

# **Back to School:**

## A Digital Portfolio

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in Candidacy for the Degree of Master of Fine Arts

Department of Drama

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**Abstract:**

The following documents and attached media materials are a representation of two and a half years of graduate study, teaching, and performance in the field of acting. It is comprised of four chapters and an appendix; and is to be reviewed alongside a personal introduction, four filmed monologues, and a reel of on-camera work. This portfolio and its supplemental videos showcase a direct application of graduate actor study to the world of professional performance.

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Please review this Portfolio in the following Order:

Introduction Video — Chapters 1-3 — Monologues — Chapter 4 — Appendix — Film Reel

# Chapter 1

Philosophy Statements

## *Statement of Artistic Philosophy*

“There’s a reason it’s called a PLAY.” This mantra has traveled through the theatrical world for ages. And it feels more important now than ever to keep in mind as both financial and societal pressures seem ever-mounting in both film and theatre. Without it, we risk losing the sense of joy that is so essential to the committed and skillful execution of our craft.

I believe that any art form, at its core, is about granting the ability for a community to share in an experience, perspective, or emotion that might otherwise be unavailable. As a theatre and film artist, it is my job to do that by giving authentic life to characters, no matter how small or large, ludicrous or grounded. From the first time I heard it, the definition of acting that most clearly resonated with me is University of Virginia Professor Emeritus Richard Warner’s slight adjustment to Sanford Meisner’s. Meisner defined acting as “the ability to live truthfully under imaginary circumstances.”<sup>1</sup> This is Richard’s variation: “acting the ability to *behave* truthfully under imaginary circumstances.” The difference is subtle, but significant. Living does not necessitate participation on the part actor; it is simply existing. Behaving demands that the actor make choices; and as a result, Richard’s variation captures two crucial elements of good acting: action and reaction. Successful implementation of these two elements keeps the actor present and engaged at all times within the specific reality of the script. It ensures that the actor is both truthful *and* interesting.

But all of that good work and philosophy is lost if it is not approached with the delight and curiosity inherent in “play.”

Joy takes the craft and gives it life.

The romanticization of the tortured artist is dangerous. It’s true that many great plays are born out of pain and are filled with characters that focus on the darker sides of the human experience, but they must be carried forward with joy and love. Legendary acting teacher, Sonia Moore touches on this in her book, *The Stanislavsky System*: “It would be impossible for an actor to survive many performances in which he went through experiences and shocks as they are in real life. On the contrary, we know that suffering on stage gives the actor who achieves it a true joy.” No actor should rely on being rude or cruel to their fellow artists in order to truthfully portray a character who treats the other characters that way. A screaming match between two characters onstage should be able to be followed by a genuine and respectful embrace between two actors offstage. Our work, as actors, must create opportunities for empathy. If we rely only on misery and suffering, we risk pushing people away and closing off our very reason for producing the work in the first place. Even especially challenging pieces have to be approached with enthusiasm; the characters can be in pain, but the artists shouldn’t be.

If our work is to mean anything, it cannot be just about what it does for us. The struggle and journey through which we go cannot supersede our responsibility to the audience. Our responsibility is to leave them in a different place from the one in which they arrived. I do not mean that all theatre and film needs to be serious or deeply meaningful; it can absolutely be about escapism or simply making people laugh and have a good evening. What it cannot be is a waste of the audience’s time. We can prevent that by filling our work, and our characters, with joy. Audiences will feel that joy radiating off of us and be all the better for it. Our work will not only mean more, it will do more.

## *Statement of Teaching Philosophy*

I believe that every action, no matter how small, can change the temperature of the world. This is as true on stage as it is in life, as it is in the classroom. A close reading of any well-constructed play written in the Aristotelian mode reveals that each and every move that a character makes has a ripple effect. Characters behave in response to one another. Our world works the same way. So, how do we encourage each other to make choices that create *positive* ripples? I believe that this is where an education in the arts becomes absolutely essential. Arts education creates empathic listeners who more readily form bonds with the people around them and in turn create communities. Those communities motivate us to be better to, and, for one another.

Community is the core philosophy that I bring to my classroom. It is my hope that all of my students carry into the world a sense of responsibility and empathy for people from all walks of life. I start this process by making it clear to them that, as classmates, they have a responsibility to each other. The vulnerability and risks that an acting student must experience in order to learn can only truly exist in an environment filled with caring and supportive people.

Our first step is to learn everyone's names. We do this through a simple, yet incredibly effective, game where each student introduces themselves. Then they tell the class a thing that they genuinely like which starts with the first letter of their name. I start off the exercise "Hi, my name is Sam, and I like Spider-Man." Then the next person goes, but before they introduce themselves they have to introduce me to the rest of the class and so on. Not only does this help my students learn each other's names, it also gives each of them a humanizing touchstone when someone confesses to loving naps or chili cheese fries. Once we learn each other's names, I ask students to use those, early and often. Using someone's name is a sign of respect that serves as the baseline from which we build our classroom community. I then ask my students to bring that sense of community with them as they travel around the university grounds by committing to greeting one another when they encounter each other outside of the classroom.

Back in the classroom - Before we start learning about subtext, Stanislavsky, vocal technique, and other essential aspects of an education in acting, we begin to learn about each other. I ask my students to play another game with me: "Step into the circle if you...". That phrase is repeated over and over as I cover a broad range of topics from "you prefer Coke over Pepsi" to "you've experienced heartbreak." (Anecdotally, people vastly - and in my opinion, correctly - prefer Coke). As we move through these topics and my students learn about each other, they begin to notice all the different communities to which they belong.

In actor training, we often ask our students to be more human. Being "more human" typically equates to being more authentic, more complete, and more imperfect. It's an essential challenge for all actors to move further from pretense and closer to truth. To fully understand a character is to understand another human life. You cannot do this without training and building your ability to empathize. That empathic skill then translates to the greater world, as we become capable of understanding the hardships and triumphs of those around us. It encourages acts of kindness both small and enormous. Building empathy builds a better world; and it can start in the classroom.

# Chapter 2

Journal

The monologues that I have chosen to include in this portfolio are pieces that I love. But, they are also pieces that I have been able to improve specifically because of the work I have done over the course of my time in the MFA program, here, at UVA. This journal will also briefly discuss my decisions to perform in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, and *The Aliens*.

For purposes of clarity, the pieces may occasionally be referred to as follows:

*The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* = the Judas piece

*Romeo & Juliet* = the balcony monologue

*I am Not Batman.* = *Batman*

*Man & Superman* = Satan's speech

*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* = *Curious Incident*

*The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* = *Spelling Bee*

*The Aliens* = *Aliens*

Judas' monologue in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* is a piece that I found before coming to the MFA program, but had not touched in a few years. What initially, and immediately, drew me to the piece was the richness of the relationship. Even as an atheist, the resonance of Jesus and Judas is hard to ignore. The specificity of what they have been through and the rawness of Guirgis' writing gives me a rich canvas on which to work. Judas is hurt, and is more than aware of the standard narrative — in which he's cast as evil incarnate: The great betrayer. This monologue, in Judas' eyes, is a chance for him to reframe that narrative: and he does so by accusing Jesus of being the one who *betrayed* him. Through my work in the program I have found new ways of approaching the piece; of adding layers of depth and specificity to the character, giving new and improved shape to the monologue. Crucial in helping me develop this complexity is the work we did during our mask class. Mask taught us about layering intentions: how to fight for something, whilst still protecting our character's innermost self. It helped us to bring life to every bit of the character, pouring from ourselves, as actors, into the character. But most importantly it helped us find an edge for our characters. To embody a human on the edge, or in the middle of something. We did an exercise where we put our two character masks on either side of us - the closer we were to the mask, the more inline we were with that character. We were encouraged to then take that experience and find what was in the middle. For the Judas piece, this idea of 'the edge' is particularly important because he is teetering on it. His feelings about Jesus are so specific and so complex that being able to dance back and forth in that relationship is essential to an effective performance.

The balcony monologue from Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet* is another piece that I have admired for a long time. Though not a popular pick among Shakespeare enthusiasts, *Romeo & Juliet* has always been my favorite of his plays. I love the language, the characters, the story, and the action - it has it all. I had never thought to perform this particular monologue, I thought: "it's so well known, and people will just dismiss it right off the bat." But invigorated by my work in voice and acting classes I decided: "screw it." Romeo is so often portrayed as a dumb love-sick fool, tossed around by circumstance and drowning in a play that is named for him and his lover, but filled with so many more interesting characters. I think this is wrong. Juliet is largely believed, by scholars and performers alike, to be one of Shakespeare's smartest ever characters - if Romeo is as described above, then their relationship is out of balance and we won't care. Shakespeare

wrote them to match wits, their love is born from language - not JUST hormones. My study with both Shakespearean Voice and Acting techniques allowed me to find and execute on that potential. I worked very closely on this piece with Andrew Wade, who was formerly head of voice at the RSC, and is currently teaching at Juilliard. We explored, in particular, the sounds, the momentum, and the speed of thought in the piece. Through working with him we found that Romeo regularly uses the '5y' vowel sound, as in 'I 'eye' 'my' etc. Playing in this sound gave the balcony monologue so much more expression and feeling. As we have heard so many times before: the vowels give the piece meaning, and the consonants give it shape. Juliet inspires Romeo; with every breath he is filled and overwhelmed with ideas, metaphors, and love. He is caught between wanting to be with her in that instant, and the impossibility of the idea that she might love him back.

If the balcony monologue is all about language, then my monologue from Marco Ramirez's brilliant short play *I am Not Batman* is all about action. Performing this piece is an absolute blast. Unsurprising to anyone who knows me, I have always loved superheroes and this piece allows me to unleash my inner superhero fantasy. The play is written to be produced simply and is essentially a dialogue between an actor and a drummer. As 'the boy' dons the (makeshift) Dark Knight Cowl he springs into action, assaulting invisible thugs with savage "judo-karate." Stage combat has long been one of my loves in theatre; and *Batman* allows me to fully indulge in a little stage combat shadow-boxing. Because of how the play is written, one of the things that eluded me in this piece was WHO I'm talking to and WHY. Through experimentation with teachers, I was able to bring it into a dramatic context (a college kid trying to connect with a friend he's crushing on) that gave me that missing specificity. One of the other challenges was that in the joy of creating all of the combat choreography I was losing the sense of spontaneity. The moves were appearing rote. The solution to this problem is in successful execution of techniques learned through stage combat. I have to activate my "combat partners" - I have to SEE the weapons that I'm avoiding and the targets that I'm attacking. When this happens the audience will see me reacting rather than rehearsing.

The piece from George Bernard Shaw's *Man & Superman* is the most recent addition to my monologue portfolio. After seeing it spoken in *The Wit & World of George Bernard Shaw*<sup>2</sup> I was immediately taken by the content — by Shaw's argument. Much like my love for superheroes, my political opinions are pretty well known among my friends and colleagues. I was inspired to find someone of like-mind in Shaw; despite the vast difference in time, I feel that we are still (to borrow a word from Shaw) plagued by many of the same socio-political problems. As a country and a culture we fetishize war, we romanticize destruction; in the *Man & Superman* Shaw gives his scathing viewpoint on both of these issues to the unlikeliest of characters: The Devil. Putting the text in the hands of the devil gives the monologue that extra bit of spice. The audience gets to see a character who, seemingly, has the capacity to know all of these things; and can simultaneously condemn and take pleasure in just how horrible mankind can be. Satan's speech combines several aspects of the training I've received in this program. It makes use of the work I've done in voice classes to fully embody each and every word, it utilizes the time we spent with Jan Gist and Colleen Kelly on shaping and carrying forward rhetoric, and lastly it allows me to showcase my ability with dialect. In working to achieve the profoundly rhetorical nature of this monologue, Colleen suggested that I present it as a sort of lecture. The exercise was so successful that I've decided to present it in that same format for this portfolio. Thinking of the monologue

as having a thesis: “the power that governs the earth is not the power of life but that of death,” and then proving it with example after example gives each and every word in the monologue significance and weight.

When deciding on performance opportunities in my final semester, I sought to fill gaps that would have otherwise felt present in my graduate studies. Specifically, I wanted to tackle contemporary work. The plays that I took on this semester were all written in the last 15 years, but beyond that, each also filled a particular niche that I wanted to explore.

For *Curious Incident*, it was a reconnection to the Charlottesville theatrical community and a desire to work with Bryan Close as a director. Having grown up in Charlottesville it was very important to me that before I leave again, I do a play in the community. I will always consider Charlottesville my theatrical home, and while I was able to participate in small events: readings, 24/7, demos etc. I was drawn by a need to fully involve myself in a main-stage production. When the opportunity coincided with a chance to work with Bryan Close (a former professional actor who I had met, and grown to admire last summer during Heritage Theatre Festival’s production of *Harvey*) I leapt. His craft and skill was evident from the moment I read with him during *Harvey* callbacks, and I knew that I could learn a lot from his experience. And while I had initially believed I would be playing the role of Christopher, the experience turned out to be all the more meaningful: a local teenage boy, who was actually on the autism spectrum, auditioned; and I was able to witness him have the opportunity to portray a piece of his own experience on the stage every night.

For *Spelling Bee*, it was the opportunity to test myself in another musical and work closely with my cohort-mate, Alisa Ledyard. Musicals have intimidated me as an actor for a long time, and though I performed in a few during undergrad, I had written them off as employment opportunities for me in the professional world. However, in my first week in this program we all had to sing in front of each other during an Alexander Technique Master Class; upon hearing me sing, Alisa has been in my corner — encouraging and guiding me. Thanks to her support, I was able to earn a leading role in a professional musical (*The Cocoanuts* at HTF), something that I would have never even auditioned for, prior to entering the program. *Spelling Bee* gave me the chance to continue to work on the skills required to successfully perform in a musical, while continuing to work alongside the person that made it all possible.

For *Aliens*, it was a chance to work in contemporary realism and on a play written by one of the most brilliant playwrights working today. Though I have had many performance opportunities during my time in the program, I really felt that I was missing the experience of testing all that I have learned against the style of contemporary realism. It’s a style that dominates film and television, and plays a huge role in the current American theatrical landscape. Plays like *The Aliens* are being produced all the time, so I really felt an urge to be in one before graduating. I found *The Aliens* while searching for scene study material, and immediately fell in love with Annie Baker’s script and off-beat characters. With a small cast and a simple setting, I knew that producing it would be feasible; and thanks to the assistance of the drama department it was made possible. Though I will not perform until after I have completed this thesis, the rehearsal process has been incredibly illuminating, and I have no doubt that the mounting of this show will have been an invaluable part of my training at UVA.

# Chapter 3

Copies of Portfolio Materials

*The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*

By Stephen Adly Guirgis

**JUDAS**

Don't oh Judas me — *you're not wanted here*, okay, Mister Above-It-All?

I watched you trip over your own dusty feet to heal the sick, the blind, the lame, *any two-bit stranger who stubbed their fuckin' toe!* When some lowly distant relative — too cheap to buy enough wine for his own wedding — suddenly runs out of booze — no problem, you just “presto change-o” — *and it was Miller time in ol' Canaan again, wasn't it bro?! But when I needed you — where were you, huh?!*

You forgave Peter and bullshit Thomas — you knocked Paul of Tarsus off a horse — you raised Lazarus from the *fuckin' dead* — but me? Your “heart”?... *What about me?!?! What about me, Jesus?! Huh?! You just, you just — I made a mistake! And if that was wrong then you should have told me! And if broken heart wasn't sufficient reason to hang, THE YOU SHOULD HAVE TOLD ME THAT, TOO!*

All I know is that you broke me unfixable — and that I'm here... I loved you. That's all I ever did. And now I'm here.

*Romeo & Juliet*, scene ii.

By William Shakespeare

*JULIET* appears above at a window

**ROMEO**

But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?  
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.  
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,  
Who is already sick and pale with grief,  
That thou her maid art far more fair than she:  
Be not her maid, since she is envious;  
Her vestal livery is but sick and green  
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.  
It is my lady, O, it is my love!  
O, that she knew she were!  
She speaks yet she says nothing: what of that?  
Her eye discourses; I will answer it.  
I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks:  
Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,  
Having some business, do entreat her eyes  
To twinkle in their spheres till they return.  
What if her eyes were there, they in her head?  
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,  
As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven  
Would through the airy region stream so bright  
That birds would sing and think it were not night.  
See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!  
O, that I were a glove upon that hand,  
That I might touch that cheek!

*I Am Not Batman.*

By Marco Ramirez

**BOY**

It's the middle of the night and the sky is glowing like mad radioactive red. And if you look up high enough you could see me. Standing on the edge of an eighty-seven story building, - up there is me.

And I'm freakin Batman.

And I gots Bat-mobiles and Bat-arangs and freaking Bat-caves like for real, and all it takes is a broom closet or a back room, or a fire escape, and I get all, like tranformation-al.

Tonight, like most nights, I'm alone. And I'm watching.. and I'm waiting...  
Like an eagle. Or like a — no, yea, like an eagle. And from where I am I can hear everything.

Somewhere in the city there's a man in a janitor's uniform, stumbling home from work. And half a block away from JanitorMan there's a group of good-for-nothings who don't know no better waiting to beat on JanitorMan with rusted bicycle chains and imitation Louisville Sluggers.

But they don't count on me. They don't count on no dark knight (with a stomach full of grocery store brand macaroni-and-cheese and cut up Vienna sausages). 'Cause they'd rather believe I don't exist.

And from eighty-seven stories up I could hear one of the good-for-nothings say "Gimmethecash" real fast (like that) just "Gimmethefuckingcash"

So I swoop down like mad fast — And they're all like "whoa-who-just-turned-out-the-lights?" "what's that over there" "what?" "did anybody hear that?!" "Hear what? There ain't nothing — there ain't. No. Bat."

One out of three good-for-nothings gets it to the head! And number two swings blindly into the dark cape but before his fist hits anything I grab a trash can lid and —  
Number One comes back with a jump-kick but I know judo karate too so I'm like —Twice—

But before I can do any more damage we all hear a CLIC-CLIC

And for a second it seems like... *maybe I'm gonna lose.*  
Naw.

And then it just me and JanitorMan. And I pick him up, I grab him tight by his JanitorMan shirt collar and I pull him to my face, and he's taller than me, but the cape helps, so he listens when I look him straight in the eyes and I say: "Go home, dad."

And he does.

**THE DEVIL**

And is Man any the less destroying himself for all this boasted brain of his? Have you walked up and down upon the earth lately? I have; and I have examined Man's wonderful inventions. And I tell you that in the arts of life man invents nothing; but in the arts of death he outdoes Nature herself, and produces by chemistry and machinery all the slaughter of plague, pestilence and famine. The peasant I tempt to-day eats and drinks what was eaten and drunk by the peasants of ten thousand years ago; and the house he lives in has not altered as much in a thousand centuries as the fashion of a lady's bonnet in a score of weeks. But when he goes out to slay, he carries a marvel of mechanism that leaves the javelin, the arrow, and the blowpipe of his fathers far behind. In the arts of peace Man is a bungler. I have seen his cotton factories and the like, with machinery that a greedy dog could have invented if it had wanted money instead of food. I know his clumsy typewriters and bungling locomotives and tedious bicycles: they are toys compared to the Maxim gun, and the submarine torpedo boat. There is nothing in Man's industrial machinery but his greed and sloth: his heart is in his weapons. Man measures his strength by his destructiveness.

In the old chronicles you read of earthquakes and pestilences, and are told that these showed the power and majesty of God and the littleness of Man. Nowadays the chronicles describe battles. In a battle two bodies of men shoot at one another with bullets and explosive shells until one body runs away, and then the others chase the fugitives on horseback and cut them to pieces as they fly. Over such battles the people run about the streets yelling with delight, and egg their Governments on to spend hundreds of millions in the slaughter, whilst the strongest Ministers dare not spend an extra penny in the pound against the poverty and pestilence through which they themselves daily walk. I could give you a thousand instances; but they all come to the same thing: the power that governs the earth is not the power of Life but of Death; and the inner need that has nerved Life to the effort of organizing itself into the human being is not the need for higher life but for a more efficient engine of destruction. The plague, the famine, the earthquake, the tempest were too spasmodic in their action; the tiger and crocodile were too easily satiated and not cruel enough: something more constantly, more ruthlessly, more ingeniously destructive was needed; and that something was Man, the inventor of the rack, the stake, the gallows, and the electrocutor; of the sword and gun; above all, of justice, duty, patriotism and all the other isms by which even those among you clever enough to be humanely disposed are persuaded to become the most destructive of all the destroyers.

# Chapter 4

Photo Gallery



*SHIPWRECKED! The Amazing Adventures of...*

by Donald Margulies  
Directed by Marianne Kubik

Photo Credit: Michael Bailey



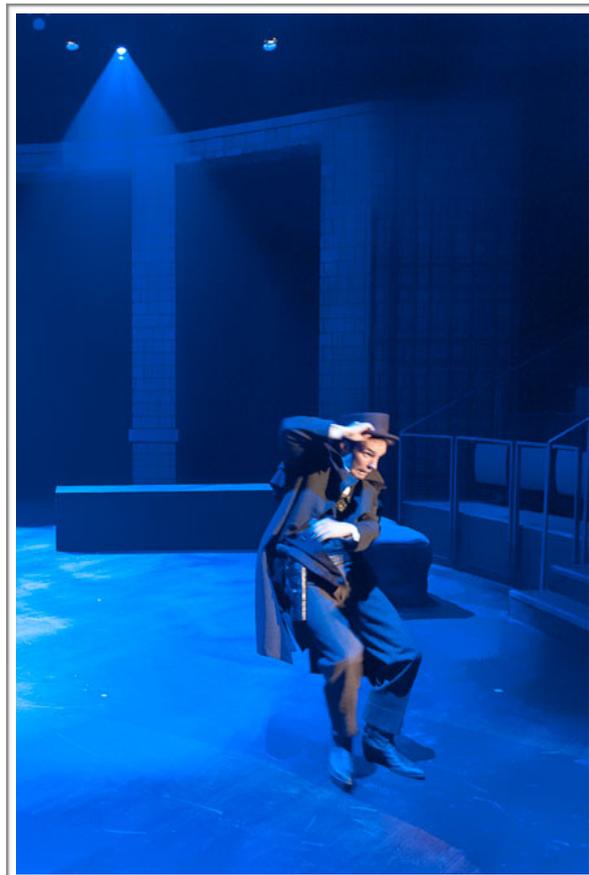


*BASKERVILLE: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery*

by Ken Ludwig

Directed by Colleen Kelly & Marianne Kubik

Photo Credit: Michael Bailey



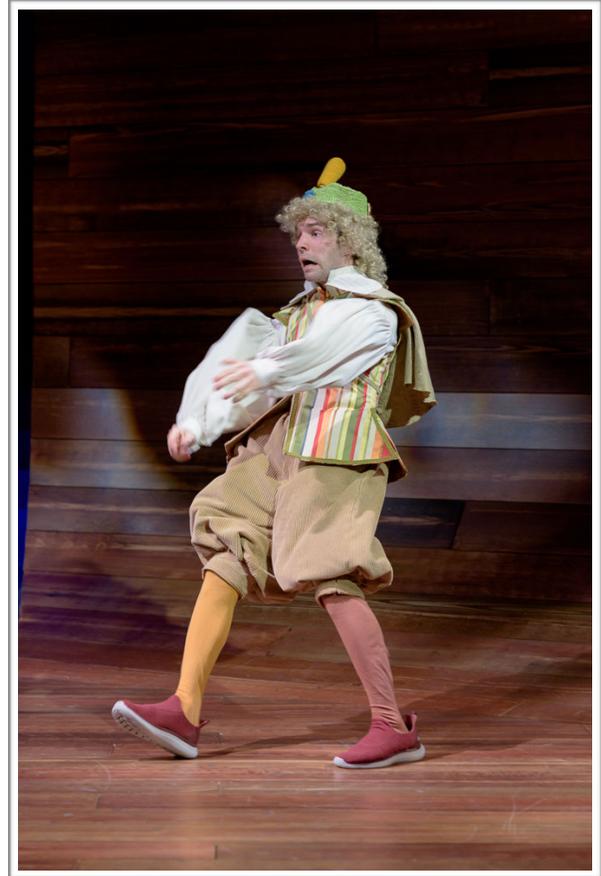


*The Cocoanuts*

Music & Lyrics by Irving Berlin, Book by George S Kaufman, Adapted by Mark Bedard  
Directed by Frank Ferrante

Photo Credit: Martin Kyle





*Love's A Bitch*

by Dave Dalton  
Directed by Dave Dalton

Photo Credit: Michael Bailey



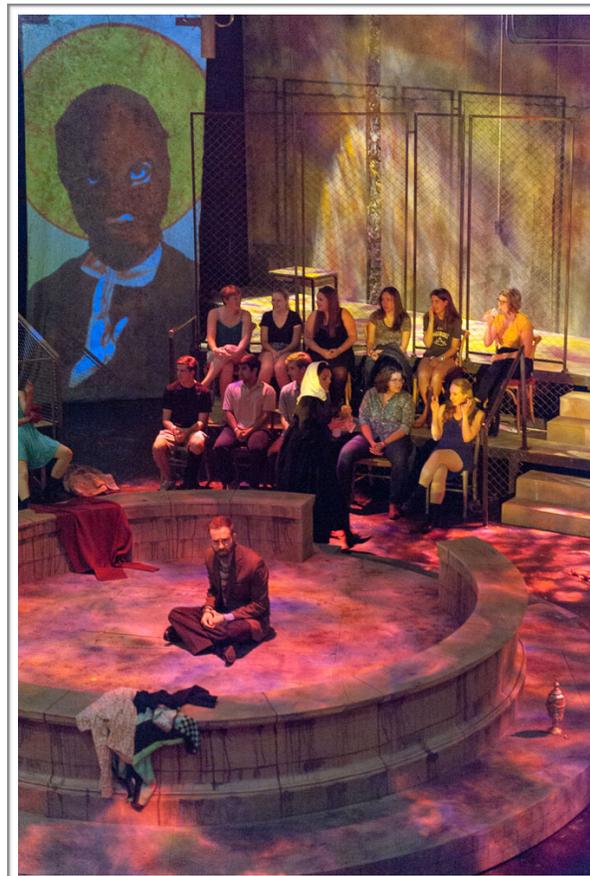


*Tartuffe*

by Molière, translated by Richard Wilbur  
 Directed by Sabine Epstein

Photo Credit: Michael Bailey





*WE ARE PUSSY RIOT or EVERYTHING IS PR*

by Barbara Hammond  
Directed by Marianne Kubik

Photo Credit: Michael Bailey





National Society of Arts & Letters  
Stage Combat Demo

Choreography by Marianne Kubik

Participants: Sam Reeder, Michael Miranda





### Cohort Memories

by The MFA Class of 2019



Appendix:  
Supplemental Materials

## *Headshots*



## Actor Resumé

# SAM REEDER

samreeder@gmail.com | Cell: (434) 760-1166  
 Hair: Brown | Eyes: Hazel/Brown | Height: 5'10"



### New York Theatre

<i>Titus Andronicus</i>	Mutius, etc.	Schapiro Theatre	Matthew Minnicino
<i>Spoon River Anthology</i>	"Butch" Weldy	Columbia University	Jimmy Maize
<i>Sections from the Heart*</i>	Son	Columbia University	Maridee Slater
<i>Everybody's Legs*</i>	The Professor	Schapiro Theatre	Anouk Kemp
<i>King Lear</i>	Albany, etc.	Easy Leap	Sharone Halavey
<i>Parradiddle*</i>	Farrell Taggart	Dream Up Festival	Thomas G. Waites
<i>Something Outrageous</i>	Mama's Boy, etc.	45th St Theatre	Michael Horn

### Regional Theatre

<i>The Cocoanuts</i>	Jamison "Zeppo"	Heritage Theatre Fest.	Frank Ferrante
<i>Ken Ludwig's Baskerville</i>	Player 2	Heritage Theatre Fest.	Colleen Kelly & M. Kubik
<i>Late Night Cabaret</i>	Ensemble	Williamstown	Kris Kukul
<i>Workshop Series: Waking Up</i>	Taylor	Williamstown	Cori Hundt

### University/Local Theatre

<i>Tartuffe</i>	Damis	University of Virginia	Sabine Epstein
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Lysander	University of Virginia	Brendon Fox
<i>The Aliens</i>	KJ	University of Virginia	Jim Moscatier
<i>Henry IV Parts 1 &amp; 2</i>	Prince Hal	Live Arts	Sara Holdren
<i>25th Annual... Spelling Bee</i>	Panch, Olive's Dad	University of Virginia	Dave Dalton
<i>Troy is Burning* by M. Minicino</i>	Odysseus	University of Virginia	Richard Warner
<i>Arcadia</i>	Septimus Hodge	Play On!	John Holdren
<i>Parade</i>	Frankie Epps	University of Virginia	Bob Chapel

### Film

The Apple Watch	Lead	Weekend Collective	Levinson Brothers
Sofa	Lead	LabShorts	Ben Feldman
Treasure Hunt	Lead	DannyJive Films	Daniel Finely
Ambition	Support	Fixed Signs Prod.	Christopher Celestin
Gifted and Talented	Lead	TheOnlineMusical	Jeff Luppino-Esposito
The Turns (Music Video)	Lead	David Bronson Music	Jordan Rathus
Beanie Baby Hunger Games	Lead	TheOnlineMusical	Jamie McCelland

### Training

*University of Virginia*, MFA Candidate

Acting: Colleen Kelly, Richard Warner, Betsy Tucker, Bob Chapel, Theresa Davis, Jenny Wales

Voice: Kate Burke, Tovah Close, Jan Gist, Andrew Wade

Movement & Stage Combat: Marianne Kubik

*Williamstown Theatre Festival*, Apprentice Company

Upright Citizens Brigade Training: Ryan Karels & Neil Casey

### Special Skills

Dual Citizen: UK and USA; SAFD Recognized Actor Combatant Singer: Bari/Tenor; Dialects: RP, British Standard, Cockney, Irish, Southern (rural and gentry), Russian; Improv; Valid Driver's license + manual transmission; I have read every single issue of the Amazing Spider-Man, and (maybe related-ly) I love climbing and jumping off stuff.

\*World Premiere Production

## *Actor Biography*

### **SAM REEDER**

**THEATER** NYC: *Jimmy Maize's Spoon River Anthology* (Butch Weldy), *Paradiddle* (Farrell Taggart), *King Lear* (Albany). Regional: *The Cocoanuts* (Jamison 'Zeppo'), *Ken Ludwig's Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery* (Sir Henry track), *My Fair Lady* (Charles). University: *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Panch, Olive's Dad), *Tartuffe* (Damis) *WE ARE PUSSY RIOT* (Sergei), *Love's a Bitch* (Caramanchel), *Fuddy Meers* (Kenny), *Troy is Burning* (Odysseus), *Parade* (Frankie Epps). Local: *Henry IV Parts 1&2* (Prince Hal), *Arcadia* (Septimus Hodge), *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time* (Mr. Thompson track). **FILM** Independent Short: *Sofa* (lead), *14th & Grady* (lead). Web Content: *Gifted & Talented* (lead), *The Apple Watch* (lead), *Pokemon: The Musical* (lead), *Beanie Baby Hunger Games* (lead). **TRAINING** University of Virginia MFA Program.

## *Text of Personal Introduction*

“Hi my name is Sam Reeder

“When I was growing up I couldn’t decide what I wanted to be when I finally reached adulthood. I would change my mind like every single week. I was gonna be an athlete, a cop, all kinds of stuff. I don’t think I ever wanted to be an astronaut; I like space, I wanted to be a Jedi - I think I would have made a good Jedi. I think part of the reason I became an actor is because as an actor you get to do everyone’s job. But you only have to do the best parts of them. Which is a whole lot more fun. Like if you are a cop, you get to make the day-saving arrest, but you don’t have to fill out all the paperwork. Or if you’re a babysitter you get to build the the pillow fort, play, and eat ice cream, but you don’t have to deal with the baby being sick on you. Or if you are a lawyer you get to make the incredible closing argument, bring the jury to tears - but you don’t have to read thousands of pages of precedent over 3 years of law school. Which *was* what I had planned. When I first went into undergraduate, I thought I was going to graduate and be a lawyer. Fortunately some really good friends and fantastic teachers saved me from that fate. And set me on this path.

I love the transformational aspect of theatre. Not only the transformation that happens for me as an actor in every role, but also the transformation that I get to see in an audience that has just experienced an incredible piece of theater, film, or television. That zeitgeist that happens around something is amazing, and really inspirational, and really feeds me.

I think that theatre and film build empathy better than any other medium out there. And I think the world, at least as it is now, and has been for the last thousand years, could use a hell of a lot more empathy.

I love what I do.”

## Statements of Permission for Use of Copyright Materials

### Performance Request for MFA Thesis: "THE LAST DAYS OF JUDAS ISCARIOT" Inbox x



**Samuel Reeder** <spr2f@virginia.edu>  
to jbz

Tue, Mar 26, 11:13 AM (5 days ago)



Dear Mr. Buzzetti,

Please excuse the email out of the blue, I was given your contact email by a rep at DPS. My name is Sam Reeder, I am currently a student at the University of Virginia pursuing my Master of Fine Arts degree in Performance. As a part of our Thesis Presentation we are required to perform a number of monologues to be video recorded and ultimately stored (as an online portfolio) in the University of Virginia library. With your permission, I would love to be able to use a monologue from Stephen Adly Guirgis' *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*. I love the piece, and would be thrilled to include it in my Thesis Portfolio. Thank you for considering this request, I look forward to hearing from you!

All the best,  
Sam



**John Buzzetti** <JBuzzetti@wmeagency.com>  
to me

Tue, Mar 26, 12:51 PM (5 days ago)



approved



### Performance Request for MFA Thesis: "I AM NOT BATMAN" Inbox x



**Samuel Reeder** <spr2f@virginia.edu>  
to info

Mar 25, 2019, 11:16 PM (6 days ago)



To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Sam Reeder, I am currently a student at the University of Virginia pursuing my Master of Fine Arts degree in Performance. As a part of our Thesis Presentation we are required to perform a number of monologues to be video recorded and ultimately stored (as an online portfolio) in the University of Virginia library. With your permission, I would love to be able to use a monologue from Marco Ramirez's *I am not Batman*. I love the piece, and would be thrilled to include it in my Thesis Portfolio. Thank you for considering this request, I look forward to hearing from you!

All the best,  
Sam



**Steve (Playscripts)** <support@playscripts.zendesk.com>  
to me

Mar 26, 2019, 9:40 AM (5 days ago)



##- Please type your reply above this line -##

Your request (896) has been updated. To add additional comments, reply to this email.



**Steve (Playscripts)**

Mar 26, 08:40 -05

Hi Samuel,

You have permission to perform a selection of the from the play that is under 10 minutes in length. Any performance longer than 10 minutes would require a license.

Only in the event of performing more than 10 minutes, a recording license would need to be purchased.

Good luck!

Steve, The Playscripts Team

## *Works Cited*

- <sup>1</sup> Esper, William, and Damon DiMarco. *The Actors Art and Craft: William Esper Teaches the Meisner Technique*. Anchor, 2009. pg. 18
- <sup>2</sup> Rasky, Harry, director. *The Wit & World of George Bernard Shaw*. British Broadcasting Company, 1972.
- <sup>3</sup> Moore, Sonia. *The Stanislavski System: the Professional Training of an Actor: Digested from the Teachings of Konstantin S. Stanislavski*. Penguin Books, 1984. pg. 42

## *Plays Referenced*

- Baker, A., Chernus, M., Darragh, P., & Gann, E. (2011). *The Aliens*. New York, NY: Dramatists Play Service.
- Finn, W., Sheinkin, R., & Feldman, R. (2005). *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. New York, NY: Music Theatre International.
- Stephens, S., Haddon, M. (2015). *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. New York, NY: Dramatists Play Service.
- Ramirez, Marco (2008). "I am Not Batman." *Humana Festival 2007: the complete plays*. New York, NY: Playscripts, Inc.
- Guirgis, Stephen Adly (2006). *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Shaw, G. B. (1952) *Man & Superman*. Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books.
- Shakespeare, William. *Romeo & Juliet*. Retrieved April 21, 2019, from [http://shakespeare.mit.edu/romeo\\_juliet/full.html](http://shakespeare.mit.edu/romeo_juliet/full.html)

*Fin.*