ANGEL IN AMERICA:
A DOCUMENTATION OF THE PREPARATION
AND PERFORMANCE OF THE ROLE OF
THE ANGEL IN
ANGELS IN AMERICA, PART TWO: PERESTROIKA

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
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*****

The Ohio State University
2000

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ABSTRACT

“Angel in America” is a documentation of the process involved in preparing for, rehearsing, and performing a role required for the completion of a Masters of Fine Arts degree in Acting on the Ensemble Track. The role discussed is that of the Angel in Tony Kushner’s Angels in America, Part Two: Perestroika, which was produced by the Ohio State University Department of Theatre in November 1999. Specific chapters include an Introduction, Production Circumstances, Research, Methodology, Scored Script, a Journal, and Conclusion. The role was approached by using the actor training methods of Suzuki, Laban, and mime to create stylized and specific physical and vocal choices. These techniques were utilized as ways to address the challenges of complex text in contemporary writing, a non-realistic play structure, and the multiple characterizations required of the Angel, a non-human character.
This is dedicated to my Angel,

Carmilla M. Brown
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank Jeffrey Bedillion for introducing me to this theatrical masterpiece, all my friends and family who have encouraged me to follow my dreams and have been with me through this process, my adviser and mentor Jeanine Thompson who has given me support, knowledge, and most of all friendship, and Jeremy Dubin for being there through it all.
VITA

September 6, 1974 .................. Born – Warren, Ohio

1996 .................................. B.A. Theatre, Kent State University

1996 – 1997 ............................. Actor,
Magical Theatre Company.
Barberton, Ohio

1997 – present ........................ Graduate Teaching Associate,
The Ohio State University

CREATIVE PROJECTS

Actor, The Ohio State University
2000 Earl of Kent, King Lear
2000 Miss Gilchrist, The Hostage
1999 Angel, Angels in America, Part Two: Perestroika
1999 Shirley/Miss Cade/Margaret/Japanese Businessman, Fen
1998 Hannah, Feral Music
1998 Bacchante, The Bacchae (Wole Soyinka)
1998 Maggie Cutler, The Man Who Came to Dinner
1998 An Actress of Today, The First Actress, staged reading
1997 Anya, The Cherry Orchard

Actor, Timestep Players Chicago, IL
1997 Millie Second, The Incredible Time Machine

Actor, Magical Theatre Company Barberton, OH
1996 – 97 Court Jester, Many Moons
1997 Multiple Characters, Kidscripts

Actor, Porthouse Theatre Company Cuyahoga Falls, OH
1996 Miss Rixey, June Moon
1996 Pinhead/Countess/Orderly, The Elephant Man
1996 Titania/Hippolyta, A Midsummer Night's Dream (Intern Production)
Actor, Coach House Theatre  Akron, OH  
1995  Mitzi, A Murder is Announced
1994  Mrs. Parker, Catch Me if You Can

Actor, Silver Pheonix Theatre Company  Delaware, OH  
1994  Gwendolyn, The Odd Couple
1993  Vera, Stepping Out

Actor, Kent State University  Kent, OH  
1996  Sarah, he and SHE , staged reading
1995  Lisa, Forbidden Fruit
1995  Ensemble, The Serpent
1994  Soloist, Ain't Misbehavin'
1993  Vibrata, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum

Actor, Kennedy Productions (Film)  Cincinnati, OH  
1998  Claire Vanover, People Like Us

Co-Creator/Performer, The Ohio State University  
1997  New York/New Year: The Johnny Cash Project

Director, The Ohio State University  
1998  Medea (Christopher Durang & Wendy Wasserstein); class project

Director, Kent State University  
1995  Elixir's Dream; class project

Director, Windham High School Drama Department  
1997  Snoopy!
1994  The Odd Couple (The Female Version)

Choreographer, Windham High School Drama Department  
1997  Snoopy!

Choreographer, William Street United Methodist Church  Delaware, OH  
2000  Godspell

Movement Captain, The Ohio State University  
1999  The Bacchae

Fight Captain, The Ohio State University  
1999  Angels in America, Part Two: Perestroika
2000  The Hostage
2000  King Lear
FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Theatre
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

I was first introduced to Tony Kushner and Angels in America when I was an undergraduate at Kent State University. A friend of mine did a scene from Part One: Millennium Approaches in an acting class and I was fascinated by the story and the characters. Shortly after that Tony Kushner came to the university and was speaking about Part Two: Perestroika, which had just had huge success on Broadway. I was in love. Although I had not read Part Two, I bought a copy of it after the lecture and had Mr. Kushner sign it. I read both parts several times and was enthralled by the characters of the Angel and Harper. I vowed to play them some day, the Angel first, and then Harper when I was a little older. Six years later, the first part of my dream came true.

Part One was produced at Ohio State in the Spring quarter of my second year of graduate school. I wasn’t cast in it, and although it was a disappointment, I had my eyes set on Part Two in the Fall. Towards the end of that Spring quarter the faculty offered each of us in the ensemble track of the M.F.A. Acting program two choices for our thesis role. I was given the choice of the Angel or Cordelia in King Lear to be produced in the Spring of 2000. I said I would think about it and let them know, although I knew there
was really nothing to think about. I definitely did not want to write my thesis on a role I would be performing Spring quarter. But most of all, this was a chance to play one of the very few roles I had dreamed of one day performing.

And so it began. I was thrilled with the opportunity to challenge myself as an actor in a role that was rather atypical. I would be working with complex text in a contemporary work, a combination not all that common, playing multiple roles, and exploring the realm of stylized, unnatural physicality. These things, along with many others outside of my control, combined to create an extremely challenging, but rewarding process.

The following is a documentation of that process. Included in this is the research I did throughout the summer prior to beginning rehearsals, a copy of my scored script, a record of the rehearsals and performances, and a concluding look back on the process near the end of the academic year.
CHAPTER 2

PRODUCTION CIRCUMSTANCES

2.1 Audition Process

This process was unusual for me because I wasn’t a part of it. The roles we could choose to do as our thesis were offered to us at the beginning of Spring Quarter 1999. I was given the options of playing the Angel or Cordelia in *King Lear*. Auditions then occurred near the end of Spring Quarter. The structure was a general audition in which each auditionee performed two contrasting monologues for all of the directors for the upcoming season. After that, each director had individual callbacks for his or her respective show. During the call backs people were asked to read from the script. I normally would have been part of this process, and because it was already set that I would be playing the Angel I would’ve been in the callbacks reading with people. However, I left school a few weeks early to begin a summer job and wasn’t there for any of the process. I was in Chicago rehearsing and was told over the phone who had been cast.

This was a different kind of process than I had been used to in this particular academic setting. I knew a lot of the people who were cast and had worked with a few of them in the past. There were also people cast who were part of the incoming MFA Acting
class whom I had never met. So, it wasn’t until the first meeting that we had any sense of the ensemble since most of us had never read together before. It was good to know that I wasn’t the only one who hadn’t been there for the audition process, and we didn’t seem to have a problem finding a sense of ensemble. This kind of process was much more reflective of how the process occurs in the professional world. It is not unusual to bring people in from different places and not hear or see them all together until the first rehearsal.

2.2 Director’s Concept

After deciding on the Angel as my thesis role and before leaving for the summer I met with the Director Dr. Lesley Ferris to discuss some of her ideas for the production. The main thing I learned from the meeting was that they would not be flying the Angel. This came as a bit of a surprise because in Part One, which had just closed a short time before, the Angel was flown in and was dressed in a flowing white gown with enormous wings. I was a bit surprised, and a bit disappointed I’ll admit, that that Angel only appeared for four lines and was flown, whereas I had some major scenes and didn’t get to fly. Dr. Ferris’ concept was that the Angel was an Amelia Earhart character, a more human angel and in scenes where she needed to fly there would be Street People that would locomote her through space. Here are some excerpts from her written Production Concept (ms) that describe these choices more fully:

I am faced with two challenges (in addition to directing the play as a whole!). The first is that I will be using the same set from spring term’s Part One. The second is that I will not be flying the Angel. (Although the impetus for this decision is for both practical and budget reasons, I want to explore creating the magic of flying without actually flying.)....
The set is an urban landscape, industrial feel, with the claustrophobia and clutter that is evocative of current cultural life: a bombardment of abandoned commodities and garbage. (I was inspired by several art works in the recent “Self Taught Artists” exhibit at the Wexner.) As part of this sense of urban clutter and chaos, four street people (who are the living embodiment of the ‘damaged polis’) will be ever present within the set…

The Angel—instead of Renaissance beautiful with full flying gear—is a more earthy angel. She is the angel is history and she needs to look like a piece of history. She has worked hard, she is covered in dust, grimy, and she is prepared to do battle. God has left Heaven; the Angels who are still there are having a difficult time of it—not quite sure how to proceed without their leader. Nevertheless, they are bureaucratic angels, trying to make sense and order out of their current chaos. Our Angel—once she decided to enter the realm of Earth, decides to dress for the occasion in flight gear—Amelia Earhart style. Our Angel has the decades a little wrong and doesn’t realize that she is out of date. In Scene 24 when the Angel wrestles with Prior, she ‘flies’ with the help of the street people. They lift her, pick her up, swoop with her…

These directorial choices ended up giving me a lot of freedom to explore the character of the Angel. I was able to make some interesting stylistic physical choices because I was not inhibited by flying apparatus. Working with the street people proved to be an incredibly creative and exciting experience. The idea of this Amelia Earhart persona enabled me to explore the different facets of the Angel’s personality and to play with the contrast between the magnificent angel that crashes through Prior’s ceiling, and the human, quirky angel that doesn’t realize she’s miscalculated her choice of apparel.

Dr. Ferris also referred to Kushner’s source for the angel, Walter Benjamin’s description of a Klee painting called “Angelus Novus”. Benjamin wrote about this in his “Theses on The Philosophy of History.” This passage is referred to in two essays from *Approaching the Millennium: Essays on Angels in America*, “Strange Angel: The Pinklisting of Roy Cohn” by Michael Cadden and “Flying the Angel of History” by Martin Harries.
A Klee painting named "Angelus Novus" shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.

I would like to close with a final quote from Dr. Ferris’ Production Concept:

I am excited that we are performing this play in the final days of 1999. As the Woman from the South Bronx says in the first part, ‘In the new Century I think we will all be insane.’

I wonder how true that will prove to be. The way the beginning of the 21st century is going, it looks like maybe the Woman from the South Bronx wasn’t far off.

2.3 Designer Concepts

During the first week of rehearsals there was one night in which the designers gave presentation of their ideas and concepts. Some showed pictures or sketches of what they were working on and others talked us through their plans and thoughts. The designers were as follows: Matt Kari--Set, Mary Tarantino--Lights, Julia Weiss--Costumes, Katie Whitlock--Sound. (Production photographs of these designs can be viewed at the Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute.)
Set

The same set that was designed for *Part One: Millennium Approaches* was used for *Part Two*. It was a series of platforms of varying level that were connected to make one large playing space that spread the width of the stage. The major differences were the adjustments of playing spaces such as Roy’s office being replaced by Louis’ apartment, the scene set in Heaven, and the addition of, in Matt’s words, “rubble and stuff.” There was more of a feeling of destruction, breaking-down, so things were a little dirtier, more disorganized.

Lights

There were moving lights used in this show which allowed for some different visual images. These specialized instruments allowed for very focused beams of lights to move through space. I had worked with this kind of lighting before and was very excited at the prospect at repeating the experience. Along with this specialized lighting Mary talked about “mushy” lighting in order to “blend the boundaries of rooms.” She also discussed the “glitzy, dance hall” look of Heaven, which eventually included a large disco ball and a neon sign reading “Heaven.”

Costumes

Julia worked from Lesley’s Amelia Earhart concept for the Angel’s costume. It consisted of jodhpurs, shirt, leather jacket, scarf, flying cap with goggles, and boots. I was able to work with the jacket, scarf, and boots very early into the process which was
extremely helpful for me. I tend to work from the outside in and always gain a lot of perspective on the characters I am playing once I am in costume. It greatly influences how I move and walk. In this instance using these items really helped me get in tune with the Angel. I was able to find the sense of power, determination, and quirkiness that made up the character. This was the base costume and it was covered during my entrance. For my appearance in Scene 8 I wore a large, flowing white robe with a hood over the pilot gear. My wings were created by rolls of fabric carried by the Street People which they unfurled and held up to me. This layer allowed for the repetition of the image of the Angel in Part One and for the unveiling of the earthy, worn, ready-for-action Angel of the second part of the story.

Sound

The sound design for this production was based on Katie’s original design for the production of Part Two that Lesley directed at the University of Memphis. Much of the score remained the same, but some of it was altered due to not working with a composer and a somewhat different concept for the Angel. The following is an excerpt from her original Design Concept Statement (ms):

Sound will serve to create a link between scenes and locations for the audience as well as informing and animating the space. There are three levels of reality in the show which must be reflected in the sound design as well as a fourth category. The first level is the reality of 1986. A combination of environments such as traffic, waves, hospital ambiance, etc. will serve to introduce and ground several scenes in a realistic base. In addition, popular music of the time period will be used for preshow and intermission to establish the time period and identify some of the popular artists of the time period. The second level is reflected in the surreal reality of... the Angel’s descention and interaction on Earth....A variety of different choices will be made to
punctuate and lift these scenes away from the reality of the remainder of the script. The third level is Heaven itself, created for a single scene. Clustered around an old radio, seeking answers, watching the world in its mad spin towards destruction. The angels live in a silent world, permeated by the incessant hum of a generator and monitored by the thunder from God.... Overlaying composition with Gregorian style chant, the effect will be to create the eerily holy environment of the Angel as she descends from heaven to the grime of Earth.... The other voiced character will be the Angel. The choice to mic her is partially motivated by the desire to manipulate her voice, changing the quality of her delivery as the scenes progress. Heavy reverb and possible pitch shifting are among possibilities. The show also requires some recording work done with the performers, then edited for the show.

As mentioned, Katie made some changes to her original design which she describes in a written Evaluation of the process:

To cover the lack of a composer, music was examined from several sources to locate a rich, orchestrated sound that would envoke the mystical and uncertain world of the Angel. Works by the composer Ratuavara as well as several film scores were utilized in creating the final product that was successful in complementing the action of the play.... The show lost the final segment of shaping sound to the space due to slow technical rehearsals... that slowness, in turn, caused the lack of time to finesse the use of wireless microphones in the show, especially in regard to the Angel.

The sound score ended up blending beautifully with the pictures and movements that had been created in rehearsals. Unfortunately the sound wasn’t added in until technical rehearsals so they weren’t able to develop together. And as Katie mentioned in her Evaluation, the mic that was used on me was not as effective as it had the potential to be.
2.4 Specifics

Rehearsal and Performance Dates

Rehearsals were held Monday through Friday from 6:30 – 10:30pm and Saturdays from 12:00 – 5:00pm beginning September 23 and continuing through November 9, 1999. Technical rehearsals began November 3 and continued until the end of the rehearsal process. Performances ran November 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 at 7:30pm and November 14 at 4:00pm. Ticket prices were $12.00 for the General Public, $9.00 for OSU Faculty & Staff, Seniors, & Alumni Club, and $6.50 for Students.

Performance Space

Performances were held in Thurber Theatre in Drake Union on The Ohio State University’s main campus. Thurber Theatre is a 600-seat house with a 35’ wide by 22’ high proscenium stage.

Afterwords

Following the Thursday, November 18 show a post-production discussion was held. This talk was part of a series of such discussions held after the second Thursday night performance of each show during the 1999 - 2000 season known as Afterwords. It was held in Thurber Theatre immediately following the show and all audience members were invited to stay. The discussion was orchestrated by the Dramaturg, Tonia Krueger. Those participating in the discussion included the Director Lesley Ferris, Assistant Director J. Briggs Cormier, the cast, and special guest speaker Dee Shepard, former Artistic Director of Reality Theatre. Only a handful of audience members attended, but a
rich, informative discussion about the process of producing the play and the script itself, was held. Hopefully, in the future, these discussions will catch on and more will stay to participate.

**Post Production Meeting**

Following each production the department holds a meeting to discuss the challenges and successes of the rehearsal and performance process. The Acting-Directing Area portion of these discussions was held December 2, 1999 in Room 107 of Drake Union. Those in attendance included the Acting-Directing Faculty, the Director, all of the MFA Acting students, and some of the undergraduate cast members.

Lesley discussed some of the directorial challenges including: using an “inherited set” that was design for the production of *Part One* which she didn’t direct, not flying the Angel, casting in the Spring without having met the incoming MFA Acting class two of whom were cast in the show, not having enough time to work on the set which resulted in her being “frustrated [she] couldn’t pay more attention to the characters because [she] spent so much time adjusting to the space,” blocking in the space and adjusting to the proscenium and sightlines, and utilizing the Street People more than in her first production. Other issues discussed by others mainly focused on the lack of time on the set and with the technical elements, the late addition of the sound score and microphones, and the fact that technical rehearsals ran into dress rehearsals and final run time before opening.
Those not involved in the production were extremely supportive of the final product and especially the ensemble cast. Some comments included: in reference to the ensemble, “That was the power of your show,” there was “constant listening,” we “shouldn’t underestimate the effect on the audience,” and “I wanted to see it another time. Once wasn’t enough.”

2.5 Cast

Names are as they appeared in the program. A full program can be found in the production files at the Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute.

Prior Walter..................................................David Zachary Price
Louis Ironson..................................................Jeremy Meier
Joseph Porter Pitt.........................................Jeffery Rice
Harper Amity Pitt...........................................Caroline Bradac
Hannah Porter Pitt.........................................Naomi Hatsfelt
Belize...........................................................Anthony Peeples
Roy M. Cohn...................................................Carney Gray
Street People........................................Lindsay Caselia, Alexander Vincent Mack, Eleni Papaleonardos, Paul Robert Ring
2.6 Fight Captain

Along with performing I also acted as Fight Captain for the show. Phil Thompson choreographed the fight scene between Louis and Joe in Scene 22 and asked if anyone was interested in being Fight Captain. I volunteered for the position, which was something I had never done. I had taken a class in Stage Combat during my first year of graduate school and was eager to put it, along with my experience as a movement instructor, into practice. I was required to be present when the scene was being run in rehearsals to make sure I understood the mechanics of the fight. Once the performances began I would conduct a fight call before each show. During this time I would watch the actors go through the sequence at least once, usually more, just to make sure everything was still running smoothly and safely and work on anything that may have caused a problem in the previous performance. This was an experience and position I enjoyed very much and repeated with two other mainstage productions in the 1999-2000 season.

2.7 Challenges

In any process there are challenges, however, this one seemed to have more than usual. Though frustrating at times, they all offered me an opportunity to learn something. The following is a list of specific challenges I faced before and during the run of the show. Some of them resulted in different approaches in methodology and process, and all of them are discussed in further detail in Chapter 6 Rehearsal Log.
Complex Text

Much of the Angel’s dialogue was complex and poetic. In order to tackle this I first had to define some unfamiliar terms and then looked to using Rudolf Laban effort qualities to define and clarify moments.

Cuts in Text

The first time Lesley directed the show about half of the Angel’s lines were cut because of their complexity and lengthiness. Although not as many cuts were originally made in our production, I did have to struggle, in most cases successfully, to keep much of the Angel’s dialogue.

Sound

Although things meshed sufficiently for the final product, the wonderful and intricate sound score was not added until tech week. Therefore it took a long time to orchestrate coordinating actions and music, and the sound was not part of the creative process, but was very prominent in production.

Microphone

I knew from the first week of rehearsals that I was going to be miced to allow for vocal manipulation. It wasn’t until tech week however, that I was able to use it. This resulted in artistic and technical difficulties, as mentioned in the section on Designer Concepts, as well as practical problems. Because it was brought in so late in the process I never had the chance to experiment with it and successfully adjust my voice to smoothly
coordinate with the manipulations that were being controlled mechanically. The mic pack continually fell off while I was on stage, a problem that I communicated to an Assistant Stage Manager, but she never let the Stage Manager or designer know, so I was left to solve it on my own. I brought in my own belt, because the one I was given was too big, and taped the pack to the belt.

**Technical Rehearsals**

As mentioned earlier, the tech rehearsal were very slow moving. Because of all the cues involved they took longer than planned. Therefore they extended into the dress rehearsals and prevented us from running the show more than once before opening.

**In Production**

One of my costume pieces was misplaced on opening night (wasn’t checked in or placed properly), my mic fell off repeatedly, there were technical difficulties with microphone volume and quality on numerous occasions, a plug came loose preventing the mic from working at all once, and the on-stage speakers blew on closing night.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH

3.1 Play and Playwright

*Angels in America, Parts One & Two* has created a phenomenon in the world of contemporary theatre. The first part of this six-hour “Gay Fantasia on National Themes” was first performed as a workshop production at the Mark Taper Forum in 1990 and eventually moved on to Broadway in April 1993. *Part Two: Perestroika* began as a staged reading by the Eureka Theatre Company in San Francisco in May of 1991. Kushner, in an article by Matthew Surrence, refers to an earlier reading of the script for the Jewish Home for the Aged in San Francisco. He said that it was “Six hours long, just this endless mess….I’d only finished writing it about three days before. They stayed from eight in the evening until two in the morning, until the play was done. They were suffering, but they weren’t going home until they’d finished with the play.” It then made its New York premiere at the Walter Kerr Theatre on November 23, 1993. Between *Part One* and *Part Two*, this story earned a total of seven Tony Awards, including Best Play, Best Actor Stephen Spinella, and Best Featured Actor Jeffery Wright for *Perestroika* in 1994. That same year *Perestroika* also received three Drama Desk Awards, three Outer Critics Circle Awards, and GLAAD Media Award The Fund for New American Plays.
The man behind this success was Tony Kushner, a gay, Jewish, socialist writer who was raised in Lake Charles, Louisiana and received a B.A. from Columbia University and an M.F.A. in directing from New York University. Many of his plays focus on the “moral responsibilities of people in politically repressive times.” (Bernstein 1) In an interview with Andrea Bernstein he says of his most successful work “…Angels is very entertaining. It does things formally that are new, and people were excited by the size and the scope. It’s a good play that makes all the difference.” And of the subject matter, which even at the turn of the 20th century some find offensive and controversial, Kushner states “Shock is part of art. Art that’s polite is not much fun.”

3.2 Vocabulary

Part of the intrigue and challenge of this role was the complex text. The language in general was rather poetic. In order to understand the idea of what I was saying in general, I first needed to understand all of the individual words, some of which were not completely familiar to me. I proceeded to find definitions for the unfamiliar words and choose the definitions that seemed to most closely relate to the idea of the sentences in which they appeared. For example, in looking up the meanings of the words lumen, phosphor, and fluor, I discovered they were terms to describe the presence of the Angel as she first appears to Prior. Lumens refers to the refers to intense light, illumination. Phosphor is a derivative of phosphorus, a highly reactive element that is essential to living organisms. Fluor can refer to the mineral fluoride, but also menstrual flux. The combination of these terms paints the picture of an extremely powerful, female being. In
production these terms ended up being accompanied by the hand gestures, or poses, that were the Angel’s signature poses. The following is a listing of specific words in the order they appear in the text and dictionary entries (as provided by the website Dictionary.com).

Am the Bird of America, The Bald Eagle Continental Principality, LUMEN, PHOSPHOR, FLUOR, CANDLE! (Scene 8)

**lumen** \(\text{Lu'}\text{men}\), n.; pl. L. **Lumina**, E. **Lumens**. [L., light, an opening for light.]
1. (Photom) (a) A unit of illumination, being the amount of illumination of a unit of spherical surface, due to a light of unit intensity placed at the center of the sphere. (B) A unit of light flux, being the flux through one square meter of surface the illumination of which is uniform and of unit brightness.

2. (Biol.) An opening, space, or cavity, esp. A tubular cavity; a vacuole.

*Source: Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary*

**lumen** “light, lamp, lantern / light of day”

*Source: IDP Latin Dictionary*

**lumen** the eye / clearness / understanding

*Source: IDP Latin Dictionary*
**phosphor** \Phos”phor\, n. [Cf. G. phosphor. See Phosphorus.]

2. The planet Venus, when appearing as the morning star; Lucifer. [Poetic] --Tennyson.

Source: *Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary*

**Phosphorus** n : a multivalent nonmetallic element of the nitrogen family that commonly occurs in inorganic phosphate rocks and as organic phosphates in all living cells; is highly reactive and occurs in several allotropic forms [syn: P, atomic number 15]

Source: *WorldNet 1.6*

**Phosphorus** Symbol: P Atomic number: 15 Atomic weight 30.93738 Non-metallic element belonging to group 15 of the periodic table. Has a multiple allotropic forms. Essential element for living organisms. It was discovered by Brandt in 1669.

Source: *The Elements*

**fluor** \Flu”or\, n. [L., a flowing, fr. fleure to flow. See Fluent.]
1. A fluid state. [Obs.] --Sir I. Newton

2. Menstrual flux; catamenia; menses. [Obs.]

3. (Min.) See Fluorite.

Source: *Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary*

**fluorite** \Flu”or*ite\, n. (Min.) Calcium fluoride, a mineral of many different colors, white, yellow, purple, green, red, etc., often very beautiful, crystallizing commonly in cubes with perfect octahedral cleavage; also massive. It is used as a flux. Some varieties are used for ornamental vessels. Also called fluor spar, or simply fluor.

Source: *Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary*
ESTRUS n: applies to nonhuman mammals: a state or period of heightened sexual arousal and activity [syn: oestrus, heat, rut] [ant: anestrus]

Source: WorldNet
Before the boiling of blood and the searing of skin
Comes the Secret catastrophe
(Scene 8)

1. To wither; to dry up. --Shak.
2. To burn (the surface of) to dryness and hardness; to cauterize; to expose to a degree of heat such as changes the color or the hardness and texture of the surface; to scorch; to make callous; as, to sear the skin or flesh. Also used figuratively.

Source: Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary

A tidal wave of Protean Fire
That curls around the planet
And bares the Earth clean as bone.
(Scene 28 cut in production)

PROTEAN \ Pro\'te*an\, a.
1. Of or pertaining to Proteus; characteristic of proteus. “Protean transformations.” -- Cudworth.
2. Exceedingly variable; readily assuming different shapes or forms; as, as am[oe]ba is a protean animacule.

Source: Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary

PROTEAN adj: taking on different forms; “eyes...of that baffling protean gray which is never twice the same”

Source: WorldNet
3.3 Angels

The history of angels goes back as far as the history of man. They are an integral part of the stories of most religions and have made their way into mainstream society today. The word angel originates from the Greek term *angelos*, which means a “messenger.” The following entries from *Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary* and *World Net* expand on the idea and function of angels as messengers:

**ang**el\ /An'gel, n. [AS. [ae]ngel, engel, influenced by OF. Angele. Angle, F. ange. Both the AS. And the OF. Words are from L. angelus, gr. ‘a’ggelos messenger, a messenger of God, an angel.]
1. A messenger.
2. A spiritual, celestial being, superior to man in power and intelligence. In the scriptures angels appear as God’s messengers.
3. One of a class of “fallen angels;” an evil spirit, as, the devil and his angels.
4. A minister or a pastor of a church, as in the Seven Asiatic church. [Archaic]
5. Attendant spirit; genius; demon.
6. An appellation given to a person supposed to be of angelic goodness or loveliness; a darling.
7. (Numis.) An ancient gold coin of England, bearing the figure of the archangel Michael. It varied in value from 6s. 8d. to 10s.

**ang**el n. 1: spiritual being attendant upon God 2: person of exceptional holiness [syn: saint, holy man, holy person]

Paola Giovetti, in her book *Angels*, writes “The earliest traces of the figure of an angel are to be found in the religion of Assyrians and Babylonians, where each divinity had its heralds.” Whereas Lewis and Oliver, *Angels A to Z*, credited their origination within Zoroastrianism, a religion that was “founded in ancient Persia (modern-day
Iran)...by the prophet Zoraster.” Whatever the beginnings, the belief in angels has carried through to the religions of today, primarily Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all of which continue the idea of the angel being a messenger of God.

Although the primary, common function of angels is that of messenger, there is an intricate hierarchy of power and duty. Kushner refers to the “Council of Continental Principalities” (Scenes 8 & 28), they are the angels of America, Antarctica, Asiatica, Europa, Australia, Africanii, and Oceania. This group of angels, the Principalities, is only one of many according to the Dionysian Hierarchy of Angels developed by the early 6th century theologian Dionysius the Areopagite. This structure has remained the basis in Christian angel doctrine.
DIONYSIAN HIERARCHY OF ANGELS

First Order: Closest to God

SERAPHIM  “the fiery spirits” usually pictured with six wings and flames; they constantly sing God’s praise and regulate heaven; led by Uriel

CHERUBIM  depicted with multi-eyed peacock’s feathers to symbolize their all-knowing character; led by Jophiel

THRONES  “the many eyed ones” represented as wheels of fire to symbolize divine majesty; led by Japhkiel

Second Order: composed of the priest-princes of the court of heaven

DOMINIONS  carry scepter and sword to symbolize the divine power over all creation; led by Zadkiel

VIRTUES  the “brilliant” or “shining ones” are associated with acts of heroism; led by Haniel

POWERS  prevent the fallen angels from taking over the world and keep the universe in balance; led by Raphael

Third Order: constituted by the ministering angels

PRINCIPALITIES  represent the protectors of princes; guardian angels of cities, nations, and rulers; led by Camael

ARCHANGELS  carry God’s messages to humans and command God’s armies of angels in the constant battle with the “Sons of Darkness”; led by Michael

ANGELS  celestial beings closest to humans, they are the intermediaries between God and mortals

(Lewis & Oliver 205)

Table 3.1  Dionysian Hierarchy of Angels

23
According to this breakdown Kushner's Angel is called one of the Principalities, but is functioning as an Angel because of her interaction with humans. However, Giovetti quotes Rudolf Steiner as saying "These three ranks of beings [Principalities, Archangels, Angels] who stand above humans, they were once human and have all passed through the human stage." This coincides nicely with the concept of the human-like, Amelia Earhart Angel, and perhaps represents the dire straits that the angels are in, having to send down a Principality. Although Kusner’s thoughts on angels and his theory behind the creation of the angelic characters in Perestroika have been published, I did not research them. I chose to base my choices for the Angel based solely on my own research into Angelology.

Not all scholars agree on whether or not angels were once human, or on the form they take as angels. William Blake believed that "angels and spirits are androgynous, with no separate principles of male and female, but only the one of humanity." (Lewis & Oliver 79) Most theologians agree with his belief based on the scripture from the New Testament that reads: "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven (Matthew 22:30). However, "Angels are perceived as either male or female by people who feel they have actually seen them or feel that they have a guardian angel." (Lewis & Oliver 174)

As far as physical appearance is concerned the most common image attached to that of an angel is wings. The image of a winged figure dates back to the time of Constantine, the first Roman Christian emperor, and is presumed to have been based on the figure of Nike, the Greek goddess of victory. As Lewis and Oliver point out though, there are no references in Scripture to angels being winged. They most commonly are described as being human in form, but possessing a power and radiance that humans do
not. Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swedish mystic and clairvoyant in the 17th century, had many visions of these heavenly beings. He is credited in Giovetti’s Angels as saying:

The angelic form is in every respect human: that angels have faces, eyes, ears, breasts, arms, hands, and feet; that they see, hear, and converse with each other, and, in a word, that no external attribute of man is wanting, except the material body. I have seen them in their own light, which exceeds by many degrees, the noon-day light of the world.”

According to Lewis & Oliver, based on Scripture and research of human interaction with angels, there are three ways in which angels communicate with humans. Kushaer seems to follow these, though sometimes quickly and not always in the same order, as the Angel appears to Prior. The first is an “audio presentation. This communication is heard by the receiver usually in an awakened state.” The second is the appearance of the angel in a person’s dreams. And finally the “direct visual approach. Through this avenue an angel appears as an image and delivers his message in person.”

In reference to this third kind of interaction Swedenborg says that “angels cannot be seen by man with his bodily eyes, but only with the eyes of the spirit which is within him, because all the bodily organs are in the natural world, but the spirit is in the spiritual world, and like sees iike, because its vision is from a like origin.” He also refers to the power that the angels possess:

Angels can express in one word what man cannot do in a thousand; and besides this, there are comprised in one word of angelic language innumerable things, which cannot be expressed in the words of human language at all: for in every one of the words uttered by angels there are arcana of wisdom in continuous connection, beyond what human sciences can ever read.
The information about personal interaction with angels is massive. These stories begin in the Old Testament of the Bible, which serves both Christian and Jewish beliefs, and continues through the present day. There has also been extensive scholarly research into angels. The basics are for the most part similar. They describe figures human in form but with overwhelming power and presence. Although frightening at first, they eventually become a source of calm and comfort, or at least not something to fear, because they are bringing a message from God. Or in Kushner’s case, because of God.

3.4 Mormonism

Although a brief history of Mormonism is given in Scene 11 of *Perestroika* in the Mormon Visitors’ Center Diorama Room, I did more research into the past and principles of this religion. I found one of the best sources of this information to be the Official LDS [Latter Day Saints] Website. The following is a brief description of the origination of Mormonism and The Articles of Faith of the Church of Latter Day Saints:

When Joseph Smith was 14 years old, he wanted to know which church he should join, so he asked God in sincere prayer. In response to this prayer, God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to Joseph and told him the true Church of Jesus Christ was not on the earth and they had chosen Joseph to restore it.

From that day, Joseph labored in God’s service, working to establish The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and to build up God’s kingdom on earth in the latter days. Faithful members of the Church witness that Jesus Christ is the Savior and Redeemer of the world. Jesus directs His Church today through revelation to a prophet on the earth. Joseph Smith was such a prophet. Although Joseph accomplished many things during his life, most important was his commitment to being a disciple and witness of Jesus Christ. He wrote, “After the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!” (Doctrine and Covenants 76:22)
The Articles of Faith
*Of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

1. We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.

2. We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and nor for Adam’s transgression.

3. We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.

4. We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.

5. We believe that a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and the administer in the ordinances thereof.

6. We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church, namely, apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, and so forth.

7. We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, and so forth.

8. We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly, we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.

9. We believe that all that God has revealed, all that he does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

10. We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.

11. We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privileges, let them worship how, where, or what they may.

12. We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.

13. We believe in honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul- We believe all things, hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.

| Table 3.2 | Articles of Faith | 27 |
The story of Joseph Smith’s visit from the angel Moroni most definitely served as the structure for the Angel’s visit to Prior. Kushner’s Angel appears “in a gown of surpassing whiteness, barefoot and magnificent...,” presents him with the book, the Sacred Implements, and gives him “peep-stones” with which to read them. This passage, again from the LDS Website, describes Smith’s encounter with Moroni:

...I discovered a light appearing in my room, which continued to increase until the room was lighter than at noonday, when immediately a personage appeared at my bedside, standing in the air, for his feet did not touch the floor. He had on a loose robe of the most exquisite whiteness. It was a whiteness beyond anything earthly I had ever seen....His hands were naked...so were his feet....Not only was his robe exceedingly white, but his whole person was glorious beyond description, and his countenance truly like lightning....When I first looked upon him, I was afraid; but the fear soon left me. He called me by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me....He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates....Also that there were two stones in silver bowls...and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted ‘seers’ in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book.

3.5 Prophets

“Greetings, Prophet!” This is the first line of text the Angel speaks to Prior. And throughout the play she is trying to convince him to accept the role of prophet. Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary and Worldnet provided the following definitions for the term prophet:

prophet Proph “et, n. [F. proph[e]te, L. propheta, fr. Gr. ?, literally, one who speaks for another, especially, one who speaks for a god and interprets his will to man 1. One who prophesies, or foretells events; a predictor; a foreteller. 2. One inspired or instructed by God to speak in his name, or announce future events, as, Moses, Elijah, etc. 14. An interpreter; a spokesman.
prophet n. 1: an authoritative person who divines the future [syn: oracle] 2: someone who speaks by divine inspiration; someone who is an interpreter of the will of God [syn: religious leader]

According to Robert Longman, Jr., creator of Spirthome, a website dedicated to Christian terminology and concepts, a prophecy is “the proclamation of a message revealed by the Holy Spirit, suited to the specific needs of the moment, in the language of those who hear it.” It therefore makes sense that the Angel chooses Prior and that behind her flowing white robes she is dressed as a human. He is specifically effected by the crisis and she wants to communicate with him in a way he’ll understand. Longman continues:

The prophet is not an interpreter of God’s will, but a communicator of it...A prophecy can come as a dream....The prophet gives the message a literary or oratory shape, but the prophet doesn’t create the message itself....Prophecy is a call to a person to deliver a specific revealed message. The one who speaks it is not responsible for the response, only for its delivery....A prophet is one who has not only been given the gift of prophecy, but also its task, its calling, and its special burden; prophecy becomes the prophet’s purpose...the task become their entire identity....It [prophecy] refers less to the art of prediction than it does the speaking of the truth God deems most important in the current situation.

Some examples of prophets in the Old Testament of the Bible are: Jeremiah, Moses, Hosea, and Ezekial. Those in the New Testament include Jesus, Paul, and the four daughters of Philip. And members of the Church of Latter Day Saints believe Joseph Smith to be a modern day prophet.
3.6 Amelia Earhart

When researching Amelia Earhart one of the words I encountered most was “courage.” Authors speak of her strength, determination, and successes in an occupation ruled by men. Earhart is known as being the first female pilot to cross the Atlantic, which she did in 1932. Her other firsts include:

--first woman to cross the Atlantic (as a passenger), 1928
--first president of an association of women pilots called the “Ninety-Nines”, 1929
--set women’s speed record of 181.18mph, 1930
--first person to set an altitude record in an auto-gyro (early model of a helicopter), 1931
--first person to fly solo, and non-stop, between Hawaii and California, 1935

Unfortunately, Earhart is most widely known for one of her failures. In 1937 she attempted to become the first female pilot to fly around the world. With fewer than 3,000 miles of their 25,000-mile trip, Earhart and her navigator Fred Noonan went down in the South Pacific. After an extensive search, neither their remains, nor the plane was ever recovered, and has remained a mystery to this day. Although it was most likely a case of running out of fuel, some speculate that the disappearance of Earhart and her supposed lover Noonan was planned.

Amelia Earhart

“(Women) must pay for everything... They do get more glory than men for comparable feats. But, also, women get more notoriety when they crash.”

“Women must try to do things as men have tried. When they fail, their failure must be a challenge to others.”

(Daher 3)

30
3.7 Character Line Analysis

One of the best ways to learn about a character is to look at what is said about him or her in the text. Of course the playwright gives a lot of information in character descriptions, but it is necessary to look at the actual dialogue as well. The following table shows lines said about the Angel, spoken by other characters as well as the Angel herself, and my comments about the information that I gained about the character through these statements.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHARACTER LINES</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LINES ABOUT THE ANGEL:</strong></td>
<td>Shows the combination of human and heavenly being along with a definite gender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“It was a woman... Not a conventional woman... An angel.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Prior; Scene 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Oh God there’s a thing in the air, a thing, a thing.”</td>
<td>Describes the mysticism, fear, and power she possessed when first appears to Prior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Prior; Scene 8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“She fucked me. She has... well, she has eight vaginas.”</td>
<td>Hermaphroditic qualities and sexual prowess.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Prior; Scene 8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Angelic orgasm makes protomatter, which fuels the Engine of Creation. They used to copulate ceaselessly before... Each angel is in an infinite aggregate myriad entity, they’re basically incredibly powerful bureaucrats, they have no imagination, they can do anything but they can’t invent, create, they’re sort of fabulous and dull at once.”</td>
<td>Shows how lost the angels truly are without God, their leader. They are in state of chaos and confusion and are unable to continue their usual activities, such as copulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Prior; Scene 8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.3** Character Line Analysis
| “You’re his [Prior] fever dream not mine…”  | Refers to her being an illness induced hallucination.  |
| (Hannah; Scene 24)                              |                                                      |

| ANGEL’S LINES ABOUT SELF                          | She is a messenger from Heaven and is on a mission. However she is speaking on behalf of all the angels, not God. |
| “The messenger has arrived.”                      |                                                      |
| (To Prior; Scene 8)                              |                                                      |

| “I I I Am the Bird of America, The Bald Eagle, Continental Principality, LUMEN PHOSPHOR FLUOR CANDLE! I unfold my leaves, Bright steel, in salutation open sharp before you.” | Refers to the immense power she possesses. She is quite a sight to behold when she first appears. |
| (To Prior; Scene 8)                              |                                                      |

| “My wrath is as fearsome as my countenance is splendid.” | Shows the duality of her character, the power coupled with the beauty and magic. |
| (To Prior; Scene 8)                                  |                                                      |

| “Open me Prophet. I I am The Book.”                  | She is the link between Prior and prophecy. She can teach him if he is willing to learn. |
| (To Prior; Scene 8)                                 |                                                      |

| “You are Mere Flesh. I I am Utter Flesh, Destiny of Desire, the Gravity of Skin.” | She is not human, but possesses human feeling and ecstasy to a magnificent degree. |
| (To Prior; Scene 8)                                 |                                                      |
Table 3.3: continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“REGINA VAGINA! Hermaphroditically Equipped as well with a Bouquet of Phalli...I I I am your Released Female Essence Ascendant.” (To Prior; Scene 8) “Each day when You awake, as though WE Are only the Dream of YOU.” (To Prior; Scene 8)</th>
<th>Also refers to her sexuality and her connection to Prior. Humans want to believe that the angels that speak to them in their dreams aren’t real, that they have control, but they assume too much.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“We do not know where HE has gone. HE may never... And bitter, cast-off, We wait, bewildered;” (To Prior; Scene 8)</td>
<td>God is gone to an unknown location. The angels are desperate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You can’t Outrun your Occupation, Jonah. Hiding from Me one place you will find me in another. I I I stop down the road, waiting for you.” (To Prior; Scene 8)</td>
<td>She is going to get her message through to him regardless of how much he tries to fight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I I I I Am the CONTINENTAL PRINCIPALITY OF AMERICA, I I I AM THE BIRD OF PREY I WILL NOT BE COMPELLED, I...” (To Prior; Scene 24)</td>
<td>Shows her unearthly power as well as her anger and frustration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Now release me. I have torn a muscle in my thigh.” (To Prior; Scene 24)</td>
<td>Refers to Biblical story of Jacob wrestling an angel. Shows her humanity, and sense of irony.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

The following is a brief description of the sources of stage performance techniques I used when developing the character of the Angel. Details of how they were specifically utilized can be found in both the Introduction to Chapter 5 and Chapter 6.

Suzuki

A form of actor training developed by Tadashi Suzuki to train Japanese actors that has spread to the United States. It is reflective of techniques used in no and kabuki theatre and focuses on the strength of the body, mind, and voice, and “the grammar of the feet.” The training includes working with body positions, both still and moving, involving sitting, standing, and walking. There is a strong focus on working from one’s center.

Laban

A technique of classifying movement developed by Rudolph Laban. It began in the modern dance world and has expanded into the world of acting. It divides movement into three realms: space, effort, and shape. The idea of effort includes eight qualities, both direct and indirect. These include press, punch, dab, glide & wring, float, flick, slash
respectively. In my actor training, these concepts have been applied to voice and acting as well. I used this as the basis for my acting, voice, and body for the character of the Angel.

**Marcel Marceau’s Conventions of Character**

I used the mechanics involved in these in creating the physicality of the Angel.

- **Risque avant** - forward pelvic translation
- **Triple design** - sculpting the body to fill space in a three-dimensional way
- **Coloration** - the rules of progression and regression; the “volume” of an emotion or action goes up in volume or degree of action
CHAPTER 5

SCRIPT

*Angels in America, Part Two* deals with the fantastic or mythical; an angel comes to earth to speak to a human, people share hallucinations, scenes even take place in Heaven. It is not your typical realistic play. The style of writing also reflects this. Much of the Angel’s dialogue is poetic and proclamatory rather than conversational. Because of the non-traditional structure and content of this play, my approach to scoring the script does not follow the traditional Stanislavsky-based structure. Like that format, I have divided the script into beats, but as opposed to the beats reflecting a change in objective, obstacle, and/or tactic, mine reflect a change in character.

Part of the director’s concept was that the Angel would be treated as an Amelia Earhart-like character, rather than that of a traditional angel. This was reflected in the costume design and influenced my interpretation of the role. I decided that the Amelia character was one aspect of the Angel’s personality. Throughout the rehearsal process I discovered that the Angel had three distinct personae. These represented a change in tactic when interacting with Prior. Therefore, in scoring my script I mark the changes in persona and therefore, tactic. Meanwhile, the objective remains the same throughout, to convince Prior that he is a prophet and to help the Angels.
The three personae are called Angel 1, Angel 2, and Amelia. These distinctions are used when the Angel is in the roles of the Mormon Mother and Emily as well. Angel 1 was the most typically “angelic” of the three. She was authoritative, glorious, larger-than-life. Her dialogue was very proclamatory and commanding, and almost always amplified through the microphone (a coordination that was only discovered in tech rehearsals). I physically embodied this persona by using bound energy and a combination of Suzuki standing statues and Marceau conventions of character. I also incorporated the Laban effort qualities of Punch and Press in my movement, voice, and intention.

Angel 2 had more of a connection with Prior mainly in the fact that she spoke to him rather than him. She was still very direct, but had a quieter energy. She was cool, calm, and in control. I found that I was physically and vocally more human but still remained quite neutral. The Laban quality I associated with this persona was Glide.

The most human of these personae was Amelia. I found that Amelia came in in the moments of vulnerability and desperation, when she didn’t have the upper hand. I used a lot of my own physicality and vocality with her and Laban Flicking energy.

It was necessary to then layer these personae with the other characters I played. Kushner designates the actress playing the Angel to play the Mormon Mother and Emily as well. I used the Angel 2 persona with the Mormon Mother to reflect the directness of the character. They both possess that sense of being in control, knowledgeable. Emily, who was a human character, was Amelia. This allowed for more of a connection with Prior and reflected the similarly weakened physical states.
The switches in these personae reflected the moment to moment actions and reactions of the character of the Angel. They were integrated as one character, just one persona domintated at a time. Although I didn’t specifically analyze the beat changes in the script in a Stanislavski-based way, using objectives, obstacles, tactics, inner monologues and actions, those things were present and instinctively acknowledged. It was because of those things that the Angel switched tactics, or personae. In my scored script I identified the beat changes by associating them with a change in persona.

In performance I used very specific movements and body positions that coordinated with what was going on in the world of the play and which persona was dominant. Therefore, at any one moment I, as the charater and the actor, was listening and responding to the other characters, as well as executing the blocking and physicality of the dominant Angel persona.
The following is a list of abbreviations and symbols used in the scored script:

**Characters**

- A- Angel
- P- Prior
- B- Belize
- HH- Hannah
- HP- Harper
- MM- Mormon Mother
- E- Emily

**Stage Directions**

- S- Stage
- D- down
- U- up
- C- center
- L- left
- R- right
- X- cross

Table 5.1 Script Abbreviations
**ANGELS IN AMERICA  Part Two: Perestroika**
By Tony Kushner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCENE 1</th>
<th>Voice-over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A: Greetings, Prophet.  
The Great Work Begins.  
The Messenger has arrived.  
P: Go away. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANGEL 1</th>
<th>SCENE 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A:  
Greetings, Prophet!  
The Great Work Begins:  
The Messenger has arrived.  
P:  
Go away.  
A:  
Attend:  
P:  
Oh God there’s a thing in the air, a thing, a thing.  
A:  
I I I I  
Am the Bird of America, The Bald Eagle,  
Continental Principality,  
LUMEN PHOSPHOR FLUOR CANDLE  
I unfold my leaves, Bright steel,  
In salutation open sharp before you:  
PRIOR WALTER  
Long-descended, well-prepared... |

-Enter SR behind “wings” DSR  
-Reveal on music cue, 3 poses, cough  
-Undulation & poses
P: No, I'm not prepared, for anything, I have lots to do, I...

A: American Prophet tonight you become, American Eye that pierceth the Dark, American Heart all Hot for Truth, The True Great Vocalist, the Knowing Mind, Tongue-Of-The-Land, Seer-Head!

P: Oh, Shoo! You're scaring the shit out of me, get the fuck out of my room. Please, oh please...

A: Now: Remove from their hiding-place the Sacred Prophetic Implements.

P: The what?

A: Remove from their hiding-place the Sacred Prophetic Implements. Your dreams have revealed them to you.

P: What dreams?

A: You have had dreams revealing to you...

P: I haven't had a dream I can remember in months.

(...Are you sure?) AMELIA

A: No...dreams, you...Are you sure?

-Wings & robe ripped off
-"Amelia" 3 poses & cough

-XUS to edge of Pitt apt. L foot on upper platform

-Snap, point for stool
-XUS standing on stool, L foot on bed -Lunge in to Prior

-Lunge in to Prior

-Lunge in to Prior -Hands on hips
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>Yes. Well, the two dead Priors, they…</td>
<td>-Sit on edge of bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A:</td>
<td>No not the heralds, not them. Other dreams. Implements, you must have…One moment.</td>
<td>-X to DR corner of Pitt apt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td><strong>This</strong>, this is a dream, obviously, I’m sick and so I…Well OK it’s a pretty spectacular dream but still it’s just some…</td>
<td>-Call on cellphone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A:</td>
<td>Quiet. Prophet. A moment, please, I…The disorganization is…<em>She coughs, looks up.</em> He says he hasn’t had any…</td>
<td>-Cover phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(coughs.)</td>
<td>-Into phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ANGEL 2</strong></td>
<td>In the kitchen. Under the tiles under the sink.</td>
<td>-Put phone away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-XUS to stool/bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Face DS point to US doorway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>You want me to….tear up the kitchen floor?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AMELIA</strong></td>
<td>A: Get a shovel or an axe or some…tool for dislodging tile and grout and unearth the Sacred Implements.</td>
<td>-Break pose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Pull covers off Prior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>No fucking way! The ceiling’s bad enough, I’ll lose the lease, I’ll lose my security deposit, I’ll wake up the downstairs neighbors, their hysterical dog, I…Do it yourself.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ANGEL 1</strong></td>
<td>A: SUBMIT, SUBMIT TO THE WILL OF HEAVEN!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANGEL 2</td>
<td>P: What did you...What...?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A: And Lo, the Prophet was led by his nightly dreams to the hiding-place of the Sacred Implements, and...Revision in the text: The Angel did help him to unearth them, for he was weak of body though not of will.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P: You cracked the refrigerator, you probably released a whole cloud of fluorocarbons, that's bad for the... environment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(My wrath...)</th>
<th>AMELIA</th>
<th>A: My wrath is as fearsome as my countenance is splendid. Open the suitcase.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Open the suitcase)</td>
<td>ANGEL 1</td>
<td>P: Oh, look at this. Like, wow, man, totally Paleozoic. This is...OH! OH GOD NO! OH...That was terrible! I don’t want to see that!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A: Remove the Book.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From the Council of Continental Principalities Met in this time of Crisis and Confusion: Heaven here reaches down to disaster And in touching you touches all of Earth.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AMELIA</th>
<th>A: Peep-stones.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANGEL 1</td>
<td>A:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Cough
- XDR to UL of Prior
- X to UR of Prior
- Point to suitcase, follow lid up w/hand
- Undulate
- Point to book, follow up w/hand
- Facing DS, pose
- Turn SL, point to Prior
- Pick up glasses, hand to Prior
- Facing DS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AMELIA</th>
<th>Open me Prophet. I I I am The Book. Read.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>Wait. Wait. How come...How come I have this...um, erection? It's very hard to concentrate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A:</td>
<td>The stiffening of your penis is of no consequence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>Well maybe not to you but...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(READ) ANGEL 1 (You are Mere Flesh...) ANGEL 2</td>
<td>A: READ! You are Mere Flesh. I I I am Utter Flesh, Density of Desire, the Gravity of Skin: What makes the Engine of Creation Run? Not Physics But Ecstatics Makes The Engine Run:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>Hmmm...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMELIA</td>
<td>A: The Pulse, The Pull, The Throb, The Ooze...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>Wait, please, I...Excuse me for just a minute, just a minute OK I...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A:</td>
<td>Priapsis, Dilation, Engorgement, Flow: The Universe Aflame with Angelic Ejaculate...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>Oh shit...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Heavens A-thrum to the Seraphic Rut,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Fiery Grapplings…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oh, God, I…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Fiery Joinings of the Higher Orders,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Infinite, Unceasing, The Blood-Pump of Creation!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OH! OH! I…OH! Oh! Oh, oh…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(simultaneous)</td>
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</table>

46
| AMELIA | P:  
| She fucked me. She has...well, she has eight vaginas. |
| --- | --- |
| ANGEL 2 | A:  
| REGINA VAGINA!  
| Hermaphroditically Equipped as well with a Bouquet of Phalli...I II I am Your Released Female Essence Ascendant. |
|  | P: (to Belize)  
| The sexual politics of this are very confusing. God, for example is a man. Well, not a man, he's a flaming Hebrew letter. |
| AMELIA | A:  
| The Aleph Glyph. Deus Erectus! Pater Omnipotens! |
|  | P:  
| Angelic orgasm makes protomatter, which fuels the Engine of Creation. They used to copulate ceaselessly before...Each angel is an infinite aggregate myriad entity, they're basically incredibly powerful bureaucrats, they have no imagination, they can do anything but they can't invent, create, they're sort of fabulous and dull all at once. |
|  | A:  
| Made for His Pleasure, We can only ADORE: |
| ANGEL 2 | Seeking something New... |
|  | P:  
| God split the World in Two... |
|  | A:  
| And made YOU:
P & A:
Human Beings:
Uni-Genitalled: Female. Male.

A:
In creating You, Our Father-Lover unleashed
Sleeping Creation’s Potential For Change.
In YOU the Virus of TIME began!

P:
In making people God apparently set in motion a potential in the design for change, for random event, for movement forward.

AMELIA

A:
YOU Think. And You IMAGINE!
Migrate, Explore, and when you do:

P:
As the human race began to progress, travel, intermingle, everything started to come unglued. Manifest first as tremors in Heaven.

ANGEL 2

A:
Heaven is a city Much Like San Francisco
House upon house depended from Hillside
From Crest down to Dockside,
The green Mirroring Bay:

P:
And there are earthquakes there, or rather, heavenquakes.

AMELIA

A:
Oh! Joyful in the Buckled Garden:
Undulant Landscape Over which
The Threat of Seismic Catastrophe hangs:
More beautiful because imperiled.
POTENT: yet DORMANT: The Fault
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ANGEL 2 | Lines of Creation!  
B: So Human progress...  
B: ...shakes up Heaven. |
| ANGEL 2 | A: Paradise itself Shivers and Splits,  
Each day when You awake, as though WE Are only the Dream of YOU.  
PROGRESS! MOVEMENT!  
Shaking HIM:  
B: God. |
| AMELIA  | A: He began to leave Us!  
Bored with His Angels, Bewitched by Humanity,  
In Mortifying imitation of You, his least creation,  
He would sail off on Voyages, no knowing where.  
Quake follows quake,  
Absence follows Absence:  
Naasty Chastity and Disorganization:  
Loss of Libido, Protomatter Shortfall:  
We are his Functionaries; It is BEYOND US: |
| ANGEL 2 | Then: April 18, 1906.  
In That Day:  
P: The Great San Francisco Earthquake. And also... |

-XSL, crouching  
UR of Prior  
-Sit on edge of platform  
-Hop off platform  
-XSR  
-Face DS
P:
On April 18, 1906...

A: *(overlapping)*
_in that day:_ Our Lover of the Million
Unutterable Names, The Alyph Glyph
From Which all Words Descend: The
King of the Universe: HE Left

P:
Abandoned.

---

AMELIA

A:
And did not return.
We do not know where HE has gone. HE
may never...
And bitter, cast-off, We wait, bewildered;
[Our finest houses, our sweetest
vineyards, Made drear and barren,
missing, Him:]
*(coughs)*

B:
Abandoned.

P:
Yes.

B:
I smell a motif. The man that got away.

P:
Well it occurred to me. Louis. Even now,
if he came back I’d...

B:
Listen to your girlfriend. I think the time
has come to let him go.

P:
That’s not what the angels think, they
think...It’s all gone too far, too much loss
is what they think, we should stop
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANGEL 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>somehow, go back.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But that's not how the world works, Prior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It only spins forward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeah, but forward into what?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANGEL 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surely you see towards what We are Progressing:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fabric of the sky unravels:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angels hover, anxious fingers worry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tattered edge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before the boiling of blood and the searing of skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comes the Secret Catastrophe:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before Life on Earth becomes finally merely impossible,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It will for a long time before we have become completely unbearable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(coughs)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YOU HAVE DRIVEN HIM AWAY!</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YOU MUST STOP MOVING!</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AMELIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop moving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AMELIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forsake the Open Road:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Mix Nor Intermarry: Let Deep Roots Grow:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if you do not MINGLE you will cease to Progress:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek Not to Fathom the World and its Delicate Particle Logic:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You cannot Understand, You can only Destroy,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You do not Advance, You only Trample.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor blind Children, abandoned on the Earth,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-turn DS clockwise, then X U throughout speech to end of bed

-stop, facing Prior, pointing at him

-on bed US of Prior, facing DS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>对话内容</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Groping terrified, misguided, over Fields of Slaughter, over bodies of the Slain: HOBBLE YOURSELVES! [There is no Zion Save Where You Are!] If you Cannot find your Heart’s desire…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P: In your own backyard…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A, P &amp; B: You never lost it to begin with. (The Angel coughs.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P: Please. Please. Whatever you are, I don’t understand this visitation, I’m not a prophet, I’m a sick, lonely man, I don’t understand what you want from me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P: Stop moving. That’s what you want. Answer me! You want me dead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANGEL 2</td>
<td>A: No more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P: I WANT. You to go away. I’m tired to death of being done to, walked out on, infected, fucked over and now tortured by some mixed-up, reactionary angel, some…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANGEL 1</td>
<td>A: You can’t Outrun your Occupation, Jonah. Hiding from Me one place you will find me in another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-sit on bed next to Prior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-XDS, pick up book, hand to Prior, turn DS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-XSR starting to leave</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-stop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-“Suzuki turn” to Prior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANGEL 2</td>
<td>I stop down the road, waiting for you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANGEL 1</td>
<td>A: Vessel of the BOOK now: Oh Exemplum Paralyticum: On you in you in your blood we write have written: STASIS! The END.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(...sounds of traffic, whistles, alarms, people, all very fast and very complex and very determinedly moving ahead.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B:</td>
<td>That’s New York traffic, baby, the sound of energy, the sound of time. Even if you’re hurting it can’t go back. There’s no angel. You hear me? For me? I can handle anything but not this happening to you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANGEL 2</td>
<td>A: Whisper into the ear of the World, Prophet, Wash up red in the tide of its dreams, And billow bloody words into the tide of sleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>Maybe I am a prophet. Not just me, all of us who are dying now. Maybe we’ve caught the virus of prophecy. Be still. Toil no more. Maybe the world has driven God from Heaven, incurred the angels’ wrath. I believe I’ve seen the end of things. And having seen, I’m going blind, as prophets do. It makes a certain sense to me.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-XSL to Prior
-sit on bed “Pieta”
-get book from Eleni over head and slowly lower it in front of Prior
-getting onto knees on edge of bed
-whispered
-slowly rising to standing on edge of bed
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene 11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A:        | FOR THIS AGE OF ANOMIE: A NEW LAW!  
Delivered this night, this silent night, from Heaven,  
Oh Prophet, to You.  
| P:        | I hate heaven. I've got no resistance left.  
Except to run.  
| ANGEL 2   |  
| SCENE 11  |  
| HP:       | Bitter lady of the Plains, talk to me. Tell me what to do.  
| MM:       | Leave it, then. Can't carry no extra weight.  
| HP (to the dummy father): | Look at us. So perfect in place. The desert the mountains the previous century. Maybe I could have believed in you then. Maybe we should never have moved east.  
| MM:       | Come on.  
| ANGEL 2   |  
| SCENE 14  |  
| HP:       | It's not safe to be out on the street here,  
| ANGEL 2   |  
| SCENE 14  |  
| A:        |  
Delivered this night, this silent night, from Heaven,  
Oh Prophet, to You.  
| P:        | I hate heaven. I've got no resistance left.  
Except to run.  
| ANGEL 2   |  
| SCENE 14  |  
| HP:       | Bitter lady of the Plains, talk to me. Tell me what to do.  
| MM:       | Leave it, then. Can't carry no extra weight.  
| HP (to the dummy father): | Look at us. So perfect in place. The desert the mountains the previous century. Maybe I could have believed in you then. Maybe we should never have moved east.  
| MM:       | Come on.  
| ANGEL 2   |  
| SCENE 14  |  
| HP:       | It's not safe to be out on the street here,  

there are crazy people around.

MM:
Towers filled with fire. It's the Great Beyond.

HP:
Manhattan. Was it a hard thing, crossing the prairies?

MM:
You ain't stupid. So don't ask stupid. Ask something for real.

HP:
In your experience of the world. How do people change?

MM:
Well it has soemthing to do with God so it's not very nice. God splits the skin with a jagged thumnail from throat to belly and then plunges a huge filthy hand in, he grabs hold of your bloody tubes and they slip to evade his grasp but he squeezes hard, he insists, he pulls and pulls till all your innards are yanked out and the pain! We can't even talk about that. And then he stuffs them back, dirty, tangled and torn. It's up to you to do the stiching.

HP:
And then get up. And walk around.

MM:
Just mangled guts pretending.

HP:
That's how people change.

MM:
I smell a salt wind.

HP:
From the ocean.

MM:
Means he's coming back. Then you'll know. Then you'll eat fire.
(Singing)
"Bring back, bring back, oh bring back my bonnie to me, to me..."
"Bring back, bring back, oh bring back my bonnie to me."

-Black out, Exit SR

SCENE 20

E:
You've lost eight pounds. Eight pounds! I know people who would kill to be in the shape you were in, you were recovering, and you threw it away.

P:
This isn't about WEIGHT, it's about LUNGS, UM...PNEUMONIA.

E:
We don't know yet.

P:
THE FUCK WE DON'T ASS HOLE YOU MAY NOT BUT I CAN'T BREATHE.

HH:
You'd breathe better if you didn't heller like that.

P:
This is my ex-lover's Mormon mother.

E:
Even in New York in the Eighties, that is strange. Keep breathing. Stop moving. STAY PUT.

-Enter DSL

-Listen to Prior's chest w/stethoscope

-Putting chart away

-Exit same way entered
SCENE 24

P: She’s on her way.

HH: Turn the lights back on, turn the lights...

A: I I I I Have Returned, Prophet, And not according to Plan.

P: Take it back. The book, whatever you left in me, I won’t be it’s repository, I reject it. Help me out here. HELP ME!

HH: I don’t, I don’t, this is a dream it’s a dream it’s a...

P: I don’t think that’s really the point right at this particular moment.

HH: I don’t know what to...

P (overlap): Well it was your idea, reject the vision you said and...
HH (overlap): Yes but I thought it was more a..... Metaphorical... I...

P (overlap): You said scriptural precedent, you said... WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO...

HH (overlap): You... you... wrestle her.

-Enter SR on shoulders, “posing” as they XSL

-“flapping” wings while still on shoulders
P: Say WHAT?

HH: It's an angel, you... grab hold and say... oh what was it, wait, wait, umm... OH! Grab her, say "I will not let thee go except thou bless me!" Then wrestle with her till she gives in.

P: YOU wrestle her, I don't know how to wrestle, I...

[A: I, I, I, I...]

P: I... will not let thee go except thou bless me. Take back your Book. Anti-Migration, that's so feeble, I can't believe you couldn't do better than that, free me, unfetter me, bless me or whatever but I will be let go.

A: I I I Am the CONTINENTAL PRINCIPALITY OF AMERICA, I I I AM THE BIRD OF PREY I WILL NOT BE COMPELLED, I...

ANGEL

A: Entrance has been gained. Return the Text to Heaven.

P: Can I come back? I don't want to go unless...

A: You have prevailed, Prophet. You... Choose.

AMELIA

Now release me.
I have torn a muscle in my thigh.

-“freeze” Prior, indicate for him to move off of bed

-“Wrestling Scene”

-break loose from Prior, on ground

-point to open door in billboard UL

-break loose from Prior completely
| ANGEL 1 | P: Big deal, my leg'd been hurting for months. 
HH: What? What?? You've got no business with me, I didn't call you, you're his fever dream not mine, and he's gone now and you should go too, I'm waking up right... NOW! | -stand up with him -watch him go through door in billboard -turn focus to Hannah -walk towards her and follow her until stopping US of her on SL step -"freeze" Hannah -kiss |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A:</td>
<td>The Body is the Garden of the Soul.</td>
<td>-carried off SR in Cleopatra pose</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCENE 25</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>Oh! She...She took the cat. Come back, you took the... Goodbye little Sheba. Goodbye.</td>
<td>-Enter UC -Pose on DS edge of bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Greetings prophet) ANGEL 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(We have been...) AMELIA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A:</td>
<td>Greetings, Prophet. We have been waiting for you.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCENE 28</td>
<td>Australia: It is a conundrum, We cannot solve Conundrums, if only He would return, I I I I do not know whether we have erred in transporting these dubious Inventions, but... If We refer to His Codex of Procedure, I I I I cannot recall which page but...</td>
<td>-Enter UL dragging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANGEL 2</td>
<td>A: Most August Fellow Principalities, Angels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most High: I regret my absence at this session, I was detained.</td>
<td>Prior</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Australia:</strong> Ah, this is… ?</td>
<td>-DL, facing out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A:</strong> The Prophet. Yes.</td>
<td>-look left to Prior beat before “detained”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Australia:</strong> Ah.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Europa:</strong> We were working.</td>
<td>-indicate towards Prior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Africanii:</strong> Making Progress.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> I… I want to return this.</td>
<td>-cough</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Australia:</strong> What is the matter with it?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> It just… It just… We can’t just stop. We’re not rocks, progress, migration, motion is.. modernity. It’s animate, it’s what living things do. We desire. Even if all we desire is stillness, it’s still desire for. Even if we go faster than we should. We can’t wait. And wait for what? God…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> God…</td>
<td>-change head focus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P:</strong> He isn’t coming back. And even if he did… If He ever did come back, if He ever dared to show His face, or his Glyph or whatever in the Garden again… if after all this destruction, if after all the terrible days of this terrible century He returned to see… how much suffering His</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMELIA</td>
<td>abandonment had created, if all he has to offer is death, you should sue the bastard. That's my only contribution to all this Theology. Sue the bastard for walking out. How dare He.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANGEL 2</td>
<td>A: Thus spake the Prophet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P: So thank you... for sharing this with me, but I don't want to keep it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oceania: He wants to live.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P: Yes. I'm thirty years old, for Godsake I haven't done anything yet, I... I want to be healthy again. And this plague, it should stop. In me and everywhere. Make it go away.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Australia: Oh We have tried. We suffer with You but We do not know. We Do not know how.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europa: This is the Tome of Immobility, of respite, of cessation. Drink of its bitter water once, Prophet, and never thirst again.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P: I... can't. I still want... My blessing. Even sick. I want to be alive.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A: You only think you do.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| AMELIA          | Life is a habit with you.  
|                 | You have not seen what is to come:  
|                 | We have:  
|                 | What will the grim Unfolding of these  
|                 | Latter Days bring?  
|                 | That you or any Being should wish to  
|                 | endure them?  
| ANGEL 1         | Death more plenteous than all Heaven has  
|                 | tears to mourn it,  
|                 | The slow dissolving of the Great Design,  
|                 | The spiralling apart of the work of  
|                 | Eternity,  
|                 | The World and its beautiful particle logic  
|                 | All collapsed. All dead, forever,  
|                 | In starless, moon-lorn onyx night.  
| AMELIA          | We are failing, failing,  
|                 | The Earth and the Angels.  
|                 | Look up, look up,  
|                 | It is Not-to-be Time.  
| ANGEL 1         | Oh who asks of the Orders Blessing  
|                 | With Apocalypse Descending?  
|                 | Who demands: More Life?  
|                 | When Death like a Protector  
|                 | Blinds our eyes, sheilding from tender  
|                 | nerve  
|                 | More horror than can be borne.  
| AMELIA          | Let any Being on whom Fortune smiles  
|                 | Creep away to Death  
| ANGEL 2         | [Before that last dreadful daybreak  
|                 | When all your ravaging returns to you  
|                 | With the rising scorching, unrelenting  
|                 | Sun:  
|                 | When morning blisters crimson  
|                 | And bears all life away,  
|                 | A tidal wave of Protean Fire  
|                 | That curls around the planet  
|                 | And bears the Earth clean as bone.]  
|                 | P:  
|                 | But still. Still.  
|                 | Bless me anyway.  
|                 | I want more life. I can’t help myself; I do.  
|                 | I’ve lived through such terrible times and  
| **-Change focus to** | Prior  
| **-X to SR of Prior** | (DS X)  
| **-grab Prior’s hand** | and kneel  
| **-stand** |  
| **-X SR** |  

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there are people who live through much much worse, but... You see them living anyway. When they’re more spirit than body, more sores than skin, when they’re burned and in agony, when flies lay eggs in the corners of the eyes of their children, they live. Death usually has to take life away. I don’t know if that’s just the animal. I don’t know if it’s not braver to die. But I recognize the habit. The addiction to being alive. We live past hope. If I can find hope anywhere, that’s it, that’s the best I can do. It’s so much not enough, so inadequate but...Bless me anyway. I want more life.

P:
And if He returns, take him to Court. He walked out on us. He ought to pay.

AMELIA

SCENE 29

P:
Oh. I’m exhausted.

B:
You’ve been working hard.

P:
I feel terrible.

B:
Welcome back to the world.

P:
From where, I... Oh. Oh I...

E:
Well look at this. It’s the dawn of man.

B:
Venus rising from the sea.
P: I'm wet.

E: Fever broke. That's a good sign, they'll be in to change you in...

P: Mrs. Pitt? Did she...

B: Elle fait sa toilette. Elle est *tres* formidable, ca. Where did you find her?

P: We found each other, she... I've had a remarkable dream. And you were there, and you...

P: And you.

HH: I what?

P: And some of it was terrible, and some of it was wonderful, but all the same I kept saying I want to go home. And they sent me home.

HH: What are you talking about?

P: Thank you.

HH: I just slept in the chair. -Look at chart

P: She saved my life.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HH:</th>
<th>Cough with Hannah</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I did no such thing, I slept in the chair. Being in the hospital upsets me, it reminds me of things. I have to go home now. I had the most peculiar dream.</td>
<td>Look up at her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louis:</td>
<td>Put chart at end of bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I come in?</td>
<td>Exit DL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have to start rounds. You’re one of the lucky ones. I could give you a rose. You rest your weary bones.</td>
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CHAPTER 6

JOURNAL

Thurs., Sept. 23

Well, the "Great work begins." Tonight was the first rehearsal, the read-thru. I am always a little nervous before the first read-thru, but tonight especially. My slight apprehension about the actual reading quickly dissipated and turned into excitement. It was truly enjoyable. However, most of my nerves were a result of realizing that this thing, this process that has been talked about for so long, and which I have been anticipating since May, had finally arrived. It is finally happening. I had been worried that I hadn't prepared enough, but I felt much better after the actual rehearsal began. I feel like I went into it with a pretty good basis, a good start. Of course, I still have more things to research and examine, but I don't feel completely in the dark.

The read-thru itself went well. I feel good about the ensemble in general. I am working mostly with people I have not worked with before, but there seems to be a good connection developing already, and feel like I will be able to trust all of these people on stage. I must admit I was a little skeptical simply because I have already seen some wonderful portrayals of these characters in Part One, but I think we will be able to create something that we can call our own. I have also been a little apprehensive about the fact
that Lesley, Briggs, and the Sound Designer (I apologize, I don’t remember her name) have all done this show together before. I have been a little concerned that there will be a lot of comparisons made between the two productions and performances, and that decisions have already been made based on the previous cast. I think though, that after seeing this team together for the first time tonight, we will be able to own this production, and create something really wonderful.

Liz, the Stage Manager, makes me a little nervous. She seems a little disorganized, or rather, unprofessional. She almost seemed bothered by being there and that it was a chore to do her job. She was very casual about everything, which didn’t really seem like a good way to make a good first impression or command much respect. I don’t want to be to quick to judge though, it has only been one night, and I haven’t really seen her “in action.”

Apparently in Lesley’s previous production there were some cuts made in the Angel’s speeches. I was able to read them through in their entirety tonight, and hope I am able to keep most, if not all of the lines. Not because I am offended that any of my speeches would be cut, but mainly because they would be cut because they were lengthy and poetic. That is exactly why I want to keep them. I may be crazy, but I want the challenge they offer. The language and imagery are beautiful, but complex, and I think, and have been told, that I need to work on complex texts. I am still somewhat intimidated by the language of Shakespeare, in how to make sense of it and make the words my own. I feel the same way about a lot of this text. I want the challenge of making it comprehensible and natural. And hey, it’s OK to want as much stage time as I can get, right? After all, it is my thesis role!
Fri., Sept. 24

Tonight we read through Act I one scene at a time and discussed any questions or confusion we had about the scene. I always feel so stupid going into those things because I feel like I should know all the answers already, but that's why we do this and why there's rehearsal, to find those answers. I was, of course fine. It was mainly more thesis apprehension. There was a little bit of "You don't know what that means?" going on though. I don't think anyone should ever be made to feel stupid if they ask a question, regardless of how simple the answer may appear to be. I think asking a question is one of the most vulnerable positions someone can put himself or herself into. Knowledge is so highly regarded in our society that people are often made to feel "stupid" for not knowing something. However, the only way to gain knowledge and wisdom is to ask questions, a point people often forget when they have the answer to someone else's question.

Anyway, back to rehearsal...Kushner is an extremely intelligent man, or an extremely intensive researcher, so there are a lot of references to world history and politics. Personally there are a lot of references that I may recognize, but not know the details about, or not be able to instantly recall them. For instance, there is a reference to Selma (Roy; Scene 5). I knew the context of the reference, but wasn't completely sure of exactly what or where Selma is. Before I was able to ask about it, someone else did to which he was greeted with a number of those infamous "You mean you don't know?"'s. Maybe I'm just ultra sensitive, but that kind of thing is exactly what I can't stand. Well, now that I've made a huge deal about something that was probably rather insignificant to the person...but hey, who knows?
Mon., Sept. 27

Tonight we began rehearsal with a kind of Viewpoints session. We began just walking through the space (Room 107) as our character, focusing on the physicalization of our character. I noticed that the Angel’s physicality is, at present, not all that different from my own. It was interesting that I didn’t even think about the fact that she is an ethereal creature. I felt very grounded and powerful, yet rather youthful and almost naive at the same time. I thought of her more as a woman than an angel. It was an unconscious decision at the time, but I’m sure it was in some way influenced by the costume I know I am going to be wearing. The directorial concept for the character of the Angel is Amelia Earhart, who was, obviously, a real person at one time. I will be wearing rather large, heavy boots and a leather jacket, along with period pilot paraphernalia, so I’m sure this prior knowledge influenced my physicalization and movement. (As I think about it, there is also a very feminine, but sometimes hermaphroditic quality to her, which is also reflected in the costume.) I also noticed that my rhythm or pace was rather quick, not brisk, but somewhat determined. I was aware after a while that this tempo seemed to separate me from the other characters, so perhaps I was subconsciously utilizing the awareness that my character is not human (or at least isn’t at the time of the play).

We were then told to acknowledge someone if we made eye contact with him or her as we passed by, and to allow that acknowledgement to affect us physically. I found that I really didn’t “see” anyone but Prior and the Street People. The next steps were to think of our character’s lowest point, physically and or emotionally, in the play, followed by the highest point. I found both of those to involve Prior. My lowest point was his rejection of the prophecy and I felt desperate to get his attention, but he just kept walking
away. At my highest point, which at the time I envisioned to be when I appear to him and give him the prophecy, I was still focused on him, but I didn’t feel the need to be so physically close to him. I instead found myself drawn to the Ensemble who took on the role of my protectors almost. They seemed to be where I got my power. I am not going to have the bright steel wings, but they seemed to take their place, they, in essence, became my “wings.” Lesley had said that they, the Ensemble, would at times be my entourage, and would help me to “fly,” and I began to experience how that might be possible, and the powerful potential of that image. I immediately felt protected and powerful when I was near them, as if we almost became one entity. And if the feeling was that strong in a simple exercise in our first day of rehearsal on our feet, I can’t wait to see what is to come!

We then read and briefly discussed the essay “‘The Delicate Ecology of Your Delusions’: Insanity, Theatricality, and the Thresholds of Revelation in Kushner’s Angels in America” by Deborah R. Geis from the book Approaching the Millennium: Essays on Angels in America. The essay contains some interesting observations on the ideology of the play and offers some good insight into the characters of Harper and Prior. Most of the ideas I found to be useful to understanding the play as a whole, but there was really only one thing I felt I could apply directly to my process of playing the Angel, which gives some background information on the Mormon Angel Moroni and the stones that the “Peep-stones” that the Angel gives to Prior are based on. I was not aware of the Mormon significance of the stones and would like to look into the story a little more. I am curious though, if Prior is a WASP, why does the Angel produce a Hebrew letter and Mormon peep-stones to get his attention?
Vocal Note: I had a brief discussion with Phil regarding the cough that the Angel uses throughout the play. I am concerned about finding a way to produce a sound that will both be audible in Thurber Theatre, but will not injure or be detrimental to my voice. Phil has suggested I try making a sound, or coughing, above my vocal folds, so they won’t be damaged. I understood what he was telling me in theory, but I haven’t tried it yet, so I can’t be sure that I physically understand what he was talking about.

**Tues., Sept. 28**

We started tonight out with designer presentations. There weren’t a whole lot of surprises because we’re using the same basic set and have already begun costume fittings. Of course the presentations were exciting though. Jeanine thought to ask about the possibility of climbing and standing on the scenery which would enable more possibilities for me to be “airborne.” I did learn that I might begin Scene 8 with a different costume. Lesley is thinking about having me in a white robe with great pieces of cloth that the ensemble would manipulate with sticks to create wings. I’d appear in that and then it would be ripped off and reveal the Amelia costume. I really like the idea for a couple of reasons: first I think it’s a nice transition from Part One to Part Two, people who saw the first will be expecting the image of the Angel in white, and second, because as Lesley said, it shows that she’s not typical. Nothing seems to be working for her. She’s not the stereotypical angel. I also found out that I am going to have a headset mic for the Angel. The Sound Designer said it is mainly going to be used to change my voice at times, but of course, will aid in amplification.
Following the presentations we worked with Jeanine, first with the same kind of character exploration we did yesterday with Lesley, and then progressed to working with some Angel “stuff.” As people were walking through the space I was supposed to make contact with each person one at a time and gently give them some of my weight. This led to a group of three at a time taking all of my body weight. After that the entire group worked together to lift me. While I was suspended they manipulated me into different positions--flipping from face up to face down, rolling, somersaulting, etc. It was really an amazing experience. Not at any time did I feel unsupported. My only moment of hesitation was when I did a “backward roll.” It wasn’t because I didn’t feel safe, it was just because the idea of rolling backwards makes me nervous in general.

After the group session, I worked with just the Ensemble. We basically did the same exercises, adjusting to only four people holding all my weight, and then manipulating it in the air. We tried a number of different ways to suggest the idea of flight. The poor Ensemble was surely getting extremely tired by the end. The main concept that we were working on was that of undulation. Some things worked better than others did, but we still have a long way to go. It was definitely a good start though.

I found that I was extremely comfortable with all of the exercises, and in fact, it was rather invigorating and exciting. I was of course aware of the fact that the entire cast now knows every inch of fat on my body and really wished I would have kept off the weight I lost this summer. Oh well.

On my own I want to review and work on some of the things we explored in mime class, particularly triple design and the bird, also undulation. I really need to continue to strengthen my knees and my ankle. Even though others were taking my
weight, the initiation of and the handling involved in the manipulations were a little tough on them. People weren’t holding me incorrectly or anything, I just think it was the pressure that was being applied that affected them. They are already a little sore, so I just need to be aware of it and work to strengthen them (which is something I should be doing anyway).

Tomorrow we will be blocking Scene 8, which I’m looking forward to. It will be interesting to see how some of the things we worked on today may fit into the scene. I’m not clear though as to how much the Ensemble is supporting my weight throughout the scene, I don’t know if I never touch the ground, or if the airborne effect is going to be reserved for “special” occasions. I also want to review my lines before we begin blocking.

Fri., Sept. 29

I went through the day somewhat sore from yesterday’s rehearsal. At first that seemed odd because I wasn’t doing a lot of moving, but rather, was being moved. I was being manipulated and supported by others. This lead to some unusual positions and stretching, and pressure being applied to my knees and ankles to keep me in the air. So I guess it’s not surprising I was sore after all.

I had an interesting experience in voice class today. Phil has been trying to get me to free up my upper chest and while I was lying on my back and Carole was massaging my left shoulder he manipulated some of the muscles around my right collarbone. He pressed on a couple that were apparently very tight because it really hurt to press on
them. The pain though eventually brought a kind of release, though not at the time. In fact as the tears were rolling down my face I really had this urge to punch Phil. When they were finished and I stood up, I felt incredibly open and free in my upper chest. I had released a lot of physical tightness and felt somewhat “exposed emotionally.” Although the emotional freedom brought with it some sadness and other feelings that needed to be released throughout the day, the freeness I felt in my body felt wonderful, and that openness luckily carried into rehearsal.

We started out this evening by blocking my “big” scene, Scene 8. I felt very comfortable vocally. I still felt that openness which seemed to allow the words to just flow. I felt vocally powerful, but not strained or pushing in any way. The blocking went pretty smoothly. We ran through it a couple of times. I was feeling pretty good until some of my lines were cut. I mean, it was only a few, but I’m only in this show for two and a half scenes as the Angel and she’s my thesis. I’m really not sure why they were cut, except I do know they were cut the last time Lesley directed it. I’m a little frustrated and disappointed because I’m afraid that will mean that more will get cut in the Heaven scene. I may just be extra sensitive today, but I’m kind of hurt. I mean, I know some her lines are wordy and poetic, but I really want the challenge of making them work and be interesting. I’m sure it wasn’t personal, but I kind of feel like I wasn’t given a chance.

**Thurs., Sept. 30**

I took a look at the Dramaturg’s Resource Book today. What an amazing document. Tonia really has information on absolutely everything in there. At first I was somewhat overwhelmed when I thought about the amount of research I haven’t done. But
then I realized it is there to help us, which is nice to know. So if I have any trouble finding anything, I know where to look. I guess I feel like I should try on my own to get information. Is it cheating to use the dramaturg’s material? I don’t mean in general, I just mean for writing a thesis.

We ran scene 8 for Jeanine tonight so she could see what it looked like with the blocking. It was a pretty crappy run for me. I felt like I was pushing, especially my voice. We did a group vocal warm-up, but I didn’t have any classes today, so it was very cold when I got to rehearsal. I also felt somewhat affected by the changing weather and the very warm temperature in the room. Not excuses for my acting, just possible explanations for the throat soreness I felt after only running the scene once. I was trying to achieve the same effect vocally as I did yesterday, but I was not only completely warmed up, but I wasn’t as physically open in my upper chest as I was yesterday.

We worked with Jeanine some on my entrance and incorporating the Ensemble into the scene. Jeanine gave me the note to try to distinguish more between the choices I seem to be making for when she’s angelic and heavenly and when she’s human and down to earth. After we finished with the scene, Jeanine and I talked one on one about the physicality. We discussed the fact that there seem to be three distinct choices I was making with the character, almost like three different personalities. I think they not only embody the idea of this being a multi-faceted character- a ghost, an angel, a woman, but they also seem to personify different tactics. She is there for one purpose- to declare Prior’s prophecy and then have him accept it. It, however, doesn’t go very smoothly so she is trying different methods, which are reflected in her different “personalities.”
Jeanine used Laban terms to identify two of the personalities and Suzuki to identify the other. The proclamitory angel is very much in the style of the Suzuki standing statues—beautiful, but very powerful, which incorporates a sense of bound flow. The second, the ghost, is much more free flow and rather “flicky.” And the third is the woman. She is the most realistic and grounded and the most vulnerable. So a sense of glide might be helpful, because she is being the most direct and is at the same time the most vulnerable.

Jeanine asked me to clearly define where I was making the character changes throughout the scene. I went through and identified in my script where I had made the changes because she said my impulses when running the scene were good. I just need to clearly define the changes and expand them physically and vocally. I hear a lot of “make more bold choices” in acting class, so I’m going to try to really make the choices clear and full, and if it gets to be too much and I have to back down I will be happy. I’ve always been told to do more not less, so maybe I can make this a first. I feel much more comfortable and powerful working from a physical place and perspective such as this, so I’m happy this role allows me to explore physically and vocally. I seem to be able to understand a character better, and just be freer in general if I am working in some kind of physically stylized way. If I’m just being “natural” I don’t know what to do with my body.

I expressed some of my concern about my lines being cut with Jeanine after we worked. I told her that I wasn’t sure why the lines were cut and that I was disappointed for a few reasons: I’m afraid that that means more of my lines may be cut, I want the challenge of clearly communicating some of those lines (especially in the section in Act
If I’m afraid will be cut), and finally, it’s my thesis. So not only do I want to challenge myself, but I really like this character and she’s just not on stage very much, so I want to take advantage of every line I can. Scene 8 used to seem pretty long, but now that it’s actually taking shape it just flies by. This character is just beginning to take shape (for me and within the world of the play) by the end of the scene, and then she’s not onstage again for another 15 scenes or so, and then it’s just a few really cool, but very brief encounters. Jeanine told me that it was okay to feel that way and to be great during the time I do have on stage so that I’m memorable not just because people saw a lot of my character, but because I was good. I think I can do that. No, I know I can do that. I can own this character and put my all into it and I can create something that I can be proud of. This can be turn out to be my proudest achievement in acting, I’m just going to have to work my ass off. And I’m ready.

Sun., Oct.3

Today we were running through the second half of Act I beginning with Scene 8. I tried to incorporate more and clearer physical choices, but was mainly focused on trying to get the lines into my head. I spent a while last night working on them and am pretty confident with the first half of the scene. I, of course, still carried my script though. Partly because the blocking was being changed at points and partly because I’m a wimp. I hate to let go of my script until I absolutely have to. Of course I hate having it in my hands because it restricts my movement. It’s just a vicious circle. I can learn lines very easily if a scene is rehearsed over and over. I have a difficult time just sitting down and
memorizing though. (Hence, learning monologues for an audition is a nightmare)

Anyway, I was initially nervous about being off book so early in the rehearsal process, but it’s going okay because we have run the scene so many times. It’s not really dialogue though, so it is a little challenging. I’m sure I know them better than I think I do. I’m afraid that my memorization issues will someday cause me trouble in the professional world. I don’t like to begin memorizing until rehearsals begin so I can see what tempos, inflections, etc. develop in the rehearsal. I’m sure if I had to be off book by a first rehearsal I could do it and then adjust. I think it all just boils down to dislike rather than inability.

Mon., Oct. 4

I met with Jeanine during the day to touch base with my thesis. She suggested I try to incorporate more Suzuki into my physical exploration of the Angel in Scene 8, and see how that informs my actions and movement. She also suggested that we meet once the lines and blocking are more concrete to physically go through the scene and work on bigger, bolder choices, build them up and then pare them down. She also gave me a breakdown of what needs to be included in each chapter and wants me to make a tentative schedule of deadlines for turning drafts in. I really appreciate that I am able to assist in creating a schedule that works for me instead of having deadlines and an order of completion imposed on me.

Tonight started out pretty rough. For some reason I just wasn’t focused the first time we ran the scene. I was thrown off guard because I thought we were just marking the movement at the beginning, but here we were supposed to begin. So, I tried to do it
without the book in my hand and just went completely blank. I knew the lines, but I got flustered. Even once I had the script I was still pretty “off.” My blocking was changed a few times as we were running the scene, so I ended up getting really confused about where I was supposed to be. But, we made it through. The second run was much better.

We ran though the rest of the act, which included the Mormon Mother scenes. They were fine. I hadn’t forgotten, but became very aware of the fact that the Mormon Mother is the Angel. So, I was able to bring a little of the characterization from the Angel into the Mother. It really helped me feel more comfortable with the scenes. She suddenly wasn’t as foreign to me because she was actually the character I had been working on for so long in Scene 8. I’m not sure if that fact needs to be recognizable or if it’s just enough that I’m aware of it.

After the run we went back to Scene 8. The focus of tonight’s rehearsal was to incorporate the street people into the scenes and transitions, which we didn’t do much of the first time we ran the scene. It was more focused on blocking. However, this time was much more successful in that respect. Lesley is trying the idea of having me undulate every time I have the multiple “I”’s, and the street people are allowing that movement to happen in themselves at the same time. I like it. I don’t know if it’s something we’ll keep, but for now it’s helping me make sense of those moments. It’s as though the message is getting stuck coming out. What at first seemed to be the most abstract parts of the dialogue, have become the moments where I feel the most “angelic” or heavenly.
A stool has been added to allow me to sit and stand during the scene like we’ve been rehearsing. It was realized that the boxes I had been using represented set pieces I couldn’t sit or stand on. I really like the idea of the stool because it not only provides a portable angelic pedestal, but also allows for more interactions with Eleni, one of the Ensemble.

I ended up feeling very good at the end of rehearsal. I found some new physical things to do (a Suzuki turn to stop Prior on “You can’t outrun your occupation Jonah”) and ended up doing a lot of the scene without the script. I guess I knew it after all. I just needed to be focused. (A novel idea, I know).

Tues., Oct. 5

Tonight we worked on Scene 8 and then blocked Scene 24. Scene 8 went really well. I did off-book for the first time. I ended up doing better than I thought I would. I guess a lot more was in my brain than I realized. It was really nice because it freed up my movement. Of course I then realized how much I wasn’t moving, but at the same time realized the potential for movement. We spent a while on my entrance with the “street people” using some rehearsal fabric. I’m beginning to become very glad that I’m not being flown. Although it would be really cool and a unique experience, it is really fun to come up with different ways to stage things. It is offering some great challenges. I was able to more fully physicalize the character transitions because I wasn’t carrying a script, but I still have a lot more to explore. Jeanine suggested that I try shifting my focus as
well. For example, really using my peripheral vision when I am angelic, and narrowing the focus when I am Amelia. We just did basic staging for Scene 24. Thursday we’re going to spend more time with Jeanine working on the wrestling match.

After rehearsal I spent quite a while going through my research again. I found a lot of artistic images I want to bring into rehearsal to help with “poses.” I really focused on the positions of hands, feet, and arms in the pictures and found some things I would really like to try. I also looked deeper into some of the passages I had marked with reference to angels as well as Amelia Earhart. I think it was good to get a broad base of information this summer and then go back to it after I’ve gotten somewhat of a grasp on the character. This way I am able to find out what is really pertinent and what is not. I also found a lot of Bible passages that I want to look up.

Wed., Oct. 6

We did our first run-thru of Act I off-book tonight. It went very well on a whole. Everyone was rather solid on lines and flowed pretty smoothly. It was almost like a play! I felt like I was actually present in Scene 8 for the first time tonight. I wasn’t worried about lines or blocking (it wasn’t perfect of course, but not bad) and just act. I tried to incorporate some of the hand positions I found last night. And some nice moments were just happening naturally. I did realize that through my staging I am changing levels depending on where I’m standing or if I’m sitting, but I am not finding different levels physically within myself. I’m either sitting or standing instead of using my whole body. I
have a whole body, I really should think about using it. Sometimes I forget. I either move or I speak and pose. I really think combining the two might be a good idea. (Just a little sarcasm for a long day.)

I’m still working on finding the Mormon Mother. She’s still a lot like the character Shirley I played in Fen last quarter. I’m sure it will come in time.

Thurs., Oct. 7

Tonight was intense and wonderful. Jeanine was with us for the entire night. We began with the Viewpoints “warm-ups”—walking through the space, floor patterns, acknowledging the people you pass, etc. We did this first as ourselves. It was very strange to be doing this kind of work without any of the people from last year (the MFA class that graduated). I had never done it without any of them and it wasn’t better or worse, just different. Jeanine added something to this part of the exercises: she first had us find our physical relationship to the group as we were walking. Were we walking close to other people or staying on the periphery? I of course was on the periphery. We then had to connect with a person and find someway to physically represent our relationship with them. People seemed to avoid making eye contact with people they didn’t know in order to avoid being uncomfortable. Something very interesting happened. I was with Carney, who is one of the people I feel the closest to and most comfortable with in the department and just naturally we hugged, which I didn’t do with just anybody. I even had somebody try to hug me, but I didn’t feel like it. What was weird was when Carney and I were talking about it afterward we realized we had never hugged each other before. It
was, of course, our first and most natural reaction, but it had never happened before. Maybe that’s why we get along so well, we’re more alike than we sometimes realize.

We then went through the same process as our characters and continued into an open Viewpoints session. It was extremely successful. There were so many discoveries happening with everyone and so much rich character development surfacing. It was interesting because we haven’t done much work on Act II, but people were able to work with their character and relationships beyond just Act I. I realized how many people I don’t have any stage time with as the Angel (except for in the Heaven scene, but they’re isn’t much interaction there and they aren’t really “themselves”). I was still able to find some kind of interaction with them though, Roy especially. I couldn’t figure it out at first, but came to realize that not only am I in some ways representative of the Angel of Death, which affects him, but we were very much struggling for control. I’m sure the Angel of Death image contributed to that, but even just as our characters, we both are fighting for control and are losing. We are both failing and our worlds are falling apart. Although these discoveries will never come into play directly since we have no scenes together, it has helped to inform my character. I was able to discover more about the Angel by finding her similarities to Roy.

I also realized how much I have grown to depend on the Street People. I realized I always knew where they were during the sessions, and during our final one, I panicked because I wasn’t able to find Eleni and Lindsay. They weren’t where I thought they were. Here they had been “tagged” and other people had stepped in. I suddenly felt very alone.
I realized how strong my relationship with the Street People has become and what a sense of ensemble the five of us have created. We have, in a sense, created a single character together.

I had some intense moments with Prior. We were never up there without the other one. In fact, David stood up to go in once and pulled me up with him. I thought that was pretty cool. We have established a good connection. We really don’t talk about our scenes together, but are finding some really nice moments and a sense of trust and connectedness just through rehearsing the scenes. Our moments of face to face interaction during the Viewpoints sessions were very intense. There were a couple of times when everyone in our group had stopped moving except the two of us. We were still “chasing” one another. We weren’t able to “stop moving,” ironic, huh. When the session came to an end, I realized that in the final pose I was at Prior’s knees. I was the vulnerable one. And although I had intellectually realized it, at this moment it became physically realized that the Angel needs Prior more than he needs her. He is her last hope. She is completely vulnerable, and that was the first time I gave in to that.

We finished the session by walking across the space side by side and individually experiencing the journey our character takes throughout the play. I was standing next to David, and it was very difficult not to be affected by his actions. I was very aware of his presence, again her reliance and their connection.

After the Viewpoints session everyone left but those of us in Scene 24. We worked with Jeanine on the entrance and the wrestling. We’re trying to find a way to have me enter parallel to the ground so I can “fly.” The way we were doing it just isn’t going to work though. My back just won’t bend the way necessary to accomplish the
desired effect, so we need to keep working on it. We also established the wrestling poses. The next step will be to find those poses with me being suspended in the air. It will be a challenge.

Fri., Oct. 8

They are working on scenes I’m not in tonight so I wasn’t called. I’m doing something completely unrelated to Angels or theatre. Joel and I are taking Jerrod out for his birthday, so I get to go play video games, yeah!!!

Mon., Oct 11

I feel like I’ve been away from this forever. We didn’t have rehearsal this weekend so I was able to spend the whole weekend in Cincinnati and help Jeremy celebrate his birthday. I had a great time, but I of course felt guilty that I didn’t get any writing done. And by the end of the night Sunday my foot was killing me.

Tonight we just read through and discussed Act II. It was a little weird to be doing this after we had already begun working on Act II, but it was still extremely helpful. There were three things that came up that really made me think. I had never really thought about these things until we began reading and discussing, and suddenly I had so many questions. One—why does Prior have to die to fulfill the prophecy? Historically prophets are chosen to spread a message, to inform people. Don’t they need to be alive to do that? So why does Prior have to die? Is he being viewed as a Christ-like figure? Christ spread the word of God, but had to die to save the people. Is that what Prior’s doing?
Two--In my researching of Angels I found out that the Principalities never have contact with humans, but here, the Angel of America is the one sent to get the prophet. Is it an oversight or are things just that bad? Also, in our production the Angel is being viewed as the ghost or spirit of Amelia Earhart, but once again, Principalities were never human, though those lower in the hierarchy were, or could have been. Three--What really is the deal with all the “I I I I”’s? Whenever I, the Angel, use multiple “I”’s I use four. When I’m in Heaven though, they’re always singular. But, the other angels in heaven use multiple I’s that range from two to seven. What is the significance of all of this? Is there any? Why four all the time for me?

This has given me a lot of great stuff to think about, whether it’s all relevant or not, I have yet to discover. Oh yeah, I was able to read the whole speech in Scene 24. It’s a bitch, but I really hope it’s not cut, what a great challenge.

**Tues., Oct. 12**

I’ve been having problems with my foot. I swear if it’s not one thing, it’s another. I haven’t been able to put any weight on the joint of my left big toe. And it hurts to bend it and to the touch. And of course, I’m limping which is beginning to irritate my left ankle, which is just beginning to feel really good for the first time since I sprained it in July. I went to the doctor today and luckily there’s no fracture or bone damage. He didn’t really say what it was. He did have me get a blood test to check my uric acid levels. Apparently the symptoms I’m having in my foot can be indicative of an arthritic condition caused by gout. He said it was unlikely because there isn’t a history of it in my
family, but I’m still a little freaked out. My first thought of gout was that it’s some gross medieval condition. It isn’t, but it still has those connotations for me for some reason. The last thing I need in my life is arthritis. I feel like my body is falling apart as it is. I’m scared to think of what kind of physical condition I’m going to be in 10, 20, 30 years. And that only puts me at 55!

Anyway, to rehearsal. I wasn’t very focused going in because of the whole foot-gout thing. Then after warm-up I was supposed to work with the Street People on lifting and manipulation. However, there weren’t any rehearsal rooms open so we had to work in the hallway. So we spent a lot of time focusing our energy as a group and then they worked on manipulating my body into different positions while I was standing and while on the ground. It was good because they were able to get a sense of working together to create a 3-D picture with my body without having to worry about supporting all of my weight. It was kind of a lesson in team problem solving. I think it was productive although it didn’t solve any concrete manipulation problems within the scene. I do think we will benefit from the work the next time we work on the scene with Jeanine. I think they’re getting more comfortable with touching and manipulating me, and with talking to one another to figure out how to get me into a particular position.

We blocked Scene 25. I only appear for one line at the end so it was pretty easy. After that we ran Scenes 15-25, so the first half of Act II. It was rather unfocused too. I’m not sure what the deal was, but we all seemed to be there together. After watching the run I realized how little I’m in the show. I really hope none of my lines get cut tomorrow when we block the Heaven scene. Albeit my scenes are cool, but they are slight. We’ll see.
Wed., Oct. 13

I had some weight lifted off my shoulders today. I met with Jeanine to go over the specific chapter requirements and a projected schedule. I have been very worried because I haven't turned in anything besides my vita. I had originally planned on having a draft of my research chapter to turn in at the beginning of the quarter, but my schedule this summer just didn't allow for it. I did a lot of research, but haven't compiled it into a definitive chapter. I know it will get done, but I've really been focusing on rehearsals and this journal, and don't really have time to do much more. I was afraid that Jeanine was expecting me to turn in something soon. She said that I was concentrating on exactly what I should be right now, performing the role, and I should not stress myself out trying to adhere to my original projected schedule or the schedule everyone else is being required to follow. She also clarified that the outline she gave me was a guideline for writing and organization and not law. Hearing all of this was a definite relief. Of course I want to get as much done as I can right now, but I don't need to push myself beyond what is realistic. I'm trying not to procrastinate, which I don't feel I have been, but I don't have to finish everything right now. I have the time to pace myself.

In voice class today Phil gave us some notes on the parts of rehearsal he saw last night. He saw me in Scene 24, and I was waiting for criticism, constructive of course. I was really happy to know I was doing something right. He told me I was using the horizontal expansion with my breath well, I wasn't tightening up in my chest. Yeah!! He also gave me some suggestions on how to use that more when I am on the floor at the end of the wrestling scene. He said to use the ground for support. To kind of "push off" of the
ground when inhaling. He also suggested that I could use that technique even when I am sitting on the guys' shoulders. I found that I was able to do that by pushing with my legs on their shoulders. It gave me more support so I was able to take a low deep breath.

My spirits were unfortunately dampened a bit at rehearsal. We blocked Scene 29, the Heaven scene. This is my second of two "big" scenes, and I have a medium-length, rather poetic speech near the end of it. I was warned earlier that part of it might be cut because it had been the last time Lesley directed it. I was told she felt the scene in general was too long (she told us last night that she would be making some cuts) and that some of that speech was flowery and confusing. Well, it happened. It was cut just about in half. I'm pretty upset, or rather, disappointed. I am going to try to talk to Lesley about it sometime tomorrow. I want to let her know that I would never question or challenge the decision if it wasn't my thesis role. Part of the reason I chose this role for my thesis was because of my intrigue with the two speeches that have had cuts made. I really want the challenge of making these poetic speeches make sense. I can fully accept the possibility that I might not be able to make them work, or at least not in the way she would like, but I at least want the opportunity to try. I have been fascinated by these monologues since the first time I read them six years ago. I've even done the one from Scene 8 for auditions before. So it's a major disappointment from that perspective to have them cut down. I also really want that stage time. I am spending a year working on a role that's really only in three scenes, and I want to savor and experience every moment of those scenes.

I am very happy with the fact that I get to appear in the last scene as the angel on the Bethesda fountain. I finally get wings!!! I am able to make a connection with Prior in the last moment, which is really cool. This scene along with the Mormon Mother scene in
the Diorama Room are great exercises in neutrality, stillness, and endurance. I finally have an excuse for not moving when I’m acting. Of course moving is not my problem, moving and talking at the same time is. I find stillness very intriguing and somewhat comforting. I think it’s interesting that the tension and bound energy required for this is appealing, but the tension and bound energy required in some of the exercises in mime is excruciating (in the drive me bananas kind of way).

**Thurs., Oct. 14**

Tonight we ran Act II for the designers. I didn’t get to talk to Lesley today so I just went ahead and did Scene 24 with the cuts she made. There was nothing really spectacular about the run. It was kind of slow because a lot of people were trying to go off book. I know it’s good to be off book as soon as possible, but it was kind of annoying because the run was for the designers to get a sense of the flow of the second half and it was very choppy because people were struggling with lines. Perhaps I’m just jealous that I’m not off book yet or bitter because I haven’t tried to be yet.

**Fri., Oct. 15**

I finally got a chance to meet with Lesley before rehearsal tonight. I told her I wouldn’t be asking if it wasn’t my thesis role, but I wanted the opportunity to work on the speech in the Scene 24. I said I was a little disappointed that both of my big speeches had been cut because they were part of the allure of the role. She said she understood, but she really felt, and had spoken with Kushner and he agreed, that they were just too long.
She said that the first time she directed it they were cut even more, but she felt I was capable of pulling more of them off (she told me I was a better actress than the last one and was capable of more, but I feel kind of weird repeating that, I know she was young). She said she understood what I was saying and really liked what I’m doing with the role, which made me feel pretty good. She said she would let me try the whole speech in Act II, but warned me not to get too attached to it just in case. She said it may still be cut and it might not have anything to do with how well I’m performing it. I decided not to push and fight for the first one too. Besides, we’ve worked a lot more on that scene and I don’t want to break up the continuity that has been established. However, as I’m writing this I’m discovering I’m still a little bitter about it and wish I would have fought for it too. I guess in my thesis-clouded state of mind I don’t understand why my speeches have to be cut to save on time when there’s so much other dialogue from the other characters that tends to ramble, Harper has her own scene that’s a monologue that wasn’t cut in any way, Roy may have a whole monologue scene added, and Prior’s response to my speech in Scene 24 was cut a little, but is still longer than mine. OK, I feel better now. I’m a grown-up; I can deal with this and stop being petty.

So, our rehearsal was divided in two because we took a break to go see Tim Miller. We got through Scene 8 before we ended. It went really well I think. I was able to make more discoveries. Just some little things like walking onto the bed to face Prior when I say “Get a shovel or an axe or some… tool for dislodging tile and grout and unearth the sacred Implements.” It really helped me to make that character or tactic shift. I am fairly comfortable with shifting vocally (who thought I’d ever make a statement like that), but I still want to find more levels physically.
The rest of the run went well. I’m starting to get more comfortable with the Mormon Mother. She’s not as angry as she is intense or determined. I’m also able to find a little more of the humanity and therefore humor in the scenes.

Sun., Oct. 17

We were given a lot of time tonight to work on Scene 24. We got a lot accomplished with the entrance and into the wrestling. They were able to find a way to “fly” me in on my stomach without hurting my back and then take me from there to sitting on the guys’ shoulders. David was in there with us and was extremely helpful in the manipulation from one position to the other. I’m sure they’re all going to be sore tomorrow. Especially Lindsay, she’s taking a lot of my weight in the transfer. We ran through the scene a few times for Lesley and discovered how long the flying actually goes on. We still need to work on the rest of the wrestling and covering space in the entrance without being too distracting, but I feel that we made a lot of progress.

We also ran through Scene 20 a couple of times. I’m only in the beginning, but it’s going pretty smoothly. I still feel awkward with the progression of lines “Keep breathing. Stop moving. STAY PUT.” I understand what they mean and what they allude to, but I just have trouble getting them to flow for some reason. I guess I need to just keep trying different things until something feels right.
Mon., Oct. 18

I talked to Jeanine today about my meeting with Lesley. She wasn’t satisfied with the outcome and like I have said before I’m not either. It’s more the principle of the thing. But anyway, she told me to keep fighting for the lines that were cut in Scene 8 and to ensure that the lines in Scene 24 won’t be cut again. She suggested that I meet with her again and if that doesn’t work to let her know and she as my Committee Chair will get involved. She was supportive of the fact that since this is my thesis role and I’m in so few scenes as it is, it’s valid to fight for those two speeches; this role was chosen as an option for a thesis because of the challenging language and without the knowledge that the speeches would be cut in half. Part of me is ready to stand up for myself, but the other part of me wants to just back down and let it be. I really hate conflict and confrontation. It would also be a lot less intimidating if Lesley wasn’t the producer and Department Chair on top of being the director. There’s no one else to go to.

As it would turn out Scene 24 is the only thing I worked on tonight. I wasn’t called until 7:15 and then didn’t start rehearsing until almost 8:00. I didn’t really mind because I spent the time working on my lines, but I did feel bad for some of the others who had been called at 6:30 and were there waiting until 8:00 to go in and work. Regardless, Scene 24 went really well. We spent a lot of time working on some bits and details, which was actually a lot of fun. The “big speech” at the end went well. I still have a long way to go with it, but it was a good beginning. I got some nice compliments from a few cast members who said it went well and that they were behind me. (I’m making this
sound like a big battle, it really isn’t at the moment. Everything thus far has been very
relaxed and there hasn’t been any tension or hard feelings.) Anyway, it made me feel
good that people are behind me and don’t think I’m just being a prima donna.

I had requested a rehearsal jacket of some kind mainly so the people lifting me
could get used to working with it. Much to my surprise they gave me the real thing. That
was pretty cool. I also got the scarf. Costumes really help me with characterization. I
can’t wait to work with it more.

Oh yeah, the progress the Street People and I made last night was not without its
price. They have sore backs and I think I’m a little bruised on my ribs and hips. My ribs
especially are pretty tender. Most of it was just the repetition of the movements, but I also
think the underwire of my bra was being pushed into my ribs. I need to make sure I wear
a sports bra from now on. Someone also suggested I find out what I’m going to be
wearing under my costume and request to have a sports bra. I hadn’t thought of that. This
may sound like a weird thing to be spending so much time on, but it is affecting my body
and therefore my movement and if I’m not careful my breathing. I’ve had trouble with
bruising from a corset so I think it’s important to be aware of these things and take
precautions.

Tues., Oct. 19

I’m tired, my foot is killing me, and I still have homework to do. But… rehearsal
went well. We worked with Jeanine for about an hour on Scene 24. We’re really making
progress. We’ve now blocked the entire wrestling scene. It’s still pretty rough, but we
have a structure now. I spent a lot of time upside-down and twisted in the air. It was weird because I kept getting disoriented as I was turning. It was hard to help them along when I wasn’t sure of where I was in space.

Without any warning, we recorded the voice-overs tonight. I don’t know what I would have done to prepare for it, but it would have been nice to know ahead of time. I felt bad for the Sound Designer because we were all caught off guard and it wasn’t her fault. I realized when I got up there that I still wasn’t sure of how to pronounce the Bolshevik’s name for the very beginning. Briggs was able to help me out though. I really hate hearing the sound of my voice on tape and it didn’t really sink in until tonight that I will be hearing it at every show. I wasn’t real happy with the Angel stuff except for the whispering at the end of Scene 8 (which may or may not be used). I was pleasantly surprised with how the Mormon Diorama Room stuff turned out. Of course, I wasn’t using my “natural voice.” I really enjoyed working with Katie, the Sound Designer. She was very informative about what she was doing. She explained that the music she was using to underscore the Angel scenes was less “heavenly” than she used in the past. Instead it is going to be more rhythmic and thundering and at times a little creepy. She told me that if I get a chance Friday during rehearsal I can go listen to some of it just to get an idea of the mood it will create.

We eventually ran through Scenes 20 till the end, and I didn’t get any notes, which was weird. I guess most of them came as we were working on specific scenes. Jeanine and Lesley worked with me a little bit on the Bethesda Angel at the end. What a long time to hold that position. I love the challenge though. We’re still working on the
very end when I turn to Prior. She told me to just keep experimenting and trying different things. Also a lot of it is going to depend on what it looks like when we get into the space.

Sat., Oct. 23

We split up rehearsal today. We ran through Act II and then went to hear Eartha Kitt at the Wexner Center. What an amazing experience that was. She is a phenomenal woman. At the age of 72 she is more limber and sensual than I could ever dream to be. She is also extremely confident. She has had a very interesting life and is eager to share it with people. She has some messages she wants to spread, and while still satisfying the questions, she got many of those messages out. She has quite an interesting voice. In fact, Lesley and Phil both “agreed” that the Angel should purr instead of cough and just sound like Eartha Kitt all the time. No problem! (Luckily he was just kidding.) After she finished we ran the fight and wrestling scenes. I’m really enjoying being the fight captain. I don’t have many duties right now, but I am able to look at stage movement in a different way. I’m paying attention to things such as weight shifts and effort/energy. I am finding this very useful because I am able to make these observations and then communicate them with the actors. It’s a good way to sharpen my communication methods.
Mon., Oct. 25

I think I’m getting sick. My throat has hurt all day. At first I thought it was a morning thing, but it still hasn’t gone away. Something’s going around the cast. I just hope I don’t get the cough. It is the time of the year for my first sinus infection. I guess if I have to get sick I’d rather do it now and get it over with.

We did some character work to start out with. We were supposed to find the line that best defines our character, and the movement that goes along with it. Then we shared the line with another character, taught it to them, and explained the significance behind it. After both partners had done so, we performed them for everyone else. We did this exercise for Feral Music and it was quite useful and very powerful. There were some wonderful discoveries made. It didn’t have the same outcome tonight. I’m not sure if the exercise wasn’t as extensive, or we just weren’t as invested. There is also a much larger cast than in Feral Music, so the sense of ensemble isn’t as strong. I am interested by the line that immediately came to my mind when thinking about the Angel—"We are his Functionaries; It is BEYOND US." It immediately came to mind. I feel this moment shows her vulnerability, her need for Prior’s help, because she, and the rest of the angels, are powerless.

After that we ran all the Prior scenes, which meant all of my scenes as well. It didn’t go very well. I stumbled on my lines, and my energy was rather lagging. I wasn’t alone though, the energy and concentration were somewhat lacking all around. It was still productive and seemed to accomplish what was intended, which seemed to be to just run the scenes and to see the continuity within them. I found some more “stuff” in Scene 8. I’m trying to incorporate some of the "vogueing" in my movement. It’s giving me some
more things to play with. It’s interesting to find the contrast between the statues and the vogue poses. I’m also trying to use more undulation and coughing as a way to control Prior. Speaking of the cough, I’m temporarily using the stylized cough we set for Scene 28 in this scene as well. It makes more sense to me. Using it as a tactic or heavenly gesture is more comfortable than trying to make it realistic. We’ll see what happens.

I also asked Lesley before we ran the Prior scenes if I could try putting in the lines that had been cut from Scene 8. She said I could and I think it went very well. It really helps with the flow of the speech and allows me to build to the end of it instead of just being there. I have always had difficulty making the transition from before the lines were cut to where they pick up again and this really helped. I also discovered that the “poor blind children…” is referring to all the people of Earth. I had thought that I was trying to paint a picture that would frighten Prior, but was outside of himself. I didn’t realize the universality of the image. Lesley didn’t say anything about the added lines, so I don’t know what’s going to happen. I think I performed them well. I hope she sees that it really helps the scene flow and makes points that are referred to later (which I kind of pointed out when I talked to her about trying them tonight). And if she’s trying to save time, the additional lines couldn’t have taken more than 20 seconds, and I can always talk faster.

I had a reality check tonight--Crew Watch is in one week. That means we only have one more week of working rehearsals. I still feel like I have so much more character development to do, and that it’s up to me to do it on my own. I’m making discoveries every night in rehearsal, but I’m not getting any feedback. The only notes I’m getting are staging or aesthetic concerns, and I very rarely get those. I haven’t been getting acting
notes. I guess it’s up to me to push myself and ask important questions. I now understand the frustrations Wendy and Jeremy felt last year. I’m looking forward to working with Jeanine one on one tomorrow.

The Bethesda statue was much easier tonight. I guess my muscles are getting conditioned to the position. I also think I was more relaxed in the position which meant I wasn’t tensing my muscles as much. I must remember to do that always, it’s much more pleasant on the body. I’m getting good at neutrality. I spend a lot of this show static, well much more than I would with a human character. I like finding the life in stillness.

Tues., Oct. 26

I had a very productive day developmentally. Jeanine and I met this afternoon for a couple of hours and worked on my speech in Scene 24. We broke it down and established where the transitions between Angel and Amelia occur. I had pretty much discovered them in the text and was making verbal adjustments, but hadn’t been able to work it into my body. There was also a section near the end where I wasn’t sure which “character” it was. I chose to make a quick, one line switch to help myself through it. We spent a lot of time clarifying the physical differences between the two personalities and detailing the movement. I’m trying to find a combination of Suzuki statues, Marceau character stances, sculpture, and “vogueing,” while also incorporating Laban effort qualities. Using so many techniques is giving me a lot of room to explore. It’s very
exciting to have the opportunity to use all of these training methods to create a character, and having the allowance to explore stylization and extremes. What’s more exciting is that I am able to use these in combination with just straight acting.

Tonight was our first night in Thurber. It was absolutely freezing. The platforms and flats were up so we had a basic idea of how everything is going to be laid out. A lot of time was spent at the beginning trying to maneuver Roy’s bed on and off stage. It seems like the whole set is very far down stage with a lot of room behind it. I don’t know if a lot is going to be added to the upstage area, but it felt like everything needed to scoot back a bit. There’s a lot of action that occurs downstage of the platforms that is being cramped.

We made it through Scene 11, which wasn’t bad because a lot of time was spent making small adjustments with the street people and such. Scene 8 went pretty well. It really helped to have the different levels to work on. There is such a difference in height that really informs the scene. I was also able to find a lot of power in standing on top of the bed (which is raked, ah!) and looking out into the house. I was also able to incorporate some of the broad physicality that Jeanine and I worked on today. It seemed to be effective, I got a lot of feedback and compliments on my work tonight. And I got a lot of notes! Yeah! In fact, I was getting them so quickly I was having difficulty writing them all down. That was a good sign to me. Lesley told me to not be afraid to take everything even further and then we’ll tone it down if we need to. That’s what Jeanine has been working on with me, so it was nice to have reinforcement from Lesley as well.
Wed., Oct. 27

Tonight was not as productive. Well, first I went home after teaching this morning. My sore throat was even worse this morning. Luckily I didn’t have Professional Aspects today and I wasn’t scheduled to work in acting so it was a good day to be sick. I got some sleep. I’m going to the doctor tomorrow. I heard strep is going around so I want to make sure that isn’t it. I don’t think it is, but better to be safe.

We spent all of tonight working on staging again. Luckily we got to the end of the show, but it was pretty slow moving. She didn’t have me do 24 since I’m sick. I really appreciated that. Turning upside down didn’t sound too appealing. I did do 28 though and was able to do the speech with the physicalization Jeanine and I worked on yesterday. Lesley said she really liked it, so I hope that means that I’ll get to keep all of it for sure.

I was able to work with my Amelia cap tonight which was fun. It’s going to take me a little while to get used to it because I feel a little silly in it. Also, I hadn’t thought about the fact that having my ears covered would effect how I sounded to myself when I’m speaking and therefore has the potential to affect how I project. I’m glad I’ll be able to work with it from now on.

It was decided tonight that I’m going to be on stage as the Bethesda Angel in Scene 17 as well. That’s pretty cool, except it means another scene of equal length that I have to stand in that position. It will be a great physical challenge.

Although I know all the adjustments to the space needed to be made, it was rather tedious. I, along with other cast members, are a little worried because we start tech in a week and two of our last few working rehearsals have been spent on staging. It’s a little unnerving. Tech rehearsals aren’t for us, these are supposed to be. I don’t understand why
there have been so many problems. This set was used in Part One, so it seems like there should have been more pre-planning and addressing of these problems. Surely some of them could have been foreseen.

Thurs., Oct.28

This is going to be short and sweet. I went to the doctor today. I went to sports medicine for my foot which was somewhat productive. I have to start physical therapy for it now. Whatever it takes to make it not hurt. I also saw someone about my throat. I'm feeling a lot better today, but I just wanted to be safe. She said it was probably just a cold, but took a culture just in case.

Tonight we ran through the whole show, for the first time I believe. It went pretty smoothly. It took a good three hours with a 15 minute break, but I'm sure a lot of time can still be shaved off. I had a pretty good run. My voice still isn't up to par, but it wasn't too bad. I found some nice things in Scene 8. I really want to start setting some of the movements. Jeanine said that what I'm doing is now at the point where it can be set. I'm still a little freaked out that we only have one more night of rehearsal before crew watch, especially since this was the first time we ran the whole show in the space. I still feel like we need more time to really work on and break down specific scenes. I'm sure we're better off than I realize. It will all be OK. I'm confident that we're going to have a good show.
Fr., Oct. 29

Tonight was our last working rehearsal. Ahhh!!!(That’s just a scary thought). We worked on the Angel scenes for a while. It was really great to be spending so much time on them, especially 8. It’s unfortunate that it’s the last opportunity to do so. We spent a long time clarifying my entrance. Luckily Katie was there so we got to work with the music. Oh, that reminds me… I met with Katie during the day to listen to the sound cues. They are really great. I get to make my entrance to Mozart’s “Requiem.” Wow is that cool. I felt so big when I unfurled my “wings.” We didn’t work with any of the other cues, but I can’t wait to. I’m really glad I was able to hear the underscoring before tech. It’s all very powerful but in a way that I think will enhance rather than overwhelm. I’m comfortable enough with the character, physicality, and presence I’ve created that I think the musical underscoring will mesh with my performance rather than intimidate me. (Can you tell I’m trying to convince myself of this as I write? I’m confident, but not cocky.) I do still need to work on setting my “poses” in Scene 8. Lesley also wants me to find three signature poses that I can use at the beginning to fill the time before I begin speaking and then to use throughout. I’m going to go through some of the pictures I marked and see what I can come up with. I think it will be interesting to duplicate classical poses in a vogueish way. I’m still a little freaked out that this was our last rehearsal before crew watch. I guess we still have Tuesday to work though. I’m sure I’m more ready than I think I am. I also received some really nice compliments on my work from Carrie Bradac tonight, which not only made me feel great, but gave me a real confidence boost. It was really nice to know that my work is being acknowledged and supported by my peer. It was a good way to end the week.
Mon., Nov. 1

Crew watch. We finally got an audience, and we finally got to run the whole show. The show wasn’t fantastic, you could tell we hadn’t rehearsed since Friday. Nothing majorly wrong, the energy level just seemed a little lacking. It was really nice to have continuity though. If I’m not mistaken we have run through the whole show only once before, and never in the space. It didn’t feel like it took three hours. There are so many scenes that the pace stays up pretty well. There are only a few moments here and there that seem to drag out a little bit, but for the most part, things clip along pretty well. I’m sure there will still be people who get bored and don’t come back for the second act, but people are just not used to having to pay attention to anything for that long of time. It’s a shame, really.

Tomorrow’s our last working rehearsal. This rehearsal process has just flown by. There’s still so much more I want to work on. I’m sure things will come together in this next week though. At least I hope.

Tues., Nov. 2

Today was quite an interesting day, in a bad way. It seems like nothing went right, although some good came out of it. My day began with a memo telling me that I will be teaching a Sat. 280 class next quarter. Not only is this disappointing because I was told yesterday that I would be teaching two 386 classes, but it’s on Saturdays from 8:30 to 12:30. I don’t enjoy early mornings. I was also worried about having rehearsals on Sunday and not having any days off a week. Sue assured me that she would make Bruce aware of the situation. I don’t necessarily have a problem with me being the one teaching
it, well yes I do but, I don‘t know where this class even came from. I can‘t believe that this department is so disorganized and lacking in communication that no one knew that this was happening. So needless to say I wasn‘t thrilled. And by the way, Sue received the memo about me teaching the class from Lesley (the relevance will become clear as my day progresses).

So, I‘m just about calm after this when Lesley walks in the office and asks if I can meet with her for about five minutes. I know what this means—cuts in the script again. Carney had told me last night she cut his added Roy monologue, so I knew I was next. Luckily I had a chance to talk with Phil and Jeanine before I met with Lesley. They told me they both were behind me and supported me in my fight to keep my lines, if that was what the meeting was going to be about. Phil seemed a little shocked that she had cut any in the first place.

I was right. She wanted to make cuts again. She was going to let me keep the section in Scene 8 except for the line “Seek not to fathom the world and its delicate particle logic.” I defended keeping it because of the logistics of the paragraph, it is necessary in understanding the lines that follow it. I also pointed out the reference back to it in Scene 28. My defense worked and she said I could keep all of them in Scene 8 (except for “There is no Zion save where you are” which I don‘t like either). Then came Scene 28, not so lucky there. She said the beginning was fine, but wanted to end it with “Let any being on whom fortune smiles creep away to death,” which cuts out the last section of lines. She said it wasn‘t because of how I was doing them, but because the flow into Prior‘s response worked better without them; that they break up the thought. That I could understand. Although I really like the images in those lines, I could see how
textually the new transition worked. She did say though that this is a three hour play and that by that time in the show she didn’t want the audience to get lost, that this long speech might make them antsy and cause them to lose focus. The time issue again. It’s only maybe 10 seconds worth of speech for God’s sake. She also brought back the “Tony Kushner agrees that it’s too long” thing again and added that Sue agreed with her too. Well just great. I told her that if she was cutting it because of time that I would not be happy or satisfied. I pointed out that there are many more longer speeches that could be cut down to save time. However, I could accept a defense of structural problems within the text. I said I agreed that it had a nice flow the new way, but I would love to put the lines from the original ending in a different place within the speech because of the powerful images they create. She just laughed and didn’t take that as a serious suggestion.

So that finished, I had a nice long meeting with Jeanine and Phil. I told them what had happened and that I was somewhat satisfied with the outcome. The final reasons given for cutting the text were difficult to dispute. I now have only about one quarter of the cuts that were originally made in that speech and none in the first one. They thought my arguments were valid and well thought out. I still think it’s ridiculous that I even had to go through all of this. It was very awkward to convince the director/producer/Dept. Chair that my lines should be kept by doing script analysis, that if one just reads one can see the importance and relevance of the line. I also think it was absurd that I had to go through all of this with a thesis role. I had to fight to keep challenging, complex texts that were the main reason for offering it to me as a thesis to begin with. Well, it’s all over now.

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Jeanine, Phil, and I also talked about things they noticed from watching rehearsals and things to work on. Phil wants me to try to find more vocal variety--pitch, levels, volume, and to try to find contrast with the strong physicality at times. He also suggested that I use the mic as amplification at times which will help prevent me from pushing to be heard and will also allow me to find more levels. Jeanine wants me to work on clarifying my physicality in Scene 8. I’ve done a lot of it in rehearsals, but there are some spots that aren’t set. Phil said that we will work on some of my text in class tomorrow which will be great. Jeanine and I were supposed to be working on clarifying my gestures at the time the three of us met. We agreed to get together tomorrow and work. It’s probably better because we’re doing Scene 8 tonight so she can see specifically what needs to be worked on. It was also good to just vent with the two of them. I felt much better about everything. They also suggested I contact Alan and see if he can watch a rehearsal and a performance in order to evaluate and give feedback. Also, I should set up a time with all four of us after the show closes for feedback.

So now rehearsal. We were told a list of the scenes we would be working on tonight would be posted sometime during the day, which it wasn’t. So, none of us knew what we were doing. We worked on Scene 24 for a while and got a lot of it cleaned up. I feel very comfortable with it now. I feel it is ready for tech. Then we worked on Scene 28, rather ran though it and focused on a few details, mainly things that could be saved for tech. Then Lesley started to move on. She said that they were doing Scene 1 so we could take a break, and that we would be doing 8 at the end. However there was no mention as to what would be in-between. I asked if before we broke up and moved on David and I could work on the ending since a) we never have in a working rehearsal and
b) it had changed since the ending of my speech had been cut. I was told that no, there wasn’t time, there were other things to be worked on, but maybe if there was time. So, I asked what else was going to be worked on so during our break we could be going over them. My response was a rather curt “I just don’t know Jessica.” Now, I have a difficult time believing that she didn’t know what she wanted to work on during our last working rehearsal.

We took our break and were then told that we would be working on that section of 28, but it wasn’t in the space with Lesley, it was in 107 with Jeanine. This turned out to be the most productive rehearsal I have had in the entire five weeks. Jeanine actually worked with us, asked us questions, helped us solve problems, explore our choices. I am so grateful Jeanine was there and willing to go beyond the call of duty. I commend her for taking the time to work with us a director. I find it amazing that with one Director and two Assistants, that is the most personal attention David and I have gotten. So much of this process has been spent with hearing “The last time we did it...” and paying attention only to the big picture. There has been virtually no work on the acting. It has seemed like it didn’t matter what I was saying or doing or why, as long as it looked cool. What a disappointment in an educational institution. I thought the goal was to educate and help students develop their talents, but I have been sorely disappointed. I know this will be a good show, not only because of the visual quality, but because I trust everyone I’m on stage with. No one that is up there is satisfied with just making a cool picture. If they haven’t been pushed in their development, they have been pushing themselves, and that is to be commended.
Well, back to rehearsal. So after this productive session with Jeanine some one came to get us because we were needed upstairs. To my disappointment, it wasn’t to show Lesley what we had worked on and to get her feedback, it was to “just go over some of the technical stuff in Scene 8.” Tonight was our last night before tech and all she was worried about were the technical issues in the scene. Up until this point all she was worried about was the staging in this scene. We have never worked on the acting in this scene. Despite its introduction it was a productive session. I was much more comfortable and able to make even more discoveries and set more as I went along. Looking back on it I realized that I was taking more time with what I was saying. I was acting the lines instead of reciting the lines. This was all possible because the “this might get cut so I’d better make it go quickly so it doesn’t” cloud was no longer looming over my psyche. I could just enjoy what I was saying. The cutting battle is over.

So that was the day. Long, tedious, frustrating, infuriating, and productive.

**Wed., Nov. 3**

Phil worked with me during voice class today. We focused mainly on my opening speech. I first did it conversationally to get the ideas across clearly, so I was sure of what I was saying. Then we went over and over it finding variety and changes in dynamics. We also worked on the section in the same scene that begins with “he began to leave us” to clarify what I was saying. I also met with Jeanine and set the last of the physicality in
the beginning speech and also in the earthquake section. I find that I am using those three signature poses more and more in different ways. That was a very helpful suggestion. I also found the work Phil and I did helped to inform my work with Jeanine.

Tonight was our first tech rehearsal. I wasn’t called until 8:30 and was a little apprehensive when I discovered they were still working on Scene 2. We did get to start on Scene 8, but didn’t get too far into it. It went well though. There weren’t any major problems, it just takes a while to make so many detailed adjustments. I’m looking forward to continuing with the scene tomorrow. I enjoy tech rehearsals. I think it’s very exciting to have everything start to come together. There’s fresh energy and excitement. I do get a little frustrated with actors talking too much while they’re holding. Especially in that space it is very difficult to hear people talking from the house, and it’s even more difficult if people onstage are talking. It wasn’t too bad though. I’m not perfect, I slip every once in a while too.

Thurs., Nov. 4

Second tech. We made it through the end of Act I. We started with Scene 8 and all the wonderful, cool stuff that came with it. It took a while but was so worth it, for me anyway. They’re doing some really great stuff with my voice, as far as manipulating it through the mic. I felt like a kid at Christmas with the mic magic. Not only is it cool, but it is also allowing me to ease up on projection at times, which is much easier on my voice
and is allowing me the freedom to explore levels and my range. The only really tricky part of this evening was the diorama in Scene 11. There were some practical problems with it.

Earlier today I had a costume fitting. The main concern was the fast change out of Amelia into Emily. I think Julia has it worked out in such a way that it will be quick, but fairly smooth. I hope. Nothing else major, most of it had already been set. Since I’m not wearing a hat or wig for Emily or the Bethesda Angel Julia said that getting my hair trimmed wouldn’t be a bad idea if I wanted. So I did, this afternoon. I wanted to get it done just so I felt good and confident to open the show (totally a psychological thing) so it was nice to be given the go ahead. Hey it’s my thesis, I deserve to feel good about how I look. And hopefully I can stop justifying spending the money. It was also nice to be freshly coiffed for our photo call with the Dispatch. I got to be the Bethesda Angel which was different and fun. I don’t know when the picture’s going to run or if they’re going to review or just run an announcement.

All in all it was a busy day- fitting, physical therapy, haircut, photos, tech, but fairly stress-free, which is really nice at this stage. It also kept me busy so I didn’t feel as bad that I was missing Jeremy Dubin’s opening of Waiting for Godot. I wish I could have been there. I know this show is very important to him. I’m sure he was great and I’ll get to see it soon. Just part of the joy of being in this business.
Fri., Nov. 5

More teching tonight. We only got through Scene 24, which took quite a while. There are a lot of sound cues, moving lights following me and the street people across the stage, the fight, the ascent to Heaven, the kiss, and the orgasm. It’s quite an action-packed scene. I’m nervous that because our tech time is carrying into our dress rehearsals, we’re not going to get a chance to just run the show before we open. We’ll see how tomorrow goes.

Sat., Nov. 6

We spent most of our first dress finishing tech. Most of the time was spent doing a cue to cue for Scenes 25 to the end. It seemed to take forever. Luckily we wore our costumes so we were able to run quick changes and such. The switch from the big Heaven scene into Scene 29 with Emily was something. My dresser was great. I just kind of talked him through it as we did it the first time. We ended up running that switch about 4 or 5 times because Belize was having a hard time making the change and I discovered, when I finally had a chance to go on, that I was too. They decided to move my change closer to the stage and cut the shoes to make it quicker. I think I’ll be fine. I also had some trouble with the change into the Bethesda Angel, just because they were going cue to cue so my changing time was cut in half at least. I will be doing it back stage because that’s where all the dressers are. It is kind of weird and a little unnerving to not have any dressers downstairs at all. Oh well. They’re still working on getting my wings to stay in the right position. The one on the left keeps flipping back. They are really light, which is
nice, but because of that even the slightest movement makes them move. I also have to be very cautious with my breathing so that doesn’t send them a flapping. It kind of destroys the illusion.

We finally finished teching a little before 4:00, so we took an almost thirty minute break (which seemed a little much) and then started running from the top of the show. Of course, they stopped right before Scene 8. It was extremely unfulfilling to come in for a first dress and only getting to tech. I didn’t even get to go on stage during the run. I was pretty bummed out. It also makes me very nervous that now we only have two more rehearsals before we open and I have a sick feeling we’ll still be stopping to fix tech and costume things during those runs. I am petrified that we won’t get a non-stop run of the show before Wednesday. We haven’t run the whole show since Monday and that wasn’t the best run. It’s also the only time we’ve run through the whole show in the space. I feel like I haven’t gotten to act forever.

We get to go see Marriage tonight. I’m really looking forward to seeing the First Year MFA Actors perform. I’m also very interested in Anatoly Marazov’s interpretation and direction. He a guest director from Russia. It’s gotten rave reviews from faculty and critics alike. I’m also really interested to see how a 45 page play has been turned into an almost three hour production.

Mon., Nov. 8

It felt like it had been a month since we last ran the show, or even “acted” any of it. In all actuality it had been a week. Carrie and I ran lines together this afternoon, all of hers then mine, so we could get the continuity back into our systems before the run
tonight. It wasn’t bad. Luckily nothing major went wrong and they let us run straight through. There were some problems with the curtain on the Mormon diorama that need to be addressed, and the quick changes between Scenes 28 and 29 were screwed up, but other than that it was pretty smooth. I still don’t feel ready to be opening in two days. We’ve spent so much of the last couple of weeks working on technical things that I just don’t feel like we are at the point that we need an audience, which is ideally where we should be at this point in the process. I wish we still had a week of rehearsals before we opened, just so we’re all comfortable with everything technically. Well at least so much time has been spent on the technical aspects of the production that they will mask anything we might screw up.

I was extremely nervous before the run tonight. I don’t usually get like this until opening night, and sometimes not even until I’m in places. But I’m a basket case already. I just really want to be confident about the show for opening because I have so much riding on this role. Also my committee and Jeremy will all be there on opening and I want to knock their socks off. I just saw Jeremy give the most amazing performance I’ve ever seen him do, and I feel like I need to match that for myself. I want to give my best performance ever and I just don’t feel like I’m there yet. I have been getting some wonderful feedback from people, but I don’t know, I still feel like there’s so much more I should be doing. At the same time, I am very pleased with the work I’ve been doing so far. I just feel like this production on a whole isn’t very stable yet. I am confident it will be, I just don’t think that’s going to happen this week. There are still too many last minute adjustments being made. For example, we still haven’t staged the curtain call, so we will be adding something new on our final dress. That doesn’t make me feel good. I
was shocked and extremely frustrated that we didn’t do it tonight. I know it’s not a huge
deal, but there will be lights and sound that we’ll need to set. I just wanted to have a
smooth, final dress. It may be, but we’ll still be adding something the night before and I
don’t understand why that needs to be the case when we’ve had six weeks of rehearsal.

Jeanine told me she took a lot of specific notes for me tonight, so I am looking
forward to meeting with her tomorrow to go over those. She said the main things were
volume and sharpness. I didn’t realize either of those were lacking tonight. It’s really
strange what I can and can’t perceive about what I’m doing on stage. I can usually tell if
my movement isn’t as sharp as usual, I was pretty tired tonight though and a little
unfocused because this was technically our first dress for most of the show. The volume
thing is confusing though. At first they told me that I needed to project because the mic
wasn’t going to be used for amplification, and then they said to tone a lot of it down and
use the mic so it wasn’t in the projection, but in the presentation. I suspect though that
those aren’t the moments that she was having trouble hearing. It’s probably the stuff
upstage on the bed when the mic’s not up.

Briggs asked me to start leading a 10 minute vocal and physical warm-up
starting opening night. I’m honored and would normally jump at the chance, but I am
going to have so much on my mind. And then after that we have to run the fight scenes,
which includes the wrestling scene. Maybe it will be nice to have something to keep me
occupied.
Tues., Nov. 9

Well, this was it. The last day before the big one. My day started off well with notes that were posted on the board. Not only did they begin with letting everyone know that “Tech has made some of you sloppy with your acting. It’s now or never,” I was also informed through the posted notes that I had been cut from Scene 17. I was absolutely furious that I had been cut from a scene the day before we open. So much for having a sense of continuity. I eventually got to talk to Lesley about it, with Jeanine, and was told it was because she didn’t like the way I looked from the back and the angle wasn’t working. I suggested and asked if I could try using a taller block to stand on and adjust my position by the proscenium to see if that would help. She said we could try it out. This made me feel better. However since we spent a half an hour working on the curtain call because of technical adjustments, she told me we didn’t have time, she just wanted to see the scene without me. I was once again furious that she didn’t have time to work with me because of technical stuff. Tech already ran into three of our rehearsals. If we had had our first dress on Saturday like we were supposed to, the problem would have been noticed before last night and we would have had time to make the necessary adjustments.

Well, this all happened before the run tonight so I was unfortunately carrying a little baggage into the scene. Luckily it slowly went away and I was able to concentrate on what I was doing and incorporate some of the notes Jeanine and Phil had given me. The main one was volume. They both told me I need to slow down. Phil suggested I draw out the vowels and try to adjust to when the mic is on and off. I think I did a little better
with that tonight. It's so hard for me to tell though. Jeanine told me I also needed to be
sharper with my physicality, that some of the distinction and therefore some of the humor
was getting lost.

All in all the run went pretty well tonight. I still don't feel ready to open
tomorrow night. My quick change before Scene 29 still took too long. It was just a beat
or two though so I think we'll be able to make it tomorrow. There were, however, two
shining examples of how lacking the communication is in this production. No one told
Carrie and Naomi that the way the curtain opens on the Mormon diorama had been
changed. And no one told Anthony or Alex that I was cut from Scene 17, so my box was
set and Anthony was thrown off with his lines because there wasn't an angel there and he
talks about it.

We stayed on stage for a few notes after the curtain call at which time I asked
Lesley if we could take a few minutes to make the adjustments for the fountain since I
was in costume and was promptly told no, there wasn't time. I then said that the new box
was already up there and asked couldn't I at least try it. And once again, was shot down. I
really reached the end of my rope tonight. I am so sick of the actors being the last priority
for this show. There hasn't been any time to work with us because of technical stuff. Now
I acknowledge the fact that there is a lot of technical stuff to work out, but I don't
understand why they're allowed to cut into our time, but we can't cut into theirs. I am so
tired of being dismissed by my director and of having to battle for lines, stage time, and
respect for my thesis role. I'm spending a year writing about the process of creating this
role and how that process resulted in a finished product. However, the whole rehearsal
process has been about the final product. I understand that this is a business, but it's also
an educational institution. The expectations of all parties involved in the M.F.A. thesis roles need to be clarified and communicate. I shouldn’t have had to fight to keep my lines, or for time to work on the acting in a scene, or to keep from being cut out of a scene the day before opening. I know what is expected from me, I think what is expected from the directors involved in thesis projects needs to be examined.

I have been told that my work in this production is good, and at one time I felt like it was, however now I’m not so confident. I still feel like I need more time to adjust to all the technical things that have been added. They are all really wonderful, but I’m still not completely comfortable with them. I need to let go of all this tension and frustration that has been a constant part of this process and just enjoy it. I need to reconnect with my love for this profession and do what I do best.

**Wed., Nov. 10**

This was it. The big day. I usually don’t get nervous about a show until I’m back stage waiting to go on. However, this time I’d been battling nerves since Monday. I just didn’t feel ready. I taught in the morning and then took a personal day so I could just relax and be spoiled by Jeremy (who surprised me by coming into town after his rehearsal). I was in good spirits when I went into the theatre. Nerves mixed with excitement. Everything was going well. The house was pretty full and word was it was a good audience, which was to be expected because most of it was faculty, peers, and friends. Then I went upstairs to get ready to go on. I began to put my white robe on during Scene 6 and only half of it was there. I have never in all my years of doing theatre
experienced such panic. I couldn’t believe that no one had noticed it wasn’t there when they checked in my costume on Tuesday or set it before the show. Everyone was back stage running around desperately trying to find it. I asked the ASM on stage left if she had seen it or if she knew who strikes it from the set and where they put it and all she said was that they couldn’t find it when they put away the fabric Tuesday night. Needless to say I was absolutely furious that one, she wasn’t in the least bit concerned or helpful, and two, she knew it was missing last night and didn’t do anything about it. Someone eventually found it just in time. I was in tears until it was found. I was in such a state of panic that I really had no idea what I was going to do if it wasn’t found. I really believed that I wouldn’t be able to go on stage. I felt the potential of complete humiliation. That this, one of the most important nights of my life, was going to be ruined because someone was incompetent. Luckily, the disaster was halted just in time. My unveiling was a little off, I missed my cue to speak because I had some hood trouble and was still doing my cough. Everything after that went pretty well though.

We had a great house. I was glad to be in front of an audience although I didn’t think I was ready. I was able to have a little fun, as much as nerves would allow. I was proud of my work, and am looking forward to improving throughout the run. I received a lot of compliments after the show, most of which I felt weren’t just obligatory. Sometimes I think that this stylized kind of movement is so comfortable for me that I’m not aware of how it looks or is perceived, and that other people are impressed by it.
My classmates surprised me with a champagne toast after the show. I really couldn’t have asked for a more wonderful and supportive class. I feel very lucky to have spent the last two and a half years with them. They are all very good people and talented artists. This was a great night for me.

Thurs., Nov.11

It was really nice to have the day off classes, but it made it a little weird for the show. The energy was a little different because we all hadn’t been there all day. The house was smaller and quieter, but still good. They were paying attention. Our energy in general was a little lower tonight, which is to be expected because of the level of nerves last night. It was nice to be more relaxed and to just enjoy performing. I wasn’t worried about everything as much. I had some microphone problems--levels and the pack falling off yet again. I really can’t believe that no one has helped me to correct this recurring problem of the pack. I can’t imagine how ridiculous I must look with this thing hanging down like a tail. I almost made my quick change into 29 tonight. I think I would’ve been OK except for the stethoscope getting tangled around the dresser’s neck. I just went on without it but was still late. I’m sure we’ll get it tomorrow. I’m sure. (Positive thinking.) I’ll have “people” in the house tomorrow so I’m sure my nerves will come back a little, but I’m starting to have fun with it now. The initial shock and terror is out of the way. However, I am now realizing just how much down time I have between some of my scenes and have to make sure I don’t lose my focus.
Fri., Nov. 12

There’s not much to say about the show tonight. It went very well. We had a pretty big, receptive house. They were really with us. I was surprised that they didn’t laugh when, as the Mormon Mother, I let go of the baby, that usually gets a nice response. There was some kind of dust or something on the stage and in the air. I thought I was going to sneeze during the Diorama scene. It would have been unfortunate, but I could have at least played it off fairly well because Joe breaks from the scene and I do at the end. However, the dust was back in the last scene. As soon as I got into position I saw this piece of dust fly up and, of course, it landed on my nose. I spent the whole scene breathing through my mouth, doing anything I could to keep myself from sneezing. I couldn’t have played it off quite as well as the Bethesda Angel. Luckily I made it through.

Sun., Nov. 14

Well it was quite apparent we had a day off. Not so much that, but we had a day off and had a 4:00 show today, which is a strange time. It’s always weird to do matinees after being so used to rehearsing and performing in the evenings. There’s a different energy. The show just felt very long today, like it was dragging. I hurt my neck this morning drying my hair, and then drove in from Cincinnati, so I was in great shape before the show even started. My neck held out okay. Most of my movement is whole body so it wasn’t bad until the “waterfall” in the wrestling scene and then with all the head turns in Heaven. It knocked me a little out of focus during that scene and I forgot to
turn my lights on and forgot to do the first cough. I don’t think the cough was too obvious because he has his back to me and is talking to all of the other angels, and I don’t look like I’m really one of them anyway. And then of course my Heaven material fell off of me at the end of the scene, which is when I discovered my lights weren’t on. This was just a great ending to the wonderful beginning Scene 8 was. My mic was on for the very first lines of my entrance and then went out for the rest of the scene. I was so mad because my Dad was there tonight and I had been telling him about all the cool effects that happen. They got it to work for Act II so I was pleased, though still frustrated and embarrassed. I’m still not sure what exactly happened to make it go out. Oh, and I forgot my cell phone to call Heaven with, so I had to improv making some kind of telepathic contact. Everyone said it worked really well. I was still pretty irritated with myself though. I’m not sure exactly what I did, but in the moment the first thing that came to my mind was an episode of “Third Rock From the Sun” where Harry is receiving messages from the Big Head. So, that was my inspiration. What a proud moment it is to write that in my thesis journal. Anyway, the house was quite large and very receptive so it wasn’t a complete disaster. Actually it wasn’t a bad show, just a little off energy-wise. I must now go and nurse my neck. I really hope this pain goes away quickly. I just don’t have the time and energy to deal with it.

**Tues., Nov. 16**

What a great night. The cast and crew of *Marriage*, my friend Tonna Sellers from Cleveland, Marni and Lisa Penning, friends from the Cincinnati Shakespeare Festival, and many other enthusiastic theatregoers made up the house tonight. We had so much
support and it really fueled us. It was definitely our best show to date. The pace was good and the response was great. It’s always a joy to perform, but it’s really incredible when the audience is really with you. I was very proud of my work. Marni and Lisa said it was nice to finally see me perform to which I responded it was nice to finally get to perform for them. I appreciated having them there as friends, but it also felt good to have had such a great show when I knew two very influential people with Cincinnati Shakespeare Festival were there. It was pretty cool to be going out with one of the Board Members after having just performed for her. We got a standing ovation, initiated by the group from *Marriage*. It is so wonderful to have such incredible support from our peers. As ugly as this business can get, this truly is a family.

**Wed., Nov. 17**

Not much to say about tonight. The audience was quite a drastic change from last night. Of course last night’s was exceptional, but tonight’s was very quiet. The show went well, and it wasn’t as if they were hostile or anything. The house was pretty full and they were with us, they just weren’t very vocal. There were probably a lot of Theatre 100 students in the audience, and most of them are not avid theatregoers, some have never been to a play, so they don’t always know it’s OK that they laugh out loud. My voice was a little strained tonight. It didn’t hurt, but was itchy rather. It felt like something was in it all night. My pitch was a little lower than usual, which I had fun playing with in the mic. I just hope it doesn’t get worse and fade away. I’m going to go have some hot tea now to help prevent that from happening.
Thurs., Nov. 18

Well, the day started off well. I went in to work in the office and saw that reviews had come out in both The Other Paper and Columbus Alive. One of them was very good in general and wrote specifically about Carney, Anthony, and Carrie. That’s fine, they deserve it. They had significant roles and did them well. The other review was good also. It wrote specifically about Carrie and Carney and then said “also admirable”, and then listed all the other roles and who played them. All the other ones, that is, but me. I was really hurt. I couldn’t believe that I was so insignificant that the reviewer didn’t even list me with the rest of the cast. Of course, maybe he was going by the “if you can’t say something nice don’t say anything at all” theory, so I should be thankful. It’s not that I necessarily take what critics say to heart, but it was very discouraging to know I’m spending a year of my life working on this role for my thesis and the reviewer didn’t even list me with the rest of the cast. And it’s even worse to think that it was just an oversight, that I was that forgettable. I was ready to write an anonymous letter to the paper about leaving my name out. I couldn’t even prove I was in the play with either review. I was a little jealous of Carrie getting all that attention too. It’s my thesis, I wanted the glory. I felt very insecure about my performance, which I now know was stupid. I talked to Jeremy for a long time before the show. He spent a while trying to remind me that I don’t need a critic to validate my work. I know that, it just really hurt to be forgotten and not even mentioned. I mean my character’s in the title! Anyway, the show went well. As soon as I was on the stage I realized that I didn’t really believe that my role and performance are insignificant. I felt proud of my work and enjoyed it. I know I’m good at what I do. And just because the critics weren’t blown away by my unique and skilled
interpretation of the role doesn’t mean it wasn’t unique and skilled. It does still hurt a little though that in three reviews I only got one mention and it wasn’t even a good one. It wasn’t particularly bad, but it wasn’t very complimentary either.

The show tonight went very well. It was a big house and a good audience. The Afterwords was tonight. I was asked to announce it after the curtain call. The guest speaker was Dee Shepard, former artistic director of Reality Theatre. I was petrified that I was going to announce her as Dee Schneider, which happens to be the name of the lead singer of Twisted Sister. Luckily, all went well. Only about ten people had stayed for the Afterwords, if that. We only ended up being there fielding questions for about 15 minutes, most of which were pretty general and Jeff Rice was quick to respond and not so quick to allow others to. It was fine, he’s intelligent and was enjoying it, so no big deal.

I was feeling better by the end of everything and then Lesley excitedly called me over to her before I left. She told me that she had just come from a symposium at the Wexner Center and Ric Wanatek, the President of the Wexner came up to her to congratulate her on the show, which he had seen Sunday. She told me he then went on and on about how much he enjoyed my performance and the 3-D quality of it. She said he told her he saw the Broadway production and the Angel was so flat compared to my interpretation and performance. Lesley said that this man is a big deal. I couldn’t have asked for a better way to end this day. I told Lesley how much I needed to hear that today and why. She told me not to worry about the critics, this man liked my work. I don’t know what to do with this information now. It of course has given me validation, that unfortunately I needed today, and just made me feel great in general. I want to thank him
somehow and try to start some kind of networking, but I’m not sure how to go about it. Is there some subtle way to ask for those compliments in writing? Just for when I need a boost, or okay, a connection.

Fri., Nov. 19

It’s almost over. I can hardly believe it. It feels like this should be our opening weekend instead of our closing weekend. The show is finally ready for an audience. We are finally comfortable with it and enjoying it, so it’s kind of a shame that it’s about to end. Tonight’s show went well. We had a good, responsive house and nothing went wrong technically. Artistically it went very well also. Like I said, we were able to just enjoy ourselves which, I believe, makes it enjoyable for the audience as well. We had photo call after the show. There were a lot of shots but it went rather smoothly. I’m disappointed that in all the shots no one requested one of the “waterfall” which is one I would really like to have for myself. Liz said we can try to take one tomorrow sometime.

Sat., Nov. 20

It’s all over. Just as soon as it felt like it was really beginning, it’s finished. It really hit me this morning. I was excited, sad, and nervous about tonight all at once. I had six family members and the Artistic Director of Cincinnati Shakespeare Festival in the audience tonight, so my nerves were pretty high. Everyone was pretty pumped before the show. We went through our nightly pre-show rituals: some quick group physical and
vocal warm-ups, counting to 20 as a group, but one at a time, and of course a rousing rendition of “Grey Squirrel” in the greenroom before places. Phil and his family found me and presented me with a Fight Captain gift, a little figurine of a knight. It was really sweet and such a surprise! Everything seemed to be going wonderfully, and then the show started.

Carrie came downstairs very unhappy because there was no sound. I was completely panicked. They said that the cues were coming on but were so faint that they couldn’t really be heard. By the time I went upstairs around Scene 5 the problem was still there and it was suspected that one of the speakers was blown. Needless to say I was furious. Not only had we had way too many technical problems during this production, but this was an extremely important night for me both personally and professionally. I had no idea if I was going to hear any of my cues, and most of my cues are sound, or if my mic was going to work. I was practically in tears. It only seemed appropriate though. I did spend the moments before I went on stage opening night almost in tears because half of my robe was missing. So at least things had come full circle. Well, luckily the speaker that was blown was on stage and all of my cues came through the main speakers in the house, so everything was fine. In fact I felt really good about all of my scenes. The only thing that went wrong once on stage was that in all of the panic beforehand I had forgotten to get my one and only prop, the cell phone. I ended up having to “channel” the angels again. I didn’t really mind though, I had a lot of people tell me it was funnier that way. I still felt bad and irresponsible.
The show on a whole went well. And I must say, I was sorry to see it end. We did strike right after the show. I had requested to be on costumes because I never had been before. I always end up on set or electrics because I kind of know what I’m doing. I must say I rather enjoyed wiping off counters in the dressing rooms for an hour. When we were finished I went upstairs to help with the set. Things went pretty smoothly and most everything was finished by the time we had to be let go at 2:00 in the morning. As I was signing out I realized that we had never taken a picture of the “waterfall” and there was never going to be another chance to do so. It was all over. I must say I felt an incredible release as I walked out the door of the theater. I was finished with my thesis role!! One part of this “monster” was over. What a great feeling.
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

I have been performing ever since I can remember. I started dancing when I was three years old and quickly moved into acting as well. I have always known it was something I wanted to do, but went through a brief period of time where I thought I should find something else to major in in college and continue acting as a hobby. I knew I loved it, knew I was good at it, but wanted to be practical. That lasted about six months during my junior year in high school. I eventually majored in theatre in college, but I still wasn’t sure if acting was the way to go. I left undergrad unsure of my abilities. Following my graduation, however, I was an intern for a professional summer theatre. There I became part of the Equity Membership Candidacy program, gained further experience with the Suzuki method of actor training, and met someone who eventually offered me a year-long contract to do touring theatre for young audiences. I was getting paid to do what I loved.

During that year I researched graduate programs. I knew I wanted to continue my education and my training. After a long, tense process I was accepted into the M.F.A. Acting program at Ohio State. From the moment of my audition I knew this was the place I was supposed to be. I was very impressed with what the program had to offer, especially the movement training.
I was petrified and very shy in my acting and voice classes for most of my first two years, but found comfort and definite skill in my movement classes. I think I was scared in my acting classes because I didn’t know what my “process” was as an actor and assumed that everyone else had it figured out by that point. As time went on I gained confidence through my class work, and especially from the roles I was cast in. My first year alone I played an ingenue, a female lead, and co-created a one act movement theatre piece.

During my first two years I was exposed to mime work and gained further, more intensive training in Suzuki and Laban, both of which I had studied as an undergrad in the Kent State theatre and dance departments. I found these to be a great way to tune in to my strength as a performer. I was being given a vocabulary and skills to help define, clarify, and expand on the kind of work I was doing on my own, the kind of work I was comfortable with. Suzuki and Laban techniques also enabled me to find my voice by treating my body as a whole instrument, discovering how physical strength and skill could feed vocality.

I used these skills and methods in other roles to some extent, but used them as the basis for the role of the Angel. Although my traditional acting training in Stanislavski and Meisner methods influenced me and have served as a basis for my acting, Laban and Suzuki have taken it to levels I never imagined. What has developed is a combination of realistic acting with very stylized acting, and my performance of the Angel was the result.

Through the rehearsal, performance, and documentation of this role I am able to begin to define my process as an actor. It was in me all along, I just didn’t have the skills and awareness to articulate it. I know that because I tend to think about things, roles, too
much, I can get stuck in my head. I can understand things and verbally explain them, but not always show it. I know I need to work from the outside in. Once I can find the physicality of a character, I can start to really understand her or him. I need to know how he or she walks, stands, sits, moves, and breathes in order to fully connect with what the character is saying. I find that I work best if I can define a character’s wants and emotions by associating them with Laban qualities. I then allow those qualities to affect my body, voice, and intentions.

It is not always possible to use the exact process with every character that I used with the Angel, but it is a good place to start. Since then I have used what I learned about myself to approach other roles. Following Angels I played Miss Gilchrist, a very over-the-top character in a burlesque, vaudevillian production of The Hostage by Brendan Behan. This character was again stylized, but in different ways. My final performance at OSU is in King Lear, where I am playing the role of the Earl of Kent. It is a male character who disguises himself for much of the show, both of which I am playing, true to the text, as men. Although this is a very different kind of role, and is a classical piece of work, I have had to use a physical approach to the role. It was necessary not only to give the illusion of masculinity, but, in order for me to get out of my head, I needed to make the connection of what I am saying to how and why I’m saying it.

Although the rehearsals and performances of Angels in America, Part Two: Perestroika were at times difficult, challenging, and frustrating because of things that were out of my control, it was an incredible experience. By documenting the process I was forced to fully examine it, and as a result learned a lot about myself as an actor. I was able to do the kind of work that I feel is unique to me. I’m not saying it’s never been done
before, but I can say, “This is what I can do that is different.” I have created something that is special to me and, as I have discovered, is identifiable. Since the run of *Angels*, my body undulations accompanying the often repeated “I, I, I”’s have been used in two other OSU mainstage productions; once as a bit in direct reference to *Angels* in *The Hostage* and once by another actor who asked permission before using the movement for a role he was playing in *VietRock*. And truthfully, if that’s all people remember about me, it’s OK, at least they’ll remember.
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