

Subject to Change: An Acting Portfolio

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Abstract

This thesis, submitted in partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Drama, contains artistic and teaching statements, a journal of portfolio creation, and video recordings of a selection of monologues and scenes. Also included is documentation from a devised production titled *Unlocked* presented in the Spring of 2023 in the Helms Theatre at the University of Virginia.

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Chapter 1

Transcription of Filmed Introduction

My favorite part of building a character is trying to figure out how that character might relate to the natural world. Growing up, my parents and I would always go to Santa Fe, New Mexico in the summer and they would take me to all these galleries up Canyon Road, and we'd go to the Santa Fe Opera, and the thing that strikes me most about both of those experiences was that the art that we witnessed in both places was in conversation with its setting and with its environment. These sculptures would be positioned around the garden in conversation with the trees and the plants and the water features, and then the Santa Fe Opera has this open-air theater where you'd be able to watch the sunset as the production is going on. So there was this kind of synergy between the art being created and the world in which it was being created and the world in which it lived. So all of those ideas kind of brought me to the conclusion that as artists we are in constant conversation with our surroundings and that was something that really stuck with me and I've tried to apply that to many of the characters that I've played.

So in a lot of the roles that I've gone after, a lot of the roles that I've been really passionate about and invested in have been the roles that I can connect the character's experience to how they interact with the natural world. So for example, Marianne Dashwood—how does she feel about thunderstorms? Happens to be that she loves them. And that actually mirrors her emotional life. She was a very emotionally tumultuous character and that energy of a thunderstorm, and the fact that she loved thunderstorms gave me a lot of information about the character because I could explore what she felt like when rain hit her skin, what it felt like when wind would hit her. What a summer night smells like when she falls in love with Willoughby. What does it smell like in the garden? What does that electricity in the air feel like? I also played a character, Salome, in the bluegrass musical *Robber Bridegroom*. She had a song called "The Pricklepear Bloom". So yes, she was relating herself to nature, but in a sharper and much more dangerous way. I played a character that was a Bear in *16 Winters*, a role that is quite literally as close to nature as you can get, and I would go into the woods and I would explore what different trees felt like— if there were trees that felt better to rub up against. What would happen if I was walking down a path and there was a fallen tree or something that I'd have to climb over? So that was a really fun challenge and brought me very close to what I would see as that synergy between character and nature.

Because of all of this, the most exciting moment for me in any production that I'm lucky enough to be in is when we go into tech, and we finally add the elements of having our set, having the lights, having the sound, because all of those elements give the actors, I think, and the characters more of an in into what their natural environment would feel like and it gives me, as an actor, so many more new, exciting things to react to. How does the light come in from that window and how does the character feel about that? If there's a fire in the fireplace, what does the fire smell like? Is it comforting? Is it repelling? So I always get so jazzed when we first go into tech rehearsals.

Reminders I Give Myself- An Actor's Philosophy

Below is a compendium of memories, quotes, observations, and guidelines that inform my artistic work. They provide emotional and inspirational energy. They also remind me of the things that define me as a person. It includes references to my passion for history and visual art, my love of Italy, and my background in musical theatre. It includes notes from the margins of old notebooks and jokes jotted down in journals, all of which combine to form something both personal and useful. This collection, like me and my characters, is subject to change.

Everyone can hear you, even when you aren't speaking.

If something is hard to do, it is usually worth doing.

Do not underestimate the sunbeam coming through that window.

"I am mainly observing the physical motion of mountains, water, trees, and flowers. One is everywhere reminded of similar movements in the human body, of similar impulses of joy and suffering in plants."¹

Edison had his lightbulb. But first, he failed many times to have his lightbulb.

Make a mess, but be your own cleaning service.

There is no greater joy than that which comes from making other people laugh.

Repeat something until you get it right. Learn from every attempt.

Beauty is what you make it.

Listen to *hear*. Look to *see*.

Keep digging. There is always more to discover. Be the gopher you wish to see in the world.

Sadness is as vital and necessary as happiness.

"Who can explain it? Who can tell you why? Fools give you reasons, wise men never try."²

Guardian angels are real. Check in with them.

In bocca al lupo. "In the mouth of the wolf." Crepi. "May it choke."³

¹ This quote from one of my favorite painters Egon Schiele illustrates the connection between art and the natural world, which I believe in wholeheartedly.

² In the song "Some Enchanted Evening" from *South Pacific* by Rodgers & Hammerstein, the character of Emile de Becque attempts to understand the phenomenon of love, in that he will never understand it, and that's OK.

³ In Italy, they do not say "good luck" or "break a leg." They say this.

Teaching Philosophy

As an acting instructor, I attempt to give my students as much control of their learning experience as possible. I encourage them to reflect on what makes them individuals and to actively and positively assess their work. I hope to instill in my students a sense of confidence and self-awareness that serves them not only as actors but as human beings.

Haydn Haring has been such an inspiring teacher in an infinite number of ways. She helped me and my classmates feel comfortable in a class that has the potential of being extremely intimidating. She is encouraging and relatable, and is genuine with any piece of advice or teaching that she gives. From Haydn, I really found a love for acting. — Acting I Student Evaluation Spring 2022

Part I: Balancing Classroom Hierarchy

It is clear that the hierarchy that exists in the traditional academic classroom does not serve the work of an acting course. By eradicating the idea that the instructor is the all-knowing, in-charge entity, the creative work of my students is brought to the forefront. Each of the exercises and assignments I offer my students is meant to help them take incremental steps toward understanding this craft. In my classroom, I encourage a level of vulnerability, agency, and dedication to the work that requires that my students trust me and each other. In my own experience as a young acting student, the professors and coaches that cultivated that necessary trust were those that tipped the standard hierarchy of the classroom in the student's favor.

Every day I acknowledge that my students bring their lived realities to class. “What’s the vibe today, y’all? What do we need?” These are the questions with which I begin. In a class of 14, rather than 200, there is time and space for them to respond to my question, and to tell me explicitly what they need before we begin the day's work. Through check-ins and starting class communally, students know that they have a moment to assess where they are coming from as well as the time to share it with me and each other. I invite them to bring themselves to the work from wherever they are, with the hope that they might find solace, joy, or understanding in their characters and with their classmates. By checking in with everyone at the beginning of class, I’m able to adjust the day's activities to fit their needs. One class might begin with a high-energy, physical warmup with games and music, another day it might be that they want or need a quiet, guided meditation. If students need different things, I might start with meditation and then move into a game, or I’ll throw something completely new into the mix. By giving students these options, they might be more willing to approach the work with an open mind and from a place of comfort and ease that fits their needs day-to-day.

“She was real and called out immaturity, awkwardness, BS, and wasn't afraid of taboo discussions or vulnerability. Haydn helped hold us accountable while fostering both independence and confidence and creativity and inclusivity in our little drama community. Through the use of coachings and one on one time, she was able to tie in her knowledge and experience to really understand and empathize with us as people and students, and then set challenging goals and expectations to better us as thespians. Though it may seem flawlessly and effortlessly, Haydn put in the effort to know us and lead us and she did it with such grace.” — Acting I Student Evaluation Fall 2022

Part II: The Value of Personal Experience

I've found that the first step of any young actor's journey is accepting that they are inherently capable of this work. By simply being alive, they already have the foundational tools they need to succeed as an actor. My job as the instructor is to assist them in identifying those tools and advancing their knowledge of how to use them. Each stage of my acting course includes an element of self-assessment and reflection. This allows students to identify their unique strengths, their quirks, and how their personalities manifest in tangible ways. After each unit of my course, students submit a reflection on their work on Flipgrid. Talking directly to me and each other about their successes and goals fosters a sense of self-awareness. Becoming aware of and sharing their opinions and their experiences helps them figure out how they are present in the world, which is then reflected in their presence in our class work. By encouraging each student's individuality, it seems that students are more likely to reflect on and share their experiences, stories, and selves. This creates an environment in which every experience becomes valuable.

When assigning scenes from published plays in my fourth unit, I attempt to give each student a piece that will assist them in areas in which they are struggling. For this assignment, I specifically pair students with classmates who I believe will give them the support and encouragement they need to address specific issues. I may pair someone more reserved with someone more extroverted so that they may bring the opposite out in each other. I may pair a student who understands arc and shape with another who is good with flow and connection. This unit comes after three units focused on self-discovery and script analysis, and my students often make huge strides at this time, as they begin to put all of the pieces together. This manifests through students' realizing that they can relate to and empathize with their characters, which in turn teaches them that they can empathize with others. When it comes time to select final monologues, I offer them full agency in their selections with my guidance. Giving them this freedom ensures that they are enthusiastic about their characters and pieces, while still focusing on clear goals that we have set together.

"I loved this course! I learned a lot about myself throughout the process and I loved the safe, welcoming environment of this class for people of all different levels of acting experience. I was always excited to come to class and I found the material engaging and fun."

— Acting I Student Evaluation, Spring 2022

Part III: The Art of Living

Early each semester I ask my students to reflect and respond to the following quote from Marcus Aurelius, "The art of living is more like wrestling than dancing, in so far as it stands ready against the accidental and the unforeseen, and is not apt to fall."⁴ To me, this statement encapsulates the courage, steadfastness, preparation, and energy that it takes to move through the world. I believe that it also applies to the craft of acting, particularly improvisation. At least twice a semester we spend class playing improv games. Through games like Yes! Let's!, Freeze Tag, and The Question Game, students begin to find the freedom and malleability that

⁴ Aurelius, Marcus. *Meditations*. Edited by A. S. L. Farquharson. Translated by A. S. L. Farquharson. New York, New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 1992.

come with adjusting to the “unforeseen”. This prepares them for unplanned moments during their performances. Rather than coming to a full stop whenever a mistake is made, students learn to work through problem spots with creativity and quick thinking.

By exploring a broad range of characters through scene work, and experiencing different theatre performances each semester, my students are exposed to a wide range of stories that may be different from their own. While rehearsing published group scenes, I introduce Elinor Fuch’s “Visit to a Small Planet”⁵ as a tool to encourage rigorous questioning of their scripts. Analyzing their scripts individually and as a group results in the creation of their own “small planets.” When they discover the myriad details that come alive in their script, they may discover the same in the world around them. They begin to identify their own “small planet.” This helps them cultivate a sense of empathy for anyone they may meet, thus expanding their worldview, and opening their eyes to perspectives they may not have otherwise considered. My class offers students a chance to explore the great diversity of the human experience in a safe and supportive environment.

“This course was far and away the most impactful of my life... [Haydn] cultivated a warm and loving environment that enabled us to grow as both actors and human beings. Throughout the semester, each student, including myself, became a much more confident and talented performer. More importantly, however, each person was able to gain confidence in everyday life. This is something that I will cherish forever, and I am forever grateful for it.” — Acting I Student Evaluation, Fall 2022

Every semester offers the opportunity to bring a group of students together through work that is inclusive, engaging, and exciting. Acknowledging and celebrating each student establishes trust in the classroom, which in turn results in successful performances. I hope that students will leave my class with greater confidence, greater enthusiasm for both experiential learning and theatre, and a deeper sense of themselves.

“This was, hands down, the best class I have taken at UVA. Through the course, I have gained great enthusiasm for the subject matter. Ms. Haring’s care and respect for each and every one of her students nurtured learning unlike anything else I have seen.”
— Acting I Student Evaluation, Fall 2022

⁵ Fuchs, Elinor. “EF’s Visit to a Small Planet: Some Questions to Ask a Play.” Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2004. https://web.mit.edu/jscschieb/Public/foundations_o6/ef_smallplanet.pdf

Chapter 2

Biography

Haydn Haring is a performer, designer, and writer based in Charlottesville, VA. She received her conservatory musical theatre training from The American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York City from 2009–2011, before relocating to Charleston, SC in 2012. Immediately, Haydn immersed herself in the local theatre community, working on a sequence of shows (*Three Sisters* by Anton Chekhov, *Boston Marriage* by David Mamet, *The Liar* adapted from Pierre Corneille by David Ives) that would jump-start her interest in dramaturgy and the relationship between theatre and history.

After meeting and working with many of the faculty from The College of Charleston, Haydn decided to return to school to pursue a Bachelor's Degree in Theatre with a concentration in Performance. She eventually added a History major and a minor in Italian Studies. While attending the College of Charleston, Haydn performed in departmental productions of *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark* by Lynn Nottage, *ENRON* by Lucy Prebble, and *Into the Woods* by Stephen Sondheim, and continued to perform in the community. While pursuing her undergraduate degree, Haydn began designing headdresses and costume accoutrements, creating various pieces from custom-made Mickey Mouse ears to holiday-themed crowns and Halloween costumes. Haydn also spent this time writing reviews for BroadwayWorld and Charleston Grit (a local online publication), as well as reflecting on her own theatre experiences on her personal blog, "Ain't No Business Like Show Business."⁶ After graduating from the College of Charleston with honors in 2019, Haydn was invited to be a presenter at PechaKucha Charleston⁷, a TEDx-type talk where she spoke on the value of perseverance in higher education and the performing arts. Haydn was featured twice in the Charleston Post & Courier's online series "No Intermission" which connected local performers and audiences during the COVID-19 pandemic.⁸

In the Summer of 2020 at the suggestion of a College of Charleston professor, Haydn applied, interviewed, and was accepted for a position in the University of Virginia Professional Actor Training Program. Over the past three years of intensive study, Haydn has performed in three mainstage productions, *God of Carnage* by Yasmina Reza, *16 Winter's or The Bear's Tale* by Mary Elizabeth Hamilton, and *Sense and Sensibility* adapted from Jane Austen by Kate Hamill. She has taught six semesters of Acting 1, starting on Zoom in the Fall of 2020 and moving into the classroom in the Fall of 2021. She designed costumes for Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, including the creation of custom-made headdresses for the fairies, nobility, and mechanicals. In her third year of study, Haydn began work on a devised piece of immersive theatre titled *Unlocked*. This piece is structured to allow for the performative exploration of paintings as informed by poetic texts. The first iteration of this project connects the work of Pre-Raphaelite painters to the plays of William Shakespeare.

⁶ <https://www.tumblr.com/thelaziestbird>

⁷ PK 34.4 HAYDN HARING

⁸ [No Intermission, Haydn Haring, A Scene from "Venus in Furs" by David Ives](#) and [No Intermission, Haydn Haring, Scene from "Wasted" by Kate Tempest](#)

Haydn Haring

Alto//Mezzo

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She//They

Theatre:

Original Work

Unlocked: Shakespeare and the Pre-Raphaelites (2023) Writer/Director/Performer

University of Virginia Department of Drama

Sense and Sensibility (2022)

Marianne Dashwood

Dir: Marianne Kubik

16 Winters or The Bear's Tale (2022)

The Bear/ Time

Dir: Kate Eastwood Norris

A Midsummer Night's Dream (2021)

Titania/Hippolyta

Dir: Colleen Kelly

God of Carnage (2021)

Annette Raleigh

Dir: Colleen Kelly

Threshold Repertory Company

Men on Boats (2020)

John Wesley Powell

Dir: Lorilyn Harper

Boston Marriage (2013)

Claire

Dir: Lon Bumgarner

Three Sisters (2012)

Masha

Dir: Judy Townsend

College of Charleston Department of Theatre & Dance

Into the Woods (2018)

The Witch

Dir: Todd McNerney

ENRON (2017)

Claudia Roe

Dir: Rodney Lee Rogers

By the Way, Meet Vera Stark (2015)

Gloria Mitchell

Dir: Joy Vandervort- Cobb

Midtown Productions

Company (2018)

Marta

Dir: Thomas Keating

The Fantasticks (2017)

Louisa

Dir: Ryan Ahlert

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change (2016)

Woman #2

Dir: Manny Houston

Village Repertory Company

Cyrano (2017)

Roxanne

Dir: Keely Enright

Hollywood (2015)

Mabel Normand

Dir: Keely Enright

Macbeth (2014)

Hecate/Lady Macduff

Dir: Evan Parry

The Liar (2013)

Isabelle/Sabine

Dir: Cristy Landis

PURE Theatre

Marie Antoinette (2015)

Marie Antoinette

Dir: Sharon Graci

The Birds (2013)

Julia

Dir: Sharon Graci

Education:

Master of Fine Arts: University of Virginia Professional Actor Training Program (Class of 2023)

Acting: Colleen Kelly, Voice: Tovah Close, Movement: Marianne Kubik

Bachelor of Arts in Theatre + History: College of Charleston. Cum Laude (Class of 2019)

Acting: Paul Rolfes, Voice: Todd McNerney, Movement: Evan Parry

Professional Certificate: The American Musical and Dramatic Academy Integrated Program (Class of Spring 2011)

Acting: Michael Perilstein, Dan Daily, Jason Chaet, Musical Theatre: Jeffrey Dunn, Stephanie Scott, Evan Pappas, Igor Goldin

Additional Training & Special Skills:

Masterclasses (UVA) with Kathleen Turner; Arvold Casting Residency with Erica Arvold & Richard Warner; Tectonic Theater Project Residency with Jeffrey LaHoste & Dimitri Joseph Moïse (feedback and Q&A with Moisés Kaufman)

Pass in Rapier & Dagger by the SAFFD, 2022

Dialects: American Southern, RP, French, Irish

Impressions: Dexter from Dexter's Lab, "Little Edie" Beale, Munchkin voice, turkey sound, opera singer

Design: Headdresses, hats, and costume accessories



Headshot by Sean Money & Elizabeth Fay

Production Photos



<Annette Raleigh in *God of Carnage*
by Yasmina Reza
UVA Department of Drama
Photo by Split Prism Productions



Marianne Dashwood in *Sense and Sensibility*>
By Kate Hamill
UVA Department of Drama
Photo by Jack Looney



<The Bear in *16 Winters or
the Bear's Tale*
by Mary Elizabeth Hamilton
UVA Department of Drama
Photo by Rich Tarbell

Chapter 3

Journal of Portfolio Creation

Searching for new material has never been productive for me. If I am actively searching for something, I never find it. I always stumble across the best material when I'm not looking—when the search is the farthest thing from my mind. I know I've found a true match when I feel like a piece has found me, not the other way around. In their poem “The old dogs who fought so well” Kae Tempest reflects⁹:

And I laughed out loud. Because it's always the way— when you're alone and feeling like you could jump off the edge of the world,
that's when they find you and tell you they all went through the same thing.
And it makes you feel special because you feel like of all the people in all the world,
these yearsdead writers wrote whatever it was that made the blood run in your veins
again, just for you.
And you say their names out loud when you walk the city in the middle of the night, and
you feel close to something timeless;
You feel like someone just lay you down on your back and showed you the sky.

While only one of the playwrights who wrote my pieces is “yearsdead,” Annie Baker, Sarah Ruhl, and William Shakespeare are all writers who have absolutely shown me the sky. Each of these playwrights, through their individual styles of storytelling, has inspired me in ways intrinsically intertwined with my artistry. Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has been my North Star since 1999 when the Kevin Kline movie version came out. Annie Baker based her play *The Aliens* on a poem of the same name by Charles Bukowski (one of my favorite poets). Sarah Ruhl's play *In the Next Room or the vibrator play* is one reason why I became a History major at the College of Charleston. Through my graduate work at UVA, I have begun to figure out how to move between these different playwrights' styles using text analysis and clear emotional/physical context. This has resulted in a deeper understanding of tone and subtext and has given me more confidence when approaching poetic text, be it classical or contemporary.

In the construction of my graduate portfolio, it became clear to me that I needed to include pieces from both Baker and Ruhl, not only because I'm deeply drawn to the romance, grit, and whimsy of their writing, but ultimately because they are women. My previous theatrical education revolved almost exclusively around the work of male playwrights. It wasn't until I started reading and viewing more plays by female-identifying playwrights that I really understood what I was missing: the emotional range, passion, desperation, and raw vitality of the female perspective. I am drawn to many of Shakespeare's female characters for the same reason, notably Viola from *Twelfth Night*, and Rosalind from *As You Like It*. Their perspectives, even though written by a male playwright, embody the same depth of character. These two characters are deeply inspiring to me, as they learn the power that comes from embracing both their masculinity and their femininity, by adopting the guise of the opposite sex.

⁹ Tempest, Kae. *Hold Your Own*. London: Picador, 2014.

In March of this year, A bill was passed in Tennessee that banned “adult cabaret performances” in any public location, or anywhere children might be present. The language used in this bill describes the banned performances as any kind of “entertainment that appeals to a prurient interest”¹⁰ - prurient meaning “having or encouraging an excessive interest in sexual matters,” which, unfortunately, encapsulates a large portion of the works of William Shakespeare. His plays are rife with innuendo, bawdy jokes, and cross-dressing, which now relegates them to the “do not fly” list in the state of Tennessee. Shakespeare also happens to be one of the greatest playwrights of all time, and this attempt to legislate transphobia is damaging not only to drag performers and the LGBTQ community but also detrimental to the education of America’s youth. I felt a responsibility to revisit one of my favorite monologues from *As You Like It* to illustrate that cross-dressing does not exist only as entertainment but as a tool for self-discovery. It is more expansive, and I hope to celebrate the fact that as an art form, it can teach us about ourselves and each other. Shakespeare’s work remains “something timeless,” as Tempest says, because it transcends the social and political limits of its time, remaining as relevant now as it was then.

***Melancholy Play* by Sarah Ruhl**

Sarah Ruhl’s writing is poetic to the extreme and communicates complex emotions through prose that is unexpected, quirky, and funny. The heightened nature of her writing intimidated me as a younger actor. When I first read *Melancholy Play*, I was in my early twenties. While I understood the emotional weight of her storytelling and identified with many of her characters, I did not yet know how to perform her text from a technical standpoint. I did not yet have the capacity to marry the language to the emotion. In our graduate studies of heightened language, tackling works by Marlowe, Shaw, and Shakespeare, I began to unlock the ways by which I might approach Ruhl’s writing. I found that there were rhythms and patterns to follow and that identifying operative words and leaning fully into metaphor would allow the character (and me, the actor) more emotional freedom. These discoveries, applied directly to my work with *Melancholy Play* and *Eurydice*, allowed me to access a deeper vulnerability than I had thought myself previously capable.

The character of Tilly is deeply melancholy, as viewed through the lens of the 16th-century language of the Humors.¹² When all four Humors (Sanguine, Cholera, Phlegm, Melancholy) exist in balance, someone is considered in good health. In Tilly’s case, the Melancholy seems to have taken over the other three, leaving the character isolated and misunderstood. As she interacts with her therapist and lovers, Tilly reflects on her emotional melancholy. She communicates her understanding of her condition through metaphor and subtext. She is never explicit. While performing the text, I often feel like Tilly is on the outside

¹⁰ Restrepo, Manuela L. “The anti-drag bill passed in Tennessee is straight from history’s playbooks.” NPR, 2023. <https://www.npr.org/2023/03/06/1161452175/anti-drag-show-bill-tennessee-trans-rights-minor-care-anti-lgbtq-laws>.

¹¹ Ruhl, Sarah. *The Clean House and Other Plays*. New York, New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2006.

¹² Burton, Robert. n.d. “The Anatomy of Melancholy | Galileo.” Galileo’s World. <https://galileo.ou.edu/exhibits/anatomy-melancholy>.

looking in. This state of mind is melancholic in itself. She has isolated herself and she uses metaphor as a defense mechanism, a way to communicate her experiences accurately and safely. The nature of the text prevents the character from getting too close to the true core of her mental state- she can only look at it from the outside, through the lens the text provides. When Tilly's metaphors bring her too close to the true nature of her melancholy, she snaps herself back into reality, retreating again into safety.

In rehearsal, I experimented with the imagery contained in the text. The first image is of a river, "When people see me cry they see... a river in a foreign country,"¹³ so I would imagine a specific river, like the Nile, or the Amazon. I would build the fantasy in my mind of the unique elements of each landscape. What is the climate like? What are the people around me like? What can I hear? What can I smell? What does the water feel like? I discovered the river I enjoyed fantasizing about the most was the Seine. The environment of this river hit a romantic chord that matched the tone of other sections of the monologue, particularly "...when the afternoons and the streets were full of rain."¹⁴ It was also the most activating in terms of the emotional contrast that Tilly is feeling in this monologue. She is watching people enjoy her sadness like a sunny vacation, and she can't understand why she can't be a part of it. Why can't she enjoy it with them? Exploring the feeling of being left out of something was helpful in rehearsals. I would create the perfect Parisian fantasy, and then deny myself the pleasure of enjoying it.

Deciding to set this monologue in a bar with Tilly drinking a Martini, offered me some context for Tilly to be somewhat removed from her own experience. Alcohol gave the character something to literally hide behind. Drinking excuses the use of metaphor because it removes inhibitions, allowing her to say whatever she wants, in whatever way she chooses. I don't believe Tilly is ashamed or embarrassed by her sadness but is rather proud and fascinated by it. She clearly sees the effect she has on others and chooses comparisons that don't position her as a victim, but simply as an outsider. While not explicit, each comparison in the text displays her confusion and pain over not understanding *why* she can't see her melancholy the way other people seem to. Throughout the play, she is in pursuit of that understanding but has not yet found the answers she is looking for at this moment.

***Eurydice* by Sarah Ruhl**

*Eurydice*¹⁵ is a more recent discovery of mine from Sarah Ruhl's body of work. I have always been fascinated by Greek mythology and love a good adaptation, so this play checked both boxes for me. The character of Eurydice is given much greater agency in the decision of her fate than in the original myth and does so with heartbreaking clarity. As with Tilly, my challenge was handling the highly poetic, metaphor-driven language while creating and maintaining an appropriate emotional arc. This was a challenge as the majority of this monologue is written as a list of instructions. Identifying the specific memory and feeling associated with each new item on the list offered a great opportunity to explore discovery as an actor. Each new piece of the list is triggered by a memory of Orpheus, which is then associated with a corresponding emotion. As the list goes on, each new item triggers a greater emotional response in Eurydice until she reaches the climactic, and what I feel is the most elevated line in

¹³ Ruhl, page 275

¹⁴ Ruhl, page 276

¹⁵ Ruhl, page 331- 411

the piece, “For he is a young prince, and his robes are too heavy on him.” This memory is too much for her to bear and she quickly moves on to the end of the list. In early rehearsals, it was extremely difficult to use my personal memory bank to the effect that Ruhl requires here. I often started to cry when I reached the peak of the list and had to balance how much of my own experience I could use without tipping the scale. Choosing to make it a silly and happy memory kept me stable while complementing the action of the text.

I was excited to play with the idea that Eurydice could physically only move down/away from Orpheus as she speaks this monologue. It is the last scene of the play, and I wanted to communicate that the decisions she was making were final, but that she wouldn’t go down to Hades until she had faith that Orpheus would be taken care of. This is a decision she is making for herself because she understands that she and Orpheus would never be truly happy together. The fact that Eurydice was able to decide her own fate was beautiful to me.

Putting this monologue on tape was a unique opportunity to play with the context and setting. The indoor staircase we used for the first round of takes felt confined and endless all at once, and we could play with angles and Eurydice’s point of view to capture the idea that she is only moving down. The stairs also offered some unexpected but happily discovered sound effects. The lines that I call out echoed for a short moment, offering a sense of the infinite and desolate. We also taped outside, on the steps of the Lambeth Amphitheatre, which was much more expansive and involved natural elements. The stone steps, unexpected wind, and biting cold all contributed to the feeling that Eurydice was indeed descending into hell and that the journey was a challenge. The elemental context I discovered by filming outside provided great sensory fodder for performing this monologue in an indoor audition setting.

***The Flick* by Annie Baker**

Many of my best friends are guys: I’ve been a “groom’s girl” for one, next year I will officiate the wedding of another, and on my birthday this year I received flowers from a third. All of these fellas have been my friends for over a decade. While I’m an only child, I have brothers in my guy friends. For this reason, I love Annie Baker’s male characters. While reading and performing *The Flick*¹⁶ I was struck by how often I thought of my friends. It was also nice to work with two male colleagues who are near and dear to my heart after three years of intensive study together. This is precisely what draws me to Baker’s work. Her characters represent the people you walk past on the sidewalk, your friends, and your neighbors. Her stories expose and explore the small universes, and the multitude of experiences that exist within and all around us.

As an actor performing Baker’s text, I have found myself trying my damndest to not *act*, but rather to simply *be*. How can I just *be* here, without *trying* to be? This is perhaps the most valuable lesson to learn as an actor. That there is nothing to “put on” with Baker’s characters, and that the truth is more easily achieved by stripping away, rather than piling on. Rose in *The Flick*, to my mind, is the definition of a stripped-down character speaking stripped-down language. Rose does not use metaphors, flowery language, or subtext. She is often explicit. She talks like any normal person, in short phrases, and often in a shorthand that reflects the intimacy of her relationships. In this sense, the character of Rose is much more relatable than a character like Tilly or Eurydice (from *Melancholy Play* and *Eurydice*, respectively) in that she

¹⁶ Baker, Annie. *The Flick*. New York, New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2014.

exists in the world as we know it. Therein lies the challenge. There is no escapism, no melodrama here, but there is life in all its mundane, confusing, horrific beauty. Rather than explicitly sharing her emotional turmoil, we experience her wondering over it, trying to figure it out, and at other times resigning herself to the idea that she may never know why she is the way she is.

I rehearsed this scene in sections. I felt like it was important to compartmentalize the relationships, particularly between Rose and Sam. One-on-one rehearsals with each of my scene partners allowed space to specify each relationship. These characters have secrets from each other, so having separate time to create each relationship was beneficial. My scene partners and I would pick the lines up randomly, in any location, at any time, and see how naturally we could move through them at that moment. It became a goal to see how much we could simply *be* in rehearsal in order to get what we needed, and we sculpted the shape of the scene that way. What were the moments where Rose does actually feel care or concern? When is she rejecting something or accepting something? How do the answers to those questions move Rose forward or backward with these two boys together and separately?

Rose's lack of emotional subtext forces her to depend heavily on her physical appearance in order to manipulate those around her. I decided to not wear much makeup on our shoot day. My costume consisted of ripped jeans and sneakers. This helped me achieve the physical attitude of someone who doesn't have to try very hard to look alluring. Rose knows that her coworkers respond to her in a certain way, and she has gotten so used to that kind of treatment that she has learned how to use it to her advantage. She is used to getting her way at work, and I see her as holding a higher position in the social hierarchy of the movie theatre because she is the projectionist. She doesn't have to deal with the trash, the puke, or the shitty customers. She is somehow above it all because she has these boys under her thumb. When Sam attacks her at the beginning scene, it is as if the world she has so carefully crafted has been shattered. The power she thought she possessed is taken away. This is highlighted by the way Sam refuses to look at her for the majority of the scene. Without the benefit of her physical allure, Rose is left confused and guilty, as she realizes that the way she has treated these boys has actually been quite harmful. The stripped-down nature of my costume choices left me feeling a bit exposed at this point of the scene. She is seeing herself for who she truly is and that clarity is frightening to her.

As You Like It by William Shakespeare (including an introduction with observations from *16 Winters or the Bear's Tale*)

In the Spring of 2022, the UVA Department of Drama produced *16 Winters or the Bear's Tale* by Mary Elizabeth Hamilton¹⁷. The story explores the 16-year gap that occurs in the middle of Shakespeare's *A Winters Tale*, and is narrated by the Bear that prompts the stage direction, "Exit, pursued by a bear." Throughout the arc of the play, the Bear comments and expounds on the philosophical issues of man and beast, guiding and playing tricks on the other characters, as it attempts to survive in an increasingly dangerous world. When I first read the Bear's speeches, I was immediately sure that was the role for me, however, the role was originally played by a male actor and is written to be a male bear. Considering Shakespearean tradition, I decided that it would be acceptable for a woman to take on a man's role if I could prove that I had enough

¹⁷ Hamilton, Mary Elizabeth. *16 Winters, or the Bear's Tale*, Gersh Agency, 2019.

masculine energy, prowess, and physical presence to make it work. For my audition, I hyper-sexualized the Bear, taking my chosen speech completely out of its original context and instead focusing on how I could use the language as a tool of instruction and manipulation. I got the part and set to work on figuring out how to bring the appropriate masculinity to the character. As I mentioned earlier, I have always had many male friends. I channeled many mannerisms and attitudes that I have observed in them. I played with the size of my voice, and the size of my eyes. How much space could I take up?

Like Rosalind in *As You Like It*, I found myself bolstered by the power that came with my new masculine persona. I was able to take up much more space physically and vocally. I could throw manners and decorum aside as a bear (particularly a male one) and relished how my physical appearance didn't make much of a difference in the interactions I had with the other masculine characters. This helped me gain new insight into my own presence in the world as a woman and allowed me the chance to convey that gender does not and should not limit us as human beings and artists. My experience with the Bear gave me new, unique, and enlightening perceptions of myself and other Shakespearean characters like Rosalind or Viola because I was able to explore and bend the gender line. Rosalind is a powerful female-identifying character, who dresses as a man to protect her identity as well as her interests as she flees from an oppressive regime that has banished her. While dressed as the peasant Ganymede, Rosalind elicits feelings of a sexual nature from both her male and female companions. This disguise also changes Rosalind's nature- bringing out the more masculine, confident, and unwavering parts of her character. I enjoy the challenge of merging both the feminine and masculine aspects of my own personality in building a character and have been offered the opportunity to explore this in multiple pieces of work during my MFA training.

During our second year of study, we completed an intensive Shakespeare unit as part of our voice training, in which we practiced rigorous textual and aural analysis. One of my pieces was Rosalind's Act 3, Scene 5 of *As You Like It*¹⁸. There is a recurring theme in this monologue of one thing being set against another, be it with opposites like insult and exult, or contrasts or comparisons like "tis not her *glass*, but *you* that flatters her" or "entame *my* spirits, to *your* worship". There is also the contrast found in Rosalind's character, as she is disguised as the male shepherd Ganymede when she speaks this monologue. Revisiting this text after playing the Bear offered me the opportunity to explore gender duality further. My costume was playfully masculine, with trousers and a tie, but I didn't try to fully disguise the fact that I am a woman. We didn't do that with the Bear either. Both genders were present, allowing the audience to interpret the character however they chose.

In my exploration of this text, I was curious how certain moments were influenced by Rosalind's femininity, and how she might lean into the benefits of her masculine disguise. The moment that she catches Phoebe giving her goo-goo eyes takes her by surprise, and the disguise slips a bit. She doesn't know what to do with female attention. Later on, she chastises Silvius, denigrating him for how he has venerated Phoebe. The courage of conviction she exudes while putting these two in their respective places, exhibits more of a masculine energy. For this reason, I set Silvius at an eye line that was far away from Phoebe so that I could switch back and forth between them clearly.

¹⁸ Shakespeare, William, and Folger Shakespeare Library. *As You Like It*. June 2009 ed. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2007.

The marriage of gender identities allows Rosalind a breadth of experience that ends up teaching her more about what she is capable of, transforming her into a more confident woman when the disguise is finally removed.

Portfolio Materials*Melancholy Play*By Sarah Ruhl¹⁹

TILLY

I'm not particularly smart.
I'm not particularly beautiful.
But I suffer so well, and so often.
A stranger sees me cry—
and they see a river they haven't
swum in—
A river in a foreign country—
so they take off their trousers
And jump in the water.
They take pictures
With a waterproof camera,
They dry themselves in the sun.
They're all dry
And I'm still wet.
Maybe my suffering is from another time.
A time when suffering was sexy.
When the afternoons, and the streets,
were full of rain.
Maybe my tears don't come from this century.
Maybe I inherited them from old well water.
Wait... am I acting weird?

¹⁹ Ruhl, page 275-276

Eurydice
by Sarah Ruhl²⁰

EURYDICE
Dear Orpheus,

I'm sorry. I don't know what came over me. I was afraid.
I'm not worthy of you. But I still love you, I think. Don't try
to find me again. You would be lonely for music. I want you
to be happy. I want you to marry again. I am going to write
out instructions for your next wife.

To My Husband's Next Wife:

Be gentle.

Be sure to comb his hair when it's wet.

Do not fail to notice
that his face flushes pink
like a bride's

when you kiss him.

Give him lots to eat.

He forgets to eat and he gets cranky.

When he's sad,

kiss his forehead and I will thank you.

Because he is a young prince
and his robes are too heavy on him.

His crown falls down

Around his ears.

I'll give this letter to a worm. I hope he finds you.

Love,
Eurydice

²⁰ Ruhl, page 410-411

*The Flick*By Annie Baker²¹

Act 2: Scene 2

ROSE: Could one of you give me a ride home tonight? My sister borrowed my car.

AVERY: Oh. Um. My dad is picking me up.

ROSE: Sam? Sam.

AVERY: But. Um. I guess I could ask him if he'd take you back to Boylston.

ROSE: Sam. What the fuck.

SAM: Why'd you show Avery how to use the projector. What the fuck is wrong with you.

AVERY: Uh. I'm gonna go to the bathroom.

ROSE: I didn't know you / wanted—

SAM: Yes. Yes you did.

I've been working here for almost twice as long as you and you know Steve only promoted you first because he thinks you're hot. And three months ago I asked you if you would train / me and you said—

ROSE: Okay. Okay. You're right. I'm sorry.

SAM: Do you know how humiliating it is to be working with like *twenty*-somethings who are rising in the ranks of your shitty job faster than you are?

ROSE: I'm sorry. It's— I was stupid. I wasn't thinking. I just— I can train you too. Then if I get sick you can / take turns—

SAM: No. No way. I'm not interested anymore. No fucking way.

ROSE: *Okay*. So. What. Are you gonna like hate my guts now?

SAM: Oh god.

ROSE: What's going on?

SAM: I feel sick. I feel like I'm gonna...Oh my god.

ROSE: Sam.

SAM: I just... I can't stand it. I can't do it anymore. It's making me nauseous. It's making me sick. I'm like breaking out in fucking rashes.

ROSE: I have no idea what you're talking about.

SAM: You don't? Really? I like— I fucking love you. I don't even know why. You're like... I see all these things that are wrong with you. But it's like— It's really bad. It's really bad. It's not like a— It goes way beyond the word "crush" or like— I want to like—I can't sleep. I mean, I haven't really slept for the past year and a half. And then when I do sleep I dream about you and you're like talking to me. Or like fucking some other guy. Or standing in front of me in like a motel room like brushing your teeth. It's never been like this before. I walk down the street and all I'm thinking is: Rose. Rose. Rose. It's like the fucking soundtrack to my life. Just your name is like... I've pictured saying this to you. I've pictured saying it so many times.

ROSE: So what do you want?

SAM: What do you mean?

ROSE: Like what do you think is going to happen now?

SAM: I don't know. I guess I just...I guess I needed to get it off my chest.

²¹ Baker, 118-130

ROSE: But is this the kind of thing where you want the person to love you back or you actually secretly don't want them to love you back?

SAM: That's a good question.

ROSE: Because it sort of seems like it has nothing to do with me. Like *me* me. You know?

SAM: That's not how I wanted it to seem. Be. That's not how I wanted it to be.

ROSE: Like— Like even right now. It's like you're performing or something.

SAM: I'm not performing. I'm not performing.

ROSE: So turn around and look at me.

SAM: Do you like me back?

ROSE: Oh my god. Would you please just turn around? Sam. You're seriously not going to turn around and look at me? You don't know me. Like for whatever reason you like me... I'm not like... I'm not like like that at all. Trust me. Okay?

AVERY: Oh my god. Someone took a... Someone took a shit on the floor of the men's bathroom and they—And they spread it all over the— It's all over the walls and it—I just puked. I just puked on the floor of the bathroom. I feel like I'm gonna—

SAM: You gotta sit down. You gotta sit down and put your head between your knees. You gotta breathe. Take deep breaths.

AVERY: Oh god.

SAM: I'm gonna take care of it. You just take it easy.

ROSE: I'll help.

SAM: No. No. You stay here and you watch him and you get him water. I'm gonna take care of it.

AVERY: You're gonna have to— Now my puke is all over the place. I'm so sorry. Are you still made at me?

SAM: It's fine. I'm not mad at you.

AVERY: It's everywhere. Why would somebody *do* that?

SAM: This happens. This kind of thing happens in movie theaters. I'm gonna deal with it.

AVERY: But you have such a sensitive sense of smell!

SAM: Avery. Don't worry about it. I'm totally cool with puke. I'm totally cool with shit. I'm gonna take care of it. I'm taking care of it!

ROSE: You want a cup of water?

AVERY: Yeah. That would be great.

ROSE: Avery. Please don't tell Sam about what happened the other night.

AVERY: Of course. I mean. You don't either.

ROSE: I won't.

AVERY: Can I still fill in for you on Thursday night?

ROSE: I'll make it work. Sometimes I worry that there's something really, really wrong with me. But that I'll never know exactly what that is.

AVERY: Uh. No. You're fine.

ROSE: Really?

AVERY: Yeah.

ROSE: I'll get you some water.

*As You Like It*By William Shakespeare²²

ROSALIND

And why, I pray you? Who might be your mother,
 That you insult, exult, and all at once,
 Over the wretched? What though you have no beauty, –
 As by my faith, I see no more in you
 Than without candle may go dark to bed, –
 Must you be therefore proud and pitiless?
 Why, what means this? Why do you look on me?
 I see no more in you than in the ordinary
 Of nature's sale-work. O's my little life!
 I think she means to tangle my eyes too.
 No, faith, proud mistress, hope not after it:
 'Tis not your inky brows, your black silk hair,
 Your bugle eyeballs, nor your cheek of cream,
 That can entame my spirits to your worship.
 You foolish shepherd, wherefore do you follow her,
 Like foggy south puffing with wind and rain?
 You are a thousand times a properer man
 Than she a woman: 'tis such fools as you
 That make the world full of ill-favour'd children:
 'Tis not her glass, but you, that flatters her;
 And out of you, she sees herself more proper
 Than any of her lineaments can show her.
 But, mistress, know yourself: down on your knees,
 And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love:
 For I must tell you friendly in your ear,
 Sell when you can; you are not for all markets.
 Cry the man mercy; love him; take his offer:
 Foul is most foul, being foul to be a scoffer.
 So take her to thee, shepherd. Fare you well.

²² Shakespeare, 131-133

Chapter 4

Filmed Scene and Monologues

As a supplement to this written thesis, a filmed personal introduction as well as the following filmed scene and monologues are available for review.

Personal Introduction

Monologue

Tilly, *Melancholy Play* by Sarah Ruhl

Monologue

Eurydice, *Eurydice* by Sarah Ruhl

Scene

Rose, *The Flick* by Annie Baker

Monologue

Rosalind, *As You Like It* by William Shakespeare

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Unlocked

Shakespeare and the Pre-Raphaelites

May 2 and 3, 2023

7:00 pm

The Helms Theater at the University of Virginia

Performed, Directed, and Conceived by Haydn Haring

Projections Design: Meixin Yu

Sound Design: Sarah Harden

Faculty Advisors: Tovah Close and Mona Kasra

Voice of Jaques, *Touchstone, the Jester*: Christine Jacobs

Narrator, *Mariana*: Cortney Lowinski

Graphic Design: Jennifer Lioy

Special Thanks to Genevieve Myers, Jack Clifford,
Marianne Kubik, UVA Department of Drama



Creative Team




Director & Performer: Haydn Haring

Haydn Haring is a Graduate student in her third, and final year of study in the UVA Professional Actor Training Program. She received her undergraduate degree in Theatre and History, with a minor in Italian Studies from the College of Charleston. She received her Conservatory training from the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York City. UVA acting credits include Marianne Dashwood in *Sense & Sensibility*, The Bear/Time in *16 Winters or The Bear's Tale*, and Annette Raleigh in *God of Carnage*. Previous credits include John Wesley Powell in *Men on Boats*, Masha in *Three Sisters*, Salome in *The Robber Bridegroom*, Julia in *The Birds*, The Witch in *Into the Woods*, Roxanne in *Cyrano*, Marta in *Company*, Claire in *Boston Marriage*, and others.

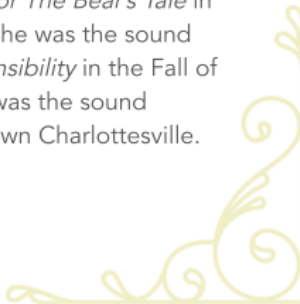
Projections Design: Meixin Yu

Meixin Yu is a third-year student at UVA with a double major in Drama and Cognitive Science. She has been involved with Lingxi Chinese Theatre for three years, combining her identity with her love of creative work. She also dances and performs with UVA's AKAdMiX open-style dance crew. Her initial interest in video editing led her to learn projection design with Professor Mona Kasra in the drama department. Meixin is enthusiastic about the infusion of technology into live performance, and is excited about new possibilities with interactive theatre in the future. She is honored that this show will be her debut production as a theatrical projections designer!

Sound Design / Board Operator: Sarah Harden



Sarah Harden is a fourth-year student at UVA with a double major in Russian and East European Studies. She started her sound design career as an assistant sound designer for the UVA Drama Department production *16 Winters or The Bear's Tale* in the Spring of 2022 and has been involved in theatre ever since. She was the sound designer for the UVA Drama Department production *Sense & Sensibility* in the Fall of 2022 and *Direct to You* in the Spring of 2023. Most recently she was the sound designer for the Live Arts production of *Buyer & Cellar* in downtown Charlottesville.





Artist Statement



This project is, at its core, an ekphrastic study of the work of visual artists. Ekphrasis is typically a textual description of a visual work of art (Keats' *Ode on a Grecian Urn* is perhaps the most famous example). This is the reverse—highly detailed paintings attempting to capture a moment originally depicted through poetic text. It seemed only natural to me that because these paintings illustrate dramatic moments and characters they might be used to inform an actual performance of the text by which they were inspired.

Unlocked was created as a tool for art history education. By combining visual art, literature, and live performance I hope to illuminate the connections between each medium. In my experience, the most thrilling moments of discovery occur when I am able to make a connection between one subject and another. In those moments, the world grows somehow smaller and larger at the same time. I love that feeling.

As a student of history, the British Victorians (1837-1901) have always fascinated me. What I find most appealing (as both a creator and performer) about the Victorians, is their ornate, highly decorative aesthetic, their obsession with death, decay, and preservation, and their fascination with the works of William Shakespeare. In fact, the Victorians brought Shakespeare back into public consciousness after years of his work being out of fashion. It seemed only fitting that the first iteration of *Unlocked* feature artists from the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, who were also known as the Victorian Avant-Garde.

It is my hope is that you leave *Unlocked* with some new knowledge about the subject matter, but also a healthy curiosity to explore the connections between the things you personally find interesting and beautiful.



-Haydn Haring



References

Miranda, The Tempest by John William Waterhouse
and
The Tempest by William Shakespeare

Painting Notes and Provenance:

<https://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2009/19th-century-european-art-including-orientalist-paintings-drawings-sculpture-n08542/lot.56.html>

Full Play Text:

<https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/the-tempest/>

Touchstone, The Jester by John William Waterhouse
and
As You Like It by William Shakespeare

Painting Notes and Provenance:

<https://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2008/old-master-and-19th-century-european-art-n08406/lot.254.html>

Full Play Text:

<https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/as-you-like-it/>

Mariana by John Everett Millais
and
Mariana by Alfred, Lord Tennyson
Measure for Measure by William Shakespeare

Painting Notes:

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/millais-mariana-t07553>

Full Poem Text:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/alfred-tennyson>

Full Play Text:

<https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/measure-for-measure/>



Miranda: The Tempest

John William Waterhouse

Oil on Canvas, 39.5 x 54.2 inches

1916

Here we see a moment from Act 1, Scene 2 of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in which the young Miranda witnesses a terrible shipwreck brought on by her father, the sorcerer Prospero. Aboard the ship are Prospero's usurping brother Antonio, his henchmen, and his young son (and heir) Ferdinand. They all survive the shipwreck (by Prospero's design) though Miranda does not yet know this.



The Tempest by William Shakespeare
Scene 2

Enter Prospero and Miranda

MIRANDA

If by your art, my dearest father, you have
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.
The sky, it seems, would pour down stinking pitch,
But that the sea, mounting to th' welkin's cheek,
Dashes the fire out. Oh, I have suffered 5
With those that I saw suffer! A brave vessel,
Who had, no doubt, some noble creature in her,
Dashed all to pieces. Oh, the cry did knock
Against my very heart! Poor souls, they perished.
Had I been any god of power, I would 10
Have sunk the sea within the earth or ere
It should the good ship so have swallowed, and
The fraughting souls within her.

This painting, full of natural elements, portrays the titular storm in violent, realistic detail. Wind, typically an invisible element, becomes visible here as the wind whips through Miranda's hair and dress, seemingly pulling her towards the sea. We see finely detailed, white, voluminous sea-foam as the waves smash into the rocks and the ship fights against the waves.

The text mirrors these visuals in phrases like the alliterative "wild waters", the personification of "the sea, mounting" and the onomatopoeic plosives and swishy fricatives in "dashes the fire out." The color scheme is muted in cool grey-green and blue tones, save for the dashes of red in Miranda's hair and at her wrist and ankles, suggesting the concentrated intensity of her suffering and concern.



Touchstone: the Jester

John William
Waterhouse

Watercolor on Card, 15 x 9.7 in
approx. 1893



Depicted here is the clown Touchstone from Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. He is placed in an unknown location, and it may be that this painting portrays an actor behind the scenes in costume, rather than a character in a realistic or imagined setting of the play. Touchstone is different than other Shakespearean jesters in that he is described as being both a "wit" and a "natural" clown, meaning that his humor is based both on his wordplay and his physicality. He is often found with his companion Jaques, who provides a pessimistic contrast to Touchstone's sunny disposition.



As You Like It by William Shakespeare
Act 5: Scene 4

JAQUES

But for the seventh cause. How did you find the quarrel on the seventh cause? 70

TOUCHSTONE

Upon a lie seven times removed— Bear your body more seeming, Audrey. — As thus, sir: I did dislike the cut of a certain courtier's beard. He sent me word if I said his beard was not cut well, he was in the mind it was. This is called "the retort courteous." If I sent him word again it was not well cut, he would send me word he cut it to please himself. This is called "the quip modest." If again it was not well cut, he disabled my judgment. This is called "the reply churlish." If again it was not well cut, he would answer I spake not true. This is called "the reproof valiant." If again it was not well cut, he would say I lie. This is called "the countercheck quarrelsome," and so to "the lie circumstantial," and "the lie direct." 75

JAQUES

And how oft did you say his beard was not well cut?

TOUCHSTONE

I durst go no further than the lie circumstantial, nor he durst not give me the lie direct, and so we measured swords and parted. 90

JAQUES

Can you nominate in order now the degrees of the lie?



TOUCHSTONE

O sir, we quarrel in print, by the book, as
 you have books for good manners. I will name you
 the degrees: the first, "the retort courteous"; the
 second, "the quip modest"; the third, "the reply
 churlish"; the fourth, "the reproof valiant"; the
 fifth, "the countercheck quarrelsome"; the sixth,
 "the lie with circumstance"; the seventh, "the lie
 direct." All these you may avoid but the lie direct,
 and you may avoid that too with an "if." I knew
 when seven justices could not take up a quarrel, but
 when the parties were met themselves, one of them
 thought but of an "if," as: "If you said so, then I said
 so." And they shook hands and swore brothers.
 Your "if" is the only peacemaker: much virtue in
 "if."

95

100

105

The bright red, yellow, and blue colors of Touchstone's costume, are reminiscent of clothing from the Medieval period— an era from which the Pre-Raphaelites drew much inspiration. These colors are exuberant, bold, and eye-catching— all good things for a Jester to be. The way he sits is almost childlike, as he grips the edge of the chair and tips himself back. Shakespeare's clowns utilize physical comedy in addition to wordplay, and this position suggests his playful nature- that he is a listener and observer as well as a performer. We glimpse the hint of a belt or scabbard at his waist, which possibly holds a knife or sword. As we hear in this selection of text, Touchstone has never participated in a proper duel, but he quarrels plenty with his words!





Mariana

John Everett Millais

Oil Paint on Mahogany, 23.5 x 19.5 in
1851

Pictured here is Mariana, a minor tragic character from Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*. She is seen despondently looking out her window, as she stretches her back and rises from her needlepoint. She has been abandoned by her fiancé Angelo after losing her dowry in a shipwreck. She is desperately in love with Angelo, despite the fact that he has damaged her reputation by spreading false rumors that she is unfaithful to him. After this, Mariana shuts herself away, resigned to the melancholic hope that one day he will return to her.



Selections from *Mariana* by Alfred, Lord Tennyson
 "Mariana in the Moated Grange"
 (Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*)

1
 With blackest moss the flower-plots
 Were thickly crusted, one and all:
 The rusted nails fell from the knots
 That held the pear to the gable-wall.
 The broken sheds look'd sad and strange:
 Unlifted was the clinking latch;
 Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
 Upon the lonely moated grange.
 She only said, "My life is dreary,
 He cometh not," she said;
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
 I would that I were dead!"

2
 Her tears fell with the dews at even;
 Her tears fell ere the dews were dried;
 She could not look on the sweet heaven,
 Either at morn or eventide.
 After the flitting of the bats,
 When thickest dark did trance the sky,
 She drew her casement-curtain by,
 And glanced athwart the glooming flats.
 She only said, "The night is dreary,
 He cometh not," she said;
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
 I would that I were dead!"

6
 All day within the dreamy house,
 The doors upon their hinges creak'd;
 The blue fly sung in the pane; the mouse
 Behind the mouldering wainscot shriek'd,
 Or from the crevice peer'd about.
 Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors
 Old footsteps trod the upper floors,
 Old voices called her from without.
 She only said, "My life is dreary,
 He cometh not," she said;
 She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
 I would that I were dead!"

7
 The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,
 The slow clock ticking, and the sound
 Which to the wooing wind aloof
 The poplar made, did all confound
 Her sense; but most she loathed the hour
 When the thick-moted sunbeam lay
 Athwart the chambers, and the day
 Was sloping toward his western bower.
 Then said she, "I am very dreary,
 He will not come," she said;
 She wept, "I am aweary, aweary,
 Oh God, that I were dead!"

There is a great amount of symbolism in this painting—the falling leaves signify the passage of time, the frustration found in the needle angrily thrust into the center of the embroidery. Many of the items surrounding her, including the mouse, suggest that Mariana has been within this space for some time. The text is laden with descriptions of the sounds she hears day-to-day, as well as vivid depictions of the passage of time all of which combine to create a heavy sense of claustrophobia.



Publicity Photographs by Meixin Yu



Miranda: The Tempest
By John William Waterhouse



Touchstone, The Jester
By John William Waterhouse



Mariana
By John Everett Millais

Unlocked- Shakespeare and the Pre-Raphaelites
Gallery Video Voiceover Transcript
Written by Haydn Haring

In 1848 a trio of young artists met in secret at 7 Gower Street, London. There were two painters: William Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais, and one poet and illustrator, Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

Their aim? To form a society that would challenge the artistic ideals of The Royal Academy. The Royal Academy upheld the classical painting styles of the late Renaissance Masters, including Michelangelo and Da Vinci, but particularly that of the painter Raphael. Their manifesto encompassed four ideals to which an artist must aspire:²³

- to have genuine ideas to express;
- to study Nature attentively, so as to know how to express them;
- to sympathise with what is direct and serious and heartfelt in previous art, to the exclusion of what is conventional and self-parading and learned by rote;
- and most indispensable of all, to produce thoroughly good pictures and statues.

They named their fellowship the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. The group was particularly influenced by their contemporary John Ruskin, the critic, artist, and philosopher, who believed that art should mirror the perfect form that exists in nature. He said that “Nature is painting for us, day after day, pictures of infinite beauty if only we have the eyes to see them.”²⁴

Before revealing their existence publicly, the Brotherhood began signing the work they turned into the Royal Academy with a mysterious “PRB” inscription. Their small joke on the Academy, within which all three artists had studied at one point or another. They were particularly disdainful of Sir Joshua Reynolds, the Academy’s founder, who they called Sir Shoshua.²⁵

The Pre-Raphaelites actively rejected the idealized forms and unrealistic themes they found running rampant in Renaissance art and (like John Ruskin) promoted realism rendered in the greatest detail, a return to nature, and truthful depictions of human emotion. This drew the Pre-Raphaelites to the subjects of poetry, depicting characters at the height of their passions.

²³ William Michael Rossetti, ed., Dante Gabriel Rossetti: His Family-Letters, with a Memoir, London, 1895.

²⁴ “Infinite Beauty.” Crafts Council, 2022. <https://www.craftscouncil.org.uk/whats-on/infinite-beauty>.

²⁵ Faxon, Alicia C. “The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood – Institute for the Study of Western Civilization.” Institute for the Study of Western Civilization, 1989. <https://westernciv.com/syllabus/victorian-england/spring/the-pre-raphaelite-brotherhood/>.

Their work was inspired by the ancient Greeks and their contemporary Alfred Lord Tennyson.

The Pre-Raphaelites were also drawn to the works of William Shakespeare, whose popularity soared in Victorian England. They produced dozens of works of Shakespearean heroines and scenes, from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, *As You Like It*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and others. To your right, please find three more examples of Shakespearean characters seen through the lens of the Pre-Raphaelites. Please scan the QR code for more information about each painting. Thank you.

The performance will begin in 15 minutes.

The performance will begin in 10 minutes.

The performance will begin in 5 minutes.

The gallery will close shortly, please take your seats.

