. It is difficult to anticipate how many new participants there will be in either the fall or spring auditions but there are usually more in the fall. It can also be difficult to anticipate how many and how prepared the returning Theatre majors will be.

Often for the fall auditions there are many participants, new and returning, on the first night of auditions. It is telling that new participants, as a cohort, determine to come to the first night of auditions; its common-sense. Some of the returning theatre majors choose to avoid the first night of auditions. There are typically fewer new faces on the second night. It might be suggested that returning students be asked to come on the second night of auditions rather than on the first to alleviate this potential crush of audition participants. However, it is only a potential outcome that there will be many audition participants on one night rather than the other. Amongst other many other considerations, weather is unpredictable. Because much is at stake much must be accomplished on both nights of auditions. Auditions are a process informed by events that occur over both audition nights. It is AFTER the second night of auditions that the production cast lists begin to take clearest shape. And that shape is strongly informed by the first night of auditions as well. Two nights of auditions are challenging to manage because the casts for each production must be determined before the end of that week and the cast lists must be based on the outcome of auditions.

The work I accomplish in the auditions is as follows (Student=Auditioner) as it relates to the actual numbers that participate in the auditions. Fewer participants equates with my ability to get only so far down the list:

- 1) Student grades
- 2) Student availability in relation to the overall rehearsal calendar; the start and finish dates
- 3) Student ability to read aloud and with clarity and meaning
- 4) Student ability to take direction
- 5) Student ability to follow instructions
- 6) Student affinity to the style of the play
- 7) Student affinity to specific roles in the play
- 8) Student affinity to others as it relates to the requirements of the play; a family, racial/ethnic/cultural/age considerations, etc.

- 9) Student flexibility; do they have multiple tattoos, can their hair be managed, cut, dyed, etc., if the student wears a traditional hair style or covering how can it be dealt with, or not
- 10) How willing is the student to take risks as they relate to the play and the work of rehearsal exploration

At the conclusion of the first night of auditions the directors consider what has been seen and heard to formulate a plan for the second night. That plan will be informed by those that participated and an understanding about those that cannot return on the second night. But the plan, based on experience, must anticipate that at least some of those individuals that said they would return will not.

The most important issue accomplished on the first night of auditions is the insight gained by the directors about the potential pool of actors available for casting their specific production. Entering the audition process, except for the basic requirements of the play, I am rarely certain of very much. I do find it easier to have my ideal in mind because it makes it easier to improvise as the actual auditions often require of me. Experience has taught me that preconceived notions about who will show up and how well prepared they will be are largely built on sand because even the most experienced actors in the program sometimes do not attend or do so largely unprepared. It happens and that outcome has implications for the productions. The poorly prepared audition demands consideration for how those situations will be quantified in casting. It can only be suggested but students should avoid adding that element into the casting determination process. While it can be difficult for the director to see it at the time, because of the immediate objective of arriving at the most effective cast possible for their production, the non-attendance of theatre majors (while rare) is a bigger issue than the immediate implications it has on casting the productions. Auditioning is required for Theatre majors with performance concentrations. But all of that can make the already challenging proposition of endeavoring to comprise the most effective and useful community of actors for each production even more risky. And casting any production, in any context, is an effort to comprise the most effective and useful community of actors for the larger community that will ultimately come together to accomplish that specific production.

Students are encouraged to attend both nights of auditions, but it is not a requirement, even for Theatre majors. It may appear easier to require attendance at both nights of auditions but there is at least one very good reason why it is not a requirement. New students/applicants may have just learned about the auditions within the past few days through campus bulletins, posters, or notification in Theatre & Dance classrooms and have other obligations. While the campus and Theatre & Dance majors would have been informed well in advance, new potential participants, including last minute theatre majors, deserve fair consideration. And if new participants are not required to participate on both nights it would be inappropriate to require majors to do so. And, the student actor needs to come to the conclusion that the opportunity of two nights of auditions is an opportunity not to be missed. There is a general rule for the actor: if there are auditions and the actor can attend them, they attend them.

It must also be noted that a sub-group of the Theatre major cohort choose to attend only the second night of Auditions. Their rationale for that decision is largely founded on the fact that they have been cast in previous productions. I have never been asked by these students if a special emphasis is placed

on past work. If such a question were asked the response would that emphasis is placed, and credit given, for past work but the current production being cast will make different demands on them than they accomplished in other productions. Further, it is their obligation to show how they have grown as actors through the previous production processes and auditions provide the appropriate outlet for that exercise. It should be added that whatever advantage a student has based on past experiences would be negatively impacted if they only came on the second night without a sound rationale for that decision. After all, if their plan was not communicated and they do not attend the first night of auditions it may be assumed they are not planning to audition for consideration. During auditions the directors are very busy. With new participants the directors are already juggling many issues and returning students should be well aware of that and should endeavor to avoid being additional issues, unless there is a very good reason.

It is not advocated here that students, majors or otherwise, be required to attend both nights of auditions. There are enough rules; they can make a choice. However, it must be said that it is a poor choice not to attend both nights of auditions, particularly for majors, unless they have legitimate reasons that have been effectively communicated. And yet, it can and must be a choice available to all. Some individuals may have legitimate reasons for an inability to participate on both nights. If there were a rule for attendance at both nights of auditions those unable to do so would be excluded by rule rather than ability and any other possible consideration. Those with conflicts can clearly communicate those to the directors. If the director(s) feel there are potential negative implications for those that they will not be able to see again, they can only inform the specific students. However, it must be said that the director only knows what has happened thus far in the auditions because there will be another night of auditions to follow. To effectively and fairly cast a production in two nights the directors need to see and spend as much time as possible with the pool of potential actors on both nights. On the first night, because time can be quite constrained, most of the time is typically spent dealing with generalities and a few specifics. On the second night while some generalities may remain, including fewer prepared auditions, the directors must get more specific because by the end of that evening they must have a good grasp of their potential cast for the production. From the first to the second night the director must remain as flexible and open-minded as possible. It is unknown what will be seen on the second night. Perhaps someone that was seen on the first night will read more effectively on the second night because they are more familiar with the play or are less nervous. Perhaps some direction was given on the first night and it can be seen in those actors that they are endeavoring to bring those ideas into what they are doing on the second, etc., etc., etc. Only the work of the audition participants can begin to shape the director's thinking about each of them in relation to the roles of the play begin cast. And if, because of circumstances, the director is able to get more specific during the first night of auditions, they can do so. The director must also deal as effectively as possible with those unable to attend both nights of auditions. However, Theatre majors that attend only the second night of auditions take a very big risk. The director's thinking is informed by what is seen on both nights of auditions. And ideas that are discussed on the first night are looked for on the second. Those that attended on the first night will have provided the director with some time to hear them read, to talk with them about the play, conflicts on the Audition Form, and to communicate the potential implications of a rehearsal process on their lives. While the first night determinations are only ideas they can be sound ones.

A couple of examples:

In 2000 we were doing a production of *TARTUFFE*. The role of Tartuffe had been pre-cast with a senior student. However, this arrangement contained a Reserve Clause. I told this student that he must present a prepared audition on the first night of auditions. This arrangement was made at the end of the previous spring semester with auditions to take place at the start of the next fall semester. Prepared auditions had been inconsistent with this very capable and generally outstanding student, so I had determined that his last audition in the program should be representative of his journey in the program. As it turned out, this actor failed to get through either of the two monologues he had selected. I informed him that since he did not fulfill his obligation the role was now open and I dismissed him from the auditions; he would not be cast in the production. I ended up casting a beginning actor in the role of Tartuffe and the production was effective, but not as effective as it would have been with the original student actor. The student that would have been Tartuffe remains a good friend, a fine young man, and a working actor. To this day he acknowledges that moment as a critical moment in his life.

In 2006 we were doing a production of *LOVERS AND EXECUTIONERS* by John Strand (a contemporary playwright telling a period story, a la Moliere). In the midst of the first night of auditions, based on the prepared auditions, my understanding of the potential returning Theatre majors, the play and its style, and the wealth of strong women auditioning and the relatively few men, I informed the women that I would also be reading them for some of the men's roles. None of this was pre-conceived. There was already good balance in the role requirements for the play as written between men and women. But the outcome of the first evening of audition activities allowed me to consider even more women and effectively cast the production. It was a very strong production enhanced by the circumstances and my use of the two nights of auditions.

So, sometimes the audition circumstances and outcomes are "happy" and sometimes they are less "happy." But casting of our productions is significantly, and rightly, based upon the outcome of the students prepared auditions and the abilities with the cold-readings from the scripts. And only those that audition utilizing the prepared or the "New Student" type are considered for casting. And BOTH nights of auditions are important to the directors. That should be the case for the students as well.

THE PREPARED AUDITION

As a student progresses in the program, they should be making monologue selection and preparation which relate to the production activities of a given semester. They should also be making progress in the development of audition skills; the prepared audition, audition attire, and in cold readings. Our audition process provides students with such an opportunity. In four years of study towards a degree in Theatre a student actor will have auditioned eight times, at least seven of those times with a Prepared Audition. That equates to the acquisition of at least 14 monologues that may be of use for future endeavors. The students have also had the opportunity to gain experience presenting monologues in an audition setting. BFA students must present a prepared audition during Reviews which occur in each semester.

CASTING OF CO-CURRICULAR PRODUCTIONS

Ours is Liberal Arts based program at a public university. Thus, our co-curricular production program is open to anyone that makes it through the Audition Process to be cast in a play. Our degree programs are open to anyone accepted by the university that is interested in Theatre & Dance. Earning the degrees of those programs is up to the individual student engaged in them.

Casting is both Art and Science. It is Science primarily because we are an academic enterprise. Each co-curricular production of a season provides an assessment of where the program is at that moment in time. How well we are able to cast the production is only an aspect of that assessment, but an important and telling one. Co-curricular productions also demand extensive student contributions in building scenery, hanging and focusing lights, and building and altering costumes. And the productions also demand a large student contingent to undertake the backstage and front of house responsibilities for each production, including stage manager, assistant stage manager, costume and properties crews, and light and sound operators. While faculty oversee and implement the productions, students, and many of them, help to implement them. And the students run the productions. That is one of the most unique aspects of Theatre and Dance programs, and it is true of our program: students have significant responsibilities in our discipline, often quite early in their individual matriculations (the first fall production opens at approximately mid-term in the semester so there is time for some enculturation for new or freshman students/participants), and we could not do a production without significant student contributions for each and every co-curricular production.

The Art of casting. In casting, Theatre majors have an advantage over unknown individuals that may also audition. The above paragraph clarifies at least partly why that is a reality. While Theatre majors can provide individual surprises, such as by not attending or ineffectively preparing for auditions, the cohort of Theatre majors provide some measure of clarity and continuity for the program. It is a reality that they sometimes do not provide enough clarity and continuity. The amount of clarity and continuity that they should be expected to provide is dependent on where they are collectively in relation to the program at that moment in time. Auditions take place on the second and third day of the first week of each semester and the rehearsal process for the first production of each semester begins before that week is concluded. This consistency of scheduling for auditions is useful because it is not be a matter that can breed confusion. Even if the exact dates are not on the tip of the tongue, "Tuesday and Wednesday of the first of classes" is readily understood as it is a part of the very fabric of the program and the University.

Because students have significant responsibilities in our program, particularly through co-curricular production activities, the ideal is that there would be a significant measure of continuity to help hold the center of the still ever-changing community that is comprised for each production. The cast of actors in a production, because they have been working together through the process, not in separate shops as the costume and scenic crews do, play a critical role in the dynamic for the entirety of the running of a production. Late in their process the cast of actors are joined by the other members of the production team. How the cast welcomes these "outsiders" into the process can be critical. After all, the newest members of the team have less than a week to be introduced to, learn, and to assume their production responsibilities, and those production responsibilities impact the production.

However, as stated earlier, because making Theatre depends extensively on communication, teamwork, and social interaction, the composition of the company (cast and crew) for each production demands some consideration relative to Citizenship. The concept of citizenship in this context has a kinship to what it meant to the Ancient Greeks. To those Greeks, obligations of citizenship were deeply connected into the everyday life of individuals, to be an active citizen to the community. The Core curriculum of our degree programs specifies the opportunity to gain citizenship in Theatre through its holistic emphasis on THEATRE. Some might call it collegiality rather than citizenship. Either way, citizenship or collegiality has a proper place as casting criteria in our program at least as long as it comprises such a significant aim of our curriculum.

While citizenship or collegiality should not be the primary consideration when casting a production in our program it is and should be a consideration. With every co-curricular production undertaken we are dependent on a group of students functioning as effectively as possible as a team and there must at least be some center to help hold the enterprise together. Yet we take many risks in constituting the student production teams for each and every production. We take those risks because most productions are constituted with students at various points in their individual journeys; from freshman to senior, major and non-major, and community members. And it is a given that the biggest risks come when the company is significantly comprised of new and less experienced participants, primarily freshman. And that does occur. An effective rehearsal process is the most effective means for managing these situations, no matter the composition of the company.

As regards the concepts of citizenship and collegiality and its application, because of the relative smallness of our program, there are, and have been, many Theatre majors that function within multiple sub-groups within the program. Sub-groups in our program are comprised of the paid positions of the Costume Shop Staff, the Scene Shop Staff, and the non-paid Actors. Some actors operate as members of the staff in one of the two shops as well. And, there have been student Actors that earn many acting credits in co-curricular productions and do not work in either of the shops. Some of those individuals, wrongly, consider themselves to be student staff members. That thinking can lead to behavior that can evoke itself negatively in assumptions of having earned certain casting priorities because they have been participating. The reality is, all through their contributions, some of those students have earned specific consideration, and some have not. That is a faculty determination based on the previous work of students. And as far as “earned specific consideration” for some students: those students must deliver in the audition situation for the specific productions by providing useful evidence of where they have been in the program and where they are endeavoring to get. A poorly prepared audition will quickly diminish any individual “earned specific consideration.” In a program generally lacking in competition that is the most effective tool available to the program for motivating students in the most useful direction.

ON STUDENT LEADERSHIP

In matters of style, swim with the current;
In matters of principle, stand like a rock.

-Thomas Jefferson

Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.
-Abraham Lincoln

We are always looking for leadership from the student cohort because the program is significantly dependent upon it. Put another way, we always have student leadership but the quality of that leadership bears watching and consideration. Actors are, after all, decision-makers. Students of Acting are learning to be effective decision-makers. Humans, let alone students, including student Actors, sometimes spend energy avoiding decision-making. As they progress in the program, students must be held accountable for greater and greater decision-making and responsibility. And potential leaders should be expected to come from those that have both acquired experience and understanding and endeavor to bring that experience and understanding to bear in the making of Theatre. But some students expect to be leaders because they have been around and engaged for a time. Any useful definition or consideration of leadership does not quantify time served as a significant leadership quality. Time served well is certainly a useful consideration, but leadership depends far more on selflessness and it demands some courage.

It would be disingenuous to not point out a reality about student leadership in Theatre production. It is not difficult to get leadership from the more experienced students. It can be difficult to get the more experienced students to provide *effective* leadership. That may be because they want to be selective about who they help and about what they will provide help with, on, or about. As an example, from a production process that took place in 2008, the only leadership I witnessed was not the type most needed at those moments. After most rehearsals the car of the more advanced student was loaded with cast members going "out". And some members of the cast were excluded from the car rides to where ever. The most useful examples are provided through the approach to the work. And that approach to the work should be defined by commitment, clarity, and purpose.

Theatre majors are informed and/or reminded of auditions by e-mail. But, again, auditions take place in the first week of classes of each semester. On the *extremely* rare occasions in which the audition time-frame has been altered, the student major cohort has been informed numerous times and also reminded in the typical audition broadcast e-mails. The e-mails they receive related to auditions also remind them of the basic requirements for the audition: two contrasting monologues, each less than two minutes, a song, and to be prepared to read from the plays being cast. For Musical productions there will typically be singing from the score. Dependent on the want of the directors, the students may or may not be informed of other audition activities or processes that may occur.

So, much information is gleaned from each semesters audition events. Often the information is exciting and useful, and culminates in strong casts of actors. At other times we learn how myopic some students can be. Ultimately, the recurring lesson is that we need more depth and competition in the composition of the student cohort. The program experiences cycles in which there is effective competition for some of the roles being cast, but we also go through cycles in which we cast virtually everyone that auditioned

that does not have extensive conflicts with the rehearsal calendar. It is positive that our co-curricular productions often provides so many students with the opportunity to experience what it is to participate in a production process from start to finish. However, a lack of competition equates with too many students prioritizing availability and dependability, vital for students to learn and accomplish, but taken for granted in the profession, as the critical factor in casting determinations. The process and system is partly merit-based; between two equals the known quantity wins. Any Casting Director would say the same thing. But the combination of too little competition and merit-based casting leads to some confusion. Good. Making Theatre demands the ability to deal with conflicting information and to bring order to it or not get side-tracked by it. In a broad stroke: rehearsals and Rehearsal Processes are a journey that begins with much White Noise and too little focused music moving towards a diminishment of White Noise in favor of the focused and purposeful, and appropriate, Music. That is vital to appreciate because an actor's role in a production is not only informed by what their character says and does but by what other characters say and do, and what those other characters say and do towards and about the actor's character. The opportunity to see and hear the other cast members work is useful for each cast member.

Largely, as exhibited in the conduct of the cohort of students in our program over time, if Acting students are not performing in the productions their level of engagement in the program and in their other coursework is negatively impacted. They have an expectation that if they are paying for and taking the classes they should be in the productions. There is certainly some truth in that thinking, we are after all an educational enterprise, but there are other ways to be engaged in co-curricular production activities that may not be performing but are informative to the Actor about the Theatre and about Acting. Also, students should not avoid the potential considerations regarding the outcome of not being cast in a production. Such reflection is a very good thing and part of the range of skills an Actor should acquire. But the process is complicated by the fact that it can be rare in our program for a student actor not to be cast because they are "not right" for a specific role. It can also be necessary to cast student actors in roles outside their "range" or their general skill or capability level. The reasons for such an outcome can be either practical or pedagogical. Given our mission, practical reasons must also be pedagogical ones. In those cases extra care must be taken to facilitate the student in situations where too much is being asked of them. It can also be true, and a happy occasion, that a specific production demands more experienced students to assume roles that are more difficult, or that are comprised of issues less suited to less experienced students. It can be a difficult to make such decisions but student actors are in a discipline that often tests their personal wants, desires, and comfort levels. Situations such as these are certainly "teaching moments". The director must understand and be articulate, even if it is to themselves and colleagues, about the rationale for such determinations. This is where Teaching/Directing comes in. And it must be emphasized that when directing in this program, directors generally do far more teaching than directing. And yet, directing must always be occurring all along the way. The product of all of this is that it places additional responsibility on the Performance faculty to manage all of these types of situations. In our program, and in those of similar size, since competition does not always play its role the faculty must fill that void.

REHEARSAL PROCESSES FOR CO-CURRICULAR PRODUCTIONS

There are exceptions, primarily for Guest Directors with abbreviated availability, but as we are an educational enterprise we follow a traditional six-week rehearsal calendar. The Annual Children's Show is also an exception, but as currently constituted, and for the last 45-plus years, the plays produced for that purpose must be less than an hour in length. Therefore, the rehearsal calendar for this specific annual production, though more brief, is essentially comparable to that used for full-length productions.

In the six-week Rehearsal Calendar rehearsals are scheduled Monday-Friday between 7:00 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. Contact hours for the six-week schedule is between 120 and 130 hours.

Using the 130 hours as the example:

130 hours/6 weeks = 21.6 hours of rehearsal per week;

-6 day a week schedule @ 3.5 hours per (7-10:30 p.m.)=21 hours per week (21 X 6 weeks=126 hours, with four hours of potential flexibility)

-5 day a week schedule @ 3.5 hours per (7-10:30 p.m.)=17.5 hours per week (17.5 X 6 weeks=105 hours, with 15 to 25 hours of potential flexibility over the 6 weeks)

-Technical/Dress Rehearsals can go very long, beyond the 3-3.5 hours of a regular rehearsal depending on the complexity of the production

The 5 day a week schedule is most ideal for our circumstances; it provides time for students to be students. There is also the possibility of expanding the 5 day a week rehearsal calendar with a couple of 6 day weeks.

SEMESTER FACTS THAT MAY FACILITATE UNDERSTANDING REHEARSAL CALENDAR RATIONALE

Not including Finals Week there are 15 regular weeks in each semester. Subtract two-six week rehearsal calendars, 12 weeks from the 15 weeks, leaves approximately three non-rehearsal weeks in each semester. We audition in the first week of classes which then leaves two non-rehearsal weeks in each semester. Hopefully that begins to clarify a significant part of the Rehearsal Calendar rationale. Add in that our students commute.

Another point worth considering is that while every effort should be made for equanimity across rehearsal calendars and production processes, longer plays demand more rehearsal time. That is also true for more challenging types of plays and productions. And yes, it is agreed that all productions are uniquely challenging. However, we cannot in good conscience, and as good stewards of our mission with students, rehearse every production we produce 6-days a week for six weeks. And 3 to 3.5 hours of rehearsal per night is plenty when considering our charge to help students move towards graduation and make Theatre while they do so. We could consider other alternatives if the casts of actors for each production in a semester were peopled with different individuals. However, there is usually overlap between the casts of both plays, and in almost all cases the overlap is extensive. And, perhaps easily missed, one process for one production should not conflict with the process of another. Again, being an educational enterprise with the educational journey of students as the priority, we must be careful to provide those student's with processes that usually have a clear beginning, middle and end before the next process starts. Further, many of those students are undertaking such journeys for the very first time. Add in that the combination of the Academic Calendar and the School of the Arts production

calendar can create some major issues that must be addressed in creating Rehearsal Calendars for Theatre & Dance Area productions.

The six-week rehearsal calendar very closely mirrors the traditional three-week, 6-day per week, 8-hours per day, professional rehearsal calendar in that there are approximately the same amount of contact hours within both schedules. For more challenging productions, a 6-day per week schedule is sometimes used, but it should never become typical for all productions. There have been recurring discussions about rehearsal schedules set earlier in the day, etc. However, we must remember our casts are typically comprised of students. And the casts should be typically comprised of students if we are doing our jobs and the student's theirs. We must also acknowledge that most of students commute. They should not then be "punished" for commuting. Students also have jobs and other obligations and they need to eat and get some rest.

Another highly significant consideration is the amount of hours dedicated to rehearsals for each production. Contact hours fluctuate between 120 and 130 hours for each production. However, the extended six-week calendar gives students more time to assimilate the physical work and the text, or dialogue. And the time to assimilate is imperative because, again, they are students and there is individual work on the play that should remain individual for actors to accomplish between rehearsals.

It is important to understand that each production will usually have a mixture of experience levels amongst the student cast: beginners up to the more advanced. And the casts for some production processes may be comprised of all one type or the other. As available, the more advanced students must provide effective leadership for the beginners. The most effective leadership is defined here as occurring through a solid approach to the work.

REHEARSAL AS PROCESS

All Rehearsal Calendars must be approved by me. Rehearsal Calendars must also be provided to the Production Team as early as possible.

For the first productions in each semester, Rehearsal Calendars must be provided to the cast by the first rehearsal; those productions begin their rehearsal processes at the end of the first week of classes in each semester. The later productions of each semester have some leeway, but articulating the process to the cast earlier, rather than later, is imperative: so many of are new to such processes that providing them with the facts of a Rehearsal Calendar can help avoid major issues before the process begins. The Rehearsal Calendars for all productions must reasonably represent the entirety of the rehearsal process. These considerations are aimed at facilitating students planning for the coming weeks. At Auditions, in the form of an Audition Information Sheet, students, and other potential cast members, are informed of the general rehearsal times and dates, including Technical/Dress Rehearsals and Performance Dates and times for each production in that semester. On the Audition Forms filled out and submitted before auditioning applicants provide information about conflicts they have in relation to those dates and times. Therefore, there is a transaction between those who audition and the program about the overall obligations of the coming Rehearsal, Technical/Dress, and Performance processes.

Rehearsal Calendars can change, but those changes must be as minimal as possible. A significant consideration for Rehearsal Calendars is that they provide for an effective process for the entire cast. Inclusion and enculturation in such processes for students should not override artistic needs but they must receive due consideration in the product of the Calendar.

Rehearsal processes for co-curricular productions are a significant means of educating students about Theatre. Therefore, the rehearsal process for each production must give effective emphasis to process. The product of each production should be the outcome of process that informs student abilities to grow as actors and as Theatre artists. The objective of each process is to provide a skill set that facilitates the specific production yet serves as a foundation for future participation in productions. Some examples:

- Costume Fittings are part of every production process. Many new participants in productions have difficulty getting beyond preconceived notions they have about Costumes and Costume Fittings. When confusion such as this arises it is addressed immediately.
- Punctuality. Rehearsals begin on time. Punctuality is an issue with which many new participants struggle. The struggle cannot last long: such issues are addressed immediately. If punctuality remains an issue for participants they are no longer participating.
- Dependability is an issue for some new participants. It cannot remain an issue.
- Accountability, preparedness, and planning.
- Planning. Since we are asking it of the students, and it is an educational skill to foster, we reciprocate through a carefully prepared Rehearsal Calendar.

REHEARSAL PROCESS AS PROCESS

Student actors cast in productions need to be consistent participants in rehearsals. How consistent is open to some interpretation, but the rehearsal period for a co-curricular production needs to provide a process every time. There are too many new participants being introduced to the process with every production for it not to be standard operating procedure. And one process should facilitate the students for the potential of future processes.

Generally, young actors do not know how to effectively use time away from rehearsal to bring effective work back into rehearsal. That is a skill they will need to develop. But, not being at rehearsal can largely be “time off” with little to no thinking and/or doing about the production. While all cast members may not need to attend all rehearsals, to facilitate their journey in the production and in the program, they must be provided an effective process that educates them in the ways and means of participating in a production. There are a number of issues that arise when an inexperienced actor attends few rehearsals. The issues include not being prepared to face an audience. They also may remain outside the “clique” that typically forms in casts which can raise their level of discomfort. The “clique” factor can only be managed, and usually only to an extent, but it cannot be avoided. But there are far more important considerations.

Each Rehearsal Process is a journey towards becoming a Ritual Process: the production with all of its elements and with a Beginning, Middle, and End and repeat tomorrow, or even later in the day. Therefore, the students should be introduced to a Ritual Process. The Ritual Process I use for that is a

Ritual Warm-up. Such a Ritual Warm-up must be relatively brief, compact, and useful. It is, after all, not the Ritual Process the Rehearsal Process has been comprised to accomplish. That is the play. However, to effectively accomplish the Rehearsal Process demands providing some vocal and physical tools to the cast. And the priority must be on the vocal tools because, first and foremost, plays demand to be clearly heard and understood. To accomplish that fundamental objective we prioritize the voice. Bodies, and bodies in motion and in stillness, are vitally important as well, the Theatre after all means the Seeing Place, but the Voice demands immediate and constant attention in the specific journey of the specific production. I am totally with Kristen Linklater: the Voice belongs to the Body. Fortunately, the Voice can serve in facilitating student understanding that they need to work on developing their Bodies as well. There is not enough time in any rehearsal process to get anyone both physically fit and work on the specific requirements of the production. Talking about Bodies is not only politically incorrect and it can be largely counter-productive. And size is not always a matter of fitness. And while the university has rules about where smoking cannot occur it has not been outlawed. So, we arrive at the bottom-line: We must endeavor to get the entire cast vocally fit enough to be able to accomplish the specific production through a Ritual Warm-up that has application for future endeavors. They will get physically fit enough to accomplish the specific production or be unable to continue in the production. That outcome is extremely rare. Fortunately, in a play the actors say the same words and phrases of words and repeat the actions of the play. The Rehearsal Process must provide them with ample opportunity to do those things and to “play” those words, phrases of words, and actions. And, of course, the words must be Action as well.

I typically use a Ritual Warm-up for both voice and body. The Ritual Warm-up for a production can and should be specific to the development of skills and awareness that will facilitate each participant’s ability to more effectively participate in the specific production. The most significant objective for all Rehearsal Processes is that student’s gain an understanding that preparation is essential for the Actor and utilize preparation in the specific process. I provide, or give up, approximately 15 minutes of each rehearsal for a Ritual Warm-up. That comprises approximately 7.5 hours of rehearsal time through an entire Rehearsal Process; approximately two and half rehearsals.

Physical fitness, while useful and important, is not the objective of an artistic enterprise. It could be suggested that applies to the voice as well, but vocal fitness and agility can and must be fostered in the specific process and through multiple production processes because the Auditorium demands far more than every day vocal production. Because they must be heard and understood in the context of a specific production by an audience in the Auditorium we must require that participants’ progress vocally during the six-week rehearsal period. Their physical progress is a consideration, but we cannot dictate diet and exercise. We can certainly encourage such considerations and that is best accomplished by providing experiences where their personal fitness is tested without utilizing precious rehearsal time. The Auditorium through its scale does that for us. It cannot be ignored. Conservatory programs typically dictate attention to diet, exercise, and other habitual behavior based issues that are counter-productive to the Actor. Some Conservatory programs do some version of all of the above and more in the extreme. We are not a Conservatory program.

Rehearsal for co-curricular production program activities is a process, every time. That is because we are an educational enterprise. The productions we undertake must serve many masters: the students, the program, the School, the University, and our audiences.

Because we utilize and prize process:

We do not dictate performances to student actors.

We do not teach mimicry because it is not a useful for actors to learn what acting ISN'T.

We may demonstrate aspects of the work at hand.

We do not "hand-hold" individual actors through the rehearsal production process.

We cast productions from those that audition. And those that audition must be able to participate in a way that is fair to all.

Line-readings are forbidden. It is already difficult enough to get many participants to spend the appropriate time with their scripts and to research definitions, let alone other information.

We DO NOT do these types of behavior because:

If you do it once, you will need to do every time for the cast or members of the cast for which it has been previously done.

What you do for one, you should appropriately do for all.

In the long run the most effective way to work with students is to avoid these approaches. The long run is the one that counts. I understand the impulse to settle for the short-term or short-cut approach when Directing or teaching because it solves all of the short-term issues. But in so doing, the long-term issues do not get addressed. And in the long-term your work will suffer because you will be more exhausted than you would be otherwise because directing for you will be doing ALL of the work. And in the long-term students will not learn and improve as students and actors.

It is vitally important to have high standards for each production. But how the ends of the production are achieved must have academically sound means which serve our mission and our students. It must be considered that each production, as different as they may be from one another, must ultimately serve the other co-curricular productions in a season, and in future seasons.

Directors love to compete. That is to be expected. Often the thinking is to "win" at all costs. Since we are an educational enterprise, specifically a university, "winning" cannot occur in a way that costs students. If the director does some, or all, of the above in the first production of the fall semester, that director and other directors will be expected to do the same in subsequent rehearsal processes. The real potential for all of this, which cannot be entirely avoided in any case, is the fostering of an atmosphere that must be carefully managed: favoritism.

Based upon history and common-sense this program cannot be run effectively as a “popularity contest.” A “mommy” or “daddy” operation with the director being one or the other is the usual way that game is played. It is never the choice of the effective Director or teacher, but there are many Directors and teachers that love to play that game and students love to exploit it because it is so readily identifiable; they have seen it before. It must be added that it is so very attractive to new faculty members because it promises quick results. But in the long-term such an approach will not succeed because that Director/Teacher cannot cast all of their “children” in every play that they direct. Besides, while it may appear obvious, they are also not “mommy” or “daddy.”

Another scenario that is not unusual but entirely counter-productive to the entire enterprise: Two faculty directors, because that is how we typically operate, in a tug-of-war of sorts about who is “top dog”. That is because the campaign is usually waged through students, and that is wrong for many reasons.

All of that and more has taken place at various points in the past 20 or so years in our program, and in other programs I know of and with which I have experience. It is most useful to embrace the concept that the students are not anyone’s actors but student actors in OUR program in the School of the Arts at Indiana University South Bend.

While directors can and should be different there can also be universal programmatic standards. That is the aim of this document. If we each endeavor to effectively educate and empower our students our program and all of our productions will be served and they will be well served.

THE CAMPUS AUDITORIUM AND UPSTAGE AS CURRICULUM

Our two performance spaces are the Campus Auditorium and the Upstage. The Campus Auditorium is a proscenium space with 801 seats. The proscenium opening is 28’x 54’ and the stage is approximately 54’ from front of stage to the back fire doors; 64’ if the pit is used. The Upstage is known in the theatre as a “created or found” space. “Found” spaces are those theatres which have been created, permanently or temporarily, in an environment that was originally created for other purposes. Out in the world, including internationally, these types of theatres are the norm not the exception. The Upstage provides flexibility in staging and intimacy with the audience.

The Campus Auditorium is our primary performance space for the co-curricular production program of the Theatre & Dance Area. The Campus Auditorium is a challenging space in which to work because of its large scale. For inexperienced actors it is a major challenge that they typically underestimate. As such, working in the Campus Auditorium is a useful opportunity for the actors in our program. If a student matriculates through to graduation in the program they will have performed in the Auditorium many times. The Auditorium demands acting to be played vocally and physically at a large scale. That basic requirement never alters. Student actors must progress vocally and physically to make progress in their acting and playing in the Auditorium as they matriculate. There are two essential elements of acting that are facilitated by working in the Campus Auditorium: specificity and focus. You do not have to yell in the Auditorium, but the actor must always be clear and precise vocally and physically. The proscenium configuration places a premium on physical clarity because the clarity demanded by a

proscenium space can often seem counter-intuitive to a young actor. To act on a proscenium stage you must place a premium on how much you look left, right, and upstage because the audience is out front and it is for them that the story is being enacted.

Since we are not a Conservatory program but rather a program based on a Liberal Arts curriculum the Auditorium serves as an important part of the curriculum of our program. The choice is to embrace that reality. What is so very useful about the Auditorium is that to work in the space you must be bigger, more precise, and clear. And a student must begin that work immediately.

What the auditorium lacks in intimacy in its relationship to the audience it makes up for with its scale. It takes vocal and physical energy to work effectively in the auditorium. Therefore, when a student works in the Auditorium, even for the first time, they are confronted by an arena that demands energy, commitment, and focus to be seen and heard as appropriate as possible for the story they are charged with telling to an audience. Such a reality demands acting founded on clarity, precision, and commitment. And these are exactly the types of demands that facilitate the training of young actors because in the venue they must share themselves and their work to function in the space at an adequate level.

To the argument that someone might formulate and posit that we should prioritize training actors for the Upstage rather than the Auditorium it must be pointed out that the great theatres that have been established in “found” spaces and became (as sought or by happenstance) institutions have moved from their garages, hardware stores, etc. into spaces created to be performance spaces. And for the actor, the transition from playing in an Auditorium to playing in a garage is far easier than the other way around.

The Auditorium serves the curricular aims of the program because it ever demands a minimal requirement of all actors to work at a large scale vocally and physically. It is an equal opportunity element of our curriculum in that it is a challenge and an opportunity for all young actors. Therefore, in a specific Rehearsal Process in which freshman are participating, and I can only think of a handful of exceptions, as the process progresses towards Opening Night the Director must determine when to stop spending time on certain issues relative to the entirety of the cast, including the freshman. This is a difficult but recurring decision that the Director must make. However, the demands of the Auditorium do not diminish.

As I see it, and how it informs my work with casts in co-curricular activities, if a student actor can begin to master working in the Campus Auditorium with a vocal range from quiet to loud, with some musicality, they can work effectively in most other venues. Specifically on our campus that is true. If they can fill the Auditorium they can fill the Upstage. It does not work so well the other way around. It is important to consider that the rehearsal space is the Upstage. And when working in the Upstage on a production that will take place in the Auditorium demands keeping the cast working to the appropriate scale, both vocally and physically. And microphones do not make better actors or better acting. Microphones make good acting easier to hear.

As already mentioned, The Upstage is akin to the most typical theatre spaces utilized for making theatre world-wide and in the States. Even world- renowned Theatre Companies have “Black Box” Theatres as part of their array of performance spaces. Thus, The Upstage is the type of space an actor will work in often, professionally, or not. The Upstage also serves as our Rehearsal Space for all co-curricular production activities and is the primary Performance Classroom. It is a terrific space. Its recent renovation has made it an even better and more useful space. Ironically, we are on the verge of that space no longer serving as the primary Performance Classroom.

It is an understatement to say that it is useful for our students to work in the Upstage. However, imagine we produced most of co-curricular activities in the Upstage with infrequent forays into the Campus Auditorium. Such an outcome would be far easier for the directors in the program. It would probably be easier for the Design/Technical faculty as well. It would also be easier for our students since they would only need to learn to master a less challenging performance venue and we would have to microphone them all without impunity when we worked in the Auditorium. And it would probably facilitate the retention of students. That best quantifies the challenges and opportunities of the Campus Auditorium. But in my personal and professional opinion, such an outcome would not be as useful as our present standard operating procedure for our students and our program. The Upstage has its attractions because it is generally easier to make a production work in that space than in the Campus Auditorium. On this issue or question reason must win out.

SELECTION OF THE CO-CURRICULAR PRODUCTION SEASONS; informed but not dictated by students

Students have always sought a seat at the table at which the co-curricular production season is selected. There have many others that have thought students should have such a place in such a process. Given the relatively small size of our program, currently approximately 60 Theatre majors in spring 2011, students already wield tremendous influence over the co-curricular production seasons. That student influence is wielded in both season selection and in the casting of the productions in each semester.

As the faculty selects a co-curricular production season we ascertain what the human resources of the program are potentially capable of at a point in time in the not too distant future. Such a determination is based on the Theatre majors that may be available for casting and for other production assignment considerations, and necessities. Such considerations include: Individual GPA's; student composition of the Theatre major cohort (male/female); their capabilities; as well as an assessment of where the student cohort is in relation to the programs of study. Casting is also dependent on the student cohort presenting prepared auditions at the start of each semester. That can be a significant issue.

It is our programmatic philosophy not to pre-cast roles. We have pre-cast selected roles in productions with Guest Artists and for Senior Projects. Senior Projects comprised of specific performance casting assignments (Design Assignments for Design/Technical students) have been rare because students warranting such special casting consideration as they approach their senior year are extremely rare. Such students are rare because this type of special consideration is dependent on a student progressing in an orderly fashion accompanied by a clear trajectory towards graduation, and for providing excellent student leadership.

While we consider the student cohort and their capabilities in selecting the co-curricular production seasons, the true relationship to the determination lies in the rough numbers of majors, the ratio of males to females, racial/ethnic composition of specific plays or production conceptualizations, that might be available and that will present an effective prepared audition for casting consideration, and how many unknown participants may be required to accomplish a specific production. All of that means that when we make season selection decisions we have as solid an understanding as possible of the potential manageability for each production situation. Even if that amounts to an understanding that a specific production will be a major reach for the program. It is also useful to consider whether we have the depth within our Theatre major cohort to potentially accomplish the more challenging roles within a specific production. However, students do not totally dictate that consideration. They cannot totally dictate such a consideration because we do not know which students may or may not continue in the program of study between semesters or from year-to-year. Students drop out of the program for many and varied reasons. Issues relative to the Prepared Auditions have already been detailed above. Therefore, individual students can inform the selection of the co-curricular production season selection but they should not dictate it. Rightly, the student body, or cohort, exerts the greater influence over such determinations. After all, the co-curricular production program is an extension of our academic mission to instruct students. Our audience is also an important consideration, but the academic mission is the leading and most significant criteria.

Since we are an academic program and the co-curricular production seasons exist to enhance that work, our mission to instruct students is the most significant criteria for the determination of co-curricular production seasons. With four co-curricular productions in each academic year, we must produce plays that serve and inform our students' educations in Theatre as they matriculate. Therefore, the plays selected and produced must come from a repertoire of plays that represent Classical, Contemporary Classic, Modern Classic, and New Works with an emphasis on ensemble plays. That can be a very challenging repertoire to sort through in any circumstance, and circumstances are rarely ideal. And our programmatic circumstances are always shifting because they are founded on students. On where the students have been and where they need, or should, go next.

THE DEGREE PROGRAMS CONSIDERED

In the Theatre Core curriculum of our degree programs, Acting Performance students take more Design/Technology courses with Design Technology faculty, than Design/Technology students take Acting Performance classes with Acting Performance faculty. THTR-T 120 Acting 1, and THTR-T340 Directing 1, are the only Performance courses required in the Theatre Core curriculum. That means the rest of the 31 credits of the Theatre Core curriculum, with limited exception, are taught by Design/Technology faculty. Of those 31 Theatre Core credit hours a total of 16 are as follows; 6 in Theatre History (THTR-T 470 and T 471), 3 in The Structure and Analysis of Drama (THTR-T 190), and 3 in Topics in Theatre & Drama (THTR-T 483), including 3 credits in Theatre Practicum (THTR-T 349), and 1 for Capstone (THTR-T 485). Other Performance course work is only required within the Performance concentrations. In Theatre, not considering the Dance faculty, there are more Design/Technology faculty than Acting Performance faculty; four in Design/Technology, two in Acting Performance.

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN THEATRE (BA); CONCENTRATIONS IN ACTING, DESIGN/TECHNOLOGY, THEATRE STUDIES

The Bachelor of Arts in theatre gives students a broad acquaintance and experience with the various ways theatre artists study, interpret, and articulate the world in which we live.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

- 122 credit hours
- At least 30 credit hours must be at the 300- or 400-level
- Successful participation in major season productions as directed by the area coordinator of theatre and dance

- **CAMPUSWIDE CURRICULUM (39 CR.)**

(All courses are 3 credit hours, unless otherwise designated.)

- **FUNDAMENTAL LITERACIES (19 CR.)**

Writing

ENG-W 131 Elementary Composition 1 (with a grade of C or higher)

Critical Thinking

Select from approved course list

Oral Communication

SPCH-S 121 Public Speaking (with a grade of C or higher)

Visual Literacy

THTR-T 228 Design for the Theatre

Quantitative Reasoning

(mathematics Level 6 equivalency or above)

Information Literacy

COAS-Q 110 Introduction to Information Literacy (1 cr.)

Computer Literacy

Select from approved course list

- **COMMON CORE COURSES (12 CR.)**

Complete one course from each of the following four areas, as designated in the Schedule of Classes. At least one of the areas must be completed at the 300-level.

The Natural World

Select from approved course list

Human Behavior and Social Institutions

Select from approved course list

Literary and Intellectual Traditions

THTR-T 190 Literary and Intellectual Traditions VT: The Structure and Analysis of Drama

Art, Aesthetics, and Creativity

Select from THTR-A 190 or A 399 offerings

- **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS (15 CR.)**

Two semesters of one world language

HIST-H 113 History of Western Civilization 1

HIST-H 114 History of Western Civilization 2

Select one of the following:

THTR-T 327 Period Styles

THTR-T 434 Historic Costumes for the Stage

- **ELECTIVES (25 CR.)**

- **MAJOR REQUIREMENTS (43 CR.)**

Theatre Core (34 cr.)

THTR-T 120 Acting I: Fundamentals of Acting

THTR-T 225 Stagecraft 1

THTR-T 228 Design for the Theatre

THTR-T 230 Costume Design and Technology I

THTR-T 335 Stage Lighting Design

THTR-T 340 Directing I: Fundamentals of Directing

THTR-T 349 Theatre Practicum (1 cr.) (three semesters; freshmen are not permitted to enroll)

THTR-T 405 Stage Management

THTR-T 470 History of the Theatre 1

THTR-T 471 History of the Theatre 2

THTR-T 483 Topics in Theatre and Drama

THTR-T 485 Capstone Project (1 cr.)

Area of Specialization Requirements (9 cr.)

Performance (9 cr.)

THTR-T 300 Musical Theatre Workshop

THTR-T 320 Acting III: Shakespeare

THTR-T 420 Acting IV: Realism

Design/Technical (9 cr.)

FINA-F 100 Fundamental Studio–Drawing

Select two of the following:

THTR-T 290 History and Design of Stage Makeup

THTR-T 326 Introduction to Scenic Design

THTR-T 425 Stagecraft III

THTR-T 430 Costume Technology II

THTR-T 433 Costume Design II

THTR-T 438 Advanced Stage Lighting Design

Theatre Studies (9 cr.)

Select one or two of the following:

THTR-T 220 Acting II: Scene Study

THTR-T 223 Vocal and Physical Preparation I

THTR-T 431 On-Camera Techniques

THTR-T 479 Problems in Performance

Select one or two of the following:

THTR-T 290 History and Design of Stage Makeup

THTR-T 326 Introduction to Scenic Design

THTR-T 433 Costume Design II

THTR-T 438 Advanced Stage Lighting Design

BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS IN THEATRE; CONCENTRATIONS IN ACTING, DESIGN/TECHNOLOGY

The Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in theatre is designed to prepare students for the professional theatre or additional training at the graduate level. It features an intense focus on a selected area of concentration (performance or design/technical) and extensive production experience designed to promote excellence.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

- 128 credit hours
- At least 30 credit hours must be at the 300- or 400-level
- Successful participation in major season productions, as directed by the area coordinator of theatre and dance

CAMPUSWIDE CURRICULUM (39 CR.)

(All courses are 3 credit hours, unless otherwise designated.)

FUNDAMENTAL LITERACIES (19 CR.)

Writing

ENG-W 131 Elementary Composition 1 (with a grade of C or higher)

Critical Thinking

Select from approved course list

Oral Communication

SPCH-S 121 Public Speaking (with a grade of C or higher)

Visual Literacy

Select one of the following:

THTR-T 228 Design for the Theatre

Select from approved course list

Quantitative Reasoning

Select from approved course list (mathematics Level 6 equivalency or above)

Information Literacy

COAS-Q 110 Introduction to Information Literacy (1 cr.)

Computer Literacy

Select from approved course list

COMMON CORE COURSES (12 CR.)

Complete one course from each of the following four areas, as designated in the Schedule of Classes. At least one of the areas must be completed at the 300-level.

The Natural World

Select from approved course list

Human Behavior and Social Institutions

Select from approved course list

Literary and Intellectual Traditions

THTR-T 190 Literary and Intellectual Traditions VT: The Structure and Analysis of Drama

Select from approved course list

Art, Aesthetics, and Creativity

Select from THTR-A 190 or A 399 offerings

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL VALUES (8 CR.)

Students must complete one course from each of the following three areas, as designated in the Schedule of Classes.

Non-Western Cultures

Select from approved course list

Diversity in United States Society

Select from approved course list

Health and Wellness (2 cr.)

Select from THTR-D offerings

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS (9 CR.)

HIST-H 113 History of Western Civilization 1

HIST-H 114 History of Western Civilization 2

Select one of the following:

THTR-T 327 Period Styles

THTR-T 434 Historic Costumes for the Stage

ELECTIVES (1-2 CR.)

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS (81-82 CR.)

Theatre Core (34 cr.)

THTR-T 120 Acting I: Fundamentals of Acting

THTR-T 225 Stagecraft 1

THTR-T 228 Design for the Theatre

THTR-T 230 Costume Design and Technology I

THTR-T 335 Stage Lighting Design

THTR-T 340 Directing I: Fundamentals of Directing

THTR-T 349 Theatre Practicum (1 cr.) (three semesters; freshmen are not permitted to enroll)

THTR-T 405 Stage Management

THTR-T 470 History of the Theatre 1

THTR-T 471 History of the Theatre 2

THTR-T 483 Topics in Theatre and Drama

THTR-T 485 Capstone Project (1 cr.)

CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS (44-45 CR.)

Performance (44 cr.)

THTR-D 120 Ballet I (2 cr.)

THTR-D 220 Ballet II (2 cr.)

THTR-T 220 Acting II: Scene Study

THTR-T 223 Vocal and Physical Preparation I

THTR-T 224 Vocal and Physical Preparation II

THTR-T 290 History and Design of Stage Makeup
THTR-T 300 Musical Theatre Workshop
THTR-T 320 Acting III: Shakespeare
THTR-T 392 Theatre Internship
THTR-T 420 Acting IV: Realism
THTR-T 423 Acting V: Period Comedy
THTR-T 431 On-Camera Techniques
THTR-T 442 Directing II: Advanced Directing
MUS-V 100 Voice Elective/Secondary (4 cr.)

Design/Technical (45 cr.)

FINA-F 100 Fundamental Studio–Drawing
THTR-T 290 History and Design of Stage Makeup
THTR-T 326 Introduction to Scenic Design
THTR-T 392 Theatre Internship
THTR-T 427 Design Studio (four semesters; junior standing required)
THTR-T 433 Costume Design II
THTR-T 438 Advanced Stage Lighting Design

SPECIALTY REQUIREMENTS (15 CR.)

Students must also select a specialty and complete 15 credit hours within that specialty:

Costume Design

THTR-T 327 Period Styles
THTR-T 330 Rendering
THTR-T 332 Scene Painting
THTR-T 430 Costume Technology II
THTR-T 434 Historic Costumes for the Stage

Scene Design

THTR-T 327 Period Styles
THTR-T 330 Rendering
THTR-T 332 Scene Painting
THTR-T 434 Historic Costumes for the Stage
THTR-T 439 Technical Drawing

Lighting Design

THTR-T 327 Period Styles
THTR-T 330 Rendering
THTR-T 332 Scene Painting
THTR-T 424 Stagecraft 2
THTR-T 439 Technical Drawing

Technical Design

THTR-T 327 Period Styles
THTR-T 332 Scene Painting
THTR-T 424 Stagecraft 2
THTR-T 439 Technical Drawing
THTR-T 490 Independent Study in Theatre and Drama

ADVISING

From the Academic Bulletin:

“THE STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY

Each student in the Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts is responsible for reading and understanding all requirements described in this publication. All colleges establish certain academic requirements that must be met before a degree is granted. These regulations concern such things as curricula and courses, the requirements for majors and minors, and university procedures. Advisors, directors, and deans are available to advise students on how to meet these requirements, but each student is individually responsible for fulfilling them. If requirements are not satisfied, the degree is withheld pending completion.”

Advising is more Art than Science. It is a science as it relates to the requirements of the degree programs. However, the Art comes in when endeavoring to facilitate students in taking the courses they need WHEN they need them. Post-Advising, students do not have to enroll in any of the courses in which they have been advised. And that does occur. Fortunately it is a relatively rare occurrence. Advising is a conversation between an appropriate faculty member, assigned by the Area Coordinator, and an individual student majoring in the faculty member’s discipline. Once the conversation has occurred, the faculty Advisor requests the removal of the student’s “advising hold” from Arts Student Services. The student enrolls in the courses after that. And, “after that” can be any time before the start of classes in a semester for which the advising occurred. On the positive side, most students enroll in classes in close proximity to Advanced Registration. For returning students, their advantage is that they get first opportunity to enroll in advance of new or transferring students. On the negative side, some students wait until very close to, or even during the first week of classes, to attempt to enroll in courses that are often “closed”. It is at these times that the student expects another Advising conversation and they expect the Advisor to fix the situation by getting them into the classes they need.

REQUIRED CLASSES; The Fundamental Literacies & freshman priorities

Writing, fulfilled by ENG-W 131 ELEMENTARY COMPOSITION, is a requirement for every student on the IU South Bend campus, and it must be accomplished with a minimum grade of “C”. The clear objective then is to Advise students to enroll in this course as early in their matriculation as possible because this course prepares students to write at an appropriate level for future coursework. However, it may take some students two semesters, one academic year, to be able to take ENG-W 131. And it may take longer. Student scores on placement tests dictate which course of this type in which they may enroll. The preparatory courses are ENG-W 031 PRE-COMPOSITION and/or ENG-W 130 PRINCIPLES OF COMPOSITION. These two courses are offered Pass/Fail; only failing has GPA implications. And if the student fails either of these courses they must retake them before they are able to move forward to the required course. As you can see, it is possible that a student gets further and further removed from the freshman year before accomplishing this essential requirement. Most students entering IU South Bend, the School of the Arts, and the Theatre and Dance Area must take at least ENG-W 130 to get ready for ENG-W 131. It is possible to advise students that have had to retake W130 multiple times. It can be very

difficult to get these students to continually retake this essential course. However, writing is so fundamental to students' academic journey that they must be "made" to retake the appropriate course. The reality is an Advisor cannot make any student do anything, including enrolling in any course. The last resort for the Advisor is to strongly urge students to accomplish certain objectives. DEMANDS can only be made by the program overseeing the degree program in which the student resides...

It has been suggested that students needing ENG-W 031 or W 130 not be allowed into a degree program, to be required to be undeclared or undecided majors. In the midst of advising students that have failed these classes multiple times the author has thought long and hard about such an approach. However, some, but not enough, students are facilitated by having theatre dangled in front of them as if a carrot to keep them at this difficult, yet essential, task. The reason it is difficult as the Advisor in these instances is that while the student continues to fail, or not re-enroll, in these fundamental courses, the Advisor advises the student into courses that depend in some way on their ability to write sentences, paragraphs, and short papers at levels at least approaching college-level.

If and when we arrive at a point where the balance of our student Theatre major cohort is significantly above the sophomore level it may be useful to consider implementing a threshold for students relative to ENG-W 131 or W 130; that they cannot be Theatre majors until they have accomplished one or the other of those courses. We are not at that point. The realities are that we already have limited competition amongst our Theatre major acting performance cohort. Potentially removing many incoming freshman from the possible casting pool would increase the challenges which already exist for our required, and essential, co-curricular production seasons. As an example, I will use the final production in spring 2011: every man that auditioned was cast, and almost all of the women that auditioned were cast. That outcome strongly impacted the artistic thinking and doing and the accomplishment of that thinking and doing through the production process. In this context it bears repeating that our degree requirements are:

- 122 credit hours
- At least 30 credit hours must be at the 300- or 400-level
- Successful participation in major season productions as directed by the area coordinator of theatre and dance

Therefore, the faculty CANNOT make students do what they are unwilling to do. We can insist, urge, suggest, plead and beg that they do more, reach higher, and push the limits but only competition can truly MAKE them want, or need, to do more, unless they individually determine to MAKE themselves reach higher. That can be rare.

Quantitative Reasoning, accomplished by MATH-M 111 or above, as specified in the approved list of such courses, and Oral Communication, accomplished by SPCH-S 121, and the other courses, or types of courses, which comprise the Fundamental Literacies are valid freshman and sophomore year considerations for Advising. However, these courses are not as essential, or rarely as problematic as ENG-W 131.

For further clarification THTR-T 190 (Literary and Intellectual Traditions) The Structure and Analysis of Drama, THTR-A 190 (Art, Aesthetics, and Creativity) Introduction to Theatre, and THTR-T 228 (Visual Literacy) Design for the Theatre are not officially required in our degree program. All that are OFFICIALLY required are courses specified as Literary and Intellectual Traditions, Art, Aesthetics, and Creativity, and Visual Literacy courses. This is a non-issue for students that come in as freshman majors; they will be advised accordingly, and appropriately; the theatre courses that meet these requirements ARE required of them. These courses are a potential issue with Transfer and "Change of Major" students that have already accomplished these types of courses. The difficulty is T 190, T 228 are, and should be, pre-requisites for other Theatre courses. THTR-A 190 is not a pre-requisite for other Theatre courses, so if a student has accomplished an acknowledged AAC course they have fulfilled the requirement.

The following is the IDEAL semester-to-semester Advising Plan for a student pursuing an Acting Performance concentration. For anyone interested, many of the Acting courses, except Acting 1, because I believe that Design/Technical students should also take it earlier in their matriculation rather than later, could be substituted with a Design/Technical course for usefulness.

Note: all students are pre-Theatre until they successfully accomplish their Mid-course Review at approximately 56 credit hours.

Note: this plan is specific to the BA degree program; students are not allowed into the BFA until after their freshman year, but usually not until the Mid-Course Review:

Year 1, First Semester

COURSES	CREDIT HOURS
ENG-W 031, W 130, or ENG-W131	(3 or 4)
COAS-Q110 Information Literacy	(1)
THTR-T120 Acting 1	(3)
THTR-A190 Introduction to Theatre	(3)
THTR-T190 Structure and Analysis of Drama	(3)
Computer Literacy	(3)

Year 1, Second Semester

ENG-W130, or ENG- W131	(3)
THTR-T220 Acting 2	(3)
THTR-T225 Stagecraft	(3)
THTR-T228 Design for the Theatre, Vis. Lit	(3)

SPCH-S121	Public Speaking	(3)
MATH-M 100, MATH-M111		(4 or 3)
Year 2, First Semester		
MATH-M 111	Mathematics in the World	(3)
THTR-T320	Acting 3	(3)
THTR-T230	Costume Technology	(3)
THTR-335	Stage Lighting	(3)
THTR-T349	Theatre Practicum	(1)
Critical Thinking		(3)
THTR-D	Health and Wellness, Dance	(2)
Year 2, Second Semester		
THTR-T420	Acting 4	(3)
THTR-T349	Theatre Practicum	(1)
THTR-T405	Stage Management	(3)
Non-Western Cultures		(3)
The Natural World		(3)
Diversity in United States Society		(3)
Year 3, First Semester		
THTR-T340	Directing 1	(3)
THTR-T349	Theatre Practicum	(1)
Human Behavior and Social Institutions		(3)
First Semester of World Language		(3)
HIST-H113	History of Western Civ 1	(3)
THTR-T327/T434		(3)
Year 3, Second Semester		

HIST-H114	History of Western Civ 2	(3)
	Second Semester of World Language	(3)
	Elective	(3)
	Elective	(3)
	Elective	(3)
Year 4, First Semester		
THTR-T470	History of Theatre 1	(3)
THTR-T483	Topics in Theatre in Drama	(3)
	Elective	(3)
	Elective	(3)
	Elective	(3)
Year 4, Second Semester		
THTR-T471	History of Theatre 2	(3)
THTR-T485	Capstone	(1)
	Elective	(3)
	Elective	(3)
	Elective	(3)
	Elective	(1)

ADVISING CONTINUED; an example of an Advising Contract

In Advisement of students I prepare a draft of the following Contract which is provided below as an example. The draft is a plan I have created in preparation for the individual advising appointment I will have with each of my student advisees. The draft is based on what the student has taken, what they need to take, and all is informed by considering the above plan for ensuring the most useful academic journey for the student. As necessary the draft is altered during the Advising meeting and then finalized, saved, and printed and given to the Advisee to facilitate them with registration. I keep these Contracts so that I can keep track of how well each student follows our Advising conversation and the plan that comes of out it. Keeping the individual contracts potentially exposes me to mistakes I may have made, but I would rather know if and when I have made any such mistakes to facilitate rectifying them.

ADVISING CONTRACT

Student: Billy Bob Clampett

Semester: FALL 2011

NEED A 300 LEVEL COMMON CORE COURSE!!!!!!

CRITICAL THINKING

MUS-V100

THTR-T 223 VOCAL & PHYSICAL PREPARATION I (3 CR)
30258 RSTR 1:00P-2:15P TR NS 118 Staff

THTR-T 442 DIRECTING II: ADV DIRECTING (3 CR)
26088 PERM ARR ARR ARR Colborn J

THTR-T 470 HISTORY OF THE THEATRE 1 (3 CR)
20664 01:00P-02:15P MW NS 111 Park I

THTR-T 483 TOPICS IN THEATRE AND DRAMA (3 CR)
26348 PERM 10:00A-11:15A TR NS 03 Hanson S

SPRING 2011

You don't need much?

How are your classes going this semester? The shows?

What do you want to do in the future?

SPANISH? PHILOSOPHY?

THTR-T 290 HIST & DESIGN OF STAGE MAKEUP (3 CR)
3953 04:00P-05:15P MW NS 027 Hanson S

THTR-T 420 ACTING IV: REALISM (3 CR)
4619 PERM 10:00A-11:15A M NS 118 Sterchi J
10:00A-12:00P W NS 118 Sterchi J

THTR-D 220 BALLET II (2 CR)
4312 01:00P-02:15P MW NS 0035 Staff

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Register early: Classes fill up. Check your Advanced Registration Date & Time in your OneStart account

Holds on Registration: Check them to be sure they are clear.

If you alter this plan, please let me know.

Scholarship Application? If so, see the Area Coordinator

Any problems registering for classes, please let me know.

Reviews? End of Freshman Year; Mid-course, BFA, etc.?

Your Name Here
Theatre Advisor

March 20, 2011
Date

STUDENT REVIEWS

- a. Entry Level Review
- b. End of Freshman Year Review
- c. Performance Review
- d. Mid-Course Review
- e. Bachelor of Fine Arts Review
- f. Capstone Experience
- g. Exit Interview

The **Entry Level Review** is used to assess two focus groups specific to freshman students that have declared a Theatre major prior to Orientation and Freshman Advisement: those primarily interested in acting and those primarily interested in design/technical work. They are conducted at the beginning of each semester. Acting students are required to audition and design/technical students are required to present a portfolio. All students participate in an interview with the Area faculty. All faculty participate in entry level reviews.

The **End of Freshman Year Review** takes place when a student has accomplished two semesters of work as a major in the program. This Review is an interview with the Area faculty.

Performance Reviews are formally conducted on all theatre students once a year and are conducted by the entire theatre faculty. All acting students except freshmen are required to audition and all design/technical students, again with the exception of freshmen, are required to present a portfolio. All of these students also present a resume representative of their theatrical work. All students must participate in an interview. During this review the student is provided the opportunity to reflect on the year of study and participation in the co-curricular production program. The student is also encouraged to discuss individual strengths and weaknesses and their academic progress. Since final grades are not available at this time, insight can be gained about each student's objectivity in relation to academic progress once their actual academic progress is determined. In turn, the faculty address academic issues specific to theatre, curricular shortfalls, potential advising issues, and skill development and enhancement for preparation for the next academic year. It has become a growing trend for more theatre students to participate in professional theatre experience in the summer. Time is taken to discuss the potential challenges and opportunities inherent to each situation. In some cases, summer theatre experiences conflict with the beginning of school in the Fall semester. Therefore, careful planning needs to take place to clarify those students transition back to school and their participation in co-curricular activities.

The **Mid-Course Review** is formally conducted when a theatre major has arrived at the approximate mid- point of their studies: 56 credit hours and/or 18 credits in the major. For the Mid-Course Review all students participate in an interview with the Area faculty; acting students are required to present an audition and all design/technical students are required to present a portfolio. These students also present a resume of theatrical work. All majors must participate and successfully accomplish the Mid-Course Review for the opportunity to continue in the course of study.

The **Capstone Experience** is required of all graduating theatre students and may include the following: the design or direction of a theatrical production, presentation of a major role, presentation of a senior recital, submission of a portfolio, and/or a project approved by the theatre faculty. The capstone experience is reviewed by the theatre Area faculty.

The **Exit Interview** is required of all graduating theatre majors and provides an opportunity for the student to discuss the program with the entire theatre faculty and to present future goals in the theatre profession.

When students graduate with a BA or BFA in Theatre it is the minimum requirement that they have gained both an understanding and an appreciation of Theatre. The Theatre Core requirements, with the emphasis on Design/Technology courses, help us to meet that mission with our students. THTR-T 120 Acting 1, THTR-T 225 Stagecraft 1, THTR-T 228 Design for the Theatre, and THTR-T335 Stage Lighting each require 20 lab hours in Design/Technology related activities. In three semesters of THTR-T 349 Theatre Practicum at 1 credit per semester, and begun in the sophomore year, further ensure Actors are provided experience in Design/Technical related activities. Along with the other Core courses, the aim is for an understanding and appreciation of the entire process of Theatre.

POST-GRADUATE ACTORS

Our degrees demand both classroom/studio and co-curricular production experience and training. The BFA specifies that graduates are prepared for the profession and/or graduate study. Many BA graduates can and do achieve that same level of preparedness. Thus, at present, one degree program is not “better” than the other. However, post-graduation, all Theatre graduates can choose to pursue other life or career choices. Those that choose to remain in the community and/or region are not going to have “professional” Theatre careers. There are not enough professional Theatre opportunities in our community or region upon which to mount such a career. Some graduates do not want professional careers in theatre.

Historically, those graduates with an Acting concentration that have said they wanted professional careers in theatre but stayed in the community to build financial resources to support their pursuit of professional opportunities in the larger American cities in which those types of opportunities are far more available have largely failed to make professional careers in the theatre; they are being successful in other ways. There are reasons for the failure to make the transition to professional careers in theatre for this cohort of graduates.

For all graduates getting a job in their career field can be challenging. Theatre graduates are no exception. After all, beginning acting work, if the young actor is able to acquire such work, typically pays little or nothing, and that outcome can often have little to do with their individual abilities. Almost all young aspiring actors must find other types of work to supplement their efforts as burgeoning theatre artists. Building financial resources would be an additional challenge for these recent Theatre graduates. Such an endeavor takes time and planning. That would be time and planning in addition to that needed to manage an Acting career. Generally, many general, non-Theatre graduates, that acquire a job could potentially be starting a career, at least taking a step towards building career experience. This is strikingly different for the Theatre graduate. Their career is the Theatre. Entry level jobs do exist in the theatre, but they are not often to be found in Acting. Entry level jobs for Actors in Theatre are any Acting jobs they are able to acquire. And such entry level Acting jobs are not often to be found in the nearest shopping district available in most towns across the country. Most actors must begin by auditioning for roles at paying and non-paying theatre organizations alike. Actors that get cast are fortunate to get cast in any of the roles for which they initially audition. For a Theatre graduate, the level of difficulty for building financial resources would be increased if the student wishes to continue to make theatre. For the Actor graduate getting paid for acting work can often be few and far between.

Not making theatre while building financial resources can create a diminished appetite for making theatre and it does not build an Acting resume, which in turn will make it difficult to gain paying work as an actor. When I have asked these students, "What is your goal for financial resources building?" they either do not know or the goal is unrealistic. They have also usually acquired the overhead of a car and an apartment. Ironically, the types of jobs these graduates typically acquire to build their financial resources for the move to the "big" city are usually the same types of jobs they could have acquired in cities, regions, and communities in which there are many more semi-professional and professional opportunities in Theatre.

It makes sense if your career ambition is in Theatre that you would not acquire another career. Instead you would, as necessary, acquire a job. And the best type of job for the aspiring Actor would pay well enough to be able to do a few things: pay the rent, put food on the table, pay for public transportation, pay for some other career necessities, and provide flexibility for potential acting opportunities, including auditioning. Most actors must have jobs to support building careers in acting. That is the way it is and has been. If such a reality is too substantial a lament for the student then Acting as a career choice probably makes little sense. It can perhaps help to consider that most other post-graduates struggle in similar ways. Most post-graduates went to school with a specific ambition that relates to their degree program. Their ambitions usually alter in the face of realities and opportunities. As an example, many Education majors never teach. Most Education majors that get teaching jobs stop teaching after between 3-5 years of teaching. Etc., etc., etc. Most want to be CEO's, as that relates to their individual career, but must start in the mailroom, or with digging ditches.

For those students/graduates contemplating graduate school, remaining in the community will not facilitate that ambition. Master of Fine Arts programs, the most typical of such possibilities, prize strong undergraduate degrees gained through extensive experience and participation in those degree programs through thick and thin, AND professional experience in their area of study.

This is the salient point: All Theatre graduates that have taken good advantage of the opportunities provided by our program are well prepared for careers, even if those careers transition to being outside the Theatre. The disadvantage for Theatre graduates is that many people, including those that hire people, can have prejudices about “Theatre people.” However, that can be a similar issue for all job applicants because individuals responsible for hiring want to hire as quality an individual as they possibly can; thus, it is the applicant’s job to prove their unique worth. The job of the Theatre graduate in looking for a career that may not be in Theatre is to understand and appreciate what they have accomplished and turn that understanding, appreciation, and accomplishment into “sellable” attributes as appropriate to the situation. And they do have strongly sellable attributes. From my perspective, looking at the range of students that have graduated from our program with Acting concentrations, there are distinct and useful attributes from which they can draw. Those attributes include:

- an understanding and appreciation of teamwork,
- taking initiative,
- a useful imagination,
- self-awareness,
- awareness of others,
- perseverance,
- multi-tasking,
- flexibility in thinking,
- flexibility in doing,
- the ability to give and take criticism,
- the ability to follow direction even when they don’t “like” it,
- being a good leader,
- being a good follower,
- knowing when to lead or follow,
- being articulate about who they are, what they can do, and what they envision for themselves in the context of the work,
- working both hard and effectively, and
- they have courage

The reality for Theatre graduates is that they may need to explain their unique preparedness to potential employers. To effectively explain those attributes means effectively understanding and appreciating what it is that they have accomplished. Recommendations from faculty would facilitate that part of the process. Students that have taken advantage of the opportunities provided by our program and graduate are well-prepared for many possible careers. How fully individual students have taken advantage of the opportunities of the program should directly correlate with the quality of the recommendations they would receive from the faculty.

WHAT IS ACTING? Acting is a career, roles are opportunities

There are at least a few debates about the nature of Acting. Those debates hinge largely on these questions:

- 1) What is Acting; is it Creative, Mimetic, or Hackneyed?

- 2) Which leads to this question: What is the place of the Actor in the enterprise of making theatre?

Essentially, the debate centers upon the question of whether Acting is Art or Craft; Representation or Presentation.

Representation: the work emanates from somewhere inside the Actor; living the character.

Presentation: the Actor presents their work to an audience; prioritizes how the work sounds and looks.

As it applies to Acting, Art would mean mastery of the elements of Acting: voice, body, mind, and soul (if one is open to that concept) with the tools for understanding, appreciating, and utilizing the nuances of language, physical movement, vocal variety, and emotional - psychological perception and availability. A Craft is a "branch of a profession which requires some particular kind of skill." So, mastery of the Craft of Acting would be Artistry. Out of necessity and practicality, as well as artistry and professionalism: Acting is both Art and Craft; both Representation and Presentation.

The nature of Acting work demands that the Actor gain expertise with various processes. The chief processes of Acting are Auditioning, Rehearsing, and Performing. Each of these processes demands the use of both Representation and Presentation. Self-management is a separate though related and essential process. It has do with the Actors need to maintain and enhance all of the skills necessary to make a career as an Actor.

Typically, in the process of Auditions, with limited understanding of the character for which they are being considered, the Actor must make bold and effective choices. While the context of specific Auditions may demand other skills, the priority is always on the Actor's ability to make effective use of Representational and Presentational choices. After all, the Actor's success in Auditions, whether they are cast or not, will be determined by the quality of evidence they provide in relation to the needs of the specific production. In Auditions it is the Actor's task to provide effective evidence of their understanding of what is required of the character and that they have the resources to fulfill those requirements.

In Rehearsal processes the Actor begins with limited understanding of the character they have been cast to play. Whatever time that exists between Auditioning and Rehearsals must be used by the Actor to get as familiar as possible with the play and the character. The Director expects to see bold and effective decisions from each Actor throughout the process, from first rehearsal to last. Therefore, even if the play is more one than the other, the priority is on the Actor's ability to make effective use of Representational and Presentational choices. In Rehearsals it is the Actor's task to provide effective evidence of their understanding of what is required of the character and that they have the resources to fulfill those requirements.

In Performance, plays may demand performances that are more one aspect than the other. That may also be a production demand. Some may demand both. It is also possible that a play that is considered

to one type of work is actually done in the style of the other. The rehearsal process would have clarified the playing needed for the specific production. In Performance, each and every one of them, it is the Actor's task to use their resources to play the journey of their character with great skill, effectiveness, and clarity.

THE ACTOR'S DILEMMA: Job or Art?

In the creation of all artistic endeavors there is making and work involved. In the Art and Craft of Acting, the Actor is their own instrument, canvas, and resource utilized in the making of Acting as part of the larger enterprise of making Theatre. Therefore, whether or not they have an actual Acting job it remains the work of the Actor to work on their instrument and craft. There is always an audition to prepare for, let alone attend. There are readings of new and old scripts going on all over town. There are classes to take, productions to see, and plays to read. There is also, typically, the job the Actor has that supports their Acting career.

There are jobs and there are JOBS. Some jobs are menial, though necessary, and some are so "dignified" that they may not even seem like work or jobs. Even if it is a "labor of love", there will be days when the Actor will have significant doubts about their chosen career or individual jobs within it. But it is useful to remember that such doubts are universal to all workers and all careers. The public nature of Acting is a unique aspect of that work which may account for why such doubts are more prevalent for the Actor. Others, sometimes even strangers, know whether or not the Actor is working as an Actor; how they are progressing through a rehearsal process; whether that work culminated in a "hit" or a "miss"; and right or wrong, they also have a point of view about the stature or importance of that work.

Actor's want jobs in Acting. They also want to get paid enough for those jobs as to make a living. With a nod to Robert Mitchum such jobs should be better than digging ditches, right?

And, what is a "living?" How would you quantify that amount over a life-time of working and earning? A former (Acting) student once said after they had moved into another career field: "If I ever win the Lottery I will open a Theatre that all my friends can work in." The fact is, if an individual is not engaged in the activities of Acting and Theatre but making a living in another field, the odds are slim on two counts:

- 1) Ever winning the Lottery, and
- 2) Using at least some of their Lottery winnings to open and maintain a Theatre.

Building, opening, let alone running a Theatre, takes much more than money, and is far more expensive than... Of course, the Lottery plan is a fantasy so logic will now be set aside.

In getting hired and being paid to dig ditches, or other types of manual or physical labor, one is certainly engaged in a job and the work of that job. These types of jobs, and the work they entail, are defined as menial in that they require limited skills and lack prestige. Certainly there are individuals that enjoy this type of work. This type of work also has one big advantage over many other types: without debate it is entirely clear whether or not the work has been accomplished. But generally people undertake such work out of a necessity to make some money. It could also be the case that such menial work

constitutes the first “rung” on a career ladder within a specific organization. In such situations the plan would be to dig ditches only as long as it takes to gain a better job with higher wages and greater prestige. Of course, even those that do not enjoy such work must quickly learn to find ways to enjoy it so as to maintain their sanity which in turn facilitates their ability to effectively dig the holes in hopes of getting on to the next rung of the ladder. Sanity and hope are necessary to maintain the job otherwise the worker will be either inconsistent or incompetent so as to be unable to climb out of the ditch, so to speak. It should not be missed that someone else would be making the determination about when the individual ditch-digger either returns to dig more, or gets to move up the ladder. In these types of jobs it is generally difficult to make a “good” living. It is also extremely difficult to continue as a physical laborer throughout a life-time of work. All the while we would be hearing the stories about those who avoided the ditch-digging experience. Such stories are welcome so long as they do not get in the way of the ditch-digging.

For this discussion the natures of menial and dignified demand some consideration. Menial generally means that the work does not require much skill and lacks prestige. Menial is not a concept generally associated with the “glamour” and dignity or prestige of Acting. After all, Acting demands that Actors be seen and heard. Actors want to be seen and heard while playing “important” roles in important plays at important venues. While some Acting work may actually be menial, self-perception can play a significant role in quantifying it as such. In other words, whether it is true or not, if the Actor believes they are doing a “menial” role or they perceive the venue in which the role is being performed as such, they are correct. It can be very difficult to take pride in “menial” endeavors. Directors can identify Actors engaged in playing “menial” roles very quickly. They may tolerate it but they do not appreciate it because it does not make the work any easier. But as long as the production is effectively served it will be tolerated.

If someone is casting *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, there is only one Hamlet, Gertrude, or Ophelia to be cast, but there are many other roles to cast important enough that the story cannot be told without them. The Director wants terrific actors in those roles, too; each and every one of them.

What makes Acting jobs unique from many other jobs is the level of engagement required of the Actor no matter whether the Acting “gig” is menial or dignified. After all, the actor can only hope to evolve from the menial opportunities to the more dignified or glamorous through the effective (sterling?) accomplishment of the former. There are even degrees of menial; the actor will willingly do menial in one context but not in another. That can be justified for the Actor through the experiences they have gained. But such self-determination by the Actor almost always comes at some price.

It is very difficult to “sort of” or “kind of” Act. Acting is an either/or proposition: you either do it or you do not. If you are not doing it you are wasting your precious time, and since the work of Acting involves others, their time as well, and you might even get fired. Otherwise you might just be allowed to continue as punishment. This punishment is self-imposed despite being perceived as coming from the Director. Directors generally do not have the luxury of time to be engaged in the effort of doling out such punishment. It could be argued that it is difficult to “sort of” do other types of jobs. However, the matter is decided by the fact that many people can be observed “sort of” doing all kinds of jobs and

other activities. Such behavior is often observed and experienced in many different contexts and it is usually easily identifiable. The only people those “sort of” working individuals seem to be fooling are themselves.

There are jobs and there are JOBS. Actors often must have one type of job to make enough money to be able to pursue Acting JOBS. There are also jobs and there are careers. An Acting career is distinct from most other careers in that it is comprised of many different Acting jobs. Although it is worth considering that more and more non-Theatre careers are accomplished by individuals moving from job-to-job, even city-to-city, on the way toward accomplishing their careers.

Acting must be more than a job because people choose to do the work of Acting rather than some other possibility. Most of those other possibilities do not require an additional job to support the main career ambition in which the jobs may not pay much, if anything. The young or professionally inexperienced actor should consider that it can be exceedingly difficult to begin such a career by only doing that Acting work that pays enough money. And yet the majority of Actors will have to make such a determination at some point in their careers. And how much money is enough for work that is not the type they really want to be doing?

Actors are prized for their professionalism. Any measure of professionalism prioritizes consistency. For the professional Actor that consistency is the ability to play with clarity and emotional “truth” the role which they have been cast to play every time it is played. To be cast in the role in a professional situation that ability must have been on clear display in the audition process. These skills and tools include receiving direction and playing that direction through the performance of the character. Professionalism also demands that the Actor be making clear progress throughout the rehearsal process and be able to repeat their work at an extremely high level during each and every performance.

The real problem seems to be that there are many “disposable” jobs available. Through such jobs workers often acquire both relatively meager wages and counter-productive work habits. Perhaps the most harmful matter acquired from such situations is a general cynicism about jobs and work. Perhaps some workers are able to treat one job as disposable while treating another with more respect. But sometimes the acquired counter-productive habits are spread equally amongst all types of jobs. It is also true that the jobs the Actor acquires in support of their Acting career must be significantly viewed as disposable. The trick is not to get caught because not many employers relish having their employees thinking that their job is disposable. Thinking usually comes out as action and behaviors. But the job the Actor has in support of their real career cannot significantly interfere with the real career and its objectives. If it does, or is allowed to, there is the very real possibility it has actually become the real career. It is the Actor’s responsibility to keep their Mission Statement in focus so that it may effectively guide their decision-making.

Beyond the financial remunerations received from work most jobs come to be viewed by employees with some level of cynicism. Such cynicism usually breeds less effective work, less professionalism. While we may generally think of careers as distinct from jobs they are not immune to the same type of cynicism and the problems caused by it. That is because there is a universal aspect of all jobs or careers

and the work they entail: repetitiveness. The situations lose their newness. Generally, newness is despised while it is being experienced and yet the level of engagement is incredibly high during these times. We are out of our element. We may make mistakes without realization. We will make mistakes that all are aware of. We are unsure. Decisions have greater weight no matter the size. Actually, the size and weight of decisions can often only be effectively discerned in hindsight. It is exhausting to be so engaged. It is impossible to maintain it for very long. As we become accustomed to the situations, gain in sureness, lose the newness, the level of engagement usually decreases. There is usefulness in this gained confidence that becomes genuine rather than projected. But there is also the strong possibility that we have begun the process of becoming a sleep-walker or the living-dead through the job, work, or career. Being present while doing the routine is the true measure of professionalism. But even professionals must often make decisions about where to focus attention and effort because the days can be long. Priorities must be set and the decisions about prioritization must be effective.

Being Human

Humans have a highly developed brain, capable of abstract reasoning, language, introspection, and problem solving. This mental capability, combined with an erect body carriage that frees the hands for manipulating objects, has allowed humans to make far greater use of tools than any other living species on Earth. Other higher-level thought processes of humans, such as self-awareness, rationality, and sapience, are considered to be defining features of what constitutes a "person".

We are always thinking

We are always feeling

We order things, and not just at a restaurant

We need to be right; we hate being wrong

We are decision-makers

We make decisions about ignoring or avoiding decisions because we so desperately hate being wrong

ATTENTION and CONCENTRATION

Since we are human beings we are always receiving stimulus. We do not have a choice in the matter because this information or stimulus is received through our senses. It is worth remembering that stimulus is also received from within. Our senses are always on. It is the universal human condition that we are ALWAYS feeling and thinking. It cannot be avoided that this vast amount of stimulus receives our attention; we feel, taste, smell, see, and hear it. Whether the information is received consciously or unconsciously all is received. The vastness of this stimulus means that only a miniscule portion of it receives our consideration, concentration, or focus. We make decisions about some of this information. We order as much of it as possible. Some contend our humanity is determined by the opposable thumb, others emphasize self-awareness as the zenith, but perhaps it is our need to order and arrange things, information, thoughts, to poeticize them, that is really the answer.

Being human, we want to order all stimuli. But with so much information we can only manage a minuscule portion of it all. We do not like that outcome. It literally drives some people mad. We must make decisions about what receives our consideration or concentration. So, we hear without listening, taste without savoring, look without seeing, feel and smell without considering much of what comes our way. Great care must be taken that such a reality does not become the normal operating procedure. The fact that we receive so much information partly explains our need for sleep. Amongst its other uses sleep provides some time to attempt to process and order all that comes our way. But we also receive information while we sleep. Though quieted, our senses are not turned off just because we are asleep. Even while awake we may “quiet” our senses so as to be more focused on a specific thing. We put blinders on horses to limit their view, we wear headphones to tune out sounds other than the ones we want to hear, and ear muffs to protect our ears from excessive sounds, etc. But generally, without devices, for periods of time, we also have the amazing ability to focus on something to the exclusion of all else.

It is a common misconception that we can think about more than one thing at a time. We also fool ourselves that we can effectively DO more than one thing at a time. As an example, driving a car and texting come to mind. It is against the law because while we are endeavoring to do both activities we are actually warring with ourselves from moment to moment about which activity is receiving our consideration or concentration. Driving a car is already a moment to moment proposition without any additional stimuli. Because YOU may not view or treat it as such does not decide this argument.

In various rates and rhythms we spend much of our time thinking of one thing right after another, after another, etc. The same is true for what we do. The rate and rhythm of our thinking and doing has an incredible range.

It is a common lament that we never have enough time to ponder on one thing for very long. But as previously stated: we receive tremendous amounts of information all the time. Decisions must be made about what gets consideration and ordering. Some stimulus or information whether we like it or not demands consideration. Logic or rationality does not always play a role in this process. Useless or counter-productive business can often receive tremendous amounts of consideration even when we have plenty of useful, perhaps far more important, things to be considered and accomplished.

We cannot be concentrated at all times. And there are degrees, rhythms, and rates of consideration or focus. We constantly make decisions about what receives any consideration let alone deeper consideration. We live in constant fear that we missed something. This is a legitimate fear because we are missing something. So, we live in constant fear. Every decision we make means we cannot make some other one. But it is a fact that our attention is inundated with all of this information all of the time and we endeavor to select from amongst it as best we can. It is actually an amazing ability: we take an overview, based upon our personal mission statement we focus in a bit more, select a handful, and then pick one thing while discarding the rest of the handful. The context of the situation in which we are in will dictate the overall rate and rhythm of each of these transactions. Our context shifts throughout each day. Since we are surrounded by communication devices of one sort or another one context can be abruptly interrupted by another, etc. The effect this one selected thing has upon us will then further

dictate the rate and rhythm of our consideration of it. We will then either discard the thing or stow it away because we must move on to the next. We are making decisions throughout this process because most things do not even receive the overview.

Concentration is a never ending process that is constantly shifting. Stanislavski called them Circles of Concentration. Our concentration is attracted by stimuli, and sometimes stimuli punches us right in the eye, or some other place or sense. We also have the ability to shift our circle of concentration. However we shift our circle of concentration, we can do it very quickly, or choose to keep it where it is. In life and in the work of Acting and the Theatre, while everything going on around us gets some of our attention, we make choices about what receives our consideration, concentration, our full-attention. We must, otherwise nothing worthwhile will get accomplished. We also have extremely limited control over what life throws at us and when it gets thrown. But there are times, and Performance is one of them, when the mind must be right. The mind must only be where it should be no matter the possible or potential distractions. That is the primary distinction between Performance and “just doing something.” Characters have their own distractions, preoccupations, and/or stimuli. The Actor will have some, but they should be limited to the specifics of the production, they must be in the correct relationship to the undertaking for it to be considered Performance.

In performance, the Actor must have a Circle of Concentration which includes the entirety of their contribution to the enterprise of the production. In the context of Performing the largest secondary Circle of Concentration would be those specific to the character within the play; characters have Circles of Concentration that would shift throughout the action of the play. Some of the shifts would be the choice of the character, and since it is a play and plays are about characters in trouble, most would be caused by stimulus received during the action of the play, usually from the other characters.

In considering Performance, concentration is central. But note through all of the above that concentration is not myopic, it is aware, a living thing that is ebbing and flowing, growing and shrinking, moving from one thing to the next, etc. For an endeavor to be rightly quantified as Performance means that it is accomplished at the highest level. It is an undertaking at the highest order of our capabilities. In the preparation for our “games”, which in our context is a Performance, during the rehearsal process, we can shift in and out of “Character” but our attention should remain within the larger context of the rehearsal and the play for which the rehearsal was called. And not just anything should cause those shifts of focus. Such a skill is demanded of all work that is well done and Acting and Theatre are not the exceptions. In fact, given the nature of our work, it is essential. Selectivity in such matters is vital. As we move closer and closer to the Performance, that place where preparation meets performance in front of an audience, we minimize the shifts in and out of Character. Such shifts may still be essential within the running of a performance: costume changes, moving of scenery, etc. Any that are not essential to the running of the performance must be set aside; left outside the space.

Repetitiveness is at the heart of Acting and the Theatre. In the Theatre it is called Ritual. Theatre was founded in Ritual. Ritual is useful, repetitiveness is not. Ritual done right requires presence, commitment, and engagement. Repetitiveness assaults all of those useful attributes, at least. And that is why Acting work demands Representation. Representation requires presence, commitment, and

engagement. In the preparation of the ritual of a performance, if the Actor wants to relish their work, look forward to it, to be engaged in it, it is their responsibility to create a useful ritual for their performance. That ritual needs to command the actor's attention because there are many potential distractions. Acting should not be just another job. If it is treated as such that is what it becomes.

Actors expect the audience to pay attention to the work they are doing in a production of a play. That seems fair, but it is actually an awful lot to expect. Even though their seats face them towards the stage the audience actually has many different things they can be thinking about. It is the Actor's task to make sure the audience is provided with something worth seeing, hearing, and considering. That is virtually impossible if the Actor is bored with the telling of the story. It is the Actor's level of engagement which should receive all of the Actor's attention. It is the only tool the Actor has any control over which may serve to organize the attention of an audience toward an appropriate level of engagement.

Essentially, characters in plays and the like have problems, they are in trouble. To the characters those problems are substantial in the extreme. Even if the trouble is insurmountable characters cannot accept that. It would defeat the very purpose for telling the story to an audience. No, audiences watch and listen to such stories to see how others deal with their troubles not to see them give up, unless such a moment arrives at the climax of the story. These problems or troubles are new to the characters. New requires of them presence, commitment, and engagement. They make mistakes. They are unsure. Decisions have weight no matter the size.

There are certainly other criteria, but not everyone can be an Actor primarily because of the extremely high level of presence, commitment, and engagement required. Those are critical ingredients in the professionalism demanded of the actor.

Work, jobs, and careers place a premium on consistency. Professionalism demands the highest level of consistency. The most significant difference between Acting and most other professions, jobs, or work is it is accomplished in front of others culminating in being performed before an audience. While the story remains the same the audience changes for every performance. The players and the production are the constant.

It is not a REQUIREMENT in any context for Actors to create a Ritual that promotes their ability to be present, committed, and engaged. The Actor can choose to create a repetitive presentational loop for their performance. As long as that loop functions effectively and the performance is both consistent and strong throughout the run of the production, they will do just fine. However, that sounds like most other jobs. It does not make going to work seem very exciting. Creating and maintaining that presentation loop is not easier. Doing a two hour (or so) performance by rote, by the numbers, or by going through the motions feeds the obstacle of monotony. Monotony can be an issue for the Actor when learning and dealing with aspects of the work, but it seems counter-intuitive to create a performance that fosters it.

The question is: Why would someone pursue a career in Acting if it were just like most other jobs, work, or careers? The answer must be the promise of being a rich and famous Star. That should not be the answer, however. Most actors do not become STARS, rich, or even famous. Most Actors have careers. They go to work just as others do except their work is the work of the Performer. Fortunately, at least

for many actors, some “gigs” are work and some may contain various degrees of pleasure. And processes can be challenging, difficult, even trying. Yes, work. And such processes can be all the more rewarding, beyond the pay, for what is achieved through such processes.

There is much about Acting that is WORK. When the Actor is cast to play a role it is their JOB to play that character with the requisite skill to be perceived by an audience as appropriate to the role within the realm of the production. That work begins with the first rehearsal and continues throughout the process. The production is the product of that work.

Generally speaking, in relation to assessing practitioners of art forms, most people, including students, see it this way: all or nothing. That is, the artist/actor is rich and famous, which would be all. Or they are anonymous and destitute losers, which would be nothing. It is challenging to understand and appreciate that most artists, including actors, are relatively anonymous, but many relatively anonymous artists, and actors, make a living doing what it is they want to do: making their art. And, yes, there are those that do not make a living making their art but still endeavor to make that art in hopes of someday making a living at it. And then there are those that have transitioned into a different career that may have been started as a means to support their ambition to be an artist or actor. Such career transitions are hardly unique across the spectrum of jobs and careers. And so it is true of those that practice Theatre, as well. But since such transitions can generally be more typical in Theatre, that receives the naysayer’s emphasis. But, there are other considerations. As an example: lawyers often transition into other careers; not many potential lawyers actually find careers, or maintain them, as lawyers. The primary difference for lawyers is that someone cannot transition into becoming a lawyer without the appropriate education and degree, and by passing the Bar.

Acting as a Craft (Presentational)

Acting is craft because it demands that the Actor be FLEXIBLE on multiple counts; that is the essential “particular kind of skill” that is required of the discipline. But it is also Craft because it must be so along the entire journey for the individual actor no matter how expert they become. Journey here means both through specific production processes and the Actor’s career. That is because the actor is consistently introduced to requirements within plays (and productions of plays) with which they have little, perhaps no, previous experience. Perhaps it is better said, that such an outcome is what most actor’s want: to not play the same (type of) roles. And yet, it must be said, some actors build careers on a singular type of role, or within a specific type of theatrical medium.

In various contexts of theatrical production it is not unusual to see young actors playing old characters; non-murderers playing cold-blooded ones; civilians playing war-hardened soldiers. Those are just a few of the myriad possible examples but they help to clarify the issues and support the point. It is inarguable that an actor can gain, let alone maintain, expertise in all of the various types of challenges and opportunities within the gamut of theatrical plays and similar situations in which Acting ensues, particularly when considering that even a single play can be produced in many different ways.

If Craft were not a requirement the actor would begin each and every rehearsal process from scratch. There simply is not time for that possibility. Although it is not unusual to sit around the “table” at a first

read-thru and hear the Director say: “Just talk (through the dialogue in the script) to each other.” After all, ideally, the Director has cast each actor in the role they should be playing in that enterprise. In actuality, and in practice, the actor must be able to read a script with which they may be largely unfamiliar aloud with at least clarity and purpose; to Act it to as a great a degree as possible. That is as true in Auditions as it is in Rehearsals for a production. In the same context, the actor must also be able to make physical choices, and play emotional – psychological information to be found or discerned within the script. If the Actor is required by a script or a production to undertake extensive physicality such as dance or combat they must be able to learn and assimilate that information with some alacrity so as to begin to “play” that aspect of the work from the perspective of their character. So, it is not just a matter of learning that type of business, although it might be necessary at the start, but as soon as possible, the Actor must begin to filter that element of the work through the role with which they are charged with playing. It is also typical that the issues of physical “business” can be so personally challenging to the actor that they feel overwhelmed. That can also be true of the emotional – psychological requirements within a role. That is the nature of the business for the Actor. The Actor must still be able to function through the effort of rehearsing the script, staging it, playing moments, making choices, and effectively receiving criticism; moving forward toward the creation of a Performance. To do so from the earliest part of the rehearsal process will almost always demand some level of Presentation. And, because of the nature of the specific situation within a production, Presentational work may be essential.

Training is the critical element in the development of the Actor’s Craft. But training and experience can help the student gain insight to elements of the work in fundamental ways because the specifics that will be encountered in all of the various contexts cannot be entirely anticipated. It is ever the Actor’s responsibility to become expert through each specific process with the elements demanded by each specific production. That process never ends as the Actor moves from opportunity to opportunity. It is the fundamental reason that Actors must continue to take Acting classes (and Stage Combat or Dance classes) throughout their careers. Each production demands a certain type of unique focus, or myopia. Sometimes the Actor, through extensive opportunities that may be similar or have similarities, may lose, even to a degree, other useful skills because they are not being demanded and utilized. If a specific enterprise demands specific expertise from the potential actor that information is imparted prior to the auditioning and casting process.

It is for the purposes of clarity that Craftsmanship is required in Acting. The business of Acting always demands clarity of voice and body in the doing utilized in the various types of work in which Acting ensues. The choices the Actor brings and plays in rehearsals must be discernable to all those around working with them: the other actors, and the Director.

Acting as Art; Representational

To Act is to be at that nexus between the objective and the subjective with the ability to move between them with some ease as necessary. The process of rehearsing a play is essentially moving towards making the subjective as objective as possible because the process of play production, even in Acting as it applies to all of the other possible contexts in which Acting occurs, must be repeatable. That sounds

an awful like all types of jobs or work. The objective of Acting is a Performance. The Art of Acting cannot be accomplished by “just” anyone. If that were the case Acting would only demand effective memorization skills for dialogue, staging, and all of the other possible business. All of that implies, at least, that the actor would only do what they were told, or asked, to do. While that can be the case, even within moments of a specific production, or its process, why would someone pursue one career that is just like most others except that it comes with far greater personal and professional risks? Therefore, while acting is work, and one gets jobs as an Actor, Acting should not be just another job. It is a career that requires a lifetime of work and study.

Typically, the beginning student of acting spends their time in the objective realm, except when they speak about their own or others Acting work. They say things like: “My character says or does this...”, or “I don’t like my character...” or “I wish my character was like some other character...” As the student of acting progresses through a rehearsal process they must at least attempt to journey to the subjective side of things. The further they get the better for them and the production. That can be very difficult, because it can appear or feel very scary. It may appear or feel scary because such a process demands letting go of preconceived notions. After all, it is about looking at and seeing the world from a different perspective. That perspective belongs to the character in the play the Actor is charged with playing. How far the Actor gets during that journey directly correlates to their ability to let go of pre-conceived notions or previous experiences. Getting comfortable being uncomfortable is the realm of the Actor. That is because the characters that Actors play are uncomfortable until at least the very end of the play.

TEACHING & LEARNING ACTING; Some Issues

THE THREE 800-POUND GORILLAS IN THE ACTING STUDIO

It is interesting to note, because many students are very aware of it, and it can be an issue in what we do: There are no specific degree programs, or requirements, for becoming a celebrity. While it is extremely rare, that is also true for actors that are celebrities. However, the majority of actors that have achieved celebrity status have studied acting, even theatre. That point can, is, and will, be argued. It is strongly decided not by the extremely few exceptions but by the rule. Like most identifiable, even famous musicians, actors usually greatly appreciate and understand their discipline, or art form. In fact, that appreciation and understanding will help them as their career progresses, and even manage their celebrity, if that were to occur. The percentage of time and focus that a student expends on the exceptions correlates to the scale of challenges they will encounter in the program, and if they graduate, in the discipline. Their focus will be on “luck” or providence rather than on preparation for when “luck” or providence arrives. Such dependence on “luck” will increase the odds that they will miss the less obvious opportunities that will arise.

Almost all of the gold prospectors that went to California in 1849 failed. Their failure rate correlates to how little they actually knew about prospecting, which required mining. In fact, anyone could be a prospector because it demanded no expertise. But mining is very hard work and demands some expertise, a strong back, useful imagination, and will. What attracted so many potential prospectors were the stories of gold just appearing at someone’s feet. But this analogy causes trouble: most of the

hardworking, well informed, miners failed as well. But at least those miners had (or gained) understanding, effective tools, a strong will, and had a useful imagination. Those types of skills would most likely have led to other jobs or career opportunities.

THE TRICKY PART; The Second Gorilla

This part is tricky because it may be taken as cynical. It will be risked because in relation to Performance Studies there are typically recurring issues. Students sometimes have prejudices about what they want or need to learn. Every layman thinks they are a valid critic or expert about Acting because they have witnessed much acting even if it was only on television. In some instances students only want to do the work they know they are capable of so acting classes should be Talent Shows. Students sometime want to be told how to do the work. Fine, except they also want to be told only how to do certain parts of the work. Which certain parts are as individual as each of the students. And then when they do the work, they want the feedback/response information to be easy to process and the problem fixed so as to never return. Many want to polish what it is that they already know, or think they know, or have been told by someone, anyone, they do well. For those individuals, it can very difficult to move on to new territory; a beginner, but already set in their ways. In relation to acting, students often want a number of things and those things often bear little relationship to learning about Acting, how to Act, and how to talk about Acting. As long as those types of issues dominate there is less hope for much growth as an Actor, let alone for building a career as an Actor.

A significant issue often begins or has a significant relationship with the want to be identified as having "IT", that intangible "star" quality. Many think the folklore, cliché, or mythology of "IT" begins and ends with Hollywood. "IT" is actually as old as Time. For many, "IT" is impossible to remove from the discussion but the concept should never be discussed unless it is brought up by a student. It is suggested that if a student does bring "IT" up that they be asked to define "IT" and then to quantify how "IT" should be taught and assessed.

Perhaps "IT" is talent. Talent is worth discussing, but only if the truth about talent frames the discussion: Talent without the want to learn how to embrace, articulate and share it will be wasted talent. Acting Performance is done within a process. The process has to do with, in some form, a script that tells a story. The process always includes other participants. In the process of the individual Actor, the Actor must be clear and understood: vocally, physically, emotionally, and psychologically. Rehearsals demand clarity of purpose because other characters, played by other actors, respond to the other characters. And by playing choices or decisions, it can be discerned by the director what the Actor is working towards in relation to the character they are playing. Acting work cannot be a mystery. And talent that cannot survive such a process is not acting talent.

As it relates to this discussion and subject, everyone has talent. I have never had a student in any acting class that could not learn better how to Act. I have had students that did not do enough of the work of the class to learn about acting as it was undertaken in the specific class. I have had students that were not "strong" actors earn an "A" in these classes because they did all of the work to the best of their ability and improved as actors. I have had students that were potentially strong actors earn an "F" in

classes because they did too little of the course work, missed too much course work, and did not improve as Actors. I have had several students make various excuses for why they could not learn to act and proved it by not doing assignments despite being well informed what work would be undertaken in the course on the first day of class and reminded at various points throughout the course of the semester. I have had students that were not willing to do the work necessary to learn and experience as much as they could have about the subject by being selective about which parts of the work they would and would not undertake. You will hear variations of all of these: they already know, or did not know, much about acting; they are the only one that was “scared” or had stage-fright in their specific way; had trouble memorizing dialogue, assuming it to be easier for those that did accomplish memorization; or that they were waiting to be told how to do the work. We, the teachers, must tell the students what the classes will entail, what we are going to be doing in the classes, what assignments will be given, and how they are to be graded. If the students do the work, how they do it, and how well they do it, must be significantly up to them, particularly after they have received feedback and criticism on recurring assignments. In the acting classes, their scene partners play a role in that as well.

I will sum up this significant issue in this way, because it plays out in every class, every semester: the students will, at different times, want to be told how to do an assignment, but only when they want that transaction to occur. But when they are told how to do a certain assignment or exercise, that was not when they wanted the direction. That is, however, an essential aspect of any acting performance class, because it is true to the process of the art form of Theatre.

THE THIRD GORILLA

DISCLAIMER: In the following the author jumps back and forth between classroom/studio and co-curricular rehearsal processes

The process, as carefully planned, and organized as it may be, is still human. And the process can be altered for both “right” and “wrong” reasons. “Right” reasons are those that may arise out of the process and may alter the direction and enhance the process. The “wrong” reasons are those that are far too human even though they comprise some part of almost all such processes, including those that involve students. It goes “wrong” when those issues become so large that they shift the balance of the enterprise too far. For the teacher/director in those instances it becomes too much about managing daily crises instead of making the production work; survival rather than art. The types of “wrong” issues range from too much time and energy demanded on establishing consistency in attendance, participation, and purpose; effective preparation for the scheduled work; endeavoring to understand the play, the specific diction and opportunities of the play; and learning to understand that the play (or work) is the reason all are gathered together for that period of time. The students job is to be present, attentive, and active participants; to learn, inform, and memorize the staging and dialogue; and generally progress through the process in a rising arch toward the purpose and clarity necessary for performing a play, scene, or monologue, to an audience. As they gain more experience, the students must bring a developing process with them into the specific process of each play production, or related endeavor. That may seem common sense, but it is extremely rare that most students, including the most able and experienced, do not require extensive reminders about such obligations.

Anyone that has ever taken or taught an acting class, a class in which the work presented is assessed immediately and with a mixture of factual/logical and seemingly metaphysical criteria, knows that an 800-pound gorilla is in the room: the assessment of acting prowess is informed by opinion. Opinions do mean something and they must be permitted. In class, in any discussion of acting work amongst practitioners, however, opinions must be supported by evidence. But what happens in the hallways, and over the cell phones, and on Facebook, etc. after class, is not class, and opinions shared in those ways does not demand evidence and it has its effects. And there are elements in acting work that sometimes, even if it is rarely, cannot be entirely defined. It would be easy to suggest those moments be avoided, but to that I would say: how, and then why, teach and study acting and theatre. It is part of the process, however difficult it may be at certain points.

Another extremely significant and recurring issue is the “pleasing” factor. The thinking generally goes like this: If the director, or teacher, is “happy” with what the student is doing in the process all is fine. That type of thinking and doing has a strong element of CULT in it. It also ignores the fact that the director or teacher may have greater issues with which to deal. It is well known that many programs trade in various degrees of CULTishness. Some programs are founded upon the premise: participants sign contracts in which specific, and typically, personal types of behaviors must be avoided for admittance into and continuation in the program. Because of the inherent intensity of the enterprise and the feeling of community that is sought, cultishness cannot be entirely avoided. But it must be carefully watched and managed otherwise the enterprise becomes a CULT.

The art form demands the actor be present throughout the process. If they were a painter, as an example to parallel the actor’s experience, at painting time they would be joined by other painters that would be painting right alongside them, even dipping into the paint they carefully mixed. Such a process would have a set schedule. The painter, along with the other painters, would be painting for a specific show that would be scheduled approximately six weeks in the future. There would be someone that would be watching all of this painting and giving direction and criticism throughout. The framing of the work would receive a similar process. When the work was to be shown, whenever the gallery was open and an audience came into view the work, the painters would begin painting the same paintings they had worked through in the above process, playing the decisions and brushstrokes they created in the rehearsal to arrive at the same painting they had developed through the process. Or to use a process more appropriate to the visual artist, showing their work in a gallery or other appropriate venue, whenever the gallery was open the artist would stand beside their finished work to see and hear the audience seeing and discussing, or not, their work.

IF YOU STUDY TO REMEMBER, YOU WILL FORGET, BUT IF YOU STUDY TO UNDERSTAND, YOU WILL REMEMBER

Habit is a significant issue in acting. That is because characters in plays should be comprised of habits (which are products of their life experience) which are distinct from those of the actor. If a student has (relatively) extensive experience when they arrive to the program they often have performance habits that are often counter-productive to their growth as actors. They have acquired what is called in the parlance of Acting: a “bag of tricks.” And it is typically an extremely limited bag. It can be tremendously

difficult to wrench that bag from their grips. The bag includes, but is not limited to: moving around for no other purpose than it is more “interesting” than standing around; trying to sound like they know what they are talking about rather than figuring out what they are talking about; sounding cute, or manly, or feminine, or with some sort of dialect, or mysterious in some way, or in mimicry of another’s work, and none of it has a relationship to their natural voice/body; “when I get my costume I’ll be acting”; “when I have my words (memorization) I’ll start acting”; and expecting rehearsal to be focused significantly on individual issues, such as memorization, rather than the entire enterprise of the production.

Memorization work should not take place during rehearsal time in the rehearsal space. If available, an assistant, or an Assistant Director, can undertake that type of work elsewhere during rehearsals. Work on memorization is not rehearsal. Any director that uses time for memorization is wasting precious time that should be spent on making the play work through the performances of the actors. It is the work of the actor to deal with memorization. The only appropriate exceptions are in stretches of very complex dialogue shared by many characters. However, admittedly, memorization is often a significant issue. Almost all students want to know the “trick” to memorization. They are generally so convinced that there must be a “trick” to memorization that when they are informed that there is no such trick they assume something it being kept from them. The only “trick” to memorization is to memorize ideas, not words, while never forgetting that the correct words and diction of the words and punctuation must be memorized. Words also have a history and denotative and connotative resonances that must be considered and understood. When the actor understands what they are saying and the potential reasons why they are saying those words, memorization often becomes easier. Personalization can also be a significant aide in the process. That memorization is a process for which they are responsible because it helps them understand their character is what students need to learn. An extensive and respected study of the use of language by humans posits this theory: We create language as we speak. Therefore, characters in plays should not just speak lines written by the playwright. A significant job of the actor is to help create the place within the character where what the character says can be more likely to “come out.”

Given the relatively small number of majors in our program, they hold immense sway over what we do and how we do it. As an example: the outcome of *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT NIGHT’S DREAM* was largely dictated by where we were RIGHT THEN as a program. Auditions and Casting significantly dictated where the process began and ended. And the process was quite good because the students largely worked well together. With Scot Shepley’s generous help we got further than I would have gotten us alone. I could say the same about multiple productions (because of the RIGHT NOW factor) in the 21 years I have been here.

More context: In 1991, when they hired me as a Visiting Faculty member, they told me we would be doing *HAMLET* as a significant part of the University’s 20th anniversary; the first show of the season. When I asked: “Great, who is playing Hamlet?” The answer I received: “You are.” Notice that I did not ask: “Who am I playing?” Even then that was the case; I was going into Academia, my question was: where are the students in their progress through the program? I knew I was to be in the production, but I assumed I would be playing Claudius. I could not understand why they would pick a play dominated by male roles, with two great roles for women, and also not have a student to play the Prince. I have

appeared in a couple of other productions here since then, but not like that. For the sake of clarity: I do want to play Lear sometime soon and I think it would be great to do it with our students. I have also thought about Prospero. And there are some other roles. But if I want to be “in” something, it will never be a mystery. I always think of the students and where WE are RIGHT NOW, and where we need to be trying to get. That consideration frames every discussion I have about what we are doing, and why we are doing it. So, please remember that if you are talking to me about such matters.

THE THROUGHLINE OF OUR COURSE WORK

There are five (5) Acting classes in our curriculum. THTR-T 120 Acting I, THTR-T 220 Acting II, THTR-T 320 Acting III, and THTR-T 420 Acting IV are required in the BA. THTR-T 340 Directing I is in the Theatre Core; required of all majors.

Five (5) three (3) credit Acting classes= 15 credit hours

In the BFA with a concentration in Acting Performance in addition to the above 15 credit hours in Acting classes are:

6 credits in Vocal Physical Preparation; voice and movement courses

3 credits in On-Camera

3 credits in Musical Theatre Workshop

4 credits of Dance

4 credits of Singing

For a Total of 35 credit hours (approximately 12 courses in Performance)

The following are the Performance courses taught by the Acting/Directing faculty and required in the BFA degree program and the course titles and descriptions:

THTR-T 120 ACTING I: FUNDAMENTALS OF ACTING (3 CR.)

Fundamentals of acting techniques through improvisational approach. Beginning scene study. Laboratory required.

THTR-T 220 ACTING II: SCENE STUDY (3 CR.)

P: THTR-T 120. Study of major theories and aims of acting in conjunction with practice in techniques of the art of acting. Laboratory required.

THTR-T 320 ACTING III: SHAKESPEARE (3 CR.)

P: THTR-T 220. Study and practice of acting techniques.

THTR-T 420 ACTING IV: REALISM (3 CR.)

P: THTR-T 220, THTR-T 223, THTR-T 224, THTR-T 320, or consent of instructor. Advanced problems in acting. Advanced scene study.

THTR-T 423 ACTING V: PERIOD COMEDY (3 CR.)

P: THTR-T 223, THTR-T 224, THTR-T 420 or consent of instructor. Continued advanced problems in acting. Advanced scene study.

THTR-T 223 VOCAL AND PHYSICAL PREPARATION I (3 CR.)

Vocal and physical preparation for acting. Designed to develop awareness of the voice and body as instruments of communication in the study of acting.

THTR-T 224 VOCAL AND PHYSICAL PREPARATION II (3 CR.)

Continued vocal and physical preparation for acting. Designed to develop awareness of the voice and body as instruments of communication in the study of acting.

THTR-T 340 DIRECTING I: FUNDAMENTALS OF DIRECTING (3 CR.)

P: THTR-T 120, THTR-T 150, THTR-T 225, THTR-T 228, Junior or senior standing. Introduction to theories, methodology, and skills: play analysis, work with actors, basic elements of stage composition.

THTR-T 442 DIRECTING II: ADVANCED DIRECTING (3 CR.)

P: THTR-T 340. Problems and functions of director, from selection of script through performance. Lecture and practical projects.

THTR-T 300 MUSICAL THEATRE WORKSHOP (3 CR.)

Performance course designed to gain experience in auditioning for and performing in musical theatre. May be repeated for a total of 9 credit hours.

THTR-T 431 ON-CAMERA TECHNIQUES (3 CR.)

P: Consent of instructor. Principles and techniques of various performance methods involved in acting on the camera. Work to include directed exercises and scenes.

ALL young actors should be TRAINED FOR THE STAGE. Vocally, Physically, Imaginatively, and Emotionally-Psychologically, the stage demands they stretch out, expand themselves, literally. Even if they have significant issues “stretching out” or expanding, the stage confronts the actor with that demand. That is particularly so in the Campus Auditorium, but it is also true in the Upstage.

If a young actor can begin to sustain a performance for a couple of hours, something a trained actor must be able to accomplish, it is much easier to “sustain” a performance for the shorter spans of time demanded by work in other performance and related situations. Actors also function, whether they are aware of it or not, as their own agents, whether they have an Agent or not. Therefore, even for the student actor that does not “love” the stage, it can actually provide them with the forum to, relatively easily, change perceptions about what they CAN play. That is essential for the actor. It also provides them with a skill and opportunity to hone their craft and sustain their careers. Actors want to act. It could be argued that most actors need to act. And whether it is want or need, actors hope to act as many kinds and types of roles as possible, not just the same one over and over. That is true even if they are earning a living, great or otherwise, by playing that same role, even in different contexts or plays.

If an actor does not have the want to learn about the stage, its history, its traditions, to read the great plays, to experience (as many times as possible) what it is like to participate in the production of a play

from auditions through closing, they probably should not be going to university, and they should certainly not be majoring in theatre at IU South Bend. Most actors, famous, or otherwise, have an appreciation and understanding of those that came before them and are interested in the how's and what's those predecessors did in and with the art form.

Plays are always POETIC, if not always POETRY, presented to an audience. That is, all plays have a shape: Beginning, Middle, and End to be witnessed—seen, heard, and experienced by an audience. The shape of a play is also to be discerned in its diction. After all, plays are comprised of words that were selected by a writer, or poet, to be spoken by characters to other characters for the purpose of being heard and understood by an audience. Diction includes the kinds of words, the arrangement and organization of the words into phrases, and the types of ideas and ACTIONS they imply. ACTION is the operative word. An audience must not only be able to hear and understand the play they must also be able to discern the journey of the events of the play and they do that through the acting-doing-playing of the actors as the characters in the play. In theatre, Characters are constituted of what they say, what is said about them by other characters, and whether they say what they do, or say a thing yet do another.

Since plays are poetic, Actors must also be poetic. Everything that happens on stage in a play must be done for the purpose of the play. And what happens on stage in a play is to be discerned in what the characters say and do. And what is said and done must be seen, heard, and understood by an Audience. The essential elements of Drama are: A Character with a Commitment to a Personally Significant Objective in an Urgent Situation with an Outcome played for an Audience.

Everything in the Theatre does and must take the form of Action otherwise its existence remains unknown.

The understanding of that concept will help in the articulation and revelation of character to an audience. Every art requires discipline and training in the use of the appropriate tools, as well as intelligence, experience, and the ability to order both experience and response into meaningful form as it relates to each specific play. Plays have a beginning, middle, and end. Moments which comprise events (BEATS) within scenes which in turn comprise plays must also have a beginning, middle, and end. Therefore, the actor knows the journey his/her character will take through the scenes and the play and what that journey means to the context of the entirety of the play. They know the information their character receives/learns/discovers through the many events of the play and that the character has emotional-psychological responses to that information. The Actor's Task is learning to play "as if" (minimally APPEARING to do so by the audience) the characters do not know how each scene and hence the play ends. And it is through EMOTION that the audience most effectively receives the information of the play because humans are always "feeling."

It is through the effects of the events of the play on the characters that EMOTION becomes the life blood of characters in plays. And it is in DOING, which includes SPEAKING the language of the play, and in taking ACTION, that EMOTION is provided its appropriate conduit. Characters in plays do not have emotional "breakdowns" in plays without speaking and doing--taking action through their words and

deeds-- unless the "breakdown" ends a scene or a play. To that end, ACTING ON THE LANGUAGE of a play is the way of the Actor and it is a major thrust of our teaching of Acting at IUSB.

Every acting book includes a consideration of EMOTION. However, it is important to point out that it is usually a single chapter in such books. Even Constantin Stanislavski, the man known (rightly or wrongly) for The Method, revised his thinking on EMOTION so that it no longer had a lead role in his thinking, just an important supporting role with a through-line. The most critical part for us in relation to EMOTION as it relates to Drama and Acting is to understand that it is essential. However, essential does not mean it is easy.

EMOTION is a product. Emotions are the result of something happening, or being done, to us, perceived or otherwise. Therefore, in Drama, EMOTION is the result of something happening, or being done, to characters in plays. And what is happening, or being done, is important to characters in plays. Since characters are always feeling something, and those feelings are being altered by events which comprise the actions of scenes, which have been arranged by the playwright, the audience is aware of the events most effectively by witnessing the effect of the events on the characters through their changing emotions which informs how they say and do what they say and do. That emotional product informs the words and actions of the characters during the play. And there needs to be a variety of emotions from the characters in a play. Typically, the more time a character spends on stage in a play correlates to the range and variety of emotions present in their speaking and doing. After all, Variety and Contrast are the most effective means for holding the attention of the audience.

The key to EMOTION is specificity. Specificity as discerned in the play by how its beginning, middle, and end have been arranged. Specificity in the range of emotions experienced by the character in the play, to be discerned through more than "stage directions" but through what the character says and does and to whom. Specificity in emotions as it relates to the type and style of a play. And specificity achieved by studying the play to understand what the character holds dear and why, how their speaking and doing alters as the play progresses, and utilizing the characters point-of-view about such fundamental human concepts. All characters in all plays are in unknown emotional-psychological territory because they have never been in as much trouble as they experience through the play.

Emotions also have a range of possibilities. There is not a singular type of angry, happy, sad, love, or hate. There are actually myriad types of each. And while a young actor might need to "play" an emotion, or "at" an emotion, they should not remain "sound and fury signifying nothing."

When someone really wants something from someone else (characters in plays want something specific from each of the characters with which they deal in a play) they spend their time and focus on that someone. Sanford Meisner says (in relation to Acting), "What you do doesn't depend on you, but on the other person." David Mamet says, "On the stage it is the progress of the OUTWARD-DIRECTED actor, who behaves with no regard to his/her personal state, but with all regard for the responses of his antagonists, which thrills the viewers. And, "In "real life" the mother begging for her child's life, the criminal begging for a pardon, the atoning lover pleading for one last chance--these people give no attention whatever to their own state, and all attention to the state of that person from whom they

require their object.” Emotion is the product of how much the character wants what they seek from the other character or characters and how much of an obstacle the other character or characters are to providing what is sought.

Discussions of concerns about and want of emotions in relation to Acting creates many difficulties. Emotions have a real tendency to “show up” in performances with an audience. Adrenalin happens. Which means that adrenalin should start coming to rehearsal as much before an audience arrives as possible. An unbreakable rule that is often broken: Emotions that have not arrived, appeared, or been used during the rehearsal process and tested out in front of the director must not be permitted in the production. Such spontaneous outbreaks of emotion in front of an audience can be dangerous. But dangerous or not, they are forbidden because they have not been rehearsed, will not be repeatable, thus, are not poetic. For plays, emotions or “playing at” of emotions is to be done in rehearsal. Since they are part of the story-telling, emotional responses must have a beginning, middle, and end. They must also be consistent and repeatable. And it is really that consistency and repeatability demanded of acting in performance which makes EMOTION so very difficult. And the only way to effectively and consistently repeat emotional responses is by making them the product they are as responses to stimuli received in the midst of the events of a play.

The ESSENCE OF DRAMA is people in conflict MAKING CHOICES about their lives. As it relates to theatre, whether we generally agree or not, Life is Choice. When we make individual choices in our lives we do not know which direction we are going until we make the decision. And we are ALWAYS making decisions. Like us, characters in plays are always making decisions. And, of course, decisions come in different sizes, but the size or scale of those decisions can often only be discerned in hind-sight. Most people do not like making decisions they do not have to make. If that is true, and experience and observations inform that it is, characters in plays do not like to do so either. The difference is that characters in plays must make decisions because the time for contemplation has passed or occurs between scenes, or offstage, and it is time for action.

Training for the stage demands TEAMWORK. And being a “good” teammate is far more, and far more complicated, than being cooperative. It is about learning when and when not to “speak up.” To not be held back by the individual members that comprise the team, or hold themselves, and/or the team back, but to dedicate every effort to the enterprise that has demanded that individuals come together to function as a team to make a play in production. It is also about learning that performing is one of the most difficult tasks someone can attempt because the participants have the tendency to add to the challenges already inherent to the specific production. That is because it is a socially based art form which means it is accompanied by many potential distractions. Team-work has never gone out of style. It has a kinship to writing in that it is a struggle every time you try to write/say something of substance and you cannot help but reveal yourself. Endeavoring to work with other people is always going to reveal self sooner or later. Endeavoring with both genuineness and commitment the actor will almost always surprise themselves by revealing something new.

Worthy stage work cannot be accomplished without DEDICATION. Therefore, it is possible that a “poor” production was actually worthwhile. For the uninitiated, one production will put their DEDICATION to

the test. Dedication is a skill that has fallen somewhat out of favor. Here in the early part of the 21st century it appears to be an “old school” concept. On dedication, I am unabashedly “old school.” Theatre is a “have-to” kind of enterprise; one cannot be lazy, inconsistent, late, absent, vague, uncommitted, or non-participatory to repeat such a process even a few times.

Working in theatre will reveal and test CHARACTER and ETHICS. Classroom/Studio work will also test them. It would be fool-hardy to suggest that work in the theatre will develop them. The situations that would guarantee such outcome would exist in the realm of a cult. But work in the theatre will reveal CHARACTER and ETHICS. If they can remain hidden it means the individual has not approached an appropriate level of engagement. I do not want to limit the concept and realities of CHARACTER and ETHICS with personal perceptions because that is always a potential issue. But there is no doubt that CHARACTER and ETHICS are critical considerations for the actor because the endeavors in which actors participate tell stories about what HUMANS are, have been, or could be, capable of being and doing. TEAMWORK plays a role here, too, because TEAMWORK will ultimately reveal CHARACTER and ETHICS. And theatre, the most subversive art form because the actor impersonates HUMANITY, demands that participants explore and play the CHARACTER and ETHICS of others. Finally, at least for this discussion, individuals that have significant CHARACTER and ETHICS issues will only make their individual journey more difficult.

Actors must have KNOWLEDGE of the world. To begin to understand the world means appreciating that there can be a gulf between knowing and understanding. It is not often that actors play actors. They always play humans, or humanity, of course, even if they are playing a God. In our relatively brief history, humans have accomplished an incredible range of actions from the heavenly to the hideous. One of the first things the actor learns is that characters, even if they are not based on historical personages, are historically, specifically based. Interestingly, while it is one of the first things they learn, it often takes a much longer time to understand and to utilize that concept. It is a fundamental acting concept that we, people, have a point of view about everything. That means the characters that actors play have a point of view about everything, and it is most certainly different from the actor’s personal one. And the concept that there can be a gulf between knowing and understanding is the essence of the actors work from audition to closing.

OBJECTIVITY; Discussing and Writing about Acting Performance

Reflection is a vital component of Acting. Therefore, it is a vital component of Actor Training. Reflection is one thing, but effective reflection is the objective because in the work of acting time is always of the essence. Effective reflection facilitates mental health. Since the work of acting performance demands so much of SELF, which implies the most essential element of risk, mental health can be a very real issue for the actor. Effective reflection also facilitates strong performance work. Therefore, there are at least two significant reasons that effective reflection is well worth the pursuit.

First, effective reflection demands an appropriate time and place. One of the first issues for the young actor is to understand that reflection, to be effective and useful, cannot take place at the same time as the work; the actor cannot do the work while “watching” themselves do the work. Such an approach is

often tried because it saves time. While it is a time-saving approach it is not particularly effective. Both reflection and the work itself are short-changed. The proper place for reflection is between or after the work of each day. There is also a need for and usefulness in overviews of weekly and process work.

The path to effective reflection is a very difficult concept, process, and enterprise. Effective reflection is that which can be accomplished with some alacrity, usually out of necessity since acting processes facilitated by effective reflection are short, and should be of service to the actor through the various and ever changing processes in which they are engaged. The actor confronts different processes within specific processes; the rehearsal process, of course related, is different than the performance process. Auditioning is its own process. The Audition process ranges between “general” auditions to those for specific productions, callbacks, cold readings, and improvisations. And there are a myriad of other possible examples and situations.

Instructing students in the development of effective reflection tools is difficult for many reasons. The first and perhaps most typical is founded on the old proverb that is some variation of this: Everything learned was learned in Kindergarten. In relation to reflection as it relates at least to the work of acting, beginning acting students typically are comprised of two extremes: self-flagellation and “it’s all good.” Both are ultimately protective behaviors and largely counter-productive. More importantly, they short-change or abort effective reflection and the reception of criticism. After all, if the individual is self-criticizing in the extreme, or they already “know” they did whatever it was that is receiving criticism, there is no need for further criticism or direction.

Those issues have a significant relationship to the very premise and central debate about acting: whether it is hiding or revealing. In the first, Acting Performance is founded on the denial or hiding of self. In the other, it is founded on the use and exploration of self in service to a character. And there are other positions or opinions on the matter. However, what is without debate in acting work: the actor is always present in the work; the actor is plays the actions, wears the costume, enters and exits the performance space, and is with themselves (or others) outside the performance space (backstage or in the dressing room). But the ideas of the character that the actor is charged with playing come out of the actor’s body, are heard on their voice, and seen in their movements. It is that question of presence and its reality which decides the matter for us and our program.

The actor must be responsible for the work they are engaged in. And yet the conundrum is that characters do not undertake the individual actor’s ideas and concepts but rather it is for the actor to undertake those of the character they are playing. In other words, the actor ALWAYS plays characters with philosophies, sensibilities, and prejudices which differ from their own. Sometimes the differences between the two can be extreme.

Acting demands the actor be as present as humanly possible. Extreme danger, for the actor, and more importantly, for the other individuals around them in the midst of a performance, lies in diminished presence. This should rarely be a significant concern in our program because the performance calendars for our productions are so brief. But it can be a significant issue for the actor engaged in long running productions. It can also be an issue for the rehearsing actor that is ill or exhausted; being in attendance

but not entirely present. If they are that ill or exhausted, they should probably not be present. However, it is important to note that Acting is a “have to” kind of proposition; it is very difficult to rehearse scenes without all of the players within a scene being present and rehearsal calendars have a set number of hours. And, it is not unusual that young actors think they can be physically present in rehearsal (or class) but largely absent mentally, emotionally-psychologically. They are wasting their time.

There are also situations which can arise in performance for which we do not prepare through a rehearsal process. Rehearsal time is not spent preparing for what might go wrong during the performances of a production. After all, much is already going “wrong” for the characters within the action of the play and those events comprise the agenda for the work undertaken through each rehearsal process. But it is not unusual for “real life” to break out on stage. That “real life” is manifested in actors missing entrances, forgetting dialogue, or by malfunctions of costumes, scenery, or technology. These potential issues can create some level of chaos for the actor and thus the production. The level of chaos is raised significantly if the actor dealing with those situations is functioning at a limited level of presence, including “automatic pilot” mode. The other “real life” outbreaks can ensue from the members company, the actors and crew members. Backstage can often have a life all its own. That can be useful and appropriate. However, that life can sometimes be contrary to the aims and demands of the production. What occurs backstage should be limited to the useful and the appropriate as it relates to what needs to occur onstage. However, when that atmosphere is not useful and appropriate, despite their individual efforts, the performer must be able to manage such situations so they do not negatively inform their performance.

Another reality which helps further define Acting Performance is that criticism of acting work is given to the actor playing the character in a play. Internal to a production process any “criticism” of the characters in a play should have taken place well before the rehearsal process began. But it is the actor’s body, voice, and soul that is engaged and utilized in the production process of creating the performance of character within the production of a play. The bottom line is: the characters in a play were created prior to the auditions for casting the production. Once cast, whatever else is taking place within and without the process, the actor begins the process of making the character playable in the production for an audience. When the director gives direction it is given to each of the actors playing each of the roles or characters in the production. It is the actor that participates in costume fittings for costumes created for the character in the play but made to fit the actor. So, while it is the actor that receives the criticism, it is their choices as they relate to the character within the play at which the criticism is aimed. However, such a process is never quite so pristine.

Student actors arrive late to rehearsals, miss rehearsals without notification, arrive unprepared for the work to be undertaken, consistently do not make significant progress with issues and concepts undertaken in rehearsals, consistently arrive with external “baggage” which compromises their ability to focus on the work, miss memorization deadlines, etc. Therefore, the student actor in a rehearsal process often ends up receiving personal criticism in the midst of receiving criticism about the development and playing of their character in the production of the play. Thus, personal criticism and performance criticism are given and received. Actually, the student actor largely sees them as one and the same; they are the recipient of both. That typically means that they receive criticism about their work in rehearsal

processes or performances as personal criticism. Therefore, they perceive such criticism as if it is aimed at personal character flaws. That is a very significant and real problem. Significant progress as an actor cannot take place until the actor can make a clear differentiation between personal and professional criticism. The student actor holds the responsibility for that often daunting issue. The program, its faculty, and the directors of the productions cannot “make” students change counter-productive habitual behaviors and responses. It is the student actor that must choose to make such changes. The critical factor for potential change is self-awareness.

There is a direct correlation between the level of personal issues the actor continues to bring into the rehearsal process and environment and their progress with the role or character they are playing in a production and their progress through the program. Rehearsal processes in our academic environment demand that the director spend time providing both personal and professional criticism to the student actor. How much time and energy is spent on the personal issues is directly proportionate to the amount that occurs during each process. Such an outcome cannot be avoided in an academic environment because students are being introduced to the process while they are engaged in it. Therefore, the potential for confusion is inherent.

Our program often has limited competitiveness for each specific role. It then rests significantly with the directors to endeavor to manage both the actor’s counter-productive personal habitual behavior and their work on the role in the play being rehearsed. As an example, if an actor continues to have extensive problems with memorization that actor may still be cast in future productions because other options can be limited. Therefore, the process for which the director is responsible must anticipate some apparatus for dealing with this specific actor’s issue. There are many other possible examples that are potentially more problematic. While it is positive that our program provides extensive performance opportunities to our students that reality also comprises a significant downside. Not being cast in a production can be a very effective attention-getter and motivator for the student actor. However, what often happens in our program is usually a different story.

This is how the story typically goes:

Based upon other production processes and course-work the director is well aware of an individual student actor’s significant recurring issues, which may include counter-productive behavior or conduct. The director still casts the actor. There are myriad reasons for this outcome. The director discusses with the student actor their need to make progress on the recurring issues that impede their acting work. The director also discusses with the student actor possible strategies for dealing with such issues. The student actor agrees to make the effort. Often the student actor makes extremely little progress with the issues because they already have what they “want”: they are cast in the production. After all, how significant can the issues be if they were cast? There is also the fact that significant change with significant issues cannot occur “overnight”. But there is also the fact that such change cannot occur without significant effort.

In Acting, the actor is their own greatest resource. As such, the actor’s personal “flaws”, habits, and preoccupations are an extremely useful resource. After all, just as people are, characters in plays are

comprised of flaws, habits, and preoccupations. The actor's own, if they are aware of them, provide an effective way to consider those of the characters the actor is playing. Personal proclivities are protected by the Constitution of the United States of America, and perhaps simply by being a human being. But personal proclivities which interrupt the process of a theatrical production must be left "outside" the enterprise. In an academic enterprise such as ours, such occurrences must be dealt with by the director. Everything is not alright. Freedom is revered but it does not serve as a scapegoat for performance issues. Being at the mercy of counter-productive habits and behaviors is a poor definition for Freedom.

Journals, Written Critiques, and Oral Critiques are utilized in Acting Performance classes to provide students with the opportunity to discuss their own work and the work of others. These opportunities facilitate students in developing the ability to consider and discuss acting work, their own and others, with objectivity. This goal is sought because change is most possible through the ability to identify and articulate personal issues of the work.

There are some givens in such a process. It is easier to get students to talk about such work than it is to get them to write about that work, particularly in Journals. The most significant challenge is getting students to write with objectivity.

Oral Discussions

Oral discussions and critiques can be challenging, particularly early on, because of the general want to use words such as "liked" or "didn't like" as operatives in discussions of such work. In this context it may be useful to point out that "liking" or "not liking" something may not be the same as appreciating it. Appreciation, and discussions of clarity of purpose, applies to all types or styles of work, but particularly in Art. It is possible to accomplish work in art that is not generally likeable but still effectively accomplished. It could be argued that the greatest types of work in any time, media, or venue did not seek to be "liked" but to make a point; to be seen and heard, yes, but not as a compromise for the truth. And what those works say or do may not be likeable and yet are extremely effective, perhaps even useful.

Almost without exception oral discussions of acting work undertaken from the start of performance classes are filled with "I liked" and "I didn't like". Attempts to direct such discussions towards using other phrases such as "it worked" or it "didn't work" and "why" are largely viewed by students as censorship. Such efforts often stifle discussions. But the move must be made towards a consideration of the choices made by the student actors and their playing of those choices in class and whether those choices worked or did not from the perspective of the observers.

Such a process is more complex than it may appear at first glance. After all, most acting work that students see is from their couch on their television sets. With the remote control in their hands, "liking" or "not liking" something motivates the finger that drives the clicker. And the viewer may not "like" something in that moment that they actually generally "like", just not right now. Acting that is done live with the actor right in front of them and where the actor is then present to hear what is said about their work demands attention in both the doing of the acting and in the observing of the work being done. So, watching acting in an acting studio or a rehearsal space is a very different experience than most

students are used to when watching acting. They have extensive experience watching television and television is filled with actors even in the commercials. They do not know most of the actors they watch on television. Most viewers of television do not consider that the characters they see on television are actually played by actors. That is ironic because millions of people go to see Tom Cruise, Julie Roberts, Denzel Washington, Brad Pitt, George Clooney, Jennifer Lopez, Haley Berry, Matt Damon, and Meryl Streep Movies. That can be true of television as well but it is far less typical. And time is made for television viewing. Television is watched when the viewer wants. There can also be fear about knowing or thinking too much about all of it.

Here are some things I know about television and this knowledge does not “ruin” my ability to watch and appreciate a television program:

- 1) Actors in Local Commercials are typically paid very little, sometimes nothing. It cause many of them to get “big heads” because they are on TV
- 2) Actors in Regional Commercials are often paid more that very little, but may not be
- 3) Actors in National Commercials are paid a significant amount of money because of the union involvement in the creation of the commercials; how much they make is also dependent on other factors, including residuals that are paid for each time the commercial is played on air:

Residual rates are also dependent on some other factors (and these are just a few examples):

- a. The actor makes more if the commercial they are in is are not for a “niche” market but shown on a variety of networks and channels at various times of day and night; the more it is shown, they more they are paid, and yet being aired at certain times and on certain networks during specific programs impacts that outcome as well;
 - b. They may make significantly more if the commercial is shown for longer periods of times or they are a “spokesperson” for some product, or the ad campaign becomes popular, etc., etc., etc.
- 4) Television actors make a range of salaries from work on television programs, even amongst regular characters on weekly shows; stars make “lots” of money, and the longer a show runs the more the other “regulars” can make, unless they are the cast of Jersey Shores...
 - 5) Guest Stars on television programs also have a significant range of possible wages; from “lots” to “scale” depending on whether they can negotiate from a position of “strength” because the producers demand the services of that specific actor
 - 6) Shows that become “syndicated” continue to pay the actors residuals each time the show is on; this is true for movies as well
 - 7) On shows I watch on a regular basis I tend to know both the names of the actors and their characters
 - 8) I used to “drop in” on certain Soap Operas whenever I happened to be home because I knew actors on those shows; most of those have been cancelled
 - 9) I sometimes watch certain shows because I know actor friends will be on them; that’s fun
 - 10) Sometimes I see friends on shows and I did not know they would be on; that’s fun, too

- 11) Sometimes I appreciate a show but not the acting; that can also be true of History Channel or PBS productions which utilize reenactments
- 12) Sometimes I appreciate the work of an actor or actors but not the show in which they are engaged
- 13) Much television programming is extensively tested before it appears on television. And even if it was not extensively tested, it will be if it is going to continue to be offered because of the expense; more and more networks “test” their productions through “pilots” and in the creation of “short-runs” (usually three episodes) of programming; if the pilot or short-runs work, more are created; sometimes actors are fired and replaced through these types of processes. And yes, such processes are often based on whether audiences “liked” or “did not like” those actors. Most “big” movie productions go through a similar process
- 14) Despite all the “testing” many tested programs fail. How could something so scientifically “right” be so “wrong” ... and lose so much money.
- 15) The mythology of acting is filled with stories about actors in roles that producers did not want or did not like but were “fought” for by the directors; we only know, or repeat, the stories in which the actor became iconic for that same role...
- 16) Art, while continually expected to be, or thought to be, is not always a popularity contest. That can also be true in the most popular and populist media going: Television. Art still shows up on television from time-to-time, despite the immense odds, and popular programming is sometimes to be found in challenging, ground-breaking, revolutionary programs. Such programs also get cancelled.

I offer the above information as an effort to address a typical lament that is often heard: If I know too much about it that knowledge will negatively impact my ability to “just” watch and enjoy something. Television is largely, without the Fair or Carnival, “cotton-candy.” Cotton-candy is very bad for the teeth. So, the “fluoride” treatment of knowing more and being more aware should not be a significant problem, particularly for the student of acting.

Teaching effective reflection is as difficult as it is to learn it. Perhaps it should not be taught or learned. After all, any potential actor that knows, just based on the most previous information, how “crazy” the business of acting can be, would avoid becoming an actor. Fortunately, logic, though important and useful to the actor, is not everything. In Acting, Science meets Metaphysics. Some people want to accomplish a thing despite the odds. As it relates to Acting, sometimes people want to study something they know everybody has opinions about, even if that opinion is often summed up as: “liking” or “not liking.” As if an acting performance were a piece of gum which can be easily tried and discarded. There is no denying that Acting is certainly one of those things to most people. It is glamorous and it is nothing; a fantasy that is fun to kick around but not to really undertake.

To Act is to be at that nexus between the objective and the subjective with the ability to move between both with ease. The process of rehearsing a play is essentially moving towards making the subjective as objective as possible so that the process can be repeated with extreme effectiveness. There is also an essential need to make the repetition as healthy as possible. To do otherwise would relegate it to being just a job. If that is the case, that Acting is just a job, why would someone pursue one job that is just like

another except that it is filled with far greater that are both personal and professional. Fame is often offered to the fill the bill as something which can make a mind-numbing/soul-stealing endeavor worthwhile. While acting is work, and one gets jobs as an actor, Acting is not just another job otherwise there is no hope for fame, fortune, or glory. It is a career. A career takes a lifetime of work and study.

Making the repetition of performing a role in a production healthy is often relegated to the status of luxury; that would be nice but who really needs it. Enter almost any dressing room at any theatre while the actors are otherwise engaged and you will find many calendars filled with "X's". The "X's" designate a count-down of the performances of the production. They serve as hard evidence of the psychology of many performers: they cannot wait to be done with the run of the performances because it has become to some degree mind-numbing.

Typically, the beginning student of acting spends their time in the objective realm, except when they talk about their own acting work, or the acting work of others. You know that because they say things like: "My character says or does this...", or "I don't like my character..." or "I wish my character was like some other character..." As the student of acting progresses through a rehearsal process they must at least attempt to journey to the subjective side of things. That can be very difficult, because it can appear, or feel, very scary. That scariness derives from the concept that such a process should be worthy of their time and effort. For that to be a possibility means letting go of preconceived notions and exploring new ones. How far students get in that journey has a direct correlation to their ability to let go of preconceived notions or previous experiences.

WRITING ABOUT ACTING; Journals and Critiques

sub-jec-tive

adjective

Based on or influenced by personal feelings, tastes, or opinions; characteristic of or belonging to reality as perceived rather than as independent of mind

ob-jec-tive

adjective

(of a person or their judgment) Not influenced by personal feelings or opinions in considering and representing facts; Not dependent on the mind for existence; actual; undistorted by emotion or personal bias; based on observable phenomena

ear-nest

adjective

Resulting from or showing sincere and intense conviction

I am not the biggest fan of Facebook but I use it, as many others do. It is useful to me as a way of staying in contact with many friends all over the world. Writing is fundamental to the Facebook experience. It is amazing that one of the most important and popular happenings of the early 21st century makes users write. Twitter does, too. And typing is writing, too.

Writing is a skill that remains vitally important to people in general, students, and the Actor. The Actor must deal with the writing of others in the activities of Acting. While plays are written language they were written to be spoken and acted aloud by Actors in front of an audience. The Actor should have at least some regard for the writer beyond “liking” them or not. One of the most useful ways to regard and appreciate writers is for the Actor to write themselves. In writing words, putting them together, and then framing them into sentences with punctuation, then into paragraphs, the Actor begins to understand the challenge and opportunities of writing. To endeavor to write exactly what we mean is a worthy challenge. To pull it off is exciting, even if it was in the act of FB tomfoolery.

Writing has a significant correlation to Acting. To effectively write a balance must be struck and maintained between the mind, body and soul. Even though one might lead the way, the others will demand their participation. It is impossible to write effectively without that occurring.

Sure, sometimes more emotion (body and soul) go into writing and it really captures people’s attention. But if we are more emotional, it means we care more, and we tend to take more time in crafting the writing. But any imbalance gets us into trouble more often than it helps.

J.K. Rowling wrote eight books about Harry Potter. Those books have been read by millions of people. The movies inspired by those books have been seen by many, many, more millions. Writing eight books that capture the attention of so many means Rowling attained that balancing act of mind, body, and soul in her writing. Only someone that could be objective about her own work could have killed Dumbledore. In the journey of the story he had to die. Acting demands the same balancing act. Without it, the Actor could not repeat their performance with effectiveness. While certain rehearsals, or parts of them, might demand one aspect over the others, they are all still present. If one of the trinity is left out of action for too long only trouble will ensue.

The challenge of writing does come only from the fact that it may be difficult but because it takes discipline. It can be difficult to write down exactly what we mean. It takes practice to write. Writing actually takes a process, even if it is for something on FB.

Journals are generally a difficult issue. Students often forget them despite being told they are to have them with them at every class meeting. Many are turned in “late.” Some students avoid doing Journals altogether even though they are REQUIRED. That is often dealt with by the faculty by subtracting the missing points for the missing Journal from the course total rather than dealing with the fact that the Journal was a REQUIRED element for the course. If ours was a Conservatory Program those students would be dismissed from the program.

Journals for Performance classes are an opportunity for the student Actor to talk to themselves about their own Acting work and that of others. Anne Frank’s Diary was a Journal. Not an Acting Journal, but a

Journal none-the-less. At points in her Journal Anne chastises herself for previous entries in which she was being too whiny, etc. Fortunately she did not edit herself and remove the sections which made her cringe or worse. Anne's diary revealed to herself (she had no idea we would read it, study it, mythologize it, etc.) truths about HERSELF. She learned much about herself and she did not like all that she learned. We love her all the more for the humanity that is revealed in her Journal.

The argument could be that Anne was not writing for a teacher that would collect and read her Journal. That would be correct: Anne Frank was not enrolled in an Acting class at IU South Bend that required a Journal. But Anne must be worth more than be relegated to serving as a lousy excuse for artistic cowardice and a lack of discipline.

Acting classes are in a subject where the objective and subjective are in play. Actors work with other actors. They perform in front of an audience. They observe the work of others. In the performances, and scene work, the Actor plays characters that are in trouble. People (characters) in trouble reveal truths about themselves as they endeavor to deal with their troubles. Actor's need to gain self-awareness about how they personally operate and why. Acting Journals, based on entries for the work undertaken in each class meeting, are quite simple:

- 1) What was the Activity?
- 2) What was your experience with the activity?
- 3) What did you observe in others work with the activity?
- 4) What did you learn from the activity?
- 5) Any other observations?

I have taught many Acting classes. I have also taken many Acting classes. Here is an example of a Journal entry from a class I was in:

Today we were introduced to Clowning. I didn't like it. It was a waste of time. What do Clowns have to do with Acting?!

We warmed up. I hate the Warm-up.

Then we gathered in the space with room between all of us. We were to be in Neutral: feet about shoulder width apart, spine long, arms hanging loose at our sides, head balanced on top of the spine, jaw relaxed, neck be free, head up and away, all that kind of usual stuff.

We were then asked to identify "deep within us ourselves our Inner Rhythm (?)" and then to give "voice" to that inner rhythm. I had no idea what that was all about but everyone else started doing it so I did it too. I had no idea what my inner rhythm was but I started giving voice so I wouldn't get in trouble. Well, I got in trouble anyway. Wise said I wasn't on voice. How does he know?

I was told to start all over. I was angry and my inner rhythm was angry and that angry came out of my voice. We did this for awhile and my anger went away.

Then we were asked to identify deep inside ourselves the “impulse” to begin to move. When we could no longer deny the impulse to move through the space we were to begin moving through the space while still giving voice to our inner rhythm. What impulse to move through the space?! I can move if I want to, stand still if I want to! So I decided to identify this impulse to move through the space. Why would it be there? I wasn’t going to move until it showed up. I waited a long time, but it finally was there. I think. I began to move through the space giving voice to my inner rhythm. Everybody looked stupid just like I felt. They were all going around giving voice to something and they seemed like they kept hoping someone else would figure it out or the class would end...

I still don’t know why we did this stuff and we did for an hour. I didn’t learn one thing... I hate days like today. I thought they were going to teach me how to act around here.

Journals are a measure of our ability to be honest with ourselves. That is true even if in hindsight we learn that we did not have the faintest idea what self-honesty meant. If we detail what occurred in the class and include a consideration of what we got out of that occurrence, even if it was “nothing”, we now have something to look back on. If we do this process consistently, for every class session, there starts to be some real things to observe about ourselves in the work. We can begin to see patterns in how we deal with new concepts, take direction, and about how we talk about the work and our expectations for it. In Acting it is possible to “hate” things for a very long time before we “get” them. In an Acting class the journal is a measure of our ability to be honest with ourselves about Acting. Being disingenuous with others is one thing but to do it to ourselves is something entirely else, besides being a waste of time for the Actor. Since the Actor is their own most significant resource it is a priority that the resource be as useful as possible. The objective is to have a handle on our own foibles so we can focus on those of the characters we hope to play or are playing. To do that we need to be capable of taking as much advantage of the rehearsal process as possible. I don’t know how many times I have sat down to write in a Journal about what I hadn’t learned and discovered that I had actually learned much. That is exciting. It can be very hard to look back at an early entry and see what a whiny little baby I am capable of being at times. But if that’s what I was then I cannot deny it. It is extremely useful to have a clear image of where I was so that I can more clearly understand where I am, how I got there, and where I am aiming next.

Journals provide the Actor with training in the development of a vital Acting skill. Actors need to process information, sometimes lots of it, in ways that will effectively serve them through the various processes related to Acting. A Journal provides the Actor with an instrument that can provide them with effective self-discourse about what it is they are doing and how they think and feel about that work so as to be able to formulate strategies and priorities for dealing with any issues. It will also serve to make talking to others about the work and asking questions about it far more useful. It is simply not a good use of anyone’s time to make our issues someone else’s if we have not spent time with them ourselves. That is unless it is our agenda to broadcast excuses for our failures without taking appropriate responsibility, or to create a club with others filled with activities counter-productive to us and to the class or production process with which we are engaged.

CRITIQUES

Critique is an accepted and established process of orderly scholarly and public debate. In the fine arts and the humanities, and especially in writing, critique is influenced by the scientific method of analysis. Critique is based upon an informed opinion, and never upon personal opinion. Informed opinion is accepted as being technical knowledge, personal or professional experience, or specified training.

While different from Journals, Critiques can also often be a difficult issue. There is a general want to avoid “going on the record” about a production, our own work, and the work of others. The struggle between the objective and the subjective is the primary reason.

Well, the subjective won't go away. We are human. Humans don't think and then feel, they thinkfeel. The idea is be as objectified as possible. One way to do that is to wean ourselves from talking about acting in only superficial ways, the ways we have grown accustomed and comfortable with in our thinking and talking about it. As with so much about Acting, new habits must be developed. Old habits do not change or go away simply because of want. Old habits must be replaced with new ones. So, again, to replace “I liked” and “I didn't like” with “It worked” or “it didn't work” is a good start. But they must be followed by an explanation for the opinion and the considerations upon which the opinion is founded.

An actor writing about acting and theatre, including their own acting and other possible contributions in production, is a useful and vital endeavor. If it is done in earnest only good can come of it.

Writing takes effort. Writing comes with risk. The risks lie in the fact that WE/US/YOU/I will be revealed in our writing. It must be noted that such potential revelation strongly correlates to Acting, actually to all artistic endeavors. You will reveal yourself if you endeavor to write effectively about what you and/or others have done in the process of making theatre. Those things revealed may be unconscious prejudices of all types; close-mindedness; preconceptions; misunderstood concepts; or a general lack of understanding or appreciation of certain forms, including types of dramatic literature. An individual can only address issues if they are known, put forth, spoken aloud, written down. In the process of putting ideas, concepts, feelings, and other types of observations into words, written or spoken, holds the promise of putting us on the road to discovery and change. It can be a struggle to see a production, an acting and/or directing scene, and scenic/design elements (even in process) and to then share our views and perceptions about those events with those that participated in the making of them or the event. But that is the exactly the type of struggle in which the theatre artist, potential or otherwise, must willingly participate. It is by extending oneself, by exercising some capacity previously unused that one can come to a better understanding of one's own potential.

Acting and writing have a significant relationship. After all, Actors endeavor to breathe dramatic literature, dialogue in a play, to life. Writing that we do ourselves can only provide us with the opportunity to personally explore how words, combinations of them, and structures of writing can serve our purposes, while also providing insight to how that works for playwrights, and the commentators and theorists of Acting and Theatre in the accomplishment of their ends.

The 21st century has not diminished our need to be able to write effectively. In many ways it has all been made more challenging. We need to understand the short-hand of texting, Facebook, Twitter, etc., etc.

and still understand how to expand our vocabularies, effectively write sentences, turn those sentences into effective paragraphs, and then build those paragraphs into papers, treatises, diatribes, and be effective tools for sharing our thinking and doing.