DANCING WITHOUT A DRUMMER:
THE CREATION OF CHARACTER THROUGH PHYSICALITY

A Thesis
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Fine Arts in the
Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By
Wendy Elisabeth Bagger, B.A.

***

The Ohio State University
1999

Master’s Examination Committee:
Jeanine Thompson, Chair
Philip Thompson
Dr. Esther Beth Sullivan

Approved by
Jeanine Thompson
Adviser
Department of Theatre
In the winter quarter of 1999, The Ohio State University Theatre Department produced a workshop production of Brian Silberman’s *Feral Music*. In this production I played a non-speaking deaf woman diagnosed with autism and schizophrenia. Because the character is present in nearly every scene but only speaks in one, I had to create the character through physicality. To do this: 1) I researched deaf culture, autism, and schizophrenia in order to find inspiration for physical choices that were based in a realistic experience of patients diagnosed with these conditions; 2) I integrated the movement training that I received at the university, specifically the techniques of Rudolf Laban, Marcel Marceau, and Anne Bogart’s Viewpoint Training, with the research I did on the aforementioned topics. These helped me balance those choices based in realism with choices that were theatrically interesting; and 3) I integrated the physical choices I made about the character with the realistic acting style I already possessed when I came to graduate school. I also used the project to help identify and articulate my process as an actor.
I dedicate this to my family. Jo Ann, Teddy, Mary Jo, Ian, Stephen, and Kevin, you have been a constant source of love and support.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank the members of my committee: Jeanine Thompson, for instilling me with confidence about myself as an artist, and as a human being; Philip Thompson for asking those enraged questions that would result in several extra pages of much clearer thinking; and Beth Sullivan for editing, as well as providing another perspective.

I am thankful also for the help and guidance and organizational skills of Sue Ott Rowlands.

I would also like to thank Claudia Kinder, who taught me not only American Sign Language, but a respect for the deaf culture.

I am grateful to Christine Buchanan and Ladeithra McKinney for their help in teaching me deaf speech.

And I am so thankful for the support of my classmates Glenn Peters, Anike, Jeremy Dubin, Giles Davies, and Chris Neher. Thank you all for letting me cry all the way through school without ever once calling me a “crybaby.”
VITA

August 24, 1971
Born - Las Vegas, Nevada

1996 -
B.A. Theatre Arts, University of Nevada Las Vegas

1996 - present
Graduate Teaching Associate, The Ohio State University

CREATIVE PROJECTS

Actor: The Ohio State University
Mrs. Hassett, Becky, Alice, Ivy; *Fen*, 1999
Nola, *Feral Music*, 1999
Aunt Gert, *Lost In Yonkers*, 1998
Bianca, *Fortunes of the Moor*, 1998
She, *The Room Next Door*, 1998
Essie, *Ah, Wilderness!*, 1997

Actor: University of Nevada Las Vegas
Grace, *Exploded View*, 1996
Simone, *Color of Bruise*, 1994
Escalus, *Romeo and Juliet*, 1993
Maggie, *Dancing at Lughnasa*, 1993

Fight Captain/Choreographer:
Choreographer, *Ballad of the Sad Cafe*, 1996
Choreographer, *Sweet and Sour Pork*, 1994
Choreographer, *Cut*, 1995
Fight Captain, *Romeo and Juliet*, 1992
FIELDS OF STUDY

Theatre, Acting

Specialization: Movement (Laban Effort/Shape, Marcel Marceau Mime Technique, Anne Bogart’s Viewpoint Training, Tadashi Suzuki’s Method of Actor Training)
Stage Combat (hand to hand, rapier and dagger, broadsword)
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Playwright and production history</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Character research</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deaf culture and psychology</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schizophrenia</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Production Circumstances</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Physical acting</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laban Effort-Shape</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marcel Marceau Mime Technique</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anne Bogart’s Viewpoints</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Acting</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explanation of terminology</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Auditioning</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Character analysis</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Table work</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blocking rehearsals</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

vii
Working rehearsals .................................................. 60
Technical rehearsals .............................................. 62
Performance .......................................................... 63
3.4 Scored script ..................................................... 65

4. The Process: Rehearsal and Performance Log ......................... 116

4.1 Pre-production preparation ...................................... 116
4.2 Early rehearsals ............................................... 120
4.3 Working rehearsals .......................................... 127
4.4 Technical rehearsals ......................................... 153
4.5 Performances .................................................. 156
4.6 Summary ....................................................... 162

5. Evaluation and Conclusion ...................................... 164

Bibliography .................................................................. 174

APPENDIX A: REVIEW FROM THE OTHER PAPER ................. 176
APPENDIX B: REVIEW FROM UPPER ARLINGTON NEWS .......... 177
APPENDIX C: REVIEW FROM COLUMBUS ALIVE ..................... 178
APPENDIX D: PROGRAM ............................................ 179
INTRODUCTION

As an M.F.A. candidate, I was excited to embark upon the thesis project. During my career at the Ohio State University, I received a very well-rounded graduate education in acting. I took classes in voice, acting, and movement. Movement was my weakest area before I came to graduate school. But during my education at OSU, I discovered much about acting through my movement training. I had very little movement training prior to graduate school and was never cast in any role that required detailed physicality. I also began teaching movement to the undergraduate theatre majors at this time. My class centered around creating physical means of expression for characters, as well as physical transformation. On the basis of my own course work, I felt that I was capable of teaching the class, however, I felt strange that I was teaching this material when I had never used any of it in performance myself. So I was anxious to find a thesis project that gave me the opportunity to utilize the movement training I had received.

Originally, I was offered three roles from which I was to choose one as my thesis role. Those roles were: Bella, in Neil Simon's *Lost in Yonkers*; Nola, in a workshop production of Brian Silberman’s *Feral Music*; and Harper in Tony Kushner’s *Angels in America*. I chose Nola.

The character is a deaf woman who believes that she can sing and hear music.
She has been raised in an institution because she has been diagnosed with autism and schizophrenia. She is unable to speak. I felt this character offered the best opportunity to really apply the movement skills I had learned. I wanted to create a portrayal of a character through physicality that was based in research of the character's given circumstances. Sometimes the given circumstances of the play conflict with what is actually possible in "real life." So I had to find a way to balance "real life" with the theatrical license Silberman took to create the time-line of events within the play. It was important to find a physicality for the character that was different from my own, interesting to audiences, and true to the character's needs.

So I assembled my committee and proposed that I play the role. The proposal was accepted.

My thesis committee consisted of professors Jeanine Thompson, (the chairperson), Philip Thompson, and Esther Beth Sullivan. I asked Jeanine to chair my committee because she was very familiar with my movement skills. She taught all of the movement classes I took at O.S.U., and we shared a common movement vocabulary, which I felt was essential to communicating during the process of creating this role. She was aware of my movement habits and my "safety zones," and I trusted her to help me push myself past them. Philip Thompson was my resource for vocal work. Nola does speak by the end of the play, and it is with a moderate impediment. Phil also taught all of my voice classes while at OSU and I knew that his work was very thorough and demanding. I put him on my committee because I liked the idea of the extra challenges he may throw my way, as well as for his very detailed knowledge of vocal production.
Phil was also very capable of coaching me in movement as well, having been in some of my movement classes with me.

I depended on Beth Sullivan’s help during the writing process. Because I had been pursuing a performance degree, the amount of writing I had done in graduate school was relatively small. I knew that I needed some coaching in that area, and I had heard that Beth was very insightful and thorough in her response to writing.

I eventually performed the role of Nola in the Winter quarter of 1999 in the Stadium II Theatre from February 17th through March 6th, and was directed by Lesley Ferris. This document describes how I researched, created, and performed the role. There were three particular challenges I focused on while working on the role. First, I wanted to create the role based on physicality, rather than psychology. Secondly, I wanted the physicality to be not only theatrical but believable. Lastly, I wanted to integrate the physical work with the acting process I’ve learned over the course of my training. In order to do that, I needed to explicitly articulate my acting process.

In Chapter One, I describe the character research I did as preparation for rehearsals. Included in that research is background on the playwright and the play’s production history, as well as pertinent information on deaf culture, autism, and schizophrenia. I also describe how the research affected my early physical choices for the character. Chapter Two describes the production circumstances of the show. I give the names of the production team as well as details about the performance space in which the play was rehearsed and performed. Chapter Three focuses on my acting methodology. I describe the physical, vocal, and acting techniques I used to create the character of Nola.
This chapter also includes a list of the vocabulary I use in acting. Finally, I articulate my process of analyzing a role with beats and objectives, and I provide my scored script as an example of that analysis. Chapter Four consists of the journal that I kept as I was preparing, rehearsing, and performing the role. It contains my day-to-day experiences and discoveries, as well as the long term progress I made as I created the role. Finally, in Chapter Five, I evaluate how well I faced the challenges of this role. I describe what I learned about my acting process, what techniques worked and which didn’t, and what I would have done differently. Lastly, I describe the next set of challenges I face as an actor and how I plan to meet them.
CHAPTER ONE
RESEARCH

Research is a necessary tool for an actor creating a role. It provides specific information as to the given circumstances upon which the actor bases her choices. By doing research, the actor can create characterizations that are distinct and unique from herself and true to the world of the play.

I have organized my research into two sections: Playwright and Production History and Character Research. Character research refers to the investigation of issues particular to the role being performed. My character research focused on three areas: deafness, autism, and schizophrenia. I needed to first define those terms for myself. I knew that they were all conditions that need to be treated. But I needed to know how they manifest themselves. What physical behaviors are connected to them? How do people with these conditions think? How do they organize the world?

Although it is true that I chose to play Nola as a sane person who was merely misunderstood and misdiagnosed by the professionals around her, I decided that it was still important to research her diagnosed conditions. I wanted to find patterns of behavior that were consistent with these diagnoses, thereby building a physical vocabulary for Nola that was not entirely based on my own physical habits. By basing these physical
choices on the symptoms of Nola's diagnosed conditions, I was also hoping to further perpetuate the ambiguous nature of the character for the audience. I wanted them to see how the doctors could misunderstand Nola's condition, but I also wanted them to see the possibility of her being actually capable of the art she purports to create.

1.1 PLAYWRIGHT AND PRODUCTION HISTORY

Brian Silberman, the author of *Feral Music*, was the Thurber Playwright in Residence during the Winter quarter, 1999, during which *Feral Music* was produced. He received his B.A. in English and Theatre from Middlebury College, his M.A. in English Literature from the University of Arizona, and his M.F.A. in Playwriting from Carnegie Mellon University. He is a member of the Dramatists Guild. Silberman has taught playwriting, expository writing, and dramatic literature at University of Arizona, Chatham College, Carnegie Mellon, Bucknell University, and Johns Hopkins University. He has held residencies at the Edward Albee Foundation and the Millay Colony of the Arts.

Silberman's work has received much recognition. He has received awards from the American College Theatre Festival, the Eugene O'Neill Center, the 21st Century Playwright's Festival, TADA!, The Poet's Theatre, and Carnegie Mellon's Summer Showcase of New Plays for his one-acts *Walkin' Backward* and *The Gospel According to Toots Pope*. These one-acts are the first two sections of a five-act cycle that focuses on orphans in a small Virginia Town. Other awards Silberman has received include two Shubert Fellowships, the Mary Marlin Fischer Playwriting Award and the Clader Prize. The Clader Prize was awarded to Brian for his vaudeville-style holocaust play entitled
Manifest. *Manifest* was produced at the Portland Stage Company in Portland, Maine, in February of 1999. It opened three days after the O.S.U. workshop production of *Feral Music*. Other plays by Silberman include: *Sugar Down Billie Hoak*, produced by Trap Door Theatre in Chicago, and off-Broadway in 1997 by the New American Stage Company at St. Peter's Church, directed by Guy Stroman; *Half Court* which is to be produced in Los Angeles; and *Salvage Operations*. While serving as the Thurber Playwright in Residence, Silberman was working on two new plays, *Dustbreeding* and *Ambivalent North*. Excerpts of his plays can be found in Smith & Krause's *Best Stage Scenes of 1995*, *Best Men's Monologues of 1995*, and *Best Women's Monologues of 1995*.

The original production of *Feral Music* opened on August 10, 1995. Brian was commissioned to write the play by Rebecca Holderness of The Theatre of the Deaf, a company of both hearing and deaf actors based in Rochester, New York. It was to be presented in a festival of one-act plays called The American Living Room '96, and was produced by Tiny Mythic in association with the Lincoln Center Theatre. The only requirement the Theatre of the Deaf had for the play was that it needed to be accessible to both hearing and deaf audiences without the traditional use of an interpreter. Prior to writing the play, Silberman had had no contact or experience with deafness, the deaf community, or American Sign Language (A.S.L.). He spent a week with the company observing their work and reported in an interview with dramaturg, Christie Stanlake, that “seeing firsthand the beauty of ASL, I hit upon the idea of a deaf mute woman who believed she was a jazz singer.” The one-act eventually became the story of Nola, a deaf “jazz singer,” institutionalized because her doctors have diagnosed her with autism and
schizophrenia. The diagnosis stems from Nola’s behavior of “singing.” They believe she is disturbed. The major dramatic question of this early version of the play, the question that the play seeks to put forth to the audience seems to be whether Nola is really capable of the art she believes she creates. Does she really sing?

After this initial production, the play was “put in the drawer” by Silberman until 1998 when he decided to revisit it and expand it to a full-length play. That version became the one produced as a workshop at O.S.U. The expansion of the play’s scope, as well as the further development of the characters and world in which they exist, resulted in a more complex cast of characters dealing with more complex themes. The full-length play goes beyond the question of “Does she sing?” to asking “What is art? Who defines it?” It explores notions of commerce, exploitation and value. The theme of value is explored on many levels. The characters are struggling to find their own value: Kraft bases his value on his ability to recognize art, define its parameters, and sell it; the doctors struggle to find their value among their peers by proving they can cure a very complicated patient’s ailments; Arturo, who does not exist in the play’s first draft, serves to further explore the theme of value, by asserting his value as an orderly and not a janitor. The “value” of Nola has many facets: she has value as being a novelty, a deaf mute who sings. Whether considered a patient or an artist, she poses unique challenges to the worlds of both medicine and art. She also has the potential of defining the value of Kraft by being his next big discovery. Or, she can define the value of her doctors, by being the evidence of their healing powers.

With complexity of theme comes complexity of character. The character, Kraft, in
the original production was a social worker, whose sole motive was to help Nola. In the full length version of the play, Kraft is an art historian whose motives are less clear. He seems to want to help Nola by getting her out of the institution that does not recognize her artistic talents and bringing her to a hospital that will both care for her and try to nurture and encourage her artistic impulses. However, by doing so, he stands to gain huge monetary reward from the consortium who hopes to market her art in Europe. Silberman based the idea of this consortium on an actual hospital in Austria which he describes in the same interview with Christie Stanlake: “...[it] provides a communal, pseudo-familial residence for a select group of artists, all long-term patients suffering from psychosis, autism and varying forms of schizophrenia, who have no realistic prospects of ever functioning within a family or community outside their institution.”

This hospital brought up questions of ethics for Silberman, questions that he found dramatically interesting. How are ethics shaped and redefined once large sums of money become part of the equation? It’s a question that figures into the motives of Nola’s doctors Hope and Williamson.

Doctors Hope and Williamson change very little from the one-act to the full-length play. Their need to cure Nola does not change. They are people of science that have very little interest in the abstract business of art. However, the full-length script offers time to explore exactly what they have to gain by keeping Nola in the institution. If her hearing is restored and her “episodes” of singing end, then they will become famous and well-respected by their colleagues.

The character of Hannah in the one-act seems to be more of a device for
interpreting what Nola says and seems to have very little character drive of her own. Her purpose is to make clear to the audience what Nola says and thinks about her “singing.” In the full-length version Hannah still says the same lines about Nola’s art, but she is not interpreting them directly from Nola. Hannah either speaks to Nola as she sleeps, or about Nola when she’s not there. The audience never actually sees or “hears” Nola philosophize about her art the way Hannah says she has. The audience is then left to wonder if Nola has really communicated to Hannah with such depth and clarity, or if Hannah is having a delusion. The mystery of their communication adds complexity to both women and to their relationship.

I asked Brian what he learned from the workshop production of the full-length script. What did he plan to do next with the script? He mentioned that Kraft would need much more rewriting. “Nola is solid, Kraft needs work/rounding....” The play is to be produced in Washington, DC, next spring.

1.2 CHARACTER RESEARCH

Deaf Culture and Psychology

I have had very little contact with the deaf community. In my grammar school, there were deaf children, but they were taught in a program and curriculum separate from mine. The only times I saw them was on the playground during recess. During those times, the deaf children played mostly with their deaf classmates just as the hearing children played within their own hearing circles. I remember very little intermingling except for one occasion: I was playing on the jungle gym and was in the way of a deaf girl who was wanting to cross coming the opposite direction. “MOVE!” she yelled at me
in a voice the likes of which I'd never heard. It was loud and muffled at the same time, and disturbingly different than the sounds I knew. That very early experience accidentally instilled in me a basic fear of the other deaf students in my school. They were kept separate from us hearing kids, and our interactions on the playground were never mediated by an adult with an understanding of both hearing and deaf children. We were taught very little understanding of one another. My fear of the deaf was firmly rooted in a fear of the unknown.

I never had a formative experience that allowed me to change that initial perception that I had of the deaf. In fourth grade I took a sign language class with my mother, but it was taught by a hearing woman. I did have deaf family members, two cousins born both deaf and mentally handicapped, but I only met them once and was too young to really remember them. I had no deaf friends. I cannot remember ever meeting anyone deaf in junior high, high school, or college. The only knowledge I had of deaf culture was based on what I'd seen on television or in the movies. For instance, I remember a character on the television show Good Times that was deaf, but no one knew because he could speak and read lips perfectly. I knew that I'd seen a deaf stand-up comedienne once. And, I had seen the movie Children of a Lesser God probably ten years earlier.

My assumption was that deafness was a condition that people naturally hoped to correct, that deafness referred not to a culture, but to a medical condition. I thought that hearing aids were an irrefutably positive development in the lives of the deaf. I also assumed that anyone who was deaf belonged to the deaf community. And I figured
learning to speak was probably very difficult for the deaf community, but it was a skill that they wouldn't mind learning in order to get along in the hearing world. I was wrong on all counts.

The contemporary deaf community is far from being a "silent minority." It is proud and aggressive about being acknowledged as a culture, as opposed to being recognized merely as a group with a disability. For centuries, the deaf were seen as very simple people, because they had no spoken language. Without a standardized sign language communication, improvised systems of signs developed to communicate within families. This situation resulted in negative cultural judgements. In *Psychology of Deafness*, Helmer Myklebust wrote "...man as we know him could not exist without language... without language no humanity. Without written language, no civilization."

While this opinion was written in 1960, it is indicative of centuries of bias against the deaf community.

Such bias can be traced back at least as far as Aristotle who concluded that people born deaf were also "dumb," meaning they were unable to speak. The meaning of "dumb" has evolved over the centuries, and it now has a connotation of "stupidity." In early Hebrew law, if a man left his cattle in the care of a deaf-mute, a fool, or a minor, and if the cattle broke loose and caused damage, the owner would be held liable. The deaf weren't allowed to own land, get married, or bear witness in legal matters. In Rome, the deaf were deprived of all rights including writing their wills and freeing slaves.

Laws in the United States in the early 1800's reflected similar attitudes toward the deaf. Those who were born deaf were not allowed to vote, were considered incompetent,
and therefore not criminally responsible for their actions. Owners of ships sailing to the
U.S. were required to report all deaf passengers on board and to pay a hefty fee to the
government before they’d be allowed into the country. The fear was that deaf individuals
would be a burden to society, not being competent to hold jobs and support themselves.
Undoubtedly, some, if not most, deaf individuals were not able to support themselves.
But this incompetence sprang from the hearing community’s neglect of this group of
people. They were uneducated, and therefore incompetent. The fault did not lay in the
deaf brain, but in the hearing person’s perception of the deaf person’s abilities.

It was around the early 1800’s, that education programs for the deaf began to
emerge, and the perception of the deaf began to change. Instead of the deaf being seen as
unable to think, they were pitied as unfortunate. Some states, that had enacted laws to
repress beggars and tramps, would give the deaf beggars a reprieve because they were
seen as an “unfortunate [class] of humanity.” Eventually, more stable and detailed
systems of deaf education were put into place. Gallaudet University in Washington, DC,
was established in 1857 and continues to be the only university in the world geared
almost entirely to the deaf. Nearly every state in the union has at least one residential
school for the deaf. Residential schools have became very much a part of the culture of
deaf America. Because most deaf children have hearing parents, it’s important for them
to have the opportunity to interact with other deaf children, and the residential school
setting allows that.

Even though the deaf had more education available to them, the methods used in
that education have been, and continue to be, hotly debated. Up until the mid-1970s, and
in some schools up till the early 1980s, the most predominant mode of education was oral. Deaf children were taught to speak and read lips, and they were punished for signing. The belief was that being taught to read and speak English made the deaf children more compatible with the hearing world. However, trying to learn to speak a language without the benefit of hearing it, or even hearing oneself speak it often resulted in individuals with incomprehensible speech. Many deaf students were embarrassed and embittered by being laughed at and ridiculed for how they sounded. Many would later refuse to make any sound at all. They preferred to further immerse themselves in the deaf world, associating only with other signing deaf people.

There are many prejudices within the deaf community regarding the use of signing, speech-reading, and speaking. Many deaf people refuse to speak at all because of these early experiences being taught to talk. Others will talk in public when absolutely necessary, but will sign in the company of deaf friends. There are deaf people who will mouth the words they are signing at the same time they sign them. This group is often ridiculed by the purists of the deaf community who believe that sign language is the only means of communication worthy of use in the deaf community. Still another group will refuse to sign, will speak in public and private with friends, and will depend on speech-reading to understand what was said to them. Speech-reading is the least effective means of communication for the deaf. Because so much of the English language is articulated by subtle movements of the tongue in the back of the mouth, only about a third of what is said can be seen. And those who speech-read are not considered members of the deaf community.
The term deaf community, I have found, refers to people who are deaf, who have grown up with the deaf, and hope to continue to socialize with and further the cause of the deaf community. There are hearing members of the deaf community: hearing spouses of deaf people, interpreters, children of deaf parents. But they are certainly the minority. Even within the deaf community there are prejudices about severity of deafness and age of onset. Those who have been deaf since infancy or birth will sometimes feel a superiority over someone who has been deaf since they were seven years old. The prejudice is often based on speech. It seems many in the deaf community believe that the culture remains purer if those who are present in the culture have not been tainted by speech.

For this reason, cochlear implants, a procedure that Nola undergoes in the play, are the subject of a very heated debate both within the deaf community and between the deaf and hearing communities. To begin with, cochlear implants are hearing devices designed to provide sound to people with profound nerve deafness. They are the latest advance in hearing technology. An external microphone picks up sounds from the environment. Sound is sent to the speech processor, that is placed behind the ear. The processor is essentially a microcomputer that filters and analyzes the sound and encodes it. These coded sounds are sent to the transmitting coil. The signals are sent via FM radio signal across the skin to an electrode implanted in the cochlea. The electrode acts as a stimulator for the fibers of the auditory nerve. Then the auditory nerve carries the information it is receiving from the implant to the brain, resulting in hearing.

The surgery to implant the device takes about three hours, and may require one
night of a hospital stay. During the surgery, a patch of hair behind the ear is shaved, and a general anesthetic is given. A small impression is drilled into the mastoid bone where the receiver/stimulator is placed, and the electrode array is inserted into the cochlea.

Then the incision is closed. The implant itself is nearly invisible except for a small lump under the skin. That lump becomes even more invisible once the hair grows back. Once the incision has healed, in three to four weeks, the external components of the device are fitted. An audiologist then programs the external speech processor over the course of several appointments. Several appointments are needed to adjust the processor's sound levels and filtering systems as the patient begins to hear and identify more and more sounds.

Since Nola does eventually reject the implant, I was curious as to what sort of physical side effects the surgery and the implant may have, as well as the limitations of the device. Exactly what can be expected from the implant? Side effects of the implant include dizziness, nausea, and tinnitus, though these symptoms generally disappear once the incision has healed. Further risks of surgery include nerve damage to the face, infection, and complications from the anesthesia. It is also possible that the implant will promote bone growth inside the cochlea, further damaging the hearing. If for any reason, the internal part of the device is damaged, the surgery has to be repeated and presents the same risks as the original surgery. Also, psychological problems have been reported, developing in patients who have unrealistic expectations of what the implants will be able to do for them.

The maximum benefit the implant seems to be: the ability to understand speech
in a not-too-crowded room; use of the telephone without a problem; and a poor-to-average reception of music. The issue of music was of particular interest to me, since that is Nola’s primary interest. Knowing that music does not translate well through the implants makes a big difference in the last scene of the play. If she cannot hear the “real” music that her doctors play for her, and her own music has ceased as well, then her need to rid herself of the implants becomes much more acute.

Although implants are done mostly in adults, children do receive roughly a third of all cochlear implants. The hearing community sees the surgery as a viable treatment for a physical malady. However, the deaf community sees the surgery as genocide. They fear that the cochlear implants will overtake or destroy their culture. As well, they fear children’s civil rights are being violated by parents who are putting their children through this surgery without the children’s consent.

Originally, I thought that my research into the deaf community would be a sort of “dead end” in terms of character choice. Since Nola has no real interaction with the deaf community within the play, I felt the rules of the culture simply would not apply to the work I was doing. However, what my research did yield was a very healthy respect for the people in the culture. Realizing the amount of pride and ownership these people have of their deafness, I began to try to look at the play through their eyes. How would they perceive this character? And how would they perceive a hearing actor (myself) playing her? Because the character of Nola is controlled by the hearing world, and never given a chance to take part in the deaf community, I believed the deaf community would sympathize with her. But I was worried that my portrayal of her would be inaccurate and
offensive to that community, since I was not in fact deaf and could really have no concept of what it means to be deaf. Even if I were to lose my hearing tomorrow, I would not be able to erase a lifetime's memory of sound. At the same time, I knew of no deaf singers that I could turn to for a primary source of research. I could only study the physical and psychological behaviors of deafness, and rely on that knowledge to inform me how to react within the given circumstances of the play.

**Autism**

I found it difficult to find an exact definition of autism. Apparently it is a terribly mysterious disorder. Doctors are not sure what causes it, or how to treat it. But from what I can gather, it is a developmental disorder that surfaces within the first three years of a child's life. The disorder seems to inhibit the child's development of social skills, reasoning, and ability to play. But again, doctors are still very much in the dark about the causes of autism, and without the knowledge of the cause, doctors cannot create a medical test to diagnose the disorder. Instead, the diagnosis depends entirely on the observation of a child's behavior: her ability to communicate and interact with others, and her ability to reason.

Behavioral symptoms of autism include difficulty in mixing and socializing with others in childhood as well as in adulthood. Autistic babies have been known to shy away from social contact by either screaming and fleeing whenever someone tries to communicate with them, or by remaining unresponsive to social stimuli and acting as though they are deaf. Often, autistic children will hold little or no eye contact with the people around them. Instead they will focus on a sustained repetitive activity, for
instance, spinning a penny, to further shut out people and sensory stimuli. Autistic children do not like to be touched and will not offer physical affection. However, though many autistic children are anti-social, they do develop attachments to inanimate objects such as a toy train or television.

Because I had very few spoken lines in the play and was relying almost entirely on physical means of communication, I decided to focus on the physical symptomology of autism. I wasn’t as much interested in the causes autism, as I was in the exhibited behaviors of those diagnosed with the condition. I read case studies of autistic children and documented how they reacted physically to their environments. There are several categories of autism, varying from highly functioning to severely developmentally delayed. Therefore, there is a wide range of behaviors within those categories. Since I decided that Nola was not really autistic, but merely misdiagnosed, I chose to focus on physical behaviors shared by nearly all categories of autism, and behaviors that could also be justified in contexts outside of autism. The symptoms I ran across again and again were repetitive physical behavior, such as rocking and hand flapping; difficulty with eye contact; lack of emotional or social reciprocity; and moments of aloofness and solitariness. One symptom that does not occur in all autistic patients, but one which has particular application to *Feral Music*, is that some autistics have unusual use of speech.

The repetitive, nearly ritualized behavior of Nola is, of course, her going into the bathroom, stuffing the toilets with sheet music, and singing into a broomstick microphone. According to Hannah, Nola does this every night she can sneak away. I decided to try to keep the ritual as similar as possible each time I did it. I always stuffed
the toilets in the same order, upstage toilet first, center toilet, then downstage toilet. And I always flushed the toilet before moving on to the next. Before stuffing the music into the last toilet, I always paused to study the sheet of music. Eventually, within the play, the ritual gets interrupted and changed because of the circumstances surrounding the need to sing. In act one, scene twelve, Nola begins to sing for Kraft outside of the bathroom when she realizes he’s trying to help her. Her established ritual is almost non-existent in that circumstance. When Nola is told that she is going to get the cochlear implant, she is compelled to go into the bathroom and sing. The need is so strong that she abandons the music and water elements of her ritual, and she just sings. It’s as if the music has come “vomiting” out of her, and she’s made it to the bathroom “just in time.” The fact that Nola doesn’t react with anxiously over the change in the ritual proves that she is not truly autistic. However, the act of singing remains constant, as does the stereotypic behavior of the rocking in the act of singing, supporting the doctors’ diagnosis of autism. I chose the rocking for a couple of reasons. It is a gesture particular to autism, as I mentioned before, but it is also a gesture that an audience member can relate to as one representative of any kind of mental disturbance. They wouldn’t need to know much to about autism to identify early on that my character was somehow “not right.”

The term “hand flapping” was probably the most prevalent symptom associated with autism in my sources, but no one ever explained what that would look like. I went to video sources to find out. I couldn’t find much. I saw only one instance of what I imagined might be the behavior called “hand flapping.” It was very brief. The young girl held her hands at the level just above her shoulders and a little in front of her, and she
shook her hands back and forth very loosely. The motion was rather like how one might try to shake her hands dry. Even though it was a very brief look at that behavior it inspired me to create an important identifying gesture for the character of Nola. By identifying gesture, I mean, the gesture that is unique to her, and expressive of so many things about her. I modified the exact gesture the young girl did on the tape, because, again, Nola was not really autistic. Rather than flapping with both hands I only used my right. And rather than shaking the hand as far out in front as the young girl did, I held the gesture right at the level of my ear. It became the gesture for conjuring the music that was inside my head within the ritual of singing. In fact, it became the only element of the ritual that never got lost no matter what the given circumstance of the singing. I modified the gesture even more within the play to express when I was simply trying to shut people out, and conversely when I was truly connecting with and understanding the people around me. The gesture became so deeply entrenched in the play, that I found it difficult to let go of it once the show closed.

I employed the lack of eye contact several times in the show. I would almost never look directly at the doctors, unless physically forced to. I certainly never looked Arturo in the eye. I only began to look Kraft in the eye once I knew that he recognized me as an artist. I had some difficulty deciding about how I interacted with Hannah in terms of eye contact. Everything that I'd read about deaf people and the way they sign, told me that I should be looking her in the face while communicating with her. However, I did need to appear autistic at the same time. Eventually, I decided to feel free to look her in the eye, because she is the only friend Nola has in the institution. Hannah speaks
Nola’s language and believes in her music.

The moments of solitariness and aloofness also occurred several times within the show. However, they were usually scenes where I was present on stage but not the focus. I had a moment of solitariness after nearly every singing episode. The way these moments would manifest themselves would be in my sitting alone very still or doing the autistic rocking. My eyes would be unfocused yet fixed. On the one hand it appeared to be an autistic behavior, but I would justified the behavior by using the moment of solitude to reflect on the singing that just occurred. It was not necessarily about blocking out the stimuli around me, but about reveling in the experience that happened just previous to that moment.

Other issues I was interested in, were issues of treatment and therapy for the disorder. How might past treatment affect Nola’s physical behaviors in the present? Since there is no known cause for the disorder, there is no real cure. The pharmaceutical treatments I ran across in my research involve either Serotonin Re-uptake Inhibitors—which are the same medications given to patients with obsessive compulsive disorder—or vitamin therapies (Vitamin B6 and magnesium supplements). The serotonin re-uptake inhibitors have the physical side-effects of hyperactivity, impulsive behavior, and sleep disturbance. Those behaviors seemed written into the script already. Nola sneaks away at night to sing, so she’s obviously not sleeping. As well, one may argue that the singing could be classified as impulsive behavior. The vitamin therapies don’t seem to have any real physical side effects. So I didn’t find any physical choices to be made from that line of research. One behavioral therapy that interested me was the idea of music therapy. I
thought this may be the way Nola was introduced to music. I wanted to find a link between the music therapy and the ritual of singing, so that I could make that ritual more specific to myself. But as time wore on, I abandoned that avenue. I chose to trust myself to invent the connections Nola has to the music.

Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is a mental disorder that affects about 1% of the population. Interestingly, there doesn’t seem to be any record or acknowledgment of the disease until nearly 100 hundred years ago. It has since been recognized and diagnosed all over the world. The cause of the disorder is unknown, but it is theorized that it results from an over production of the brain chemical Dopamine. There is some evidence that the disease has a genetic link, however, there are people diagnosed with the disease who have absolutely no family history of the disease.

Symptoms of schizophrenia include delusions, or generally paranoid or violent thoughts with no basis in reality, and hallucinations, or seeing and hearing things that are not present. Schizophrenics often have disordered thinking, thoughts that are strung together with no apparent relationship to one another. Their behavior may be disorganized as well; they may perform strange tasks or repeat rhythmic gestures or movements for long periods of time. Symptoms also include emotional flatness, inability to initiate or participate in activities, and lack of enjoyment in life.

Most of these symptoms can be linked to Nola in some way. Nola may be perceived as delusional because of her belief that she can hear music. She was born deaf, has never heard sound let alone music, and can have no concept of what that sensation
must be like. One could argue that the music Nola hears in her head is a schizophrenic hallucination. The music does not exist to the people around her, and therefore is a fiction of Nola’s imagination. Additionally, Nola’s thinking does at times seem disorganized. When her doctors are trying to tell her of the implant procedure, rather than acknowledge the surgery, Nola focuses on images like “marsh grass” and “snail[s].”

Also, the repeated stuffing of the toilets could be perceived as disorganized schizophrenic behavior: it is a repetition of rhythmic gestures that have no apparent meaning to anyone but Nola. And around her doctors particularly, Nola seems to suffer from a severe lack of interest in life. Evidence of this can be seen in the act two, scene four, when the doctors are trying to explain the implant procedure to her. She doesn’t respond until they begin talking about subjects that interest her, such as drums.

As a performer it is good to know the basis for these choices that are written into the script. But these offer me no information about how I might physically approach the role. So I decided that, since Nola does display schizophrenic characteristics, it is likely that her doctors would be prescribing medication for these behaviors. I researched the drugs used to control the condition, and the possible physical side effects they may have.

Anti-psychotics are generally used to treat schizophrenia. There are two kinds of anti-psychotics that are prescribed: typical and atypical. Atypical anti-psychotics treat delusions and hallucinations with very few side effects but are very expensive, and they do not work on the symptom of “emotional flatness.” Typical anti-psychotics are the older of the two types of drugs. They’ve been prescribed since the 1950s. They include drugs like Thorazine. They block the production of Dopamine by the brain. They are
much more effective in relieving most of the symptoms of the disease. However they work on the central nervous system, creating a condition called Tardive Dyskinesia. This side effect causes stiffening and spasms in the muscles. I imagined that since a drug like Thorazine was less expensive, that it was more likely to be what Nola would receive in a state-run institution. I also thought that this medication was a more significant source for physical choices for Nola. Unfortunately, I didn’t ever find a place in rehearsals to explore what those choices might be.

1.3 SUMMARY

What my research did for me as a performer was to give my choices for Nola’s characterization a basis in reality. It gave me information I needed to make informed choices as to what characteristics I would play realistically (the lack of eye contact) and which ones I would invent, augment, or adapt (the hand-flapping gesture). This research also gave me very specific information regarding Nola’s given circumstances. For instance, knowing that the deaf community is conflicted about the use of speech, I realized that Nola might have no community to call her own if she decided to try to live in the hearing world. That made Nola’s decision to remove her implants more specific and more important to me.

I discovered an interesting thing about doing this much research for a role. There were moments in the show that were specifically related to the research I did. But mostly, once I’d done the reading and research, I didn’t refer to it again on a conscious level. At a certain point, the research became secondary to the objectives and drives of the character. I’m certain that the research I did had an impact on the choices I made
regarding those objectives, but it was on a subconscious level. The research was the key that opened the door to the role. But behind that door was still a pretty sparsely decorated room that I had to furnish and live in myself.
CHAPTER TWO

PRODUCTION CIRCUMSTANCES

This workshop production of Brian Silberman’s *Feral Music* was mounted by O.S.U.’s Department of Theatre in the Winter quarter of 1999. *Feral Music* was produced and directed by Dr. Lesley Ferris, the Chairperson of O.S.U.’s Department of Theatre. This was the first production Dr. Ferris directed at the university since her arrival in 1998.

The cast consisted of Jessica Morgan, a second year M.F.A. acting student, who played Hannah, a schizophrenic, and best friend to Nola; Jeremy Dubin, who played Kraft, the diagnostician, was also performing his role as his thesis project for his M.F.A.; Christopher Neher, who played Arturo, an orderly, was a third year M.F.A.; Michael Karp, a second year M.F.A. acting student, played Dr. Hope, a clinical psychologist; Christina Sidebottom, who played Dr. Williamson, another clinical psychologist, was an undergraduate student; and finally, David Dawes, who was our musician, was a graduate of the O.S.U. School of Music with an M.F.A. in jazz performance.

The set was designed by Dan Gray, the Department of Theatre’s resident scenic designer, who was assisted by Vicki A. Horning. Rebecca Guillot, a first year M.F.A. costume design student, designed costumes for the production. Lights were designed by
James T. Allen, a lighting designer from Dayton, OH. Sound design was done by Tera Cozart, an undergraduate student specializing in design and technology. Tera was assisted by Heather Olmstead, who also served as stage manager for the show. Heather was assisted in her stage management duties by undergraduate theatre major, Rob Dell. The technical director for the show was Jim Knapp, who was assisted by John Leahy. Christy Stanlake, a first year Ph.D. student served as dramaturg. Claudia Kinder, who is the deaf services coordinator in the Office of Disabilities Services on campus, served as our interpreter coordinator. Dr. Paul Robinson, a teacher in O.S.U.'s School of Music was the music consultant. The box office was run by Joseph F. Scharrer. Julie Graham was the Front of House manager. Program and production design was done by Rachel Barnes, the graduate secretary and graphic designer for the department of theatre.

The production schedule went as follows:

Auditions: November 6th 1998

Callbacks: November 8th

Working rehearsals: January 5th - February 10th 1999

Technical rehearsals: February 8th - February 10th

Dress rehearsals: February 11th, 14th, 15th, and 16th.

Opening Night: February 17th at 7:30 PM

Performance Run: February 18th - 20th, 24th - 27th, and March 3rd - 6th at 8:00 PM

Matinee performances on February 20th and 27th at 2:00 PM

The show was performed in the Stadium II Theatre. The theatre is inside the
Drake Union building on the university's main campus. It has a 250 seat auditorium and a three-quarter thrust. The stage itself is twenty-six feet, three and one-fourth inches wide, and forty feet, eleven inches deep with a thirteen and one-half inch distance from the house floor. The Stadium II Theatre has since been renamed the Roy Bowen Theatre.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

As I mentioned in the Introduction to this thesis, this project offered me two important opportunities. First, it allowed me to utilize the movement training I received at O.S.U. I witnessed amazing work done by visiting artists and by my professors during my graduate studies. I remember two specific incidents that turned out to be formative experiences in my training. They each happened in my first year of graduate school. During winter quarter of my first year in mime class, the teacher of the class, Jeanine Thompson, showed a mime piece called “Images of Woman.” It was a beautiful lyrical exploration of the cycle from girlhood through womanhood. I was struck by her ability to transform her body. In the span of the piece she embodied a helpless infant, a toddler, an adolescent, and both a young and elderly woman. Not only was the work beautiful, it was believable. Each “woman” in the piece had a very specific psychological and emotional base. The toddler was filled with wonder, the adolescent with embarrassment about her developing body, the old woman with desperation to remember her life. I was moved to tears by the piece. I was very affected by the story of the piece, but also, I was sure that I would never be able to capture that kind of specificity in my own work. For a while afterward, I was afraid to even begin to try. I’m not sure when it happened, but
eventually, the experience of watching that piece changed. Although I was still
intimidated by the level of specificity in Jeanine’s work, I began to see the piece as an
ideal to aspire to: grace and beauty, physical transformation, and emotional connection.

The second experience that inspired me was seeing the Saratoga International
Theatre Institute (SITI) perform *The Medium*. It was an entirely different style of theatre
than I had ever seen. It was theatrical, spectacular, and very cleanly executed. The
performers created the illusion of working with such ease while balancing themselves
horizontally on a table, or working in harmony with a very involved lighting and design
concept. But, while the sound and lighting design were intricate, they were so well
integrated into the piece that I don’t remember them as separate elements. The piece was
an integrated “whole.” There was almost no set and very few props outside of some
chairs and a low rectangular box. Yet I felt like the piece took me miles through space
sometimes at light speed, sometimes in slow motion. I remember being amazed at the
control the actors had over their bodies as well as their emotional lives. They had power.
They were inventive in their use of props and text. And I couldn’t tell how they did it. I
was bleary-eyed by the end of it. I only knew I wanted to be able to do that. So in
working on *Feral Music*, I wanted to explore what had inspired me so much in these early
experiences of movement theatre: control, integration, power, imagination, and
specificity.

I also wanted to use this project to discover and articulate what my process as an
actor is. I wasn’t necessarily focusing on the strengths and weaknesses in my acting. I
was more concerned with the method I’ve developed for myself as an actor. I’ve never
tried to articulate that process for myself. Until I do articulate that, I feel like I'm depending on chance and instinct in order to "arrive" at a characterization, instead of taking deliberate steps to create one. Articulating my acting process will also help me when I teach acting. By knowing the specific steps I take to create a role, I can in turn teach those steps as a system.

The following chapter is broken into three sections: Physical Acting, Voice, and Acting. Within each of these sections, I identify the methods I used within the process and examples of when and how I used them in the performance of the role. Ideally, the body, the voice, and the acting all become integrated into a seamless whole over the course of the rehearsal period. That integration was in fact one of my goals. However, I have separated them to make discussing my work easier. Each of these headings represents how I was organizing my early choices as I was creating the character of Nola. I began with an awareness of physical issues, vocal issues, and acting issues. Then, during rehearsals, I integrated the work I'd done within each of these areas. In the last part of the chapter, I've included my scored script. It documents both the physical and psychological choices I made during the rehearsal period.

3.1 PHYSICAL ACTING

One of the reasons I chose this role to portray was because of the excellent opportunities it provided to utilize the movement skills I had learned at O.S.U. My undergraduate training offered very little movement training. Most of the training I received was independent of the theatre department. I took it upon myself to become a recognized Actor/Combatant with the Society of American Fight Directors. I learned
those skills without too much difficulty, meaning I was able to replicate the moves taught
to us without injuring myself or others around me. I also took a few classes in ballet, tap
and jazz, but those too were independent of my curriculum as an undergraduate theater
major. Unfortunately my class load, coupled with my work schedule, didn’t allow for too
much extra-curricular study. So I never went beyond the level of beginner in any of those
dance forms. However, the small amount of training I had experienced made me aware
that I had movement potential. When I came to O.S.U., I was glad to find that they had
an extensive movement program, which included the study of Laban Effort/Shape,
Marcel Marceau and Etienne Decroux mime techniques, Anne Bogart’s Viewpoint
Training, and Tadashi Suzuki’s Method of Actor Training. Initially, I wanted to find a
place for all of it in the show. I realized, though, that perhaps the show didn’t need all of
it. I then decided to limit myself to three of the four areas I’d been trained in: Marceau
and Decroux mime techniques, Laban, and Viewpoints.

**Laban Effort-Shape Method**

The Laban Effort/Shape Method is the work of Rudolf Laban, a German
choreographer. Cecily Dell describes his system of codifying movement in her book, *A
Primer for Movement Description: Using Effort-Shape and Supplementary Concepts.*
This book is the origin of the terminology I use to describe Laban’s method of breaking
down and organizing the building blocks of movement. According to Dell, Laban
contends that all movement is made up of four factors: *time, space, flow,* and *weight.*
Although each of these factors will be defined separately, all four factors are present in all
movement. Laban further de-constructs each of these four factors into two elements.
The two elements of each factor are set up as opposites to one another, creating a spectrum of possibilities within each factor.

The factor of time refers to how long a particular gesture takes to be executed. The elements of time are quick and sustained. The term quick applies to movement that has a very short duration of time. Sustained movement is that which has a long duration. Sneaking up behind some one with slow, elongated steps would be an example of sustained movement, while grabbing them to scare them would be an example of quick movement. Space refers to the shape of the path a gesture takes in space, and can be divided into the elements direct and indirect. Direct is the term used for movement that has a linear shape. It takes the most efficient path from its origin to its destination. It helps me to think of making straight lines with whichever part of the body I’m gesturing with at the time. Indirect movement has a curvilinear path. A direct gesture may be the motion the hand makes when throwing a dart at a dart board. The throw, ideally, needs to make a straight line if the dart is to hit the target. An example of indirect motion that Cecily Dell gives is the path that someone may take to get across a crowded room, trying to avoid being bumped or bumping others. Flow refers to the amount of resistance a performer seems to be working against to execute the gesture. The two elements that comprise flow are bound and free. Bound refers to movement that appears to be working against a lot of resistance. The resistance, or the illusion thereof, can be created by an outside influence (i.e. a wall being pushed against, or a piece of burlap being torn) or internally, by the performer engaging opposing muscles (perhaps both biceps and triceps at the same time). Free movement, on the other hand, gives the illusion of no effort.
While tearing fabric is a bound movement, tearing a piece of crepe paper would be free. There is less resistance. *Weight* refers to the relation the performer's body weight seems to have to a gesture. *Light* and *strong* are the two elements of weight. Delicately carrying a butterfly would be an example of a light motion, while carrying an anvil would be an example of a strong motion. Again, none of these elements exist on its own. All movement is made up of factors of time, space, flow, and weight simultaneously. So once Laban had broken these factors down into their separate elements, he began layering the elements together. By taking one element from each of the factors of time, space, and weight, and combining them in all their possible permutations, Laban created a series of eight basic effort actions: flick (indirect, light, quick); dab (direct, light, quick); slash (indirect, strong, quick); punch (direct, strong, quick); wring (indirect, strong, sustained); press (direct, strong, sustained); float (indirect, light, sustained); and glide (direct, light, sustained). Laban argued that all movement can be described in terms of these efforts.

Though the effort actions have names that commonly refer to gestures made with the hands, it does apply to gestures made with all parts of the body. Flow is omitted from the eight effort-qualities because all eight can be done in either a free or a bound way. Flow becomes a supplemental category to describe movement.

It was through working with these theories that I was able to really identify my strengths and weaknesses as a movement performer. I really enjoy strong movement. I'm capable of light movement but I prefer strong. I also prefer indirect movement over direct movement. So of the eight essential effort actions, wring and slash are my most habitual patterns. To further specify my habits, I prefer sustained movements to quick
ones, which includes only wring. That effort quality describes my physical habits. What that means to me is that I have a good sense of strength when I move, and an ability to take time to explore a gesture.

However, it was important to me to find a significant physical difference between myself and my characterization of Nola. In all of the roles I'd played up until this point, I'd pretty much depended on two versions of my own physicality. If I was in a contemporary play, I'd play a sort of relaxed version of me. If I was in a period piece, I would play a refined version of me, and depend on the restriction of the corset to make physical choices for me. I'd never challenged myself to work beyond my habits. I didn't know what I was really capable of physically. So I decided to try to begin working with physical choices that were the opposite of what I was accustomed to, choices that were direct, and light. That left me with glide and dab.

The Laban Effort-Shape Method was originally designed to objectively describe and codify movement. But, as I mentioned earlier, the ultimate goal of this project, was to integrate physicality with my acting skills. I believe it is important to connect physical behavior with psychological choices, I have begun to further specify the effort actions with psychological attributes. In that way, when I am working within this terminology, I am not only making physical choices, I am attempting to create a psychological reality for the character I am creating. The following is a description of how I've begun to organize this work psychologically. It is by no means a complete list of how Laban can be applied to acting. It is the meager beginnings of how I've begun to connect the two worlds of Laban Effort-Shape and Stanislavski-based acting for myself.
Indirect movement connotes a personality that can be seen a couple of ways. Indirectness can convey “sneakiness,” as in the case of a shark circling its prey before it attacks. But it can also be a symptom of an insecure personality. For instance, someone may cross a crowded room indirectly, being sure not to force anyone to move out of the way for her. On the other hand, direct movement can connote a more aggressive personality. Direct people get to the point without much nonsense. That can be portrayed a number of ways, both positive and negative, and still maintain that “no nonsense” quality.

A person who moves in a strong way can be perceived as either very confident or youthful. Because the energy expenditure in strong movement is perceived as intense, I imagine that the character moving in a strong way is acting on drives that are intense as well. Her needs are immediate. On the other hand, if she moves lightly, the character seems more likely to be a dreamer. She is not weighed down by reality. She seems ethereal.

The time factor of a character’s movement can tell us a number of things. If she moves quickly, it seems that she must be either very nervous or very excited. While sustained movements, movements that take a lot of time can imply stupidity or laziness, or they can imply age or patience.

So I used the physical choices I was making to help inform me about Nola’s personality and psychological state. What glide told me about Nola was that she was direct and free, meaning she was a dreamer, and unapologetically so. She’s not been taught the “dog eat dog” ways of the outside world and so knows no wiles to protect
herself. Dab, which is light, quick, and direct, told me that Nola is fast on her feet (which makes sense for her within the circumstances of the play, having to dodge Arturo and the doctors when she sings and also keeping an eye out for Hannah). The challenge I faced in working with in this direct free structure is that the shape of American Sign Language is often very curvilinear, so I chose to focus the effort qualities of glide and dab on gestures and stage business that were behavioral and not part of my signed dialogue.

**Marcel Marceau Mime Technique**

Marcel Marceau Technique refers to the codification of mime developed by Marcel Marceau. He was a student of Etienne Decroux. Decroux developed a system of physical training for actors. His system divides the body into five sections: the head, neck, chest, waist, and pelvis. Decroux then codified the range of movement within these body sections into three categories: *inclinations, rotations*, and *transstations*. Inclinations refer to the vertical movement of a section of the body either forward, back, right or left. Transstations can also happen either forward or back, left or right, but the movement occurs on a horizontal plane. Rotations are centered around the spine and can only be done to the right or left. They are circular motions that change the direction the body section faces when rotated. For instance, if the head is rotated right, the face is looking to the right of the center line of the body. If the head is transtated right, then the face is still forward, but the entire head is moved horizontally right of the center line of the body. These three categories of movement can be layered together. For instance, the head can be rotated right, inclined forward, and then transtated left. This layering is known as a *triple design*. It creates a body shape that is more three-dimensional.
Marceau made Decroux's work the basis for his own. Marceau "filled" the physical form of Decroux's technique with psychological and emotional content. Marceau created what he calls conventions of character. They are a set of body shapes that depict emotions: jealousy, pride, despair, and revolt to name just a few of the statues. They are also called character stances or character statues. Although the word "statue" is not necessarily the best description of the work, I tend to use it to describe how I used the conventions of character in Feral Music. "Statue" may give the impression that the body remains stationary in these conventions of character. The conventions of character are often used while the performer's body is in motion.

I found a few places in the show where I utilized Marceau's statues. Whenever I would sing, particularly just as the music was beginning in my head, I would inhale and take the shape of "joy" for just a moment. It gave me a feeling of physical lightness and suspension that I think needed to be present in the singing. It was such an ethereal art form I was trying to invent. I would inhale one large breath that I imagined inflated my whole rib cage. The image of the inflated rib cage gave me a great feeling of suspension through the sternum that in turn freed up my whole upper body. My arms, shoulders, head, neck and back all felt free to respond to my own inner impulses, or to the outside stimuli of the music David Dawes was playing. This stance of joy helped me tap into that place where only the music was important.

I also utilized Marceau's technique of coloration and de-coloration to help find physical choices different from my own. Coloration refers to a gradual transformation into a shape or emotion, and de-coloration is the gradual transformation out of the shape
or emotion. In the singing scene when Kraft is talking on the phone as I am singing in the background in slow motion, I was trying to color into an adaptation of Marceau’s character statue of despair. I also used a very slow coloration in act two, scene five. Arturo and Kraft are talking and dancing in the bathroom. In the script it was written that Nola is to burst into the bathroom and break up their conversation. However, in our production, I was staged to be sitting on stage for the entire scene prior to the interruption of Kraft and Arturo. So, I used the entire length of scene five to color into a frenetic state of rocking and pacing before breaking into the bathroom. I used de-coloration every time I finished singing, but at varying intervals of time. In the prologue, I de-colored out of singing in about eight counts. In act one, scene six, I used about five counts to de-color. In act two, scene six, after the very slow coloration into the joy statue, I de-colored in about half a count.

The Marceau and Decroux work helped me utilize my body in subtle ways (inclinations of perhaps only the chest) and in grand ways (filling the whole bathroom with the energy of a character statue). It gave me a palette of conscious choices to make which were different from my own everyday habits. And, in the case of using the de-coloration out of the singing, it helped me find physical distinction between moments on stage that were written similarly.

Anne Bogart’s Viewpoints

This is a technique developed originally by Mary Overlie, to help direct the creation of work at the New York University Experimental Theatre Wing. While working at the E.T.W., Anne Bogart began observing and working with the technique and has
since adapted the work for actors. Bogart has expanded the original six elements of “Viewpoints” to nine elements. Tina Landau defines the technique in *Anne Bogart Viewpoints* as “a philosophy of movement translated into a technique for 1) training performers and 2) creating movement on stage” (Dixon, 18). Landau goes on to further define the viewpoints themselves.

They are categories of quantifying how time and space are manipulated on stage. Viewpoints of time include: tempo, the rate of speed at which a movement occurs; duration, how long a movement lasts; kinesthetic response, the immediate reaction to a stimulus outside oneself; and repetition, repeating a gesture or sequence of gestures whether your own or someone else’s. The viewpoints of space include: shape, the combination of straight lines and curves that make up the contour of the body in space; gesture, a movement involving one or combination of body parts expressing behavioral patterns or emotion; architecture, the physical space in which the movement performance or exploration is taking place; spatial relationship, the distance between things or people on stage, or the relationship of the performers body to the playing space; and topography, the design created in the space or on the floor as an actor moves.

I was utilizing many of the viewpoints as I worked through the show, though not always consciously. Like the Laban work, the Viewpoints describe elements of movement that are present at all times. For instance, we are always working with architecture. Unless we are performing in a perfect vacuum, we have no choice but to have contact with the architecture of our playing space. Spatial relationships exist as long as there are bodies and objects in a space. The Viewpoint Training is designed to give the
performer a conscious awareness of each of these elements as she moves through space. And because of that, I will expound only on the elements I consciously chose to explore and utilize to create physical choices. I was mainly working with kinesthetic response and repetition.

The Viewpoint work depends very much on the ability of the actors involved to open up their awareness to the people and sounds around them. It is from these people and sounds that the actor is fed her impulses to move. It creates an integrated stage picture. As we worked with Anne Bogart and The Saratoga International Theatre Institute on this technique, I was amazed as I observed my classmates “mysteriously” doing the same things at exactly the same moment but at completely different ends of the stage. This is repetition.

This mysterious quality was one I knew Nola had. She is, after all, able to experience and create music without having the benefit of a sense of hearing. I decided to use repetition to imitate the other characters on stage at times when it would seem impossible for me to do so. Specifically, in scene six of act one, Nola is singing in the bathroom as Hannah is speaking about her in another part of the hospital. I timed my movements in that scene so that the ritual and singing gestures matched the stage business of Jessica. I knelt in front of the toilets as she knelt behind the bed. I crumpled the paper as she struggled to straighten hers out, I spun around as she spun around. On one hand, I was interested in this mysterious quality of Nola. But, I was also using the repetition of gesture to clear up questions about Nola’s relationship to other characters. In this scene I hoped to create visual evidence of the bond between Nola and Hannah.
Again, my physical choices needed to be balanced with the reality of the play and the character’s needs. Since Nola’s apparent autistic condition does not allow for eye contact, the repetition of gestures allowed me to connect to the other characters in a different way. One example is scene eight of act one, when Kraft first examines Nola. I wouldn’t look him in the eye, or acknowledge I understood him, until the very end when I begin to imitate his gestures. In this way the audience got the information they needed about how I listen to those around me, while at the same time, drawing the connection between myself and Kraft.

3.2 VOICE

The voice work required for the show began relatively late in the process. We were not sure whether or not Nola was to be portrayed with a speech impediment. Since Nola never spoke in the first rendition of the play, Brian was still making decisions as to her speech patterns. Also, Lesley was waiting to work on the last scene of the play until we’d had more time to explore all the scenes leading up to it, giving us a jumpstart on the subtext and objectives. I also knew we’d be getting rewrites on the scene and didn’t want to memorize anything too soon, particularly if the rewrites were going to be extensive.

It wasn’t until about two weeks before opening that the rewrites were finalized. We had run the scene intermittently until then. In those run-throughs, I was beginning to play with deaf speech a bit by inventing a pattern of speaking that was based only on my memory of how my teacher from the sign language class spoke, and on the speech patterns of the students in the film of *Children of a Lesser God*. The early choices I was making with speech were really very small. I was only changing the tone of my voice for
the most part. By dropping my velum and opening the space at the back of my mouth, I was creating a mixture of pharyngeal and my nasal resonance. Vowels tended to lose their diphthongs, but the consonants remained fairly crisp. I didn’t want to make vocal choices that made it impossible for the audience to understand what I was saying, particularly when the dialogue was already so ambiguous. I also felt that working beyond that tone of voice, without having done any research into it, would create habits that would be harder to break later. I was also tentative about my choices because I knew that the deaf community is very sensitive about how they sound, and I wanted to be respectful of that. Ironically, they would never hear my voice or theirs. But I didn’t want the hearing community to perceive my efforts as any kind of caricature or stereotype.

When my committee came to see a run through of the play, they had questions about the direction the speech was taking. Beth Sullivan thought that Nola was not only deaf, but somehow Slavic. I am not sure what I was doing vocally that would make her think that was true, however, whatever it was, it was wrong. Phil Thompson thought that I could go further, experimenting with the consonants, because the speech was too clear. If her speech became too crisp and understandable, then Nola seemed as if she had been faking her deafness all along. On the other hand, if the speaking became too incomprehensible, then the plot points at the end of the play would be lost.

I met with Phil, and he gave me some suggestions about how to deepen the choices I was making. He suggested that the struggle to articulate the words is at times more important than being heard and clearly understood. He said I should find the places where articulation is not very important because Kraft’s lines would often clarify what
Nola said. That struggle to express myself could come from having a limited vocabulary as well as the inexperience in speaking. Phil also suggested finding “suspension” within the lines, those moments when I’ve begun speaking but am unsure of how to complete the sentence. In those moments the words may be eluding me, or the particular sound may be difficult and I’m trying to figure out how to make it. Two specific suggestions he made in regards to articulation included voicing plosives (p, t, k) and making “s” sounds linger while trying to figure out where to place them. He also mentioned tools that he gave us in other classes where we dealt with particularly dense texts: finding the keywords (the words that were most important in the line), and coining the words (saying the line slowly as if it’s being make up on the spot).

His feedback was very helpful, and I was glad to have it, but I was frustrated that I had not begun the vocal work sooner. We were opening in a week and a half and I needed to find a sample of authentic deaf speech. It was a particularly frustrating situation because the deaf voice is scientifically measurable and distinctive, so, as opposed to the other aspects of Nola that really could be invented, this quality needed realistic attention. I had a plan to meet with two deaf students that Claudia Kinder worked with on campus, but they were too self-conscious about their voices to do the interview. I got in touch with Christina Buchanan, who teaches sign language at OSU and who is a speech therapist. I was hoping she would have some samples of deaf speech on tape. She didn’t, however, she did provide me with a list of characteristics of deaf speech. She also spoke some of my lines using all of these characteristics. It made the lines completely incomprehensible. I would have to pick and chose which characteristics
I wanted to use to develop Nola’s pattern of speech.

I chose to centralize most vowels. Instead making the “u” sound, as in flute, I would say “u” as in good. The “i” sound as in tree, would become “i” as in sit. I continued to drop the diphthongs of vowels in an effort to simplify the sound and to give the impression that Nola hadn’t quite learned yet how to finesse the sounds she had heard.

When dealing with consonants, I chose to use Phil’s suggestion to voice most of the unvoiced plosives. “P,” “T,” and “K” sounds nearly all changed to “B,” “D”, and “G” respectively. Also, when consonants came in clusters, as in the word “duplicity” or “artistry” I would omit some of the consonant sounds in the cluster. Those particular words became “dupisiti” and “aditwi.” Most r-coloring was dropped except at the beginnings of words. When I used “r” sounds (as well as “l” sounds), I employed lip rounding so that the sound was almost a “w.” The “s” sound became dentalized so that it was nearly a “t” sound. “Th” sounds were changed to “t” sounds as well. So the phrase “person with name from this file” was pronounced “pot³m wit o nəm fəm dit faru.”

The vocal quality of Nola was similar to what I had been doing before I was coached by Phil and Christine. I was continuing to employ pharyngeal resonance in combination with nasal resonance. I added to this quality a breathy falsetto at times. And the pitch of my voice was much more variable than before.

3.3 ACTING

My approach to acting is based on the Stanislavski method of acting. Stanislavski
was a Russian actor and director. He developed a method of acting that focuses on character needs and drives. He believed that characters are always pursuing an objective on stage, and that the way to prepare a role for performance is to decide what the character wants (the objective), and what steps the character takes to achieve what he wants (the beats). I admit I've never had an acting class that was based on a purely Stanislavski method. But the classes that I've taken have been based on his philosophy of objectives and beats. Each of my acting teachers has had a slightly different way of delineating and organizing this material. So what follows is my explanation of how I use objectives and beats to play a role. I first present the terminology that I use to describe my work, and to communicate with my fellow actors and director. I then describe the process I use to create the role. The process is broken down chronologically. I explain each step in the order it falls in the rehearsal period from auditioning, to character analysis, to table work, to working rehearsals, to technical rehearsals.

**Explanation of Terminology**

I will first provide a list of terms and vocabulary I use in my work. An actor must be able to articulate her process within a given rehearsal period, that includes being able to develop and explain the vocabulary that she uses to communicate with her fellow actors and her director about the work at hand. Because I will be using a very specific vocabulary in the paragraphs that follow, as I describe the process of rehearsing and scoring a script, I feel it is necessary to define the terms I will be using. The following is an explanation of the acting terms I use in my work to help me define and specify details within the creation of a character.
Whenever a character is on stage, she is always in pursuit of a goal. It’s just as in real life, everything a person does is for a reason. The character’s goal or need is called the objective of the character. The actor must look at all of these objectives that the character pursues and find the common thread among them. This common thread is the character’s ultimate goal, or super-objective. Objectives are important in a play for a couple of reasons. First, they propel the action of the play forward. If characters have no objectives, than there is no reason for the play to go on or for the audience to come see it. Second, by articulating the objectives, the actor is creating a repeatable pattern of behavior for the character. Super-objectives and scene-by-scene objectives are the two most basic building blocks to mapping a character’s journey within a play.

An action refers to how a character chooses to achieve these scene-by-scene objectives. Actions must be expressed in the form of a verb that is active and dependent upon the other character in the scene (if one exists in the scene). I use the term interchangeably with tactic. Actions arise and become necessary because of the character’s obstacles. Obstacles refer to the circumstances or other characters that stand in the way of a character achieving her objective. If obstacles don’t exist then there is no conflict. And if no conflict, then there is very little interest for an audience to watch the play. Raising the stakes refers to increasing the intensity of the obstacle, or the need to achieve the objective, or both.

Given circumstances are the details about a character and/or his situation given by the playwright or the director. These may include setting, time of day, or things said about that character within the context of the play. Given circumstances or givens are
important to the actor because these will influence her decisions in terms of her objectives and/or actions and/or obstacles. For example, how a single mother tries to quiet a crying baby at three in the morning is different from how a grandmother tries to quiet a baby at noon.

A beat is a unit of action within a scene. Each beat contains an action that the character takes to achieve her objective. When the action or tactic to achieve that objective changes, it creates a new beat. However, the beat change does not necessarily constitute a new objective, although it can. Most often however, a beat change is related to a change of action.

The thought process behind the words being said and/or the physical action being taken is known as subtext. Since most of my action in Feral Music was physical, I have noted my subtext throughout the scored script provided at the end of this chapter. Subtext is supplied by the actor to help specify why her actions are important for the character. Subtext may or may not agree with the surface meaning of the written dialogue.

Moments are the smallest unit of action. It is the present moment in time that an actor must react to. An action can consist of several moments: there is the moment of preparation to execute the action; the moment of doing; the moment of evaluating whether the action is working; the moment of deciding to either explore a new tactic or to intensify the effort of present tactic; and the moment of changing the tactic. It is the closest thing the actor has to actually becoming her character, by committing to moment to moment needs and reacting to how her needs are being met. I believe being in the moment is the ultimate goal for acting. It refers to the ability to fully commit to actions...
while being aware of the given circumstances, and to react spontaneously within the
context of those circumstances. I tend to use the term “concentration” interchangeably
with “being in the moment.”

Impulses are reactions that an actor has to her given circumstances. Impulses are
not thought out, but arise out of the belief in the given circumstances and the commitment
to the character objectives.

Blocking refers to the physical activity that happens on stage. It may include
walking (also known as crossing) from one place to another, or it may refer to sitting,
standing, or possibly taking off a hat. It is any physical task performed by the actor.

Auditioning

The first step in creating a role is really in the audition. Since I knew before the
casting process even began that I had the role, the audition for me was a formality. I was
required to audition as part of my class work for that quarter.

My audition consisted of two monologues, one contemporary and one classic. I
decided to tailor my audition to getting the role of Nola and chose my monologues as if I
didn’t know that I was already cast in the role of Nola. I chose characters that needed to
make big transitions within the monologues. My contemporary piece was from a comedy
sketch by “The Kids In The Hall,” in which a male prisoner is talking for unknown
reasons about the decline in the world’s ability to speak and understand the English
language. The reasons for him speaking become clear at the very end of the monologue
when he reveals that he killed a woman in Holland for speaking “Hollandaise.” I
changed the given circumstances for the audition and made the character a nice
Midwestern housewife who is on the verge of having a breakdown. It kept the comedy alive but also gave me a nice contrast between gentle feminine choices and very aggressive powerful choices, with a very gradual build in between the two. The character is on edge and ambiguously insane, as Nola appears in the text so I found it appropriate.

My second piece was Cressida from Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*. Cressida is berating herself for not being able to keep quiet about her love for Troilus, while at the same time admitting more and more how much she adores him. I thought the piece went well with “The Prisoner,” as I’ve begun to call it, because it offered very quick but severe transitions in comparison with the slow gradual build of the other piece. “The Prisoner” is comedic but with very dark undertones hinting at the insanity of the character speaking, while Cressida remains lighthearted but frenetic and desperate at times. The way I’ve staged Cressida involves the use of physicality, gestures, and levels in space. I thought the package offered a good range of what I could do as a performer as well as things I would need to be able to do as Nola.

I was performing in O.S.U.’s production of Neil Simon’s *Lost In Yonkers* at the time of the callbacks and was therefore unable to participate in them. I was only able to observe the callbacks for the first forty-five minutes. This was definitely a far cry from how I normally approach a callback. In a more “realistic” audition situation, where I am not pre-cast, I would read the script to get a general feel for the character’s needs. I would read the entire play probably only once for a callback situation. But I would spend a lot of time reading and re-reading individual scenes in which the character I was auditioning for appeared prominently. To feel comfortable in the audition, I need a fair
amount of familiarity with the script. Once I am familiar with the script, I feel safe to open up to my fellow actor and respond to his or her choices within the audition. And ultimately, whether auditioning, rehearsing, or performing, that connection to the partner is the goal.

Once I have been cast, the first step I take in creating a role for performance is to read the script several times. During the initial readings of the script, I look for clues to the character's objectives. "What does she want?" In subsequent readings of the script I focus on her given circumstances. "Why does she want to it?" "How old is she?" "Where is she living?" "Does she have friends?" I don't have a list of questions I use every time I create a role. I simply find out what the character wants and make decisions about how her surroundings effect her pursuit of that goal.

Character Analysis

For me, character analysis is the assembly of all given circumstances of the character as provided by the playwright. I assemble these givens in order to lay the foundation for the choices I will later make regarding objectives and beats. I find the givens in a number of ways. I read the character description that the playwright provides at the beginning of the script. From there I will read the play. I will focus first on what my character says about herself. It's often a reliable source of information, though not entirely. Many times what a character says and does are completely different. So I read the play again, and the second time, I focus on what the other characters say about my character. Again, there may be huge discrepancies between what a character says about herself, and what other characters say about her. So I read the play again. On the third
reading, I try to focus on what the character does, and how she reacts to the people around her. The decisions a character makes, in what are often the extreme circumstances of a play, tell a lot about a character's true nature.

Sometimes there may be very little said about the character at all, either by the playwright, the other characters, or herself. Other times, there may be references to the character that may involve research to understand. And there may be discrepancies between what a character says and what she does. In these instances, it is the actor's job to fill in those blanks. These blanks may be filled by research or by creative decisions by the actor. But the blanks must be filled.

While working on *Feral Music*, I used a system of character analysis I learned at University of Nevada Las Vegas. It was taught to me by Davey Marlin-Jones. The system is called *P.A.S.T.O.* The name is an acronym for *Preparation, Attack, Struggle, Turn*, and *Outcome*. I use this system of analysis to assemble everything I know about the character from reading the play and doing the character research (that was presented in Chapter One) to outline my character's journey. It helps me discover a cohesive through-line for my character. Some of the conclusions I arrive at about the character come directly from the script. Some come from the character research described in Chapter One. Others are creative solutions and imagery I created for myself to specify details that required invention on my part (particularly in the sections about the singing). As I further define this system, I will show how I applied it to the character of Nola.

The first step in analyzing a character with the *P.A.S.T.O.* is to determine the character's super-objective, or her need that propels her decisions in the play. In the case
of Nola, I decided that I believe Nola’s super-objective is to find connection with the world outside herself. She feels inner creative impulses and is eager to find a conduit that allows her to share them with other people. However, she is hindered by her deafness and inability to communicate in a common language. She has not been able to learn the common mode of communication of those around her, spoken language. Nola has only recently been taught a formal sign language. She is also hindered by the “scientific deafness” of her doctors, Williamson and Hope. They are not literally deaf, but they are unwilling to listen to or believe Nola when she says that she can hear and sing music.

Once the character’s super-objective is defined, the P.A.S.T.O. system helps me arrive at the steps that the character takes to achieve that objective. The first step in the P.A.S.T.O. system is preparation. Preparation refers to the events in the life of the character that lead to her conflict within the play. These events are not limited to the scenes we see in the play, they can also include events that are referred to within the play, but are never seen. Most of Nola’s preparation happens before the curtain ever rises on her in the hospital. It really begins at her birth. She was born deaf. There are few hints as to her upbringing in the script, except the fact that she was “orphaned at birth,” and has been a ward of the state since. It seems likely that her social development was stunted by being raised in institutions with other children with developmental problems. She has been transferred to the institution in which the play takes place because two doctors have discovered that she has the ability to learn sign language and therefore to communicate, despite her lifelong diagnoses of autism and schizophrenia. She was diagnosed as autistic because of her inability to relate socially, and because of a repetitive behavior the
doctors refer to as an autistic rapture. In this “rapture,” Nola takes pages of sheet music and stuffs them into the toilets, floods the bathroom with the water, and gestures and silently mouths words in front of what seems to be a makeshift microphone.

I had to do a lot of creative imagery for myself in specifying what this singing ritual meant to Nola. I decided the flushing of the toilets causes vibrations in the wall and floor. The clogging of the toilet provides her with water. The water seems to act as a conduit between the music on the page and her ability to “hear” and perform it. Water is a substance that exists on a plane between solid and gas. It is a tangible form of a sound wave. As the ripples of the water run across her feet, it carries the music that has been trapped on the page into her body. She has found a symbolic way to tap into her own creative impulses. She sees herself as a fish. Like a fish lives in the water, and needs it to survive, so Nola lives in her music.

The doctors have begun to teach her to sign. In so doing they have offered her a way to reach out to the world around her. She uses this new communication to tell her doctors that during these “raptures” she is actually hearing music and singing what she hears. This is completely implausible to Hope and Williamson. Nola has no concept of sound, having been born deaf. The only scientific explanation for the doctors is that the behavior is a result of schizophrenia. What seemed to be a step toward connecting Nola with the world has become an agent to isolate her more, until she makes friends with Hannah.

Hannah is a hearing woman who is schizophrenic. She resides in the same ward as Nola. Hannah has been learning sign language by observing and communicating with
Nola privately. Hannah believes Nola when she says she can hear and sing. Through Hannah, Nola has made another connection to the outside world. Hannah believes Nola, so Nola protects Hannah, as well as she can, and by doing so, protects her connection. Nola believes that when Hannah watches her sing, she is able to share in the art she is creating. So Nola continues to sing despite the doctors trying to teach her that her “episodes” are in fact fictional and silent. And that’s where we first meet her in the play. As the lights go up, she is sneaking into the bathroom to create her art.

The “A” of the P.A.S.T.O. system refers to the work attack. The attack is the incident that sends the character into action. Nola’s attack occurs in the game of “Listening” she plays with Hannah. Music serves Nola in a couple of ways. It is the conduit for her creativity. But it is also how Nola organizes the world around her. It’s a game of Nola’s invention in which she says, or rather signs, a word and Hannah describes what that thing would sound like in music. It’s how Hannah further helps Nola connect with the world outside herself. But in the game Nola realizes that the descriptions provided by Hannah are based on sounds she’s never heard. At the musical description of her own name Nola becomes despondent. She turns away and begins to cry. Nola doubts her system of connecting to and organizing the world. It’s all being described to her in terms of instruments she’s never heard. The game’s previous fun and beauty become desperation for Nola, particularly when she asks Hannah what “silence” sounds like in music. The word “silence” has particular importance because her doctors are using it to describe her art. Hannah cannot come up with an answer. If the only word Nola can equate with “silence” is “nothing,” then the possibility exists for her that her art is in fact
nothing, and therefore, she may truly be crazy. Or it means that the one person who Nola believes can hear her music cannot in fact hear it, and that Nola is alone, unable to share or communicate what’s happening inside her mind. She is as alone as she was before she discovered her method of singing.

And so her *struggle* to find another way to connect to the world begins. Struggle refers to the actions a character takes to pursue her super objective. Nola’s struggle begins with Dr. Kraft, when he first examines her. She is unreceptive to him at first, assuming he’s just another doctor. She assumes he is there to give her more reasons why she can’t sing. She realizes, however, in the course of the examination that he is there against the will of the other doctors. He may be on her side. But the encounter is too brief to know if he is a viable ally. He is after all a doctor. So Nola’s struggle moves into the direction of trying to find out if he is trustworthy.

When they meet the second time, Nola and Kraft have more time to interact. She spends the scene testing him. She refuses to speak to him. She says she will only sing. She throws the metaphors she has created for herself at him to see if he understands. In the course of the scene, Kraft makes the sign for “artist” in reference to Nola. She recognizes that he wants to understand even if he can’t. She begins to sing for him. It is the first time she sings outside the bathroom. The importance of Kraft’s understanding overwhelms her normal ritual. But he is unable to recognize what she is doing, and the singing is interrupted by the doctors. The connection that was beginning to be established is broken again. It’s broken not only by the orderly and the doctors chasing Kraft and Hannah from the room, but also, by Kraft’s inability to recognize the event of the
singing.

Kraft waits for Nola in the bathroom and finally does witness and recognize her singing. His attention and effort make Nola aware that he is who she needs in order to escape the prison she's in and to share her art with the rest of the world. But her doctors have already made the plan to implant her with the device, and she is given the gift of hearing before she can escape. Nola's disconnection from, and disregard for her own doctors makes her unaware of her fate. The doctors attempt to explain the imminent procedure, but she ignores them. Nola has found someone who is willing and able to hear what she sings, and so she has no further need for her doctors. Even if she had heard and could understand the implant procedure, she would be powerless to resist the orderlies and medications of the hospital. And so she is operated on.

Returning to the P.A.S.T.O. terminology, this operation is Nola's *turn*. The turn is the event in the play that resolves the conflict. In Nola's case, she is given the "gift" of hearing and sent on her way by her doctors. From the time of her operation to the time of her release, Nola experiences none of these creative impulses that used to lead her to sing. On the day of her release, she makes a final pilgrimage to what was her studio, the institution's bathrooms, and tries to sing. She cannot hear the music she once had playing inside her. She has been trained to speak, she has heard "real" music. She has been cured of her deafness, and the "water" that Nola, the "fish" has been swimming in has been polluted by her implants. Her pure form of expression has been killed, and she can only remember the feeling of it, or enact a cheap copy of it. She is forced to decide: Will she live her life as a hearing person with all the "benefits" thereof? Or will she try to remove
the implants and go back to her old life, knowing that once she has heard sound and music, she may be unable to ever regain the music that played before? She decides that she will risk removing the implants.

The outcome is the result of the character’s reaction to the turn of the play. Nola’s outcome is to visit Dr. Kraft. She pleads with him to help her try to return to her old life. Nola is aware of the ethical ramifications of the forgery, and has figured out how to involve Kraft in a way that benefits him without making him responsible if the forgery were to come to light. He eventually agrees. As the lights go down, we see Nola on the precipice of a new life. Even if she fails to regain her creative expression, the false life and identity she would assume in Kraft’s hospital would be truer to herself than living happily ever after as a hearing person.

Once I’ve mapped the basic journey of the character through the character analysis, I return to the script. I don’t ever really visit the character analysis again once it is written. It is really just a doorway into the world of the play. If I am having trouble with particular moments in the script, I may see where they fall in the character analysis. But really it is just a tool of preparation for me. Once I’ve written the analysis, I am ready to enter rehearsals and explore the script on my feet.

Table work

This is the time in rehearsal when the actors sit around a table and read the script aloud to one another. Table work is valuable time for me to begin to familiarize myself with the other actors in the process, as well as with the other characters in the script. It also gives me a chance to get “on the same page” as the director. I prefer at least two days
worth of table work. Reading the script aloud with the other actors begins to give me a clue as to how the actions of my character are affected by them. I don’t try to act the play during table work, I try to listen. I’m listening for details I may have missed about my character or my surroundings. After table work, I assign some preliminary verbs to the script. Those verbs give me a good starting point for when we begin blocking rehearsals. In *Feral Music*, we had two evenings of table work, during which time we were fortunate enough to have Brian with us the help clarify moments in the play that were unclear.

**Blocking Rehearsals**

In blocking rehearsals, the script is generally worked through chronologically. Scene by scene, the actors, the director, and, in our case, the playwright, begin exploring the physical shape of the play. Entrances, exits, and everything in between are staged during these rehearsals. During *Feral Music*, blocking rehearsals began on the third evening. These are difficult rehearsals for me. Ideally, the movement on stage should come organically, from the actors’ impulses. Since blocking rehearsals happen early in the process, I don’t have my lines memorized. And I find it hard to concentrate on the given circumstances of the scene when I still have the script in my hand. Therefore, all my impulses, which should be based on the given circumstances of the play, are squelched by insecurity with my lines. This play was particularly difficult in that respect because my lines were all in American Sign Language. I didn’t have my hands free to “speak” because I was holding the script. It was rather like I was trying to talk with my mouth full. I don’t usually memorize my lines early in the process, but I made a concerted effort to do so this time, just so I could communicate with the other characters
on stage.

**Working Rehearsals**

Working rehearsals happen after the blocking has been done. The actors and director take each scene separately and dissect it action by action, beat by beat, moment by moment. These rehearsals help me further refine my choices about verbs. I test the verbs I've chosen in rehearsal. If they aren't working, I make a note of them during the rehearsal. The next day before rehearsal, I'll assign new verbs based on what I learned about the scene the day before. It is important to specify actions and objectives as much as possible during these rehearsals because they will be neglected during the upcoming technical rehearsals. This is my favorite part of acting. It's a time of discovery about the character's drives and motivations and obstacles. This is the time I find I learn the most about my character by interacting with the other characters.

I tried something new during the rehearsals for this play. I spent a lot of time in the working rehearsals of *Feral Music* focusing on physical activities that were not necessarily connected to psychological action. I was making a concerted effort to work from the outside in, instead of from the inside out, which is my usual habit. The early physical choices I was making were still based on verbs, but the verbs were not necessarily "acting" verbs. They didn't really connect me psychologically with my fellow actors. Instead I chose verbs that gave my movement particular shape. For instance, I used verbs like to pop or to bubble, rather than verbs like to punish or to coax. Eventually though, I realized those early physical choices weren't moving me forward. They weren't helping me achieve my objectives or connect with my fellow actors. I
abandoned them and returned to verbs that required psychological action rather than physical activity. I did keep the Laban efforts in mind as I worked, but they became secondary to the objectives of the scenes.

Working rehearsals are also the time when the journey of the character becomes more clear to me. The beats become more distinct. Once the steps of the character's journey become clear, I can find the varying intensities the character works with to attain their objectives. Dr. Ferris and I compiled a list of Nola's moments in the play. We put them on a sort of graph of intensity. The more intense the energy Nola was expending, the higher the numerical value it had on the chart. This helped me find the differences in Nola's bathroom singing scenes in particular. Once I had detailed the moments psychologically, and assigned them a number on the graph, I could use the graph as a physical score. As well, once I graphed the scenes around the singing sections and saw how the pattern of energy seemed to be developing, I could make choices about how subtle or energetic the singing needed to be. I would then justify the energy level with a psychological choice.

However, in scenes where I was working with other actors, I had to begin with psychological choices and then supplement them with physical ones. It was not a conscious decision to work alternately between "inside out" and "outside in." It was a pattern that evolved in rehearsal.

**Technical Rehearsals**

Technical rehearsals involve the addition of the technical elements (lights, costumes, sound) for the production. This is the time that blocking gets adjusted to work
within the lights, or sound cues get adjusted for volume. I enjoy the addition of the “special effects.” But these rehearsals can also be some of the most frustrating. The through-line of the show becomes of secondary importance. But I often feel like I fall behind in these stop-and-start rehearsals. I lose track of my objectives. I have not yet found a technique to combat this frustration. And the technical rehearsals for *Feral Music* were no different. The first night of technical rehearsals, I was committing as fully as I could to my actions and objectives in an effort to not lose ground on the work I’d done so far. However, it was exhausting to try to sustain the performance energy between stops and starts. I gave up on the idea by the second tech. I decided that the energy would be better used studying my script earlier in the day, or later that evening, when I could work at my own pace and not worry about interruptions. Once we were able to run the show without any interruptions, I still felt like I had lost some ground, but I was satisfied that I had tried my best to stay on top of it.

**Performance**

Opening night, the first public performance of the play, usually makes me very anxious. On the one hand, opening nights are special times when the actors unite in a way that just isn’t possible before an audience arrives in the process. And opening night audiences are usually filled with friends and family, so it is a kind and generous group. However, I almost never feel like I am ready. Since there is no time left to prepare, I must resign myself to that feeling. I usually spend the day of opening trying to relax: long baths and naps; and trying to take the focus off of my nerves and on to something positive, like opening night gifts. The opening day of *Feral Music* was slightly different
for me. I felt very ready for an audience, because I’d done so much preparation, more so than I’d done for any other role I’d played.

Once a show has opened, I do very little work outside of the performances. I very rarely keep a journal of experiences and events within the rehearsal process. In the case of this role I did, knowing that I would have to document the role later. I also very rarely do a physical or vocal warm up before a performance. But Dr. Ferris created a ritual in the process of Feral Music that consisted of a group vocal warm up. It helped to focus my energy and to check in with my acting partners before doing the show. Before the vocal warm up, I would do a physical warm up on my own. I don’t think the ritual of this show was enough to make me change my ways all together, though. If, in the future, I’m playing a role that is not demanding physically, I don’t know that I would do a physical warm up. The most important part of my preparation before performing in the evening is to have at least ten minutes to myself, during which I can breathe, or think, or cry, or whatever it is I need to do at that moment.
3.4 SCORED SCRIPT

What follows is my scored script from O.S.U.'s production of *Feral Music*. It is made up three columns: Objectives, Dialogue, and Physical Action. The Objectives column contains all the objectives, actions, beats, and subtext I developed to play the role of Nola. It also lists the Laban effort actions I used to inspire the work I was doing in any given scene. The Dialogue column contains the script. I’ve also included the A.S.L. translations of my lines in this column. The Physical Action column contains all of my blocking in the show. It is my hope that this score documents all of the physical and psychological choices I made within the context of the show.

Key:

**Bold Text:** Beats

*Italicized Text:* Signed Dialogue

*Underlined Text:* Text that is signed and spoken

U: upstage

D: downstage

R: stage right

ST: subtext

A: Action

OBJ: scene objective

Obs: obstacle

L: stage left

C: center stage

X: cross

65
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>SCORED SCRIPT</th>
<th>Physical Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OBJ: TO AVOID GETTING CAUGHT 1.1 Sneaking Glide, Dab A: To conjure the music Obs: Orderlies, doctors, sound ST: I must sing or I can’t sleep!</td>
<td>ACT ONE Prologue</td>
<td>Enter from UL with crumpled sheet music and broomstick. X DC to bathroom. Enter bathroom, set broomstick down on floor, stand in front of upstage toilet, tear first piece of sheet music, stuff it into toilet, flush toilet. X to center toilet, stuff with three sheets of music one at a time, flush toilet. X to downstage toilet. Stare at music, press sheet music to ear, turn in a circle. Crumple music and stuff into downstage toilet, flush toilet. Pick up broomstick, X DC to bathroom drain and place broomstick in drain. Turn upstage, shake right hand at ear rocking weight back and forth until music cue. Turn to face broomstick downstage and begin singing. At light cue, bend down and gather a handful of water. Toss water straight up into the air. Continue singing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I've ... *What? What? Shit ... Wait a minute!*

**HANNAH.** Since they brought her she makes the flood. Drowns of water that would cover me, drown me and suffocate everything that kept low on the floor. Whenever she can, whenever she can get away at night ... That is what I know. They find her there. She sneaks out ... She sneaks away to the water closet ... to the bathroom and stuffs the bowls with papers, with musical papers she tears from books. She stops up the pipes. And she makes the flood of water everywhere. She makes an ocean. And the she sings.

**KRAFT.** Because the airline lost my ... The goddamn airline routed my luggage to ... I'm on the side of a road. Can you ... I can't hear anything you're ... From Lausanne. From ... Well tell them I've arrived and in the mom ... I'm onto something new here just trust me, I know what I ... Who? Her doct ... they want to teach her what? Who gave you that informa ... I've read all the journal arctic ... What addendum? Then why wasn't I informed of ... Who's the operative manag ... you're goddamn right it's me who's directly ... I'm the man in field. Did anyone think to inform ... it's your job to locate me then. So, read it to me. Read it. Loud, I can barely hear your voi ... Shit.

| At light change, begin singing with signs that are lyrical and water-like. |
| Large sweeping gesture. Then continue singing. |
1.3 Which way did he go?
Wring
A: To recapture the music
Obs: concentration, fatigue

HANNAH. Nola says that before we learned to live on dry land we were fish, creatures of the swamps and the seas. We didn’t have ears, we had gills... they took in sounds transmitted through the water. So, when our first ancestors began to adapt to life on land, when they began to pull oxygen from the air, their gills changed form, becoming outer and middle ears. You know what I think? I think the bowls in the bathroom, they’re like shells... I think they’re like giant porcelain seashells and Nola makes the ocean... makes the waves... I try to tell her, I say “Nola... Nola... when you put your ear up against the shell you can hear ocean... you can hear music.” But Nola, she doesn’t hear it. She can’t. But I think she wants to... and that’s why she’s there every night she can get out. That’s why.

KRAFT. Hello? Hello? The goddamn international operator... that’s not me talking it’s the... I’m gonna run out of change for the... it’s like eleven dollars a minute from here to... Because a call from your office can be traced that’s why the... Read it fast, I don’t have enough change for the... because all my phone cards were all in my goddamn luggage...

1.4 Runner’s high
Slash
A: To wrangle the music

HANNAH. Gills are not capable of perceiving sound. Did yo know that? It’s true. That’s

Stop singing. X to center toilet. Kneel. Take sheet music out of toilet and put it up to ear. Begin rocking.

End rocking, gather the rest of the music in the toilet and X to center of bathroom. Slowly squeeze the water out of the paper. Play with stream of water under the light cue.

Hurl wad of music into the center toilet, begin singing in large slashing and punching gestures.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.5 Back into the cage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To replenish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obs: music, Arturo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST: I must pretend I haven’t done anything wrong.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

what Nola says. So, fish perceive sound waves through their acute sense of balance. Any fisherman will tell you, she says, noises above water won’t disturb fish swimming beneath the surface. Only water changes... a splash or surging swell creating underwater sounds waves, inform a fish to be aware. The water movement is felt in the part of the gills the part of the gills that control equilibrium.

End singing in “big finish” gesture. Slowly regain neutral body shape. X UR to steps of musicians platform. Sit. Remain in same posture through Scene 1.

Scene 1
(End)

WILLIAMSON. To hear voices when one has no concept of voice at all is only explicable by a grand delusional psychosomatic—

KRAFT. Or is it that she is connected to an altogether new and ground breaking form of communicative expression.

WILLIAMSON. What!

Music Cue

HOPE. Perhaps it is too strong a word. He operates aborad and is unfamiliar with American practice. Perhaps a more gentle phrasing.

Begin hand shaking gesture and rocking to music.
WILLIAMSON. Fine.

HOPE. Symptoms of schizophrenia, Doctor
Draft, are--

WILLIAMSON. Exactly so are--

HOPE. Are signs of a--

WILLIAMSON. Signs.

HOPE. Of a reconstitution of a world.

WILLIAMSON. Not of a--

HOPE. No.

WILLIAMSON. Not of a decay.

HOPE. But of a recovery.

WILLIAMSON. What a psychiatrist must do is to--

HOPE. Interpret. To--

WILLIAMSON. Interpret... to piece together...

HOPE. The language.
**scene one**

**WILLIAMSON.** The language that the schizophrenic remakes. It is getting very late, Doctor Kraft. This might be enough for this evening, yes?

**KRAFT.** The time difference.

**WILLIAMSON.** To go away and rest after you long flight.

**HOPE.** A clean shirt. Freshen up.

**KRAFT.** They lost my luggage... the airlines... My clothes...

**HOPE.** Unfortunate. One of the perils of travel, I think... One of the perils one ought to expect.

**Scene Two**

**NOLA.** You are out of you bed. You are asleep on the floor. (You / bed/ out of bed. You/ sleep/ on floor)

**HANNAH.** No, I am not.

**NOLA.** Out of your bed and— (Bed/ out of bed.)

**HANNAH.** Not out of bed, not sleeping.

Stand, continuing hand gesture.

**X DR to bed.** Notice H on floor. Look around for orderlies. X to H. Tap her. X R of her.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: To prove I'm right</th>
<th>NOLA. <em>On the floor and</em>— (On floor.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ST: Do you understand me?</td>
<td>HANNAH. Okay, on the floor, but not sleeping then.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. <em>My room.</em> (My/ room.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To hurry her up</td>
<td>NOLA. <em>They'll come. I have to wake you or</em>— (They/ come(nod). Me/ warn/ they/ come.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obs: music in my head</td>
<td>HANNAH. Don't let them come. Asleep okay, but mostly hunting, and calling out. So, don't tell. If they come for me you mustn't say I was sleeping. Because I was calling out. I was talking in my sleep. I was calling. I was wandering the streets and calling for sleep because it wouldn't come. Yes. And it stole from me. It took my mattress and wouldn't give it back. And so I was hunting sleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begin listening gesture, X U of bed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To excite Hannah</td>
<td>NOLA. <em>I could push my button. The would give you sleep.</em> (Button/ they/ come. They/ inject/ sleep.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. No, don't, Nola. I don't want the kind of sleep they bring when you call them on the button.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X L of bed, pulling out orderly's call button.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 You're right Glide</td>
<td>NOLA. <em>They would bring it with them. If push this button, sleep will come.</em> (They/ bring/ sleep. Button/ sleep/ happen.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To relent Obs: my fear for Hannah ST: I'm afraid of Arturo, too.</td>
<td>HANNAH. <em>Please. They will make me go to bed. They will strap me to the mattress. And they you know what they do. I am hiding from them. I am keeping low to the ground so they will not strap me in my bed and have their way with me. Nola, in my dream... in my dream do you know what I would do? If I found sleep, do you know what I was prepared to do to him? Murderous thoughts, Nola. I would kill him.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>A: To make sense of what Hannah's telling me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 Et Tu Brute?</td>
<td>NOLA. <em>For stealing your mattress.</em> (For/ steal/ bed.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. For stealing my mattress, yes. And do you know what else... I found thief sleep in an alleyway behind a theatre. They had stolen my mattress away from him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. <em>Who? (Who/ they?)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. A group of toughs.. A group of toughs is who, Nola, and now all sleep had for a mattress were the bags of wasted popcorn left at the theatre at the end of the night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. <em>We will press the button. We will have</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sit on SL side of bed facing DL, looking at call button.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stand facing H.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To conspire</td>
<td>sleep brought here. (Button/ bring/ sleep.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obs: language, Hannah’s feelings for sleep.</td>
<td>HANNAH. Lying there. That thief sleep on the ground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST: If we can kill sleep, I can save her.</td>
<td>NOLA. I am pushing the button. (Me/button/sleep/happen.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. No, Nola, please. Don’t bring the button Sleep. It’s the wrong one... it’s not the thief, it’s the madman!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. We will kill him. (We/ kill/ crazy/ sleep.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. No, we can’t kill the madman Sleep, only the thief. I know this Nola. I know because I’ve seen them both. In my dream, I go to Sleep and shake him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. Sleep is a thief. He is a liar. (Sleep/ self/ thief. Self/ liar.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. He is a liar. He is a thief. Yes. And he is bloody and bruised. Those toughs have almost killed him. “Wake up, Sleep,” I call. “Wake up.” And what does he say to me then, Nola?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. Sleep spit. He swore. (Sleep/ spit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Let go of button. X U of bed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X D to L side of bed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X U of bed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A: To regain Hannah’s attention
ST: I’m jealous and angry with “sleep.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: To plead</th>
<th>ST: You're taking your life into your own hands!</th>
<th>Sleep/ swear.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. He gives me on of the bags. To sleep on. He asks me to be his lookout</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. No. It's a trick. Don't take it. (No. Trick/ con. Accept (shake head no.))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. It's not a trick. A mattress like that, Nola. A mattress of a bag of popped corn, it travels. It is much more portable than a regular bed... And I am to be his lookout, Nola. Two mattresses... one for each of us. He's not in my bed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. The kernels in your bag will break down. You are a rough sleeper. (Popcorn/ condense/ you/ toss and turn.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. If I am a rough sleeper and flatten the kernels then I will go back to the alley behind the theatre each night for a fresh bag of popcorn in plastic.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. I want to press button. I want to see them bring us Sleep. (Want/ button. Me/ want/ see/ they/ bring/ sleep.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. Press it then. Bring them. Have them come and bring madman Sleep too. Press</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X D to L side of bed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Throw sheet off bed. Counter up R of H.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X D to R side of bed. Stomp.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X U of bed to H.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A: To comfort

A: To flee

**OBJ: TO PERFECT MY ART**

**1.9 I feel you there**

Glide, Float

A: To conjure

Obs. Fear of being caught

it. Because when they strap me down and push themselves into me tonight I will be think about how when I am thief Sleep’s’s lookout, Nola... how we will lie together... how we will lie together separately in the alley behind the theatre, settling in on our still warm beds... hot from the poppers, our portable mattresses, troubled sleep, but fine, raised, protected from the ground.

**Scene Five**

*(End)*

WILLIAMSON. We are scientists... we are involved in a treatment that we believe benefits the patient. It's not a matter of ownership, of making a name for oneself. Personal gain is--

HOPE. We were not expecting you for several days. Coming late at night. We were leaving. We were heading home. So you see...

KRAFT. Yes. My apologies. I should have called. You're upset.

WILLIAMSON. Absolutely.

KRAFT. Doctors, I want to see her. I want to see her when she sings.

Grab call button. Press it several times while holding it above head and turning in a circle. Replace button. Pick up sheet from floor. X U of bed to behind H SR of bed.

Wrap sheet around H. Sit on edge of bed, looking for orderlies. When Arturo enters, run out D R vom.

Enter from UL carrying crumpled music pages and broomstick.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: To free the music</th>
<th>Scene Six</th>
<th>X to DC of bathroom area. Place broomstick into drain. Rip one page of music. X upstage toilet.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. The can write music down and you can see it on a page... you can read it... it has depth and color even on the still, black lines and notes. It is sound transformed into art. Trapped. Still. But it's there. All the other kinds of art are easy. She can see and feel those... she knows what they are. The are easy. But music from scratches trapped on a page. It's like her. It's like Nola. Stones. Music from blackened and lifeless stones. She wants me to say, it's sound transformed into art. It is sound transformed into... And the little black scratches of ink on the paper come alive and stir the air. Can you feel it? I think I can. Even if I can't hear what she makes, I believe in it. I want to. They move the air these scratches... it's teeny tine molecules into patterns that bounce off our face... touching... and quickening our senses. They are moving those scratches, even when they're still and trapped on paper, she says. I can free them I can free them. And music, Nola, they say, You can't hear it. You've never heard it. I cannot hear it, she says, but I am listening. I am in love with Nola. I want her. When I am strapped down and trapped I pretend it's her I feel inside. Touching me. Making me stir. She is a black scratch on paper, waiting. Waiting.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X to US toilet, crumpling torn sheet. Kneel when H kneels. Stuff music into toilet and flush.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kneel in front of center toilet. When H begins to straighten paper, crumple music, stuff into the toilet and flush it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kneel in front of DS toilet, looking at music. Lift music above head at the same rate as H. On the word “stones” crumple the music, stuff it into the toilet and flush it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X to center of bathroom, begin listening gesture, turn DS and begin singing into broomstick, gestures loosely emulating the H's dialogue.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bend down and gather two handfuls of water. Throw the water into the air and spin in a circle in unison with H. Resume singing in large slashing/punching gestures.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freeze in “listening” pose.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST: If I can capture a single impulse I can study it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To release the music I am different from when I started</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene Seven</th>
<th>(End)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. It is she who must understand! Nola must. That is why we are proceeding as we are. She must be made aware that what she is not is a singer. That she cannot actually hear music. And that here is nothing to listen to. That she cannot even comprehend what music is. It is beyond her. If she cannot understand that then she is obviously--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. That is the last thing we want. That is precisely the reason. Don't you understand? She is experiencing something that perhaps we can only--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. She listens to music! She sings!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOPE. We have seen her, Diagnostician Kraft. We have studied her case. Don't you think if there was something to hear we would have heard it? So, is there music to listen to? Is there song?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. Nola believes there is.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Slowly resume singing, one hand at a time, with gestures diminishing in size until lights change. X U to musicians platform. Sit on SR edge steps and lie down, mirroring H's body position. Stay there until the end of Scene Seven. |
| Sit up, begin listening gesture, while rocking forward and back. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Williams: That wasn’t the question. Do you believe there is, Mister Kraft? Do you? That is what is important.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scene Eight</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. You’re awake. Play with me, Nola. Play listening with me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. (Shakes head “no.”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. Why not? When they teach you to talk, Nola, can we still play?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. Go to sleep. It is late. (Sleep/ now. Late.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. I’m not tired. Please, Nola. Let’s play listening. Because maybe it won’t be the same afterwards. Listening won’t be fun anymore. We’ll do it the way you like. Music. You say a thing and I’ll tell you what it sound like in music. Come on, Nola. Please? Play with me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. Moon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. Oh, Nola, the moon is any easy one. It is the sound that big violin makes. The one you need to play between your legs... the one on</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stand. Begin smaller version of singing.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X D to R of bed. Pick up music. Place it against ear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sit on SR edge of bathroom wall, rocking back and forth, continuing listening gesture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place music against other ear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crumple music and throw to H’s feet. Turn to face H.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To resist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10 Best friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To play along</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST: I can't stay mad at you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST: I betcha can't get this one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To cheer Hannah up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To find connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST: I don’t know what that means!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To press her for an answer. ST: Am I crazy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. Quiet. (Silence.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. What.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. Quiet (Silence.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. Quiet? For listening? In the game? Quiet like silence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. (Nodding.) What music is quiet? What does it sound like? (Which/ music/ same/ quiet? Quiet/ noise/ same/-what-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. Quiet doesn’t sound like music, Nola. That one doesn’t work. It’s too hard. I can’t’ think of any. There is no good music for quiet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. No. There is. Tell me. (No. Try. Tell/me.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 1.11 The meeting

**A:** To hide
Observations: Kraft, Hannah’s not helping
ST: I just want to be left alone.

**A:** To comply
ST: He’s the first doctor to look me in the eye.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HANNAH. There isn’t, Nola. Stop it, I can’t. I’m sorry. I don’t know. Music that means quiet is hard. It’s too hard for me to hear.</th>
<th>X backwards to box. Sit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scene 9</strong></td>
<td>At light change, X to SR bed. Sit on SR edge facing DR vom. Head and chest inclined forward. No reaction to examination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KRAFT.</strong> To convince you... to prove to you something known by the entire world... do you see? Or what the whole world will know, cannot help but know, you see, under the right circumstances. Given the right circumstances. What you can do, yes... certainly, you art, your talent... what it is you are and your ability... but what I can do as well... an ability I possess, if you will, a kind of artistry too... dealing with those circumstances we’ve just discussed. The point is that we appreciate you. We recognize. Do you understand me? Does she understand me?</td>
<td>K points my face toward his. Turn away.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. She reads you mouth. She read your hands.</td>
<td>K points my face back towards his opening my mouth to examine it with the pen light. He lets go of my mouth. My mouth remains open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KRAFT.</strong> Given a set of circumstances, you see. Optimizing and creating just those circumstantial conditions in which world attention and knowledge is sparked... it is not random, you know, or if it is it’s just a fluke... it’s chance... And I, you see, we, those I represent, those for whom I lend my services...</td>
<td>K closes my mouth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To feign disinterest</td>
<td>You possess an ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST: Does he understand?</td>
<td>NOLA. <em>Studying me.</em> (Study at self)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. We suspect, yes, we project such an ability, fine... but we seek it out. We--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To protect myself</td>
<td>HANNAH. She wants to know--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST: He's gotten too close.</td>
<td>KRAFT. Our facilities... what we can offer... the finest... the--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. She wants--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. This, yes... it's an examination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. What's wrong with her?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. Please. I'm with a patient.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. Leave her alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. To see... to know if--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To appeal to Hannah</td>
<td>HANNAH. Are you a doctor?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. <em>Cold. Dead.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. Yes, prospector... broker... whatever you.. Yes, a collector's speculator...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Turn away.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When K touches my ear, tense up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To hide</td>
<td>diagnostician. Excuse me, I'm involved in an--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. She wants to know something.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. <em>The hands</em>— (hand/ hand)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. An investment of this type. Be still.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This kind of investiture... it involves great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>expense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. Your hands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. Cost. To purchase an objet d'art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>without--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. They are cold like the dead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. Oh, sorry. Without verification of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>authenticity. Better? A racehorse. To purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a racehorse without sounding its legs...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. He thinks you are a horse, Nola.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. Please. Do you understand how... she</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>does understand when I--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. <em>Mouth. Lips. Tongue.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. He doesn't know that you are a fish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>That you are a creature of the swamp.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When K lets go of my ear, cover it with R hand, rocking back and forth.

Stand. X left turn to face him still holding R ear.
A: To study Kraft

KRAFT. It is only a matter of time before forgeries occur. The market as it is. Do you see? Let me explain something to you. Do not take us lightly, do not brush us off. It would be a grave mistake. Lausanne, the Orient... in the eastern block... we're an international consortium... a series of private collective, small minds, purposefully so, but serious. Thriving. In the marketplace... there we will be, are, a player of significance. Your wrist please, Nola. Give me your wrist so I can record your pulse.

When he goes to move me back to the bed, X to SR side of bed and sit facing DR vom. Emulate K's gestures.

Look K in the face and then at wrist he's holding. When K leaves turn US to H and show her the wrist who listens to it. Freeze in position until the top of Scene Eleven. When Arturo enters, take H's hand and run off through DR vom.

Scene Eleven
(End)

A: To keep watch over Hannah

KRAFT. What'd you see? Did you hear it? Did you? Hear anything? Listen to me. Listen to me. I have access to her and the ward during the day. But... Could you... could you... at night... could you get me in?

ARTURO. Don't know. How bad do you want it?

Enter from DL vom. Sit on DS edge of SL bed. Examine wrist.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: To justify Hannah's behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scene Twelve</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. Nola? Nola? Good morning. Good mom-- I'm sorry. I didn't mean to--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. I wasn't sleeping on the floor! I wasn't sleeping on the floor!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. It's okay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. Don't' tell them! They'll put straps. They'll think I need more straps for my bed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. Seizures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. What is she saying do you know?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. Seizures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. I have seizures in the night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. Moving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. I'm moving... and they have to sometimes strap me... so I sleep still.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. Mad Sleep. (Crazy/ sleep)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. They call him... and Mad Sleep, he comes to strap me down. You won't tell, will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X U to stand U of K facing DS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To threaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>you?</strong> That I was on the floor and—**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KRAFT.</strong> No. I won’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HANNAH.</strong> Please. You promise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KRAFT.</strong> How do you know to understand her? The signs she makes... the...?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HANNAH.</strong> I don’t know.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KRAFT.</strong> Someone taught you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HANNAH.</strong> No. Just do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KRAFT.</strong> What is it you’re here for? Your symptoms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HANNAH.</strong> They taught her. They try to show her taught it. I watch.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| NOLA. Stealing Sleep. Calling. (Steal/ sleep/ call.)  |
| **HANNAH.** She wants to know what you want... why you’re here now and back again.  |
| **KRAFT.** That’s what that meant?  |
| **HANNAH.** Stealing Sleep. She’s calling. She  |

<p>| X DR to tap H on the shoulder. End up DR of H.  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: To ridicule Kraft</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.14 The Test</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Float</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To test Kraft's limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obs. Hannah, my own hopes for him.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wants to push the button.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. What button? What does that mean?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. For Sleep. She told me about you yesterday. Asking questions. Looking at her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. She didn't tell you. You were there. I spoke to you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. No. I don't recognize you. I would remember. The way your closes smell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. I only have one shirt... one suit. All the urgency. I haven't had any time to get anything new.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. <em>Nose. Fish.</em> (Smell/ fish.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. Look... I want to talk to her. I want to talk to you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. <em>Horse. Horse.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. Can she understand me? That I want to talk? Can she--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. She's saying &quot;horse.&quot; Right, Nola. Horse. He's the one with the Horse. Now I remember.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Giggle with H.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When K X to face me, turn DS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| A: To remain aloof  
NOLA. *No talk. No. Only sing.* (Won't talk. No. Only music.)  
HANNAH. "I don't talk," she says. "I only sing."  
NOLA. *Mouth. Tongue. Artist.*  
HANNAH. That's rude, Nola. He came to be friends with you. I like him. He's not going to tell about me on the floor. He's --  
NOLA. *Artist. Artist. Artist.*  
KRAFT. What's that last one? What's that?  
HANNAH. Artist.  
KRAFT. She's saying artist? That's what she's--  
HANNAH. Let's be fish, Nola. Fish in the rocking waves.  
KRAFT. You know what it is you're doing? When you flood that room? Do you have any idea?  |
|---|---|
| Slowly sit on DC box facing DL. | Begin fish and water gestures.  
A: To avoid Kraft  
ST: He has to invest in me before I trust him. |
| A: To seek understanding | NOLA. *Artist. Fish. Artist.*  
KRAFT. Yes. You're damn right “Artist.”  
*Artist. Artist.* And I just want to know... I want to know shy music? Why that and not something else? Painting... Sculpture... Why not something that you could feasibly do? Huh? Explain it to me. What are you saying? Just answer, Nola... I can make my report and you can leave here. I could get you out. I can take you somewhere where you'll be appreciated. An artists' house.  
HANNAH. Nola?  
KRAFT. I know you can understand me. My music? What's the meaning?  
NOLA. *I am a fish with gills and there is a surging sea swell. It upends me.* (Me/ fish/ gills. Water/ wave/ fish/ thrown.)  
KRAFT. What? What did she say?  
HANNAH. She says, “I am a fish with gills and there is a surging sea swell.” “It upends me,” she says.  
KRAFT. Nola, I make an evaluation. Investors, they want-- |
| ST: Does he understand art? | Continue fish and water gestures turning away from K whenever he gets into my line of view.  
Turn to H and do fish and gills gesture.  
Rise and begin to wander around DC enter area continuing water fish gestures.  
Stand on DC corner of bathroom area.  
Continue water and fish gestures. |
HANNAH. You are a fish Nola. That’s funny.
A fish!

NOLA. I am a black scratch on paper waiting.
(Paper/ me/ black/ staff/ wait.)

HANNAH. She is a black scratch on paper waiting.

KRAFT. That’s what you want me to put in it?
“When questioned, subject declares she is a fish
upended by a—”

HANNAH. She doesn’t care. She is a fish. She
is a black scratch waiting.

NOLA. Black scratch. Fish. (Black/ staff. Fish.)

KRAFT. This is my job, Nola. It’s what I do.
Do you want them to keep you here? Is that
what you want? You want to stay locked in here
forever and never leave? Never be appreciated?
Never have the recognition of greatness... be a
true artist...?

HANNAH. Are they going to take you away,
Nola?

KRAFT. You want what they say to be true?
Hope... Williamson...?

A: To close off to Kraft
ST: Perhaps I’ve pushed him too far.

1.14 Inner Struggle
Slash and Punch
A: To reach out to Kraft
Obs: My need to protect
Hannah
ST: He passed the test! He
knows I’m an artist!

K grabs my arms, tense them and hold
them to my sides, head inclined forward,
avoiding gaze.

Notice “artist” gesture, relax tensed pose.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: To make sense of my situation</th>
<th>NOLA. <strong>Loud. Loud.</strong> (Noise. Noise.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. <strong>Singing.</strong> (Music.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. But you know how I see it? I think your precious. I think you have value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. What they'll do to you here, what their plan... it'll kill the artist. It'll kill the singing. They want--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. I don't want them to take you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. <strong>Stone. Seaswell. Upended.</strong> (Stone. Water. Fish/thrown.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANNAH. I don't want them to take you away from me, Nola.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To escape</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. Sing to me. Now. And then it’s all taken care of.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. Who would play with me? Who would play listening?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. Come on, dammit. I need this. Please.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. Tell him no.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. <em>Upended. Upended.</em> (Fish/thrown. Fish/thrown.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. Do you really hear it, Nola... when you sing--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. &quot;Upended,&quot; she says. &quot;Upended.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. Is there really music or do you just imagine there is? Do you just think it's playing?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X DL to DS edge of SL bed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: To push Kraft away</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.15 They’re heee-er... Float, Slash, Punch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To prove myself Obs: Kraft’s inability to understand, the doctors and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. There’s a big difference. Listen to me. Listen.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANNAH. What’s the difference. That’s what she says. What is the difference.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. <em>What’s the difference?</em> (Doesn’t matter.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X U to box. Stand on box. Begin listening gesture until music begins to play. Begin singing as if an a “jam session.” Gestures are mixed with ASL signs about “can’t hear, not hear.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Arturo  | HANNAH. No! No more listening! Quiet! Go away!  
KRAFT. Stop it. Nola. Look at me. Look.  
HANNAH. Quiet, she's singing. Go to sleep.  
KRAFT. Nola, I'm up against a deadline. I've got pressure that's--  
HANNAH. She is untrapping the scratches and letting them move. Quiet!  
HOPE. What is this. What are you--  
HANNAH. The button Nola. You called Mad Sleep with the button!  
WILLIAMSON. Look at this. I think this is enough.  
HANNAH. Sing quiet, Nola! Sing quiet! So they won't take you away from me! So you won't wake Mad Sleep!  
KRAFT. Don't you understand, Nola? If only you can hear it isn't really music. I need to hear it too or I can't do my job.  
WILLIAMSON. You are disturbing the other  |
patients!

KRAFT. It's my ability, too. We talked about it.

HANNAH. Sing quiet louder! Louder, Nola!

KRAFT. If only you hear the music then there's something wrong with the rest of us. That's not what art does, Nola. It's not fair. It won't sell.

HOPE. I think you should--

HANNAH. Sing! Sing!

KRAFT. I know my job. I--

WILLIAMSON. Get her out of here!

KRAFT. Don't shut me out. I'm different. I'm a professional afficionado. I'm here to believe in you.

WILLIAMSON. Now do you believe us?

HANNAH. Yes! Music!

HOPE. You've done enough here for today.

KRAFT. I'm getting through to her. We've--
A: To lash out
ST: Why does no one understand?

WILLIAMSON. Enough.

ARTURO. C'mon crazy bitch. Come to Poppie.

HANNAH. I'm pretending I can hear it, Nola. Do you see? I'm pretending there is music. So they won't take either of us. All around. All around is song!

At light change, begin singing gestures that emulate the sound cue of the waves of water until black out. Exit SL.

Music Cue-Enter from UR wrapped in bed sheet. X down to SR bed. Lie down on stomach with head DS facing SR. Remain in sleeping posture through Scene One.

ACT TWO

Scene Two

HANNAH. I heard the pipes banging, Nola, so I know you were at it again tonight. I know you were in the water and singing... . . . Notes and sounds buffeting. A wild, feral music everywhere. Singing. "Don't you hear it too? Do you?" I say. Listen! And so, you would say to them, Nola... how can you know that I don't hear the music? . . .

. . . So that perhaps you will touch my arm so

Shift sleeping position.
2.2 How do I get out?
A: To shut out distractions
Obs: my need to reach Kraft

Scene Three
(End)

KRAFT. ... Tell me that you’ll see what’s more important... what’s a better thing for them. Where are you going?

ARTURO. She ain’t coming tonight. Too late. You come back tomorrow.

KRAFT. Are you sure? Wait a minute. Wait.

Shift to sleeping on back.

Sit up. Wrap sheet around tighter. Slowly lie back down into previous sleep position. Remain until the end of Scene Three.

Sit up facing DR vom. Remove bed sheet. Begin rocking, head inclined forward.
OBJ: TO PUSH MY
DOCTORS OUT OF MY
LIFE
2.3 No one's taking me
alive
Float, Glide
A: To ignore them
Obs: The physical
closeness, they're talking
about hearing, which I want
to know more about.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene Four</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOPE. Look at me. Look here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. Your signs, Nola. They're improving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOPE. Here. Look here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. But I want to explain something to you. I want you to pay attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOPE. We want to fit you with a device.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. How the ear works, Nola, there are moving molecules that become waves of sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOPE. Look. Nola. We are bound. Not for consent, but to explain the nature of the surgical procedure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. They are funneled by the outer ear to the tympanic membrane where they cause a vibration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOPE. The surgical implantation of a device.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. On the other side of the membrane is a narrow air chamber. There are</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notice "pay attention" sign.

Begin rocking again.
A: To reach out
ST: Have they talked to Kraft? Has he changed their minds?

A: To find out what’s on the clipboard.

three bones to pick up and enhance the movements of the ear drum.

HOPE. An instrument, Nola. A drum like a musical instrument.

WILLIAMSON. Don’t say that. It’s a validation of--

HOPE. Sorry. Over here. Here, Nola. There are doctors coming to implant it. A medical team. Do you see? And then we are certain, improvement will quickly follow.

WILLIAMSON. These bones--


WILLIAMSON. Look at me, Nola. The vibrations of these bones arrive in the middle ear.

HOPE. Bones in the shape of a hammer, an anvil, a stirrup.

WILLIAMSON. These vibrations at the cochlea.

HOPE. Here, Nola. Cochlea.

WILLIAMSON. It’s a small chamber in the

Notice “drum” gesture. Look at HOPE, repeating gesture.

Watch diagram on clipboard while doing listening gesture.

Turn to left, following HOPE with chart.
| 2.4 Marsh grass
Float
A: To make sense of what they’re telling me.
Obs. They speak too fast, and don’t understand me. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>shape of a snail. Full of liquid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. <em>Snail. Fish.</em> (Worm. Fish.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. Once here sound recognition is possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOPE. And here. Look. Here is where we can help you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. <em>Fish. Water. Snail.</em> (Fish. Water. Worm.) [Ad-libbing signs]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. This device. We can bypass your membrane. We can connect to the liquid in the cochlea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOPE. Wait. She’s doing something. She’s responding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. It’s gibberish. She’s a fish, she’s a sea creature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. <em>Fish... fish...</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. The inner ear is the nerve center. A labyrinth. The sound waves that entered the cochlea are picked up by</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Turn to face DR vom. |

| A: To shut him out. ST: He doesn’t get it. I’m not playing his game. I’m saying something real! |

| HOPE grabs my right hand and shakes it. I shake my hand in exactly the same gesture. |
A: To reach out
ST: I am a creature of the swamp!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>microscopic sensory receptors. Thirty-thousand hair cells in rows, swaying.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOPE. Bending under the wave vibrations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. Marsh grass. Swamp grass. Tides. (Soft/ wet/ grass/ place/ water) [Ad-libbing until the end of the scene.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOPE. What's she--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. Marsh grass... tides...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOPE. Stop it. Look at us. Here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. Marsh grass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOPE. These marsh grasses, Nola, these hair cells, they relay impulses to the acoustic nerve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. There's no point. It's not reaching her. Marsh grass. Tides.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOPE. It's only when the acoustic nerve transmits the message to the brain that the concept of heard sound becomes extant. Now the brain says, Aha!, I am knowing the sign of the wind, I am knowing the rustle of leaves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAMSON. Then we'll play music for you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Turn US to face WILLIAMSON.

Turn to face DR vom.
| Scene Five  
(End) |

| ARTURO. I'm going to teach you Salsa. Come. |

| KRAFT. I don't think so. |

| ARTURO. Put your hands here. On my hips. |

| KRAFT. Look— |

| ARTURO. Do it. "Ba-dip ba-dip, baaa-dip, baaa..." Move your feet, fruit. |

| KRAFT. This is silly. |

| ARTURO. You want to hear music, huh? "Ba-dip ba-dip, baaa-dop..." Sing it. |

| KRAFT. It's— |

| ARTURO. "Ba-dip, ba-dip..." Sing goddammit. |

When WILLIAMSON grabs my shoulders, stop signing. Break her grasp. Begin signing again. Do large gesture in the face of HOPE. Drop hands into lap. Remain sitting on bench, head inclined forward, motionless until the end of Scene Five.

Begin very small very slow rock back and forth.

Rocking motion becomes slightly larger and continues to build in intensity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A: To release the music. ST: It’s too strong for me to hold it inside.</td>
<td>KRAFT. I’m not very artistic. I wanted to be. But all I’ve got is a good eye... a sense of other’s ability to--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ARTURO. Sing. So, what does your eye say about these hips, then, huh? Maybe you falling for this as art. Maybe you falling for me instead of her. You think? Got you eye focused right here on my hips dancing Salsa. Feel them, come one. That’s the transcended. That’s art what you’re feeling right there. You want to take me away with you to your hospitals across the oceans, hug? We can go on a cruise over there. Okay? A cruise. ‘Cause how much you think these hips got value for those art lover’s money?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begin doing listening gesture with rocking. Continue to build in intensity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stand and pace quickly around bedroom area, continuing listening gesture. X U to musicians platform. Pick up sheet music and broomstick. X L to US of bathroom area. Pace there for a moment before X into bathroom. Break through ARTURO and KRAFT dancing. Place broomstick in drain. Throw music in the general direction of the toilets. Begin very quick frenetic version of singing. At light change X DS closer to broomstick.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freeze in singing pose. Begin a slow motion transition into open-mouthed singing sculpture. Transition lasts all the way through HOPE’s phone conversation. When the lights change X UC sitting on the edge of the bathroom wall, arms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scene Eight

KRAFT. There's a book written by Rabelais, the fourth book of Pantagruel... and in it there's a description of a seafaring voyage during which the crew hears voices that seem to come from thin air. They're terrifically afraid, paralyzed by fear. They won't sail. The captain, this Pantagruel, he tells them that the sounds consist of words that were frozen in the winter air and that begin to thaw out on being touched, thus becoming audible. And so they go on. They the crew begins to see the voices, see the words. There are bloody ones, sharp and cut. Pantagruel says sometimes the words went back to the place where they'd been spoken, only to find that the throat that'd uttered them had been slit. Horrible words, and many others equally unpleasant to see, bodiless, orphaned. And when they'd been touched and melted they'd hear: hin, hin, hin, hiss, gibber, tick, whizz, frr, fr, booo, tr, tr, crack, on, on, on... woowooaaawooo... God knows what other barbarian, feral words. But some of the crew wanted to catch and preserve the words in oil, to take them back with them to port. To show them. Maybe even to profit by them. And Pantagruel, he tells them it's not worth saving

resting in lap head inclined forward and to the left. Remain in that position through Scene Seven.


Match singing gestures to "feral words." Return to very quick singing with flicking, punching, slashing.
what’s always plentifully at hand. That there’s no value to be had. That disembodied sounds are no different than any other. I’m willing to believe in you, you know? I’m right here with my bucket of oil... trying to hear... trying to preserve. But there’s not a lot of time. The recorder, it shows nothing. Silence. The spectrometer... the graphs... a flatline. On video you appear only to be having an autistic rapture. I have nothing to prove your artistry buy my own sensation. I can’t even prove I’m hearing anything out of the ordinary. I’m even starting to doubt... I want to hear so I do. What do you think you’re worth? Huh? And what if that Pantagruel was right?

**Scene Nine**
(End)

HOPE. Doctor Kraft... for a while now we, my wife and I... We have considered acquiring, of investing in just some small, lesser know painting. One or two. We are thinking of it as a hobby. Perhaps, in your remaining time... while you are petitioning the state, some suggestions. Or if we were to show you the pieces we were considering you could advise us. It’s your field, I know... you are the expert... I would value it. My wife. In making our minds. They are modest paintings to you I’m certain, but we like

Stop singing. Turn to look at Kraft. Smile.

Exit UR.

Enter from DR vom wrapped in sheet, with head bandaged. X U to bed and lie down under sheet to sleep.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJ: TO SHUT OUT THE NOISE</th>
<th>what we like and want to be in good taste. An investment in fine are. You'll have the time now perhaps... why you are not petitioning the state...?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.7 BAD DREAM</td>
<td>Scene Ten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wring, press</td>
<td>HANNAH. Nola. Nola. I did a bad thing. I did a bad thing to Sleep when I was being his lookout. Did you hear. Nola. To Sleep. A really bad thing. I killed him. Made him dead. But then I cam right here, okay Nola? Right to you and to your room to help you. I takes a man to make a room silent. Right? That's what it takes. When a man enters a room. Only then. And now what's going to happen to you? After you wake up and that thing is in your head. That think they put inside. They put a man in the room. He's there. I can feel him there. He's pressing himself back up against the walls, but I can feel he's there. Making the room silent. Why? WE cont' want him in the room. We don't want him inside. He makes silence grow inside you. I'm going to get him out, Nola. Don't worry. I'm going to get him out of you just like I did with me. See, you're making sounds. He's ruined you. You could never do that before. Man in the room, I can feel you there. I'm going to et you. Come here. No silence, Nola. Okay? No more silence in the room. Come out. Man in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To find comfort</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obs: pain from surgery,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah, ability to hear my own voice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To work through the haze</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST: What's happening?</td>
<td>Open and close eyes slowly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To protect myself</td>
<td>Try to take HANNAH's hand away from my ear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To stop the pain</td>
<td>Begin moaning, struggling against HANNAH.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begin screaming. Screaming escalates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene Fourteen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: To mourn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2.8 The Big Sleep
A: To find comfort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJ: TO RECAPTURE THE MUSIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2.9 Goodbye scene
Glide
A: To search for inspiration
Obs: all sound
ST: Hello?

room. Where is he inside? He's slippery. Stop bleeding. Don't. He's slippery in all your blood and he'll get away. What's going to happen if he does? What going to happen?

WILLIAMSON. Good God!

HOPE. Orderly! Orderly!

Lean against WILLIAMSON, crying.

At light change, gather sheet and bandages, exit DR vom. Enter UL wrapped in sheet and fresh bandages. Lie down on DL bed with head downstage facing DL. Remain sleeping there through Scene Thirteen. At the end of Scene Thirteen, exit UL with KRAFT's suitcase.

Enter UL dressed in street clothes and carrying a suitcase. X through doorway to UC of bathroom. Look at bathroom. Step into bathroom. X DC to DS corner of bathroom. Put suitcase down on right. Make one long sweeping gaze at bathroom scanning from R to L. At light change pick up suitcase, exit UL.
| **OBJ: TO WIN KRAFT OVER**  
2.10 Seduction  
Float  
A: To impress  
Obs: my voice, Kraft's ethics, my knowledge of right and wrong  
ST: This is my last chance | **Scene Fifteen**  
No, I... so, we lost her okay, we'll find another... I'll find anothe... What do you think I've been doing for the last five weeks... Because I'm in the field, John. Because I have an eye for... I have an eye for the value of artistic... Perception is a perpetual reconfiguration of a Gestalt, John... You want to know who the hell said it, I said it, John. It's my... I'm saying I'm good at what I do. I haven't lost my ability to... not everyone has what I... the artistry that I... it is of value, John. What I do is still of... I'll call you back. You surprise me. I am surprised.  

NOLA. Yes.  

KRAFT. When you contacted me with your plan. Someone like you.  

NOLA. I know.  

KRAFT. Duplicity. To expect it to come form one as you, it is--  

NOLA. I'm fixed. I'm like everyone else now. Why not give me--  

KRAFT. I'm just-- | **Enter from DL vom, carrying purse. X to DL bed and sit. Take purse off shoulder and set on bed.** |
| A: To charm | NOLA. Why not duplicity too along with hearing and speech? *You like it?*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. I'm not sure. I'm still--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To excite</td>
<td>NOLA. Because I want you to like it. I can fix us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST: We both have something to gain.</td>
<td>KRAFT. Those doctors have published. It's come out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. Fix us. Right us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. You're known. There's nothing we can--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To plead my case</td>
<td>NOLA. I'm cured now. There's no place for me in the hospital any--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. There's noth--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. I'm really silence to them now. I'm--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. Nola, the consortium has no place for someone who--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. More than before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. There's no value for them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene</td>
<td>Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To shut Kraft down</td>
<td>NOLA. I need you to--&lt;br&gt;KRAFT. Once you hear real music your art's contaminated by--&lt;br&gt;NOLA. I need you!&lt;br&gt;KRAFT. They've cut me off. They've--&lt;br&gt;NOLA. No! <strong>I want what I had.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To beg</td>
<td>X L to KRAFT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.11 Go in for the kill</strong>&lt;br&gt;Press&lt;br&gt;A: To get down to business</td>
<td>NOLA. You know. Artistry. <strong>Artistry.</strong>&lt;br&gt;KRAFT. What's that?&lt;br&gt;NOLA. A file. Hannah's.&lt;br&gt;KRAFT. It's a lie, Nola. It's forgery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To barrage Kraft with facts</td>
<td>X DL to KRAFT. Turn him to face me.&lt;br&gt;Remove file from purse on bed.&lt;br&gt;NOLA. You don't know that.&lt;br&gt;KRAFT. But I think it is, that's the same.&lt;br&gt;NOLA. A person with a name from this file--&lt;br&gt;KRAFT. It's not done this way. It's--&lt;br&gt;NOLA. Never published. Never named as--&lt;br&gt;X U around SL bed, following KRAFT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To charm</td>
<td>KRAFT. Nola, I'm--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. I am a stranger. Foreign. You no longer know me. I've come here and surprised you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. Surprised.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. I am Hannah. Someone unknown. Say it. Say it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. Hannah. Deaf mute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. We remove your implant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To encourage</td>
<td>NOLA. An unknown someone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. Pass you off as her. Her name and records.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To cover our tracks</td>
<td>NOLA. Who is to say? Do you see? The lying we do, fine. It becomes valuable. It becomes treasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. Pass you off as her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To take the blame</td>
<td>NOLA. Yes. And that is the value. I give you these things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with file.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Put file down on bed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pick up file again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Offer file to KRAFT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.12 Thank you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.12 Thank you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Float</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To get him to make the call</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obs: Kraft's ethics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: To conjure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. But I did not ask for them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. Exactly, yes... unexpected treasures from a stranger... a discovery... you take them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. But I did not ask for them. I never asked.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. But you gave me no choice, you listened. And we are fixed. Mended.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. I am surprised only.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. Good.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. Because I am surprised. My eye.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOLA. Unsteadied, upended, a fish buffeted by a surging sea swell.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. And then here it is this lie.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT. What am I to do? How am I to affix value? Yes. A stranger with a record of lies. Who will convict me for being taken in? For mistaking forgery for truth.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRAFT takes file and X DR. Follow.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X a few steps closer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| X U around SR bed, ending DR of bed.
<p>| A: To diminish the consequences | NOLA. Good. |
| ST: It's no big deal... | KRAFT. Surprised and shocked... I am absolved of blame. |
| | NOLA. And I am just a stranger. |
| | KRAFT. Yes. |
| | NOLA. Guiltless too of a past. |
| | KRAFT. New to me. Without foundation. |
| | NOLA. So how would you recognize a lie. |
| | KRAFT. Without a relative means of opposition... a means of measure. |
| X toward KRAFT | Sit on bed. |
| | . |
| | Turn toward DR vom |
| A: To appeal to his ego | NOLA. The value of this. |
| | KRAFT. Yes. |
| | NOLA. As art. |
| Turn back to KRAFT | KRAFT. As art. But can you sing anymore though, Nola? Can you pull it off? |
| A: To change the subject | NOLA. You see. We are mended. We are fixed. |
| | KRAFT. But can you? Truly? |
| | Stop. |
| | Stand. X R away from KRAFT. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: To plead</th>
<th>NOLA. Make a call.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. You surprise me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOLA. Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KRAFT. I am surprised.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4

REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE LOG

My rehearsal log documents my rehearsal process through pre-production preparation to early rehearsals, working rehearsals, technical rehearsals, and performances. In the log I have included experiences, discoveries, failures, and insights that I encountered through the process.

I actually began preparing for the role of Nola by taking a sign language class in the summer of 1998. It taught me a lot about deaf culture, and it was good to have some interaction with the deaf community, but what I learned from that class is that I really needed an interpreter to translate the script for me. I would not be able to learn the language well enough in a matter of months to translate the script for myself. I continued to research autism and schizophrenia through the summer and fall months, the research for which is reported in Chapter One.

The log officially begins with the performance of the *Huey P. Newton Story* by Roger Guenevrur Smith, though my preparation began much sooner than the date of that performance.

4.1 PRE-PRODUCTION PREPARATION

12/4/98: Roger Guenevrur Smith: I didn’t think this performance or this artist was

116
going to have anything to do with my thesis, but after hearing him speak, I realized it did. I was very impressed with Smith’s ability to articulate his process and the things he was trying to accomplish. I was most interested in the idea that the show was very improvisational. I wanted to know more about his interaction with the audience and with the music. When seeing the show, I was very aware of the improvisational nature of his interaction with the audience, but not so much with the music. Knowing I was facing a similar situation, and knowing that the nature of improvisation is so uncomfortable for me, I decided to go see the show a second time to look for those moments of musical improvisation.

12/5/99: Upon seeing the show again: Mr. Smith was very adamant about the audience seeing the show a second time to see how it changes. I did, but I didn’t see as big a difference in the show as I expected. He was very open and aware of the audience and their group dynamic. But the show itself was not terribly different. The musical improvisation was still very subtle to me. So much so that I didn’t notice the difference, but perhaps it was different enough for him to know, and that was enough for him to keep it fresh every night.

12/6/98: First Meeting with Claudia Kinder. Jessica and I had our first meeting with Claudia. I video taped the rehearsal so that Jessica and I would have record of the language to refer to later. She interpreted the first half of Scene two for us. It became very clear that Jessica has much more sign language to learn than I do. My question became how do I create a rounded character when I’m almost never “speaking.” I began to feel a little jealous of Jessica’s role. My role is really created more through the writing
and what is said about her more than what she does or says. Do I simply trust the writing? Or do I try to fill in the blanks that may not be relevant. I was very glad to find out that Claudia had done lots of work as an interpreter for an opera company in Dayton. She was a shadow signer so she has the knowledge of what it means to be on stage. She will be a good resource to ask questions about expressing music physically. We also went to observe the “Footsteps of the Elders,” a senior theatre group in town who were just beginning to add a shadow signer by the name of Wendell Barnes to their current production. I found his face to be very expressive as he signed. What I find so difficult in A.S.L. is the facial grammar. It is in fact very standardized. But it feels very “inorganic” at the moment. I had a problem in the past with facial expression in mime class as well. I need to spend more time observing sign language in action. I also realized that if Leslie is going to want to do a completely signed performance of *Feral Music*, she’s going to have to set aside a significant amount of time to make that possible and to rehearse it well.

12/19/98: Jessica and I worked together on our own to review the translated text. We remembered most of the signing pretty well. Of course I have much less to remember than Jessica. A problem we ran into was when we needed to look at the tape to find a particular sign that we couldn’t remember, it was very hard to find since we had taped the entire two hour rehearsal. So we developed a new system of documenting the translation. We decided that at the end of every rehearsal we would tape only the dialogue that had been covered that day, so we would essentially have the scene on tape, and not the extraneous conversation that occurs as we are learning scene. It seems an
easier way to reference the material.

12/21/98: Jessica and I met again with Claudia. We finished learning the signs for Scene Two. At the end of rehearsal we taped the signs for the entire scene so we would have them for easy reference. The written language and the A.S.L. are so different. I’m curious as to how the playwright will react to the translations. Also, in the script it says that my “signs are getting better.” Am I just learning A.S.L.? In which case, Nola has had no real contact with the deaf community. How much deaf culture is she aware of? Claudia and Jessica and I set another appointment to meet on 12/30/98 when I return from my trip home for Christmas.

12/30/98: Jessica and I met with Claudia and learned the signs for the first half of Scene Eight. Claudia mentioned that there is a developmental stage in deaf children in which they are experimenting with sound. She told the story of the one deaf child who was trying to fool his friend by saying his name behind a piece of paper so that his friend wouldn’t know who said it. And another child who was trying to harness and fill a pool of sound in his lap in gym class. It’s a fascinating to know that as part of their defining what deafness means, they’re also needing to define sound.

What perceptions do the deaf have of sound? Are they curious about it? Is it possible to get hold of that artist that Claudia knew who watched “Immortal Beloved”? He realized for the first time that music was able to inspire people. He knew it made noise, but he didn’t realize that it could influence you to do other things. I was amazed at what we take for granted. Like the sound we hear in our own heads of things like chewing and humming and speaking. We ended the rehearsal a little abruptly because I
needed to get home by noon to wait for my luggage that was to return from Pittsburgh that day, and Claudia was busy as well. Unfortunately, we didn't get to tape the dialogue we rehearsed that day. We also didn't set up another rehearsal time because Jessica and I were unsure of what our class schedules were going to be.

1/3/99: I returned to the script today to review the signs. I'd sort of neglected it since the last rehearsal in favor of reading about the developmental psychology of deaf children. Upon returning to the script, I realized that I had forgotten much of that day's work. And not having taped it, I was at a loss. I decided to be sure to review that material with Claudia next time before we move on to the next section of dialogue. I also began a system of keeping a running list of questions that will need answers from either myself, Brian Silberman, Lesley, or Claudia.

4.2 EARLY REHEARSALS

1/4/99: It was to be our first rehearsal but it was canceled because of the icy snowy weather and rescheduled for 1/5/98. It gave me a chance to go home and try to remember more of the forgotten sign language, but I'm afraid there was not much progress in that area. I'm very easily distracted by the television and it was on all evening.

1/5/99: This was the day of our first rehearsal. I spent some time at home reading the lines aloud. It was a strange sensation to hear the lines out loud. I've spent so much time thinking about them in terms of sign and gesture that I'd just forgotten that speaking them was possible.

We spent the first part of the rehearsal listening to the designers' concepts. I was
excited by the fact the play was really underway! The set is to be “colorless” with the colors coming from each of the characters. The bathroom is the central area of play on the stage. I also know that center stage is the most neutral place on a stage, so I’m wondering how that knowledge will affect my choices. The row of toilets in the bathroom area are off-center, and this will help I think in creating visually interesting pictures. During the microphone scenes, there will be moving lights and effects to help enhance the water imagery. The microphone stand will also be a broom stick handle. I like the idea of the found object imitating the real thing. The musician, David, will be in front of a metal framed window that will help amplify his music. The set is very suggestive and symbolic. There are very few literal set pieces. Again, it brings up the conflict in the script between the symbolic and the real, the tangible and the ethereal. There will be water in the bathroom, probably no more than two inches deep, but considering the size of the playing area, that should be plenty. We don’t know yet when the water will be made available to play in, but I hope it’s as soon as possible.

The costumes are to represent the collision of so many different worlds. I’m to be dressed in a purple “sack dress.” I’m worried that the dress will be too big and shapeless for any subtle movement. I was scheduled for a costume fitting for Thursday morning, and I will bring up my concerns then. I thought it was interesting that the musician is to be dressed in scrubs, the idea being that he is a part of me. Are the only people I interact with orderlies and doctors? How often do I meet people outside of the hospital?

The music is to be developed in rehearsal. Lesley would like David and me to come up with some kind of theme and variation of Nola.
Brian Silberman gave us some background on the origin of the play. Brian mentioned that the woman who originally played the role was in fact deaf pretty much since birth. I was a little intimidated by that information. I'm finding myself very easily intimidated in this process because I know that I will have to invent this idea of "singing" and I don't trust myself to do it.

We did a read through of the text, and again it was a strange sensation to hear the words out loud, but it will give me a point of reference for when I am no longer able to use my voice to express my emotions or attain my objectives. At the end of the rehearsal Lesley set up a meeting with me and David, the double bass player to begin improvising together.

1/6/99: We did table work, working through the dialogue very slowly. We spent a lot of time just working out the basic logic of some of the dialogue. Lesley asked us questions about what we thought was going on, and allowed us to ask Brian questions as well. She asked me what the ritual of the music in the toilets meant to me, and I was surprised by my answer. I'd realized that I hadn't quite found a place for the water in the ritual. The tearing of the paper had a symbolic significance, and the flushing of the toilets themselves, but the overflowing water didn't occur to me as important, and there are so many water images in the play, that I felt a little silly not having figured out its significance in Nola's art. What Brian mentioned was that it may have something to do with the music moving from a static form (on the page) to the kinetic and the water is the medium in which Nola can feel the kinetic energy of the music.

An interesting issue arose for me during table work. One of the cast members
began asking questions of me about my character that I felt were inappropriate for her to ask at the time. It made me feel very defensive. I answered the questions, but I need to figure out what that reaction is about. It's probably merely another way my fear of not being prepared is surfacing.

Some very small adjustments to the text are being made now, but Brian has been very clear that he is amenable to change if we find that particular words aren't working once we've had a chance to work and explore them.

Again-Why JAZZ? I need to go to the library looking for Count Basie, Billie Holiday, Coletrane? Lena Horne?

Is Nola a mother figure for Hannah? I know that she undergoes this transformation within the play in terms of how the other characters perceive her. From innocent/simple to deceptive/manipulative. In that journey, I imagined Nola going from child to adult, but last night I began to see how Nola is also a mother/protector for Hannah.

We were only able to reach the end of Scene Ten, so we will begin tomorrow with Scene Eleven. I need to spend some time looking at the final scene. I think I understand what's happening, but the language is so stylized and indirect, I can't be sure.

1/7/99: I had a costume fitting, and I am worried about the costume. It's very loose and affords a lot of movement, but it hides the shape of the body as much as I thought it would. Do I take that up with the designer? Or do I bring it up to Lesley? I'll bring it up to Lesley, because she may have a reason why the costume works. My reaction to the costume may also be due to the fact that I am feeling so out of shape since
I haven’t been to the gym on a regular basis in months. I’ve lost some weight being sick with a cold, but I think the weight I lost is all muscle mass.

I went to the library and checked out CD’s by Count Basie and his “un-Big Band”, Betty Carter, and Etta James singing Billie Holiday hits. I was noticing that there really are so many different kinds of jazz and jazz singing. I’d like to consider using different jazz influences for each of the different “performances” Nola does within the play, depending on what the reason or subtext of the performance is. When is Nola having a jam session, when is she singing the blues, when is she confessing? I’m liking the Etta James music. There’s a nice kind of soulful gritty sound to the album. It’s a very contemporary sound. I listened to a little of the Count Basie stuff as well as a collection of great pairings of jazz musicians. The collection is called Dynamic Duo’s. It’s a little more nostalgic. But what does it all mean to Nola. Since I’m going with the assumption that what she is doing is ART, and art is based on expression, I need to discover what exactly Nola is trying to express.

We spent the evening’s rehearsal continuing through the script. Questions that arose for me in the script: In the first part of Scene 12 in Act I, I can’t quite follow the logic of what Nola is saying or doing. I know that I’m referring to Mad Sleep, but it’s still not crystal clear to me. What does “loud” mean? Is it referring to Kraft, or Hope and Williamson, or to myself being the scratches on paper? We decided that I would find out what the signs for each of those options is, and decide from there. Why do I begin singing then?

I noticed while trying to answer that question about what loud means, that looking
at this script is like looking at one of those posters that are entirely composed of dots. You need to soften your focus to see the whole picture, each little dot, or detail, doesn’t mean much on its own. It doesn’t represent its own picture, it’s part of the bigger picture.

In Scene 4, Act II, what’s going on with me that I’m not listening to the doctors? I’m catching phrases of what they say. Am I confused by each of them trying to teach me at the same time? Am I in my own little world? Perhaps David will be able to help with that subtext.

In Scene 14, Act II, will there be music playing? Or will there be silence? I mentioned the essay I read about the man who got a hearing aid late in his life and his reaction to it. That kind of reaction is never mentioned in the play and I was curious if it was something Brian was never aware of. He seemed unaffected by the idea of it. We’ll see if it makes its way into the play. I think I brought it up out of the need to strike a balance between the symbolic and the literal.

In, Scene 15, Act II, how broken is Nola’s speech? She’s only been speaking for a month at this point. And what is the difference between her voice and the voice of a normal human being who has been speaking all their lives. In a real world, deaf people still make vocal noise in everyday life, I believe, but just aren’t aware of what it sounds like. So it’s another balance to be struck. That scene became so much clearer after talking with Brian about it. I was not aware that I was trying to get Kraft to forge the documents inside Hannah’s file. I thought that I had already done it. And it didn’t occur to me that Hannah was going to “fake” her art from here on out. My assumption was that
she thought she could do it if the implant was removed, or at least wanted to find out if
that was the case. Brian seems to be saying that Nola is going to lie about her art. That
really makes Nola’s journey end in a very different place. It raises the stakes. She loses
much more. It’s interesting that Kraft and Nola are both reduced to forgery to survive,
when the art was genuine to begin with. Next rehearsal is with me, Jessica, and Jeremy.
We’re working on the scenes we’re signing, but we’ve not gotten all of the lines
interpreted yet. I’m realizing were getting behind on that. Particularly for Jessica who
has so much sign to learn. I need to go back over the dialogue we’ve done before
rehearsal, and assign some verbs. Break it into beats.

1/8/99: Rehearsal was canceled on account of the terrible weather. So I spent the
evening watching show related videos. Actually, I caught Lauren Hill on the Rosie
O’Donnell show and made a note of a few of the gestures she used when singing. I also
watched a documentary of Billie Holiday to try to steal some gestures from her as well,
but her style was much more subtle. There was not much to pick up physically. Though,
she definitely has a magical quality when she sings, and even when she listens to her
fellow musicians play. You can see the music affecting her in a deep way. And watching
her sing “Strange Fruit” was amazing, she was working with such belief and specificity.

I watched The Heart is a Lonely Hunter with Alan Arkin. There is a scene in that
movie where Mick tries to describe music to Singer. There sure seems to be a fascination
in the hearing world with trying to describe music to the deaf. I also watched Children of
a Lesser God, and she dances to the music saying she can feel the vibrations through her
nose. And it contains a lot of water imagery as well. It was good to watch Marlee
Matlin sign. Her face is so expressive. I feel my face beginning to awaken when I sign.

4.3 WORKING REHEARSALS

1/9/99: Rehearsal was on. It was the first rehearsal with David Dawes, the Double Bass player. We started by having David just play and me beginning to move to the music. Lesley coached as she saw the music developing. She coached me to start using signs in the movement. There was not a lot of time to just explore the movement before we began to structure. The movement is not centered in the lower body very much. It’s mostly in the upper body, arms, hands, head and face. Several things came up in the rehearsal that I can tell are going to be difficult:

Lesley coached me to find more “violent” movement in the signs. As if I’m being possessed by the music. She’s asking me not to be so lyrical, which is very difficult for me to do. I need to find a classmate or student who moves in a more staccato way that I can observe. I also decided to find a video of jazz singers, skat more precisely, to see what they do physically when they sing. Betty Carter was suggested. I have been listening to her, but I haven’t been able to see her work.

I also need to find a faster sequence of gestures. That lyrical quality is resulting in a pretty predictable pace.

I need to remember to actually sing, meaning I need to remember to mouth the words as I sing. It feels so foreign. An interesting exploration may be just to skat with David for a while and then lose the voice. I was also told to look at Ella Fitzgerald (or at least listen to her) for source material. I also need to direct the singing at the microphone, I was directing my voice there, but not the sign language.
We managed to rough block the prologue and the first scene I have with Hannah. We realized that at this point, Jessica and I don’t need to move around too much in that first scene. I’m a little concerned that Jessica is upstaged for most of that first scene, but working in three quarters always confuses me a little.

Goals for next rehearsal: to call Aardvark to see if they have videos of jazz singers. Also, to choose very specific signs to abstract for the opening prologue.

1/10/99: Watched “Full of Sound and Fury”, a video about schizophrenia. It had some fascinating pieces of art done by a young schizophrenic man who eventually killed himself. I spent about an hour listening to Betty Carter’s CD “Whatever happened to love?” There’s some wonderful music on there. The song “Witch No Words” was particularly inspiring. Moving to the music is still difficult for me to do without moving very lyrically, and I still forget to use my mouth to sing. I also spent an hour and a half memorizing my lines. What medications treat autism or schizophrenia? What are the side effects?

1/11/99: I met with Jeanine. She reminded me that I do need to meet with my committee to set up times for my committee members to observe rehearsals, and to get everyone up to date about my goals and progress. I spent an hour memorizing and assigning preliminary objectives and verbs to the first two scenes.

During rehearsal, we began with Chris Neher doing a short vocal warm up. Lesley asked me to teach everyone a few signs. We ran through what we had done last time and added the doctors. I noticed that I’m making the same choices I did yesterday. I need to continue exploring choices and settle on the first one that I try.
Jessica and I worked by ourselves on the first scene with David playing in the background. He was trying to figure out what the scene is about as well as we are. And until we really know, he can’t create the background music that needs to happen. My choices about calming and soothing Hannah in that scene didn’t seem to work. I need to find objectives that involve more energized choices.

Next rehearsal, we are doing the same. Reviewing what we’ve done and adding scenes 5 and 6. I am to teach more signs to the cast.

1/12/99: I tried to set up meetings with my committee, and mistakenly chose Martin Luther King Day as the date for the meeting, so I was forced to reschedule. It’s still up in the air. Jessica and I met with Claudia and finished learning the signs for scenes 8 and 10. She gave me the names of some deaf performers that do poetry and storytelling. I’m wanting to meld what they do with what the female skat singers do. I also got the names of more female jazz singers from Bruce Hermann. He gave me the names of jazz musicians that weren’t singers necessarily, but were very expressive. (Thelonious Monk) I spent some time on the internet library catalog looking for video on any of those names, and also for video about autism, but OSU’s video collection is pretty sparse. The closest source for video seemed to be Columbus State. I’ll go there when the weather improves.

At rehearsal we worked what we had done so far and added scene 6. I thought the singing I’m doing in that scene in particular should be a torch song. What that means physically, I’m not yet sure. But it needs to be very different from the scene before. We were let out early to see Hot Mouth. I was hoping to find more gestures to add to my
vocabulary for Nola. I found the women in the group most compelling. I didn’t take any physicality away from what I saw, but I was taken with their ability to reach out to the audience. I feel like I can do that with my voice, but not with my body. Perhaps I need to break the “singing” down even further and then slowly reconstruct it again. Have one or two rehearsals that are just about dancing and feeling the music, another just about singing and using the mouth and face for expression.

1/14/99: In rehearsal, we worked scene 2 more. My lines are so repetitive that I’m finding it very hard to get off book. I was still unsure why I tell Hannah that I want to call in the orderlies to put her to sleep when she’s saying how horrible sleep can be. That seems mean. Lesley mentioned that it may be because I know that she needs to sleep regardless. We worked scene 6, where Hannah is speaking and I am “singing.” I’d like to find a couple of places where we are in sync physically. I don’t like my shoes, they make my feet sweat and I’m worried that when there’s water my feet will slip out of my shoes.

I’ve not been able to go to Aardvark or to the Columbus library for tapes of jazz singers or autistic children. The weather has been so icy miserable that I don’t want to drive anywhere but home, school, and the grocery store. And even then I feel I’m taking a risk. This weekend is supposed to warm up a bit. I’m hoping to get to both places on Sunday.

1/16/99: We blocked scene 12 for the first 90 minutes. I need to come in with some fish physicality ideas. Perhaps I should refer to the techniques in Animal Transformation class. Watch some video tapes of fish.
We ran the whole first act, prologue through scene 12. Generally, the scenes in which I’m interacting with people are very clear and make sense to me and Lesley. But the singing still needs to be explored and played with. She wants it to be something particular to Nola. Which again goes back to needing to find those videos. The great winter thaw is to happen this weekend so I feel more mobile and able to get to the places I need to go, namely, Aardvark, Columbus Main Library, and Columbus State.

We also had Nola singing all through scene 6 and scene 7, but it seems too long a time to fill. My thought was that it makes the singing less mysterious and amazing if you see her doing it all through the show. (And while I’m not yet comfortable or clear about what the singing is, the less I do the better.) Lesley does want the singing to reappear by the end of the scene when Williamson says “How many times to I have to tell you? There is no singing.”

1/17/99: I finally got to the Columbus Main Library, they have many videos listed in their computer, but only one of them was on the shelf. “A World Apart.” It’s more about coping with Autism. I need more video about what it looks like. There was some footage of those with Autism, but it was so brief. Dare I try to visit a home where autistic adults are cared for? I have a real fear of the developmentally challenged. I’m afraid they’re very unpredictable. So at the moment, I’m able to rationalize my decision to not do that by saying that Nola’s not really autistic, so it’s not imperative that I recreate that behavior exactly. But I do have to recreate it accurately enough to represent someone who could conceivably be misdiagnosed as autistic.

1/18/99: I was planning to go to Columbus State’s library today but they were
closed. I did find out, though, that I am not able to check out their videos since I'm not a
student there. I can watch the videos if I stay there in their viewing room. So I'll need to
ask Lesley if I can spend that time for 986 on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to go
there to do that.

1/19/99: I spent the morning watching Straight No Chaser, the documentary about
Thelonious Monk. He was eccentric and apparently bipolar. But there's not much I can
take from him physically. I did notice that when playing the piano in concert that he
can't help but vocalize as well. I aspire to find that kind of commitment and immersion
in Nola's singing.

Jessica and I met with Claudia today and translated Scene 12. I was pleased to
find out that the signs I improvised for Saturday's rehearsal were pretty close to the real
thing. Claudia continues to raise questions about issues that the deaf may find offensive
within the play. For instance, she mentioned that people who are granted cochlear
implants are usually those who have had hearing in the past, who have lost their hearing
as adults. Or they are children who are young enough to adjust to the barrage of sound
that is in store for them. So when I asked Claudia about how much speech I could be
expected to learn before the last scene, she was at a loss. It just doesn't happen. It's up to
me to make that decision. Claudia offered to set up a time with two deaf students that she
knows so that I can listen to them speak. I'll need to set up questions for them to answer
that are about something other than speaking. They are self-conscious about how they
sound. I also need to call the Speech and Hearing Center about maybe talking to
specialists there.
In rehearsal Jessica and I began by working on our lines for scene 2 and 8. Then we reviewed Scene 12. Since we have abandoned the video taping of the signing, it has become more imperative that we review the new signs more immediately after we learn them. I have found that it is much easier to forget the new stuff.

We blocked Scene 2 Act 2. Easy for me, I am sleeping in that scene. It was decided that I am actually in that bed for the entire act up until the point I’m in the bathroom. That length of time promises to challenge my powers of concentration. I’m uncomfortable in the scene with Hope and Williamson because I’m supposed to not be listening to them, but I still catch things they say. Like “snail.”

I have also decided that Nola is not autistic or crazy, so why am I acting like I am? How did they ever teach me sign if I never look at them? And if I’m acting this way in this scene, and in the first scene with Kraft for that matter, should there be some hint of it in the scenes with Hannah? I’m frustrated. What is my place in bringing up these questions? And who do I bring them up to? I think I need first to articulate the questions more clearly for myself and then bring them up to Lesley.

At the end of rehearsal we ran what we had worked that night, up to scene 6, and broke for the night.

1/20/99: In rehearsal we ran thru Act I for the lighting designer. It seemed to go well until the last two scenes. It’s the newest part of the blocking, and it shows. I’m feeling uncomfortable in my shoes. The soles are thick and I’m unable to ground myself very well. And I still fear that once we have water they’ll slip off. I’m still not sure of the through-line on Nola. Why is she so able to talk with and attentive to Hannah and is
so inaccessible to the doctors.

Lesley said that the work between me and David was as close to a duo as it has been. I’m having trouble reacting off of him because I’m so self-conscious about the singing still. Lesley is looking for a more manic ritual in setting up the singing. She’s been very clear that she doesn’t want lyricism, but that is very much my nature of moving so it’s hard for me to incorporate that all the time.

We ran the first six scenes of Act 2. I spend a lot of time sleeping in that act, so it’s sort of a relief to not worry about the singing in rehearsal. After we ran those scenes, we left for the night.

1/21/99: I continued the hunt for videos about autism. I also organized my thoughts for my first committee meeting. I’m nervous about the meeting. What if I’m not doing enough work? How many pages should I have written by now?

Rehearsal began late because of the auditions for spring. Once we started, we worked on the ear digging scene. The act of screaming in that scene was surprisingly affecting to me. I don’t know if it was the nerves from having auditions that evening, or just the frustrations I’m feeling in inventing this method of singing, or if I’m just very empathetically connected to the character in this situation, but I was brought to tears by the scene. I don’t think my emotionality in the scene is detrimental or distracting, but I am interested in how the emotionality of the scene will change and evolve. Will it always be this accessible to me? Will it become mechanical?

We also began blocking the bathroom scene where Kraft is recording Nola singing. There was a great thunderstorm outside and it added to this effect of Kraft
becoming a sea captain in the tides of the toilet water.

1/25/99: I had an afternoon rehearsal with Lesley. We focused on the pattern of movement for the singing. She came up with a system of finding more variety. She and I developed different movement styles: Foundation, which is the type of gesture I've been doing. It has a pretty even rhythm, and involves a lot of very specific signs from A.S.L., which occur close to the body. Angular: it involves creating angular shapes with the arms and torso. It helps to break up the curvy, indirect pattern I habitually live in. Lesley was inspired to bring this up when she saw the BeBe Miller company perform. I wish I'd seen the performance. Reaching: this involves gestures that extend way outside the body. Opening up to give (from the sternum) and to receive. Grounded: these are body shapes that happen close the ground, involving levels. Shaking: it's a very particular gesture in which the hands are shaken on either side of the head as the head rotates quickly from left to right. It seemed to act as a transitional gesture in between each of the other levels. It also incorporated a faster more erratic rhythm.

We improvised within these levels, then we improvised switching from one level to another. It was very freeing because I had so trapped myself into this safe Foundation way of moving. Lesley was very encouraging during the improvisation. She encouraged me to go way off into a "dancy" kind of movement. And encouraged me to incorporate different levels of intensity that became a sort of volume level. It was a brief rehearsal but very, very, very helpful.

In the evening rehearsal I ran lines with Jeremy for the first part of the rehearsal. We lost track of time and ended up being late. I was embarrassed by that and began the
run of Act II a little tense because of it. I found that the work I did with Lesley was helpful, but Brian being present, and my knowledge that he doesn’t want Nola’s singing to be “dancy,” I became more self-conscious than I was in the afternoon rehearsal.

In the blood scene, the doctors were late coming in because they couldn’t hear their cue over all the music and the screaming. I need to choreograph the vocal work so that A) there is variety and specificity to the event, and B) the doctors backstage have a specific “score” by which they can tell when to enter.

We got notes and were released.

1/26/99: We spent the first part of rehearsal doing “character workshop.” We were asked to choose one line in the text that best expresses our characters. I chose “I am a black scratch on paper waiting.” We were then to choose a gesture that encapsulates the character. Since my line was actually signed, choosing a gesture was a bit of overkill, but I did make the decision that the line was signed in a smooth “gliding” manner. It represented to me the knowledge that Nola has of her art form, and her awareness that her current circumstances are not ideal for her creative expression. She has no one around that can hear her. But she also knows that there are people who will be able to hear her. She is aware of her potential and hopeful for it’s fruition.

We taught the line and gesture (and the reasoning behind it) to a partner, and watched them perform it. It was an interesting exercise. It gave me an outside eye on what was happening. It was interesting that the sort of lyrical “glide” quality, which much of Nola’s movement is based in, doesn’t capture her passion, her life force. She is more erratic and impulsive and doesn’t care about what anyone thinks. Unlike myself.
It’s hard for me to turn off that reaction to the work, but I think it’s one of the most important distinctions between me and Nola. The only situation I can successfully compare to Nola’s in my life is that sensation I jokingly call the “two beers and I’m a babe” feeling. The relaxation of inhibition that happens after a little alcohol consumption.

How does that feeling come into rehearsal without the chemical intervention? We eventually learned everyone’s gesture and line and will use it as a group warm up.

We revisited Act I, since we haven’t worked on it for a while. It wasn’t terrible. Brian was absent and that freed me up a little. I’m very self-conscious when he is present. We have some disagreements as to how the character is to be played, so when he’s not present, I feel freer to experiment with my ideas. David wasn’t there so I had no music. But since I’ve not quite figured out how to use him in this invention, I wasn’t put too far off my game by not having him there. I think I need to sit down with David and tell him the problems I’m having and the goals I have for the character. Establish a channel of communication with him. He’s coming in with plenty of ideas and I think I worry about either squelching his creativity, or being intimidated by his very specific ideas, when mine are still in the process of forming. We ran the last scene three times and cleaned up some blocking issues. I noticed a tendency in myself to not fully commit to the scene when it was out of the context of the entire act.

We got very general notes on the run through and then spent some time on Scene 6, where Hannah is talking about Nola as she sings in a separate section of the stage. We discovered some accidental similarities in what Jessica and I were doing. We were
playing with the music sheets at the same time, and some of the singing was inadvertently mirroring what Hannah was saying about Nola. I wondered if it was a subconscious by product of the SITI training. We decided to really embrace and choreograph those moments. Lesley also spent some time having me improvise with David who arrived late in the rehearsal. She wants the music to happen as a result of an alternating lead, sometimes I’m to lead, sometimes he is. I became overwhelmed with trying to figure out if I was leading, or if I was to follow, or if I was reacting to Hannah and her dialogue. It will definitely take more time.

1/27/99: In rehearsal we ran Act I again. I felt pretty good about run through. I was starting to find the through line for Nola. I was able to fill the spaces where I’m on stage and not speaking. I discovered that the music that she hears is really running through her head all the time. She would sing all the time if the hospital would let her. But she only sings when she can sneak out. I suspect that they would increase her medication if all she did was sing. We didn’t have David, the bass player, so I was really able to listen to Jeremy and Jessica in the prologue, and let the energy of what they were saying affect the shape the singing took. Dare I say I “viewpointed” through the prologue? I still struggle against the music. By just following the music, I think that Jeremy and Jessica get lost. Should David hear them and react as well? Or should he follow me more than I follow him? The adjustments we had made in scene 6, where Jessica is speaking about me as I am doing my singing ritual in the bathroom, I thought worked. Again, there is a connection with what is being said and what is being sung.

I continue to get notes about being and looking to earnest and logical. I need to
appear more autistic. Brian told me the story of his conversation with his friends’ autistic son. He was trying to have a conversation with the boy about this new toy. The boy didn’t react in any way that let him know that he’d heard any of it. But later, the boy brings the toy out and set it near Brian. The boy didn’t do it in a way that let him know that Brian was supposed to look at it, so Brian left it alone. Then the boy comes over and sets the toy closer to Brian. Brian then picked up the toy and the boy’s whole body shape changed. He wants the same behavior with Nola. She can’t appear to be paying attention, but then things happen that let you know she’s “heard” everything.

He wants that to manifest itself in not looking at the people in the scene with me.

I’m finding it very difficult to justify that choice. A) Nola is not in fact autistic. She is merely deaf. It is true that the deaf used to be perceived as retarded. But that was before the knowledge and technology existed to teach them to communicate. B) Being deaf, Nola has to depend on her eyes to connect her with the world. To ignore the visual stimulation around her seems to go against all logic of human development. C) It makes the transition into the last scene even more difficult to make. She’s suddenly able to speak and listen and make eye contact after only five weeks of speech training? Brian suggested that I focus on the music that is always playing in my head. And every gesture I see becomes a phrase of music. I’ll give it a try.

The other issue this conflict raised for me is that of where the actor’s voice is in the process. As a M.F.A. candidate completing my thesis, I am doing a significant amount of research into these areas. Probably more so than Brian or Lesley because I have the benefit of being able to focus exclusively on the one character. When I bring up
what I’ve found in my research, and have it disregarded, I become angry. Why am I doing this research if not to create a believable, well rounded character, with a basis in truth and human experience? It is entirely possible that the audience won’t know the difference between what is true and what is poetic license. But I feel like I am being asked to portray an entire group of people inaccurately and possibly offensively. And why should my performance propagate the ignorance of the audience?

1/28/99: I went to Phil for feedback on my auditions for Angels in America. It was a painful moment. He basically told me the same things that have been said to me since I got here: that I need to make bigger, bolder choices. All my choices are in a “safe” range. It was very frustrating to hear that since it has been something I’ve struggled with since my first acting class. And it is definitely an issue that I struggle with in this play. I am having to create and invent so much and I have a basic distrust in my ability, so I don’t commit to my own choices. That is perhaps why I am so violently riled by the notes about Nola being autistic: I am being forced to work outside my comfort zones. If the choices that are being made directorially about Nola don’t work, than I have to have faith that they will be changed, but it’s my duty as the actor to at least really commit to trying the choices they’re giving me, rather than censoring them too soon. Phil made it clear that he was available to ask questions once I had ruminated on his notes for awhile. It was wise of him to give me time, because it was an emotional session for me. Once I’d calmed down some, I resolved to embrace the notes being given about Nola and commit to trying them.

In rehearsal we ran Act II. I remembered having resolved to commit to making
those choices that get me in trouble, but I realized I didn’t know how. I decided to talk to Phil the next day about it.

1/29/99: I went to Phil for advice and he suggested that I take the reigns a bit on my own. To have an exercise or an exploration planned that I thought was valuable and to tell Lesley that I needed to do it. The exercise itself was not the important part of the suggestion. It was developing the skill to say to the director that I need to do this thing, even if it may be stupid. It’s important to take control of what I need to do. Of course, I can’t think of any exercises I need to do except those that focus on the notes they’re giving me anyway. I’m trying to please them so much, I don’t even know how to break away and please my own sense of aesthetic. I’m also aware that we have a designer run-thru tonight and I’m immediately telling myself that tonight is not the time to do it, because I don’t want to throw off the designers.

At rehearsal, I didn’t come up with any particular exercise that I needed to announce publicly to anyone. But I did decide to focus more on the music than I have been. I also asked if David could listen more to the dialogue that surrounds the sections where I’m singing. Since I’m using what the people around me are saying to inspire a lot of my physicality, perhaps if the music does the same, we will have found a back door way of getting onto the same page. It was very helpful to have done that. Lesley mentioned that it was the most “together” David and I had been. I could feel that was true.

I discovered a nice moment of connection between Nola and Kraft. When Kraft is in Nola’s room drunk, and sits next to her bed and rests his head on her leg, I realized that Jeremy was in the perfect spot for my hand to relax to my side and accidently brushed his
cheek with the back of my hand on the way down. It seemed to really feed Jeremy in the moment.

I began to work with the autistic behavior in the popcorn scene and the game scene with Hannah. It felt very strange. Lesley seems to like it. It makes me feel very passive, and victimized, and out of control, to not connect with anyone on stage. I’ll continue to explore. But it is difficult.

1/30/99: Rehearsal felt very disjointed and disorganized today. I spent the first hour running the lines to the popcorn scene with Jessica. Then we rehearsed it. I had a minor explosion in the rehearsal when Lesley told me that I was still looking at Jessica too much in the scene. It still doesn’t make sense to me. I can’t tell if I haven’t given the choice enough time yet, or if it simply doesn’t work for me.

The next part of rehearsal was spent with Jessica, David and me working out the timing for the singing sections. Scene 6 is looking very interesting, I think. I’d like to find more specific moments of what appears to be accidental unison as possible. It gives Nola a sort of magical quality. Or rather, it goes back to the story Brian was telling about his friends’ autistic child. There seems to be no reaction to what is being said and then suddenly in a gesture, you know that he’s aware of everything that happens around him.

2/1/99: I got the tickets for my family to see the show and was very demanding about the placement of their seats. I made sure they were in the west section not too close. I checked the seats out once I got the tickets and they’re crammed into the corner. I hate the tickets and must change them. It’s the first thing my family has seen me in for some three years. I want them to be able to see it. (My sister hasn’t seen me in anything
for about 6 years.)

I rehearsed with Jeremy in the afternoon for an hour. Ever since getting the audition feedback from Phil, I've been painfully aware of that tense tentative feeling I get whenever I work. It never quite went away today. I had ideas about the scene. Choices to make, and then I never made them. Also, my deaf speech pattern went in and out of deaf and hearing speech sound. I think it comes from running lines with Jeremy with my normal voice. I need to visit Claudia and Karen Hodge for deaf speech samples. My slipping in and out of "accent" may also be my tentativeness since I've developed this pattern of speaking that is not based on any real research at the moment, beyond my memory of what the deaf students sounded like in the movie version of "Children of a Lesser God."

In the evening rehearsal, we ran Act I. We've got the beginnings of a set. The toilets are a little further apart than I'd imagined, but other than that, my blocking didn't change too much. I'm excited to get the water! The set is much brighter than I'd imagined it would be. We've rehearsed so much in that black room in poor lighting, that the whiteness of the set was a bit startling. But pleasantly so.

In the prologue, David was doing some new music things that I really liked, some new rhythms. It seemed sort of like Jazz mixed with New Age, but more improvisational. I'm getting used to listening to him more and more, rather than splitting my focus too much between him and the dialogue that's happening. I suspect we're building more of a give and take routine while performing. I was dropping lines all through the popcorn scene. I think it was because of the new autistic behavior. I wasn't
watching Jessica very often, but then I wasn’t listening to her either. I need to stay aware of her even when I’m not looking at her. She does provide my cues.

After the run thru, we went back and worked through trouble spots. The mood was pretty silly all evening. I don’t know if it was the weather, or if we were just releasing steam from the pressure of THESIS, and the upcoming auditions for UPTA.

2/2/98: I went to the box office to exchange my tickets for my family. (As per Lesley’s approval). The box office manager was getting upset and making it difficult for me to exchange the tickets. Both of our tempers were raised, but in the end, I didn’t back down, and I got the seats I wanted for my family. What I found was very telling about this experience was that I have never fought like that for my own acting process. Only on behalf of my family. Why is that?

I tried to get hold of Karen Hodge and Claudia today regarding the deaf “accent.” But neither were available.

In the evening rehearsal we ran Act II on the set. It went pretty smoothly. Brian was back from Portland. He hadn’t seen the show in a couple of days, and seemed pleased with the progress. I’m slowly finding how to integrate the suggestion he gave me a while back about concentrating on gestures the other characters use when they talk to me, and imagining what kind of music it would make. I’m also finding moments in which I can emulate people’s gestures. It makes sense to me that I would do that as Nola as an attempt to reach out to the world around me. Lesley wants to keep it. We got some notes, particularly about articulation and projection, and started at the top of the act again to work through the trouble spots. I’m still losing my deaf dialect.
At the end of the second run thru, Brian stopped me and gave me a line reading on the line in the last scene. “Surprise. And we are mended.” He wants “Surprise!” As if it’s a surprise party. That’s fine. But the line reading made me angry. And rather than telling him that, I buried my head in my props and muttered “okay.” It’s such a difficult balance to strike between standing up for yourself, and being a “pill.” Did I not just have a confrontation earlier today. Did I not successfully achieved what I wanted? Why did I back down here?

2/3/99: I had a very good day in Mime. I felt like I finally found a substantial connection to the emotional life of the character statues. While I was watching others working on the statues, I noticed that those who were working with their mouths open seemed the most connected with the “content” of the statue. I felt like I had a good idea about how to execute the form, so I tried to fill the form with “open-mouthed content.” It freed up my breathing and integrated my breath, and really helped me blossom into these statues. This freedom I think is linked to Nola somehow. Since I have been working for several hours a night not being able to speak, it has really connected me to my breath. And it was that connection that helped me in Mime. Now, I must find the same specificity in the “open-mouthed content” of Nola.

I had an afternoon rehearsal with Lesley. We went through the script and graphed Nola’s journey in terms of emotional intensity. I found it very helpful for two reasons. One, it really helped clarify in my mind the moments that were specific, and the ones that really weren’t. Two, it gave me and Lesley a chance to get back onto the same page and talk. I was able to give her my ideas about what I think Nola is doing, and she was there
to help clarify the choices by saying whether or not my choices were reading to the audience. An question that arose for me was “What does the ‘Mouth, Lips, Tongue’ mean?” I had made the choice that it was me declaring myself an artist by identifying my tools as a singer. But I realize I don’t really use those tools in the singing so much. So then what do I mean by that?

I went to Anike’s thesis performance. I was amazed at the scope of the project. It really kind of put my project into perspective. One the one hand, I panicked because I felt I hadn’t done enough work particularly when I considered all the work she did on the first proposal for her thesis, on top of this one. I realized that she and I have undertaken two very different projects, but it did help focus my mind on my project a little more.

We returned to Drake and did a run thru of Act I and finished right at 10:30, so we were unable to get notes. I still find that if I am distracted by knowing that Brian present in rehearsal.

2/4/99: My committee came to rehearsal and watched a run thru of the entire show. I was definitely aware of their presence, but it served to keep me more focused on my objectives. I was very happy not to have “choked” but to have raised the level of commitment instead. I was able to find new things and act on them rather than just to do what I’ve been blocked to do and wait for notes. I think they came at the right time in the process.

I was given the note to tear the paper less. I was a little annoyed by that. I’ve been tearing that paper the same way for the last five weeks. It’s very specific business I have given myself. And because the designer wasn’t aware of it, or just chose to ignore
it, I'm forced to change it. Just tear the prop paper into smaller pieces if it doesn't match what the actor is doing, why should the actor be dictated to by a prop?

The scene in act II with the doctors explaining the implant went really well. I found a way to connect with the sort of autistic behavior while still staying involved in the scene. However, the final scene, where Nola speaks for the first time was a little rocky. I was still involved in the emotional life of the scene before and was dealing with some issues of crying. The tension in my throat made any of the voice work I had done previously disappear.

We got notes at the end of the evening and were released a little early.

2/5/99: I met with Phil in the morning to get notes from the run-thru. Jeanine was unable to come, but it was just as well because the time I spent with Phil on vocal issues took longer than I thought and I would not have been able to get all of the information they both would have had. Phil opened by reading a poem by Naruda that was wonderful. It was about speaking and using words that have life in them. I need to get a copy of it.

Phil mentioned that he thought the "discoveries" in the signed scenes with Hannah were missing. He asked the question "What is the rhythm of a discovery." It was a point well taken. I have rehearsed the sign so much that I've forgotten that the sign is a reaction to the surroundings, and not an entity in and of itself. He also said that the struggle to speak can be more evident. Let the struggle be organically connected to the objective to win him over to my side. Phil offered several very helpful suggestions, and I was glad to have them, but I felt very angry with myself that I hadn't done more work on
the vocal issues earlier.

Later in the afternoon, I met with Jeanine. It was an overwhelming amount of notes. We spent a little over an hour on them. I had expected to work afterwards but found I was needing to sort the notes out for a while before I was able to approach working on them. What Jeanine told me was that the autistic behavior worked despite my misgivings about it. She told me that I can go even further with it, incorporating more agitated rocking and so forth. Jeanine noticed that the dress I’ve been rehearsing in was restrictive to me particularly when I was sitting. Because the dress was sort of narrow, it made me sit with my knees together and my back straight. It seemed too proper. Jeanine suggested getting a big oversized house dress or something like it at a thrift shop, and to practice sitting with my spine and pelvis more released. The direction I’ve been going with neutral facial expression worked for Jeanine, and I should go even further, so that when facial expression does happen, it’s more of a “phenomenon.”

Jeanine’s biggest note for me though was to find more variety in the singing. (Something I’ve been crazed about for a while.) A) I need to make a clearer transition between the ritual of preparing to sing, and the singing. How do I get myself into that place where the music plays in my head? B) How does the music stop? And how can my physicality reflect that. C) I need to vary the tempo and meter of the singing. Currently it’s lovely and lyrical and all at the same pace. How can I find more erratic phrases? D) How is the general singing different from scene to scene? How can the events surrounding each performance affect the expression within the performance?

Jeanine also mentioned things that worked: the movement is lovely. She sees that
I'm bringing all of my movement training to bare in this role. She was very happy with the slow coloration into the singing pose when Kraft is on the phone. Jeanine was very good in couching the notes by saying that the work was good and these were just to help specify the work even more and to "tweak" it. I was still left with the feeling that I'll never be done in time. But I guess that's how these things are designed.

Rehearsal was brief. We worked scenes for clarity and broke early so Jeremy and I could go see Giles' thesis performance.

2/7/99: We had our auditions at UPTA. We all did very well. I received 17 callbacks. It was great to be recognized as a viable working member of this profession. I've spent so much time working in school, I wasn't sure I could make the transition to real life theatre. Glenn gave me a great compliment. He said that the room's energy tangibly changed when I did my monologue. I thought that I felt it too, but wasn't sure until Glenn told me he noticed the same thing. It's really boosted my confidence in my work. I was called back by Metro Theater Company in St. Louis, among other places. But that company seemed very interesting to me because they create their own work and work in a physical way.

The callbacks and the audition going so well gave me a new burst of energy and confidence to face Nola with. I spent very little time this weekend thinking about Nola, but I don't feel the same dread about the role as I did before I left for Memphis.

2/8/99: We drove the ten hours back from Memphis to arrive in Columbus just in time to shower before rehearsal. We had a run-thru of the entire show, crew watch. It was perhaps not the best run thru we've ever had. Jeremy and I were exhausted from the
trip. Christina was fighting a migraine, and Jessica was getting over a cold or the flu or something. It was definitely not on the same level of commitment and concentration we had experienced the night that my committee came to observe. Although, I found myself able to surrender to the "music" in my head more than ever before. I think some of it came from the confidence rush I was having since the auditions.

We played with the water a bit last night. It was very brief. We only flooded the bathroom the one time. And they actually used more water than they needed to. I still had a bit of a block about putting my hand in the toilet. It's even worse now that they are filling with water. I had to stand there and laugh about it for a few minutes before I could commit to the action. But the laughter was momentary and I was able to move on quickly.

2/9/99: Christina was in the hospital with her migraine, so we were unable to do a run thru. We got some cuts in the script. Jessica and I ran lines for the first hour or so of rehearsal, but Jessica was feeling ill still and wasn't able to rehearse the scenes all out.

We ran the prologue and decided to lose the shoes all together in the bathroom scenes. And then we worked with Scene 14, where Nola comes into the bathroom after being able to hear. The blocking was changed to include much more stillness. On the one hand I'm glad, because when we ran it the one time, I kicked the wall in frustration at not being able to hear, and I really bruised my foot. But I haven't quite figured out how to fill that structure of silence in that scene. Brian seems pretty adamant that I remain very still, so the decision Nola needs to make to go see Kraft becomes very difficult to convey.
Lesley was pleased with the new vocabulary of gestures that I'm finding. She warned me to beware of a gesture going on for too long, though. And that makes sense. Once I find a gesture I like, I tend to stick with it for a while so that I don't have to come up with anything new.

We worked the doctor scenes as best we could without Christina, and with the new cuts. I was observing Brian giving his opinions about the scene and directing it, and found that his direction does work. It made me much more willing to listen to and trust what he'd been saying about the direction Nola needs to go. And since the run thru for the committee and the auditions in Memphis, I've felt pretty good about my work, and am not threatened as much by suggestions to improve it. I'm taking those notes less personally.

2/10/99: I got Beth's feedback on the run thru for the committee. She was very positive about my work for the most part. She was pleased that the ending was clearer having seen it being done. And I was pleased to know that! She did mention that the deaf dialect sounded Russian. (I have been playing phone tag with my vocal source for over a week now and I'm getting nervous.) She enjoyed the physical choices I was making, and found the signing to be very clear. She was interested in seeing how the friendship between Hannah and Nola could be developed more by us. Where are the moments when they enjoy each other's company and are not in a terribly frenetic state of mind? I must try to acknowledge our friendship more in those scenes. Dr. Sullivan asked me to come to speak to her Honors Theatre 100 class on 2/25/99 at 10:30am. I agreed.
I worked with Jeanine on specifying the singing sections of the play. We worked on creating the physical transition from reality to singing. And we set up the differences in each of the scenes. In the first scene, I am luxuriating in the lyrical quality I’ve been trying so hard to fight against, with moments of erratic gesture, but not many. The ending of that performance is like a “big finish.” In my brain I likened it to Jerry Seinfeld ending on a “high note.” In Scene 6, when Jessica is narrating the singing, the big physical difference is that she and I are working together in unison, and in between those unison moments, the movement is staccato. It ends in a slow fade out. I haven’t decided yet if the music fades out in my head, or if I fade myself out of the music. Scene 12 singing is like a big jam session, large slashing movements, but erratic. Probably another big finish, I’ll have to find out what the lights are doing. In act II, the first time I sing is when I interrupt the Salsa scene, and we specified that interruption by stating that it’s as if the music is vomiting out, and I need to get to that kind of urgency. That scene also contains the Marceau coloration into the outstretched pose of despair. The last time I sing is during the Pantagruel scene. We decided it is marked by small quick gestures, and changing meters. I want to find a connection with Jeremy in that scene. I think it’s important to for the audience to see the development of the relationship between Kraft and Nola. It makes the last scene make even more sense. The end of the singing in that section is an interruption. I don’t know where the music goes, and I will look to Kraft for the answer.

Working with Jeanine was so helpful! I found I was able to change the meter of what I was doing and felt free to find new gesture. I was also working alone, without the
bass, so it was easy to find my own rhythm. I felt a real connection to my breath, and I
let that inform nearly all of the choices I made while I was singing. Now if I can find that
kind of freedom while the bass is playing, I'll be in a solid place. Also Jeanine is so
supportive of my work and always has been, that I feel comfortable enough to get sort of
artistically "naked" and go to that place where Nola's music plays. I am finding more
and more ease in doing that in rehearsal. I've noticed that it's more and more difficult for
me not to make sound when I'm singing. I'm finding the Thelonious Monk connection.

4.4 TECHNICAL REHEARSALS

2/10/99: First tech was pretty smooth. I didn't think we'd make it all the way
through the first act, but we did. It was good the have the water there. The acting very
often has to take a back seat to the technical elements for a while but it was okay. During
the down time when cues were being adjusted, David would continue to play and I would
continue to "sing" and I was able to find some new things. I found that the lights really
energized my choices.

2/11/99: Second tech. Much more frustrating. Maybe it's just the nature of tech,
but I was very out of touch with that freedom that I had found the day before. I think my
focus was a little thrown by having photo call for the dispatch. And I still worry about
whether any of my physical work will be seen in my costume, particularly since I had
such a nice break through about the movement recently. I would hate for those
discoveries to get lost.

Jeremy was very frustrated with the wires and cables he needs to string up in the
Pantugral scene, and Dan Gray was very nice and accommodating and worked with him
to resolve the problems the prop was causing. Kudos to you Dan Gray.

But we got through it.

2/12/99: We ran the whole show with tech. It went pretty smoothly. My acting still feels off. But I’m finding more and more specificity with the singing in the bathroom scenes. I feel like I know what I’m trying to express. Also, my fears about my physical work getting lost in the size of my costume caused me to bump up my commitment to the movement. I think Nola’s need to be heard connects directly and organically with my need to be seen. It adds an edge to the singing.

We ran a few cues over again after the run thru. Got a few notes and were released.

2/13/99: I was very tired for first dress. I went out the night before and had very little to drink, and plenty of sleep afterward, but I think the upcoming opening and the stress therein is affecting me more than I realized. I was planning to go out after first dress, but I think it’s best if I stay in and do some work.

First dress went very smoothly. The costume changes went well. The blood pack went a little strange and filled my ear with blood soap, so that will need some work.

The deaf “dialect” is not getting any better. I have an appointment to meet with Christine Buchanan tomorrow. That is my real focus for the next three days, to catch up on the voice work I’ve neglected.

2/14/99: I went to visit Christine Buchanan. She provided some really good guidelines to follow in deaf speech and some handouts about deaf culture. She recreated some deaf speech for me. It was completely incomprehensible. So there’s yet one more
balance to be struck. I felt like I had to apologize for having to make the adaptation, for not depicting this character exactly as she would really appear in nature.

There was a grad student there by the name of Ladeithra McKinney that offered to take me to the deaf school to listen to the students speak. However, when we got there, we realized that the students would not have returned from the weekend because of President’s Day. We were unable to find another time to go together. So I went to the library and rented *Children of a Lesser God* again and some A.S.L. videos to see if there is ever deaf speech in them, but only *Lesser God* had any.

I spent some time applying the guidelines Christine gave me to my script. I realized I would just have to trust my own invention, again.

2/15/99: Jeremy ran lines in the afternoon. Lesley had gotten called away for a meeting and so we were left to work on our own. It was helpful to further reinforce the lines, especially since they were cut relatively recently.

The run through in the evening was pretty strange. I was distracted by the toilet flushing cues going awry in the prologue and it a while for my concentration to catch up. I also need to spend more time focusing and warming up before the show even starts. I felt like I lost a lot of the autistic behavior and was a very “normal” person. I don’t think the popcorn scene works with me connecting so directly with Hannah. However I did like the connection in the listening game scene. And I did not get any notes saying otherwise at the end of the night. So I will continue to play with that until someone tells me no.

I am constantly surprised at how tired this show makes me. This culminating
event that is to distill my ten years of training, the closer we get to opening, the more I feel I want to sleep. Oh the escape!!

2/16/99: Final Dress. Nothing really remarkable except that we needed an audience. I continue to venture further and further into the realm of the incomprehensible in my speech patterns at the end and it seems to be working. I can’t wait until the audience is here to see it.

4.5 PERFORMANCES

2/17/99: Opening night went very well. The audience was filled with friends and colleagues and was very generous. We were sold out and had a couple of people who were standing in the aisle that had to be asked to leave lest we run them over. Since they were trying to seat everyone, we had to hold the house for a few minutes and that felt like torture. I spent my time in the wings jumping up and down trying an old trick that my professor from undergrad taught me. Just before he would go on in his magic shows as a young performer, he would bounce up and down in the wings chanting “love my audience, love my audience.” I did that for a while until I realized I was tiring myself out.

There was a distinct change in the energy of the cast. We shaved three minutes off of the first act. Though I never felt like we were rushing. I found a new comfort in front of the crowd. When I began the actual singing, I was so happy to share the work we had done and was so ready for an audience that it really was a joy to “sing.” I hope that I can keep that feeling through the run. I know that I have a couple of landmark performances that will keep me engaged, but the ones in between will take a little work to stay focused.
in, I’m sure.

We had a small reception in Archie’s Alley afterward. It was very relaxed. Jeanine was very supportive and generous with her praise. She did mention that I could still find more distinction in the scene where Jeremy is recording me. Phil was very supportive too. He encouraged me to go even further with the deaf speech patterns. Esther-Beth was also very supportive and seemed pleased with the production. What I found refreshing was the ability I found to ask for critique and not feel entirely self-conscious or self-flagellating about the response. My committee was so positive in their responses that I began to wonder what I would be surprised by when I went to talk with them later.

I was happy to discover that I had finally created a group of artists that I had a connection to and a relationship with. This was the first opening night that I didn’t feel a let down or disappointment after. I was happy with my work overall, and was glad to have people to share the triumph with.

2/18/99: It was as large an audience as the night before. A little less responsive. At the end of the first act they didn’t clap, but I was surprised at how I was able to not take that personally. In that first act I was really beginning to notice how difficult it is going to be to maintain concentration when I’m in my autistic daze. My concentration really began to flag in the second act.

The blood pack was very frustrating. The blood gets all over my hands and face and I can never quite get rid of all of it, so I walk into the next scenes with smears of blood all over me. Also, the skin around my ear is getting very dry and chapped.
In the last scene, Jeremy and I dropped lines in a few places. I felt very bad about that. I'm sure no one knew, but I was angry with myself for my concentration being blown by the blood situation. Then the final lighting cues were brought up to early so then it was another weird applause issue.

2/19/99: The show picked up significantly from the night before. I hate that second night phenomenon. I think it happens because we place so much importance on the opening. On the one hand it gives us something to look forward to and to feel special about. But not having preview crowds, the opening night, very often filled with friends and family, is not the most honest crowd. They are very often unconditionally supportive, and it makes for a let down later.

2/20/99: In the matinee show, Christina had a migraine. It was amazing to watch her getting ready. She moved as if she were underwater in one of those old fashioned deep sea diving suits with the big metal helmets. I made a mental note of it in case I ever needed to replicate it. It changed the energy of the show a bit. We were all aware of her discomfort, but it didn't feel like we were overcompensating for her, though we did adapt. It was a very quiet crowd. But not in a negative way. It just seemed that their energy was more subdued.

The evening show went really well. As we were waiting to go on, the group of us began to tell ghost stories about haunted theaters we'd heard of. The giddy uneasiness really helped me find the enthusiasm for the show. It helped rev up my energy since I was a little tired after the matinee.

We had many friends in the audience. The entire Misanthrope cast and crew
came, as well as Brian Silberman. This was his first time seeing the show since before technical rehearsals began. He seemed pleased and congratulated us after the show.

In this show I have found that I am much more comfortable and at ease when I know people in the audience. This is the only show I've ever felt that way about. It's a pleasant change. I don't have any idea what may have caused it, but I'm not looking a gift horse in the mouth.

2/24/99: It was our first show since the weekend. I was worried it would be pretty rocky having had a few days off. Also David was feeling very, very ill. Ironically, though, the music and singing was as in sync as it has ever been, I think. I think the extra concern about David really forced me to listen and pay more attention to him. I hope I can maintain the same awareness when I know he feels better.

2/25/99: I went with Brian Silberman to speak with Esther-Beth Sullivan's class about the play. I always feel a little pretentious in those situations. I noticed that Brian was very generous about acknowledging the actor's work in the play. I'm afraid I didn't do the same for him. It didn't even occur to me to do so. I had taken so much ownership of the role that I managed to forget that the work was in fact collaborative. I mentioned the fact that I wondered how the audience would fill in the gaps if they were to watch Nola sing silently before they heard the double bass. I'm worried that I may have offended Brian with that comment because I don't think I brought up the issue very tactfully.

The questions that the students had were mostly about the ending. Was Nola in fact deaf? How long had it been since the implant? Was she ever crazy? A few of them
seemed to really have gotten it, but didn’t trust their perceptions about what they thought happened.

The performance that night went well. I found very specific through lines to moments that had not been clear to me before. I feel the show staying alive, but it doesn’t seem to be changing much. The reaction to the ending by Dr. Sullivan’s class made me realize that Nola probably seems too normal by the end of the play. Perhaps more of the autistic behavior can be brought into the scene.

David and I continued to find new musical moments together. I’m listening to him more, and he is trying different less “musical” sounds from the bass. The new sounds seem to describe what I’m doing more than ever before. I’m pleased with the growth we’ve found.

2/26/99: The audience size has dwindled since most of the theatre 100 students have seen the show already. It was a surprising contrast to the full houses we’d been experiencing previously. I adapted my blocking to accommodate the west section of the house, since it was the only place where we had audience members sitting. The adaptations were minor. It really was only a matter of cheating out a bit more.

2/27/99: The matinee performance was awful. I don’t think the performance was really bad, but the audience was a black hole of nonparticipation. I’m not one to immediately blame a audience for a bad show, but there seemed to be such a disrespect for the performance going on. One pair of girls were eating lollipops and talking to one another as if we were a big television show. I became very discouraged by that. I had the first decent night of sleep in 5 days, I was well rested. And by the middle of the
performance, I was exhausted.

For the evening performance everyone’s family was in the audience. Which accounted for about 50% of 50 people. The house was very small and it was difficult not to be disappointed. I was hoping for a big audience to maybe impress my parents or something. They were very quiet, but it was a different kind of energy than the matinee performance. They seemed to be listening very hard and trying to stay with the story because most of them were related to us somehow and they had some sort of emotional investment in the show, as opposed to the younger students earlier who are only in it for the grade in a class that they are required to take.

An interesting phenomenon occurred on this evening that I fondly refer to as “family night”. The acting became much more urgent. It felt as if we were trying to impress our families.

3/1/99: There are reviews in The Other Paper, Columbus Alive, and SNP. I don’t know what that third paper is but I’ve been told that there is a review in it. Carney Gray gave me the Columbus Alive review. I planned to abstain from reading it until the show had closed but I couldn’t help myself. It was generally good, but honest. I wonder why the reviewer from the Columbus Dispatch won’t come to the show. Isn’t that his job as newspaper critic? From what I understand we have to coddle and cater to him just to get him to agree to see our work. Exactly who does he think he is? He works in Columbus, Ohio for God’s sake? He’s not going to make or break any one production. So then I guess I need to ask myself why I want him to write the review in the paper. I’m not sure.

3/5/99: Mole night. Chris Neher has instituted this policy of having a night during
the run of any show he's in to have a Mole Night. Each character is to place a mole on themselves somewhere. It seems such a tiny thing. Literally, it is. The moles were no bigger than maybe an eighth of an inch across. But the giddiness in wondering if the audience would notice, or if the playwright might, energized the entire performance. The audience shrank even further tonight and the energy was much needed. It really is hard to fight against the discouragement of a small audience. I have to constantly remind myself that it's the people in the seats that matters, and to stop focusing on the empty chairs in the room.

3/6/99: Closing night. The house was very small. We had something like 28 people. But I felt the show did well. It has been difficult to go from very full houses to audiences dwindling away. But actually I believe it helped us find more connection to each other. There was only one audience in the run that I really truly felt was hostile. The rest of the time, I felt we engaged the audience pretty regularly, though I'm sure they were never quite sure what happened. I could hear it in the applause. Phil saw the show again tonight. So did Lesley. They both said that my journey seemed much more specific. I guess that just happened unconsciously over time, because I could never feel the moment of the seismic shift where suddenly the show settles into "where it needs to be."

4.6 SUMMARY

Ending the show was bitter sweet. It was the end of an amazing time at OSU. And it was great to learn so much about my classmates. I learned so much about the team player attitude of Chris Neher, and I got to become very good friends with Jessica
Morgan. There is a sort of inarticulatable bond that Jeremy and I share from having done this final thesis project together after having been in class together. I will miss those moments. But as we bowed for the last time, and hearing the sort of befuddled applause again, I knew that it was time to give the show back to the playwright for him to take it. I really believe that I went as far as I could with the material as is. It’s ready for its next step, and I’m ready for mine.
CHAPTER FIVE
EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

I was specifically working on three issues in this project. I wanted to create a character based on physicality, rather than psychology. I wanted to create a physicality for the character that was at once believable and theatrical, and different from my own. I utilized Marcel Marceau mime technique, Anne Bogart’s Viewpoints Training, and Rudolf Laban’s Effort-Shape method to tackle both of these tasks. My third concern in this project was to be able to articulate the acting process I use to prepare a role for performance. How did I do?

As I mentioned in Chapter Three, I decided to begin working with the Laban in the effort qualities of glide and dab. These were decisions I had made before rehearsals began. Once we began to actually rehearse I lost track of those early decisions. During the first week or so of rehearsing, Lesley began to direct me to make physical choices that required more bound and strong effort. The more I worked on my feet, the more I realized that the choice of direct movement didn’t work with the imagery within the play. There were too many references to water images for me to justify the choice of linear movement. And actually, at that point, I stopped using the Laban terminology as a creative tool, and began using it as a descriptive tool. I didn’t make creative choices
based on the terminology, rather, I used the terminology to describe and remember what I was doing. Generally, the Laban terminology proved most useful in breaking down the different sections within the singing scenes. For instance, the prologue of the play consisted of four sections: The Glide section, where I enter the bathroom and prepare to sing; the float section where singing first begins; the wring section, where I’m trying to recapture the music; and the slash section, where I am overcome with the music. More examples of how I used the Laban to describe my movement within the play can be found in Physical Action column of the scored script.

The Marceau work helped me more than I thought it would, and in ways I didn’t expect. I expected to find variations in the shape of my body through Marceau’s character statues. But his technique also helped me to integrate my breath with the physical work I was doing. Several times during rehearsal I would lose my balance as I tried to slowly color into my adaptation of Marceau’s statue of “despair” that occurs in act two, scene six. I realized I was holding my breath, which is antithetical to the work of Marceau. So I began to focus on continuing to breathe in that slow coloration. I imagined that each breath would enter my body and surround the muscles of my legs and inflate my sternum to reinforce and suspend the shape I was creating with my body. As I would inhale, I could feel the shape of my body become more specific and focused. It freed up superfluous tension and allowed my body to work more efficiently to support itself. That awareness of my breath helped me to connect with the singing. I began to use my breath as the vehicle for music in my head. It became another element of the singing. I would use my breath to imitate the gestures I was performing. Other times, I
would use the gestures to express what my breath was doing.

The Viewpoints became a very important tool for my acting, as well as for my movement. Repetition became the best acting tool I had to connect with the other characters on stage. Since I had decided not to make any eye contact with the other actors, I found it difficult to stay engaged in the scene. My mind wandered. I missed my cues, or forgot my lines. By focusing on the other actors' gestures out of the corner of my eye, and emulating them, I was able to stay engaged and "alive" in the scene.

Kinesthetic response became the most important element in developing Nola's method of singing. I would depend on David Dawes' bass playing to propel my physical choices as I sang. I would try to react to the music by trying to physicalize what I heard him play. I also had to be aware of when David was reacting to me and to feed him physical choices that he could respond to. The earlier connection I made with breath in the Marceau work helped to deepen my responses to the music.

I can cite so many specific instances when I used each of these techniques, but I cannot say that I specifically planned those occurrences. For the most part, these techniques came into play in a subconscious way. I think that by studying each of these techniques so extensively in my classes, both the classes that I took and those that I taught, gave me easy access to them without having to make conscious decisions about how I would use them. In rehearsals, I found that my focus switched from creating specific physical behaviors and gestures to working within different modes of time and duration. I began to find variation between my physical habits and those of Nola, through varying the rhythms and tempos in each scene. When I was working with a quick tempo,
I found one set of physical choices, and while working in another tempo, another set of physical choices became apparent to me. I was surprised to find this connection between time and physicality. It's a connection that I hope to explore more in the future.

Though my goal was to create this role based on a physicality, I found that I was unable to start from a purely physical point of view. My belief is that the body and the mind are inexorably linked. So I found that it was very difficult for me to make a physical choice that I couldn't immediately justify with character needs and drives. I feel that I perhaps limited myself in that respect. In a question and answer session at O.S.U., Anne Bogart said that nothing is abstract if it's done with specificity. I believe that she meant that if a physical action is executed with clarity and commitment, even if it is part of a movement vocabulary outside of normal human behavior, the audience will fill in what the movement means. I wish that perhaps I had trusted that philosophy more when making decisions about Nola. I edited choices too soon.

I found this to be true in my acting as well. I have a problem with working spontaneously in my work. If I am unable to think through a moment to find the "right" choice, I become flustered. That issue never quite got addressed within the process of creating this role. I was still always wondering if I was "doing it right" and looking to outside approval for the answer, particularly in the singing scenes of the play. I had to almost entirely invent that method of singing. I am more comfortable imitating movement than I am inventing it, so I was very insecure in the singing scenes for a long time. It wasn't until about a week before the show opened that I found a personal connection to those scenes. I was also uncomfortable being on stage alone and not
having a partner to focus my attention on. I wrote to a friend who is also an actor about how he works past the nearly paralyzing self-consciousness of acting. He wrote back and said that he just focuses on his partner and really listens to them to find out what he needs to do next. “How ironic,” I thought to myself, since I was playing a deaf woman who is afraid to make eye contact with anyone. I thought I could do neither of those things. Eventually, though, I realized that I did have a partner in those singing scenes: the bass player, David. As soon as I realized that, I found the connection that would free me up. At first I was purely trying to imitate what David was playing on the double bass, but that still wasn’t quite working. I became frustrated being tied only to what he was playing and eventually “broke out” of the music to move the way I felt I needed to. It was then that the music began to come alive. He had been waiting for me to take the lead at the same time I was depending on him to do so. Once we both figured out that we each needed to feed each other new impulses, I stopped dreading doing the music scenes. Of course, here were when David and I really had to struggle to stay connected through the music, but just the awareness of that need to connect kept those scenes alive. It seems a simple lesson, but it taught me that I have to have a focus outside myself to work the most freely.

A challenge that arose that I did not expect was the self-consciousness I felt at having the playwright present for the rehearsal process. I’ve had quite a few opportunities to work in conjunction with a playwright. At University of Nevada Las Vegas, where I got my Bachelor of Arts, there was a Master of Fine Arts degree offered in playwriting. Since there were always at least ten playwrights in the program at any one time, there
were always productions of their work. I worked in several capacities with these playwrights. I had been a director, an assistant director, and a fight choreographer, but most often I was an actor. Some of my most satisfying experiences in my undergraduate education came by way of acting in these new plays. I enjoy the idea of being the first person to create a role. So I was really looking forward to working with the playwright on this production. It was one of the reasons I chose to play the role, originally.

The processes I'd worked in previously involved the playwright sitting in on most rehearsals and making adjustments as he or she saw fit, or as the director saw fit. Any notes that the playwright had for the actors were always filtered through the director. There was not a lot of direct interaction between the playwright and the actors themselves. Or if the actors had any questions or suggestions about the script, the director would serve as the liaison between them and the playwright. It was a good system that kept resentments to a minimum on both the parts of the writer and the performers. It allowed for collaboration through a mediator. I expected this process to work in a similar way.

At the beginning of rehearsals I could see that this process was going to be different from the ones I had experienced. The interaction between Brian and the actors was through direct contact and conversation. However, we didn't share a common vocabulary about the work, which resulted in some friction in our communication. His way of communicating his ideas about scenes with us would sometimes consist of line readings: he would say the line for us with the emphasis and inflection he was hoping to hear us replicate. Most actors, myself included, find this method of communication
difficult. I find it intrusive to my process of discovering the character. (I liken it to being
told “who done it” before you’ve reached the last page of the mystery.) But I didn’t
know how to communicate my feelings about the subject without offending the
playwright, so I would take the suggestion and move on to the next thing that needed
attention. Unfortunately, I began to dread getting notes. I was afraid he would give me
another line reading, and I would again fail to express myself about how upsetting it was
to me. That made me a little uncomfortable.

I eventually got more comfortable with the idea of receiving notes straight from
the playwright. Many of the performing groups I had seen at O.S.U. have talked about
how important it is for everyone involved in the process to be able to collaborate and
participate. The Five Lesbian Brothers create entire plays based on collaborative
improvisation; the Wooster Group does the same; the S.I.T.I. Company allows all
members of the creative team, including the sound designer and stage manager, to make
comments and suggestions within the rehearsal process. After all, Brian was the author of
the play. He should have as much right as anyone to offer opinions about the work. But I
remained pretty possessive about my choices and was vocal about defending them. I
realized I have come to take a certain ownership of my work as an actor. In most of my
past work, I would take notes from directors, and integrate them without question. I think
that I assumed that I was wrong, or that they knew better. But I am now more interested
in having an active role in collaborating on a project. I have a stronger belief in my work
than I used to, and that was a good discovery to make.

That ownership manifested itself other ways as well. When reviews of the play
came out in, I was able to avoid reading them. Copies of the reviews are included in the appendix of this document, but I managed to avoid reading them until I began to write this thesis. Reviews used to be an important source of feedback for me as to whether the work I was doing was "good" or "bad." But I can now look at a review with the knowledge that it is written out of one person's opinion. Another important change for me in terms of ownership of the work was that I was most excited to perform when I knew that I had friends or family in the audience. I was excited to share what I was doing with the people that I know and care about. In the past, I would be made very self-conscious by having friends present. Here I felt a definite pride in the work I was doing, which was a novelty.

If I were to do the role again, I would look for more primary resources for my research. The reading I did about mental illness and deaf culture was certainly helpful. It gave me a good understanding of Nola's given circumstances, and it became the basis for several physical choices. I suspect my research was also part of what made me feel strong enough about my work to defend it when necessary. But I encountered very few deaf people during my research for the role. I was afraid to offend them with questions that may have been intrusive, and I was afraid to make them self-conscious by asking them to speak for the sake of my being able to imitate them. I can't deny that I gained a great confidence in my work as creator of movement (and sound for that matter) having to invent so much based on "book knowledge." Very likely, I would have had to adapt the realistic behavior of a primary source to behavior that was more theatrically feasible. I would like to be able to say I made the choice to do so, rather than to just have pulled
choices out of the air. I'm especially aware of this issue because of what I learned about
the deaf community during this process. They are outspoken about their need to be
recognized as a culture of their own. They are emphatic about teaching the hearing
population about who they are as a culture. So I felt obligated to depict a member of that
culture accurately. At one point, we thought the artistic director of the Cleveland
Signstage, Aaron Weir, was going to come and see the show. I was in a panic, knowing
that I was a hearing person, portraying a deaf woman. I was worried about the political
implications that the show might have within the deaf community. I was worried about
how accurately I was portraying the character. Mr. Weir was unable to come,
unfortunately. As a matter of fact, I don't believe we had any members of the deaf
community come to see the show. I am still curious as to how my performance would
have been perceived by the deaf. Claudia Kinder, who was the sign language interpreter
for the show, was the closest person to the deaf community I could find to give feedback
about the performance. She was very complimentary about how expressive and graceful
my sign language was in the performance. She was impressed with my deaf speech, she
said it was very "convincing." It was a relief to hear that. But I would have liked to
include the deaf community more in my research and in the performance of the show.
Perhaps we could have directed the marketing of the show into that portion of the local
community.

Most of the challenges I faced in this process are the same ones I've been facing
since I began acting. And they are all based in fear. The work I need to do now is on
how to utilize that fear which can be so paralyzing to me. I'm not sure how to begin to

172
approach that task. What I did learn about my process is that I am less fearful when I am more familiar, whether it be with the lines, or the movement tasks. It seems the more familiar I am with being in situations that are tenuous, unstructured, and improvisational, the less fearful of those situations I'll become. It seems the answer is to just do it. And I've begun to.

I have accepted a position in the acting company of the Metro Theater Company in St. Louis, Missouri, where I will be asked to act, direct, and help in the creation new works for young audiences. In many ways, I was terrified to accept the position, particularly because of the fear of directing. But I have developed a philosophy for myself through having played this role: if it scares me, it means I have to do it. The parts of the process that were the most frightening to me were the most rewarding. Having to invent an entire method of expression was terrifying. But that experience taught me so much about myself as an artist. And through this position with Metro Theater Company, I hope to learn even more.
SUSPECTED MISSING PAGE 174
The head of OSU theater knows what she’s doing

The good news: The chairwoman of the OSU theater department knows how to direct a play. The bad news: She proved it with a play that isn’t nearly as well-thought-out as her production.

Lesley Ferris, who has led the department since early ’88, makes her Columbus directorial debut with Feral Music, a work by Brian Silberman. The Thurber House playwright-in-residence wrote Feral Music as a one-act, then stretched it into a full-length play. What he failed to do in the process was to add enough character development or plot to justify the extra dialogue.

If the play didn’t have an intriguing premise, and if Ferris didn’t direct it with a keen sense of mood and place, the results would be much less worthwhile.

The premise is that Nola, a woman who can neither hear nor speak, is convinced she can somehow sing. She proves this to herself by wailing away in the restroom of the psychiatric clinic where she lives.

Beyond her total deafness, Nola’s character is notable for two reasons: She first floods the floor by stuffing sheet music down the toilets, and she “sings” without actually making a sound.

Though the clinic administrators consider Nola’s “singing” a sign of her mental instability, it attracts the attention of Dr. Kraft, a sort of talent scout for people with psychiatric problems. He arrives in town and hangs around for days, hoping to learn whether Nola’s vocal ability is genuine. In other words, he wants to know whether his employers can make money off of her.

Silberman uses the play to make not-very-compelling points about the commercialization of art. What’s worse, he turns Kraft into such a single-minded heel that we have no reason to be interested in him.

Despite a brisk performance by Jeremy Dubin.

Much more mysterious and therefore intriguing are Nola, played with silent grace by Wendy Bagger, and her schizophrenic friend Hamish, played with alternately fierce and fearful energy by Jessica Morgan.

The most disappointing character, though well-acted by Chris Neher, is an orderly named Arturo. He’s a stereotypical example of low-class brutishness and, unfortunately, the only Latino character in the play.

Ferris’s fine production of this revision-ready work owes a lot to James T.

Allen’s dusky lighting and even more to Dan Gray’s coldly institutional scenic design. The set is so perfectly realized—it even includes three overflowing toilets—that it helps us to overlook the unrealized potential of Silberman’s work. For a while, anyway.
OSU's 'Feral Music' off key, tedious

By DENNIS THOMPSON
Associated Press Theatre Critic

The Ohio State University Theatre Department's current offering is a workshop production in need of work.

Feral Music is a new play by Thutber House playwright-in-residence Brian Silberman.

It is the story of Nola, who cannot hear or speak. She has been committed to a psychiatric clinic where they are trying to get her to speak.

She baffles her doctors by making nightly excursions to the toilet where, with a broomstick as a microphone, she "sings" without making a sound.

While the doctors try to cure her, a man named Kraft enters the picture representing a consortium that pays top dollar to fund mentally ill artists in hopes of profiting from their work. Kraft wants to keep Nora unchanged and take her away.

Is Nora truly insane? Acting out a role? A musical genius? Do we care?

This is a cold, unengaging piece.

It is surprisingly wordy with surprisingly sterile dialogue for a play about art.

The play purports to offer a "startling new vision of notions of language, creativity and cross human greed."

Rather, it is didactic, condescending and ultimately cynical.

Particularly in the second act, Silberman gives characters long, preachy monologues that not only fail to hold interest, but seem unrealistic coming from the characters he gives them to.

As a viewing experience it is difficult to get involved with the issues when we are presented with a group of characters we care nothing about.

They carelessly alternate each other's words, hardly an effective choice if Silberman intended to give their arguments equal weight.

Set design is not much of a presence, although it occasionally shows genuine concern. Karp is more effective, although his incessant smile and wide-eyed look makes us wonder if he is the one insane.

Next to Dubin, the only other consistently strong performance is Chris Neher as Aruro, the Churchill bully of an orderly.

His scenes with Dubin are cracking. Wendy Bagger's wordless portrayal of Nola is physically vital.

She and Jessica Morgan as Hannah do well, with their portrayal of American sign language, taught to them for the TDOUS, Page 2A

They carry the weight of the play, with their sense of desperation, their need to communicate, their struggle to be heard.

This production by Claudia Kinter is entertaining. David Dawes contributes haunting original music on the double bass as background, remaining on stage throughout the production.

It's difficult to take the ideas of this play seriously because the whole premise is preposterous.

If Silberman wants us to believe these issues he could start by giving us characters who make us care about what they're saying rather than cartoonish vessels who merely vent.

The Ohio State University Department of Theatre's Feral Music continues through March 6, in Drake Union's Second Stage Theatre.
FERAL SOUND
MUSIC TO ALL THE SENSES

by Doug Hoehn

A number of years ago, a Canadian professor of play writing wrote one of those too-common beginners' guides that set the rules hard and fast. In his advice to budding dramatists, he offered a stern warning about bizarre special effects demands that will cause designers and technical directors to lose hair and sleep. He cited in particular one example of a new writer who put operating toilets on stage, requiring them to gush forth water like a porcelain-lined biblical commentary.

The learned professor obviously did not reckon on Dan Gray and Jim Knapp. The scene designer and technical director of the Ohio State University's Feral Music provide a trio of comedies that overflow into a contained area, serving playwright Brian Silberman's stark depiction of a mental hospital. Unfortunately, not everything in the play flows so evenly.

The premise of the work is interesting enough. A deaf and mute woman named Nola has been confined to a mental institution for her entire life. She develops a private form of singing as a means of self-expression, and this very original 'art' causes her to be labeled hopelessly insane by some professionals and a marketable prodigy by others.

The real Nola, the gifted and tormented genius with a whimsical sense of humor, is known only by a fellow patient, a schizophrenic woman named Hannah. Their communication by sign language provides the most reliable insight into Nola's behavior. Not coincidentally, the interactions of the two women are the most rewarding scenes of the play, as well as those offering the greatest challenge to the performers.

In Silberman's notes, we learn that the play originated as a 30-minute treatment of Nola's art and of this relationship. The two-hour play presented at OSU feels overlaid with characters and with a superimposed plot structure. Where Silberman occasionally loses us in trying to make the relationship between Nola and society as interesting as the relationship between the two women, it cannot possibly become half as involving.

The play remains a golden opportunity for two fine actresses to display their power. And director Lesley Ferris has chosen them wisely. Wendy Bagger delivers a stunning performance as Nola, conveying through energetic physical movement the soul of the threatened artist and the lonely woman. With fine-tuned gestures and facial expressions, Bagger holds the attention of the entire audience, "speaking" volumes without actual dialogue.

Jessica Morgan matches Bagger beat for beat as the hyperactive Hannah. Morgan plays the human of the part like a master craftsman, as when she stealthily plays with a stolen flashlight. But we are also left, with a sense of the woman's private anguish, her longing for Nola's touch, her contempt for the raping orderlies, her belief in something more beautiful than the sterile world of the institution.

Not all of the supporting cast members shine through the superficiality of their written characters. Most believable is Christina Sidebottom as a defensive psychologist who believes that she has Nola's best interests at stake. Chris Neher, Jeremy Dubin and Michael Karp have effective moments that somehow are not sustained. But the onstage musician, double bass player David Dawes, provides a tireless through-line that adds power to Nola's expressions and a subtle undercurrent to the rest of the play.

Feral Music plays through February 27. For tickets, call 292-2295.
The Ohio State University
Department of Theatre

presents

Feral Music

A Workshop Production of a New Play

By Brian Silberman

Thurber Playwright-in-Residence

Stadium II Theatre
February 17 at 7:30 PM
February 18-20, 24-27, March 3-6 at 8 PM
February 20 & 27 at 2 PM
Cast

Nola, a deaf mute ........................................ Wendy Bagger*
Hannah, a schizophrenic ..................................... Jessica Morgan
Kraft, a diagnostician ....................................... Jeremy Dubin*
Arturo, an orderly ........................................... Chris Neher
Hope, a clinical psychologist ................................. Michael Karp
Williamson, a clinical psychologist ......................... Christina Sidebottom
Double Bass .................................................. David Dawes

Time: The Present
Place: Somewhere in the United States

*These roles are performed in partial fulfillment of the M.F.A. degree in Acting.

There will be one 15-minute intermission.
Audio and Visual Recording Devices are prohibited in the Theatre.

Feral Music is produced by special arrangement with Rosenstone/Wender,
3 East 48th Street, New York, NY 10017.

Production Staff

Director/Producer ............................................. Lesley Ferris
Scenic Design ................................................ Dan Gray
Assistant Scenic Designer .................................... Vicki A. Horning
Costume Designer .......................................... Rebecca Guillot
Lighting Designer ............................................ James T. Allen
Sound Designer ............................................... Tera Cozart
Assistant Sound Designer .................................. Heather Olmstead
Technical Director ......................................... Jim Knapp
Assistant Technical Director ............................. John J. Leahy
Stage Manager ............................................... Heather Olmstead
Assistant Stage Manager ................................... Rob Dell
Dramaturg .................................................... Christy Stanlake
Interpreter Coordinator ................................... Claudia Kinder
Music Consultant ............................................. Dr. Paul Robinson
Box Office Manager ........................................ Jos. F. Scharrer
Front-of-House Manager ................................... Julie Graham
Poster/Program Design .................................... Rachel Barnes
Production Crew

Scenic Studio Supervisor .................................................... Ron Carnell  
Properties Manager ............................................................... Robert Krege, III, Stephanie McFarland  
Scenic Studio Teaching Associates ........................................... Chris Corff, Matt Kari,  
              Robert Krege, III, Nick Nold  
Scenery Construction Crew .................................................. Chris Athanas, Sarah Beder, Bill Bilger,  
              Chris Blain, Kelly Bowman, Craig Cosper, Bridgetta Davis, Dan Freimark,  
              Sam Friedman, Thomas Greer, Judy Hall, Lynn Hicks, Chad Kashary, Rhian  
              Kelly, Liang-Chang Ko, Melissa Lijek, Felix Loveless, Greg Maier, Anna  
              Palmer, Eleni Papaleonardos, Michelle Patterson, Michelle Perry, Ko-Rely Pi,  
              Jessica Secrest, Lydia Southwick, Sandra Starner, Ashla Thobani, Deborah  
              E. Titus, Liz Waggoner, Kate Weilnau, Mollie Workman, Karen Zingale  
Welding Crew ................................................................. John J. Leahy, Heather Olmstead,  
              Kevin Parsley, Dave Wallingford  
Scenery Run Crew ............................................................... Craig Cosper, Ren Hubbs, Chad Kasharn, Greg Maier  
Costume Studio Supervisor ................................................... Julia Weiss  
Costume Teaching Associates ................................................ Rebecca Guillot,  
              Presley Morton, Jean Najar, Jacquelyn Shelley  
Costume Construction Crew .................................................. Marieli Beltran, Tracy Calla,  
              Aimee J. Greer, Naomi Perry, Erynn Wheatley  
Wardrobe Head ................................................................. Jennifer Bach  
Costume Run Crew .............................................................. Jeff Marcinko, Kellie Wheatley  
Lighting Teaching Associate ................................................... Cherie Gallinati  
Master Electrician ............................................................... Dave Wallingford  
Assistant Master Electrician .................................................. Brandon Mulholand  
Moving Lights Programmer ................................................... Kevin Parsley  
Lighting Crew ................................................................. Edna Mae Berkey, Mark Bernhardt, Erik Binion,  
              Tammy Blakeman, Kelly Bowman, Matthew Cherubino, Joy Cooper, Dave  
              Debelak, Rafka Diety, Evin Douglas, Sherehan Elbokhary, Erika Farfan, David  
              Friedman, Sam Friedman, Kristina Garshellis, Chester S. Harding, Sarah  
              Haven, Sean Hennessy, Brett John, Wesley Ko, Emily Matthews, Meghan S.  
              Moore, Heather Olmstead, Anna Palmer, Kirk Patrick, David Price, Melinda  
              Sanders, Holly Skeens, Jason Swank, Tom Kim, Anya Tashayeva,  
              Deborah E. Titus, Mat Vandeneeynden  
Light Board Operator ........................................................... Chester Harding  
Sound Board Operator .......................................................... Napoleon Rossi
Feral: *fera* means ‘wild beast.’ 1. wild, untamed; uncultivated. Often of animals and plants that have run wild. 2. Of, pertaining to, or resembling a wild beast; brutal, savage. *(Shorter Oxford English Dictionary)*.

**About the Playwright**

Brian Silberman holds an M.F.A. in Playwriting from Carnegie Mellon University, where he received two Shubert Drama Fellowships and the Mary Marlin Fisher Playwrighting Award. His plays “Walkin’ Backward,” about orphans and abandonment in a small Virginia town, and “The Gospel According to Toots Pope,” the first two sections of the five-act cycle, *The Buckland Canticle*, were the recipients of awards and workshops from Arena Stage, the American Alliance for Theatre Education, 21st Century Playwrights, TADA!, the Kennedy Center’s American College Theatre Festival, Carnegie Mellon’s Summer Showcase of New Plays, and The Poet’s Theatre. Mr. Silberman’s other plays include: *Manifest*, 1998 Clauer Prize recipient, finalist at the Eugene O’Neill National Playwrights’ Conference, the San Francisco Playwrights’ Center, and the Jerome Fellowship at the Playwrights’ Center of Minneapolis. This play was first workshopped at The Drama League of New York and is receiving its world premiere this month at the Portland Stage Company; *Sugar Down Billie Hoak*, produced Off-Broadway by the New American Stage Company and in Chicago by the Trap Door Theatre; *Half Court*, scheduled for a spring production in Los Angeles; and *Salvage Operations*. Currently, Mr. Silberman is serving as the James Thurber Playwright-in-Residence and is at work on two new plays, *Ambivalent North* and *Dustbreeding*. He is a member of The Dramatists Guild.

**About the Play**

*Feral Music* deals with age-old questions of esthetics. What is art? Who is an artist? Who decides the value of art? And who defines what an artist is?

Nola, a deaf mute, has lived in mental institutions all her life. Mute and deaf since birth, she has never heard music, yet she believes she is a singer. Nola’s “singing” causes her psychiatrists to label her insane. However, Dr. Kraft, an art historian who is in the business of “discovering” mentally ill artists, visits Nola in hopes of bringing her to his own hospital which specializes in promoting the art of mentally ill people. What ensues is a story about art, commerce, and exploitation.

Here, playwright Brian Silberman, speaks about the inception of *Feral Music* and its relation to Outsider Art.

**The Origins of Feral Music**

“I was asked by Rebecca Holderness, a director who had worked extensively with The Theatre for the Deaf in Rochester, New York, to develop a theatre piece for a company of actors, both hearing and hearing-impaired. There were to be no constraints on me, I was told, as far as subject matter was concerned. I could write about anything I desired. The only caveat was that the play needed to be accessible to both a hearing and non-hearing audience, and needed to be accessible without the standard utilization of an interpreter standing alongside the stage, serving as translator. Prior to my agreement, I had no involvement with deafness or with American Sign Language. After spending a week in the presence of this acting company, seeing the firsthand beauty of ASL, I hit upon the idea of a deaf mute woman who believed she was a jazz singer.”
On Expanding the One-Act Version Feral Music into the Full-length Production:

“The initial formulation of the play was a thirty minute one-act which focused primarily on the character of Nola. As it expanded, more focus was given to the character of Kraft, who was an unknown and mysterious figure in the one-act version. The character of Arturo came into being in this process of expansion, as the world of the hospital grew and developed. Largely, the one-act is plotless, it is governed by a question of whether Nola hears music or not, the play wandering around this question without necessarily answering it. One-acts, it seems to me, can get away with such a structure. Full-lengths cannot.”

The Connection between Outsider Art and Feral Music:

“I’ve been interested in Outsider Art, or Art Brut, for some time now... in the complex relationship between psychopathology and artistic expression... so much so that I began to explore the possibility of pursuing the field in dramatic terms,... Art Brut is characterized by that artistic creation untouched, and as a result uninflected, by artistic culture and history. By nature of its definition it is a body of work that does not conform to an artistic pattern... at least those patterns culturally recognized in the form of aesthetic history. The limitations of communication within a defined social sphere done away with, art brut artists—whose creative activity is of a compulsive nature, either rationally explicable or not depending on the individual state of mind—are protected from semantic and analytical interference in poetic or philosophical terms, defying accepted critical evaluation.”

Gugging Hospital and Kraft’s Consortium:

“My test case is the hospital Gugging. In 1991, the artists/patients of Haus der Künstler (House of Artists) at the Lower Austrian Psychiatric Hospital at Gugging, outside of Vienna, were collectively awarded the prestigious Oskar-Kokoschka Prize for Art. Gugging provides a communal, pseudo-familial residence for a select group of artists, all long-term patients suffering from psychosis, autism, and varying forms of schizophrenia, who have no realistic prospects of ever functioning within a family or community outside their institution. Their artwork, however, now sells for tens of thousands of dollars apiece and is avidly sought by collectors and museums alike.”

The Ethics within Feral Musics’ Aesthetics:

“I found these questions and ethics tremendously interesting and wanted to develop a play around them. I began to understand how pathologizing is itself a way of seeing; how a debate about what constitutes art and what constitutes mere curiosity in the alternate reality of the insane might represent a larger, metaphysical question about our own reality. And then I threw in the commercial element that permeates the art world today; as soon as these works sell for large sums, become commodity, how do the ethics shift and get reshaped? How is value assigned? These seemed like dramatic questions to me.”
Acting in a Second Language

Actors must face many challenges when creating a character. For Feral Music, Wendy Bagger (Nola) and Jessica Morgan (Hannah) had to learn a new language, American Sign Language (ASL). Claudia Kinder, Interpreter-Coordinator for Ohio State's Office of Disability Services, translated portions of Feral Music into ASL and then met with Wendy and Jessica to teach them this second language.

Claudia Kinder brings a diverse performance background into her work with Feral Music. Before becoming an interpreter, she studied classical ballet for twenty-five years. Since becoming an interpreter, Kinder has continued her work with live performance. She has worked as an interpreter for many opera companies across the country, and has worked with the University of Cincinnati on the play, Reckless. Because of these experiences, Kinder's interpretation of Feral Music marries language with aesthetic concerns.

- Claudia: Most importantly, when working with performers who have never signed before, I focus on two things: keeping it simple and working with the rhythm of speech. So, when a performer is simultaneously working with spoken lines and rehearsing speaking in sign—like Jessica—the rhythmic pattern is the most important thing. When choosing the signs, I try to keep things as simple as possible by selecting signs that use a similar hand shape and through condensing lines into concepts, rather than signing word for word.

Wendy Bagger speaks about how the use of ASL has enriched her and Jessica's relationship as performers.

- Wendy: There are some really nice visceral connections that happen. When I say "visceral," I don't mean really angry or passionate, but really nice moments that happen, through this sign language, that I don't think would happen if we were speaking. My favorite scene in the show right now is when we are playing the "listening game." Hannah is saying, "Let's play. Let's play. You say a thing, and I'll tell you what it sounds like in music." That scene is really nice because you really see the relationship between those two people. And the relationship so depends on that mode of communication. And Jessica and I, just as people, whenever we're backstage start signing things. We sign as much as we can, from what little we know and have learned from the script.

Research and Interviews by Christy Stanlake, Dramaturg

Recorded music in this production is by John Cage, Paul Robinson and David Darling. Live music is by David Dawes.

AFTER WORDS: POST PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION

You've seen the performance and you are eager to talk about it. Here is the opportunity. For each production an invited guest will give a brief response to the play and then lead a discussion with the audience and the production team. Following the second Thursday evening performance join us for AFTER WORDS. On Thursday, February 25, invited guest speakers for Feral Music will be Brian Silberman, Thurber Playwright-in-Residence and Claudia Kinder, American Sign Language Specialist.
Upcoming Events

For further information on these productions, please visit our Box Office in the lobby.

**The Misanthrope**
Thurber Theatre
February 24 at 7:30 PM
February 25-27, March 2-6 at 8 PM
February 27 at 2 PM

**Breaking the Current**
Stadium II Theatre
April 14 at 7:30 PM
April 15-17 at 8 PM
April 17 at 2 PM

**Female Parts: One Woman Plays**
Mount Hall Studio Theatre
March 2 at 7:30 PM, March 3-6 at 8 PM
March 6 at 2 PM

**In Conversation With....Tony Kushner**
Thurber Theatre
Tuesday April 20 at 8:00 PM

**Rock 'n' Roles from Shakespeare**
Mount Hall Studio Theatre
March 7 at 2 and 7 PM

**The Love of the Nightingale**
Stadium II Theatre
May 5 at 7:30 PM
May 6-8, 12-15, 19-22 at 8 PM
May 6 & 15 at 2 PM

**Angels in America: Part One, Millenium Approaches**
Thurber Theatre
May 19-22, 25-28 at 7:30 PM
May 22 & 23 at 2:00 PM

**Fen**
Mount Hall Studio Theatre
May 24 at 7:30 PM
May 25-28 at 8 PM

---

Special Thanks

Dr. Paul Robinson for use of waterphone
Olentangy Area Building Services
Brown Steel, Inc.
Department Faculty and Staff

Lesley Ferris  
Chair  
Daniel Boord  
Video/Acting/Directing  
Stratos Constantinidis  
History Literature Criticism  
Nena Couch  
Curator of The Lawrence and Lee Theatre Research Institute  
Dan Gray  
Resident Scenic Designer  
Bruce Hermann  
Acting/Directing  
Anthony Hill  
History Literature Criticism  
Ezekiel Kofoworola  
History Literature Criticism  
Vincent Landro  
TH100 Administrator  
Dennis A. Parker  
Resident Costume Designer  
Thomas Postlewait  
History Literature Criticism  
Joy Reilly  
History Literature Criticism  
Sue Ott Rowlands  
Acting/Directing  
Mark Shanda  
Resident Technical Director

Esther Beth Sullivan  
History Literature Criticism  
Mary Tarantino  
Resident Lighting Designer  
John Taylor  
The Lawrence and Lee Theatre Research Institute/Dramaturgy  
Jeanine Thompson  
Movement/Acting/Directing  
Phil Thompson  
Voice/Acting/Directing  
Alan Woods  
History Literature Criticism/Director of The Lawrence and Lee Theatre Research Institute  
Rachel Barnes  
Graphic Designer  
Graduate Studies Secretary  
Ron Cannell  
Scenic Studio Supervisor  
Sonja Kalamas-Elder  
Administrative Assistant  
James Knapp  
Production Coordinator  
Jos. F. Scharrer  
Box Office Manager  
Laura Sipe  
Undergraduate Secretary  
Julia Weiss  
Costume Studio Supervisor

For more information about The Department of Theatre, see our webpage at:  
www.the.ohio-state.edu

Also see the OSU Lawrence and Lee Theatre Research Institute at:  
www.lib.ohio-state.edu/OSU_profile/triweb/  

For the latest theatre in Columbus, see the new Theatre Roundtable web page at:  
www.theaterroundtable.org