

PRACTICAL DRAMATURGY FOR ACTORS: APPLYING RESOURCES OF THE  
OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL TO THE CHALLENGES  
OF LANGUAGE AND PREPARATION

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## DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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This dissertation investigates the relationship between acting and dramaturgy. It proposes a change in the contemporary actor's work to more purposefully integrate practical dramaturgy as a preparation that parallels character analysis. Despite how the actor's focus frequently aligns with character, current trends in American playwriting suggest a need for a different approach as well because many plays defy expectations for the kind of naturalistic, character-driven acting that suits plays written in the style of realism. New playwriting, especially as codified by Paul C. Castagno, reflects a need for the actor to focus on other dramaturgical structures. In response, this dissertation considers the actor's dramaturgical approach. It expands upon Geoffrey Proehl's concept of "dramaturgical sensibility" as it relates to the dramaturg and explores the *actor's* dramaturgical sensibility. Research into production processes at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival reveals a scope for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility through three kinds of awareness beyond character: story, language, and performance structures. This foundation then informs a proposed process of dramaturgical script analysis, which functions as a practical dramaturgy for actors.

This project also includes a secondary case study related to a University of

Oregon production of Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*, which helps to establish the components of dramaturgical script analysis for actors. In order to consider a benefit for actors in response to new playwriting strategies, the same components are then applied to two contemporary plays: *Apparition: An Uneasy Play of the Underknown* by Anne Washburn and *God's Ear* by Jenny Schwartz. The process overall reveals a persistent binary related to internal and external preparation for actors and a resistance to new methods owing to lack of time in processes of contemporary theatrical production. Ultimately, however, outcomes also suggests how a practical dramaturgy for actors may expand the actor's work in any context and may support various theatrical production processes in the United States by maximizing the actor's ability to discern the needs of a play.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

“From the first moments of its creation to its final performance, a play’s dramaturgy speaks as potential to anyone who will listen. *It must, however, have listeners for its silences to be broken.*” – Geoffrey Proehl

In an 1874 article for the journal *Det Nittend Aarhundrede*, Danish critic Edvard Brandes stated that the evaluation of the actor should be based upon the following question: “Has he understood and relayed the script’s spirit?” (71).<sup>1</sup> The question of what he meant by “spirit” is a large one, and Brandes offered a partial answer. The sentence that follows his question suggests a parallel between the actor’s primary purpose and the Danish national theater’s primary purpose: “Helped by the actors, these speaking dramaturgs, every theater’s job simply is this: to give a critical portrayal of the dramatic literature in its historic development adjusted according to the nation’s seat and psychological peculiarities, to which it addresses itself” (71). This literal translation conveys Brandes’s sentiments but cannot fully capture the heightened tone of his prose. Still, the translation clearly reflects a comparison: if the actor is called upon to relay the play’s spirit, the Danish National Theater is called upon to relay the nation’s spirit. The meaning of *spirit* in this context may therefore relate, in part, to national identity or the “nation’s seat.” National identity may function historically as it reaches back in time, but it may also represent contemporary developments within dramatic literature as well. The meaning of *spirit* may also culturally represent the intellectual or psychological concerns of a nation’s people – in Brandes’s case, the Danish people or *danske Folk*. By breaking down Brandes’s comparison, the “script’s spirit” expansively requires the actor’s expertise to dramaturgically embody a nation’s identity through dramatic literature,

although that literature may specify place, time, and cultural priorities. The script's spirit more specifically requires the actor's expertise to dramaturgically embody a play's place, time, and cultural priorities.

Brandes's consideration of the actor passes quickly in this article because he particularly critiqued the leadership of the Danish National Theater. My project, however, investigates the relationship between acting and dramaturgy, which is why Brandes's brief reference to actors as "speaking dramaturgs" fittingly introduces the notion that a meaningful connection between the two contemporary practices not only exists, but must exist. Though I do not share his fervor for discussing the complex interplay between national theaters, artistic leadership, and programming content, I do propose a change in the contemporary actor's work in the United States to more purposefully integrate practical dramaturgy as a preparation that parallels character analysis. Of greatest interest to me is Brandes's suggestion that the actor has a dramaturgical responsibility, and that this responsibility demands the actor's attention to the spirit of a *play* as well as to the spirit of a *character*. Brandes's comments coincide with his support of naturalism and realism in the theater of the late 1800s,<sup>2</sup> which is where our paths diverge. The system for acting devised by Konstantin Stanislavski<sup>3</sup> shared similar concerns with Brandes, and that system gives primary weight to the actor's empathetic identification with character and to character analysis. Stanislavski's goal is a "creative state" through which the actor may, "...experience the life of the human spirit' of a role" (*An Actor's Work* 282, 295). While the spirit of a *script* and the spirit of a *role* reflect parallel concerns in the historical movements of naturalism and realism, I suggest that the distinction between *play* and *character* makes a significant difference in the contemporary actor's process.

After Brandes, two notable instances connect acting with dramaturgy and do not isolate the actor's responsibility to character or character analysis. In the first instance, Patrice Pavis recognizes a need for the "actor-dramaturg" to complete the playwriting of the twenty-first century ("Premature Synthesis" 79). In 2000, Pavis looked ahead to challenges that actors would face due to trends in playwriting at that time. Approximately 100 years after Stanislavski, Pavis recognized a profound divergence from character-driven playwriting. He said, "In the analysis of contemporary texts, it is useless to begin with a study of the characters since often enough the text either dispenses with them or does not characterize them in a psychological or sociological manner" (77). Pavis surveyed a particular group of French plays, plays that he labeled as "neo-lyric" and "neo-dramatic" in their exploration of language and textual forms (76). The "neo" classification suggests a return to older lyrical or dramatic forms as well as creation of new forms. Through his prediction that the actor will be needed to finish a playwright's text, Pavis ascribes broader dramaturgical responsibility to the actor beyond character.

In the second instance, Eugenio Barba recognizes a similar responsibility for the actor. In his recent book, *On Directing and Dramaturgy: Burning the House*, Barba names and also defines the "actor's dramaturgy" as the actor's "individual creative contribution to the growth of a performance," and the actor's "ability to root what they have recounted into a structure of organic actions" (23). Barba's Odin Teatret mainly devises new work, and his definition arises from a context in which the play does not exist prior to the actor's contribution. Through this association of creating text, Barba ascribes dramaturgical responsibility to the actor by requiring the actor's contribution to content and the actor's willingness to transfer personal experience directly into

dramaturgical structures. Like Brandes, Pavis and Barba both recognize instances of theatrical necessity that allow them to consider the actor's dramaturgical contribution more profoundly.

In his "Theses on the Philosophy of History" Walter Benjamin encourages historians to turn away from a causal sequencing of history and seek instead, "...the constellation which his own era has formed with a definite earlier one" (*Illuminations* 263). Heeding Benjamin's advice, I see a recognizable "constellation" in the collaboration of Brandes, Barba, and Pavis through their direct association of acting with dramaturgy. I do not, however, suggest that Pavis and Barba draw upon the work of Brandes. Rather, their individual work occurs in a recognizable pattern, and that pattern reflects my own focus as well. The views of Brandes, Barba, and Pavis span approximately one hundred years of theater history – from the late 1800s to the late 1900s. Within that timeframe, but also up to the present, the actor's work has most commonly aligned with characterization, not dramaturgy. To that end, Stanislavski's system profoundly serves the actor's process by guiding the actor through rigorous character analysis. Yet particularly by predicting new trends in playwriting, Pavis issues a call to action that theater practitioners must now heed regardless of international boundaries or time-bound concerns.

Pavis's predictions about French playwriting particularly resonate with a trend in American playwriting that has been codified by Paul C. Castagno. Castagno does not link acting and dramaturgy, but the first edition of his book, *New Playwriting Strategies: A Language-Based Approach to Playwriting*, outlines "new playwriting" techniques by

studying playwrights like Mac Wellman, Len Jenkin, Eric Overmyer, and Paula Vogel.

He defines the playwrights and their work generally as follows:

To a great extent, the models used in the book are from the plays of an inspiring group of writers known as the “language playwrights” or “new playwrights.” The language playwrights have emerged over the past twenty years to stake out a significant territory in American theater. Since the 1970s they have been produced (and published) in and out of New York, and have been a major influence on the practice and pedagogy of playwriting. While their influence has been extraordinary within the field, they have been largely ignored for production in mainstream theater, and for the most part have escaped further critical inquiry. (1st ed. 3)

In 2001, the “language playwrights” were on the margins of American theater, congregating in New York but beginning to influence playwriting trends and playwriting pedagogy in the United States. In 2012, Castagno’s second edition claims that “new playwriting” techniques have become mainstream. His newest edition recognizes the “first-generation” playwrights mentioned above, but also considers a new generation of playwrights (2nd ed. 3). Among this second generation, Susan-Lori Parks, Sara Ruhl, Young Jean Lee, Naomi Iizuka, and Lyn Nottage may represent the most well known names (2nd ed. 2). Castagno’s early work and his revised material serve as a springboard from which I will consider how new playwriting resonates with acting methods in the United States and whether these methods help actors to learn dramaturgical responsibilities beyond a singular attention to character.

I have a personal stake in attributing dramaturgical responsibility to the actor, which I offer as incentive and disclaimer. Over the past twenty years, as an actor, I began to notice how new plays required an awareness from me that was not a singular attention to character. Instead, I explored language more fully as a structure of storytelling; I studied the whole play for clues to the accumulation of meaning; I needed to understand

complex moments between characters rather than rely on a singular focus from one character's point of view. First, in Seattle, I co-founded Printer's Devil Theater. Our company's annual Bonanza hosted 12 new plays in 12 weeks through workshops where I became familiar with the early plays of Adam Bock, Sheila Callaghan, Melissa James Gibson, Lawrence Krauser, and Anne Washburn, among others. More recently, in New York, I acted in plays by Lisa D'Amour, Karinne Keithley, and Kristen Kosmas, and became familiar with new plays by Jenny Schwartz and Erin Courtney. Callaghan, Courtney, D'Amour, and Washburn are among the second generation of "language playwrights" Castagno identifies (2nd ed. 2). Each of the other writers I mention above just as easily fits the strategies he outlines – strategies that echo my personal experience in many ways. In between Seattle and New York, I went back to school in London to study Shakespeare and classical acting. With Shakespeare, I encountered the need for a similar awareness beyond character that I had with new plays. Language structures remained integral to this work and prompted me to consider a connection between new plays and classical texts.

I now teach beginning actors. I have found that Stanislavski's system still provides foundational tools for acting work because contemporary production standards still require actors to engage with realism and naturalistic acting. I borrow this distinction from John Lennard and Mary Luckhurst, who acknowledge a complexity that arises when trying to distinguish naturalism from realism in playwriting as well as acting. They employ the neutral term *naturalistic* as a descriptor I find helpful: "Naturalistic acting seeks to minimize the gap between actor and role, and is most usefully contrasted with 'stylized' acting, which tends to foreground that gap" (348). Using other contemporary

terms, naturalistic and stylized acting might also be distinguished as representational and presentational acting respectively. Inspired mainly by film acting, beginning acting students expect to learn how to “become” a character, but guiding young actors predominantly through psychological character analysis makes me uneasy. I know, from personal experience, what many new plays and other theatrical traditions may ask of them. To compensate, I insert exercises to help actors explore play structures, language structures, or physical structures in order to help them approach classical and contemporary plays that work outside the bounds of realism and naturalistic acting.

Building upon the constellation of Brandes, Pavis, and Barba my research seeks to propel a shift in actor training. I propose actors may approach plays through dramaturgical preparation in order to meet the needs of “new playwriting,” but I ultimately suggest that dramaturgical awareness will expand the actor’s work in any context. As a tool for actor training or the actor’s individual process, practical dramaturgy would encourage the actor’s exploration of a *play* as well as a *character*. Toward that goal, practical dramaturgy would supplement the actor’s individual preparation. It could serve as a complement to character analysis, although that is not the foremost goal here, especially because character through-line often disappears and characters take significantly different forms in “new playwriting.” I do not suggest we abandon Stanislavski or naturalistic acting, but I do suggest that practical dramaturgy may help the actor to discern whether that system supports a particular play. Thus, practical dramaturgy gives the actor a different way to approach preparation, especially when dramaturgical structures do not meet the expectations of naturalistic acting for plays written in the style of realism.

In his book, *Toward a Dramaturgical Sensibility: Landscape and Journey*, Geoffrey Proehl discusses “dramaturgical sensibility” in relation to the dramaturg’s role in theatrical production. I borrow the concept from Proehl<sup>4</sup> and expand upon his work by investigating dramaturgical sensibility in relation to the actor. Case study research into production processes at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF)<sup>5</sup> prompts me to define the scope of the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility as three kinds of awareness beyond character: story, language, and performance structures. The diversity of OSF’s content provides an intentional parallel to my experience as an actor, especially through a range of new plays in development, modern or contemporary works, and Shakespeare or other classical authors. Defining the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility then allows me to suggest categories for dramaturgical script analysis that may function as a practical dramaturgy for actors. Practical concerns inform each chapter that follows, though theoretical concerns also ground the work in ideas and ideals.

I should acknowledge up front that I privilege “text” to achieve these goals. However, as my recognition of Barba suggests, I also value other composition methods for theatrical work. Nonetheless, plays that are already texts offer a demonstrable starting point from which to introduce dramaturgy for actors because I am able to offer examples for practical application. Later projects would hopefully intersect more profoundly with the work of Barba or other devising artists, just as later projects may also intersect more profoundly with classical texts.

Chapter II, “Establishing a Dramaturgical Vocabulary,” clarifies foundational terms and ideological concepts in order to establish a need for the actor’s dramaturgical vocabulary and to suggest what may be included in that vocabulary. Considering

Castagno's strategies for "new playwriting" in comparison with current trends for actor training offers a means to assess whether patterns of pedagogy for playwriting and acting are well matched. Further, by viewing dramaturgy as a phenomenological process of interactive discovery with a play, I explore how dramaturgy offers alternative tools for the actor's preparation. These tools include three critical approaches: prepare for an unknown journey, listen, and question. Identifying vocabulary like *mode* and "dramaturgical voice" clarifies those approaches. For instance, in order to prepare for an unknown journey, I suggest actors could use the word *mode* in association with a play's language in order to distinguish a play's language as unique. In this context, a play's mode of language may productively resist categorizations of genre or style. I also propose use of "dramaturgical voice" in order to clarify what it means to actively listen to and question a play's mode. Don Ihde's consideration of the actor's "dramaturgical voice" in *Listening and Voice: Phenomenologies of Sound* inspired application of that phrase for this project. Establishing the need for a dramaturgical vocabulary and offering that vocabulary then foreshadows how I will consider the actor's "dramaturgical sensibility." Geoffrey Proehl's concept reveals the work of the dramaturg through this phrase, but I apply this sensibility to the actor's work. Thus, I distinguish the *actor's* dramaturgical sensibility, although I build on Proehl's use of this phrase in relation to the dramaturg.

Chapter III is called "The Oregon Shakespeare Festival – A Dramaturgical Case Study." This chapter begins the work of outlining a practical scope for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility by observing processes of production at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF). By observing OSF with this goal in mind, I suggest that it models direct and indirect resources in contemporary theatrical production that already

ascribe a dramaturgical responsibility to the actor or that may support my effort to do so. This case study first considers resources that support actors directly in relation to a diverse range of content: dramaturgy as well as voice and text work. These resources particularly reveal potential for the actor's awareness of story and language structures. An investigation of the Festival's indirect resources also reveals how the actor's dramaturgical awareness may extend to performance structures. I devised this label to encompass processes through which a theatrical project takes shape from rehearsal into performance. Performance structures combine elements of a play's dramaturgy with the actor's preparation to embody dramaturgy in action. Ultimately, a scope for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility arises from this case study, which may be applied for the benefit of actors beyond OSF. These discoveries will then transfer to a practical dramaturgy for actors.

Chapter IV, "The Actor's Dramaturgical Sensibility," transfers the discoveries from Chapter III in order to define a scope for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility. Again, three kinds of awareness help to organize the definition: story, language, and performance structures. The dramaturgical vocabulary established in Chapter II also begins to merge with case study findings from OSF as I outline a process for dramaturgical script analysis. Under the category of story structures, the actor reads a play with collaborative awareness in order to explore structure, story, and resonance. With regard to language structures, the actor notices what the play offers in order to explore dramaturgical punctuation, allegorical layering, and the unique mode of a play. Performance structures extend the actor's dramaturgical awareness to ensemble concerns related to flexibility, environmental awareness, and exchange.

I also conducted research related a secondary case study at the University of Oregon, which presents practical applications for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility and dramaturgical script analysis in Chapter IV. Scott Kaiser, from OSF, was a guest artist with UO's University Theatre in 2013. He directed a production of Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* for which I was the dialect coach. The production created an opportunity to consider how undergraduate student actors prepare in comparison with the professionals I interviewed from OSF. Stoppard's play primarily employs structures of realism but also incorporates "new playwriting" strategies. The language in *Arcadia* functions as a puzzle as the play moves between scenes that take place in the early 1800s and in the present day. *Arcadia* thereby offers a point of entry into the strategies of "new playwriting." In that regard, this secondary case study reveals more immediate trends in actor preparation through the experience of undergraduate student actors at an early point in their training. Outcomes from the case study suggest how young actors may incorporate dramaturgical tools, although they also reveal persistent binaries that suggest internal or external preparation represent separate activities.

Chapter V, "Practical Dramaturgy for Actors," applies dramaturgical script analysis to plays that primarily employ "new playwriting" strategies but retain traces of realism as well. The categories and elements proposed for dramaturgical script analysis in Chapter IV remain consistent. Yet the shift in playwriting strategies allows for consideration of how the actor's dramaturgical preparation particularly benefits "new playwriting." For this chapter, I apply dramaturgical script analysis to two plays and playwrights: *Apparition: An Uneasy Play of the Underknown* by Anne Washburn and *God's Ear* by Jenny Schwartz. Paul C. Castagno's recent edition of *New Playwriting*

*Strategies* also gives attention to *Apparition*, but by exploring Washburn's play in relation to practical dramaturgy I am able to undertake a more detailed investigation than Castagno's project allows. Further, I explore *God's Ear* in order to feature Schwartz as a playwright that Castagno does not discuss.

To conclude this project, I consider the broader implications of, "Envisioning a Practical Dramaturgy for Actors." This effort builds upon the work of defining a scope for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility and outlining a process for dramaturgical script analysis. The primary focus throughout this project builds toward an understanding of how a practical dramaturgy could particularly support the actor's preparation for plays that employ "new playwriting" strategies. Still, application for various types of plays arise in this process, as do questions about how practical dramaturgy may support various theatrical production processes. Within the conclusion, I particularly consider production concerns related to time, resources, and other artistic collaborations, including the relationships between actors and dramaturgs or directors. Ultimately, final departures suggest larger theatrical concerns that provide additional context for considering a practical dramaturgy for actors *now* in response to theatrical production processes in the United States.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Literal translation of excerpts from Brandes's article, from Danish to English, was completed for the purposes of this research. Citation of page numbers reflects the article's publication in *Det Nittend Aarhundrede* because the full article remains to be translated. The bibliography entry cites the translator of the excerpts, May-Britt Ostersen.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick Marker points out that much of Brandes's writing precedes the founding of the Moscow Art Theatre in 1898 by approximately twenty years, although it echoes the sentiments of Stanislavski's system in relation to what Marker calls a "naturalistic style" (509). Marker's "Negation in the Blond Kingdom" also provides an overview of Brandes's writing career, which continues well past the 1874 article and

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includes other journals than *Det Nittend Aarhundrede*. Marker provides only a brief reference to “speaking dramaturgs,” which prompted my interest in having that section of the article translated.

<sup>3</sup> Authors tend to spell the last name in two ways: Stanislavsky or Stanislavski. I will use Stanislavski ending with an “i” unless quoting authors who employ the other spelling.

<sup>4</sup> Proehl borrows his book title as well. “Toward a Dramaturgical Sensibility” is a section title in *Dramaturgy in American Theater*, which, in turn, is taken from Jane Ann Crum’s article of the same title. Proehl includes an endnote to that effect in which he admits, “This book borrows its title from both” (218). Early in his book, he also states his intention to expand the concept beyond Crum’s use of the phrase to reflect a “state of mind” and his use of the phrase to suggest “a way of meeting the world” (17).

<sup>5</sup> A name change occurred in 1988, shifting from Oregon Shakespearean Festival to Oregon Shakespeare Festival. A brief mention is made in the *Annual Report* within a statement by Board President, Richard K. McLaughlin: “A third change occurred at the annual meeting: We dropped the ‘an’ in “Shakespearean,” becoming the Oregon Shakespeare Festival” (OSF, “Annual Report” 6). Otherwise, the change appears seamlessly in other publicity materials without much explanation. For example, the *Souvenir Program* for Winter/Spring 1988 says Shakespearean whereas the *Souvenir Program* for Summer/Fall 1988 says Shakespeare. No note within either program refers to the change. I take my cue from the seamless transition and refer to OSF throughout.

## CHAPTER II

### ESTABLISHING A DRAMATURGICAL VOCABULARY

“The ‘system’ doesn’t manufacture inspiration. It just prepares the right soil for it. As to the question whether it arrives or not that you must ask heaven, or your own nature, or chance about. I’m no wizard.” – Konstantin Stanislavski

A play’s dramaturgy refers to its composition, and more specifically its language, structure, and story. The work of the dramaturg – in the practice of dramaturgy – supports those elements when they are put into action in production. Building from this understanding, I hope to encourage a “dramaturgical sensibility” in the actor’s process of preparation. I apply this phrase from dramaturg Geoffrey Proehl. He suggests that a dramaturgical sensibility is, “a way of meeting the world” (17). I use it to refer to how the actor may learn to meet the world of a play. Proehl also says, “To enter into a conversation informed by a dramaturgical sensibility is to commit to the slow, ambiguous emergence of meaning...” (28). This purposeful ambiguity requires exploration of a *play*. But American actors are most often trained to explore a *character* and to create specific psychological motivations for a character’s actions. In theater, we owe this tradition to the groundbreaking work of Konstantin Stanislavski. He developed a system for acting in Russia in the late 1800s that was introduced in the United States beginning in the 1930s. It offered a means to replace stock characterization, or what Stanislavski called “stock-in-trade” acting (*An Actor’s Work* 298). We would now call this presentational acting, and Stanislavski’s system values representational acting through a “creative state” in which actors, “...experience the ‘life of the human spirit’ of a role” (*An Actor’s Work* 282, 195).

Cultivating a dramaturgical sensibility does not replace the actor's empathetic connection to a character, but it engages a similar connection with a whole play.

This chapter clarifies foundational terms and ideological concepts in order to establish a need for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility and to suggest vocabulary that might benefit that awareness. Considering "new playwriting" through strategies codified by Paul C. Castagno provides a means to assess whether current playwriting trends are well matched with common pedagogies for actor training. Going forward, I will not use quotation marks, but will apply the phrase "new playwriting" in this context unless otherwise noted. Considering dramaturgy, and more specifically production dramaturgy, reveals alternative tools for actors in response to content challenges that arise from new playwriting. In the course of establishing a dramaturgical vocabulary, I will also introduce the following ideas: allegorical language, script analysis (as distinct from character analysis), mode, and the actor's "dramaturgical voice." Clarification of these terms will preface further definition of the actor's dramaturgical sensibility.

### New Playwriting/Language Playwrights

In the first edition of his book, *New Playwriting Strategies: A Language-Based Approach to Playwriting* (2001), Paul C. Castagno codifies new playwriting techniques by studying playwrights like Mac Wellman, Len Jenkin, Eric Overmyer, and Paula Vogel, among others. He calls them "language playwrights" or "new playwrights," which indicates that "new playwriting strategies" have something to do with how these playwrights use language (1st ed. 3). Not surprisingly, Castagno also describes new playwriting more specifically in relation to language: "The language playwrights are exploring the power of stage language, reigniting the appeal of virtuosic writing for the

theater” (1st ed. 5). An immediate association with Samuel Beckett or Harold Pinter comes to mind. The language of Beckett and Pinter could be described as “virtuosic” because each playwright calls particular attention to rhythmically “staged” language. Each uses language in a manner that is not always conversational in the style of realism. To clarify “virtuosic” writing in relation to the vanguard of language playwrights, I will offer a definition using Wellman as an example. In advance, however, it is important to note that Castagno’s first edition simultaneously suggests that new playwriting strategies were common enough to codify by 2001, but that language playwrights were still “ignored” by the mainstream at that time (1st ed. 3). The second edition of his book offers a significant turnabout.

In the 2012 edition, Castagno recognizes a second generation of language playwrights. This supports his view that the mainstream no longer ignores strategies of new playwriting. An updated subtitle also adds media as a concern in relation to language: *New Playwriting Strategies: Language and Media in the 21st Century*. This shift allows him to consider writers like Wellman, Jenkin, Overmyer, and Vogel as “first-generation language playwrights” and to suggest how their techniques now extend to other media like film and TV (2nd ed. 3). In the new edition, Castagno also introduces a new generation of writers, including playwrights who are inspired by – and in many cases mentored by – the vanguard. Susan-Lori Parks, Sara Ruhl, Young Jean Lee, Naomi Iizuka, and Lyn Nottage are some of the most well known names in this group.<sup>1</sup> I mention well-known playwrights from Castagno’s list briefly in order to provide an immediate association with new playwriting strategies, but I will consider other playwrights more thoroughly in later chapters as well.

About the new generation of language playwrights, Castagno proposes that new playwriting strategies are no longer ignored by the mainstream in the United States. Rather, he suggests they are predominant in playwriting because first-generation language playwrights such as Wellman, Jenkin, and Vogel now lead playwriting programs (especially at a graduate level), and because techniques of language playwriting have crossed over into the mainstream through Pulitzer Prize winning plays as well as through popularity of TV programs like *The Wire*,<sup>2</sup> *Deadwood*, and *Mad Men*. Even more specifically, Castagno offers the following: “The evidence is clear that language playwriting and playwrights now represent the dominant pedagogy in training playwrights” (2nd ed. 3-4). I agree that language playwriting techniques have found an audience in mainstream media and theatrical production, and in many of the ways Castagno highlights. Yet Castagno’s claim regarding the “dominant pedagogy in training playwrights” assumes that because some of the first-generation language playwrights teach and also lead playwriting programs, a majority of students across the country learn these techniques. This and other assumptions will serve as a jumping off point from which to consider whether new playwriting strategies align with common pedagogy for training actors.

A definition of “virtuosic writing” in relation to new playwriting strategies will become of primary importance when considering the actor’s work. The earlier reference hints that virtuosic writing uses language to inspire effect and meaning rather than to construct conversational or realistic dialogue. In general, “virtuosic” purposefully invokes a broad spectrum of writing because it has many possible interpretations. To

provide more specificity, the following description of Wellman's writing clarifies how virtuosic language can be associated with new playwriting and still invite variation:

Wellman's texts construct their own logic from the illogic, power, and slipperiness of words. Riddled with riddles, word games, and references obscure and slangy, his plays are densely-packed puzzles that invite us to make connections both intellectually and instinctually. Wellman's goal is to create an alternative theatre language in which words become objects that are thrown about the stage. (Wegener 22)

While each playwright may employ language uniquely within a general category of new playwriting, I consider the use of language as both a structure and a puzzle, and the use of words as objects to be characteristic of "virtuosic writing." Wellman's approach to playwriting is also available in his own words, which provides a comparative view of how he uses language:

The pressure that one receives on many sides is to make the dialogue and the scenario perfectly consistent. That leads to plays that to my way of thinking are dull and problematic – kind of one note. In a sense, the dialogue and the scenario are both redundant and over-determined. This is the kind of impasse that naturalism has arrived at after one hundred years; it's turned into a manner. So, it actually doesn't describe any world that's real but a kind of assumed, already-known reality. (Herrington and Crystal 93-94)

The description about Wellman's writing and his own description reveal a similar logic. Words as objects defy the "already-known reality" because they are not used recognizably in dialogue. In realism, for example, we expect words to construct meaning through conversation, in familiar combinations, and often with direct meaning arranged to convey discursive, logical intentions. New playwriting suggests words are used to construct meaning anew. Each play has its own rules. This represents a fundamental difference about how language in new playwriting compares to language written for conversational dialogue.

A comparative sampling of text will be useful here to illustrate the difference between realistic dialogue and new playwriting strategies more concretely, especially in relation to the actor's work. Better yet, contrasting several text samples reveals "virtuosic writing" as Castagno uses that word, even though each of the authors excerpted below may be considered virtuosic in different ways. On one end of the spectrum, Henrik Ibsen represents conversational dialogue. On the other end of the spectrum, Mac Wellman represents use of words as objects. In the middle, Tom Stoppard represents language that is both conversational and structured as a puzzle. Not coincidentally, Stoppard's play *Arcadia* also relates to the secondary case study that will appear later in this project. Stoppard's work serves as a point of entry for engaging with blended playwriting strategies, or what Castagno introduces as "crossover poetics" in relation to the newer generation of language playwrights: "Crossover poetics defines the integration or merging of language playwriting strategies in traditional dramaturgical formats. This results in a blurring of distinctions so that it is now difficult to categorize the mainstream and new playwriting as strictly counter-movements" (2nd ed. 123). Before considering plays that employ primarily new playwriting strategies, investigation of *Arcadia* reveals how "new" playwriting strategies may blend backward as well as forward in time through different degrees of "crossover poetics." Stoppard's work also offers a reminder that challenges of language may deny "counter-movements" in many texts. At this point, however, sampling Ibsen, Stoppard, and Wellman differentiates realistic dialogue from language strategies in new playwriting.

The first example is taken from Henrik Ibsen, a playwright commonly associated with modern realism even though much of his work departed from realism as well. At a

point in his playwriting trajectory that aligns with realism, Ibsen's correspondence declares his intent to "depict human beings" by using contemporary speech in dialogue rather than poetic verse (Dukore 560). He thereby separates himself from theater traditions of Romantic stylization as well as from classical verse plays. Before viewing a sample of text, it will also help to clarify the concept of subtext in relation to Ibsen's realistic dialogue. Above, I refer to realistic dialogue when I suggest that we expect words to construct meaning through conversation, in familiar combinations, and often with direct meaning arranged to convey discursive, logical intention. Direct meaning does not imply that communication is always clear or without nuance. Words may be used conversationally and still contain undercurrents of unspoken meaning, which is commonly called subtext in many acting techniques. Robert Benedetti's description of literal meaning as *denotation* and emotional meaning as *connotation* offers a clear comparison between text and subtext (52). Text refers to *denotation*, and subtext refers to *connotation*. Benedetti distinguishes the two further by suggesting, "A performance is a fusion of the *text* created by the writer, and the *subtext* created by the actor" (60, author's italics). When analyzing realistic dialogue, the actor investigates subtext in order to explore psychological motivation for a character that will lead to emotional connection with that character.

An excerpt from Act III of Ibsen's play, *Rosmersholm*, provides a sample of realistic dialogue that includes conversational language with a potential for subtext. What follows is a brief exchange between three characters: Rebekka West and Johannes Rosmer, who are involved in a complex love relationship, and Professor Kroll, who opposes Rebekka's influence over his friend Rosmer.

REBEKKA: ...Doctor West had taught me many things – in fact, all the scattered knowledge I had of life in those days, I’d learned from him. And then –

KROLL: And then?

ROSMER: But, Rebekka – I already know all this.

REBEKKA: Yes, of course, I suppose you do.

KROLL: Perhaps I had better go. (321, stage directions removed)

On the page, this text includes character names and uses a dialogue format so that lines are attributed to specific characters. At first glance, this is a quick and direct exchange. Yet given the relationship between these three characters, actors must also navigate intricate clues in the language with regard to subtext. To illustrate complexity within this seemingly straightforward conversation, a parallel sketch of possible subtext is provided below. The lines of dialogue are included, and a subtextual analysis appears in parentheses under each line:

REBEKKA: ...Doctor West had taught me many things – in fact, all the scattered knowledge I had of life in those days, I’d learned from him. And then –  
(The words *many things* and *scattered knowledge* hold the weight of the previous scene between Rebekka and Kroll in which Kroll implies an incestuous relationship between Rebekka and Doctor West. *And then* – conveys a breaking of thought, perhaps an inability to express the full depth of the multiple meanings of what she *learned*.)

KROLL: And then?  
(The simplicity of the question implies that Kroll already knows her history intimately, but that he also wants her to reveal other information that she is concealing.)

ROSMER: But, Rebekka – I already know all this.  
(*But* is conjunctive to the previous two lines and suggests Rosmer also knows Rebekka’s history. Use of *I already* distinguishes Rosmer’s knowledge from Kroll’s and reasserts his own intimate knowledge of Rebekka’s past.)

REBEKKA: Yes, of course, I suppose you do.  
(The juxtaposition of certainty in *of course* and doubt in *suppose*, conveys the unexpected discovery of Rosmer’s intimate knowledge of

her past, especially as Rebekka and Rosmer do not discuss her past in detail until Act IV.)

KROLL: Perhaps I had better go.  
(This line hints that Kroll understands Rebekka is experiencing a discovery. He may attempt to excuse himself in order to give the other two characters enough privacy in which to expose the matter of Rebekka's past more fully.)

In *Rosmersholm*, both the text and the subtext convey an “already-known reality” in the sense that the dialogue is recognizable as conversational language. Language delivers direct and implied meaning. In other words, Ibsen employs realistic dramatic writing that is open to variations of subtextual analysis by the actor.

The next excerpts come from Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*. For the purposes of discussing how language is used, *Arcadia* offers a means to consider realistic dialogue that is also structured as a puzzle. Stoppard's witty character interactions suggest virtuosic writing that blends Ibsen's crafted conversation with Wellman's composition of words as objects, but to a lesser degree than Wellman creates words as objects. The action in *Arcadia* moves between scenes that take place in the early 1800s and in the present day. There are many intricate connections between the time periods, the characters, and the characters' dialogue. The following excerpts reveal a subtle reversal that occurs for the character of Bernard Nightingale through use of the repeated phrase, “What for?” The reversal becomes apparent when the excerpts are viewed in tandem. First, near the end of Scene Five, the phrase ends a sparring exchange between Bernard and another scholarly researcher, Hannah Jarvis:

BERNARD: ...Why don't you come?

HANNAH: Where?

BERNARD: With me.

HANNAH: To London? **What for?**

BERNARD: **What for.**

HANNAH: Oh, your lecture.  
BERNARD: No, no, bugger that. Sex.  
HANNAH: Oh...No. Thanks...Bernard!  
(63, stage directions removed, my emphasis in bold)

For the record, this does not lead to any kind of sexual affair between the two characters. The second excerpt comes from Scene Seven, but use of the phrase in this context effectively marks the end of an affair that *does* occur between Bernard and Chloë Coverly in the play.

BERNARD: Your mother caught us in that cottage.  
CHLOË: She snooped!  
BERNARD: I don't think so. She was rescuing a theodolite.  
CHLOË: I'll come with you, Bernard.  
BERNARD: No, you bloody won't.  
CHLOË: Don't you want me to?  
BERNARD: Of course not. **What for?**  
(95, stage directions removed, my emphasis in bold)

Bernard reveals that he and Chloë have been “caught” by Chloë’s mother in the middle of a sexual rendezvous, but that he does not wish her to following him to London to continue their affair.

The reversal in relation to Bernard also reveals Stoppard’s use of language as a puzzle. In Scene Five, Bernard makes an offer to Hannah that is refused. Hannah’s use of the phrase, “What for?” is ironically repeated by Bernard, but not as a question. He says, “What for.” Subtext could reveal that he thinks his meaning should be obvious. The question plus the repetition elevates the phrase so that it becomes a representative object that speaks for sexual tension. The phrase lingers, suspended between Bernard and Hannah. In Scene Seven, it appears as if Bernard has forgotten his own rules of engagement. He turns the phrase on Chloë, refusing her advances and revealing his own

insincerity. But perhaps if the actor playing Bernard recognizes the reversed dramaturgical structure on offer in the juxtaposition of these scenes, the character could recognize his own situation – in reverse – through layering of language. Essentially, Stoppard’s repetition of the same phrase appears conversationally, but it also establishes and complicates structured moments within the play. *Arcadia* uses language as objects to create dramaturgical puzzles – puzzles that may be engaged by actors from one scene to another.<sup>3</sup>

On the other end of the spectrum, Mac Wellman’s play *Cellophane* provides an example of virtuosic writing that employs words as objects more obviously. Wellman describes how the project originated as a “language experiment” about grammar and slang, but he also reveals how the process led to an “undiscovered continent of bad writing” (151). According to Wellman, exploring language exposed a discovery: “I found to my great surprise that the stuff possessed great expressive power, was usually about important ideas, and almost always was far more speakable than the better class of American language” (152). The text on the page, unlike Ibsen and Stoppard’s plays, does not include character names. It appears in monologue format with no dialogue breaks. Section titles delineate what can be viewed as scenic breaks, and lines of text appear within the scenic breaks under a number. The excerpt below is taken from the first section titled, “From *Mad Potatoes*.” It appears under “3” in a series of six monologues for that section:

3  
For it behind the great labernath am.  
Of the school of mad potatoes.  
Just when you think it hadda been shall have done  
could it be  
At cat.

It hardly were else elsewhere.  
 If it were not it mighta have did  
     was in some place other  
     as for instance Y to Y'.  
 Like as how  
     twixt it and he and she are  
     between his self the same and an X be.  
 Like the crowe.  
 Like the other side  
     done up most whatfer most beautifullest.  
 Why the  
 At cat's  
     X to X' all the way the crisscross am?  
 It cross the blackdress.  
 Why the not  
     amn't it ever  
 At cat? (155)

On the page, the text reads confusingly, especially given the made up words and unusual grammar. Quite literally this language defies an “already-known” reality.

If the text is spoken, however, a rhythm underscores the unknown use of language, especially if the speaker follows the poetic line breaks and allows the sounds of the words their due. For instance, the word *labernath* echoes the word *labyrinth* but remakes the word and its expected meaning into an unknown object. Similarly, the word *cat* becomes a place rather than an animal. These word/objects appear in other monologues for this section as well, which gives them further weight for structural consideration, much like “What for?” in Stoppard’s play. At the same time, the text is unfamiliar and open-ended, and subtext is seemingly indecipherable. Whereas realism may at times incorporate poetic text like Wellman’s in a play, an audience expects the rest of the play to sort things out in a more straightforward manner. *Cellophane* maintains its composition of “bad writing” throughout the play. The text appears in a discernable monologue format on the page, but lines do not appear according to character, meaning

does not occur through conversational dialogue, and the text defies the actor's attempts to explore psychological motivation for a character via subtext. Wellman's "virtuosic writing" purposefully employs word/objects to build a new reality.

Comparing the two extremes of Ibsen and Wellman offers an experience of the strategies Castagno codifies as new playwriting. Stoppard troubles those extremes by occupying a murky middle ground because he blends techniques, which will become equally important in later examples of "crossover poetics." To examine strategies of new playwriting more purposefully, the sample from Ibsen's *Rosmersholm* illustrates the kind of conversational language employed in realism. Wellman's *Cellophane* exemplifies what Castagno describes as "polyvocality." Castagno builds upon the theory of Mikhail Bakhtin when he defines polyvocality in relation to new playwriting: "Multiple language strategies and sources coexist in the play. ... Polyvocality resists the notion of a single or dominant point of view in a narrative, thereby supplanting the single or privileged authorial voice" (2nd ed. 22). Authorial voice refers to the voice of the playwright. David Edgar suggests a comparable perspective by using the classical terms *diagesis*, which he defines as "the writer's authorial voice," and *mimesis*, which he defines as "speaking through characters" (*How Plays Work* 65). When the author speaks through character in realistic dialogue, authorial voice still factors into the playwriting, but occurs through what Castagno defines as "character-specific" dialogue: "Character-specific refers to the principle that each character should speak a consistent way or within a certain range" (2nd ed. 17). Ibsen, for example, crafts character-specific dialogue for each character, but organizes *Rosmersholm* to convey a thematic concern. The play places Rebekka and Rosmer within a society that condemns their unmarried relationship. The triangulated

dialogue excerpt reveals a practical instance of their impossible love through the looming presence of Kroll. A polyvocal play like Wellman's differs, by his own definition, as an experiment with "bad writing." Though bad writing may reflect something like a thematic concern, Wellman does not craft dialogue in order to convey that theme. Rather, he organizes words into an experience of that theme. In Wellman's case, a polyvocality of voices replaces authorial voice.

Along with polyvocality that infuses the play's dramaturgical structures, Castagno refers to "multivocal" and "equivocal" characters in relation to new playwriting. These concepts equally pertain to the actor's work. He defines the multivocal character as follows: "The multivocal figure bulks multiple speech strategies in a single character. This character can change level or approach to language 'on a dime'" (2nd ed. 22).<sup>4</sup> The equivocal character he defines as, "...one actor shifting between two or more characters" (2nd ed. 97). Both constructs mimic polyvocality – or contribute to a play's polyvocality – but through instances of character. To continue the comparison of extremes, Rebekka and Rosmer reflect character perspectives through the style of realism, and the actor would play one character with character-specific dialogue. The actor who speaks Wellman's "3" monologue uses various words that shift meaning and create multiple possibilities of perspective because the language turns "on a dime." Castagno also makes a useful comparison between polyvocal playwriting and the standards of baroque art, which equally explains multivocal and equivocal characters: "Another way of understanding how multivocality works is to compare it to the baroque style. The baroque is a recipe for opposition and tension as opposed to harmony and balance. The baroque intertwines, juxtaposes, is serpentine, or swings between polarities of high and low,

comic and serious” (2nd ed. 33). Castagno’s exploration of polyvocal plays and multivocal or equivocal characters via baroque strategies further defines how language shapes virtuosic writing through opposing narrative styles, sources, and voices.

Walter Benjamin offers another perspective about virtuosic writing via the baroque. His view precedes Castagno’s application of polyvocality, although the two perspectives reflect similar concerns. Benjamin also complements my suggestion that virtuosic writing uses language as both a structure and a puzzle and uses words as objects. In *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, Benjamin draws attention to the allegorical composition of language in the German *Trauerspiel*. He describes baroque language strategies of the *Trauerspiel* as follows: “In the anagrams, the onomatopoeic phrases, and many other examples of linguistic virtuosity, word, syllable, and sound are emancipated from any context of traditional meaning and are flaunted as objects which can be exploited for allegorical purposes” (*Origin* 207). In Benjamin’s analysis of the *Trauerspiel*, as in Wegener’s analysis of Wellman, words as “objects” work together, even though meaning appears through exploration of uncommon associations. The “linguistic virtuosity” of allegorical composition also resonates with virtuosic writing introduced by Castagno. Further, Benjamin contextualizes how baroque constructions of language invite exploration of words as allegorical, not symbolic.

Language constructed allegorically contains a layering of potential meanings rather than the symbolic association of a singular meaning constructed from discursive intent. Benjamin’s analysis of the *Trauerspiel* draws a careful distinction between symbol and allegory, which recognizes how layering of language differs from affixing a symbolic meaning to words. After comparing several other writers’ definitions of *symbol*,

Benjamin proposes his own: "...the experience of the symbol is the mystical instant in which the symbol assumes the meaning into its hidden and, if one might say so, wooded interior" (*Origin* 165). Benjamin shares his perception of the symbol as an instant occurrence with Friedrich Creuzer. He references Creuzer's description of the symbol as a "flash of lightning" – something akin to Benjamin's "mystical instant." At the moment the symbol "assumes the meaning" into itself, that instant of symbolic association affixes a singular meaning to the symbol. By way of example, Benjamin's use of "wooded interior" actively employs a symbolic construct. The idea of *forest* instantly, briefly, and concretely represents that which is hidden or enclosed, and, once named, an association is fixed within that single image.

By comparison, Benjamin's description of allegory exposes limitations of the symbol's fixed meaning. The allegorical use of language works oppositely in creation as well as effect: "...the contemplative calm with which it immerses itself into the depths which separate visual being from meaning, has none of the disinterested self-sufficiency which is present in the apparently related intention of the sign" (*Origin* 165). The symbol is the self-sufficient sign that assumes meaning into itself in a momentary and often visual flash – literally a word or a phrase. Allegory, however, is that which "immerses itself" into the depths of language with a "contemplative calm." Allegorical use of language requires a different engagement with words, as objects come together in uncommon associations, through sounds and rhythmic relationships – through polyvocality. Meaning then arises from the exploration and layering of words. It is not affixed to singular definition in an instant association.

The allegorical composition Benjamin recognizes in the baroque *Trauerspiel* resonates with the use of allegory in new playwriting. Allegory is especially apparent in Wellman's work. In an interview with Amy Wegener, Wellman describes the allegorical structure of his play, *Description Beggared; or the Allegory of WHITENESS*, as a means to construct new worlds out of familiar elements (Wegener 22). According to Wegener, such allegorical structure for the world of the play creates a means to talk about cultural or social issues by making the familiar unfamiliar, or, as Wellman suggests, by considering things "a bit indirectly" (22). Wellman invites an experience of allegorical structure when he explains how he uses allegory as a device. Within his explanation, he layers multiple meanings into the word *know*: "I think it's always about finding out what you know, that you don't know you know. Which is far more interesting than what you know you know" (23). In these two short sentences, Wellman configures the word *know* to reflect the known as well as the unknown. Meaning layers back and forth when one word reflects both ideas. In allegorical composition, a word *stands in* for various meanings; it does not *stand for* a fixed meaning. For example, *know* in Wilson's statement stands in for both the known and the unknown rather than standing for either the known or the unknown.

Wellman's intentional confusion of the "already-known reality" resurfaces in this explanation as well. As a complimentary view, Benjamin suggests the allegorical structure of the *Trauerspiel* functions as a historical remnant. He compares the baroque use of allegory to the historical ruin. A crumbling castle, for example, invokes an actual site of ruin that recalls a history no longer visible in its full glory. Much like such ruins, Benjamin sees an "irresistible decay" in the *Trauerspiel*: "Allegories are in the realm of

thoughts what ruins are in the realm of things” (*Origin* 178). Through allegorical composition, then, new playwriting unravels the known world of language into ruins. Words become sites or ruins that recall a no longer visible certainty. This reflects a significant shift in dramaturgical composition at the level of words.

Like polyvocality and multivocal or equivocal characters, allegorical language impacts characterization profoundly. For instance, a different construction of character immediately arises when viewing the text samples from Ibsen and Wellman on the page. This hints at how characterization takes shape differently in each play. In Ibsen’s text, character is first delineated by character name. Characters also speak in conversational dialogue, which reveals character-specific language and information as well as that character’s relationship with other characters. Dialogue in Ibsen’s play thereby reveals clues for the actor that lead to realistic characterization. David Ball offers another way to understand how conversational dialogue leads to “recognizable human behavior” in characterization:

So playwrights try to reflect recognizable human behavior in how their characters talk. Playwrights may heighten language, or lower it, or fragment it, or make it as artificial as can be, but because they want to support, not undermine, the pretense of impersonation, they always try to present talking as recognizable human behavior. (Ball 27)

In new playwriting, however, playwrights do not always want to support “the pretense of impersonation” in the same way. Wellman does not distinguish character by name – or even by number. For example, in *Cellophane* the numbered “characters” do not speak consistently throughout, and language is not character-specific in the play. Such plays pose a challenge for actors who are trained to create characters in realistic plays, regardless of whether the play includes character-specific dialogue or monologue.

Castagno assumes that actor training already meets challenges for multivocal or equivocal characters. He refers to alternative methods that provide solutions for characterization in new playwriting, including: Viewpoints in relation to Anne Bogart,<sup>5</sup> Suzuki training, and techniques like Fitzmaurice because of its emphasis on combined voice and body conditioning (2nd ed. 4). In fact, he offers the following:

The newer acting training methods have met the demand of new playwriting with its emphasis on theatrically based versus psychologically based characterization. This has opened up writing for the stage, since actors can now seamlessly move across orthodox training boundaries, subverting established pretexts, such as a Meisner actor, a method actor, an external actor. (2nd ed. 4)

The methods mentioned above, and surely others not mentioned by Castagno, do encourage a greater range of flexibility for actors with various performance material. Yet the assumption that actor training is currently meeting “the demand” of new playwriting by offering techniques for physical and vocal flexibility may be premature. Castagno assumes that because more plays incorporate more theatrical characters in their texts, and because *some* methods address theatrical characterization, that the “dominant pedagogy in training playwrights” aligns with common pedagogy for training actors (2nd ed. 3-4). Beyond impact for actors, such generalizations also give leave to doubt assumptions that new playwriting strategies dominate playwriting so fully. It may be better to suggest that such strategies now occur with frequency. This distinction would still necessitate a shift in dominant pedagogies of actor training.

The phrasing Castagno uses to differentiate theatrical and psychological characterization offers a starting point from which to consider pedagogies for training actors in response to new playwriting. From the actor’s perspective, he provides a two-column table entitled “Traditional versus new approaches to character” [sic] (2nd ed. 78).

The column headings for this table distinguish characterization at a glance. The first column is labeled “Actor Becomes Character.” Under this heading the first item reads, “emotional, psychological identification;” the last item is “interiority.” The second column is labeled “Actor Performs Character.” Under this heading the first item reads, “External, performative projection;” the last item is “virtuosity.” Use of the words *external* and *virtuosity* imply a non-emotional, non-psychological association with theatrical/performative characters as a new approach. Castagno goes on to offer “The Thirteen Tenets of Theatrical Characters,” which suggest more of a pronounced theatricality or performativity in these characters. For instance: they operate in extremes; they are not thematically constructed; they are polyvocal; they transform; they are grotesque; they may be archetypes or figures rather than psychologically distinguished individuals (2nd ed. 83-88). Castagno effectively echoes Bertolt Brecht’s epic and dialectical theater projects as prior approaches to nonrealism. In relation to performative tools for actors, Brecht employs *gestus* as repeatable gesture in words or actions; he advises the actor to ask dialectical questions rather than emotional questions; and his “Alienation Effect” creates a distance between actor and character by historicizing events related to character rather than creating empathetic associations (Brecht 42, 279, 147). As an *old* approach to new playwriting, Brecht offers prior instances of theatrical approaches to character.

I also note that Castagno’s table subtly reinforces an expectation that contemporary approaches to acting are either internal (psychological) or external (performative). Use of this binary diminishes Castagno’s earlier supposition that actors now shift “seamlessly” between theatrical versus psychological characterization because

the existence of the binary suggests a definable seam. As another representative resource, *The Creative Spirit: An Introduction to Theatre* acknowledges a bias toward internal acting in the United States: “Because so much of American theatre and American actor training depends on an internal, psychological approach, it is harder for us to understand the nature and validity of external, technical approaches to acting” (Arnold 126). External approaches are characterized in this context as conscious choices growing out of speaking a text, as opposed to the actor’s internal work to identify closely with a character’s circumstances. John Lutterbie’s essay titled, “Resisting Binaries: Theory and Acting,” is a comparative resource. He says, “Actors are categorized by the way they work – from the ‘inside out’ or the ‘outside in,’ through the ‘emotions’ or the ‘intellect,’ and depend on ‘technique’ or creative ‘impulses’” (139). These resources were published in 2011 and 2012 respectively. Despite Castagno’s suggestion that the transition between boundaries of internal/external characterization are negligible, it appears there are missing links in actor training that would yield a more seamless transition for actors as they negotiate between plays written in the style of realism and plays that use new playwriting strategies.

Perhaps a difference still exists between new playwriting pedagogy and methods for training actors in the United States. Playwrights may now engage more fully with new playwriting techniques, but other theater practitioners – more specifically, actors – may not. The sample texts from Ibsen and Wellman illustrate a profound disparity between plays that employ conversational language and plays that use language to virtuosic effect. Ibsen’s dialogue requires subtext to convey meaning through character-specific language. With regard to characterization, clues in the text relate the individual character’s current

and historical psychological state. Wellman, on the other hand, disregards psychological characterization or temporal concerns. The speakers in Wellman's text are neither distinguished as characters with names (or numbers, despite his use of that convention) nor given distinct personalities through consistent speech qualities. Despite alternative training techniques that may enhance the actor's physical and vocal development, a more active analysis of language must be given a different consideration during the actor's preparation in response to new playwriting.

I propose that the contemporary practice of production dramaturgy may offer tools for the actor to undertake this work. Production dramaturgy considers text on the page as well as text in rehearsal and performance. In other words, it explores dramaturgy and dramaturgy in action. Also, as stated in the introduction, thinking about dramaturgy in relation to text offers a starting point from which to develop a practical dramaturgy for actors, but I do not consider text as the only source of performance material. By considering dramaturgy as a practice and as an artistic role, and then by considering how actors currently engage with dramaturgy in production processes and in training, it will be possible to assess more thoroughly whether trends for actor training in the United States address the same dramaturgical concerns as new playwriting.

### Why Dramaturgy?

Dramaturgy describes how a play is constructed. The term encompasses various other terms that may refer to a play's composition, architecture, or structure. In reference to construction, dramaturgy also attends to multiple components, such as genre, style, dramatic action, language, character, location, and time. Dramaturgy is therefore a play's text on a page, or its unique components. Yet that text also becomes action onstage. The

recognition that a play's dramaturgy refers to composition as well as to the dynamic process of production relates to what Cathy Turner and Synne K. Behrndt have called a, "tension between the fixity of concept and the fluidity of performance" (5). In other words, a creative tension exists between structure and action as a production evolves from the play's text on a page, into exploration of that text during rehearsal, into the interactive and live performance. The practice of dramaturgy therefore considers a play's dramaturgy as well as that dramaturgy in action.

Dramaturgy also refers to the work of the dramaturg, or the artistic role in contemporary theatrical production. Definitions of the dramaturg's artistic role in the United States continue to transform, especially as the profession emerged in this country most noticeably in the late 1970s. Dramaturgs are now incorporated frequently in theatrical production, and while the artistic functions continue to shift, the job description has stabilized. A critical source that defined the dramaturg's role for theater in the United States is *Dramaturgy in American Theater: A Source Book*. As the first compilation of theoretical and practical debates for the profession in this country, the 1997 anthology is both historical and current in its conversations. One of the first essays in the book, Anne Cattaneo's "Dramaturgy: An Overview," is especially helpful in tracing a legacy that extends back to G.E. Lessing's *Hamburg Dramaturgy*, written in Germany between 1767-1769. Cattaneo also traces a more direct lineage in the United States from Yale's first graduate program in the late 1970s<sup>6</sup> as well as from several individual American practitioners who preceded formal study. Other authors in the anthology go into detail about the German tradition of dramaturgical practice. The American legacy will be privileged here, but with Cattaneo's practical advice in mind: "The functions of the

dramaturg existed well before the profession itself had a name” (Jonas et al. 3). Toward that goal, *Dramaturgy in American Theater* offers more than its status as a historical milestone for the profession of dramaturgy in the United States. It presents essential definitions of the artistic functions attributed to the dramaturg by practitioner-authors seeking to clarify the practice.

In her overview, Cattaneo identifies multiple artistic functions for the dramaturg, from which I suggest two primary objectives. The first objective relates to the resident or institutional dramaturg’s function of cultivating production content to suit the artistic mission of a theater or producing organization. In other words, the dramaturg exists as a resident or artistic staff position, whether that individual has the institutional job title of Dramaturg or an alternate title like Literary Manager or Artistic Associate. Cattaneo suggests the resident dramaturg’s purview includes commissioning new plays, preparing production texts (especially for classical plays), and “assembling” text from diverse material (Jonas et al. 6-8). This function of the dramaturg also operates as an internal critic for a theater in relation to programming content. That focus may sound straightforward, but defining the “critic” becomes a source of debate throughout *Dramaturgy in American Theater*. I would phrase the underlying debate as: dramaturg as in-house critic for the theater versus dramaturg as advocate for the play. On the side of dramaturg as in-house critic, Robert Brustein offers a view of the dramaturg as the theater’s conscience: “As the humanist in the woodpile, it is the dramaturg who must act as the conscience of the theatre, reminding it of its original promise, when it threatens to relax into facile, slack, and easy paths” (Jonas et al. 36). On the side of advocating for the play, especially new plays in development, Art Borreca suggests the “scholar/dramaturg”

gives critical attention to the playwright's process: "...dramaturgical work requires an empathic, learned sensibility, which extends the playwright's own process of self-questioning into a playwright-dramaturg dialogue about the play and the process of creation" (Jonas et al. 65, 69).<sup>7</sup> What remains the same on both sides of the debate is the critical attention of the dramaturg to production content. Cattaneo asserts a blended role for the resident dramaturg, a view shared by others in the anthology. From this perspective, the dramaturg gives critical attention to the theater, the play, and the playwright at various times, but a split focus does not require one dramaturgical focus over another in the job description.

The second primary objective relates to the dramaturg's function within the production process, or production dramaturgy. The specifics of production dramaturgy appear in Cattaneo's subsection titles, especially: "Research, Production Books, In-House Critic: Watching Out for the Play in Rehearsals" (Jonas et al. 9-10). Cattaneo's use of in-house critic offers an example of multi-faceted attention. It transforms the debate about whether a dramaturg should function as either in-house critic or advocate for the play into a combined function, especially when attending rehearsals as a production dramaturg. She defines research primarily as historical research into the play's content, although her examples illustrate how research expands into a much broader category. For example, research may include conducting thematic analysis, creating and arranging character-specific notes, and collating glossaries as well as study of a play's form and structure through various versions of a play text, if various versions exist. Dramaturgs may also compile production books from the multiple layers of this research, which may be shared in whole or in part with the production team in rehearsal, and sometimes with the

audience. Research and production books are therefore specific to a play and a production, but they are also compiled at the discretion of the dramaturg.

By way of another example, Lue Morgan Douthit is Director of Literary Development and Dramaturgy at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF). In a personal interview, she revealed that she no longer creates actor packets and minimizes research depending upon the play. She says *Google* has “freed” her from that task and offers a directive for actors: “‘I have no idea what you’re interested in. I’m not going to pre-digest it. It may not be useful for you.’ I don’t do actor packets anymore. Some people still do; I just don’t” (Douthit). Douthit does not claim to speak for all dramaturgs or even all plays, but her perspective offers a potential shift as the dramaturg’s production role continues to transform in response to media resources. Other details from her perspective on production dramaturgy at OSF inform the case study in the next chapter.

To return to Cattaneo’s perspective, the subsection of her overview related to “In-House Critic: Watching Out for the Play in Rehearsals” introduces how the production dramaturg integrates directly into a rehearsal process. During research and preparation, the dramaturg may focus primarily on the nuances of a play’s dramaturgy, but in rehearsal that focus shifts to the play’s dramaturgy in action. As noted earlier, this shift embraces a tension between “fixity” and “fluidity” of a text in performance. Much like the efforts of research or production books, the dramaturg’s integration into rehearsal occurs at the discretion of the dramaturg, but also depends upon the particular collaborative process with a play’s director and production team. This is perhaps why the case study at OSF and other case studies reflect diversity from each dramaturg/director relationship. Representative sources for other case studies include: *The Production*

*Notebooks: Theatre in Process*, edited by Mark Bly; the interviews conducted by Judith Rudakoff and Lynn M. Thomson in *Between the Lines: The Process of Dramaturgy*,<sup>8</sup> and the “Models of Collaboration” section in *Dramaturgy in American Theater*. Such diversity renders the process of production dramaturgy as an intuitive and individual process. Thus, like other artistic processes in the theater – playwriting, directing, designing, or acting, for example – production dramaturgy remains flexible enough to transform in response to the dramaturg and to the needs of a particular play.

Still, approaches also exist that help to categorize production dramaturgy. Much like first-generation language playwrights have inspired a new generation of writers, early American production dramaturgs have inspired a new generation seeking to individuate – and sometimes systematize – dramaturgical practice. For example, Andrew J. Hartley’s *The Shakespearean Dramaturg: A Theoretical and Practical Guide* (2005) speaks to the dramaturg’s work in contemporary productions of classical texts. Hartley sees the production dramaturg for Shakespeare plays as both, “an intellectual presence in a production” and “a poet, sensitive to the functions of language in all its aesthetic and emotive power” (2, 7). Picking up the critic versus advocate debate, Hartley identifies himself intellectually as well as artistically. Michael Mark Chemers has written *Ghost Light: An Introductory Handbook for Dramaturgy* (2010) in which he considers – as he notes in a preface – the “art and science of dramaturgy particularly as it is practiced in American theater” (xi). Echoing Hartley’s dramaturg as intellectual/artist, Chemers considers the dramaturg as scientist/artist when he suggests the following: “Like scientists, dramaturgs ask questions at every step and test their answers” (9). In *The Art of Active Dramaturgy* (2011), Lenora Inez Brown articulates dramaturgy as an active,

though not a predetermined process: “Actively looking for the play’s rules rather than how a play conforms to preexisting styles and structures makes new discoveries possible” (5). In each description, these dramaturgs engage in active exploration of a play from a critical and artistic perspective. Given that shared tendency, production dramaturgy might therefore be defined as an interactive process of discovery that engages with a play’s dramaturgy as well as its dramaturgy in action.

Considering production dramaturgy as an interactive process of discovery inspires the potential to view it as a phenomenological practice. Of course, the excerpts above represent approaches to dramaturgy, and they cannot include all approaches. Yet each practitioner reveals a common process of perception between the individual dramaturg and a play in production. In the tradition of Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s body-subject, the dramaturg may be considered along the lines of what David Abram suggests is a, “breathing body, as it experiences and inhabits the world” rather than an incorporeal essence or “transcendental ego” of Edmund Husserl’s phenomenology (Abram 44-45). To state the comparison in another way: the production dramaturg not only engages in critical and artistic research about the play, but enters into a lived research through the experience of a play’s production process. Production dramaturgs may thereby experience an immersive, embodied relationship of phenomenological perception with a play. The practitioners sampled equally suggest production dramaturgy incorporates a process of listening to and questioning a play, which also parallels phenomenological research. Max Van Manen goes so far as to suggest a process of “becoming” with regard to the phenomenological researcher as an experiencing subject:

Even minor phenomenological research projects require that we do not simply raise a question and possibly soon drop it again, but rather that we

‘live’ this question, that we ‘become’ this question. Is not the meaning of research: to question something by going back again and again to the things themselves until that which is put to question begins to reveal something of its essential nature? (43)

The process of “becoming” is perhaps more often associated with the actor in relation to the “essential nature” of a character, especially related to so-called internal approaches. Nonetheless, a production dramaturg also experiences a process of “living the question” of a play – going back again and again to question a play just as an actor repeatedly questions a character.

What Van Manen describes from the perspective of the researcher introduces a more complex relationship in the reflexive sense of phenomenology: the researcher (perceiving subject) enters into a relationship with the subject of research (perceiving world) such that both are living and becoming at the same time. Both are listening and questioning. To transfer that dynamic to production dramaturgy, the dramaturg is the perceiving subject in a relationship with the perceiving world of a play in production. Furthermore, Van Manen and Abram confirm this is not only an intellectual activity, even though the intellect is engaged in the manner described by Hartley and Chemers. It is a visceral experience, of the kind Brown refers to as an active search. As an interactive process of discovery, production dramaturgy may therefore align with phenomenological research. The dramaturg seeks to experience a play by listening to and questioning that play, even as it transforms through a specific process as dramaturgy in action.

Debates about the dramaturg’s role as it functions intellectually or artistically also suggest why the practice of production dramaturgy could align with semiology<sup>9</sup> rather than phenomenology. Like the critic/advocate debate represented in *Dramaturgy in American Theater*, another debate relates to dramaturg as intellectual versus artist. Robert

Brustein primarily considers the dramaturg is an intellectual. Though he suggests a humanist approach to dramaturgy as a critical function, he also recognizes hostility to the dramaturg in the United States because it creates friction between the artist and the humanist critic. The result is what Brustein calls an “anti-intellectualism” within theatrical practice (Jonas et al. 33). Jonathan Marks was dramaturg for Robert Brustein for a period of time, and he defines dramaturgy as more of a blended role: “a person who mediates between the intellectual, literary, and aesthetic aspects of theater, on the one hand, and its practice on the other” (Jonas et al. 31). Art Borreca seeks to differentiate himself from Brustein in other ways, but still refers to the dramaturg as scholarly:

Despite variations in these models, however, Yale and Iowa have repeatedly aspired to certain ideals of new play dramaturgy: those of the Yale critic who is brought inside the theatrical process to help improve the artistic and intellectual quality of the play or the production, and of the Iowa playwright/dramaturg – and, more recently, scholar/dramaturg – who serves as an empathic facilitator of the playwright’s and director’s process and vision. (Jonas et al. 56)

Without naming Brustein, Borreca’s reference to Yale refers to him, just as Iowa refers to Borreca. The intellectual/artist debate featured program-specific concerns at this point, although the perspectives of Hartley and Chemers equally suggest an ongoing concern of definition occurs in dramaturgical practice.

Semiology functions as a tool used for critical analysis in relation to theater, which suggests a connection to the “intellectual” role of the critic. Mark Fortier provides a practical definition for this context: “...theatre semiotics is predominantly a study of signs that humans put on stage for others to interpret” (19). Fortier also offers an understanding of “signs” when he describes them as: “...objects by which humans communicate meaning: words, images, behaviour, arrangements of many kinds...” (19).

Semiology, as descended from Ferdinand Saussure's study of linguistics, follows the premise that the sign has two parts: "the signifier, which is the material phenomenon we are able to perceive...and the signified, which is the concept invoked by the signifier" (20). A very basic example is the word *theater* (signifier) and the idea of a stage performance that it suggests (signified). For instance, when I say the word *theater*, I envision whichever stage space I visited or worked in most recently. Beyond subjective associations, other arbitrary relationships between signifier and signified exist due to shifting context. For example, the word *theater* might just as easily signify a movie theater as a playhouse. As a tool for critical analysis related to signification, dramaturgs may certainly engage with semiology – formally or informally – by giving attention to the "signs" within a play's dramaturgy or its dramaturgy in action. The reading of theatrical "signs" actually aligns quite well with the intellectual activity of the dramaturg that is described by Hartley, Chemers, and others. But semiology does not necessarily account for the lived experience of a production process. In fact, signs, like Benjamin's symbols, share a common tendency toward fixed associations or relationships within a given context, which is why semiology may more readily relate to interpretation of product rather than experience of process. I therefore draw a distinction between use of semiology as a tool for critical analysis in the *practice* of dramaturgy, and the phenomenological *process* of production dramaturgy.

In his study of theater semiology, Patrice Pavis suggests another theoretical means to distinguish the process of production dramaturgy from semiology. In his early work, *Languages of the Stage: Essays in the Semiology of Theatre*, Pavis suggests the interpretive concerns of semiology and dramaturgy are fundamentally different in scope,

although both attempt to interpret the, “articulation of the total signifier and its corresponding signified” (27). The “total” signifier in this case might be understood as the performance, and the signified as its content – ideas or themes, for example. Pavis distinguishes dramaturgy by restricting its scope to a theoretical comparison of form (structure) and content (ideas or themes) relating to how the performance of a play articulates these elements (what I call dramaturgy in action). Semiology, on the other hand, “...attempts the comparative operation at all levels of the performed work, and more particularly at the level of stage systems” (27). Pavis distinguishes semiology by expanding its scope to a theoretical comparison of multiple systems and layers of signification articulated in the performance of a play. Semiology thereby extends beyond the relationship between form and content. The complex systems and layers of “signs” constitute *mise en scène*, or “totality of staging” (15). Given this distinction, Pavis essentially suggests the dramaturg’s focus may be semiological but attends to the *play* in performance, whereas the semiologist’s focus encompasses the entirety of the *performance*.

In his most recent work, however, Pavis considers a shift in critical analysis that includes *mise en scène* as well as semiology and phenomenology. In *Contemporary Mise en Scène: Staging Theatre Today*, Pavis concludes that *mise en scène* is in “dire need of repair” and suggests the way forward by conjoining theoretical analysis of *mise en scène* as an “organised and conceptual system” with the “Anglo-American” view of performance as a live process (57, 283). Pavis suggests new terms may be required to better represent the duality; he offers: *mis en perf* or *performise* (47). In order to engage in critical analysis of *mise en perf*, Pavis also proposes “equilibrium” is necessary

between semiology and phenomenology, which he describes as “production and reception” respectively (292). He coins a term for this theoretical merger as well: *semio-phenomenology*. (61). Through this shared approach, semiology attends to the conceptual system of signs (*mise en scène*) but also considers the interactive, phenomenological process of reception. Multiple layers of signification thereby gain an equal footing with multiple layers of phenomenological reception. Yet even in Pavis’s conjoined *semio-phenomenology*, these theoretical perspectives still have distinct scopes: semiology is associated with production and phenomenology is associated with reception. In essence, phenomenology as reception still aligns with dramaturgy as an interactive process of discovery (reception to a play or a play in performance), and semiology as production still aligns with the total performance.

By conceiving of production dramaturgy as a phenomenological process of interactive discovery, I have identified three critical approaches to the process. The first is: prepare for an unknown journey. This concept owes its origin most directly to dramaturgs Elinor Fuchs and Anne Cattaneo. Fuchs advises that we must approach a play as a new world, as a unique and unknown planet: “...there is nothing in the world of a play by accident. *The puzzles may hold the key*” (9, author’s italics). Oppositely, approaching a play as a known world leads to quick answers rather than dramaturgical questions. Wellman’s grappling with the known and unknown resonates particularly well with this concept. Similarly, Cattaneo recognizes how individually preparing for an unknown journey contributes to dramaturgical collaboration: “So you don’t know where you are going and don’t know where you are going collectively. As the dramaturg, you have to be armed, in order to go on the journey. You have to go in with your stuff, and if

everyone is doing that, we will go somewhere collectively” (Rudakoff and Thomson 234). Building upon these two approaches, to prepare for an unknown journey requires individual exploration of the play’s unknown world, which will ultimately contribute to a collaborative process rather than a predetermined path.

The second and third approaches are linked to the first, but also to each other: to listen and to question. To some extent, conceiving of a play as an unknown world is already listening to the play in a new way – without expectation. Yet, as noted by another dramaturg, Geoffrey Proehl, the process of listening in theatrical production often condenses due to limitations of time: “Playwrights need months if not years to create a script; those other theater makers – directors, designers, actors, dramaturgs – too often find themselves with weeks, when what is needed is months, even years. We find ourselves speaking, when we have not yet had time to absorb, to listen and read” (41). Considering Proehl’s perspective, to listen may be likened to a phenomenological “becoming” with a play’s dramaturgy. This effort requires time, but also a quality of attention: “...a play’s dramaturgy speaks as potential to anyone who will listen” (Proehl 38). Listening anticipates “speaking.” The play may speak through an interactive dramaturgical process. But to speak about the play does not always constitute listening to the play. The activities are distinct. Similarly, to question is not to answer. To question in Fuchs’s sense, for example, embraces the puzzle of not knowing. Another view of what it means to question comes from Mark Bly: “On every level of my work, whether in production or as a staff member, I strive to be a supportive but questioning force, never an ‘echo’” (1: xxiv).<sup>10</sup> Becoming a “supportive but questioning force” implies openness

to discovery; “echo” implies a reflection back of something already spoken – or already known.

As I outline a practical dramaturgy for actors, it will take shape with these three critical approaches in mind. Like the production dramaturg, the actor may engage with a play in advance of rehearsal guided by this dramaturgical advice: prepare for an unknown journey, listen, and question. Such advice directly applies to acting challenges that arise from new playwriting strategies – especially polyvocal plays, multivocal or equivocal characters, and allegorical language. These critical approaches from the production dramaturg’s process also suggest a way for the actor to transcend boundaries of internal/external characterization. As noted earlier, such transitions may not be as negligible as Castagno claims. Thus, as a next step forward toward dramaturgy for actors, I will consider how actors currently engage with dramaturgy and dramaturgy in action through production processes as well as training in the United States. This investigation will identify gaps between acting processes and training. Most noticeably, the actor’s preparation predominantly relates to character analysis and characterization, which suggests a gap still exists between new playwriting pedagogies and methods for training actors. More essential to a consideration of language challenges, comparing methods of actor training reveals how and why contemporary actors learn to mistakenly associate character analysis with script analysis. Further, a focus on character analysis leads the actor to narrowly view a play through the lens of *a* character, rather than through potential relationships between characters and dramaturgical structures.

## How Does Dramaturgy Currently Inform the Actor's Work?

A kind of collaboration already exists between dramaturgs and actors, although the process of dramaturgy is frequently disassociated from the work of the actor. By considering the production process from the perspective of the dramaturg first, a preliminary understanding about the professional relationship between dramaturgs and actors begins to emerge. For the sake of consistency, I turn again to the new generation of dramaturgs as a representative sampling of current practice. Insights from Hartley, Chemers, and Brown reveal a division of responsibilities not uncommon in theatrical production – or, for that matter, in other professional environments where time constraints demand specialization of skills and division of labor.

Andrew Hartley recognizes the actor's focus on character in contrast to the dramaturg's focus on the play:

Actors are generally trained to see the play through their character, and their engagement is thus more kinetic, emotional, and tactile. The dramaturg (particularly one with literary critical training) sees the play if not as a network of ideas (which is often – and usefully – the case) then at least as a larger entity, a structure, or structures to which the actor immersed in his or her character is generally too close to see. (Hartley 161)

The distinction of focus Hartley perceives appears in his description of the actor's immersion in a character and what might be viewed comparably as the dramaturg's immersion in a play's structure. While the actor's "kinetic, emotional, and tactile" engagement with character might be viewed as a component of the dramaturgical process, it still suggests a narrow or singular focus. Whereas the dramaturg looks out for a network of structures, the actor's responsibility relates to a single structure within that network.

Michael Mark Chemers adds another insight into the actor's singular focus. He notices how internally focused preparation on the part of the actor may be owed to standards of training and production:

Acting training in many parts of the world teaches the actor to “look inward” for answers to questions of performance as much as to search the historical record. In addition, the production calendars for most United States companies are cruelly tight, and actors often feel as if they have barely enough time to learn their cues and blocking, much less engage in time-consuming analysis and contextualization. (Chemers 154)

One distinction of focus Chemers perceives relates to research. The actor's ability to engage in dramaturgical research is subject to the demands of time. Echoing Proehl's comment about lack of time, what Chemers refers to as a cruelty of “barely enough time” in current standards of production means the actor's attention must focus on basics: learning lines and blocking. In another distinction, Chemers mentions training that encourages actors to “look inward.” His statement recalls the internal/external binary associated with acting approaches, and the perceived privilege given to internal preparation in the United States. By connecting the actor's internal focus with both training and restrictions of time in rehearsal, Chemers recognizes how standards of training actually reinforce the actor's singular responsibility to character by preparing actors for current standards of production. Training supports standards of production and vice versa. A tradition of training actors to “look inward” perpetuates the expectation that actors must give whatever individual resources they have – especially in a time delimited production process – to character.

Lenora Inez Brown acknowledges a limited preparation time for actors in the production process as well, and she further distinguishes how expectations within the production process lead to boundaries between actors and dramaturgs. In the following,

Brown offers advice to the dramaturg about the first day of rehearsal, which usually includes the first read-through of a play with the acting company:

The key to a successful first day is to remember that the actors have had less time with the play and the production concept than the other collaborators; this means the dramaturgical presentation will need to review ideas and discoveries the design team made weeks if not months before. One of a dramaturg's worst mistakes can be to tell an actor or writer how these questions were solved by the artistic team or to articulate how the actor should solve a particular character challenge. The information presented should ignite the actor's process by presenting information that can fuel many paths clearly rather than one definitive, creative journey. (Brown 89-90)

Brown's advice reveals three distinctions about the actor's process in relation to the dramaturg's: (1) actors are expected to spend less time with a play leading up to the first rehearsal than the dramaturg and the rest of the artistic team; (2) actors are responsible for character, and they are expected to solve "particular character challenges" in rehearsal; and (3) the first rehearsal is a beginning point in the actor's "creative journey" with a play. The first two points mesh with distinctions of focus provided by Hartley and Chemers, and the third offers another, more subtle distinction with regard to a limited amount of preparation before rehearsal begins.

Assuming actors spend "less time with a play" and that the dramaturg must not solve character questions but "ignite the actor's process" are concerns that equally suggest actors begin their most intensive preparation from the first day of rehearsal. There are plenty of media resources providing examples to the contrary. For instance, "behind the scenes" interviews and DVD "extras" are readily available for film especially, but for theater productions as well. Accounts by actors in articles and books also abound. And yet, the attention Chemers and Proehl give to lack of time in the production process gives weight to Brown's observation. My findings within the *Arcadia*

case study also align with Brown's observation in relation to the specific group of undergraduate student actors surveyed. Brown also perceives a clear boundary by warning production dramaturgs not to infringe upon the actor's process of characterization. The responsibility for maintaining that boundary seems to rest heavily upon the dramaturg, especially if failing to preserve it is one of the "worst mistakes" a dramaturg might make.

Through their representative views as practicing dramaturgs, Hartley, Chemers, and Brown recognize a strategic collaboration when it comes to current theatrical production processes. To summarize, the following are perceived distinctions of focus and responsibility for dramaturgs and for actors: the dramaturg focuses on the play, and the actor focuses on character; the dramaturg's focus is often external (research-oriented, critical), and the actor's focus is often internal (emotional, psychological); due to standards of production, the dramaturg is responsible for spending time in preparation with the play before rehearsals begin, and the actor is responsible for spending time with the play in rehearsal. Given this division of labor, singular focus on character effectively disassociates the dramaturgical process from the work of the actor. However, the actor's process seems to include a dramaturgical attention focused on character through what is commonly referred to as character analysis in contemporary actor training.

The perception of character analysis as the primary dramaturgical responsibility for actors is consistent with the goals for actor training in the United States. Because actors most frequently inhabit one character per production, the actor's work may be viewed as a singular endeavor of character. Consider, for example, the following view from an introductory theater textbook: "Script analysis by the actor parallels that by the

director but with a narrower focus, on the one role alone. The actor must study the entire script and relate his or her portion of it, no matter how small, to the goals of the overall production” (Archer 171). “Script analysis” by this definition equates to character analysis, which the dramaturgs’ observations suggest as well. Character analysis is not a wrong focus for actors, but it is a narrow focus of preparation. This narrow focus may limit the actor when considering new playwriting strategies in which characters are constructed differently, as multivocal or equivocal characters, for example.

Like a survey of dramaturgy in the United States, a survey of actor training cannot fully reflect all variations. It does, however, reveal a tendency to train actors for naturalistic acting that intentionally supports playwriting in the style of realism. In these cases, character analysis functions as script analysis. This training descends from Konstantin Stanislavski’s system, which was developed in Russia in the late nineteenth century, then introduced in the United States.<sup>11</sup> Stanislavski’s system intentionally replaces a kind of acting he calls “stock-in-trade” (*An Actor’s Work* 298). The stock-in-trade does not encourage a “creative state” in which actors, “...experience the ‘life of the human spirit’ of a role” (*An Actor’s Work* 282, 295). Instead, stock-in-trade relies on presentation, stock characterization, and stylized movement. In contemporary contexts, Stanislavski’s system transfers to *naturalistic* acting for plays written in the style of realism. John Lennard and Mary Luckhurst use this term in order to acknowledge a complexity that arises when trying to distinguish naturalism from realism in playwriting or acting, which I find helpful: “Naturalistic acting seeks to minimize the gap between actor and role, and is most usefully contrasted with ‘stylized’ acting, which tends to foreground that gap” (348). Naturalistic acting aligns with Stanislavski’s intention for his

system with regard to the actor's experience of character, while also reinforcing the idea that naturalistic acting requires the actor to make connections between self and character. Returning to Castagno's table, naturalistic acting falls under the column heading "Actor Becomes Character" as psychological characterization. By comparison, *stylized* acting relates to what Stanislavski would call "stock-in-trade" because it is presentational rather than representational. This falls under Castagno's column heading "Actor Performs Character" as theatrical characterization.

To understand character analysis as employed in most naturalistic acting methods, it is helpful to recognize how profoundly Stanislavski grounded his system in the scientific developments of psychology in the nineteenth century. In relation to his system, Stanislavski identifies how inner psychological drives can, "...induce the actor's subconscious creative powers through a conscious psychotechnique" (*An Actor's Work* 329). Stanislavski traces his understanding of three inner psychological drives; he first refers to them as *mind*, *will*, and *feeling*, but then modifies these titles according to his understanding of contemporaneous scientific developments: *representation*, *appraisal*, and *will-feeling* (*An Actor's Work* 276-268, my italics). In a further explanation of these terms, Stanislavski provides an example of the psychological evaluative process most humans undergo when responding to stimuli or processing information: *representation* is a phase in which the mind creates a mental image when presented with information; *appraisal* is the mind's assessment of that image; *will-feeling* is both a willful (wanting) and a feeling (emotional) response that follows the image and the mental assessment of that image. According to Stanislavski, his explanation links human response to what should be the actor's response in naturalistic acting. If the human process of evaluation

leads to psychological *will-feeling*, then the actor's process of evaluation must be the same onstage.

Psychological evaluation in Stanislavski's system leads to psychologically motivated action. Naturalistic acting is thereby a mental process, but it is also physical and emotional. Stanislavski stipulates that action in his system is psychologically derived in order to distinguish it from stock-in-trade action, which is externally applied by the actor rather than motivated internally. He claims psychologically motivated action moves from the mind to the body: "Stage action is the passage from mind to body, from the centre to the periphery, from experiencing to embodiment" (*An Actor's Work on a Role* 136). Psychologically grounded character analysis therefore requires the actor to trace a character's progression through a play in order to identify a series of psychologically motivated actions. Acting terms like *objective*, *superobjective*, and *through-line* refer to analysis of the character's progression through a play from one psychologically motivated action to another, until the end of the play occurs and the character either achieves his or her objectives, or does not.<sup>12</sup> This focus for character analysis – empathic connection achieved through the actor's psychological identification with a character's actions – is the primary concern for most methods of actor training in the United States.

Stanislavski's system for naturalistic acting inspired a variety of training techniques still dominant in the United States. Most emphasize some facet of Stanislavski's psychologically grounded character analysis. Arthur Bartow edits a recent anthology called, *Training of the American Actor*, which discusses many of the subsequent methods. The anthology uniquely includes essays written either by originating practitioners of the methods or by someone who trained extensively with

those practitioners. Bartow's introduction suggests outright that each technique borrows from or reacts to Stanislavski: "All these approaches, in one way or another, sprang from Stanislavsky's investigation of the actor's process, surely the most complete exploration ever undertaken" (xxvi). Approaches that borrow from Stanislavski most directly include techniques that encourage psychologically grounded character analysis of one form or another. Lee Strasberg's Method is credited with creating "...a new standard of emotional honesty for English-language acting" (8). Stella Adler's technique identifies three core concepts of Foundation, Character, and Script Interpretation, and the goal of the work is psychologically truthful character (37).<sup>13</sup> Sanford Meisner's technique at a basic level promotes "The Reality of Doing" in order to develop the, "...actor who is caused authentically to do what his character must do..." (51). As techniques that borrow from Stanislavski most directly, these variations train actors to ground their work in psychological character analysis. The practical approaches differ, but the goal is naturalistic acting whether derived from emotional association in Strasberg's Method, from Adler's script interpretation, or from Meisner's focus on action and doing.

Training methods in Bartow's anthology that react to Stanislavski's system by modifying its components more radically include what are called psychophysical techniques. Psychologically grounded character analysis still figures into this work, although naturalistic acting does not. Phillip Zarrilli, for example, calls his technique psychophysical and distinguishes it by adding the concept of "energy" into psychological and physical components of characterization. His term *psychophysiological* refers to: "an embodiment and shaping of energy" (42). Other techniques involve more physical than psychological methods, such as those developed by Jacques Lecoq and Rudolf Laban.

Yet these are organized psychologically and often rely on character. For instance, in his discussion of what it means to give meaning to movement, Lecoq discusses gesture in its broadest sense, which is not necessarily naturalistic but is psychologically and emotionally responsive: “Whatever the actor’s gesture, it is inscribed in the relationship between the actor and the surrounding space, and gives rise to an inner, emotive state” (66-67). In relation to Laban’s technique, Jean Newlove also suggests gestural efforts are created and applied in order to established character:

Initially, the actor-dancer will have an intuitive approach to the role and will not consciously choose specific sequences of effort combinations. It is only when he gets ‘into the part’ and feels at one with the character that he can consciously select movement rhythms, spatial patterns and effort combinations, specifically ‘honing’ his interpretation of character. (154)

Bartow’s anthology includes other adapted methods that react to Stanislavski with physical techniques, but they do not necessarily fit in a category with psychophysical methods. This group includes Michael Chekhov’s psychological gesture; Uta Hagen’s expansion of the actor’s awareness beyond the fourth wall into the audience; and Practical Aesthetics, an approach originated by David Mamet and William H. Macy, which, like Meisner, privileges action as a means to reveal psychological motivation.<sup>14</sup>

Like the variety of methods Stanislavski’s “psychotechnique” inspired, his early writing supports physical and vocal conditioning for psychologically grounded, naturalistic acting. His later writing, however, more purposefully develops what has been called his “Method of Physical Actions.”<sup>15</sup> Psychophysical techniques derive their name from his later work, which was still grounded in psychological character analysis but gradually began to incorporate more of a physical process of exploration. Stanislavski’s later writing explains Method of Physical Actions as a process, which is succinctly

represented in a three-page chapter from *An Actor's Work on a Role* (Chapter 4: "The Approach to a Role," 88-90).<sup>16</sup> The process begins with a full reading of the play, as it does in *An Actor's Work*, but the first thirteen steps – out of twenty-five – involve imaginative and improvisational exploration of the character's actions. This is undertaken without the script, but is inspired by what resonates from the initial reading. The fourteenth step verifies, "Up till now you have been using your own words" (89). Study of the script in the fifteenth step advises, "Fix it in your minds but do not speak it out loud so as not to let yourself gabble mechanically and create a line of (verbal) tricks" (89). Essentially, the Method of Physical Actions advises the actor to explore objective, superobjective, and through-line (*task*, *supertask*, and *throughaction* in Benedetti's translation) in his or her own words, but in rigorous detail.

Incorporating the script's actual words occurs later in the Method of Physical Actions, bit by bit, so that an empathetic identification between actor and character forges a connection to the character's action. The majority of the exploratory work involves character and action, but the actor eventually melds his or her empathic connection with character to the play's text – the playwright's actual words. In Chapter 7 of *An Actor's Work on a Role*, "Woe from Wit 1916-1920," Stanislavski summarizes this process of analysis:

So, analysis proceeds from the formal, written text, which is accessible to our conscious mind, to its essence, which the writer has embedded in his work, and which, for the most part, is only accessible to the unconscious. We go from the periphery to the centre, from words to meaning. And thus we come to know (feel) the circumstances the writer proposes, so that, thereafter, we can feel (know) the truth of the passions or, at least, emotions that seem true in a living situation. (106-107)

Psychologically grounded character analysis in the Method of Physical Actions proceeds from the “periphery to the centre,” whereas the earlier description suggests, “Stage action is the passage from mind to body, from the centre to the periphery...” (*An Actor’s Work on a Role* 136). This is not as much of a reversal as it may seem, particularly because both statements support empathetic and psychological connection between actor and character. Stanislavski’s analysis involves exploration of the “periphery,” or actions within the play. This analysis occurs in action so that the actor may respond with actions that are psychologically grounded for the character. In other words, Stanislavski envisions a reciprocal relationship between analysis and action in order for the actor to achieve psychological characterization. More to the point of investigating character analysis, even Stanislavski’s Method of Physical Actions encourages empathetic identification by the actor *with* the character’s action throughout the play, but *without* the play’s text. This methodology reinforces a view of script analysis as character analysis.

Bella Merlin offers another perspective that effectively reinforces that conclusion. She suggests that psychophysical techniques derive most directly from the phase of psychologically grounded character analysis that Stanislavski was pursuing at the end of his life, what she refers to as Active Analysis. Merlin’s book, *Beyond Stanislavsky: The Psycho-Physical Approach to Actor Training* relates her experience in a ten-month training program at the State Institute of Cinematography (VGIK) in Moscow in 1993 (3). Merlin describes Active Analysis as, “...a kind of textual analysis which was carried out by the actor’s entire being, and not solely the brain. This led to a synthesis of the actor and the play, rather than the dissection of the text” (21). The synthesis between the actor and “play” is thereby a synthesis between the actor and the play’s action, but from

the character's perspective. It is not surprising when Merlin confirms, "The final stage in Active Analysis is 'learn the lines'" (251). In this description, Merlin provides one of the most concise representations of character analysis as equated with script analysis.

Empathetic identification between the actor and the character through the play's action – but *without* the play's text – defines character analysis. By comparison, a more active analysis of language may be required from the actor's preparation when considering alternatives to psychological characterization in new playwriting.

Despite the integral difference revealed between character analysis and script or text analysis, Stanislavski's system still envisions a more complex preparation for actors than is often recognized in actor training. In its entirety, the process he proposes requires more dramaturgical rigor in relation to character and action than most summaries of his techniques lead actors to believe. The desired result establishes a framework of actions so that an actor may achieve an "Inner Creative State" in performance (*An Actor's Work* 292-305). A framework of actions does attend to dramaturgical concerns, even if it does so from a narrow view of character. However, a common misperception related to Stanislavski's system – popularized by Strasberg's Method – is a belief that the actor works primarily on emotion. Rather, Stanislavski advises the actor to invest in character actions as psychological motivation so that emotion arises naturally when the actor lives the character's circumstances onstage. He offers an analogy for this work that compares acting to mining: the actor must unearth, "incalculable treasures (psychological Elements) and their ore (the subject of the work)" (*An Actor's Work* 304). The bulk of the analogy reads best in the words of the teacher Tortsov, Stanislavski's counterpart in his writing about the system:

These precious objects are extremely subtle, complex, elusive. They are more difficult to dig out of the heart of a role and of an actor than a vein of minerals from the earth. When you approach a writer's work you look at it from the outside, as with a mountain full of gold, you study its form. Then you look for ways in, some means of penetrating its secret depths where the riches of the mind are hidden. For that too you need "boreholes", "tunnels" and "shafts" (Tasks, wants, logic, sequence, etc.); you need workmen (creative forces, Elements); you need "engineers" (the inner drives); you need the appropriate "mood" (your creative state). (304)

This is, as Stanislavski says further, not a "casual stroll round the role, as round the mountain," but a rigorous attention to the character's action as it progresses through a play (304). Where character analysis alone may be lacking, such rigor may apply to the actor's dramaturgical exploration of a play as much as it applies to character.

Exploring actor training in the United States indicates common trends firmly rooted in Stanislavski's legacy. An obvious need exists to train actors in character analysis, which is a dramaturgical concern, but is not the same thing as script analysis. Character analysis supports naturalistic acting and current acting pedagogy supports character analysis. But what happens when an actor trained in psychologically grounded character analysis encounters a play in which character is not similarly motivated, or is not even a "character" in the tradition of realism or naturalistic acting? Castagno assumes that alternative techniques for movement and voice offer adequate tools for actors in relation to new playwriting strategies. I agree that a range of psychological, psychophysical, and psychophysiological techniques encourage flexibility in the contemporary American actor. Such techniques engage the actor's body, voice, and emotional empathy. Some even encourage ensemble awareness beyond the actor's singular responsibility for character. What such techniques do not necessarily encourage

is the actor's exploration of language for its own revelations, which may then reveal subtleties of character.

Returning for a moment to the allegorical construction of language in language plays, a parallel distinction may be made between symbolic and allegorical character construction. A deeper investigation of character analysis reveals that such analysis encourages the actor to associate or connect with a character and to live that character realistically onstage. If it is possible to view production dramaturgy as a phenomenological process of interactive discovery through which the dramaturg lives or becomes the play, character analysis could also be considered a phenomenological process of interactive discovery. Symbolic representation of character is the goal of character analysis because the actor must live the character's circumstances onstage. Like the effort of affixing symbolic meaning to words, the actor is, essentially, affixed to the character. Remembering Benjamin's distinction between allegory and symbol, by becoming a character onstage, the actor is the self-sufficient sign that assumes meaning into itself in a momentary flash. Allegorical use of language in new playwriting, however, defies definition just as it defies character. The actor is not required to symbolically live the character onstage. Much like allegorical language unravels the known word into ruins, multivocal or equivocal characters unravel characterization. Character may resist psychologically grounded character analysis in these instances. Because character cannot be fixed so easily through symbolic association with the actor in new playwriting, it requires other kinds of preparation by the actor.

Distinguishing characterization in relation to the demands of new playwriting identifies a pertinent question about whether actor training meets the needs of all new

plays. As well as providing support for naturalistic acting, pedagogies for actor training must help actors attend to language structures. Conceiving of production dramaturgy as a phenomenological process of interactive discovery offers an initial step toward defining what it may mean for the actor to give this kind of dramaturgical attention to a play. However, recognizing that character analysis may be mistakenly perceived as script analysis identifies a gap that may be bridged with practical dramaturgy for actors. No matter how rigorous character analysis may be, its focus is narrow and often limited to exploration of actions through the language of text, rather than exploration of language for its own structures. Returning to the critical approaches identified in relation to production dramaturgy, an alternative focus in the actor's preparation with language relates to the following guides: prepare for an unknown journey, listen, and question.

#### Prepare for an Unknown Journey – Redefining Mode

I propose use of the word *mode* as part of the actor's dramaturgical vocabulary in order to distinguish the individual play as unique. In order to prepare for an unknown journey, actors must learn how to approach plays without expecting them to fit easily into broad categories. By shifting expectations so that actors expect each play to have its own mode, a different attention to listening and questioning may follow. More specifically, mode may be viewed as a separate consideration from dramatic or literary genre (e.g., tragedy, comedy, romance, farce) and from cultural or historical style (e.g., Elizabethan, Restoration, Modern). A play's mode has to do with how a play's language works and with how words come together to create action.

While the idea of each play having its own mode is a relatively simple one, the challenge of articulating a play's mode is difficult. It may require the entirety of a

rehearsal and performance process to fully engage with a play's mode, and production choices may interact with a play's mode differently from production to production. It may also be impossible to express mode beyond the play itself; simply put, that is what the play's words do. A practical dramaturgy for actors values the actor's attempt to *engage* with a play's mode more than the actor's ability to *articulate* a play's mode. In fact, the complexity that accompanies trying to describe a play's mode requires an exploratory approach to language, especially in relation to new playwriting.

Formal definition provides one means to distinguish use of the word *mode* more specifically. After consulting the *Oxford English Dictionary*, I find my purposes are closely linked to the philosophical definition, which refers to, "A manner or state of being of a thing" (Def. 6a). This usage is distinct from referring to mode as a method, which is defined as, "a way or manner in which something is done" (Def. 4a). A play's language involves a particular manner in order to achieve the "doing" of a particular "something" through voicing by the actor. However, use of the word *mode* as a method does little to explain how a play's language works uniquely as a structure. A method more fittingly allies with the word *genre* because it refers to broad categorization by method of storytelling, whereas a "manner or state of being of a thing" implies unique qualities. Philosophical use of the word *mode* is also distinct from the French derivation, defined as: "a prevailing fashion" (Def. 7a). Prevailing fashion resonates with theatrical use of the word *style* because it suggests common trends from a particular historical era or cultural period. To assume that a play or theatrical text has a unique "manner or state of being" is exactly what I am proposing.

The actor may prepare for the unknown journey by exploring a play's unique mode of language. Shifting the actor's expectation away from "known" qualities associated with categories of genre or style distinguishes a play's mode as unique, and even potentially as ambiguous. To return to Benjamin's image linking allegory with ruins, a play's mode may be layered and somewhat recognizable, but its language should not be taken for granted as a known structure. To use Elinor Fuchs's image, the play's mode is a unique and unknown planet. This context for mode may therefore trouble constructs of language as logical, linear, intellectual or discursive, in order to privilege other ways of interacting with language as a constantly shifting form. To use Wellman's phrase, mode may disturb expectations for the "already-known" reality of a play's language.

Though an unlikely ally in the attempt to distinguish mode as potentially ambiguous yet unique to each play, John Locke's consideration of mode still proves helpful. Locke is an unexpected resource in the sense that his notion of empirical understanding requires conclusive, experiential evidence. Yet empirical understanding resonates with dramaturgy as a phenomenological process of interactive discovery at a level of experience. Embracing ambiguity, however, diverges from Locke because ambiguity allows experiential evidence to be valid when it is changeable. For example, in its layered meaning, allegorical language is purposefully ambiguous. Purposeful ambiguity embraces a tension of "inside and outside" that informs phenomenological research as it occurs between simultaneously perceiving bodies; this is an experience Stanton B. Garner describes as: "...in flux, oscillating within and between" (51). With regard to defining *mode*, Locke takes up the word and its connotations in *An Essay*

*Concerning Human Understanding*. He defines “simple” and “complex” modes as ideas and groups of ideas that derive from the experience of living in the world, rather than from the mind’s experience alone (Locke II.xxii.1, 174). In its simplest interpretation, this definition suggests that either simple or complex modes are actively encountered. Such a distinction supports consideration of a play’s mode as dramaturgy in action, and exploration of mode as a practical activity in the actor’s process. It also echoes the distinction Bella Merlin makes between Stanislavski’s Method of Physical Actions as more of an imaginative endeavor and his Active Analysis as engaging the actor’s whole body in that endeavor.

Locke’s perception of how “naming” modes creates language proves more complicated, but also useful. Locke acknowledges how naming facilitates categorization, but simultaneously exposes that process as arbitrary. He describes this process as follows:

...Men have had regard only to such Combinations, as they had occasion to mention to one another. Those they have combined in distinct complex *Ideas*, and given Names to; whilst others that in Nature have as near an union, are left loose and unregarded. (Locke III.v.7, 274, editor’s italics)

The following attempts a rephrasing: the necessity of creating “Names” (words) to stand for “Combinations” of ideas (modes) depends upon cultural need. Locke also implies that an effort of naming reflects cultural need to expedite communication when possible.

Essentially, humans with a shared language create words for objects or experiences (modes) they encounter on a regular basis. Thus, naming modes facilitates more efficient communication. By way of current example, Tracy Letts interviews Will Eno via email in the April 2013 issue of *American Theatre*. In an article titled, “The Immutable Radish,” Eno responds to Letts’s admission that he used the word *pith* incorrectly until he looked it up in the dictionary. Eno writes: “Did you see the verb entry, ‘to kill by piercing the

spinal cord'? Wow. That happened enough that they had to come up with a word for it" (Letts 61). Coming up with words to describe a frequently encountered mode of experience results in a shared understanding that clarifies context and conversation (or invites misunderstanding – as Letts indicates – when words are applied differently). In either case, words create a way to talk about experiences in the human world.

Locke suggests one further distinction that supports consideration of mode as individual to a play. Grappling with the following excerpt in its entirety leads to an essential understanding about how the actor's nuanced perception of language may also be encouraged:

Sure I am, that the signification of Words, in all Languages, depending very much on the Thoughts, Notions, and *Ideas* of him that uses them, must unavoidably be of great uncertainty, to Men of the same Language and Country. This is so evident in the Greek Authors, that he, that shall peruse their Writings, will find, in almost every one of them, a distinct Language, though the same Words. (Locke III.ix.22, 312, editor's capitalization, punctuation, and italics)

Locke recognizes how individual authors employ words uniquely. Thus, written works may reflect individual notions of the author even though they are written in a language shared by other authors. He uses the "Greek Authors" as an example, which certainly raises a question about text in translation that I neglect in detail here by focusing on an English language tradition. Still, even a focus on translated language may adhere to the following. Locke distinctly acknowledges the "Writings" as unique – not only the authors – in that they reveal a "distinct Language, though the same Words." By first individuating authors that share a common language, and then by distinguishing the written work from the author of that work, Locke's "distinct language" is a means to consider mode as unique to a play rather than to an author. Another contemporary example will help to

illustrate this concept. In a *New York Times* article celebrating Harold Pinter after Pinter won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2005, Charles Isherwood discusses the “musical coloring” of Pinter’s language: “...the Cockney music-hall jazz of early plays like ‘The Birthday Party’ and ‘The Caretaker’ or the elegant, oracular chamber music of later ones like ‘Old Times’” (“A Pinter Actor”). Isherwood’s attention to language is play-specific; he extends his musical metaphor differently to more than one play by the same author.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, my use of mode relates to the play rather than to the author. Instead of “authorial voice,” Locke’s explication of mode thereby supports the “distinct language” of a play.

To summarize Locke’s role as an ally, his consideration of mode and of the “distinct language” of a particular play reckons with conventions of “naming” on several levels. First, the tendency to name common modes in response to a cultural need for expedient communication also explains how *lack* of cultural need leaves certain modes undefined, or unnamed. Naming thereby influences categorization. For instance, conversations about theater benefit from broad categories of genre and style because such categories facilitate shared understanding. Allowing each play the specificity of its own mode, however, opens up theatrical discourse to a potential chaos of naming. Use of mode therefore does not replace references to genre and style. Categorization is necessary and unavoidable. And yet, accepting that a play has its own mode embraces multiplicity as well as specificity. Apart from associations linked to genre and style, using mode to consider a play’s unique use of language encourages discussions about plays to become more specific.

To return to the word *genre*, I have already established a loose definition for genre as a categorization of plays by method of storytelling. Traditional genres, such as tragedy, comedy, romance, or satire, rely on different use of form, plot, and content to tell their stories. David Edgar offers a comparable definition when he refers to genre as a “theatrical format” that brings to mind “predictable structures and patterns” (*How Plays Work* 202). Edgar also offers another understanding of genre that is of particular use when trying to distinguish genre from mode. He proposes that categories of genre enable an audience to, “...close off options even before the story has begun” (*How Plays Work* 67). With this slight but significant shift in perspective, Edgar essentially transfers the ownership of genre from a play to its audience. Keeping that shift in mind, the actor’s preliminary categorization of genre is similar to that of an audience. Yet for the actor, to close off options before the story even begins equates to limiting choices before rehearsal starts. Hence, relying on genre limits the actor’s process of preparation. Genre is antithetical to exploring the unique mode of a play because it prohibits the potential for an unknown journey. In other words, genre may serve a purpose when attempting to categorize a play’s storytelling format, but it does not necessarily benefit mode as it relates to the actor’s dramaturgical preparation.

Differentiating mode from *style* is a bit more problematic in theatrical usage because style denotes multiple types of classification. In relation to directing, for instance, David Jones defines style as, “the shaping of theatrical image of experience” in a production (7).<sup>18</sup> In relation to playwriting, style distinguishes the work of a particular playwright, as when Phyllis Nagy refers to the “idiosyncratic style and point of view” of the writer (Edgar, *State of Play* 131). In relation to acting, realism represents the

predominant style of playwriting that influences actor training. Yet style in relation to actor training more frequently refers to acting in plays from historical periods prior to the twentieth century and prior to common methods for naturalistic acting, which recalls the differentiation between *naturalistic* and *stylized*. Style from a particular era may also align with a playwright who was writing in that historical period or shared methods used by a group of playwrights. William Shakespeare, for example, is the playwright who most commonly reflects the Elizabethan period in England, although Christopher Marlowe might be grouped as an Elizabethan playwright as well. Further, when influenced by techniques for naturalistic acting, actors are cautioned about playing *only* the style in plays from historical periods. For instance, Robert Benedetti warns the actor against “external qualities of style” without psychological motivation, although he also suggests style should be “fully understood within its original historical and social context” (124). Because of varied contexts that define style, it is necessary to distinguish mode from style, and especially from use of style to denote historical periods in discussions of acting.

Michel Saint-Denis offers one of the most thorough considerations of style in relation to acting, but as one of the primary influences on actor training in the twentieth century it is telling that Saint-Denis also regards style with a problematic multiplicity of meanings.<sup>19</sup> In *Theatre: The Rediscovery of Style*, Saint-Denis delineates between realism, which he claims is present in works of any historical period, and naturalism, which he associates with the particular work of Émile Zola, Henrik Ibsen, August Strindberg, and Konstantin Stanislavski (50). He also suggests stylization is not style; rather, it is an attempt to copy historical styles, which turns “theatre into a museum” (81).

Within the context of those critical distinctions, Saint-Denis argues that each play cannot be “approached in the same manner” by actors (107). Instead, actors must realize: “Style has its own reality: it is made up of a choice of words, of shape, of rhythm and emphasis”(66). While these views closely resemble the definition of mode I propose, Saint-Denis also refers to style with confusing variance: (a) as the style of an individual play, such as when he offers a brief example of directing *As You Like It* and considers, “the secret style which lies at the heart of Shakespeare’s play” (82); (b) as historical style, as in the historical period to which a play is “umbilically attached” (80); and (c) as genre, particularly in his discussion of training at The Old Vic School in which improvisation and interpretation are undertaken in, “...three main styles – classical tragedy, classical comedy, and realism...” (100). Ultimately, the fact that Saint-Denis employs multiple meanings of style is more useful than problematical because he illustrates a disparity in conversation about theatrical practice and the actor’s approach to plays. Use of mode to distinguish a play’s “secret style” – or its unique “choice of words, of shape, of rhythm and emphasis” – offers a solution to the problematic conflation of that concept with style as well as with genre.

Using mode to describe a play’s unique use of language also differs from other uses of the word *mode* in theatrical practice and discourse. Mode frequently denotes method. For example, in his consideration of modern acting theories, Robert Gordon refers to a mode of performance as, “entailing a particular methodology of training and a unique technique of presentation” (3). Mode also sometimes refers to modes of perception in relation to phenomenology. Bert States most noticeably considers phenomenological modes in acting. States proposes three pronominal modes that define

the actor/audience relationship from the perspective of the actor: the “self-expressive mode” acknowledges a first-person presence of the actor (the pronominal “I”); the “collaborative mode” allows the actor to interact directly with the audience (the pronominal “You”); the “representative mode” denotes the actor as character (the pronominal “He”), which creates a distance between actor and audience (“Actor’s Presence” 24). In his phenomenological study of the three modes of actor/audience relationship, it is also worth noting how States seeks to differentiate mode from style: “...it is simply not sufficient to say that the actor performs in various styles...” (“Actor’s Presence” 24). Whereas the unique mode of a play’s language encourages what I have described as multiplicity and purposeful ambiguity, Gordon and States illustrate a tendency to view a finite potential for modes. Differentiating mode from theatrical method or finite types of phenomenological perception may clarify expectations for actors even further.

To consider the unique mode of a play’s language prepares the actor for an unknown journey because the actor cannot rely upon expectations of genre or style and cannot assume known methods will benefit the process. Consideration of mode as unique to a play is not necessarily a new concept, especially given the difficulty of distinguishing what Stanislavski calls a play’s “essence” and Saint-Denis calls a play’s “secret style” (*An Actor’s Work on a Role* 106; Saint-Denis 82). Distinguishing the mode of a play as its unique and potentially ambiguous use of language reflects a hopeful advance in theatrical discourse by reconsidering available vocabulary. To encourage actors to prepare for an unknown journey in relation to mode of a play effectively changes a

broader theatrical conversation, just as it shifts expectations significantly so that a different attention to dramaturgical listening and questioning by the actor may follow.

### To Listen/To Question – The Actor’s Dramaturgical Voice

I propose use of “dramaturgical voice” as part of the actor’s dramaturgical vocabulary in order to clarify what it means to actively listen and question mode in a play. This phrase comes from Don Ihde in his book, *Listening and Voice: Phenomenologies of Sound*. Ihde considers “dramaturgical voice” a phenomenon especially associated with the actor because the actor’s voice, “amplifies and displays...variations on the modes of being in language” (173). Ihde’s “modes of being in language” reflects the context of phenomenological modes of perception, as it does in States’s theory of acting. Given my definition of mode, it also suggests variations of “being in language,” or a multiplicity of ways in which language is available to the actor, rather than a finite sampling of methods. In that regard, the concept of “dramaturgical voice” reinforces the notion that actors may listen for a unique mode within a play’s language. Ihde’s construct thereby provides a critical link between the dramaturgical voice of the playwright and the dramaturgical voice of the actor. Whereas the playwright accesses dramaturgical voice in writing, the actor accesses dramaturgical voice through vocalizing as a full-bodied process of vocal exploration.

Vocalizing by the actor requires listening and voicing as well as voicing and listening. Ihde refers to a “sounded” interaction between the actor and the language of a play: “The actor’s preference for *voicing* is what allows his voice to bring to life the wider context of meaning which animates drama. ... Here is the embodiment of sounded signification beyond what is merely declarative in which a whole range of unsuspected

existential possibilities may come to life” (170, author’s italics). The actor’s phenomenological exploration of voicing is another kind of listening through which the actor may encounter unexpected “existential possibilities” of a play’s mode of language. Practically, this manifests as voice and text work, which will be considered in detail in later chapters. In fact, Ihde recognizes a crucial link between listening and voicing in relation to the actor, when he claims, “His listening as well as his speaking is dramaturgical...” (169). Rather than assume dramaturgical voice is only an act of speaking, the introduction of voicing as listening meshes well with a dramaturgical process of interactive discovery. Hence, vocalizing does not affix symbolic association to words but explores layers of meaning within language.

Toward that goal, it is helpful to consider the importance of the auditory in Ihde’s phenomenologies of sound. Ihde argues that phenomena of the invisible are better understood through the auditory than through the visual, which serves as the premise for his “philosophy of listening and voice” (14). From the previous discussion of mode, an immediate association arises by considering a play’s “essence” or “secret style” as phenomena of the invisible. Ihde responds to a tradition of phenomenology that privileges what he calls “visualism” as a primary way of experiencing; he intends to rebalance the common association of sight as sensory perception by considering sound more fully (13). Ihde’s claim of visualism is corroborated by other analyses of phenomenology as well. Edward Said states directly that Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology, “...attaches the greatest importance to sight” (13). In his study of the “sensuous,” David Abram views eyes as an outwardly perceiving sense and ears as inwardly perceiving, but he also states, “flowing together of different senses into a

dynamic and unified experience is already operative within the single system of vision itself” (125). Theoretical study specifically related to phenomenology in theater tends to privilege the visual as well. For example, in his introduction to *Bodied Spaces: Phenomenology and Performance in Contemporary Drama*, Stanton Garner locates his phenomenological perspective in relation to a theatrical gaze: “The embodied I of theatrical spectatorship is grounded, one might say, in an embodied *eye*” (4-5, author’s italics). Bert States does not deny the presence of the lyric in speech, vocality, or poetical form, but he suggests a “gestural presence” is what distinguishes dramatic action (*Great Reckonings* 142). Though he also recognizes gesture as “any form of expressiveness,” States focuses on the body as the site of “gestural change” or “gestural liveness” (*Great Reckonings* 138, 141). Giving phenomenological attention to the oral and aural mode of a play, however, effectively displaces the visual so that the actor may engage specifically with its language.

Heide also urges a necessary caution against the limits of “being in language,” which suits an understanding of allegorical rather than symbolic construction of language. He recognizes that it is essential to question how human perception is “steeped” in language:

But a perception steeped in Language poses a problem for us that we may not even recognize. For it is a perception that is always too quick to make familiar the most strange and other that we come upon in the world. Perhaps only for moments do we come face to face with that which is truly other, and then we give it a name, domesticating it into our constant interpretation that centers us in the world. (186, author’s capitalization)

In other words, rather than “domesticating” a word to fit the actor’s perception of what it means symbolically, actors may more usefully resist fixing immediate associations of meaning. Words as objects of allegorical meaning resist conventions of naming the

“other” symbolically because they are words used as both structure and puzzle. In short, words as objects are the “most strange” and “truly other.” Recalling Locke’s explanation of naming as expedient for communication, it may be uncomfortable to *not* make the “most strange” familiar, but that ability also embraces what I have called a purposeful ambiguity. In a circular fashion, then, listening becomes questioning. Because of the limitations of “being in language,” the exploration of voicing serves as a means to explore – through questioning and listening – what a play’s mode offers without pressures of definition.

Considering these dramaturgical approaches anticipates their practical application. Literally, the actor may prepare for an unknown journey by expecting to encounter the unique mode of a play’s language. Similarly, listening to a play’s language and questioning its allegorical structures through practical voice and text work embraces the actor’s dramaturgical voice. These are steps toward dramaturgical preparation through which the actor may engage with structures of a play rather than default to character analysis. This interactive process of discovery reflects an imaginative process, but it also requires embodied exploration. Also, like character analysis or other training techniques, dramaturgical exploration may occur before rehearsal begins.

### Summary

The work of this chapter has been to clarify vocabulary for actors in relation to dramaturgy by distinguishing script analysis from character analysis as well as by introducing new vocabulary with regard to allegorical language, mode, and dramaturgical voice. Establishing a need for such a vocabulary in the actor’s process also creates the opportunity to suggest a need for the actor’s “dramaturgical sensibility.” I borrow the

concept of “dramaturgical sensibility” from Geoffrey Proehl’s book, *Toward a Dramaturgical Sensibility: Landscape and Journey*. As a practicing dramaturg and a professor who teaches dramaturgy, Proehl suggests that a dramaturgical sensibility is “a way of meeting the world” (17). A dramaturgical sensibility therein suggests a way in which the actor could learn to meet the world of a play differently.

More specifically, Proehl describes a quality of listening and questioning that I also mean to encourage in the actor’s dramaturgical process of preparation: “To enter into a conversation informed by a dramaturgical sensibility is to commit to the slow, ambiguous emergence of meaning, particularly those meanings (discursive and aesthetic) we seek with and from our collaborators when we explore a play’s dramaturgy” (Proehl 28). To commit to a “slow, ambiguous emergence of meaning” requires persistence and patience – purposeful ambiguity does not result in easy answers. To commit to that process as part of a larger collaborative effort suggests the actor may more fully engage in a process of interactive discovery greater than character (and greater than the actor). Whereas character analysis may lead the actor to listen to a play’s language eventually, such exploration is secondary to character. Cultivating a dramaturgical sensibility encourages the actor to begin by listening to and questioning a play’s mode as primary rather than secondary dramaturgical analysis. The next chapter begins the work of understanding the practical applications of the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility by observing processes of production at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

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<sup>1</sup> The full list: Sheila Callaghan, Naomi Iizuka, Lyn Nottage, Anne Marie Healey, Lisa D’Amour, Barbara Cassidy, Madelyn Kent, Carson Kreitzer, Rinne Grof, Anne Washburn, and Erin Courtney (2nd ed. 2).

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<sup>2</sup> Castagno exaggerates Eric Overmyer's contribution to *The Wire*. He states: "As executive producer of the successful HBO series *The Wire*, Overmyer constructed a landscape of street language and juxtaposed narratives into an intertwined political-cultural matrix..." (Castagno, 2nd ed. 1). Overmyer joined the series as a "Consulting Producer" in the fourth season and only wrote two teleplays in that season.

<sup>3</sup> An exchange also occurs between the characters of Septimus and Thomasina in the 1800s during Scene Seven. It echoes the scene between Bernard and Chloë but uses the phrase "For what?" instead of "What for?" (Stoppard 91).

<sup>4</sup> In the second edition, Castagno replaces the word *combines* with the word *bulks* in his definition of the multivocal character. I choose the later definition purposefully. To "bulk" implies something that is layered, possibly even overstuffed and obvious. To "combine" invokes a more commonplace action of joining with little attention given to the effort.

<sup>5</sup> Castagno does not mention Mary Overlie who originated "viewpoints." For Overlie's techniques, see: "The Six Viewpoints" in *Training of the American Actor*, edited by Arthur Bartow, 187-221.

<sup>6</sup> In *The Columbia Encyclopedia of Modern Drama*, under the subheading "American Dramaturgy" Robert Brustein is listed as Dean of the Yale School of Drama from 1965-1979. During that time, Brustein established the first graduate program in dramaturgy in the United States: "Brustein replaced Yale's Ph.D. in theater history with a D.F.A. in criticism, and in 1978 he instituted the M.F.A. in dramaturgy and criticism, the nation's first graduate degree program in dramaturgy..." (Cody and Sprinchorn 371). *Dramaturgy in American Theater* lists the year as 1977 in its Appendix titled, "Some Relevant Dates" (Jonas et al. 520).

<sup>7</sup> Borreca's article is titled, "Dramaturging New Play Dramaturgy: The Yale and Iowa Ideals," which suggests the growth of subsequent methods of dramaturgy in other pioneer graduate programs (programs dedicated to cultivating playwrights as well as dramaturgs).

<sup>8</sup> *Between the Lines* contains interviews with dramaturgs in Canada and the United States about their production process as well as their working relationships with directors. For early collaborations in the United States, several interviews are noteworthy: Michael Bigelow Dixon discusses his work at Actors Theatre of Louisville and with Jon Jory; Morgan Jenness talks about her collaboration at the Public Theater with Joseph Papp; Anne Cattaneo relates her work with William Ball as well as at Lincoln Center; and Mark Bly offers insight into his early dramaturgical work at Arena Stage with Artistic Director, Zelda Fichandler, as well as into his work at The Guthrie Theater.

<sup>9</sup> I use semiology in the tradition of Saussure's signifier and signified, rather than semiotics, which includes the referent as well. Patrice Pavis explains the distinction in his book *Languages of the Stage* (14). I include Fortier's view of semiotics in theater practice in order to provide a more general perspective.

<sup>10</sup> Mark Bly now cautions against the use of questioning to define the dramaturgical process, which is especially relevant since he is largely responsible for coining the phrase in early discussions of dramaturgy in the United States. Bly's current advice is to not get stuck in that definition, which I admire as well. I still view the simple directive "to question" as useful because so often actors are required to answer before they question. In respectful deference to Bly, I include his later thoughts on questioning here: "Questioning has now become codified. As soon as someone gets on a panel and says that's what we do, I wince. It's time to move on. Defining our function as only raising questions is as dangerous as being the old scholar who is the receptacle of all answers. Now, we are the receptacle of all questions. But the process is more subtle" (Rudakoff and Thomson 309-310).

<sup>11</sup> Stanislavski's notes about the actor's process were first translated into English by Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood and were divided into three volumes: *An Actor Prepares* (1936), *Building a Character* (1949), *Creating a Role* (1961). Robert Benedetti's recent translation is organized into two books: *An Actor's*

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*Work: A Student's Diary* (2008) and *An Actor's Work on a Role* (2010). I prefer Benedetti's translation for its readability, but also for the attention it gives to the system as still evolving and not static.

<sup>12</sup> Terms may vary according to translation. Various practitioners summarize Stanislavski's system especially for use in acting classes or general studies programs. Robert Benedetti's book, *The Actor at Work* is an example, in its tenth edition as of 2009. My program uses Robert Barton's *Acting Onstage and Off*.

<sup>13</sup> Adler's technique also encourages a very specific dramaturgical attention to language and to the play. This is noteworthy despite the ultimate goal of psychologically truthful characterization.

<sup>14</sup> Bartow's anthology also includes highly physical techniques, such as a method inspired by Jerzy Grotowski and Mary Overlie's "The Six Viewpoints." It also includes techniques that align with dramaturgy: Fritz Ertl's essay, "Interdisciplinary Training: Directing for Actors" and Louis Scheeder's "Neo-Classical Training." Scheeder's Neo-Classical Training, though it aligns very much with dramaturgy for actors, seems to be a handy course name for what is considered in the British tradition of actor training as classical acting evolved from Michel Saint-Denis. This is not so surprising in light of Scheeder's biography, which notes he was "assistant to artistic director Terry Hands at the Royal Shakespeare Company" (Bartow 281).

<sup>15</sup> I incorporate this term as it is used in Bella Merlin's prologue for *Beyond Stanislavsky: The Psycho-Physical Approach to Actor Training*. She differentiates Sharon Carnicke's use of the phrase "Method of Physical Actions" (*Stanislavsky in Focus*) as attention given to action that leads to through-line from Active Analysis as physical exploration.

<sup>16</sup> In the editions translated by Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood, the information is incorporated into *Creating a Role*. Stanislavski considers the techniques in relation to his work on several plays, which become case studies to relay the process.

<sup>17</sup> Isherwood also comments on Pinter's use of language in relation to the actor, which is as much a humorous warning as it is advice on perseverance: "But if Mr. Pinter's plays are fraught with acting booby traps, they also contain immeasurable rewards for those able to negotiate the terrain" ("A Pinter Actor").

<sup>18</sup> David Jones also refers to the "terminological miasma" of defining style in relation to directing alone, which reveals a similar potential for redefinition in various contexts (D. Jones 7).

<sup>19</sup> The lectures that comprise *Theatre: The Rediscovery of Style* (published in 1960) were delivered by Michel Saint-Denis in New York in 1958. In his own words, Saint-Denis describes the circumstances of the lectures, which in part explains his status as a leading influence on actor training in the twentieth century: "I had been invited to America as 'consultant' to the Juilliard School of Music following upon [sic] the completion of an enquiry about theatre training conducted in Europe and the United States by the Rockefeller Foundation" (13). His influence on actor training originated in England, where he established The London Theatre Studio (1935-1939) and the Old Vic Theatre School (1946-1952); in 1954 he opened l'École Supérieure d'Art Dramatique in Strasbourg (90).

## CHAPTER III

### THE OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL – A DRAMATURGICAL CASE STUDY

“But our motives were never those of the antiquarian.” –Angus Bowmer

This chapter begins the work of outlining a practical scope for the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility by observing production processes at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF). By observing OSF with this goal in mind, I suggest it models direct and indirect resources in contemporary theatrical production that ascribe a dramaturgical responsibility to the actor. The Festival does so through a diverse range of content and unique production processes. In response to content, OSF’s direct resources particularly support actors with regard to challenges of classical and contemporary story and language structures. Collaboration that occurs between dramaturgs, voice and text professionals, and actors at OSF reveals these practical applications most directly. An investigation of the Festival’s unique production processes also reveals indirect resources related to how the actor’s dramaturgical awareness may extend to performance structures. In addition, by considering several of OSF’s historical processes in relation to current organizational goals, OSF models historical attention to the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility that may inform contemporary considerations as well. Directly and indirectly, then, OSF’s processes suggest how the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility may manifest as dramaturgical responsibility for a play as well as for a character. These discoveries will transfer to a practical dramaturgy for actors in the chapters that follow.

Three additional notes will clarify context in relation to my focus in this chapter. First, observing OSF’s production processes with the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility in mind is *my* project and does not represent the Festival’s organizational goals. As noted

above, the organization does support dramaturgical resources, but I associate these resources with a practical dramaturgy for actors. Second, I approach OSF's diverse range of content generally in this chapter, by which I mean I do not offer analysis in relation to particular plays. The Festival has diversified over its lengthy producing history. It still produces Shakespeare's plays, but also produces other classics, modern classics, contemporary plays, musicals, and newly developed commissions – some of which are also musicals. Looking at processes more generally here establishes foundations for a dramaturgical sensibility without overtly comparing how the language challenges of classics reveal concerns that are similar to new playwriting strategies. I suggest that potential most profoundly as a path for further exploration in the final chapter because the focus of establishing a practical dramaturgy for actors responds particularly to new playwriting strategies. Still, case study research at OSF considers specific language challenges through a general frame in order to establish a scope for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility and also anticipate future exploration. Third, historical information most pertinent to the discussion of contemporary processes will appear in the main body of this chapter. Further information that suggests more intricate connections appears in the appendices.

### Direct and Indirect Resources

OSF traces its origins as a producing organization back to 1935, when founding Producing Director Angus Bowmer and a small group of collaborators staged two Shakespeare plays as part of a Fourth of July celebration in Ashland, Oregon. Named officially as the First Annual Shakespearean Festival, the 1935 repertory included *The Merchant of Venice* and *Twelfth Night*. Performances spanned three days from July 2 to

July 4, with two performances of *Twelfth Night* and one of *The Merchant of Venice*. The first Festival's title predicts "annual" productions, though it was no guarantee at the time. Annual seasons are now taken for granted. Including its hiatus of six years during World War II (1941-1946), and anticipating uninterrupted operations in the near future, the Festival will celebrate its eightieth anniversary year in 2015. Currently, the Festival seasonally produces eleven plays in repertory, with performances spanning ten months from mid-February to early November. Since 1960 the Festival has produced classical playwrights besides Shakespeare, and with the opening of the Angus Bowmer Theatre in 1970 began to produce contemporary plays. OSF now commissions and develops new theatrical works as well. For example, *American Revolutions: The United States History Cycle* is a project in process: between 2008 and 2018, OSF will commission up to thirty-seven new plays, "sprung from moments of change in United States history" (OSF "American Revolutions"). In conjunction with its productions, the Festival offers a variety of education programs for students, teachers, and other audience members throughout its now lengthy season. In total, given the current scope of OSF's activities, the "annual" festival has definitely grown beyond the bounds of two summer productions in three days of repertory performances.

OSF now figures as one of the most financially successful non-profit theaters in the United States. Not only does OSF have a tenure of operations that spans almost eighty years, it is counted among a relatively small group of big budget, non-profit theaters in the US. For instance, Theatre Communications Group (TCG) tracks OSF as one of its members. According to TCG's *Theatre Facts 2012*, OSF is one of thirty-one "profiled theaters" with a budget of ten million dollars or more.<sup>1</sup> OSF's budget bracket comprises

about 17 percent of the 178 profiled theaters. The bracket with the largest number (about 32 percent) have budgets between \$1 million to \$2,999,999; the smallest budget bracket group (about seven percent) have budgets less than \$500,000 (TCG, *Theatre Facts 22, 37*). OSF clearly represents a nonprofit theater with significant financial resources. Many small non-profit theaters struggle with basic operational funding and yet still produce with budgets well below the smallest bracket for TCG's profiled theaters (that is, the seven percent under \$500,000).

OSF's budget size means that direct resources like multiple staff dramaturgs and two resident voice and text directors are possible because of monetary support. Even today, dramaturgy or voice and text staff positions are not guaranteed in regional theaters, though they are integrated profoundly at OSF. For instance, a search of TCG's member theaters on its "Theatre Profiles" page offers mixed results.<sup>2</sup> When using the advanced "Search for People" feature and designating the 2012-2013 season, the position of "Dramaturg" in member theaters with a budget size of \$10 million or more results in only 15 productions: nine productions are from OSF divided between five dramaturgs; four are from Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and two are from Signature Theatre Company (TCG "Theatre Profiles"). However, searching further for "Dramaturg" in theaters of various budget sizes reveals 155 results. Admittedly, this is a representative search of TCG member theaters, but it also bears mention that the option to search for "voice and text" production positions in TCG's drop-down list does not yet exist.

If financial resources make my investigation possible, financial considerations cannot be ignored because they make a legitimate difference in *all* resources. However, I consider OSF's nonfinancial resources more fully. It is within this context that

collaborative, artistic work takes precedence in this case study regardless of whether I consider production processes in historical or contemporary contexts that may inform a scope for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility. Nonetheless, OSF's financial resources are also significant because they have long supported actors as part of the organization's production goals. Specifically, almost fifty years into its producing history, OSF significantly transformed its artistic goals by shifting the focus of its financial resources from educational to professional objectives. This also resulted in more financial support of actors through professional acting contracts. Still, recognizing OSF's early goals as an educational theater also reveals how production processes now reflect mindfulness about professional development, often in relation to actors. OSF's current support of actors may clearly require financial resources, but understanding the larger organizational shift reveals a history of support for actors that is no longer apparent in the organization's mission statement: "Inspired by Shakespeare's work and the cultural richness of the United States, we reveal our collective humanity through illuminating interpretations of new and classic plays, deepened by the kaleidoscope of rotating repertory" (OSF, "What is OSF"). For a detailed examination of direct financial resources related to actors at OSF, please see Appendix A.

In the early stages of this case study, I assumed OSF's production processes would reveal resources that directly support a practical dramaturgy for actors. For instance, I anticipated insights into dramaturgy as well as voice and text work as resources that directly relate to the actor's exploration of a play's dramaturgical structures. Direct resources also relate to production content, which at OSF ranges between classics and commissions. This diverse content creates challenges for actors that

necessitate combined resources of dramaturgy as well as voice and text support. Thus, expected collaborations *do* take significant focus in this case study, and they also reveal a contemporary context that ascribes dramaturgical responsibility to the actor. I incorporate insights from personal interviews with Lue Morgan Douthit, Director of Literary Development and Dramaturgy as well as with Rebecca Clark Carey, Head of Voice and Text; David Carey, Resident Voice and Text Director; and Scott Kaiser, Director of Company Development. Kaiser built the voice and text program at OSF and was head of voice and text at OSF prior to Carey. Talking with these professionals about their individual and collaborative processes of preparation ultimately reveals how an actor may develop a dramaturgical awareness of story and language structures as well as a dramaturgical responsibility within a production process.

Further case study research also revealed unique production processes at OSF that indirectly relate to the actor's exploration of a play's dramaturgical structures. These resources encompass what I will call performance structures, a label I devised to reflect processes through which a theatrical project takes shape from rehearsal into performance. Performance structures combine elements of a play's dramaturgy with the actor's preparation to embody that dramaturgy in action. Thus, OSF's indirect resources specifically relate to: (a) the resident company and rotating repertory, both of which may inspire flexibility in the actor's individual process; (b) stage spaces, which may heighten the actor's environmental awareness; (c) education programs, which reveal how the actor may encounter resonance for theatrical storytelling *offstage*; and (d) community relationships, which encourage artistic work to be viewed as an exchange. Each resource – direct or indirect – derives from practical production processes at OSF, and I include

each for its practical application when outlining a scope for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility.

### Direct Resources

OSF's programming includes classical and contemporary plays that are, according to its current mission, "inspired by Shakespeare's work and the cultural richness of the United States" (OSF, "What is OSF"). For many years, OSF produced only the plays of Shakespeare on the outdoor Elizabethan stage. This early work led founder Angus Bowmer to refer to OSF as a "language oriented theatre" (*Acting and Directing* 44). Challenges related to content might therefore involve dramaturgical structures of language found in Shakespeare's plays. By comparison, OSF's current mission gives a slight privilege to new plays simply because of word order: "...we reveal our collective humanity through illuminating interpretations of *new* and *classic* plays" (OSF, "What is OSF?" my emphasis). New plays incorporate diverse cultural content and just as frequently contain "language oriented" challenges for actors, as do classical plays written by authors other than Shakespeare. Such a diverse range of content challenges actors at OSF on a daily basis, especially with regard to structures of language. Reflexively, those challenges also inform the kinds of organizational resources dedicated to support the actor's process throughout rehearsal and performance. In response to structural challenges of language, the combined resources of dramaturgy as well as voice and text support reveal potential application for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility and also ascribe a dramaturgical responsibility to the actor. The Festival's historical precedents and its current processes reflect these concerns through content.

## Content – Historical Challenges

Bowmer's focus on producing only Shakespeare's plays in OSF's early years was a unique undertaking with regard to content because Shakespeare was not standard fare, especially in terms of audience demand. This effort reflects an attempt to influence audience perceptions of Shakespeare, which also required Bowmer to consider the actor's dramaturgical awareness of Shakespeare. In that regard, Bowmer figures as an early ally of a practical dramaturgy for actors because he addressed challenges of language or content with a dramaturgical sensibility.

OSF produced only the plays of Shakespeare for its first twenty-four seasons. A turning point occurred in 1959 when Carl Ritchie was asked to write *The Maske of the New World* for the centennial celebration of Oregon's statehood. It was the Festival's first staging of a work written by a playwright other than Shakespeare. According to Bowmer, "It gave opportunity to display the cloud machine and other features of our brand new Elizabethan stage house in a double celebration of its initiation and the Oregon Centennial (*As I remember* 243). The "brand new" Elizabethan stage refers to the structure rebuilt in 1959 due to fire hazard in 1958. In 1960, John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* was among the productions, and other classical plays were regularly included in subsequent seasons. With the addition of other theater spaces on the Festival's campus, contemporary plays were also gradually added to OSF's repertoire. The Angus Bowmer Theatre opened in 1970 with a production of Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, directed by Bowmer. Another performance space, the Black Swan, opened in 1977 with Shelagh Delaney's *A Taste of Honey*. The Black Swan's flexibility as a black box theater allowed for even more variety in production content,

staging, and seating configurations. At the time, Artistic Director Jerry Turner referred to it as, “a theatre where we can stretch muscles” in relation to all kinds of plays (Leary and Richard 86). The Black Swan closed in 2001, however, and is now used as a multipurpose space. It was replaced by the Thomas Theatre, which was called the New Theatre until 2013 when it was named in honor of Peter Thomas, a former development director. A production of *Macbeth* opened the Thomas Theatre, illustrating how Shakespeare still figures prominently in OSF’s programming content and in each of OSF’s venues.

In his book *Highbrow/lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America*, Lawrence Levine traces cultural perceptions of Shakespeare in America beginning in the 1800s. He proposes that Shakespeare gradually became the province of intellectually and socially elite audiences, which accounts for contemporary perceptions of Shakespeare as “highbrow” entertainment. Oppositely, “lowbrow” entertainment includes popular content enjoyed by mainstream audiences. Levine ultimately exposes a hierarchical organization within American’s culture as a “phenomenon of cultural bifurcation” that is represented through several artistic mediums (81). Shakespeare makes up the first part of his study, which sheds particular light on challenges related to content that Bowmer faced beginning in 1935. Fundamentally, Levine argues that treatment of Shakespeare as a literary classic resulted in fewer American productions of his plays by the turn of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth. By the twentieth century, American elitist audiences treated Shakespeare as a “sacred author” who should be, “protected from ignorant audiences and overbearing actors threatening the integrity of his creations” (72). Bowmer’s interests in producing Shakespeare deviated from “highbrow”

Shakespeare on several counts, but that does not mean he was freed from considering cultural perceptions about Shakespeare with regard to audiences or actors.

In the Festival's first years, Bowmer's audience development strategies had to work against perceptions of Shakespeare as highbrow content. Early in the 1950s, he began to produce a winter festival of contemporary plays with Festival actors as an enticement for local audiences. Though not produced under the auspices of OSF, The Vining Repertory Company was a collaborative effort between Bowmer and several colleagues from the Festival. Bowmer recalls confronting cultural biases:

I had another reason for desiring the project. There were still far too many people in Ashland, and within commuting distance of Ashland, who thought Shakespeare too "highbrow" or too dull to warrant their attendance at the summer Festival. I had a theory that, if they could be enticed to see our young, talented actors in some non-Shakespearean plays that these people had not been conditioned to label "highbrow" or "dull," they might turn up the next summer to see these same exiting artists – even in Shakespeare. (*As I remember* 228)

Bowmer equated *highbrow* with *dull*, which suggests his focus on Shakespeare was intended to provide "exciting" productions of the plays with these artists. Inspired by Elizabethan staging practices, Bowmer emphasized the value of Shakespeare's plays for a contemporary audience while using what he called Shakespeare's mastery of "kinaesthesia" through language: "...so that we are moved by his stirring of our muscles, tendons, and joints" (*As I remember* 221). By inviting audiences to experience the plays viscerally, Bowmer intentionally tried to deviate from highbrow traditions.

At the same time, Bowmer had to contend with perceptions of Shakespeare in Oregon as not highbrow enough. In his 1971 dissertation, "The Festival Story: A History of the Oregon Shakespearean Festival," William Oyler particularly notes a *New York Times* article written in the late 1940s. Oyler recounts how the article's author, future

Oregon Senator Richard L. Neuberger, "...created the impression that Shakespeare in Ashland was all very well even though done by rustics in the bucolic backwoods" (250).<sup>3</sup> In *Players Magazine*, Bowmer refuted the belief that Shakespeare should be reserved for the "cultured few" in bigger cities like New York, and his response once again treated Shakespeare as relevant to contemporary audiences: "To say that a drama is a classic is to say that it is a lasting drama; to say that it is lasting is to say that it is material for good theatre. Good theatre is exciting fare for any audience, whether it congregates on Broadway or in Ashland, Oregon" ("Oregon Shakespearian [sic] Festival" 129). Claiming that Shakespeare amounts to "good theater" echoes Bowmer's belief in staging the plays as well as his insistence on staging them for a contemporary audience.

Bowmer's struggle to change perceptions about highbrow Shakespeare represents a unique undertaking with regard to actors as well as audiences. In the same article mentioned above, Bowmer referred to OSF's regional responsibility: "The Festival nuclei should serve a whole area with the idea of training both actors and audiences in the delights of the best in theatre" ("Oregon Shakespearian [sic] Festival" 129). His advice for actors focused on the imaginative possibilities of Shakespeare's language as well, which he revealed in two chapbooks written shortly before his death in 1979. The first chapbook, *The Ashland Elizabethan Stage: Its Genesis, Development and Use* (1978), will be considered more fully when discussing OSF's stage spaces. The second chapbook, *Acting and Directing on the Ashland Elizabethan Stage* (1979), includes an editorial note clarifying the purpose behind Bowmer's final directives: "Angus also would have liked it to be known that this book was written primarily for his Festival's actors" (48). These short works particularly address challenges of language and content

with a dramaturgical sensibility. Among his notes to actors, Bowmer clarifies the challenges of performing Shakespeare at OSF specifically: “In a language oriented theatre such as Ashland’s Elizabethan stage, it is obvious that a chief problem is to keep the attention on the speaking actor” (*Acting and Directing* 44). Bowmer distinguished the idea of a “language oriented theater” further in his autobiographical book: “...since the earliest days of the Festival we have always tried to place major emphasis on the imaginative impact of Shakespeare’s word, ideas, and imagery interpreted by actors for the purpose of influencing members of the audience” (*As I remember* 68). Beyond highbrow or lowbrow concerns, addressing acting challenges that arise from Shakespeare’s language particularly reveals how Bowmer’s advice includes dramaturgical concerns.

Under Bowmer’s artistic leadership, acting challenges at OSF related primarily to Shakespeare and the outdoor stage, which was built to resemble an Elizabethan playhouse. Bowmer attempted to implement a shared method of performance, but any individual actor training occurred informally. In *Golden Fire*, a book celebrating OSF’s fiftieth anniversary, Edward Brubaker characterizes the shared method as the “Poel-Payne-Bowmer approach,” and delineates this method through its emphasis on the Elizabethan stage, minimal design, and Shakespeare’s language (41-43). He relates how Bowmer’s mentor, B. Iden Payne, influenced this approach just as Payne’s mentor, William Poel influenced Payne’s approach. Oyler calls this the “Ashland style” of production in a similar attempt to describe Bowmer’s performance method: “The Ashland style is the manner in which the plays of William Shakespeare are produced relatively uncut, played through with no intermissions, dressed in Elizabethan costumes,

and mounted on a reconstruction of a supposed Elizabethan stage” (604). Oyler’s definition adds uncut versions of the plays, no intermissions, and historical costume elements to Brubaker’s description. Given both descriptions, the costumes in particular suggest an effort toward Elizabethan context rather than historical accuracy in the plays. When writing about his own techniques, Bowmer included all of the elements mentioned above but also explained a fundamental approach of “continuous performance” without scene breaks: “...the entrance of one scene occurring before the exit of the preceding scene is complete, after the fashion of the lap-dissolve in motion pictures” (Bowmer, “Oregon Shakespearian [sic] Festival” 129). Bowmer claimed his productions of Shakespeare at OSF used this technique to enhance fluidity of staging and pace of performance and to embrace the stage space as well as the “imaginative impact” of the language.

The method of performance that emerges suggests a dramaturgical awareness of story and language structures, but Bowmer does not implement a method of acting. This distinction bears mention because a dramaturgy for actors encourages the actor’s dramaturgical awareness as an alternative approach to preparation but does not introduce a new method of acting. Focus on approach rather than method might appear to weaken my project, as others suggest of Bowmer’s approach. For example, Oyler claims there was never sufficient support for the actor’s work at OSF, beyond exposure to the “Ashland style” of production in performance (647-648). With regard to this method of performance, Oyler reflected that by 1969 a shared style was replaced by a “multiplicity” of styles: “Every production department seemed intent that its contributions should be noticed and applauded as independent artistic units” (628). If acting challenges related to

content were not supported, as Oyler contended, how is it possible to suggest OSF's resources reflect historical precedents for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility? It is necessary to remember the bigger organizational shift. As an educational theater organization, OSF resolved challenges for actors through an experience of production, which essentially constitutes on-the-job training. Different resources developed from the organization's efforts to meet its professional production goals.

To comprehend the organization's shift more distinctly, it is helpful to compare Oyler's proposed solution to OSF's acting challenges with OSF's solution. Based on his observation of the Festival's practices in 1969 as well as his personal experience as an actor at the Festival in the 1950s, Oyler proposes what could be described as a codified "Ashland acting style." First, with regard to his experience as an actor Oyler says:

Unfortunately, there seemed never to be sufficient time or encouragement to establish an intellectual program of continuing script and period exploration of the plays throughout the rehearsal time so that cast members had an understanding of the totality of the play rather than just memorization of lines and stage business. (647)

Quite bluntly, Oyler's experience resists my interpretation of the Festival's resources as supportive of actors. He goes on to say that if actors at OSF displayed "artistic abilities" at that time it was due to training elsewhere or because they acquired it at Ashland "by chance and osmosis" (647-48). His statement resonates with the educational theater organization's goals; exposing young actors to skills by "chance" and "osmosis" reflects on-the-job training. Clearly, though, Oyler's use of these terms intentionally introduces a lack of resources beginning in the 1950s. Oyler witnesses the same lack in 1969 and related it to, "young and relatively-inexperienced actors" (646). An agenda behind this

observation becomes especially clear in Oyler's suggestion to formalize a conservatory school. I refer to the personal note in parentheses:

To better the artistic offering of the Ashland productions, it would seem that, short of employing several very good professional, or semi-professional, artists, the solution lies in establishing a conservatory school in which the Festival organization would train, both intellectually in Shakespearean scholarship and aesthetically in theatre craftsmanship, actors, directors, and technicians (in descending order of importance in a truly great theatre, in the view of this writer) to produce an artistic product as defined by an adhered-to Festival aesthetic policy. (650)

The "descending order of importance" suggests that actors deserve the bulk of the organization's support and focus. Oyler's primary solution elevates the actor's need to acquire practical and professional skills to meet the challenges presented by OSF's diverse content. Yet a codified style of acting did not resonate with Bowmer's performance method or align with the educational goals of the theater at that time. Oyler anticipates the needs of the professional theater organization, though even "employing several very good professional, or semi-professional, artists" could not guarantee OSF's specific acting challenges would be met.

OSF's later solution to acting challenges reflected the organization's professional goals. The Festival directly introduced dramaturgy as well as voice and text resources into the company's production processes, reversing Bowmer's trend of considering these concerns indirectly. These resources were employed more flexibly than a codified acting style but still represented an effort to cultivate practical and professional skills for actors via on-the-job training. It also took time to develop these resources to the current level of support. Dramaturgy and voice and text positions were implemented at OSF in the late 1980s, following the Festival's decision to hire primarily professional actors beginning in 1984. Prior to the organizational shift in 1984, Bowmer's performance method continued

to dissolve when artistic leadership was passed to Jerry Turner in 1971. After the organizational shift, dramaturgy as well as voice and text resources were given greater emphasis during Henry Woronicz's brief tenure as Artistic Director from 1991-1995, which established precedents for the current processes of production. This period of the Festival's history reflects an early dramaturgical awareness on the part of the organization after Bowmer's tenure.

In the 1980s, OSF began to regularly employ dramaturgs on its artistic staff as well as intermittent vocal coaches for individual productions. Looking to the Festival's *Long Range Plan* for guidance as to when these resources became a priority, both are included in "Action Programs" within the 1983-1987 planning scope. Under programs to "improve artistic quality," the eighth item reads: "Employ a Literary Manager to assist directors in obtaining text clarity, to provide closer links between artistic and public relations functions, and to read and recommend plays" (OSFA, *LRP 1983-1987* 16). Under programs to "overcome deficiencies of the Elizabethan Theatre," the first item reads: "Employ a vocal coach each season to work with actors during rehearsals and part of the performance period" (16). Deficiencies refer to "ever-increasing ambient noise" within Ashland's city center that denigrated sound quality of the outdoor performances, including car and pedestrian traffic during performances (Leary and Richard 105). The impact for actors related to vocal projection issues, which increased prior to construction of the Allen Pavilion in 1992.<sup>4</sup> Addition of dramaturgs and vocal coaches for production support soon followed the strategic planning in 1983. Cynthia White began as the dramaturg and literary manager in 1986, and Ursula Meyer is listed as one of the first vocal coaches for several productions in the 1987 season (OSF, *Souvenir Program*,

Summer/Fall 1987). In his biography as an “Emeritus Leader” on the current OSF website, Henry Woronicz receives direct acknowledgment for expanding these functions: “In addition he added more actor resources, hiring voice and text coaches, a movement director and dramaturges [sic]. His influence continues, and today OSF hires artists to fill these positions for each production team” (OSF “Artistic Directors”). Eventually, under Woronicz’s leadership, support for acting challenges related to content particularly catered to actors via strategic resources for dramaturgy as well as voice and text at OSF.

Dramaturgy resources developed further at OSF along two primary paths. Dramaturgical responsibilities were divided between literary management and production dramaturgy, which is consistent with the views of professional dramaturgs discussed in the previous chapter. Cynthia White implemented the Festival’s first “Play Readings” series early in her tenure, which served as a precedent to OSF’s current efforts of commissioning and developing new theatrical work. The initial series in 1987 included public readings of four new plays in direct collaboration with playwrights: “Each of the playwrights was present for the week of rehearsals leading up to the reading of her/his play” (OSFA, “Audiences Enjoy” 2). White continued as Associate Director and Director of Play Development until 1996, maintaining a primary focus on literary management and cultivating material for production that would meet the organization’s artistic goals under Woronicz’s leadership.<sup>5</sup> Woronicz also hired Barry Kraft as production dramaturg in Ashland<sup>6</sup> for the 1993 season. This appointment set a precedent for production dramaturgs at the Festival, a position Kraft has filled for several seasons along with acting roles. In 2013, for instance, Kraft was production dramaturg for *King Lear* (see Appendix B). OSF’s newsletter, *Prologue*, describes Kraft’s responsibilities and outlines

his production support at the time of his appointment in 1993: “As dramaturg, Kraft’s duties include assisting company members with the exploration of the texts of these plays and providing supplemental resources. He also conducts Shakespeare Studio, a series of discussions and workshops designed to familiarize company members with the fundamentals of Shakespeare” (OSF, “Barry Kraft” 3). This description reveals a need for production dramaturgy to complement literary development in 1993. It also reveals Kraft’s direct interaction with OSF’s company members during production and in the Shakespeare Studio. His dramaturgical support of the company, which included actors, represented just one part of a purposefully strategy on Woronicz’s part to enhance production resources for actors.

Woronicz’s push to provide production resources related to voice and movement was also purposeful. This becomes especially clear in the *Long Range Plan* for 1994-1998, which states concerns about actor training programs outside of the Festival and proposes a solution that requires internal resources on the part of OSF. The section titled “Opportunities and Threats” includes the following:

Actor training programs are producing fewer good actors and the number of trained production people will decline as fewer people attend a declining number of college training programs. The opportunity exists for OSF to establish in-house programs to expand and develop the skills and abilities of company members. Space limitations must be addressed in any training initiatives. (OSF, *LRP* 1994-1998 19)

Though the document does not specify what “fewer good actors” means, this sentiment echoes the concerns of other regional theaters at the time, at least according to *The Artistic Home*. Theatre Communications Group (TCG) created a dialogue between executive leadership and artistic directors of regional theaters across the United States in 1988. The detailed results appear in the book, *The Artistic Home*, as written by Todd

London. The outcomes of this project reveal: “Actor training, most directors agreed, tends to emphasize such job-skills classes as auditioning and ‘On-camera Tehniques,’ while paying short shrift to the kind of vocal and physical training that all actors need for a life in the theatre” (London 42). Scott Kaiser clarifies in retrospect that the Festival’s concerns at the time reflected to vocal and physical training as well.

Kaiser particularly identifies how issues related to vocal production for OSF’s outdoor space and lack of actor training with classical material influenced the Festival’s broadly stated concerns about training in the mid-1990s. He also confirms the same concerns in relation to current production processes:

...what happened was our outdoor theater, we were having a hard time finding people who could handle the outdoor space, and we still do. It’s even worse now because nobody is training for outdoor work anymore because it’s all mic’d. ... In ’95 it was on the wane; now it’s basically gone. ... It’s gone so badly now that we’re considering mic’ing all our outdoor shows, which is a big deal. ... Also it’s because they’re training for TV and film now. They’re not really training for – despite the fact that a lot of the prospectuses that you read from colleges talk about classical training, language based training. Part of the reason I go into these schools is to see: is that true? And very often it’s just not true. (Kaiser)

The revelation that the Festival would consider microphones in Allen Elizabethan Theatre suggests why the situation is “worse” now. In fact, OSF added a “Sound Enhancement System” for the 2014 outdoor season. According to the news release, “The new system, which includes new microphones, speakers, and sound control, is designed to enhance the voice, bringing clarity, articulation and projection throughout the venue” (OSF, “OSF Implements”). Kaiser’s evaluation of the current lack of vocal technique and “language based training” sheds light on past concerns also. In the 1990s, Woronicz’s solution was to create “in-house programs” to address deficits in training outside of the Festival. For example, the 1994-1998 *Long Range Plan* refers to efforts aimed at

revitalizing and rejuvenating company members beginning in 1991, including: "...text, voice and movement studios, expanded work in playreadings, [sic] workshops of new plays, and commissioning of new work" (OSF, *LRP* 1994-1998 4). Like the Shakespeare Studio offered in relation to dramaturgical elements of the plays, artistic studios or workshops were implemented to address particular content challenges for actors.<sup>7</sup>

By 1993, Woronicz was pursuing multiple options for voice and text support from studios with guest artists to resident vocal coaches.<sup>8</sup> Intermittent vocal coaches were added to certain productions beginning in the late 1980s, primarily for productions on the Elizabethan stage and primarily to support sound projection issues. As Kaiser's recent comments suggest, demands of vocal production in relation to challenges of classical language make vocal support more of a concern for actors at OSF regardless of the stage space. Woronicz's efforts to ensure consistent support reflected that concern as well. He hired Kaiser as Vocal Coach for the Festival's 1993 season. Kaiser had been an actor with the festival from 1985-1986 and later received an Advanced Diploma of Voice Studies (ADVS) from the Central School of Speech and Drama in London. A letter from Woronicz to Kaiser in September of 1992 outlines expectations for a vocal coach, a position to be offered under short contract at the Festival from January to April:

This person would be involved in all rehearsal processes during that time, attending rehearsals as possible, teaching a once a week voice studio for company members and coordinating pre-show and pre-rehearsal warm-up for 20-30 minute slots each working day. As you can see, our voice program is growing far beyond performance notes. (Woronicz, Letter to Scott Kaiser)

Beginning in 1993, Kaiser developed OSF's voice and text program from year to year, gradually becoming part of the resident artistic staff and assuming the title Head of Voice and Text. He brought in other coaches to share the production load, including Ursula

Meyer (one of the first vocal coaches in the late 1980s) and Nancy Benjamin. As of 2014, Kaiser will no longer coach actors for voice and text, but he will continue to oversee voice and text as Director of Company Development.

From these early precedents, resources for dramaturgy as well as for voice and text support have continued to transform based on OSF's production-related goals. Reviewing historical precedents reveals how acting challenges related to Shakespeare and other "language oriented" plays developed from OSF's earliest productions and required various levels of dramaturgical awareness from individuals as well as from the organization. OSF's concerns about actor training in the 1990s echo Oyler's concerns in 1971, although OSF offered dramaturgical support for actors rather than a codified style of acting. The organization continues to do so. During Woronicz's tenure, production processes at OSF turned permanently away from supporting an identifiable "Ashland style" or method of production, but continued to address acting challenges related to diverse content.

Investigating current production processes will expand an understanding of the Festival's acting challenges as well as the resources that encourage the actor's dramaturgical awareness to meet those challenges. The comparison of historical and current practices also allows me to suggest that beyond any individual training or experience actors might bring to their production work at the Festival, the combined impact of dramaturgy as well as voice and text resources intentionally addresses challenges of content and language for actors. The following section considers each resource individually and then reflects upon their combined impact in current processes of production.

## Content – Current Challenges: Dramaturgy

The active engagement of production dramaturgs at OSF reveals how actors within the resident company encounter production dramaturgs regularly through rehearsal and production processes. Investigation of these processes allows me to suggest that the work of the production dramaturg impacts the actor's work circuitously, but also directly. In addition, these processes reveal preparation with story structures that will benefit the actor's dramaturgical sensibility.

Compared to early precedents for dramaturgy at OSF in the 1990s, current processes indicate a blended role for dramaturgs rather than two distinct paths. The Festival currently employs a staff of three in its literary department, including Director of Literary Development and Dramaturgy Lue Morgan Douthit, Literary Associate Lydia G. Garcia, and Literary Administrative Assistant Kait Fairchild. In their staff positions, Douthit and Garcia act as literary managers (institutional dramaturgs), but they are also production dramaturgs within the season. Other production dramaturgs are hired as guest artists when necessary or are sourced internally when possible. For example, Julie Felise Dubiner is Associate Director of *American Revolutions: The United States History Cycle*; she filled the position of dramaturg for two commissions from that cycle – *The Liquid Plain* in 2013 and *Party People* in 2012. Current practice also reveals a standard for each production at OSF to have a dramaturg associated unless otherwise determined by the artistic team for that project. Out of eleven productions in the 2013 season, only two were without a production dramaturg. For the nine remaining productions, Douthit and Garcia were primary dramaturgs for five. A guest artist was Associate Dramaturg in one instance, and a second production dramaturg was listed in another, but both are credited

along with Douthit. Guest artists were primary dramaturgs for three productions and Dubiner was primary dramaturg for one. (For production detail, see Appendix B.)

At OSF, the dramaturg works collaboratively with the project director as well as the voice and text director in a manner that impacts the actor. Douthit describes the role of production dramaturg in several ways, but very succinctly in the following statement: “To me, of course, the dramaturg means the one who is holding story and is the one who understands how the structure of the play works” (Douthit). Her perception reflects a fundamental view of dramaturgy in action. To “hold” story implies an ongoing process as well as an engagement with a play’s story structures. From this description, Douthit’s dramaturgical attention supports a larger storytelling experience, but she offers insight into how a dramaturg may shape the accumulation of smaller moments throughout the rehearsal process at OSF. She clarifies how involvement in rehearsal varies from production to production: “There’s a range of observer to almost assistant director, and on the observer end it’s like first audience” (Douthit). The spectrum for a particular project ranges between viewing a play as if seeing it for the first time (first audience) or frequent involvement in daily rehearsals (almost assistant director). Douthit’s responsibilities as institutional dramaturg and production dramaturg also merge within this range of activity. As Director of Literary Development and Dramaturgy, Douthit attends the first read-through of each OSF production, as well as a run-through in the rehearsal hall and the second dress or first preview. As a production dramaturg, she will likely engage in more rehearsals: “There are three touches – professional, work-related touches – at least three, for *all* eleven shows. My own shows, you know it just kind of depends” (Douthit). A distinction of activity for her “own” shows refers to projects for

which she is production dramaturg. Her comment underplays the variable factors upon which her involvement depends, but these become more specific in her revelations about preparation and rehearsals.

Fluctuation of variables may account for Douthit's understated description of her process above, as well as her revelation about what guides her process overall. She says: "It is all by instinct" (Douthit). Generally speaking, instinct may guide the actor's dramaturgical awareness as well, but Douthit's process reflects a discernment specific to a production and a play. For her individual preparation, certain factors remain constant, such as attention to story and structure. Other factors are less constant, which explains why Douthit's preparation changes depending upon the needs of the play. For instance, preparing a production script for a Shakespeare play involves researching different editions (First Folio or quarto texts, for instance) and deciding upon the specific script in collaboration with a director. This kind of script preparation is not limited to Shakespeare's plays, as Douthit confirms various classics or modern plays have different editions and versions.<sup>9</sup> Preparation of a text might also include annotation, such as compiling explanatory notes when content or language is less accessible within contemporary frames of reference. Consultation with the director about the production always figures into the preparation process, and Douthit prefers to meet as early as possible to understand what the director has in mind. Lengthy conversations or text sessions to talk about the play are not always feasible. However, Douthit clarifies that her ideal text session involves reading the script out loud and discussing "point by point" or "line by line" shifts in the play's dramaturgy: "The amount of textual investigating and intervention that one can do in a Shakespeare play is *endless*, actually. And it's true of a

lot of other plays” (Douthit). Leading up to rehearsals, the presence of so many variables supports Douthit’s comment about how instinct generally guides her individual preparation. Once in rehearsals, instinct and discernment guide the process further.

Douthit’s work in rehearsal also fluctuates, although practical considerations again relate to discernment of a play’s needs. This discernment previews the actor’s dramaturgical script analysis. For example, the frequency of her presence in the rehearsal hall may depend upon the play: “In a new work, I believe I’m needed in the room more often than with *Death of a Salesman*. A Shakespeare play, I think I’m needed almost all the time in the room because there are just so many decisions that are being made all the time, and I just make comments to the director along the way that he or she can accept, or reject, or ignore...” (Douthit). Identifying the needs of the play remains a priority, but what may be needed in the rehearsal hall factors into the process as well. From her description, Douthit engages in the rehearsal hall more often when dramaturgical elements of story and structure are especially complex or are taking shape in real time. In other words, her instinctual awareness attends to a play’s dramaturgy as well as to the process of putting that dramaturgy into action. She also offers a deceptively simple approach for all rehearsals: “I always try to see what *little* I can do” (Douthit). Her meaning is layered, as the fluctuation of variables reveals how she questions the process:

So my goal is actually to say very little. Be really, really patient until I can’t take it anymore or there just does need to be somebody to say whatever this is. And it’s all instinct. I can’t tell you what the – you can imagine the realm of the possibilities. It can be very prosaic and very banal like, “Why are they wearing red when they’re talking about yellow?” That very rarely happens, but actually more than you think. Or it can be something about, “Hey, on the first day of rehearsal you said you wanted the play to be about *this*, and it seems to be about *this*. Now that’s fine, the play still could be about *this*, but your production was going to be

about *that*. What do you think? Do you have to reconcile that? Are you pitching that idea? Just reminding you.” (Douthit)

This process of questioning relates practical realities of text in relation to production and also suggests a way to listen to the play’s dramaturgy in action within a specific production context. Douthit’s description of being guided by instinct as well as by what little is needed appear to be profound understatements in these contexts, although her insights also distill the spectrum of production dramaturgy. Douthit’s directives about how the dramaturg “holds” story in relation to the rehearsal process may be restated: instinct and patience. If you are seeking a prescribed method of production dramaturgy or a succinct definition of a dramaturgical sensibility, this revelation may be problematic. If you are seeking practical confirmation of a “slow emergence of meaning” that engages a dramaturgical sensibility, such directives are affirming.

Douthit confirms she rarely has direct contact with actors in the rehearsal process, though her working relationship with a play’s director and also with OSF’s voice and text directors impacts actors directly. She describes her collaboration with the voice and text directors in particular as an effort to help actors punctuate moments throughout a performance. She says, “It’s a matter of agreement of what we think is the potent piece of information – be it emotional, thematic, character, or action driven – that I’m not feeling is being punctuated” (Douthit). Punctuation of potent pieces of information reflects back to how a dramaturg may help shape smaller moments of the storytelling experience throughout the rehearsal process as well as the larger structure of any given story. Jokingly, Douthit provides this sample conversation with one of the voice and text directors: “I don’t care whatever else you’re doing, fine. Alliteration, whatever, go ahead. Just pop the word ‘revenge’ for me, will ya?” (Douthit). In a more serious tone, she

describes the voice and text work as, “quite extraordinary and really, really vital” (Douthit). Her view of a collaborative dramaturgical process, one that combines efforts to punctuate story and structure, reinforces her comments about instinct and patience because it foregrounds process, a collective process of discovery.

Douthit extends this process to the actor’s contribution as well. She offers the following insight about her dramaturgical process in relation to the actor’s: “Because one choice over another rarely makes a difference, except when I need to hear the word ‘revenge’ and I’m not hearing it. How somebody does it? I believe the beautiful thing we learn about from classical plays is that there are so many different ways to do things” (Douthit). From this perspective, Douthit’s instinct, patience, and discernment extend to several layers of the production process as well as to the collaborative efforts of several contributors. This dramaturgical awareness also explains why she chooses to interject herself “as little as possible” between a director, a playwright, and actors (Douthit). Such an approach also ascribes a dramaturgical responsibility for story and structure to the actor, especially through individual choices an actor may make. Thus the collaborative effort between dramaturg and voice and text director impacts actors directly because it extends to a parallel effort between voice and text director and actor. In this way, OSF provides a web of support through which the actor may be encouraged to make a dramaturgical contribution to performance.

#### Content – Current Challenges: Voice and Text

The active engagement of voice and text directors at OSF reveals how actors within the resident company encounter this support regularly through rehearsal and production processes. Investigation of these processes allows me to suggest that the work

of the voice and text directors impacts the actor's work directly. In addition, these processes reveal preparation with language structures that will benefit the actor's dramaturgical sensibility, especially when responding to challenges of diverse content.

OSF currently retains resident voice and text directors during the ten months of its season programming. Rebecca Clark Carey is Head of Voice and Text, and David Carey is Resident Voice and Text Director. Both have been resident artists since 2010, although both worked with the Festival for several years prior.<sup>10</sup> Much like the dramaturgs on OSF's artistic staff, resident voice and text directors manage in-house resources and also assume responsibilities for particular productions. This marks the first of several parallels between OSF's production dramaturgs and voice and text directors. Another parallel is evident in relation to production: resident voice and text artists at OSF support a majority of productions, with guest artists brought in on an as-needed basis. For the eleven productions in 2013, David Carey was associated with five plays, Rebecca Clark Carey with four, Scott Kaiser with one, and guest artist Ursula Meyer with one (for production detail, see Appendix B). All production teams had an associated voice and text director for OSF's 2013 season.

A third parallel between dramaturgy and voice and text work arises because both attend to story and structure, although differences begin to surface in this comparison as well. Most profoundly, voice and text work gives specific focus to structures of language. An article in OSF's *Prologue* from 2002 offers a "mission" for the work of voice and text directors that provides a helpful overview: "Their mission is to help actors and directors realize the full expression of the language of the plays through the actors' voices" (Richard 12). References to language and voice are not so surprising given that the job

title refers to *voice* and *text*. What is meant by “full expression” may prove more complex. A recent article from *Prologue* in 2013 offers further detail from the current directors, as each responds to the question, “What is voice and text work?” Together, they clarify what “full expression” of a play’s language can mean:

David: It’s a combination of working on the physical instrument to give actors the skills to be audible in space as well as to have a flexible and healthy instrument, and then applying those technical skills in an artistic way to working on text, in particular, Shakespeare. To find how the language informs the play and the process of character development and story line.

Rebecca: Part of our job is to help the actor understand the language, not just intellectually, but emotionally, from the character’s point of view. (Foster, “Wizards” 12).

David Carey’s comments confirm that expression of language relates to healthy vocal skills employed by actors. He also introduces how vocal techniques may be applied in order to inform storytelling with the play or character. Rebecca Clark Carey affirms that language may have intellectual and emotional impact when used by an actor, which resonates with Douthit’s comment about punctuating potent pieces of information. Attending to nuances of language helps to shape smaller moments for the actor within a larger storytelling effort. Both descriptions of voice and text work suggest more specifically how it functions side by side with dramaturgy, engaging in a parallel effort to “hold” story. Yet a distinction also comes clear: voice and text work attends specifically to the intricacies of language. It supports actors in the exploration of language as a dramaturgical structure of storytelling. Practical applications of this difference become apparent through investigation of the voice and text directors’ individual preparation and rehearsal processes at OSF.

Much like Douthit, OSF's voice and text directors confirm a project-specific approach when preparing for a production. Early on, consultation with a play's director always occurs, and to varying degrees. David Carey's description of connecting with a director in advance of rehearsals identifies a spectrum for potential involvement echoing Douthit's "realm" of possibilities. He suggests that an initial conversation with a play's director determines how a voice and text director will prepare to support the rehearsal process:

What is this project? How does this director understand what I can contribute? We try and meet with the directors in advance of the shows going into rehearsal and have some kind of dialogue about how a voice and text person *can* contribute, what they might expect of that, and what the demands of any particular space might be. So there are a whole lot of things that are coming to bear on my particular contribution. (D. Carey)

Some of OSF's incoming directors may not have worked with a voice and text professional before, which reflects one reason for early conversations. What the voice and text director *can* contribute in relation to textual or vocal challenges is another reason for early conversations because the spectrum of variables requires preparation. For example, texts at OSF range between different kinds of classical verse forms, contemporary plays, projects in development, and musical scripts. Productions may also involve dialects, which can include multiple dialects for the same play. Preparation must anticipate potential impact of language structures on actors as well as how individual challenges may be addressed. These early considerations require flexibility in the voice and text director's preparation, which becomes clear when Rebecca Clark Carey speaks about her process overall: "Well, I think the most important thing about my process is that it is actor-sensitive and show-sensitive" (R. Carey). She clarifies further, "I guess that's why it's hard to talk about *my* process because *my* process is very much about what

is needed and wanted on the basis of the individuals involved in the show” (R. Carey).

Adaptability in the earliest stages of preparation represents the first of many instances of flexibility found in the voice and text director’s process.

Individual preparation with the script suggests another facet, which profoundly illustrates the unique approach of each practitioner. As might be expected, each voice and text director begins by reading a play – multiple times – in advance of the first cast read-through. Some kind of annotation frequently accompanies this activity. Notes might relate to scansion of classical verse, a character’s rhythmic use of language, or intricacies of dialect, for example. David Carey’s comment above also suggests “demands of any particular space” may be part of the notation process. Rebecca Clark Carey describes her method of annotation as follows:

I’ll scribble notes in the margins about things I’m noticing about character’s rhythms. I do try to scan verse sections of classical plays. I do rough scansion before the show starts. But there are rhythmic things that come up in contemporary plays as well that I’m scribbling margin notes to myself to just kind of pay attention to. (R. Carey)

Using her own visual notations, she specifically identifies language structures commonly found in Shakespeare but evidenced in contemporary plays as well: she circles antitheses, draws boxes around puns, and marks lists or builds (R. Carey). Kaiser offers another example of individual notation through the method he created to visually track Shakespeare’s rhetorical devices in the margins of his scripts. He refers to a particular notation device as “threads” because it involves following the thread of an argument: “I’d underline, and then I’d literally draw the thread to the next part, and then I’d draw the thread to the next part so that from page to page to page you can follow the line. And if there’s more than one line, I’d start using colored pencils” (Kaiser). If dialects are

required for a production, preparation with the script may also involve learning unfamiliar dialects or refreshing known dialects. David Carey identifies changes in vowels and consonants and “the tune of the accent” as critical elements of dialect (D. Carey) He also raises another instance of flexibility by anticipating how different actors learn dialects. Preparation of materials for actors can involve sound samples, phonetic notations, or handouts with key sound changes: “You can’t just have one kit that fits everybody. You have to be prepared to be a jack-of-all-trades in that respect” (D. Carey). Individual preparation with the script is therefore unique to each practitioner, but illustrates a shared attention to language structures.

For the voice and text director, rehearsal becomes another kind of preparation prior to individual working sessions with actors. In the rehearsal room, the voice and text director – like the dramaturg – interacts as another instinctual and patient observer, sometimes offering verbal notes but also making script notes about clarity of a text’s meaning, as well as vocal clarity or sound projection in relation to individual actors. Thus, early preparation with the script begins to merge with choices actors make from the first cast read-through of the play. When David Carey speaks about rehearsals in general, he suggests how he attends to language structures:

...I suppose I see myself as being the voice of the text in the room, the voice of the playwright, perhaps. Not entirely, but the voice of the text in that moment, for the character, but then open to the fact that the text is a fluid animal. There are no single interpretations because if there was everybody would be doing it that way. (D. Carey)

Becoming the “voice of the text” from moment to moment invokes a connection with the playwright but also with the actor. It also recalls “dramaturgical voice” as a task of listening as well as questioning. Carey’s reference to text as a “fluid animal”

simultaneously offers another image of flexibility, imagining specificity but changeability. Further, his recognition that there are “no single interpretations” sounds very much like Douthit’s belief that, “There are so many different ways to do things,” which especially recalls the instinctual observation of dramaturgical structures throughout rehearsals.

These levels of observation prepare the voice and text director to work with actors one-on-one, though they are also tempered by a patient expectation that some issues may be solved in the rehearsal room. Rebecca Clark Carey demonstrates this duality through what she calls the “very dynamic” revision of her penciled script notes during rehearsals:

I usually will not ask for sessions until they’ve been through a round of work on the scene because some of my pencil marks will get erased. They’ll start working on the scene, and they’ll have the “aha” moment, or the director will help them put something together, and I just erase those marks. Some new marks might go in as they make acting choices that actually sometimes obscure things in the language, and I need to help them re-find the balance between whatever that choice is and the language. (R. Carey)

Dynamic revision of notes builds upon any initial preparation with the script, and textual exploration in rehearsal may shift the eventual focus of individual working sessions. Both of the Careys reveal that rehearsal continues the process of preparation because the work in rehearsal – like the text – is fluid. The instinctual and patient effort within the rehearsal process provides another parallel between dramaturgy and voice and text work. What follows through individual rehearsal sessions, however, provides the greater distinction between these two practices.

At OSF working sessions are predominantly one-on-one between voice and text directors and actors. These sessions especially suggest how an individual actor may explore language with a dramaturgical sensibility. Sometimes sessions occur in pairs or

small scene groups when necessary, but these instances are less common.<sup>11</sup> Individual rehearsal sessions may include different vocal exercises, textual investigation, or methods to connect language with meaning as well as with emotional resonance for the actor. David Carey clarifies the larger goal: "...essentially that's what I'm asking an actor to do, is to make sense of what the language is doing, whether it's a Shakespeare piece or a contemporary piece. To not just think about what the character is doing, but what is the character doing *through* the language, *with* the language? What is the language telling you that the character is doing?" (D. Carey). Sometimes the work of discovering what the character is doing through and with language involves discussion. It also involves exploration with the actor on his or her feet trying exercises or working bits of text in various ways. More often it is a combination of both.

Rebecca Clark Carey provides an example from her work on *Troilus and Cressida*. She and the actor playing the character of Cressida questioned why Cressida only responds to Menelaus when she meets the Greek generals, and each kisses her in turn. Prior to Menelaus, several of the Greek generals kiss her, but Cressida does not respond with any lines of text. Carey says, "We look at it, and Menelaus is the first one to say, 'I pray you, lady.' He's the first one to *ask* her. He says, 'I pray you.' So he opens the door for her to respond" (R. Carey).<sup>12</sup> In this subtle distinction of language, Cressida's first line after a significant silence becomes more purposeful for the actor through a specific impetus to speak. This discovery opens up options for what the actor playing Cressida may do *through* and *with* her response in performance. Discovering such specific connections between the actor, the language, and the dramaturgical

significance of a moment within the story uniquely factors into these individual rehearsal sessions.

Because voice and text sessions are one-on-one, and specifically designed for the actor as well as the particular text, these individual rehearsals reveal how the voice and text director's collaborative effort diverges most distinctly from the dramaturg's but still incorporates a dramaturgical sensibility. Work in the individual sessions builds upon the voice and text director's collaboration with the director as well as with the dramaturg regarding pertinent bits of information that will punctuate the larger storytelling experience. The individual sessions provide the medium through which that collaboration extends most directly to the actor. The voice and text director thereby becomes a kind of conduit between the artistic team and the actor but also occupies a similar position between the actor and the text. To that end, variables are already apparent in what Rebecca Clark Carey describes as her "actor-sensitive and show-sensitive" process, or what David Carey refers to when he prepares to be a "jack-of-all-trades." Flexibility in managing production elements is clearly expected, although working sessions with actors reveal the voice and text director's work at its most variable. Kaiser's describes how his work with actors has evolved during his years at the Festival because of the individual rehearsal sessions:

So I try to tailor my coaching to the actor's idiosyncrasies. I know a lot of coaches are like, "This is how I coach. This is my way of coaching, and this is how I coach." And they ask the actor to come alongside their process. Because I was working at a professional company all those years – when I was younger with actors who were far more experienced than I was – my approach to winning over trust was to say, "I'm not here to tell you what to do or how to do it. I'm here to be a resource. I would love you to continue to tell me how I can come alongside your process." ... My secret to success was: don't impose; come alongside. (Kaiser)

The range of what might surface during an individual rehearsal session at OSF is partially to blame for the difficulty of explaining how voice and text directors *come alongside* actors more specifically. The moment from *Troilus and Cressida* represents one example through significant attention to intricate structures of language. How an actor may arrive at a specific connection with text and then apply that connection is unique and individual. In that way, the collaborative effort between the voice and text director and the actor reflects an extension of the collaborative effort between dramaturg and voice and text director. The process overall is circuitous: the dramaturg collaborates with voice and text directors in a manner that directly impacts actors, but voice and text directors have the most direct contact with actors at OSF. More importantly, in relation to a practical dramaturgy for actors, the actor is encouraged to make a dramaturgical contribution to performance through this web of support.

#### Content – Combined Efforts and Dramaturgical Sensibility

Considering the combined impact of dramaturgy and voice and text resources at OSF more fully exposes how they function together. Both practices address structural challenges in plays. Individually, OSF's current processes for dramaturgy as well as for voice and text seek to address challenges of varied content, including Shakespeare or other "language oriented" classical plays as well as new works. Douthit suggests the dramaturgical question for each production is the same: how does the structure deliver the "emotional values" of a play to an audience (Douthit)? Emotional values may vary depending on story content as well as dramaturgical structures. The work at OSF also reveals a lateral rather than a hierarchical collaborative process. Emphasis shifts between larger dramaturgical structures of storytelling and smaller moments within those

structures, but each receives attention within the production process. This collaboration might also be considered circuitous in the sense that individual work circles back to the larger effort. Each artist strives – instinctually, patiently – to make sense of dramaturgical structures and to realize those structures meaningfully in action. The dramaturg looks out for the story and its structure, voice and text directors as well as actors actively engage with structures of language to tell that story from moment to moment. Along with certain fixed expectations come a myriad of variables. For instance, varied work with each play’s director and processes of preparation always map back to the needs of the particular play – however much the needs of the play may differ from project to project. Flexibility within the rehearsal process is expected and manifests in varied or unpredictable ways. Taking such variables into account, the symbiotic relationship between dramaturgy and voice and text resources at OSF may inform the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility.

The web of support for actors at OSF in relation to content acknowledges the actor’s dramaturgical responsibility and offers a means to address challenges of structure, story, and language. OSF regularly provides actors with challenging content, and also provides direct resources through which dramaturgical exploration becomes primary analysis rather than a secondary concern. Practical exploration of text helps to “punctuate” moments within a larger storytelling experience, which has been discussed here as a dramaturgical concern. For instance, Rebecca Clark Carey confirms what happens when the actor develops “a deeper appreciation of why the speech or the line is put together that way” for any given section of text:

...it’s clicked something about the acting of the speech, or the thought or the intention has clicked for the actor, and therefore it’s more fun to play. And when it’s more fun to play, not only do I hear the antithesis lifted, but

I hear the energy – the character’s energy, the actor’s energy – starting to lift and become a little bit fuller. (R. Carey)

In essence, she describes how an understanding of dramaturgical structures leads to a more full portrayal of a character by the actor. Practical script analysis of this kind suggests an alternative to psychological character analysis, an alternative that does not negate “emotional values” within a play or disrupt connections between actor and character. Thus, OSF models practical tools that encourage a dramaturgical sensibility while also addressing challenges of diverse content.

Nonetheless, even OSF is not a perfect model with regard to its current or historical production processes. Like many theater organizations in the US, a dramaturgical responsibility for actors does not manifest as a conscious organizational goal. This does not diminish OSF’s resources, but it does recall my disclaimer that the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility reflects the goals of my project rather than OSF’s priorities. Douthit offers an insight that supports the necessity of this disclaimer because she reveals how collective dramaturgical investigation has not yet manifested in OSF’s production process intentionally:

I think that we’re wasting a lot of time by not spending time at the beginning of the process by going really, really slowly to understand what the play – not what’s being said. I don’t want table work that says, “Do you know what that word literally means?” because *that* is *not* the project. But how it’s functioning in that, and where somebody is emotionally at one point, and where they are somewhere else. That conversation is the one we never have. That’s the one we never have in the room, *ever*, as a collective. (Douthit)

Douthit recognizes how shared dramaturgical conversation is occasionally intentional in the rehearsal process, but more often literal understanding presides as the more immediate need. When actors are grappling with language used beyond everyday

contexts, literal understanding is necessary. Unfortunately, that is also where shared dramaturgical analysis often stops in rehearsal contexts due to time constraints of production – not only at OSF. The perspectives of several dramaturgs in the previous chapter suggest time remains a constant concern in most production processes.

Douthit proposes a more meaningful dramaturgical investigation with attention to what she calls, “a collaborative effort to tell a larger story” (Douthit). In that light, individual voice and text sessions exemplify how moment-to-moment punctuation of a story and its structure require collective dramaturgical investigation as well as individual preparation. In Douthit’s experience, spontaneous dramaturgical “conversation” may eventually occur when actors lack an understanding of structure and become frustrated in rehearsal (Douthit). Similarly, Rebecca Clark Carey speaks of one benefit of attending rehearsals frequently so that she might attune herself to, “where the actors’ points of frustration might be,” in order to prepare for individual sessions (R. Carey). Intentional and collective dramaturgical priorities could preempt frustration on the actor’s part more purposefully. In that regard, OSF’s resources as well as the gaps in its organizational intent argue together for conscious cultivation of the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility.

Another gap relates to the lateral collaboration discussed in relation to dramaturgs, voice and text directors, and actors. OSF’s production processes have developed over time but still do not encompass all theater artists who work with the company. For example, Kaiser reveals the following about his efforts to integrate voice and text more fully into production processes:

It was years and years of miniature victories that slowly added up. Like the voice studio I have, it took me more than ten years to get a dedicated space for coaching. The same with my office; I didn’t have an office for years. Those were the big victories, and there were lots and lots of small

ones too. The fact that we have a *resident* staff, that was my dream for years, and years, and years. It took a long time to get that, to the point where I can step away from it now. (Kaiser)

To fully appreciate what “years” mean in this context, it is helpful to remember that Kaiser began work as a vocal coach at OSF on a short-term contract in 1993, and twenty years later stepped away from voice and text production support in 2013. It is also necessary to recognize that such collaboration requires agreement on the part of all collaborators. As Kaiser’s comments indicate, this may require significant efforts to change expectations about process and practices. Douthit’s perspective suggests a willingness to collaborate, as her practice of dramaturgy currently benefits from shared efforts: “...I work very, very closely with the voice and text directors here, who are *always* in the room. I’m not in the room as much as the voice and text. We work together a lot on getting story...” (Douthit). Other artists within the production processes at OSF may be less willing to shift their individual processes.

Kaiser’s earlier revelation about coming *alongside* the actor’s process could be viewed as a necessity when attempting to shift actor perceptions about the collaborative process for voice and text work. Also from that view, it is not surprising that he invokes trust as the first step in beginning those working relationships: “Usually I would do far more homework than I ever thought was necessary. I would come in anticipating any possible questions because that first meeting is all about trust, you know” (Kaiser). Similarly, when David Carey speaks of the first meeting with a project’s director he identifies trust as integral to that working relationship, “...building a sense of a relationship and a sense of trust through the process of rehearsal...” (D. Carey). Recalling Rebecca Clark Carey’s “actor-sensitive and show-sensitive” approach is equally telling.

In each case, the burden of trust seems to rest upon the voice and text practitioner – at least until other artists are willing to come alongside *their* process.

Beyond the current scope of OSF’s resources, more widespread integration of voice and text and dramaturgical processes may encourage further instances of the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility. Likewise, adoption of such practices by other artists – directors, for instance – would also facilitate intentional change. Anticipating a shared value for the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility raises larger questions than the production processes at OSF may solve. However, building upon practices and direct resources that OSF already employs may offer a critical step toward that goal. I will consider these larger questions in conclusion, when also considering how a practical dramaturgy for actors may be incorporated more widely in current theatrical production processes. OSF’s resources provide a starting point from which to consider those options. For now, dramaturgy as well as voice and text resources at OSF most directly help actors meet the challenges of diverse content by supporting dramaturgical exploration of story and language structures.

### Indirect Resources

The work of outlining a scope for the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility by observing production at OSF also reveals how the actor’s dramaturgical awareness may extend to performance structures. I devised this label as a means to suggest how elements of a play’s dramaturgy combine with the actor’s preparation to embody dramaturgy in action. The actor’s individual preparation may therefore consider performance structures through processes that shape a play from rehearsal into performance. This effort also aligns with the wider aims of the case study: observation of OSF’s processes reveals directly and indirectly how the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility may manifest as

dramaturgical responsibility for a play. With that goal in mind, each of the following discoveries will transfer to a practical dramaturgy for actors.

My treatment of OSF's indirect resources intentionally differs from direct resources. I discuss each indirect resource more broadly than the processes for dramaturgy or voice and text because these discoveries are applied extensively in the chapters that follow. Bluntly, the ways in which these indirect resources practically apply to the actor's dramaturgical sensibility may appear less theoretical when applied to a play. Also, I consider the indirect resources in an order that progresses from consideration of the actor's work in rehearsal to the actor's interaction with an audience: (a) the resident company and rotating repertory, both of which may inspire flexibility in the actor's individual process; (b) stage spaces, which may heighten the actor's environmental awareness; (c) education programs, which reveal how actors may encounter resonance for their storytelling *offstage*; and (d) community relationships, which encourage artistic work to be viewed as an exchange. These categories and resources overlap, even though I discuss them here in order to apply a particular benefit or transfer. This overlap will be considered more profoundly in future chapters as well. Lastly, in keeping with the consideration of contemporary processes and historical precedents, I include a retrospective view of OSF's indirect resources in Appendix C.

#### Resident Company and Rotating Repertory

OSF's resident company suggests a need for ensemble awareness and flexibility as a facet of the actor's dramaturgical sensibility, which is reinforced by the Festival's rotating repertory experience. In this context, flexibility suggests an ability to adapt or embrace change, but also to enter the production process with an awareness of

collaborative compromise. OSF's resident company and rotating repertory immerses the actor in a complex assortment of ensemble structures and still requires the actor's creative contribution. With regard to performance structures, ensemble awareness reflects a commitment to contribute to a larger whole in addition to an individual endeavor.

Once hired by OSF, the actor becomes part of a resident company from which the roles for a particular season are cast. Already by inclusion in the company, the actor's contact with ensemble structures functions as a basic consideration. Participating in the resident company encourages a fundamental ensemble awareness that is then multiplied by involvement in various productions. Most actors will play multiple roles during OSF's season. They may also understudy larger roles in productions for which they have smaller roles, or they may understudy for another production. Length of the season at OSF adds another level to ensemble awareness because productions run anywhere between ten weeks to ten months. OSF's full season is ten months, running February to November. Many actors remain in residence for the full ten months, but others have shorter contracts due to the fact that productions open earlier or later based on a staggered schedule for the indoor and outdoor venues. In contrast, many regional, non-profit theaters schedule four to five week runs, and actors often move from theater to theater in order to perform on a regular basis. Current Artistic Director, Bill Rauch, speaks to the significance of that difference in an interview shortly before beginning his tenure at OSF: "Resident acting companies in this country are an endangered species; they hardly exist anymore. And I do believe the best work in world drama comes out of company situations; I'm a passionate believer in company. ... So I do think I'm attracted to places where company values are at the heart of the work" (Rauch, 564-565). Considering how the actor may be asked to

contribute to a resident company suggests how OSF exposes actors to a heightened sense of ensemble awareness.

The rotating repertory experience at OSF reinforces that sense of ensemble awareness as well as the need for individual flexibility. Rotating repertory means that several plays rehearse in the same period of time so that they may be performed in rotation during the same period of time. In a “Special Repertory Edition” of OSF’s *Prologue*, David A. Dreyfoos (Producing Director at the time of publication) identified how rotating repertory is different from sequential repertory:

In sequential repertory, you may have one show on the main stage and another in rehearsal or on a second stage. Sometimes you share actors from show to show, so in a way the actors are in repertory, but not the plays. That’s how most regional theatres work. They’re called repertory theatres, but they mean sequential rather than rotating repertory. (Olsen 5)

OSF’s resident company means actors are “shared” between productions, and the Festival’s rotating repertory schedule ensures that performances of multiple productions are offered within the same timeframe. Actors at OSF rehearse more than one production at a time, working with more than one cast and production team simultaneously. Collaborative working relationships are thereby intensified through rehearsals, which continues into performance of the rotating repertory. With regard to performance, Edward Brubaker offers “advantages” of the rotating repertory for actors as well as audiences in *Golden Fire*. For actors, he identifies how the opportunity to play multiple roles interrupts the repetition of playing one role and encourages spontaneity, but he offers “a more important consideration” as well: “It places emphasis on a company, on the ensemble rather than on a star performer” (50-51). For audiences, Brubaker highlights how watching the same actor in more than one role reveals something about the craft of

acting: “Instead of identifying actors with a particular role, they become more sharply aware of the differences between the performers and their roles” (51). The same awareness suggests an advantage for actors as well, which is why Brubaker’s statements echo Rauch’s later comment about company values. Both views illuminate how ensemble awareness supports the rotating repertory as well as the resident company structure.

OSF’s production processes may even be said to require the actor’s flexibility through ensemble awareness. A dramaturgical sensibility may require the actor’s flexibility in a different way, but some of the concerns related to OSF’s resident company and rotating repertory suggest complementary examples of flexibility. For example, at OSF actors encounter the complexities of being part of resident company on a daily basis, which demands an awareness of multiple collaborators. In fact, OSF’s rotating repertory necessitates a company “Conflict List” to track each company members’ scheduled activities. David A. Dreyfoos called this, “...essential if we want to cast the same actors in two or three plays and we want to produce eleven plays in three theatres” (Olsen 5). Just as Rauch’s statement about OSF’s company values informs how I conceive of heightened ensemble awareness, so do the practical realities of day-to-day scheduling. Similarly, actors at OSF are subject to the realities of casting. About his role in casting as Director of Company Development, Scott Kaiser confirms that “diversity and inclusion” are fundamental goals for OSF, but that casting for the resident company must also consider the full season’s content: “A lot of what we do is based on season selection, and season selection drives, often, cultural diversity and casting. So when I go to universities I’m looking for talent, absolutely, but I’m also looking for talent from underrepresented segments of the acting company’s population, so to speak” (Kaiser). The needs of casting

for a diverse repertory require the actor's flexibility as another practical consideration. Lastly, ensemble awareness and flexibility sustain OSF's multiple collaborative rehearsal processes into long performance runs. Realities of scheduling, casting, rehearsal, and performance compel the actor's ensemble awareness and require practical flexibility to meet daily challenges that multiply through the production processes for the resident company and rotating repertory.

OSF's resident company and rotating repertory may therefore challenge the actor's individual process of preparation, but that also makes these resources worth considering indirectly for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility. OSF's production processes negate individual process to some extent. Actors may either embrace or resist a level of flexibility in response and may do so to different degrees depending upon the specific needs of a production and the actor's individual role within that project.

Resistance may account for why the word *ensemble*, as Lue Morgan Douthit suggests, is considered a "dirty word" in some respects: "...I have to come up with a better word that doesn't have pejorative implications because 'ensemble' does. Because it's like group storytelling, and that sounds a little like, I don't know – like Saturday mornings at the public library in the children's book section" (Douthit). Outside of OSF's resident company and rotating repertory, actors more often negotiate one rehearsal process at a time in shorter runs, which may not challenge their individual processes so intensely.

OSF, on the other hand, almost demands collaborative flexibility from actors on a daily basis. Through a complex convergence of resident company and rotating repertory, OSF models flexibility as a dramaturgical sensibility that relates to performance structures. In fact, these resources suggest flexibility for the actor that parallels the work of OSF's

voice and text directors. Through ensemble awareness, actors may be encouraged to recognize what it means to “come alongside” the collaborative processes of other theater artists and to respond flexibly.

### Stage Spaces

As an indirect resource, OSF’s unique performance venues expose a dramaturgical relationship between dramatic structures that compose a play’s story and physical structures within a stage space. This relationship reveals how environmental awareness may inform the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility. I use the phrase “environmental awareness” to imply a conscious consideration of the stage space as a structure of performance.<sup>13</sup> Further, stage spaces encourage the *actor’s* environmental awareness, not the *character’s*. OSF’s quantity of stage spaces and their unique qualities reveal how the actor may consciously consider a dramaturgical relationship between story and physical structures of space.

OSF’s combination of stage spaces reveals a unique assortment of physical structures. Many regional theaters in the US have more than one performance space, but OSF’s three stages include a combination of indoor and outdoor venues. OSF’s campus also progressed from outdoor to indoor stage spaces, unlike many regional theater complexes built indoors for accessibility year-round. Currently, OSF’s three primary stage spaces include the following: the Allen Elizabethan Theatre, the Festival’s first stage space built for a summer season outdoors with a seating capacity of 1,200; the Angus Bowmer Theatre, the Festival’s first indoor venue with a seating capacity of 600; and the Thomas Theatre, the Festival’s newest and smallest indoor stage with flexible configuration and a seating capacity of 274 (OSF, 2014 40). OSF’s campus also includes

administrative offices, rehearsal spaces, education classrooms, and a costume shop onsite. Its production departments as well as costume storage and rental facilities moved offsite late in 2013. The new offsite facility is, “a \$7.5 million production building in the nearby town of Talent, an eight-minute drive from the OSF campus” (Foster, “A Building Grows” 10). With the completion of the Thomas Theatre, it became necessary for the Festival to strategically increase build and storage space to support the three stages in rotating repertory. Plans for the new offsite production facility were implemented by Paul Nicholson, but were completed under current Executive Director Cynthia Rider. Not including the extensive campus operations, but focusing only on the capability for rotating repertory on three stages, and given the indoor as well as outdoor venues, perhaps it is a bit of an understatement to say OSF’s combination of stage spaces reveals a unique assortment of physical structures.

Considering OSF’s stage spaces together offers insight into how their physical structures contribute to the rotating repertory. Generally, qualities of each stage space influence assignment of plays for a given season. As audience capacity for each space suggests, different kinds of interaction between actors and audiences are possible in each venue. The kind of actor/audience relationship desired by the artistic team helps to determine which stage space best suits a play, but contemporary and classical plays are produced on all stages. In addition to actor/audience relationship, artistic goals for a production (the organization’s goals as well as the director’s vision) also influence selection of stage spaces for a production and for a season. Ultimately, of course, the rotating repertory schedule complicates each of these general considerations. The physical structures of each stage space could merit three dissertation-length studies based

only on architecture. For my purposes, a brief overview of each stage space highlights particular qualities that reveal how the actor's environmental awareness may apply to physical structures.

Structural qualities of the Allen Elizabethan Theater might be summarized under the heading of "architectural." I borrow this concept from Angus Bowmer. He referred to the Elizabethan stage as architectural because the facade served as a shared setting for all of Shakespeare's plays. Bowmer took particular care to pass on this understanding of the Elizabethan stage space to OSF's company through the first of his chapbooks, *The Ashland Elizabethan Stage: Its Genesis, Development and Use* (1978). He admitted to a necessary simplicity in the outdoor stage space, at least at first: "And a permanent stage which would serve as an *architectural setting* for all the plays made such a venture economically feasible for us – penniless as we were" (*Ashland Elizabethan Stage* 10, my emphasis). The first incarnation of the Elizabethan theater was built within the concrete wall of Ashland's demolished Chautauqua dome for the "first annual" Festival in 1935. Due to fire hazards, the Elizabethan-style stage was fully rebuilt in 1959. Minor upkeep, gradual seating changes, and various performance modifications followed until the Allen Pavilion<sup>14</sup> was added for the 1992 season. The Allen Pavilion added balcony seating and a partial roof enclosure primarily as a measure to improve sound-related performance issues. Construction also allowed for other improvements: "to extend the stage, add vomitoria, improve sight lines and expand the lighting" (OSF, "Allen Pavilion" 50). Despite structural changes over time, the imaginative performance quality Bowmer described in relation to the Elizabethan stage remains in tact: "On the Ashland stage with its architectural milieu, visual devices which indicate change from one place to another

tend to jerk the audience's attention from the smooth transitions which Shakespeare accomplishes with words" (*Ashland Elizabethan Stage* 43). Bowmer's statement relates specifically to Shakespeare's plays, although simplicity of visual design and imaginative contribution by the audience may apply to other plays and playwrights. In fact, consideration of other plays is now a necessity for the Allen Elizabethan Theatre. Though the stage tends to support large cast productions best, current programming for the venue includes contemporary plays like *The Heart of Robin Hood* (2013) or musicals like *Into the Woods* (2014). Along with OSF's diversity of content, the "architectural" qualities of this stage space extend to each of its productions.

The performance qualities of the Angus Bowmer and Thomas Theatres might be summarized together under the heading of "intimate." However, grouping the indoor theaters together does not mean these stage spaces are intimate in the same ways. Use of this term owes its inspiration to OSF's descriptions of the Thomas Theatre (included below), but such references inspired my further definition and application of the term. The adjectival definition of *intimate* in the *Oxford English Dictionary* includes theatrical connotations: "Of a theatrical performance, esp. a revue: that aims at establishing familiar and friendly relations with the audience. Also of a theatre itself" (Def. 3e). The Angus Bowmer Theatre, OSF's first indoor playing space, was the Festival's first stage space to establish such intimate or "familiar and friendly relations" with audiences. The theater's opening in 1970 marked a turning point by kicking off the Stage II season (performances from March to May at that time) and by expanding the Festival's repertoire to include contemporary plays on a regular basis. The following description of the stage space

suggests an intentional effort to create intimate qualities for performance through proximity as well as comfort:

The Angus Bowmer Theatre was a custom-designed theater conceived with both actor and audience in mind, placing them in one room without a proscenium framework. None of the 600 seats in the theater is more than 55 feet from the stage, and the seating is in continental fashion, with wide space between rows and no aisles. (Leary and Richard 70)

Compared to the Allen Elizabethan Theatre, the Angus Bowmer Theatre's stage space expanded the Festival's capabilities for more intimate relationships between actor and audience. It also allowed for more scenic design elements by foregoing "architectural" structures as well as the proscenium arch.

As the stage space with the smallest seating capacity and the most flexible stage configurations, the Thomas Theatre is even more intimate than the Angus Bowmer Theatre. Its opening in 2002 strategically coincided with the closing of the Black Swan the previous year. Though it is the smallest of OSF's venues, the Thomas Theatre's capacity allows for 274 patrons, which is an increase compared to 138 seats in the Black Swan. When describing the custom design for this space, Senior Scenic Theatre Designer, Richard L. Hay<sup>15</sup> described its qualities as follows: "Most particularly, we want a playing area that can easily be converted from three-quarter thrust to full round, and perhaps into other arrangements as well, while maintaining a sense of intimacy" (Bardossi 8). Hay's design priorities for "a sense of intimacy" echo how the Festival's 2014 season brochure features the Thomas Theatre: "OSF's most intimate theatre" (OSF, 2014 40). To extend the earlier comparison to all three of the Festival's stage spaces, the Thomas Theatre allows for even greater intimacy than the Angus Bowmer Theatre and a more extreme flexibility with regard to design.

It may state the obvious to say that OSF's stage spaces offer the most tangible indirect resource for actors, but this is not just because they are tactile, physical structures. In theatrical production, even if the actor rehearses primarily in a rehearsal room that is not the performance venue, the *actor* negotiates initial contact with the stage space in preparation for performance. Eventually, *character* interaction with a stage space is encouraged and expanded with the help of design components, which add another layer to the actor's storytelling. Theatrical design transforms a stage space viscerally – through costumes, scenery, lighting, sound, projections, and other design elements – and enhances the dramaturgical connection between content and the stage space. Yet a dramaturgical relationship between actor and stage space underlies those efforts profoundly. Practical concerns at OSF related to the quantity of its venues, various capacities for audience members, and unique structural qualities for each stage space model how the actor may gain an awareness of the relationship between a particular stage space and a particular story.

Other practical concerns necessitate the actor's environmental awareness in relation to OSF's stage spaces. These may inform blocking (character-related movement) and also apply to voice and text concerns. For instance, Bowmer connected blocking to the stage space by employing "zones of interest" for the Elizabethan stage, which is a concept he borrowed from B. Iden Payne's "Modified Elizabethan Staging" (*Ashland Elizabethan Stage* 19).<sup>16</sup> Six zones denote literal areas of the stage, including: forestage; middle stage; sides, to the left and right of the pillars; inner below level, inner above level, and gallery level. Bowmer referred to the zones as individual, but with a magnetic tension between them (22). He also considered the zones as acting areas: "Each of the

zones of interest can serve as an acting area. Some however, are weaker than others, but each is made stronger when combined with other acting areas” (25). Bowmer intended this advice to support the director’s work on the Elizabethan stage, but it equally suggests a way for actors to make conscious connections between structures of the stage space and effective movement with the acting areas. In other words, the actor’s physical movement interacts with a given stage space even more fundamentally than blocking or choreography within a designed stage setting. Likewise, David Carey’s description of “embracing the house” vocally suggests a parallel to Bowmer’s concerns about movement: “...that doesn’t necessarily mean you’re facing out, but that you’re conscious that you’re playing to that space, and asking that space to be connected to you” (D. Carey). Carey’s description of OSF’s other stage spaces confirms a vocal component of environmental awareness:

The Thomas has its own demands. It’s a small space. You *can* be much more intimate, but nonetheless, very often you’re playing in the round or you’re playing on three sides, so if you turn your back on a member of the audience then you just have to remember that they’re included. You need to think that you’re communicating behind you as much as in front of you. The Bowmer, its width can be quite challenging because if you’re facing across the stage, your back is to maybe a quarter or a third of the audience. (D. Carey)

Environmental awareness may therefore invite the actor’s conscious attention to physical structures, to the actor/audience relationship, and to practical concerns of physical or vocal interaction with a stage space as a facet of the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility.

### Education Programs

OSF’s view of itself as an educational theater developed internally in relation to the company and externally in relation to audiences, which widens the possibilities of

what may be considered resources of the organization's education programs. Internally, OSF's educational goals used to pertain to the development of theater artists in what amounts to training on the job. William Patton has summarized this focus with regard to actors: "So, we're a sort of a step in between the university, or the drama school, and the professional stage" (Oyler 538). Similarly, when the Festival sought to enhance its actors' skills in the 1990s, attention was given to providing studio workshops in voice, movement, and Shakespeare. Internal education efforts could now be linked to current practices of voice and text in light of individual rehearsal sessions aimed at developing the actor's connection with content. Externally, OSF created its first education programs for the benefit of audiences as well as company members in the 1950s. Beginning in 1955, Patton implemented music concerts and backstage tours to complement the playgoers' experience during the days as they waited for performances to occur in the evenings (Oyler 342). Lectures offered by Dr. Margery Bailey through the Institute of Renaissance Studies in the 1950s were intended to illuminate what we would now call the dramaturgical elements of the plays in performance, including Elizabethan cultural values as well as Shakespeare's stagecraft and structural concepts of his playwriting. Current education programs at OSF include similar offerings for audience members of all ages, onsite as well as offsite. By contemporary standards, educational theater also includes college training programs. That, too, is applicable to OSF's education efforts for the acting "Trainees," who participate while completing their college training at Southern Oregon University (SOU). This legacy is also historical because Angus Bowmer led the Festival artistically for thirty-five years and was simultaneously a college instructor at SOU.<sup>17</sup> Simply because the internal and external reach of OSF's education programs

encompasses so many activities, the field of focus must be narrowed. In order to target how OSF's education programs model an indirect resource for actors, I will consider education programs the Festival offers for the benefit of its audiences.

OSF's dual focus between theatrical production and education programs is largely owing to Bowmer's influence. His early attention to how Shakespeare's plays could resonate with a contemporary audience first informed entertainment values for production. This impulse then encouraged informal education efforts to compliment an immersive theatrical experience of Shakespeare's plays on an Elizabethan style stage. Eventually, Bowmer's concerns over engagement of younger audiences led to more formal education programs at OSF. Bowmer's stewardship effectively merged the two paths of production and education in the Festival's first forty years. Though production at OSF still strives for immersive theatrical experience, and education at OSF is still directly linked to how production can resonate with audiences, the organization's current education programs are more purposefully split from production. These paths diverged following the organization's shift toward professional theater goals beginning in the 1980s, and decreased involvement of OSF's actors within its education programs reflects this split. Festival actors were profoundly involved with OSF's early education programs, but several factors have contributed to a decline of this practice (see Appendix C). As a result, OSF's education programs now represent an indirect resource. However, these education programs also reveal how actors may encounter resonance for their storytelling offstage as a dramaturgical sensibility.

A general timeline and scope of OSF's education programs provides a means to understand their decreased impact on Festival actors. OSF's standard for involving actors

directly in education programs grew increasingly difficult to sustain over time. In the 1950s, company actors took part in Institute lectures, music concerts, and helped with the backstage tours. When the School Visit Program was created in the 1970s, actors were the primary teaching artists who visited schools in conjunction with performing onstage roles. This involvement created an opportunity for direct contact between actors and audience members offstage. However, as the season schedule grew, significant participation in education programs began to compete with the actors' production responsibilities. Tracking the evolution of the Festival's educational programs into the 1990s reveals that company members in general, and actors more specifically, lacked time to participate. For instance, OSF's *Long Range Plan* for 1994-1998 reveals what appears to be a growing need to separate education *programs* from education *activities* in relation to artist participation:

Our educational programs have always been regarded as part of audience development. However, we recognize that many aspects of the educational activities do include performance elements. Performance programs, such as our school tour work, require production cooperation with the artistic office as they represent a significant interaction with a large segment of our total audience (OSF, *LRP* 1994-1998 20).

It would seem that *programs* (more formal education offerings) as well as *activities* (production-related offerings that involve Festival artists) were both essential, but *activities* require more coordination with participating artists. Such concerns are stated more overtly by 1999: "Our programs are solidly based on the work on stage and rely heavily on company involvement for experienced actors/teachers. ... Unfortunately, our programs have had to be limited because of actor time and space availability. ... There is a concern about how much load we can place on the acting company." (OSF, *LRP* 1999-2003 27). In the later excerpt, participation of artists refers more blatantly to

“actors/teachers.” Lack of “time and space” suggests the primary reasons for a gradual decrease in actor involvement.

Following the Festival’s statements about actor participation in 1999, a greater rift is evidenced by 2003. The *Long Range Plan* for 2003-2007 states: “OSF Board and staff leadership recognize that these educational programs are our second most important activity and are vital to the Festival’s mission. However, as they have grown in scope and relative importance, company member understanding and support has not grown proportionately” (OSF, *LRP* 2003-2007 27). This statement relates to one of the organization’s goals for education programs: “Goal 5: We will increase the impact of the OSF Institute, offering education programs of excellence and depth, and reaching a broader range of students and teachers” (27). Two clues are offered in these statements with regard to program development: “company member understanding” is lacking and a “broader range” of teachers is necessary. When taking the earlier *Long Range Plan* statements into account as well, it is clear that actor participation became increasingly difficult to sustain along with roles in production – first due to the burdens of time and later due to lack of understanding or support. As a result, actors in OSF productions continue to participate minimally in educational activities, most often through onsite activities like Festival Noons, Park Talks, or other panel discussions. Additional teaching artists – who may be actors but not necessarily in OSF productions – lead a majority of the education programs and make up performance teams sent to schools.

Decreased actor involvement means that education programs now function on the periphery for most actors at OSF, which is why they are considered here as an indirect resource. Decreased involvement also means that actors engage less with audience

members offstage, and exposure to that kind of dramaturgical resonance differs from the actor's exposure to audience response during performance. Direct interaction between actor and audience during performance represents immediate feedback based on what is happening onstage, such as laughter at moments of humor or audible exclamations of sympathy at moments of distress. Engaging audiences offstage is more likely to illuminate resonance of a play more specifically. In other words, actors encounter response to the story as well as the performance. David Percy Edgecombe's 1986 dissertation provides further context for this difference. It chronicles OSF's education programs at that time in comparison with other North American Shakespeare festivals.<sup>18</sup> Edgecombe's research allowed him to suggest that, "More than any other festival, Oregon encourages audience/actor interaction" (135). Edgecombe's further evaluation of a necessary interaction between theater professionals and students figures in his conclusion:

We must increase our exposure in all levels of educational institutions and realize that education and audience development often are interchangeable. While there may be a temptation to return this program to educators, I believe the students' experience will suffer if we do this. We must allow them as much contact as possible with theatre professionals. (200)

Edgecombe's mention of audience development reflects an objective OSF also recognized. The excerpt quoted from the 1994-1998 *Long Range Plan* begins with, "Our educational programs have always been regarded as part of audience development" (20). Edgecombe proposes a further benefit through the direct encounter between "professionals" and "students." He notes the benefit to students in particular because their engagement in theater increases through direct contact with artists. I suggest the reverse is also true: that artists may benefit through direct contact with students or other audience

members. The actor's dramaturgical sensibility will therefore consider the actor's awareness of resonance for an audience.

### Community Relationships

Over time, direct community participation in OSF's production processes has declined, much like direct actor involvement in education programs. I suggest that community mindedness still informs the Festival's community relationships, although this resource may reflect the least tangible transfer for the actor's dramaturgical awareness. In relation to performance structures, however, OSF's community relationships and community mindedness recognize artistic exchange, which ultimately will help to define a scope for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility.

OSF still encourages community volunteer relationships, but with a more complex reciprocity than direct community involvement in production processes. Some relationships are with individuals who volunteer time and skills to administrative or production-related functions. Individual donors are also essential to OSF's ongoing survival due to its ambitious production goals and significant budget. Individual memberships are another means to sustain the organization financially. OSF's donor relationships and memberships operate on the principal of voluntary buy-in from patrons to support the organization, and exchange ticket incentives or other perks for individual support. Other volunteer community relationships are with groups like the Tudor Guild, the Soroptimists, or OSF's Board of Directors. But the Festival no longer depends so heavily upon volunteers as a necessity to meet its production goals. OSF retains a legacy of community participation but also appears to have achieved a level of reciprocity that Bowmer predicted would be necessary for the Festival's long-term survival.

Bowmer's account of the restarting of the Festival in 1947 describes how he demanded a yearly fee of one thousand dollars when approached by the Ashland Chamber of Commerce to lead the organization. In the first five seasons prior to WWII, his producing and directing services were donated. He gave the following explanation for what could be viewed as a change of heart, but instead demands an exchange between the Festival and its community partners:

Before the war, there had been a goodly number of wonderful public-spirited people whose help had been essential to the success of the Festival. But I felt there was a limit to an artistic organization which depended upon the help of the community for its success. The reverse should be true. We theatre people should be essential to the success of the community's artistic project. I was also of the opinion that the people of Ashland must want the Festival very much indeed if it were to survive another try. The money yardstick was a measure we could all understand. If they wanted a thousand dollars' worth, I thought it was worth a second attempt. (*As I remember* 160)

Bowmer also admitted that he wanted to be considered a "professional man" just as any other businessman in Ashland might be worthy of payment for his services (161). At the same time, this admission did not belie his philosophy of service, a formative family influence he described as, "...an unself-conscious dedication to public service" (*As I remember* 19). Bowmer's philosophy of service infused his effort to restart the Festival and to ensure that OSF's activities would contribute to the "success of the community's artistic project." In exchange, reciprocal support from the community would be necessary to sustain OSF. Bowmer recognized that community relationships require a mutual benefit, and OSF's processes now reflect this complex reciprocity more fully.

The meaningful exchange idealized in Bowmer's vision for the Festival's community relationships requires a mutual benefit and a community mindedness on both sides of the exchange. Community mindedness still infuses OSF's processes, as

evidenced in the subtle shifts in its ongoing volunteer relationships, but it also impacts the actor's work at OSF. Yet Festival traditions that encourage relationships between actors and OSF's community are no longer practiced in the same ways, much like volunteer efforts are no longer required to the same degree. For example, William Oyler documents the evolution and dissolution of open rehearsal policies at OSF. Townspeople in Ashland were first actively invited to attend rehearsals in order to encourage community interest in 1935 (128).<sup>19</sup> By 1960 rehearsals were no longer open to the public in any form. Oyler's personal memory of open rehearsals suggests they definitely infused rehearsals with community mindedness, but not necessarily of a kind that benefitted the actor's process:

During the fifties, some fans never missed an afternoon rehearsal, an evening session, or both. Though the presence of public at rehearsals further upset actors groping for a characterization or for lines and caused acute embarrassment at being on public display those moments, Angus Bowmer maintained that he had always let the public come to gain goodwill, the Festival desperately needing community support. So local residents and tourists attended rehearsals. (660)

Referring to open rehearsals as upsetting and embarrassing to actors does not speak well for their mutual benefit. Nevertheless, as a gesture of "goodwill" and a draw for "community support" open rehearsals encouraged an exchange between actors and audiences. Actors were encouraged to be mindful of the audience's contribution in the process of making theater, and audience members were encouraged to be mindful of theater making as a process.<sup>20</sup>

A contemporary parallel to the open rehearsal exists in OSF's web presence, more indicative of a benefit for both sides of the exchange because OSF's community may participate in the artistic process in a less invasive way for artists. For example, the

“Connect With Us” feature promotes blogs from multiple departments, and regularly features posts related to company members, including actors. Similarly, regular communications invite members to share in the artistic experience, such as monthly “On the Bricks” emails as well as *Prologue* magazines published four times each year. In these processes, community mindedness continues to inform artistic exchange by encouraging awareness about the “artistic project” that is OSF – on both sides of its community relationships.

Through the reciprocity of its community relationships, OSF models a mutually beneficial exchange for actors. The organization’s community relationships now reflect Angus Bowmer’s philosophy of reciprocity more profoundly because they are less dependent upon community participation without sacrificing the artistic exchange. Reciprocity may already inform the actor’s relationship with the audience because the actor’s dramaturgical engagement with a play extends to the audience through performance. However, OSF’s community mindedness differs because it *advocates* for an artistic exchange through member buy-in and volunteer engagement, but also through conscious consideration of the “artistic project” as a community endeavor. This ideal will transfer indirectly to the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility in relation to performance structures.

In fact, community mindedness fuses a connection between OSF’s direct and indirect resources. I stated earlier that use of the phrase “performance structures” intentionally encompasses how a theatrical project takes shape from rehearsal into performance. Community mindedness extends the artistic exchange that occurs between actors and audiences to all levels of performance. Specifically in relation to the actor’s

dramaturgical sensibility, the actor may apply community mindedness to dramaturgical structures of a play, to collaborative interactions with other performers, and to the exchange that occurs with the audience. More profoundly, the actor may engage this dramaturgical awareness consciously through preparation in order to engage with dramaturgy in action as a collaborative exchange.

### Summary

Observing the Oregon Shakespeare Festival reveals resources that ascribe a dramaturgical responsibility to the actor especially in response to a diverse range of content and unique production processes. Each of OSF's resources merits inclusion in this chapter when considering its practical potential for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility. OSF's programming content reveals challenges of story and language as well as how an awareness of story and language structures meets those challenges through the combined impact of dramaturgy and voice and text work. OSF's performance structures also reveal potential for flexibility, environmental awareness, resonance, and exchange. The next chapter will explore these discoveries in order to outline a scope for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility and to suggest a process for dramaturgical script analysis.

### Notes

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<sup>1</sup> In *Theatre Facts 2012*, "profiled" theaters take part in the survey but may not have done so continuously over a consecutive number of years. OSF, however, is also a "trend" theater because it has participated in the survey for the past five years consecutively. In fact, OSF has participated for ten years as a "trend" theater (TCG *Theatre Facts 2012* 36).

<sup>2</sup> Here is the description of the webpage for reference: "Theatre Profiles is an online compendium of information about TCG member theatres and their productions, going back to 1995" (TCG, "Theatre Profiles").

<sup>3</sup> Oylar cites Bowmer's response to the critique in the 1949 article for *Players Magazine*, but he does not cite Neuberger's article directly or include it in his bibliography. In *Players Magazine*, Bowmer does say

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the author refers to Shakespeare “on the edge of the Western frontier,” and he refers to a reprint of the article in the Paris Edition of the *New York Times* with the headline “Shakespeare in the Woods” (*As I remember* 255). The Neuberger article remains difficult to locate based on these leads and on the assumption that it originally appeared somewhere in the *New York Times*, sometime late in 1948.

<sup>4</sup> The *Long Range Plan* for 1988-1992 states concerns related to actors more directly: “The theatre is intimidating for many of the actors. The lack of sound reflection, the increase in ambient noise, and the inconsistent training for actors to work in such a space, make this a less and less satisfactory experience for both actors and audience” (OSFA, *LRP* 1988-1992 10).

<sup>5</sup> The lineage of OSF’s institutional dramaturgs at OSF is not readily available. I have pieced it together from Cynthia White’s tenure. Douglas Langworthy served as Director of Literary Development and Dramaturgy from 1996 to 2003, appointed by Libby Appel (OSF, “Langworthy” 2). Current director under that title, Lue Morgan Douthit, worked with Langworthy as Literary Associate in 1996, was Literary Manager by 1998 (OSF “Life” 2), and is listed as Dramaturg and Literary Director by 2002 (Douthit, “All Plays” 6). Barry Kraft is also listed in two of the same sources as a production dramaturg in 1996 and as Shakespeare Dramaturg in 1998.

<sup>6</sup> The distinction of the season at Ashland is owing to the fact that, at the time, OSF Portland was also in operation. “OSF Portland productions occurred from 1988 to 1993, after which the connection with OSF dissolved and the independent organization still known as Portland Center Stage was formed” (OSF, “OSF Timeline”).

<sup>7</sup> Movement is equally important and coincides with vocal work although emphasis is given to voice and text resources in this case study. However, Kaiser’s view supports my belief that voice and movement are equally essential to text exploration and even work best when employed holistically. I later cite his collaboration with John Sipes, an Alexander Method practitioner, and he also speaks of movement work currently offered at the Festival by Darrell Bluhm, a practitioner of the Feldenkrais Method.

<sup>8</sup> Woronicz’s efforts were far reaching, as revealed in his archived correspondence files. In a letter dated January 2, 1992, Woronicz wrote to Patsy Rodenburg thanking her for a conversation in November 1991 and expressing his interest in having her visit and work with OSF’s company (Woronicz, Letter to Patsy Rodenburg).

<sup>9</sup> During the interview, Douthit elaborates as follows: “Obviously, with a new play that’s a different kind of project, including with the playwright,” but a lot of classical work has different editions, particularly Shakespeare. And *American* classics in the mid-twentieth century have different editions, and that’s been fun archaeology to do and surprises people – that there’s more than one version of *Streetcar*, and there’s more than one version of *Death of a Salesman*” (Douthit).

<sup>10</sup> An article in *Prologue* confirms the two were in residence as of 2010 (Foster, “Wizards”). The personal interview with Kaiser confirms how prior to 2010, David and Rebecca alternated years at OSF because they were still working at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) (Kaiser). The same *Prologue* article confirms they have been married since 2003 and also briefly mentions their combined history of voice and text work with the Royal Shakespeare Company, RADA, and the Central School of Speech and Drama.

<sup>11</sup> Kaiser mentions that this became a standard at OSF. He contrasts group sessions and group warm-ups to individual sessions in which he and the movement director, John Sipes, would work with one actor and combine Alexander Method with voice work. Eventually, he says they determined the one-on-one sessions were more “efficient” and that “the returns were always much greater” for actors (Kaiser).

<sup>12</sup> This occurs in the fourth act of *Troilus and Cressida*, when Menelaus says, “I’ll have my kiss, sir. – Lady, by your leave” (Shakespeare 4.6.36). In the *Norton*, “by your leave” is equivalent to “I pray you.” Both indicate that Menelaus asks Cressida’s permission for a kiss, unlike the other generals.

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<sup>13</sup> Use of the term *environmental* is influenced by environmental theory, but does not convey association with the earth's environment. At the same time, my thinking about dramaturgy for actors is influenced by Theresa May's use of the term *ecodramaturgy* in relation to reciprocity: "Ecodramaturgy is theater and performance making that puts ecological reciprocity and community at the center of its theatrical and thematic intent" (Arons and May 4).

<sup>14</sup> Bowmer's reference to a "pavilion" requires clarification. He refers to a different structure with that word: "In the late fifties, Dick Hay, our scenic designer and also our theatre designer, experimented with the use of a structure we call the pavilion. This is a platform thrust out from the inner above, two steps down from that level" (*Ashland Elizabethan Stage* 30).

<sup>15</sup> Richard L. Hay has been with the Festival for over fifty-five seasons. In addition to scenic design, he also designed the renovation of the 1959 Elizabethan Theatre and was "design consultant" for the Angus Bowmer Theatre (Leary and Richard 67). Hay was conceptual designer for the Thomas Theatre and worked in collaboration with Thomas Hacker, the architect who completed the newest theater's building design (Bardossi 8).

<sup>16</sup> A helpful sketch by Kay Atwood delineates the zones of interest visually (Bowmer, *Ashland Elizabethan Stage* 20-21).

<sup>17</sup> Bowmer first taught theater-related courses at Southern Oregon Normal School, which later reorganized as Southern Oregon State College (SOC) then as Southern Oregon University (SOU).

<sup>18</sup> Edgecombe's title names the other organizations: "Educational Programs of Four North American Shakespeare Festivals: Stratford Shakespeare Festival, The New Jersey Shakespeare Festival, The Folger Theatre and The Oregon Shakespearean Festival."

<sup>19</sup> This practice continued, but it was gradually limited to certain rehearsals. As of 1955, first dress rehearsals were still open, though second dress rehearsals were closed (Oyler 340). Technical rehearsals were eventually closed to the public in 1959, as technical demands needed more focused attention (Oyler 430).

<sup>20</sup> Similarly, as a precursor to the organized backstage tours, audiences were invited backstage after performances in 1938, but this practice was soon discontinued to avoid potential fires – due to cigarette smoking by patrons – as well as to avoid disruption of presets for the next performance (Oyler 167).

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ACTOR'S DRAMATURGICAL SENSIBILITY

“To look at dramatic structures narrowly in terms of characters risks unproblematically collapsing this strange world into our own world.” – Elinor Fuchs

Cultivating a dramaturgical sensibility may expand the actor's engagement with a play as a conscious process of preparation. The actor's dramaturgical sensibility does not replace the dramaturg's, but encourages the actor to think like a dramaturg. When asked how actors might think like a dramaturg, OSF's Director of Literary Development and Dramaturgy, Lue Morgan Douthit, offers the following advice:

I would say that actors understand that the story is larger than they are and that they are part of a collaborative effort to tell a larger story. If you're thinking dramaturgically you're thinking, “What kind of information are you setting up there for your fellow actor to take and run?” You're not thinking about what your big character arc is... (Douthit)

The actor must choose to engage in a “collaborative effort to tell a larger story.” Whereas the actor often thinks of “information” in relation to a character he or she portrays, a dramaturgical sensibility views various kinds of information within a larger framework of dramaturgical structures. When Douthit asks the actor, “What kind of information are you setting up for your fellow actor?” the question assumes reflexivity between structures – and between actors. For instance, a character's lines have dramaturgical importance. One character's lines set up another character's lines, just as one part of the play sets up another part of the play. Also in response to how the actor might think like a dramaturg, Douthit questions, “How are you contributing to how the roller coaster ride goes?” (Douthit). If the “roller coaster ride” refers to a play's dramaturgy in action, a dramaturgical sensibility concerns itself with the roller coaster ride rather than a single

rider's experience. Put another way, a dramaturgical sensibility engages with a play as well as with a character.

Considering the critical vocabulary established in Chapter II, and applying “transfer” elements from the OSF processes revealed in Chapter III, this chapter outlines a scope for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility through three broad categories of awareness: story, language, and performance structures. Contemporary dramaturgs frequently avoid use of the term *structure*, partly because of its association with traditional dramatic analysis. For instance, in *The Art of Active Dramaturgy* Lenora Inez Brown prefers the terms *form* and *pattern* (24). Similarly, in “EF's Visit to a Small Planet,” Elinor Fuchs speaks of *patterns* as well as *systems* and often refers to *figures* instead of *characters*. I choose to use *structures* for the way it acknowledges a practical effort of construction and of building connections. Through a process I will call dramaturgical script analysis, the actor must expect to engage with a plurality of interconnected dramaturgical structures. This process identifies clues for further exploration by the actor, who may apply discoveries individually and instinctively. As a framework for individual preparation that engages the actor's dramaturgical sensibility, dramaturgical script analysis intentionally mirrors the production dramaturg's process of interactive discovery with a play. Just as intentionally, it suggests a practical dramaturgy for actors.

This chapter also incorporates a secondary case study toward the effort of defining the actor's dramaturgical sensibility and demonstrating dramaturgical script analysis. Detailed investigation of Tom Stoppard's play *Arcadia* serves three purposes toward this goal. First, *Arcadia* provides practical examples that illustrate how the actor's

dramaturgical sensibility may be investigated and applied. Second, Stoppard's work serves as a point of entry for engaging with "crossover poetics" found in a second generation of language playwrights (Castagno 2nd ed. 123). This phrase refers to blended playwriting techniques within the same text, which includes polyvocal strategies that Paul C. Castagno identifies for new playwriting as well as dramaturgical elements of traditional playwriting. *Arcadia* includes "crossover" examples, like language that works as both a structure and a puzzle, even though the play's overall approach more fully represents realism. The next chapter will consider texts from a new generation of language playwrights that retain fewer traditional structures. Third, I am able to consider methods of preparation offered by the dramaturgy and voice and text professionals at OSF alongside methods of undergraduate student actors involved in a 2013 production of *Arcadia* at the University of Oregon. An overlap exists between OSF and the student production as well because Scott Kaiser, from OSF, directed the production.<sup>1</sup> Based on interviews with six student actors about their process for *Arcadia*, I survey how student actors may or may not already engage with the elements I offer for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility.

Like the professionals at OSF, I interviewed student actors from *Arcadia* about their *existing* process of preparation. In other words, these actors were not asked to prepare with the process of dramaturgical script analysis that I outline here. Seven student actors were invited to participate, and I interviewed six within a month after the production closed. Overall, the interviewees share a similar amount of experience onstage: five of the actors have participated in ten to fifteen fully staged productions as actors; one estimated involvement in at least twenty-five fully staged productions.

Because I targeted participants who gained an intensive experience with the text of *Arcadia*, I requested interviews with actors that had to contend with more of the play in preparation and performance. Bluntly, many of the actors had larger speaking roles. The characters of Septimus Hodge, Thomasina Coverly, Hannah Jarvis, Bernard Nightingale, Valentine Coverly, and Ezra Chater are represented.<sup>2</sup> Lastly, many of the student actors agreed to my use of their real names, but I maintain their anonymity by assigning the interviewees a letter, as in “Student A.” Since I value the feedback as the primary objective, this convention of naming serves my research purposes without exposing student participants to individual scrutiny.

### Dramaturgical Script Analysis

The process of dramaturgical script analysis requires additional disclaimers regarding its function as analysis. Most importantly, because the primary goal remains practical preparation with a play in order to perform within that play, outcomes are treated as individual inroads for further exploration. The same play may therefore inspire different dramaturgical script analysis depending on the actor. How this analysis applies to a collaborative process will also factor into this discussion.

Next, the process of dramaturgical script analysis should not be conflated with character analysis, although it may support character analysis. The actor is often tasked to read and analyze a play through the lens of an individual character, which constitutes character analysis. From the tradition of Stanislavski’s system, character analysis leads the actor to explore the journey a character makes through a play. The actor identifies a through-line of actions that support a superobjective for the character. In *The Actor at Work*, Robert Benedetti states the goal: “Once you have fit each moment into its place

within the structure of the whole during rehearsal, you are then free in performance to give your full attention to playing each moment, secure that it will also be serving the play as a whole” (113). In other words, connecting moments of action creates a through-line for the character so the actor may embody that character’s progression through a play. Benedetti suggests this serves the “play as a whole” without clarifying that it does so by focusing on one character. When exploring character through-line and superobjective, the actor’s focus narrows to a *character’s* story. While the effort of character analysis may indeed serve the play as a whole, it effectively bypasses the *play’s* story. Conflation of character and play occurs if the actor employs character analysis as the only approach to preparation. Stanislavski carefully connected through-line and superobjective with the play as well as with the character, which suggests a more complex process for the actor than character analysis alone can achieve.

In *An Actor’s Work*, Stanislavski discusses the term *supertask* in relation to a play as well as to a character. Benedetti chooses the term *supertask* for the translation, which equates to *superobjective* in common American acting vocabulary.<sup>3</sup> In Chapter 15 of *An Actor’s Work*, Stanislavski begins discussing this concept by first acknowledging “The Supertask of the Writer’s Work” as a section heading (307). This heading suggests a play has a supertask or superobjective much like a character. Also within this section, Stanislavski’s fictional teacher, Tortsov, asks his students about identifying a character’s supertask: “Do we need a wrong Supertask which doesn’t correspond to the ideas the author expresses in the play, even if it is interesting in itself and to the actor?” (308, author’s capitalization). Tortsov answers his rhetorical question in the negative. He goes on to instruct the students about a triangular connection between the actor, the character,

and the playwright's goal for the character: "The same Supertask, which every actor playing the role must accept, has a different resonance for each person" (308). To restate: the character's superobjective may be found within a play, and the actor must identify it as well as forge a personal connection to it. Stanislavski then associates the superobjective of a character with the superobjective of a play: "That is why the actor's first concern is not to lose sight of the Supertask. To forget it means disrupting the lifeline of the play" (311). Dual use of *supertask* in relation to both a play and a character confuses the term somewhat, and yet it also encourages a complex connection between actor and play as well as between actor and character.

Dramaturgical script analysis does not equate to literary or dramatic analysis either. The work of the production dramaturg may include literary analysis because theoretical and thematic concerns situate a particular work within cultural or critical thought. As a way of demonstrating, John Fleming offers a detailed thematic interpretation of *Arcadia* that concludes:

By the end of the play all the major distinctions – classical-romantic, Newtonian-chaotic, order-disorder, intuition-logic, heart-mind – have interpenetrated each other, showing that the co-existence and interdependency of these seeming opposites is fundamental to the way the world, life and humans operate. (*Tom Stoppard's Arcadia* 71)

The actor's exploration of Fleming's thematic opposites may lead to practical applications *if* those thematic opposites are not treated as end points. Dramaturgical script analysis would identify these discoveries as clues for further exploration by the actor rather than consider them as conclusive or definitive meaning about a play. Similar to literary analysis, traditional dramatic analysis organizes outcomes by criteria for playwriting as well as by categories of classification like genre or style. For instance,

Gustav Freytag's five-part pyramidal structure determines whether certain components of a play fit or do not fit within criteria for action: introduction, rise, climax, fall, catastrophe (Freytag 114-115). This analysis may lead to practical applications as well, but also if the actor continues to explore initial discoveries. This process parallels the director's use of dramatic analysis as a tool that may inform practical exploration when building a production and putting a play's dramaturgy into action. In advance of rehearsal, dramaturgical script analysis would encourage the actor's practical exploration as individual preparation.

As analysis, then, dramaturgical script analysis engages the actor in collaborative reading and exploration of text. This effort for the actor also mirrors the production dramaturg's phenomenological process of interactive discovery with a play. Collaborative reading includes the act of reading – either silently or aloud – but also encompasses the effort of responding to a play. Perhaps response takes the form of recording written notes in a script, keeping a journal, or creating other methods of tracking the actor's interaction with the play. The distinction of “collaborative” reading suggests the actor's individual process of preparation may intentionally deepen collective work if the actor comes into the rehearsal process having engaged more fully with a play. Like reading aloud or silently, practical exploration occurs whether the actor sits still or moves in space. “Practical” exploration implies that exploration must be of use to the actor, although the actor cannot predetermine which discoveries will become useful. Reading counts as practical exploration, but so do other activities. For instance, making a diagram of a play's structures, paraphrasing a story or scene, or finding a full-bodied physical gesture for a verbal image might represent practical exploration. These efforts of

collaborative reading and practical exploration intentionally investigate discoveries that may be applied or used in unknown ways. Thus, the actor's dramaturgical script analysis functions as a phenomenological process.

### Story Structures

An awareness of story structures relates most directly to methods of production dramaturgy that the actor may effectively incorporate as dramaturgical script analysis. Douthit refers to the production dramaturg's work as understanding the story but also, "how the structure of the play works" (Douthit). The structure of the play is literal. How is the play put together? Do acts and scenes organize the play? Are these sections given names or numbers? The structure of the play also interacts with the play's story. Story reveals content in a particular way. Does the story follow a linear progression? Is the story clear or purposefully veiled? Do multiple stories connect to a larger story within the play? Structure and story also encourage an awareness of resonance. I previously suggest that exposure to OSF's education programs may offer actors a connection between the dramaturgical elements of story and specific resonance for audience members. Blurring the boundary between performance and education thereby reveals how actors may encounter resonance for their storytelling offstage. This concept includes individual resonance for the actor as an initial audience member of a play, but also encourages the actor's conscious consideration of resonance with and for an audience. Using Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*, the analysis of story structures that follows suggests variations on how the actor may investigate structure, story, and resonance through dramaturgical script analysis.

## Structure

*Arcadia*'s structure navigates between scenes from the present day and scenes set in the early 1800s. Scene One of *Arcadia* is set in 1809, followed by Scene Two set in the present day, which establishes the play's pattern of alternating time periods. Location for all scenes remains the same physical structure: "A room on the garden front of a very large country house in Derbyshire" (Stoppard 1). The large English country home belongs to the Earl of Croom, though the family name is Coverly. The house's grounds remain largely unseen, as indicated by the playwright's additional stage direction, "Nothing much need be said or seen of the exterior beyond" (1). However, the "garden front" indicates the larger grounds of Sidley Park, which do remain unseen but factor into the play's story and resonance significantly – more on that construct will follow. In the stage directions for Scene Two, Stoppard indicates how the setting of the same room functions as a link between time periods as the play "shuttles" forward and backward in time:

The action of the play shuttles back and forth between the early nineteenth century and the present day, always in this same room. Both periods must share the state of the room, without additions and subtractions which would normally be expected. The general appearance of the room should offend neither period. ... During the course of the play the table collects this and that, and where an object from one scene would be an anachronism in another (say a coffee mug) it is simply deemed to have become invisible. By the end of the play the table has collected an inventory of objects. (15)

The location of this stage direction in the written text provides a significant clue for the actor's exploration of structure. It occurs at the moment the audience will experience the phenomenon of the room in performance for the first time: the start of Scene Two. In other words, Stoppard's note for the actor mirrors how a new audience will experience

the play's structure viscerally through the transition between the play's first and second scenes. Intended use of the room and the table therein reveal how *Arcadia*'s structure frames a collision between location and time.<sup>4</sup>

Beyond Scene Two, *Arcadia* continues to deliver such a collision. Scene Three returns to 1809. Scenes Four and Five revisit the present day. Scene Six goes back again to 1809. Scene Seven then merges the time periods and creates a literal collision between location and time for the actor and for the audience. This scene also shifts slightly because the action of the past jumps ahead three years, from 1809 to 1812. As Scene Seven progresses, the action of both periods gradually intermingles onstage until the final image of the play includes two pairs of characters dancing together simultaneously – one couple from the past and one from the present. At its end, *Arcadia* structurally “shuttles” to a single point of convergence.

If the actor distinguishes a collision between location and time in *Arcadia*'s overall structure, further investigation into structural collisions within the play may follow. I will offer two examples. The first demonstrates a structural collision of location and time through action. Sometimes the action in *Arcadia* begins in one time period but resolves in the other. The actor cannot expect the action to progress only through one time period, but must track parallel actions between scenes and between different characters. For instance, the character of Thomasina Coverly proposes scientific theories in the past that resolve through action that occurs in the present. A specific thread of action begins in the past during Scene One when Thomasina and Septimus Hodge discuss Fermat's last theorem. Septimus initially reveals how Fermat left a margin note about a proof for his theorem but claimed the margin was “too narrow” to write the proof itself;

Thomasina asserts the proof did not exist because the margin note was, "...a joke to make you all mad" (Stoppard 6). In Scene Four, present day researcher Hannah Jarvis discovers a similar margin note made by Thomasina in a notebook. Thomasina jokingly wrote: "This margin being too mean for my purpose, the reader must look elsewhere for the New Geometry of Irregular Forms discovered by Thomasina Coverly" (43). The scenes from the past do not depict Thomasina writing her margin note, but the implied action collides with the present when Hannah reveals the note. Unlike Fermat's missing proof, one of Thomasina's "iterated algorithm" equations survives within other documents, "proof" of her "New Geometry of Irregular Forms" (43). The discovery of the notebook and documents by Hannah allows Valentine Coverly – Thomasina's descendent – to complete one of her algorithms. He creates the "Coverly Set" with the help of a computer program (76).<sup>5</sup> This thread of action begins with a layered "joke" in the past but resolves in the present with the explanation and fulfillment of Thomasina's equations by Valentine.

The second example illustrates a structural collision of location and time through content. Sometimes the content from one time period in *Arcadia* confuses the content of the other. The actor must therefore track content structured as hypothesis or fact between the time periods. The present-day character of Bernard Nightingale illustrates this collision. Bernard is an English professor with a specialty in Byron who comes to the Coverly estate in search of information on a poet, Ezra Chater. He consults with Hannah about an inscription written to Septimus Hodge in a copy of Chater's published poem, "The Couch of Eros." Bernard says he seeks a connection between Septimus and Chater, then later reveals his suspicion of Lord Byron's involvement. He believes Byron wrote a

review of Chater's poem because the poem copy with inscription came from Byron's library and includes hand written margin notes.<sup>6</sup> As it turns out, Bernard wrongly hypothesizes two theories: (1) that Chater challenged Byron to a duel because of the review, and (2) that Byron killed Chater in the fight. Eventually, Bernard and Hannah's combined research unravels *some* of the facts about Septimus, Chater, and Byron. They find out that Septimus and Byron attended Trinity college together, and because Byron's name appears in the game books they discover he did indeed visit Sidley Park (Stoppard 32, 50). They also discover that Ezra Chater died in Martinique because of a "monkey bite," not at Sidley Park because of a duel (89). The remaining facts only gain clarity due to the scenes set in the 1800s: Scene Three reveals that Septimus – not Byron – wrote the review that provoked Chater's challenge (36); and Scene Six divulges how nobody died in the duel because the duel never happened (67). Not surprisingly, collisions of content not only confuse hypothesis and fact between time periods, but content also contains collisions of action. In the case of the duel, for example, the action unravels backward in time unlike the forward completion of Thomasina's equations.

## Story

Despite how the play's structures interweave two different time periods, the story of *Arcadia* is relatively simple in its construct. In fact, the opening scene answers the principal question of the play: who was the Sidley hermit? Yet the first scene does not let on that it asks or answers any such question. Rather, the characters of Septimus and Thomasina open the play engaged in a tutoring session, although distracted from study by an impromptu discussion of "carnal embrace" (Stoppard 1). As the play's scenes move back and forth between time periods, a shifting relationship unfolds between Septimus

and Thomasina, from tutor and student at the beginning of the play to romantic attraction at the end. They eventually kiss in Scene Seven and share a kind of “carnal embrace” by dancing together. Though Septimus does not agree to meet Thomasina in her room, presumably to engage in further embrace, he teaches her how to waltz (96). They become one of the dancing couples onstage as the play ends. Earlier in Scene Seven, however, *Arcadia*’s contemporary characters reveal that a fire killed Thomasina on the eve of her seventeenth birthday, which is the same night she learns to waltz. Following her tragic death, Septimus becomes the hermit of Sidley Park.<sup>7</sup> By answering the question of the Sidley hermit’s identity surreptitiously, Scene One effectively establishes how the story will unfold structurally. In connection with the broader structure of *Arcadia*, clues to the Sidley hermit’s identity “shuttle” between time periods and unravel amidst hypotheses and facts.

During Scene Two, *Arcadia* poses the question of the hermit’s identity outright through the contemporary character of Hannah. She comes to the Croom estate because she is writing a book that includes the Sidley hermit. She does not know who the hermit was, but she knows something of his reputation. From her early research, Hannah quotes an essay by Thomas Love Peacock that appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine*: “Not one of your village simpletons to frighten the ladies, but a savant among idiots, a sage of lunacy” (Stoppard 26).<sup>8</sup> Peacock’s statement about the “sage lunatic” reflects a Romantic ideal of the mad artistic genius. Yet through reports of abundant papers covered in “cabalistic proofs” and stacked in the hermitage at the time of the hermit’s death, Hannah concludes simply that he suffered from insanity, not from genius: “It turned out, of course, he was off his head” (27). Hannah later uncovers a letter written by Peacock that

interprets the hermit's motives for withdrawing from society more explicitly: "...for it was Frenchified mathematick that brought him to the melancholy certitude of a world without light or life ... the proof of his prediction even yet unyielding to his labours for the restitution of hope through good English algebra" (65). Peacock therein describes the hermit's efforts to regain "hope" with algebra, which presumably accounts for the "cabalistic proofs." He also attributes the hermit's melancholy to an awareness of French mathematical theories, which obtusely refers to early theories of thermodynamics developed by French scientists. Such scientists eventually contradicted Newton's determinism by introducing theories of chaos into scientific research about organic systems. Such theories also complemented Newton's by acknowledging *deterministic* chaos.<sup>9</sup> While the scientific elements reflect conflicting themes in *Arcadia*, perhaps the dichotomies identified by Fleming as "Newtonian-chaotic, order-disorder," these elements also pertain directly to the story of the hermit.

Before they begin to waltz in Scene Seven, Septimus reviews an essay written by Thomasina. This essay explains Thomasina's "diagram of heat exchange," which becomes one of the extant documents reviewed by Hannah and Valentine (Stoppard 93). This drawing suggests Thomasina had an early understanding of the Second Law of Thermodynamics before it gained notoriety through "Frenchified mathematick." In his analysis of *Arcadia*, Fleming helpfully summarizes this law as the flow of heat in only one direction, from hot to cold. He also applies consequences: "Since these equations, unlike Newton's laws of motion, do not go backward and forward, there is an 'arrow of time' that points toward the eventual 'heat death' of the universe" (Fleming, *Stoppard's Theatre* 194). Fleming's description echoes Septimus's comment after he reviews

Thomasina's essay: "So the Improved Newtonian Universe must cease and grow cold. Dear me." (Stoppard 93). At this junction in *Arcadia*, Peacock's comments about algebra and melancholy merge most profoundly with the story of the hermit's identity. Hannah's evidence leads to her conclude that the hermit was insane, but the final scene between Septimus and Thomasina hints at other potential circumstances. Perhaps the unresolved relationship between the two characters and the unresolved theories of eventual doom provide motivation for the withdrawal of Septimus into a hermit's life. This line of thought represents character analysis. Dramaturgical script analysis reveals that Scene One effectively answers the question that drives *Arcadia*'s story: Septimus Hodge becomes the Sidley hermit. In addition, awareness that *Arcadia*'s story unfolds in a purposefully mysterious manner serves as a dramaturgical framework for the actor's further exploration.

Engaging with the question of the hermit's identity in *Arcadia* immerses the actor more fully in the play's story. Rather than focus on a single character, any actor may consider how various moments within the play contribute to the larger effort of revealing how Septimus Hodge becomes the Sidley hermit. The character of Hannah provides a constructive example of what this difference means, especially because of the profound intersection between the play's story and Hannah's story. If the actor playing Hannah prepares from the perspective of character analysis, she might track Hannah's through-line of actions in relation to a superobjective. One version of the character's superobjective supported by the play's content could be stated as: gain critical approval by publishing a book that refutes Romantic idealism. Hannah's effort to name the Sidley hermit operates as one objective within that superobjective because she is writing a book

that includes the Sidley hermit. Hannah's action throughout the play focuses mainly on the Sidley hermit because that constitutes her current research focus within the play's contemporary scenes. Thus, the character's superobjective aligns with the play's superobjective to reveal the hermit's identity. Exploring Hannah's through-line of actions in *Arcadia* based on that superobjective will likely reveal specific details about the character's progression through the play. If the same actor prepares from the perspective of dramaturgical script analysis, she tracks how the play reveals the Sidley hermit's identity, rather than how Hannah pursues the hermit's identity.

The character of Hannah first engages in research that reveals Peacock's references about the Sidley hermit and the hermit's pursuit of "hope" through algebra. Hannah's further sleuthing with the help of Valentine reveals how the hermit's hope may not have rested in algebra but in regeneration of the world from its eventual "heat death" and cold doom:

HANNAH: Do you mean the world is saved after all?

VALENTINE: No, it's still doomed. But if this is how it started, perhaps it's how the next one will come.

HANNAH: From good English algebra? (Stoppard 78)

This exchange occurs early in Scene Seven. The actor playing Hannah would miss the relevance of hope and regeneration with regard to Septimus if she fails to explore the play's story. More specifically, a revealing moment occurs for the character of Septimus in Scene Three. When Thomasina bemoans the loss of cultural information after the libraries of Alexandria burned, Septimus counters:

We shed as we pick up, like travellers who must carry everything in their arms, and what we let fall will be picked up by those behind. The procession is very long and life is very short. We die on the march. But there is nothing outside the march so nothing can be lost to it. The missing

plays of Sophocles will turn up piece by piece, or be written again in another language. (38)

Septimus suggests that knowledge cannot be destroyed or created, but it may be changed. His thought echoes the Law of Conservation of Energy in physics, and suggests his hope for the regeneration of knowledge.

Even though the character of Hannah does not participate in the action of Scene Three, the actor's understanding of this connection may consciously inform the exchange between Hannah and Valentine in Scene Seven. What Septimus reveals in Scene Three builds one chord of the hermit's story, which then reverberates when Hannah recognizes the hermit's hope for the regeneration of the world through "good English algebra." The character of Hannah unwittingly bridges a gap in the hermit's story by connecting the hermit's identity to Septimus. Her discoveries then link to another momentary reveal by Septimus near the end of Scene Seven. After reviewing Thomasina's essay, and just before he teaches her to waltz, Septimus says: "When we have found all the mysteries and lost all the meaning, we will be alone, on an empty shore" (Stoppard 94). Just as unwittingly, Septimus predicts his years spent in solitude as the Sidley hermit. Dramaturgical script analysis supports the actor's effort to recognize such momentary reveals within the story of *Arcadia*. While the characters may *unwittingly* contribute to the reveal of the Sidley hermit, the actor may intentionally identify connections within the story and wittingly apply them through further exploration.

## Resonance

As a component of dramaturgical script analysis, resonance forges an individual connection between the actor and the play. Through their philosophical consideration of

“rhizomes versus trees” in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari offer a way of understanding resonance in this context. Deleuze and Guattari introduce the rhizome in order to engage multiplicity. They define a rhizome as a “subterranean stem,” but also factually and directly: “Bulbs and tubers are rhizomes” (Deleuze and Guattari 6). A ginger root, with its bumpy nodes, hairy extensions, and unpredictable shapes is a rhizome. A tree, by comparison, includes a root system that grows upward to trunk, then to leaves, and sometimes to fruit. A linear order characterizes a tree’s system, even a figurative “family tree,” which tracks the descendent line forward and traces the ancestral line backward. The action of “tracing” leads to “points or positions” that connect to each other along a genealogy (12, 8). Deleuze and Guattari suggest that a rhizomatic system functions as an “antigenealogy” or “a map and not a tracing” (11, 12). Through disconnected lines and “multiple entryways,” the rhizomatic map also reveals how resonance functions: “The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation” (12). Within dramaturgical script analysis, resonance maps the actor’s multiple connections to a play. Also like a ginger root, resonance may be bumpy or unpredictable. And like Deleuze and Guattari’s map, resonance is open to modification within the actor’s process.

In part, resonance attempts to answer why a particular play matters to the actor, but it should not be mistaken for theme. Theme serves more readily as a means of “tracing” a particular connection through a play. Themes also thrive on binaries. For example, as noted earlier, Fleming suggests *Arcadia* breaks down into thematic

opposites: “classical-romantic, Newtonian-chaotic, order-disorder, intuition-logic, heart-mind” (*Tom Stoppard’s Arcadia* 71). Deleuze and Guattari profoundly question “binary logic” as philosophical thought: “...what we have before us is the most classical and well reflected, oldest, and weariest kind of thought. Nature doesn’t work that way: in nature, roots are taproots with a more multiple, lateral, and circular system of ramification, rather than a dichotomous one. Thought lags behind nature” (Deleuze and Guattari 5). Unlike theme, resonance does not attempt to order and control information through comparisons. Rather, it offers “multiple entryways” through which the actor may return for exploration.

As a practical example, Fleming’s analysis of the classical-romantic theme in *Arcadia* demonstrates an essential difference between resonance and theme. Fleming claims that Stoppard’s audience may recognize the “classical-romantic” theme more easily than the “Newtonian-chaotic” theme through action that revolves around the changing garden landscape of Sidley Park:

Since comprehending scientific concepts can sometimes be difficult, Stoppard aids his audience’s understanding by paralleling the shift in the scientific paradigm to the analogous transition from classicism to romanticism – that is, classicism metaphorically corresponds to Newtonian science and Romanticism to deterministic chaos. (*Stoppard’s Theatre* 197)

Apart from the patronizing suggestion that comprehending scientific concepts is too difficult, these thematic binaries cannot sustain multiplicity. The “classical-romantic” comparison suggests an either/or structure through its criteria, meaning *either* classicism *or* Romanticism. In relation to the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility, resonance pursues the rhizomatic map as well as what Geoffrey Proehl has called a “slow, ambiguous emergence of meaning” in relation to a dramaturgical sensibility (28). For the actor’s dramaturgical script analysis, the changing garden landscapes of *Arcadia* frame more

than just a thematic duel between classical versus Romantic thought, or Newtonian order versus deterministic chaos. The gardens function as an entryway through which the actor may explore a map of resonance for the play.

An undercurrent of “change” resonates through the structure and story of *Arcadia*, and it stems from the dramaturgical script analysis already offered as well as from the unseen gardens of Sidley Park. The internal, one-room setting for *Arcadia* implies the external gardens, which creates a parallel space for the structural collisions of the play. Within this unseen vista, a hermitage eventually exists, which also factors into how the play’s story reveals the hermit’s identity. A purposeful overlap begins to appear between structure, story, and the changing garden landscape in *Arcadia*, which suggests “change” as an entryway. Through the scenes that range from 1809 to 1812, a landscape architect, Richard Noakes, redevelops the geometrical symmetry of Sidley Park’s classical garden to reflect the wilderness of a Romantic garden in the “modern” style (Stoppard 10). Lady Croom’s description of the prospective design compares the two styles: “Where there is the familiar pastoral refinement of an Englishman’s garden, here is the eruption of gloomy forest and towering crag, of ruins where there was never a house...” (12). The antithesis of *there* and *here* refers to the current and future garden designs respectively, and Lady Croom’s word choice privileges “refinement” over the imposition of gloom, crags, and false ruins. The fact that Lady Croom also refers to the hermitage design as a, “...rustic hovel that presumes to superpose itself on my gazebo,” further implies the new design’s imposition on the existing landscape (12). Such comparisons certainly support Fleming’s thematic argument. With regard to resonance, however, Lady Croom purposefully repels change just as Noakes provokes it.

Once the hermitage actually exists within the gardens of Sidley Park in Scene Seven, change continues to resonate. Lady Croom purposefully calls it a “cowshed,” although Noakes describes it otherwise: “...a very habitable cottage, properly founded and drained, two rooms and a closet under a slate roof and a stone chimney” (Stoppard 85-86). His defense of the well-equipped and fully habitable hermitage provokes the following exchange:

LADY CROOM: And who is to live in it?  
NOAKES: Why, the hermit.  
LADY CROOM: Where is he?  
NOAKES: Madam?  
LADY CROOM: You surely do not supply a hermitage without a hermit?  
NOAKES: Indeed, madam –  
LADY CROOM: Come, come, Mr. Noakes. If I am promised a fountain I expect it to come with water. What hermits do you have?  
NOAKES: I have no hermits, my lady.  
LADY CROOM: Not one? I am speechless.  
NOAKES: I am sure a hermit can be found. One could advertise.  
LADY CROOM: Advertise?  
NOAKES: In the newspapers.  
LADY CROOM: But surely a hermit who takes a newspaper is not a hermit in whom one can have complete confidence? (86)

The contradiction of a state-of-the-art hermitage and advertisement for a hermit exposes irony in the architect’s intentional change to suit the modern times. Similarly, a manufactured wilderness may change the landscape, but it ironically orders the natural world in its own way.

The resonance of change could begin through exploration of the gardens in *Arcadia*, but that investigation may reveal other points of entry as well. Paralleling Lady’s Croom’s effort to resist the change to her gardens, Hannah also seeks to expose Romanticism to critique. Her attempt to classify Romantic ideals as a “sham” involves

the Sidley hermit: “He’s my peg for the nervous breakdown of the Romantic Imagination” (Stoppard 25). Just as Hannah interprets the hermit’s genius as insanity, she views the garden’s wilderness as artifice: “A mind in chaos suspected of genius. In a setting of cheap thrills and false emotion” (27). The connected – but disconnected – resonance of change between Lady Croom and Hannah offers the actors who play those characters opportunities for further exploration, but so do the multiple entryways into change that resonate less directly with the gardens of Sidley Park. As a sampling, further exploration might consider how change influences other aspects of the play: it underscores the evolving relationship between Septimus and Thomasina; it impacts Bernard’s research with regard to hypotheses and facts; it contributes to Valentine’s willingness to complete Thomasina’s work; it generates the flip-flopping camaraderie between Chater and Septimus. Furthermore, a myriad of opportunities for resonance could exist beyond the exploration of change.

While the actor’s exploration of resonance forges individual connections with the play’s dramaturgical structures through various entryways, it also allows the actor to recognize whether the play offers the audience a similar or different experience. In relation to Hannah’s research about the Sidley hermit, for example, an audience knows that Thomasina drew the hermit into Noakes’s sketchbook as a joke in Scene One. An audience experience of change may therefore resonate differently. Whereas the actor may know that Hannah’s contemporary interpretation of the drawing is partly correct, the audience does not yet have that point of entry or knowledge into the play’s story of the hermit. In this case, an audience might experience the resonance of change as an error on the part of contemporary researchers to interpret the past. The audience may have

different information than the actor or the character, but the actor's exploration of resonance may identify both.

As noted earlier, the actor should expect overlap between story structures. For instance, my exploration into the resonance of change exposed how the audience experiences *Arcadia*'s structural collisions between Scene One and Scene Two. Similar exploration also suggested how the reveal of Septimus Hodge as the Sidley hermit brings closure to *Arcadia*'s story for an audience even though the play effectively reveals that information in Scene One. Remembering that resonance does not equate to a root structure of knowledge, further exploration benefits from use of questions as a practical tool. Questions might be very open-ended, as in "At which points of entry could an audience experience 'change' with this play?" Questions might also be more specific, "When does the audience know the hermit of Sidley Park actually existed?" Dramaturgical script analysis reveals a multiplicity of questions in order to begin mapping resonance. Further exploration leads to a multiplicity of answers, but probably also leads to more questions. Each entryway allows the actor to map and to continue mapping resonance. If the actor willingly engages in the process of creating a rhizomatic map, it will reveal opportunities for resonance with a play.

To return to Douthit's advice about the "rollercoaster ride" of the play, and actors who think like dramaturgs, story structures lead the actor to consider what kind of information they are setting up for their fellow actors. Generally, dramaturgical script analysis reveals how a play's story structures work concordantly or discordantly, which story or stories unfold, and when resonance arises for the actor or could potentially arise for the audience. More specifically, dramaturgical script analysis empowers the actor to

begin to “punctuate” story structures through what OSF dramaturg Lue Morgan Douthit has called the “potent” information, “...be it emotional, thematic, character, or action driven...” (Douthit). The actor’s ability to identify such moments – and eventually to contribute more productively in rehearsal – may occur through dramaturgical script analysis. This will then require collaborative agreement with a director in rehearsal to ensure that the actor’s discoveries support the play’s overall structures in action. Several of the *Arcadia* examples offer insight into how the actor might “punctuate” character as well, but through exploration of story structures as the primary dramaturgical analysis. The actor might miss pertinent information by jumping ahead to character analysis without an effort of collaborative reading and practical exploration with story structures.

It may already be apparent, but in order to engage in dramaturgical script analysis with story structures, the actor must come to terms with a fundamental ambiguity: “useful” may not always mean “actable.” One of the actors interviewed for the *Arcadia* case study distinguishes “actable dramaturgical information” as knowledge that informs the actor’s choices when playing a character (Student A). This actor speaks especially about reckoning with historical content in *Arcadia* when he asks, “What does my character know? ... Information – historical or intellectual or scientific or literary – whatever the information is that he would know that would inform acting choices” (Student A). In a realistic play, the actor always knows more than the character because the character’s consciousness exists within the play and does not extend to dramaturgical concerns. Like the actor in *Arcadia*, OSF dramaturg Lue Morgan Douthit references how the actor might “know too much of context” that does not translate to playable action onstage: “You know what? Your character knows nothing about 1812. Your character is

just trying to get up and put on a pair of pants today” (Douthit).<sup>10</sup> I agree with both views. The actor needs to distinguish what the character knows, which is why dramaturgical script analysis with story structures gives the actor tools to become more discerning. In that regard, useful discoveries are not alwaysactable discoveries – but sometimes they are. For instance, *Arcadia*’s story structures reveal what certain characters do *not* know through confused content between time periods. Thomasina does *not* know she experiments with concepts that eventually become the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Bernard does *not* know with any certainty that Byron fought a duel with Chater. Story structures translate into what the actor can “use,” but they also help the actor discern what may or may not be “actable.”

#### Story Structures – *Arcadia* Case Study Outcomes

For the actors interviewed as part of the *Arcadia* case study, individual preparation did not engage with story structures as a primary concern prior to the start of rehearsal. Casting for the play occurred on June 8 and 9 of 2013, and rehearsals began October 1, 2013. Most of the actors read the play at least two times before rehearsals began in October. One actor describes the first reading as a means to, “let it wash over me,” and the second reading as, “looking in a little more detail at my character and my character’s journey” (Student C). Another actor deviated from prior practice by reading the play more than once before the start of rehearsals: “I read the script more. Usually when I get cast I’ll only read a script maybe one time before we go into rehearsal. But I read it, I think, twice. ... And even in those two readings I obviously didn’t get everything that it has to offer because there’s just so much” (Student B). One actor even admitted, “But I had read the play a couple times over the summer. It made no sense to

me” (Student F). Independently, two of the actors also began to work with the text through a method of writing out their characters’ lines. One of these actors noted, “So I was almost off book with the first scene before we came into rehearsals...” (Student A). Many also mentioned they began work on a Standard British dialect using the packet of materials they received upon being cast.<sup>11</sup> Though each actor found different approaches to preparation prior to the start of rehearsals, the primary effort extended to reading the play for a basic understanding of its story structures. The average effort of reading *Arcadia* two times in advance of formal rehearsal suggests the actors engaged in minimal analysis of any kind with the play. However, several of the actors registered a dramaturgical complexity in the play’s story structures, as the comments above suggest.

The rehearsal process for *Arcadia* began with table work prior to blocking rehearsals, which functioned as dramaturgical script analysis related to story structures for many of the actors in the case study. After an initial read-through on the first day of rehearsal, director Scott Kaiser designated four days for table work with the *Arcadia* cast. This table work consisted of: reading through the play slowly scene by scene; stopping and starting in order to discuss specific moments; connecting action, content, and language between scenes; asking questions of the play or the cast; answering questions or suggesting further research by the actor or the production dramaturgs; and offering dialect coaching notes for the actors on individual or shared pronunciations. For the actors interviewed, table work marks the point at which they began to engage with the play’s structural collisions, opaque story, and layered opportunities for resonance – though not necessarily in those terms or with the same insights I have offered.

Most notably, table work called attention to interconnectivity within *Arcadia*'s story structures. For instance, the way that action begins in one time period and completes in another was discussed, but in relation to dialogue rather than structural collisions. Scene One offers an example of this kind of discussion through Thomasina's scientific theories:

THOMASINA: When you stir your rice pudding, Septimus, the spoonful of jam spreads itself round making red trails like the picture of a meteor in my astronomical atlas. But if you stir backward, the jam will not come together again. Indeed, the pudding does not notice and continues to turn pink just as before. Do you think this is odd?

SEPTIMUS: No.

THOMASINA: Well, I do. You cannot stir things apart. (Stoppard 4-5)

The scene above was compared to an exchange that occurs in Scene Seven, between Valentine and Hannah:

VALENTINE: Your tea gets cold by itself, it doesn't get hot by itself. Do you think that's odd?

HANNAH: No.

VALENTINE: Well, it is odd. Heat goes to cold. It's a one-way street. Your tea will end up at room temperature. What's happening to your tea is happening to everything everywhere. The sun and the stars. It'll take a while but we're all going to end up at room temperature. (78)

In the later scene, Valentine begins to differentiate for Hannah between Thomasina's equations and the Second Law of Thermodynamics – flow of heat from hot to cold. He tries to prove that neither Thomasina nor Septimus were prematurely aware of this concept. Yet the earlier scene proves Thomasina grasped something like that concept by observing the “flow” of jam into her pudding and the inability to stir it apart. Valentine eventually realizes that Thomasina's other drawing reflects the theory of heat exchange. Thus, the dialogue reveals structural collisions that equates to my discovery about how a character in the present day completes the action of a character that begins in 1809.

Table work continued to reveal structure and story in *Arcadia* without referring to the activity as “dramaturgical script analysis.” Kaiser encouraged an awareness of *Arcadia*’s story structures among the actors, especially through dialogue or other language structures. For example, the same conversations excerpted above illustrate how Stoppard creates parallel moments for Thomasina and Valentine through intricate use of language – language used as both a structure and a puzzle. Each exchange begins with a question that employs the word *odd*, includes an answer that uses a short negative, and ends with a rebuttal that reaffirms the original question. Use of bold highlighting reveals the significant, but minor differences in these exchanges:

Do you think <b>this is</b> odd?	Do you think <b>that’s</b> odd?
No.	No.
Well, <b>I do</b> . (Thomasina, Scene 4)	Well, <b>it is odd</b> . (Valentine, Scene 7)

The conversations are structured similarly, but each uses different words to convey similar meaning. As a result, parallel content – but also rhythm – resounds, especially when speaking the excerpts one after another. The structural collision of language between these scenes creates a complex connection between Thomasina and Valentine. Like my examples of dramaturgical script analysis with structure, story, and resonance, the table work for *Arcadia* encouraged a similar awareness. Though different in focus, table work ultimately revealed how story structures might be “used” by the actor.

The *Arcadia* case study also revealed a shared expectation among the actors that the work of exploring the play’s story structures would begin with formal rehearsals. In other words, the actors did not assume a dramaturgical responsibility in relation to their individual preparation. Table work met the actors’ expectation because it essentially took the place of dramaturgical script analysis, and it clarified questions about the play’s story

structures. One of the actors offers the following summary of *Arcadia*'s structural complexities:

So the complexity of Tom Stoppard's writing was a really difficult thing to balance as well because it was complex anyway, *and* he was purposefully doing weird parallels and callbacks because it's present and future – I mean present and past. And the present and past had connections to each other down to a word that's used in both, and it's actually meant to connect the two in talk. And it's like, "Ahhh." So after table work, which got a whole bunch of it, still figuring out what exactly was being said was difficult. (Student F)

This actor recognizes "parallels and callbacks" between present and past, which registers an awareness of what I have called the play's structural collisions. Another actor implicitly recognizes a dramaturgical benefit from table work, but more intentionally applies it to exploration of character:

Rehearsal-wise, we had the week of table work, which I think was helpful for *this* play. I think that some plays I would have not preferred that. I would have preferred to kind of have more exploration to find that kind of stuff, but with this one there are so many references and so many – especially like a lot of the things I was saying, my character was saying, were quotes or allusions to things. Some of them I got. Some of them I didn't. (Student A)

This actor suggests *Arcadia* required table work because of its complex story structures, some of which were hard to identify. By distinguishing "this" play, the actor also exhibits a reluctance to apply dramaturgical analysis as a regular practice. A belief that some plays need dramaturgical investigation and some don't may explain why most of the case study actors registered the play's complexities, but did not discern a need for individual preparation prior to rehearsals. Previous production experiences or training might also factor into that result. Without speculation, the case study interviews did reveal that most of the actors assumed rehearsals would resolve confusion about the play, and that they valued table work for meeting that assumption.

Two of the *Arcadia* actors raise compelling points about the collaborative experience of table work as well. A standard question for the case study interviews relates to the actors' hindsight: "Looking back on your process, would you make any changes if you could begin again?" One of the actors responded with a comparison between individual preparation and group exploration:

Well, knowing what I know now is so much more about the script, you know. I'm tempted to say to have done more work with the script on my own in preparation. By the end of the rehearsal process I was getting so much from the script. It was so rich. It would have been interesting to know what it would have been like to do that at the beginning. To have that, I don't know, just sort of knowledge of the script. But, I think there was something really valuable in doing it with the cast, that gave us a group understanding, that we were all sort of on the same page about things with less room to misinterpret things. (Student C)

On one hand, the actor recognizes how working more with the play "on my own in preparation" could have deepened an individual connection with the play. On the other hand, the actor values a "group understanding." In essence, the actor questions whether more individual preparation could replace the shared experience of table work. In a follow up to the same question, another actor values group exploration because it benefits individual preparation:

We did more table work with this show than I've ever done before, but I really think it was necessary. Not just for me, but for all of us as a whole kind of understanding the general arc of the story. Not only your own sort of line but everyone else's and how it all connects. I don't think I would have had nearly as deep of an understanding had it not been for that first week of table work. (Student B)

Both actors register a benefit from shared dramaturgical script analysis via table work. Each identifies a desire to engage in a dramaturgical investigation with an ensemble. Similarly, Douthit has identified how OSF lacks a regular dramaturgical "conversation" within in its production processes, but suggests it would serve ensemble understanding of

a play (Douthit). These responses confirm my goal for dramaturgical script analysis as well: the actor's individual process of preparation may intentionally deepen collective work if the actor comes into the rehearsal process having engaged more fully with a play.

An outcome similar to resonance did occur in the *Arcadia* case study feedback, although it still demonstrates a need for exploration of resonance in a context of story structures. Two actors shared a profound concern for the audience because both actors felt pressure to make sure the audience understood dialogue related to scientific and mathematical concepts. One of the actors referred to this concern as making sure the math and science content was, “legible or readable to an entire audience” (Student D). The actor elaborated by offering an analogy comparing the experience to the role of a “lecturer” in relation to students: “...it’s definitely the case where not a lot of people will know this information when they’re coming in to watch this play. So my job is to kind of guide them along and not leave them behind” (Student D). The other actor recalled a similar impulse to “lecture” and described the effort of facilitating “understanding for the audience” as one of the biggest challenges with the play: “Throughout the whole thing I wasn’t necessarily worried about how the audience was understanding what was happening, but there were just those couple of moments in those lengthier speeches where I was sort of – it did feel more like kind of an academic, ‘And now I’m going to try to get you to get *this!*’” (Student B). Concern for the audience suggests a similar impulse to resonance, but results in difference strategies.

Both actors eventually explored a kind of resonance through a lens that Kaiser offered the cast during table work. After the first read-through, Kaiser encouraged the actors to explore “desire” in its many forms, including the irrepressible desire for

knowledge that is shared by many of *Arcadia*'s characters in different ways (Kaiser, "First Rehearsal"). What these actors essentially mapped for themselves was resonance related to "desire," though in the interviews they did not connect their efforts to Kaiser's comments during the first rehearsal. One of the actors tutored algebra over the summer, and used that as entryway into "desire" within the play: "It goes back to tutoring my cousins, honestly, because they don't understand a lot of the things I'm talking about so I have to make it make sense to them as well. That's where a lot of the subliminal layering comes in" (Student D). Within the play, the actor applied desire as a willingness to share knowledge, to make the information "legible." The other actor also found an entry point into the play through desire to share knowledge, and linked it to the character's abilities as a "natural teacher:" "So I feel like that process of me feeling like, 'Oh, now I'm going to teach the audience,' actually really helped in terms of connecting with [the character's] MO" (Student B). These practical results represent what might be considered unintentional mapping of resonance, and the actors engaged more fully with resonance in relation to character than with the play. Still, they explored dramaturgical possibilities of resonance and considered the audience.

Although these actors incorporated something like resonance individually, their shared concern for the audience led them to *assume* what the audience would not know. This tendency reflects what Douthit refers to when she says, "...actors take on more work than they need to. They work harder and against plays almost more than they work with plays. ... They think that it's their job to make me have emotion. And it's not. It's the play's job. It's not theirs." (Douthit). I agree, especially in the sense that emotion occurs in an audience member because of a play's dramaturgy in action. Playwrights, directors,

and actors may also identify dramaturgical punctuation that facilitates an audience's emotional experience of what Douthit calls a play's "emotional values" (Douthit). Ultimately, however, whether or not emotion arises for an audience member is beyond the actor's individual control. Thus, the concern that the two actors in *Arcadia* experienced when trying to ensure the audience's intellectual understanding parallels a concern over trying to ensure the audience's emotional response. Exploring resonance as a story structure – and as a story structure that considers what the audience knows or does not know based on what the play provides – might have refocused the actors' efforts more productively away from trying to control the audience experience.

To summarize *Arcadia* case study feedback relating to story structures, early rehearsals may not have addressed structure, story, and resonance outright but did encourage a dramaturgical awareness for many of the actors through table work. Shared dramaturgical script analysis with *Arcadia* extended the actors' awareness beyond character and most noticeably to the structural collisions within the play, sometimes in relation to story and perhaps less so in relation to resonance. Dramaturgical script analysis in advance of rehearsals could remedy the lack of exploration with complex story structures, especially as it frames individual preparation through a dramaturgical responsibility. These initial outcomes also practically reveal how story, language, and performance structures interact. For example, the actors in the case study accessed story structures through language structures. Hence, categories of dramaturgical script analysis might occur in any order as long as the actor expects and embraces interconnectivity. Like *Arcadia*, the effort of dramaturgical script analysis may "shuttle" backwards and forwards.

## Language Structures

An awareness of language structures builds on the collaboration that occurs between actors and voice and text professionals, especially the active exploration of language as primary analysis. OSF's working sessions model how specific connections may be forged between the actor, the language of a particular play, and the dramaturgical significance of a moment within a given story. Dramaturgical script analysis in relation to language structures could create options for how the actor uses language, or, as David Carey has suggested, what the actor may do *through* and *with* language (D. Carey). Consideration of language structures also includes exploration of allegorical language and mode, as discussed when establishing a dramaturgical vocabulary. By viewing language as an allegorical rather than a symbolic construction, the actor may experiment with layers of meaning rather than singular meaning, as often results when words take on discursive intent. Expecting a play to have a unique mode of language allows each play its own specificity, distinct from associations with genre or style. At the same time, a play's mode often defies description because the play's language or words embody a mode without defining it.

An awareness of language structures also engages the actor's "dramaturgical voice." The phrase "dramaturgical voice" comes from Don Ihde's *Listening and Voice: Phenomenologies of Sound*, also discussed previously. Ihde considers "dramaturgical voice" a phenomenon associated with the actor because the actor's voice, "amplifies and displays...variations on the modes of being in language" (173). This construct provides a critical link between the dramaturgical voice of the playwright and the dramaturgical voice of the actor. Whereas the playwright accesses dramaturgical voice in writing, the

actor accesses dramaturgical voice through vocalizing. For example, vocalization may manifest practically through voice and text work, which involves experimentation with breath, sound, language, and other techniques for vocal production. For the purposes of dramaturgical script analysis, vocalizing further represents a reflexive experience of listening. By vocalizing, the actor also hears and responds to what Ihde has called the unexpected “existential possibilities” of language (170). The effort of voicing *as* listening informs the actor’s awareness of language structures and functions within the phenomenological experience of dramaturgical voice. Acknowledging and accessing the actor’s dramaturgical voice also creates yet another parallel between the actor and the production dramaturg.

Voice and text work experiments with dramaturgical voice in relation to a play’s unique mode of language. Head of Voice and Text at OSF, Rebecca Clark Carey offers a view of how the components of *voice* and *text* work as a symbiotic relationship:

Sometimes it goes backwards, or it goes both ways. You’ll work with somebody on the vocal aspect of things, and that will open up the emotional or the imaginary. But sometimes you’ll work on the text point of, “Let’s just find the clarity,” and the voice will – somehow the actor will become *safe* because they own the words – and the voice will open up. They really feed into each other. (R. Carey)

Carey explains how the actor may engage with voice or text components at different times. Vocal exploration may lead to connections with the language of a text just as textual exploration may lead to clarity as the actor vocalizes. Voicing and listening work similarly as a symbiotic relationship. Voicing may lead the actor to hear a particular language structure more clearly, just as listening may lead the actor to an unexpected opportunity for voicing.

Dramaturgical voice not only engages the actor's vocal apparatus but also requires the actor's full-bodied awareness of language structures. This is why, for example, voice and text work attunes the actor to sounds within words rather than only to discursive meanings of words. Sound can reveal potential for clarity of discursive meaning, but sounds also encourage reactions within the actor's physical body, invoke disconnected images, and trigger emotional responses. That which is physical, emotional, inarticulate, or even silent may engage the actor's dramaturgical voice, but the actor must "listen." Thus, voicing *and* listening represent exploration that engages the actor's dramaturgical voice. Similarly, listening *and* voicing – or even listening *without* voicing – allows unfamiliar language structures to retain their unique qualities. In his research, Ihde has recognized the limits of language because language attempts to name and define the unknown. Ihde says, "But a perception steeped in Language poses a problem for us that we may not even recognize. For it is a perception that is always too quick to make familiar the most strange and other that we come upon in the world" (186, author's capitalization). Actors may develop a "perception steeped in language" because so often the job of acting requires clarity of speech, specificity of discursive meaning, or articulation of sounds for the purpose of being heard in the back row. Voice and text work supports these efforts but also allows the unfamiliar its due. A symbiotic process of voicing *and* listening, listening *and* voicing encourages the actor to question language structures without naming the unfamiliar too soon.

Many techniques exist to develop the actor's dramaturgical voice through vocal conditioning, and this work will support dramaturgical script analysis even though it is not a principal focus here. Other practitioners now join pioneers in the field of voice and

text work, such as Edith Skinner and Cicely Berry. For example, Catherine Fitzmaurice, Arthur Lessac, Kristin Linklater, and Patsy Rodenburg each offer approaches that help actors create a foundation for voicing onstage. Such conditioning benefits dramaturgical script analysis of language structures because, like the analysis employed for story structures, language structures create opportunities for further exploration by the actor. To that end, vocal conditioning enables actors to access and investigate what may or may not be of “use” through healthy approaches to vocal production.<sup>12</sup> Specifically relevant to my research, OSF’s voice and text professionals offer approaches as well. For the purpose of identifying language structures in relation to Shakespeare, Scott Kaiser’s study of *Shakespeare’s Wordcraft* results from his practical work at OSF: “That book, that’s the result of ten years of preparing for coaching” (Kaiser). Similarly, from their experience training student actors and working with professional actors, David Carey and Rebecca Clark Carey co-wrote *The Verbal Arts Workbook*. The introduction to the workbook includes a directive that very much applies to dramaturgical script analysis: “In this book, we will ask you to take nothing about language for granted” (Carey ix). For dramaturgical investigation of language structures, the actor must also heed this advice.<sup>13</sup>

Dramaturgical script analysis of language structures mirrors the initial phase of preparation undertaken by OSF’s voice and text directors before rehearsals begin. Such preparation generally involves reading a play multiple times in order to notice how the language works. These readings might reveal: literary devices, like antithesis or puns; rhetoric and the development of arguments; rhythms that occur within the play’s language or for particular characters. These examples apply to contemporary as well as classical texts, and they reflect the effort of reading for language structures. However,

language structures also vary so much from play to play that defining potential variations becomes a futile activity. With an English language play, for example, even basic questions begin to multiply. Is the play written by an English-speaking writer or translated into English? Is the play written in a particular dialect, or does it employ the vernacular of a specific English-speaking population or area? What does the play look like on the page? Are the words organized in prose or verse, dialogue or monologue? The advice to “take nothing about language for granted” serves as a practical guide for the actor to notice what the play offers at the level of words, sentences, and paragraphs. *The Verbal Arts Workbook* offers another bit of advice that recognizes how the actor’s effort to notice these structures is a full-bodied endeavor: “It’s important to note that understanding how language works isn’t always something that happens in the head. It happens in the body, too. In drama, written language is merely a way of capturing spoken language, and spoken language works not only on the intellect but also on the senses” (Carey x). The actor’s dramaturgical sensibility includes sensory awareness and other ways of knowing. Thus, the instinct and patience that characterizes the work of OSF’s dramaturg as well as the voice and text directors applies to dramaturgical script analysis for the actor and may be demonstrated through language structures.

#### Language Structures – *Arcadia*

My initial readings of *Arcadia* identified multiple language structures for further investigation through dramaturgical script analysis. First, British playwright Tom Stoppard authored *Arcadia*, and the play’s dialogue employs British syntax, word choice, and rhythms. Depending on the production, actors may be required to learn a British dialect and explore these different features. For instance, the actors in the case study

learned a Standard British dialect, which is common for American productions of British plays. Second, on the page *Arcadia* looks like a traditional play because lines are delineated by character and dialogue occurs in a realistic, conversational manner. The text on the page also includes stage directions from the author. Of particular note within the otherwise conversational dialogue, occasional sections of monologue also erupt in scenes between characters.<sup>14</sup> This pattern suggests that characters speak monologue passages to each other and do not break away from a scene in soliloquy or in direct address to the audience. Third, because the play includes characters with vocabularies related to their work, professional jargon factors into the play's language. I will refer to these as "specialty words." For example, Valentine is a postgrad student in biology, and his line of study references scientific axioms like the Second Law of Thermodynamics. He also refers to his background idiomatically as "maths," the British abbreviation for the word *mathematics* and a shorthand way of referring to that line of study. Fourth, the play's language self-reflexively overlaps between scenes, as first suggested by the analysis of story structures. For the actor's exploration of allegorical language, this overlap creates additional strata to consider. Fifth, the unique mode of the play's language remains an ongoing inquiry, but at present I refer to *Arcadia*'s mode as "pointillist." The dramaturgical script analysis that follows explores these language structures within *Arcadia*. Also, now that I have established the case study, outcomes will be integrated throughout.

## Dialect

Demands of any dialect provide a structural challenge for actors who do not already speak in that dialect. The voice and text directors at OSF have noted approaches

to help actors learn dialect. David Carey identifies changes in vowels and consonants and “the tune of the accent” as critical elements (D. Carey). Scott Kaiser refers to “dialect breakdown sheets” that provide actors with specific language components to address when attuning the voice or ear to a particular dialect (Kaiser). General placement of the dialect in the mouth is one such component because it helps the actor shape and focus sounds. For instance, a Standard British dialect requires forward placement in the mouth, which often requires American actors to experiment with bringing sound forward. Sound changes factor as components as well, which Carey identifies in regard to vowels and consonants. For example, a significant change for American actors when speaking in a Standard British dialect is the “broad a” vowel sound that appears in words like *can’t*. The “broad a” makes the vowel pronunciation sound something like “cahn’t.” And yet, the word *can* is pronounced with the same vowel sound in American or British dialect. In short, the process of incorporating structural changes for dialects does not always follow predictable rules.

Rebecca Clark Carey offers another insight into how an awareness of dialect as a language structure may eventually lead to more complex discoveries for the actor. In the following, she refers to coaching actors in OSF’s 2011 production of *August: Osage*

*County* by Tracy Letts:

I worked on *August: Osage County* last year, and it was so important my getting a sense of that accent, and hearing the play in my head in that accent told me so much about that world and those people. So that when I was doing accent sessions with them, it wasn’t just about, “Okay, make sure you say *this* sound, not *that* sound.” It was about, “Think about – as we go through the text – about that tightness there, that lack of generosity with that vowel. What does that do to this thing that you say to your daughter?” (R. Carey)

Carey identifies the “tightness” of a particular vowel sound as a means to explore a “lack of generosity” in the language. Her insight offers a discovery for further exploration of Letts’s play, especially when considering how the play’s action reveals deteriorating relationships within the Weston family. The characters in this play may share a dialect from Pawhuska, Oklahoma, but Carey identifies a possibility for exploration into how dialect may function as a language structure the actor might “use” within the play’s other structures. Her example relates to a one-on-one working session with an actor, which explains the reference to how a character might speak specifically to her daughter. However, the actor may access such discoveries by investigating dialect as well.

By way of another example, one of the actors in the *Arcadia* case study noted a gradual awareness of the rhythms in British dialect. The actor referred to this as, “...the banter aspect of British theater” (Student F). The individual discovery came from understanding how a shared rhythm between characters could be achieved with lines of dialogue. In turn, the actor inhabited the lines more fully in dialect. The actor referenced a particular rehearsal in which Kaiser helped raise this awareness by stopping and starting the dialogue if the actors paused too long between lines. In the actor’s words: “...so we were running the scene and we’d start doing it and he’d be like, ‘Stop. Do it again.’ And we’d go to do it again, and he’d be like, ‘No. Stop. Do it again. You’re taking too long.’ We did it like five times, and he’s like, ‘That’s it.’ And it was like, ‘Oh. That’s what it’s like...’” (Student F). In order to illustrate what this language structure might look like on the page, the actor’s discovery prompted me to identify a sample from the play.

Among other instances, the introductory conversation between the characters of Hannah and Bernard in Scene Two often displayed this bantering rhythm in the UO

production of *Arcadia*. The excerpt below reads on the page in a manner similar to what the actor describes as, "...rapidness and the bouncing right after each other in speaking" (Student F). When read out loud at a normal speed, while taking no pauses between lines, the following dialogue creates a visceral experience of the back and forth rhythm equated with British banter:

BERNARD: I'm impressed. Thank you. And Chater?

HANNAH: Nothing.

BERNARD: Oh. Nothing at all?

HANNAH: I'm afraid not.

BERNARD: How about the library?

HANNAH: The catalogue was done in the 1880s. I've been through the lot.

BERNARD: Books or catalogue?

HANNAH: Catalog.

BERNARD: Ah. Pity.

HANNAH: I'm sorry.

BERNARD: What about the letters? No mention?

HANNAH: I'm afraid not. I've been very thorough in your period because, of course, it's my period too. (Stoppard 24)

Adding in elements of a Standard British dialect supports a bantering rhythm as well. For example, a lightness and quickness of speech occurs especially by paying attention to word and line endings that include the tapped "t" consonant sound that occurs in words like *not* and *lot*, or the shortened "y" ending sound that occurs in words like *library*, *pity*, and *sorry* (often pronounced like the short "i" vowel sound in the word *it*). The rhythm moves swiftly because the words do not linger in the mouth the way they might with an American pronunciation. For example, a longer "e" vowel sound in American pronunciation of the "y" in *sorry* takes more time to form in the mouth. The brisk short "i" vowel sound in Standard British pronunciation of "y" sharpens those line ending

because the sound does not linger. As in the example Carey provides from *August: Osage County*, the example from *Arcadia* suggests how the actor may investigate language structures through an awareness of dialect.

### Monologues and Specialty Words

The occurrences of specialty words and monologues in *Arcadia* function similarly as language structures. On a basic level, when dialogue moves into or out of monologue, a shift occurs, from a moment in which two characters share language (dialogue) into a moment wherein one character controls the language (monologue) – and vice versa. A similar shift occurs with use of specialty words. Jargon may be shared between characters or used by an individual character. Sometimes jargon is shared between the play and audience, but the play might also control language by withholding definition or not explaining its lingo to an audience. In *Arcadia*, monologue and specialty words work in conjunction with the play's story structures. I suggest these language structures operate as moments of certainty amidst the uncertainty of the play's story structures. This is not to say that specialty words or monologues represent factual truths or even resolution for the play's unanswered questions. Rather, *Arcadia*'s specialty words provide momentary flashes of assurance, while its monologues extend the experience of certainty for a longer period of time. A look into both structures individually will offer further explanation for this discovery.

The phrase “specialty words” implies that a concept or object has been named and defined. Such words operate with symbolic certainty. This occurs on at least two levels. First, words symbolically represent ideas and things, and they are used in everyday conversation in order to reference those ideas or things. Symbolic certainty thereby

equates to naming.<sup>15</sup> With regard to the actor's preparation, specialty words may fall within a scope of dramaturgical research because they require definition in context – contemporary or historical – or may be evaluated on the spectrum of what the character knows or doesn't know. In *Arcadia*, for example, Valentine has to explain what he means by “iterated algorithm” because Hannah asks, “What's that?” (Stoppard 43). Similarly, Bernard and Hannah refer to “Byron” with the assumption that everybody knows they reference the poet until Valentine asks, “Are you talking about Lord Byron, the poet?” (50). Valentine knows exactly what he means by “iterated algorithm” even if Hannah doesn't, just as Hannah knows exactly which Byron she references even if Valentine doesn't. *Arcadia's* specialty words range from the names of historical figures like Byron, Fermat, and Thomas Love Peacock to words for historical objects like *theodolite*, *shilling*, and *Cornhill Magazine* to scientific references like *algorithm*, *relativity*, or *quantum*. These words suggest a symbolic certainty by naming ideas or objects.

The second level of symbolic certainty for specialty words operates in the figurative sense. Use of jargon – even when the listener has no knowledge of its particular meaning – implies certainty on the part of the speaker. In other words, jargon suggests that meaning exists even though it may be inaccessible to some people or taken for granted by those who use it. For instance, in response to Hannah's prompt to define the iterated algorithm, Valentine replies, “Well, it's...Jesus...it's an algorithm that's been...iterated. How'm I supposed to...? (*He makes an effort.*)” (Stoppard 43). Ellipses abound in these two short sentences, which implies some kind of working thought on Valentine's part. He struggles to define his own word choice, possibly because the words have become jargon he takes for granted. The short stage direction, “He makes an effort,”

reflects this struggle as well. Within this dialogue, specialty words help to illustrate a moment through which symbolic certainty appears and breaks down. Valentine recovers certainty by continuing to explain – to Hannah and presumably to the audience – what an iterated algorithm looks like on a page and how it works in theory. Thus, even figuratively, specialty words assure the listener of meaning because their use conveys symbolic certainty. Even if Valentine did not take further pains to define an iterated algorithm, or if other dialogue did not achieve this definition within the play, use of this special combination of words establishes hidden meaning. *Arcadia*'s jargon thereby provides momentary flashes of assurance, which the actor may explore as a language structure.

An example from the *Arcadia* case study offers insight into how recognizing language structures, such as specialty words, may transfer to practical exploration. In table work for *Arcadia*, Kaiser introduced the idea of “operative words,” which he continued to employ throughout the rehearsal process. Operative words may be identified within a line of text in order to convey clear meaning or intent, and they require vocal emphasis by the speaker in some way.<sup>16</sup> Kaiser views this as a “craft-based” concern, which he defines broadly in relation to his casting work for OSF: “So I write notes about voice, about handling of text, about movement through space, about ability to play variety, ability to play actions, emotionally availability – craft-based notes” (Kaiser). He differentiates craft-based concerns from casting that focuses on appearance, qualities, or type (Kaiser). Kaiser's emphasis on craft-based notes in casting also transfers to a fundamental focus for his directing work. In the rehearsal process for *Arcadia*, craft-based notes to the actors included notes on operative words. Kaiser and the actors agreed

on which words were operative, but this did not dictate *how* the actor might achieve emphasis. The actor's exploration of emphasis might occur through vocal punctuation, for example: increasing or decreasing volume, stretching the vowels, articulating consonants, using a different tone. Emphasis might also occur in conjunction with specific blocking or a physical gesture. Like operative words, specialty words emphasize meaning – either implied or explicit. Practically, specialty words might also become operative words in order to punctuate or clarify meaning.

The occurrence of monologues in *Arcadia* extends the experience of specialty words by offering a longer experience of assured meaning. Just as a monologue on the page takes up more space than a word or a single line of dialogue, a spoken monologue takes up more time in speech. This represents a purposefully simple insight. As part of the effort to take nothing about language for granted, recognizing the eruption of a monologue within a play that consists largely of dialogue acknowledges the monologue's dramaturgical significance. What a monologue says – its content, its thematic potential, its character viewpoint – may be discerned through further investigation, but the fact that the monologue exists should not be overlooked in dramaturgical script analysis related to language structures. In *Arcadia*, multiple monologues exist, and they occur sporadically within the dialogue. Like the play's specialty words, these monologues provide instances of symbolic certainty, whether meaning is displayed or hidden. *Arcadia's* unique combination of these language structures inspires further investigation about why the play employs these reminders of symbolic certainty. Dramaturgical script analysis with story structures offers possible answers. *Arcadia's* structural collisions reveal complex action, subtle content, and mysterious connections between time periods. The story of the

play unravels the identity of a hermit, but not in a straightforward manner. The impact of “change” surfaces as one exploration of resonance. In tandem with story structures that provide an experience of *uncertainty*, language structures that provide an experience of certainty offer dramaturgical balance in *Arcadia*.

A sequence of six monologues in *Arcadia* reveals potential for further exploration into the balancing impact of these language structures. The six monologues occur intermittently in the play and in the following order: Lady Croom reviles the transformation of her garden in the prospective drawing by Richard Noakes in Scene One (Stoppard 11-12); Hannah offers her views on the “Romantic shame” in Scene Two (27); Septimus advises how, “...what we let fall will be picked up by those behind” (38), and Lady Croom requires help in keeping Byron on her estate (41) – both in Scene Three; Valentine counsels why the best time to be alive is, “when everything you thought you knew is wrong” in Scene Four (48); and Scene Five includes an erroneous lecture as well as a defense of poetry by Bernard (53-58, 61). Observing how these monologues work together as language structures reveals that they occur within the first five scenes of the play. Scene Six measures as the shortest scene in the play (coincidentally, six pages long) and marks the final point at which the action “shuttles” between time periods before merging in Scene Seven. Possibly, then, as the play moves toward its conclusion, the burden of certainty falls more fully on the play’s story structures than its language structures. Content also reveals how these monologues work together as language structures, though this ventures further into thematic analysis: Lady Croom and Hannah provide a shared critique of the Romantic “sham,” one offers a contemporary perspective and the other a retrospective; Septimus and Lady Croom argue competing views of faith

and human intervention; Valentine and Bernard introduce two sides of a philosophical debate about human knowledge, one assumes he knows nothing and the other assumes he knows enough. What begins to emerge through dramaturgical script analysis with *Arcadia*'s language might be stated as a structural cording between the existence of specialty words and monologues. These language structures provide brief moments of certainty while the play's story structures operate in a shuttling, chaotic state.

Internal language structures within dialogue or a monologue require further exploration on the actor's part, which suggests how language structures may also inform character analysis. When undertaking character analysis, the actor frequently gives attention to character-specific language, as it reveals character circumstances through content. What is said by the character or about the character addresses this concern, and investigation of subtext may lead to further connotations of meaning. Language may also reveal how a character says something through such structures as word choice, syntax, or length of sentences. That difference offers a helpful distinction between dramaturgical script analysis and character analysis, but character-specific language also merges these two kinds of analysis. David Carey offers a pertinent example of the distinction and conjunction in reference to his work on August Wilson's *Two Trains Running* at OSF.

With regard to his preparation in advance of rehearsal he says:

For me, coming to it and just reading the text for the first time – I didn't know the play before starting work on it – it struck me that August Wilson's language is very particular. There's a very particular rhythm to it. There's a very particular shape to it, and you've got characters who really like to talk, particularly in this play. (D. Carey)

Carey's work prior to rehearsal suggests an awareness of preliminary language structures – like the analysis I have offered for *Arcadia*, but with play-specific outcomes and

concerns. From his preparation, Carey recognizes the play's language as "very particular" with regard to rhythm, and he even suggests the language has its own "shape." Carey follows this description by clarifying how the characters in *Two Trains Running* who "really like to talk" speak in long monologues (D. Carey) As the voice and text director, he anticipates a necessary effort toward helping the actor develop those monologues through rehearsal, "in a way that's going to help the actor sustain it and help the audience understand it" (D. Carey). Carey outlines concerns related to character-specific language from the working sessions with the actors for OSF's production:

Working with some of the individual actors who had the longest speeches in the play was very much about, "Okay, how does *this* part of the text connect with this next bit? What are the beats within this long monologue? How does each connect? Where do you need to breathe? What are the emotional shifts running through this? What is the argument here that the character is laying out? How can I help you develop that in terms of your understanding of the character?" (D. Carey)

These or other questions may arise with regard to the actor's exploration of character-specific language, especially in a lengthy monologue. However, as Carey's process suggests, analysis with language structures identifies a need to ask those questions.

In the *Arcadia* case study, character-specific language manifested as the primary concern for many of the actors. Regarding specialty words and monologues in particular, two of the actors noted their engagement with these structures through character. In order to "understand the broader concepts in the play," one of the actors used the "lens" of character: "It's written so well that all of these sort of scientific concepts – from Thomasina and from Valentine – for me, they explain them pretty well in the actual text" (Student B). For this actor, content exposed meaning behind the language structure of specialty words. Another actor identified questions about language after recognizing, "I

think each character has a language of their own. The thing about Stoppard is that he gifts his characters with their own mindset, and it's brilliant" (Student D). This suggests a glimpse into dramaturgical script analysis with language structures, though the actor attends to character more fully than the play. With regard to character-specific language, the same actor noted: "...he's a specific person in the world that's good at what he does, and that shows in the way that he speaks" (Student D). The actor went on to ask, "...what would his language sound like? What would his voice sound like? Would he be irritated? Would he be somewhat of a snob?" (Student D). Through these questions, this actor experiences how voice and text exploration may enhance character-specific language through vocal qualities. Both of these actors recognize a convergence between language structures and character, even though they enter the process of analysis primarily through character.

### Allegorical Language

Among the other language structures in *Arcadia*, exploring language as an allegorical construct leads the actor to experiment with layered meanings rather than symbolic or singular meaning. When words are associated with discursive intent, symbolic meaning leads to organization of thought and a reasoned argument. This often requires specific definition of a word with more than one meaning – in academic writing, for example. For the actor, symbolic meaning leads to clarity, as when Rebecca Clark Carey laughingly admits she will spend more time in preparation with a classical script, "...looking up words I don't know" (R. Carey). By contrast, exploring the allegorical potential of language admits multiplicity of meanings and allows the actor to layer in various meanings through exploration. I discussed this potential previously in relation to

Walter Benjamin and allegorical composition of language in the German *Trauerspiel*. Benjamin describes baroque language strategies of the *Trauerspiel* as follows: “In the anagrams, the onomatopoeic phrases, and many other examples of linguistic virtuosity, word, syllable, and sound are emancipated from any context of traditional meaning and are flaunted as objects which can be exploited for allegorical purposes” (*Origin* 207). In new playwriting, these strategies also align with “virtuosic” writing. In plays written in the style of realism, the allegorical potential of language appears less pronounced, but may still contain discoveries for further exploration.

Using an earlier example from *Arcadia*’s story structures, Thomasina and Valentine share parallel lines that include the word *odd*: Thomasina says, “Do you think this is odd?” in Scene Four, and Valentine says “Do you think that’s odd?” in Scene Seven. The word *odd* in these contexts refers more readily to something strange or unfamiliar. Yet an *odd* number mathematically denotes the opposite of an *even* number. The actors might investigate the layering of both meanings to punctuate the word vocally or physically. For instance, an exercise that asks the actor to explore vowels and consonants in the word *odd* offers one layer of exploration. Creating a physical gesture for *odd* as it refers to something strange, and listening for how that gesture impacts the actor’s voicing of the word, introduces another layer. Repeating the gesture for the same word as it refers to an uneven number reveals yet another layer. These kinds of exploration influence the actor’s vocal and physical memory, which infuses words with layered, allegorical meaning even if the actor does not retain the particular qualities or gestures in performance. What’s more, if the actor chooses *odd* as an operative word, its layered meaning helps punctuate pertinent information.

The allegorical potential of language may apply to any text, but the language structures in *Arcadia* offer an additional opportunity for the actor's exploration. As suggested in relation to story structures and through the example above, language in *Arcadia* self-reflexively overlaps between scenes. For the actor's exploration of allegorical language, this overlap creates layering potential, regardless of whether words are repeated by one character or shared between characters. The shared line between Thomasina and Valentine reveals just one of the many instances of overlap that occur throughout *Arcadia*. The reversal Bernard makes around the phrase "What for?" reveals a shared line as well as a recurring phrase used by one character (Stoppard 63, 95).<sup>17</sup>

Thomasina and Septimus share a phrase that bookends their relationship in the play. In Scene One, Thomasina's line reads: "There is no proof, Septimus. The thing that is perfectly obvious is that the note in the margin was a joke to make you all mad" (6). In Scene Seven, Septimus reflects back on the earlier exchange, several years later in the play's historical timeline. He refers to the joking entry Thomasina made in his notebook about the "New Geometry of Irregular Forms" when he says, "It will make me mad as you promised" (92). The overlapping repetition of the word *mad* suggests an opportunity for allegorical layering. Similar to the line shared between Thomasina and Valentine, Thomasina and Chloë also mirror each other. Thomasina speaks the line initially in Scene One: "Septimus! Am I the first person to have thought of this?" (5). In the third line of Scene Seven Chloë says, "Valentine, do you think I'm the first person to think of this?" (73). The ancestral connection between these three characters may offer a thematic structure for further investigation, but the allegorical potential within the words *first person* suggest an opportunity for the actor's exploration of language structures.

## Mode

When introducing exploration of language structures within *Arcadia*, I briefly noted that describing the unique mode of this play's language remains an ongoing inquiry. At present I suggest the play's unique mode of language is "pointillist," which I will explain further in detail. However, I offer this analysis with an understanding that this description could shift, either in my own estimation or because another actor's analysis outcomes may differ. A dramaturgical sensibility embraces purposeful ambiguity of this kind because it allows each play the specificity of its own mode of language. And yet, that effort creates a chaos of naming.<sup>18</sup> If mode factors into collective dramaturgical analysis – table work, for instance – it would require mutual agreement with a director much like dramaturgical punctuation. Yet the actor cannot contribute to shared analysis without first engaging in individual exploration. In addition, an awareness of a play's unique mode of language also differs from recognizing a playwright's unique writing style. For example, one of the actor's in the *Arcadia* case study referred to Tom Stoppard as follows: "It's important to have a style, have a certain language. And Stoppard definitely has a 'Stoppardian' language..." (Student D). Considering the play's mode of language allows a distance between the play and playwright. As with the other goals for dramaturgical script analysis, this distinction allows the actor to engage more fully with a play. Lastly, a play's mode often defies description because the play's words may embody a particular mode without defining that mode. I suggest this explains why my process of naming *Arcadia*'s mode involved such a lengthy exploration.

After several months spent with *Arcadia* in rehearsal as dialect coach, followed by more time spent working through this detailed analysis of *Arcadia*'s language

structures, I actually began to despair about ever considering the idea of mode for my dissertation project, let alone investigating it in the context of this chapter. However, I came to value that despair because it best illustrates the “slow, ambiguous emergence of meaning” that Geoffrey Proehl associates with a dramaturgical sensibility (28). I propose the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility must grapple with this process, and naming the unique mode of a play’s language might just represent the slowest and most ambiguous emergence of meaning in relation to dramaturgical script analysis. I know even more assuredly now that the value of mode therein lies. I offer my steps toward analysis as an example that reflects both the effort and outcome of my quest to name *Arcadia*’s unique mode of language. These steps illustrate how mode may function as a component of dramaturgical script analysis with regard to language structures, and also how actors may question mode patiently and instinctively with a dramaturgical sensibility.

After rehearsals ended and the production closed, I continued to investigate *Arcadia*’s language structures. I would ask myself intermittently, “What is *Arcadia*’s mode?” Finally, on one occasion (a moment on the verge of falling asleep at night), the image of Georges Seurat’s painting, *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*” flashed in my mind, followed by the lyric phrase “bit by bit” from Stephen Sondheim’s song, “Putting It Together.” Seeking my own symbolic certainty, I consulted the *Oxford English Dictionary* the next day for a definition of *pointillism* because most of what I knew about Seurat’s development of this artistic form came from Sondheim’s *Sunday in the Park with George*. The dictionary definition supported my emerging theory that *Arcadia*’s mode could be named pointillist: “A technique of painting using tiny dots of various pure colours, which when viewed from a distance are blended by the viewer's

eye” (Def. 1). After reconsidering the collision and collusion of *Arcadia*’s story and language structures, I began to feel confident. I recognized that *Arcadia*’s language structures consist of pure colors – single words – which exist individually as tiny “dots” throughout the play, but that also “blend” more fully with the expanded perspective of distance – between scenes, for example. The investigation of specialty words, monologue occurrences, and allegorical language within the play particularly reflected pointillist functions. These tiny dots blended most clearly with my viewer’s attention. As a final push toward naming *Arcadia*’s mode, I unexpectedly recalled the advice of Elinor Fuchs, which ironically suggests how *not* to focus too tightly on language when encountering the unique world of a play:

To see this entire world, do this literally: Mold the play into a medium-sized ball, set it before you in the middle distance, and squint your eyes. Make the ball small enough that you can see the entire planet, not so small that you lose detail, and not so large that detail overwhelms the whole. ... Before you is the “world of the play.” (Fuchs 6)

Only when I could “squint” ever so gently at the language structures in *Arcadia*, did the mode of the play begin to reveal itself as a pointillist construct. Essentially, I worked forward from identifying the unique instances – dots – that make up the play’s language structures in order to grasp its blended mode.

My process with mode represents individual exploration, and therefore also illustrates potential for disagreement in determining a play’s mode as a language structure. How one actor names the mode of a particular play might differ from how another actor names the mode for the same play. In this regard, mode not only represents the slowest, and most ambiguous emergence of meaning, but it exemplifies the risk and benefit of the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility. Dramaturgical script analysis supports the

actor's individual process, but toward the effort of deepening collaborative contribution. The discussion of table work earlier in the *Arcadia* case study introduced benefits for a collective understanding of dramaturgical structures. In the next section, the discussion of dramaturgical script analysis related to performance structures will suggest how the actor may prepare with flexibility in order to collaborate.

### Language Structures – *Arcadia* Case Study Summary

Before moving on to performance structures, a summary look at the *Arcadia* case study reveals additional outcomes with regard to how developing an awareness of language structures engages the actor's dramaturgical voice. Two of the actors in the *Arcadia* case study offered insights into a full-bodied awareness of language structures. One actor recognized his process of listening *as* questioning in relation to a scene in which his character had very few lines. The actor associated the effort of listening with finding “emotional filling” as well as subtext: “So you're creating all this stuff that fills in the skeleton of the play, especially when you don't get any direction on it either, or text” (Student A). With few lines, the actor could engage listening *without* voicing, but attributed the benefit to character analysis through emotional subtext. Another actor raised the idea of a visual language that exists, “outside of the text, or outside of the script” (Student D). The actor also applied this awareness of language structures to character-specific monologue work by experimenting with how voicing led to physical gestures. Again, the second actor attributed the benefit to character analysis because the actual gestures led to a character trait: “What I figured out was [the character] likes to do a lot of hand visualizations” (Student D). The second actor's discovery reveals an awareness of how language structures impact the body. Each of these actors demonstrates

how dramaturgical voice requires the actor's full-bodied awareness of language structures, though that framework was not directly available to them.

A second outcome from the *Arcadia* case study reveals an actor tendency to view dramaturgical script analysis with language structures – or equivalent activities – as “technical” or “mechanical” work disassociated from character analysis. This distinction by student actors – actors still in training – suggests that binaries of internal/external or emotional/technical processes still permeate views of acting from within the practice. I particularly note a difference between how the director and the actors perceive craft-based tools like operative words. As the director, Kaiser's purpose for offering craft-based notes related to objectivity. He recalled setting this expectation with the *Arcadia* actors:

And I told them, “It's all concrete. It's all craft-based. Everything I give you is craft-based.” Because the thing about craft-based notes is that they're not personal. They're just not. They're completely, completely objective. Right? “You didn't hit the operative word we agreed on.” There's nothing personal about that. (Kaiser)

From Kaiser's perspective, the objective agreement between he and the actor related to which operative words were selected, not necessarily how they were emphasized. This approach leaves space for the actor's artistic input because the actor may choose how to emphasize words through personal exploration. Granted, the director must also register or hear the emphasis, which might require further exploration on the actor's part if initial attempts are not audible or visible. Kaiser's focus on craft-based notes further reflects his belief that directing in a university setting equates to teaching: “You're setting up a set of artistic hurdles, and by asking students to jump over them, you're training, you're teaching” (Kaiser). This represents a difference from his effort to “come alongside” the

professional actor's approach at OSF, although the focus on craft-based skills remains similar. In the production of *Arcadia*, the introduction of operative words provided a new craft-based tool for the actors, and this also proved a challenge or "hurdle" for their process.

Overall, the actors in the *Arcadia* case study acknowledged the challenge Kaiser introduced and grappled with new possibilities for their craft as actors. However, several of the actors also used words like *technical* and *mechanics* in reference to the intensive focus on operative words. At least one of the actors in the case study referenced the director's focus on operative words outright when asked about any differences between the process for *Arcadia* and previous projects:

...I noticed more direction on operatives – operative words – or where to emphasize words than I've ever experienced in any other play. I struggled a lot with that in terms of figuring out, "Is this something I should be figuring out, or is this something –?" And I still don't really know what my opinion on that is. (Student A)

This actor also viewed operative words as a "technical way" to think about lines and equated the process of identifying and agreeing upon them to a line reading from the director: "So it's sort of a different way of in – which one happens first: whether you get the most clear reading and have to figure out how to motivate that, or if you figure out how to motivate yourself into the most clear reading" (Student A). Similarly, another actor noted the process of, "...working a lot with various emphasis on words..." as one of the bigger challenges of the project (Student B). The same actor referred to this focus as "mechanics" and differentiated it from focus on "relationship and emotional investment in the character" (Student B). The persistent binary between technical and emotional acting tools represents a critical block to dramaturgical script analysis.

This lack of connection between craft-based tools and character analysis represents the most troubling outcome from the *Arcadia* case study. In other words, binaries and resistance to dramaturgical approaches represents a “hurdle” to acceptance of the actor’s dramaturgical voice, especially with regard to language structures, but more importantly with regard to actors. This problematic development will be considered directly in my concluding thoughts. It also figures into the work of the next chapter because new playwriting language structures help to blur boundaries between internal/external as well as technical/emotional binaries. They make it more difficult to categorize either/or concerns. Still, these students’ views also suggest it will take more than new forms to shift ingrained expectations about actor preparation. Concerns of time represent a similar hurdle that surfaced for these undergraduate student actors, although I do not discuss it in detail here. Given the parallel concern in professional production, I will consider time as a “hurdle” to the acceptance of dramaturgical approaches as well.

### Performance Structures

Like the categories of story and language structures, the actor’s dramaturgical awareness of performance structures intentionally directs significant attention to the play as a whole. As the category title suggests, performance structures begin to consider production concerns in relation to a play’s dramaturgy as well as the actor’s preparation to embody that dramaturgy in action. OSF’s indirect resources have revealed a potential for how the actor may consciously incorporate flexibility, environmental awareness, and artistic exchange into the process of dramaturgical script analysis. Arising out of the processes for OSF’s resident company and rotating repertory, the element of flexibility applies to the actor’s ensemble awareness. Flexibility encourages collaborative

compromise and adaptability but also requires the actor's individual contribution to an ensemble process. Generally speaking, theatrical rehearsal processes require flexibility from the actor under those conditions. But as a component of dramaturgical sensibility, flexibility transforms into a deliberate consideration for the actor's preparation.

Environmental awareness asks the actor to consider a dramaturgical relationship between physical structures and story or language structures. Physical structures practically relate to the actor's awareness of physical or vocal interactions with a stage space and to the actor/audience relationship. The ideal of artistic exchange extends an awareness of community mindedness to all levels of performance. The actor may consciously apply community mindedness to dramaturgical structures of a play, to the exchange that occurs with the audience, and even to collaborative interactions with other artists in the production process.

As with the previous elements of dramaturgical script analysis, the *Arcadia* case study provides practical examples. With performance structures in particular, these applications not only relate to a specific play and production circumstances, they also consider a particular stage space. Within the case study, few outcomes related to performance structures exist, which is also why I employ more examples from OSF's processes to demonstrate performance structures. Further, having already established a foundation for dramaturgical script analysis with extended examples from the text of *Arcadia*, I will forgo new textual investigation in detail and offer examples that build on prior discoveries.

## Flexibility

Flexibility encompasses an ensemble awareness of collaborative compromise and adaptability, which also recognizes the individual actor's contribution to a larger process. To that end, dramaturgical script analysis may appear counterproductive because it encourages the actor to explore a play individually before rehearsals begin. However, the effort of individual dramaturgical script analysis as preparation should intentionally encourage flexibility because it prepares the actor for an unknown journey. Anne Cattaneo's advice for the dramaturg suggests what it means to prepare for an unknown journey: "So you don't know where you are going and don't know where you are going collectively. As the dramaturg, you have to be armed, in order to go on the journey. You have to go in with your stuff, and if everyone is doing that, we will go somewhere collectively" (Rudakoff and Thomson 234). Similarly, dramaturgical script analysis prepares the actor for further individual exploration and for exploration with an ensemble. Within that process, flexibility operates on the same principal as not categorizing a play too quickly in terms of genre or style, or not forcing "the most strange" into familiar constructs. As a conscious function of ensemble awareness, incorporating flexibility into dramaturgical script analysis prepares the actor to contribute, compromise, and adapt.

Flexibility also encourages the actor to become more discerning about how dramaturgical script analysis applies to an ensemble process. At the beginning of this chapter, Lue Morgan Douthit's question offers pointed advice for the actor when she asks, "What kind of information are you setting up there for your fellow actor to take and run?" (Douthit). This question achieves two things simultaneously. First, it refocuses the

actor's attention toward a play's through-line of actions rather than a character's. Second, it sets an expectation that each actor may contribute to a play's dramaturgy in action. This very question applies to discoveries already discussed in relation to *Arcadia*. For example, dramaturgical script analysis with story structures revealed a connection between Septimus and Hannah. Septimus introduces a thread for the hermit's story in Scene Three that Hannah picks up in Scene Seven. I have suggested that Hannah's contribution to telling the hermit's story benefits from an awareness of what Septimus reveals: hope for the regeneration of knowledge. To carry this example forward, flexibility means the effort works both ways: if the character of Hannah builds upon a moment Septimus establishes, then the character of Septimus must first establish that moment. Using Douthit's frame, the actor playing Septimus must "set up" that information for the actor playing Hannah. Ultimately, rehearsal and performance may determine how an ensemble punctuates a play's dramaturgical information. Nonetheless, incorporating flexibility as a conscious consideration through dramaturgical script analysis helps the actor discern which discoveries may benefit ensemble exploration.

One of the outcomes from the *Arcadia* case study practically demonstrates flexibility in a context of contribution, compromise, and adaptability. It relates to one of the "hurdles" that Kaiser introduced to the actors in the production. On the first day of rehearsals, he encouraged the actors not to "memorize" their lines. When interviewed, Kaiser described this particular challenge as follows:

I keep challenging their notion of what the process is by – I don't mean to shock them – but sometimes saying things like, "*Don't* learn your lines." They were shocked by that, absolutely shocked by that. And there's been some fallout by that. ... Some of them didn't understand me, misunderstood me and didn't learn their lines. What I meant was – some

of them really didn't understand me – you will learn them by doing, and by memorizing the doing, you will know your lines. (Kaiser)

Kaiser spoke about not learning lines during table work and followed through on this approach throughout rehearsals, much like he incorporated operative words. Most of the actors in the case study interviews generally recalled the lack of an “off book date” as a new experience.<sup>19</sup> This suggests Kaiser's challenge registered as an unfamiliar part of the production process and required the actors to engage flexibility. In line with Kaiser's analysis of the outcomes, case study interviews reveal evidence from actors who incorporated the new way of working into their individual process and from actors who could not adapt as readily.

A comparison between two of the actors in the *Arcadia* case study effectively illustrates flexibility in the context of *not* learning lines. In this instance, dramaturgical structures equate to lines of dialogue associated with particular characters. The actor begins to engage more fully with character when learning lines, which also demonstrates an effective overlap between dramaturgical script analysis and character analysis within the production process. Based on what Kaiser proposed, the first actor infused learning of lines with ensemble awareness by committing to an individual contribution. This actor described the compromise as, “...shifting the focus away from ‘be memorized’ to ‘understand’” (Student A). He adapted by reframing the task of learning lines: “So the concentration was on figuring out what I'm thinking, what I'm saying, what I'm doing. And then those are the only words that make sense with those things” (Student A). This actor assumed a dramaturgical responsibility, especially accepting Kaiser's challenge to not memorize by rote, but to figure out the lines in a different way. Significantly, the actor also attended to story and language structures – “what I'm saying, what I'm doing”

– while delving into more specific character analysis. Unconsciously, this actor applied flexibility through contribution, compromise, and adaptability.

By comparison, the second actor adapted to Kaiser’s challenge with less flexibility. Like the first actor, the second also reframed the task of learning lines based on Kaiser’s approach, referring to the compromise as not “drilling lines” (Student F). Yet the second actor did not commit as specifically to an individual contribution. A difference appears in this actor’s restatement of Kaiser’s suggestion: “...judging by what you work on and how you perform on your own basis through each scene, you will just memorize the scene. You’ll memorize it” (Student F). A different level of discernment exists in the first actor’s expectations as compared to the second. The first actor committed to “figuring out” the components that make up a scene in order learn lines, but the second actor expected to “just memorize” by performing in a scene. Significantly, the second actor also recognized a lack of individual preparation in retrospect: “I would definitely have memorized a lot sooner because I could have gotten even more character work...if I’d been off book sooner...” (Student F). The actor may have compromised by not “drilling lines” but continued to emphasize memorization and character. Just as unconsciously, the second actor adapted with less flexibility in response to Kaiser’s approach.

Within this example a potential for flexibility exists in the opportunity to approach the text in a different way. Both actors did not already consider this approach as part of their individual processes of preparation. Both of the actors attempted to adapt with flexibility when faced with an expectation in the rehearsal process that did not align with their individual processes of preparation. The first actor adapted with more

dramaturgical awareness than the second by discerning the structures of the play in response to this challenge. However, both actors admit to not giving much time to individual preparation with lines away from rehearsals. The first actor indicates, “The rest of the play I memorized doing almost *no* work at home, mostly just finding the stuff in the rehearsals” (Student A). The second actor recalls, “I never really spent too much of [sic] sitting and preparing myself for rehearsal as much” (Student F). Also of note, the first actor was one of the first in the ensemble to rehearse without book in hand and the second was one of the last actors to put the book down.

#### Environmental Awareness

In the context of dramaturgical performance structures, environmental awareness ultimately asks the actor to consider a dramaturgical relationship between physical structures and story or language structures. Physical structures inform how the actor interacts physically or vocally with a stage space and within the actor/audience relationship. Physical structures may eventually enter into the actor’s consciousness as rehearsal progresses into performance, most predictably through technical rehearsals before a production opens. Design components like scenery, costumes, props, soundscapes, and projections function as physical structures that require the actor’s environmental awareness. However, physical structures that relate more fundamentally to architecture – proscenium or thrust orientation, for example – impact how the actor interacts physically or vocally with a stage space and how the actor negotiates a relationship with an audience. Prior to the addition of design elements, then, environmental awareness incorporates physical structures as a component of the actor’s dramaturgical script analysis.

Because the actor's physical interaction with a stage space precedes design elements and may even occur before blocking, the actor's conscious negotiation of physical structures suggests potential for movement. OSF models this function of environmental awareness especially well because of its diverse venues. Former OSF artistic director Henry Woronicz offers pointed advice to Festival directors when he says, "You have to pay attention to the space that you're in..." (Jeffrey 113). He refers specifically to how the Allen Elizabethan Theatre's architectural facade encourages minimal scenic design. Woronicz encourages directors to embrace the architecture rather than ignore it, and his advice applies equally to the actor's environmental awareness. For instance, the actor might recognize how a tendency toward minimal design places greater emphasis on individual or group movement onstage. The actor's may explore movement as dramaturgical punctuation of a text more profoundly in that case. OSF's founding artistic director, Angus Bowmer, also connected the physical structures of OSF's outdoor stage to blocking. In a chapbook, Bowmer discusses "zones of interest" within the architectural structures of the Allen Elizabethan Theatre (*Ashland Elizabethan Stage* 19). He highlights how effective acting areas like the forestage, the sides, and the gallery level reveal opportunities for staging. To build on the earlier example, the actor's awareness of effective acting areas on OSF's outdoor stage may work in tandem with an understanding of movement as punctuation.

Space and movement reflexively influence the actor's environmental awareness of sound, which is why a conscious negotiation of physical structures also impacts vocal interaction with a stage space. Physical structures fundamentally determine the actor's effort toward vocal projection and audibility. Again, the Allen Elizabethan Theatre offers

a practical example. OSF's outdoor stage has proven structurally difficult for actors as an outdoor venue, partly because ambient noise around the theater has increased steadily over the years. The addition of a pavilion in 1992 attempted to address the issue structurally by decreasing ambient noise. More recently, Scott Kaiser suggests two additional factors that complicate the actor's vocal interaction with OSF's outdoor stage space: (1) fewer actors train for vocal projection in an outdoor space; and (2) the Festival now aesthetically prefers "contemporary speaking styles" and "contemporary American speech" in the outdoor space (Kaiser). Of actors specifically, Kaiser says, "We have very few actors who can do both, can sound just sort of easy and natural in American and fill up the space with sound. It's very tricky" (Kaiser). As a current solution, OSF added a "Sound Enhancement System" for the 2014 outdoor season. According to the news release, "The new system, which includes new microphones, speakers, and sound control, is designed to enhance the voice, bringing clarity, articulation and projection throughout the venue" (OSF, "OSF Implements"). Like the facade and the pavilion, the sound system represents a physical structure that reflexively influences the actor's vocal interaction with a stage space.

This kind of environmental awareness often influences preparation for voice and text professionals, which also suggests specific applications for vocal exploration of a stage space by the actor. David Carey elaborates on particular considerations:

There are technical demands in terms of really making sure that your voice is well supported, that there is muscularity in consonants and resonance in vowels and things like that, and that your intention and energy is playing all the way through to the end of the thought, to the end of words. Also that your performance is embracing the house; that doesn't necessarily mean you're facing out, but that you're conscious that you're playing to that space, and asking that space to be connected to you. (D. Carey)

Expectations for muscularity, resonance, and energy require vocal exploration on the actor's part, which intersects profoundly with language structures for a play as well. Further into the rehearsal process, staging choices may also complicate how the actor "embraces the house" vocally. For instance, Rebecca Clark Carey refers to "acoustically tricky" staging that could require the actor to focus on alignment, breath, or posture in order to punctuate story (R. Carey). She also offers a particular example related to puppetry in OSF's recent production of *White Snake*. The actors had to adapt to using puppets onstage and maintaining audibility. As these examples suggest, exploring a stage space vocally extends the actor's exploration of dramaturgical voice to physical structures that will intersect with language or story structures of a play. This investigation especially informs how punctuation of dramaturgical information could be accomplished vocally or physically within a particular stage space.

Through a conscious environmental awareness, the actor integrates physical structures as dramaturgical script analysis in relation to story and language structures, but also in relation to an audience. Physical structures equally inform the actor/audience relationship because the actor punctuates dramaturgical information for the benefit of an audience. This occurs practically in the effort of storytelling, but it also occurs practically with regard to the actor's visibility and audibility. For example, David Carey considers both the "organic nature of the language" as well as the demands of the stage space: "The language is *essential* to what the character is *doing* in any particular scene. And that needs to be inhabited. ... Although, on a very basic level, what I'm looking for is that an actor makes sense and can be heard" (D. Carey). Similarly, Rebecca Clark Carey's reference to puppetry illustrates how an "acoustical" awareness of the stage space fuses

environmental awareness with story and language structures in relation to an audience and in relation to design elements for a production. Regarding the addition of a sound system for OSF's outdoor stage, the actor may have to project sound in a different way with the addition of microphones, but attention to physical or vocal punctuation remains as integral to the process of putting the play's dramaturgy into action. Practical realities of space, movement, and sound intersect with the actor's exploration of story or language structures and also invite an awareness of the actor/audience relationship.

The experience of environmental awareness does not factor significantly in the *Arcadia* case study, but minor instances serve to illustrate the concept. For instance, one of the director's production concerns suggests how environmental awareness factored into the design process. The location for the production, the Robinson Theatre, is a 300-seat proscenium theater. Given the actors' various levels of vocal training, Kaiser requested that sound projection be considered in the scenic design to help the actors with audibility in performance (Kaiser, "First Production Meeting"). Ultimately, the play's one-room setting offered an opportunity to bring the action downstage, closer to the audience. Scene Designer Jerry Hooker created realistic walls and windows as a facade, but added extra panels at the top of the walls to focus sound out into the house. Admittedly, this example reveals a practical experience of environmental awareness within the production process for *Arcadia*, but does not point significantly to actor preparation.

With regard to environmental awareness as actor preparation, Kaiser's ongoing focus on operative words most profoundly suggests how the actor might explore environmental awareness while engaging in dramaturgical script analysis with story and

language structures. During one rehearsal in particular, Kaiser sat far back in the house so that he could listen for operative words during the run of scenes. He coached the actors to “serve it up” with clarity, which meant the actors needed to emphasize operative words vocally and with as much individual clarity of meaning as possible (Kaiser, “October 23 Rehearsal”). Complementing Kaiser’s focus on operative words in rehearsal, focus on breath support and volume in dialect work also immersed the actors in considerations of sound as environmental awareness. For the most part, however, the actors who participated in the case study interviews did not demonstrate environmental awareness with regard to their recollections of the production process or of their individual preparation.

Still, one of the actors in the case study made a unique connection between punctuation of story and language structures that borders on an understanding of environmental awareness. The example relates to how the actor prepared to execute physical blocking and emphasis on operative words with the timing agreed upon in rehearsals. The actor described preparation before each performance as follows:

It’s sort of like doing your own personal fight call. Yeah, that was kind of what I would do before each *Arcadia* performance. I’d go through all my scenes even if I was sure that I had the line. I went through in my mind, just letting the scene unfold, imagining where I was onstage and what I was doing during that line, the sort of reaction that I might have, maybe even practicing faces in the mirror. (Student C)

The “personal fight call” before performances actually echoes the same actor’s preparation before rehearsals with regard to story and language structures: “You know, for the blocking rehearsals, I definitely would glance at the – I’d look through the notes I’d taken on my script and to the side during the read-throughs for clarification on what’s going on in the scene” (Student C). The attention to dramaturgical structures in self-

rehearsal transfers to the actor's focus on physical and vocal awareness as a pre-performance "fight call." Imagining how a scene progresses within the stage space reflects visualization as exploration, just as practicing reactions in the mirror reflects physical exploration. Dramaturgical script analysis would encourage this actor to extend a similar care to environmental awareness as individual preparation, prior to rehearsals or performance.

### Exchange

OSF's community relationships model how the actor may consider artistic exchange in relation to a dramaturgical sensibility. Over many years, OSF gradually decreased its reliance on direct community participation, although this kind of patron involvement sustained the organization during its early years. Currently, fewer volunteers contribute to daily operations of the Festival through in-kind contributions of labor or materials, but the Festival continues to operate with community mindedness. For instance, membership sustains OSF through community buy-in, which literally means money paid to become a member but also means volunteer opportunities for members as well as auxiliary organizations made up of members. In turn, OSF sustains its membership through theatrical performances as well as through programs that generate member investment in the artistic processes of production. OSF's community mindedness thereby demonstrates a complex reciprocity, achieving what founder Angus Bowmer referred to as a community "artistic project" (*As I remember* 160). Inspired by OSF's community relationships, an awareness of reciprocity infuses the actor's dramaturgical sensibility with a practical ideal: exchange, or mutual benefit through collaborative interaction. In this context, exchange applies to the actor's interaction with dramaturgical

structures of a play, with other artists, and with an audience. Exchange recognizes a need for give and take in that it requires the actor to consciously consider how the play, the other artists, and the audience complete a performance.

Practical application of exchange as a dramaturgical awareness becomes particularly imperative for the actor with regard to new playwriting. In fact, for other plays that do not adhere to the aesthetic of realism, dramaturgical structures may manifest in unfamiliar patterns – to actors as well as to audiences. Story structures may not follow a linear progression and language structures may purposefully avoid predictable associations of meaning. In such cases, the actor can offer clarity from moment to moment, but the audience must actively assemble meaning. The work of dramaturgical script analysis helps the actor provide that level of specificity and clarity, as already described. Considering exchange as a dramaturgical awareness allows the actor to share responsibility, or to let the play and the audience do their part. Patrice Pavis has suggested that in the twenty-first century, “Writing will seek out the actor-dramaturg, who will be needed both to embody it and to complete it” (“Premature Synthesis” 79). New playwriting calls upon the audience to complete a performance as well, as Pavis also recognized:

Spectators will no longer have any settled criteria for evaluating these plays, except for immediate use, the pleasure of the text, or the desire to answer this text with another – a text that also escapes all norms and rules of performance, unless it is the rule that regulates a small group of theatre fans for an instant. (79)

Pavis views the lack of “settled criteria” as a means for the audience to experience the “pleasure” of moment to moment assembly along with the actor, and he acknowledges how this experience occurs “for an instant.” For that instant, which could represent one

moment or the larger instant in which the play occurs, the actor cannot assume a greater responsibility for audience perception than the play provides. As a conscious consideration of performance structures, exchange embraces dramaturgical reciprocity.

The same guidance applies to realistic plays, but even then the actor may assume responsibility for how an audience understands a text in performance. This tendency recalls Douthit's suggestion that, "...actors take on more work than they need to. They work harder and against plays almost more than they work with plays" (Douthit). The *Arcadia* case study suggests this phenomenon occurs even in relation to a mostly realistic play. For example, the two actors who felt responsible for making sure the audience would understand the scientific or mathematic concepts represent an instance of taking on more work than needed. One of these actors spoke of making the language and concepts "legible" to an audience: "...for this play and for the language it was necessary because, I suppose, not a lot of people will really follow the language the way that I do. So what I have to do is to make that understandable, to make that legible to them" (Student D). The other actor recalled worrying about how the audience would follow along: "But I think the real challenge came in just worrying about whether or not the audience was going to respond or understand everything that was happening. And trying to figure out ways in which I could help facilitate that understanding for the audience, that was the biggest challenge for me, I think" (Student B). Like resonance, exchange acknowledges a dramaturgical sensibility within the audience. As a component of the actor's dramaturgical sensibility, exchange acknowledges the actor's tendency to work against the play, especially in an effort to provide clarity for an audience. Ultimately, the actor cannot control such things. The play must do its part, and so must the audience.

Exchange functions practically within the actor's preparation and in conjunction with other elements of dramaturgical script analysis. For instance, through resonance the actor may map a difference between what the actor, the character, and the audience might know about a particular point of entry into the play. That awareness suggests an opportunity with regard to exchange as well, most readily in the revelation of how the audience members will need to assemble meaning more or less actively. An awareness of exchange also recognizes how other actors – and other artists – may provide a conduit to understanding that a single actor cannot. In *Arcadia*, for example, the revelation of the hermit's identity through the play's structural collisions cannot be rushed. Yet various actors may punctuate pertinent information that helps to reveal the hermit's identity as the story and language structures unfold. To offer a brief view of how this might work, the following suggests shared punctuation: the actor playing Septimus lays a foundation; the actor playing Bernard muddles it; the actor playing Hannah rebuilds it; and the actor playing Thomasina finally helps to complete it. Exchange functions as a practical measure of discernment, encouraging the actor to work *with* the play rather than *against* the play. And even then, is it possible that the audience may not attend to every nuance that dramaturgical script analysis reveals? Absolutely.

### Summary

The three broad categories of awareness relating to story, language, and performance structures outline a scope for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility. Dramaturgical script analysis functions as the process through which the actor engages a dramaturgical sensibility in practice. It establishes the framework of a practical dramaturgy for actors. The case study examples from *Arcadia* provide real-time

outcomes through the experience of actors involved with a play written in the style of realism. The next chapter will apply this process to contemporary plays that employ “crossover poetics.” When the actor approaches a play that treats language as both a structure and puzzle more fully than *Arcadia*, or when the actor approaches a play that employs polyvocal strategies that resist characterization, practical dramaturgy still offers a means to identify what may be of “use” to the actor. Moving ahead, a dramaturgical sensibility in practice benefits the actor’s work when a play’s story and language structures escape “all norms and rules of performance” (Pavis, “Premature Synthesis” 79). In situations where the dramaturg functions as a creative role within the production team, collaboration between actor and dramaturg could benefit from shared attention to the play. In instances where a dramaturg is not part of the production team, the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility could fill that gap.

Many of the *Arcadia* case study actors encountered dramaturgical structures profoundly *as actors* for the first time through this production process. Analyzing the actors’ expectations and their mostly unconscious encounters with a dramaturgical sensibility suggests several tendencies, but two profoundly coincide with my hope for a practical dramaturgy for actors. First, the actors generally did not engage in dramaturgical script analysis as preparation, but they readily incorporated dramaturgical tools through group table work and rehearsals for this production. To put it another way, they willingly employed dramaturgical preparation and recognized its benefits. Second, however, following the project the actors maintained a distinction between character analysis and the “technical” work that leads to dramaturgical discoveries. Thus, despite how most of the actors benefitted from table work, they did not recognize how dramaturgical script

analysis could parallel character analysis as preparation. The actors' willingness to benefit from a dramaturgical sensibility, but not to view it as an ongoing process, reveals a resistance to – but also a need for – a practical dramaturgy for actors.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> I also served as dialect coach for the project. Performances occurred in Eugene, Oregon at the Robinson Theatre, University of Oregon, November 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23 of 2013.

<sup>2</sup> An interview with the actor playing the character of Lady Croom could not be arranged within the timeframe required.

<sup>3</sup> Benedetti's translation of Stanislavski uses the term *supertask*, as represented in the title for Chapter 15 of *An Actor's Work*: "The Supertask, Throughaction." *Throughaction* equates to *through-line* of actions just as *supertask* equates to *superobjective*. Benedetti's acting text, *The Actor At Work*, uses the terms *superobjective* and *through-line*. American acting vocabulary more commonly those terms as well, which suggests cause for confusion in the translation.

<sup>4</sup> John Fleming compares *Arcadia's* structure to deterministic chaos and quotes Stoppard in reference to the bifurcations of an algorithm into chaos (Fleming, *Stoppard's Theatre* 195). In his own words, Fleming summarizes: "Thus, as with chaotic systems in the physical world, there are a series of bifurcations and even within the chaotic region there are pockets of order; and so overall, this nonlinear play exhibits a fine, underlying structure" (195).

<sup>5</sup> It is not entirely clear which of her early algorithms Valentine uses because Thomasina first attempts to plot a mathematical equation for an apple leaf in Scene Three, and later references her "rabbit equation" in Scene Seven (Stoppard 37, 77).

<sup>6</sup> Recurring margin notes merit attention within the overall structure as well because they suggest a collision of location and time through content *and* action. Thomasina's margin note impacts Hannah's research, just as the margin notes written by Septimus – not Byron, as it turns out – impact Bernard's research.

<sup>7</sup> I do not suggest cause and effect in Septimus's fate based on the unrequited love relationship between he and Thomasina, as in: Septimus retreats from the world because of his lost love. Further analysis reveals more complex circumstances also apply.

<sup>8</sup> Stoppard invents Peacock's essay and letter, as he does the other historical documents, though they are often based on actual people or real publications like the *Cornhill Magazine*. This essay figures chronologically in 1862, well after the hermit's death (Septimus's death) in 1834 (Stoppard 25-26).

<sup>9</sup> In his investigation, Fleming provides a useful comparison regarding the sciences of *Arcadia*: "Deterministic chaos is a hybrid of math and science that describes dynamic systems (any general field of action/behavior). Newton's classical mechanics describes an orderly world. Systems operate via clear-cut cause-and-effect mechanisms, and there is inevitable determinism; given enough information one can predict future events. This traditional view of the natural world has proven to be incomplete. Scientists now believe that the greater part of nature follows the rules of deterministic chaos. Though determined by equations that are understood, natural systems such as the weather, population growth patterns, and heartbeat rhythms behave in ways that cannot be predicted. Thus, simple equations can create complex patterns." (*Stoppard's Theatre* 193).

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<sup>10</sup> Douthit randomly chooses 1812 and does not directly reference *Arcadia*.

<sup>11</sup> The students may have felt it necessary to mention this preparation because I was the dialect coach as well as the interviewer. However, it seems they also responded in earnest based on the following sampling: a few of the interviewees specifically mentioned additional dialect efforts through watching television shows and movies (Student C and E); one mentioned trying to speak only in dialect on a road trip (Student F); another admitted to, "...a little bit, not as much as I should have but a little bit..." of work with the materials (Student B).

<sup>12</sup> With regard to identifying structures of dramatic language in particular, Cicely Berry's *Voice and the Actor* or *The Actor and The Text* offer examples for individual use and exploration without prior training.

<sup>13</sup> *The Verbal Arts Workbook* investigates five elements that also benefit actors without a particular vocal technique: sound, image, sense, rhythm, and argument. The workbook uses different texts and exercises to explore the elements practically. The process of working through the five elements suggests how discoveries made through dramaturgical script analysis may be investigated further.

<sup>14</sup> For the sake of clarity, I define monologue as a section of text that may read between one to two minutes when spoken aloud. This frame considers the standard length of an audition piece for actors, also referred to as a monologue. Certainly, any line that extends beyond one sentence could be considered a monologue, but the shorter the monologue the less disparity between dialogue and monologue.

<sup>15</sup> I explain this concept using John Locke's simple and complex modes in Chapter II.

<sup>16</sup> *The Verbal Arts Workbook* refers to "key word" in a similar manner. The introduction for the third chapter about "sense" suggests the audience may not think, "... 'Hmm, that actor didn't seem to know what the *key word* was in that sentence', but they won't be able to follow your argument, and they will lose interest in you very quickly" (Carey 59, my emphasis). When introducing "sense" earlier in the book, a similar intent appears: "It will also help you focus your energy on those words and phrases that convey what is most significant in a speech or scene" (Carey xi).

<sup>17</sup> See Chapter II for a detailed description of this instance.

<sup>18</sup> I also explain this concept in relation to John Locke in Chapter II.

<sup>19</sup> The "off book" date for a UO University Theatre production targets a day when the actors need to have their lines memorized so that they no longer carry their script (book) in hand.

## CHAPTER V

### PRACTICAL DRAMATURGY FOR ACTORS

“At this point, the piece, or play, no longer exists to illustrate (a point of view, a time and place) but becomes experience itself – autonomous, ineffable. At this point too, it finally becomes necessary to choose between reading and watching – between trying to figure out what’s going on and simply paying attention, out of curiosity.” – Jeffrey M. Jones

Categories of awareness outlined for the actor’s dramaturgical sensibility in the previous chapter also establish a process of practical dramaturgy for actors. As a method of individual preparation, practical dramaturgy parallels character analysis. It intentionally readies the actor to enter a rehearsal process, but through collaborative reading and practical exploration with a play rather than with a character. Practical dramaturgy involves dramaturgical script analysis within three broad categories of story, language, and performance structures. Under the category of story structures, the actor reads the play with collaborative awareness in order to explore structure, story, and resonance. With regard to language structures, the actor notices what the play offers in order to explore dramaturgical punctuation, allegorical layering, and the unique mode of a play. Performance structures extend the actor’s dramaturgical awareness to ensemble concerns related to flexibility, environmental awareness, and exchange. The previous chapter outlines dramaturgical script analysis using Tom Stoppard’s *Arcadia*, a play that primarily employs strategies of realism but also offers a point of entry into new playwriting techniques. Oppositely, this chapter applies dramaturgical script analysis to plays that primarily employ new playwriting strategies but retain traces of realism. The categories and elements for dramaturgical script analysis remain consistent. Yet the shift

in playwriting strategies allows me to consider how new playwriting in particular would benefit from the actor's dramaturgical preparation.

At this juncture, I also offer a reminder about the goals of a practical dramaturgy for actors. I do not suggest we discard Stanislavski's system or character analysis. The actor's work will continue to rely on these necessary and beneficial tools. However, new playwriting strategies also resist these tools in many cases, rendering them less helpful without a similar attention to dramaturgical structures. In response to that need, dramaturgical script analysis may offer a means for the actor to discern which tools will benefit a play's structural storytelling. A practical dramaturgy for actors does not therefore constitute a new method of acting in response to new playwriting. Rather, it offers a different approach to the acting process through dramaturgical awareness, which does not factor into most actor training at present in the United States. Dramaturgical script analysis therefore attends to the unique structures of a play rather than assume those structures will reveal a recognizable through-line of actions for a character. A similar reminder about new playwriting strategies will suggest why this may constitute a necessary concern for actors.

In *New Playwriting Strategies: Language and Media in the 21st Century*, Paul C. Castagno proposes that techniques of new playwriting, once considered avant-garde, have now integrated into mainstream playwriting. Techniques of new playwriting employ language in order to achieve, "...virtuosic writing for the theater" (2nd ed. 14). In Chapter II, I propose that while each playwright may use language differently, the use of language as both a structure and a puzzle, and the use of words as objects may be considered characteristic of "virtuosic writing." Castagno also identifies how

polyvocality typifies new playwriting, which he defines further as “multiple language strategies and sources” or “different speech forms” within the same play (22). This deviates from playwriting in the style of realism, which relies on conversational dialogue and character-specific language – characters written with individual and consistent patterns of speech (17). Castagno also recognizes a hybrid: crossover poetics (123). He suggests a second generation of language playwrights now blends new playwriting and traditional strategies more fully than first-generation language playwrights like Len Jenkin, Eric Overmyer, and Mac Wellman:

Crossover poetics defines the integration or merging of language playwriting strategies in traditional dramaturgical formats. This results in a blurring of distinctions so that it is now difficult to categorize the mainstream and new playwriting as strictly counter-movements. The outcome has shifted the ground of the avant-garde over the past decade, as border crossings have become the rule rather than the exception. Many playwrights now draw upon diverse aesthetics in creating hybrid plays. (123)

Because of crossover poetics, the integration of new playwriting strategies into the mainstream, and many instances in which first-generation language playwrights now lead playwriting programs, Castagno further suggests: “The evidence is clear that language playwriting and playwrights now represent the dominant pedagogy in training playwrights” (3-4). I agree that language playwriting techniques have found an audience in mainstream media and theatrical production, and in many of the ways Castagno highlights. Nonetheless, my approach with *Arcadia* equally assumes that crossover poetics may blend backward as well as forward in time in relation to playwriting. Stoppard’s 1993 play includes complex language structures and uses language as both a structure and a puzzle, although Stoppard’s virtuosic writing does not employ words as objects to the same degree as Wellman’s.

Castagno's consideration of theatrical, multivocal, and equivocal characters also benefits discussions of acting in relation to new playwriting. However, Castagno asserts that techniques of actor training currently meet the demands of new playwriting, which I challenge (2nd ed. 4). According to Castagno, theatrical characters fundamentally differ from characters written in the style of realism because they are not psychologically motivated (73). In addition, a multivocal character requires the actor's virtuosity because it "...bulks multiple speech strategies in a single character" (22). An equivocal character engages the actor's capacity to "...switch or transform from one character into another and back again" (19). These character qualities also require what Castagno calls "external" and "performative" approaches by the actor (78). In response to these demands, Castagno asserts that actor training now provides methods that emphasize "corporeal" acting rather than internal, psychological character development (4). He also assumes such approaches provide actors the necessary tools to "...move seamlessly across orthodox training boundaries" (4). Having confirmed a persistent bias toward internal approaches on the part of student actors in the *Arcadia* case study, I continue to think otherwise. Applying dramaturgical script analysis to the plays in this chapter allows me to demonstrate that the demands of new playwriting require a dramaturgical approach in addition to character driven methods – physical or psychological.

Castagno's recent edition calls attention to women writers among the second generation of language playwrights who use crossover poetics, which I support through a different approach in this chapter as well. As in the first edition of *New Playwriting Strategies*, the second offers extensive examples from Jenkin, Overmyer, and Wellman as first-generation playwrights. With regard to crossover poetics in the second edition,

Castagno especially includes examples from plays by Sarah Ruhl and Susan-Lori Parks in an effort to highlight women playwrights, "...who have emerged over the last decade" (2nd ed. 2). Castagno also gives some attention to one of the plays I will sample in this chapter: *Apparition: An Uneasy Play of the Underknown* by Anne Washburn. Exploring Washburn's play through the process of dramaturgical script analysis allows me to undertake a more detailed investigation of this work than Castagno's project allows. While Castagno cannot explore the play in great detail, he does offer instances of language, character, or scene structures from this text – among others – to illustrate various language strategies of new playwriting. In this chapter I also consider a play and playwright not featured by Castagno: *God's Ear* by Jenny Schwartz.

I include plays by Washburn and Schwartz in this chapter for several reasons, although my primary goal relates to promoting the work of women playwrights. I agree with Castagno's assessment that his first edition focused mainly on "male progenitors of language playwriting" (2nd ed. 2). I also aim to feature playwrights who have less mainstream exposure than Ruhl or Parks. Still, these particular plays by Schwartz and Washburn are available in print, either single play editions or recent anthologies that include other "crossover" plays. Samuel French published *God's Ear* in 2009, and *Apparition* is available in *New Downtown Now*, a 2006 anthology edited by Mac Wellman and Young Jean Lee. Access to these plays also encourages consideration of Washburn and Schwartz as playwrights within a context of similar work, beyond any attempt to address gender imbalance or exposure.<sup>1</sup> One further consideration applies with regard to choosing these playwrights: Schwartz and Washburn continue to work as playwrights. The plays explored in this chapter may eventually be considered alongside

their newer work, although the new plays may engage with language strategies differently. Both playwrights had new plays produced in New York in 2013. Playwright's Horizons produced Washburn's *Mr. Burns* and Schwartz's *Somewhere Fun* premiered at the Vineyard Theatre. *Somewhere Fun* was also published in 2013, *Mr. Burns* in 2014.<sup>2</sup>

A final reason for selecting these works relates more generally to the process of developing new plays. This did not factor as readily into the analysis of *Arcadia*, but deserves mention here. By working with newly developed plays, the actor may recognize an ongoing, collaborative effort that shapes a new play in production. This awareness would complement the actor's approach to dramaturgical script analysis. For example, a short preface for *Apparition* appears in *New Downtown Now*: "*Apparition* was developed in the Soho Rep Writer/Director Lab in New York City and workshopped at Soho Rep in January 2003 and premiered in November 2003 at Chashama in New York City" (Washburn 313). A similar kind of history appears in the published edition of *God's Ear*. Actors who have not contributed to the developmental process of a new play might quickly flip the page to get on with reading. However, recognizing the process of shaping a new play *as* a process may cause the actor to consider collaborative reading and practical exploration more deliberately. Through dramaturgical script analysis, the actor notices how a play takes shape dramaturgically. Similarly, by working with a living playwright, the actor's awareness of dramaturgical structures increases through everyday contact with the process of playwriting. Oppositely, the actor may more easily disconnect from this process in productions of long-published or well-known scripts. Viewing dramaturgy as an active, ongoing process of development forges yet another link between the playwright's dramaturgical voice and the actor's, regardless of whether the actor

takes part in the developmental process for a play or whether the playwright attends rehearsals for a production.

The format of this chapter will follow the process of dramaturgical script analysis already established. For each play, I will offer results from analysis related to story, language, and performance structures. Without consideration of these plays in relation to a particular production, analysis of performance structures decreases somewhat. Nonetheless, I will offer insights that arise through analysis with each broad category as well as the elements within those categories. I also note in the previous chapter that the order of working through categories or elements of dramaturgical script analysis may shift. In other words, the actor might enter dramaturgical analysis through language structures rather than story structures. Such instances occur here as well, especially in relation to *God's Ear* because the story and language structures uniquely intertwine in this work. An expectation that dramaturgical script analysis intentionally leads to different discoveries by different actors continues to apply as well. The outcomes that follow suggest potential for what I would bring to a rehearsal process through individual preparation. To bring this discussion full circle in relation to dramaturgical efforts in practice, my analysis outcomes reveal how I have listened, questioned, and prepared for an unknown journey with these two plays.

*Apparition: An Uneasy Play of the Underknown*

The title and subtitle of Washburn's play represents the actor's first clues toward dramaturgical script analysis: "*Apparition: An Uneasy Play of the Underknown.*" Without consulting a dictionary, the word *apparition* summons the notion of unexpected appearances and encounters with ghosts or other visitors not of the human world. The

subtitle further proposes the *uneasy* and *underknown* experience of apparitions, admitting the play will embrace lack of human ability to explain otherworldly visitations. In short, the actor should expect surprise encounters and few – if any – easy explanations. A list of characters that reads “A, B, C, D, E” supports these early revelations as well. These character designations ultimately do not represent consistent characters in the play, but they do designate which actors speak which lines. Moving to the first page of the play, C has the first lines. They appear in parentheses: “(something watches and waits for you there / something is trembling atop the stair / something believes it is a mighty scare)” (Washburn 315). Within these lines the author does not include capitalization or punctuation, the lines appear in poetic stanzas, and the parenthetical frame suggests an aside begins the play – a whisper of sorts about an “underknown” entity. A sly sense of humor also emerges in the singsong quality of the verse lines, creating a whimsical entry into the play. The voice of C enters and disappears quickly, similar to the “something” that watches, waits, trembles, and believes. For dramaturgical script analysis, these clues suggest how the actor must invest in the uneasy rather than try to explain it.

In the introduction to *New Downtown Now*, Jeffrey M. Jones offers a similar suggestion. He advises how recognizing the recurrence of elements within *Apparition*, rather than trying to define a through-line or “narrative arc,” will allow the reader to navigate Washburn’s play (J. Jones xiv). Jones relates this effort to reading for patterns instead of traditional story structures or narrative. Like several contemporary dramaturgs, Jones prefers *pattern* to *structure* in this context. His introduction, titled “How to Read a Curious Play,” offers this advice for each play in the anthology, not just in relation to *Apparition*. I relay that advice here as a caution about the text samples that follow.

Analysis for language structures will focus on the instability of punctuation and grammar, awkward phrasing, and instances where character text includes self-interruptions. This occurs overtly in the text samples, making them appear as if they have been typed incorrectly. A more intricate look at the language structures will follow an introduction to the play's story structures in order to provide a broader understanding of how language contributes to the play's encounters with unseen forces.

### Structure

As the initial clues suggest, *Apparition*'s structure offers a plurality of interconnected but non-linear encounters with unseen forces. These encounters are not delineated as scenes, but they usually begin with some kind of introduction. The first encounter, for example, introduces an unseen "something" through the parenthetical verse, and the words that follow give a name to the invisible force: "The Dark Morton" (Washburn 315). The next encounter occurs when E begins to speak in a made up Latin-like language two pages later: "Luraditur, sola fiscator" (317). E explains soon after, "It isn't real Latin, I made it up. It helps me to concentrate" (318). E then attempts to teach the language to B. A third encounter follows the false Latin lessons, but its introduction includes a series of shifts:

*Music.*

E. Where there is Latin, there also there is candles.

*Light change: candles, or candelique lighting.*

A and B and C and D and E:

Lorimysticor

A: I HAVE A STRANGE INFIRMITY WHICH IS NOTHING TO THOSE THAT KNOW ME. (319)

These shifts occur through stage directions as well as dialogue. First, the stage direction inserts music, but leaves the kind of music open to interpretation. Then, E concludes the prior discussion of Latin but also invokes the image of candles. Next, the stage direction requests a “candlesque” lighting change, after which the characters speak a final word of false Latin together. A’s line that follows quotes from the third act of *Macbeth*, spoken by the title character of that play during the banquet scene, just before the ghost of Banquo appears (Shakespeare 3.4.85-86). The line appears in all capital letters in *Apparition*, even though it does not include quotation marks to indicate citation directly from the other play. The capital letters, however, invite emphasis of some kind by the speaker to denote the new encounter. Within the play’s larger structures, this line also introduces what will become more encounters with *Macbeth*, through which the characters in *Apparition* paraphrase, quote, and question unseen forces in Shakespeare’s play. As *Apparition* progresses, the technique of introducing various encounters repeats as well, although each introduction involves a different strategy.

The introduction of each encounter in *Apparition* also illustrates what Castagno discusses as “beats” and “beat segments” in relation to new playwriting. In traditional playwriting, beats organize linear action into progressive sections, much like scene breaks denote the ending of one section of a play and the beginning of another. For realistic acting, actors identify beats within dialogue or through stage directions in order to explore flow and rhythm of a scene. Beats may vary in length but generally shift with changes of subject and tactic or with entrances and exits of characters. Thus, tracking beats throughout a play may help to reveal character through-line for the actor as well. Differently, Castagno proposes that beats function with a “potential for disruption” in

new playwriting: “The beat becomes the site of innovation, shifting the direction of the character or play, and by doing so, contradicting the expected or conventional” (2nd ed. 145-146). Yet he also identifies how beat segments consist of, “The building of several beats around a given action or topic...” (165). This mirrors how longer beats operate in traditional playwriting, although beat segments in new playwriting may shift direction without following a linear progression of action. The encounters in *Apparition* function within the play’s story structures in both ways, which may allow the actor to organize dialogue and action into beats or beat segments.

Castagno also identifies the “marker” in relation to beats and beat segments in new playwriting, which *Apparition* employs in a different fashion. Castagno defines the marker as follows: “The marker can be an exit, an exit line or button, a pause or stage direction that underlines or defines a transition” (2nd ed. 170). Castagno even instructs the director and actor to look for markers by identifying “shifts in the intention of the language” (171). He suggests these may be embodied onstage through dynamic variation in voice, gesture, or movement, advice that aligns with dramaturgical punctuation. However, a slight deviation occurs in *Apparition* with regard to markers because transitions are often defined through introductions rather than exits, or through a blended series of techniques as noted in the example above. While the beats and beat segments do unexpectedly shift or disrupt action, *Apparition*’s encounters also blur lines between the end of one beat segment and the beginning of another. Still, as the sample above suggests, markers signal the more subtle or blended shifts. The actor might therefore look for a *series* of markers in *Apparition* as a recurring method that introduces encounters

rather than looking for exit lines. This particular structure of “introduction” underpins each of the play’s nonlinear encounters with unseen forces.

## Story

Various encounters with the unseen in *Apparition* also reveal the play’s parallel stories. In fact, the structure and story work together through repetition of contexts, rather than through linear progression of different storylines. For instance, encounters with *Macbeth* occur multiple times throughout the play although each interjects different content and perspectives. The first includes plot points and moments within Shakespeare’s play told from the perspectives of *Apparition*’s characters. The second continues the retelling of *Macbeth* but includes different focal points within the story of Shakespeare’s play. A scene title marks the third encounter: “In the Lustrehouse” (Washburn 339). This instance involves the greatest deviation from the story components of *Macbeth* and incorporates *Apparition*’s characters as if they were performing in a production of Shakespeare’s play. The stage direction under the scene title reads: “*We are behind a heavy old-fashioned curtain. A, C, D and E wear masks. Periodically A peers through it and reports back*” (339). Through a repetition of contexts related to *Macbeth*, the unnamed characters within *Apparition* make no attempt to tell the full story of *Macbeth*, although they sometimes quote Shakespeare’s text verbatim. Rather, each encounter offers different perspectives: interpretations of scenes between Macbeth and the witches; individual views on the murders of King Duncan and Lady Macduff; renditions of Lady Macbeth’s sleepwalking scene and even her childhood. *Apparition* does not order these moments in a linear fashion, but momentary flashes of story erupt

that relate to other momentary flashes of story. These collaged plot points from *Macbeth* create new and parallel encounters with unseen forces in *Apparition*.

More parallel encounters with the unseen also occur throughout *Apparition*. For instance, encounters related to mysterious entrances into rooms or exits from rooms reverberate in different scenarios throughout the play. Similarly, encounters with doors create parallel story contexts – what lies behind a closed door or what might enter through a door, for example. A singular encounter even occurs between two demons, introduced as follows:

E: Listen. What is that? Listen.

Nonluminous Interlude

D: In the dark, something is reticulating.

*Two demons. D is feral. The moon is very bright.*

C: I took the bus here. Have you ever been on a bus? Probably not. They're very complicated. They're easy to get into once they are there, but you have to know where they will appear. (Washburn 332)

Conversation between the two demons continues, and a sly sense of humor again asserts itself through the context of otherworldly demons concerned with public transportation. Also in an equivocal character shift, the actor playing D becomes the “feral” second demon, a demon that does not know how to ride the bus. Identifying either the unique or parallel stories as they occur in various encounters may allow the actor to explore structural connections without trying to impose a story or character through-line onto the text of the play.

Interjections of the made up Latin language also return in parallel contexts within the play, which suggests another story structure. In the first instance, E creates the false Latin because, “It helps me to concentrate” (Washburn 318). Castagno uses the occurrence of the “faux Latin language” to demonstrate how a multivocal approach may,

“...juxtapose formal patterns, rhetorical strategies or foreignisms – whether real or concocted...” (2nd ed. 30). The false Latin does function in the play in this regard, but it also transforms the initial moment between two characters into a larger story structure within the play. Eventually, in extended sequences that serve as parallel story contexts, the characters all simultaneously speak the false Latin together (Washburn 331, 348). In essence, the false Latin creates shared moments for concentration – regrouping the actors and possibly providing respite for the audience – between the other encounters. Again, the actor may identify parallel encounters as useful structures without imposing through-line.

In fact, I encourage the actor to *embrace* the lack of through-line in *Apparition*. The play’s story, language, and performance structures work together to dismantle through-line, and this introduces a double bind for the actor who relies on character analysis. Without story through-line, character through-line disappears as well. In lieu of through-line, the actor may embrace the parallel story encounters in a different way. For example, an encounter occurs between B and E early in the play that is indicated by the stage direction, “*In an attic in the dark. The moonlight streams through a window but doesn’t illuminate them*” (Washburn 321). As the dialogue unfolds, E says the following line: “Yes, I died today, horribly, no, tonight, you killed me. With your knife. I startled you and you lunged up, half asleep, and jammed it through my throat” (323). Later in the play, a similar encounter echoes the first:

*Stage plunges into darkness.*

*Next scene is in the dark.*

B: Who is it Who is it Who’s there

*Pause.*

I know you're/there.\*

E: You cut me.

B: Oh.

*Pause.*

I cut you. Where are you?

*Beat.*

How badly (*Beat.*) Are you all right

E: I don't know. I can't *see*. Turn on the light.

B: It's burnt out.

E: Oh. All right. Well I'm bleeding. There's a lot of – oh – that thing they say about blood being slippery? It's true. (344-345)

The actors might try to create a history between B and E in order to understand these two encounters in the tradition of realism. This approach looks for cause and effect progression between the scenes, which inspires specificity in the actors' analysis about shared character circumstances. However, recognizing the parallel between scenes, but still viewing them as unique encounters, creates a different kind of specificity. By not focusing too rigidly on one set of character circumstances, the actor may allow an encounter to multiply, to become yet another interaction with the underknown. This alternative approach embraces the unique logic of the encounters in *Apparition*. In effect, this means the actor may explore parallel story encounters without imposing linearity or cause and effect progression for characters from one scene to another.

## Resonance

Resonance becomes a particularly useful tool for the actor in response to new playwriting strategies because it offers an alternative way for the actor to connect with the play. Mapping resonance in relation to *Apparition* reveals the practicality of this consideration, particularly because story and character structures resist analysis related to

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\* The forward slash suggests overlapping lines. An earlier instance of this device occurs in the play with a brief parenthetical note that indicates: "(overlapping)" (Washburn 327).

through-line of action. I suggest the actor consider “particle” as an entryway into *Apparition*. This notion springs from a literal mention of “dust” as a “particle” in one of the play’s encounters:

E: I came into the room and someone had just left. I rang the bell and the servant entered. She had a very plain face and a severe black dress and a starched white apron. Clearly it was the nineteenth century or something. She said – I said – before she could say anything I said, who has been in this room? Just now. Who has been here? She looked at me strangely, she said Miss, no one has been in this room. But I heard, I said – she ran a finger along the table and she lifted it toward me, dust tumbled from her finger, her finger left a channel in the dust on the table, dust swirled through the air around us, like snow, she said Miss, no one has been in this room. No one has been in this room for a hundred years.

C: People don’t know much about that particle, but they fear it all the same. (Washburn 328)

In this encounter, the character of E reveals the presence of another unseen “something.” E’s back and forth with the servant describes how the dust in the room remains undisturbed, regardless of the mysterious visitation. C’s line then intrudes, halting the poetic rendering of dust as a swirling snow-like presence and naming dust practically as a “particle.” The manner in which the idea of “particle” undercuts E’s fearful encounter serves the actor’s approach to resonance with this play. Structure and story form and reform in various configurations in *Apparition*, much like the unseen entities appear and reappear. The actor *must* employ a rhizomatic map that is “open and connectable in all of its dimensions” instead of “tracing” through-line of action (Deleuze and Guattari 12). Likewise, the actor need not fear how encounters and parallel stories multiply and layer within the play because that is how the story structures intentionally function. To track resonance even more literally, the actor may map “particle” entryways in relation to *Apparition*. Multiple entryways may occur in relation to “particles,” and I will offer one example in detail along with another example for further exploration.

The first example occurs near the end of the play. E speaks a three-page monologue. It retells an encounter that parallels the first experience with the servant and the dust. The following three excerpts appear within this monologue at different points:

I stopped  
and I eyeballed the room  
which is dusty, and which is still. (Washburn 349)

I am stopped and I am standing. In the room which is so dusty, and so still.  
(349)

that turn  
is the corner where I will look around  
is the long hallway that long hallway  
from the other way  
leading down into giving onto a door  
a door into a still and dusty room. (351)

E's monologue phrases and rephrases an encounter – or possibly multiple encounters – in a room that is both “dusty” and “still.” It eventually arrives at a moment in which E tries to cross through a door – the “door into a still and dusty room.” E then says, “My heart is pounding terribly but it is a muscle and I clench it and step forward. / And then from nowhere and nothing the room plunges into dark” (353). The sequence of lines that follows contributes a line from each character about the nature of darkness, ending with E's inability to “keep hold of the dark” due to the brightness of the moon's light:

A: It might be dark but at least it wasn't night

B: It might be pitch black but at least it wasn't night

C: First it was dark and then, later on, it was night

D: The moon, the moon was incredibly bright.  
It was melting, and trailing light.

E: I didn't want to open my eyes. I didn't want to open my eyes – the lids were brightening, I knew there was a lightening outside of my eyes, I squinched them tight shut but the darkness, I couldn't keep hold of the dark. (353)

With these lines, the play ends by shifting attention away from particles of dust in a somewhat startling reversal. The earlier encounter implies that dust particles remain undisturbed by the unseen presence, whereas the later encounter suggests something could make itself known through disturbed particles of light. E tries to “keep hold of the dark” in order to shut out what the light could finally reveal – presumably the unseen or the underknown. Searching for entryways into *Apparition* through “particles” thereby reveals intricate layers within and between the play’s encounters, including reversals and nonlinear connections.

Mapping “particles” may also help the actor map resonance with regard to the audience. If the actor finds the unfamiliar story and character structures challenging, the audience may find them challenging as well. To return to the initial entryway into resonance regarding dust, this encounter also provides a clue about resonance for the audience. When describing the servant, E says, “Clearly it was the nineteenth century or something” (Washburn 328). This line steps outside of the play to provide a self-referential context for the story in progress. By doing so, this line also invites the audience into the play differently. The rest of the monologue that follows, and the undercut response from E, thereby advises the audience in the same way it advises the actor: do not fear how encounters and parallel stories multiply and layer within the play because that is how the story structures intentionally function. Ultimately, the play ends without ever revealing the unseen, underknown entities that populate the play’s more mysterious encounters. An exception includes another reversal of expectations when the play offers an encounter with bus riding demons. Exposing demons that have practical concerns about human life may challenge expectations in a different way. In this case, the

encounter with demons also serves as a reversed instance of “particles” in a play of otherwise hidden, mysterious, or otherworldly apparitions. Still, because the play keeps its agreement about unseen entities with the audience, but also invites the audience to encounter apparitions, the actor may strive to do so as well.

A second example of mapping “particles” as an entryway into *Apparition* suggests an opportunity for further investigation of resonance. It involves how blood figures prominently in the play. The presence of blood – drops and cells...particles – especially suggests an entryway through encounters with *Macbeth* as well as through the possible stabbing encounters between B and E. Most notably, a reversal of expectations, much like the one that occurs at the play’s end, potentially exists in the second encounter between B and E. The characters cannot turn on the light because it has burnt out, which also supports how the play retains its agreement to not expose the unseen (Washburn 345). Mapping “particles” may therefore reveal potential disturbances through encounters with the unknown, despite how the play does *not* reveal the unknown outright. Toward further exploration with the encounters that relate to *Macbeth*, this approach may especially liberate the actor from realistic associations with Shakespeare’s play. Embracing the occurrence of “particles” may therefore benefit the actor’s approach to the play as well as the actor’s analysis of nonlinear encounters within the play.

### Language Structures

Language structures within *Apparition* appear in each of the text samples offered above. At first glance, these samples particularly illustrate several of the language strategies mentioned earlier: the instability of punctuation and grammar, awkward phrasing, and self-interruptions. Other language structures revealed through

dramaturgical script analysis relate to the play's use of prose and verse as well as dialogue and monologue. Allegorical layering also occurs more blatantly in *Apparition* than in *Arcadia*, which allows for consideration of words as objects more fully here. Lastly, I will offer two possible means of naming the unique mode of language in *Apparition*.

One of the more obvious language structures in *Apparition* relates to the instability of punctuation and grammar. In the discussion of structure, for example, one of the first excerpts reads awkwardly: "Where there is Latin, there also there is candles" (Washburn 319). This phrase mimics Latin translations into English, but awkwardly inserts an extra *there* into the sentence structure. Rules of grammar would dictate that this line be rephrased for clarity as well as for subject and verb agreement: "Where there is Latin, there *are* candles." If the writer insists on this exact assemblage of words, then punctuation ought to be added for emphasis: "Where there is Latin, there, also there, is candles." As the expected rules of grammar and punctuation consistently do not apply in *Apparition*, the actor may approach the instability of these constructs purposefully. Other phrases in the play continue to resist punctuation, and these offer clues for the actor's further exploration. For example, in the second stabbing encounter between B and E, B says, "Who is it Who is it Who's there" (344). The repetition of the word *who* indicates a question phrase, although a question mark does not appear – either at the end of each question or at the end of the line. Still, a capitalized "W" begins each occurrence of the word *who*, which indicates a division of three questions in the line even though question marks do not appear. If the play uses these structures intentionally, the actor must continue to apply different logic to unstable punctuation. For instance, giving extra

emphasis to the “W” in each occurrence of *Who*, but not pausing in the space where a question mark usually exists, creates a unique rhythm for the line.

Also regarding punctuation, the use of punctuation marks for quoted text varies in *Apparition*, which may create confusion if the actor does not look for intricate language structures. In the first encounter with *Macbeth*, for example, C retells Shakespeare’s version of the scene between Lady Macduff and her son. C remembers the final moments of this scene, which follows the messenger’s warning to Lady Macduff. The lines in *Apparition* read as follows:

...and then he exits and she says why, why must I flee, what have I done wrong, and then it’s like she slaps herself on the forehead sarcastically, she says well but of course, what world did I think I was living in: “What have I done to deserve this!?!”: listen to me! What audience did I think I was playing to? And then the murderers enter. (Washburn 320)

Within this small sample, a variance of quotation marks and paraphrase occurs. Quotation marks do not consistently denote spoken language, as in: and she says why, why must I flee. Rules of grammar indicate the line should appear differently: and she says, “Why? Why must I flee?” Later in the same section, a quoted line *does* appear: “What have I done to deserve this!?!” C’s line paraphrases a quote from Shakespeare’s play, but this line does not represent a direct quote. Because the text uses quotation marks differently than expected, the text also implies how the actor might explore dramaturgical punctuation differently. For instance, C might describe what Lady Macduff says with less vocal emphasis when quotation marks are *not* used, but the use of quotation marks could suggest the paraphrase requires more vocal emphasis. By contrast, the encounter in which C’s line occurs begins earlier with a direct quote from Shakespeare’s play. In *Apparition*, A speaks this quote and the text appears in all capital letters but without quotation marks:

“I HAVE A STRANGE INFIRMITY WHICH IS NOTHING TO THOSE THAT KNOW ME” (319). Ultimately, the actor’s attention to different written emphasis – especially within the context of unstable punctuation – creates opportunities for exploration of vocal emphasis and dramaturgical punctuation.

On the page, language forms in *Apparition* include verse as well as prose, and the verse instances also reveal rhyming lines. For example, C’s lines begin the play and include rhyming line endings through the words *there*, *stair*, and *scare* (Washburn 315). The lines that follow suggest this encounter involves the “Dark Morton” (315). A similar encounter occurs later in the play with the “Weevil Tender” (326). Rhyming line endings recur, although B speaks the lines: “I heard a knock I said who’s there? / I heard a knock. I thought I heard a shifting, or, voices. On the stair” (327). Again, the rhymes include *there* and *stair*, which echoes the first encounter and multiplies the parallel story context. With regard to language structures, noting the first occurrences of the rhyming verse invites the actor to look for other rhyming opportunities within the play. Such opportunities exist in *Apparition*. As a later example, the play ends with another rhyming sequence. Unlike the initial instances of rhyming text, which are spoken by a single voice, the closing text shares rhymes between A, B, C, D, and E. On second look this dialogue not only demonstrates resonance but also illustrates rhyming emphasis through line endings. The final words of each line are: *night*, *bright*, or *light*. Like the intricate layering of resonance with regard to story structures, identifying the first occurrence of verse leads to a more intricate layering of language structures. Identifying the *rhyming* verse may then lead to further exploration with dramaturgical punctuation of the rhymes.

As noted in relation to *Arcadia*, the occurrence of monologue as well as dialogue offers a language structure for the actor's exploration – especially when taking nothing about language for granted. As noted above, *Apparition* incorporates realistic patterns of prose as well as verse, and it does so in relation to both dialogue and monologue. Exploration may then consider how those language structures differ. However, dialogue and monologue in *Apparition* share a unique language structure: self-interruptions by the speaker. The excerpt below occurs in a monologue delivered by A. This particular section of text also exemplifies how self-interruption occurs in the play through both dialogue and monologue as well as how it appears with and without punctuation:

Did I have a drink? Yes, I could still, my hand was still cool, damp, the sweating drink I had I was by the window I had strolled over I had – and then I had lifted the window up – why would a person lift a window up after seeing after thinking they were seeing what I was thinking I was – and then I had slammed it down again... (Washburn 317)

A abruptly begins a new thought with “I was by the window” even though punctuation does not conclude the previous thought. In common grammar, a period could indicate a full stop, or an ellipsis could indicate a suspended thought. Neither punctuation mark appears here. The same thing happens with “after seeing after thinking they were seeing.” A shift in thought occurs quickly and without punctuation. However, the elongated dashes between “I had – and” as well as between “I was – and” recognizably denote an interrupted thought. In fact, the third elongated dash between “up – why” inserts an interruption within the interruption. Realistically, such self-interruptions occur in everyday speech, but the transfer between patterns on the page and spoken language might represent a challenge for actors with regard to language structures. As with the exploration of inconsistent punctuation marks, the actor's attention to written patterns

still creates opportunities for vocal exploration and dramaturgical punctuation even though the written patterns may involve their own logic.

*Apparition*'s structural encounters with the unseen provide another consideration of dialogue and monologue in tandem: how the actor may employ different speech patterns to engage with the audience. For instance, the self-referential admission by E offers an example from the previous text excerpts: "Clearly it was the nineteenth century or something" (Washburn 328). That instance signals a break with realistic conventions by referring to the story from inside the story. This discovery may also signal a break with realistic conventions because the actor could conceivably engage in an aside or direct address with the audience. The opening line of the play offers a similar ambiguity: "something watches and it waits for *you* there" (315, my emphasis). The word *you* implies second person address, which at least suggests the potential for direct conversation with the audience. Eventually, deciding how dialogue or monologue functions within the other performance structures becomes a collaborative decision with the director. Still, the actor must identify such possibilities in the language so that further exploration may occur in advance of rehearsals. How the actor may consciously prepare with flexibility for either option will be considered more fully with regard to performance structures.

Allegorical structures of language occur frequently throughout *Apparition*, which demonstrates the extensive layering that Walter Benjamin encountered with the baroque German *Trauerspiel*. Of the *Trauerspiel*, Benjamin notes: "In the anagrams, the onomatopoeic phrases, and many other examples of linguistic virtuosity, word, syllable, and sound are emancipated from any context of traditional meaning and are flaunted as

objects which can be exploited for allegorical purposes” (*Origin* 207). *Arcadia* employs only occasional instances of allegorical layering, despite how that layering occurs through complex structural collisions between time and place. In *Apparition*, words layer through repetition as well as transformation, and become more blatant allegorical objects. The false Latin, for example, interjects words as Latin-like objects. Similarly, within moments of retelling *Macbeth*, made up words replace the well-known incantations of the three witches. For instance, the first encounter with *Macbeth* includes C and D speaking together: “Nubble Tubble / Oily Rubble / Dire Turn and / Toasty Mubble” (Washburn 319). A later encounter features another version spoken by A, E, and C: “Hubble Hubble Coils of Gubble” (339). These instances more profoundly create and layer different words with multiple meanings, stacking words upon words to create new objects with allegorical potential. The actor may explore linguistic virtuosity – to use Benjamin’s phrase – with vocal and physical tools that help the actor explore dramaturgical voice: voicing and listening, listening and voicing, or exploring full-bodied responses to *Apparition*’s language structures.

I suggest two possible means of naming the unique mode of language in *Apparition*. The first applies the play’s title, perhaps too literally: mode functions like an apparition in *Apparition*. Nonetheless, the examples illustrate how language structures in the play appear unexpectedly and in various corporeal configurations. The uneasy and underknown do, in fact, manifest in the play’s diverse language structures and through the actor’s convergence with the text. Spoken language may thereby take on the rhythm of appearances or disappearances, particles and reversals. The individual language structures discussed here also lead the actor toward spoken apparitions: unstable

punctuation, rhyming verses, self-interruptions, and allegorical layering. In a visceral transfer of the play's language structures to an audience, the apparition-like mode gains corporeal form through the sensory and rhythmic experience of sound. In a very practical way *Apparition* embraces "the most strange and other" through its language structures without forcing the "other" into a familiar construct too quickly (Ihde 186). Still, linking the play's mode of language with the play's title suggests a conflation that this notion of mode ought to resist. With that warning in mind, I suggest an alternative: the unique mode of language in *Apparition* occurs like a swarm of honeybees, rising up in various formations depending upon the contribution of the unique particles in any given moment. This view of mode equally invokes the diverse and individual language structures noted above in a similar – but less literal – manner.

#### Performance Structures

Flexibility encompasses an ensemble awareness of collaborative compromise and adaptability, which also recognizes the individual actor's contribution to a larger process. Through dramaturgical script analysis with story and language structures for *Apparition*, practical reasons for flexibility already stand out. Preparation with story structures suggests how the actor must shift expectations away from linear through-line or cause and effect circumstances in order to embrace the play's encounters and parallel stories. Also, as noted early on, the list of characters offers a significant clue about how the play determines an ensemble approach. Unnamed characters immediately signal potential for multivocal and equivocal figures rather than realistic characterization. In addition, language structures reveal purposeful ambiguity through punctuation and speech forms, which suggest how the actor may need to apply different logic to the text. Even more

ambiguously, the potential for different relationships between the actor and the audience encourage the actor to prepare with flexibility in relation to how story and language structures may break the fourth wall. Each of these discoveries from dramaturgical script analysis suggests how preparation with the play readies the actor to contribute to rehearsals with a director and other actors. Even bringing questions to the process, such as the potential for direct address, may result from the actor's exploration with the play.

In the context of performance structures, environmental awareness ultimately asks the actor to consider a dramaturgical relationship between physical structures and story or language structures. Without knowing the production venue for *Apparition*, a particular concern for environmental awareness arises in relation to character. *Apparition* includes multivocal and equivocal characters. The structure of the play's encounters requires the actor to transform from one character to another multiple times, and parallel stories require the actor to employ multiple speech strategies, sometimes within one encounter. The language structures add another level to that exploration with regard to character. Environmental awareness adds a further level, particularly with regard to how *Apparition* employs lighting clues as dramaturgical structures within the text. Practically, varying degrees of visibility will require different kinds of vocal and physical punctuation on the actor's part. For instance, regarding the "candle-esque" lighting requested in stage directions for the first encounter with *Macbeth*, the actor might anticipate a need for vocal punctuation more fully. Environmental awareness must also consider the actual stage space, but initial investigation prepares the actor to anticipate vocal or physical demands of a particular play, which may then be applied to a particular stage space.

Exchange extends the actor's interaction with dramaturgical structures of a play to other artists and to the audience. In relation to dramaturgical script analysis, exchange may also function as a practical measure of discernment, encouraging the actor to work *with* the play rather than *against* the play. The previous chapter suggests that applying exchange as conscious preparation becomes particularly imperative for the actor with regard to new playwriting. When story structures do not follow a linear progression, and language structures purposefully shift predictable associations of meaning, the actor may create clarity from moment to moment, but the audience must actively assemble meaning. Analysis with the story and language structures of *Apparition* suggests how this play fits within that category of new playwriting. Specifically in relation to *this* play, the actor cannot create linear storytelling if the play chooses to do otherwise. Neither can the actor impose a character through-line when the text allows story contexts to multiply. Lastly, although it may seem obvious, the actor cannot ignore unstable punctuation or rhyming verses if the text provides these opportunities. The actor *can* use those structures and may also consider what the audience does or does not know at any given time.

Anticipating opportunities for exchange with regard to *Apparition*, I suggest three considerations for the actor's further exploration. The first consideration relates to story and language structures of the play. The actor might enter dramaturgical script analysis with an inclination to overlay meaning onto this text in the effort to make it make sense. The example offered in relation to story structures suggests how the actor might try to create character history for the scenes between B and E to justify a possible stabbing. Alternatively, the actor may explore interconnectedness and multiplicity with the scenes. Toward interconnectedness, the actor might read the scenes one after another, without

overlaying too much character quality but also listening for overlap. In this way, voicing and listening does not have to involve application of extreme vocal qualities. Toward multiplicity, however, the actor might employ many vocal and physical qualities to the scene in order to explore how the story contexts multiply. This kind of exploration realizes exchange between the actor and the play because the actor lets the text do its work but also applies tools that listen to or question the text. Such activities also allow the actor to explore without rigidly affixing character choices to the text. This would benefit rehearsal because the director may assemble connective experiences for the production as another rhizomatic map and may request different choices.

The second consideration relates to exchange with other actors. The character list for *Apparition* suggests an immediate tip off for the actor with regard to ensemble awareness. Rather than character through-line, the actor will need to consider equivocal character constructs and prepare to move from one character to another throughout the play. *Apparition* dramaturgically follows through on that clue. For example, the play signals scenic and character shifts through introductions to the various encounters. The actor might miss such subtle clues when reading for character through-line. Anticipating choral collaboration considers exchange in still another way because it requires an awareness of shared text. For instance, the false Latin eventually becomes a device shared between the actors because all characters speak the lines together in at least two instances (Washburn 331, 348). The actor may therefore anticipate ensemble and choral constructs by investigating sounds within the false Latin words or by listening to and trying to embody rhythms within the shared sections of dialogue. Engaging with the

particular ensemble structures in *this* play suggests individual preparation that is specific and practical.

A third consideration of exchange in relation to *Apparition* proposes an awareness of the actor/audience relationship regardless of the stage space. Toward that end, the actor might take courage from the play's subtitle: *An Uneasy Play of the Underknown*. Hopefully, the audience members have some indication about what they are getting into because of the play's title, but the actor cannot expect a close reading of the program from every audience member. I intend this observation as a joke, but I also mention it in earnest. The actor cannot assume the audience will be confused, disgruntled, or unsatisfied by the ambiguities offered in *Apparition*. The unseen remain unseen, as the subtitle predicts. What the actor may assume and explore further relates to those ambiguities. Working *with* the play, then, the actor could seek opportunities to immerse the audience in an experience – an overall encounter – with the unseen. This could frame the nonlinear storytelling that occurs between the play and the audience via the actors and the production. In that light, potential for direct address with the audience benefits rather than hinders the actor. The monologues, for instance, become a means for the actor to increase the unease of the audience, especially through suspenseful content or language structures that draw out – but do not resolve – encounters with the unseen. The play's sense of humor suggests this approach from the first parenthetical lines. The “something” that believes “it is a mighty scare” might ultimately refer to the play, which invites the actor to fully embrace ambiguity for the audience's sake (Washburn 315). Finally, regardless of whether the production eventually employs direct address, the actor may explore its potential as a conscious investigation of exchange along with these other

considerations. If direct interaction with the audience does occur, unpredictable responses would also require the actor's flexibility within those moments of exchange.

### God's Ear

Charles Isherwood's *New York Times* review of *God's Ear* offers initial perspective about how crossover poetics occur in Jenny Schwartz's play. Isherwood refers to the main characters, parents coping with the grief of losing a child, as follows: "The haunted man and woman who move through this hallucinatory work almost seem to be drowning in speech, as they cope with a personal tragedy by spraying streams of fractured, fragmentary babble into the darkness around them" ("Explaining"). The realistic core of Schwartz's play revolves around the tragic death of Mel and Ted's young son. Isherwood's metaphor "drowning in speech" purposefully invokes how the death results from a "near-drowning" accident (Schwartz 8). Isherwood's reference to "fractured, fragmentary babble" refers to how the play's language structures relate the realistic story circumstances. He also reflects that the characters of Mel and Ted, "...will spend the rest of the play trying to obliterate the ability of language to convey meaning" ("Explaining"). Isherwood focuses on the characters, which makes sense in relation to the 2008 Vineyard Theater review because characters function as a conduit to the play in production. However, as a result of dramaturgical script analysis with the *play*, I suggest that tension between the play's story and language structures purposefully creates a disorienting experience of grief for the characters, and potentially for an audience. If the actor recognizes this tension within the play's dramaturgical structures, it may offer multiple discoveries for individual exploration.

Dramaturgical script analysis with *God's Ear* could begin through either story or language structures, especially considering the unique way they function in tandem in this play. The opening lines certainly indicate how the play's language will work, although the opening lines of the play appear in a prologue. If the actor assumes that the prologue employs different strategies than the rest of the play, the poetic line breaks and stanza arrangements may appear at first glance to be inconsequential, or at least manageable as a brief occurrence:

*(a hospital)*

MEL. He's in a coma.

He's hooked up to a respirator.

He has a pulse.

He has brain damage.

Due to lack of...

Extensive brain damage.

Due to lack of...

His pupils are unreactive,  
they said.

He doesn't withdraw from pain,  
they said.

The next twenty-four hours are critical.

Or was it crucial?

Or was it critical?

Or was it crucial? (Schwartz 7)

Ultimately, the rest of play uses similar language strategies as this excerpt. The sample illustrates how several stanzas build rhythmically but do not quite complete. One stanza builds to the next through repetition and suspension of thought. For example, repetition of the phrase "due to lack of" compels a stuttering movement forward as the language stalls, then moves on to another phrase. Allegorical layering of "crucial" and "critical" conflates and expands possible meaning for what will occur in the next twenty-four hours. Noticing the intricacy of these different language structures as a first approach to

dramaturgical script analysis will definitely lead the actor to further discoveries.

However, investigating the play's story structures alongside language structures reveals how language both resists and constructs story in *God's Ear*.

### Structure and Story

*God's Ear* presents a linear scene breakdown and named characters in the published script, which aligns with strategies of traditional playwriting. Following the prologue, "Act 1" includes a progression of six scenes that are labeled "Scene 1" and so on. These strategies recede somewhat in "Act 2" because the scenes are not labeled or distinguished by scene breaks despite how the play delineates a second act. Also, in the opening pages of the play characters are named and listed in order of appearance, although some of the characters appear at first glance to reflect cultural icons: Mel, Ted, Lanie ("Mel and Ted's six year old daughter"), Tooth Fairy, Lenora, Flight Attendant, Guy, GI Joe (Schwartz 5). Appearances by Tooth Fairy and GI Joe represent potential for unrealistic conventions in the play's characterization. Such drastically different icons also inspire comic potential, but both figures equally suggest childhood rights of passage and play as well. The character named "Guy" implies an everyman quality for this figure, which parallels allegorical layering of language by suggesting allegorical characters – the Tooth Fairy and GI Joe suggest this possibility as well. A note following the character list also announces, "GI Joe and Flight Attendant are played by the same actor" (5). Potential for double casting does not indicate use of equivocal characters to the same degree as *Apparition*, but might precipitate an equivocal opportunity. Thus, along with notable strategies of traditional playwriting, these initial encounters with *God's Ear* also reveal potential for crossover poetics.

Action overall does occur in a progressive manner in *God's Ear*, but fluidity of time distorts the linearity of the scenic construct. Act 1, Scene 1 figures after the prologue in linear time. A stage direction at the opening of this scene states, "Ted comes and goes" (Schwartz 11). Dialogue then implies that Ted travels frequently, although it does not clarify purpose for these trips. However, this scene moves back and forth between moments of conversation that involve Mel and Ted without clarifying specific timing for these interactions. Scene 2 includes Mel and Lanie, who remain at home while Ted travels. Again, however, progression builds on the earlier revelation that Ted comes and goes in the first scene. Scene 3 mostly involves Ted and the Flight Attendant, but also includes interjections from parallel scenes between Mel and Lanie. This convention blurs time while still indicating simultaneous progress in action. Scene 4 unravels in "a bar" through a seemingly drunken scenario in which Guy and Ted agree – then disagree – to swap wives (44). Continuity relates to how Ted still seems to be traveling. Scene 5 reveals Mel and Lanie burying action figures in the snow, and they still seem to be at home. Scene 6 includes a rendezvous at "a lounge" between Ted and "some lady named Lenora" but ends with Ted onboard another flight (55, 68). Act 2 gradually brings the family back together, but through story and language structures that continue to complicate the linear scene breakdown. A closer look at these structures explains how.

Regardless of the scene breakdown, sequencing of action in *God's Ear* presents few linear story structures. The prologue introduces what might be called the inciting incident in traditional analysis: a near-drowning accident involving Mel and Ted's son. Yet the prologue does not resolve what happened to the child specifically. Following the prologue's ambiguous conclusion, the first scene in Act 1 hints at the son's death, but

again does not reveal it directly. One of the early conversations between Mel and Ted in this scene contains the following dialogue:

TED. Anyway, we got to talking, and what do you know...  
MEL. Why is it that everyone you talk to has a dead son?  
TED. Small world?  
MEL. Tiny.  
TED. Life is short?  
MEL. Life is a shrimp.  
TED. He was ten, she said.  
    He drowned.  
    She was looking the other way.  
MEL. On the plane?  
TED. Never mind. (Schwartz 16)

Story structures emerge in this short excerpt through subtext, a strategy of realistic dialogue. Ted's line ends with an ellipsis, which suggests an unspoken but shared knowledge between the characters. Mel picks up on the subtext and responds, "Why is it that everyone you talk to has a dead son?" This dialogue strongly implies the child's death, but still does not convey it directly. In the second scene of Act 1 Mel says to Lanie, "Sam is buried" (33). Finally, this scene confirms the outcome of the prologue. It also includes a first mention of the son's name: Sam.

A tension exists between how the story structures in *God's Ear* confirm the death of Mel and Ted's son and how the play resolves the conversation that begins in the prologue. In other words, the prologue does not conclude the conversation that occurs in the hospital between Mel and Ted. It leaves the outcome and the conversation open-ended. This extends the conversation into the rest of the play, but the conversation does not resolve until the end of the second act. The extended conversation demonstrates how language both resists and constructs story. In fact, a repeated sequence of dialogue

functions as both a language structure and a story structure. A version of the sequence occurs once in the first act (Scene 1) and once in the second:

LANIE. Look Ma!  
No hands!  
TED. (*to MEL*) Sit down.  
MEL. (*to TED*) Tell me.  
TED. Sit down.  
MEL. Tell me. (Schwartz 31, 78)

Lanie's lines within the dialogue represent a dramaturgical discovery as well, which I will discuss in relation to language structures. Another version of this dialogue occurs near the end of the play. It follows a story Mel reveals about putting sunscreen on her daughter, which distracted her from her son: "When my son was in the lake, I was putting sunblock on my daughter. / Or at least I was trying. / She was stubborn and difficult" (86). Mel's story transitions into the familiar sequence of lines, but this time the sequence ends differently:

MEL. When I finally, finally finished,  
I stood up,  
Pleased,  
And I looked around,  
Proud,  
And he was...  
TED. (*to MEL*) Sit down.  
MEL. (*to TED*) Tell me.  
TED. Sit down.  
MEL. Tell me.  
TED. He's gone. (88)

In terms of realistic conventions, Ted's final line in this sequence invokes the moment at which Mel hears the news of her son's death. This entire sequence would have occurred in the prologue if the play employed a realistic or linear story strategy, but it does not.

The sequence occurs outside of the prologue and only completes much later in the play.

The dialogue itself is simple and contains conversational language, but also appears in a poetic form. These qualities represent language structures as well. However, the repetition and suspension of the dialogue sequence functions as a story structure.

Language resists story and also constructs story in *God's Ear* by creating this tension.

Tension between story and language in *God's Ear* also structurally creates a disorienting experience of grief within the play, for the characters and potentially for an audience. The play's content alone does not lead to this conclusion, but because Mel, Ted, and Lanie move through the play in the wake of Sam's accidental death, thematic potential for grief does arise. And yet *God's Ear* does not rely on content to convey thematic relevance. Rather, language structures distort story and build tension through episodic, free-associative, and sometimes illogical action. The scene breakdown may provide potential for linear through-line, although the language in *God's Ear* simultaneously resists through-line and promotes fluidity of time in the play's action. The extended conversation between Ted and Mel offers a larger example of this experience, but other instances occur as well. Each demonstrates how poetic repetition and recurring dialogue creates puzzles about where and when conversations between characters actually take place. The combined experience of these intertwined story and language structures echoes the realistic but disorienting experience of grief through a dramaturgical framework.

Recognizing the realistic content of *God's Ear* within the dramaturgical framework may encourage the actor to apply character analysis as an initial step. Grief represents a human psychological process, after all. Further, as the excerpted text from the play suggests, these characters sometimes speak in conversational dialogue with

psychological subtext. However, language overall in *God's Ear* maintains friction between realistic story and new playwriting language strategies. Apart from moments of realistic dialogue, the play also includes: poetic repetition, extended monologues that layer allegorical meaning through idiomatic phrases, and conversations that overlap unrealistically between scenes. Songs also recur throughout the play, although songs will be discussed within the play's language structures here rather than with regard to their musical composition. Distinguishing between dramaturgical script analysis and character analysis will benefit the actor when approaching *God's Ear* because the play chooses to explore grief through nontraditional story and language structures. In other words, the psychological content may be familiar, but the story and language structures require a different approach. Anne Kauffman, director of the Vineyard production of *God's Ear*, describes how the actor might approach the work by understanding the playwriting strategies:

I think it's about *riding* the language – you follow the language, you follow the rhythm, and that's where a lot of the meaning is. ... It also feels very real. We don't plan every word we say – stuff just comes out and we follow behind it. I've always thought that that's an interesting thing to watch on stage, not being on top of the language, but actually being one step behind. (Boyd 26)

The cumulative effect of the language structures in *God's Ear*, despite the realistic story content, requires the actor to follow the language toward meaning rather than to trace character through-line. Delving further into the various language structures suggests how and why this occurs.

## Language Structures

Beyond the prologue, the text of *God's Ear* continues to employ poetic line breaks with sections arranged like stanzas of a poem. Characters speak lines of dialogue, as in traditional playwriting, but rhythmic or episodic builds occur within one character's text as well as between characters and scenes. For example, similar to the repeating sequence of lines that occurs between Mel and Ted, Mel shares a sequence of lines with GI Joe. The character of GI Joe does not enter until the first few pages of Act 2, but a connection between Mel and GI Joe occurs much earlier. In Act 1, Scene 3 Mel steps on action figures: "Ow. / I stepped on an action figure. / I stepped on another. / They're everywhere. / Underfoot. / I'm going to take them outside and bury them" (Schwartz 42). As noted in the scene breakdown, she and Lanie bury the action figures in the snow in Scene 5 (49). When the personified character GI Joe eventually appears, he and Mel engage in the following sequence of dialogue:

MEL. But we buried you.  
GI JOE. I escaped.  
MEL. Didn't we bury you?  
GI JOE. I escaped. (71)

The same sequence appears one page later, and then repeats again in Act 2. It takes on further significance when considering an earlier scene between Mel and Lanie from Act 1, Scene 2 (before Mel steps on the action figures and before she and Lanie bury them):

LANIE. What does Sam look like?  
MEL. Sam is buried.  
LANIE. In the ground?  
MEL. That's right.  
LANIE. Sam is in the ground.  
MEL. That's right. (33)

As a reminder, this scene between Mel and Lanie follows the prologue. It confirms the death of the child, Sam, and first mentions him by name. This collection of moments reveals an episodic build over several scenes. The build employs the repeated sequence of dialogue, but also asserts a gradual significance about how Mel continues to confront the death of her son.

Similar occurrences of poetic repetition and episodic builds in the play's language structures create a means for the actor to follow the language toward meaning. Like the suspended dialogue sequence between Mel and Ted, the recurring sequence between Mel and GI Joe traces backward and forward in the play, but it does not necessarily reveal overt meaning. Individual and psychological meaning surfaces for the character because Mel's confrontation with the buried action figure reveals something about the ongoing process of grieving for her buried son. Most directly, the question "Didn't we bury you?" creates overlap between GI Joe and Sam. Eventually, sequences collide or overlap, which reveals even more complex meaning. For instance, when Mel tells the sunscreen story, the stage directions indicate that she tells it to Tooth Fairy and GI Joe (Schwartz 86). Immediately following the story, the suspended dialogue between Mel and Ted completes. Immediately following the completed dialogue sequence, Tooth Fairy and GI Joe recount memories of both children to Mel and Ted. A collision occurs in this sequence by aligning the persistent confrontation between Mel and GI Joe and the suspended conversation between Mel and Ted. In addition, one of these memories reveals the origin of Lanie's earlier lines, "Look, Ma! / No hands!" The memory recounts how the children learned to ride bikes:

GI JOE. You bought your daughter a bike when she was 22 months old.  
But she wouldn't go near it until she was 32 months old.

Then, after five weeks of practice, she could pedal down the street.  
With her brother.  
TOOTH FAIRY. “Look, Ma!  
No hands!”  
GI JOE. “Look Ma!  
No hands!” (89)

Episodes build separately between Mel and Ted, Mel and Lanie, or Mel and GI Joe. Ultimately, however, separate episodes for Mel, Ted and Lanie overlap. Full meaning within the story only emerges through poetic repetition and episodic builds in the play’s language structures.

As noted in relation to *Arcadia* as well as *Apparition*, the occurrence of dialogue and monologue creates an opportunity to investigate connections between these language structures. In *God’s Ear*, individual character speeches erupt in what Castagno has identified as *tour de force* monologues. Castagno compares *tour de force* monologues in new playwriting to the qualities of the *commedia tirata* (tirade): “...a set speech that twisted through dialects, emotional swings, heightened gestures, and a hodgepodge of seemingly unrelated material” (2nd ed. 133). Among the list of attributes he identifies for the *tour de force* monologue, several match how monologues function in *God’s Ear*. Most notably in this play, *tour de force* monologues are: “interpolated” rather than “causally motivated,” and they also require “a performative style with an emphasis on the virtuosic” (134). As I previously suggest, virtuosic writing uses language as both a structure and a puzzle, and it may also use words as objects. Dramaturgical voice and dramaturgical punctuation intentionally represent a means for the actor to explore “emphasis” in this context. I also intend such tools to benefit the actor’s identification of a “performative style” that supports a particular play – or even a particular moment within a play. Castagno’s distinction that *tour de force* monologues may occur without

cause and effect motivation also encourages the actor's exploration beyond the boundaries of psychological realism in order to emphasize virtuosic playwriting. These distinctions may benefit the actor's investigation of monologues as well as allegorical layering in *God's Ear*.

Allegorical layering in *God's Ear* occurs through smaller and larger *tour de force* monologues that layer idiomatic phrases. An example from Act 1, Scene 4 occurs as a smaller monologue – within dialogue – spoken by the character Guy. It also features an unusual occurrence in this play: text that looks like prose on the page. The following essentially reflects a miniature version of the *tour de force* monologues that occur elsewhere in the play:

GUY. Is your wife a wife-wife?  
Or is she one a those take-charge, split-your-lip, bust-your-balls, pull-your-chain, cook-your-goose, get-your-goat, rip-you-to-shreds, kick-you-when-you're-down...types a gals? (Schwartz 44)

Each of the descriptions incorporates an idiomatic phrase to describe someone with a bullying personality. In this context, the phrase “wife-wife” conveys the other side of the comparison, invoking a supportive spouse who does not dominate the relationship. This short section of text stacks up meaning with different phrases, allegorically weighting the comparison on the side of the bullying personality – perhaps like Guy's wife. The actor may therefore investigate layers of dramaturgical punctuation through vocal or physical exploration. Each phrase evokes a particular aspect of a dominating personality, but together this list becomes a virtuosic *tour de force* monologue, albeit in miniature.

Longer *tour de force* monologues occur multiple times in *God's Ear*. The character of Mel has several in Act 1, Scene 1, which eventually “interpolate” even more allegorical layering within the play. For instance, in the middle of the conversational

back-and-forth in Scene 1, an early monologue sequence occurs for Mel. Her free-associative movement from topic to topic recounts events that have occurred during Ted's travel: she asks him to look for his pillbox when he gets home because the doctor has given her a list of vitamins to take; she tells him about how she cleaned out the medicine cabinet; she revisits a conversation with Lanie over several lines that begin with either "and she said" or "and I said;" she details her efforts to fix a broken doorknob; and she finishes with the line, "I'm ill-equipped" (Schwartz 13-14). Similar, but shorter versions of the same occur throughout the first scene and also in the rest of the play. In the same scene, however, Mel also interrupts the action with a longer *tour de force* monologue. Over the course of three pages she progresses from comforting thoughts of Ted's arrival home through a growing list of idiomatic phrases. These idioms share common advice about navigating difficult life events, which eventually turns toward the subject of marriage. The following three excerpts offer a brief snapshot of this progression:

And then you'll hold me.  
And protect me.  
And I'll forgive you.  
And you'll understand me. (21)

And we'll cross that bridge.  
And bridge that gap.  
And bear that cross.  
And cross that 't.' (22)

For richer, for poorer.  
In sickness and in health.  
And the fat lady will sing.  
With bells on. (23-24)

In this case, the allegorical layering occurs through a longer section of text and creates an extended virtuosic effect. The actor's exploration of language as objects transfers to the

use of phrases as objects, as each phrase continues to layer upon and even displace the others.

A parallel language structure also exists between Mel's *tour de force* monologue in the first act and Lanie's *tour de force* monologue in the second act, which suggests further potential for the actor's exploration. Lanie offers common facts and her own life lessons, and layering occurs through a repetitious question format as well. The following excerpts represent the first stanza of the monologue and the last:

Did you know that the tongue is a muscle?  
Did you know that the dandelion is a weed?  
Did you know that the sun is a star?  
Did you know that the coconut is a seed? (Schwartz 78)

Did you know that you can't get a sunburn through the window, but you can get cancer?  
Did you know that kisses and hugs are better than drugs?  
Did you know that you can pick your friends and you can pick your nose, but you just can't pick your friend's nose?  
Did you know that our hearts are the same size as our fists?  
But what if you have no hands?  
What then?  
But what if you have no hands?  
What then? (79-80)

Not all of the stanzas in Lanie's *tour de force* monologue rhyme in the manner of *weed* and *seed*, but some do. Toward the end of the monologue, the rhythmically matched four line stanzas noticeably begin to disappear, alternating between longer questions and shorter questions. The final lines deviate entirely, but employ repetition that recalls the phrase, "Look, Ma! / No hands!" Within the play's other clues about her brother's death, Lanie's lack of hands also conveys her individual experience of grief through the revelation that her heart may be missing because she misses her brother. The parallel *tour de force* monologues therefore reveal a recurring language structure shared by these

characters. Furthermore, a story of mother and daughter also begins to emerge between these two characters because they share language strategies.

Shared language strategies link Mel and Lanie without defining a relationship between these characters succinctly. This discovery offers yet another example about how language resists and constructs story in *God's Ear*, especially through the exploration of allegorical layering. For example, exploring Mel and Lanie's monologues together reveal a parallel language structure: each *tour de force* monologue employs allegorical layering of idiomatic phrases. Mel's statements share common advice about navigating difficult life events, and Lanie's questions offer common facts and life lessons. The language strategies shared between these monologues gives weight to the Tooth Fairy's observation that, "The apple doesn't fall far from the tree" (Schwartz 52). Evidence in the play also indicates the opposite, especially because Lanie's "stubborn and difficult" behavior contributed to Mel's distraction at the lake (86). While the characters share language strategies as mother and daughter, they also share conflict in the play's story structures, much like their strategies of statements and questions offer opposite approaches to life lessons. The play offers complex clues about character relationships through language in this way, but it does not reveal them overtly. For instance, the pattern of Mel's statements and Lanie's questions repeats in other scenes between these characters. Different language strategies revealed through the *tour de force* monologues may therefore reveal nuance about other interactions between these characters in the play. The actor's further exploration – and even the actor's character analysis – benefits from "following the language" toward identification of such clues.

Another language structure that reveals and complicates story structures in *God's Ear* relates to conversations that overlap unrealistically between scenes. These occasions also contribute to the fluidity of time within the play. An example of the overlap occurs via the characters of Ted and Lenora. The play implies that Ted and Lenora have a sexual affair. Ted meets Lenora in a "lounge" in Act 1, Scene 6 (Schwartz 55). However, the name "Lenora" is mentioned earlier in the play. Mel catches Ted with a thong "around his ankle" in Act 1, Scene 1 and asks, "Who does it belong to?" (27). A sequence of dialogue follows, but inserts thirteen more names following the four that occur in this excerpt:

TED. Amanda.  
    It belongs to Amanda.  
MEL. Does Amanda have a name?  
TED. Tina.  
MEL. Does Bridget have a name?  
TED. Marie. ... (27)

The sequence concludes when Ted says the name "Lenora." Mel responds, "I only know one Lenora" (27). Several sequences of dialogue later, but still in the same scene, Mel also says, "Lenora from high school. / She was the star of all the plays. / Is your Lenora the star of all the plays?" (31). Fluidity of time occurs through this intermittent reveal of information. Similarly, unrealistic overlap occurs when scene content between Ted, Lenora, Mel, and Lanie merges later in the play.

The overlap and merging between these particular scenes again develops through individual episodes. First, a scene between Ted and Lenora takes place in Act 1, Scene 6 that includes the following dialogue:

TED. I like your bones.  
LENORA. All of them?  
TED. I like your bone structure.

I want to suck on your bones.  
LENORA. All of them?  
TED. I want to suck on your bone structure. (Schwartz 56)

Then in Act 2, stage directions indicate that Lenora appears in a scene already taking place between Ted, Mel, and Lanie. Based on the free-associative logic of the play, this could represent many moments in time or perhaps just one. Time blurs further when a new sequence of dialogue begins between Ted and Lenora, but the conversation overlaps unrealistically with Lanie and Mel. What's more, Lanie and Mel comment on action that occurs – or has occurred – between Ted and Lenora in the current scene by referencing the previous scene:

LANIE. (*referring to TED and LENORA*) What are they doing?  
MEL. He's sucking on her bone structure.  
LANIE. Why?  
MEL. It tastes good.  
LANIE. What's bone structure?  
MEL. I've heard it tastes good. (76)

Multiple conversations overlap between scene constructs and even refer back to previous scenes involving different characters. The unrealistic overlap in the language structures thereby contributes to fluidity of time in the play.<sup>3</sup>

Toward a final effort of dramaturgical script analysis related to language structures, the songs in *God's Ear* suggest one further exploration related to how language constructs story in the play. Musical composition of the songs would involve another layer of dramaturgical exploration on the actor's part, although the discussion here relates to how the songs as text interact with the play's other story and language structures.<sup>4</sup> Eight songs appear in *God's Ear*, six occur in the first act of the play. Of the six songs that occur in the first act, four are sung by characters external to the family:

Lenora, Guy, and the Flight Attendant. Tooth Fairy also sings one of the first act songs as well as the lullaby at the end of Act 2, which is a duet with GI Joe. That leaves two remaining songs in the play, which are sung by Lanie. Lanie sings the play's first song immediately following the prologue. Her second song appears well into Act 2. By first considering the dispersal of songs to particular characters, two significant dramaturgical notes arise for the actor when exploring the relationship between songs and other structures: (1) the songs exist outside of the interactions that directly involve Mel and Ted; (2) Lanie's songs may create a structural suspension that parallels the suspended dialogue between Mel and Ted.

The songs in *God's Ear* exist outside of interactions that directly involve Mel and Ted, but they provide a means to shift between their interactions. For example, Tooth Fairy appears in the play for the first time in Act 1, Scene 1. This section of the scene offers another possible view of Ted's frequent travels, during which Mel tells him that Lanie lost a tooth:

MEL. I have the tooth fairy here.  
We're waiting for you.  
Are you almost home?  
Or should we go ahead without you?  
TED. I'm on the bridge.  
MEL. You should avoid the bridge.  
(TOOTH FAIRY *appears.*) (Schwartz 17-18)

The Tooth Fairy *speaks* in the play for the first time in a song that follows Mel's *tour de force* monologue. The first line of the song reads: "The sun is rising on the sea. / My bowl is full of cherries. / The best things in life all are free, / And we believe in fairies" (24). References in the song echo Mel's litany of idiomatic phrases, especially how the bowl is "full of cherries" and how the "best things in life are free." By the end of the

song, however, a shift occurs in content and tone: “And if nothing interesting happens soon, / I’m gonna – / (*makes a throat-slitting gesture and sound*)” (24). The sequence of dialogue following Tooth Fairy’s song occurs between Ted and Tooth Fairy. In content, this short episode mirrors the conversation Ted describes to Mel earlier about the woman on the plane whose son died. After this sequence of events, Mel and Ted’s conversation restarts – or continues. Within the story *and* language structures, the song may exist outside of Mel and Ted’s interaction with each other, but it also shifts time by transitioning to a new dialogue sequences between these characters.

After the first scene, when scenic breaks separate the action that alternates between Mel and Ted, the songs continue to shift time as well. For instance, Lenora sings a song at the end of Scene 1, which helps to facilitate the action that begins in Scene 2. It begins, “At the airport, / At the airport last week, / At the airport the other day, I saw a man I thought I knew...” (Schwartz 31). Repetition of the word *airport* recalls how Ted’s travel manifests during the previous scene. This song also introduces the personified Lenora after the earlier hints about Ted’s affair. In that light, Scene 2 follows Lenora’s song and begins to structurally separate action for either Mel or Ted into different scenes. Less overlap occurs between Mel’s scenes with Lanie and Ted’s scenes with Lenora, Guy, and the Flight Attendant for the rest of the first act. However, many of the songs occur in this section of the play. In that regard, the songs in *God’s Ear* also help to suspend multiple conversations between Mel and Ted, while still providing structural links between the characters. In essence, the songs offer a recurring language structure that distinguishes the passage of time but also contributes to fluidity of time.

Also with regard to language structures, Lanie's songs may create a story structure that parallels the suspended sequence of dialogue between Mel and Ted. Lanie sings the first song in the play immediately following the prologue. It begins, "You can't see the cars on the street today. / Only mounds of snow" (Schwartz 10). Reference to snow on the street suggests a seasonal shift to winter because other references to time in the play indicate that the prologue likely occurs in the summer. Mel puts sunscreen on Lanie at the lake, for example, which is where the accident occurs. Seemingly Lanie's song shifts the play forward into winter, but the final lines of the song confuse that assumption: "You can't go anywhere at all. / Because all the cars are buried. / Pretend all the cars are buried. / Pretend all the cars in the world are buried" (10). Realistically, the play *does* shift forward into winter after the prologue, especially because Mel and Lanie bury the action figures under the snow. Yet the pretense in Lanie's song distorts that logic. Is it really snowing, or does she just wish it were? If she wishes it were, the song may occur at the same time as the prologue, which also allows it to function as Lanie's individual prologue, as if she were not present at the hospital with Mel and Ted. If that is the case, Lanie's song begins an extended conversation with the audience – much like the extended dialogue that occurs between Mel and Ted.

Lanie's second song, near the end of Act 2, follows the sequence of memories about the children told by Tooth Fairy and GI Joe. The later song begins, "The cat isn't coming back. / Again. / She isn't coming back" (Schwartz 91). The first stanza repeats, but the third stanza creates an echo of the earlier song: "Soon, the snow will be melted. / But we won't find anything. / There's nothing under the snow" (91). Both sets of lines admit finality and a lack of pretense about what will or will not return. Structurally, the

completion of Lanie's second song parallels the completed dialogue between Mel and Ted, but differs because Lanie completes her conversation with the audience. Both completed sequences acknowledge Sam's death as a realistic story or plot point. For Lanie, the suspension dissolves in the practical reveal that she no longer needs to imagine the snow. Perhaps more importantly in relation to the play's disorienting experience of grief, she no longer needs to avoid the fact that the "cat" will not come back.

### Resonance

Recognizing how the songs contribute to the tension between story and language structures in *God's Ear* also serves the actor's dramaturgical script analysis with regard to resonance. The songs suggest an entryway into resonance with regard to the broader ideas of "transition" and "suspension." Prior analysis with the play suggests these points of entry as well, but the songs embody these notions more tangibly through larger sequences of text, and eventually through the unique format of sung verse rather than spoken verse. Similarly, the songs also offer an entryway into resonance for the audience. By approaching the play through various entryways related to transition and suspension, the actor may also discover even more intricate language and story structures in *God's Ear*.

From the perspective of resonance, the fact that many of the songs are sung by characters other than Mel, Ted, and Lanie also supports the play's disorienting experience of grief because these characters remain suspended while time transitions around them. While the play's story and language structures resist clarity, the songs thereby offer clear moments of transition. Smaller transitions within the play mirror this pattern, as additional language structures separate the action between Mel and Ted into different

episodes. Such moments might also be considered different beat segments, as mentioned in the analysis related to *Apparition*. For instance, several times in Act 1, Ted asks Mel, “How are you otherwise?” The repetition signals a transition, as do Mel’s responses. The first time Mel responds with: “The same. / Pretty much” (Schwartz 14). The second time, her answer involves a distorted cliché: “I’m not all I’m cracked up to be” (25). This pattern continues into the next act, although the question changes. Ted asks, “What are you doing?” Mel’s responses vary but maintain the quality of distortion: “Sitting and spinning” (73), “Reading and weeping” (80), “Trying and failing” (82). Like the songs, these language structures transition the characters forward even if the action repeats in a circular manner. The repetition, however, also serves the notion of suspension by confusing time, purposefully recalling the previous instances but failing to clarify where or when each interaction occurs.

The songs and other transitional language structures allow the actor and the audience to navigate the play’s tension between story and language as well. Like the actor, the audience may glimpse realistic story moments but become confused by what Isherwood’s review calls the “fractured, fragmentary babble” of the play’s language (“Explaining”). When exploring resonance for the audience, then, the actor may consider smaller moments of transition more profoundly. The kind of repetitious dialogue mentioned above may serve as a guide, leading the actor toward dramaturgical punctuation that also signals transition for an audience. The actor might also map what the audience knows at a particular moment with regard to suspended conversations. For example, Lanie first says “Look Ma! / No hands!” at the end of Act 1, Scene 1. These lines repeat in Act 2, but only connect to the bike riding experience near the end of the

play. Again, how the actor explores dramaturgical punctuation may help to suspend these significant language structures. Such punctuation may also help to remind the audience about the suspended conversations until these language/story structures resolve. In these ways, transition and suspension provide anchors throughout the ongoing process of exploration for the actor. Especially because the play offers potential for character analysis in relation to story structures, but then confounds that process through its language structures, dramaturgical script analysis with resonance could provide a bridge between these efforts as well as help the actor track resonance for the audience.

### Mode

In order to identify a unique mode of language in *God's Ear*, it helps to consider how the play's language disorients but also balances the play's tragic story. Most profoundly, the overload of popular American sayings contributes to the experience of grief by creating tension between the tragic event and words that may be meaninglessly applied. In his *New York Times* review, Isherwood ultimately concludes that the "giddy wordplay" in *God's Ear* obscures the "emotional stakes" of the play's tragedy ("Explaining"). I disagree with the choice to characterize the language strategies as "giddy wordplay." It reduces the play's language to what Isherwood calls "...and end in itself" ("Explaining"). Rather, exploration of the play's language through dramaturgical script analysis reveals a complex tension between words and meaning – or lack of meaning in words when applied to inexplicable loss. I agree with Justin Boyd's analysis of the play's language, which he offers in an *American Theatre* article about director Anne Kaufman: "With the characters' struggle to communicate preserved, the play was a heart-wrenching depiction of a world where words had lost their power to change the

bleak reality of the characters' lives" (Boyd 26). With this difference in mind, I suggest the unique mode of language in *God's Ear* occurs much like the experience of dilation during a standard ophthalmic exam.

The language of *God's Ear* functions orally and aurally like the distorted experience of vision that follows dilation. When the eyes are dilated, for example, common street signs appear somewhat illogical. The red color becomes a defining feature rather than the sign's octagonal shape or its written warning. Allegorical layering of language in *God's Ear* employs a similar strategy. Common sayings occur in unusual contexts that render the language – not the situation – in a distorted manner. When Mel responds, "I'm not all I'm cracked up to be" it skews the composition of the well-known cliché (Schwartz 25). The ear registers something not quite right, but it takes a moment to catch up with the newly applied meaning. This experience embodies what Kauffman has described as, "...not being on top of the language, but actually being one step behind" (Boyd 26). Tension arises because the play's mode of language creates the space in which this phenomenon occurs. Both the actor and the audience may struggle to catch up – repeatedly. Therein lies the potential for Isherwood to identify the language as an end in itself. Viewed in another light, that "end" creates the tension between the tragic content and the disorienting experience of maneuvering through this family's grieving process. Conceiving of the play's mode of language as a kind of oral and aural dilation may encourage the actor to engage with structural significance of the language rather than isolating the language as an end in itself.

## Performance Structures

Given the discussion of story and language structures in *God's Ear*, the most obvious performance structure relates to environmental awareness: the play offers a distinctly aural experience. The actor's exploration of the play through dramaturgical script analysis may reveal opportunities for exploration of dramaturgical voice or punctuation, but how might the actor proceed with those discoveries? Anne Kauffman's relates useful advice from her perspective as director:

I think what I've started to learn recently is that to get up on your feet as soon as possible is really important, especially with language plays that are highly rhythmic, because the behavior and movement totally affects the rhythm. ... Learning it one way at the table fucks us up because it may be a completely different rhythm when you're up on your feet. (Boyd 27)

Kauffman uses this approach in rehearsals, and the emphasis of dramaturgical script analysis suggests that the actor may also employ that approach as individual preparation through full-bodied engagement with dramaturgical voice. Kauffman sees a benefit from this approach for the actor's contribution to rehearsal: "Actor's begin to understand in three dimensions and can contribute to the process much more wholly and productively than me just telling them what to do every second" (Boyd 145). Similarly, exploration based on dramaturgical script analysis creates an opportunity for the actor to engage with the play, but prior to rehearsals. Flexibility enters into this preparation as well because the actor cannot determine choices too rigidly in advance of rehearsal. Rather, the actor's recognition of the aural potential in *God's Ear* engages with the play in order to reveal small moments of transition – in relation to resonance, for example – or the broader experience of tension between the play's realistic story and its discombobulating language structures.

The exploration of exchange suggests a final consideration for dramaturgical script analysis with *God's Ear*. Stage directions signal a profound shift leading up to the moment when Mel tells the story of the sunscreen and the subsequent completion of the recurring dialogue between Mel and Ted. The stage directions suggest Mel and Ted face each other, but further state: "*Slow. Lots of air*" (Schwartz 84). A short sequence of dialogue follows, over the course of which Ted declares, "I'm back" (85). Another stage direction appears after this sequence: "*LANIE approaches TED. Slower. Even more air.*" (85). A sequence then unfolds between Ted and Lanie in which she registers how different he looks since she saw him last, particularly because of his gray hair (86). One more instance of a similar stage direction occurs after Lanie's final song. It indicates Mel and Ted are alone together, but also: "*Very slow. Full of air*" (91). The exploration of "air" may become a practical investigation for the actor in relation to exchange. The stage directions literally request a space in between the lines, a pause, but perhaps "air" also infuses these moments with something different than a pause. I suggest "air" seeks a contribution from the audience as well. Allowing "air" into the play indicates a transition and suspension between the actors and the audience more profoundly than it calls for a suspended moment – a pause – between the actors' lines. Conceit of this difference arises through other dramaturgical script analysis regarding tension between story and language elsewhere in the play. Considering this tension also reveals the opportunity for exchange.

Toward an investment in the play's dramaturgical structures, the actor might consider "air" as an invitation to the audience. The embodiment of "air" creates a shared breath with the audience because it allows the audience to exhale the play's experience of grief and inhale hope along with the characters:

TED. And then...  
MEL. And then?  
TED. A glimmer of hope.  
MEL. A glimmer of what?  
TED. And then...  
MEL. And then?  
TED. Normal.  
MEL. Are you there?  
TED. I'm here.  
MEL. I thought I lost you. (Schwartz 93)

By considering how “air” between the characters also invites “air” between the play and the audience, the actor’s exploration of dramaturgical punctuation extends to the investigation of exchange. To return to the conversation of exchange in the previous chapter, it also recognizes how new playwriting invites the audience to complete a play in performance.

### Summary

Ultimately, realizing a play in production requires a collaborative, dramaturgical effort from more than just actors. Because of that expectation, a process of individual preparation that diverges from character analysis may seemingly ask too much of the actor in terms of time and resources. The timeframe for most production processes in the United States certainly places practical limits on such considerations. Nonetheless, *Apparition* and *God’s Ear* both illustrate how character analysis alone cannot support the actor in preparation with all plays. Because new playwriting requires alternative approaches from actors, practical dramaturgy readies the actor to engage more profoundly with the play. In the face of unfamiliar story, language, or performance structures that arise from new playwriting strategies, dramaturgical script analysis thereby helps the actor comprehend his or her role *as* an actor for any given project.

For other practitioners, the process of dramaturgical script analysis might also challenge established artistic roles in theatrical production. For example, if the actor's analysis merges with the dramaturg's, does the dramaturg's role become obsolete? If the actor prepares with dramaturgical script analysis, how will this inform the director/actor relationship? The next chapter concludes this investigation by considering such concerns in earnest and by questioning whether practical dramaturgy for actors may support current processes of theatrical production. It also envisions how a change in current processes may support new playwriting strategies for contemporary as well as classical language plays. As I initially suggest based on my personal experience, and continue to consider in response to *Arcadia*, "virtuosic" language strategies may extend backward in time as well as forward. "New" playwriting strategies that defy structures of realism may therefore require different approaches by actors no matter when a play was written.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Along these lines, I also considered using a play and playwright from *Funny, Strange, Provocative*, a 2007 anthology of seven plays produced by New York's Clubbed Thumb edited by Producing Artistic Director and Founder Maria Striar along with Erin Detrick. However, I limited the scope of comparison to two plays in this chapter.

<sup>2</sup> In the interest of disclaiming my personal connections with these plays and playwrights, I offer the notes that follow, although I developed tools for dramaturgical script analysis *without* these plays or playwrights particularly in mind. I saw the Vineyard Theatre production of *God's Ear* in 2008, although I have not seen *Apparition* in production. I previously worked with Anne Washburn in relation to Printer's Devil Theatre, and recently in unrelated workshop projects in New York. I have appeared as an actor alongside Jenny Schwartz in a workshop of Kristen Kosmas's *Hello Failure* in New York and directed a short excerpt from her work in progress for a recent student production, which at the time was titled *The Invisible Line*.

<sup>3</sup> It may also blur boundaries between the play and the audience by using a self-referential strategy similar to the kind that appears in *Apparition*.

<sup>4</sup> Song scores by Michael Friedman are included in the printed text for *God's Ear*. Out of eight songs in the play, six are co-written with music by Friedman and lyrics by Schwartz. Two list Friedman only for music and lyrics: "Tooth Fairy 2" and "Lullaby."

## CHAPTER VI

### ENVISIONING A PRACTICAL DRAMATURGY FOR ACTORS

“Just as there are voiceless words, there are wordless voices, the voices of things which are wordless speaking. Such voices are pregnant with significance but not yet word.”  
– Don Ihde

I set out by building upon a comparison Edvard Brandes made in 1874 when he linked the purpose of the Danish National Theater with the purpose of the actor. Brandes wanted the actor to understand and relay the “script’s spirit” (71). He also said, “Helped by the actors, these speaking dramaturgs,” the national theater should understand and relay the nation’s spirit (71). The fact that Brandes referred to actors as a “speaking dramaturgs” establishes an initial connection with my project because I seek to connect the contemporary practices of acting and dramaturgy. Brandes also assumes that the actor has a responsibility to a play, to the “script’s spirit,” which I recognize as the actor’s dramaturgical responsibility as well. However, as a theater critic, Brandes later championed the playwright Henrik Ibsen (Marker 511). Ibsen’s early plays, along with the plays of Anton Chekhov, now define a transformative shift toward modern realism in theater history. Modern realism, in turn, gave rise to Konstantin Stanislavski’s system of acting, which outlines character analysis for plays that employ conversational dialogue, psychological characterization, and linear through-line of actions. Differently, I hope to propel a shift in actor training due to contemporary playwriting strategies that employ virtuosic language, multivocal or equivocal characterization, and nonlinear action. Hence, my effort to establish a link between acting and dramaturgy parallels but differs from Brandes’s effort to compare the actor’s work to the work of the Danish National Theatre;

much like practical dramaturgy parallels but differs from character analysis as actor preparation.

I also introduced a broader “constellation” in relation to this project. By considering how Edvard Brandes, Patrice Pavis and Eugenio Barba all speak of dramaturgy in relation to the actor, I follow Walter Benjamin’s advice and identify the “constellation” my era has formed with an earlier one (*Illuminations* 263). In 2000, Pavis predicted: “Writing will seek out the actor-dramaturg, who will be needed both to embody it and complete it” (“Premature Synthesis” 81). Pavis’s prediction relates to French playwriting at the start of the twenty-first century, which coincides with Paul C. Castagno’s effort to codify new playwriting strategies used by American playwrights. Castagno’s first edition was published in 2001 and does not refer directly to the actor’s dramaturgical work as a response to new playwriting, although it does consider concerns of acting in relation to these strategies. Pavis also referred to the plays he documented in 2000 as “neo-lyric” and “neo-dramatic” (“Premature Synthesis” 76). More recently, director Anne Kauffman offers a similar categorization for a group of contemporary New York playwrights, including Jenny Schwartz and Anne Washburn: “neo-realists” (Boyd 26). Whatever we choose to call these newly realized forms of dramatic writing, and in whatever language, the multiplicity of forms will continue to complicate the actor’s preparation. Like Pavis, I recognize a need to establish dramaturgy for actors, but as practical preparation that may help meet the needs of new playwriting.

The “constellation” also includes Eugenio Barba because he has defined the “actor’s dramaturgy” in a different context. In *On Directing and Dramaturgy: Burning the House*, Barba defines the actor’s dramaturgy amidst a plurality of dramaturgical

investigations that involve the actor, the director, and the spectator. His definition for the actor's dramaturgy recognizes "individual creative contribution to the growth of a performance" on the part of the actor (23). Barba's definition echoes my focus, especially in relation to dramaturgical investigation of ensemble awareness and flexibility as a performance structure. In addition, my continued supposition that each actor's dramaturgical script analysis may reveal different outcomes, depending on the actor, mirrors Barba's focus on the individual actor's contribution. Still, our approaches differ in that Barba encourages the actor's contribution particularly in relation to content that is not pre-scripted. I encourage the actor's dramaturgical awareness of a play so that the actor may contribute to an ensemble process with that play. Conceivably, by applying that notion to a process of devised work, I might arrive at a more profound convergence with Barba. While this represents a path for further investigation, Barba completes the initial constellation by associating dramaturgy directly with the actor.

Through further research, I have explored additional connections between actors and dramaturgs in relation to contemporary theater. More specifically, resources of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF) reveal collaborations that occur between dramaturgs, voice and text professionals and actors. These collaborations also ascribe a dramaturgical responsibility to the actor in response to a diverse range of content and in relation to various processes of production. As one of the largest regional theaters in the United States, OSF maintains the intention of founder Angus Bowmer by offering its audience relevant productions of Shakespeare's plays. Yet the Festival has also diversified over time and now produces other classics, modern classics, contemporary plays, musicals, and newly developed commissions. Although the primary reason for developing a

practical dramaturgy relates to new playwriting strategies, OSF's resources have encouraged further application to other plays. With these multiple possibilities in mind, the *Arcadia* case study has suggested how dramaturgical script analysis may support the actor's work with plays that primarily employ structures of realism, just as the examination of *Apparition* and *God's Ear* has suggested how the same process especially benefits actors when engaging with new playwriting strategies.

Another reason for conducting dramaturgical research in relation to OSF has to do with the Festival's diverse classical content. This suggests another path for further investigation, which is also subtly implied within the various attempts to describe "neo" dramatic forms. The terms *neo-dramatic* and *neo-realist* emphasize a convergence between traditional dramaturgical structures and contemporary language strategies in the manner of Castagno's "crossover poetics." Traditional structures in this context relate primarily to structures of realism. The term *neo-lyric*, by contrast, recalls conventions of classical verse plays, which suggests an additional "crossover" between new playwriting and classical playwriting. As I initially propose in relation to *Arcadia*, language strategies of new playwriting may extend backward in time as well as forward. OSF's content extends that discovery even further back in time. Additional exploration beyond the scope of this project could investigate whether dramaturgical script analysis may equally support the actor's work with classical plays.

Even though I will not undertake that investigation in detail here, I will offer an initial connection between the language strategies of classical plays and new playwriting. This also brings Walter Benjamin's profound contribution to the project of practical dramaturgy full circle. Benjamin's exploration of the *Trauerspiel* reveals strategies of the

German baroque form that echo in Castagno's *New Playwriting Strategies*, although Castagno does not indicate that he has drawn on Benjamin's work directly. Castagno particularly compares baroque operas to the "theatricalized baroque" of new playwriting when he says, "Their dramaturgies feature abrupt shifts or contrasts from scene to scene, double or multiple plotting, the contrast between the serious and the comic, and a sense of the ornamental or florid" (2nd ed. 33-34). From a contemporary perspective, a similar description could apply to Shakespeare's plays. When compared to today's speech patterns, for example, Shakespeare uses "ornamental" and "florid" verse. His plays also display abrupt shifts from scene to scene, multiple plot lines, and contrast between the serious and the comic (at times within the same scene). Hence, initial connections reveal crossover potential between classical lyric plays and neo-lyric plays like *Apparition* or *God's Ear*. Further application of practical dramaturgy may therefore reveal how dramaturgical script analysis with classical plays could also benefit contemporary production.

The gradual work of envisioning a practical dramaturgy for actors takes different shape in each of the previous chapters. Chapter II establishes a dramaturgical vocabulary for further application. Chapter III offers a primary dramaturgical case study, investigating direct and indirect resources for actors in relation to OSF. This process reveals three broad categories for the actor's dramaturgical awareness through structures of story, language, and performance. Chapter IV applies those categories, as well as the vocabulary from Chapter II, in order to determine a scope for the actor's dramaturgical sensibility and to outline a process for dramaturgical script analysis. Applying dramaturgical script analysis to *Arcadia* in Chapter IV clarifies practical dramaturgy

while suggesting its relevance to plays written in a style of realism. The secondary case study related to the University of Oregon production of *Arcadia* also suggests how actors in training may willingly apply dramaturgical approaches, if sometimes unwittingly. Unfortunately, the same case study reveals the actors' persistent preference for character analysis and a tendency to view dramaturgical work as applicable only to certain plays. I will consider that in relation to production concerns here. Chapter V supplies dramaturgical script analysis for *Apparition*, and *God's Ear*, which represent plays that require a dramaturgical approach because they employ what Castagno has called "crossover poetics" (2nd ed. 123). Both plays contain new playwriting strategies as well as traditional structures, but also resist character analysis. Thus, the process of envisioning a practical dramaturgy for actors returns to the immediate need: actors require different tools to support new playwriting.

Ultimately, then, the effort of parsing out Brandes's comparison also supports the notion that "speaking dramaturgs" may refer to actors no matter what kind of "spirit" the play conveys. The question of what spirit means in this context is still a large one, however, as it summons an explicable essence that defies description. Spirit is perhaps best left up to an audience's experience of a play in performance, an experience of its dramaturgy in action. The potential of spirit as a descriptor thereby exists in its ability to layer many allegorical meanings into a theatrical performance, from the spirit of a nation to the spirit of truth for a particular time, place, culture, or individual. Similar in its purposeful ambiguity, "mode" may actually offer a way to think about how a play's language functions as another kind essence that is somewhat more tangible. Mode creates

a way to consider unique structures within each play that may be practically explored and experienced by the actor who engages a dramaturgical sensibility.

### Production Concerns

Because the process of envisioning a dramaturgy for actors has suggested a benefit for the actor's approach to diverse plays, I now question how practical dramaturgy may support various theatrical production processes as a final effort. My focus at present considers standard theatrical production processes in the United States, especially in relation to nonprofit organizations like OSF that model common practices but also retain unique operating procedures. This description may just as easily apply to other professional productions and smaller nonprofit or for profit companies that program productions over a seasonal schedule.

Above all, time represents the most critical factor in relation to the question mentioned above. More to the point, *lack* of time in contemporary production schedules may cause resistance to practical dramaturgy as a new layer of actor preparation. Based on standard processes, building a theatrical production commonly involves three to five weeks of rehearsal. Such limits put significant pressure on the actor's time and resources. As dramaturg Michael Mark Chemers has suggested, "...the production calendars for most United States companies are cruelly tight, and actors often feel as if they have barely enough time to learn their cues and blocking, much less engage in time-consuming analysis and contextualization" (154). A similar lack of time impacts other members of a production team, including directors and dramaturgs. For instance, regarding the ideal of having detailed conversations with a director prior to the start of rehearsals, OSF's Director of Literary Development and Dramaturgy admits, "It's rare, unfortunately, that

we ever have long conversations” (Douthit). Dramaturg Geoffrey Proehl relays a similar reality when he considers how such conversations require a quality of time that strained production schedules do not allow: “...most theaters – academic and professional – work with staggering time deficits on something like an ever-quickening production line...” (41). In relation to lack of time, a process of individual preparation that purposefully distracts from character analysis or learning of lines may seemingly ask too much of the actor.

At the end of the previous chapter I stated that dramaturgical script analysis may help the actor to comprehend his or her role *as* an actor for any given project, which I now propose will maximize the actor’s time. In other words, when faced with plays that resist character analysis or employ unfamiliar structures, dramaturgical script analysis may put the actor’s time to better use. For instance, the actors in the *Arcadia* case study waited until the start of rehearsals to clarify individual questions about the play. I suggest the actor may bring individual discoveries – or questions – to table work that could deepen collective dramaturgical investigation. However, the actor must spend time with the play in advance of rehearsals. Each play surveyed in the previous chapters relays a different version of how the actor might do so using consistent categories of exploration. Comprehension of what a play asks of the actor may then result from the actor’s familiarity with the play. Again, using the example of *Arcadia*, the actor’s dramaturgical exploration could help to construct the play’s story through the action of multiple characters because clues for the actor occur in scenes that alternate between time periods. Ultimately, then, exploration may even benefit the actor’s ability to delineate a realistic through-line of action for a particular character. Moreover, time spent with the play and

its dramaturgical structures may also support the actor's familiarity with character-specific dialogue even though the actor engages with these elements through a different context. A focus on dramaturgical script analysis admittedly diverges from character analysis, but may still serve the actor and the production by revealing what the play requires of the actor.

The actor's exploration through dramaturgical script analysis may also lead to a different quality of time spent in collaboration with a director and other actors once rehearsal begins. One of the actors in the *Arcadia* case study offers a purposeful way to view how the actor may contend with various layers of preparation and additional layering that occurs in rehearsal: "There's all of the perimeters you have to fit into, right? But then other than that the performance is yours, right? So you just have to find out how to fit the perimeters and then let the performance blossom into the other corners of it, if that kind of makes sense" (Student C). I agree. A play offers an initial set of perimeters for the actor, and dramaturgical script analysis applies practical tools to help the actor identify those perimeters. *Apparition*, for instance, creates equivocal opportunities for the actor to switch back and forth between characters rather than to maintain a consistent character throughout. By contrast, *God's Ear* retains story structures grounded in realistic tragedy, but simultaneously defies linear through-line while maintaining a suspended through-line for the characters. Once in rehearsal, a director and other actors create further perimeters, as in Scott Kaiser's advice to the *Arcadia* actors about learning lines in a different way. The actor's effort to let a performance "blossom" into all of its possible corners may begin with awareness of a play's unique structures and then

continue into rehearsal. These various levels of awareness may also maximize time in rehearsal because the actor already anticipates a play's dramaturgy in action.

Positive benefits aside, the *Arcadia* case study reveals a persistent adherence to the internal/external binary among the undergraduate student actors, which suggests that other actors may fundamentally resist a practical dramaturgy as well. The undergraduate student actors perceived character analysis as an internal approach and dramaturgy as an external approach. They also revealed a preference for character analysis, and a tendency to view dramaturgical work as applicable only to certain plays. Rivaling concerns of time within the production process, this represents a disheartening outcome for my project. In response, I suggest the plays themselves, as well as several other practitioner perspectives, argue for a different approach in the actor's preparation. Castagno's efforts to codify new playwriting strategies suggest they represent a critical factor for contemporary theater in the United States. As a director, Anne Kauffman offers perspective about how these plays require different approaches from directors – in a more immediate and practical way than Pavis may be able to provide. These instances, along with the extensive resources at OSF serve as my evidence that the actor may have a dramaturgical responsibility to a play as well as to a character.

I do not advocate for a new acting method, but a different and complementary approach to character analysis. Actor training has the potential to provide this alternative, which is why I purposefully challenge the actor's artistic role. With that goal in mind, actor training suggests a point at which the actor's process may be infused with a dramaturgical sensibility. Offering alternative approaches to preparation for actors when they are at a point of developing an individual process could make a willingness to apply

dramaturgy a conscious choice and the tools to do so more readily available. Most importantly, considering the benefit of a practical dramaturgy for actors alongside emotional or physical preparation would offer one concrete step toward dissolving the internal/external binary that no longer serves actors in their training or in their practical, professional work.

For other theater practitioners, a process through which the actor considers a play's dramaturgy in action may challenge established artistic roles in production. For example, if the actor's analysis merges with the dramaturg's, does the dramaturg's role become obsolete? The actor's dramaturgical sensibility does not replace the dramaturg's. Rather, it encourages the actor to think like a dramaturg. Through this distinction, I envision how the actor's dramaturgical thinking may lead to more productive collaborations with other artists, just as this sensibility may contribute to the collaborative process of production. For instance, the dramaturg may still attend to story and structure most fully within the rehearsal and build process for a production, but the actor's dramaturgical thinking could potentially maximize time in rehearsal because both the actor and the dramaturg would be thinking about dramaturgical punctuation. This may dissolve some of the boundaries between the dramaturg's focus on the play and the actor's focus on the character, but it may also effectively encourage the actor to develop a dramaturgical vocabulary and employ it in practice. Further, an expectation for the actor's flexibility already factors into practical dramaturgy. Despite how the actor may prepare individually, by anticipating flexibility throughout dramaturgical script analysis, the actor would commit to an ensemble process with the play as well as with other artists before rehearsals even begin.

I also anticipate that directors may wonder how dramaturgical script analysis would impact the director/actor relationship. Along with the dramaturg/actor relationship, I envision a positive shift in the collaboration between actors and directors. However, actors and directors may both have to come to the process prepared to collaborate in a different way. Patrice Pavis again provides a means to consider this shift in response to new plays. In his more recent work, *Contemporary Mise en Scène*, Pavis anticipates a change in the actor/director relationship: “When the actor is also the dramaturg, the actor is obviously one body with what is said or shown, becoming organically present to the words and to the actions, and to the director if the director persists in wanting to guide and control” (284). Like Pavis, I recognize how the actor may need to become “one body” with the play by engaging with a play’s dramaturgy in action. Unlike Pavis, I anticipate that the director *will* “persist in wanting to guide and control” because that is, after all, a definition of the director’s function in contemporary theater production.

Pavis refers particularly to the process of working with new plays that are open to completion by both the actor and the director rather than plays that require traditional interpretation. Still, his statement may seem extreme. It specifically questions the director’s contribution, but perhaps new plays require the director to prepare differently in order to collaborate with actors, just as the actor’s preparation with new plays may require a different approach. This could be perceived as a negative development for the director because it requires a different flexibility or ensemble awareness – a different dramaturgical sensibility. As with actors, this potentially creates resistance because it challenges production norms. Regardless, the director may continue to guide a production and may continue to shape plays in a production as the critical decision-maker and

outside eye. The actor's preparation with dramaturgical script analysis does not intentionally threaten the director's artistic role in production any more than it threatens the dramaturg's. Rather, by preparing more productively, the actor may potentially enhance the rehearsal collaboration with a director as long as the actor prepares with flexibility and with an expectation of exchange.

### Final Departures

In an interview featured in *American Theatre* magazine in 2013, Todd London speaks about New Dramatists, the organization he heads. He says, "...it's an attempt to participate in cultural democratic politics. It's the act of working together in a self-examining process that allows for the voices of individuals to affect the collective. It's a practice that is both theatrical *and* democratically vigorous" (Nunns 29). If I have not been clear in my aims, I will now say more forcefully that I hope the actor's practical dramaturgy will contribute to "democratically vigorous" collaborations in theatrical production. More blatantly, as theater artists we may currently take collaboration for granted without questioning its efficacy. Reconsidering the actor's approach presents one opportunity to treat collaboration as a vital and practical concern, especially in response to new dramatic forms.

Toward the effort of more meaningful and "democratically vigorous" collaborations, I also urge that we collectively attempt to break what Lue Morgan Douthit has called a "cycle of crisis management" (Douthit). In 2013, I had the opportunity to take part in a panel session at OSF during a weeklong program for the University of Oregon Department of Theatre Arts. In a dramaturgy forum that included Douthit as well as Lydia G. Garcia, I noted Douthit's advice to the students to "break the cycle of crisis

management.” Through a personal interview at a later date, I asked Douthit what she meant. In retrospect, she clarified that she partly referred to crisis management as something learned in college, when students try to navigate multiple demands on their time; she also partly referred to how crisis management then transfers to theater production because, “...we are always perpetually behind in theater” (Douthit). As the previous comments about *lack* of time confirm, crisis management pervades theatrical production. Surely when time represents such a critical factor, actors as well as other theater artists may welcome an approach that maximizes the actor’s time. But this shift requires more than just the actor’s willingness to engage in a “democratically vigorous” collaboration.

Very plainly, I propose that practical dramaturgy may support the actor’s approach to various types of plays in production because I consider the actor’s responsibility to a play as profound an endeavor as embodiment of a character. I also argue that practical dramaturgy may support various theatrical production processes, but especially new playwriting because new playwriting inspires a different dramaturgical sensibility from other theater artists as well. I therefore hope to encourage “democratically vigorous” collaborations in contemporary theater as a conscious step toward these goals so that further investigation may envision other applications of a practical dramaturgy for actors.

## APPENDIX A

### OSF FINANCIAL RESOURCES IN RETROSPECT

OSF's financial resources have been examined more thoroughly in other scholarly studies, and such projects address the Festival's fiscal responsibilities at different stages of its producing history. In his 1976 MS Thesis, John Michael Evey discussed OSF's early attempts to successfully deal with the "income gap," which for a theater organization represents the difference between earned income and other kinds of revenue – contributions, grants, and large donor gifts, for example (Evey 1-2). A 1980 brochure entitled *The Oregon Shakespearean Festival Association Endowment Fund: The Next Fifty Years* refers to the same financial issue, though OSF used the phrase "earnings gap" rather than "income gap:"

While the Festival was once almost entirely self-supporting, the financial picture has shifted over the years. Needs for the 1980's and beyond are quite different from those of the 1960's. The Festival now faces an annual "earnings gap" (the difference between ticket sales and expenses) as the rising costs of materials and services push operating expenses higher each year. (OSFA, *OSFA Endowment* 5)

The brochure also recalls how the need for an endowment fund was first recognized by OSF in the 1960s in order to support artist "scholarships" prior to paying actors professional wages; I will consider this more fully in a moment. In 1980, however, the Festival was trying to reach a goal of ten million dollars for the Endowment Fund by its fiftieth anniversary year in 1985 so that it might plan for various expenses (OSFA, *OSFA Endowment* 3). Evey evaluated the organization several years earlier in 1976 and predicted a necessary expansion to sustain OSF's low income gap and to maintain operating expenses through memberships and ticket sales.

Two of Evey's predictions for expansion have come to pass: a longer festival season and increased seating capacity in what is now called the Allen Elizabethan Theatre (Evey 160-161). As of 1976, the Festival's season stretched over seven months and included eight plays.<sup>1</sup> Seasons in the 1980s lengthened, accommodating ten to twelve plays before gradually settling to the current standard of eleven plays over ten months. Evey's other prediction about expanding seating capacity for the Elizabethan theater came to fruition with the construction of the Allen Pavilion from 1991-1992. The pavilion added balcony seating in the Elizabethan theater for the 1992 outdoor season. OSF's expansion was also achieved through the addition of other stage spaces. Most importantly, Evey's evaluation of earned income illustrates how that side of OSF's income gap has been determined by production-related goals. That is, its financial goals were established primarily to support the company's stage productions.

Almost thirty years after Evey's study, Joshua Sixten Knudson discussed OSF as a model for "Institutional Advancement" in his 2003 MA Thesis. Institutional advancement relates to financial resources of contributed income raised through administrative functions like marketing, communications, public relations, fundraising, and development (Knudson 1). Though Knudson does not intentionally complement Evey's research, his work offers a view from the other side of OSF's income gap. Knudson's study concludes with five components that characterize OSF's successful growth: inspiration, perseverance, commitment to community, longevity of leadership, careful spending and sensible growth (50-51). Knudson's final component, careful spending and sensible growth, most profoundly captures how OSF has continued to maintain a relatively low income gap through donor relationships. Because the

organization can no longer rely so heavily upon earned income to support a multi-million dollar budget, donor relationships now represent significant financial resources for OSF. These funding relationships are also tied to production-related goals.

In fact, donor relationships tied to production are not new to OSF. The Festival has a history of carefully cultivating relationships with individual donors, stretching as far back as the first five years of production when community participation and in-kind donations were a necessary part of the organization's sustenance (in-kind refers to exchange of goods and services rather than money). For example, Bowmer recalls organizing a "fund-raising drive" to rebuild the Elizabethan theater in time for the 1959 summer season after the Fire Marshal closed the theater at the end of the 1958 season (*As I remember* 246-247). Individual donors were integral to the success of ongoing operations, as the Festival received what would now be called a matching grant from Alfred Carpenter. Carpenter matched every dollar raised in Ashland, which effectively doubled donation funds. In these early cases, a simple goal of continuing to produce plays motivated careful and sensible donor relationships. Production-related goals still require other methods of careful and sensible institutional advancement – also by necessity.

Individual donors remain integral to the success of OSF's ongoing operations. They reveal current financial strategies still associated with production and still characterized by careful spending and sensible growth over time. The size of major donor contributions has changed, however, increasing to support OSF's bigger budget. For example, in October of 2013 OSF received a three million dollar grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, which inspired a change from the formerly named Elizabethan Stage/Allen Pavilion to the Allen Elizabethan Theatre. The press release chronicles how

the most recent Allen Family Foundation gift is actually the result of an ongoing relationship between the Festival and the donor, carefully cultivated over a number of years in relation to production-related projects:

The Paul G. Allen Family Foundation provided the lead gifts for the building of the Allen Pavilion in 1993, when the name of the theatre was changed to Elizabethan Stage/Allen Pavilion. In 2002 the Foundation once again provided the lead gift for the building of the New Theatre, but passed on the opportunity to name the theatre and issued a naming challenge. That challenge was met in 2012 by a group of donors who renamed the New Theatre to the Thomas Theatre. (OSF, “Paul G. Allen”)

According to the same press release, many years of patronage by the Allen Family as audience members preceded the twenty-year funding relationship with the family’s foundation, which makes it a relationship that actually spans fifty years. Similarly, the Carpenter family’s continued support as a major donor is reflected in the naming of Carpenter Hall on the Festival’s campus. Both of these examples indicate careful and sensible “advancement” of the organization’s funding relationships, just as they illustrate how contributed income is tied to production-related goals on the other side of the income gap.

What Evey and Knudson track in tandem, albeit from a later perspective, reveals long-term growth of financial resources, but it also illuminates OSF’s financial support of actors. Outlining financial resources on both sides of the income gap reveals how both are heavily influenced by production-related goals with the organization’s intent. OSF’s shift from an educational theater organization to a professional theater organization is now fully integrated, but the shift itself reveals how OSF’s financial resources have long supported actors as part of the organization’s production-related goals.

To return to the Endowment Fund goals in 1980, the brochure recalls how the need for an endowment fund was first recognized by the Festival in the 1960s in order to support artist “scholarships.” The organization’s objectives at that time related to viewing itself as an educational theater organization, and more particularly equated to developing young artists because of that mission:

One of the Festival’s goals was to develop the best emerging young talent by presenting opportunities other theatre companies in the United States were unable to offer. To assist in the provision of future *scholarships*, the Oregon Shakespearean Festival Endowment Fund was created in 1962, governed by a separate board of trustees. (OSFA, *OSFA Endowment 5*, my emphasis)

A primary artistic objective of the educational theater organization was development of young actors; therefore funding goals for actor scholarships were created in accordance with that objective before the organization paid professional wages to actors. William Oyler credited Dr. Margery Bailey with instigating the first actor scholarships in 1950. Oyler chronicled how Bailey was recognized in the souvenir program that year for implementing the Actors’ Scholarship Fund under the auspices of the Tudor Guild, and how subsequent “Festival-sponsored scholarships” continued as authorized by the board of directors for the 1951 season (281). Oyler also noted that in subsequent years, scholarship amounts increased based upon an actor’s tenure at the Festival (560). Prior to professional contracts, production goals of the educational theater organization made scholarships the first form of monetary support for Festival actors.

In 1959, an unprecedented arrangement for actor compensation occurred when Angus Bowmer received a Ford Foundation grant. Funds from the grant were used to employ several professional actors during that season. That year, the Festival contracted with actors through Actor’s Equity Association (AEA), the national labor union for actors

and stage managers in the United States. This is significant because OSF did not offer regular professional contracts for actors via AEA until 1984. Between 1959 and 1984, professional guest artist contracts were offered with some frequency through special negotiation with AEA. However, after the unusual 1959 season, when the Festival returned to its practice of casting mainly non-professional actors and providing financial support through scholarships, Equity began to take more notice of the Festival's casting and compensation policies. This resulted in several years of negotiations between the Festival and AEA, whereby OSF attempted to establish its intentions as an educational theater in relation to actors in particular. Oyler's dissertation includes excerpts of his 1969 interview with William Patton, General Manager from 1953 and Executive Director from 1953-1995.<sup>2</sup> In the following, Oyler quotes Patton, who spoke to how the festival's educational focus intentionally dictated its casting and compensation policies in relation to production:

If we had [a regular Equity company] ... we'd be just the same as any other professional repertory theatre: those people would be taking all of the roles, and the incentive for the younger ones would be lost to a great degree. I'm saying that we're able to help these people get that kind of experience much faster here than by working as apprentices where they don't have a chance for the kind of responsibility [sic]. So, we're a sort of a step in between the university, or the drama school, and the professional stage. (Oyler 538)

Patton clarified OSF's early educational focus more specifically in relation to actors by explaining how the Festival viewed itself as "a step in between" training and professional careers. The educational mission was primary. Financial resources, though a practical necessity in relation to that goal, were a secondary consideration.

A significant shift in OSF's view of itself as an educational theater organization occurred between 1969 and 1984, and this also impacted actors directly. Joshua Knudson

documented how the change impacted OSF's financial resources for actors as the organization moved from subsidizing non-professional actors via scholarships to contracting professional actors via AEA. Knudson's thesis includes interview excerpts with Paul Nicholson, General Manager from 1980, Executive Director from 1995-2012, and now Executive Director Emeritus. The following analysis by Knudson includes a quote from Nicholson related to how the "artistic quality" of OSF's productions was one of the contributing factors for the change:

Since 1984, the OSF has been an "Equity house," employing a minimum of forty AEA contracts per season (Nicholson). Nicholson states, "This was one of the things that really made an impact. I can't overstate the difference that signing the Equity contract made; it made the statement that artistic quality is of paramount importance" (Nicholson). (Knudson 42)

Nicholson's comments reveal a new goal for the organization: a professional status among the company's actors would lead to greater artistic quality in production. The goal of the educational theater organization, to cultivate young actors, disappears at this point. OSF's long-term strategy makes the shift more explicit. For instance, in the *Long Range Plan* for 1988-1992, a section titled "Problems and Opportunities" states: "Our peers still see us as an educational theatre rather than a professional one. We need to stop looking at ourselves as a training institution" (OSFA, *LRP* 1988-1992 17). Subsequent *Long Range Plan* documents continued to record progress toward the new goal, as the following excerpts illustrate by comparison:

Higher artistic standards are in part the result of increasing the proportion of Equity actors from 50% five years ago to 67% today. (OSF, *LRP* 1994-1998 3)

Higher artistic standards are in part the result of increasing the proportion of Equity actors from 67% in 1993 to 73% in 1998. (OSF, *LRP* 1999-2003 4)

Higher artistic standards are in part the result of engaging increasingly experienced actors. In 2002, Equity actors represented 76% of the total actor weeks. (OSF, *LRP* 2003-2007 3).

The shift from an educational theater organization to a professional theater organization purposefully links production-related concerns with actors, as an increasing percentage of Equity actors requires new financial goals. With almost eighty percent Equity actors in recent years, it is now expected that professional actors – requiring professional wages – will comprise a majority of OSF’s resident company.

And yet, OSF retains something of its legacy as an educational theater organization. Most noticeably, it sponsors a program for acting “Trainees.” Each year, trainees include a group of acting students from Southern Oregon University (SOU) who are mentored by Director of Company Development, Scott Kaiser. Like many actors from OSF’s first fifty years of production, trainees receive on-the-job training opportunities with roles onstage in the Festival’s season. In addition to onstage roles, Kaiser interacts as a mentor to the trainees during the year and beyond. He offers the following as a sample conversation with a trainee program participant:

This year, we’ll begin a relationship as a mentorship. If at the end of the year you no longer have need of my advice, that’s fine. But if you find yourself out in the profession, and you want to call me or write to me, you should consider me a professional mentor. That’s for the year, and that’s also when you leave here. If you have questions you want to ask me, five years from now, I’ll pick up the phone, and I’ll answer your questions. That’s just something that you get with this internship because *we’re* getting your free labor. (Kaiser)

Kaiser also refers to the yearlong program as a “bridge” for the trainees, “either into the profession or to grad school” (Kaiser). In that regard the trainee program retains the closest vestige of OSF’s educational production goals in relation to actors. Kaiser’s

reference to the program as a “bridge” effectively echoes Patton’s reference to the Festival as, “a step in between the university, or the drama school, and the professional stage” (Oyler 538). The question of “free labor” may also represent a legacy concern, although Kaiser frankly acknowledges this when setting expectations with the trainees. With regard to historical processes, it is not so evident. In fact, Oyler’s dissertation stops just short of suggesting that the Festival’s insistence on promoting itself as an educational theater organization was financially motivated. He explains how non-profit educational institutions in the state of Oregon were granted tax breaks (Oyler 548). In essence, Oyler implies that as an educational theater organization, OSF might have carried less financial burden (at least with regard to taxes) than other theater organizations. Given the significant financial resources now required to support OSF’s professional acting company, smaller roles are legitimately and economically cast from trainee actors who will work for no wages. Perhaps, in the same way, limited financial resources in the past necessitated OSF’s educational practice of hiring actors for “scholarship” compensation.

Regardless, almost fifty years into its producing history, OSF significantly transformed its artistic goals by shifting the focus of its financial resources from educational to professional objectives. In both phases, however, production goals determined financial goals. The decision to increase artistic quality resulted in more professional contracts with actors starting in 1984 and led to an increasingly higher percentage of Equity actors within the company in subsequent years. In turn, a higher percentage of Equity actors within the company resulted in the need for more financial resources to support those actors. Increasing financial resources to support actors resulted in increased pressure on both sides of the income gap. Ultimately, this series of choices

contributed to the significant growth of a multi-million dollar budget for an organization that once held a donor “fund-raising drive” to rebuild its outdoor stage.

### Notes

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<sup>1</sup> This information is pieced together from OSFA’s *Prologue*, Fall/Winter 1975 (OSFA, “Festival/Stage II” 4) and from “Appendix 3” of OSF’s *Long Range Plan, 2003-2007* (58).

<sup>2</sup> Patton first came to the festival in 1948. He worked in several technical capacities but also acted upon occasion.

APPENDIX B

PRODUCTION DETAIL FOR OSF 2013 SEASON

<b>2013 Production</b>	<b>Production Dramaturg</b>	<b>Voice and Text Director</b>
<i>The Taming of the Shrew</i>	Lue Morgan Douthit	Scott Kaiser
<i>My Fair Lady</i>	n/a	David Carey
<i>Two Trains Running</i>	n/a	David Carey
<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i>	Lydia G. Garcia	Rebecca Clark Carey
<i>The Tenth Muse</i>	Luis Alfaro (guest artist) <sup>a</sup> Lue Morgan Douthit	Rebecca Clark Carey
<i>King Lear</i>	Barry Kraft <sup>b</sup>	Rebecca Clark Carey
<i>The Unfortunates</i>	Lue Morgan Douthit Seth Gilbert (guest artist) <sup>c</sup>	David Carey
<i>The Liquid Plain</i>	Julie Felise Dubiner <sup>d</sup>	David Carey
<i>Cymbeline</i>	Lydia G. Garcia	Ursula Meyer (guest artist) <sup>e</sup>
<i>The Heart of Robin Hood</i>	Philippa Kelly (guest artist) <sup>f</sup>	David Carey
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	Philippa Kelly (guest artist)	Rebecca Clark Carey

Source: Constructed for the purpose of comparison. (OSF, *Playbill* vol. 1 and 2).

- a. Alfaro is co-credited as a dramaturg and is OSF's Mellon Foundation Playwright in Residence.
- b. In twenty-six seasons at OSF, Kraft's has been an actor, production dramaturg, and teaching artist with the School Visit Program.
- c. Gilbert is credited as Associate Dramaturg with no prior seasons at OSF.
- d. Dubiner is Associate Director, *American Revolutions: the United States History Cycle*; this play is a commission for that program.
- e. Meyer was initially an actor at OSF, then guest voice and text coach or director for a total of fifteen seasons with the Festival.
- f. Kelly's individual biography lists no prior seasons at OSF.

## APPENDIX C

### OSF INDIRECT RESOURCES IN RETROSPECT

#### Resident Company and Rotating Repertory

Comparing historical contexts to current practices reveals a longstanding tradition of encouraging ensemble awareness for the actor through the production process at OSF. Former expectations about the actor's responsibilities in production were very different from current practices, yet a tendency to value flexibility from actors endures. William Oyler provides an example specifically related to actors based on his personal experience as an actor at the Festival in the 1950s. An event he describes from the 1954 season is relatively minor: several actors rejected production-related work assignments. All the same, this example identifies a critical moment for Festival actors because it captures a turning point at which they began to contest non-acting responsibilities. Oyler outlines expectations of the Festival organization as well as the protests from what he called the "Carnegie Tech contingent:"

Festival policy had always expected that actors and actresses would aid in other fields to ready the productions. Since the war all actors and actresses had received work assignments for a certain number of mornings each week (the number varied from season to season) during the rehearsal period on scenery and lighting tasks, sprucing of the audience area, costuming, etc. But, the Carnegie group that season opposed participating in work calls, and in an acrimonious meeting called to discuss their recalcitrance, Carnegie spokesman George Peppard informed the technical staff of his group's position: "We didn't travel 3,000 miles to do tech work! We are actors!" (Oyler 336-337)

It should be noted that Oyler cites his own attendance at the meeting as source for the quotation of Peppard. Further, Oyler's use of words like *acrimonious* and *recalcitrance* suggests a negative view of the "Carnegie Tech" position, although he does not declare

his view of the debate outright. Beyond the debate itself, Oyler's account unexpectedly reveals a contemporary parallel to OSF's historical practices. OSF may no longer require actors to take on assignments in technical production, but OSF actors now take on multiple ensemble responsibilities in lengthier seasons than their Festival predecessors. Despite changes over time, flexibility still factors into the resident company and rotating repertory structures profoundly through the contemporary actor's extended participation in production at OSF.

### Stage Spaces

Angus Bowmer went to great lengths to provide future Festival actors with specific directives about OSF's stage spaces. The "architectural" benefits and challenges of Ashland's Elizabethan stage were his particular focus. He described the stage as "theatrical" and encouraged the actor's double awareness of the practical stage space and the imaginative stage space: "An actor must be two persons on stage. He must be the character but he must also be the actor" (*Ashland Elizabethan Stage* 44). OSF's Elizabethan stage may encourage the actor's double awareness most profoundly, but OSF's other stage spaces invite this consideration as well. Bowmer's conclusive thoughts clarify how "theatrical" refers to the imaginative potential for any stage:

When Rosalind says, "Well, this is the Forest of Arden." [sic] we in the audience accept that as the kind of statement of imaginative fiction that we have contracted to accept when we buy our tickets to the theatre. But on another level of our minds we know and accept the real fact that Rosalind and her companions are actually standing on a wooden platform which is an integral part of a functional architectural structure. It requires this double acceptance to make the magic. (*Ashland Elizabethan Stage* 45)

What Bowmer described as the interplay between "imaginative fiction" and "architectural structure" is summarized neatly by a common phrase in theater practice: willing

suspension of disbelief (long attributed to Samuel Taylor Coleridge). This concept refers to how an audience accepts unrealistic elements of theatrical performance, which is perhaps what Bowmer meant when he invoked the “magic” of theatrical imagination. Common association, however, does not diminish Bowmer’s advice for actors to engage a practical and imaginative awareness of the stage space.

Former OSF Artistic Director Henry Woronicz has offered a simple directive for the actor’s awareness of a stage space that also relates to OSF’s historical production processes: pay attention. In her MA thesis, Bobbie Ann Jeffrey<sup>1</sup> includes an interview excerpt in which she quotes Woronicz as he described what it means for directors to consciously negotiate OSF’s Elizabethan theater as a stage space. He spoke of the Elizabethan “facade” – Bowmer’s “architectural setting” – in a manner that applies to OSF’s other stage spaces:

I wholeheartedly agree with Richard Hay, who designed all of the Ashland theatres. He said we do not want to hide what is there. We don’t *want* to make it a neutral space. You have to pay attention to the space that you’re in; ... Sometimes you do just forget about the facade, but I like the facade. It’s so strong, it’s a certain style and period that deserves to be integrated rather than just hoping the audience will forget it’s there. (Jeffrey 113, author’s italics)

The directive to “pay attention to the space that you’re in” is simple, but effective – for directors but also for actors. The qualities of the stage space contribute to an “integrated” experience between the actors, the play, and the audience. This particularly applies at OSF because of its three distinct stage spaces and because the physical structures of each theater are designed to enhance qualities of the actor/audience relationship.

## Education Programs

OSF's first education programs for audiences were formalized in conjunction with the founding of its Institute of Renaissance Studies in 1956. Dr. Margery Bailey was instrumental in establishing the Institute.<sup>2</sup> Bowmer studied with Bailey while taking graduate courses at Stanford University through the G.I. Bill in the 1947-1948 academic year (Bowmer, *As I remember* 171). Bailey then came to the Festival in 1948 as an academic advisor, offering lectures on the "Renaissance Man" to the festival company as well as to its audiences (Brubaker 52). In 1955, she was named Director of the Festival Association's Division of Education and soon began offering summer courses for college credit through Stanford but onsite at the Festival and in connection with its productions. Institute offerings later expanded to other universities as possible, though OSF's education programs for audiences no longer result in college credit. A 1957 pamphlet for the second year of Institute courses indicates a focus on the plays in performance. The pamphlet is titled: *Institute of Renaissance Studies: An Introduction to Shakespeare in Action*. The distinction "in action" first suggests attention to the plays as performance texts rather than as literature. The pamphlet's internal content emphasizes that approach further: "...root of the dual program is the performance of plays on an Elizabethan stage, which teaches us something new about Shakespeare's practical stagecraft and its immense influence on his dramatic and poetic expression" (OSFA, *Institute* 3). This focus evidences Bowmer's performance goals and Bailey's expertise as a Renaissance theater scholar. Their particular collaboration created a dramaturgical focus within the first education programs. Studying a play "in action" blends scholarly or historical research with equal attention to story and structure as revealed through staging. These

founding precepts for the first Institute courses are integral to the development of OSF's subsequent education programs.

Building upon the work of the Institute, OSF formalized education programs for primary and secondary age students in the early 1970s. These were inspired by Bowmer's priority to ensure a future audience for the Festival. OSF has a longstanding tradition of discounted student ticket incentives, which were offered for the first time in 1952: "A new ticket had been approved for the first time that year, a student ticket; this allowed college undergraduates, elementary, and secondary school students to attend the plays for half price" (Oyler 312). Bowmer's goals to reach younger audiences also benefited from the opening of the Angus Bowmer Theatre in 1971. Winter and spring productions in the Stage II season could entice school-age audiences and school-organized visits to the Festival. In addition to ticket incentives, Bowmer's ideal became even more of a reality with his instigation of a school visit program – that is, a program through which OSF sent teaching artists into the schools. OSF's archives track the creation of the program as follows: "Bowmer established the School Visit Program in 1969 and the Festival's Education Department in 1970. Forbes W. Rogers was hired as OSF's first Education Coordinator, responsible for overseeing school visits and programming for school groups attending plays in the Angus Bowmer Theatre" (OSF, "Education Department Records" 4). Under Rogers, the School Visit Program was developed and funded, though Bowmer recollected visitations actually began in the fall of 1973 under the guidance of Margaret (Peggy) Rubin. According to Bowmer's account, ten actors in various teams were sent to 97 schools in Oregon, Washington, California, and Idaho (*As I remember* 265-266). In *Golden Fire*, Brubaker reveals the program more than doubled by 1984, sending teams of

actors to visit 260 schools in California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Idaho, Nevada, and British Columbia (104-105). Such efforts to build education programs for younger audiences expanded what might be called the Bowmer/Bailey legacy by incorporating outreach efforts into the Festival's dual focus between production and education.

Through much of the 1980s, OSF maintained two separate education departments that eventually merged to consolidate efforts and combine resources beginning in 1988.<sup>3</sup> College-level courses waned, but efforts to entice younger school-aged audiences continued, including outreach with the School Visit Program. These fell under the umbrella of the director of education. Other onsite programs remained under the oversight of the director of the Institute, through which programs were added specifically for teachers and for general audiences to complement existing opportunities. Well into the 1980s, OSF's mission supported education programs that were actively linked to production, as the *Long Range Plan* for 1983-1987 attests: "It is our intention to bring the classical theater out of the library and into the living consciousness of the modern playgoer. We intend to provide a theatrical bridge between our cultural heritage and modern experience" (OSFA, *LRP* 1983-1987 13). Following the shift to a professional theater organization and to a combined education department in the 1980s, the current OSF Institute shares those fundamental aims.

Increased workshops on campus reflect the biggest difference in programming, though participants for these programs remain students, teachers, and general audience members. Activities still include the backstage tours Patton originated as well as newer audience offerings that blend production and education, for example: Festival Noons and Park Talks ("noontime activities" that include lectures, panel discussions, or casual

conversations scheduled from June to September) or preplay introductions called Preface Plus (OSF, *Playbill* vol. 2 106). Bowmer's groundbreaking School Visit Program continues, though visits have gradually decreased over the years. A recent *Long Range Plan* claims, "...but recent school funding limitations have reduced demand for our work in the schools" (OSF, *LRP* 2003-2007 7). Festival statistics confirm a steep decline from 284 total schools in 1999 to only 174 total schools in 2002 (OSF, *LRP* 2003-2007 62). A fundraising brochure for education in 2013 tracks the on-campus trend in relation to school visitations even more recently: compared to approximately 100 total school visits, the brochure cites 908 workshops for students on OSF's campus (OSF, *Education*). Like the early education efforts initiated by Bowmer and Bailey, OSF's current programs continue to emphasize the plays' resonance with an audience and to explore dramaturgical elements "in action."

### Community Relationships

William Oyler documented the Festival's early efforts to build community relationships and chronicled significant changes up to 1970. His dissertation states up front that this research, "particularizes community participation" (Oyler 1). Ultimately, Oyler equated community participation with direct involvement in production. His framework encompassed volunteers for the most part, and he tracked a gradual decline in community participation following a "golden era" of the 1950s (265). For many years, volunteers were informally welcomed into Festival operations in order to meet production needs. They took on jobs that are now occupied by professional craftspeople and union stagehands, such as constructing sets or costumes and staffing run crews. Through that lens – and through interviews with the Festival's founding artistic leaders,

production teams, and volunteers – Oyler effectively proves that community participation in production did decline at OSF. His dissertation records active community involvement in the Festival’s first seasons (1935-1940) and refers to the post WWII years (1947-1958) as the “second theatre” in which the Festival, “. . .achieved its maximum of community participation” (6). A sense of nostalgia surfaces, however, through Oyler’s summary of decreased community participation after the 1950s: “During the 1960’s the Festival organization became more and more a closed bureaucracy as paid staff positions multiplied, informality evanesced, and show business commercialism magnified” (8). His subtle hostility toward exclusion, regret at loss of informality, and blunt charge of commercialism together reveal a view that these trends represented a misstep or a point of no return for OSF.

Oyler’s framework for considering a decrease in community participation also extended to OSF’s actors. As noted previously, Oyler had a personal association with the Festival, having been an actor for several seasons in the 1950s. This also lends a sense of nostalgia to his statement about the 1950s as a “golden era” for OSF. Nonetheless, Oyler’s first-person accounts track historical production processes especially in relation to actors; this is relevant and essential for comparison with current processes. For instance, Oyler revealed that up until the late 1950s actors took on production responsibilities beyond acting, such as technical assignments or stage management for other productions in the repertory. Those days are gone, but Festival actors may work in various artistic capacities.<sup>4</sup> As evidenced in relation to education programs, time is one factor contributing to the decline of these practices. Lengthier seasons and more plays result in busier rehearsal schedules for actors. Union regulations are another factor

because AEA intentionally protects professional actors from other production responsibilities. If viewed less subjectively, Oyler’s deductions confirm signs of the shift from an educational to a professional theater organization.

Operations at the Festival no longer require the kind of volunteerism that abounded from 1935 to 1960, but volunteers continue to take part in production processes to a lesser extent. According to *Images of America: Oregon Shakespeare Festival*, as of 2009, “...volunteers still work in every department of the festival and on the board of directors” (Leary and Richard 83). Unlike informal recruitment methods in the early years, OSF now screens and accepts volunteers via application. OSF’s website page for volunteers states the following: “Because training sessions and benefits are offered only during the spring and fall seasons, volunteer opportunities are restricted to Rogue Valley residents only. ... At the present time, we have had such an overwhelming response from our community that we have temporarily closed volunteer application” (OSF, “Volunteering”). From the “overwhelming response” and closing of applications, volunteers apparently exceed the organization’s needs, but lower demand does not signal higher volunteer involvement. OSF’s statistics reflect an overall decrease in total volunteers since the 1980s (see below). OSF’s *Long Range Plan* data provides numbers for total volunteers that offer a comparison at a glance when viewed together:

<u>Volunteers</u>	
1003	(OSFA, <i>LRP</i> 1983-1987 32)
860	(OSFA, <i>LRP</i> 1988-1992 44)
820	(OSF, <i>LRP</i> 1994-1998 52) <sup>5</sup>
865	(OSF, <i>LRP</i> 1999-2003 55)
666	(OSF, <i>LRP</i> 2003-2007 63)

Based on categories provided with this data, individual volunteers fill a variety of needs, like costume shop assistance, ticket takers, or staff for the OSF Welcome Center. Groups

of volunteers also exist, such as the Soroptimists, who organize the blanket and pillow booth for the Allen Elizabethan Theatre. The largest volunteer group is the Tudor Guild. OSF's increased professionalism has not reduced the volunteer efforts of the Tudor Guild. In fact, the relationship between the two organizations provides an insight that contrasts with Oyler's view of declining community participation.

The Tudor Guild functions as a "principal auxiliary" to the Festival, which means it is separate from OSF, but linked (Brubaker 35). Tudor Guild volunteers staff the Tudor Guild Gift Shop and its various operations within the OSF campus; of the 666 volunteers listed for 2003 in the comparison above, 142 are affiliated with the Tudor Guild (OSF, *LRP 2003-2007* 63). The "auxiliary" support for OSF by the Tudor Guild is primarily financial, which becomes apparent when reviewing both organizations' websites. OSF's site provides a direct link to the Tudor Guild's, and OSF's page defines the relationship factually: "The Tudor Guild donates all of its profits to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival" (OSF, "Tudor Guild"). Clicking through to the Tudor Guild's separate website, its mission confirms OSF's statement: "The mission of Tudor Guild, a volunteer organization, is to support the Oregon Shakespeare Festival through significant financial contributions derived from the operation of the Gift Shop and satellites and to provide services to the Festival Company and patrons." (Tudor Guild, "Home"). Essentially, by providing services to OSF's patrons, Tudor Guild volunteers make "significant financial contributions" to the Festival. In fact, Guild volunteers have supported OSF's operations for many, many years: it was founded in 1948 explicitly to provide financial support to the Festival and it was incorporated as a non-profit in 1952 (Tudor Guild, "About"). Though this is not the kind of volunteer community participation Oyler tracks in relation

to production, he, too, recognizes its value. He credits Dr. Margery Bailey and her early influence on the Tudor Guild for implementing the Actors' Scholarship Fund (Oyler 281). Essentially, what the Tudor Guild models is a different kind of participation in OSF's community relationships. Guild volunteers may be less involved in production, but reciprocity and exchange still informs Guild operations in conjunction with OSF. In this way, the Tudor Guild demonstrates how OSF's early dependence upon community participation has transformed into community relationships that reflect a more complex reciprocity.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey compares directors from OSF and the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) in England. She declares an advantage for the RSC: "There is an undeniable maturing, a wealth and richness that their knowledge and experience bring to the work and to the text that was only really begun in Ashland when experienced dramaturgs and voice and text coach Scott Kaiser became part of the OSF company in the 1990s" (123).

<sup>2</sup> The Institute of Renaissance Studies was informally known by an acronym that could now be misleading: IRS. I refer to it as the "Institute" to avoid that confusion.

<sup>3</sup> Peggy Rubin headed both departments as Director of Information and Education beginning in 1974. Paul Barnes became Director of Education from 1980-1987. Homer Swander, followed by Edward Brubaker represent Directors of the Institute until 1988. Swander is credited for developing the first programs for teachers and Brubaker with developing the first programs for audiences. When Barnes and Brubaker left OSF, the departments merged as the OSF Institute in 1988 under leadership of Education Director Joan Langley, who still holds that position (OSF, "Education Department Records" 4).

<sup>4</sup> An example is available from the 2013 season. Several artists who were instrumental in developing and writing *The Unfortunates* were also actors in the production. This differs from what Oyler calls "non-acting duties," which he reveals were outlined in a booklet for Festival company members in the mid-1950s called *Actors' and Technicians' Guide to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival* (Oyler 374-375).

<sup>5</sup> Statistics from the *Long Range Plan* for 1994-1998 include a breakout of volunteers in Ashland and in Portland. The total used in this comparison reflects Ashland only.

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