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This thesis functions as a document detailing a Grotowskian directorial approach to Charles Mee’s *Hotel Cassiopeia*. The central focus of this project has been to explore and construct a piece of theatre at its most basic and organic level and to experiment upon this theme. Through this thesis I strive to conceive and construct a bridge to unite Jerzy Grotowski and Charles Mee.
CHARLES MEE'S *HOTEL CASSIOPEIA*: A DIRECTORIAL COMPOSITION IN SEARCH OF THE ‘INNER LIFE’

A Thesis

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by
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Figure 1: The Human Thermostat [c. 1960]; paper collage mounted on board, 15 1/8 x 9 in.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my Parents, who have provided me, as always, with encouragement, unstinting support, and love...

...they know how much they contribute to everything I do.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are all children of somebody’s work. We may delude ourselves that we have no masters, that no personality has influenced us, proudly affirming that our originality is nourished by the anonymous and democratic teaching in the schools of our industrial civilization. Or else we can acknowledge in a few people the origin of the path that has led us to ourselves and which others call a ‘professional biography.’

- Eugenio Barba, Land of Ashes and Diamonds

Throughout my academic adventures there have been several people that have greatly impacted my “professional biography” – both as a scholar and as an artist. Indeed, this thesis is the product of not only my own experiences with the theatre, but also the experiences of those knowledgeable people that I have had the pleasure to meet and/or study.

Above all, my thanks go to Dr. Paul K. Jackson, who eagerly saw this project complete its performative arc. Undeniably, his presence throughout this journey has become one of friendship, as opposed to one of an academic adviser. A number of other people have played important roles in the development of my “professional biography;” I thank the Grotowski Institute, as well as the leaders and members of its 2008 Atelier for an incredibly memorable experience and for opening my person to new performative heights. My readers: Dr. Kathleen Johnson, Dr. Andrew Gibb, and Dr. Elizabeth Reitz Mullenix have also done much to help. Of course, I also thank my new-found colleagues at Miami University, who have humored me along the way.

I also wish to thank the entire Faculty of Theatre at Miami University for giving me the opportunity to explore this production of Hotel Cassiopeia within a safe and supportive environment. With the knowledge that one can fall extremely short of perfection and learn from one’s mistakes, can dare to push the envelope and other various safety zones, and continually be encouraged in their artistic endeavors is a relief in and of itself.
Last, but not least, I give special thanks to the entire collective of Hotel Cassiopeia, who shared with me so many splendid moments of “inner-life.” Indeed, this entire performative experience has been nothing less than a rewarding journey and I am thankful. All of you have helped to shape my growth as an academic scholar, theatre artist, and individual.

Lessons learned...
...gradually surfacing
Because of the great changes in the world, the changes of consciousness, the changes of our sense of life itself will not come from the reasoned arguments of political scientists or philosophers, but from the visions of artists. Not by arguing well, but by speaking differently.

- Duchamp, Hotel Cassiopeia

It is a deep conviction of mine that art must change its structure and even its function. All the arts have purified themselves, eliminating the intrusions of other arts; they have rejected everything that was not necessary and vital to their own intentions. Only the theatre has not done this ... There is no purification, no effort to develop (or rediscover) the essence of theatre. There is no new means of expression suited to our century.

- Eugenio Barba, Theatre Laboratory 13 Rzedow (1965).

**PREFACE**

This thesis functions as a document detailing a Grotowskian directorial approach to Charles Mee’s *Hotel Cassiopeia*. Indeed, I hope this thesis becomes a type of mile-marker; one that can be frequently revisited and expounded upon as I continue to develop and grow as an artistic director and as an academic scholar. The central focus of this project has been to explore and construct a piece of theatre at its most basic and organic level and to experiment upon this theme. What this thesis does seek to be is a study of one of theatre’s most important experimental performance theorists and practitioners, Jerzy Grotowski, and how an application of Grotowskian methodology can be applied to Charles Mee’s script *Hotel Cassiopeia*. I entered into this project with a specific problem in mind: applying a Grotowskian “Poor Theatre” aesthetic to Charles Mee’s theatrically bourgeois script (a seemingly contradictory and paradoxical association). Through this thesis I strive to conceive and construct a bridge by which to unite Jerzy Grotowski and Charles Mee. In addition, this thesis operates as a document that seeks to combine theory with praxis.
Much of this thesis lends itself to the performance explorations and physical training exercises practiced at the Grotowski Institute during the month of July, 2008. Drawing heavily from this experience, I have made it my effort to bring the knowledge I have gained at the Institute forward and share it with the student and academic body at Miami University, as well as the collective ensemble of Hotel Cassiopeia.\footnote{Throughout this thesis, I refer to the cast of Hotel Cassiopeia as a collective. I define the term in Chapter Four. Please see note 32 on page 34} It was my primary objective to unite this training experience with the conceptualization and February 2009 production of Hotel Cassiopeia, as well as within the framework of this written thesis.

The greatest portion of my academic training as a theatre artist has been taught via traditional approaches to the craft. Nothing, in terms of theatre, infuriates me more than keeping the art of the practice bound within the parameters of say, Stanislavski or authors such as Arthur Miller.\footnote{I return to this argument in greater detail in Chapter Three.} I feel that as a novice director and educator I can bring forward my passion for non-traditional theatre and present to the academic body a performance aesthetic that seeks to challenge the practice and motifs of the art form; an approach to theatre that can potentially challenge the prescriptive boundaries of the students and their functioning roles as audience members and as practitioners. Grotowskian methodology has ignited a new flame within me and I feel that it is my duty to share this rejuvenated vitality and process with the academic body at Miami University.

This thesis is comprised of five chapters. The first chapter, The Impact of Sudden Surprise: The Burn and Desire to Explore Hotel Cassiopeia functions as an introduction to the thesis and details my selection of a directorial aesthetic and script. The second chapter, The Rich vs. the Poor: The Aesthetic Similarities of Charles Mee and Jerzy Grotowski, aims to provide a theoretical lens through which I view and unite the methodology of Grotowski with the writing aesthetic of Mee. Chapter three, Enchanted Wander: Excavating the Oneiric Life of Joseph Cornell, functions as a dramaturgical analysis of Mee’s script and the historical, performative, and fantastical world of Joseph Cornell. Following this analysis, the fourth chapter, Beginning to Journey: Conception, Execution, Process, and Composition, operates as a roadmap that guides the reader through the rehearsal process and documents my directorial choices. The final chapter, As Time Goes By: The End, concludes the thesis with
an assessment and evaluation of the performance, as well as a critical account of its conclusion.
CHAPTER ONE

I felt a graciousness and wonder all over again at the impact of these “meetings” – their sudden significance.

The face in the driveway across the street, the sudden surprise and happy confusion – trying to place it

- Joseph, Hotel Cassiopeia

The Impact of Sudden Surprise:
The Burn and Desire to Explore Hotel Cassiopeia

Contrary to traditional directorial approaches I knew outright that I wanted to explore a piece of theatre via a Grotowskian lens as opposed to selecting a script that demanded a particular or more appropriate directing aesthetic. As an artist, I feel that I have, throughout my years of education, found a personal avenue by which to create and explore theatre: one of an experimental nature and one far removed from theatre’s capitalistic commercialization. I find myself continually reverting back to the avant-garde theatre movement where theatre and theatre practitioners first sought to challenge the parameters of the art form. Undeniably, Jerzy Grotowski was a pivotal avant-garde theatre figure whose methodology sought to redefine and rediscover the lost potential of theatre via the innovative explorations of the performer’s body and voice, as well as the theatrical space. 3

Grotowski’s stance on the theatrical space as a functioning environment has become a key that has unlocked many doors for me as an actor and director. Jennifer Kumiega posits that Grotowski’s basic premise to environmental theatre is the exploration and experimentation “of the actor/audience spatial relationship” (Kumiega 18). 4 Indeed, this relationship has been most intriguing to me as I have studied the field of theatre. I knew coming into the program at Miami University that I wanted to produce a piece of theatre that would challenge, if not break down, the audience/performer and audience/stage

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3 I speak more on Grotowski’s approach to the training of the performer in subsequent portions of this thesis.
4 The actor/audience spatial relationship is only one aspect of Grotowskian methodology that has captivated my interest and propelled me into further exploration of Grotowski’s experimental theatre aesthetic. Throughout this thesis, I will introduce more Grotowskian concepts as they come into play.

4
binaries. Considering that the primary engagement with theatre at the academic level is steeped in a market-driven approach, it became my goal to push an abstracted theatrical performance forward that would challenge the student body to engage with a style of theatre that would allow for a heterotypic performance experience.

Entering into this process with a set directorial aesthetic, I knew that in order to produce the appropriate artistic environment suited for Grotowskian exploration I would need a script that would agree with and call for experimentation; a script that would allow for total artistic freedom; a script that is convertible and open to discussion/interpretation. Charles Mee’s dramatic canon has intrigued my directorial desires since I was first introduced to his work. The construction of Mee’s texts encapsulates several of my interests, including: poetic language, visual imagery, and copious outlets for artistic freedom (as Mee’s dramatic works are bereft of scriptural authoritarianism). Mee’s scripts are not, by any means, traditional theatrical experiences. The boundaries of Mee’s plays stretch beyond the unusual – the prescribed – and beg of their creators and audience members to approach the performance and text differently. In essence, Mee has made it a point to refrain from adhering to any semblance of normalcy in his texts.

A selling point with Charles Mee’s dramatic canon is his offer to take his work and use it as a springboard for further exploration. He writes on his website:

Please feel free to take the plays from this website and use them freely as a resource for your own work: that is to say, don’t just make some cuts or rewrite a few passages or re-arrange them or put in a few texts that you like better, but pillage the plays as I have pillaged the structures and contents of the plays of Euripides and Brecht and stuff out of Soap Opera Digest and the evening news and the internet, and build your own, entirely new, piece--and then, please, put your own name to the work that results.

Indeed, Mee’s ‘offering’ lends itself to the experimental nature of Grotowskian methodology. This is not to say that Mee’s scripts are by any means Grotowskian, but rather, they are

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5 Anne Bogart and the SITI Company’s productions of Charles Mee’s works challenge traditional theatrical norms by stirring the audience into a state of active participation. For more information, please visit Scott T. Cummings and Anne Bogart’s books found in this thesis’ bibliography.

6 All of Charles Mee’s scripts are provided on-line. You can view his dramatic canon, as well as his artistic concept at www.charlesmee.com.
susceptible to a variety of diverse modes of exploration and any number of directorial interpretations – like Viewpoints.7

The impulse to direct Hotel Cassiopeia is deeply rooted in my desire to experiment with and explore new approaches to theatre, as well as how we as theatre artists create or conceive our work. In fact, it became one of my objectives to seek a script that abandoned traditional approaches with the text and one that would allow focus to be placed on theatre’s experimental possibilities. Scott T. Cummings writes of the playwright’s aesthetic:

Mee describes his method as a matter of using a classic text as a scaffolding or armature on which to shape his own constructions, which he then smashes into fragments and presents held together by a more intuitive structure. (5)

In Hotel Cassiopeia, Mee constructs a theatrical homage for the late American collage artist, Joseph Cornell. The structuring of the script is comprised of snippets from newspaper articles, journal entries, and other various forms of dialogue that speak directly of the artist’s heritage. Intermingled with film clips and musical scores, such as the film To Have and Have Not, starring Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall, as well as Kathleen Ferrier’s operatic rendition of Where’re You Walk, the script recounts Cornell’s passions while simultaneously making a comment on American culture. Mee structures this theatrical piece in an oneiric fashion so as best to fulfill the mind and artwork of Joseph Cornell, but he also, by doing so, breaks the traditional mold and structure that conventional scripts follow. There is an absence of narrative development and a lack of a liner plot structure in Hotel Cassiopeia due to, as Cummings states, Mee’s rejection of psychological realism (14).

Mee’s breaking of a traditional structure coincides with Grotowski’s approach to artmaking, as well. It therefore became my artistic desire to place the cloak of Jerzy Grotowski on the scaffolding of Charles Mee.

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7 The Viewpoints are Anne Bogart’s adaptation of Mary Overlie’s improvisatory techniques. While I do not focus on Bogart’s techniques in the creation of our production of Hotel Cassiopeia, it should be known that the first production was composed entirely of Bogart’s Viewpointing.
CHAPTER TWO

I believe that theatre’s function is to remind us of the big human issues, to remind us of our terror and our humanity. In our quotidian lives, we live in constant repetitions of habitual patterns. Many of us sleep through our lives. Art should offer experiences that alter these patterns, awaken what is asleep.

- Anne Bogart, Viewpoints

The Rich vs. the Poor:
The Aesthetic Similarities of Charles Mee and Jerzy Grotowski

At first, it would seem almost impossible to associate Charles Mee and a vast majority of his dramatic works to anyone other than Anne Bogart who has, along with the SITI Company, worked to develop and explore certain selections of Mee’s work for the past decade. However, I have found a strong point of reference with which to unite Mee, along with his play Hotel Cassiopeia, with the methodology and visions of the Polish director, Jerzy Grotowski. Though it is hard to envision elements of Poor Theatre operating within a visually bourgeois and highly theatrical script, the play’s structural elements bear a striking similarity to Grotowski’s ideas of theatre. I contend that the plays of Charles Mee, specifically Hotel Cassiopeia, can be profitably developed through the structural framework of Grotowski’s methodology, as both artists work through a similar process of via negativa to reach their own rendition of “theatrical truth.” Mee and Grotowski employ similar conventions in the making of their theatre and create their work by means of a fragmentary

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9 I use the term 'visually bourgeois' to refer to Charles Mee and Anne Bogart's production of Hotel Cassiopeia, which assembled a multitude of images that prompted or promoted a heightened state of theatricality: show, as opposed to soul. This is not to say that such line of work does not produce its own type of spirit or soul. Indeed, Joseph Cornell was heavily influenced by the bourgeois world around him and captured such imagery in his artwork. Needless to say, Cornell's masterpieces are rampant with a sense of spirit and soul. While this style of performance is profitable to explore, as it is quite astonishing in and of itself, it would be antithetical to the direction I have set out to explore: a Poor Theatre aesthetic.
10 In reference to Charles Mee’s Playing God: Seven Fateful Moments When Great Men Met to Change the World, Scott T. Cummings notes in Remaking American Theatre: Charles Mee, Anne Bogart and the SITI Company that Mee’s final work was a type of “farewell to history” (32). Cummings links Mee’s Playing God, a “chronicle of the occupational hazards of the professional historian,” with Mee’s refusal to abide by the “laws of history” as though it were a type of via negativa (32). I strive to further this statement by investigating various via negativa similarities between both artists. For more information, please reference Mee and Cummings works included in this thesis’s Works Cited.
structure. In effect, Charles Mee can be viewed as an American equivalent to the Polish legend, an instigator for modern theatre, though cloaked in the guise of a playwright.

Consider the similarities between Grotowski’s and Charles Mee’s structuring and utilization of the text. Fundamentally, each artist works to create a collective montage: small pieces of action and text that lend themselves to the overarching theme(s) of the work. James Slowiak and Jairo Cuesta mention in their book *Jerzy Grotowski* that Grotowski most notably “reworked traditional scripts into textual montages, paying particular attention to keep the flow of particular images assembled in such a fashion that they lead the spectator to comprehend a story of theme” (92). Grotowski pillages classic texts in an attempt to reach “the inner meaning of the play” (90). The inner meaning or the core of the text - obtained through a process of exploration - is what remains after “[Grotowski] eliminates anything that [is] not important for him,” and the selection of those “words that [can] function with regard to his own experience or [those] of the actors” (90).

Similarly, Charles Mee works to create pieces of montage in his plays with a similar impulse. Scott T. Cummings states in *Remaking American Theatre: Charles Mee, Anne Bogart and the SITI Company*:

> In form and content alike, the plays of Charles Mee demonstrate his view of culture as a process in which a society sifts through the past and its artifacts, salvages what is of interest and value, and redefines itself by combining recycled materials in new ways, from a new perspective, and with new ideas and materials (5).

Mee’s process of structuring a play resembles Grotowski’s as focus is placed on the substance of the work: its meaning(s) or inner life. Grotowski and Mee weed through original texts or historical events, appropriating only those nuances that lend themselves to the exploration of new perspectives and ideas. The primary difference between Grotowski and Mee becomes apparent when one asks where and why they choose their texts, as well as how they choose to treat their texts as springboards for further exploration. Mee pulls his material from a specific epoch and reconfigures his texts to encompass a vast array of dialogues pertinent to that era and how they juxtapose those of today. Grotowski, by
contrast, attempts to reactivate ritualistic roots through the appropriation of classical texts.¹¹

My work at the Grotowski Institute was centered on the constructions, explorations, and elaborations of etudes: in its simplest articulation a personalized action.¹² These etudes mirror the construction of Grotowski’s work. Each etude is constructed, explored, and crafted on an individual basis. These individual etudes, or personal explorations, are then juxtaposed with other works or etudes, which culminate into large segments that comprise a montage structure. Ultimately, these compounded etudes function to enhance and ritualize the experience, i.e. Hotel Cassiopeia, for both the collective and the audience.¹³

It is useful to explore the structural makeup of each artist’s creations. Both artists create through montage and episodic form and in doing so their dramatic structures resist the common cause/effect paradigm of traditional theatre. Cummings notes that Mee’s structure “progresses from one singular ‘individual moment’ to the next, like an assortment of colorful beads cut loose from the string of theatrical time … free, if not independent, of what came before and what comes after” (33). Grotowski’s episodic structuring or montage creation resonates with Mee’s as he, too – through a process of physical exploration – assembles individual moments of imagery that contribute to the piece’s overarching theme. Grotowski’s montage work is directly associated with the actor’s body and voice; the text is merely a starting point for further exploration.

¹¹ Grotowski primarily focused on classical work in the beginning of his career, such as works by Shakespeare and various Polish playwrights. From these works, he would break down the structure of the plays, bringing forward only the most fundamental elements of the work. Later in his career, Grotowski refrained from working with completed text altogether, focusing more on the creation of art via the physical investigations of his actors. Many of Grotowski’s followers continue to explore theatre in such a manner, but only from various bits of sacred texts, or various passages from ‘archetypical’ works, in order to create anew.
¹² Considering the multiplicity of the meaning of song, as previously discussed, within the Grotowski paradigm, the importance of the musicological term etudes should not be minimized.
¹³ In application to work being currently produced (Theatre Zar’s Gospels of Childhood, for instance) the performance structure is comprised of several fragments or etudes that have been shaped to make-up a collective whole centered around the study or exploration of a topic and/or theme, such as Zar’s “intimations of immorality from recollections of early childhood” (Gospels Playbill). Gospels explores Gnostic elements from the beginnings of Christianity, providing various fragments through which its theme develops, however, the goal is not to reinstate such traditions or thoughts. It is of most importance for the work of Grotowski, as well as his followers, to focus attention on the development of a new theatre. Grotowski refrains from merely restaging past stories and lessons and he makes sure that his audience is unable to follow a story which they have already been told.
Collectively, the fragments in Grotowski’s work create a structure comprised of song, chant, prayer, and various passages of text that can be rearranged or played out simultaneously and each individual etude transforms into a larger montage work. Mee’s montage is also an amalgam of music, song, visual imagery, movement, and poetic language. However, Mee refrains from listing his episodic vignettes as fragments. In fact Mee destroys all possibility of defining his work in an etude/montage fashion by mixing all of the fragments together. In doing so, Mee forces his reader to make connections, associations, and juxtapositions on their own. Nevertheless Mee’s scripts, especially Hotel Cassiopeia, are in fact comprised of etudes that can easily be given succinct titles that render the playwright’s message of importance: their inner life or meaning(s). By eradicating such strictures, Mee mimics Grotowski in that he too prescribes that the text or the construction of the text is not of main importance, but rather a type of blueprint for further exploration.

As I have alluded to, the aspect of song is vitally important to both Grotowski and Mee. Grotowski and Mee utilize the effect of music and song similarly. However, their intent differs in terms of application and execution. Grotowski treats voice and song, as well as its structural functionality, as a process of ritualization as opposed to mere product. At the core of Grotowskian practice, the voice is viewed as an “extension of the body,” an additional “appendage,” a secondary function of the body (Slowiak 144). The training and exploration of the voice, its relationship to the spoken word and/or song, its resonance within the body, and its carrying power are a process by which the actor strives to “unblock [his/her] body’s living impulses” (Slowiak 155). Once this is accomplished, the actor then “exploits his voice in order to produce sounds and intonations that the spectator is incapable of reproducing or imitating,” thereby leaving the audience with a product that stretches beyond common musical conceptions and the readily apparent imagination (Grotowski 115). Ben Spatz contends in To Open a Person: Song and Encounter at Gardzienice and the Workcenter that the appropriation and application of song, an important aspect of the approach at the Workcenter and Gardzienice, functions as:

a kind of vessel for something else that pours into and is expressed through singing. In neither case is the production of music an end in itself. This is part of what separates their work from the genres of opera and musical theatre, and it has everything to do with the kinds of songs they
choose to work with and the particular balance struck, in their work, between technical rigor and the performer’s freedom to act. (209)

Again, it is apparent that focus is not placed on the final product, but rather on the process. The voice is utilized by Grotowski in the same fashion that the body is broken down, by eradicating its blocks. It is not a process that develops a strong popular voice, but one that allows the performer to awaken his impulses and do naturally (Sloyiak 155). As Spatz notes, song in such work refrains from entertaining audiences, as it does in most current Western productions, but rather, as Grotowski would say, leaves them “penetrated” (Spatz 209, Grotowski 115). Grotowski brings forward song in his theatre practice in a way that directly echoes ritualistic rites within original communities: songs on the cusp of being forgotten. Spatz contends that the language of “the songs of Gardzienice and the Workcenter are almost never in the language of those who sing them, nor are the performers to learn the linguistic meaning of words through translation” (209). Again, the practice of singing songs without an understanding of their messages recalls the main idea of such performance being a work of process, as opposed to a product. The ambiguity of the songs being sung force the performer to listen, embody, and repeat the feelings of the song and discover the song’s inflection within the body’s resonators. This leaves the performer with knowledge as to how the song functions for and through him/her.

Mee’s application of song in his text – at first glance – is different, as Mee employs song with a different aesthetic etymology. However, it is possible to explore the use and functionality of Mee’s song in his text in a similar Grotowskian fashion. Though the songs employed in Mee’s text are not seemingly of ritualistic or foreign heritage, he recalls songs that evoke the feelings and sentiments of bygone days, while simultaneously juxtaposing nostalgia against the song’s cultural climate and popularity. This process mimics ritualistic patterns, though it is associated with a specific person rather than a community: i.e., Joseph Cornell in *Hotel Cassiopeia*. As a playwright, Mee is not involved with the production of his work as a director might be, nor does he seek to provide any form of training for the actors filling his character roles. However, one can make the argument that Mee employs song in
the structural framework of Hotel Cassiopeia in a similar fashion to that of Grotowski. The use of song in Hotel Cassiopeia does not render the script a musical one, nor is it a ‘production of music’ as ‘an end in itself,’ but rather it is an exploration of song and its legacy and what effect it has on shaping, molding, and impacting a person and his art, a group of artists, or a country. Mee assumes an aesthetically wedded communitas via cultural signifiers: like song.

Beyond similarities in structure, both Grotowski and Mee employ in the construction of their work the technique of via negativa. Though the term is directly associated with Grotowski himself, it appears that Mee’s writing style follows a similar suit as well. In Towards A Poor Theatre, Grotowski proffers a technique by which his performers are constantly asked to explore their boundaries; a technique that establishes a new process via rigorous training and discovery. It is a process that opposes formal technique, one that continually strives to eliminate “elements of ‘natural’ behavior which obscure pure impulse” and “an organism’s resistance to his or her psychic process” by way of via negativa (16, 18). The term via negativa can be traced back to Grotowski’s experimental stages with the group Teatr Laboratorium in Poland, and the concept lies behind the framework of his subsequent experimentations with the Para-theatrical and the Theatre of Sources. Simply put, for Grotowski via negativa refers to the “organism’s” (performer’s) eradication of limitations and “blocks” held captive in the performer’s body and mind (Grotowski 17). But Grotowski’s application of via negativa stretches beyond a focus on the performer; he plants its seeds within the fundamental principles of the theatre itself. With it he strives to redefine the theatre, as well as its environment. Emphasis is placed on the relationship between the audience, the performer and the space to the extent that all three elements create dialogues that transcend traditional discourses. Grotowski places the audience in direct relationship to the space, within the action (depending on the specific play being produced). It is as if the audience becomes a part of the performance, a

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14 As director of Hotel Cassiopeia, I strive to explore song as a process, not as a product. Indeed, this argument is derived out of my artistic volition.
15 I entertain Victor Turner’s understanding of communitas which, as defined by Richard Schechner in Performance Studies: An Introduction, is “a feeling of group solidarity, usually short-lived, generated during ritual” (62). For more information see Works Cited.
16 For further information about Grotowski and the audience, please visit Jerzy Grotowski by James Slowiak and Jairo Cuesta, as well as Towards A Poor Theatre by Jerzy Grotowski, himself.
performer. Grotowski’s theory revolves around the central theme that theatre exists within the cooperative space between the performer and his/her audience and that it (the theatre) can and must exist without theatrical conventions that captivate popular audiences: lustrous costuming, spectacular stage design and vivid lighting effects (32). The theatre must refute ‘spectacle’ as its raison d’être; theatre should be viewed as more than just ‘show.’ By evicting these petty elements of popular theatre, the theatre traverses boundaries, developing a spirit in which to breathe at the most basic level of communication: between the space, the actor, and the audience. Ideally, the theatre redisCOVERs its religiosity. 17

Mee employs a similar approach of via negativa in the construction of his plays. He frees his audiences, readers, and potential directors of any hegemonic voice that may dictate how his plays are to be produced. Mee strives to find the crux in which a script can exist. For Mee, a text (play) can exist without stage direction, without concrete linear dialogue, and well defined characters. In fact, Mee destroys the Western idea of a well made play, giving his readers a page of suggestive thought. Cummings suggests that Mee’s plays refrain “from the laws of history” (32). In addition, Mee’s daughter argues that her father does not provide a sense of authorial direction as “the text is anywhere from 1/5 to 1/38 of the experience” (Mee 85). Stylistically, this reiterates Grotowski’s structuring of his performances, as the text is merely a blueprint and through physical action, the majority of the performance is created.

In a sense, Mee considers his text as complete when in the hands of the director who, in turn, becomes the play’s author/coauthor. Mee encourages creative exploration in his dramaturgy. 18 It is obvious that Mee is placing his work in the hands of those who wish to take upon themselves this challenge. This offer allows one to incorporate and explore how or to what extent Grotowski and his methodology may be applicable to the work of Hotel

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17 It is interesting to note how audiences are asked to address, witness, and enter into a Grotowskian event. Before an audience enters into the performance space, they have the opportunity to study the breakdown of each performance fragment, provided in the playbill. Many shows do not provide a playbill. Upon entering the space, the audience is asked to refrain from bringing the literature into the performance space. The absence of literature suggests that the performance exists as an exploration with the audience alone. The playbill is designed to show the process by which the company creates their performance, not as a guide to decipher (in a pragmatic sense) the far reaching experiences of the performance.

18 Refer to Mee’s on-line quote on pg. 5
*Cassiopeia.* In a sense, you have the playwright insisting that one take up a similar stance to that of Grotowski. Mee’s script calls for further exploration, which echoes the methodology of Grotowski. Indeed, while studying the work of Charles Mee and Jerzy Grotowski, it is more and more appealing to view the two artists as being synonymous in their structural style, even across the great aesthetic divide of playwriting and directing.
Fig. 1. The Human Thermostat [c. 1960]; paper collage mounted on board, 12 1/8 x 9 in. (Courtesy of Hollis Taggart Galleries, photograph by Joshua Nefsky).

A dream on the couch of – in a rowboat casting off from shore i.e. she in the boat looking towards the shore self seemingly against a pole... the feeling that she must have observed me before pulling away on the water

- Joseph Cornell, *Joseph Cornell’s Dreams*
Enchanted Wander:
Excavating the Oneiric Life of Joseph Cornell

Joseph Cornell (1903-1972), if anything, was a dreamer – a dreamer who knew how to dream. Leaving behind the harsh realities of his life, the artist could escape into a world of illusion, reverie, and grandeur at a moment's notice. Not only did he know how to escape to such worlds, he knew how to return from them and transport from them his imaginings, his visions, his desires, and their ethereal qualities of serenity and the sublime. For the majority of his life, the fantasist did nothing more but live, work, and play within an eccentric universe akin to that of the subconscious dreamscape. This dreamscape is ever present in Charles Mee's Hotel Cassiopeia: a theatrical rendition of Joseph Cornell’s universe. In fact, it is as if both Mee and Cornell share a similar aesthetic geography, especially when mapping their works of art. For instance, the playwright’s dramatic aesthetic, as noted by Scott T. Cummings in Remaking American Theatre: Charles Mee, Anne Bogart and the SITI Company, “sifts through the past and its artifacts, salvages what is of interest and value, and redefines itself by combining recycled materials in new ways, from a new perspective, and with new ideas and materials” (5). In similar attitude, Mee’s writing aesthetic mirrors the principle philosophy and artistic mindscape of Joseph Cornell, whose works are composed of various bits of history, objects, and materials that combine to reframe, question, and reflect upon notions of time and memory.

In Hotel Cassiopeia, Mee, in a Cornellian fashion, delivers an intertextual montage of Cornell’s most inner life; its fiction, intrinsic realities, and surreal qualities. Pulling heavily from sources such as Deborah Solomon’s comprehensive biography (which details the life and work of Joseph Cornell), newspaper articles and interviews with American stars, various poetic works, as well as Cornell’s own musings, one sees that Mee merges various fragments of the artist’s history and adapts them to the stage. Although Mee’s script structurally mimics the mindscape of Cornell, as well as his artwork, it nonetheless refrains from becoming in and of itself a biographical work. Joseph and the characters filtering in and out of the play are based on actual people and prominent figures recorded in American art and literature, such as Lauren Bacall, Arshile Gorky, and Marianne Moore. Other characters include the passerby on the street, familial figures, and most importantly, the
embodiment of Cornell’s artwork and dreamscapes. As Adrien-Alice Hansel notes in a newsletter published by the Actors Theatre of Louisville prior to the 2006 Humana Festival premier of Hotel Cassiopeia, Mee has “structured his play around what Cornell called ‘sparkings,’ those breathtaking moments when the mundane details of life shift into transcendence” and that the playwright, more than anything, attempts to present on the stage Cornell’s “way of seeing” as opposed to a critical examination of Cornell life.¹⁹ Hansel further states that with Hotel Cassiopeia “we are given a chance to experience Cornell’s shock of recognizing all time in an instant.” ²⁰ Hansel infers that the play does not adhere to a specific passage of time, but rather, perhaps, a collision of time – of life – within a fraction of a second.²¹

Throughout the dramaturgical conceptualization of Hotel Cassiopeia, it was our collective’s intention to refrain from capturing an accurate historical depiction of Cornell’s personal relationships or life. It was our goal, however, to capture the ‘essence’ of Cornell’s memories and dreams. Throughout the rehearsal process, the collective attempted to excavate the captive spirit within the multiple box assemblages of Cornell, as they speak of a time (and of a people) long forgotten, a time that only Cornell knew and envisioned, and one that only Cornell knew how to express. This chapter, Enchanted Wanderer: Excavating the Oneiric Life of Joseph Cornell functions as a dramaturgical analysis of Charles Mee’s Hotel Cassiopeia, as well as a gateway though which to view, regard, and access the artwork, lifestyle, and times of Joseph Cornell. The subsections contained in this chapter speak of the most impactful images and moments of Cornell’s life, ideology, and spirit. These elements, performative extensions of Cornell’s subconscious dreamscape transformed into dramaturgical cornerstones by Charles Mee, became central to the production of Hotel Cassiopeia.²²

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¹⁹ Adrien-Alice Hansel article can be viewed on the Actors Theatre of Louisville website: http://www.actorstheatre.org/HUMANA%20FESTIVAL%20CDROM/play_hotel.htm
²⁰ See note 1
²¹ See note 1
²² It is equally important to recognize that a more extensive psychoanalytic discussion of dramaturgical elements would proffer rich results. Texts such as Lindsay Blair’s Joseph Cornell’s Visions of Spiritual Order are fine examples. I have merely entered into the threshold of such a psychoanalytic discussion due to the limits of time and space.
The Inner Life

One of the most striking passages in Mee’s text occurs during one of Joseph’s lucid dreams. Looking for a present to give to his brother, Joseph delivers a chilling passage of perceptive thought that echoes the artist’s feelings about his life. In a dialogue with the Corkmaker, Joseph vaguely seeks a gift without knowledge for whom he is seeking the gift. The conversation flows doggedly between references to women and his brother and finally settles with Cornell’s desire to purchase a clock for his self:

JOSEPH: Do you have a clock?
CORKMAKER: A clock ...
JOSEPH: Yes
CORKMAKER: We don’t have clocks. What would your brother do with a clock?
JOSEPH: I would like a clock for myself because, sometimes it seems to me my life is going by so quickly and I don’t know what is happening. I think, if I could slow it down, I would notice it. I would feel OK about it before it’s gone.

Cornell’s perception of time, if anything, was troubling for the artist. Here is a man, who, in his artwork, has captured an oneiric reflection of other people’s lives, their essence and purity, their brutality and gentleness, so much so, that Cornell found himself living his life via other people’s adventures.

Having lived in a state of fantasy for so long, Cornell’s understanding that his life will eventually end terrified him. This fear was so powerful that Cornell, as Deborah Solomon states, avoided the signing of his will and testament to his estate as it symbolized his very own ‘end’ (363). Cornell’s need for a ‘clock’ that can slow down time is perhaps seen as a cry for help and functions as a reminder to correct his greatest failure: to live a life of his own. Nonetheless, Cornell did live a life of his own. However, in retrospect, it did not match up to the lives he observed walking down the streets of New York or those glamorously captured on Hollywood screens. Cornell’s life was one of minimalism, a life grounded in the

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23 All page numbers which are in reference to the script of Hotel Cassiopeia are directly associated with our collective adaption of Charles Mee’s original script published on his website. The collective’s adaptation of the script can be found in the appendix of this thesis. Hotel Cassiopeia 16, 17.
verve and vigor of life’s simplicity. Cornell lived to document the beauty of such a life: its spirit, and its unknown or neglected beauty. He tried to capture life’s ethereal qualities in his art and stress the need to discover, to remember, and to cherish its significance – “the moments of life itself” – before “it slips through the fingers” of humanity and “vanish[es] forever” (Hotel, 24). As the Astronomer states, in Hotel Cassiopeia:

There was a time when you came
Indoors from the fields you would expect to see traces of
Human occupation everywhere; fire still burning in the
fireplaces because someone meant to come right back; a
book lying face down on the window seat; a paintbox and
beside it a glass full of cloudy water; flowers in a cut glass
vase; an unfinished game of solitaire; a piece of cross-
stitching with a needle and thread stuck in it; building blocks
or lead soldiers in the middle of the library floor; lights left
burning in empty rooms.24

For Cornell, these seemingly trivial traces of human occupation are what Mee refers to in Hotel Cassiopeia as “the inner life” – the quintessence of a life well-lived (16). Cornell’s artwork serves as a testimonial of life’s intrinsic possibilities for those who have neglected to see or live life’s beauty.

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24 See note 20. Hotel Cassiopeia 15, 16.
Blue, Grey, and White-washed Frames

The most striking details of Cornell's boxes, aside from the plethora of trinkets and flotsam and jetsam housed within them, are his color choices. The boxes, framed in various woods, are stained and then tarnished for long weathering periods of time. The frames themselves connote passages of time, where the new transcends into timelessness. The casings protect various objects set against somber colors which complement their enclosures. Shades of blue, grey, and white coloring line the box's interior walls along with bits of yellowed newspaper clippings. Cornell employed a wide range of colors in his artwork, but of the many colors used, Cornell responded most to hues of blue and white. For Cornell, they represented the artist's primary philosophies, visions, reservations, and guilty pleasures. The color blue, as scholars note, was inviting and it represented the "contemplation of the celestial" skies, as well as aquatic adventures (Hartigan 29). White, on the other hand, connotes a multitude of symbolism for Cornell. Robert Lehrman’s compiled The Magical Worlds of Joseph Cornell in CD ROM format, notes that Cornell’s appreciation of emotive and spiritual qualities of color shines through in his use of stark, dazzling white in many constructions. White as the color of light reflected throughout the entire visible spectrum relates to his concept of light as an enveloping force that illuminates the soul and one’s understanding of the world and life. For Cornell, the color white also symbolizes purity, innocence, and life.

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25 For further information see the CD-ROM provided in the appendix of Joseph Cornell: Shadowplay ... Eterniday.
We All Love Birds

Cornell was an avid birdwatcher and enthusiast. Imagery such as paper cockatiels, cardboard parrots, and birds' nests fly in and out of Cornell's artwork. The images are at first comforting – resonating thoughts of roosting, of home, and perhaps even love. However, as Catherine Corman notes in Joseph Cornell’s Dreams, birds, though majestic and beautiful, were also haunting for Cornell:

The bird is one of the most common themes in Cornell’s dreams. Birds are often enclosed, but not in conventional birdcages. They are trapped in a neighbor’s basement or on the pages of a magazine. They are associated with children and toys. Only twice do birds appear flying free. Both times Cornell finds this ominous, calling their flight dangerous. (121)

The danger of birds in flight renders Cornell as apprehensive to his worldly surroundings. Cornell failed to venture away from the vicinity of his New York suburb and opted to spend the majority of his life confined in the basement of Utopia Parkway, where he spent the majority of this time working on his masterpieces. The inability to leave his home has precedence, however, as he was most willful in taking care of his brother, Robert, and seeing to the wishes of his mother, Helen. Deborah Solomon contends that for Cornell “there could be no chance of pulling away from his family’s orbit” as Cornell cared too deeply for his brother’s well-being (37). Cornell’s attachment to his house and his family became more like chains, however, as the years progressed. It was almost as if Cornell, who kept such a close proxemic relationship to his home, was fearful to flee his nest. This entrapment in his own home was, perhaps, why Cornell had an affinity for birds. As Lehrman suggests, the birds were symbolic for Cornell, an “emblem of imagination, freedom, and immortality.”

Towards a Blue Peninsula, one of Cornell’s most cherished works, is a box collage constructed for the poet, Emily Dickinson. In this piece, there is an absence of birds; though their presence is felt as the box itself resembles that of a birdcage. Lehrman writes:

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26 Utopia Parkway is the title of Deborah Solomon’s biography which takes its name from the street Cornell and his family lived on. Utopia Parkway has become synonymous for Cornell’s household.
27 See note 22.
In this exploration of the world of the spirit, Cornell used the evocation of a bird, a well-known symbol in Western art for the soul and divine grace. The metaphor of the bird in a cage suggests man’s earthly limitations. The empty cage points to transcendence, perhaps through the imagination, and the ultimate release of the spirit.

This cage both confines and releases: the wire grid opens to allow us to enter from the front, experience our earthly boundaries, and then escape through the window in the back of the box to a limitless world beyond. We experience human freedom more intensely by passing through the bars of enclosure. Captivity and freedom, presence and absence, now and hereafter, earth and heaven – Towards the Blue Peninsula resonates powerfully in a spare and profound poem for the soul. (208).

Scholars suggest that Towards a Blue Peninsula, being in homage to Emily Dickenson, is designed as a message for the poet, as the box shares the same title as one of Dickenson’s works (215). Solomon posits that “Cornell offers Dickinson an escape – perhaps the ‘blue peninsula’ of her longings” (215). Here, we find Cornell associating a woman, symbolically, with a bird. In essence, Cornell views Dickinson as a captive bird and he offers her, in The Blue Peninsula, a cage from which she can escape to freedom. It is arguable that Cornell, too, includes himself in this escapist adventure. Could it be that Cornell’s box collage is not merely for Emily Dickenson, but rather for the pair of lost voyaging souls? Or perhaps a portal from which both Author and Artist can take flight, into freedom, together?

Cornell brings forth the comparison of women to birds again in his film Nymphlight. In this film, Cornell follows a young woman who is running down a busy street wearing a tattered dress with a parasol resting on her shoulder. The woman is running through a maze of grey-brick buildings. As she turns the corner of one building, we find her running into the midst of a busy park. A flock of pigeons are cooing in the middle of the park and the woman runs into the middle of the flock with speed. The camera sweeps upward over the woman’s head and as she jumps into the air, the pigeons take flight. It is as if the young woman, too, departs into the air with the birds. The camera sweeps across the

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28 You can view Nymphlight, as well as a variety of Cornell’s films, on Robert Lehrman’s compiled The Magical Worlds of Joseph Cornell. See note 22.
sky following the flight patterns of the pigeons as they arc across the sky, catching their silhouette against the gray brick buildings and the white clouds. The young woman does not reappear in the frame after the birds have taken flight. Perhaps she has transformed into a bird and is flying away from her tattered lifestyle?

Cornell has a habit of drawing parallels between various objects and women, such as his association of women and birds. For Cornell, it is almost as if the bird’s freedom is representative of a woman. Perhaps this longing for freedom stems from his sister’s absences in the family household? Cornell’s sisters were able to “flee the coup” on their own accord, and at a very young age. As Solomon posits, the Cornell sisters were eager to leave the confines of their mother’s negative effects and seek out their own adventures (52). Is it possible that the Cornell sister’s ability to leave the ‘nest’ instigated Cornell’s association and desire to flee his own home, to be like a bird (his sisters) and fly away? If anything, Cornell’s departure from the family home put a strain on the tormented artist, which only exacerbated the depressed soul even more.
Milky Way Star Dust

As Cornell drew a parallel with women and birds, he also connected the idea of women with the celestial heavens. Cornell was fascinated with the cinema, as well as the many ‘stars’ that graced their screens between the 1930s and 1950s, such as Lauren Bacall and Greta Garbo. Solomon suggests that Cornell’s affinity for movie stars stems from his idealization of not only women, but “of an entire movie-adoring age in America;” one that “captures a time when the Hollywood studios were at their zenith” (172). This affinity for stars is captured in many of Cornell’s boxes. However, the nostalgia of America’s most cherished movies, his desire to live in such a fantastical world that only film can represent, as well as his desire for the well-to-do lifestyle all conflicted Cornell in great measure. Perhaps these musing represented the ‘untouchable’ for Cornell? It is known that Cornell never consummated a relationship with a woman. The artist’s lack of sexual promiscuity is partly due to his fear that such pleasure would, as Solomon quotes Leila Hadley, “lose his ability to be an artist” (356). For Cornell, movie stars were an escape to a world of pleasure, a dreamscape where he could be just as big, as decadent, as splendid, and refined as the people he watched on the screens of his local movie theatre.

This escape and ideology with movie stars shares in connection with Cornell’s perception of the celestial heavens, as well. The night sky, with constellations such as Virgo, Cassiopeia, Taurus, and Orion danced in and out of Cornell’s dreamscape, along with their mythological associations of chivalry, bravery, romance, and adventure. Like Hollywood films, the night sky and celestial wonders were Cornell’s escape from the mundane life he led at Utopia Parkway. Of Cornell’s various modes of escapism, the stars were his primary source. Corman suggests that, for Cornell

The stars are clear when the world below is confusing. Like the sky, they draw Cornell out of the world, reminding him that the world is not a trap or a prison. Whether the activity in the world is charming or menacing, the appearance of stars interrupts it and offers escape. The frame of reference shifts. He is no longer enclosed in the world; he is living beneath stars. (125)

In addition, as Lindsay Blair, a Cornell scholar, suggests “the inter-connectedness of man and the Created Universe was what captivated Cornell” (184). Indeed, there was interplay
with the celestial heavens and Cornell’s association to the spiritual world. As Lynda Roscoe Hartigan and Mary Beth Bainbridge suggest on their brilliantly compiled site *Joseph Cornell: Navigating the Imagination*, Cornell was “an avid stargazer and celestial navigation became his primary metaphor for extended travel across time and space and between the natural and spiritual realms.” One can only imagine what Cornell saw while gazing into the unknown universe: a thousand beautiful women (Lauren Bacall?) waltzing throughout the cosmos, the startling eyes of a spiritual deity, or a gateway for lush transcendental thought. It is enough to say, however, that Cornell, through his artwork, constructed a bridge on which he could travel diverse distances: between heaven(s) and earth.
**Water in a Stream**

Cornell, in addition to his connection with the spiritual world, was one with nature. Many objects found in Cornell’s boxes are comprised of his ‘findings’ while walking the streets of his New York neighborhood or from his many visits to nearby parks. Sticks, rocks, sand, and other various natural items can be found in Cornell’s boxes; and they all connote specific images and pertinent memories. Solomon posits that on Cornell’s adventures to the park or while sitting under the family’s quince tree in the backyard of Utopia Parkway, that the artist would collect various items of significance to include in his artwork. These items connect the location with which the objects were found: locations where Cornell felt at home; where he was able to think philosophically. For example, if Cornell were to observe a family of robins building a nest, or a sparrow mothering its young, Cornell would perhaps associate this sighting as a bit of ‘inner life.’ In like fashion, Cornell would snatch a loose feather from below the birds nest and incorporate it into his artwork so that he would always be reminded of life simple pleasures: life’s simple ‘lessons.’

However, not all natural elements recorded imply pleasant memories. One particular element that troubled Cornell was that of water. There are many references to water in Cornell’s artwork: images of landscapes being distorted in reflective pools, reflections of women who are caught peering into murky depths, and various types of waterfowl floating on waves. In fact, one of Cornell’s primary colors (blue) is at times representative of water in his creations. Water also played a huge role in Cornell’s dreams, as well, and it was in his dreams that the image of water proved most troubling.

In her analysis of Cornell’s dreams, Corman reflects upon Cornell’s visions of water as being disquieting:

> Water inspires images of sinking and floating. The sea swallows a procession of women and a pair of scissors, and Cornell fears drowning in “dreams of water beyond one’s depth.”(125)

Interesting is Cornell’s fascination with water’s depth. It is almost as if water has a contrary connotation to that of the celestial heavens. Both contain various levels of depth, although

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29 Solomon describes Cornell as a collector throughout the entirety of her book. For more information about Cornell’s selection of materials to include in his artwork, please visit Solomon’s biography.
water connotes a level of uncertainty that is greater than the distance between here and the stars. It is almost as if Cornell equates water with abrasive qualities, such as erosion and attrition.

Water finds its negative roots in Cornell's familial history, as well. In Mee's script, Joseph recounts a memory in which his mother acts out against one of Joseph's female visitors:

JOSEPH: Mother, why do you kick girls out of the house? Why are you rude to them? Do you not want me to have any friends? And then, if you let them come and sit with me in the garden – do you remember the time you were washing dishes at the sink and you emptied the dishpan out the kitchen window and it splashed down like a waterfall and soaked the girl who was talking to me in the garden? Why did you do this? (6).

It is no surprise that the image of water became a symbol of concern for Cornell. As a memory, it only serves to flood and inundate Cornell’s steps toward good fortune and a life well-lived.

Cornell, if ever near water, is always envisioned to be in a boat and riding upon waves of uncertainty. The boat functions to protect Cornell from the water's harmful depths. As Corman suggest, “Cornell is usually rowing and the boat is near the shore” (122). Perhaps this is indicative of Cornell's inability to truly explore his boundaries? Cornell never ventured to far from his family home: is it possible that Cornell’s relationship to the shoreline is synonymous with his relationship to his household? If anything, it can be argued that Cornell was fearful of water’s constant state of agitation, it’s constantly changing fluidity. As the saying goes, “one can never step into the same pool of running water, twice.” It is perhaps this sense of freedom, this evolution and dramatic current of life, of water, that scares Cornell. And indeed, a mother’s dirty dish water is symbolic of Cornell’s fears, too!
Conclusion

Drawing upon these dramaturgical elements, the collective ensemble was able to enter into the world of Cornell and embody such images in their performance. The dramaturgical elements worked to provide points of inspiration and departure for our investigation and composition of *Hotel Cassiopeia*. For example, one of the staple images utilized in the production of *Hotel Cassiopeia*, which was influenced by our dramaturgical analysis, was that of a boat. In our composition, the boat signified various symbols throughout Cornell’s life and world. In Mee’s script, Cornell is grounded to a desk, which symbolizes his workspace: the basement of Utopia Parkway. Considering that the collective ensemble positioned the world of Cornell within a state of dream, we decided to transform the desk into a boat. The boat, as it does in Cornell’s dreams, signified the artist’s inability to either ‘get on or off the boat,’ which became a metaphor for Cornell’s artistic journey: to live a life well lived.

Another example was our incorporation of Cornell’s admiration and freedom of birds. The opening image of the composition pictured Cornell safely within the confines of a boat, while the closing image presented Cornell just outside its protection. These images were set against a backdrop of birds in flight, which were projected onto a scrim. As Cornell constantly found himself ‘missing the boat,’ the birds worked to reinstate and constantly remind the audience of one of Cornell’s main desires: freedom.

Considering the complex world of Joseph Cornell, there are many dramaturgical elements that have not been discussed due to the limitations of this thesis, such as Cornell’s affinity for children and childish game and toys, as well as his religious beliefs. The elements I have provided in this chapter, above the rest, have helped shape the character’s housed within the script. Following Cornell’s fluid world and Mee’s fluid script, the characters were composites of the surreal depictions of Cornell’s dreams. Indeed, a discussion of character would prove useful, though it would not be adequate in the space allowed. I will therefore refrain from discussing characterization as a discrete dramaturgical element. Moreover, an in-depth analysis of Cornell’s dreams would prove useful, especially in terms of psychoanalytic theory, such as Freud and Lacan. However, I am again bereft of space and time.
CHAPTER FOUR

What is a rehearsal? When does art start? Does art happen only with an audience present? Is rehearsal a place and time to practice moves or is it a site of collaborative conception? Each artist’s answer to this question reflects distinctly different intentions in the creative process.

- Anne Bogart, And Then, You Act

Beginning to Journey: Conception, Execution, Process, and Composition

Miami University is an academic setting that is infinitely steeped in tradition. Within the Department of Theatre at Miami University, as well as other academic institutions, I have felt there to be a traditionalist approach to the art and craft of theatre that disturbs my personal artistic desires. By traditionalist, I mean the established patterns by which scholars pedagogically address and create theatre. In other words, primarily a Stanislavski approach. By no means am I saying that this approach is less than useful. This approach to the art form is more than rewarding as an academic discipline. I find it, however, to be limiting. Having received most of my academic training as an artist and scholar within a university setting, I recall finding myself yearning for an experience that echoed the lectures that stemmed from (and which could only be taught, explored, and discussed within the parameters of) a textbook. I desired the opportunity to integrate the experimental nature of theatre, the avant-garde, the absurd, the poor, and the cruel into my academic praxis. However, this generally was not the case. In fact, the production of theatre at my previous university – a traditionally southern university steeped in the traditionalist mode – remained consistent with the desires and cultural norms of its audience. Thus, rather than exploring the potential of the art form, the university merely prescribed and reproduced theatre that people were and are accustomed to attending – such playwrights and works as Shakespeare, the popular musical, and Arthur Miller.

I believe that the practice by which we study and execute theatre at the academic level is problematic. Indeed, the process of input and output is displaced. What is studied in the theatre at the academic level is not the same as what is being performed. For example: a
typical theatre season at the University level is primarily composed of works that adhere to a traditionalist mentality. Nearly every University slate to perform within any given academic year a straight play, a musical, a Greek of Victorian work, or a Comedy. Vary sparingly are shows performed that attempt to break this ‘season subscriber’ mold. Moreover, the experimental works I have witnessed within the academic setting have been littered with traditional trappings as well. The inability to break the mold, I find, is partly due to the treatment – or lack thereof – of the performance space. Simply put, University theatre remains safely nestled in what is ‘comfortable.’ With this in mind, I knew that I wanted to direct a piece of theatre that was, if anything, oppositional to such a traditional “box office” attitude. I craved a piece of theatre that would potentially transgress or disrupt the development and complacency of current theatrical and cultural codes within the academic setting, within the institution’s audiences, as well as within its students. It was with this interest that I found myself being drawn to the works of Charles Mee; specifically Hotel Cassiopeia. Charles Mee’s dramatic canon works to re-direct theatre audiences via the deconstruction of such theatrical norms. The subject matter within Hotel Cassiopeia, its improvisatory nature, and Charles Mee’s writing aesthetic appease my directorial desires as they allow for an in-depth exploration of theory and praxis to ensue.

Beginning to Journey: Conception, Execution, Process, and Composition is comprised of four major sections which pertain to the theoretical methods I investigated while composing Hotel Cassiopeia. These are processes that I believe work to break down or establish new norms within the academic setting. The sections within this chapter highlight the various components involved and needed in order to make this particular production function properly. Via the artistic choices made, I attempt to exhibit how each component lends itself to the reconstruction of theatre for and by students, as well as for an academic audience.
Conception

We abolish the stage and the auditorium and replace them by a single site, without partition or barrier of any kind, which will become the theatre of the action. A direct communication will be re-established between the spectator, from the fact that the spectator, placed in the middle of the action, is engulfed and physically affected by it. This envelopment results, in part, from the very configuration of the room itself.

- Antonin Artaud, The Theatre and its Double

Grotowski’s theatre frees space from the limitations of design, concept, illusory effect, and convention. The space is what it is. The theatre as a safe, familiar place no longer exists and the participant (both actor and spectator) is forced into a new mode of awareness.

- James Slowiak and Jairo Cuesta, Jerzy Grotowski.

It is perhaps unsound for a director to select a specific mode of experimentation before selecting a script, seeing as how directors traditionally opt for the best method or mode of production to underscore a script’s message of importance. For this project, however, I selected a script that would allow me to craft its production via a specific method of direction. As I mention in the introduction of this thesis, my directorial desires reside in accordance with Grotowski’s theatrical methodology and it was my ultimate goal to tailor or model all aspects of this project to reflect a Grotowskian Poor Theatre aesthetic.

Essential to Poor Theatre is the request to reclaim theatre as a total or pure art form. Eugenio Barba, in Theatre Laboratory 13 Rzedow, upholds Grotowski’s preface for a Poor Theatre by maintaining that contemporary theatre has yet to cleanse itself by “eliminating the intrusions of other arts” and avows that theatre needs to enter into a process of purification in order to reclaim “(or rediscover) the essence of theatre” (153). As such, Grotowski seeks to combat theatre’s contamination by restoring the theatre back to its intrinsic roots, the governing principles of its ritualistic act. In doing so, Poor Theatre repudiates conventional forms of theatricality – the “kleptomania which draws its energy from other disciplines” – and seeks poverty over riches (Grotowski 19). In Towards a Poor Theatre Grotowski states:
By gradually eliminating whatever proved superfluous, we found that there can exist theatre without make-up; without autonomic costume and sceneography, without a separate performance area (stage), without lighting and sound effects, etc. ... The “synthetic theatre” is the contemporary theatre, which we readily call the Rich Theatre – rich in flaws.\(^\text{30}\)

With the extraction of theatre’s wonton excess, *Poor Theatre* is thusly able to channel its energy toward fulfilling theatre’s most basic requirements: its organicity. Producing a piece of theatre at an organic level became my major focus while conceptualizing *Hotel Cassiopeia* – and, indeed, the most challenging aspect in seeing this production come to fruition.

Considering that Miami University selects a production team for its Studio 88 performances prior to the initial director/designer meeting, I was skeptical as to how I would be able to appease creative interests and work with a design team, especially with student designers who needed such hands-on experience. Seeing as how a Grotowskian methodology refutes such practice, it is sufficient to say that in bringing a *Poor Theatre* model of production forward to a design team would more or less ridicule their artistic endeavors rather than support and challenge them. How was I to incorporate designers into a methodology that shuns such work?\(^\text{31}\)

Admittedly, while conceptualizing the production of *Hotel Cassiopeia*, I had wished that I did not have to work with a design team. However, I recognized that the directorial program was designed so that novice directors were able to collaborate with designers to simulate a professional atmosphere. Therefore, I knew I had to be lenient and delineate only the most important aspects of *Poor Theatre*. Upon the initial director/designer meeting, I presented to the production team a list of guiding principles that I felt needed to be in place in order for the production of *Hotel Cassiopeia* to function properly.\(^\text{32}\) Of these principles, the most essential were: focus and the use of space.

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\(^\text{31}\) Throughout the experimental phases of The Laboratory Theatre, the conceptualization of the *mise-en-scène* has been created from within the collective itself. All aspects of design come from the performers and are only conceived once a discovery has been made while working on the show via physical explorations.

\(^\text{32}\) You can find the initial PowerPoint presentation used in the appendix of this thesis.
It was my intention to craft a piece of theatre that could, after its opening, be returned to and further explored; a piece of theatre that focused all of its attention and energy on the process as opposed to its product. However, this focus on process solely revolves around the actors and their craft. As such, it was of utmost importance to explain to the designers that the focus should exhibit the actor as opposed to the designer's artistic sensibilities. As much of Grotowski’s methodology is of and for the actor, the designers needed to address the set, costuming, lighting and other pertinent theatrical constructions to function properly with the actor’s body and only highlight the body and its function in space. As Kumiega states, “Grotowski wanted the actor to be elevated from merely one of several factors in a theatrical event to the essence of theatre” and that “there should be a reduction of the artistic means of expression extraneous to the actor” (12). Such design work, as Grotowski suggest, detracts from the actor as being the essence of theatre.

In terms of space, it was imperative that the production of Hotel Cassiopeia refrained from defining an actor / audience relationship; meaning that there should be no stage. I requested that there not be any semblance of a fourth wall, nor a proscenium arch or construction that would insinuate to the audience that they could comfortably function as an observer of the theatrical event. It was important that the audience, upon entering the theatrical space, felt as if they were to become a part of the show.
Execution: Forming the Collective

Collective creation, popularized in the 1960s and 1970s primarily through the work of the Living Theatre, struck Grotowski as just another kind of dictatorship. Instead of a single tyrant as director, the entire group interferes in the work of each member ... The answer for Grotowski does not lie in the method – one single director or a collective – but in the creation of an atmosphere where the actor is secure enough to reveal himself.

- James Slowiak and Jairo Cuesta, *Jerzy Grotowski*

Grotowski’s approach to conceiving theatre is by and large different than normal approaches to theatre. Specifically, this can be seen in the formation of the theatre ensemble. Lisa Wolford, author of *Grotowski’s Objective Drama Research* and participant in the Objective Drama Program at U.C.-Irvine (1989), records her experience while working with James Slowiak and Jerzy Grotowski on various projects throughout her seven years of research and active participation. Wolford notes in chapter six *Re/Membering Home and Heritage: Tributaries and Continuities of Objective Research* of Grotowski’s dislike for academic processes that only promote a route for the commercialized theatre and stresses Grotowski’s need for a strong collective ensemble to be in place in order for creativity to return to the theatre (142). Wolford distinguishes what an ensemble is according to Grotowski:

Grotowski asserts that the development of a profound creative process in performance requires not only time but also the security of a stable group, a structure that he observes to be disappearing in America and to a lesser extent in Europe as old traditions of artistic theatre are steadily eroded by a

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33 I became familiar with the system of auditioning practiced within the Grotowski Institute as well as with Grotowski’s closest collaborator, Thomas Richards, who currently serves as Artistic Director at the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards in Pontedera, Italy while training in Poland. From this experience, I modeled the audition process for *Hotel Cassiopeia* within a similar structure.

34 Grotowski did not define the structure of his performance group as a ‘collective,’ as the epigraph above states, except for his last theatrical production. However, the community functions as a collective on its own accord. While working at the Institute, the members of the Atelier functioned as a collective. We constantly worked together, performed for each other, and did various chores together. This community is what I refer to as a collective. While the collective ensemble of *Hotel Cassiopeia* did not function accordingly (as I did serve as a director) it was my intention to model our ensemble within the various parameters of this term.
Within a stable group, by contrast, knowledge is cumulative. Approaches to work and elements of craft are learned, absorbed, and built upon. Time is not wasted in teaching basic lessons, over and again, to random assortments of actors who will inevitably soon disperse. Freed from this unnecessary repetition, artists within a stable ensemble are able to confront the limitations of their capacities, both individually and as a group, and then strive together to expand those limitations. (142-3)

Indeed, Grotowski's approach to conceiving theatre is by and large different than normal approaches to theatre, though it is this difference that has drawn me to his work. Specifically, this attraction can be seen in the formulation of Hotel Cassiopeia's collective. This section discusses the audition and casting process taken to form the collective ensemble of Hotel Cassiopeia.

Traditional approaches to holding auditions within the academic setting are usually conducted as an open call audition. Seeing as how there are many students who all seek to be cast in limited roles, directors typically choose this style of audition to cast their show. The actors auditioning are asked to prepare two contrasting monologues and/or a vocal arrangement from a musical score. Each director demands his or her own specific variation upon the auditioning system, however the goal is one in the same: to view as many “bodies” as quickly and as efficiently as possible. Considering the nature of Hotel Cassiopeia and the physical demands of a Grotowskian methodology, I chose to hold auditions differently. First and foremost, I knew that this production would require a strong ensemble. Moreover, I needed to see that the actors who were auditioning had an innate desire, need, and will to join and be a part of the collective. Therefore, I administered the audition process as if it were an actual call for actors to join a working collective.

As many of the students in the Department of Theatre had never heard of or participated in a collective audition process, I held a workshop on Saturday, December 5th (two days prior to the first wave of selections) in hope to dispel any fears that the students might have before entering into the actual selection process. The workshop included a basic breakdown of the performance’s direction and requirements, provided information on how to approach a non-traditional audition process, as well as advice on how to prepare
an appropriate action and text to use for the first wave of selections. The students were asked to prepare (at max) 10 lines of text and/or a traditional song, as well as a simple, though complete, action. I encouraged the students to seek a text that was vastly different from traditional forms of dramatic literature, i.e. poetry, prose, prayer, or self written work. In essence, the selection of the text helped to gauge the student’s ability to work with a non-traditional language, such as Mee’s Hotel Cassiopeia. In addition, I encouraged the students to select a song that stemmed from any culture or language. The selection of the song was not a requirement by which to discover the actor’s innate vocal talents, but rather, to see if they were able to connect their voice, emotionally, with their body. It was necessary for this process to highlight the actor’s ability to fully engage with a selection of text via their voice and body.

One of the greatest struggles I encountered throughout the rehearsal process was getting the students to connect with and fully utilize their voice and body truthfully: to be ‘authentic.’ Shomit Mitter, a Grotowskian scholar, notes that Grotowski believed that the performer could not “achieve authentic selfhood” unless he/she understood “that it is not possible to be something without knowing it” (83). Mitter continues, “If one can only inhabit what one is aware of, and if people are strangers to themselves, then it follows that one can only truly be oneself if one knows oneself” (83). Entering into this selection process, I knew that the concept of self-awareness would be one of my biggest challenges to work through, as the students at Miami University are submerged in a culture that upholds a specific image. Even popular public reports denote Miami University as having a “reputation as a preppy, upper-middle-class establishment,” a university whose image is synonymous with the elite clothing store J. Crew.35 In addition to this image, the students that attend Miami University are typically direct products of wealthy households and have been accustomed to social strictures that connote privilege.36 Therefore, it became essential to conduct the selection process in an appropriate fashion that would highlight

36 The issue of privilege became a major problem throughout the production of Hotel Cassiopeia and will be further discussed in subsequent chapter and sections of this thesis.
these potential pitfalls and exhibit the actor's ability, above all, to possess "the courage to be oneself and not hide" behind false pretenses (Mitter 82).

The first wave of the selection process took place on the 8th of December, 2008 and consisted of a range of exercises that introduced the basic concepts of Grotowski’s physical and Poor Theatre aesthetic. In leading these exercises, I was able to gauge who in the auditioning pool was willing or interested in engaging with physical work. The initial wave of the selection process served as a type of filter that separated the willing from the unwilling and/or disengaged. After the physical warm-ups, those auditioning were asked to present their etudes - the actions the student's were asked to prepare for their audition. The action became a type of physical monologue that allow me to measure the student’s creativity and basic understanding of movement. I was not looking for how well the student could connect with and recite written text, but how well they communicated in space with their body.

Interesting to note is how this process of auditioning strays from traditional modes. Rather than having actors present their etudes in front of the director alone, they were asked to present their slated material in front of all the students auditioning. This form of auditioning was designed so that the students were able to see what they were competing against and to challenge them to do and perform their best. In essence, it became an auditioning system that worked to facilitate learning, as well as cast the show.

After the first wave of the selection process, I asked a select number of actors to return the following day to continue movement and rhythm exercises. The second wave of the selection process consisted of more vigorous physical and psychological explorations, as well as vocal and rhythm work. From here, I broke the actors up into three groups that I believed worked well together as an ensemble. There were a few students whom I questioned their ability to work with partners, so I continually shifted individuals in and out of the group work in order to assess their collaborative capabilities. The exercise culminated into full group improvisation. Three groups, comprised of no more than 4-5 actors, were confined to specific sections of the stage. All were asked to imagine that an apple was suspended or hanging high above their heads in the center of the stage, just out of their reach. The only stipulation I gave upon entering into the exploration was that they could not use the English language to communicate with the group. Without giving any
further instructions, I read the following poem aloud to the entire group which prompted
the start of the improvisation:

On the tip of the branch
High on the highest bough
The apple blushes red
Forgotten at harvest time
By the farmers.
But it is not forgotten.
In vain they tried to reach it.
- Sappho

This piece of text speaks toward the human condition and the hunger to *survive*, to *live*, and
to *be*, as well as the negative virtues inherently instilled in our day-to-day actions. I selected
this poem because I found it to echo the spiritual and performative mindscape of Joseph
Cornell, the central character in *Hotel Cassiopeia*. Cornell constructed his artwork and lived
in accordance with such contrasting juxtaposition. For instance, the artist lived an
incredibly well-lived life, though he was socially displaced due to his artistic disposition.
Cornell strove to capture the beauty he saw in life's daily routine; and he strove to impress
upon its beauty by contrasting it with vanity, irony, and the sublime. Much like Sappho's
poem describes the desires of the farmers to obtain their forgotten apple, Cornell, too,
strove to capture items long forgotten, though greatly cherished. Moreover, Cornell
attempted to articulate in his artwork this sense of desperation, the need to return, to
obtain and remember *life*.

Sappho’s poem aided my final decision as to who I would ask back for the final wave
of the selection process. There were three important things I expected to acquire from this
poetic improvisation. The first was to learn of the student’s innate ability to decipher a
poetic piece of text, as *Hotel Cassiopeia* is a dense poetic work. The second was to see how
the students were able to express their understanding of the text through the use of their
body in addition to measuring the extent that they were mentally able to lose themselves in
their body’s own dialogue and language. Thus, it was important to conduct this

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37 This poem comes from Eugenio Barba’s book *The Land of Ashes and Diamonds: My Apprenticeship in Poland*. 
improvisation without the use of the English language. The third was to see if they were able to “perform” without any guided direction and evaluate their ability to work collaboratively and physically with the group in order to obtain their goal.

After the second wave of the selection process, I invited eight students (four women and four men) to return the following day to perform in the final collective ensemble. The final wave of the selection process was devoted to assigning each member of the collective their roles. The event consisted of a series of cold readings. The play was not cast until the final wave of the selection process.\(^{38}\)

Over all, I wanted the selection process to be treated as a type of workshop. My intention was to allow the students to experience a style of auditioning that, regardless of if they were cast in the collective or not, would benefit them as developing artists; to introduce to them other forms of auditioning techniques that they would be able to carry with them into the professional world. While the majority of their future auditions will most likely be held within the limitations of an open call, I felt insured that they would know that other forms of auditioning exist outside the academic world and would be able to participate in them if they occurred.

The response to the formation of the selection process was one of excitement. Many of the students became invested in the selection process and enjoyed experiencing a new approach to theatre and one of an experimental nature. As a director, scholar, and teacher, I found it to be most impactful to approach the audition process as a workshop, as it allowed each student to experience and engage with a fraction of Grotowski’s approach to physical training. A highly achieved senior drama major recounts in a post-show questionnaire of the collective ensemble experience and involvement with the auditioning process:

I can’t imagine how Adron would have been able to properly cast the show within the confines of a typical collegiate audition process. I think that Hotel’s audition process might have been intimidating for some of my peers but I found the opportunity to be extremely exciting. As a student of theatre, I thought that it was my responsibility to familiarize myself with as many different styles of performing and auditioning as possible and this was

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\(^{38}\) While the play was cast in this fashion, I continued to find myself questioning a few of the decisions I made throughout the rehearsal process. These issues are further explored in this chapter’s conclusion.
certainly a unique opportunity at Miami. The pre-audition workshop also
gave me a great chance to learn what sort of actors I’d be working with in the
audition process and allowed me to engage physically with them before the
final audition which was group-based. I love ensemble performance
activities, so both the workshop and the audition were taken more as an
exciting challenge (since they were new to me) than a deterrent.39

The student further reflects upon how the audition process helped prepare the student’s
for physically group-based auditions outside of the academic setting as well.40

Another esteemed senior theatre major, whose work at the university level has
focused its attention on theatre management, reflects upon their work with the collective
ensemble and involvement with the show from a new perspective. The student states:

The auditioning process was an absolute relief to me. As a stage manager, I
had been present in many auditions and could not imagine myself standing in
front of a table of people reciting and actually meaning it. I did not believe
that I would have any chance in a traditional audition process. So when I,
very hesitantly, dragged myself to the pre-audition workshop, I was slightly
confused but mostly relieved to hear what Adron had planned. I was
encouraged knowing that we would all be in the process together, but
nervous that I didn’t have the "creativity" to create the physical action that
Adron asked us for. I gained much confidence, however, with an intense
three hour experimentation session. After the workshop, two other students
and I locked ourselves in Studio 88 and tried everything we could think of.
The safety and the freedom of that kind of experimentation was the best way
for me to prepare for the auditions. That night was a miniature version of the
entire rehearsal process: we formed unbreakable connections, supported
each other, and challenged each other to look beyond the text and put the
action solely into our bodies.41

39 This abbreviated quotation comes from a student’s personal response to the student’s work on Hotel Cassiopeia. The student’s entire response is included in the appendix of this thesis.
40 Currently, this student has been accepted into the physically group-based Redmoon Theatre in Chicago, Illinois.
41 See note 37.
I believe that those who attended the workshop and participated in the selection process were able to fully engage with the process, which I believe to be a benefit that other forms of auditioning neglect or seldom allow.
Process: Systems of Rehearsal

Our goal for the afternoon is to connect the performer’s internal space with the external space (the actual performance space) and strive to allow both spaces to function together as a complete unit: The space itself is an old barn that has survived the destructive forces of World War II. Crumbling brick and mortar dust the edges of the hard wood floor that has been polished by sweat. The threat of the edifice’s collapse is eminent. The building is held together by rot iron support beams and rusty metal pillars that are caked and coated with candle wax. Windows open outward to the sounds of a churning waterwheel (broken), windblown trees, birds, a car horn, a horse nickering in a nearby field. A fireplace, chard with soot and ash, smells of dinner. There are five doors of planked wood. All except for three are open to an overgrown lawn. We stand with our arms stretched above our heads, fingers spread wide, for what seems like eternity, listening. A breeze enters the room and we begin to run with it as it circles the space.

- Charles A. Farris, III

While training at the Grotowski Institute I was fortunate to study under the direction of Natalka Polovynka and Sergey Kovalevich – the co-founders of Majsternia Pisni – whose artistic objective is to blend traditional Ukrainian music with theatrical performance. During the training sessions with Majsternia Pisni, the members of the Atelier and I focused our attention on discovering and unleashing the performer’s ‘inner life’ and unifying this inner life with the surrounding environment. Throughout the training session it was of utmost importance to surrender our body and mind to the process in order to reach or obtain a state of purity, to perform truthfully, to simply exist (‘be’) on stage, and to discover and perform within a genuine state of ‘openness.’ Prior to our meeting, we were encouraged to read Grotowski’s noted article Performer. In Performer, Grotowski defines what it is to be a performer. He states,

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42 Kovalevich compares the performer’s ‘inner life’ to a ‘seed.’
43 I use the term ‘stage’ with hesitation, as the process strives to break down any resemblance of stage/performer/audience relationships.
Performer (with a capital P) is a man of action; a state of being; a man of knowledge; a rebel who should conquer knowledge; an outsider; a warrior; a pontifex, a bridge maker; a bridge between the witness and something else. As such, the performer, through his or her personal method or investigation of Grotowskian physical technique, is persistently under a state of examination. The performer is constantly feeding an insatiable hunger for ‘completeness’ and is never in a state of repletion. While the physical demands of the performer are exasperating and strenuous, the performer seeks to satisfy this hunger by discovering new spaces within the body to explore and by tapping into undiscovered sources of energy and life. Shomit Mitter connotes this physical purgation as an act of self-sacrifice:

Grotowski’s actors literally invade the fiction of their characters, and if the principal theme of that fiction ... is preoccupation with salvation through sacrifice, then it follows that it is Grotowski’s intention to save his society through the real sacrificial action of his actors (80, 81).

Building upon Mitter’s premise, Kovalevich further suggests, that there is within every performer a ‘seed’ or ‘core’ of truth; a seed of ‘wholeness.’ Grotowski’s practice of physical negation is designed so that the performers continually pillage their body in order to relinquish their captive seed/core; to allow this seed to grow and live truthfully on the stage. Once the performer recognizes their body’s ulterior potential, the performer seeks to relinquish this inner life or potential via a process of negation. The spirit of the performer is only able to communicate effectively and truthfully once the vessel (body) has been freed from contradiction. Via vigorous physical exploration, a Grotowskian technique works to free the body of its inhibitions and blocks: the ‘disturbances’ that keep a performer’s spirit and creativity captive (Kumiega 113). Grotowski works to perfect the nature of the human condition (physically and spiritually) by singling out and eradicating what the human condition is not or does not need. In doing so, Grotowski, at once, defines the

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45 Grotowski refrains from defining his theatre trainings as a set methodology. Kumiega refers to his training as technique. See Kumiega, pg 111, in *The Theatre of Grotowski* for more information.
material left behind as ‘spontaneous creativity’ – the perfected spirit or human condition\textsuperscript{46} (113). Grotowski “steal[s] from the actor all that disturbs him” and strives to reveal all “that is creative” within the performer (qtd. in Kumiega, 113). Within the discipline, the director seeks not to educate the performer or teach him a specific methodology, but rather to “eliminate his organism’s resistance” to such stylized modes of theatrical training (Grotowski 16).

According to Richard Schechner, an esteemed avant-garde practitioner and scholar, Grotowski’s process is one of “resignation, renunciation, and giving up” and that “the actor goes on by not going back and by needing less and less support” (157). By eradicating the points of blockage in the performer, the body and mind are thusly freed to explore and perform truthfully. The performer is in a constant state of self discovery; a state of testing, mapping, and renovating his/her body’s restrictions. This focus on what the body is \textit{not}, or what the body \textit{does not} need, in order to define what the body \textit{is} originates from Christian Negative Theology.\textsuperscript{47} Through a process of \textit{via negativa}, Negative Theologians seek to understand and define who/what God \textit{is} by defining what He \textit{is not}. Grotowski broadens the premise of \textit{via negativa} in his poor theatre aesthetic so that it encompasses the human condition. Essentially, there resides a \textit{spirit} within the performer and through a process of negation the performer perfects his/her spiritual condition by eradicating its excessive refuse.\textsuperscript{48} The quest to perfect the human condition is made possible once the performer recognizes his/her need for spiritual wholeness.\textsuperscript{49} The process in which one discovers spiritual wholeness is never complete, however, and the performer is in a constant state of motion to discover his/her inner truth via continual exploration, retention, and desertion.

Throughout the rehearsal process, the collective ensemble attempted to explore such a negative approach while crafting \textit{Hotel Cassiopeia}. Pulling heavily from Grotowski’s physical techniques, as well as those experienced at the Grotowski Institute, the collective

\textsuperscript{46} While Grotowski spent the majority of his life trying to unearth the answer as to how one should live a life, it should be noted that this process is not concrete. Negative explorations are merely a starting point. See Shomit Mitter, page 80, for more information.

\textsuperscript{47} Christian Negative Theology is a theological approach to defining what God is by denoting what he most defiantly is not. See Gregory P. Rocca’s \textit{Speaking the Incomprehensible God: Thomas Aquinas on the Interplay of Positive and Negative Theology}.

\textsuperscript{48} I use the word ‘spirit’ or ‘spiritual’ interchangeably with ‘inner life’ and ‘seed.’

\textsuperscript{49} Thomas Richards notes how this process manifests throughout the training of the performer in a personal anecdote while training with Grotowski in his book, \textit{At Work with Physical Action}. See bibliography.
conducted a form of physical exploration that constantly pushed the performers to meet and transgress their physical and mental boundaries in an attempt to present mentally grounded and physically tuned performers on stage.\textsuperscript{50} This section of the thesis details the physical training techniques explored throughout the rehearsal process, from the construction of individual warm-ups, plastique exercises, to self propelled group ensemble work.\textsuperscript{51}

Fundamentally, Grotowskian technique centers its attention on the individual performer. It is not a process of teaching someone how to “learn” the craft, but rather a collection of tools by which to unearth a performer’s instinctive abilities. Kumiega states:

\begin{quote}
The first point to re-state is that, for Grotowski, only a process of creating one’s own method is important. This means that although Grotowski believes that there exists a concrete path of research and training for the actor, the essential condition which qualifies this path or ‘method’ is that it is individual and personal. (111)
\end{quote}

The technique refrains from teaching a set of rules and instead proffers ideas by which to further the performer’s explorations and quest for spiritual wholeness. It is not a matter of being taught, states Grotowski, nor is it (as to the academic) “a place where an actor recites a written text, illustrating it with a series of movements to make it more easily understood,” but rather a stripping of the actor of what it is that shuts him off (28).

Grotowski refrains from proscribing a set method through which to train an actor. He places the impulse to perform within each performer and strives to activate the performer’s innate creativity.

\textsuperscript{50} While it would be foolish to suggest that throughout the rehearsal process each performer reached a sense of wholeness, it is important to reiterate that this mode of exploration was fashioned as a workshop in Grotowskian physical training. Grotowski spent upwards to three years working on the performer’s ability to “be” before constructing his theatrical montage creations. While this quest is impossible to accomplish or even cover within a month-long rehearsal period, the approaches utilized throughout the rehearsal process provided the students an opportunity to experience and explore non-traditional modes of physical training.

\textsuperscript{51} The majority of the physical exercises provided in this chapter have been explored by numerous directors. I provide and expound upon the process the collective ensemble took to formulate a technique unique to the production of Hotel Cassiopeia. The skeletal structure of the explorations and exercises stem from the practical research and explorations conducted with several international artists at the Grotowski Institute and therefore I do not give official recognition to a specific director; however each exercise finds its roots within the premise of Grotowski’s physical exploration.
In rehearsals, it was of most importance that all explorations were conducted for and through the individual, that the technique offered functioned solely as a pathway by which the performer began his or her journey toward self discovery and wholeness. It was in the hands of the individual performer to incorporate this technique and have it manifest into his or her own unique language or methodology.

During the entire rehearsal process (January 12th – February 13th, 2009), the collective focused primarily on creating a personal physical methodology to begin every rehearsal as a form of warming up the body before composing the show. Throughout the duration of the rehearsal process, it became difficult to override a few of the student’s privileged dispositions and relinquish them from their safety zones. Many of the students were only able to engage with and use their body from the chest up. In order to override this setback, we began our physical explorations by isolating each component of the student’s captive body. For thirty minutes to an hour, the ensemble focused specifically on the discovery of the body. We began our exploration by first focusing on and unlocking the captive parts of the body. The students were instructed in focusing all of their energy on specific body parts, isolating these body parts, and investigating their function within the body and space; body parts such as the neck, wrists, and knees. These are often the typical parts of the body that go ignored throughout daily interaction. As Mitter states, “to ‘realize’ is both to ‘apprehend clearly’ (know) and to ‘convert into fact’ (be)” (183). Therefore, it was important to awaken each dormant portion of the body in order to begin the process of reaching “authentic selfhood” (183). Once awareness was raised and the students were able to feel their isolated body parts, the students eventually began to create a rhythmic map using various isolations. In juxtaposing two contrasting parts of the body, the students began to recognize that their bodies can function independently and concurrently, and that each component sponsors or elicits certain emotions or sensations. The exploration concluded with the actor’s bodies in erratic and constant motion which propelled the actor’s bodies throughout the performance space.

After this initial process, the students were asked to focus on 5 major ‘blocks’ or ‘inhibitions’ that were discovered throughout the first wave of the physical exploration. I asked the students to answer a range of questions that pertained to how their body was responding, such as: What parts of the body were the easiest to connect with and why, as
well as, what were the most difficult parts of the body to focus on and keep in motion? 

Afterward, I instructed the students in creating individual warm ups that targeted their specific boundaries. The majority of the students agreed that they had the most trouble working with the spine. Therefore, as a point of departure for our more evolved physical explorations, I asked the students to incorporate the spine throughout all of their 5 blocks. Many of the students began exploring their spine through common undulations. This was acceptable at first, however as the rehearsal process progressed, I began to insist and encourage the students to become more involved with their physical choices, to make them more complex. Ranging from 1-5, I would spontaneously call out a numbers at random to which the students would respond by performing the specific ‘block’ assigned to the number being called. This became a quick exercise that encouraged the actors to constantly shift their focus within their body, to discover new pathways between each exercise as swiftly and as efficiently as possible. As the rehearsal process continued, so too did the intensity of the exercises. If the students became complacent in their explorations, I encouraged them to find other means to expound upon their physical explorations. Many of the students selected safe and less challenging parts of the body to work with, which essentially allowed them to walk through the warm-up process. The majority of the ensemble’s “block work” did, however, evolve over time into physically challenging explorations.

After the ensemble was able to grasp a better understanding of their body and its function in space, we furthered our physical work to accentuate and encompass the entirety of the performance space. The students were instructed to create an evenly balanced circle within the performance space. Facing one another, one person from the ensemble would non-verbally initiate the exercise, which prompted the rest of the ensemble to follow the initiator, as leader. The students concentrated their energy and movements to be in accordance with the leader. Following the rhythm, tempo, and speed of the leader as they moved throughout the space, the group would naturally build to a climax and then back down to a moment of stasis before exiting the space. As individual actors, the group focused on collectively moving throughout the space (opening and closing the space) as if functioning and breathing as one collective living organism. This warm-up found its way into the opening of the performance event. As the audience entered into the
performance space, the collective ensemble began opening and closing the space. At times, the audience would, unknowingly, become involved with this process.

The premise of these two exercises eventually coalesced into one complete exercise. As the students began to balance and open the space, in random order, the 5 body blocks were called out, prompting the students to stop in the tracks and re-adjust their focus within the body. It was important that the students did not lose focus and remain grounded in what their body was doing as they moved throughout the performance space.

If the students had time to further develop their physical exercises, they would have been able to move throughout the entire warm-up without any direction, feeding off of each other’s energy, rhythm, and tempo in a synchronized fashion. However, time was not on our side.
Composition

The blocking-out period of rehearsals consists of finding the general pattern of movement and large bits of business necessary for a revelation of the plot and of the character relationships. This overall physical pattern results from the director’s clear understanding of each character and his relationship to other characters and situations.

– Alexander Dean and Lawrence Carra, *Fundamentals of Play Directing*

Actor’s who’ve never worked with Anne [Bogart] often find in the initial viewpoint sessions a playfulness long since buried. Yet those same actors will approach the first whack at a scene with script in hand and pencil stuck behind ear. They are so used to the initial week being about putting meaning into the words, where the physical life amounts to well-coordinated page-turning and avoiding stabbing anyone with a #2.

– Ellen Lauren, *Viewpoints*

Grotowski was an iconoclastic director who focused his attention not so much on his own artistic visions and desires, but rather, those of his actors. As Grotowski’s theatrical investigations evolved over his career, he began to move further away from traditional modes of direction and toward a new means of approaching, creating, and defining the role of theatre, as well as its constituent parts. James Slowiak and Jairo Cuesta note Grotowski as a director who would, “with each new production, put aside the directorial concepts, scenic tricks, and other gimmicks that only served to clutter and confuse the scenic space, dramatic action, and, most importantly, the actor’s personal process” (14). The scholars contend that it wasn’t about sharing with Grotowski’s actors “things the director already knows” but rather “learning to pinpoint and nurture those aspects of the work that stemmed from his own creative consciousness and that of his actors” (14). While training at the Grotowski Institute in Poland, Slowiak and Cuesta shared with the members of the Atelier a story of Grotowski’s directing methodology. The scholars described Grotowski’s direction as being minimalistic while overwhelmingly frightening. Slowiak mentioned that

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52 Slowiak and Cuesta both worked with Grotowski at the University of California-Irvine.
while training, he could feel Grotowski’s eye’s on him as he moved throughout the space and that when he would turn to Grotowski for guidance or approval, the director would either say, “I don’t believe you. Do it again” or “Good.” For Slowiak, the words “I don’t believe you” were frightening. These words signified that the actors were not doing their job. Through the physical training of his actors, Grotowski worked to instill apparatuses and systems that allowed the actor to realize his or her creative potential. These apparatuses permit the actors to creatively infiltrate the performance space on their own accord, as opposed to having a ‘director’ pull and force such creativity to exude from them.

In selecting a directing methodology for *Hotel Cassiopeia*, I opted to adapt a similar structure or mode of direction to that of Grotowski’s. However, I refrained from adhering to a Master/Apprentice relationship with my actors (a relationship that insist upon its participants “to accept the leader’s criticism or to follow his/her example”) as such a relationship, I find, refutes collaborative creation and spontaneous creativity (146). For instance, Wolford mentions James Slowiak’s direction with the New World Performance Laboratory in Akron, Ohio, a performance laboratory that follows a similar Grotowskian methodology, as problematic (146). Quoting Slowiak, who states that “art isn’t democratic” and that “if you debate every single decision until you reach a consensus, you’ll never accomplish anything,” Wolford raises awareness as to how such a dictatorial demeanor detracts participants as opposed to attracting them to such experimental work (146). Ultimately, rather than becoming a didactic director, I continually strove to position myself as a type of ‘coach,’ a type of director who responds to an actor’s creative instincts: an observer. I later discovered that I would have to alter my role to some degree as performance dates approached. This section provides a detailed account as to how I, as a director, worked with the collective to achieve, conceive, and compose an organic and collaborative production of *Hotel Cassiopeia*.

Contrary to traditional modes of direction, such as entering into a rehearsal process with a set ground plan, blocking strategies, and ‘large bits of business’ already taken care of (as traditionalist Dean and Carra suggest in the epigraph provided above), I chose to craft *Hotel Cassiopeia* in collaboration with the collective. It was my intention to shape and mold *Hotel Cassiopeia* in an organic fashion, and it was therefore important to get the collective involved in structuring the overall composition of the show. The initial stages of the
rehearsal process were devoted to physical explorations, and it was from these explorations that the ground plan of Hotel Cassiopeia emerged. From the performer’s engagement with movement in space, I sculpted a preliminary ground plan. Noting the performer’s movements within the space, I began to locate the various areas where the actors felt most comfortable or the areas they were most drawn towards. These areas, in a sense, generated an energy that the actors appeared to respond to naturally. When the actors were in specific areas that were comfortable to them, they tended to be more responsive with their bodies; meaning they were more alive and willing to explore and open themselves up to their work. These areas became hotspots, so to speak, and were established as ‘playing fields;’ areas that would house the major action sequences throughout the performance. In essence, this method became a form of composing, as opposed to what is traditionally defined as ‘blocking.’

Rather than having a definitive blueprint of the entire show to revert back to or conduct from, the actors, through movement, helped shape and form the structural patterns of the show. I entered into the rehearsal process with specific pictorial compositions in mind. Collectively, we worked on how each picture would come into focus through movement. The actors, through exploration, began to filter in and out of each etude and it was their instinctual patterns that became the footprint that mapped each etude.

There were, however, moments throughout the rehearsal process where the overall pictorial balance became too skewed and I was forced to recompose the flow of the show. For example, due to the construction of the space, many etudes fell to one side of the room where interplay with the scrim supported the performer’s actions. Too often the performers remained close to the scrim, which knocked the overall space off-balance. In order to override this issue, we had to anchor the opposing space with equal action.

Another aspect that hindered the organic composition of the performance piece was the fact that in Grotowski’s theatre nothing is hidden; everything takes place in front of the audience. Costume changes, scene changes, entrances and exits, introductions of various properties and other theatrical constructs all happen before the audience’s eyes. Seeing as how Hotel Cassiopeia is comprised of a multitude of short etudes with multiple characters

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53 For further reference, see Slowiak.
entering in and out of Cornell’s dreamscape, I had to conduct many entrance and exists in order for the show to flow properly, as the production rested on seamless transitions. It was therefore important to draw the eyes of the audience to various areas in the room in order to create enough distance for subsequent etudes to be set up without distraction. This focusing and directing of the audience’s attention, as spectators, was dealt with via traditional modes of direction, as well. Thereby ensuring a seemingly seamless collage, I had to “block” specific scenes to function properly.

Within the table work of Hotel Cassiopeia, which unfortunately was sparing, the performers and I broke the script into a series of etudes; or short sequences of action. The objective of doing so was to pinpoint the essence of each scene – the message, feeling, mood, or image. Once a scene’s essence was articulated, the actors focused their physical work to highlight the driving action of the scene. Essentially, this process was supposed to lead the actors away from the text. From such etude analysis, the actors were to incorporate the message, image, or feeling into their physical work and compose a scene or action centered on the collective’s research and discoveries. As the rehearsal process progressed, however, the text eventually found its ways back into the scene, though the physical work did remain intact. Of importance is that the etudes were defined and excavated collectively. As a collective, we each shared our interpretations of the etude and came to consensus as to how each etude would be carried out.

As we began working the etudes in rehearsal, the major issues that arose were that the students continually sought appraisal of their work, as opposed to trusting their creative instincts. I link this lack of trust to the issues of student ‘image’ held on Miami University’s campus. The students had the most trouble bringing their physical explorations into the etudes. This is partially due to the text entering back into the overarching production and taking precedence over the physical work. The students began to stray away from their physical work and, as Ellen Lauren states in regards to the novice actor, “put meaning into the words” (67).
Conclusion

As I state in the introduction of this chapter, my initiative in conceptualizing, executing, and producing *Hotel Cassiopeia* originated from a yearning to disrupt academic tradition. This disruption is most notable within the formation of the collective and the subsequent processes of production that followed. The audition process functioned as both a workshop in various audition processes as well as a means through which I cast the show. In breaking the traditional model of auditioning held within the academic setting, the students were able to engage with a process unique to the performance world at large. Indeed, it is my belief that, if we are to teach students about theatre, then such lessons should be entertained throughout all aspects of the discipline. Furthermore, the utilization of space is another aspect I feel the academic theatre neglects. Previous Studio 88 productions have all utilized the performance space in a traditional manner: a thrust stage. I have found the performance venue to be in need of experimentation and it was my intention to break the customary fashion of performance within Studio 88 and offer something much more subversive. I attempted to encompass the entire performance arena in the production of *Hotel Cassiopeia*. In accordance with Grotowski, I agree that *space* is truly all that the theatre, as edifice, has to offer. I attempted to break such traditional molds, both for Miami University Theatre and its students, as well as for the patrons who attend Miami University theatre productions. In doing so, I believe I have – however, small in margin – transformed audience expectations and perhaps the role of the audience member as a participant in the theatre. Finally, in working with the *Hotel Cassiopeia* collective, I strove to break traditional directorial definitions within the rehearsal process. I strove to engage the students in a physically demanding methodology that focused specifically on their artistic creativity as opposed to dictating their bodies on stage. By having the students become a part of the process, they were able to bring forward their own voice, their own visions. It is too seldom that academic directors allow for such artistic freedoms to ensue.
CHAPTER FIVE

I developed minor insomnia while working on the show. From the night of our first rehearsal to the day of our closing show, I can count the number of times where I slept through the night without waking up at least once... I was constantly thinking about ways to improve my performance, new ideas or images that we could try at rehearsal... I could think of little else throughout the day.

It is no secret that Adron and I were at odds many times throughout the rehearsal process... My mind goes in a million different directions at once and because I was constantly trying to do new things with my character, sometimes I just wanted Adron to flat-out tell me whether something was working or not... Even though I know both of us were ready to kill each other at different points throughout the process... I would jump at the chance to work with him again. All of the struggles just made the success of the final product that more satisfying.

I don’t think I would have been able to turn out the performance that I did if Adron had not challenged me every step of the way. My experience with Hotel Cassiopeia greatly increased my critical eye towards my own abilities, taught me how to work with other actors in a very physical environment, and helped me learn how to ask questions of a director in a manner that will give me the sort of feedback that is necessary for me to grow as a performer.

- Student Actor in Hotel Cassiopeia

As Time Goes By: Seeing the End

As stated in the preface, it was my intention to explore and construct a piece of theatre at its most basic and organic level, to experiment upon this theme, and challenge various traditional prescriptions set forth by the academic institution. In uniting the methodologies and practices of Jerzy Grotowski with Charles Mee's Hotel Cassiopeia the collective ensemble achieved, to an extent, such ambitions. The final production of Hotel Cassiopeia culminated into a thought provoking, inspiring, and exceptionally rewarding theatrical composition. However, it also exhibited some concerns. This chapter, As Time Goes By: Seeing The End, functions as an assessment and evaluation of the collective’s
explorative and experimental journey with *Hotel Cassiopeia*, as well as a critical account for its conclusion.

To enter into the world of *Hotel Cassiopeia* with a clear objective in mind is not, by any means, possible – at least not in my justification of the script. The play, as well as its subject matter, is overwhelmingly loaded with ingenuity and vast artistic possibility. To quote the script: the play is littered with “so many visions of wondrousness, so many great ideas” (24). For over a year and a half I filtered in and out of Joseph Cornell’s artwork and history, Charles Mee’s poetic language, and other bits of inspiration. Initially I had three contrasting modes of direction through which I planned to execute the 2009 production of *Hotel Cassiopeia*. However, I, like Cornell, was fated to be perpetually lost in the ‘stars’: constantly envisioning new performative realizations of the script with every new day. Though finding oneself lost in a dramatic work is, first and foremost, a sign of good material, it is also (inevitably) an impediment to formalizing and articulating a clear realization of a script.

Essentially, it was my goal to explore Mee’s script via a Poor Theatre aesthetic. It was my intention to strip-down *Hotel Cassiopeia*’s bourgeois nature in order to unearth the piece’s ‘inner-life’ – its core message or meaning – and create a new piece of theatre that centered its attention on this discovery. Initially, I envisioned the script to be entirely stripped of its theatrical language, leaving focus to be placed on the performative language of the actor’s body alone. Unfortunately, this realization did not come to actualization. The production ended up in a diametrically opposed borderland spanning the vast divide between Jerzy Grotowski, Ann Bogart and Charles Mee, and various traditional modes of performance: i.e., Stanislavsky, as well as my own artistic choices. This intersection or border-crossing, however, provided many interesting results. While the script reached new levels of deconstruction, it invariably adhered to its theatrically bourgeois trappings and language.

Indispensable to Poor Theatre, however, is the physical exploration of the actor’s body. I foresaw this production to be overwhelmingly physical and the physical explorations conducted throughout the rehearsal process did show their usefulness in the composition’s final product. The students, in terms of being physically grounded in their
work and able to communicate via their bodies, as opposed to solely relying on the text to carry them forward in the production, demonstrated a wide range of abilities.

In addition to the unification of Grotowski and Mee, I attempted to bring forth an experimental style of theatre that would challenge the prescriptive norms of how theatre is produced within the academic setting. As Lisa Wolford contends, Grotowski envisioned university theatre departments [as] a possible site of resistance against the superficiality and slapdash craft dictated by the culture industry, a structure that allows for long-term, systemic work. Theatre departments, he argues, are relatively free to negotiate the constraints that plague commercial theatres. (143)

In light of Grotowski’s vision of a diversified institution that promotes art above commercialization, I thought such an experimental exploration at Miami University would instigate such claims. Unfortunately, the environment needed for Hotel Cassiopeia to achieve its goals was literally stifled by immobile academic strictures. Ultimately, these constraints limited the collective’s creative freedom. The requisites spoken and unspoken for a Studio 88 production continually produced impediments: for example, the necessary pedagogical goals for student designers. I recognize the pedagogical goals and their importance, however they did not aid in this particular production. In retrospect, I find that such an exploration would have been better suited if treated as if it were a special project that was supported by Miami University as opposed to being slated as part of its production season.

It is slightly disheartening to see this production of Hotel Cassiopeia come so close to its intended realization, especially in reflection of the adventures I’ve taken to see this project reach its actualization. If anything, as a director I have been living within a challenging artistic universe for the past two years. My adventures at the Grotowski Institute propelled my attraction to the performative nature of experimental theatre to a degree that prevents me from changing my course of study as an artist and as a scholar. My involvement with the Grotowski Institute has provided many doors of opportunity that appear to be exceptionally bright once opened: doors that lead to international performance collaboration, study, and global friendships. Indeed, this experience would not have been possible had I not entered into the directorial program at Miami University.
As I mention within this thesis, it was a great desire of mine to return from my adventures and present the discoveries made while ‘in the field.’ Even as I was able to engage the collective ensemble with certain performance methodologies, systems of rehearsals, and modes of experimentation, I still feel a sense of incompleteness: we could have propelled our investigations further by having excavated and refined our work at a greater intensity. Seeing as how this production of Hotel Cassiopeia was constantly forced to negotiate between process and product, I can only attest that time was a preventive factor in this curtailed experience; that it was birthed prematurely.

As a novice director, I discovered that I, by no means, will ever be perfect and I embrace this with open arms. I learned that there are many fundamental qualities that need to be in place when directing, especially when working with student actors. Throughout the rehearsal process, many of the students were lost in their choices and had problems committing to their actions due to my inability to provide the appropriate commentary needed for blossoming actors. It is important to give constructive feedback, to coach and guide novice actors throughout their entire journey. It was my goal to instill in the performers the ability to think and create on their own accord; to become artists that acted upon their innate impulses; to develop their own abilities and decipher, for themselves, if their choices were strong enough to pursue or in need of further investigation. Granted, this line of work cannot manifest itself within a month-long rehearsal period. While the students understood my objectives, they were often lost and in need of more traditional modes of direction; such modes that had been instilled in them throughout their years at Miami University as theatre students, as well as those instilled in them prior to their colligate training.

Oppositional to such artistic lessons, I also found myself, as a scholar, to be continually challenged. The Master’s program at Miami University has presented to me two contrasting doors through which to progress in contribution to the discipline: a “creative,” as well as a scholarly route. It is my current goal to continue on with my education in pursuit of both theory and praxis.

Of the many other challenges and problems faced while working on the composition of Hotel Cassiopeia, the most notable one revolved around my negligence to investigate the performative script’s dialogue with the multitude of theoretical discourses available in the
academic community. A major criticism that arose from the production’s conclusion stemmed from the dominating ‘male gaze’ exhibited throughout the entire composition. Joseph Cornell, Charles Mee, and Jerzy Grotowski’s artistic works problematizes the role of women. I found myself falling into this ‘gaze’ while composing Hotel Cassiopeia. After all, I am part of this all male calculus. However, as a novice director, I now more fully understand the power of the director and his/her ability to negotiate such issues in future productions.

All of these ‘problems’ lend themselves to further research and indeed beg for further investigation. As a director, I hope to further explore the dramatic canon of Charles Mee and investigate his aesthetic process more fully. Furthermore, I hope to continue my work with Grotowskian methodology and see a collectively devised piece of theatre come to its absolute fruition. In terms of research, Charles Mee’s account of Joseph Cornell’s life and history deserves special attention. Within this paradigm, a greater psychoanalytic study would prove useful – though such work would be an entire thesis in and of itself.

To conclude, I draw attention back to the epigraph provided at the beginning of this chapter. As the student can account for and expresses a developmental growth, maturity, and character, I too, can reflect on my growth as an artist and scholar. This, above all else, is the greatest thing a novice director and scholar can take into account. Indeed, this entire performative experience has been nothing less than a rewarding journey and I am thankful.

Still, if I were to say anything to you it would be: do what you love not what you think you should do, or what you think is all you can do, what you think is possible for you – no, do what you love and let the rest follow along behind it or not ... or not ... because, even if it doesn’t follow along behind you will have done what you’ve loved and you know what that is. You know better than anyone what you love and a life centered around your love cannot be wrong, cannot finally be disappointing

- Joseph, Hotel Cassiopeia
WORKS CITED


APPENDIX I: 
Hollis Taggart Galleries Consent to Reproduce Photograph

June 26, 2009

To Whom It May Concern,

I hope this e-mail reaches you in good spirit.

My name is Charles Adron Farris and I am currently a graduate student in the Department of Theatre at Miami University. At the moment, I am working on the completion of my thesis which focuses on Charles Mee’s Hotel Cassiopeia: a play that theatrically captures the artwork and life of Joseph Cornell. I am writing to you in order to seek permission to utilize the photograph of Cornell’s The Human Thermostat found at Hollis Taggart Galleries on-line. Please do inform me if there are appropriate measures I need to take in order to include your work as a part of my completed thesis: especially the name of the photographer who captured this work of art.

I anticipate your response and look forward to hearing from you, and thank you, most of all, for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Charles Adron Farris, III
Dear Charles,

Thank you for contacting us about reproducing Joseph Cornell’s The Human Thermostat.

Copyright permissions for the visual arts are a little tricky. Legally, the copyright is held by the artist or his/her agent, or (after the artist’s death), the estate. This is true for most artists who lived into the mid-20th century (copyright applies for a certain number of years--which can vary--after the artist’s death. This is a long way of saying that even if we (or you) own a Cornell, we (or you) don’t have the right to reproduce it. Only the artist’s estate has the right to allow someone to reproduce an artwork. So while we at the gallery can grant you permission to use our photograph, we can’t grant the intellectual property rights to use the image. There’s more information about the legal technicalities at this site: http://www.arsny.com/basics.html. Cornell’s estate is represented by a company named VAGA; I’m afraid I don’t have their contact information with me today.

But the good news is that an MA thesis or a PhD dissertation is usually exempt from these copyright restrictions. That is, a thesis is usually not technically considered "published," and so laws about copyright may not apply to you. But I’m not an attorney; you may want to bring this up with a thesis advisor or other administrator at Miami. Is there someone at the university who handles the depositing of theses?

You have our permission to use the image from our website; please credit the image "Courtesy of Hollis Taggart Galleries, photograph by Joshua Nefsky".

I hope this all makes sense.

With best wishes,

Sarah

Sarah Richardson
Research Manager
Hollis Taggart Galleries
958 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10128
P: 212-628-4000
F: 212-570-5786
sarahrichardson@holistaggart.com
APPENDIX II:
Student Consent to Reproduce Work

June 2, 2009

I, [Name], give Charles Adron Farris permission to utilize my work and words within this written portion of his thesis:

____X_____

Jake Carr

____X_____

Taylor Fenderbosch

____X_____

Lizz Keo
Complete Student Response: One

**Question One:** Please describe your experience with physical and experimental theatre, as well as your knowledge of Jerzy Grotowski prior to your involvement with Hotel Cassiopeia. Have you explored, been taught, or trained in physical theatre in your class work or in other shows while at Miami University?

Coming in to this process, I was the definition of a blank slate. I had only heard of Jerzy Grotowski’s name, but I knew nothing of his work or the style of theatre that we were going to explore, as this was not only my first Grotowskian show, but my first show ever as a performer. Prior to this experience, I have had basically no experience with physical theatre. However, my work with the Walking Theatre Project has accustomed me to using my body to tell a story. Our study of Boal’s theories and performance style had influenced our work. We based each devised piece in image theatre and the dynamization of images, which allowed me a basic understanding of my body as instrument. However, Hotel was my first experience with completely embodying a feeling rather than simply feeling it.

**Question Two:** Please describe your experience with the auditioning process for Hotel Cassiopeia. What did you like/dislike about the auditioning process? How would you compare this to more traditional modes of auditioning?

The auditioning process was an absolute relief to me. As a stage manager, I had been present in many auditions and could not imagine myself standing in front of a table of people reciting and actually meaning it. I did not believe that I would have any chance in a traditional audition process. So when I, very hesitantly, dragged myself to the pre-audition workshop, I was slightly confused but mostly relieved to hear what Adron had planned. I was encouraged knowing that we would all be in the process together, but nervous that I didn’t have the “creativity” to create the physical action that Adron asked us for. I gained much confidence, however, with an intense three hour experimentation session. After the workshop, two other students and I locked ourselves in Studio 88 and tried everything we could think of. The safety and the freedom of that kind of experimentation was the best way for me to prepare for the auditions. That night was a miniature version of the entire rehearsal process: we formed unbreakable connections, supported each other, and challenged each other to look beyond the text and put the action solely into our bodies.

**Question Three:** Please describe your experience while working on the show. Describe your process of transformation as an artist. What type of performer, or person were you before, during, and after the show? What did you respond to and why?

I walked into this show believing that I never should have been cast. I only had faith in my ability to move - but no confidence in my acting skills or vocal skills...I was incredibly apprehensive. However, I was also excited. I saw this as my last opportunity to really push myself within the safety of my college world. And I hoped that I would find many things within myself during the process. I would summarize the rehearsal process as eye-opening, exhausting, frustrating, confusing, emotional, loving, and fun. Every night completely

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erased whatever had happened during the day - the physical demands of the show didn't leave room for much else. But I also felt the frustration of not being able to produce what I felt Adron was looking for, which was that he wanted us to create rather than give him what he was looking for (a paradox that I had difficulty reconciling). In general, the rehearsal process left me feeling very lost. Not lost in an overwhelming or paralyzing way, but lost in the way that I was constantly grasping at different things: different movements, different poses, and different ideas. I think my biggest challenge and possibly greatest achievement was committing to any given choice. I was often too timid to really follow through on a choice and I think that held me back. BUT! I think that I gained an incredible amount of confidence during the rehearsal process. By opening night, I was comfortable onstage. I knew that my physical choices, especially in the statues, had been made while cognizant on the lines of my body and the "overall picture" that was created. I had come to understand my relationship with Joseph and with the audience, but I felt that connections were lacking in the "transitions." I did not understand how I related to the other characters in the space. We reached out to touch each other, we contacted and experimented, but it never felt like more than a simple experiment - children playing.

**Question Four:** What are your reflections of the physical training, direction, and performance of the show? As you continue to journey as an artist, would you consider this performance genre something worth revisiting or would seek out this style of performance to fulfill your artistic desires?

The physical training frustrated me because I felt that I could be pushed further, but I could not find the motivation to push myself further. Actually, that is a good way to sum up the majority of the rehearsal process: I could take more, but I could not go there on my own. This is where the direction comes in. I think the time restriction we were under was the most detrimental aspect of the process. Early in the process, I felt that I was able to really engage in the exercises and that we were moving forward with the exploration of our bodies, our emotions, and the connection between the two. But once Adron felt that we needed to reach that same place (and beyond) on our own, we floundered. We struggled to find a connection deep enough to bring us to such a place and I think we felt that mom really did let go of the bike when we were learning to ride. It was less of an inability to ride a two-wheeler than it was a fear of being on our own. However, this is not to say that we faltered. The show underwent many, many various shifts and we were all an integral part of the decision making process. This ownership gave us sense of agency which is typically not found in a traditionally directed show. However, without strict direction, it also led to frustration. Overall, this show changed the way I see theatre. It gave me a confidence in myself that I did not know was possible. It presented me with a world of options and exploration; it allowed me to connect to a more essential part of me and to shed some of the bindings placed on me, and my body, by my everyday life. I passionately gave myself to the process and would not turn down another opportunity to work in this kind of theatre.
Complete Student Responses: Two

**Question One:** Please describe your experience with physical and experimental theatre, as well as your knowledge of Jerzy Grotowski prior to your involvement with Hotel Cassiopeia. Have you explored, been taught, or trained in physical theatre in your class work or in other shows while at Miami University?

Hotel Cassiopeia came along at a great time in my performance journey. The summer before performing in the show I was an administrative intern at a physical and puppetry based Theater Company called Redmoon in Chicago. I was hoping to work with them again professionally after graduation but I knew that I had a lot of work to accomplish in my physical training before this would be possible. I was a competitive swimmer for almost a decade before coming to college and as such, my back was wrenched very badly out of shape and I was not nearly as limber as I needed (and hoped) to be. Because of my double major I had a very cramped schedule with little room for electives while at Miami, so I was unfortunately unable to take any of the movement classes that were offered let alone learn anything other than a very basic understanding of what the Grotowski method was. Under the limitations, I attempted to incorporate what little theatrical movement I was familiar with into my other performance classes, but it really wasn’t until my time at Redmoon that I decided to focus on different realms of physicality that were previously unbeknownst to me. First semester of my senior year, I played a clown character in a Chinese Opera adaptation of The Taming of the Shrew and this provided me with the opportunity to explore using my body as a comedic instrument in addition to vocal training I had been taking. Hotel was sort of a godsend for me because it forced me to stray even farther from my more “realistically trained” comfort zone and engage with my body in ways I never had before. I am happy to say that I am infinitely more limber now and have a much stronger sense of what my body can do in space. Also, I was cast as performance intern at Redmoon for a portion of their coming season so I will be able to cultivate these skills even more in the future.

**Question Two:** Please describe your experience with the auditioning process for Hotel Cassiopeia. What did you like/dislike about the auditioning process? How would you compare this to more traditional modes of auditioning?

I can’t imagine how Adron would have been able to properly cast the show within the confines of a typical collegiate audition process. I think that Hotel’s audition process might have been intimidating for some of my peers but I found the opportunity to be extremely exciting. As a student of theater, I thought that it was my responsibility to familiarize myself with as many different styles of performing and auditioning as possible and this was certainly a unique opportunity at Miami. The pre-audition workshop also gave me a great chance to learn what sort of actors I’d be working with in the audition process and allowed me to engage physically with them before the final audition which was group-based. I love ensemble performance activities, so both the workshop and the audition were taken more as an exciting challenge (since they were new to me) than a deterrent. Obviously this process was vastly different than a traditional monologue audition. I don’t think either is
better than the other, seeing as how they both serve different purposes. For example, I don’t know how well Adron’s process would work in casting an Arthur Miller show (although I highly doubt this is something he is gearing up to do!) That being said, the Redmoon audition that I was cast from was a physical group-based workshop, so I definitely felt more prepared for their unorthodox activities because of my experiences with Hotel.

**Question Three:** Please describe your experience while working on the show. Describe your process of transformation as an artist. What type of performer, or person were you before, during, and after the show? What did you respond to and why?

I developed minor insomnia while working on the show. From the night of our first rehearsal to the day of our closing show, I can count the number of times where I slept through the night without waking up at least once (often much more than once). I also found great difficulty in falling asleep at night even though I was constantly emotionally and physically exhausted. Although I don’t necessarily know if this was healthy, I became obsessed with Hotel. I was constantly thinking about ways to improve my performance, new ideas or images that we could try at rehearsal, or ways to pick up the slack and/or work with any of my fellow ensemble members who were confused or didn’t seem to be pulling their own weight. I could think of little else throughout the day. As such, when rehearsals went well, I felt like I was on top of the world. On the other hand, when we were hitting a wall as a collective or things were beginning to lag I felt at turns like a failure or ready to smack some people (including myself) upside the head with a baseball bat. It is no secret that Adron and I were at odds many times throughout the rehearsal process. I felt like I was always giving it my all even when things just weren’t clicking, so I really despised being told that I wasn’t putting in enough effort. I, along with the rest of the collective, was treading in brand new performative waters, so I desperately wanted constructive criticisms. However, being told over and over “this just isn’t working” or “that wasn’t very good” was sometimes very demoralizing. Then again, I know that Adron was still learning as a director/collaborator too and I don’t know if I would have done any better if I was in his shoes. Even though I know both of us were ready to kill each other at different points throughout the process, I think that Adron has a fantastic creative mind and I would jump at the chance to work with him again. I also ended up needing more director feedback than I thought I would. Before Hotel, I had been micromanaged by several directors who didn’t offer me the artistic freedom I was hoping for, but I learned that I do indeed need a certain level of guidance (at least at this point) to help my creativity blossom. My mind goes in a million different directions at once and because I was constantly trying to do new things with my character, sometimes I just wanted Adron to flat-out tell me whether something was working or not. I didn’t want a pat on the head or to have my ego-stroked, I just wanted to know if my choices were panning out in the way I envisioned them. I don’t want to make it sound like I didn’t love every minute of the experience though, because I did. All of the struggles just made the success of the final product that more satisfying and I don’t think I would have been able to turn out the performance that I did if Adron hadn’t been challenging me every step of the way, whether it was intentional or not. My experience with Hotel greatly increased my critical eye towards my own abilities, taught me how to work with other actors in a very physical environment, and helped me learn how to ask
questions of a director in a manner that will give me the sort of feedback that is necessary for me to grow as a performer.

**Question Four:** What are your reflections of the physical training, direction, and performance of the show? As you continue to journey as an artist, would you consider this performance genre something worth revisiting or would seek out this style of performance to fulfill your artistic desires?

As previously stated, I am already continuing along the vein of theatrical performance. As an artist, I think there is something extremely powerful in creating a show where each individual audience member can enter into the piece in a different way and take home a message that is relevant to their personal lives. I think Hotel was a great example of this, especially at Miami where students tend to focus more on linear, “traditional” theatrical pieces. I think it is essential to shake-up people’s expectations of what theater, as an art form, can accomplish. At this point in my journey as a theater artist, seeing a technically proficient, well-acted piece of theater just isn’t enough for me anymore. I need to be sucker-punched by the production, regardless of the genre or content. I need to leave a show feeling as if I can concentrate on nothing more than what was just presented to me. A recent graduate going out into the professional theater world, this is also the type of art which I hope to create. Working in the avant-garde universe of Hotel Cassiopeia for several months only strengthened this conviction.
APPENDIX III:
A Critical Response to *Hotel Cassiopeia* by Youngji Jeon

Reciprocal Seeing to Be Allowed by Environmental Setting: Staging of *Hotel Cassiopeia* Creates Dialogical Vision that Deconstructs the Male Gaze.

In the 1960s, as film and television made a drastic development in the world at large, Jerzy Grotowski, a Polish theatre director and theatrical theorist, diagnosed that theatre cannot technologically compete with film and television. Instead of attempting to develop technological elements for the theatre, he suggested that the theatre should instead return to its ritualistic roots; that the actor and audience should, once again, share the space. For Grotowski, the actor/audience spatial relationship is the root of theatre. Indeed, Grotowski’s *Poor Theatre* aesthetic aims to reunite and redefine theatre for its audiences, as well as for its actors.\(^{54}\) According to Grotowski, the power of theatre comes from the “actor-spectator relationship of perceptual, direct, and live communion.”\(^{55}\) In order to achieve this goal, Grotowski insists on devising a new stage/auditorium configuration for each new production. That is, the staging of each production should be invented anew in order to transform the audience from passive spectators into active participants: participants who communicate with the actors and are implicated by *action*. Enthralled by Grotowski’s experimental work, Charles Adron Farris, the director of Miami University’s 2009 production of *Hotel Cassiopeia*, indeed, presents a performance environment which convinces the audience of such *active* unity.\(^{56}\) Upon entering the performance, the audience filters through the space, mixing with the actors as they ‘warm up.’ The audience takes to their seats within the performance space, which is the actual performance/acting area. The audience seating is divided into two sections with each section parallel to the other. With this seating arrangement, the audience begins to realize that they will become a part of the

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\(^{56}\) Adron Farris makes it clear that he tries to use Grotowski’s method in the *Hotel Cassiopeia* production program.
show, or become potential performers, as they are seated in a position to be ‘watched.’ With this seating arrangement, the audience becomes unsure of their role as traditional audience members. This confusion raises questions: What kind of communication does the audience have with the actors, specifically by way of sight? Can the act of seeing create the “perceptual, direct, and live communion” proffered by Grotowski? If the audience experiences this sense of communion, where does their experience come from? In fact, as an audience member, I found that my way of seeing was not consistent from the opening of the performance to its close: each scene was composed with a different arrangement of actors in space and each new arrangement directly inflamed my sight.

In this paper, I will explore the audience’s various ways of seeing in Hotel Cassiopeia. Moreover, I will examine how the environmental staging of Farris’ production worked to deconstruct the conventional ‘gaze’ of its theatre audience. Though seeing is regarded as an extremely natural behavior, what we see has always been closely related to what we perceive. Thus, deconstructing the ‘gaze’ of an audience can also be considered the deconstruction of an audience’s perception. Simply put, while in the theatre, the audience(s) of Farris’ Hotel Cassiopeia can perceive their own personal and unique narratives as the performance environment works to disrupt a finite ‘gaze.’

Joseph Cornell, an American collage artist, is the play’s protagonist in Hotel Cassiopeia. Charles Mee wrote the characterization of Joseph based off of Deborah Solomon’s biography, Utopia Parkway: The Life and Work of Joseph Cornell. As Joseph Cornell did in real life, Mee’s characterization of Cornell also watches women through various lenses, such as a window, a telescope, or a monocle. Joseph’s character has imaginary dialogues with various women throughout the show and takes from these friendly encounters various bits of flotsam and jetsam to remind him of the “impact of [his] meetings.” In fact, he attempts to collect the multitude of women he encounters by collecting their photographs. In Hotel Cassiopeia, Joseph reveals his reasoning behind keeping women’s photographs: he believes “he will have them” [the women] by keeping their photographs. This is mentality connected with his desire of possession: a possession

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57 Throughout the performance, the audience is watched by fellow audience members, as well as by the actors.
58 Hotel Cassiopeia 11.
59 Hotel Cassiopeia 8.
of not only real women, but of female characters presented in films (all of which become objects of desire). Joseph religiously watches films that present the heroine actresses of his time, such as Hedy Lamarr (Algiers) and Lauren Bacall (To Have and Have Not).

Interestingly, Laura Mulvey, a British feminist scholar, explains the male ‘gaze’ in reference to Cornell’s most cherished film, To Have and Have Not. Mulvey explains the way men watch, film, and refer to the movie, as well as the actress Lauren Bacall as producing a male-centric ‘gaze.’ According to Mulvey, the active male ‘gaze’ uses images of woman as passive raw material. By becoming the object or focus of the male gaze, female characters in conventional films are displayed and looked at for enjoyment. Moreover, females are possessed by spectators who identify themselves with the male characters in the film, such as Humphrey Bogart. This ‘gaze’ is shown when Joseph watches To Have and Have Not in Farris’ production of Hotel Cassiopeia. Joseph eagerly watches the female character, Marie ‘Slim’ Browning (portrayed by Lauren Bacall) and envisions getting-to-know – not only the character in the film – but the actress herself, better. Joseph repeats many lines throughout the performance that render his eagerness for film stars. This excitement is also apparent in Joseph’s imaginary interview with Lauren Bacall. Though Bacall argues in the play that there has been exaggeration about her life, Joseph only adheres to what he has learned from watching her in films. For Joseph, Bacall is a sex symbol. Joseph seems to think he, as a viewer, can know about the actress better than Bacall herself. This is because Joseph reproduces the gaze of Humphrey Bogart who possesses Bacall, not only in the film but in real life. Joseph, as a spectator, identifies himself with Bogart and feels as if he also possesses her, however, indirectly.

In fact, many scenes in Hotel Cassiopeia are based on Joseph’s illusion that he knows the women he encounters simply because he has ‘watched’ them. More precisely, he watches the women in order to get to know them, which, in turn, allows him to possess them: a voyeur, if you will. Though he thinks he knows Bacall by watching her in films, he creates illusionary dialogues and imaginary get-togethers with women based on his

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61 Ibid., 203.

62 Ibid., 204.
feelings while watching the women. Moreover, as Joseph cannot distinguish reality from fantasy, i.e., the real actress from her characterization, Joseph leads conversations with the film ‘stars’ without a clear understanding of who the actress truly is, which is a result of his voyeuristic ‘watching.’ Joseph can only imagine what the actress is like and it is this imagination of Joseph that projects a male dominated fantasy or ‘gaze.’ In reality, as a male artist, Joseph Cornell creates many of his artworks based off of his one-sided and male dominated imagination of women. Charles Mee realizes Joseph Cornell's imagination, and he verbalizes it in the script. In other words, the gaze of Joseph's character is the product of the playwright's own male gaze. If the audience follows the guidelines set forth by male artists, they are likely to reproduce this male 'gaze,' not only in male audience members, but in female audience members, as well. Indeed, as a fine-arts scholar John Berger explains, “[t]he surveyor of woman in herself is male: the surveyed female.”63 Therefore, the male ‘gaze’ not only affects men's vision but also determines a women’s vision as well.

The most apparent case in which the audience reproduces Joseph’s male ‘gaze’ is during Joseph’s imagined scene with Marianne. Marianne is definitely the object of Joseph’s ‘gaze,’ as well as an object of his desire. This objectification and ‘gaze’ is apparent in Joseph and Marianne’s dialogue with each other, as well as within Farris’ stage composition. Both instances reinforce the male ‘gaze.’ In the stage composition, the character of Marianne pampers herself while looking into the depths of a mirror. Her brassiere is hung down around her shoulders, and we see that she is being watched by Joseph.64 This composition reveals how women watch themselves within the male ‘gaze,’ as well as attributes to how women function as the object of the male ‘gaze.’ Furthermore, this composition plays a part in how the audience is to perceive and reproduce Joseph’s ‘gaze.’ The scene’s setting is not different from when the two film clips are projected onto the screen. The space resembles “a hermetically sealed world,” as Mulvey describes in the cinematic world.65 The darkness in the auditorium provides the audience with a sense of separation, which not only isolates the audience from the stage but also separates the spectators from one another. Therefore,

64 Throughout the play, actresses become a character by taking off their clothes and making themselves exposed to be seen by men, whereas male actors become a character by wearing or having something and thereby showing who they are,
65 Laura Mulvey, 201.
the audience can enjoy their voyeuristic appeal as if they are watching alone. In this way, a temporary cinema space is created. In a cinematic and a quasi-cinematic environment, only a unidirectional way of seeing is created.

In this quasi-cinematic environment, the audiences' unidirectional way of seeing repeats Joseph's 'gaze.' At first, the recreation of a cinema within the performance offers the audience a model 'gaze'. While the audience watches Joseph interact with the various film clips, they are forced to share Joseph's way of seeing: women as object. The physical arrangement of Joseph and the actresses on the stage encourages the audience to perceive Joseph's unique 'gaze'. The female characters are seated on both sides of Joseph. All the characters are facing a screen, as if they were in a movie theatre. Therefore, the audience comes to face the screen and is forced to follow Joseph's line of sight, as if they were in the theatre as well. That is, the audience comes to physically mimic Joseph and his 'gaze.' In this sense, it is as if the audience is watching the performance from the auditorium of a proscenium theatre. In a proscenium theatre stage configuration, the audience, regardless of where they sit, interprets the stage as if they are in the center of the auditorium. The center of the auditorium allows for the entire stage picture to be viewed at once. Elin Diamond articulates how the audience in “[t]he picture-frame or proscenium stage” perceives the stage: the space reinforces the pleasures of perspective space, in which each object has a measured and appropriate position within the whole – a “whole” produced by a “single and immobile eye.”

That is, the audience reproduces one vision. In Farris’ production, Joseph is the very person who has the “single and immobile eye.” Farris’ setting, at times, functions like a proscenium stage. However, the audience’s way of seeing changes its direction or line of sight throughout the show: the audience’s focus shifts throughout the performance space. The

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66 My description of the temporary cinematic space, shown in both scenes, is based on Mulvey’s description on the cinema. Actually, Suzanne Bennet, who studies the theatre audience’s reception, states that the act and the nature of viewing have not been studied by theatre scholars. Instead, film scholars have been central in studying the theme of viewing. Bennet introduces Laura Mulvey with mentioning that Mulvey’s theory can be applied to any study of audiences.

audience, however, keeps the unidirectional *way of seeing* which reproduces the male ‘gaze’ of Joseph during the many moments when the main character views his cherished films clips.

Since the male ‘gaze’ complicity works to create a unidirectional focus, more information about this focus is needed. If a director can break-up an audience’s unidirectional *way of seeing*, would the director be able to prevent the audience from reproducing the male ‘gaze’ of a male character? According to John Berger, it is the invention of perspective, in terms of the fine arts, that makes a human being’s *way of seeing* unidirectional. This is because perspective, as a product of the Western modern era, drives the sight of human beings out of their world and into a world where collective sight can no longer exist. That is, thanks to the invention of perspective, man can perceive himself and the world around him as a God. Within this omnipotent *way of seeing*, spectators do not need to consider a relationship with the object being viewed. While visual reciprocity is diminished, the spectator’s personal *way of seeing* remains. Therefore, the hermetically sealed world of a cinematic and a quasi-cinematic environment, such as Joseph and Marianne’s scene, is the very place for an audience to lose their visual reciprocity.

If it is the visual reciprocity that perspective diminishes, would the recovery of visual reciprocity allow other or various *ways of seeing*? As a matter of fact, according to John Berger, the biological nature of our vision itself is made to have “the reciprocal dialogue of vision.” This biological nature, in contrast with that of the male ‘gaze,’ stops communication. Berger argues that when we discard the dominant and directional view and return to a visual relation with others, we recover our original *way of seeing*. The question now would be as to whether or not some scenes in *Hotel Cassiopeia* bring back the nature of our biological vision? Does Farris’ production divest the audience’s God-like disposition and vision? In other words, does the environmental staging of Farris’ production prevent the audience from reproducing the male ‘gaze’? Fortunately, the setting of *Hotel Cassiopeia* is not fixed in any way; the scenes flow in and out of various perspectives. Scenes such as Joseph and the Ballerina, as well as Leila’s scenes, exhibit this

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68 About the way of seeing connected with the invention of perspective, see the first chapter of *Ways of Seeing*: 7-34.
69 Ibid., 9.
70 Ibid.
shift in focus and perspective. These scenes are composed with a different setting from those where Joseph is seen ‘watching’ women in films clip, as well as the character of Marianne. In the Ballerina’s scene, the female actress is at the center of the stage and Joseph is placed on the stage’s periphery. The final scene, where Joseph’s life, as well as the play comes to a close, also composes the female character of Leila as the center of attention while Joseph remains on the scene’s fringe. Do these two scenes allow the audience to share alternative ways of seeing that are oppositional to the male ‘gaze,’ as well as Joseph’s personal vision?

The scene with the Ballerina is one moment where Joseph is positioned close to the audience. Joseph is almost a part of the audience and Ballerina is positioned center stage. If this were to be staged the other way around, the audience would continue to watch the Ballerina through Joseph’s personal ‘gaze.’ By placing Joseph on the periphery, however, the audience cannot easily reproduce or perceive the scene through Joseph’s ‘gaze.’ More importantly, Joseph’s close proximity to the audience allows the audience to recognize that they are being put in a position to also be seen. The section of the audience close to Joseph cannot evade the other section of the audience’s focus. In turn, both sections of the audiences are again reminded that they are all in direct eye sight of other audience members, as well as the actors. Bottom line, no one in the performance venue is free from being seen. The audience cannot escape into a personal or secluded spectatorship. In essence, the entire audience becomes a “temporary community” and all parties experience what other members of the audience experience.71 The audience realizes that they are susceptible to being seen and they let others know that they can be seen by exchanging glances. Therefore, the audience realizes that they have lost their omnipotent and personal way of seeing, forcing them to reevaluate how and what they see.

Our way of seeing has been established to see artificial images made for the spectators’ consumption. This is similar to when people watch advertisements on television.72 The audience’s vision absolutely loses its original reciprocity and only focuses on the desire of possession. So, it is not easy to say whether the visible reciprocity is still

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71 Suzanne Bennett introduces several reader theorists in her book. One of them is Stanley Fish, who interprets spectators as “interpretative communities.” See Suzanne Bennett, 40–43.
72 John Berger defines the state of our contemporary way of seeing as the way we see or consume the advertisement. See the chapter seven of Ways of Seeing: 129-154.
natural to the audience. Thus, in order to experience a new or original way of seeing something greater than visual reciprocity is needed. In this sense, Leila's scene offers an example of how to stimulate our vision and restore our biological nature of vision. In this scene, our auditory sense helps us to reconsider what our vision perceives. Leila approaches Joseph and tells him that she wants to be with him. As a denial to her proposal, Joseph says that he cannot find “true love” even though he has looked for it his entire life. His rejection of love seems to be expressed by various characters dumping water over Leila’s body. However, all of the actors hold their breath as they pour water of the body of Leila and they remain holding it until Joseph agrees that he has in fact found ‘true love:’ his artwork. When Joseph comes to this realization and says “Yes” the actors gasp for air and continue to breathe as normal. This communal breathing includes everyone. That is to say that the scene is not only about Joseph’s relationship with Leila, but rather about his relationship with all of his imagined characters. In doing so, the multi-sensual stimulus in this scene asks the audience to change what they perceive. It is in this moment that sight no longer trumps the human’s multiple senses. Instead, it is the sense of hearing that determines understanding. For example, half of the audience is unable to see the actors as they are placed near the exit of the theatre. It is their sense of hearing that allows them to “see” the performance’s final moment; the audience “sees” the conclusion of the performance by hearing the actors breathing patterns. While this shift in “seeing” begins to recover visual reciprocity, it is the auditory sense that enables the audience to realize that they have been in the environment where this realization can be made.

While live performance has been considered to potentially have a ‘reciprocal ‘gaze,’ a reciprocal ‘gaze’ cannot be achieved without a clear apparatus in which to highlight the inherent reciprocity of the theatre space. In fact, Jerzy Grotowski mentions that finding the proper spectator-actor relationship is not enough and that the decision should be embodied “in physical arrangements.” Though Grotowski does not mention a detailed method through which to exemplify such a spectator-actor relationship, he does point out

73 Hotel Cassiopeia 35.
74 It is also possible for one part of audience to look back after recognizing that the opposite side of audiences watch different place from where their sight leans toward. Still, in this particular moment, it is the sound that asks the audience to consider the opposite side of audiences’ direction of sight.
75 Elin Diamond, 5.
76 Jerzy Grotowski, 20.
that the strength of the theatre is in changing the accepted stereotypes that stem from the theatre with those “imaged in the human organism’s breathe and body.”77 In this sense, I believe that the actor’s breathing, as sound, along with the multi-sensual elements of the scene provoke the male ‘gaze’ and proffer alternative ways of seeing. In Peggy Phelan’s words, “To doubt the subject seized by the eye is to doubt the subjectivity of the seeing ‘I’.”78 This act of doubting enables the theatre to perform its own function, which Grotowski believes is “the place of provocation.”79 Though Grotowski doesn’t intend to attack the male ‘gaze’ itself, his hope to challenge the audience’s “accepted stereotypes of vision” along with their “feeling[s] and judgment[s]” can result in disrupting the male ‘gaze,’ as the male ‘gaze’ is no longer a single man’s way of seeing, but a stereotypically fixed way of seeing which is applied to all spectators.80

Even though the contents of Hotel Cassiopeia revolve around issues with the male ‘gaze,’ I believe Farris’ production presents alternative ways of seeing. When our sight senses that we are seen just as the objects of our sight are, we cannot help but lose our God-like way of seeing. This forces us to constantly recall and recognize where and with whom we are with, as well as why and how we are with those around us. We recover a communal relationship with those who are also in the same visible world. This recovery allows other senses to prevent ‘sight’ from taking over as well. In Hotel Cassiopeia, multi-sensual elements of the performance helped the audience to experience different ways of seeing. The most striking factor which we can find in Hotel Cassiopeia is that the environment allowed for a communal experience with other audience members, as well as with the actors. The fact that we are watching different moments being composed in different areas of the space enables the audience to feel a sense of presence; that other audience members are always with us. This realization encourages us to perceive the space and to return to our biologically original way of seeing.

77 Ibid., 22.
78 Peggy Phelan, 1.
80 Ibid., 22.
WORKS CITED


APPENDIX IV:
Adapted Prompt Script of Hotel Cassiopeia

Opening

#1.

JOSEPH [waking from sleep, in the boat center stage]: There are days that I will have: a few donuts; a caramel pudding; two cups of Dutch-process cocoa all milk; white bread, peanut butter and peach jam; a Milky Way candy bar; some chocolate éclairs; a half-dozen icing cakes from Bay West; a peach pie (6 cents) and a prune twist. And, on other days: cottage cheese, toast, bologna, jello, fresh baked shortcake with creamy chocolate icing; Kool Aid; brownies and cherry Coke; a cinnamon donut; homemade coffee cake; the pink centers of Huntley and Palmer shortcake cookies; pancakes

#1-2

WAITRESS: What will you have?

JOSEPH: What will I have? I don't know.

WAITRESS: You're not hungry? [gesturing with her pencil towards the little windows] Well, then, I've got your honey colored seashells...

JOSEPH: I'm sorry?

WAITRESS: I've got your crested cockatiel....

JOSEPH: My what?

WAITRESS: I've got your deep sea blue sand, your dancing confetti, a toy metal horse, very nicely corroded,
lead with greenish and reddish coloring, after it's been lying
about washed in the sand and sea ...

JOSEPH: What will I do with these?
WAITRESS: Make a life. Have you got a life? So: a
caramel pudding and a cherry Coke?
JOSEPH: Yes. Yes, thank you.
WAITRESS: Will you be having the whipped cream?
JOSEPH: Yes, thank you. I'll have the whipped cream.

THE ASTRONOMER: You see, you'll be wanting to go
slow with girls, because ...

THE HERBALIST: Because you can scare a girl
THE ASTRONOMER: You can scare anyone really.
THE HERBALIST: You can scare anyone.
THE ASTRONOMER: And you don't want always to be
looking at women out the window
THE HERBALIST: The passersby on the sidewalk.
THE ASTRONOMER: Because this can give a bad
impression.

HERBALIST: You can scare a person.
THE PHARMACIST: Do you ever take a girl home with
you?

JOSEPH: Yes.
HERBALIST: What do you do with her?

JOSEPH: Well. We sit in the kitchen usually.

THE ASTRONOMER: Yes?

JOSEPH: Usually, we have tea.

THE HERBALIST: Tea?

THE PHARMACIST: That’s all?

JOSEPH: And I will open the window, so the birds can fly in and eat crumbs from the kitchen table.

THE ASTRONOMER: Eat crumbs.

JOSEPH: Yes.

THE PHARMACIST: During the summer.

JOSEPH: Yes, well, yes.

THE ASTRONOMER: During the winter?

JOSEPH: Well. Yes.

THE ASTRONOMER: I see.

JOSEPH: Usually, people like this.

THE HERBALIST: And then they leave?

JOSEPH: Yes. Well, by then it will be late afternoon.

So it’s time to leave.

ASTRONOMER: Tea and crumbs.

PHARMACIST: Still, I like an herbal tea.

ASTRONOMER: A peppermint tea.

PHARMACIST: Or a tisane.
ASTRONOMER: Something made with roots and berries.

[Joseph, ever a voyeur, watches them as they continue the conversation.]

THE HERBALIST: I would say, probably, I would have to say, licorice root. That would be my favorite root, because it contains thick astringent mucilage with a little aroma which is a very good pectoral.

THE PHARMACIST: A pectoral?

HERBALIST: Very good for illnesses of the chest and lungs.

PHARMACIST: Ah.

HERBALIST: And that happens to be my own personal preoccupation.

PHARMACIST: I see.

HERBALIST: Whereas I don’t know, for you....

PHARMACIST: For me it would be the hawthorn which used to be used always to decorate the front door on May Day

HERBALIST: Oh, well, but of course - also it was said to invite death indoors.

PHARMACIST: No.
HERBALIST: Yes.

PHARMACIST: No.

HERBALIST: I am afraid so. I mean, excuse me, but I am an herbalist.

PHARMACIST: Still.

HERBALIST: No. There is no getting around it.

ASTRONOMER: I would have to say my favorite herb would be the common quince.

HERBALIST: Indeed?

ASTRONOMER: Oh, yes, because for two reasons, you know, it was once thought to be the forbidden fruit of the Garden of Eden.

HERBALIST: I knew that, yes.

ASTRONOMER: And so it was served at wedding feasts in ancient Rome.

HERBALIST: Of course

PHARMACIST: Of course.

ASTRONOMER: So, to me, it is the sexiest herb.

HERBALIST: Fruit.

ASTRONOMER: I beg your pardon?

HERBALIST: Fruit. It is a fruit. Not an herb.

ASTRONOMER: Oh yes, fruit. I thought we could mention either herbs or fruits.

HERBALIST: Well, the conversation was about herbs.
ASTRONOMER: And I brought the conversation around to include fruits.

HERBALIST: If you are not going to stick to the point I'm afraid this is not my kind of conversation.

#4

Ballerina

#5.

JOSEPH: Are you [he stands]

ALLEGRA: Were you expecting me?

[he takes several steps backward unable to help himself in his embarrassment and shyness]

JOSEPH: Oh. Yes. Expecting you.

ALLEGRA: Had you forgotten I was coming today?

JOSEPH: No. Oh, no. I've been looking forward to it.

[he stands motionless]

ALLEGRA: I've brought some cake.

JOSEPH: Ah. Cake. I love cake.

ALLEGRA: Chocolate mocha cake.

JOSEPH: Chocolate mocha cake.

ALLEGRA: Shall I get some plates?
JOSEPH: Oh. Yes. I'll get them. [He returns with plates.] Shall I cut the cake? —

ALLEGRA: [Mimes you.] How are you?

[He cuts the cake very carefully as he speaks.]

JOSEPH: How I am. Yes. Well. Some days I will wake up in the morning feeling serene it may be having a vision of the house, trees, grass, well, bushes in flower in the early morning air - forever inviolate. This is so much better than the mornings of anxiety the nervousness feelings of reversal sadness, so much so, sometimes I will have to sit on the edge of my bed for a few hours waiting for the time of lifting, waiting for the time of evenness, the time of naturalness; arriving in the mental clearing which also, on some mornings, I can induce by spending some time standing at the sink shaving ... taking some time dressing ... and then, if I make a trip down to the water - the colony of beautiful laughing gulls - I will be free of confusion. Migrating birds - scattered drifts of them heading South; way up like specks against pink glow. Salvaging these moments, I think of celestial blue heavens, golden constellations, the Milky Way star dust ... the girl seen through the window of Bickford's cafeteria, a young girl: sharp features, pleasant expression after a very hot working day, black dress, such gracious qualities of serenity — that I felt ashamed of any inner
complaining. And then, the sustained mood of calmness on returning home. This is OK. And the evening - the smell of night on a scarf or a handkerchief.

What I saw today... I saw, thru the cellar window, the squirrel and the catbird, a robin at the bird table under the quince tree with its petals falling, the rose pink of azalea bush in full bloom.

ALLEGRA: I'm going to wear a newspaper hat because the sun is so bright.

JOSEPH: Yes, I have some pictures. [he shows her]

ALLEGRA: What will you do with them?

JOSEPH: I will keep them because... because then I will have them.

#6.

HIS MOTHER'S VOICE: Joseph?

JOSEPH: Yes.

HIS MOTHER'S VOICE: Did you have a guest?

JOSEPH: Yes, mother.

HIS MOTHER'S VOICE: Did she wash her hands at the sink?

JOSEPH: I think she did.

HIS MOTHER'S VOICE: And dry her hands on the dish towel?
JOSEPH: Yes.

HIS MOTHER'S VOICE: Then you must boil the dish towel.

JOSEPH: Yes, mother.

#20

MARIANNE: I've enjoyed your letters.

JOSEPH: Oh, I'm sorry.

MARIANNE: Sorry?

JOSEPH: I didn't mean to impose.

MARIANNE: Impose. No. Certainly not. I only wonder if I did something inconsiderate to have made you disappear the way you did. I had thought we had quite a heartfelt exchange so that after I sent my last note to you, I waited two years for a reply. So I wondered: what had I done wrong?

JOSEPH: Oh. No. You did nothing wrong.

#3 (repeat X 2)

THE ASTRONOMER: You see, you'll be wanting to go slow with girls, because...

THE HERBALIST: Because you can scare a girl

THE ASTRONOMER: You can scare anyone really.

THE HERBALIST: You can scare anyone.
THE ASTRONOMER: And you don't want always to be looking at women out the window.

THE HERBALIST: The passersby on the sidewalk.

THE ASTRONOMER: Because this can give a bad impression.

HERBALIST: You can scare a person.

THE PHARMACIST: Do you ever take a girl home with you?

JOSEPH: Yes.

HERBALIST: What do you do with her?

JOSEPH: Mother, why do you kick girls out of the house? Why are you rude to them? Do you not want me to have any friends? And then, if you let them come and sit with me in the garden – do you remember the time you were washing dishes at the sink and you emptied the dishpan out the kitchen window and it splashed down like a waterfall and soaked the girl who was talking to me in the garden? Why did you do this?

and care for you forever. You will never be left alone
because I will always be here for you and not just because I
am your brother, but because I love you. I will be here for
you forever. You don’t need to worry. You never need to
worry. You will be warm enough. There will be things for you
to eat and I will talk to you so you won’t be uninterested in
your life. I will talk to you about the things I see, what I have
done, where I have gone during the day - the pharmacy.

I had a ringside seat by the window at
Bickford’s cafeteria today. The June Dairy truck unloading
into the basement in front of the plate glass window, a girl
fixing her white kerchief and hair, a girl with a red scarf, well
groomed; a Chinese girl in a striped sweater, with an
exquisite profile; a girl in a white blouse on the escalator; a
girl in a pink linen skirt reading a thick tome on Freudian
theory.

And out the window: a blonde child looking
from out of the window of a taxi up 8th avenue--On the
sidewalk: a woman with chestnut hair worn down her back--
a light blue sweater-- high cheek bones, boney frame, wan
emaciated.

I felt a graciousness and wonder all over
again at the impact of these “meetings” - their sudden
significance.
The face in the driveway across the street,
the sudden surprise and happy confusion - trying to place it
A surprise blue skirt, white blouse, graceful simplicity with that impact of surprise
Beth-do you remember the girl I call
“Beth?” Walking up Lexington avenue about 56th with a friend – almost sunny
A sunny Tuesday, high noon, the face in the crowd beaming across an intersection. One’s own steps turned back
Three different appearances of joyce in baby blue dress from endearing to mocking
A group of older girls and some baby lambs
Courtesy Drugs checkout girl, also seen in Food Shop - piled up hair again - warm light brown corduroy slacks, no socks but the same dreamy docileness, the immense innocence and beauty of expression - warmth in her contacts in Food shop.

Are you asleep, Robert? Are you asleep?
Shall I open the window? I will be here all night if there is anything you need. I will bring you tea in the morning.

HERBALIST: A window is a lovely thing.
PHARMACIST: A lovely thing. I myself have a shop with a window and what I like to put in the window of my shop - I like to put a glass beaker or a vial of some sort with an emerald green liquid in it or a deep blue because people will look at that.

HERBALIST: Or sometimes I will put a white clay pipe in my window.

ASTRONOMER: Or balloons.

PHARMACIST: Balloons. Balloons are always good.

HERBALIST: Or... a forest of twigs, green-leaved twigs, a crescent moon.

PHARMACIST: Crumbled pieces of paper with text on them, a giant crumpled ball of paper with text on it.

HERBALIST: Fussy old wallpaper with birds on it or butterflies.

PHARMACIST: a music box wrapped in paper with old printed text on it, and on one side, a letter with stamps and postmarks.

JOSEPH: "Birds".

PHARMACIST: a paper cockatIEL

ASTRONOMER: a whiffle ball

HERBALIST: the head of a porcelain doll

JOSEPH: small wrapped packages with ribbons on them, packages of words, bits of text, bits of handwriting.
ASTRONOMER: the stars, a map of the starry sky, the
milky way

JOSEPH: sand

PHARMACIST: seashells

JOSEPH: broken glass

PHARMACIST: a wine glass

HERBALIST: little pennants with stick pins

ASTRONOMER: zeppelins, a new star exploding in
the heavens

PHARMACIST: an engraving of a girl caught in the act
of drawing

HERBALIST: Renaissance women, a Renaissance girl

ASTRONOMER: children, girls, young women,
flowering trees

HERBALIST: Hedy Lamarr

JOSEPH: wooden benches under a quince tree,
children's blocks, with pen and ink sketches of owls and
ferns and songbirds on them, an 18th century man in a
snowcovered forest, a star in a box as though found under a
bridge

PHARMACIST: This will catch the eye of your typical
passerby. He will be looking in the window and thinking; "If I
had one of those, then I'd have a complete life."
#23

JOSEPH: Of course, I wouldn't want to be presumptuous. Giving advice to you - a person of a different generation. What I think may no longer be useful.

THE GIRL: Still....

JOSEPH: Still, if I were to say anything to you it would be: do what you love not what you think you should do, or what you think is all you can do, what you think is possible for you – no, do what you love and let the rest follow along behind it or not ... or not

... because, even if it doesn't follow along behind you will have done what you've loved and you know what that is. You know better than anyone what you love and a life centered around your love cannot be wrong, cannot finally be disappointing.

THE GIRL: Easy for you to say.

JOSEPH: No. No, it isn't.

#Movie Clip

#9.

ASTRONOMER: There was a time when you came indoors from the fields you would expect to see traces of human occupation everywhere; fires still burning in the
fireplaces because someone meant to come right back; a book lying face down on the window seat; a paintbox and beside it a glass full of cloudy water; flowers in a cut glass vase; an unfinished game of solitaire; a piece of cross-stitching with a needle and thread stuck in it; building blocks or lead soldiers in the middle of the library floor; lights left burning in empty rooms. This was the inner life.

We miss:

14

JOSEPH: I am looking for a ... a present ...

CORKMAKER: For a girl?

JOSEPH: For someone.

CORKMAKER: But is it a girl? That is to say, do you want something for a girl or for a man?

JOSEPH: For my brother

CORKMAKER: I see. And what is it you would like?

JOSEPH: What do you have?

CORKMAKER: I have a little train you can wind up, that goes around a track and a...

JOSEPH: Do you have a clock?

CORKMAKER: A clock ...

JOSEPH: Yes
CORKMAKER: We don't have clocks. What would your brother do with a clock?

JOSEPH: I would like a clock for myself because, sometimes it seems to me my life is going by so quickly and I don't know what is happening. I think, if I could slow it down, I could notice it. I would feel OK about it before it's gone.

BALLERINA: Have you been looking for me?

JOSEPH: Well. Have I been looking for you? Yes, well, I don't know.

BALLERINA: You can't be sure.

JOSEPH: No.

BALLERINA: You can't be sure.

JOSEPH: You see, I have obligations.

BALLERINA: I see. I thought I'd like to come to tea.

JOSEPH: Oh, tea. Well.

BALLERINA: That would be alright?

JOSEPH: Oh.

BALLERINA: Shall I come for tea, then?

JOSEPH: Oh, yes, well, of course.

BALLERINA: Where shall I sit?

JOSEPH: Here.
BALLERINA: OK.

JOSEPH: I have only one tea bag.

BALLERINA: We can share it.

BALLERINA: When I was a girl, I suddenly realized that I loved to run fast at night, so I wrote my mother that I wanted to be a ballerina. I had never seen a ballet but I had three favorite dancing records at boarding school: The Grand Canyon Suite, The Fighting Song of Notre Dame, and something by Beethoven.

Later, when I was eleven, we came to New York and we obtained a scholarship for me at the School of American Ballet. I say we because it's good to have a mother behind you if she's not, too, [she laughs] too much of a ballet mother.

The fact that I didn't know entirely the technique— I sort of made some of it up—I think Mr. Balanchine was interested in that - that little offbeat part of me because the slight peculiarities of a dancer were interesting to him. Otherwise you could have a plasticine doll you know, go through the positions. But so. I think he liked that.
My first piece was called The Unanswered Question, which actually Charles Ives the composer had a very mystical ... he was very ... attached ... to this composition of his. Some of it I believe was even supposed to be improvised and it was mysterious and he chose that piece for me. I was held aloft by four men, I never touched the floor, and there was someone on the floor sort of trying to reach me, always, and I regarded the men as my spaceship. The best part was when I was standing on the two men's shoulders and Balanchine said to me: just fall back! So in the first rehearsal I looked around to make sure the men were there to catch me and then I just slowly— oh, that was fun.

Then Balanchine revived The Somnambulist for me and in that ballet he always had me exit backwards, because you know, well, because I didn't need to see a doorway to go through it.

I was reading a book by Eudora Welty called The Optimist's Daughter and there's one line that stuck: "it's memory that is the somnambulist." There is no going backward in life, except for the sleepwalker. And at the end.... at the end! The poet that I—the sleepwalker—am so deeply in love with is stabbed by my jealous husband and he's lifted— the somnambulist carries the poet backwards
offstage in her arms ... and ... it's just a shocking entrance--
excuse me!-- Exit.

I've had a big problem with depression but--
That's why I like to dance. Even now, I take ballet class every
day to normalize my psychotic instincts. I'm just mad for
plies, tendus.

We are-- we're animals. We have to run fast.
We have to swim, we have to walk, we have to dance.

And now the world has come around to
thinking that muscles are very important. However old you
are.

I miss postcards. You know. Postcards are
unique, and no one sends them anymore. It just isn't done.
And I often wonder: why not? Has someone taken a moral
position?

With a novel or a book you always come to
the end, but you can just keep reading or writing one
postcard after another and never come to the end. Each one
of them unique—and never an end. This is a kind of pleasure
we simply don't know any more, though it seems harmless
enough when you think about it. There's no point to it, and
yet it's such a pleasure. It's not what you would call goal-
oriented, that's the pleasure of it, I suppose, you just take it
for it's own sake.
And I like that you can never tell which is the front and which is the back of a postcard.

JOSEPH: No. Is this how you are?

BALLERINA: How do you mean?

JOSEPH: Is this how you are all the time, or just with me?

BALLERINA: How am I?


BALLERINA: Good.}

#16

JOSEPH: Robert? Robert? Are you warm enough?

I've brought you some things. Some watch parts, a coiled spring, you see? A beautiful thing. Some stamps, marbles, a gold-colored bracelet, a painted wooden bird, a cut out metal harlequin, marbles, candies, bubble pipes, a thimble, some bits of broken glass, scrimshaw, whales' teeth, left over buttons, spools of thread, feathers, sequins, a metal ring, a cork ball, a music box, these are for you.

I love you, Robert.
JOSEPH: Sometimes, mother, we have a peaceful exchange

MOTHER: And we like that, do we not like that?

JOSEPH: Yes. Yes, we do, but more often you criticize my behavior. Your criticisms fill the air like, like musical darts

MOTHER: Not like darts. Oh, Joseph, not like darts.

JOSEPH: you say nothing without an edge - glowing at me from across the room - resentful when you are not included, belligerent ... like ... like ... like Queen Victoria.

MOTHER: Queen Victoria.

JOSEPH: What you require, it seems to me, is absolute sexless loyalty

MOTHER: No.

JOSEPH: And then there will be times, we sit together in the back yard

MOTHER: In the warm weather

JOSEPH: Yes

MOTHER: Idyllic

JOSEPH: Yes. And then you will somehow say; "I haven't had one word from Mrs. Duchamp, for the letter I took such pains with," and also, "I wonder if she ever got the little gift in my last gold and silver Lord and Taylor gift box? People could take a minute or two to acknowledge little
kindly things their friends do.” And then the complaining and criticism has begun again...

MOTHER: Oh.

JOSEPH: ... so that no one would ever know who you really are; the intensity of your inner life.

MOTHER: Oh.

JOSEPH: The letters that you write me sometimes, for no reason at all - do you know that I mark on them: “read again”?

MOTHER: No.

JOSEPH: To remind myself, to read them again and again and again, because then I see you love what I love.

MOTHER: We are kept alive by the same things.

# 10

MATT: What sort of future do you see? What sort of future of humanity and of the world?

DUCH: What new forms?

MATT: What new visions?

DUCH: This will be the job of the artist.

MATT: This will be the artist’s only job.

DUCH: Because the great changes in the world, the changes of consciousness, the changes of our sense of life itself will not come from the reasoned arguments of
political scientists or philosophers, but from the visions of artists. Not by arguing well, but by speaking differently.

MATTA: Or is this a promise that has failed, or is failing? New visions are easy to come up with but the world goes on ignoring the best of them, the world is littered with so many utopias

DUCHAMP: So many visions of wondrousness, so many great ideas

MATTA: And even ideas that were possible at one time or another, beautiful things

DUCHAMP: Or never mind the great ideas, just life itself. The moments of life itself. Transporting things, things that will last a moment and then vanish forever. Vanish forever. How does one cherish even what has happened, let alone what might have happened? How does one relish it?

How does one relish life itself? It slips through the fingers so quickly

MATTA: This is where the work comes from, if one is an artist: From the shooting stars, water in a stream, a love, a young girl, a woman, a ballerina on the stage, snowflakes, the lifespan of a butterfly all gone, a girl I saw in a window,

Hedy Lamarr on a bicycle

Movie Clip

24h
JOSEPH: As the character in the movie, you recall how great it was to be beautiful. As someone who was a sex symbol yourself, what are your views on that?

LAUREN: To begin with, I never thought I was beautiful. Sorry, guys. I wish I thought I was divine.

Listen, I would've been a much happier person had I been able to look in the mirror and say, "Gee, you are great! Love your looks!"

JOSEPH: But, you were called The Look. You were the one who said, "Put your lips together and blow."

LAUREN: Well, I'll go along with that. But beautiful, no. In movies, when somebody new comes along, plays a part and it happens to click, there is a tremendous exaggeration about what you are, what you have, what this sudden new person is. In my case, I was announced as the Second Coming. I was this combination of Garbo and Dietrich and Bette Davis and Mae West all rolled into one—and that was just in one movie. Now, you know damn well there was no way I was any of that. Then came the second movie, Confidential Agent. It was a disaster, and I was a disaster, and they said, "Oh, we made a terrible mistake."

JOSEPH: Are there parts of you in Hannah?
LAUREN: Well, I certainly recognize the woman's insecurity and her fear of what's to become of her on a personal level. I recognize certain confrontational moments that I've had with my own children. I know what it feels like to want your child to do something and have them not do it.

JOSEPH: You've written about how happy you were with Humphrey Bogart and how difficult it was for you after his death.

LAUREN: Well, it's been hyped so much. But, of course, it was a great love story. Listen, I lucked out at a very young age; it's been downhill ever since. What can I say? Then again, I had what some people never have, so I can't complain.

#17

ASTRONOMER: Most people feel that, gee, somebody must know all about that, some university or something. The fact is, no, they don't.

HERBALIST: Even about common species?

ASTRONOMER: Even the common birds.

HERBALIST: For a person just getting started watching birds, what advice do you offer?

ASTRONOMER: First thing I'd tell them is "Get some binoculars." If you play tennis, you get a tennis racquet. If
you go skiing, you get skis. If you go birdwatching, you get binoculars.

PHARMACIST: "Enjoy watching the birds, and don't be intimidated."

HERBALIST: Sometimes I hear a kind of contempt for people who enjoy birds only in the backyard, as if they weren't real birdwatchers.

ASTRONOMER: Lillian and I have found that some people tend to make a hierarchy out of different ways of watching birds. But there is no hierarchy. There are various areas and ways that people enjoy birds, and we're all under the same tent. It isn't something at the top and something at the bottom.

PHARMACIST: It's a sphere. It's not a ladder.

ASTRONOMER: We always talk about cooperation, not competition. We're getting the language of hierarchy out of our language in referring to birdwatching.

PHARMACIST: And we use the words birdwatching and birding interchangeably. We feel that people are participating in both activities in the enjoyment of watching birds, and both those terms describe that, even though some people want to split them and make a lot of different definitions. We're all under one big tent!

HERBALIST: Yes, right. With the birds!
PHARMACIST: That's right.

ASTRONOMER: And we have one thing in common.

We all love birds.

#11

JOSEPH: Do you know Anne Hoysi? She works in a factory where I work and I gave her a box that I had made, a box containing a picture of a dog, a young girl, skyscrapers, a dark blue night sky, Lauren Bacall behind a glass frame, a ball and I think she may have liked it, although, the truth is she has hardly noticed me. Before or since. She gave me a Christmas card which I have saved in a special place and I take it out from time to time to look at it because she was important to me and her card is signed, you see, it is signed "Anne (tester) (Allied)"- tester in parentheses, and Allied in parentheses, because, you see, she thought she needed to identify herself to me. She thought our friendship was so insignificant, that I wouldn't know who she was unless she reminded me that she was a tester in the factory at Allied where we worked. Her Christmas card was a sort of business Christmas card that's how I guess she thought of it, but to me ... I've saved it all these years and I take it out from time to time – not just on Christmas – to look at it; to remember her.
THE ASTRONOMER: One time, long ago, not far from here, the poet Simonides was gathered with his friends for dinner at a palace in the hills across this valley. Simonides stepped outside onto the terrace for a moment for a breath of air, and in that moment an earthquake shook the villa and brought it to the ground. All Simonides’ friends were crushed to death, their bodies mangled and torn apart, not even their own families could recognize them.

But Simonides could picture in his mind’s eye just where each one of his friends had been sitting, and as he recalled them one by one their bodies could be pulled out from the rubble and identified. And from this moment came the beginning of mankind’s desire to remember, exactly, how the world has been at one moment or another.

And so Simonides instructed his friends how to build their own palaces of memory, how to build each room, how to furnish these rooms with the faces and figures of their friends, events of their lives, their treasures, books, poems, each room given things of singular beauty or distinctive ugliness, to make them vivid unforgettable memories; disfigured, faces splashed with paint or stained
with blood - each moment suspended in this geometry of memory, thought and feeling.

#21

JOSEPH: I work in the basement. That’s where I keep all my materials for my work. And I think: What am I doing? I’ve lost my way, why don’t I give it up? There are times I get so lost, I don’t know what to do. I’ve gone so deep, so far. I don’t know if I’ll ever find my way out again. And then: what’s the point? Is this useful? Does anyone care? I get up in the morning — some days I just weep and weep. Is everything I do just written on water? But what else can I do? Just because another artist is incredibly famous doesn’t mean his work is destined to fall into oblivion in another generation and my work will endure. Is this any way to spend a life? I’m living my life in a basement.

GORKY: I was born Vosdanik Adolian at the turn of the last century in Khorkom, a now destroyed village in the western Armenian province of Van, part of the Ottoman Empire. I didn’t speak until I was 6. My father left my mother, Shushan, and her children to find work in America, promising to send money so they could join him, which he never did.
After the siege of Van City by the Turks, with my family I fled the Turkish slaughter of Armenians by trekking east. My mother had already endured unspeakable horrors. Years earlier, her father, a priest, had been killed and his body nailed to the door of his church, and she had been forced by the Turks to watch her previous husband murdered. Now she starved herself to give her children what little food there was on the long march. Broken and impoverished, she died, while I was by her side.

Where am I now? My studio has burned down with most of my work still in it. An operation for rectal cancer has forced me to use a colostomy bag. I am a fastidious man. I find this unbearable. My wife has run off with Matta. I have broken my neck and my painting arm in an automobile crash. I don’t sleep well and I have headaches. I pushed my wife down the stairs in a rage when I was drunk. Now she is gone.

And I have nothing left but to hang myself.

#19

MOTHER: Joseph?

JOSEPH: Yes?

MOTHER: What is this you’ve left on the kitchen table?
JOSEPH: Oh. Have I left something?

MOTHER: You’re not a child.

JOSEPH: No.

MOTHER: And yet it seems ... you leave things on the table, you leave things on the chairs, you leave things on the cabinet, you leave things on the floor.

JOSEPH: I’m sorry, mother.

MOTHER: And what? Is the faucet fixed? Have you fixed it? Or have you called the plumber? I will be right if I blame you for everything.

JOSEPH: I’m sorry, mother.

MOTHER: And do I not always do everything for you? Here. I’ve read the newspaper for you and I have clipped out the articles you will want to see.

JUDY HOLLIDAY’S GONE AND BROADWAY WEEPS

SEA SHELL MINIATURES STILL HOLD OLD CHARMS

PAN AM HELIPORT TO OPEN

JOSEPH: Judy Holliday is gone? Has she died?

MOTHER: Yes.

JOSEPH: Oh. Sometimes a person will wonder: what does art matter compared with the sad prospect of a life unlived? Lus comes down stairs.

#24
JOSEPH: Robert, are you asleep? Are you asleep? I've brought you some things. You see: a metal ring, a piece of string, a cork ball, a wooden dowel, a clock face, a little box. Robert: Now then, don't leave me, Robert. Who will I care for? Who will I give things to? Who will talk to me?

Because we've had a lifetime together, without you, our lifetime is gone.

HERBALIST: Do you come back often?

JOSEPH: No. I've only come back for the funeral.

HERBALIST: I see.

JOSEPH: Otherwise, I haven't been back since my father died when I was seven.

HERBALIST: So young!

JOSEPH: And that was when we moved and we left a good many things behind in the attic. But otherwise I haven't missed things so much. The front yard, which sloped down from the front of the house toward the corner. And the big tree in the front yard. I've never had a fireplace since that time. I would like to have a fireplace. Otherwise I haven't missed anything except my father.

HERBALIST: You miss him.

JOSEPH: Oh, yes. After he died our lives were never the same again.
JOSEPH: The fact is, of course, I am not a good prospect for you. I am too old for you.

LEILA: I don't think so.

JOSEPH: I am twice your age.

LEILA: Well, more than twice my age.

JOSEPH: You see.

LEILA: No, I don't.

JOSEPH: I will be decrepit and whatnot while you are still just beginning your life.

LEILA: I'd like to begin it with you. The only thing I regret is that you won't live forever, because I will miss you.

JOSEPH: A girl like you, anything is possible for your life.

LEILA: I don't think so.

JOSEPH: Yes. For you it is. A life of possibility.

LEILA: Then I'd like to be with you.

JOSEPH: You can always be with me, the way you are with Bleecker Street or Bank Street, Broadway south of Houston, those shop windows, Debussy, Mallarme, Fanelli's on the corner of Prince and Mercer, the little store nearby where you can find star fish, butterflies in little boxes, driftwood and in the antiques store - the things from Asia;
inlaid wood, a thousand little drawers. You have a good
sense of mortality in these streets. Stopping in the cafes,
looking at the light on the buildings in the late afternoon
when it is already nighttime down below. Lights coming on in
the shops and still afternoon in the sky above. This is how I
spend my time. I can see it again and again and never grow
tired of it.

The fact is, I've spent my life looking for true
love and never found it.

LEILA: I thought you had.

JOSEPH: Have I?

L77

Yes.

End/Exit

P19: Birds (red crow)
S22: Gym (red crow)
L77.5

S23: Gym fade off close of
L77.8

L77 door exit
S24: Bubble
APPENDIX V:
Director Power Point Presentation/Concept
(As presented to the Hotel Cassiopeia Design Team on 10 October 2008)
A Direction in Which to Explore

Theatre’s transcendental boundaries of the Traditional, The Prescribed, the Academic

Theatre: process, not product

Transformative Teaching

Becoming a Collaborative Auteur

Via Negativa

Yes, and ...

Actor / Audience Relationship

And much MUCH more ...

Everything listed above is a point of departure ... our exploration sets itself in refrain from the wind that rebuffs our sails.

Beginning: An Outline

The Crux of Exploration

Jerzy Grotowski and The Poor Theatre

- Towards a Poor Theatre
- Actor / Audience Relationship
- Physical Action

Charles L. Mee and Hotel Cassiopeia

- Re-Making Project
- Singular, Stand-alone etudes; Non-linear Structure & Narrative
- Music
- Art History

Joseph Cornell

- Found Art, Object Creation
- Dancing in a Childhood Dreamscape
- Surrealism
Towards a Poor Theatre
- Via Negativa
- Actor / Audience Relationship
- Physical Action

"The education of an actor in our theatre is not a matter of teaching him something; we attempt to eliminate his organism's resistance to this psychic process. ... Ours then is a via negativa – not a collection of skills but an eradication of blocks." - Grotowski

"... the number of definitions of theatre is practically unlimited. To escape from this vicious circle one must without doubt eliminate, not add. That is, one must ask oneself what is indispensable to theatre. Let's see.
Can the theatre exist without costumes and sets? Yes, it can.
Can it exist without music to accompany the plot? Yes.
Can it exist without lighting effects? Of course.
And without text? Yes ...." - Grotowski

"Can the theatre exist without an audience? At least one spectator is need to make it a performance. So we are left with the actor and the spectator. We can thus define the theatre as 'what takes place between spectator and actor'"
“Our productions are detailed investigations of the actor-audience relationship. That is, we consider the personal and scenic technique of the actor as the core of theatre art.” – Grotowski

“The eliminations of stage-auditorium dichotomy is not the important thing ... The essential concern is finding the proper spectator-actor relationship for each type of performance and embodying the decision in physical arrangements.” – Grotowski

It is imperative that our production of Hotel Cassiopeia refrain from defining the actor/audience relationship. Meaning, there should be no barrier from the audience space and the acting space. There is no forth wall, no proscenium arch or drop cloth that insinuates that the audience can comfortably function as observer. Upon entering the theatrical space, that audience becomes a part of the show.

Physical Action

Much of Grotowski’s theory focuses on the actor and his body. It is therefore important that we address the set, costuming, and other pertinent theatrical constructions to function properly with the body, so that emphasis is not focused elsewhere.
- Re-Making Project
- Singular, Stand-alone etudes; Non-linear Structure & Narrative
- Music
- Art History

“Please feel free to take the plays from this website and use them freely as a resource for your own work. That is to say, don’t just make some cuts or rewrite a few passages or re-arrange them or put in a few texts that you like better, but pillage the plays as I have pillaged the structures and contents of the plays of Euripides and Brecht and stuff out of Soap Opera Digest and the evening news and the internet, and build your own, entirely new, piece—and then, please, put your own name to the work that results.” – Charles Mee

We cannot be afraid to explore this offer. In fact, I insist we explore this offer.
Non-linear structure: Let’s not look for a structure to embody.

Episodic etudes: Focus should be placed on the individual etudes, above all. The overarching theme will be discovered through the actor’s exploration and embodiment of the text, physically.

Poetic Text, Language: The text is only a point of departure.

Song, Music: Song and music must come from the performer, not recordings, unless attached to film work.

Film: Film will be explored aside from the required video clips provided in the script.

Art: The images provided in the script are brilliant points of departure, what else strikes our interests? How can we incorporate the image with the actor’s movements, rather than provide a slide show?

- Found Art, Object Creation
- Dancing in a Childhood Dreamscape
- Surrealism
“His boxes are filled with seemingly unrelated objects: a Medici Prince and a marble, a map of the moon and a cork, a clay pipe, a piece of coral, and a champagne glass; a picture of Cleopatra, clear glass crystals, and a German coin.”

Joseph Cornell was, above all, a collector “of unwanted things, of items related to ‘having’ only in the passive voice and past tense. Neither Have nor Have-Nots. stuffed parrots, dolls, and colored bottles are never subjects, only objects, of desire, until they become objects of desire forgotten (in the attic, the garage, the garbage dump). Fulfillment of desire often cancels desire. Have have, then discard, what they have — their stuff — when desire eventually cools. At which point they direct desire at more stuff to acquire and discard. A Have's desire is portable, transferable, perhaps fickle, and even (from an angle worth considering) heartless” (Andersen 420).

“In his journals, Joseph Cornell records four influences on his philosophy of dreaming: Rene Descartes, Blaise Pascal, Sigmund Freud, and Nikolai Gogol. While he was moved by the metaphysical and even mystical beliefs of Pascal and Descartes, he was later drawn to Freud, a favorite of the Surrealists. Toward the end of his life, he was touched by the providential view of dreams expressed by Gogol in a letter.”

Joseph Cornell is said to have enjoyed children’s responses to his work best, perhaps because nothing prepares one for viewing a Cornell box, other than paying attention to one's dreams.
Surrealism: A 20th-century literary and artistic movement that attempts to express the workings of the subconscious.

Surrealist works feature the element of surprise, unexpected juxtapositions and non sequitur; however, many Surrealist artists and writers regard their work as an expression of the philosophical movement first and foremost, with the works being an artifact. Leader André Breton was explicit in his assertion that Surrealism was above all a revolutionary movement. Surrealism developed out of the Dada activities of World War I and the most important center of the movement was Paris. From the 1920s on, the movement spread around the globe, eventually affecting the visual arts, literature, film, and music, of many countries and languages, as well as political thought and practice, and philosophy and social theory.

Important Questions, Difficult Answers:

What have I been seeing as I approach this play?

What have I been hearing?

What have I been dreaming?
Music
Merry Macs "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles"
Smile - Chaplin by Nat King Cole
Moonlight Serenade By The Glenn Miller Orchestra
Kathleen Ferrier - Where'er you walk
Cole Porter – Every time We Say Goodbye

Sounds
Fingers sliding on the rim of crystal.
Sand swept across the floor.
Bicycle Bells
Harp, Piano, Xylophone, Cello

It is important that all music be sung and played live, or a possible recording that is played on a phonograph by one of the performers.
Hotel Cassiopeia – Characters

Joseph Cornell

Cornell’s Brother, Robert

Marcel Duchamp

Arshile Gorky

Cornell’s Mother

Roberto Matta

Lauren Bacall

The Cornell Family

Historical Figures
Waitress: Sultry, New Yorker, Swift, Slightly Sweet, yet Slightly Offensive.

The Astronomer:

The Herbalist: Alice and Wonderland: Mad Hatter, The Hair, and the Mouse

The Pharmacist:

Ballerina: Flowing, yet rigid, soft, delicate, childlike, bending

Allegra: Ignorant, center of attention

Marianne: nude, sultry, provocative

The Girl: small, confused, riding a tricycle.

The Cork Maker: Pensive,

Leila: Angelic, Cherub
What have I been dreaming?

A bed in the bottom of a boat, surrounded by sand floating on a gigantic glass coffee table.

Flowing gossamer suspended from tree branches, dancing in the wind, shadows of people running in and out of the yards of white cloth. Sunshine through tree leaves.

How much do we allow our own dreams to influence this production?
APPENDIX VI:
*Hotel Cassiopeia* Production Guide/Play Bill
Department of Theatre
MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Theatre is committed to developing passionate, creative thinkers with artistic vision through a program of study that emphasizes the interplay between critical thinking and artistic practice.

• We situate ourselves within a strong liberal arts tradition, celebrate its interdisciplinary resources, and encourage multiple connections to our surrounding communities.

• We enable and require our students to study, test and explore theatrical practice, cultural contexts, and the ethical and social concerns of art makers in a plural and global society.

• We are committed to helping our students identify and develop their own personal strengths, provide them with the tools to realize their potential, and embrace the challenges of independent thinking, global awareness, and artistic and scholarly passion.

Adopted 8/29/00

Department of Theatre • 112 Hiestand Hall
513-529-3053
For updated information on the season or to view this program guide visit:
www.marin.edu/theatre

School of Fine Arts
www.arts.marin.edu

Click "Curricular Connections" for more information about this and other SFA events

Miami University Theatre Season 2008-09

ON THE MAINSTAGE (GATES-ABEGGLEN THEATRE)

Ohio State Murders
by Adrienne Kennedy
Directed by Paul K. Bryant-Jackson
October 8-12, 2008

The 10th Annual John D. Yeck Production

The Taming of the Shrew
A Jingju version of Shakespeare's comedy
Adapted and directed by Hsing-lin Tracy Chung
November 20-22, Dec. 4-7 2008

Urinetown: The Musical
Music by Mark Hollmann, Book by Greg Kotis,
Lyrics by Greg Kotis and Mark Hollmann
Directed by Suann Pollock
Music Direction by Ben Smolder
April 9-11, 16-19 2009

ON THE SECONDSTAGE (STUDIO 88)

Double-Take!
A night of plays featuring

The Lover
by Harold Pinter
Directed by Rosemary Marston

The American Century
by Murphy Guyer
Directed by Monica Morse
October 29- Nov. 2 2008

Hotel Cassiopeia
by Charles Mee
Directed by Adron Farris
February 18-22 2009

THEATRE ETIQUETTE

• Please turn off all cell phones and pagers.
• The taking of photographs or use of recording devices is strictly prohibited.
• If you have candy to unwrap, kindly do so before the show begins.
• Please note the closest exit in case of an emergency.
• Please discard all food and drinks before entering the theatre.
• As a courtesy to the audience and performers, latecomers will not be seated until an appropriate break in the performance.
Miami University Department of Theatre presents

Hotel Cassiopeia
By Charles Mee

Directed by                Adron Farris
Advised by                Paul K. Jackson
Scenic Design             Gion DeFrancesco
Costume Design            Rachel ConawayBennison
                          Gion DeFrancesco and Meggan Peters
Lighting Design           Michael Warden
                          Jay S. Rozema
Sound Design              Jay S. Rozema
Technical Direction       Steve Pauna
Vocal Coach               Julia Guichard
Choreography              Ashley Goos
Production Dramaturg      Youngi Jeon

Please watch your step on the way out of the theatre as there may be
water spilled during the production.

Hotel Cassiopeia will be presented without an intermission

Join us for a pre-show gallery talk by Professor Ellen Adams
from the Art Department on the works of Joseph Cornell,
Thursday, February 19, 6:30 – 7:30 pm at the Miami University Art Museum.

World premier in the 2006 Humana Festival of New American Play at
ACTORS THEATRE OF LOUISVILLE
Created by the SITI Company, directed by Anne Bogart

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Hotel Cassiopeia
by Charles Mee

CAST LIST

Joseph ........................................ Jake Carr*
Mother, Waitress ............................... Lizz Keo*
Allegra, Girl, (Lauren) ...................... Taylor Fenderbosch*
Leila, Marianne ............................... Olivia Ifergan
Astronomer, Matta ............................. Jon Kovach
Pharmacist, Gorky ............................ Ryan Oder*
Herbalist, Duchamp ........................... Grant Johnson
Ballerina, Cork maker ......................... Natalie Conti

PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Manager ............................... Kaleigh-Brooke Dillingham
Asst. Stage Manager ......................... Melissa Nye
Assistant Property Master .................... Val Stone*
Deck Crew .................................... Alex Homer
Property Run Crew ............................ Ben Thomas
Wardrobe Supervisor ................. Charlotte Stauffer
Wardrobe Crew ................................. Heather Boddy,
                                            Amanda Bouffard,
                                            Sha Toree Crutchfield,
                                            Leland Vogel
Make-up Crew ................................. Caroline David*
Light Board Operator ..................... Mel Brenner*
Sound Board Operator ..................... Lawton Lovely

*denotes member of Alpha Xi Omega, the National Theatre Honor Society
ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Chuck Mee has written *bobrauschenbergamerica*, *Wintertime*, *Belle Epoque*, *Vienna: Lusthaus*, *Snow in June*, *A Perfect Wedding*, *Limonade tous les Jours*, and a number of other plays in addition to his work inspired by Greek plays: *Big Love*, *True Love*, *Orestes 2.0*, *Trojan Women*, *A Love Story* and others. His plays have been performed at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, American Repertory Theatre, New York Theatre Workshop, the Public Theatre, Lincoln Center, the Humana Festival, Steppenwolf, and other places in the United States as well as in Berlin, Paris, Amsterdam, Brussels, Vienna, Istanbul and elsewhere. He graduated from Harvard College in 1960.

As an editor, Charles Mee served as editor-in-chief of *Rebus* for fifteen years, where he was a founding editor of the University of California, Berkeley Wellness Letter and of the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions Medical Letter, of the Wellness Reference Book Division, and of the Hopkins Reference Book Division. He was the founding editor, also, of the Johns Hopkins White Papers.

He was previously the editor-in-chief of *Horizon Magazine*, a hard-cover magazine of history, art, archaeology, and the other liberal arts, as well as the editor of a number of one-volume and multi-volume history and art books. Mees is a Life Trustee of the Washington policy think tank, the Urban Institute. His complete works are available on the internet at http://www.charlesmee.org/.

His work is made possible by the support of Jeanne Donovan Fisher and Richard B. Fisher.
DIRECTOR’S NOTES
by Adron Farris

My initial impulse to direct Hotel Cassiopeia is deeply rooted in my desire to experiment with and explore new approaches to theatre, as well as how we as theatre artists create or conceive our work (especially within the academic setting). In fact, it became my main objective to seek a script that abandoned traditional approaches with a text and one that would instead allow focus to be placed on theater’s experimental possibilities. I had already been accustomed to the work of Jerzy Grotowski before I selected Hotel Cassiopeia and I had always dreamed of exploring the Polish director’s theatrical trainings and methodologies more deeply. Luckily, over the past summer, this dream became a reality.

In July of 2008, I had the opportunity to study abroad at the Grotowski Institute in Wroclaw, Poland with several international artists whose work explores or continues to explore the performance methodologies left behind by Jerzy Grotowski. The members of the Atelier and I focused on discovering and perfecting the performer’s craft; specifically the ability to suspend one’s physical expressions in time. The work sessions consisted of rigorous physical explorations. Throughout the series of work sessions it became our primary objective to awaken every ounce of our bodies, to open our inner core (life) and allow it to lead us on the stage as opposed to relying solely on a rudimentary text to shape and condition our art.

Pulling heavily from this momentous experience, I and the company of Hotel Cassiopeia made it our intention to conceive and produce this production of Hotel Cassiopeia through a similar lens. As a collective, we have made it our endeavor to shape and mold our conception of Charles Mee’s Hotel Cassiopeia via an in-depth exploration of the body and mind and how that transforms the theatrical space we perform within. From this recognition and awareness of the “self” we then began to build upon the characterizations housed within Mee’s script.

Mee’s script is not, by any means, your traditional theatrical experience. The play’s boundaries stretch beyond the unusual—the prescribed. It begs its creators, as well as its audience members, to approach the performance differently than one would with, say a Cole Porter musical or an Arthur Miller play. That is to say that the performer/audience relationship is heightened. In fact, we have made it our effort to make the audience an integral part of this performance.

Mee, in an effort to construct his theatrical homage to the late American collage artist, Joseph Cornell, made it a point to refrain from adhering to any semblance of normalcy. Indeed, why should he? The playwright offers his work as a springboard into further exploration. He writes on his website, http://www.charlesmee.org/: “Please feel free to take the plays from this website and use them freely as a resource for your own work: that is to say, don’t just make some cuts or rewrite a few passages … but pillage the plays as I have pillaged the structures and contents of the plays of Euripides and Brecht and stuff out of Soap Opera Digest…and build your own, entirely new, piece.” We have attempted, however small in margin, to do just that.
Joseph and the characters filtering in and out of this play are based on actual people; prominent figures recorded in *American Art and Literature*, the passerby on the street, familial figures, and, most importantly, the embodiment of Joseph Cornell's artwork and dreamscapes. We have not attempted to capture historical accuracy, but rather the "essence" of these historical figures and the period(s) of time where interplay was initiated with Joseph Cornell. We have attempted to excavate the spirit held captive within the multiple box assemblages of Joseph Cornell, as they speak of a "time" long forgotten, a "time" that only Cornell knew how to capture in his artwork.

We hope, dear audience members, that you will join us in our quest to uncover these special moments in time, to relish them, to remember them with fondness, to live them—at least for this brief moment in our own "time"—again.

Together, we are setting sail on a journey. Are you on or off the boat?

"No-one else in the world, to my knowledge, no-one since Stanislavski has investigated the nature of acting, its phenomenon, its meaning, the nature and science of its mental physical-emotion process as deeply and completely as Grotowski."

Peter Brook, Preface of "Towards A Poor Theatre"

**Jerzy Grotowski** (1933–1999) was a Polish theatre director and theatrical theorist. He was a founder and director of the small but influential Theatre Laboratory. He is famous as an innovator of "Poor Theatre," which eliminates all nonessentials, i.e., costumes, sound effects, makeup, sets, lighting, and any strictly defined playing area, in an effort to redefine the relation between actors and the audience. According to him, the own power of the theatre comes from the "actor-spectator relationship of perceptual, direct, and live communion". The realization of "Poor Theatre", after all, can be accomplished by returning the theatre to its root of the act of theatre: actors in front of spectators. Since Grotowski thought the theatre can exist only by depending on actors’ acting, the education of an actor is most important to him. Therefore, his acting training was severe, but he didn’t demand his actors to learn many techniques. Instead, he asked his actors to liberate themselves from their own bodies. He believed that actors’ impulses and actions can, and should, be concurrent if they have eliminated their organism’s resistance to the psychic process. That is, "the body vanished, burns, and the spectator sees only a series of visible impulses". His acting method can be said, in a short, as "via negativa"—not a collection of skills but an eradication of blocks. Best known among the Laboratory Theatre's efforts were Wyspiański's *Akropolis*, Byron's Cain, Caldonón's *The Constant Prince*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, and an original piece, *Apocalypsis cum Figuris*. 
DRAMATURGY NOTES
by Youngji Jeon

Joseph Cornell (1903–1972) was an American artist and sculptor, mainly famous for his highly distinctive 'boxes' in assemblage. He was born in Nyack, New York to Joseph Cornell, a designer and merchant of textiles, and Helen Ten Broeck Storms Cornell, who had trained as a kindergarten teacher. The Cornells had four children: Joseph, Elizabeth (b. 1905), Helen (b. 1906), and Robert (b. 1910). After Cornell's father died in 1917, the Cornells moved to the borough of Queens in New York City. And there Joseph Cornell lived for most of his life except for the three and a half years he spent at Philips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts. In the wooden frame house on Utopia Parkway in a working-class area in Flushing, Queens, he devoted his life to caring for his younger brother Robert, who suffered from cerebral palsy.

Cornell's most characteristic art works were boxed assemblages created from found objects. He was fascinated by fragments of once beautiful and precious objects, so his boxes were usually filled with pocket watches, coiled springs, maps of the stars, forest thimbles, parrots, seashells, broken glass, children's alphabet blocks, brightly colored balls, soap bubbles, whales' teeth, a colored lithograph of the moon in the night sky, star fish and so on. He could create poetry with these objects. His boxes relied on the surrealist technique of irrational juxtaposition, and on the evocation of nostalgia for their appeal. However, Cornell never regarded himself as a surrealist; he disavowed the surrealists' "black magic," claiming that he only wished to make "white magic" with his art. In his "white magic," there are numerous stories around dream and reality, loneliness, relation, heartbreak and true love.

The Hotel Boxes

In 1952, Joseph Cornell started to work on a new series of boxes—the Hotel boxes. For years he had been collecting turn-of-the-century guidebooks to European cities, many of which included advertisements for hotels. Cornell clipped out the ads and filed them away. Cornell's boxes are all recognizable by ads, which he glued onto the inside back walls of the boxes, turning them into Cubist collages. He often baked the boxes in the kitchen oven or left them out in the sun to give their white walls a vintage look, and in the best pieces the walls themselves—with their cracked and peeling paint—give off a strong whiff of the past. One doesn't have to look too far to understand the source of Cornell's hotels, a theme that encapsulates his passions more than any other. Cornell, an armchair traveler, his head filled with dreams of distance places, really did roam far in his thoughts. In his mind's eye, he followed peripatetic Romantic ballerinas on world tours and envisioned them in the cramped, meagerly furnished rooms where they rested overnight. In his Hotels, Cornell gets to spend the night with them and partake of the titillating anonymity of the back streets. But his Hotel boxes are not strictly sensual places. They're also spiritual places. Often haunted by a ghostly reproduction of an almond-eyed girl from a painting by Parmigianino, they allow Cornell to gather his visions of feminine beauty into a place that exists on no map. For the journey he is making is not merely between one city and the next. The journey is also between life and the next station that awaits us, and in his Hotels he guarantees his beloveds a life that outlasts mere flesh.

Deborah Solomon, <Utopia Parkway>
Joseph Cornell Timeline

1903  Joseph Cornell was born on Christmas Eve, in Nyack, New York
1910  Joseph’s brother Robert was born with an invalid suffering from cerebral palsy.
1917  Joseph’s father died after a long illness.
1918 – 1921  Cornell attended Phillips Academy Andover, although he did not graduate.
1922 – 1928  Cornell worked as a wholesale fabric salesman to support his family.
1929  The family moved to Utopia Parkway, in Flushing, where Joseph lived for the rest of his life.
1931  Cornell made his first work of art after stumbling upon a piece by Max Ernst in the Julien Levy Gallery.
1932  Cornell made his debut by “Surréalisme” exhibition at the Julien Levy Galley, along with Ernst, Man Ray, Pierre Roy, Picasso, Marcel Duchamp, and Jean Cocteau.
1933  Cornell constructed his very first shadow box, as he once called his Untitled (Soap Bubble Set), the first in a long series of the same name.
1936  Cornell made his first film montage, Rose Hobart, entirely from splicing together existing film stock and mostly derived from a 1931 ‘B’ film entitled East of Borneo.
1938  Cornell made his European debut when his work was taped for another now-legendary show, the International Exposition of Surrealism at the Galerie Beaux-Arts in Paris.
1940  The Romantic ballet became a key theme in Cornell’s work with the introduction of Pavel Tchelitchew (the most prominent of the Neo-Romantics) and began work on a Swan Lake shadow box, the first in a series he would continue for about five years.
1942  European artists including Marcel Duchamp, Roberto Matta Echauren (Matta) and Salvador Dali came to New York amidst the general exodus of artists and intellectuals and became Cornell’s friends. He made his extraordinary Medici Sot Machine—the best box from 1942 and perhaps his greatest ever.
1943  Cornell worked for a defense business, Allied Control Company. Cornell’s obsession with little girls would find its most memorable artistic expression in a box called Bébé Marie, taken its name from the pretty, apple-cheeked Victorian doll.
1946  Cornell had the exhibition of “Romantic museum at the Hugo Gallery. Portraits of Women by Joseph Cornell”, which contains one of his most ambitious works, Penny Arcade Portrait of Lauren Bacall.
1949  Cornell had the exhibition of “Aviary by Joseph Cornell” at the Egan Gallery, showing the twenty-six bird boxes, nearly all of them made in 1949. Cornell joined an adventurous new gallery, the Egan Gallery, and there he exhibited the Aviaries, which marked a sharp break from his earlier work: from Surrealism to Abstract Expressionism.
1952  Cornell started to work on a new series of boxes — Emily Dickinson’s bedroom in Amherst (Toward the Blue Peninsula) and the Hotel boxes.
1956  Cornell met Allegra Kent, a ballerina while he searched for actresses to appear in his films.
1957  Cornell had the last show at the gallery at the Stable Gallery. There exhibited the Bleriot Boxes, the Sand Fountain boxes, and the Space Object boxes (also known as the Celestial Navigations), which are Cornell’s final series of boxes.
1962  Cornell restarted his collage works, but they were different from his previous works in that the sixties collages were photocollages, whereas the earlier ones have the muted tones of a page from an old book.
1965  Cornell’s brother, Robert died.
1966  Cornell’s mother died.
1967  Cornell was belatedly honored with two large and important retrospective exhibitions, one in California (Pasadena Art Museum), the other in New York (Guggenheim Museum)
1971  Cornell met Leila Hardly, at that time a twice-divorced travel writer and developed a close, platonic relationship with her.
1972  He opened a show only for children, “A Joseph Cornell Exhibition for Children”, which had been his dream for a long time. Joseph Cornell died of apparent heart failure on 29 December 1972
SCENIC APPROACH  
by Gion DeFrancesco

Joseph Cornell was a collector. His artwork, based in collage, showcased the variety of things that caught his fancy. He used what was available to him, creating work united around theme without artifice or pretension. In approaching this play, I wanted the scene design to be true to this central idea while embracing the idea of “poor theatre.”

The play itself demands very little—some space and a place to project images. Since Adron was seeing this as a piece dominated by movement, I wanted to give him the maximum amount of space. I also wanted to use a lot of found objects and make them into art. The audience is greeted by different collections of seating styles, and as they choose a seat become part of a collection of sorts. Over head, pieces from our fall studio production are reassembled to create a frame over the space (Cornell always built his own frames). Elements of Cornell collages also appear—drawers, branches, maps and star charts all have their place.

The other designers also had a say in how the space would be shaped. Rachel chose the costume that would live on the dress form, and to actually make the piece into a character. Her eye for detail also informed the way the set was dressed. Mike brought in the idea of adding practical lighting and using light bulbs to represent stars. And much of the sound comes from objects that are part of the scenery.

LIGHTING DESIGN  
by Michael Warden

What do you see when you dream? Are you a dreamer with grand schemes and epic battles? Are you a dreamer who sees everything with pinpoint accuracy? Are you a dreamer with waves of color and feelings and amorphous spaces? Can you always distinguish between your dreams and reality? I felt that it was important to bring both the essence of dreams and the need for everything to come from within and be purposeful together. Through color I managed to capture the feel of two of Joseph Cornell’s works and encompass the action on stage with his dreams, surrounding the mix of dream and reality that Mee gives us to play with. The lighting had to feel fairly light and playful at the same time in order to match the process of the show and the characters playing with each other. This isn’t a world of nightmares. This is a land of imagination and memory. It’s a land where the wisps of other dreams and other realities are always hovering on the periphery, waiting to be pulled in and attended to. This is the mind of a brilliant man.
COSTUME DESIGN
by Rachel Conaway-Bennison

Cockatrices, jars, butterflies and corks are just some of the found objects that Joseph Cornell would add to his boxes to give them flickers of life, perfumes of their memories. A handkerchief lost on the beach, a rusted bike bell left in the rain; these things were their own living, breathing entities to Joseph.

In my design, Joseph is surrounded by his desires and his insecurities through the embodiment of his artwork. The other characters tease him, seduce him, and lure him into his thoughts, away from the harsh realities of life with his mother and brother. Even his artistic acquaintances, Gorky, Matta, and Duchamp are fleeting and too abrasive for Joseph to comfortably socialize with, thereby driving him farther into his fancies. The imaginary trio (the Herbalist, the Astronomer, and the Pharmacist) are a direct result of my research on such pieces as *The Pharmacy*, *Verso of Cassiopeia I*, and *Habitat Group for a Shooting Gallery*. They are equipped with spying lenses (such as the monocle and telescope) to peer in at the reclusive boy beneath the aging exterior.

The women are figments as well since most of the women portrayed in this play he never actually meets, but simply adores from afar. However, unlike the imaginary trio, their specific pieces identify who they truly were (for example, Lauren’s long black gloves are similar to those actually worn by Lauren Bacall) while their palette is a reflection of his work. Legs drenched in color to draw his eyes but devoid of color where the heart is, the women he believes he knows so well are actually transparent images of who the real women really are.

The Ballerina especially is what Joseph has always searched for and seen in women: the innocent white of her tights, the flirtatiously full skirt, giggles and rosy cheeks, perfect little curls. And while she is the paradigm from which he carves all women, Leila, the woman stripped down to her bare legs with hair in loose tendrils is the woman Joseph finds when he’s forced to throw away all his preconceptions. When he makes the decision to see past the ballet points and youth and floating skirts, he finds that love can be experienced from up close, not only from afar.
WHO'S WHO IN THE COMPANY

Jake Carr (Joseph) is a senior theatre and psychology double major. Past productions at Miami include The Good Person of Szechwan, The Shadow Box, The Goat, Skirker, An Evening of One Act Plays, and most recently, a performance as a clown in The Taming of the Shrew. He is president of Walking Theatre Project, a campus activist theatre group aimed at addressing sociopolitical issues at Miami. Jake would like to thank his friends and family for traveling across the state to see him in his final collegiate play and all of the people at Miami who have helped to make his last four years as life-changing and exhilarating as they've been.

Gwyneth Conaway Bennison (Costume Designer) is a senior with a focus in costume design. She's gotten an honorable mention for the ACTF Region III Paper Projects award for costume design and has also won the competition twice. Before that, she was the assistant costume designer for Candide. This is her first full design opportunity at Miami.

Natalie Conti (Ballerina, Cork Maker) is a freshman dietetics major. Hotel Cassiopeia is her first acting role, and she hopes it won't be her last! Being a part of this production has opened her eyes. Because of this play, she feels more aware of herself. She hopes you, as viewers, leave the theatre feeling enlightened as well. As each of Cornell's works embodies a piece of his life, you get to see a living representation of the whole picture. Enjoy the show.

Gion De Francesco (Scene Designer) joined the faculty of Miami University in the fall of 2001 and teaches courses in scene design, design communication skills, scene painting and American musical theatre. He also designs scenery and serves as scenic charge artist for MU Theatre productions. Favorite designs at Miami include Pentecost, In Quest of Love, As Bees in Honey Drown, A View From the Bridge, and The Good Person of Setzuan. Regionally he has designed and painted at a number of theatres including Big River at the Gallery Players of Brooklyn, I Love You! You're Perfect! Now Change! at the Florida Repertory Theatre, and The Magic Flute at the Illinois Opera Theatre. His 2006 design for Ovation Theatre's production of The Little Foxes earned a Cincinnati Enquirer Acclaim Award.

Kaleigh-Brooke Dillingham (Stage Manager) is a sophomore theatre major. She most recently worked as the Assistant Stage Manager of Miami's production of Taming of the Shrew. Next on the agenda for Kaleigh-Brooke is being Assistant Props Master for Miami's production of Urinetown: the Musical. She would like to thank Adron for giving her the opportunity to work with Grotowski theatre and to her cast and production crew for making this show such a success. Kaleigh-Brooke would also like to thank her family and the Schmaltz family for their love and support.

Adron Farris (Director) is a second year graduate student in the Department of Theatre at Miami University. Over the past summer Adron worked abroad with members of the Grotowski Institute and several international artists' whose theatrical works and training disciplines explore the performance methodologies and practices left behind by the Polish director, Jerzy Grotowski. Adron aspires to continue his practical work and research into his doctoral degree after the completion of his thesis. He wishes to thank the faculty in the Department of Theatre for the chance to practice, explore, and experiment with Hotel Cassiopeia, as well as, all of the wonderful people who managed to find themselves involved with this unique performance experience. He would also like to thank Dr. Bill Doan for his help with the initial "kick start" into the exploration of this project and thank Dr. Paul Jackson for his guidance, spirit, and friendship in seeing that this project safely comes to its close.
Taylor Fenderbosch (Allegra, Lauren, Girl) is a senior theatre and english/lit major performing in her very first show at Miami. She has more frequently been found in the booth stage managing shows such as *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Trojan Women*. She would like to thank Adron for allowing her this incredible opportunity, her fellow actors for making it unforgettable, and her parents for trusting in her love of theatre. *There’s something about right now that’s perfect.*

Julia Guichard (Vocal Coach) is associate professor of theatre at Miami. In addition to serving as vocal coach during the production season, Julia teaches voice, speech and acting and is a certified teacher of the Alexander Technique. Julia is an active member of the Voice and Speech Trainer’s Association, serving as Production Editor for the *Voice and Speech Review* and also as a VASTA Fellow. Julia holds a BFA in acting from the Goodman School at DePaul University and an MFA from Penn State.

Olivia Ifergan (Leila, Marianne) is excited making her debut in Miami University theatre! Olivia is a junior theatre major at Miami. She would like to thank her loving family and friends for all their support, her roommates for allowing her to slack off on chores during the rehearsal period, and, of course, the most amazing cast, director, and stage managers ever. The Universe is made of you, and made of me, a family.

Paul K. Jackson (Advisor) is professor of theatre at Miami. Prior to coming to Miami, he was associate professor and chair at Spelman College. His theatre and performance interests center on the African Diaspora, post colonialism and issues of race, class, gender and sexuality. His work as a director mirrors these interests. In 2002, he directed Suzan-Lori Parks’ *Venus*. He is an active member of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education, the Black Theatre Network, and the Modern Language Association. He is the editor of *Blackstream*, a journal devoted to conference papers of the Black Theatre Association (ATHE). He is completing a study devoted to public space, resistance, performance and neo colonialism with urban geographer James Engstrom. Chapters have been presented at both ATHE and at The Association of American Geographers. One of his recent productions he directed at Miami University, *Bourbon at the Border* was selected for regional entry for the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival. Dr. Jackson was the director of Miami’s fall 2008 production of *Ohio State Murders*.

Youngji Jeon (Dramaturg) comes from Seoul, Korea and is a first year graduate student at Miami. She holds bachelor’s degree in history of art and archaeology from Seoul National University in Korea. She would like to thank Adron for this wonderful and insightful experience. She would also like to thank Dr. Jackson, Dr. Armstrong and Howard Blanning who always help her in many ways.

Grant Johnson (Herbalist, Duchamp) is a sophomore theatre major from Bellbrook, Ohio. Grant has been seen in 12 plays at Bellbrook High School, and on the Miami stage. Performances on the main stage at Miami include: Johnny Squarefoot in *Skriker*, and was in the ensemble of *The Ohio State Murders*. Grant is excited to be performing in Studio 88 in front of his friends, and family, and would like to thank Adron for this wonderful, challenging, and fun opportunity.

Lizz Keo (Waitress, Mother) is a senior theatre major from Columbus, Ohio. It has been an exciting four years for her and while she’s sad to leave her theatre family, she’s anxious to get out there and show them what she’s made of. Credits include: *The Taming of the Shrew: Jingju Style* (Old Pill Bottle), *The Conversion of Ka’ahumanu* (Hannah), and *Roméo and Juliet* (Lady Capulet). “Thank you to all who have made my past four years here unforgettable.”
Jon Kovach (Astronomer, Matta) is an off-campus freshman who is currently listed as an undeclared major, but Miami's theatre department is slowly turning him to the dark side. Jon holds a varsity letter for soccer and at his high school he played roles such as; Lumiere in Disney's Beauty and the Beast, Nephew Fred in A Christmas Carol, and John Brooke in Little Women. At Miami Jon participated this past fall as the man in The American Century and the milkman in The Lover. Jon would like to thank his family for their everlasting support.

Melissa Nye (Assistant Stage Manager) is a senior English education major and theatre minor. During her time at Miami, she worked on deck crew for The Shadow Box and The Skriker, and costume run crew for Candide. Last semester, she was Assistant Stage Manager for Ohio State Murders. About to graduate, she would like to thank her directors, professors, and fellow theatre students for all they have taught her.

Ryan Oder (Pharmacist, Gorky) is a senior at Miami. His past shows include: A View from the Bridge, The Good Person of Szechwan, Romeo and Juliet, Rhinoceros, Cloud Tectonics, or The American Century. Unfortunately, this is his last show with Miami as an undergrad, and what a way to go! He wants to thank Adron for letting him be a part of this experience in which he has learned so much and everyone at Miami, students and faculty, who believe in him and never let him settle. It's all happening.

Steve Pauna (Technical Direction) joined the department of theatre as faculty technical director in 2000 and has also served as department properties master since 2002. He is an active presenter at United States Institute for Theatre Technology national conventions and currently serves as secretary for the regional branch; USITT Ohio-Valley. He is also a participating member of the Popular Culture Association and the League of Historic American Theatres. Professional credits include the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park and five seasons of technical direction and/or scene design with the Porthouse Theatre Company, which performs on the grounds of the Blossom Music Center near Cleveland.

Meggn Peters (Costume Design Advisor) has served as Costume Studio Supervisor and Costume Designer for Miami's Dept. of Theatre since 1995. She has designed costumes for more than fifty musicals, plays, and operas for Miami and other area theaters. Her costume design credits range from Moliere's The Imaginary Invalid to the contemporary Broadway hit, Seussical, the Musical. She holds a BFA in Theatre from Miami, and is a member of USITT. Professional credits include work at La Commedia Dinner Theatre, Porthouse Theatre, and Glimmerglass Opera. She is the mother of 2 rock star sons, Jake and Nathan Witt, and mom-in-law to Linn, Jake's beautiful Norwegian bride.

Jay Rozema (Sound Design and Lighting Design Advisor) is an Assistant Professor of Theatre Lighting and Sound Design for Miami University. He has earned a Master of Fine Arts degree from The Florida State University School of Theatre and a BFA from the University of Arizona. Recent Miami productions Jay has designed lighting for were A View From the Bridge, Bourbon at the Border, and Trojan Women. He has designed the sound for shows such as Candide and Playboy of the Western World. Last year Jay received a Kennedy Center / American College Theatre Festival Certificate of Merit for the sound design of The Insanity of Mary Girard. Jay regularly teaches courses in Lighting and Sound Design, Stage Management, and Script Analysis.

Mike Warden (Lighting Designer) is, as you read this, a graduate of Miami University. He has now completed his undergrad in theater focusing in lighting and sound design with a minor in interdisciplinary studies through the Western College program. Previous work includes lighting design for Cloud Tectonics, and assistant work on The Skriker and Candide. He would like to thank Adron for the room to play around a little bit with this show, the department for helping him grow into the man he's become, and especially Jay and Gion for never really letting him get away with anything...and rightly so. He'd also like to thank his family for their unflinching support of his educational conquests. Mike intends to move to Chicago in the spring and tackle the outside world head on. To his families here at Miami: ...words cannot express my love.
COMPANY CREDITS

FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE

Artistic Director/Producer  Elizabeth Reitz Mullenix
Production Manager  Gion DeFrancesco
Technical Director  Steven Pauna
Scene Shop Supervisor  Tom Featherstone
Scene Shop Staff  Chrissy Alaimo, Jacob Carr,* Josh Clabaugh,* Kaleigh-Brooke Dillingham, Taylor Fenderbosch,* Caroline Kristoffersen, Alex Krusinski, Mark Roberts, Chris Taylor, Drew Turner
Scenery Construction  Phil Bauer, Kimberly Bega, Joel Franck, Zack Guiler,* Jesslyn Harris, Lauren Hehl, Linda Horner, Steven Kaminski, Erin Lann, Kristen LaViscount, Kathryn McCarthy, Melissa Nye, Brayton Orchard, Tamra Schiroky, Dale Sullivan, Stefanie Wagner,* Kristen Whaley, Annie Wilkins
Electrics Supervisor  Jay Rozema
Electrics Staff  Alex Bozworth, James Lees, Jonathan Maag, Andrew Thiele
Electrics Crew  Tommy DeSalvo, Michelle Fakler, Ben Hahn, Joseph Kinney, Matt Mitchkash, Laura Mock, Lys Olsom, Thomas Park, Elmer Joseph Smith, Stefanie Wagner,* Kathryn Wallrabenstein, Luo Wiejian
Property Master  Steven Pauna
Property Construction Crew  Adam Kezele, Christina Milianak, Laura Schleder,* Chelsea Skalski, Jacqueline Smith
Scenic Charge Artist  Gion DeFrancesco
Scene Painter  Jessica Winters
Costume Shop Supervisor  Meggan Peters
Costume Shop Staff  Courtney Bairas, Amelia Bergmann, Melanie Brenner,* Karli Erich, Anna Featherstone, Charlotte Stauuffer, Kat Taylor*
Costume Construction  Samantha Beskin, Katie Cole, Grace Czerniawski, Elissa Falconer, Meggan Farbinder, Heather Kenton, Alexandra Leach-Wick, Carolyn LeCompte, Rachel Momenee, Katy Perkins, Ashley Perry, Sarah Radis, Sarah Ramos, Sarah Rhein, Katherine Rohr, Zhong Ruohan, Mary Sackett, Tylers Schaller, Dale Sullivan, Desmond Thomas
House Managers  Mel Brenner,* John Crowley,* Stefanie Wagner*
Audience Development Crew  Grace Andrews, Andrew Bowman, Jonathan Brouse, Karli Erich, Alex Helton, Olivia Hergan, Eric Igel, Mandi Jarman, Kara Kendro, Adam Kezele, Laura Mock, Brittany Morgan, Lys Olsom, Colleen Payne, Laurel Roether, James Siegel, Kathryn Smith, Anna Turner, Lauren Whitehouse
Administrative Assistant  Karen Smith
Senior Accounting Assistant  Angela Clark
Student Office Assistant  Kelli Hughes
Student Production Assistants  Stefanie Wagner,* John Crowley*
Vocal Coach  Julia Guichard

FOR THE SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

Dean  James Lentini
Interim Associate Dean  Susan Ewing
Assistant Dean for Student Affairs  Rosalyn Erat Benson
Director of Diversity and Outreach  Clifton Mcnish
Assistant to the Dean for Operations and Finance  Connie Asher
Director of Integrated Programs and Arts Management  Susan Thomas
Manager of Marketing for Theatre and Music  Jeannie Harmeyer
Master Secretary  Pamela J. George
Don’t miss these upcoming events!

Visit www.arts.muohio.edu and click on e-VENTS to receive a bi-weekly newsletter with the latest up-to-date info on School of Arts upcoming events.

THEATRE

OUR NEXT SHOW...COMING SOON!

Urinetown, The Musical
Thursday, April 9 - Saturday, April 11, 8:00 pm
Thursday, April 16 - Saturday, April 18, 8:00 pm
Sunday, April 19, 2:00 pm
Gates-Abeglen Theatre
Tickets $9 Public, $8 Seniors, $6 Students/Youth
$3.50 Curricular discount

Musical by Mark Hollman, Book by Greg Kotis, Lyrics by Greg Kotis and Mark Hollman
Directed by Suann Pollack
Music direction by Ben Smoulder
Collaboration with the Department of Music

31st Annual Southwestern Ohio High School Jazz Festival
Sunday, March 1
7:30 pm, Gates-Abeglen Theatre
Free admission
Directed by Hal Melia

PERFORMING ARTS SERIES

Peking Acrobats
Tuesday, February 24
7:30 pm, Millett Hall
Tickets $12 Students/Youth, $23 Seniors, $24 Adults

Efe Baltacigil, cello & Miami University Symphony Orchestra
Friday, February 27
7:30 pm, Hall Auditorium
Tickets $5 Students/Youth, $9 Seniors, $10 Adults
Conducted by Ricardo Averbach
Collaboration with the Department of Music

ART

Miami University Department of Art
2009 Bicentennial Exhibition
Thursday, January 29 – Sunday, June 21
Miami University Art Museum

BFA Capstone Exhibition
Thursday, February 19 – Tuesday, March 3
Hiestand Hall, Hiestand Galleries

The 1878 McCullough Portraits by Miami Alumnus De Scott Evans
Thursday, February 26
4:00 pm, Miami University Art Museum

ARCHITECTURE

Film Seminar- ARC 404/504
Wednesday, February 18 - Friday, February 27
Alumni Hall, Cage Galleries

TICKETS
MU Box Office • Shriver Center, 529-3200
www.tickets.muohio.edu
APPENDIX VIII:
Production Photographs of Hotel Cassiopeia
(Photographs Taken by Charles Adron Farris, III)

Publicity Photo
Girl on Tricycle – Pre-Show
Pre-Show
Ballerina – Pre-Show
“Have You Got a Life?” – Joseph and the Waitress
“Then You Must Boil the Dish Towel” – Projection of Mother on Scrim
“I’ve Enjoyed Your Letters” – Marianne and Joseph
“Sometime it Seems to Me My Life is Going by so Quickly” – Joseph
"Kiss Me" – Joseph, Girl, Leila, and the Ballerina
“As Time Goes By” – The Astronomer
“This Is the Inner Life, We Miss It” – Joseph and the Astronomer
“I’ve Brought You Some Things” – Joseph and Robert
“A Crumpled Ball of Paper with Text on It” – Mother Statue
“Now, Robert. Don’t Leave Me.” – Joseph
"You Miss Him?" – Joseph and the Herbalist
“Where’er You Walk” – the Ballerina, Joseph, and Partial Cast
“The Somnambulist” – the Ballerina
“Milky-way Star Dust” – Joseph and Allegra
“A Window is a Lovely Thing” – the Pharmacist, the Astronomer, and the Herbalist
“Goodbye” – Joseph
“Goodbye” – Mother, Leila, Allegra, the Pharmacist, the Herbalist, and the Astronomer
Set
Set
Set