FINDING THE IMPULSIVE SELF: THE CREATION OF SIMON EYRE IN THE SHOEMAKER’S HOLIDAY

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

Damian Francis Bowerman, B.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
2002

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ABSTRACT

A propaganda play for the apprentices of London, Thomas Dekker wrote The Shoemaker's Holiday as a celebration of working class life. The play follows the journey of Simon Eyre, a master shoemaker, as he works his way up the merchant class ranks, ultimately becoming Lord Mayor of London.

This thesis is a documentation of my process: the steps I took to find the impulsive self and create a rich, charming and generous human being. Discovering specific, detailed, and historically accurate actions was essential in this project in order for me to create a three-dimensional Simon Eyre. In the following chapters, I introduce my problem question, document my research, explain my production circumstances, define my methodology, analyze my script, record my process, and evaluate my conclusions.
Dedicated to my wife, Marlene, my parents, Ron and Jane, and all of my family
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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I appreciate my high school drama teacher, Merri Bame, and my undergraduate mentor, Barry Alexander, for helping me to “imagine the possibilities.”

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I am grateful to my thesis committee, Dr. Tom Postlewait and Dr. Lesley Ferris, the director, Dr. Jon Farris, and all of the OSU Theatre Faculty and Staff for their valuable insight.

I also wish to thank my colleagues: Carie DeVito, Kathleen Gonzalez, Naomi Hatsfelt, Jennifer Manvich, Jeremy Meier, Jonathan Park, Regina Rockensies, and Allyson Rosen. Your creative energy, sense of humor, and loyal friendship facilitated this project. We work well together.
VITA

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1995................................. B.A. Theatre Performance and
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1996 -1998............................ English 9, Speech/Drama and Yearbook Teacher,
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Theatre 280: Fundamentals of Acting,
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CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Acting

2002 ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO’S NEST Dr. Spivey Porthouse Theatre
2002 BRIGADOON Stuart Darlrymple Porthouse Theatre
2002 ST. JOAN OF THE STOCKYARDS Cridle Ohio State University
2002 THE SHOEMAKER’S HOLIDAY Simon Eyre Ohio State University
2001 ELEKTRA Tutor Ohio State University
2001 THE TEMPEST Antonio Actors’ Theatre Company
2001  BEAUTIFUL VIEW  Alistar Owen  da da kamera, Wexner Center
2001  WIT  Kelekian, Mr. Bearing  Ohio State University
2001  LONDON CUCKOLDS  Doodle  Ohio State University
2000  ORPHEUS DESCENDING  Sheriff Talbott  Ohio State University
2000  KING LEAR  Albany  Ohio State University
2000  THE HOSTAGE  I.R.A. Officer  Ohio State University
2000  JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER  John D. Rockefeller  Ohio Chautauqua
1999  MARRIAGE  Kochkariev  Ohio State University
1999  JULIUS CAESAR  Marullus & Messala  Actors’ Theatre Company
1999  TUCK EVERLASTING  Tuck  Phoenix Theatre Circle
1999  THE SECRET GARDEN  Mr. Craven  Phoenix Theatre Circle
1998  REALLY ROSIE  Johnny  Phoenix Theatre Circle
1998  STUART LITTLE  Mr. Little, Snowbell, Dr.  Phoenix Theatre Circle
1998  BUS STOP  Carl  Findlay Summerstock
1998  ROBBER BRIDEGROOM  Big Harp  Findlay Summerstock
1997  PHILADELPHIA STORY  Seth Lord  Findlay Summerstock
1997  BOYS FROM SYRACUSE  Sergeant  Findlay Summerstock
1996  ARSENIC AND OLD LACE  Teddy  Findlay Summerstock
1996  BLACK COMEDY  Harold Gorringe  Findlay Summerstock
1996  OLIVER!  Mr. Bumble  Findlay Summerstock
1995  SOMEONE WHO’LL WATCH OVER ME  Michael  University of Findlay
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
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<td>MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD</td>
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<td>THE LITTLE FOXES</td>
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Directing

1998  BYE, BYE, BIRDIE  Stage Director  Van Buren High School
1997  OZ!  Stage Director  Van Buren High School
1997  SORRY, WRONG NUMBER  Director  Van Buren High School
1996  FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON  Director  Van Buren High School
1996  THE CURIOUS SAVAGE  Director  Leipsic High School

FIELD OF STUDY

Major Field: Theatre
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapters:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Research</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Production Circumstances</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Script</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Process: Rehearsal and Performance Log</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Pre-Production Process</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 The Early Rehearsals: Director’s Concept</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 The Early Rehearsals: Design Concepts</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 The Working Rehearsals</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 The Technical and Dress Rehearsals</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 The Performance Log</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Evaluation and Conclusion</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendices

Appendix A: Production Photos................................................................. 161
Appendix B: Costume Renderings............................................................. 164
Appendix C: Set Rendering................................................................. 166
Appendix D: Poster.............................................................................. 168
Appendix E: Program............................................................................ 170
Appendix F: Symposium Flyer................................................................. 180
Appendix G: Director’s Concept............................................................. 183
Appendix H: Historical References......................................................... 186
INTRODUCTION

Prince am I none, yet am I princely born.
- Simon Eyre, The Shoemaker's Holiday

Actors often pine for plays and roles that speak to them and their need to express what life is. After all, it is this desire which has fueled the creation of great theatre throughout its fascinating history. Sophocles, Molière, Shakespeare, Shaw, Ibsen and Miller share a similar unique energy of expression, each creating groundbreaking theatre that burns both in the hearts of theatre lovers and in the pages of theatre history books. It is essential for theatre to revive the works of these master playwrights.

In turn, it is equally important to perform important playwrights who are less well known than the canonical dramatists. Thomas Dekker, a contemporary of William Shakespeare, is remembered for his many contributions to the theatre, and wrote in the genre known as "Citizen Comedy" or "social theatre." It was my pleasure to bring the character of Simon Eyre in Thomas Dekker's The Shoemaker's Holiday to life for my thesis role. Dekker's most popular play, The Shoemaker's Holiday, has many modern overtones, even though it was written in about 1599. What a passionate, talented, and caring man he must have been. A humorous and telling portrait of life in Elizabethan London, The Shoemaker's Holiday is a delightful story, a fantasy of sorts for the working class, the members of the important guild system in English society. In creating the role of
Simon Eyre, I felt a great deal of responsibility for doing the play justice. In scene twenty-one the King proclaims the highest of charges:

Does thou not know that love respects no blood,
Cares not for difference or birth of state?
... Where there is much love, all discord ends. (lines 104-105, 120)

The message is clear. The play meant to raise the audience’s political spirit and social awareness, not to mention their glasses of ale, in a grand celebration of the London working class. As well, it intended to present subtle commentary on the quality of life in a class-conscious society.

Like Dekker, I have always considered the theatre to be one of the best media for enabling society to experience a rich understanding of people, culture, and the world in which we live. I began my theatrical journey my freshman year of high school when I played Professor Nemur in Flowers for Algernon. There was something about this character and this play that made me feel whole. Perhaps it was the commentary about scientific notoriety versus human compassion, perhaps it was the excitement of portraying a person with such complex moral issues, or perhaps it was the connection we had with the spectators who were moved to tears every night in their blue metal folding chairs on the gym floor of that small high school. During this production, I found my niche in the school, in the community and in life. From that point on, I was hungry, yearning for any opportunity to have an intimate connection with other human beings as we told stories together.

I became as involved as possible with theatre, performing in several more high school, community, and university theatre productions. During my sophomore year of high school, I was fortunate to be invited to perform in A Man for All Seasons and
A School for Scandal with the theatre department at The University of Findlay. The late Barry Alexander, Director of Theatre at The University of Findlay and Artistic Director of Findlay Summerstock, was one of the most passionate, expressive, and kind director/teachers with whom I have ever worked. He became my mentor, my inspiration, and my guide. His love for theatre performance fueled my newfound interest and propelled me to accept an internship with the semiprofessional summer company during my junior year. Findlay Summerstock was welcome training, providing a virtual playground for me to test my wings and offering many roles in a relatively short season. The next year, I completed a company membership with Findlay and successfully auditioned for Wright State University and The University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music. I decided to attend CCM in the fall of 1990. The training was extremely focused, so much so that I was required to take only nine academic electives. Oddly enough, this frightened and overwhelmed me. There was so much to learn about the world and life. How was I going to even begin to absorb it all with a conservatory Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Dramatic Performance? Ironically, at the time, I was reading a section of Uta Hagen's Respect for Acting, our text for the first acting studio. Hagen spoke adamantly about her belief in a strong liberal arts education for every actor. She said that such an education promotes an actor's understanding of life, the world and the people in it. Her words echoed many of my thoughts and experiences at CCM. I felt that at the age of 19, a conservatory program was not meeting my needs. So, after two quarters at CCM, I decided to transfer to the University of Findlay, which boasted a strong liberal arts curriculum and a strong theatre department within a small university
setting. Barry Alexander, the gifted director I mentioned earlier, strongly influenced my transfer decision as well. Ultimately, I was pleased with this move for many reasons.

I enjoyed working with Barry, the other acting students, and many of the other faculty. I was able to play several vital, meaty roles and completed my training at the University of Findlay with a double major in Theatre Performance and Comprehensive Communications Education in 1995. I credit this solid, fundamental training for many theatrical successes. During undergraduate summers, I worked as an actor for four different companies: Findlay Summerstock, The Showboat Becky Thatcher, The Huron Playhouse, and The Barn Theatre. During my senior year, I decided to pursue a MFA in acting; I was ready now for conservatory training to increase voice, movement, and acting skills. I wasn't offered any assistantships that year; however, I was offered a high school teaching job. While teaching, I continued to accept acting contracts in the summer.

I enjoyed teaching high school drama and many of the freshman English classes, but I wanted to pursue professional acting further. I yearned for a year-long acting contract and got it after auditioning at the Southeastern Theatre Conference. I quickly retired from public education at the age of 27 and moved to Columbus, Ohio to work with The Phoenix Theatre Circle for nine months. This marvelous work proved that children's theatre is not a nightmare. In fact, bringing children's literature to life with such a genuinely appreciative audience can be quite rewarding. During this experience, I researched several MFA programs and auditioned at the University/Resident Theatre Association in Chicago and in several private auditions as well. This time, I was given a first alternate assistantship offer from the Alabama Shakespeare Festival and a firm assistantship offer from The Ohio State University. Ohio State's offer was most
competitive and I was impressed with their eclectic training. Happily, I was already in Columbus.

The training at Ohio State has been first rate. It is challenging, focused and practical. I am also pleased with the roles I have played thus far. The faculty has my bag-of-tricks (or bad acting habits) pegged, and continues to raise the stakes in both my studio and production work. Providentially, during graduate school I have continued to work for professional companies such as Toronto’s da da kamera, The Ohio Chautauqua Society, and the Actors’ Theatre Company of Columbus.

My thesis role as Simon Eyre in The Shoemaker's Holiday was the pinnacle of my graduate work at The Ohio State University and my acting career to date. We produced the 1990 (second) edition of the play edited by Anthony Parr, and performed February 27 through March 2, 2002 in the Thurber Theatre. (All citations from the play are drawn from this edition of the script, published by A & C Black, London, and W.W. Norton, New York.) Finding the essence of life in Simon Eyre, whatever it is that drives him to be so merry, was absolutely vital. I had to identify the source of his virility. Here lay the rub, or at least the central problem of this thesis. Given that my own tendency is to control impulses with a tight jaw, irregular breathing, forced voice, and unnecessary effort, I had to integrate specific skills (dialect, timing, imagination, physical response to impulses, listening, and text analysis) to overcome my detrimental habits and create a rich, charming and impulsive human being. And I had to do all of this while possessing a full-body understanding of my research.

Specific areas of historical and character investigation included the “Gentle Craft” (of which all of the shoemakers speak so highly), the social caste system of Renaissance
England, the separation of the English classes by dialect (Simon and Margaret Eyre are not themselves when they "put on airs" and attempt to use "received pronunciation") and the political situation of Elizabethan England. The Eyres serve a vital purpose in the lives of many cordwainers and Londoners of all classes. Both Sir Roger Oately and the King remark that it is a breath of fresh air to know an official with such a light heart as Simon Eyre. Using the tools I had experimented with in the studio, I addressed the challenges of creating a person who demands respect for authority with humor, charm, and wit. In essence, I had to get out of my own way and let Simon Eyre tell the story.

My approach to this work was circular. I attempted to mix historical and character research with the many acting techniques I have studied for the past ten years. Besides reading Thomas Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, my research included reading many historical, literary, and critical studies about Elizabethan Theatre, and The London Guild System (particularly the cordwainers, better known as shoemakers). I also consulted the expertise of Dr. Thomas Postlewait, a premier scholar of theatre history and a professor in the Department of Theatre at The Ohio State University. A boyish look of enthusiasm graced his face as he described the fantasy that this play created for the working class Londoner in 1600. For character analysis, Dr. Postlewait encouraged me to observe Shakespeare's Falstaff in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* as a starting place for ideas on the outgoing, boisterous Simon Eyre. The most fascinating, resourceful, and entertaining primary research was reading Thomas Deloney's *The Gentle Craft*, an account of the many adventures St. Hugh, St. Crispine and St. Crispianus, Simon Eyre, Richard Casteler, Master Peachey and His Men, and the Green King of St. Martin's, many of whom I will discuss in the research chapter of this thesis. This celebration of the craft of shoemaking
was a joy to read. It paints a vivid portrait of the life and *amour-propre* of the gentlemen shoemakers. The Gentle Craft became a springboard for much of my character work. From this initial jump, I attempted to find the spontaneity of Simon Eyre using my discoveries in the studio. The work of Constantin Stanislavski, Uta Hagen, Anne Bogart, Daniel MacIvor, Tadashi Suzuki, Marcel Marceau, and Kristin Linklater are just a few of the many influences on my journey as I attempted to solve the aforementioned central problem of this study.

The first chapter of this thesis is a chronicle of my research, including information about the playwright and production history, historical research within the context of the play, and character research and analysis. In the second chapter, I describe the venue of the performance, introduce the director and production team, and explain the casting process, production schedules and other rehearsal information. Chapter Three is a brief description of my acting methodology in general and for this role in particular, including an explanation of the terminology I use. It also includes a summary of my script analysis and the scored script (which includes beats or units of action), given circumstances, objectives, obstacles, actions, physical actions, and historical references. An account of the rehearsal process and a performance log documenting the pre-production process, the early rehearsals, the working rehearsals, the technical rehearsals, the performances, and the actual rehearsal and performance schedule constitute the fourth chapter. Finally, in Chapter Five I evaluate my work and conclude my discoveries.

Thus, I have set the stage for this documentation with an exposition of my intent, background, experience, central problem, work method, and organization. It’s time for
CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH

There is no better way to commence such a venture than with an investigation of the maker of the piece, Thomas Dekker. It is important to consider that when Dekker wrote *The Shoemaker's Holiday* in Elizabethan London, there was more class mobility than ever before. Merchants had more power over the city than they had previously enjoyed. An extended family relationship existed among the Shoemakers, or cordwainers, as they preferred to be called. Young men decided very early what guild or craft they would follow. During this period, these craftsmen had the power to "wheel and deal" because the economy was more capitalistic than ever before. In a sense, it was the beginning of the modern world as we know it. Being skilled in a craft provided the average citizen with great empowerment. Understandably, the workers' religious backgrounds rewarded such individualism.

It was this ability to negotiate the level of class that propelled Dekker to write this version of class mobility. Additionally, the volatile culture of 1590s London experienced much economic unrest. Dekker lived in this city and loved it. By asking the simple question, "What if it all worked out and the king had to bow to you?" Dekker, using the
historical figure of Simon Eyre, represents his own views of how life in his ideal London should be (Postlewait, Tom. Personal interview. 6 June 2001).

Dekker’s work demonstrates his unmitigated understanding of the average Elizabethan Londoner. In addition to his playwriting, he was quite an avid pamphleteer who openly addressed the social issues of class struggle. The title page of Work for Amourers boasts the motto, “God help the poor, the Rich can shift.” The closing of the pamphlet is just as harsh: “The rich men feast one another, as they were wont, and the poor were kept poor still, in policy, because they should do no more hurt” (Steane 7). In his Seven Deadly Sins of London, Dekker sounds particularly radical when he criticizes the “shaving” of the poor, what communists in modern times called “capitalist blood-sucking.” He was adamantly against indiscretions caused by dishonest landlords who took advantage of the poor. It would be easy to peg Dekker as a social radical, but his political pendulum swung both ways, and ultimately seemed to land in the center. For example, in Four Birds of Noah’s Ark he almost contradicts his earlier writings:

The maid servant prays that, as the Lord has laid upon her the condition of a servant, her mind may be subjected to the state in which she was placed, and the serving man consoles himself in the thought that in the service of the Lord, he has a promotion greater than that due to Kings. (Steane 7)

Seeming to disregard the concept of the self-made man, this pamphlet appears to support the idea of a class system as a creation of God, and therefore something to be thankful for. Nevertheless, Dekker did have an understanding of the eclectic range of London culture. The successful production history of The Shoemaker's Holiday, which I will consider later, certainly demonstrates his ability to write for and appeal to a broad audience.
Dekker’s public witnessed an idealistic apprentice/master relationship in The Shoemaker’s Holiday. There are a few rubs, for example: the threat of a walkout by the shoemakers when Eyre refuses to hire Lacy as an extra hand. The conflict is easily resolved with Eyre’s promise of a round of brews for all his workers. Class divisions between Eyre and his men don’t really occur. Everyone seems happy, most of all the ambitious Simon Eyre. Perhaps Dekker’s fantasy of Simon Eyre as the ideal master, merchant, sheriff and Lord Mayor is a reflection of aspirations he had for himself. Whatever the likelihood of this conjecture, Dekker’s life did not reap such a bounteous economic, political, or social harvest as Eyre’s (Steane 10-11).

Living between 1570 and 1637, Dekker is thought to have attended Merchant Taylors’ School, but he likely tutored himself with additional personal readings. Possessing quite a work ethic, Dekker created at least twenty-four surviving plays and thirteen prose works. Although often creating characters who were foreigners and who used bastardized versions of Dutch, French, or Welsh, Dekker shows no evidence of being a traveller. It is more conceivable that he gained an impression of these foreigners through keen observation of London visitors. Even though Dekker received a generous salary for his early plays, according to the diary of theatre manager Philip Henslowe, Dekker spent seven years of his life in prison for debt. Aware of the hardships of the writer’s life, a character in Dekker’s play Old Fortunatus says,

I am mad to see men scholars in the broker’s shop, and dunces in the mercers. The labours of writers are as unhappy as the children of a beautiful woman, being spoilt by nurses, within a month or two after they come into the world. (Steane 11-12)
For the most part, Dekker was considered a merry man, jubilant enough to write such a play as The Shoemaker’s Holiday. But it was the duskier side of his life experience which made him a consummate writer. Dekker sings a different tune about bosses in his Seven Deadly Sins of London. It is apparent that some change of philosophy must have occurred when he wrote this pamphlet. As a result, Dekker included many tongue-in-cheek social criticisms, to be discussed later, in a play which seems on the whole to be intended for festive occasions. Consequently, The Shoemaker’s Holiday is richer and more vital than a general celebration of the furlough of a few jolly shoemakers in Renaissance London (Steane 13).

Dekker likely started his theatrical writing career in the 1590s, when he collaborated with William Shakespeare and other Elizabethan playwrights on the unpublished play, Sir Thomas More. Eight years later, he was working with a group of writers for Philip Henslowe, producing a steady supply of material for The Admiral’s Men, an acting company at the Rose Theatre on Bankside. Unlike Shakespeare, Dekker was not an actor and shareholder in a theatre company, but was paid for each play written, often working with other writers to quickly manufacture plays. These artists made up a virtual playwriting factory, as the demand for good plays was high. As I mentioned earlier, Dekker’s arduous command of writing did not save him from debt. Imprisoned for it in 1598 and 1599, Dekker was bailed out both times with pay advances from Henslowe. But Henslowe was not there for him later when Dekker died, probably in debt, in 1632.

Dekker’s widow forfeited her right to control his estate, most likely to avoid gaining his liabilities. Dekker’s inability to properly manage his finances heightened his awareness of the hardships of people who were trapped in poverty. England was in an exciting time for
economic development, and Dekker showed that he was excited about the potential for success for the average London citizen. With this sensitivity, Dekker wrote the festive *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, a celebration for all classes. The play wasn’t directly offensive to anyone, yet it was filled with plenty of “tongue in cheek” social commentary against bourgeois society (Parr vii).

Henslowe’s diary indicates a payment of three pounds, probably the second and final payment, for “A Booke of thomas dickers Called the gentle Craft,” on 15 July 1599. Dekker was a swift writer and probably wrote the play weeks before The Admiral’s Men purchased it. *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* was apt to have been “first performed at The Rose Theatre in the late summer or autumn of 1599” (Parr x). We can assume that it was a success at The Rose Theatre because the title page of the play states that it “was given in the presence of the Queen on New Year’s Day, 1600” (Parr x). There are no surviving written records documenting any public performances of the play during Dekker’s lifetime. However, the play was reprinted several times before the theatres were closed in 1642. This suggests that it more than likely saw many revivals. No surprise, given the play’s popular themes of nationalism, growth, and progress. The characters also had a mainstream appeal to the public. The shoemakers receive fame and fortune because they are good, hardworking, honest men. The audience must have felt a camaraderie with Simon Eyre and his cohorts similar to that felt by contemporary audiences towards television sitcom characters (Parr x, xxv).

Several editions of *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* were printed before 1657, but printing of the script was discontinued for about 250 years. During the Restoration Age, *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* was considered lowbrow, bawdy Elizabethan wit. The next
revival of the play was not until the end of the nineteenth century. Since then, the play has maintained success in both amateur and professional venues, including some productions of note in the 1920s. One in particular was at the Old Vic and starred Edith Evans as Margery and Baliol Halloway as Simon Eyre (Parr xxv, xxvii).

At its premiere in 1599, the play was performed at the Rose Theatre. Since its excavation in 1989, much is known about the dimensions of the Rose Theatre. For example, it allowed for an intimate connection between the actors and the audience. One can imagine enthusiastic working-class Londoners dancing the Morris dance along with the Shoemakers. In addition to this spatial relationship with the audience, some entrances (most likely, the processions) were possibly made from the yard. Dekker used this spectator friendly space to capitalize on the audience's love for the self-made man, Simon Eyre, and his gentle roustabouts (Parr xxvii, xxviii).

The audience and performers also enjoyed this close relationship as there was no proscenium arch to separate them. In order to appease an impatient crowd, there probably was not much time when characters were not on the stage (where most of the action took place). The onlookers, who completely surrounded the stage platform, were in plain view. The players could see the audience clearly. One can imagine the crowd psychology that must have existed, considering the open-air setting where the audience can see each other and the players (Gurr 179).

Scholars don’t have any way of knowing for certain the specifics of the original staging; however, they can be sure that Dekker kept the design of the modern public theatres in mind when he was writing The Shoemaker’s Holiday. According to Wells, processions probably came from the yard, rather than the up center entrance of the
tiring-house. The tiring house could have had two double doors used for entrance onto interior scenes and the exterior shop scenes. Elizabethan shop windows opened to create counters for the shops, so the shuttered windows in the back of the Rose stage were used for those scenes. When closed, these shop windows were an effective defense against thieves. In his stage directions, Dekker also makes it clear that there are two shops that must be indicated, Jane’s seamstress shop and Eyre’s shoemaking shop.

So the only certain evidence we have as to how Dekker intended either of the two shops - the sempster’s and the shoemaker’s - to be represented is by the presence of a shop-board. This could mean either a counter hinged to a window or a movable work table. (Wells 44-45)

Whatever lessons we learn from the original theatres themselves, one of the most valuable is that an inherent aspect of Elizabethan staging was economy. The play was designed to work best with rapid scene transitions. In most cases, one scene is directly related to its preceding one, an implied requirement for the most authentic telling of Dekker’s story, since the dramatic structure of his story line relies on swift transitions.

Anthony Parr, editor of a 1990 edition of the play, observes:

... [Dekker] uses this technique to solve the problem of varying time-schemes in the separate story lines: Eyre’s swift promotion seems less implausible when it is flanked by love plots moving rapidly to a climax. But if Dekker thinks in scenic units, he also makes dramatic narrative out of their interaction, and for this a flexible, unencumbered stagecraft is essential (Parr xxix).

Twentieth-century productions of the play have received varying acclaim. The movement by universities and other groups to produce plays which hadn’t received attention for a long period of time led to two major productions: at the Birmingham Repertory Company in 1922 and at the Old Vic in 1926. Then in 1938 Orson Welles adapted and directed a version of The Shoemaker’s Holiday. And in 1958 Donald Wolf...
played Simon Eyre for a radio performance of the play. There have been numerous other productions as well, and in his investigation of the play’s production history, Stanley Wells says that often

directors have betrayed unease and distrust either of the play or of their audiences’ possible reactions. Apparently embarrassed by the play’s emotional directness, they have laboured too hard to sophisticate it with comic and interpretive business. (Parr xxix)

After referring to several reviews of productions, he postulates:

... [the play] offers ample scope for idiosyncratic character acting, but detail must not overwhelm the design; the commonest complaints have been of overfussiness, excessive heartiness, and caricature. (xxix)

The novelty of and demand for The Shoemaker’s Holiday have decreased recently with the advent of more audacious productions of Elizabethan dramas. The students of the Old Vic were directed by Nat Brenner in a 1978 production at the Theatre Royal, Bristol. The play ultimately arrived at the National Theatre in 1981 in a production directed by John Dexter, with Alfred Lynch as Eyre and Brenda Bruce as Margery.

Dexter received both praise and criticism for his grandiose staging, which attempted to recreate the daily realities of Elizabethan life. Some critics considered the beer drinking, revelry, and discharged chamber pots a distraction to the telling of the story and some thought the additional color was a brilliant enhancement. The critics in favor of the life-like recreation believed that it gave rich detail to the representation of “the material urban realities of characters’ lives, the economic facts underlying the romantic, sentimental and idealized story lines” (Parr xxx). An important aspect of Dexter’s production was the performance of Alfred Lynch as Simon Eyre.

Alfred Lynch avoided making Eyre rumbustious, and according to John Wilders, ‘gave a sense of grittiness, of a man who has worked very hard to
get to the top and has had disappointments on the way.’ Critics divided as to the effectiveness of this reading of the part (some thought that it lacked the necessary energy), but it avoided the clichés of past performances. (Parr xxxi)

Stanley Wells says that the best professional productions of The Shoemaker’s Holiday were probably the ones in Birmingham in 1922 and at the Old Vic in 1926. A. E. Filmer’s production at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre played for two weeks after opening on November 25, 1922. A letter by J. M. Lloyd describing the production appeared in the December 1, 1922 issue of The Birmingham Post:

... staged in the Elizabethan manner, with a curtain background, and inner stage, and a balcony above, so that there is no waste of time in changing scenes, and the atmosphere of the old times is preserved without pedantic antiquarianism. The music, which belongs to the period, has exquisite charm, and the morris dancing is a revel of delight. (Wells 48)

In the November 27, 1922 issue of The Birmingham Post, a critic said that Cedric Hardwicke “played Simon Eyre with vigour and zest, and made him a living man of hearty and vulgar good nature” (Wells 48).

The 1926 Old Vic production received high acclaim. Lilian Baylis recorded how they successfully collaborated with the Worshipful Company of Cordwainers who “helped us in every possible way, from showing the ‘prentices how to handle the shoes, to allowing us to display their coat of arms.” Lilian found that playing “this joyous comedy gave us all fresh vitality.” Baliol Holloway, who played Falstaff in The Merry Wives of Windsor three years earlier, was Simon Eyre. Horace Horsnell said that he was “part Falstaff, part Pantaloon in appearance.” James Agate, who described Eyre as “a hurly-burly of a man compounded in equal parts of Falstaff and Pistol,” said that Holloway “gave us all there is in the part” (Wells 49).
At the Mercury Theatre in New York, Orson Welles directed the most significant American revival in January 1938. The text was cut and adapted; the entire play was only an hour and a half in length. Brooks Atkinson said it was performed at a “breathless pace.” The critics raved over most of the performances; however, Ivor Brown, in a January 23, 1939 article in the New York Times wrote:

I protest against the habit of laughing with Dekker and at him simultaneously. The players have no business to be winking at the audience in order to get laughs on the side and love-scenes should not be burlesqued in the manner of Beatrice Lillie . . . This is not the real Shoemaker’s Holiday. It is Busker’s Night Out! (Wells 50)

In order to avoid these clichés and to create an intriguing three-dimensional human being, I must have an adequate understanding of Simon Eyre, his London, and his culture. The most propitious way for me to present my study of the background of The Shoemaker’s Holiday is to begin with Dekker’s source for the play, The Gentle Craft by Thomas Deloney. As I mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, Deloney’s account of the history and anecdotes of famous shoemakers was an absolute joy to read. While it may be impossible for me to recreate the tales with as much color, poetry, and vivacity as Deloney, I will attempt to present the essence of them. The stories were a delightful and valuable resource and engaged the impulsive, playful, and dramatic aspects of my investigation. The book must have appealed to the adventurous and romantic Elizabethan reader curled up next to a fire on a cold English night. Its title page described The Gentle Craft as

... a discourse containing many matters of delight, very pleasant to be read, showing what famous men have been shoemakers in time past in this land, with their worthy deeds and great hospitality... declaring the cause why it is called the Gentle Craft, and also how the proverb first grew: ‘A Shoemaker's son is prince born.’ (Steane 135)
Additionally, we discover the story and history behind the patron saint of the shoemakers, St. Hugh, and how a shoemakers tools came to be known as “St. Hugh's Bones” (Steane 135).

Deloney tells of Sir Hugh, a king’s son, who is madly in love with Winifred, an upper-class, God-fearing maiden. Winifred rejects Sir Hugh’s endearments, as she has given all of her love, body and spirit to God. The spurned lover decides to sow his wild oats by traveling throughout Europe, hoping to avoid any reminders of his only love.

Unfortunately, every country he runs to harbors many beautiful women who torment him because of his memory of the fair Winifred. Sir Hugh passionately vows never again to be snared by the magnetic gaze of a woman’s face and continues to wander in the wilderness, lost, hungry and heartbroken. Luckily for Sir Hugh, he ends up at a place called Harwich, and is taken in by the local shoemakers. The shoemakers take care of him and teach him their craft. His heart is warmed by their generosity, their vivacious lifestyle, and their love for their trade. Meanwhile, living beside a beautiful spring in Flintshire, Winifred seeks to become a religious recluse, but is arrested by the locals and charged with violating their anti-Christian laws. While Winifred is awaiting execution in prison, Sir Hugh hears about her fate and quickly comes to her side. He loudly professes his love and support for Winifred and for her cause. Because Sir Hugh makes his feelings public, he too is quickly arrested and sentenced to death. As fate would have it, they are scheduled to be executed on the same day. While in prison, shortly before his death, Sir Hugh writes a tribute to the shoemakers who had so kindly sheltered him before. Long after Sir Hugh wrote this, the shoemakers sang it to rally their cause as a symbol of their greatness.
Of Craft and Craftsmen, more and less,
The Gentle Craft I must commend;
Whose deeds declare their faithfulness,
And hearty love unto their friend.
The Gentle Craft in midst of strife
Yields comfort to a careful life.

A prince by birth I am indeed,
The which for love forsook this land;
And when I was in extreme need
I took the Gentle Craft in hand.
And by the Gentle Craft alone,
Long time I lived being still unknown.

Our shoes we sewed with merry notes,
And by our mirth expelled all moan... (Steane 136)

The song continues for three additional verses in Deloney’s book.

Winifred endures the torturous execution of being bled to death, and as a final act of cruelty, their executors poison her blood and force Sir Hugh to drink it. The martyrs proclaim their devotion to each other and to God. Before Sir Hugh perishes he makes a final promise to the “Gentlemen of the Gentle Craft.”

I drink to you all (quoth he), but I cannot spare you one drop to pledge me. Had I any good thing to give, you should soon receive it. But myself the tyrant doth take, and my flesh is bequeathed to the fowls, so that nothing is left but only my bones to pleasure you withal. And those, if they will do you any good, take them. And so I humbly take my leave, bidding you all farewell. (Steane 137)

The shoemakers take him for his word and decide to remove his bones and put them to good use by making them into shoemaking tools. According to the story, all shoemakers carry their tools on their back, and when they see a fellow cordwainer, they say, “There goes St. Hugh's Bones.”

In reference to another story in The Gentle Craft, in The Shoemaker’s Holiday Simon Eyre repeatedly states his motto, “Prince I am none, but I am princely born.”

20
It concerns the French wars in which the hero Crispianus fought for the Gauls against the Persian general, Iphicratis, who had invaded France. Apparently this Iphicratis was a shoemaker’s son, and in the exchange of insults which generally preceded a battle, the French taunt him with his lowly origin. ‘Thou shalt understand,’ he replies, ‘that a shoemaker’s son is a prince born; his fortune made him so, and thou shalt find no less.’ It causes some embarrassment amongst the French later on when they find their own champion is also a shoemaker’s son. Many battles are fought amid much courtesy, and Crispianus wins: ‘Thus a shoemaker’s son was by a shoemaker foiled.’ Iphicratis feels that this makes everything all right and they all become good friends. (Steane 137)

With few changes, Dekker uses Deloney’s chapter about Simon Eyre as a primary source. Minor modifications exist, however. For example, the merchant who comes to trade is in fact French, but Dekker decides to make him of Dutch origin probably because of the many Dutch workers in London. The most significant variations are in the details of Eyre’s rise to wealth, power, and fame. In Deloney’s version, Simon Eyre becomes aware of a foreign merchant who needed a local seller to handle his commodities. At this time, the English trade laws prohibited foreigners to engage in free trade except through local merchants. Eyre knew that he could realize a large profit because the commodities, rare fabrics and spices were valuable in London. Lacking the cash to pay the Frenchmen for the goods, Eyre allows his wife to persuade him to pose as a wealthy merchant who would make a small down payment and promise to pay off the balance within a few weeks. The plot worked. Eyre sold the goods, paid the French merchant and profited greatly from both the sale and the investments he made with his income.

Eyre’s business dealings which paved the way for his eventual political success, were based on disguise, guile, and false-credit. Eyre wasn’t the wealthy merchant he pretended to be. Dekker chose to downplay this aspect of his hero by giving the
impression that the wealth more or less dropped in his lap, an opportune gift from above. And Eyre, being the self-made man that he was, capitalized on it (Steane 137- 138).

Other particulars from Deloney’s story which Dekker uses include the reference to Shrove Tuesday and Eyre’s promise of a celebration. Apparently, when Eyre was a young apprentice, he would often fetch water and meet many fellow shoemakers. There, they would break their fast together with pudding pies. On one occasion, Eyre confessed that he didn’t have the money to pay for his part of the breakfast. But he vowed that one day he would be Lord Mayor and would give a large breakfast to all the shoemaker’s apprentices in London (Steane 139).

As unlikely as the promise may have seemed, Eyre kept his word and upon becoming Lord Mayor, organized such a grand feast

that besides the Great Hall, all the gardens were set with tables. . . drums and trumpets were pleasantly sounding. . . . Then after this, Sir Simon Eyre builded Leaden Hall appointing that in the midst thereof there should be a market place kept every Monday for leather where the shoemakers of London for their more ease might buy of the tanners without seeking any further. And in the end this worthy man ended his life in London with great honour. (Steane 139)

In John Stowe’s 1598 edition of the Survey of London, there are more fascinating details of the real-life Simon Eyre. Stowe documents what Deloney claims. Apparently in 1444, the parson of St. Dunston reports that Eyre built Leaden Hall with his own funds and gave it to “Henry Frowick, then mayor, the aldermen and commonalty, and their successors for ever, all their tenements, with the appurtenances. . . for the annual rent of four pounds” (Steane, 139-140). According to Stowe, there is written the following inscription in the chapel:
This honourable and famous merchant, Simon Eyre, founder of this work, once mayor of this city, citizen and draper of the same, departed out of this life, the 18th day of September, the year from the Incarnation of Christ 1459, and the 38th year of the reign of King Henry VI. (Steane, 140)

One assumes that the actual Simon Eyre was a well-respected citizen, but a draper instead of a shoemaker.

The political climate in 1599, when The Shoemaker’s Holiday was first produced, is easily summarized by saying that England was in dire need of a holiday. Certainly a festive play would have been a welcome escape for the Elizabethans. England was at war in France, Spain and Ireland; citizens were being called to serve their country. Scenes such as the one in The Shoemaker’s Holiday when Ralph Dampor is called upon to leave his wife for the military were very common and the audience would have empathized with him. Of course, one must also remember that the country was in the midst of the plague as well. Prices for goods in England had risen and the economy was struggling. The Elizabethans needed a hero to look up to and bolster their spirits. Wanting better times, the audience was in need of any utopian fantasy to help them get out of bed in the morning.

Because of these troubling times, Dekker chose to be ambiguous about the year of the play. The king has no name. The Shoemaker’s Holiday is the perfect setup for an Elizabethan escapist fantasy. Apparently the play succeeded in rousing the spirits of the 15,000 apprentices and 12,000 journeymen in London, as there are records of complaints of their rioting in the London streets following the performances. Nothing like breaking some glass, beating-up some of Her Majesty’s watches, or stealing orchard fruits in order to release tension (Seaver 87-91).
Audience members would have realized important technicalities about the realities of class mobility in London. Although the details do rain on the parade a bit, they did not squelch the popularity of the play.

In keeping with the holiday mood of the drama is the social fantasy of Simon Eyre's precipitous rise to the mayoralty. As Dekker's London audience well knew, no cordwainer ever rose to be lord mayor, for London had long been a highly stratified society, dominated by a mercantile elite, and its lord mayors all belonged to the liveries of one of the twelve great livery companies - Mercers, Grocers, Drapers, Haberdashers, Merchant Taylors, Clothworkers, Goldsmiths, Skinners, Ironmongers, Salters, Fishmongers and Vintners. Simon Eyre, the historic figure, had begun his career as a freeman in the Upholsterers' Company but had secured his translation to the more prestigious Drapers some fifteen years before his election as sheriff... In short, the opportunities for a mere shoemaker to expand his trade were severely limited. Production took place in household shops, and a yeoman cordwainer as old as Simon Eyre would have been entitled to take on as many as four apprentices, so long as he also employed a journeyman for each two apprentices. (92)

Nevertheless, these facts did not deter the enthusiastic response of a working-class audience in need of a celebratory comedy. Audience members had to suspend their disbelief when it came to Eyre's business deal, as it would have been very difficult for a shoemaker to obtain the capital necessary for such a transaction. Dekker's call for Eyre to be in such rousing spirits... was possibly a device to divert the audience's attention away from the realities the play was side-stepping (93).

Firk's offhand remark that the ships lading was worth 'two or three hundred thousand pounds' must have been a further clue that the audience was being presented with a happy piece of wish fulfillment rather than any kind of mercantile reality, for Firk's wildly exaggerated sum was closer to the size of the crown debt than to the value of any conceivable shipload of commodities. (93-94)

It is important to consider though that Elizabethan working people were very proud of their guilds. They had great processions and celebrations of all the major guilds
and how you wore your clothes or banner was vital to your community. The people
needed celebration and validation and Dekker, like any smart marketer, capitalized on this
need by delivering a play which reminded the audience that even the little guys were
important (Tom Postlewait, personal interview, 6 June 2001). We must forgive Dekker
for employing some dramatic license as it would have taken Eyre a much longer time than
indicated in the play to become Lord Mayor of London (Seaver 94).

The underlying urban tensions which are represented in this play must also be
considered. As I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, it was necessary for a man to
learn a trade in order to enter into London merchant society. An individual chose an
apprenticeship at an early age, and after a while, became a journeyman who was allowed
to work for any master he chose. If he advanced enough in society, and paid dues as the
equivalent of an indentured servant, he became a freeman, with the liberty to trade in
English society.

The Shoemaker’s Holiday shows us two kinds of inequality. Hodge, Firk
and Ralph are all freemen cordwainers and citizens of London, but they are
also journeymen who call Simon Eyre master. In the terminology of the
times, they are ‘covenanted servants’, which implied that they had entered
into a contract with their master, normally for a year at a time, to serve
their master for a specified wage to be paid at the conclusion of their
service. . . .The second inequality is the stuff of one of the two major social
dramas of the play, the clash between the shoemakers’ world and that of
Hammon and Mayor Oatley. (Seaver 96)

Firk’s refereral to Mayor Oatley as Sir Roger Oatmeal tells us how these shoemakers
must have felt toward the established London bourgeois (102).

All this considered, Simon Eyre is still loved and respected by his gentleman
shoemakers when he is promoted. They celebrate his success and he shares it with them.
Even Eyre’s wife, whom he criticizes and mocks, plays an important role. At that time,
one’s relationship with one’s wife was a gauge of success as a businessman. The king’s awe at the achievements and personality of Simon Eyre reiterate the implied fantasy that Simon Eyre is successful because of his positive, gentle and merry spirit (101-116).

Eyre, as final spokesperson for the idea of holiday that is the very raison d’être of festive comedy, urges the King to embrace a madcap spirit with him and all the shoemakers, for they can teach enlightened authority what holiday is all about. (116)

The end of the play is reminiscent of feel good, patriotic movies where the little guy becomes the hero and every one feels good about themselves, their country and their compatriots. It’s the sort of play that would leave the audience wanting to sing the national anthem, praise God, and pass the ammunition.

So, what does all this mean for me as an actor portraying a multi-layered personality with such a specific history? In my aforementioned interview with Dr. Thomas Postlewait, he suggested that I concentrate on how to occupy the stage with a sense of “the man in his element.” Some issues: How would he enter a room, fill a space, use his body, hands, eyes, head? Would he relate to everyone in the same manner? If not, what are the distinct traits that I would need to develop? By focusing on the character and his relationships, I would need to discover whether Eyre is pompous, or just full of irony. Is he self-regarding or attentive to others? Dr. Postlewait encouraged me to take a “hit or miss” approach in order to find out what this type of man was like, and he recommended that I watch The Merry Wives of Windsor because, although the situations vary, Falstaff shares many personality traits with Simon Eyre. But what does this have to do with my central problem? My own tendency is to control impulses with a tight jaw, irregular breathing, forced voice, and unnecessary effort. Therefore, I had to integrate specific
skills (dialect, timing, style) in order to overcome my detrimental habits and create the character of Simon Eyre, a man who is not ashamed of his dialect, his appearance, or his beliefs. Simon Eyre is a “go getter.” What a perfect character trait for any actor to portray since the basis of good acting is achieving your objective within life and death circumstances. Eyre must succeed, or business will fail and he will starve.

Essentially, I had to allow myself the freedom to play, to celebrate, and to understand that this character has a big heart. His heart, in fact, is probably bigger than his head because no shoemaker in his right mind would have attempted the feats of Simon Eyre. I needed to win over the audience by selling them a success story, utopian and fantastic as it may be, of what can happen if a man applies himself, does service to others, and is wise with his business practices. This audience must believe in the potential of good, honest, hard working men of the “gentle craft.” I am reminded of the electricity of the St. Crispin’s Day speech in Henry V, which had just been produced at the Globe when The Shoemaker's Holiday opened. The well-known speech in Shakespeare’s Henry V contains powerful rhetoric. Eyre’s choleric personality and gift for speech are similar to Henry V’s in Shakespeare’s play. Thomas Dekker wanted his audience to believe that a man like Simon Eyre had potential. He wanted to encourage his fellow Londoners and to teach them that it is possible to be successful. In this sense, Eyre functioned much like Henry V for the London worker.

Simon Eyre is grandiose like Fezziwig in Dickens’ A Christmas Carol. Fezziwig’s primary concern is that his employees are happy, even while he is a good businessman. It is implied in the Dickens tale that Fezziwig is a success because he is merry and loves Christmas and that Ebeneezer Scrooge is not because he doesn't cherish merriment or the
yuletide. The theme of art versus commerce, or family versus commerce is not a new one.

So I must wed the choler of Henry V with the gaiety of Fezziwig and the lust of Falstaff. The creation of the character of Simon Eyre necessitated more than a basic understanding of the historical research. If I simply made Simon Eyre a jolly old elf, then I would ignore the realities which make him human. I had to embody the humanness of the man. Eyre needs validation. He wants to be liked by his workers and to be loved by his wife. He promises drinks to his rebellious journeymen, but with the disclaimer that they'll only get two. Any politician with a sense of diplomacy knows that Eyre has more in mind than keeping his workers happy when he treats them to breakfast after becoming Lord Mayor of London. He knows he needs their support; he is a smart politician. Yet what is it that really drives Simon Eyre? What is the base of his energy?

I conclude my investigation of Simon Eyre with his own words: a summary of what makes him great, included in his final appeal to the king.

My Liege, I am six and fifty year old. Yet can I cry hump with a sound heart for the honor of Saint Hugh. Mark this old wench, my King: I danced the shaking of the sheets with her six and thirty years ago, and yet I hope to get two or three young Lord Mayors ere I die. I am lusty still, Sim Eyre still. Care and cold lodging bring white hairs. My sweet Majesty, let care vanish! Cast it upon thy nobles, it will make thee always young like Apollo. And cry hump: Prince am I none, yet am I princely born. (lines 27-35)

In this chapter, I have presented a history of Thomas Dekker and the productions of The Shoemaker’s Holiday. Thomas Dekker played an important role in the establishment of the Citizen Comedy and was a key Elizabethan social dramatist. Past productions of The Shoemaker’s Holiday succeeded when they stayed true to Dekker’s story of the self-made man and recreated everyday Elizabethan life on the stage. The
applicable historical research encouraged me to allow for an informed, yet playful study of this character. Eyre must not be a caricature, but a rich, three-dimensional man, with fundamental human needs. Finally, I have presented my research and analysis about the creation of the character of Simon Eyre focusing on him as an inspiration to hardworking people. So, these are the given circumstances. Let’s produce the play. In the next chapter, I explain the production process for The Shoemaker’s Holiday at The Ohio State University’s Department of Theatre.
CHAPTER 2

THE PRODUCTION CIRCUMSTANCES

The venue for our production of The Shoemaker’s Holiday was the Thurber Theatre in the Drake Performance and Event Center at The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. According to the Department of Theatre’s web page, “Thurber Theatre is a 600 seat Continental house with a 35 foot proscenium, fully supported lighting, sound and fly system.” Having performed in this space in previous productions, I am aware of the many challenges and advantages of this space.

Acoustically speaking, as long as you are down stage of the proscenium, you can whisper and be heard in the back of the house. But the moment you step behind the arch, particularly center stage, there is a dead spot for sound. Actors must elongate their vowels and attack their consonants to be heard. The space requires a fine line between vocal projection and vocal pushing. Thurber Theatre is not an intimate space and challenges the actor to find movement and gestures which can be read, yet are not too exaggerated.

On the positive side of the coin, Thurber Theatre allows for grand scenery. Even with my 5'7" stature, I love the hugeness of this theatre. In The Shoemaker’s Holiday, I was able to create extremely vivid imaginary fourth walls by using the architectural
elements of the theatre for elements in the world of the play: the windows at the back of
the house for building windows on the street, pillars for buildings, lights for torches, etc.

And, as Simon Eyre is a “larger than life” persona, Thurber Theatre seemed to be the only
space in Drake large enough to hold him.

The director of this production was Dr. Jon Farris, Chair of the Department of
Theatre at Denison University. Their web page says:

Dr. Farris holds an M.A. in Theatre from the University of Wisconsin and
the Ph.D. in Dramatic Literature from Tufts University, and serves as chair
of the Department of Theatre. He is a member of Actors' Equity, and in
recent years has performed at the Cleveland Play House, the Milwaukee
Repertory Theatre, The Indiana Repertory Theatre, the Illinois
Shakespeare Festival, the Utah Shakespearean Festival and the Cincinnati
Playhouse in the Park. This past spring he played the title role in The Ohio
State University's production of King Lear, and most recently he starred in
the Contemporary American Theatre Company's production of Sleuth. Dr.
Farris teaches courses in acting, directing and dramatic literature.

The rest of the production staff was as follows: Dr. Lesley Ferris, Chair/Director of
Theatre; Professor Mark Shanda, Producer; Erin Riddle, Stage Manager; Rebecca
Rhinehart, Assistant Stage Manager; Maureen Ryan, Voice/Speech and Dialect Coach;
Carla Chaffin, Set Designer; Jim Hutchinson, Lighting Designer; Joe Neirkirk, Assistant
Lighting Designer; Adam West, Costume Designer; Stacey Siak, Sound Designer; Brian
W. Baker, Music Designer/Director; Professor Nena Couch, Dance Choreographer; Terry
Schoone-Jongen, Dramaturg; Jim Knapp, Technical Director and Production Coordinator;
Christina Sidebottom, Box Office Manager; Poster and Program Design, Laura Sipe.

Each quarter the Department produces a show in the proscenium space (Thurber),
a show in the thrust space (Bowen Theatre), and a show in the black box space (Mount
Hall Studio Theatre). A staged reading in the New Works Lab is often produced as well.
All of the productions are cast out of a pool of actors generated from a general audition. In an effort to model professional situations, The Ohio State University Department of Theatre casting process is similar to that of many Equity theatres.

Typically, general auditions are held for two days each quarter to cast the next quarter's shows. The auditions are open and anyone is welcome to participate. The general audition for Winter Quarter 2002 required the auditioners to do two contrasting, one-minute monologues. The two-minute time limit was strictly adhered to by the stage manager. The auditors consisted of the directors, assistant directors, and department faculty. The directors created a callback list based on this general audition.

The style of the callbacks is up to the director of the show. Since there are many guest directors at OSU, directing styles and callback methods vary. Usually, the callbacks take one or two days and the actors are called back to read for specific roles from the script. Occasionally, as needed, callbacks may include a dance, singing, or improvisational audition. After the callbacks, the directors meet with the producer and the head of the acting faculty to discuss their casting choices. After agreements are made, the cast lists are signed by the director and the producer and posted on the appropriate bulletin board for each venue, usually by noon the day after callbacks. General auditions for The Shoemaker's Holiday were held on Sunday, October 21, 2001. Callbacks were on Sunday, October 28, 2001. The cast list for The Shoemaker's Holiday was posted on Monday, October 29, 2001. It read:

King of England................................. Jonathan Park

Earl of Lincoln................................. John Engleman
Roland Lacy................................. Jeremy Meier *
Askew...................................... Tarashai Lee
Cornwall................................. Joe Gianfagno
Lovell..................................... Tim Burhenne
Dodger..................................... Carie DeVito
Sir Roger Oatley........................ Michael Schnell
Rose....................................... Regina Rockensies
Sybil....................................... Naomi Hatsfelt
Hammon.................................... Quinn Carlson
Warner..................................... Kenderick Hardy
Scott...................................... Joe Gianfagno
Ralph...................................... Donato Wilkinson
Simon Eyre............................... Damian Bowerman *
Margery........................---------- Jennifer Manvich *
Cicely Bumtrinket...................... Karen Michelle Friedman
Hodge.................................... Mike Holmes
Jane..................................... Sara Borgeson
Firk...................................... Donald Clark
A Dutch Skipper........................ Jonathan Park
Eyre’s Boy.............................. Leah Reddy
Boy with Hunters........................................ Lane Scarbury

Nobleman, Soldiers, Huntsmen, .................... Tim Burhenne

Shoemakers, Apprentices, Servants................. Michael Hulvey

Sean Michael Russell
Carie DeVito
Zach Hartley
Tarashai Lee
Brian Peters
Siddhartha Jayanthi
Derek Lindes
Kenderick Hardy

The roles marked with an asterisk (*) were to be performed in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Fine Arts in Acting.

Rehearsals took place January 7 - February 19, 2002. Technical rehearsals were February 20 - February 26, and the show was performed February 27 - March 9. We met six days a week, 5:30 - 10:30 pm Monday through Friday and 10:00 am - 2:00 pm on Saturdays. In addition to these evening rehearsals with the ensemble, the third-year MFA students had a class with Jon where we explored the text in more detail, drilling the meanings, the verse and the inflections of most of our lines. The afternoon class was extremely helpful because it allowed us the luxury of addressing more specific problems which the evening rehearsals didn’t permit due to time restrictions. Our rehearsal space was in room 107, a studio with a mirror and sprung floor. The dimensions of the set were
indicated on the floor with colored tape. When most of the set was functional, we moved to Thurber Theatre. Private coaching sessions were held with vocal coach Maureen Ryan and the director on an as-needed basis.

In this chapter, I have described Thurber Theatre as both a challenging and an advantageous space for vocal, spatial and “fourth wall” reasons. I introduced the director and production team, briefly explained the casting process at OSU and listed the cast. Finally, I gave the details of the production schedule, from the first audition to the final curtain. Now that I have considered the production circumstances, in the next chapter I’ll divulge my approach to working on the script.
CHAPTER 3

THE SCRIPT

Asking an actor to describe his or her methodology is like asking an astronomer to depict the precise source of gravity. Although many theories exist, no scientist can give a definite answer. While I’m grateful that I don’t have to tackle this or any of the other many unanswered questions of physics, I will attempt to define my acting methodology in general and to this role in particular.

It is safe to say that the basis of my training and my general method of approaching a role is eclectic. And while eclectic is a fun word to throw into the universe of acting pedagogical theories, it gives testimony to the multi-faceted exposure many actors, like myself, have to the techniques of acting. From my collage of studio work, I’ve established a definite approach to the creation of characters. However, I must say that my approach varies depending on the play, the character and the director.

I have developed a personal approach to acting which is influenced by the work of Constantin Stanislavski, Uta Hagen, Sanford Meisner, and Anne Bogart. Stanislavski teaches about the use of the Magic If. By simply asking myself, “If I were this person in the particular given circumstances of a play, what would I do?,” I avoid asking myself, “How would I feel?” The Magic If is particularly useful because feelings cannot be played
as specific actions. In order for me to answer the *Magic If* question, I must have a
specific understanding of myself: who I am, how I behave, and what my idiosyncrasies are.
I must also have an incredible sense of imagination and observation in order to apply these
questions to myself and to the characters I create. When the imagined given
circumstances and the resulting actions are immediately clear for me because I can relate
to them easily, I heed Stanislavski’s suggestion and leave it alone. In other words, I don’t
apply additional technique because whatever information the playwright has given is close
to my own life experience. After I find a connection to the imaginary world of the
character, I begin to translate the imaginary given circumstances to the tangible
circumstances of the play. My relationship with other characters, the scenic elements, and
the events of the play are all concrete sources for me to imagine myself as the character,
sources which become vehicles for a transition from myself to the character. But when I
have difficulty relating to a character’s situation using the *Magic If*, I turn to what Uta
Hagen calls *substitution*.

Simply put, *substitution* is a means whereby an actor takes the *Magic If* one step
further and replaces or substitutes one life experience for another. If my character’s action
is to kill someone, I may not be able to relate to the act of committing murder, but I can
remember the feeling I have when I’m late to work and someone cuts me off on the
highway. By recalling my behavior in a road rage incident, I can apply the emotional life
of that experience to the given circumstances and the actions of the character I’m creating.
But all these techniques are quite internal and don’t mean a thing on stage if you can’t
convey your actions to other characters in the world of the play. This is where the work
of Sanford Meisner comes into play.
Sanford Meisner posited that acting is all about listening and responding to the other actors in a given scene. He developed a series of drills whereby two actors repeat what the other is saying, but they also listen and respond to whatever signals the other actor is giving them. Meisner believed that the essence of life and of acting is in the gut response we have to whatever energy we get from another. From the beginning of my work on creating a character, I endeavor to give other actors my focus and attention, picking up on their energy and responding to it from the gut, from my impulses, and not from an intellectual, analytical standpoint.

Anne Bogart accesses this gut level response from external sources. Her work is particularly valuable when I focus on bringing a character alive from the outside in. Sometimes we have a greater understanding of a character than we give ourselves credit for. Bogart has developed an approach to acting she calls Viewpoints. The central focus of this approach is kinesthetic impulse, or the body’s natural reaction to outside energy. By putting myself in a neutral state, which is the mental and physical equivalent to a blank canvas, I clear my mind of thoughts and my body of tension and heighten the awareness of my surroundings. Sources of outside energy include other actors (their movements and their gestures); the architecture of the space I’m in, the curves (lines and levels); and the sounds of the environment. Her method is about whole body listening.

So when I read a play the first few times, I observe the given circumstances of the character with as much detail as possible and try to answer the following questions: Who am I? Where am I? When is it? What do I want? Why do I want it? How am I going to get it? As the answers to these questions become more specific through my research, including relevant historical information, related books, interviews, observing similar life
situations and sometimes films, I employ the Magic If. If I were this character, how would I behave? When the answer to this question begins to come into focus, I experiment with actions and behavior appropriate to the role. If the answer remains elusive, I substitute similar life experiences for the behavior of the character. As this work continues, I feed off the energy I get from the other actors and respond to it as honestly as possible with an instinctive, whole body reaction. Thus, my approach to acting is rooted in the work of Stanislavski, Uta Hagen, Sanford Meisner, and Anne Bogart. But every character and every play is different and requires a flexible and specific process. Therefore, I will specify my tactics for the creation of Simon Eyre in The Shoemaker’s Holiday.

I remember the first time I read The Shoemaker’s Holiday in the Spring of 2001. I was overwhelmed with a sense of elation. The play was meant to be performed on holidays and weddings, and I was particularly aware of a euphoric feeling of celebration. The more I researched the role, the more I became aware of the subtle criticisms of bureaucracy and social injustice. I began to concentrate my research on the social and political conditions of Renaissance London and to focus on answering questions about Simon Eyre. Without repeating the research portion of this thesis, I’ll describe how my characterization of Simon Eyre came to fruition.

Eyre is the master of a shoemaker’s shop in seventeenth century London. He is a self-made man who began his career as an apprentice, fetching water from the conduit and cleaning the shops of former masters. He is a prime testament to the potential of the newly formed guild system in Renaissance London. If a man joined a good trade when he was young and worked hard, he had great potential for success. Eyre’s success story has
an additional slant: he is a man who knows how to take advantage of golden opportunities. He banks on the value of the commodities of a Dutch skipper and becomes wealthy quickly. However, Eyre is as likeable as he is aggressive. He loves his wife and his workers, and his foremost need is to have their approval. He revels in popularity and for this reason, does many good deeds for his fellow shoemakers.

Based on my historical research of the given circumstances of this play, I answered the who, what, when, where, and why questions of this character and began to focus on identifying Eyre's super-objective (his ultimate goal within the context of the play) and his objectives (goals) for each scene. I also established what was preventing Eyre from meeting his super-objective in the play and his objectives in each scene. The effort to overcome these obstacles creates conflict for the character. Every scene consists of a series of beats, or units of action, during which a character attempts to achieve his/her objective. The character's moment-to-moment actions are what make a play interesting. The more "life and death" the circumstances are, the more the actions are motivated. Heightening the given circumstances in a play or a scene is sometimes called "raising the stakes." What does this character have to have? What does the character need? In my script, which is included in this chapter, I have identified these and several other terms which ultimately made up the score of my script. The score is very similar to the score that a conductor might use to direct a symphony orchestra. In my scored script, I've identified the objectives, obstacles, beats, and actions of each scene. I've also listed my physical actions, the "blocking" or stage movement, that I discovered during the course of the rehearsal process.
I found that throughout the play Eyre consistently wants to succeed and be liked. More specifically, since he was a boy, Eyre has wanted to be Lord Mayor of London and, happily, within the world of the play, he succeeds. Each individual scene is about how he uses other people to achieve his lofty goals. Eyre’s most obvious obstacles are his bothersome wife, his lazy beer-drinking workers, and members of the aristocracy who attempt to ruin his friends. In the beginning of the play, the primary thing preventing him from political success is his income and social status. Therefore, he takes some amazing risks to gain wealth, impersonating an alderman and signing a contract for goods with false credit. As far as protecting friendships, Eyre is so bold as to defend Roland Lacy against accusations of treason by appealing to the King of England himself. Eyre also requests additional leather trading rights for the shoemakers and invites the king to a banquet, which he has provided for the apprentices of London. The banquet takes place on Shrove Tuesday, also known as Fat Tuesday, the day before Lent begins. Eyre’s willingness to take these leaps of faith inspired many of the risks I took when creating the role.

When making the transition from my imagined Simon Eyre to a tangible Simon Eyre, I noticed several opposite forces at play. I am not a large man, but Simon Eyre acts as if he is. I’m not completely comfortable recreating Cockney and North Country dialects but Eyre takes pride in his “working class” mannerisms. In life, I like to be in control, maintaining a sense of dignity, while Eyre likes to “let it all hang out.” These are just a few of risks that I had to take in order to get out of my own way and allow my imagination to inform my understanding of Simon Eyre. The risks necessary for the creation of this role influenced the title of this thesis, “Finding the Impulsive Self: The
Creation of Simon Eyre in *The Shoemaker’s Holiday.* The act of not thinking and just doing can be a very scary endeavor.

The scored script in this chapter includes many terms, most of which I have discussed already. The following is a key to the terms:

**Key to Script Analysis Terms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Given Circumstances</td>
<td>What the character already knows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>What the character wants in a scene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstacle</td>
<td>A person, influence of nature, or inner conflict, which prevents the character from getting what they want.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Moment to moment “doings” of the character. What the character does to achieve his/her objective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beat</td>
<td>Smallest unit of action.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key to Blocking Notation Terms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>Stage Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR</td>
<td>Stage Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS</td>
<td>Down Stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>Up Stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSL</td>
<td>Down Stage Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSR</td>
<td>Down Stage Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USL</td>
<td>Up Stage Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USR</td>
<td>Up Stage Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Cross</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

42
The following script contains only those scenes which included Simon Eyre. The text is in the center column, the corresponding script analysis terms are in the left column, and the blocking notations are in the right column. Historical references are marked with an asterisk and are defined in Appendix H.
Scene 1

Given: End of day
(Friday Evening).
The war in France is
important. Ralph just
married, he is a good
worker and he may
die.

Objective: Get Ralph
discharged from the
English Army draft.

Obstacles: The
officer's position vs.
mine, Jane's
blubbering and
Margery's
interruptions (they'll
blow my case.)

Enter SIMON EYRE, MARGERY, HODGE, FIRK, JANE,
and RALPH with a piece

LACY
Stay, cousin -who be these?

Beat 1 - Action: To
reassure with good
will.

EYRE
Leave whining, leave whining: away with this whimpering, this puling*, these
blubbering tears, and these wet eyes. I'll get thy husband discharged, I X to second landing
warrant thee, sweet Jane-go to*!
HODGE
Master, here be the captains.

EYRE
Peace, Hodge; husht, ye knave, husht.

FIRK
Here be the cavaliers* and the colonels, master.

EYRE
Peace, Firk: peace, my fine Firk. Stand by, with your pishery-pashery*, away!
I am a man of* the best presence: I'll speak to them an* they were popes!
Gentlemen, captains, colonels, commanders; brave men, brave leaders, may it
please you to give me audience. I am Simon Eyre, the mad* shoemaker of
Tower Street. This wench with the mealy mouth that will never tire is my
wife, I can tell you. Here's Hodge, my man and my foreman. Here's Firk, my
fine firking* journeyman*; and this is blubbered Jane. All we come to be
suitors for this honest Ralph*. Keep him at home and, as I am a true
shoemaker and a gentleman of the Gentle Craft, buy spurs yourself and I'll
find ye boots these seven years.

MARGERY
Seven years, husband?

EYRE
Peace, midriff, peace; I know what I do. Peace!

FIRK
Truly, Master Cormorant*, you shall do God good service to let Ralph and
his wife stay together. She's a young, new-married woman. If you take her
husband away from her a-night, you undo her; she may beg in the daytime; for he's as good a workman at a prick and an awl* as any is in our trade.

JANE
O let him stay, else I shall be undone!

FIRK
Ay, truly, she shall be laid at one side like a pair of old shoes else, and be occupied for no use.

Beat 6 - Action: To demonstrate understanding with good will.

LACY
Truly, my friends, it lies not in my power.
The Londoners are pressed*, paid and set forth
By the Lord Mayor. I cannot change a man.

HODGE
Why, then you were as good be a corporal as a colonel, if you cannot discharge one good fellow. And I tell you true, I think you do more than you can answer, to press a man within a year and a day of his marriage.

EYRE
Well said, melancholy* Hodge! Gramercy*, my fine foreman!

Beat 7 - Action: To demonstrate disgust with bad will.

MARGERY
Truly, gentlemen, it were ill done for such as you to stand so stiffly against* a poor young wife, considering her case; she is new-married-but let that pass. I pray, deal not roughly with her. Her husband is a young man and but newly entered-but let that pass.
EYRE
Away with your pishery-pashery, your polys and your edepols*. Peace, midriff; silence, Cecily Bumtrinket*. Let your head* speak.

FIRK
Yea, and the horns* too, master.

EYRE
Tawsoone*, my fine Firk, tawsoone! Peace, scoundrels. See you this man, captains? You will not release him? Well, let him go. He's a proper shot: let him vanish! Peace, Jane, dry up thy tears, they'll make his powder dankish. Take him, brave men. Hector of Troy was a hackney to him*, Hercules and Termagant* scoundrels. Prince Arthur's Round Table, by the Lord of Ludgate*, ne'er fed such a tall, such a dapper swordman. By the life of Pharaoh, a brave, resolute swordman. Peace, Jane; I say no more, mad knaves.

FIRK
See, see, Hodge, how my master raves in commendation of Ralph.

HODGE
Ralph, thou'rt a gull*, by this hand, an' thou goest not.

ASKEW
I am glad, good master Eyre, it is my hap
To meet so resolute a soldier.

Beat 9 - Action: To demonstrate delight with good will.
Trust me, for* your report and love to him
A common, slight regard shall not respect him*.
LACY
Is thy name Ralph?

RALPH       Yes, sir.

LACY        Give me thy hand.
         Thou shalt not want*, as I am a gentleman.
         Woman, be patient; God no doubt will send
         Thy husband safe again, but he must go:
         His country's quarrel says it shall be so.

HODGE
Thou'rt a gull, by my stirrup*, if thou dost not go! I will not have thee strike
thy gimlet into these weak vessels*-prick thine enemies, Ralph.

Enter DODGER

DODGER
My lord, your uncle on the Tower Hill
Stays with the Lord Mayor and the aldermen,
And doth request you with all speed you may
To hasten thither.

ASKEW    Cousin, let's go.

LACY
Dodger, run you before. Tell them we come.

Exit DODGER

This Dodger is mine uncle's parasite*,
The arrant'st varlet* that e'er breathed on earth.
He sets more discord in a noble house
By one day's broaching of his pickthanked tales
Than can be salved again in twenty years;
And he I fear shall go with us to France
To pry into our actions.

ASKEW

Therefore, coz,
It shall behove you to be circumspect.

LACY

Fear not, good cousin. Ralph, hie to your colours*.  

[Exeunt LACY and ASKEW]

RALPH

I must, because there is no remedy.
But, gentle master and my loving dame,
As you have always been a friend to me,
So in mine absence think upon my wife.

JANE

Alas, my Ralph.

MARGERY

She cannot speak for weeping.

EYRE

Peace, you cracked groats, you mustard tokens*; disquiet not
the brave soldier. Go thy ways, Ralph.

JANE

Ay, ay, you bid him go; what shall I do when he is gone?
FIRK

    Why, be doing with me, or my fellow Hodge - be not idle!

EYRE

    Let me see thy hand, Jane. This fine hand, this white hand, these pretty
fingers must spin, must card*, must work. Work, you bombast-cotton-candle
quean*, work for your living, with a pox* to you. Hold thee, Ralph, here's
five sixpences for thee. Fight for the honour of the Gentle Craft, for the
Gentlemen Shoemakers, the courageous cordwainers*, the flower of Saint
Martin's*, the mad knaves of Bedlam*, Fleet Street, Tower Street and
Whitechapel. Crack me the crowns* of the French knaves, a pox on
them - crack them! Fight, by the Lord of Ludgate, fight, my fine boy.

FIRK

    Here, Ralph, here's three twopences. Two carry into France, the third shall
wash our souls* at parting, for sorrow is dry. For my sake, firk the basa mon
cues*.

HODGE

    Ralph, I am heavy* at parting, but here's a shilling for thee. God send thee to
cram thy slops* with French crowns*, and thy enemies' bellies with bullets.

RALPH

    I thank you, master, and I thank you all.
Now, gentle wife, my loving, lovely Jane,
Rich men at parting give their wives rich gifts,
jewels and rings to grace their lily hands.
Thou know'st our trade makes rings for women's heels.
Here, take this pair of shoes cut out by Hodge,
Stitched by my fellow Firkin, seamed by myself,
Made up and pinked* with letters for thy name.
Wear them, my dear Jane, for thy husband's sake,
And every morning, when thou pull'st them on,
Remember me, [Kisses her] and pray for my return.
Make much of them, for I have made them so, That I can
know them from a thousand moe*.

*Sound drum. Enter OATLEY, LINCOLN, LACY, ASKEW,
DODGER, and soldiers. They pass over the stage*. RALPH falls
in amongst them, FIRK and the rest cry farewell etc., and so
exeunt.

Scene 4

Givens: Saturday morning (next day),
Busy day (much business and work to do)

Objective: To work and make money merrily.

Obstacles: Early morning (7 am), slow Firk, Margery's obstinace and Lacy's arrival.

Beat 1 - Action: To demonstrate delight with good will.

Enter EYRE, making himself ready

Exit USR

Open USL third story window
EYRE
Where be these boys, these girls, these drabs, these scoundrels? They wallow in the fat brewis* of my bounty, and lick up the crumbs of my table, yet will not rise to see my walks cleansed*. Come out, you powder-beef queans*! What, Nan! What, Madge Mumblecrust*! Come out, you fat midriff-swag-belly whores*, and sweep me these kennels*, that the noisome stench offend not the nose of my neighbours. What, Firk, I say! What, Hodge! Open my shop windows*! What, Firk, I say!

Enter FIRK

FIRK
O master, is't you that speak bandog and bedlam* this morning? I was in a dream, and mused what madman was got into the street so early. Have you drunk this morning, that your throat is so clear?

EYRE
Ah, well said, Firk; well said, Firk - to work, my fine knave, to work! Wash thy face, and thou'lt be more blessed.

FIRK
Let them wash my face that will eat it* -good master, send for a souse-wife*, if you'll have my face cleaner.

Enter HODGE

EYRE
Away, sloven! Avaunt, scoundrel! -Good morrow, Hodge; good morrow, my fine foreman.
HODGE
  O master, good morrow; you're an early stirrer. Here's a fair morning. Good
  morrow, Firk. I could have slept this hour. Here's a brave day towards*.

EYRE
  O haste to work, my fine foreman, haste to work.

FIRK
  Master, I am dry as dust to hear my fellow Roger talk of fair weather. Let us
  pray for good leather, and let clowns* and ploughboys, and those that work
  in the fields, pray for brave days. We work in a dry shop, what care I if it
  rain?

Enter MARGERY

Exit window and Enter
on second story, USC

EYRE
  Beat 2 - Action: To
  chide with good will.
  How now, Dame Margery, can you see to rise*? Trip and go*, call up
  the drabs your maids.

MARGERY
  See to rise! I hope 'tis time enough; 'tis early enough for any woman to be
  seen abroad. I marvel how many wives in Tower Street are up so soon.
  God's me, 'tis not noon! Here's a yawling.

EYRE
  Peace, Margery, peace. Where's Cicely Bumtrinket your maid? She has a
  privy* fault: she farts in her sleep. Call the quean up. If my men want
  shoethread, I'll swinge her in a stirrup*.

Exit USC
FIRK
Yet that's but a dry beating*. Here's still a sign of drought.

Enter LACY [disguised as HANS], singing

Beat 3 - Action: To find out.

LACY
Der was een bore van Gelderland,
  Frolick sie byen;
He was als dronck he could nyet stand,
  Upsee al sie byen;
Tap eens de canneken,
  Drincke, schone mannekin*.

FIRK
Master, for my life, yonder's a brother of the Gentle Craft. If he bear not Saint Hugh's bones*, I'll forfeit my bones. He's some uplandish* workman. Hire him, good master, that I may learn some gibble-gabble-*twill make us work the faster.

Beat 4 - Action: To convince with goodwill.

EYRE
Peace, Firk. A hard world*; let him pass, let him vanish. We have journeymen enough: peace, my fine Firk.

MARGERY
Nay, nay, you're best follow your man's counsel*; you shall see what will come on't. We have not men enough but we must entertain every butter-box*-but let that pass.

Enter on USC through shop door, X DSL
HODGE
  Dame, 'fore God, if my master follow your counsel he'll consume little beef.
  He shall be glad of men an' he can catch them.

FIRK
  Ay, that he shall.

HODGE
  'Fore God, a proper man, and I warrant a fine workman!
  Master, farewell; dame, adieu. If such a man as he cannot
  find work, Hodge is not for you.          Offer to go

EYRE
  Stay, my fine Hodge.                          X to Hodge

FIRK
  Faith, an' your foreman go, dame, you must take a journey to seek a new
  journeyman. If Roger remove, Firk follows. If Saint Hugh's bones shall not
  be set a-work, I may prick mine awl in the walls and go play. Fare ye well,
  master. Goodbye, dame.                        Step toward Firk

EYRE
  Tarry, my fine Hodge, my brisk foreman. Stay, Firk; peace, pudding-broth.
  By the Lord of Ludgate, I love my men as my life. Peace, you gallimaufry!*
  Hodge, if he want work, I'll hire him. One of you to him -stay, he comes to
  us.                                           X DSL

Beat 5 - Action: To lament with good will.

Beat 6 - Action: To find out with humor.

LACY
  Goeden dach, meester, end you fro, auch*.       X to C
FIRK
   'Nails*, if I should speak after him without drinking, I should choke! And
you, friend Oak, are you of the Gentle Craft?

LACY
   Yaw, yaw, ik bin den skomawker*.

FIRK
   Den skomaker, quoth 'a! And hark you, skomaker, have you all your tools -
a good rubbing-pin, a good stopper, a good dresser, your four sorts of awls,
and your two balls of wax, your paring knife, your hand- and
thumb-leathers, and good Saint Hugh's bones to smooth up your work?

LACY
   Yaw, yaw, be neit vorveard. Ik hab al de dingen voour mack skoes groot
end klene. *

FIRK
   Ha, ha! Good master, hire him. He'll make me laugh so that I shall work
more in mirth than I can in earnest.

EYRE
   Hear ye, friend: have ye any skill in the mystery* of cordwainers*?

LACY
   Ik weet niet wat you seg; ik verstaw you niet*.

FIRK
   Why thus, man. *He mimes a shoemaker at work* Ik verste you niet, quoth
'a!
LACY
  Yaw, yaw, yaw; ik can dat wel doen*.

FIRK
  Yaw, yaw-he speaks yawning like a jackdaw that gapes to be fed with cheese-curds. O, he'll give a villainous pull at a can of double* beer. But Hodge and I have the vantage; we must drink first, because we are the eldest journeymen.

EYRE
  What is thy name?

LACY
  Hans; Hans Meulter.

Beat 7 - Action: To demonstrate delight with humor.

EYRE

HODGE
  Hans, thou'rt welcome. Use thyself* friendly, for we are good fellows; if not, thou shalt be fought with, wert thou bigger than a giant.

FIRK
  Yea, and drunk with, wert thou Gargantua*. My master keeps no cowards, I tell thee. Ho, boy, bring him an heelblock*: here's a new journeyman.

  Enter BOY
LACY
O, ik wersaw you: ik moet een halve dossen cans betaelen. Here, boy, nempt dis skilling, tap eens frelicke*.

Exit BOY

EYRE
Quick, snipper-snapper, away! Firk, scour thy throat; thou shalt wash it with Castilian liquor. [Calls] Come, my last of the fives*,

Enter BOY

give me a can. Have to thee, Hans! Here, Hodge; here, Firk; drink, you mad Greeks, and work like true Trojans, and pray for Simon Eyre the shoemaker. Here, Hans; and thou'rt welcome.

FIRK
Lo, dame, you would have lost a good fellow that will teach us to laugh. This beer came hopping in well.

MARGERY
Simon, it is almost seven.

EYRE
Beat 8 - Action: To demonstrate disdain with humor.
Beat 9 - Action: To demonstrate delight with goodwill.

Is't so, Dame Clapperdudgeon**? Is't seven o'clock and my men's breakfast not ready? Trip and go, you soused conger*, away! Come, you mad Hyperboreans*; follow me, Hodge; follow me, Hans; come after, my fine Firk-to work, to work a while, and then to breakfast.

Exit

Exit USC
FIRK
Soft, yaw, yaw, good Hans. Though my master have no more wit but to call you afore me, I am not so foolish to go behind you, I being the elder* journeyman.

Exeunt

Scene 7

Given: The following Monday morning. The shop is closed for business, but we are filling orders.

Objective: To work, keep shoemakers happy, silence Margery and decide to deal with the skipper.

Obstacles: Margery's big mouth and the size of the deal with the skipper.

Beat 1 - Action: To demonstrate delight with good will.

Enter EYRE, MARGERY [and BOY]

Enter USC, second story
FIRK
Mum, here comes my dame and my master. She'll scold, on my life, for loitering this Monday. But's all one - let them all say what they can, Monday's our holiday*.

MARGERY
You sing, Sir Sauce*, but I beshrew* your heart;
I fear for this your singing we shall smart.

FIRK
Smart for me, dame? Why, dame, why?

HODGE
Master, I hope you'll not suffer my dame to take down* your journeymen.

FIRK
If she take me down, I'll take her up -yea, and take her down, too, a buttonhole lower*.

Beat 2 - Action: To chide with goodwill.

EYRE
Peace, Firk; not I, Hodge. By the life of Pharaoh, by the Lord of Ludgate, by this beard, every hair whereof I value at a king's ransom, she shall not meddle with you. Peace, you bombast-cotton-candle quean - away, Queen of Clubs, quarrel not with me and my men, with me and my fine Firk. I'll firk you if you do.

MARGERY
Yea, yea, man, you may use* me as you please - but let that pass.
EYRE
    Let it pass? Let it vanish away! Peace, am I not Simon Eyre? Are not these
    my brave men, brave shoemakers, all gentlemen of the Gentle Craft? Prince
    am I none, yet am I nobly born, as being the sole son of a shoemaker*. Away,
    rubbish. Vanish, melt - melt like kitchen-stuff*.

MARGERY
    Yea, yea, 'tis well. I must be called rubbish, kitchen-stuff, for a sort* of
    knaves.

FIRK
    Nay, dame, you shall not weep and wail in woe for me. Master, I'll stay no
    longer. Here's a venentory* of my shop-tools. Adieu, master. Hodge,
    farewell.

HODGE
    Nay, stay, Firk, thou shalt not go alone.

MARGERY
    I pray, let them go. There be more maids than Malkin*, more men than
    Hodge, and more fools than Firk.

FIRK
    Fools? 'Nails, if I tarry now, I would my guts might be turned to shoe-thread.

HODGE
    And if I stay, I pray God I may be turned to a Turk, and set in Finsbury for
    boys to shoot at*! Come, Firk.
**Beat 3 - Action:** To convince with good will.

**EYRE**
Stay, my fine knaves, you arms of my trade, you pillars of my profession. What, shall a little-tattles words make you forsake Simon Eyre? Avaunt, kitchen-stuff! Rip*, you brown-bread tannikin*, out of my sight! Move me not. Have I not ta'en you from selling tripes in Eastcheap, and set you in my shop, and made you hail-fellow with Simon Eyre the shoemaker? And now do you deal thus with my journeymen? Look, you powder-beef quean, on the face of Hodge: here's a face for a lord.

**FIRK**
And here's a face for any lady in Christendom.

**EYRE**
Rip, you chitterling*, avaunt! Boy, bid the tapster of the Boar's Head* fill me a dozen cans of beer for my journeymen.

**FIRK**
A dozen cans? O brave! Hodge, now I'll stay!

**EYRE**
*Aside to BOY* An' the knave fills any more than two he pays for them. *

*Exit BOY*
A dozen cans of beer for my journeymen!

*Enter BOY with two cans, and exit*

**Beat 4 - Action:** To find out.

Here, you mad Mesopotamians! Wash your livers with this liquor. Where be the odd ten? No more, Madge*, no more. Well said*; drink and to work. What work dost thou, Hodge? What work?  

*Exit USC, second story Enter USC Floor, X DSR X up DSR steps to him.
HODGE  
I am a-making a pair of shoes for my Lord Mayor's daughter, Mistress Rose.

FIRK  
And I a pair of shoes for Sybil, my Lord's maid. I deal with* her.

Beat 5 - Action: To convince with goodwill.

EYRE  
Sybil? Fie, defile not thy fine, workmanly fingers with the feet of kitchen-stuff and basting-laddies! Ladies of the Court, fine ladies, my lads-commit their feet to our apparelling. Put gross work to Hans. Yerk* and seam, yerk and seam.

FIRK  
For yerking and seaming let me alone, an' I come to't*.

Beat 6 - Action: To demonstrate understanding with goodwill.

HODGE  
[Pulling out a money-bag] Well, master, all this is from the bias*. Do you remember the ship my fellow Hans told you of? The skipper and he are both drinking at the Swan. Here be the portagues to give* earnest. If you go through with it, you cannot choose but be a lord at least.

FIRK  
Nay, dame, if my master prove not a lord, and you a lady, hang me.

MARGERY  
Yea, like enough, if you may loiter and tipple thus.

FIRK  
Tipple, dame? No, we have been bargaining with Skellum-
Skanderbag-can-you-Dutch-spreaken* for a ship of silk cypress, laden with sugar-candy*.

**Beat 7 - Action:** To demonstrate delight with goodwill.

**EYRE**

Peace, Firk; silence, tittle-tattle. Hodge, I'll go through with it.

*Enter BOY with a velvet coat and an alderman's gown*

Here's a seal-ring, and I have sent for a guarded* gown and a damask cassock. See where it comes-look here, Madgy! Help me, Firk; apparel me, Hodge.

**EYRE puts it on**

Silk and satin, you mad Philistines, silk and satin!

**FIRK**

Ha, ha! My master will be as proud as a dog in a doublet*, all in beaten damask and velvet.

**Beat 8 - Action:** To convince with good will.

**EYRE**

Softly, Firk, for rearing of* the nap, and wearing threadbare my garments. How dost thou like me, Firk? How do I look, my fine Hodge?

**HODGE**

Why, now you look like yourself, master! I warrant you, there's few in the city but will give you the wall*, and come upon you with the 'Right Worshipful'*. 

Kiss Margery then XC
FIRK
'Tails, my master looks like a threadbare cloak new turned and dressed.*
Lord, Lord, to see what good raiment doth! Dame, dame, are you not enamoured?

EYRE
How sayst thou, Madgy? Am I not brisk*? Am I not fine?

MARGERY
Fine? By my troth, sweetheart, very fine. By my troth, I never liked thee so well in my life, sweetheart - but let that pass. I warrant there be many women in the city have not such handsome husbands, but only for their apparel*-but let that pass, too.

Enter LACY and Skipper

LACY
Godden day, meester. Dis be de skipper dat heb de skip van marchandice. De commodity ben good: nempt it, meester, nempt it*.

EYRE
Godamercy, Hans. Welcome, skipper. Where lies this ship of merchandise? X SR

SKIPPER
De skip ben in revere. Dor be van sugar, civet, almonds, cambric, end a thousand thousand things, Got's sacrament! Nempt it, meester; you sal heb good copen*.
FIRK
To him, master. O sweet master! O sweet wares! Prunes, almonds, sugar candy, carrot-roots*, turnips-O brave fatting meat! Let not a man buy a nutmeg* but yourself.

EYRE
Peace, Firk. Come skipper, I'll go aboard with you. Hans, have you made him drink*?

SKIPPER
Yaw, yaw, ik heb veale gedrunck*.

EYRE
Come, Hans, follow me. Skipper, thou shalt have my countenance* in the city.

Exeunt [EYRE, Lacy and Skipper]

FIRK
Yaw heb veale gedrunck, quotha! They may well be called butter-boxes when they drink fat veal, and thick beer too! But come, dame - I hope you'll chide us no more.

MARGERY
No, faith, Firk. No, perdie*, Hodge. I do feel honour creep upon me, and which is more, a certain rising in my flesh-but let that pass.

FIRK
Rising in your flesh do you feel, say you? Ay, you may be with child, but why should not my master feel a rising in his flesh, having a gown
and a gold ring on*? But you are such a shrew, you'll soon pull him down*.

MARGERY
Ha, ha! Prithee, peace: thou makest my worship* laugh—but let that pass. Come, I'll go in. Hodge, prithee, go before me. Firk, follow me.

FIRK
Firk doth follow. Hodge, pass out in state!

*Exeunt*

**Scene 9**

*Givens: One month later, late May, Friday. I am successful, the deal went well. There is talk about electing me to be Sheriff.*

**Objective:** Make an honest impression on the Lord Mayor.

**Obstacle:** Unfamiliar courtly manners.

*OATLEY*
Now tell me, Master Scott, would you have thought
That Master Simon Eyre the shoemaker
Had been of wealth to buy such merchandise?

*SCOTT*
'Twas well, my lord, your honour and myself
Grew partners with him; for your bills of lading
Show that Eyre's gains in one commodity
Rise at the least to full three thousand pound,
Besides like gain in other merchandise.

OATLEY
Well, he shall spend some of his thousands now,
For I have sent for him to the Guildhall.

Enter EYRE

See where he comes. Good morrow, Master Eyre.

EYRE
Poor Simon Eyre, my lord, your shoemaker.

OATLEY
Well, well, it likes yourself to term you so.

Enter DODGER

Now, Master Dodger, what's the news with you?

DODGER
I'd gladly speak in private to your honour.

OATLEY
You shall, you shall. Master Eyre and Master Scott,
I have some business with this gentleman.
I pray, let me entreat you to walk before
To the Guildhall; I'll follow presently.  
Master Eyre, I hope ere noon to call you sheriff.  

Beat 2 - Action: To demonstrate delight with goodwill.

EYRE  
I would not care, my lord, if you might call me King of Spain*. Come, Master Scott.

Exeunt [EYRE and SCOTT]

Scene 10

Givens: The same day, that afternoon.  
I've just been elected Sheriff of London.

Objective: To show-off, celebrate and reward Margery, Hodge, Firk and Hans and make preparations for Old Ford.

Obstacle: Time - I must meet the Lord Mayor for dinner at Old Ford.

Beat 1 - Action: To demonstrate delight with good will.

Enter SIMON EYRE wearing a gold chain
LACY
See, myn liever broder, heer compt my meester*.

MARGERY
Welcome home, Master Shrieve. I pray God continue you in health and wealth.

EYRE
See here, my Madgy, a chain, a gold chain for Simon Eyre! I shall make thee a lady; here's a French hood for thee. On with it, on with it - dress thy brows with this flap of a shoulder of mutton*, to make thee look lovely. Where be my fine men? Roger, I'll make over my shop and tools to thee. Firk, thou shalt be the foreman. Hans, thou shalt have an hundred for twenty*. Be as mad knaves as your master Sim Eyre hath been, and you shall live to be sheriffs of London. How dost thou like me, Margery? Prince am I none, yet am I princely born! Firk, Hodge, and Hans!

ALL THREE
Ay, forsooth, what says your worship, Master Sheriff?

Beat 2 - Action: To convince with good will.

EYRE
Worship and honour, you Babylonian knaves, for the Gentle Craft! But I forgot myself. I am bidden by my Lord Mayor to dinner at Old Ford. He's gone before, I must after. Come, Madge, on with your trinkets. Now, my true Trojans, my fine Firk, my dapper Hodge, my honest Hans, some device, some odd crotchets*, some morris* or suchlike for the honour of the gentle* shoemakers. Meet me at Old Ford; you know my mind. Come Madgy, away;
Shut up the shop, knaves, and make holiday.

Kneel DSC, stand
Start exit, stop
Exeunt [EYRE and MARGERY]

FIRK
O rare! O brave! Come, Hodge -follow me, Hans;
We'll be with them for a morris-dance.

Exeunt

Scene 11

Given: Dinner at Old
Ford . . . very posh.
I'm not. I'm just
happy to be
successful.

Objective: Have fun
and make friends at
the Lord Mayor's
house.

Obstacle: Margery's
feigned formality and
Oatley's issues with
Rose.

Beat 1 - Action: To
demonstrate delight
with good will.

Enter OATLEY, EYRE, MARGERY in a French hood,
[ROSE], SYBIL and other Servants

Exit USL, first level
Enter USR, second level
X to first stair landing
OATLEY
   Trust me, you are as welcome to Old Ford
   As I myself.

MARGERY Truly, I thank your lordship.

OATLEY
   Would our bad cheer were worth the thanks you give.

EYRE
   Good cheer, my Lord Mayor, fine cheer; a fine house, fine walls, all fine and neat.

OATLEY
   Now, by my troth, I'll tell thee, master Eyre,
   It does me good, and all my brethren,
   That such a madcap fellow as thyself
   Is entered into our society.

MARGERY
   Ay, but, my lord, he must learn now to put on gravity.

Beat 2 - Action: To convince with humor.

EYRE
   Peace, Madgy, a fig for gravity. When I go to Guildhall in my scarlet gown, I'll look as demurely as a saint, and speak as gravely as a justice of Peace; but now I am here at Old Ford, at my good Lord Mayor's house, let it go by, vanish, Madgy; I'll be merry. Away with flip-flap, these fooleries these gulleries. What, honey: prince am I none, yet am I princely born! What says my Lord Mayor?
OATLEY
Ha, ha, ha! I had rather than a thousand pound
I had an heart but half so light as yours.

EYRE
Why, what should I do, my lord? A pound of care pays not a dram of debt.
Hum, let's be merry whiles we are young. Old age, sack and sugar* will steal
upon us ere we be aware.

OATLEY
Beat 3 - Action: To
find out.
It's well done. Mistress Eyre, pray give good counsel to my daughter.

MARGERY
I hope Mistress Rose will have the grace to take nothing that's bad.

OATLEY
Pray God she do, for i'faith, Mistress Eyre,
I would bestow upon that peevish girl
A thousand marks* more than I mean to give her
Upon condition she'd be ruled by me.
The ape* still crosseth me. There came of late
A proper gentleman of fair revenues
Whom gladly I would call son-in-law;
But my fine cockney* would have none of him.
You'll prove a coxcomb* for it ere you die.
A courtier or no man must please your eye.

EYRE
Beat 4 - Action: To
convince with humor
Be ruled, sweet Rose. Thou'rt ripe for a man: marry not with a boy that has
no more hair on his face than thou hast on thy cheeks. A courtier? - wash*,
go by! Stand not upon pishery-pashery*. Those silken fellows are but painted images - outsides, outsides, Rose; their inner linings are torn. No, my fine mouse*, marry me with a Gentleman Grocer like my Lord Mayor your father. A grocer is a sweet trade, plums, plums! Had I a son or daughter should marry out of the generation and blood of the shoemakers, he should pack*. What, the Gentle Trade is a living for a man through Europe, through the world!

Beat 5 - Action: To demonstrate delight with good will.

A noise within of a tabor and pipe*

OATLEY
What noise is this?

EYRE
O my Lord Mayor, a crew of good fellows that for love to your honour are come hither with a morris-dance. [Calls] Come in, my Mesopotamians, cheerly!

Enter HODGE, LACY, RALPH, FlIRK and other
Shoemakers in a morris. After a little dancing, the Lord Mayor speaks

OATLEY
Master Eyre, are all these shoemakers?

EYRE
All cordiners, my good Lord Mayor.

ROSE
[Aside] How like my Lacy looks yond shoemaker!
LACY
   [Aside] O, that I durst but speak unto my love!

OATLEY
   Sybil, go fetch some wine* to make these drink. - You are all welcome.

ALL [THE SHOEMAKERS]
   We thank your lordship.

   ROSE takes a cup of wine and goes to LACY

ROSE
   For his sake whose fair shape thou represent'st, *
   Good friend, I drink to thee.

LACY
   Ik be dancke, good frister*.

MARGERY
   I see, Mistress Rose, you do not want* judgement. You have drunk to the
   properest* man I keep.

FIRK
   Here be some* have done their parts to be as proper as he.

OATLEY
   Well, urgent business calls me back to London.
   Good fellows, first go in and taste our cheer,   X C
   And to make merry as you homeward go,
   Spend these two angels in beer at Stratford Bow*.
To these two, my mad lads, Sim Eyre adds another. Then cheerly, Firk, tickle it*, Hans, and all for the honour of shoemakers.

All [the Shoemakers] go dancing out

OATLEY
Come, Master Eyre, let's have your company.
Exeunt [OATLEY, EYRE and MARGERY]

Scene 17

Given: Shrove
Tuesday morning.
Lacy and Rose are to wed.

Objective: Prepare
Hans and Rose for their wedding.

Obstacle: Their desire to leave, marry and consummate.

Beat 1 - Action: To demonstrate delight with good will.

Enter EYRE, MARGERY, LACY and ROSE

Enter UC, first level

EYRE
This is the morning then-stay*, my bully, my honest Hans: is it not?

X DSC
LACY
This is the morning that must make us two
Happy or miserable; therefore if you-

Beat 2 - Action: To convince with humor.

EYRE
Away with these ifs and ans, Hans, and these etceteras. By mine honour, Roland Lacy, none but the King shall wrong thee. Come, fear nothing. Am not I Sim Eyre? Is not Sim Eyre Lord Mayor of London? Fear nothing, Rose, let them all say what they can. [Sings] Dainty, come thou to me*. - Laughest thou?

MARGERY
Good my lord, stand* her friend in what thing you may.

EYRE
Why, my sweet Lady Madgy, think you Simon Eyre can forget his fine Dutch journeyman? No, vah! Fie, I scorn it. It shall never be cast in my teeth that I was unthankful. Lady Madgy, thou hast never covered thy Saracen's head* with this French flap, nor laden thy bum with this farthingale - 'tis trash, trumpery, vanity! - Simon Eyre had never walked in a red petticoat,* nor wore a chain of gold, but for my fine journeyman's portagues; and shall I leave him? No. Prince am I none, yet bear a princely mind.

LACY
My lord, 'tis time for us to part from hence.
Beat 3 - Action: To demonstrate delight with humor.

EYRE
Lady Madgy, Lady Madgy, take two or three of my piecrust eaters, my buff-jerkin varlets,* that do walk in black gowns at Simon Eyre's heels. Take them, good Lady Madgy, trip and go, my brown* Queen of Periwigs, with my delicate Rose and my jolly Roland to the Savoy, see them linked, countenance* the marriage, and when it is done, cling, cling together, you Hamborow* turtle-doves. I'll bear you out. Come to Simon Eyre, come dwell with me, Hans, thou shalt eat minced pies and marchpane*. Rose, away, cricket. Trip and go, my Lady Madgy, to the Savoy! Hans, wed and to bed; kiss and away - go, vanish.

MARGERY
Farewell, my lord.

ROSE
Make haste, sweet love.

MARGERY
She'd fain the deed were done.

LACY
Come, my sweet Rose, faster than deer we'll run.

They go out

EYRE
Go, vanish, vanish; avaunt, I say. By the Lord of Ludgate, it's a mad life to be a Lord Mayor. It's a stirring life, a fine life, a velvet life, a careful life*. Well, Simon Eyre, yet set a good face on it, in the honour of Saint Hugh. Soft, the King this day comes to dine with me, to see my new buildings*. His Majesty is welcome; he shall have good cheer, delicate cheer, princely cheer. This day my fellow prentices of London come to dine with me too. They shall have fine cheer, gentlemanlike cheer. I promised the mad Cappadocians*, when we
all served at the conduit together*, that if ever I came to be Mayor of London, I would feast them all; and I'll do't, I'll do't, by the life of Pharaoh, by this beard, Sim Eyre will be no flincher. Besides, I have procured that upon every Shrove Tuesday*, at the sound of the pancake bell*, my fine dapper Assyrian lads shall clap up their shop windows* and away. This is the day, and this day they shall do't, they shall do't!
Boys, that day are you free; let masters care,
And prentices shall pray for Simon Eyre.  

Givens: Shrove Tuesday evening. I'm hosting a feast for my fellow apprentices. The king is coming to see my new buildings.

Objective: Motivate my shoemakers to serve the apprentices well and make sure they are pleased. Prepare for the king's arrival.

Obstacle: Many apprentices, bad communication between me and the shoemakers, and time.

Scene 20

Exit

Exit UC, second level
Enter EYRE, HODGE, FIRK, RALPH and other shoemakers, all with napkins on their shoulders.

EYRE
Come, my fine Hodge, my jolly Gentlemen Shoemakers. Come, lively! Let your fellow prentices want no cheer. Let wine be plentiful as beer, and beer as water. Hang these penny-pinching fathers, that cram wealth in innocent lamb-skins*. Rip, knaves! Avaunt! Look to my guests.

HODGE
My lord, we are at our wits' end for room. Those hundred tables will not feast the fourth part of them.

EYRE
Then cover me those hundred tables again, and again, till all my jolly prentices be feasted. Avoid*, Hodge; run, Ralph; frisk about, my nimble Firk; carouse me fathom heaths* to the honour of the shoemakers. Do they drink lively, Hodge? Do they tickle it, Firk?

FIRK
Tickle it? Some of them have taken their liquor standing so long that they can stand no longer. But for meat*, they would eat it an' they had it.

EYRE
Want they meat? Where's this swag-belly, this greasy kitchen-stuff cook? Call the varlet to me. Want meat! Firk, Hodge, lame Ralph, run, my tall men, beleguer the shambles*, beggar all Eastcheap, serve me whole oxen in chargers*, and let sheep whine upon the tables like pigs for want of good fellows to eat them. Want meat! Vanish, Firk! Avaunt, Hodge!
Beat 4 - Action: To demonstrate understanding with good will.

HODGE
Your lordship mistakes my man Firk. He means their bellies want meat, not the boards; for they have drunk so much they can eat nothing.

Enter LACY, ROSE and MARGERY

Beat 5 - Action: To find out.

MARGERY
Where is my lord?

EYRE
How now, Lady Madgy?

MARGERY
The King's most excellent Majesty is new come; he sends me for thy honour. One of his most worshipful peers bade me tell thou must be merry, and so forth—but let that pass.

EYRE
Is my sovereign come? Vanish, my tall shoemakers, my nimble brethren. Look to my guests, the prentices.—Yet stay a little: how now, Hans? how looks my little Rose?

LACY
Let me request you to remember me. I know your honour easily may obtain Free pardon of the King for me and Rose, And reconcile me to my uncle's grace*.
Beat 6 - Action: To convince with good will.

EYRE
Have done, my good Hans, my honest journeyman. Look cheerily. I'll fall upon both my knees till they be as hard as horn but I'll get thy pardon.

MARGERY
Good my lord, have a care what you speak to his Grace.

Beat 7 - Action: To demonstrate disdain with humor.

EYRE
Away, you Islington whitepot*! Hence, you hopperarse*, you barley pudding* full of maggots, you broiled carbonado*! Avaunt, avaunt, avoid*, Mephistophilus! Shall Sim Eyre learn to speak of you, Lady Madgy? Vanish, Mother Miniver-Cap*, vanish! Go, trip and go, meddle with your partlets* and your pishery-pashery, your flews and your whirligigs*! Go, rub, out of mine alley*! Sim Eyre knows how to speak to a pope, to Sultan Soliman, to Tamburlaine* an' he were here. And shall I melt, shall I droop before my sovereign? No! Come, my Lady Madgy; follow me, Hans; about your business, my frolic freebooters*. Firk, frisk about, and about, and about, for the honour of mad Simon Eyre, Lord Mayor of London.

Beat 8 - Action: To demonstrate delight with good will.

FIRK
Hey for the honour of the shoemakers! Exeunt

X DS, Start Exit, circle US to Firk

Exit USL, first level
Scene 21

Givens: Shrove Tuesday evening. The King is in my house. The shoemakers are coming. The apprentices have left.

Objective: Get the King's pardon for Lacy, get permission to buy and sell leather two days a week at Leadenhall and invite the King to our banquet.

Obstacle: The king's authority, Oatley's and Lincoln's protestations and poor courtly manners.

Beat 1 - Action: To lament with good will.

* A long flourish or two. Enter KING, Nobles, EYRE, MARGERY, LACY and ROSE. LACY and ROSE kneel

KING
Well, Lacy, though the fact* was very foul Of your revolting from our kingly love

Enter SR, XC, set chair, then XSL and bow
Beat 2 - Action: To demonstrate surprise with good will.

And your own duty, yet we pardon you.
Rise, both; and, Mistress Lacy, thank my Lord Mayor*
For your young bridegroom here.

Beat 3 - Action: To convince with good will.

EYRE
So, my dear liege, Sim Eyre and my brethren the Gentlemen Shoemakers shall
set your sweet Majesty's image cheek by jowl by Saint Hugh for this honour
you have done poor Simon Eyre. I beseech your Grace pardon my rude
behaviour. I am a handicraftsman, yet my heart is without craft*. I would be
sorry at my soul that my boldness should offend my King.

X to King, put hand on
his shoulder
Remove hand and kneel

Beat 4 - Action: To demonstrate delight with humor.

KING
Nay, I pray thee, good Lord Mayor, be even as merry
As if thou wert among thy shoemakers.
It does me good to see thee in this humour.

EYRE
Sayst thou me so, my sweet Diocletian*? Then, hump*! Prince am I
none, yet am I princely born. By the Lord of Ludgate, my liege, I'll be
as merry as a pie*.

Stand, Grab stool and sit
next to King

KING
Tell me in faith, mad Eyre, how old thou art.

EYRE
My liege, a very boy, a stripling, a younker*. You see not a white hair on
my head, not a grey in this beard. Every hair, I assure thy Majesty, that
sticks in this beard Sim Eyre values at the King of Babylon's ransom. Tamar
Cham's* beard was a rubbing-brush to't. Yet I'll shave it off and stuff tennis
balls with it to please my bully King.
KING
    But all this while I do not know your age.

EYRE
    My liege, I am six-and-fifty year old, yet I can cry hump with a sound heart
    for the honour of Saint Hugh. Mark this old wench, my King: I danced the
    shaking of the sheets* with her six-and-thirty years ago, and yet I hope to
    get* two or three young Lord Mayors ere I die. I am lusty still, Sim Eyre still.
    Care and cold lodging brings white hairs. My sweet Majesty, let care vanish.
    Cast it upon thy nobles. It will make thee look always young, like Apollo, and
    cry hump! - Prince am I none, yet am I princely born.

KING
    Ha, ha! Say, Cornwall, didst thou ever see his like?

NOBLEMAN
    Not I, my lord.

Enter LINCOLN and OATLEY

Beat 5 - Action: To find out.

KING      Lincoln, what news with you?

LINCOLN
    My gracious lord, have care unto yourself,
    For there are traitors here.

ALL      Traitors? Where? Who?
Beat 6 - Action: To demonstrate surprise with malice.

EYRE
Traitors in my house? God forbid! Where be my officers? I'll spend my soul ere my King feel harm.

KING
Where is the traitor, Lincoln?

LINCOLN [indicating Lacy] Here he stands.

KING
Cornwall, lay hold on Lacy. Lincoln, speak:
What canst thou lay unto thy nephew's charge?

LINCOLN
This, my dear liege. Your Grace to do me honour
Heaped on the head of this degenerous* boy
Desertless favours. You made choice of him
To be commander over powers in France;
But he -

KING
Good Lincoln, prithee pause a while.
Even in thine eyes I read what thou wouldst speak.
I know how Lacy did neglect our love,
Ran himself deeply, in the highest degree,
Into vile treason.

LINCOLN Is he not a traitor?
Beat 8 - Action: To demonstrate understanding with good will.

KING
Lincoln, he was; now have we pardoned him.
'Twas not a base want* of true valour's fire
That held him out of France, but love's desire.

LINCOLN
I will not bear his shame upon my back.

KING
Nor shalt thou, Lincoln. I forgive you both.

LINCOLN
Then, good my liege, forbid the boy to wed
One whose mean birth will much disgrace his bed.

KING
Are they not married?

LINCOLN
No, my liege.

BOTH
We are.

KING
Shall I divorce them, then? O, be it far
That any hand on earth should dare untie
The sacred knot knit by God's majesty.
I would not for my crown disjoin their hands
That are conjoined in holy nuptial bands.
How sayst thou, Lacy? Wouldst thou lose thy Rose?
LACY
Not for all India's wealth, my sovereign.

KING
But Rose, I am sure, her Lacy would forgo.

ROSE
If Rose were asked that question, she'd say no.

KING
You hear them, Lincoln?

LINCOLN
Yea, my liege, I do.

KING
Yet canst thou find i'the heart to part these two?
Who seeks, besides you, to divorce these lovers?

Beat 9 - Action: To demonstrate disgust with malice.

OATLEY
I do, my gracious lord. I am her father.

KING
[Aside] Sir Roger Oatley, our last Mayor, I think?

NOBLEMAN
The same, my liege.

KING
Would you offend love's laws?
Well, you shall have your wills. You sue to me
To prohibit the match. Soft, let me see:
You both are married, Lacy, art thou not?

LACY
I am, dread sovereign.

KING
Then, upon thy life,
I charge thee not to call this woman wife.

OATLEY
I thank your Grace.

ROSE
O my most gracious lord! (Kneel)

KING
Nay, Rose, never woo me. I tell you true,
Although as yet I am a bachelor,
Yet I believe I shall not marry you.

ROSE
Can you divide the body from the soul,
Yet make the body live?

KING
Yea, so profound?
I cannot, Rose; but you I must divide.
Fair maid, this bridegroom cannot be your bride*. 
Are you pleased, Lincoln? Oatley, are you pleased?

BOTH
Yes, my lord.
KING Then must my heart be eased;  
For, credit me, my conscience lives in pain  
Till these whom I divorced be joined again.

Beat 11 - Action: To demonstrate understanding with good will.

Lacy, give me thy hand. Rose, lend me thine.  
Be what you would be. Kiss now; so, that's fine.  
At night, lovers, to bed. Now, let me see,  
Which of you all mislikes this harmony?

OATLEY  
Will you then take from me my child perforce?

KING  
Why, tell me, Oatley, shines not Lacy's name  
As bright in the world's eye as the gay beams  
Of any citizen?

LINCOLN Yea, but, my gracious lord,  
I do mislike the match far more than he.  
Her blood is too too base.

KING Lincoln, no more.  
Dost thou not know that love respects no blood,  
Cares not for difference of birth or state?  
The maid is young, well born, fair, virtuous,  
A worthy bride for any gentleman.  
Besides, your nephew for her sake did stoop  
To bare necessity and, as I hear,  
Forgetting honours and all courtly pleasures,  
To gain her love became a shoemaker.
Beat 12 - Action: To find out.  
As for the honour which he lost in France,  
Thus I redeem it: Lacy, kneel thee down.

[LACY kneels, and KING taps him on the shoulder with a sword]

Beat 13 - Action: To demonstrate surprise with good will.  
Arise, Sir Roland Lacy. Tell me now,  
Tell me in earnest, Oatley, canst thou chide,  
Seeing thy Rose a lady and a bride?

OATLEY  
I am content with what your Grace hath done.

LINCOLN  
And I, my liege, since there's no remedy.

KING  
Come on then, all shake hands; I'll have you friends.  
Where there is much love, all discord ends.  
What says my mad Lord Mayor to all this love?

Beat 14 - Action: To demonstrate delight with good will.  
EYRE  
O, my liege, this honour you have done to my fine journeyman here, Roland Lacy, and all these favours which you have shown to me this day in my poor house, will make Simon Eyre live longer by one dozen of warm summers more than he should.

KING  
Nay, my mad Lord Mayor -that shall be thy name -  
If any grace of mine can length thy life,
One honour more I'll do thee. That new building
Which at thy cost in Cornhill is erected
Shall take a name from us, We'll have it called
The Leaden Hall*, because in digging it
You found the lead that covereth the same.

EYRE
I thank your Majesty.

MARGERY God bless your Grace.

KING
Lincoln, a word with you.

Enter HODGE, FIRK, RALPH and more shoemakers

EYRE
How now, my mad knaves! Peace, speak softly. Yonder is the King.

KING
With the old troop which there we keep in pay
We will incorporate a new supply.
Before one summer more pass o'er my head,
France shall repent England was injured.
What are all those?

LACY All shoemakers, my liege,
Sometimes* my fellows. In their companies
I lived as merry as an emperor.
KING
  My mad Lord Mayor, are all these shoemakers?

EYRE
  All shoemakers, my liege, all gentlemen of the Gentle
  Craft, true Trojans, courageous cordwainers. They all
  kneel to the shrine of holy Saint Hugh.

SHOEMAKERS
  God save your Majesty!

KING
  Mad Simon, would they anything with us?

EYRE

Beat 15 - Action: To convince with good will.

[To shoemakers] Mum, mad knaves, not a word* - I'll do't, I warrant you.
[Kneels. To King] They are all beggars, my liege, all for themselves; and I for
  Kneel. To King
  them all on both my knees do entreat that for the honour of poor Simon
  Eyre and the good of his brethren, these mad knaves, your Grace would
  vouchsafe some privilege to my new Leaden Hall, that it may be lawful for us
  to buy and sell leather there two days a week.

KING
  Mad Sim, I grant your suit. You shall have patent
  To hold two market days in Leaden Hall.
  Mondays and Fridays, those shall be the times.
  Will this content you?

ALL
  Jesus bless your Grace!
Beat 16 - Action: To demonstrate delight with good will.

EYRE
In the name of these my poor brethren shoemakers, I most humbly thank your Grace. But before I rise, seeing you are in the giving vein, and we in the begging, grant Sim Eyre one boon more.

KING
What is it, my Lord Mayor?

EYRE
Vouchsafe to taste of a poor banquet* that stands sweetly waiting for your sweet presence.

KING
I shall undo thee, Eyre, only with feasts. Already have I been too troublesome; Say, have I not?

EYRE
O my dear King, Sim Eyre was taken unawares upon a day of shroving which I promised long ago to the prentices of London.

Beat 17 - Action: To convince with good will.

For, an't please your Highness, in time past I bare the water-tankard, and my coat Sits not a whit the worse upon my back. And then upon a morning some mad boys - It was Shrove Tuesday even as 'tis now- gave me my breakfast, and I swore then by the stopple* of my tankard if ever I came to be Lord Mayor of London, I would feast all the prentices*. This

Stand
day, my liege, I did it, and the slaves had an hundred tables five times covered. They are gone home and vanished. Yet add more honour to the Gentle Trade:
Taste of Eyre's banquet, Simon's happy made.

Beat 18 - Action: To demonstrate delight with good will.

KING

Eyre, I will taste of thy banquet, and will say I have not met more pleasure on a day.
Friends of the Gentle Craft, thanks to you all.
Thanks, my kind Lady Mayoress, for our cheer.
Come, lords, a while let's revel it at home.
When all our sports and banqueting are done,
Wars must right wrongs which Frenchmen have begun.

Exeunt

FINIS

Kneel

Stand

Shake hands with King, Hug and kiss Margery, point to King and freeze

Exit SL at Blackout
This chapter included a description of my acting methodology in general and for the role of Simon Eyre in particular. I identified Constantin Stanislavski, Uta Hagen, Sanford Meisner, and Anne Bogart as the major influences of my acting technique and described their approaches to creating a character. Following with an outline of my approach to Simon Eyre, I described my process of uncovering the particularities of the man. Finally, I defined the terminology of my script analysis and blocking and used these terms to create the score of my script. Now that I’ve detailed my approach to acting, to this role, and to this script, I’m ready to document the actual rehearsal process as I set about creating the role of Simon Eyre. In Chapter Four, I will detail my many successes and failures in a comprehensive rehearsal and performance log.
CHAPTER 4

THE PROCESS: REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE LOG

Now it's time to really get my hands dirty. Rehearsal processes are unique for each show, director and ensemble. I've performed in over fifty-five educational and professional productions and the process has never been the same for any of them. It's important for me to have an open mind whenever I approach a new project. With this free spirit, I documented my experience creating Simon Eyre in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*. The following rehearsal and performance log reflects the process, from the pre-production meetings and research to the final performance and post-performance discussion with my colleagues, the ensemble and department faculty. The log is divided into six chronological categories: pre-production process, the early rehearsals (director's and designers' concepts), the working rehearsals (log of rehearsal goals, discoveries, etc.), the technical rehearsals, performance log, and summary. I recorded most of the rehearsal and performance entries on an audio tape and, as much as possible, maintained the conversational tone as transcribed directly from the tape. I'm glad I chose this approach because I learned as much, if not more, about my process from the tone of my voice as I did from what I was saying.
4.1 Pre-Production Process

April 25, 2001 - Announcement of Thesis Roles

[Note: We all met with Sue Ott Rowlands today to find out our thesis roles.] I will never forget this moment. Sue is in the middle of performing *Wit* and is very busy, as usual. It was late afternoon, so the sun was shining blindingly in Sue’s office window. She stood up in front of the window and all I could see was this halo-like silhouette of her head. With dramatic flair she said, “For your thesis role we would like you to perform . . . uh, I forget.” The moment could not have been any more anti climatic, but all we could do was laugh. She had to search through an abyss of papers before she could tell me that I will be playing Simon Eyre in *The Shoemaker’s Holiday* by Thomas Dekker. She said it is a large role. Simon Eyre is the main shoemaker and the play is a Citizen Comedy. In the next week or two, I need to submit a thesis prospectus identifying my committee. Sue or Jeanine can be the chair, then I will require at least one Department of Theatre faculty member. The other committee member can be inside or outside the department. She recommended Phoebe Spinrad, the English Professor who spoke on John Donne for *Wit*, or a Dekker specialist. I think I’ll shoot for Dr. Tom Postlewait since Elizabethan Drama is his thing. By the end of this quarter I need to have a title page, bibliography, and a calendar of deadlines. I will do my major research and writing of the research chapter over the summer. Sue wants me to have some of my chapters done before I start rehearsals. During rehearsals, I’m responsible for the scored script and rehearsal log.

98
May 14, 2001 - Meeting with Sue to compose a project calendar

I’ve asked Sue to chair my thesis committee, and happily, she has agreed. She said I could begin to think about the core question and timeline of my thesis. By June 1, the final project proposal must be to the committee. This summer I must do my research and write the first draft of the Introduction and the curriculum vitae. The project calendar we established helped to make the entire process seem a little less daunting; the deadlines are pretty spread out. I like the fact that I only need to document the process during the rehearsals; I don’t have any deadlines while we are rehearsing so that I can focus on creating the role.

For my project proposal and core question, Sue and I brainstormed a bit. Some of the ideas for my problem have to do with my tight jaw, inadequate breathing, forced voice, and effort. In the creation of this character, I need to find physical freedom and allow for the sense of humor to come through. I have to discover the richness of this humor and Eyre’s charm, while letting him carry the authority he demands. Given that my own tendency is to control impulses, the role will require me to invest in Simon Eyre’s impulsive actions to create a charming and rich human being. Eyre’s gregariousness is contrary to my tendencies. Therefore, my task is to integrate specific skills (dialect, timing, style) with natural gregariousness, which goes against my natural tendencies. Sue cautioned that too much research might put me in my head. My historical understanding of the role must be full body, not intellectual. Ultimately, I need to use the skills I’ve honed at OSU to address challenges and counter my tendencies.
June 6, 2001 - Meeting with Dr. Tom Postlewait to discuss historical research

Dr. Postlewait made several points about Renaissance England, Thomas Dekker, The Shoemaker’s Holiday, and Simon Eyre. Culture is mobile for the first time and merchants have more power over the city. An extended family relationship exists among shoemakers, who would have decided very early what guild or craft they would follow. Craftsmen have the ability to “wheel and deal” because the culture is more capitalistic than ever in what some scholars call the “Beginning of the Modern World.” There is empowerment in owning a craft. The workers Puritan background rewards individualism. They can now negotiate their level of class. The Shoemaker’s Holiday is a dream version of class mobility. Shakespeare’s Falstaff is like Simon Eyre, an appeal to a new urbanite. The volatile, more mobile culture in the 1590s led to economic unrest.

Dr. Postlewait offered the following suggestions to occupy the stage as Simon Eyre: have the sense of the man in his element, find the relationship with his wife (women have more independence, and success equals a good relationship with one’s wife), and focus on the character and relationships. Is Simon pompous? Does he have self-irony? How you wear your clothes or banner is vital to your community. Celebration and validation are an important aspect of this society. Head in a “hit or miss” way about what this type of man is like. Dekker lived in the city and loved it. Simon Eyre equals Thomas Dekker. What if it all worked out and the king had to bow to you? Read the Falstaff plays and watch them.
Summer 2001

My research this summer has focused on Thomas Dekker, Simon Eyre and the history of the Gentle Craft. I began by reading the introductions and appendixes to Anthony Parr’s and J.B. Steane’s editions of the play. Both were helpful, but Steane included a great article which provided detailed information about St. Hugh, the Gentle Craft, Simon Eyre and the phrase “Prince am I none, but am I nobly born.” This led me to read my favorite primary source, which was Dekker’s source for The Shoemaker’s Holiday. The Gentle Craft by Thomas Deloney, an account of the many adventures St. Hugh, St. Crispine and St. Crispianus, Simon Eyre, Richard Casteler, Master Peachey and His Men, and the Green King of St. Martin’s. This celebration of the craft of shoemaking was a joy to read. It paints a vivid portrait of the life and amour-propre of the gentlemen shoemakers. The Gentle Craft became a springboard for much of my character work. I also read much of The Theatrical City and Citizen Comedy in the Age of Shakespeare, two books recommended to me by Dr. Postlewait. For character ideas, I watched a video of a production of The Merry Wives of Windsor and studied Falstaff. I eventually concluded that Simon Eyre is only part Falstaff. My three main ingredients for Simon Eyre source work will be Falstaff, Henry V, and Fezziwig.

Sunday, October 21, 2001 - The General Auditions

The general auditions! Whoa. I used a new piece tonight . . . some people love Mamet, some don’t . . . I’ve never done a Mamet piece for an audition, so I thought I’d give it a whirl. One, an A/B scene included in a collection of Mamet studio scenes, is all about finding and playing the actions of the pauses. Mamet is the master of the ellipse, and
this piece helped me in my vocal work with Maureen Ryan. I’m not sure yet how it works for an audition. Sue said it was very confusing, which is appropriate, because it is. The piece becomes about being very specific about each action. I did the piece well though and followed it by one of my favorite classics, Gratiano from The Merchant of Venice. I was attempting to show the range of sociopath to classical comic relief. I need to get more feedback. I watched a section of the auditions after mine and was impressed with the professional and supportive, yet removed atmosphere by the auditors. The auditors obviously wanted the actors to feel comfortable, but were removed, behaving in an non-biased, non-judgemental way. The vibes were positive, not negative.

October 22, 2001 - Meeting with Sue

Sue encouraged me to e-mail Jon Farris, the director, to touch base with him and to get any cuts, research ideas, etc. The auditions are October 21st from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm and callbacks are October 28, 6 - 9 pm. Sue reminded me about the use of tense in my thesis. Production information should be in the past tense, and discussion about Dekker and/or the play should be in the present tense.

October 28, 2001 - Callbacks

Dance Call (Observations): 40 guys are learning the Morris Dance from Nena Couch. The Morris Dance will be for the scene in Lord Mayor’s House. The women are learning a country dance (Circle Dance). The girls are much more graceful.
6:00: Readings for Oatley and Lincoln. Is it more important to read well or show character awareness? Talking and listening seem so important. It’s less important to read well . . . listening and reacting is clearer to me. What a chore for Jon to remember all these names. Jon removes himself. He is friendly, yet efficient. Is he cutting people or just doing different readings?

6:20: Readings for women. Jon arranged them alphabetically. Talking and listening is so important, rather than reading. Knowing how to connect phrases and ideas seems important. Showing familiarity with the scene really helps you stand out. Jon asked for the hard R, lower class for Sybil. I think Jon is cutting actors as he goes.

6:40: Readings (continued). Jon’s giving occasional directing notes to see if they can make the adjustments and intention choices. He cuts people and then asks others to take in intention notes.

7:30: Great discussion with Jenn and Jeremy about auditioning and trying to read Jon’s dry wit.

4.2. The Early Rehearsals: Director’s Concept

January 7, 2002 - First Afternoon Rehearsal/Class

Jon Farris wasn’t here today. He won’t be until Thursday, so we met with Sue. We discussed scheduling and future audition information. Jon had us get together in pairs and read through for clarity, taking turns reading each other’s cue lines. Really helped me to forget the dialect and just read it for clarity, concentrating on the punctuation, the alliteration and the assonance . . . trying not to act as I’m reading for clarity. It’s always tempting to do that the first time . . . the temptation of wanting to create a character
before the character is ready to be created. We made a lot of progress on that today. It helped me to slow down. Carie and Jenn were very helpful in reminding me when I was mixing up words and reading too fast. Helpful rehearsal today.

**Wednesday, January 9, 2002 - Afternoon Class**

I rehearsed with Jonathan today in the afternoon class. We ran through all the lines again; this time I incorporated dialect. After listening to several sound samples, Cockney dialect samples online . . . *Eastenders*, and (upon Maureen Ryan’s recommendation) *Alfie* with Micheal Caine. I’ve got an article about the Cockney dialect to read, and I need to read an article Phil Thompson gave me about the history of the Cockney dialect, with examples from *The Shoemaker’s Holiday*, in order to come up with my best guess of what the dialect would be for Simon Eyre. I also want to coordinate with Mo and Jon on this. But the read-through went really well with Jon today. I have a sense of the rhythm. There is a rhythm written into the language. I think I’m one step closer to finding clarity of dialogue plus dialect. The first full read-through is tomorrow night.

(Continued) I’m reading through the play again, and some of the footnotes that I’ve pasted in my script from both the Steane edition and the Parr, and I’m struck by the sense of community and civic duty in this play that seems to be missing from contemporary plays. There is such a sense of responsibility to one and all. Although every man was a self-made man and had to work for himself, he had to remember where he had come from. There are so many mentions of buildings and Leadenhall . . . and contributing back to society. It shows that Dekker really felt a responsibility to London. I mean, he
loved London and criticized it with ease. The play has a “happy go lucky” feeling at the end, but not until everyone admits that “with love, all discord ends,” as the king says. It’s beautiful.

January 10, 2002 - First Rehearsal - Read Through with Maureen Ryan

The paperwork... .

Mo’s not sure about dialect, yet. She says if Shakespeare doesn’t use a dialect, why would Dekker? Based on the article I got from Phil, which I read last night, I disagree. I gave the article to Mo. I believe there are several Cockney references (Margery more than Eyre) but both share Cockney roots. Eyre has an urban, East London background, which is where he met his wife, and I think the textual cues are there for the Cockney. We’ll talk more about it with Jon tomorrow and this weekend.

It went well tonight. Jon wasn’t there. Mo was sitting in for him. Jon should be in class tomorrow. We still have a schedule for this weekend. He’s going to work with us in individual appointments, which will be helpful. The read-through went well. Everybody has a general sense of the story. When we get into the more obscure historical references, everyone seemed to struggle as I did when I was working on those areas. I thought the clarity of what I was saying went well. I really concentrated on talking and listening, identifying who I was talking to in each scene. I threw in a little bit of the dialect. The big challenge I have, even if this is just the first read-through, is that the Cockney, with all the glottal stops and drops and the diphthongs, tends to live in my throat. For some reason, I’m holding a lot of tension in my throat. Usually most of the
tension is in my jaw, and some in my throat, but I've got to be very careful and find a way
to place this dialect without letting it destroy my vocal cords.

Again, today's read-through went well and I look forward to the class work
tomorrow. I think my next step is continuing to do some research about the dialect. I
need to scan the script this weekend and write my methodology to be more specific, about
Simon Eyre. Talking to Jon will be helpful.

Friday, January 11, 2002 - Afternoon Class

Today we met with Jon and went over the Hammon speech (when Hammon is
looking at Jane). We went through line by line and scanned the text and talked about
keeping the delivery, the pitch, the same. Any time you want to pick up iambic
pentameter, it helps to keep your pitch pretty narrow, instead of trying to vary your pitch
too much. It helps for clarity of meaning. The same thing goes for prose.

Jon also talked about the following definitions of mood forms in English: The
subjunctive mood is used for expressing conditions contrary to fact, i.e. "If I were you?"
The indicative mood is investigative, "Whether she knows me." The imperative mood is
urgent, "Be quiet." Jon addressed literary issues with prose, inflections, phrasing and
antithesis: Pitch drops are for important words. Don't stress personal pronouns. In
prose, rhythms are not respected as much and not as a regular structured rhythm.
Phrasing is the rhythm of phrases. You can slow down to "point up." Antithesis is
grouping similar points together that have opposite meanings.
Saturday, January 12, 2002 - Rehearsal (Individual Appointments)

Today I scanned the rest of my scored script. I met with Jon at 3:30. We didn’t meet very long. We talked a little bit about the Cockney dialect issue. He said that Cockney is very hard to understand on stage. He recommended a book on tape for me to pick up at the library to get an idea of a North Country English dialect, which basically has a lot of diphthongs and hard r’s. As well, it doesn’t have so many glottal stops.

We went through Eyre’s speech to the king in the final scene and talked about the fact that Eyre is bigger than life, all the things I’ve already written about in my research chapter. Another thing that he really made clear to me is that Eyre’s side talk, the “throw away language, is very small . . . not very big at all. I have to concentrate on throwing the “Peace Firk” and the “pishery-pashery” away, and get to the main part of the sentence, keeping the main idea in the same pitch range. We don’t have rehearsal again until Monday.

Monday, January 14, 2002 - Afternoon Class

Jon asked me to identify lists in Eyre’s speeches. How am I going to handle them? Do they sound alike or are they unique? Am I saying a grocery list or pointing out individual examples? Eyre has many lists. This will take a while.

Monday, January 14, 2002 - Rehearsal - First Read-Through with Jon

Jon spent some time working on an iambic pentameter review and spent a lot of time talking about phrasing: playing in the same pitch range until you get to the end of a line, and then dropping it in order to provide continuity of thought through the line. So
not only are you conscious of the verse, but you’re playing the point of a line through to
the end of the line, not putting in so many variations of pitch. If you vary the pitch too
much, you confuse the audience. In iambic pentameter, the point usually comes at the end
of the line. The read-through went much better than the first one with Mo. I felt
comfortable with the dialogue and the dialect. I’m still pushing a little bit vocally, but my
voice is not as tired tonight. I’m finding a happy medium between a Cockney and North
Country English dialect, with harder r’s and fewer glottal stops, but with some of the
Cockney diphthongs still in there. During the reading tonight, Jon told me not to push too
hard, even though the character is flamboyant and colorful, to take it easy and just read for
meaning. At the end of the rehearsal tonight, he said that for long verbal expressions I
should use a more common expression and apply the same music of that common
expression to one that’s longer in the play. For example, use the same musicality of the
line “Where the hell is everybody?” in a line from the play that has many more words.
(“Where be these boys, these girls, these drabs, these scoundrels?”)

Some other notes from Jon: Say re-VEN-ue, instead of RE-venue. Warm-up my
c consonants. Drill the sense of the lines. Have something to practice everyday. This is
something I remember Sue saying . . . that Jon, when he was working on King Lear, ran
through the show, or a good portion of the show, everyday.

Something else I thought of tonight . . . Simon Eyre reminds me of the Ghost of
Christmas Present in Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol, particularly the movie version
with George C. Scott playing Scrooge.
Tuesday, January 15, 2002 - Rehearsal

I just completed a one-on-one rehearsal with Jon from about 9:50 pm to 10:40 pm. It was very valuable rehearsal time. We started chatting about his day and the stresses at Denison University, and then we started working on some of Eyre’s speeches. He said he was trying to pinpoint a problem during the read-through, what was bothering his ear. He said that so many people, when they’re trying to hush some one up, they do it under their breath. Simon Eyre seems to be the kind of person who proclaims his “shut ups” to everyone, almost reveling in doing so. It is almost like he’s showing off by directing, by giving orders. We worked on two different speeches. The first was the speech in scene seventeen, where Eyre says, “Why, my sweet Lady Madgy, think you Simon Eyre can forget his fine dutch journeyman?” We talked about the different choices in that he’s always interrupting himself. The “no vah” is a throw away. The “fie I scorn it” is a new thought like, “I can’t believe it.” I need to drive this point home. We talked about playing through each of those individual moment-to-moment actions. For the speech in scene one, (“I am Simon Eyre, the mad shoemaker of Tower Street. This wench with the mealy mouth that will never tire is my wife I can tell you. Here’s Hodge, my man and my foreman. Here’s Firk, my fine firking journeyman. And this is blubbered Jane.”), each of these moments needs to be specific. I’m discovering how I’m announcing every one of them. I can play with the moments, and use the verse tools for this prose.

Some notes from Jon: “Words are decoration for the action.” Take the time to make discoveries to frame the actions. Do something to interrupt myself with every speech. It’s different from “framing.” What is your action? Another action interrupts whatever you’re saying. The words are just there. Avoid the high energy of “Monty
Pythonisms.” Look for ways to find the up and down music of the text and look for ways to find the rhythmic patterns to play through the end of the line. To keep myself from rushing in the beginning rehearsal stage when I’m playing general actions, smile a lot. Because Simon Eyre is a really jolly man, the smiling may be a natural choice and maybe by smiling, I can find whatever choice I’m trying to make.

Jon said his work on the Lady Bracknell speech in the CATCO production of The Importance of Being Earnest reminds him of the struggles I’m having with Eyre’s speeches. The inflection of a line cannot be so up and down . . . it’s not that varied. One has to keep the same inflection until the end of a line for clarity.

Wednesday, January 16, 2002 - Meeting with Mo about Dialect

This was a good day for a lot of reasons. Mo recommended a BBC Video by John Barton of the Royal Shakespeare Company called “Speaking Verse - Shakespeare.” They use a North Country hard r with diphthongs. We started to make a phonetic list that is tied to the period. We came up with a pretty good vowel and consonant list for Simon Eyre and his shoemakers.

Wednesday, January 16, 2002 - Afternoon Rehearsal/Class

I tried on my fat suit today. It’s Carney Grey’s fat suit from The Hostage, which brought back a lot of memories. I was looking online to find geographical references to Tower Street, Fleet Street, etc. . . . couldn’t find very much at all. There were just tourism web sites. I talked to Julia Weiss about it and she said she had a book that she was letting Adam West, the costume designer, borrow. It’s a historical atlas of London.
There are a whole bunch of historical maps, and there is even a section that refers directly to Simon Eyre. Very interesting. I’ll be able to get an idea of where all the cordwainers and their buildings were: Leadenhall, St. Paul’s Cathedral, Ludgate, etc.

Notes from class today: A comparative inflection compares two phrases which are similar, but with one difference. Inflection is a pitch change that lends meaning (“To be or not to be”). “I mean it, I really mean it.” Something similar, but slightly different. You can’t compare apples and oranges because they are not similar enough. Repeat the thing we want to compare with inflection. Don’t use comparative inflections thoughtlessly. (Example: Last four lines of the Gettysburg Address) Look for places where you are using a comparative inflection. Choose the word you’re comparing and reflect it. “When you use too many bright inflections, you fracture the phrase, rather than keeping it whole.” Phrases must be shaped simply.

Wednesday, January 16, 2002 - Rehearsal

We worked for a while with Jeremy, Donald, Mike Holmes, Jenn and I on scene four. We read through it several times and identified the important and difficult lists. We also found the parentheticals. Jon encouraged us to find one bright inflection per sentence. In the first speech of scene four, Jon gave me several notes. “Where be these boys, these girls” is a clean or good will comparison. “These drabs, these scoundrels” is a dirty or bad will comparison. There are two points being made in the next sentence (“They wallow in the fat brewis of my bounty and lick up the crumbs of my table, but will not rise to see my walks cleansed”) and the third phrase is the point to which the entire sentence is leading. “. . . you fat midriff swag belly whores” is parenthetical. “What
Hodge?” means “How Hodge?” When I say, “Come out you fat midriff swag belly whores,” it’s like saying, “Come out, you guys.” Jon says it is helpful to find a more contemporary way of saying the text. Memorize the inflection of the contemporary line and use the same inflection for the old text. Later in the scene, “Peace Firk. A hard world. Let him pass, let him vanish. Peace, my fine Firk” is relaxed. It’s no big deal when Lacy comes in at first, but it becomes a bigger deal as Hodge and Firk threaten to leave if I don’t hire Lacy. I’m busy hushing Margery and convincing my men to stay. Today, I’m going to read a little more of the historical atlas of London.

4.3 The Early Rehearsals: Design Concepts

Thursday, January 17, 2002 - Rehearsal and Design Presentations

Jim Hutchinson didn’t have a lighting design ready yet. He is looking to Renaissance paintings for ideas. He said he wants to make it look like we are using natural or historically accurate light sources, since we wouldn’t have electricity, only candles or sunlight. Carla’s set design is amazing. There are so many different practical entrances, doors and windows. Simon Eyre’s shop comes out on a cart in the up center of the stage. It’s a very functional set. The production will set the play in the Tudor age, so I’m becoming familiar with that architecture. Adam West’s costume design is loyal to the play and the Tudor period in which we are setting it. He makes a clear indication between the classes: the handicraftsmen and servants are wearing earth tones and the bourgeoisie are in bright, fancy colors. I like the change in Margery and Simon’s costumes when they come into some money. The rich scarlet and royal blue will be fun contrasts to our still earthy nature.
The blocking is going well. Jon is giving practical suggestions in terms of making
crosses with an arc rather than a straight line. Pretty standard stuff. He is also reminding
us to have our torsos facing different directions, rather than standing in a line facing the
same way. Jon guides us through the movement choices, sometimes offering suggestions.
Right now we are blocking the scenes one night (one through four tonight) and then
running them for the first part of the next rehearsal. Then we continue blocking.

Friday, January 18, 2002 - Rehearsal

Rehearsal was pretty rough tonight . . . kind of like going to the dentist. It was the
second blocking rehearsal. We almost got through scene nine. When we ran scenes one
through four, I was pushing because of lack of action and not knowing what the hell I was
doing. Way too much comedy . . . way to cartoony . . . it was a caricature. It’s too early
for character work. I just need to calm down and play it more deadpan, for now. Let the
discoveries come when I get off the script. So, I think that will be the trick. Just
remember that it’s a five-week process and everything’s going to be fine. Jon’s words of
wisdom tonight: “Say the meaning.”

Saturday, January 19, 2002 - Rehearsal

It was a lot easier today to say the meaning instead of performing what I’m saying
and making it something that it’s not. The blocking went well today.
Monday, January 21, 2002 - Rehearsal

Today we reviewed scenes ten through twelve and blocked thirteen through sixteen. So, I only had a short time to rehearse. When I did read in scene ten and scene eleven, Jon noticed the effort I was making to keep Simon Eyre honest and to quit varying the pitch for no reason, which misleads the audience from the meaning. It’s now a matter of finding sincerity and excitement without varying the pitch too much.

Jon’s general suggestions: In a series of things to say, invent different reasons for speaking the next sentence. When a line is interrupted,inhale before you begin to say the line that is interrupted. Keep the line “... gold chain for Simon Eyre ...” on the same pitch.

Tuesday, January 22, 2002 - Rehearsal

We blocked scene seventeen and part of eighteen. There is a lot of stuff going on in scene seventeen. It’s about keeping Lacy calmed down, getting Rose and him prepared, and boasting that I can defend his marriage to Rose. I’m making it clear to Madge that all the things she’s wearing as well as my position as Lord Mayor are a direct result of Lacy’s loan. This is the important key argument here; I have to stand up for him.

I’m beginning to get off book for the first scene. It’s a slow process. I’ve decided to memorize the lines and then to discover the objective, obstacles, and moment-to-moment actions.
Wednesday, January 23, 2002 - Rehearsal

We finished blocking the show tonight. Pretty rough sketch . . . but we have a lot to work with. I’m getting an idea of how to bring a little more character work to Simon Eyre, without making him too flamboyant. There is not a lilt to his dialect. It is more calm and matter-of-fact . . . getting the point across is my main goal. It’s fun and interesting to contrast the mannerisms of Simon and Margery Eyre with the behavior of the King. They try to act proper, but Simon couldn’t take it, so he has to act “improper” or more like himself. Now it’s about learning the lines and playing around with the actions and objectives, and then really clamping down on them and making some choices. I want to get completely off book for the first scene by tomorrow, which is a full run-through.

4.4 The Working Rehearsals

Thursday, January 24, 2002 - First Run-Through

I have several pages of notes for the run, which went very well. Jon said he was impressed with what we have so far. General Observations: No wandering. Use slow and deliberate crosses and find quick crosses. Choose specific reasons for the moves. Find intentions and fast crosses. Specify actions. (Starting Monday, I really need to be off script for each scene we’re working.)

Text coaching with Jon: Pick five or six long sentences where phrasing is important and drill them. Over-inflection will destroy the sense of the phrase. Don’t ask questions with inflections of introductory clauses. “When we get to rehearsal tomorrow night? wear your costume.” Don’t do that. Make it a command. Don’t use comparative inflections inappropriately. Comedy depends on timing. Find the pause before the punch.
Don’t do funny things for the sake of being funny. Beware of the comic Nazi. Jon won’t give notes more than three times.

“Prince am I none” (one level) “yet am I princely born” (second level). Use controlled energy, because the exclamation is implied. Focus exclamations through the line. Look for little expressions that I’m not familiar with and find the familiarity. Try to specify the meaning of little phrases and actions. It’s about learning the lines and being more specific. It’s an exiting stage . . . a time to play, a time to experiment and a time to do a lot of work.

Monday, January 28, 2002 - Afternoon Class

Worked with Jenn and Jonathan on the sense of our exchanges and then discussed them with Jon. Jon said that it’s important to go through each line and ask yourself, “Why do I say this, instead of something else. Why do I choose to say each line?”

Monday, January 28, 2002 - Rehearsal

Jon urged us to go through the script and clarify the plot points. It’s way more important for the audience to get the plot points than it is for them to see a character or hear a dialect. Scene seven is very important in particular for this reason, because it explains the plot about Simon Eyre taking care of the Skipper and gaining the merchandise to sell in London. I was off book tonight to work scenes one, four, and seven. I have a tendency to push vocally when I’m not sure what I’m doing. I tend to hide behind the character to mask the fact that I don’t feel confident about my actions or my lines. Tonight was all about correcting some blocking issues.
Specific notes: When I take Ralph for “Here’s five sixpences for thee,” I need to bring him down stage of Margery. Bring him down stage center. After the end of this speech on “Crack ‘em, by the Lord of Ludgate, crack ‘em. Fight my fine boy, fight,” move him down stage right and step back, rather than just backing upstage, so that Firk and Hodge have a chance to donate to his cause.

One of the major issues in this process that I was talking about at dinner tonight with Naomi, Carie, and Regina is that it’s difficult to define actions when you’re sitting in a chair opposite Jon. He’s asking you to play active inflections in the lines when you’re not doing anything and you’re not engaging with another person. It’s a very different approach to text work. I appreciate the attention to textual detail in terms of the verse and the meaning, however it’s hard for me to find actions when I’m sitting and trying to make those actions clear. Jon has a very distinct idea of how he thinks the play should sound and it’s almost as if he’s trying to recreate his idea of what the sound should be, instead of us finding it by reacting to another person. In a way, it’s almost unnatural. It’s a different process and I’m not judging it yet, but it’s just going to take me awhile to get used to it. I see the point that he’s making to clarify meaning for the audience by being clear with the inflections we choose, but it seems to contradict the very title of my thesis, “Finding the Impulsive Self: Creating Simon Eyre in The Shoemaker’s Holiday.”

Tonight, Jon asked me to review the introduction of our edition of the play regarding the opening speech for scene four, “Where be these boys, these girls . . .” He said the inflection should be equivalent to the expression, “Where is everybody?” It’s a question. Where are they? And I need to make the line, “Come out, you fat midriff swag belly whores, and sweep me these kennels” an order instead of a whine.
With “Where’s Cicely Bumtrinkel?,” I really need to discover that moment. I must define the moment for “She has a privy fault. She farts in her sleep.” Why do I share that and who do I share it with? I think I share it with Hodge and Firk, but why do I bring that up? Jon also said that “I’ll swinge her in a stirrup” is a real threat, and is what brings me down the steps.

It really became apparent to me that it’s not only about what actions I’m playing but about what directions I’m giving to people. Who am I ordering? Eyre is constantly giving orders. Scene seven was a little weak toward the end with the lines, so I have some work to do on it.

When Firk and Hodge threaten to leave in scene four, I need to be down stage left. We really need to concentrate on opening the space. We’re being pulled up stage, because of the set design, which forces us to think that we need to live in the shoe shop. We need to resist that and open up down stage.

A really difficult plot point to make clear is on “Hodge, I’ll go through with it.” I’ll go ahead and take the money, and put on this costume and talk to the Skipper. I have only one line to make this clear: “Here’s a seal ring, and I’ve sent for a guarded gown and a damask cassock.” That’s a big challenge which we’re going to have to meet.

Wednesday, January 30, 2002 - Afternoon Class

We worked on clarity and connection in interchanges between Eyre and the King in scene twenty-one. I need to really work on the “So my dear liege” speech. Eyre is getting excited and opening his mouth before he thinks. Using RP is a choice, but it needs to be more than that. Saying that I’m going to put the king’s image “cheek by jowl by St.
Hugh” is a crude image for the king. I have to have something to apologize for (“I beseech your grace, pardon my rude behavior”). It’s about finding something there that makes it seem like rude behavior. The speech is thanking him for his favor; we’ll remember him by setting his image next to St. Hugh, our patron saint. In the same way that you have honored us, we will honor you by thinking you equal with St. Hugh.

Jon says that strong phrasing is very important in “My liege, a very boy, a stripling, a younker.” He pointed out the younker is not like some place in New York, it’s younker as in younger. “You see not a white hair on my head, not a gray in this beard . . .” I get off on a tangent here and don’t answer his question about my age. It’s important to find the key phrases in this section.

In the line, “My liege, I am six and fifty year old, yet I can cry hump with a sound heart . . .” there are a lot of sexual implications there. “I am lusty still, Sim Eyre still.” The first expression implies the first time that Eyre and Margery consummated; the second confirms that he can still do it. The “care and cold lodgings” line is an afterthought. “Prince am I none, but am I princely born,” is an apology because I’ve been talking about some pretty crude subject material with the King.

Wednesday, January 30, 2002 - Rehearsal

We worked on scenes ten and eleven. Mo said that the come (coom) sound is one I really need to work on. I’m in that awkward stage right now where I’m thinking about the memory of the lines more than anything else, so it’s pretty much an outline. I’m still trying to cover it up with a caricature of Eyre. It seems sloppy. But I’m starting to get Jon’s idea of phrasing more clearly. It’s a different approach for me, kind of backwards. I
usually use an action to inform my phrases. But I see what he’s doing. When you watch any professional Shakespearean production or a Kenneth Branagh film, the tempo, the phrases, and the intonations they use are very similar to what Jon is going for. These things help to give the play flow and because there are so many words, the lines have to have a certain lilt to be understood.

In scene eleven, the main note that I have is for “When I go to the Guildhall, I’ll look as demurely as a saint and speak as gravely as a justice of the peace.” I need to do Eyre’s best imitation of those saints and justices. The “flip flap” the “fooleries and gulleries,” are making fun of the proper mannerisms the Lord Mayor is using and Margery is attempting to do. I need to find a reason to give council to Rose and interrupt Margery. It’s interesting that Oatley wants us to talk to Rose. He wants us to encourage her to marry a “down home” guy. Remember to say courtier, not courtiay.

Mo cautioned me to keep Simon Eyre out of my throat. It’s really about doing the Feldenkrais and Linklater warm-up. I need to do this, so Simon Eyre can live in my belly. The belly is where he lives and from where he thinks. When I’m rehearsing the lines on my own, I don’t feel this pressure to put the lines in my throat. So, I just need to relax.

Thursday, January 31, 2002 - Rehearsal

We worked on scene seventeen tonight. It was a very quick run-through. I was not off book. It’s important to remember in the speech, “Why my sweet Lady Madgy, think you Simon Eyre can forget his fine Dutch journeyman,” that this is a joyous speech, a proclamation of thanksgiving for Lacy’s generosity. It has to be positive. “No, vah. Fie I scorn it,” is positive. The only negative in the entire speech is, “Tis trash, trumpery
vanity,” which is an aside to Lacy. I have to really avoid getting sucked into playing the negatives. Simon Eyre is a nice guy. He’s giving Lacy and Rose fatherly endearments that one would give to a son or daughter. The first speech, “Away with these ifs and ans, Hans . . .” is “don’t worry about it.” That’s the kind of feeling that it has. The comedy in this scene is that I keep interrupting them with new thoughts. They want to go, they want to get married, and I keep interrupting them with new opinions and new thoughts. I’m the only one keeping them, and then I say, “Well, what are you doing here? Go!”

The line, “let masters care,” means, “let the masters worry.” The apprentices won’t have a care at all because they’re going to pray for Simon Eyre . . . they’re going to have fun. The masters can worry about their business on this day. So, I have a lot of work to do on this scene.

I’m starting to feel a little overwhelmed with the task at hand. Simon Eyre is very simple, so the simpler I can keep my work on him, the better.

Friday, February 1, 2002 - Dialect Session with Mo and Mike Holmes

Mo, Mike and I are trying to get Hodge (Mike) and myself (Eyre) to have a similar sound. These main vowel substitutions are in words like: house, queen, time, ought, stuff.

Friday, February 1, 2002 - Afternoon Class

Notes: The music of the line will carry the sense more strongly than the words will. Stay ahead of the audience, moment to moment, by doing things that are not expected. Don’t do everything the way it’s implied. Surprise the audience; keep it interesting. Do
sudden movements with specific impulses. It forces you to be more specific. Create
“selective suddenness.”

Friday, February 1, 2002 - Rehearsal

We worked scenes eighteen through twenty-one. I didn’t get on until very late, so
I had some good time to memorize. I worked a lot on scene twenty. Scene seventeen is
giving me a little bit of trouble, and I need to go back to it. Scene twenty requires so
much action and energy. Again, I have to concentrate on playing the positive with Simon
Eyre; it’s so easy to get sucked into playing the negative. The best example of this is my
big curse of Margery at the end of scene twenty (“Away you Islington Whitepot”). I need
to find ways to joke around with this speech to keep it positive, and to make sure that it is
an argument defending my ego, yet also, a fun rant. I also need to make direct commands
in scene twenty, and avoid using upwards, weak inflections.

In scene twenty-one, there needs to be a crowd reaction after we find out that the
king has pardoned Lacy. I found a really good beginning for, “So my dear liege . . . ,”
when I find out that Lacy’s been pardoned. It is helpful to go up and pat the King on the
back and tweak his cheek or something, and then apologize after that for the rude
behavior. For “I’ll be as merry as a pie,” I can laugh and try to continue, but the King
stops me with “Tell me, i’faith Eyre, how old thou art.” The next speech is full of very
strong phrasing. It’s also full of afterthoughts. Many of Eyre’s speeches work better
when I recognize the afterthoughts. It’s what some people call “framing.” Eyre says one
point, and then he thinks of something else, which causes him to ramble. Example: “You
see not a white hair on my head, (beat - new thought) not a gray in this beard, (beat - new
thought) every hair, I assure thy majesty, that sticks in this beard, Sim Eyre values at the King of Babylon’s ransom, (beat - new thought) Tamar Cham’s beard was a rubbing brush to’t, (beat - new thought) yet I’ll shave it off and stuff tennis balls with it to please my bully king.” Yet, I still haven’t answered the King’s original question about my age.

When, I start the next speech, I finally tell him, but I stop after “I am six and fifty year old.” I have an impulse, a new thought, “Yet I can cry ‘hump,’” I’m very lusty still. “Sim Eyre, still.” I’m virile still and I take great pride in it. He constantly comes up with different ways to celebrate his virility, particularly in this speech.

There needs to be a general murmur when Lacy kneels and the King taps him on the shoulder. Maybe we think that he’s going to decapitate him. We also need to react when the King remarries Lacy and Rose. “How now my mad knaves!” is a greeting. I’m really glad to see them, but I catch myself when I say, “Peace. Speak softly. Yonder is the King.”

I really need to work this last speech. It’s hard. It’s one of the few of Eyre’s speeches with verse. “Oh, my dear liege, Sim Eyre was taken unawares upon a day of shroving . . .” This entire speech needs to be carefully crafted.

Saturday, February 2, 2002 - Second Full Run

I had about 75% of the play off book. I have a lot more memorization work to do, but in particular, I need to find more impulses for sudden moves, sudden actions, to keep these scenes interesting.
Notes: Avoid the cop out inflection. Don’t raise the end of sentences as if asking a question. This is a very American way of speaking. In scene one, “I’ll get thy husband discharged . . .” is a promise. I was whiny today. Cheer lead, encourage, and order.

“Where be these boys, these girls . . .” means, “Where are they?” Just ask honestly. It’s a joyful speech, yet it’s also literal. Eyre is a good business man and he wants to get to work, but not in a negative way. It’s a very positive speech. What does the audience have to know? Remember plot points. Make deliberate and energetic choices. Work the rhythms of these lines as I memorize. Eyre enjoys saying “Cry hump!” Say it with non-verbal flair. Eyre probably said it a lot as a youth, as well. Also, enjoy “. . . not a white hair on my head.”

It was a good run for a second run. My head was heavy; I had a headache. I’m trying to cram so much information. Simon Eyre is very impulsive, but I’m giving very direct orders, very direct commands. I need to know exactly what I’m doing. I need to go through this script moment, to moment-to-moment and be specific about each of the actions. Almost every sentence has a different intention and these intentions will inform my actions on stage, the inflections of my lines, and the development of the character.

Monday, February 4, 2002 - Rehearsal

Jon asked me to read the introduction to our edition of the play again, particularly the section about Simon Eyre being an efficient businessman. I am jolly, but that can become tiresome very quickly, just having a jolly old elf. It’s important to distinguish the fact that I seek wealth and do want to get work done, particularly at the top of scene four in the speech, “Where be these boys, these girls . . . .”
I found some good moments tonight in scene one ("Leave whining, leave whining...") When I come back to Jane, I reassure her and promise her. "I warrant thee, Sweet Jane. I'll get thy husband discharged. Go to." Then there is a build-up with everyone shouting and making noise, "Peace Hodge, husht ye knave, husht." And then I stop Firk, "Peace, my fine Firk, peace. Stand by with your pishery-pashery, away."

Tuesday, February 5, 2002 - Rehearsal

We worked on scene nine. I'm only in for the one moment with Oatley and Scott. It's important for me to laugh at Oatley's address, "Master Eyre," and make sure that he knows that I want him to call me, "Poor Simon Eyre, my lord, your shoemaker." "I would not care, my lord, if you might call me 'King of Spain,'" is very jovial, very comfortable.

Scene seven. Wow. I was talking to Jeremy tonight... scene seven is a paint by number scene. We need to totally paint a picture, moment to moment, for the audience. Jon really focused on finding all of the plot points tonight, because there are so many of them. Dekker rushed right past the fact that Eyre makes all this money from this shady deal with the Skipper. There is very little time in this scene to make that clear to the audience. We are literally painting pictures with gestures, and referring to people, places, and the money. Jon gave me a compliment tonight. He said it was a painful rehearsal, yet the work that I've been doing is really paying off and it's showing in the character work. I thanked him, and told him that I reread that article I mentioned earlier, where it refers to Eyre in scene four as a businessman, not just a jolly old elf.
I need to laugh more at the top of scene twenty because it’s so important to remind myself to play the positive when bitching out Margery. At the same time, I must keep my shoemakers jovial. I must find a reason to remain upstairs for the first part of “stay my fine knaves,” because it opens up the blocking more. Remember to convince Firk and Hodge that I will not tolerate Margery’s rude behavior. Squeeze Hodge’s face when I say, “Look, you powder beef queen, on the face of Hodge.” I’m starting to get the sense of the moment when I send the boy for beer on, “An’ the knave fills more than two, he pays for them.” We still need to find the punchline and the clarity here. The blocking, right after that moment, on “Here, you mad Mesopotamians,” was still messy. I clarified “Defile not thy fine workmanly fingers . . . ,” as Jon requested, by putting an action with it. I’m really proving to Hodge and Firk that I’m going to treat them right. So, I take that terrible shoe of Sybil’s which would defile Firk’s fingers, treating it like trash, and tell them to let Hans work on it. After “Peace Firk. Silence, tittle-tattle,” I really need to stop and decide before I say, “Hodge, I’ll go through with it.”

Clap my hands to request the guarded gown and damask cassock, indicate the seal ring, then start changing my clothes into the alderman clothes. Now, it’s all about the business of getting ready before the skipper arrives. Stop getting ready on “. . . wearing thread bare my garments.” Pose and say, “How do I look, my fine Hodge.” Margery and I have our exchanges where we admire the clothing, then I have to look proper because the merchant is coming. We all scramble to get ready, then boom, the epitome of excellence. We exit the scene in this manner.
Wednesday, February 6, 2002 - Rehearsal

Jon says, “The subject of the communication is more important than caring about communicating.” Inexperienced actors have a tendency to over-express a phrase like, “I really care,” with many up and down inflections. It is much easier to understand, “I really care,” when it uses a stable inflection. Much like phrasing in music, it makes more sense and has more umph.

Thursday, February 7, 2002 - Rehearsal

In scene ten, we need to spread out and use the space. Jon drilled the line, “Here’s a French hood for thee,” with me tonight. A perfect example of rolling trippingly on the tongue, it does no good to make the French hood sound like the Holy Grail. I’m actually hiding the French hood from Margery, it’s a surprise for her, and I’m grand about treating her like a lady. She is acting proper, as well . . . Jenn found some very funny moments in this scene tonight. She has Margery going back and forth between being proper and being herself. I found a nostalgic moment for “Worship and honour, you Babylonian knaves . . . .” We go down stage and kneel for a second, and then continue getting ready for dinner at Old Ford.

Jon has paid me some nice compliments in the past few days, saying that I’m really starting to find the sound and the clarity. I’m finally beginning to loosen up into the role; bring on the fat suit and shoes! I want to begin work on Simon’s physicality more. I admire Jon’s no-nonsense approach to the language. For me, it’s about making it active.
Friday, February 8, 2002 - Full Run

I made it through the entire play with out the script tonight, calling for a line only two or three times (pat, pat, pat). I made several character discoveries tonight. I was wearing the fat suit tonight for the first time. I’m glad I waited, because I felt like I deserved to work with it tonight. It’s part of Jon’s policy to not use costume pieces or props until you’re off book and ready to start working character so that it doesn’t interfere. It should enhance, not inhibit character work.

Clarify moves and objectives. “This fine hand, this white hand, these pretty fingers” are the same thing, not different things in a list. Get on a role of saying the same thing and enjoy clarifying it. “Yerk and seam,” is fairly passive. I need an action that Hodge interrupts and brings me down stage on “All this is from the bias.” “Here’s a French hood for thee” should sound like, “Here’s a bean bag for ya’.” “Care / cold lodging / brings white hairs.” Phrase more carefully and play as an aside.

Monday, February 11, 2002 - Afternoon Class

We worked through Friday’s notes and Jon gave us some general practical suggestions. Don’t beg the audience to do something. When you say a line as if you’re setting up a reaction, the audience is not going to think it’s funny. When you underplay it, if it’s something obvious, the audience will react. In most cases, it’s the audience’s job to react to jokes. It’s not the actor’s job to make them react, because then it’s just bad comedy. Don’t pound the audience’s ear into numbness. This is a tendency we have when we imply that “we really mean it.” The audience will shut down and not listen.
Monday, February 11, 2002 - Rehearsal

I wasn’t on stage until 10:15, and we only had fifteen minutes to work scene twenty. We didn’t get to scene twenty-one, which concerns all of us. Scene twenty-one is massive, and needs a lot of work yet. It’s an important scene which ties everything together. We worked several moments in scene twenty. I must clarify my actions in this scene. I’m preparing for the arrival of the King, but I’m also ordering the shoemakers around to wait on the apprentices at the feast. There are many things going on simultaneously, and I need to juggle them better. I’m still not playing the positive of “Away, you Islington Whitepot.” Jon has given me the liberty of the entire stage to do so. The negative tendencies always suck me in because I’m using so many curse words toward Margery. It’s not hateful. He’s really saying “I love you” in a backwards way.

The more chummy I can make this, the better.

At this point in the rehearsal process, I’m really appreciating Jon’s sense of detail. Jon is all about doing the technical work first (identifying the intonations, inflections, meaning, the antithesis, and the parentheticals; breaking down the complex text of the line) and then really drilling it until you get some sense of meaning. Only then can you incorporate the action and the sense memory. You have to do your homework first, your drill and practice. It reminds me so much of piano practice. You can’t put emotion into a piano piece and give it action which invokes feeling until you drill the music, measure by measure, phrase by phrase. After you can physically play the notes, and you’ve got them under your belt, and you’re so comfortable with it that you don’t have to think about it, then the music starts to really come alive. This is so true for acting. I was telling my colleagues tonight, while I was going through my script penciling in moment-to-moment
actions, so many of them are so much in the moment that they change all the time. It’s so
hard for me to commit to one specific action right now. I don’t know whether I’m
disdaining with malice or celebrating with joy. It’s strange for me to commit to specific
actions at this point because I feel like I’m still experimenting. It’s a process. I’m really
glad that I made this comparison to practicing piano. Drill and practice the lines until you
have them under your belt, then you can put in the actions.

I went to the music library today to find sources for the musical references. I’m
looking specifically for, “Dainty, come thou to me,” the reference I make to a popular
ballad tune in scene seventeen. I haven’t been able to find it yet. I talked to Dr.
Postlewait about it, and he suggested that I e-mail a music librarian.

Tuesday, February 12, 2002 - Rehearsal - First night in Thurber Theatre

We worked through Part One and dealt with some problems. It’s always such a
huge adjustment from the rehearsal studio to Thurber. I always forget just how big it is.
It’s such a challenge to be natural on that stage. It’s so massive. So, once again, I’m
fighting with my problem of pushing, rather than just letting actions happen. Jon implored
me to take out the pitch variation in the speech to Rose, and just say it with strong
phrasing. I made the adjustment and it made a significant difference. Jon’s approach
seems to work. Yes, it’s about filling that space, but Jon reminded me that it’s important
to have sudden moves. Simon Eyre has too much energy to be “lollygagging” around the
stage.
Wednesday, February 13, 2002 - Rehearsal

We worked the second half of the show tonight. At first, Jon staged a party scene at the beginning of the play. He’s really encouraging us to find active movement choices. General notes: Jon can understand less than 1/3 of the time. Find the top level at which we can generate sound. He can understand the principle characters about 80% of the time. We’re not telling the story of the play very well. Pay attention to the story. Pay attention to every single detail and react to it. Give attention to what is being said and give attention to your action. Open up physically and shift weight when responding actively. He’s encouraging life on stage instead of looking like a large mass of people just standing there doing a play. Craft moments when we’re not moving.

I talked to Carie DeVito tonight about her experience with Elektra. I asked her if she ever had any moments when she felt like she was just saying the lines, getting through them from memory, but not really having an action or knowing what the hell you’re talking about. She said that happened to her all the time during her long monologues. It’s difficult to keep it active and to maintain a relationship and energy with the audience. Eyre gives so much information, and so many plot points, and so much exposition, it’s challenging to keep it interesting and active. Carie said she talked to Sue Ott Rowlands, the director of Elektra, about that problem, and Sue advised her to find little tiny things, little actions to remind herself to stay active. Very specific details like the way she held her hat, her costume, the doll, or the way she twirled her hair. Use little actions which trigger larger moment-to-moment ones and keep you in the moment and active. I’m going to give this a try as I continue my character work. Sometimes I feel like I’m just hearing sounds and I’m not hearing meaning. I must bring the humanity to Simon Eyre.
instead of letting him be two-dimensional. He’s very cheery right now, but he needs to
come down and live in this place in London in the seventeenth century.

Thursday, February 14, 2002 - Rehearsal - Work-through of Part One

I felt more comfortable with my vocal quality tonight. Jon said there was a 300%
overall improvement in vocal energy and physical awareness.

In addition to detailed notes on specific moments, Jon reminded me that it’s
important for the audience to like Eyre, and I must accentuate the positive with the
Jane/Ralph situation in scene one, because the audience will feel sympathetic with them as
Ralph leaves for battle.) Eyre really cares. Be considerate and be sensitive to their
situation.

Friday, February 15, 2002 - Rehearsal

Before our run/work of Part Two, we were introduced to Brian, the music and
sound person. He is timing the underscres and the scene change music to set up the
world of each scene. We need to use the entrance and exit music for our timing. We are
meeting with him tomorrow to work on some of the vocal music.

Tonight’s rehearsal went really well. I found some specific moments and am
starting to feel more comfortable in Simon Eyre’s heels. I was focusing tonight on playing
the positives and, unfortunately, some of my laughs were very general and washed. I
wasn’t finding specific reasons for laughing; I was just laughing for the sake of laughing.
Jon requested that I focus and be specific about the laugh moments, to surprise the
audience with them. For “my fellow ‘prentices of London come to dine with me,” point
up the fact that they are coming to eat with me, because that is not clear right now.

Jon had us do a speed-through tonight of the second half. It made my head
explode! My whole rhythm was just all messed up. It made me shaky. I couldn’t do it. I
talked to Jon about it. I was going up in my head. I was going up on lines that I didn’t
go up on for the first run at all. Jon said I was just trying to talk fast instead of doing a
speed through, where you pick up the cues. Also, Eyre speaks mostly in prose, whereas
many of the other characters speak in verse and verse is a lot easier to speak faster. The
other thing Jon said I can learn from this is that I can say almost three lines exactly the
same, and yet not really distinguish the meaning of all of them. Even though I may know
what each line means, if I say each line with the same inflection, I’m not really
distinguishing between meaning for all of them. For example, “For, an’t please your
Highness,” in scene twenty-one. If I find more specific meanings and actions for the lines
in this speech, a speed-through will be much easier for me.

Saturday, February 16, 2002 - Rehearsal

First of all, we worked music with Brian. He’s making up a lot of the music. He
composed some of it. It has an Elizabethan sound to it. He’s not really concerned if
we’re that accurate with the actual authentic music.

I worked with Jon and the cast on several scenes. In scene seven, we worked
specifically on, “Hodge, I’ll go through with it.” I need to silence Firk and Margery,
decide to go through with it, take the money from Hodge, kiss Margery to shut her up,
and then walk down stage center to get ready. Show Margery the seal ring and then say,
“Here’s a seal ring.” Acknowledge the guarded gown and the damask cassock, and then walk down stage to get ready.

In scene seventeen, Jon said it’s not working for us to enter on the second level. It’s going to be much easier for us to enter up stage center, through the shoemaker’s shop. Lacy and Rose are already on their way to the church and stop when I enter and say, “This is the morning then . . .” Get Hans to stay and calm him down so I can enjoy the moment. I talk to them center, and they leave up the stairs with Margery. I follow them accordingly, and I end up doing the final monologue of this scene on the second platform.

For scene twenty, Jon is particularly interested, as I am, in making the speeches active, instead of relying on the text to tell the story. The action, of course, needs to be prominent. I’m entering upstage center, again. At the entrance, I catch Firk and Hodge lying about, and I must get them moving. Stop them from leaving on, “Let them all walk and wait upon my brethren . . .,” and send then them away with the next few lines. They come back when I ask them, “Do they drink lively, Hodge? Do they tickle it, Firk?” Then the scene continues as originally staged.

Monday, February 18, 2002 - Afternoon Class

I worked with Jon at 3:30 today on clarifying the moment-to-moment meanings of each speech. He said that it’s like juggling; you’re keeping the speech up in the air. While interrupting yourself, you’re keeping the energy going and alive. Avoid dropping it, and then try to pick up the ball again. It’s this driving force which will propel me through each of the long speeches. He encouraged me to find specific vocal choices that I then inform with actions. It’s difficult for me to work this way.
Monday, February 18, 2002 - Crew Watch

Inevitably, the crew watch was rough, as they usually are. The first act was tough. The run felt very forced, very pushed. I was living in my head a lot. I dropped a couple of lines. The second act went fairly well, but I was having a hard time staying in the moment tonight. My jaw was all tense, I was stumbling over words. I must do a better warm-up from now on.

A muddy run tonight. Very messy. I guess it's a good stage to be in. It needs to be formed and shaped quite a bit. I have to review my specific moment-to-moment actions.

Tuesday, February 19, 2002 - Rehearsal

I had a conversation with Jon tonight about the "plums, plums" reference in my speech to Rose in scene eleven. Selling the idea about the grocer being a sweet trade is my primary action. Plums are a perfect comparison to the grocer's trade. The run went much better tonight. I was much more in character. I told Jon that last night's rehearsal was very educational because I was concentrating so much on the notes we worked on and the technicalities of the speeches in terms of keeping the ball in the air, continuing thoughts, and changing inflections based on parentheticals. Jon said it's fine to work that stuff privately, but when I'm in rehearsal to set it aside.

Tonight, I focused on being in the imaginary world and really going with the givens, the objectives, and the obstacles . . . trying to go back to the basics. It helped out quite a bit. My voice is kind of tired tonight. I was pushing vocally when trying to pick
up the energy. The energy was there, but I tried to put too much pressure on my larynx to
create said energy. Whole body awareness is part of the solution, and a better warm-up.

Mo gave dialect and voice notes. She said that the dialect is fun. Attack the
plosives on “powder beef queen” and others like it where there is unfamiliar vocabulary:
“basting lads,” “tittle tattle.” Consonants will help to create the direct clipped
sound that Jon wants. Pound the diction on that damned balcony which is so hard to
project from. The long expositional monologue in scene seventeen is killing me here. For
Scene eleven use more consonants. Remember the plot points here, too, particularly with
the dialogue (which is faster). “Witness the marriage” was lost. Point up the plot points
in this speech. “I promised the mad Cappadocians when we all served at the Conduit
together” was lost. Hit the plot points.“Let wine be as plentiful as beer.” was lost. “Away,
you Islington Whitepot!” This speech was produced in my throat. Be very clear about
“Shrove Tuesday.” Can I say Fat Tuesday? “This day my liege, I did it” was lost.

4.5 The Technical and Dress Rehearsals

Wednesday, February 20 and Thursday, February 21 - First and Second Tech.

I’m fighting a little bit of a cold tonight and it’s starting to affect my voice, so it’s
very fortunate that we had tech for the past two days because I’m able to “mark” the
scenes. This set seems to function really well for our blocking, except for the shoemaker’s
shop which is very far up stage. We must resist getting sucked up into it; we must
continue to play the down stage area. The set and the stage are challenging to speak from.

Today I studied the time frame of the play. I think that it takes place over one
year, which is more specifically noted in my scored script.
Friday, February 22, 2002 - Rehearsal - First Tech Run

I’m really struggling tonight because my voice is very tired. Part of it has to do with pushing, and part of it has to do with my cold. The congestion is wreaking havoc on my larynx. My vocal folds are heavy and worn. The plus side of this is that it forced me not to push. I was able to find some good moments of casual, relaxed listening, communicating, and being in the moment. However, my voice wasn’t there in certain places and this threw me off my rhythm and timing, making me go up in my head and lose my concentration. So, it was a blessing and a curse. I’ve been drinking a lot of water. I’m going to sleep with a humidifier and gargle salt water. Hopefully, tomorrow will be better.

I’m really frustrated that we don’t have shoes or shoemaking tools to work with yet because they are set props and they’re not done yet. There are only a few props to work with. The lighting looks great. Jim’s work is excellent. But, it’s such a hard set to be genuine on. I feel like I’m being over-the-top a lot. I rehearse the lines by myself one way, then I get out there and it’s completely different. I find some really good moments offstage and then I go out there and it blows up. As we add more props, set pieces and costumes, I’ll have other things to play with which should help.

Saturday, February 23, 2002 - First Dress

I didn’t have my costume hat today, so I used my trusty rehearsal cap. The gold chain fell apart. Putting on the guarded gown and the damask cassock on stage was a difficult change, even though I had people helping me. This needs practice.
I’m still struggling with my cold, but my voice felt better. Doing a slow, half-hour Linklater and Feldenchrails warm-up helped. Coupling the two styles works well for me. I followed this by a vigorous consonant warm-up. I tried to nail consonants during the rehearsal tonight.

With all of the costume and prop issues, it’s really hard to stay in the moment. In order to make a focused entrance, I have to force myself to use my imagination, to get myself in the moment backstage, and to be more clear about the given circumstances. It’s a constant battle to stay in the moment and keep the ball in the air. The costumes look great and wonderful, but they’re very hot and heavy. I found some fun things with Simon’s Sheriff and Lord Mayor costumes. They are so bulky and cumbersome for him. He’s so used to being casual in his shoemaking clothes. I like the fact that it looks formal, yet I’m walking and acting informally, a nice counterpoint I’ve found with the costume. I think I’m going to play with this even more.

Monday, February 25, 2002 - Second Dress Rehearsal

It went very well tonight. We have some issues to work out, we reworked some blocking before the run. Specifically, the timing in scene seven with the Skipper and Lacy still needs work. The first entrance in scene one makes so much more sense with Jon’s restaging. Ralph is called to go to war as the officers go knock on his door and get him. Jane comes out crying after him, and I come out comforting her. We still have a few moments to polish here. On the whole, Simon started “happening” tonight. I’m really settling into the role. I gained more confidence tonight because I’ve been drinking so much water and feeling better vocally. The master class with Michael Kachingwe, a voice
faculty candidate, really reminded me of what Phil Thompson, the former voice professor, used to tell us about using our whole body voice. I felt really connected to a full sound. You have so much more power when you extend the voice through the body. Good timing for that workshop today. I was thankful I could participate. The best sound quality comes from a full, open, Lessac "inverted megaphone" mouth. At the same time, it continues through the body and flows outward. This helped me relax into Simon, allowing him to be there and taking the space with a sense of humor and direction.

Finally, the "Away you Islington Whitepot" monologue was so fun tonight. Jon reminded me to check in with Hodge, Firk and all the shoemakers to make sure they're responding. It's really a series of jokes. I'm seeing if I can top myself. What other words can I come up with to call Margery? I'm showing off for my men. Jon told me he really felt like Simon Eyre was the central focus of the show. He feels like things are really starting to happen.

I couldn't believe it, but my costume hat made a huge difference tonight. It made me feel like I needed a huge turkey leg in my hand, like Petruchio and Henry V... very Tudor. I felt big, which is where Eyre needs to be. He needs to be bigger than life. Hopefully, this and my vocal health will continue. I pray for the best.

Tuesday, February 26, 2002 - Final Dress Rehearsal

Tonight, several challenging factors came into play, which I, unfortunately, brought on stage and let them affect my rehearsal. I behaved self-righteously when I found out that the go time was at 7:00 pm instead of 7:30 pm. It threw me off when I learned that I had twenty minutes to get into make-up and costume when I thought I had
fifty minutes. It shook me and it took me awhile to shake it off. I had a few minor costume problems which seemed major at the time because I was having other difficulties. So I behaved impulsively when I asked Erin, the stage manager, when the call time had been changed. At that time, I was very indignant. However, I apologized to Erin and Becky, the assistant stage manager, after rehearsal.

I learned some things from this. When I go up in my head and worry about other stuff, I immediately put pressure on my throat. My voice became tired again tonight. I was pushing and I wasn’t very spontaneous. I guess it was your typical final dress. The previous dress had been so much fun. It just reminded me how important this ensemble is and that we need to have fun doing this. Sometimes I get so caught up with the work I’m doing that I forget to play. What a big wake-up call and reminder for me to do a 180 degree turn, remember to have fun, and be a leader for the ensemble.

4.6 The Performance Log

Wednesday, February 27, 2002 - Opening Night

Wow! The energy was intense. I was flying on stage tonight, so when I wasn’t aware of what was happening moment-to-moment, I had to rein myself in. The show went incredibly well. I had a few vocal problems toward the end when I got to scene twenty-one. I feel like I’m shouting over a lot of the music in scene twenty, which is not helping. Overall, however, my vocal support was good. I’ve got this weird resonance thing going on. I’ve been doing the Feldenkrais and Linklater warm-up religiously, and it’s putting me in a different place. My vocal range is weird. Coupled with the dialect and the character, Simon Eyre has put me in a lower range. Some of it may be vocal fatigue.
I’m glad the show is open. It was great to have an audience. Jon said I need to build the “Away you Islington Whitepot” speech all the way up to the “No!” when I become formal and say, “Come my Lady Madgy” in a completely different beat. I must remember to take off my coat and vest earlier for the change in scene seven. I must find a way to allow the speeches to speak for themselves and be more specific on the long ones.

Notes: “Wash thy face” is a joke. Don’t cover actions with laughs. Don’t stop the play with laughs. Change the direction of the play with the lines, don’t stop it.

Thursday, February 28, 2002 - Performance

I was much more relaxed tonight and I didn’t suffer from the “second night blahs.” I credit my focused warm-up which puts me in a good place. Thank God for Maureen Ryan, Feldenkrais, and Linklater. I had several genuine moments tonight with many of the actions working well. I don’t want to identify too many of them, because that would not be “finding the impulsive self.” But I know that I found several specific moments that I liked. Many of them had to do with finding not just the madcap nature of Simon Eyre, but the genuine human quality that makes him lovable.

Everything went well vocally, all the way through the show. I got to scene twenty-one and my voice was fine, but my tempo . . . I get so excited when the King tells me I can be the mad shoemaker and I’m still not specific enough about it.

Friday, March 1, 2002 - Dekker Symposium

Oh, wow. I’ve been waiting for this one for quite a while. Andrew Gurr and two other scholars, Christopher Highley and Valerie Lucas, conducted a symposium about the
play. Christopher Highley's presentation covered "Dekker's London" historically and geographically. Valerie Lucas' paper entitled "Mad Mesopotamians and Languishing Ladies: Staging Gender in The Shoemaker's Holiday" addressed many of the play's gender issues. In his presentation, "An Audience of Shoemakers," Andrew Gurr said that the Lord Mayor is supposed to control the apprentices because they rebelled so much, making sure theybehave and that they are fed. He also represents the rich employers of London who would get upset when their apprentices would go to plays and leave work. Dekker was targeting John Spencer, a bad Lord Mayor, who took advantage of the poor during famine by raising food prices. The character of Lincoln is modeled after Spencer. Gurr is very interested in the many aspects of crowd behavior and mentality in an open-air theatre such as The Rose where this play premiered in 1599. The Shoemaker's Holiday is blatant propaganda supporting London's apprentices. It uses psychology to bolster them, to lift their spirits. This play is wildly optimistic.

Friday, March 1, 2002 - Performance

I must admit, the show was measured tonight as a result of all the scholars being in the audience. It went well technically, but it felt very controlled, as if we were all being cautious. During the intermission, Jon stormed into our dressing room and had some very strong words with me, not understanding why I didn't pull Ralph down stage when I present him to the officers. He said I was really resting on my laurels in scene one, not allowing myself to open up. He encouraged me to pick up the energy and find the suddenness in the scenes. The audience should be thinking, "What's next, what's next?"
This was frustrating at first, but encouraging. It certainly propelled me in the second act. It was crazy; I was very motivated.

**Saturday, March 2, 2002 - Two Performances**

The teacher’s seminar took place prior to the matinee. We talked about what we are planning for our careers. We also addressed using action to make sense of the language of the play. Donald Clark made some good points about his character, Firk. He said that he knows only about food, beer and women. This reminded me of the simplicity which this play demands. I need to let the research go. I was really free for the 2:00 performance, which my beloved wife Marlene came to, but I occasionally still felt measured and forced. It was a good performance, but not completely clicking yet. The 8:00 performance went well also, but there is still something missing. I walk off the stage like I’ve been working instead of playing.

**Tuesday, March 5, 2002 - Performance**

Hello. Wow. It’s just such an incredible feeling. Tonight went so well. I began to play; I was relaxed. I did a warmup, but I didn’t run all my lines beforehand. I really gave myself permission to let go and play with the role, to have fun. I found so many good moments because I’m starting to find the heart of Simon Eyre. I’m realizing that it’s not important to remember all of the historical research right before I walk on stage, but just to know the given circumstances in that moment, and to play them in an honest, moment to moment way. I’m also trying to find more ways to play the positive with Margery. I can tell that the audience reacts negatively when I yell at her too much, so it’s
about finding a balanced, playful quality with Margery. What a welcome relief tonight was.

**Wednesday, March 6, 2002 - Performance**

The show was fun again tonight. There were a few moments where I caught myself pushing due to lack of audience response. Then I decided, “You know what, I’m just going to back off and enjoy it myself” . . . this worked. I had a newfound energy in the second act. I wasn’t pushing. It was spontaneous. I’m starting to find some impulsive choices. I have to be careful though. When I get impulsive, I tend to make the text go all over the place, and I accidentally make up new words. I guess this is a danger of letting the impulses go too far.

**Thursday, March 7, 2002 - Performance**

Another good performance. Several of the cast members of **Division Street** were in the house. At first, I couldn’t help but think some of their laughter was random because they seemed to be laughing at things unrelated to the show, more related to seeing us in the show and in the costumes. However, they were genuinely listening and reacting in several places and that was nice. I was focusing on finding the impulsive self tonight. I did find several good moments particularly in the second act. When I was wishing Lacy and Rose well on their way to the Savoy, I went up into my head. I think it’s because I was doing some Linklater breathing exercises backstage and they opened me up and released some tension, but made me lose my focus. It was fine. I eventually worked my way back on target.
We had the Afterwords, a post-performance discussion, tonight with Christopher Highley. He repeated several things from his symposium presentation. There were six audience members present. It was probably the shortest Afterwords I’ve ever been to. The audience said the dialects, costumes and set were nice. Christopher Highley asked Donald if there are any women in the show that Firk doesn’t fancy.

Friday, March 8, 2002 - Performance

Tonight was my best performance yet. My moment-to-moment actions were clearer than they’ve ever been. Vocally, I felt really relaxed. I did a long warm-up. Naomi Hatfelt, who plays Sybil, said she thought I was “on” tonight. Marlene was in the audience again and that certainly helped. I wasn’t thinking about the lines, which always tends to trip me up. I think about the complexity of the text sometimes and get in my head. I was also more specific tonight than ever before. It had to do with easing into the role and letting things happen, rather than trying to force them. It’s very much like driving a stick shift . . . you have to ease off that clutch and ease into the gas. The same is so true for acting. It’s easier said than done, as we all know.

Saturday, March 9, 2002 - Closing Performance

In the first act I felt like I was making too much out of the fact that it was the last performance. I was forced and pushed in several moments. I didn’t feel prepared enough for the first scene. In fact, the first scene really warmed me up, so that by scene six, I was ready to go. However, I was in my head thinking about what I was doing, judging myself
rather than just being in the moment. It wasn’t bad, it was still in the context of the play, and I eventually got it back on its feet.

I was very tired for the closing performance. I had to get up at 5:30 am. It was a very long day, and I had to do a lot of driving to go to an aunt’s funeral. Unfortunately, my fatigue was a factor in my performance. So, as a result, I tried to find energy somewhere. Carie DeVito (Dodger) pointed out that she noticed that I was stamping a couple of times, almost as if I was trying to get energy from the floor. It wasn’t that I had low energy; it was just unspecified energy in the first act. Then I went out and I calmed down in the second act and I didn’t push. It was probably the best second act yet, even better than last night. It was free, alive, spontaneous, impulsive. Scene seventeen, which always kicks my butt, (especially that final monologue where I talk about it being a mad life to be a Lord Mayor) was so much fun. How great for an expository monologue to be fun. That monologue represents my overall challenge for this entire show in that it’s so complex and there are so many important plot points. Yet it also allowed me to be impulsive and have fun. I think I succeeded in that tonight.

I was vocally tired again, but the fact that I still have my voice after so many performances of such a demanding role is testimony that the Linklater and Feldenkrais warm-ups work. I also incorporated some of Lessac’s warm-up, particularly for vocal resonance and the inverted megaphone. I used the Linklater imagery for breathing and producing sound and the Feldenkrais physical work for a full-body connection.

There was a huge weight off my shoulders at the end of the performance tonight. I was so excited. The strike lasted until 2:30 am for the performers. I was exhausted . . . it was surreal.
Tuesday, March 19, 2002 - Post-Performance Discussion

Jon talked about the importance of the verse work. He said it was vital to the beginning of the process. I mentioned how valuable the inflection work was for clarity. Jon said that the character work had to be layered for everyone. Mark Shanda, the producer, said we received many compliments from the English Department, that the show was truer to history than a previous Stratford Festival production. Jon’s basic goals: clarity of language, create a specific world of merriment and keep the performance rooted in the language and history of the text. On the whole, he thought we succeeded in meeting all of these goals.

What a challenging role. It constantly kicked my butt in terms of being in the moment. The text is so complex, and forced me to be specific. When I felt tired or unfocused, it was very hard for me to be specific, whereas in other plays, such as Elektra, it has been easier for me to be specific. The easiest show for me to be specific in at OSU was actually Wit, playing Dr. Kelekian. I related to the intellect of the man, and I guess this makes sense due to my own heady tendencies. Dr. Kelekian is very cerebral, but Simon Eyre is not, so sometimes I still felt like I was barking, as I’ve done in the past. I didn’t succeed 100% in “freeing the impulsive self” in my creation of Simon Eyre. I feel like, even though this was the closing performance, I was just starting to get to a place where I could play. Because Simon Eyre was such a large amount of work, there were times when I got headaches on stage in the second act. I was trying so hard to produce good resonance. I even had a singing teacher tell me once that opera tenors often have headaches after a performance because of the resonance in their head. It was partially because of this, but it was also because I was occasionally pushing. My sound, my energy,
and the strength of my entire performance were stronger than anything I’ve ever experienced, but I wasn’t always impulsive. There were several times before I walked on stage when I was more nervous about the text being there than I was concerned about the present moment.

So Simon Eyre returns now to the pages of John Stowe’s *Survey of London* and is now a wonderful memory in my mind. Dr. Andrew Gurr said, “This is one of the best performances of this play I’ve seen in ten years.” Dr. Tom Postlewait says it is one of the best performances he’s ever seen at OSU. What a challenging script and what a challenging role. I’m thankful for the opportunity to have worked on the play. Now I need a contemporary play to cleanse my palate. Maybe Dr. Spivey in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* at The Porthouse Theatre will be just the role. But before I make way to the “loony bin,” I will end this thesis in the next chapter, by evaluating my work and sharing conclusions about my process of creating of Simon Eyre in *The Shoemaker’s Holiday.*
CHAPTER 5

EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

The set is struck, the stage dust swept, the ghost light burns, and a cacophony of wonderful memories of our production of The Shoemaker's Holiday echo in the walls of Thurber Theatre. As I sit in the dark empty house reflecting, the expression "hindsight is 20/20" comes to my mind. The countless epiphanies, the "oh, yeahs," the "break a legs," and the "congratulations," all add up to my raison d'être as an actor. For me, it's always the discoveries, the lessons, and the challenges that make this one of the most exciting and frustrating vocations in the world. Good acting seems so simple, yet I still make the same mistakes over and over again. I celebrate the mistakes, because they usually contain valuable information, and I'm reminded that good acting is never easy. The moment I try to be perfect, I'm lying to the ensemble, the audience, and myself. The only way to be genuine on stage is to admit that you are not perfect; the moment you believe you are perfect, you stop working. If an actor believes he/she has achieved perfection, there is nowhere to go. I'm constantly looking for ways to raise the stakes, to find more specific actions and clearer beats. Mistakes and inconsistencies help keep my work "in check" and authentic.
My work on Simon Eyre was an incredible journey. I learned a great deal about myself and my process as an actor. In this, the final chapter of my thesis, I evaluate my work and conclude how well I addressed the central problem. Given that my own natural tendency is to work with a tight jaw, irregular breathing, forced voice, and unnecessary effort, I had to integrate specific skills such as breathing exercises, physical/vocal warm-ups, dialect, timing, imagination, physical response to impulse, listening, and text analysis to overcome my detrimental habits and create a rich, charming and impulsive human being. And I had to do all of this while possessing a full-body understanding of my research and the complex language of the play.

There were many contradictions within this problem. Primarily, Simon Eyre may have been an impulsive person, but he was also very controlling. I was constantly battling with my own controlling tendencies and with Eyre’s as well. It was fine for Eyre to want to be in charge, but I had to let him be in charge without my “actor self” controlling his impulses. This dichotomy was a challenge throughout the entire process. With numerous exercises and drills, I finally succeeded in relaxing my tight jaw somewhat. However, I went back and forth between a relaxed voice with regular breathing, and a forced voice with irregular breathing; unnecessary effort occasionally crept into the work. I found that the more specific I was about my moment-to-moment actions, the easier it was for me to be relaxed and impulsive. Yet, the second I rested on my laurels, I lost what I had gained and had to struggle to be in the moment. Simon Eyre forced me to stay on my toes, endlessly moving forward towards the super objective of becoming Lord Mayor. I’ll never forget the night that Jon Farris emphatically explained the need for the audience to be surprised by Eyre. They constantly needed to be wondering what was going to happen
next. This required me to get off my heels, to stay in the moment, and to listen and react to the other actors in the scene. A lazy actor could not portray Simon Eyre.

Analyzing complex text and creating a believable dialect helped me to overcome this problem. Initially these tools produced a campy, two-dimensional representation of Eyre. But the real work began when the director started working with us on inflection. I certainly understood the concept of clarifying the musicality of a line for comprehension, but Jon’s approach was unique in that he endeavored to help the audience understand a four-hundred year-old play by helping them to hear the inflection of a modern expression. He used a drill and practice approach similar to that of accomplished music conservatory masters. Jon Farris possesses an acute awareness of actor inflections that are polluted with too much varying of pitch, and he carefully monitored our daily “scales.” I must admit that, at first, it was difficult for me to support this intense inflection work with true moment-to-moment actions. Jon asked us to clarify our lines before layering on actions. This approach was the perfect antidote for my problem, because it made me extremely conscious of just how specific I had to be about each word of each line. If I didn’t understand a line, I certainly wouldn’t use a clear inflection, and without a clear inflection, the audience would not be able to understand this Renaissance Citizen Comedy.

With the help of Jon and Maureen Ryan, the vocal coach, I succeeded in incorporating a convincing dialect for Eyre. I attribute this success to our early definition of specific vowel and consonant changes based on a cross between a Cockney dialect and a North County (Lancashire) dialect. I’m glad that Jon cautioned me about the danger of a pure Cockney dialect on stage. No matter how authentic it may be, it is usually very difficult to understand. Working on Eyre’s dialect helped me to be impulsive because I
associated certain physicalities with the sounds. The dialect also helped me find several
character discoveries. Eyre is proud of his working class background and equally pleased
with his dialect. He won’t change for anyone, even a King. His dialect allows him to
distinguish himself as a man who hasn’t forgotten where he came from.

Comedic timing was exigent in this production. I can’t say that I succeeded in
finding the optimum sense of Eyre’s timing within the world of the play. I had to resist
trying to be funny (which isn’t funny at all). Additionally, my timing was really hit or miss.
Moments I had discovered one night would not work the next. I could not rely on
previous discoveries or remanufactured actions. I had to remind myself constantly that
everything was happening for the first time. A consistent example of this need to stay in
the moment was in scene seven in which Eyre dresses as an Alderman and meets the
Dutch skipper. In my journal I noted that this scene was a paint by number scene. The
audience had to understand that Eyre was making a deal with the skipper by feigning
wealth. We kept searching for actions to make this clearer: pointing out the seal ring,
adding the line “so that he might think me a wealthy alderman,” and dressing up in
wealthier looking clothes. We succeeded in making this clear when we honestly listened
and reacted, and took out time to clarify the plot points.

I discovered that I couldn’t think in terms of a certain style while working on the
production. Style is really an issue for critics. Looking back, I suppose we did find a
certain style, tailor-made with Jon’s approach to verse and complex text. After layering
on the Tudor period scenic elements, the dialect, and the physical gestures, I’d say we
created an authentic historic representation of this period. However, I was not aware of
using a certain “style” when Eyre got up in the morning, went to work, and became Lord
Mayor of London.

So I overcame many of my detrimental habits some of the time, but not all of them
all of the time. Sometimes I felt as if I was walking on water, and sometimes I would sink
beneath the surface. However, I did succeed in creating a rich, charming and impulsive
human being. By the time we were in performance, my Simon Eyre was fairly consistent,
and the challenges I was confronting were probably not visible to the audience. The most
challenging speeches to be impulsive with were any of the expository monologues,
particularly the speech in scene seventeen about it being “a mad life to be a Lord Mayor.”
Yes, I had to convey information, but I had to do it with suddenness. Sometimes the
complexity of the text, the length of the speech, and my location far upstage on the second
balcony made it difficult to find “creative charm.”

Did I possess a full-body understanding of my research? Well, if I’ve learned
anything, I’ve learned that this is a magnificent challenge. I had to think of Eyre in his
given circumstances before, during, and after his time on stage. I resisted thinking about
Eyre as a symbol of Dekker’s beliefs about the self-made man in Renaissance England. In
other words, during the performances, I had to limit my understanding of my research to
the bare necessities in order to keep Eyre honest and impulsive.

One of the simplest and most detailed reminders of these essential characteristics
was my costume. Sue encouraged me to stay in the moment by finding simple gestures,
adjusting a button, moving my hat, etc. During the first dress rehearsal I discovered that
Eyre was proud of his new threads after he became Lord Mayor, but he found them
cumbersome. My Eyre was much more comfortable in his base working class clothes.
The large gown and cassock got in his way. I had of lot of fun trying to maintain the same physicality in the second, mayor costume that I had found in the first shoemaker costume. It ended up being comical portraying the awkward Eyre, dealing with this big scarlet gown when he just wanted to let it all hang out, “Cry Hump,” and have a good time. The fat suit made me lead with my belly and the hat made me hold my head a certain way. With the help of my costume, by the end of the run I would say that my Eyre began possessing a full-body understanding of the research. I felt like I was successfully riding a bike, but if you had asked me to think about what I was doing, I would have crashed. Acting was not work by the end of the run; it was play.

I’m glad my approach to this work was multi-faceted. I succeeded in mixing historical and character research with the many acting techniques I have studied for the past ten years. I’m also very thankful for coming across the review about Alfred Lynch’s performance of Simon Eyre, because I was aware of the pitfalls of this character very early. As I mentioned in Chapter One, the review noted Lynch’s effort to keep Eyre from being a two-dimensional jolly old elf with no sense of a genuine man who wants to be liked and to succeed. Lynch “gave a sense of grittiness, of a man who has worked very hard to get to the top and has had some disappointments on the way” (Parr xxxi). Eyre is bombastic; implied exclamation marks are scattered throughout the text. It was challenging to keep him both enthusiastic and real. To do this, I had to raise the stakes, to make becoming Lord Mayor a life-or-death cause for him.

Simon Eyre is a multi-layered personality with a specific history. In focusing on his relationships, I found that, depending on the moment and the given circumstances, Eyre is both pompous and full of irony. He enjoys showing off his authority when making
fun of Margery, but he knows when to be sincere, as he is when asking the King to forgive Lacy. Eyre forgets his situation when he is asking the King for favors. It may be ironic that a former shoemaker is appealing to the King, but Eyre certainly isn’t conscious of it. He’s just a regular guy who became something great because he wanted to help his fellow apprentices by feeding them. He also wanted to assist the shoemaking trade by making it legal to buy and sell leather at his new Leadenhall two days a week. And displaying his ability to be affectionate, Eyre wants to make his wife a lady because he loves her, even if he does give her a rough time every once and a while, and wants to give her more of life’s fineries. It was helpful to hear Dr. Postlewait encourage me to explore many avenues in order to discover the qualities of Simon Eyre. I ended up following his advice by studying Falstaff in The Merry Wives of Windsor. Falstaff possesses the lusty qualities of Eyre, but I felt like Eyre was more than just a “dirty old man.” In his introduction to the play, Anthony Parr compares Eyre to Shakespeare’s Henry V. While experimenting on stage, I was reminded of Fezziwig in Dicken’s A Christmas Carol. So, I decided to wed the choler of Henry V with the gaiety of Fezziwig and the lust of Falstaff in order to create a man whose most essential need is validation. Yes, Eyre is proud of his virility, as he so blatantly boasts to the King, but he is most proud of who he was, who is he is, and who he wants to be.

In terms of my methodology, did I use Stanislavski’s Magic If, Meisner’s listening, Uta Hagen’s substitution and Anne Bogart’s Viewpoints? Yes, at some point, I used all of these techniques, but I didn’t use all of them all of the time. The Magic If worked very well for me. I’ve always liked using my imagination and it’s easy for me to believe that I’m in a given set of circumstances. What made it difficult is when my “actor problems”
got in the way. That’s when I had to work on listening, being more specific with substitutions or being hyper-aware of all the qualities of my surroundings. Therefore, when the Magic If didn’t work, I relied on substitution, listening and Viewpoints to pull me back into the imaginary world.

My warm-up really progressed during this process. I secured a healthy combination of Linklater, Feldenkrais, and Lessac. I concluded my warm-up with a set of consonant exercises and articulation drills. Each one of these techniques and exercises played a specific role in preparing me to work. Linklater’s imagery-based exercises helped me to find regular, relaxed, and supported breathing. Feldenkrais exercises allowed me to get in touch physiologically by loosening physical tension and making me more aware of my head-tail-heal connection. Lessac’s resonance work was useful for creating a fully resonated sound. You can have all the breath you want, but you must also be able to channel the sound properly. The consonant work seemed self-explanatory at first, but Jon Farris reminded me that just saying tongue twisters does you no good. Hamlet says, “trippling off the tongue” for a reason. The consonants must be drilled by exercising and strengthening the articulators.

This thesis project is not the end of my work, my lessons, or my discoveries. It is simply another stage in my development as an actor. I have a long way to go and many more goals and objectives to meet. I never want to stop learning about acting. I may become more and more experienced, but I will always try to approach a role with the open mind I referred to earlier. I only hope I can take the many lessons I’ve recorded in this documentation and apply them to my future endeavors. “Finding the Impulsive Self: The Creation of Simon Eyre in The Shoemaker’s Holiday” is a story about an actor who gave
it his all and got to know his impulsive self a little better. My work at The Ohio State University is almost complete, but my work in this profession has only just begun. So many roles, so little time.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Editions


Books


**Articles**


**Interview**

Postlewait, Tom. Personal interview. 6 June 2001.
APPENDIX A: PRODUCTION PHOTOS
Plate 1 - Scene 1
(Photo courtesy of OSU Photo Services)

Plate 2 - Scene 7
(Photo courtesy of OSU Photo Services)
Plate 3 - Scene 11
(Photo courtesy of OSU Photo Services)

Plate 4 - Scene 17
(Photo courtesy of Lea Christiano)
APPENDIX B: COSTUME RENDERINGS
APPENDIX C: SET RENDERING
Set Design by Carla Chaffin
APPENDIX D: POSTER
department of theatre
presents

The

Shoemaker's Holiday

By Thomas Dekker

Directed by Jon Farris, Guest Artist

February 27 - March 9, 2002
Thurber Theatre

Contact the University Theatre Box Office at 292-2295 or theatre-tix@osu.edu for tickets. Also available at the Wexner Center and all TICKETMASTER outlets.
APPENDIX E: PROGRAM
The Shoemaker's Holiday
by Thomas Dekker

Directed by Jon Farris, Guest Artist

Thurber Theatre
February 27 - March 9, 2002
CAST

Earl of Lincoln ............................................................ John Engelmann
Sir Roger Oatley .......................................................... Michael Schnell
Lovell ................................................................. Tim Burhenn
Roland Lacy, Hans ............................................................ Jeremy Meier
Askew ................................................................. Tarashai Lee
Simon Eyre .......................................................... Damian Bowerman
Margery ............................................................ Jennifer Manvich
Cicely Bumbrinket .................................................... Karen Michelle Friedman
Hodge ............................................................... J. Michael Holmes
Firk ................................................................. Donald Clark
Jane ................................................................. Sara Borgeson
Ralph ................................................................. Donato Wilkinson
Dodger ............................................................. Carie DeVito
Rose ................................................................. Regina Rockensies
Sybil ................................................................. Naomi Hatsfelt
Hammon .......................................................... Quinn Carlson
Warner ........................................................... Kendrick Hardy
Dutch Skipper, King of England .................................. Jonathan Park
Cornwall, Scott ....................................................... Joe Gianfagna
Lincoln’s Servant, Boy with Hunters .............................. Lane Scarberry
Eyre’s Boy ............................................................ Leah Reddy
Nobleman, Soldiers, Huntsman, Shoemakers, Apprentices, Servants; .... Michael Huvey,
Sean Michael Russell, Zach Hartley, Brian Peters, Derek Linde, Siddhartha Jayanthi,
Tim Burhennen

SETTING

London, 1600s.

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

Audio and Visual Recording Devices are prohibited in the theatre.
In consideration of the actors, please turn off all cellular phones and beepers.

SPECIAL THANKS

Michael Darby and the Olentangy Motley Morris and Sword

Music by special arrangement with the Utah Shakespearean Festival
PRODUCTION STAFF

Chair/Director of Theatre .................................................. Lesley Ferris
Producer ................................................................................. Mark Shanda
Director .................................................................................. Jon Farris
Scenic designer ................................................................. Carla Chaffin
Costume designer .............................................................. Adam M. West
Lighting designer ............................................................... James Hutchison
Sound designer ........................................................................ Stacey Siak
Music designer/director ...................................................... Brian W. Baker
Technical Director .............................................................. Jim Knapp
Production Coordinator ..................................................... Jim Knapp
Stage Manager ......................................................................... Erin Riddle
Assistant Stage Manager ..................................................... Rebecca Rhinehart
Choreographer ....................................................................... Nena Couch
Voice/Speech and Dialed Coach ........................................... Maureen Ryan
Assistant Lighting Designer .................................................. Joe Neikirk
Dramaturg .............................................................................. Terry Schoone-Jongen
Box Office Manager ............................................................ Christina Sidebottom
Poster and Program Design .................................................. Laura Sipe

PRODUCTION CREW

Scenic Artist ........................................................................... Carla Chaffin
Scene Studio Supervisor ....................................................... Chad Mahan
Scenic Studio Teaching Associates .................................... Carla Chaffin, Who Jeong Lee, Brad Steinmetz
Scenery Construction Crew ................................................. Jim Allison, Jonathan Barnes, Mary Ann Benson, Mike Buchman, Tim Burhenne, Heather Burley, Laura Butler, Lindsey Carr, Jeremy Cather, Kristin Cherry, David Dean, Dante DeRusso, Liam Dillon, Tiffany Forrester, Julie Franke, Tamara Gardner, Jodi Genter, Joe Gianfagna, Todd Henderson, Justin Jennings, Amber Jordan, Erin Katz, Stephen Kennedy, Amy Kern, Lisa Lehmkuhl, Jordan Lightner, Stacy McKain, Katie Miller, Jamie Oxley, Bill Prentice, Maureen Quinn, Sarah Rankin, Lindsay Ruhage, Lane Scarberry, Jody Severson, Laura Simpson, Kristina Smith, Fergus Theilbert, Erin Thorpe, Toby Wilson, Sue Wifsmar, Joan Wood
Scenery Run Crew ................................................................. Sean Dunbar, Benjamin Jones, Katy McAfee, Amy L. Stauffer
Costume Studio Supervisor .................................................. Julia Weiss
Costume Studio Teaching Associates ................................ Melissa B. Bialko, Jocelyn Jurlina, Tatjana Longerol, and Adam M. West
Costume Construction Crew .............................................. Jennifer Hughes, Greg Palmer, Cassandra Rae, Leah Reddy, Elisha Teague, Amy Tzagournis
Wardrobe Head ................................................................. Lindsey Rae
Costume Run Crew ............................................................... Kathryn Namey, Katie Owen, Lindsey Reed,
Derek Reno, Jody Stevenson, Joan Wood
Lighting Studio Supervisor ................................................................. Matt Hazard
Lighting Studio Teaching Associates ... James Hutchinson, Kristopher Jones, Drew Ward
Production Electrician ...................................................................... Drew Ward
Assistant Electricians ................................................................. Kori Godsey, John Kirkman
Lighting Console Operator .......................................................... David Truesdale
Lighting Crew ............................................................................... David Atkinson, Katharine Buquo, Casey Burns,
  Kevin Callison, David Dean, Liam Dillon, John Durbin, Tiffany Forrester, Judy Hall,
  Zach Hartley, Kate Harvey, Nikki Heinlein, Leigh-Ann Houchin, Amber Jordan, Beth
  Josephson, Brandon Lewis, Jenni Martin, Steven McCartney, Joe Neikirk, Brian
  Obermeyer, Andrew Penfield, Chris Pine, Becky Rhinehart, Chris Rickles, Erin Riddle,
  Michael Schnell, Adrian Shepherd, Jeff Slack, Shaun Suchan, Danielle Waters,
  Stephanie Wilterson, Toby Wilson, and Erin Wolf
Sound Console Operator ................................................................. Jonathan Tewart
Box Office Staff ................. Colleen Bozacki, Joshua Bozile, Lisa Hawkins, Guy Phillips
Box Office Associates ................. Jerome Brown, Donnell Carlington, Andrea Clark,
  Dustin Fisher, Jennifer Gray, Kathryn Namey, Tia Marie Protopapa, Jody Stephenson,
  and Jennifer Workman
House Managers ........................................................................... Wendy Hoop and Katie Miller

Ohio State University Department of Theatre invites you to

London Citizens On and Off the Stage:
A Symposium on Thomas Dekker’s
The Shoemaker’s Holiday

Friday, 1 March 2002
1:00 pm to 5:15 pm
Roy Bowen Theatre, Drake Center
Free Event

Keynote Speaker
Andrew Gurr, Department of English, University of Reading, United Kingdom.

Featured Speakers
Christopher Highley, Department of English, Ohio State University.

Valerie Lucas, Department of Drama and Theatre Studies, University of Surrey,
United Kingdom.
FROM THE DRAMATURG

Why on earth would anyone stage a 400-year old play called The Shoemaker's Holiday?

Well, first of all, when the time comes to do a play from the English Renaissance, the usual choice is Shakespeare. By our current standards, Shakespeare certainly is the most accessible of the English dramatists of his time. However, our emphasis on Shakespeare tends to overshadow the other highly talented playwrights of his time who also wrote quality plays. Ben Jonson and Christopher Marlowe perhaps come to mind, but in his day Thomas Dekker was just as renowned as Jonson, Marlowe, and even Shakespeare.

Who is this Thomas Dekker? He was born in London sometime in the 1570's. By the late 1590's, his plays were in high demand by the famous Lord Admiral's Men—in 1599 alone he was commissioned to write three plays for them, and collaborate on several others. In 1601 he out-rioted Ben Jonson in a war of words, and Jonson actually admitted defeat (an unusual, if not singular, occurrence). 1603 saw the death of Queen Elizabeth and the coronation of King James; Dekker, with Jonson, was commissioned to write the pageant for James' royal entry into London. Dekker may have been something of a celebrity writer, but he was also apparently lacking in financial sense—he was imprisoned at least three times for debt, and was again in money trouble when he died. Financial matters often found their way into his work—you will notice that Shoemaker's Holiday is packed with monetary concerns. Financial troubles aside, Dekker's invitation to write the royal entry and his besting of Ben Jonson show that, besides being in high demand, he was a playwright to be reckoned with.

So, in seeing The Shoemaker's Holiday tonight, you will have the opportunity to see a play by a dramatist who, in his own day, was considered one of the best playwrights around. You will also have the (rare) opportunity of seeing an English Renaissance play that does not have the name "Shakespeare" attached to it.

But what about the play itself? As you will see, The Shoemaker's Holiday has weathered four centuries quite well. The timeless themes of love and the "little guy" overcoming the forces arrayed against them make this play an enjoyable celebration of the human spirit. The energetic and likeable heroes, whether they be "noble" or "common," will draw you into this world of enthusiastic celebration. Enjoy the music, enjoy the dancing, and enjoy the triumph of the generous, care-free forces of happiness over the dour forces of worldly concerns.

-Terence Schoone-Jongen, Dramaturg
FROM THE DIRECTOR:
The Gentle Craft, Gentility, and the Plots of The Shoemaker’s Holiday

The phrase “Gentle Craft” is an oxymoron, not an acknowledgement that the trade of shoemaking is non-violent. The word “genteel” to the ear of modern audiences, immediately suggests kindly, tender, soothing. Even in the familiar modern address “Ladies and gentlemen” there is little connotation of social status. In Dekker’s subtitle “A pleasant comedy of the Gentle Craft,” shoemaking is given social status: it is a trade practiced by “gentlemen,” by men of noble birth, aristocrats who work for a living. All the shoemakers, and Simon Eyre in particular, reiterate often the nobility of their trade — the “Gentle Craft,” practiced by “gentlemen shoemakers.”

The oxymoron “Gentle Craft” derives from the legend of St. Hugh, patron saint of shoemakers, as does Eyre’s oft-repeated mantra, “Prince am I none, yet am I princeiy born.” Born a king’s son, St. Hugh fell on hard times and took up the trade of the shoemaker. During a stay in prison, his fellow shoemakers stood by him and provided for his every need, prompting him to acknowledge this genteel behavior by labeling them “Gentlemen of the Gentle Craft.” When St. Hugh died a martyr’s death, the shoemakers stole his bones and disguised them by making them into cobbler’s tools. Ever after, shoemakers referred to their tools as “St. Hugh’s bones.” And because St. Hugh was indeed a prince, the son of a king, there was born the proverb “A shoemaker’s son is a prince born.”

The subject of social status, gentility vs. lowly birth, is at the heart of both plot lines in The Shoemaker’s Holiday. Simon Eyre is a mere shoemaker, but he and his wife Margery have grand ambitions to climb the social ladder. Simon wants to make himself Lord Mayor and thereby make Margery a refined “lady.” Posing as an alderman to lend himself more social clout, he purchases the entire (and entirely illegitimate) cargo of a Dutch smuggler’s ship and makes a fortune. With this huge profit, he is able to buy first the office of sheriff, and then the office of Lord Mayor.

In the other plot, young Roland Lacy has fallen in love with the lowly-born Rose, daughter of the grocer Roger Oatley, who remains conscious of his humble origins even though he has risen to be Lord Mayor. Lacy is the nephew of Sir Hugh Lacy, who is Earl of Lincoln, a powerful and snobbish aristocrat. To prevent his nephew Lacy from marrying the lowly Rose, Lincoln contrives to have the King send Lacy abroad to fight in the war in France. Young Lacy risks death by going A.W.O.L. and stays in London to pursue his Rose, disguised as — a shoemaker. The plots converge as Lacy’s new master — Simon Eyre the shoemaker — must, in his new role as Lord Mayor, intercede with the King to pardon Lacy’s dereliction of duty and endorse the marriage of the nobleman to the lowly grocer’s daughter.
OSU Theatre presents
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Time and the Beast
By Marina Shron, Thurber Playwright-in-Residence
Directed by Jennifer Schlueter
March 12, 2002
7:30 PM
New Works Lab, The Drake

Support for the 2001-2002 Season has generously been provided by The Columbus Foundation and Leslie and Abigail Wexner.
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The Shoemaker's Holiday
By Thomas Dekker
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March 5-9, 2002

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PORCELAIN
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April 30 - May 4, 2002

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Dance Sequences Choreographed by Nena Couch
APPENDIX F: SYMPOSIUM FLYER
Ohio State University Department of Theatre

presents

London Citizens On and Off the Stage: A Symposium on Thomas Dekker’s
The Shoemaker’s Holiday

Co-sponsored by OSU’s Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Office of International Affairs, Institute for Collaborative Research and Public Humanities, and Department of English

Friday, 1 March 2002
1:00 pm to 5:15 pm
Roy Bowen Theatre, Drake Center

Keynote Speaker

Andrew Gurr, Department of English, University of Reading, United Kingdom.

Featured Speakers

Christopher Highley, Department of English, Ohio State University.

Valerie Lucas, Department of Drama and Theatre Studies, University of Surrey, United Kingdom.

Convener

Thomas Postlewait, Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Theatre, Ohio State University.

Followed by a performance of
THE SHOEMAKER’S HOLIDAY
at 7:30 PM in the Thurber Theatre
(Tickets to the performance are $12 general public; $9 faculty, staff, and seniors; and $6.50 students. Contact the OSU Theatre Box Office at 614-292-2295.)
London Citizens On and Off the Stage:
A Symposium on Thomas Dekker’s
The Shoemaker's Holiday

This symposium is free and open to the public

The Department of Theatre, in conjunction with the spring production of The Shoemaker's Holiday, will host a public symposium on Thomas Dekker’s “citizen” comedy about Simon Eyre, a shoemaker who became Lord Mayor of London. The play, a loose mix of historical fact and artistic fantasy, was first produced at the Rose theatre in London in 1599. It was then performed at court before Queen Elizabeth. The symposium, featuring internationally renowned scholars, will consider the play and the two premiere productions in terms of: (1) the production methods of the period, (2) the new knowledge we have of the Rose theatre (based upon recent archeological discoveries), (3) Dekker’s professional life (in and out of prison), (4) the playgoers who supported a “citizens” play that celebrated the London guild of shoemakers, (5) the politics of court performances, and (6) the social and economic conditions of Renaissance London — the new metropolis. In addition, the members of the production team will discuss the historical and aesthetic challenges of performing the play today, 402 years after the first production. Please join us for not only this special symposium but the new production of The Shoemaker's Holiday.

SCHEDULE

1:00pm: Welcome and Introduction of Topic. Thomas Postlewait, Department of Theatre, Ohio State University.

1:15pm: Christopher Hightley, “Dekker’s London.”


3:15pm—3:30pm: Intermission, Refreshments

3:30pm: Andrew Gurr, “An Audience of Shoemakers?”

4:30pm: Jon Farris (Dept. of Theatre, Denison University, and director of the production), Nena Couch (Curator of the Lawrence and Lee Theatre Research Institute and choreographer of The Shoemaker’s Holiday), Production Team, and Actors, Open Discussion on Production.

5:30pm - 7:30 pm: Dinner break

7:30pm - 10:30pm: Performance of Thomas Dekker's The Shoemaker's Holiday in the Thurber Theatre, Drake Center.
APPENDIX G: DIRECTOR’S CONCEPT
Simon Eyre's generosity of spirit pervades the world of *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, and I look to Eyre's celebrated individuality, his honesty, his ebullience, and his unrestrained merriment to provide the inspiration for the world we create with our production. Like the speech of Eyre and Firk, the production needs to be characterized by flavorful idiosyncratic detail—robust, colorful, and lively. Obviously the play is not without vivid contrasting elements; the three plots of the play—Eyre's rise to become Mayor, the Ralph-Jane separation and reuniting, and the Rose-Lacy love story—all have conflicts that arise from issues that have negative connotations: heartless class consciousness (Lincoln and Oatley), war (Ralph and Lacy), poverty (Jane), unscrupulous deception (Hammon), pressure to conform (everyone!). In our production, these elements need to be vivid not only in dialogue and action, but in its visual components. In the action of the play, the conflicts are resolved in a comic spirit by the elimination of these negative elements; and perhaps we can find ways also to eliminate them to some meaningful degree from the physical environment.

*The Shoemaker's Holiday* is well known as a piece of documentary evidence of the details of the working-class life of London in at the end of the sixteenth century. Time and place are specifically and thoroughly woven into the text, and I believe that the visual style of our production should take full advantage of that by grounding our theatrical world in the London of 1600.

Scenery: the play poses the typical problem of Elizabethan plays: multiple scenes in multiple locales, with the necessity of instantaneous change from one locale to another. Rapid pace is a necessity for the play, so a unit set of some sort seems absolutely necessary. The several scenes located in Eyre's shop, with shoemakers at work with their tools, requires some physical detail that is at odds with quick change of locale, and I hope for an inventive solution. In all the scenes, tasty and earthy physical detail would be welcome, but only to the extent that it brings the action of the play alive. Physical action with authentic and interesting physical objects is not advantageous if it is there for its own sake merely as a vivid slice of Elizabethan life. The ability to play some scenes on an upper level would be most welcome; it provides the opportunity for visual variety and also facilitates beginning a new scene in a new locale instantaneously.

Costumes: the costumes in *The Shoemaker's Holiday* can be a visual feast. There is the widest opportunity for variety of color, line, and shape. I hope the costumes can provide an echo of Simon Eyre's ebullience in full force. Opportunities for contrast between social classes can be taken full advantage of; we might emphasize particularly the contrast between the individuality of the dress of Eyre and his fellow-citizens with the more conforming nature of the clothing of the aristocracy—especially the shallow and insincere Hammon and his cookie-cutter servants.

Lighting: *The Shoemaker's Holiday* is a comedy and it needs to be bright. But not shallow-comedy bright. *The Shoemaker's Holiday* is a gentle comedy, yes, but with very
serious themes; we want the audience to respond in a spirit of merriment, but not of frivolity. To this end, I hope we can make the lighting bright, but bright with depth and richness. Perhaps looking to Rembrandt or other Dutch masters for inspiration would serve well (with a slight nod here toward Lacy's Dutch disguise-coherence of concept?).

Sound: The use of incidental music does not seem apt to this approach to the play. I hope to use live music for the singing and dancing. If that proves impractical, then we will use recorded music, but I plan to use music only when it emanates from the action. I have not noticed opportunities for sound effects, but if the action can be enlivened by appropriate sound effects growing out of the action, I would welcome suggestions in that regard.

Overall, the style of the production can perhaps be characterized as heightened realism, rather than authentically realistic. The play is a wonderful artifice with its three plots carefully woven into an aesthetic construct. The artificial use of prose, blank verse, and rhymed couplets is ingenious without being precious. Our consciously aesthetic choices need not apologize for their artifice; indeed, that artifice can be celebrated as long as it flows from the human truth of the play.

Jon Farris
APPENDIX H: HISTORICAL REFERENCES
a nutmeg - i.e., something as small as a nutmeg

_A common, slight regard shall not respect him_ - “he [Ralph] will get more consideration than is usually due to ordinary recruits” (Parr 16)

after - similar

_an hundred for twenty_ - i.e., five times the repayment for Lacy’s loan of twenty portagues

_an_ - truly if

_ape_ - small monkey

_arrant ’st varlet_ - most absolute rogue

_as proud as a dog in a doublet_ - a popular saying

_Avoid_ - move it

_avoid, Mephistophilus_ - “a catch-phrase resulting from the popularity of Marlowe’s _Dr Faustus_” (Parr 94)

_awl_ - “bawdy pun on ‘hole’. Firk takes Jane’s _undone_ in the next line as another sexual quibble, and caps it with one of his own (occupied)” (Parr 14)

_bandog_ - mean guard dog

_banquet_ - “probably a dessert (which _stands sweetly_) rather than an entire meal” (Parr 101)

_barley pudding_ - a type of sausage

_basa mon cues_ - “Firk’s pronunciation of _baisez mon culs_, ‘kiss-my-arses’” (Parr 18)

_Bedlam_ - “Bethlehem Hospital, London’s main lunatic asylum just outside Bishopsgate. Either this is Eyre’s joke (punning on _mad_) or the area was another shoemaking center” (Parr 18)

_beleaguer the shambles_ - take over the meat-stalls
beshrew - hex

**Boar’s Head** - “Probably the tavern of this name in Eastcheap, which was also the setting for several scenes in Shakespeare’s *Henry IV*” (Parr 37)

**bombast-cotton-candle quean** - “i.e., delicate wench (bombast is cotton-wool; good candles had cotton wicks); but these refined associations are offset by the roughness of tone. Eyre uses the term as general abuse at Scene 7.39. He urges Jane to work, presumably, not just for therapeutic reasons but because he has no intention of paying Ralph’s wages in his absence” (Parr 17)

**brave day towards** - great day coming

**brewis** - soup water

**bride** - “spouse; ‘Bride’ was used of both sexes at this date” (Parr 98)

**brisk** - spic-and-span

**broiled carbonado** - “a piece of meat scored across and grilled” (Parr 94)

**brown** - robust

**brown-bread tannikin** - “Brown bread was despised for its coarseness; *tannikin* was a diminutive form of ‘Anne’, was commonly applied to a Dutch or German girl, and could easily become a term of mild abuse” (Parr 37)

**buff-jerkin varlets** - Eyre’s disrespectful name for the officers now under his command

**bully** - buddy

**but only for their apparel** - “except when they’re dressed up. Margery’s logic is no match for her enthusiasm” (Parr 39)

**butter-box** - stereotypical slang name for Dutch, whom many believed were butter addicts

**can you see to rise?** - “Eyre’s sarcasm: ‘is it light enough for you to get up?’” (Parr, 24)

**cannibals** - another of Eyre’s nicknames for his officers

**Cappadocians** - Eyre’s gibberish

**card** - prepare wool for spinning by combing it
Carouse me fathom healths - drink a lot

carrot-roots - Firk’s misunderstanding of cambric; carrots and turnips were inexpensive local vegetables

cavaliers - soldiers on horses

chargers - big serving platters

chitterling - sausage

Clapperdudgeon - “beggar; apparently so called after the wooden clap-dish which beggars and lepers beat to indicate their presence. Eyre refers of course to the clacking of his wife’s tongue” (Parr 28)

clowns - working class

cockney - spoiled brat

colours - military position bearing the flag

cordwainers - “shoemakers (the name derives from Corboda in Spain, a source of fine leather). Eyre evidently thinks of it as the posh term for his trade” (Parr 18)

countenance - sanctuary

countenance - view

coxcomb - idiot

craft - cunning

crotchets - entertainment with music and dance

crowns - pates

cypress, laden with sugar-candy - Firk has confused the skipper’s version of the ship’s origin and cargo.

Dainty, come thou me - well-favored love song

danced the shaking of the sheets - first line of a sixteenth century song, used in dirty jokes
De skip . . . copen - “The ship is in the river. There are sugar, civet, almonds, cambric, and a thousand thousand things, by God’s sacrament! Take it, master; you shall have a good bargain”” (Parr 40)

deal with - an innuendo from Firk

degenerous - corrupt

Der . . . mannekin - “‘There was a boor from Gelderland, merry they be. He was so drunk he could not stand; pissed they all be. Fill up the cannikin; drink, my fine mannikin.’ The Dutchmen had a reputation as drinkers, and ‘boer’, the Dutch word for ‘farmer,’ had already acquired in English the modern sense of ‘boor’ ” (Parr 25)

Diocletian - a Roman Emperor

double - stronger

dressed - decorated

dry beating - “i.e., one that won’t draw blood. Firk will say anything to remind people of his thirst” (Parr 24)

elder - higher seniority. Firk is boasting about his higher status over Hans (Lacy)

fact - doing, action

fellow prentices - co-workers

firking - a raunchy expression used by Firk to mean fucking, or hitting

flap of a shoulder of mutton - “i.e., the French hood” (Parr 54)

flews and your whirligigs - “flaps and fripperies” (Parr 94)

for rearing of - in case you lift the first layer of fabric; Firk is straightening Eyre’s finery

for - since

freebooters - “pirates (with a pun on ‘bootmakers’)” (Parr 94)

French crowns - “money, but (see line 218) also alluding to heads made bald by syphilis, which was known as the French disease” (Parr 18)

from the bias - irrelevant
gallimaufry - “ragbag (literally, a dish of leftovers)-again addressed to Margery” (Parr 26)

Gargantua - “a giant in French folklore, generally known in England through translations of popular tales rather than through Rabelais’ version” (Parr 28)

gentle - gentlemen

get - spawn

give you the wall - on the streets, lower classes moved to the outside to allow higher classes room to walk next to the wall, the best place to avoid chamber pots being emptied from above

give earnest - advance payment

go fetch some wine - “Possibly Sybil exits to perform her errand, but a reception has clearly been laid on and wine could be served from the side or back of the stage” (Parr 57)

go to - A popular Elizabethan saying, i.e. ‘get away with you’

Godden . . . nempt it - “‘Good day, master. This is the skipper who owns the ship of merchandise. The commodity is good: take it, master, take it’” (Parr 39)

Goedeu . . . auck - “‘Good day, master, and you mistress also’” (Parr 26)

grace - liking

Gramercy - “From Fr. grand merci, great thanks” (Steane 113)

guarded - braided

gull - stupid person

galleries - cunnings

hackney to him - a regular bore

Hamborow - “Hamburg (perhaps alluding to Lacy’s disguise: Holland and Germany were often confused in English minds)” (Parr 81)

heavy - unhappy
heelblock - “a small block used to fasten a heel to a shoe, but apparently used here as slang for a round of drinks. Perhaps shoemakers kept a tally on their heelblocks of rounds bought” (Parr 28)

Here be some - “Firk objects to her elevation of the newcomer. As usual, his phrasing is sexually suggestive” (Parr 58)

hopperarse - big butt

horns - cuckold’s horns, worn by husbands of unfaithful wives

hump! - “Perhaps a call to raise glasses. At this point in the 1981 NT production Eyre sat down next to the King, causing consternation amongst the royal attendants” (Parr 95)

Hyperboreans - “mythical people who lived beyond the north wind. Eyre may think the description apposite to his happy band of shoemakers, but probably he just likes the sound of the word” (Parr 28)

I . . . Spain - “Perhaps modestly jovial (‘I’ll believe that when I see it’); but Eyre seems to resist Oatley’s rather patronising manner” (Parr 46)

If . . . lower - “i.e., I’ll take her down a peg or two. But Firk also spots the opportunity for sexual innuendo in Hodge’s take down” (Parr 35)

Ik . . . niet - “I don’t know what you say; I cannot understand you” (Parr 27)

Ik . . . frister - “I thank you, good maid” (Parr 57)

innocent lambskins - purses; A traditional term for a miser was ‘pennyfather’, and Eyre underlines the contrast between grasping old age and his own ‘youthful’ largesse” (Parr 19)

Islington whitepot - “a dish of milk or cream boiled with eggs, flour and spices, apparently a favourite with Londoners on local excursions” (Parr 94)

jackdaw - pet bird

journeyman - the next level of handicraftsman after apprenticeship

kennels - gutters, drain

kitchen-stuff - garbage left from cooking
last of the fives - “last (wooden model of the foot) for small shoes, i.e., little one” (Parr 28)

Leaden Hall - “a familiar landmark to Dekker’s audience. The naming of Eyre’s building confirms his solid legacy to the present” (Parr 100)

Let them wash my face that will eat it - “i.e., comparing his face to a pig’s head being readied for cooking” (Parr 23)

livery members - guilds were distinguished on formal occasions by the colour of their hoods

Lord of Ludgate - “probably King Lud, legendary founder of London, whose statue stood on the east side of Ludgate” (Parr 15)

mad - blithe

made him drink - “A courteous inquiry rather than a stealthy aside to Hans, though it is obviously in Eyre’s interests to have the skipper well oiled” (Parr 40)

Madge Mumblecrust - “a character in Udall’s old play Ralph Roister Doister (c. 1553) whose name betrays her toothlessness” (Parr 23)

marchpane - marzipan (i.e., luxurious)

marks - “A mark was worth two-thirds of a pound” (Parr 56)

marvel - to admire

Master Cormorant - “Firke is the clown of the company and has a fool’s license. So ‘cormorant’ is a play on ‘colonel’ (or in Elizabethan spelling ‘coronel’, which is a little closer in sound). There is also some point in the pun, as the cormorant was a greedy bird of prey, gobbling up others’ goods, much as the officer takes good men away from their home, wife and business” (Steane 112)

Master - a title indicating Eyre’s new position, Eyre insists on remaining humble

meat - food

melancholy - introspective

Miniver-Cap - “Margery’s cap is trimmed with ermine for the occasion” (Parr 94)
moe - “more; The rhyme underlies the dramatic point of Ralph’s reminder and signals the close of the scene” (Parr 19)

Monday’s our holiday - “Monday was a traditional holiday for shoemakers. Firk apparently sings the phrase, perhaps with elaborate repetition” (Parr 35)

more maids than Malkin - “proverbial; Malkin was a common name for a girl” (Parr 36)

mouse - a general term of endearment

my new buildings - Leadenhall

mystery - art

‘Nails - “God’s nails; a common expletive of the period (referring to the nails of the Cross) which Firk uses frequently in the play” (Parr 26)

No more, Madge - “Perhaps Eyre is reassuring Margery that he is only pretending to demand the odd ten” (Parr 37)

not a word - “The shoemakers are obviously anxious to present a petition to the King” (Parr 100)

O . . . freelicke - “O, I understand you: I must pay for half a dozen cans. Here, boy, take this shilling, fill up once all round” (Parr 28)

of - suited for

pack - leave - i.e., I’d kick him out

pancake bell - “the bell for Church on Shrove Tuesday, but with obvious festive associations. The day was a traditional apprentices’ holiday” (Parr 81)

parasite - “servant; but the term creates expectations of an artful, scheming character like Mosca in Jonson’s Volpone which Dodger does not fulfil, though he may be one of the spies referred to in line 114. In the 1981 NT production Dodger lived up to his name by his inability to walk in a straight line” (Parr 16)

partlets - shirt collars

Peace, you cracked groats, you mustard tokens - “The same bantering tone of humorous abuse. A groat was a fourpenny piece, so a cracked groat is a worthless article. A token was also a cheap coin, while the phrase ‘mustard token’
was used of the yellow spots on the body of a victim of the plague. The two meanings together are sufficiently uncomplimentary” (Steane 114)

*pickthank* - “sycophantic” (Parr 17)

*pie* - magpie

*pinked* - ornamented

*pishery-pashery* - “A sort of jovial contempt implied. The term is a favourite one with Eyre . . . these jingly collocations (gibble-gabble, jiggy-joggy, etc.) are fairly common in Dekker” (Steane 112)

*pishery-pashery* - tawdry rags

*pols and your edepols* - digression, rambling speech

*powder-beef* - “beef salted for preservation. But Eyre thinks of his women as old and tough rather than well-preserved” (Parr 23)

*Prince . . . shoemaker* - motto used by Eyre in Deloney’s *The Gentle Craft*: ‘A Shoemaker’s son is a prince born’

*privy* - hidden

*properest* - most attractive

*puling* - whimpering

*Ralph* - “spelled ‘Rafe’ in Q1, and so pronounced” (Parr 14)

*red petticoat* - the Lord Mayor’s scarlet gown

*Rip* - leave

*sack and sugar* - a sweet wine which the elderly took with additional sugar

*Saint Hugh’s bones* - “shoemaker’s tools, so called after the story of Sir Hugh, who became a shoemaker for love of Winifred and was martyred with her, and whose bones are discovered and made into tools by a company of shoemakers. The tale is told in Deloney’s *The Gentle Craft*, ch. 4, where the tools are itemised, and dramatised in William Rowley’s play *A Shoemaker a Gentleman* (1608)” (Parr 25)
Saint Martin’s - “the parish of St Martin’s-le-Grand, a centre of the shoemaking trade” (Parr 18)

Saracen’s head - “referring to the ugly caricature on an inn-sign; another of Eyre’s roughly affectionate insults” (Parr 80)

scarlet gown - worn by the Lord Mayor and alderman for various ceremonies

sd pass . . . stage - “In Dekker’s theatre, this was probably a movement from the yard to the stage to the yard again, involving a procession through the standing audience” (Parr 19)

See . . . meester - “See, my dear brother, here comes my master” (Parr 54)

served at the conduit together - “i.e., as apprentices, fetching water for their masters’ houses” (Parr 81)

shop windows - formed counters when opened for business

shroving . . . prentices - “The mixture of verse and prose in Eyre’s speech is a sign of incomplete revision in Dekker’s manuscript” (Parr 101)

Sir Sauce - “a mock-formal way of saying ‘saucy youth’” (Parr 35)

Skellum-Skanderbag-can-you-Dutch-spreaken - “i.e., the skipper. Firk’s composite name for him is routine derogation of the foreigner, although Skanderbag was the name of a popular hero. Skellum (or ‘skelm’) was a common term for ‘thief, rogue’” (Parr 38)

slops - pants

some morris - “Morris dancing was for festive occasions, notably May-day, and involved dressing in fancy costume to represent legendary characters such as those in Robin Hood stories. Eyre wants a suitable entertainment: dancing, music (‘some odd crotchets’), and an appropriate tableau, emblem or design (‘some device’)” (Steane 123)

Sometimes - previously

sort - gang

souse-wife - woman who washed and dilled offal

soused conger - “pickled eel” (Parr 28)
speak... bedlam - growling like a crazy thing

spend - quit

stand - behave (with sexual implication)

stand so stiffly against - “behave so inflexibly towards. But Margery is unable to avoid sexual innuendo, as her catchphrase but let that pass frequently acknowledges” (Steane 113)

stay - Eyre has to hold back Lacy’s excitement

stirrup - leather shoemaking strap

stopple - stopper of a flask

Stratford Bow - “a small village outside London, whose tavern was a regular stopping place on the road into the city” (Parr 58)

Sultan Soliman, to Tamburlaine - “the great conquering rulers of the Middle East whose exploits were dramatised in popular Elizabethan plays by Marlowe and Kyd” (Parr 94)

swing her in a stirrup - hit her with a strap

‘Right Worshipful’ - the appropriate way to address an alderman

tabor and pipe sd - “small drum and pipe often played by a single performer” (Parr 56)

take down - scold

Tamar Cham - “famous ruler of China, familiar to theatre audiences from a 1596 play in which he was probably identified on stage by a distinctive beard” (Parr 96)

tankard - water container

Tawsoone - Shut up

Termagant - “god of the Saracens in romance literature and the medieval mystery plays, where he is loud and violent” (Parr 15)

thank my Mayor - “Eyre has pleaded Lacy’s cause between the last scene and the present one” (Parr 95)
The Londoners are pressed - “i.e. impressed by the press-gangs which forced men into the army and navy” (Steane 113)

Thou shalt not want - you’ll have everything you need

tickle it - have fun

to . . . cleansed - “in time to get my walkways cleaned up. The physical detail of Eyre’s speech demands its visual complement in performance; in the 1981 NT production there was much passing and emptying of chamber-pots” (Parr 23)

Trencher - plate, i.e., table

Trip - hurry up; Trip and go was a type of morris dance

trullibubs - fat innards

Turk . . . shoot at - “Effigies of Turks and other ‘infidels’ were used as targets” (Parr 36)

uplandish - alien

upon every Shrove-Tuesday - “Apprentices traditionally enjoyed a holiday on Shrove-Tuesday, but there seems to be no historical evidence for making Simon Eyre the originator” (Steane 130)

Use thyself - be

use - Margery’s use of this double-entendre spawns laughter from the men

velvet . . . careful - “Both terms convey Eyre’s awareness of the cares and duties of rank; ‘velvet-jacket’ was slang for a mayor” (Parr 81)

venentory - Firk’s way of saying ‘inventory’

want - need

want - lack; Cicely probably was responsible for spinning and waxing thread for shoemaking

want - to be without

wash our souls - get us a drink

wash - nonsense

198
weak vessels - “women (see I Peter 3.7). The sexual joking continues” (Parr 16)

Well said - i.e., all right, then, finish your drinks and get back to work

whose fair shape thou represent’st - “whom you so resemble; Perhaps at this moment Rose confirms a suspicion that Hans is Lacy” (Parr 57)

windows - wooden shutters which made shop counters when opened

with a pox - “with a vengeance, whatever you do. Although he uses the same vocabulary as his men, Eyre thinks only of hard work whilst they insinuate that Jane should become a prostitute” (Parr 17)

wonted - standard, traditional

Yaw... skomawker - “‘Yes, yes, I am a shoemaker’” (Parr 26)

Yaw... doen - “‘Yes, yes, yes; I can do that well’” (Parr 27)

Yaw... gedrunck - “‘Yes, yes, I have drunk well’” (Parr 40)

Yaw... klene - “Yes, yes, never fear. I have everything for making shoes large and small” (Parr 27)

Yerk - sew

younker - young person

you’re man’s counsel - “sarcastic: Margery constantly suspects that her position and advice are undermined by Eyre’s solidarity with his men” (Parr 25)

your head - Eyre’s referring to himself, the patriarch of the household