Acting: The Training of an Athlete

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Releasing Old Habits and Linking the Voice to New Potential

Any craftsman who is a master of their trade understands two important practices, awareness and repetition. In order to master a craft, it is necessary to develop skill that appears effortless to the outside eye. Achieving this level of proficiency means the craftsman has to implement self-awareness and repetition in daily practice. Great performers know what keeps a certain skill from appearing effortless and have the willingness to repeat that skill until it becomes second nature. Athletes train in their respective sports this way, which is why sporting events can be some of the most engaging experiences to witness. The discipline of the basketball player who has shot thousands of free throws, of the soccer player who has passed tens of thousands of balls, of the quarterback who has thrown to a moving target on a daily basis, and of the baseball player who has swung a bat hundreds of thousands of times is what makes those skills effortless. The utilization of self-awareness and repetition are what every actor should employ in vocal training.

Proficient artists need awareness of their bodies in order to advance vocal development. With growing awareness comes great potential, and we as artists have an incredible responsibility to meet that potential to the best of our ability. I assumed this responsibility in my learning process, my teaching process and in the process of combining both in performance at the University of Virginia.

1.1 Identifying the Formation and Sensation of Sustainable and Tappable Consonants

The discovery and execution of Arthur Lessac's sustainable and tappable consonants has been one of my most enjoyable journeys with text work. Initially, it felt very vulnerable to commit to and indulge in speaking full, sustained consonant sounds such as the M, N, V, Z, or S. My difficulty with breaking the habit of speaking sustainable consonants in a short, punched

manner when they could be extravagantly lengthened made me realize how limited my speech was in life and on stage. It was revealing to discover that most Americans, including myself and my classmates, typically do not employ consonant sustention in everyday speech. Shedding old habits and replacing them with acute self-awareness and a new way of speaking proved to be time intensive and tedious. Once I allowed myself to embrace the gift of sustained consonant sounds, however, I discovered how dynamically they could inform different texts. On stage, consonant sustention can give the actor a much wider range of vocal potential for communicating choices more clearly. An actor's awareness of when a word is unclear because consonant sounds are not fully articulated is paramount when developing a role. Prior to my vocal training at UVa my awareness of consonant clarity had slackened. After a whole semester of focus on these sounds I could identify the habitual patterns in my speech that were holding me back.

Tappable consonants are the hard-hitting staccato letters that create crisp beginnings, middles, and ends in words. Consonants such as B, D, T and P link one vowel efficiently to another and give clarity to the language being spoken. Finding a strong relationship with tappables was both challenging and surprisingly quite effortless at times. Even though I initially had difficulty executing them, it was a breakthrough when my awareness of tappables increased. Though I quickly found unvoiced tappables easy to execute, voiced tappables, such as the B and D, gave me trouble. In the same way voicing sustainable consonants felt extremely vulnerable, it took time to vocalize tappable consonants with full value. Just as any athlete will attest, when there is a problematic habit limiting potential, such as vulnerability while executing a given vocal technique, repetition is the key to moving from mere awareness of the habit to changing it. After a semester of daily work, it became second nature to voice crisp consonants at the middles and ends of words.

1.2 Exploring these sounds in language

I had the opportunity to directly apply this work to my development of Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*, directed by Brantley Dunaway at UVa. A stronger execution of both sustainable and tappable consonants allowed me to add dynamic variation and clarity to Mercutio's speeches. Though he is always on stage with others, he has little dialogue with them. He tends to speak in long waves of text, often relating to the audience while other characters interject in a reactionary way. In many of Shakespeare's speeches the same idea is repeated in slightly different ways. How can an actor express similar ideas differently and with clear intent? As a less experienced actor, this would have been terrifying for me but, thankfully, my ability to play with sustainables and tappables saved me.

I utilized sustainables to get multiple intentions out of the same idea. I could sustain certain consonants within a line in order to entice another character, which built tension. I could sustain certain parts of words in order to slow down pacing without having to slow down the thought process by pausing between words. Lengthening consonants also allowed the character to discover ideas for the first time in his speeches by working out thoughts through the text instead of before or after it. The utilization of consonant sustention created a wonderful contrast to the tappables that provide a button at the ends of words and sentences. Tappables were also integral to finding clarity and articulation of the rich language that had to be communicated in the cavernous 600-seat Culbreth Theatre at UVa. They provide the structure and support that hold together all the big open vowels Shakespeare uses in his texts.

Vowels are just as important as consonants in classical texts because they provide the heartbeat of emotion within the words. Sounds such as *oh, ay, aye,* and *ow* drive the passionate intention of the character. Without clear, concise tappables bonding Shakespeare's words

together, the audience would only hear big open vowel sounds with nothing to shape and contour them. These power vowels need to be contained by consonants so the actor can clearly communicate their intentions.

The importance of the vowel/consonant relationship became very evident to me in one of Mercutio's most famous lines "O, then I see Queen Mab hath been with you." The O allows the actor to find their way emotionally into the speech, but the tappable "B" in Mab is important for the audience to hear for two reasons. First, because it is one of Shakespeare's most well known lines. Second, because Mab is the catalyst that launches Mercutio into the speech and if missed by the audience, they will lose an important empathetic connection with the character. I also developed a consistent sarcastic energy with Mercutio; emphasizing the tappables helped to highlight that sarcasm especially in short, single-syllable words. Lines such as "Come, come, thou art as hot a jack in thy mood as any in Italy," "Could you not take some occasion without the giving?" or "Thou hast most kindly hit it." were spoken with a sharp, crisp tone, creating a wonderful "wink" of sarcasm.

1.3 Consonant Linking

Consonant linking is a technique used to connect like or related sounds from the end of one word to the beginning of another so as not to create a glottal stop, or a pause in sound between words. Consonant linking affords the actor a road map that can lead them through the text seamlessly and efficiently; otherwise, pacing and energy can quickly become lost in the enticing space between words. Once a strong road map has been established, the actor then has the freedom to "detour" when they deem it necessary. I thought it would be extremely difficult to decide what consonants could or should be featured by breaking links within a speech. Once the actor has notated all the links, they are afforded the freedom to play with the language by picking

and choosing which word links to break. Exploring variations and feeling what pops out allows the actor to try all types of interesting choices, which empower them to choose what works best based on the circumstances of the scene.

Other than clarity of character intention, linking allows the actor to develop three other important techniques: pace, pause, and breath support. All three tools help to create engaging choices, especially when dealing with the poetry of Shakespeare. In long plays comprised of longs speeches, linking allows the actor to move the language at a strong rate without having to necessarily speak quickly. This creates steady pacing that not only keeps the play moving forward but also permits the actor the maximum amount of breath per line because there are no unnecessary pauses between words. Without unneeded pauses, the actor has the freedom to use the measured tempo, created by consonant linking, while making deviations that give dynamic life to the language. When the actor does choose to take a pause that is not indicated by a comma or period, consonant linking reveals whether or not the break feels justified. Honing this technique gives the actor more control over pause length and how it should affect the scene. The constant flow that efficient consonant linking provides, makes this possible.

1.4 Experience 14 (Adapted from Arthur Lessac's *Exercise 14*)

Graduate acting students wear many hats in their training programs–performer, student, teacher, peer–and fulfilling all of these roles takes up time and energy. One of the most important responsibilities an artist has is a daily commitment to ongoing growth and training. Sometimes one may feel there is not enough time in each day to maintain that commitment and if they only have five minutes, what's the point? Since consistent, repetitive training is one of the only ways craftsmen can improve, why *not* five minutes? Five minutes a day is better than none, especially in a trade where repetition is so important. Experience 14 is an exercise which captures many of

the facets of vocal training and can be utilized in a manageable amount of time. Incorporating any piece of text, Experience 14 takes the actor on a journey of vocal exploration touching on memorization, tone, resonance and placement, breath support, volume, vowel shaping, consonant clarity and mental focus in one continuous sequence of events. Listed below is my personalized sequence from beginning to end adapted from Arthur Lessac and Kate Burke's original exercise.

Experience 14 Vocal Warm Up Sequence

1. *Sustained "Beee" sounds moving up one half step in pitch on each breath in the lower third of the register. Begin at the lowest comfortable pitch, move up to slightly above speaking level then back down.*

2. *Sustained "oooo" sounds in the upper falsetto in order to begin to find relaxed forward placement.*

3. *Proclaimed (spoken) "beeyoh" and "beeyay" calls to find clear, forward resonance in the speaking register.*

4. *Place a cork, cut to a thumb width, between the teeth so the mouth can sit about a half inch comfortably open and the lips can move freely. Using a piece of text from a production or an audition monologue sustain (recited on a single tone) each line beginning just below the speaking register and moving up a half step on the last syllable of the last word of each phrase. Continue up a half step in pitch until you reach your highest sustainable tone, then come back down using half a step each phrase until you hit your lowest sustainable tone. As you move upward in pitch allow your lips to move from a relaxed, smaller "o" shape to open up to a more elongated, larger "0" shape. Depending on the length of the speech, it will most likely be repeated many times by the end of the full experience. The first phrase to bring you into chanting, before you begin the chosen text, will always be "Hello Away Until Unearth Again." The consonants should be articulated as clearly as possible without strain and all vowels are replaced with the "O" vowel which promotes strong forward resonance. Ex. "Hello Away Until Unearth Again" becomes "Hohloh Ohwoh Ohnoath Ohntoh Ohgohn."*

5. *Remove the cork and use one finger space between the teeth, shaping softly rounded, forward lips. In the natural speaking register continue proclaiming the text with the substituted highly resonant, projected O vowel sounds for all the regular vowel sounds giving full intention to the text and exploring range in pitch and volume. This is called "tone dialect" and should sound a little as if you were playing the Mayor of Munchkin Land. (Each of the following sections in Tone Dialect can be explored for about 30 seconds)*

6. *Continuing to move through the text in tone dialect, speak all "E" and "A" vowels normally, sustaining them. Ex. As written from Moliere's Tartuffe, "Has for my sake presumed to violate the secrecy that's due to things of state," in tone dialect highlighting the long "E" and "A" vowels "Hohs foh moh sAYk prohsohmd toh vohyohlAYt thoh sEEcrohsEE thohts doh toh thohngs ohf stAYt"*

7. *Using tone dialect, highlight and elongate all the sustainable consonants. Ex. "HohZZZZZZ foh moh sohk prohsohMMMMMMd toh vohyohloht thoh sohcrohsoh thohts doh toh thohNNNNNNgs ohVVVVVV stoht"*

8. *Using tone dialect, highlight and clearly execute all the tappable consonants. Ex. "Hohs foh moh soh**K** prohsohm**D** toh vohyohloh**T** thoh sohcrohsoh thoh**TS** doh toh thohngs ohf stoh**T**"*

9. *Speak the text in a whisper focusing on the sensation of lip shaping without needing the cork to keep the teeth apart and the lips open and relaxed.*

10. *Resume tone dialect without the cork until you have gone through the rest of that cycle of the text, and then slowly allow the normally inflected vowels to find their way back while speaking the whole text. Explore full voice, pitch variation, consonant clarity and easy open vowel shaping.*

11. *Alternate voiced and unvoiced tappables with each letter until the breath runs out. Ex. "Buh, Puh" then "Duh, Tuh" then "Guh, Kuh" then "Juh, Chuh"*

12. *Flutter the lips on any comfortable tone ending with buh, wuh, and muh. Three separate sequences with each consonant.*

13. *Take a deep breath and enjoy the show or audition!*

An actor's warm up should be about taking time to find focused energy that will prepare them to be open to any creative opportunity. In my studies here I have gained enough tools to do an hour-long warm up if I wanted to, but sometimes it is more important to find out what needs the most attention in order to maximize the effectiveness of preparation. The amazing Experience 14 allows the actor not only to warm up, but to tailor that warm up to the role being played or whatever the actor may need on that particular day.

My first application of E14 in development and performance was in the same production of *Romeo and Juliet* here at UVa. E14 allowed me to continue to progress on many different levels. I embodied the Queen Mab speech through daily repetition. The many different components involved in E14 strengthened my oral agility because of the constant manipulation of the text that occurs throughout the exercise. E14 takes the actor on a unique journey every time and encourages them to explore the geography of the language; it stays alive and fresh without the hindrance of developing rote line readings. Mercutio's speech became malleable,

which made it accessible to nightly changes in performance depending on what circumstances or other actors threw at me.

Taking any well known speech or monologue and going through E14 with it on a daily basis not only allows the actor to continue to become intimate with their repertoire but it hits all the building blocks of Arthur Lessac's training methodology. E14 gives the actor the opportunity to speak text with full value and explore the limits of pace and pitch all while strengthening breath capacity. I continue to struggle with this in classical texts, but throughout *Romeo and Juliet* I gained a stronger awareness of poor breathing patterns. Awareness put into practice eventually led me to breathe more efficiently when coupling heightened text with the physicality I created for Mercutio.

In addition to breath support, E14 helped me to quickly find forward tonal placement by using the tone dialect. Tone dialect naturally brings the placement of tone forward and out which creates optimal resonance in the space. With repeated use of it, the actor can distinctly sense when tonal placement is most efficient versus when it creates unnecessary tension in the vocal cords. Initial exposure to this new-found awareness can be frustrating for young actors in performance; it may cause them to be thinking about vocal placement and its manipulation, as opposed to acting intentions or relationship. As with any athlete or craftsman, repetition of this technique allows it to become second nature.

In conjunction with my execution of vocal placement, I found it challenging to keep my voice healthy while transitioning from rehearsals into performances of *Romeo and Juliet*. I was tensely vocalizing from my throat for a couple different reasons. Young actors tend to develop nerves when performing in an unfamiliar space which can create tension in the vocals cords, or they may have a fear of not being understood which provokes unnecessary volume, energy and

stress. Mercutio's high-stakes speeches made it tempting to plow through text without shaping tones properly, letting the energy of being in the moment guide my speech instead of allowing technique to guide it. This will almost always create tension in the vocal cords and in time will weaken the actor's voice. Developing second-nature vocal technique is important, because it gives the actor freedom to play in the moment while still speaking efficiently and healthily. Once I was able to pinpoint the few moments when tension might occur, it was easier to find forward placement during the rest. By the beginning of the second weekend of the run I found stronger control over the quality and health of my voice.

Finally, in addition to helping my voice find rich, forward placement, clear resonance and strong breath support, E14 allowed me to explore different rhythms and patterns using the sustainable and tappable sections of the exercise. Doing E14 nightly gave me the chance to make different choices all the time which kept the speech fresh and did not allow me to get stuck in a pattern. Since *Romeo and Juliet*, I have applied E14 to numerous other shows, and it continues not only to keep my vocal work fresh and alive, but also allows me to get a little closer to mastering some key vocal techniques already mentioned: tonal placement, tappable and sustainable consonants, lip shaping, and breath support.

When the actor combines all of these techniques and continues to master them, they breathe life and intention into text. I have realized the importance and simplicity of finding emotion and energy from the words themselves without having to fabricate a mood or tone. When these techniques are fully utilized, the actor can trust in allowing the language to speak for itself through exploration. Embodying every nook and cranny of the language makes it easier for the actor to relate to it and then clearly share that with an audience.

During my short time with vocal study and application at UVa, I have gained new opportunities for potential with the techniques I have learned. With this potential comes a great responsibility because of the power that performers hold when we share stories with the people who come to listen. Whether that is seven classmates who are required to listen or six hundred strangers who have paid to listen, the magnitude of that responsibility does not change. As artists we have the opportunity to expose a diverse community of people to stories of the human condition through the mediums of speeches, plays, poetry and other expressions of live performance. My exploration of language through the voice strengthened my ability to uphold this responsibility and helped me continue to grow into the kind of artist that can affect people in a vital way.

The Physical Actor Creates Moving Performances

What compels someone to say that they were "moved" by a piece of theatre? More specifically, how can an actor portray a character in such a way that they are moving to an audience? This is a question that actors strive to find the answers to throughout their careers. There is no single way to create a great performance; but one way a performance can be "moving" is due to the movement itself that fuels an actor's development and play within the circumstances of a piece of theatre.

An actor's aptitude to fully embody their physicality gives their audiences clear information about the character they are playing. The easier it is for the audience to follow a character's state of being, the easier it will be to follow the story and invest in the performance. All of this can be aided by clarity of the actor's physical state of being in relationship to the other characters and to the space. Before those relationships can occur, the actor must have the aptitude for creating multiple physical states dictated by the circumstances. If the actor does their job, the audience should be able to tell exactly what state their character is in before a single word is uttered based on how they manipulate their body. An audience should sense whether they are sick, depressed, elated, enraged, devastated, at peace, or even the degree to which they have to go to the bathroom. The state of a character will only be moving if the audience can empathize with them. Most often an audience may not know how empathy is created, but the actor should. Actors achieve this by showing how the circumstances of the play change the character physically.

When I played the role of Ted in *God's Ear,* directed by Sandy Shinner at UVa, I was able to directly apply manipulation of physicality in order to show the character in two distinct states. In the very first scene Ted rushes into a hospital room where he finds out his child is

fighting for his life. I had to use the physicality of an average, healthy father, which was essentially neutral, to react physically to the circumstances. Heavy breathing created tension in my abdomen and lower back and a trembling in my hands; my focus was either directed down to the floor or up to the ceiling. These physical choices conveyed a strong healthy man fighting against the trauma of the life-changing news he was given. The audience was given a clear idea of his initial state of being which was juxtaposed with his state during the rest of the play that took place months after his son's death. In order to show the deep state of depression and detachment that comes with the loss of a loved one, I collapsed the character inward at the lower torso which caused the shoulders to cave in. I moved at the slower pace of someone who no longer had the will to survive. Lastly, I kept my face as relaxed as possible unless the stakes were high enough to compel me to show deeper emotion.

In order to achieve this type of physical manipulation, the actor first needs to be able to identify their most neutral physical state so they can build a character around that state. Employing a physical body that is responsive to any and all stimuli creates a character with such specificity that it becomes accessible to any member of the audience. Up until recently, a lot of American acting training has focused on honing analytical abilities of human behavior in order to develop a character's internal psychology. This mostly comes from the influence of Lee Strasberg and his adaptation of the Stanislavski Method. Strasberg's "Method Actors" would draw from deep and personal emotional recall and funnel that into the psychological state of the character. This training is based on the assumption that if the actor is truly engaged in the psychological world of the character, the voice and the body will naturally follow.

Strasberg's contemporaries Stella Adler, Sanford Meisner and Robert Lewis drew from the fundamentals of Stanislavski as well, but felt that Strasberg's methods put too much attention

on “self” and not enough on the “other.” Each of their methodologies moved further from a focus on a psychological construct and closer to focusing on how the given circumstances and other actors in a scene could help build clear character. Though all these methodologies differ in degree, they are still primarily used in one way or another in actor training programs. They are successful and work for a lot of students, but I believe beginning with a psychological state creates a static, heady character development process. If actors start with the physical self, impulses can be received through their bodies which create more dynamic character actions.

Actor training, according to the Method, exercises the mind to become so familiar with a character that the actor can be given any type of impulse and honestly and openly react to it. Unfortunately, depending on the actor’s level of physical awareness, their reactions may or may not manifest through their body. I say, exercise the body before the mind. If actors train their bodies with the same mentality and awareness as an athlete, they can develop a specific physical life for a character, and use that facility to react based on the given circumstances. This physical state of play will directly and organically influence the emotional state of the character. Using this method allows the actor to draw from the body’s natural reaction to stimulus, not from preconceived notions of how the actor thinks the character should react.

As spectators of sports, people find so much beauty in watching the artistry of a professional baseball player hit a home run, a sprinter run the 100 meter dash in ten seconds, a golfer hit a hole in one, a basketball player score from half court or a soccer player manipulate the ball past numerous opponents. Actors have the opportunity to create an even more moving performance because of their ability to engage with their audience not only using their bodies, but their voice and imagination as well. Athletes presumably play for the audience but may choose not to engage with them to protect their productivity throughout the game. This is a good

example of the purest form of what Stanislavski called public solitude. In storytelling, everything should be for the audience, so actors should strive to incorporate every part of their bodies in order to engage with the audience at the deepest level.

An actor's aptitude for fully utilizing their body, voice, and imagination, is what separates a good performance from a moving performance. With the discipline of training the body physically, comes the actor's freedom to play. This is not only important for development during a rehearsal process, but also gives the actor stamina throughout the long run of a show in the same way any baseball player must play nearly one hundred fifty games a season to the best of their ability. An actor with a strong, flexible body can continue to create an honest, vulnerable and unique performance every single night. Literal strength and flexibility are important for actors, but awareness is equally as important and provides creative flexibility when building a character.

2.1 Awareness Builds Character

Athletes often have to change physical habits that limit their potential in order to play the game as efficiently as possible. Actors should do the same. This means first recognizing their habitual physical movements before stripping away those that may be limiting the development of a character. Achieving this neutrality, or what I like to call the *everyman,* gives the actor a facility for physically reacting to any stimulus with limitless potential. In other words, it is easier to remodel a house when you can build over a stripped down frame as opposed to having to build over the original facade, distorting what the final product could be. In the case of a soccer player, the everyman state is attained in order to masterfully develop skills such as passing and shooting without the athlete's prior inefficient, habitual physicality getting in the way. Before an athlete can have a clean pass with the inside of the foot, they need to gain flexibility in the hips and

thighs so they do not continue to inaccurately pass the ball because the foot does not have full turn out. For the actor, there may be similar dominant, inefficient physical habits such as pigeon toes, hunching of the upper back, extraneous hand movement, walking with heavy energy or others they may not be aware of. Without awareness, those habits will begin to show up in every character they play, limiting specificity and, therefore, the ability to tell a clear story. The breakdown of inefficient habits requires a commitment to the repetition of neutral physical movements that are adjusted by a constant objective eye until they are controllable; this sometimes takes years to achieve.

Once the actor has found their everyman, they have the freedom to build any type of character. I created two characters that had completely different status levels indicated by their physicality built from the everyman. Jack, the character I played in *Vinegar Tom* at UVa, directed by John Vreeke, had to have extremely low status. I used deviations from the everyman that lowered his status based on physical appearance and energy. I adjusted my natural parallel foot position so my right foot turned inward which gave a slight "hump" to his walk. I collapsed my torso and caved my shoulders while still maintaining broad arms in order to take up space. Lastly, I affected my speech using an under bite, and I breathed mostly through my mouth with it hanging open as much as possible. This gave the audience the impression of an uneducated man, who had apelike, animalistic and territorial behavior because of the amount of space he took up. Conversely, when I played Valère in *Tartuffe,* directed by Bruce Miller at the Virginia Repertory Theatre, I used my physicality to develop an upper class, high status character. Because it is a period piece set in Mid-17th Century France, creating high status meant the character had to exemplify the physical norm of the period. I adjusted from a parallel stance to one that was wide and staggered with a broad turn out. My lower back had a strong arch which allowed my chest to

be high and open. My arms extended out at all times supported by my latissimus dorsi muscles, the broadest muscles of the back that wrap around the torso under the arm, allowing my wrists and hands to be relaxed and free. This gave the audience the sense of a character that was schooled in deportment, dance, and fencing indicating his wealth and high social status.

Building a character from the everyman state promotes the creation of specific, spontaneous and, hopefully, empathetic character choices. It allows the actor to play freely within the context of the story being told and provides clear information about the state of their character based on the given circumstances. In the same way, an athlete's neutral physical embodiment allows them to play to the best of their ability according to the specific circumstances of the game.

How else can the actor fully utilize the everyman state once they have found it? The human body houses immense potential energy. Whether one is walking down the street or performing on stage, we see the utilization of this potential energy all the time, in some instances more efficiently than others. Starting with the everyman to build a character is not merely about changing physical habits, it is about finding an awareness of how the body uses energy and how to maximize that use of energy. Maximizing potential energy comes through the core found within us all.

What exactly does "core" mean? Physically it means the muscles that encase our body's center which includes many layers of the abdominal and back muscles that make up the torso of every human being. Energy controls that physical powerhouse of sinew and any actor or athlete must gain awareness of this energy in order to manipulate it with full potential. No core awareness equals no everyman, equals limited play which, ultimately, equals a low quality of artistic expression.

What does manipulating or moving our bodies with full potential mean and why is it important? It means that the actor's movement is originated from the core, as opposed to the extremities. Energy moves through our core, our core moves our bodies, and our bodies move in space, in turn affecting their surroundings and the audience. Without focused energy, there is little movement from the core and, therefore, a physical action becomes weak and less effective. This is why moving from the core allows a person to affect their surroundings on a more engaged and deeper level. The actor who tries to generate energy from their extremities rather than their core creates weak and disconnected movement, which is not useful for communication in any game, on or off stage.

The sword fight between Mercutio and Tybalt, in my previously discussed production of *Romeo and Juliet,* is a clear example of how moving from the core is essential to showing status differences between two characters. Mercutio is a character that is very in tune with his body, but has nowhere near the experience with sword fighting as Tybalt. It is important for both actors to have the ability to move through their core during this scene in order to clearly show this status difference. I, the actor, had to be very agile and have strong control over my physical actions while giving Mercutio, the character, the appearance of being a less qualified sword fighter. I used my core energy to create safe physical actions and sword moves that appeared uncontrolled and frantic due to the skill and finesse that Tybalt brought to the fight. If the actor playing Tybalt does not execute his sword maneuvers by moving from the core, it will make his character appear weak and inefficient. Inefficiency of core movement such as this could lead the audience to believe that Tybalt does not have the upper hand due to the dominant skill that he should have. Thankfully, the actor playing Tybalt was a good stage fighter who was aware of his body. We

were able to find what is called a *shared equilibrium* with each other and create a compelling fight scene where some of the odds were clearly against Mercutio because of his lack of training.

Once the actor can relate their personal energy source to their core powerhouse, they can draw all of their physical movement through the core instead of around it, allowing them to affect the space in a more dynamic way. We watch sports or go to the theatre to be engaged, to witness something beyond reality that changes us in some way. The effect created when experiencing a football player kick a 50-yard field goal, or a soccer player volley a shot from mid air and score, comes from this awareness and utilization of potential energy. Actors can create similar effects while crying out "Stella!" as Stanley in *A Streetcar Named Desire* or playing the moment when Othello becomes driven to murder Desdemona. These are moments in the theatre that have the potential to change an audience's communal artistic experience forever. Without core engagement there is no dynamic power and there is no tension in space; if these elements are not present in performance, it will not be as engaging for the audience.

2.2 Awareness of Relationship and Space

What exactly is a shared equilibrium between actors on stage? In any game there are always two or more opposing forces that are constantly pushing or pulling in order to navigate winning the game; similarly, it is the actors' ability to play with these opposing forces that creates tension filled, engaging theatre. Whether two actors are connected physically or in space, in order to explore tension, they have to first find the implicit opposing force between them. Without this awareness, there is nowhere to push or pull from and, therefore, no tension. Finding a shared equilibrium will create more opportunities for the actor and their partners on stage allowing them to play the game or performance at a much more dynamic and interesting level.

How does the use of an actor's core relate to others in space? When a soccer player passes the ball, or the point of focus, to other players on the field, they have to use their awareness of spatial relationship in order to play the game to the best of their ability. That awareness depends on their ability to manipulate their aforementioned shared equilibrium. Congruently, the actor must use their awareness of their own movements or the movement of the point of focus in order for the team, or company, to achieve its common goal to the best of its ability. With any team or company, a communal sense of shared equilibrium gets stronger the longer you work together and the more you get to know each other.

A challenge for any athlete or performer is figuring out how to find a clear shared equilibrium with people they have little or no experience working with. Does this mean working with a new person cannot be easygoing and enjoyable; will it always be difficult and laborious? Of course not. The quality of work is dependent on each actor's ability to use their shared equilibrium to play with, or in opposition to, another's shared equilibrium. That individual level of awareness will dictate how much there can become a cooperative state of equilibrium. Unfortunately, even though two partners may trust each other they could still be limiting their potential if they cannot find a shared equilibrium.

I experienced the benefits of shared equilibrium while playing the role of Berenger in *Rhinoceros,* directed by Marianne Kubik at UVa. Once my fellow cast member, Mike Long, and I found our shared equilibrium, we were able apply it directly when building physical scenarios. There was a scene where the circumstances drove Berenger to jump into Mike's character Jean's arms in order to hide from another character. We changed to multiple positions where Mike had to take my weight. Mike and I had to find a literal balance point between us in order for him to efficiently hold me up for an extended period of time in different positions. Our ability to

maneuver cleanly around this balance point not only kept the actions safe for us as actors, but also raised the stakes of the scene. It allowed Berenger to quickly find different hiding positions so as not to be seen by the other character once she made her entrance.

This balance point of tension should be present between performers even when they are not physically connected. If there is one performer in the space and another enters, there has to be an awareness of the new energy that fills the space between them. Mike and I were able to utilize an indirect shared equilibrium in *Rhinoceros* in the moment when Jean enters the space and reveals that he is turning into a Rhinoceros. In order for the scene to be as compelling as possible, we had to create high tension due to the uncertainty of Jean's transformation. Mike and I created this tension by keeping a clear point of focus between us in the space. Initially, my character was not sure what to make of the transformation and the possible dangers that came along with it. Therefore, I kept the two of us equidistant using our balance point as I explored whether or not Mike's character was a threat. Conversely, if Berenger became comfortable enough to move closer to Jean, Mike would react accordingly as a possible threat to him. Our acute awareness of each other in space created a dynamic scene that felt fresh and full of surprise every night for both us and the audience. If both performers are really listening and playing with a shared equilibrium, the performance should never have aesthetic blocking issues such as the characters getting too close too quickly, too far too quickly, not far enough, or not close enough based on the circumstances. Playing with shared equilibrium allows for a mutual exploration of tension by each performer.

Thoughts on Acting

Acting is one big game of make-believe, and it is the actor's job to develop their technique through different disciplines that focus on the body, the voice, and the story being told. When performers train in these disciplines with the mentality of an athlete training for their sport, they will find much greater success in their ability to affect an audience in a deeply engaging way. In order for technique to be useful, actors must first be confident in utilizing their natural abilities. They must learn to fearlessly play with full commitment, to trust using the abilities they have naturally developed, to gain awareness of what abilities hold them back and, finally, to enhance the effectiveness of those abilities. Once the actor understands and embraces their true "self," they can begin the journey of my basic acting philosophy: marrying natural skill and technique to build craft as an artist.

3.1 Playing the Game to the Best of One's Ability

Though the application of good technique is and will continue to be one of the most important tools that define an actor's performance, I believe anyone can act. No matter what an actor's natural skill level, the main factor that creates an engaging performance is keeping a high standard of *fearless play* driven by each actor's personal and unique instincts. An actor who is willing to abandon the idea of doing something "right" gains freedom to explore using fearless play lead by the text, their bodies and, perhaps most importantly, their partners on stage. When we watch sports on TV, there are good players and bad players. As long as the athlete continues to play the game, the audience will accept that they belong in that game.

Will everyone always be the world's greatest athlete? No, not necessarily, but it is their ability to simply play that keeps them in the game. Similarly, every person may not be the most talented actor in the world, but as long as they play the game within the given circumstances to

the best of their ability, the audience will engage with them in that world. Even though at a sporting event or play there is generally some kind of end result looking to be achieved, in both disciplines it is the actual playing of the game that keeps the action fresh, alive and different every time. When asked in an interview about being the greatest British actor of his generation, Mark Rylance said, “Greatest just means different really....” The quality that distinguishes a great performance from others is simple; it is because the performance happens to be different, or unique, from the rest. We as humans are inherently different, and if an actor truly accepts and embraces that, they have the potential to soar. The only way an actor can utilize the full potential of their individuality is by playing the game of the story being told to the best of their ability (Rylance).

3.2 Who you are is what you have to Work With and that is Enough

Meryl Streep once said, “Acting is not about being someone different. It's finding the similarity in what is apparently different, then finding myself in there.” The only way an actor can begin creating interesting theatre with infinite possibilities is by knowing and embracing who they are and freeing themselves from the burden of judgment and the fear of failure. Many people think they need to “build” a character from the ground up and fabricate this “other” person in order convey a specific story. No matter what an individual’s process is, the core of character development should come from the natural instincts and qualities they posses, and should be defined by their reactions based on a set of very specific given circumstances (“Meryl Streep Quotes”).

The difference between a good performance and a great performance is the actor’s ability to embrace all their flaws and shortcomings in order to use that vulnerability as a building block for character. Why try and pre-fabricate the natural instincts of a human being when one can

simply use one's own? If an actor trusts that using themselves as a template will be engaging enough as long as they are playing to the best of their ability under the circumstances, they are much more likely to create a spontaneous, truthful and unique character.

Does this mean that the character has to react to everything under the circumstances in the way that the actor would react to them in life? No, of course not, that is where the freedom of play lies. An actor may not personally agree with a character's actions or even relate to them. The fun comes from exploring what Stanislavski called the *magic if*. The magic if is an actor's ability to honestly say, "I have no experience with the action of the character in this scenario, but I can place myself inside the circumstances and play the game based on the information I have created about this character." That information can come from clues given in the language, from the research based on the style and setting of the play or from the type of person the character is. It is the responsibility of the actor to make a bold choice based on that information and see where it lands.

3.4 Embracing Who You Are, Developing Awareness, and Creating Empathy

Self-awareness is one of the hardest things for an actor to utilize. I once had a colleague who was frustrated with an acting class they were taking because they thought it was getting too personal. "It's not like it's a psychology class, I don't understand why who I am as a person has anything to do with what I do on stage," they said. If the actor really wants to create empathetic characters, their development *must* rely on who they are as a person. The actor must first be able to identify with who they are so they can identify the habits they have developed that limit their potential for success. Many actors would rather change who they are in order to play a certain type of character, instead of finding the types of characters they could play by embracing who they are. I would love to play the role of Superman, but I know that, based on my physical type,

an audience will have a harder time identifying me with that type of character. On the other hand, an audience could easily identify me with Jimmy Olsen. Once actors embrace who they are, they can use self-awareness and technique to adapt physical or vocal habits that limit their potential for success. In other words, if I can be accepting of my type, I can create the most engaging Jimmy Olsen possible and that will be much more interesting than watching me try and fill out a pair of blue tights.

The acceptance of an actor's inherent qualities, flaws and all, coupled with the ability to manipulate inefficient habits, enables them to tell a story more clearly and honestly. Otherwise, the actor may be trying to force narcissistic qualities onto their audience. Realistically, an actor has no control over an audience's impression of their character or how they feel. When I am watching a piece of theatre I can usually sense the true nature of an actor and whether or not they are trying to conceal that nature instead of embrace it. The acceptance of self and committing to the simple joy of playing make-believe is the only way to really achieve empathetic story telling.

Football players are assigned to different positions based on their size and the types of skills they naturally bring to the game. One can argue that it is possible for an athlete/actor to change their size, but if they first learn to embrace and develop their natural qualities they will be more successful. The most engaging athletes develop an acceptance of where they can be best utilized on the team. Accepting that position allows them to fine tune their skills and remove any inefficient habits in order to play the game to the best of their ability. There are few things more engaging than watching an athlete play in a position they naturally belong in and execute their responsibilities with grace and efficiency. What becomes engaging is not about the type of position or role being played, but rather the manner in which the athlete/actor plays it, hence, the common saying in the theatre "There are no small roles, only small actors."

3.5 Discovering and Honoring Impulse

Driven by their passion and desire to succeed, many actors, young and old, take themselves entirely too seriously. The need for success tends to force actors to think too much and make decisions based on a perceived outcome. The healthiest type of decision making an actor can do, is to fully commit to playing with their partners onstage without fear or judgment of a right or wrong outcome. This encourages the potential for creation to be at its highest. In the beginning stages of developing a scene, if the actor can release the need to answer the *why* and simply *do*, then it's up to the outside eye to decide whether or not it is appropriate.

Any athlete, especially in sports such as wrestling or boxing, needs to develop the ability to spontaneously react to stimulus in order to save themselves from harm or possible defeat. When they develop the ability to react first, the *why* is very quickly answered based on the outcome of that reaction. An actor who learns to work using honest reaction to stimulus, as opposed to following a pre-planned agenda for the scene, will likely prove to be more engaging to watch. Once a choice has been clearly made the actor can decide the quality of the choice based on whether or not it works for the circumstances of the scene. Only when an impulse is fully realized for everyone to see can an aesthetic judgment be made. One would assume many actors work hard to calculate how to make the perfect choices when developing a scene, and rightfully so, but in life, the decisions that people make in reaction to stimuli are rarely pre-calculated based on what type of person they *think* they should be. They are made instinctively. Why not work in the same manner when developing a play? Decisions should be made instinctively in the moment based on the circumstances of that moment. It is our job as actors to re-create moments by playing the game to the best of our ability, which keeps every performance spontaneous while maintaining its structure.

3.5 Practice Makes… Better Actors

Embodying a technique empowers actors to master the application of the technique, as opposed to merely comprehending it or discussing it. Even though an actor may apply technique in an exercise or occasionally in a performance, it takes a long time, sometimes years, practicing that technique in order to actually embody it. Many artists have connected the idea that if musicians practice daily in order to master techniques, allowing them the absolute freedom to create, why shouldn't actors respectively do the same? I feel that way about the disciplined training of an athlete in conjunction with their ability to utilize that training in a game. Once actors learn the concept of a technique it should be discussed, explored and applied daily in order for the actor to be set free in the creative process, in the same way an athlete trains daily on the practice field in order to smoothly transition to the game field. *Repetition* is one of the simplest yet most important concepts for any actor to grasp. Even if it takes years, it is the actor's responsibility not only to comprehend their techniques but, more importantly, embody them.

The freedom of fearless play married with the embodiment of structured technique will always invite engaging storytelling. It took two years of seeing my students struggle to execute one or the other, and my own exploration in marrying the two, to understand this philosophy. One takes guts and the other takes time; both require extreme patience and a willingness to fail over and over again. Whether you are a pro soccer player or an actor on Broadway, fearlessly playing the respective game using mastered technique is the best way to create a performance that will engage an audience in a moving way.

Lessons from the Classroom

Over the course of two and a half years I have taught nine sections of Acting 1, the entry-level acting class for both majors and non-majors at the University of Virginia. Teaching has solidified my philosophy that beginning actors should start with awareness of "self" before they learn technique to build their craft as artists. Teaching presented me with the opportunity to watch and study this philosophy objectively with my students. I ask my students two things at the beginning of each semester: what qualities create engaging theatre and what qualities make a great actor? Students with more experience give typical answers such as high stakes, truthful storytelling, or interesting choices. On occasion the more novice student may guess answers such as these, but most of them do not have a strong idea of what creates engaging storytelling. Initially, I thought this lack of exposure might hinder less experienced students' ability to grasp my basic philosophy of acting. However, the opposite is surprisingly true. The less students know to begin with, the less likely they are to get in the way of themselves while learning, and the more likely they are to make courageously bold choices in their exploration.

An introductory acting course for a BA program draws a diverse pool of students with varied levels of acting experience. The majority of students has never studied acting and will most likely not continue to study it after having finished my class. To my initial surprise, this became a great advantage from the teaching perspective. I have found that novice actors are less likely to allow a fear of judgment guide their exploration and more likely to fully commit to class exercises, seemingly because they have less at stake. More experienced actors tend to let the pressure of displaying their abilities cripple them with fear of failure and a fear of looking foolish in front of peers. Students who have had little or no exposure to acting do just as well, if not better, throughout the semester, which creates a mutually beneficial relationship. The students

with less experience encourage the more experienced ones to take bigger risks. More experienced students provide strong examples of execution of technique, creating a diverse and encouraging work environment. In advanced actor training it may be more important to have everyone working at a similar level so they can continue to encourage each other using the techniques they have learned. In an introductory acting class, having students with varied levels of skill and exposure to the work actually helps to encourage their confidence in "self", which should take precedence before learning specific techniques for acting.

4.1 Work for the Journey, Not the Grade

Actors should never focus on the end result of a process, or approach it looking for a specific reward, but view it as a journey that is constantly budding and changing as they grow as artists. The United States is a country where, ideally, the harder you work the more you achieve. Unfortunately, many American students bring a skewed sense of this ideal to their approach to acting. I believe it is important for the actor to personally assess what they are trying to achieve. Many students are not working to experience a strong *qualitative process*, but in some cases finding out how to do the least amount of work possible in order to gain the largest *quantitative result*. "Making the grade," "getting it right" and "doing it for the teacher" are mentalities that many of my students begin with each semester. If a student wants to get into the best business, law, or medical school in the country, maybe this is the proper approach. In the theatre, getting a certain grade should never be the reason one puts in the work. The development of one's ability to tell an engaging story is driving force behind any actor training. The sooner actors stop thinking about a result and start embracing the development of skills to tell a clear, truthful and engaging story, the more successful they will become. Therein lies one of the most difficult

things for a student to accept, trusting that their instincts and willingness to fearlessly play will be enough, and that the grade will take care of itself.

4.2 Who you are is Enough, as Long as You Play to the Best of Your Ability

How do performers know if they are good enough, or interesting enough to watch? Many young actors worry about this, which is why they feel the need to indicate or expel more energy than necessary in a given circumstance or scene. When a person executes a task to the absolute best of their ability, they are exploring the full capacity of their potential. If the person has trouble executing the task, the engagement comes from witnessing their struggle to succeed. If the person executes the task proficiently, the engagement comes from witnessing the virtuosity of the task. Both executions are valid; what is important for young actors to understand is that an audience's level of engagement is dependent on the actors' willingness to play with their full potential. I teach an exercise that plays with the "where" of given circumstances in which an actor enters and crosses from one side of the stage to the other while playing in a given environment with the highest stakes possible. It is clear when students allow an outside eye, such as the audience or the instructor, to decide whether or not they are interesting to watch. Whether it was one of my students entering the space as if they were caught in a blizzard, another scraping their way through a raw sewage plant or one playing a physicist giving a lecture in broken English, they were all uniquely exciting and engaging actions to experience. This was because the actors were drawing from their natural instincts to play out every extreme circumstance to the best of their ability without worrying what they looked like to the audience. Repeating this exercise often and holding the students to a high standard of play eventually allowed them to embrace the possibility of failure and make bold choices dictated by the level of absurdity of the circumstance.

A common conundrum among young actors is how to approach the actions or words of a character when they do not have personal experience with them. When considering the differences between what a character might do or say versus what the actor might do or say, it is important to understand that even when the character's actions or words are contrary to one's own, actors should still draw from their natural instincts to play those circumstances "in the shoes of" the character. If the play is a comedy and the character is attempting to tap dance, then it doesn't matter if the actor can dance at all, so long as they are legitimately dancing the best they can. The audience will be able to see the genuine struggle of the character and, therefore, empathize with them more easily. If the character needs to tap dance well in the play, it then becomes the actor's responsibility to learn that particular skill in order to not only do it to the best of their ability, but also do it in accordance with the circumstances of the play. The audience will be able to empathize with this character because of the genuine virtuosity in executing the dance.

4.3 Do First, Justify Later

Another difficulty that both young and more experienced actors have in developing a scene is an unwillingness to *do* first and *justify* later. Many actors receive an impulse based on a stimulus, and the impulse is stifled before they can even act upon it because something in their brain told them it is not the "right" choice. The limiting result of this method of working is that a true impulse may never see the light of day because the actor intellectualizes whether or not it was appropriate for the character. Many actors tend to work in this way, but I have found the most interesting moments in performance tend to come from students that react impulsively to each other's play, as opposed to talking and planning it out before hand. Interestingly enough,

sometimes the most exciting moments in life are created by someone driven by their immediate circumstances to act “out of character.”

When students are willing to play to the best of their ability, they release the fear of making a wrong choice as a result of failure because the focus is placed on the game, not on the worry of self and peer judgment. Embracing this concept has the potential to make any mediocre actor great. Placing all of one’s focus on the game allows them to play using genuine impulses taken from stimuli throughout the game. Exercising the use of genuine impulse, received from stimulus, is one of the most important fundamentals to be taught in any introductory acting class. Actors should have a basic understanding of this before developing specific techniques. Once students are comfortable with using natural instincts to find genuine impulses, they can begin to build their craft by marrying skill and learned techniques. Craft allows the actor to present material in a truthful and engaging manner and provides the opportunity to shape it artistically. That takes time.

4.4 Technique Takes Time

I always worry when I get to the middle of a semester, after having explored these fundamental ideas for weeks, that the class still does not fully grasp them. By the time students are wrapping up final scene work, little break-through moments pop up and the concepts begin to click. Though my undergraduate professors told me the same, it took years of working away from school combined with teaching students myself to understand that developing technique really does take time. Embodiment of technique may take weeks, months, or even years. With the strong influence of film acting on younger generations, many students think the actual technique of how to build an interesting character is to simply “transform” or change who they are into a completely different person. I have seen students build much more unique and organic

characters when they trust in their natural instincts coupled with constant trial and error application of technique. It is important for the actor to embrace the possibility that mastering technique rarely happens over night but, with patience, over time and after much failure.

In Acting 1, some typical examples of technique building might be learning basic vocabulary such as *stage directions*, breaking down what an objective is and how multiple objectives are divided into different beats, using breath to release tension or having an awareness of your physical state in order to manipulate it based on choice instead of habit. All these different techniques can be embodied in different ways for different people. Therefore, it is important to have them taught and studied in as many varied manners as possible.

I have learned to teach using what I like to call *read, talk, exercise* and *apply* and not necessarily in that order. Personally, I am predominantly a doer and learn through physical means, which might indicate that I prefer to explore a technique through exercises or application. It became important to adapt the manner in which I explain a technique, because even though I may not prescribe to using particular teaching methods, it is important to expose students to those methods. Reading about a specific technique from an expert or authority on the matter and then talking about it can be just as useful as learning through physical means. Exposing actors to many different perspectives of the same technique allows them to clearly solidify their personal viewpoint and, therefore, embody it more concretely.

Teaching has become one more facet of "read, talk, exercise and apply" for my personal growth as an artist. It is yet another way that I can continue to hone my own process by looking at it objectively through others. My students continue to teach me new things and provide me with new perspectives. Teaching on a daily basis allows me to constantly revisit the fundamentals of what students should be taught to become engaging story tellers: embracing

who they are as a person, using their unique identity in play, playing the game to the best of their ability and always acting from impulse before questioning why or how that action relates to the surrounding circumstances. Teaching exposes the teacher to repetition and any good actor or athlete knows how important repetition is in a training process. Teaching is training, and training is what allows the performer to have palpable control over those few things that are controllable in the development of an art such as live theatre.

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Appendix: Video Supplement

Accompanied with this document is a video supplement that represents how the actor takes the development of technique and utilizes it in the professional world. When an actor leaves academia, they need to have a portfolio that can efficiently represent who they are both as an artist and as an independent small business. Typical portfolios may include audition materials, production stills, headshots, resumes or reels. Audition materials should be short 1-2 minute monologues or scenes that can be used to submit for film or theatre projects. Production stills include photographs taken from actual stage productions or films from the actor's repertoire. Headshots are professional photos in an 8-by-10 inch format that the actor uses for specific auditions with theatre companies or for film projects. Resumes are documents that include a printed list of theatrical, film or commercial projects and all the training in the actor's portfolio. Reels are videos compiled of many short clips from some or all of the film or theatrical projects in the actor's portfolio. My digital portfolio represents different pieces that could be sent to any agent, manager, casting director, theatre or production company as a pre-screen in order to book a meeting or audition with them. The portfolio includes two monologues with different audition variations (depending on the type of project being submitted for) and a film reel compiled of segments from different films I have worked on. This package represents my talent and technique, my versatility, and my persona as an artist.

The Gersh agency and Mr. Neil LaBute have given permission for the use of the two monologues from *Autobahn* and *Somegirls* in this supplemental material. Copied below, is the original email communication and confirmation from Kelly Hires at Gersh.

Bradley Fraizer <bwf4zn@virginia.edu> Mar 28

to khires

Hi Kelly,
Thank you again for taking the time to send this request forward.

My name is Brad Fraizer and I am a 3rd Year Masters Candidate in the University of Virginia's Drama Department.
Our Masters Thesis is comprised of two parts, a written section which chronicles our personal journeys over the past three years focusing on the disciplines of voice, movement, teaching and acting. The second component is a digital (or DVD) section which is representative of the actor's ability to move forward into the professional world. In this section it is my responsibility to show my panel of "readers" how my independent business will be represented moving back into the professional acting world. I'll have a template for a website, a film reel and I hope to have two monologues that would represent mock audition materials.

The Drama Department and I understand that in the actual defense I would be able to do the monologues live, as they might be done in a professional audition, but because it is part of the actual thesis, it must be documented so it can stay on record as part of this digital component.

I have considered writing my own monologues so I don't have to worry about rights, but I have used Mr. LaBute's material since I was an undergraduate ten years ago and in literally thousands of auditions since. I have always been able to connect to his language on a personal level and feel that it highlights the best qualities of what I can bring to the table in an audition setting. I would also plan to highlight the fact that the nature of Mr. LaBute's writing style not only lends itself to work in the theatre but can be just as compelling in a more intimate medium such as film.

We have an honor code here at UVa that is taken very seriously and that the students and faculty are extremely proud to uphold: never to lie, cheat or steal. By that code, I swear that the sections from pgs. 61-65 of Mr. Neil LaBute's AUTOBAHN and pgs. 67-69 of Mr. Neil LaBute's SOME GIRL(S) will be used solely for the purpose of Brad Fraizer's defense of his thesis for a Masters in Acting at the University of Virginia, and will be filmed only for the archival purposes of that thesis. It will be viewed by faculty members Colleen Kelly, Kate Burke, and Marianne Kubik during the final defense.

I have copied Colleen Kelly the Interim Chair & Associate Professor & Director for the M.F.A. Acting Program on this email and any further inquiries can be directed to her:
434-924-8964
jk2s@Virginia.EDU

Thanks again for your time and I hope Mr. LaBute considers granting me permission for this thesis.
Brad

...
Brad Fraizer
MFA Candidate, University of Virginia
989-280-4022
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Kelly Hires Mar 28

to me

Hi Brad,

Neil is happy to grant permission for you to use these monologues as long as they are used for stated purposes only, and are not readily available on youtube or for download.

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Best,
Kelly

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