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# Performing Franz in Sunday in the Park with George

Evan T. Crump  
*University of Mary Washington*

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**PERFORMING FRANZ IN SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE**

An honors paper submitted to the Department of Theatre and Dance  
of the University of Mary Washington  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Departmental Honors

Evan T. Crump

April 2015

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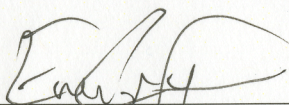
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04/29/15

*Performing Franz in  
Sunday in the Park with George*

submitted to the Department of Theatre & Dance  
in fulfillment of THEA 482: Senior Project

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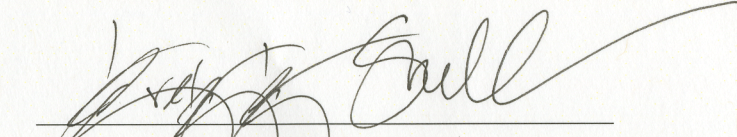
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Gregg Stull, Project Advisor

AWARDED HONORS IN THEATRE, 2015



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Gregg Stull, Chair

April 29, 2015



UNIVERSITY OF  
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## Art Is What You Do for Yourself

Menu

### Reminiscing the park

Posted on [December 5, 2014](#) by [etcrump](#)

When I began this process, I kept thinking of how meaningful this experience will be to me, in that it is my last time in my college career performing a musical. With that constant thought always nudging me in the back of my head, I knew that this show would mean I would have to [...]

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### I'm not surprised

Posted on [November 2, 2014](#) by [etcrump](#)

It's been a while. Like I mentioned in my previous post, I've been meaning to update this site more often. It's funny how intentions can change with a slight tweak to your already busy schedule. Life in the rehearsal period has left me with limited time to update this blog. That being said, I have been [...]

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### Overwhelming Week

Posted on [September 30, 2014](#) by [etcrump](#)

WHEW... It has been quite the hectic week. With classes, work, and other obligations, rehearsal have become my only time where I have been able to fully engross myself into my character and scene work as of late. I do hope my schedule opens up a little in the weeks ahead, for I feel bad [...]

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## At Long Last

Posted on [September 23, 2014](#) by [etcrump](#)

I am quite overdue in making my first post to this site. And by overdue, I mean about a month since the beginning of this entire process. The excuses behind my delay in posting are neither here nor there, but I had intended from the start of the rehearsal process to wait until I had [...]

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## Art Is What You Do for Yourself

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### Introduction

Hello and welcome to my journey through *A Sunday afternoon on the island of La Grande Jatte*. I am so excited to be cast in our production of "Sunday in the Park with George," music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, book by James Lapine. This show has held a special place with me since I first listened to the original Broadway soundtrack two years ago. To be able to portray the characters Franz and Billy Webster is such an honor. This site will serve as a guide and tool throughout the research, development, and exploration of my characters and surroundings. The hardest challenge in doing this show will be keeping my previous experiences of the musical from over influencing the development and growth of my character. As long as I remain honest in my work, I know I will be able to rise above that thought. I hope you enjoy my development. It's time to get to work!

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### Research

This page is dedicated to documenting the outside sources that helped me move forward in my process of creating Franz and Billy.

[http://www.genealoger.com/german/ger\\_emigration\\_records.htm](http://www.genealoger.com/german/ger_emigration_records.htm)

I used this site to gain a better understanding of why Germans were living as servants in Germany. I initially thought Franz had immigrated to France with his family after he had been born, but as I looked at the reasons in which groups of Germans immigrated overtime, I discovered that Franz's Parents must have had him after they moved. I also used this site to gain a better understanding of where in Germany Franz's relatives might originate, and even though I did decide eventually they must have come from the south of Germany, on account of his accent and the way in which he pronounces his "th"s as "s"s and "z"s, a definite place for his origin became less important to helping me find my character.

[http://gallery.sjsu.edu/paris/social\\_classes/lower/lowerclass\\_more.html](http://gallery.sjsu.edu/paris/social_classes/lower/lowerclass_more.html)

This site helped my gain a better understanding of the social norms of the lower class society in the 19th century. What this site gave me that helped me most when forming my relationship with my scene partner, Vanessa; who played Franz's wife Frieda, was the story in the 'More Marriage, Less Children' section that described Claude Monet's cook Marguerite and how Monet decided to hire her husband as his butler so that Marguerite could continue cooking for him gave me the idea that Frieda and Franz had a similar marriage story.

<http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/artwork/27992>

To learn more about the painting and the painter and period all over.

<http://www.biography.com/people/georges-seurat-9479599#synopsis>

This site was used in helping me learn and understand more about Seurat's life and how s real life related to the show.

<http://newsone.com/1555245/most-infamous-public-housing-projects/>

This site just helped me understand Billy Webster's way of living and the current slum he has been having in his car selling business.

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## Art Is What You Do for Yourself

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### Scene Analysis Sunday: Franz and Billy

#### Scene 1.1 – 1.3:

What happened before?

I am out early this morning with Monsieur and Madame driving them around the city on what should be my day off. Monsieur wanted to see Monsieur Seurat's new painting on exhibit in the Louvre today, so I had no choice in taking him. At least they want to swing by the park. With Frieda being so distant as of late, I've begun talking to a nurse who frequents the park with the old lady she takes care of. Depending on how long Monsieur and Madame wish to stay, the Nurse and I might be able to further our relationship passed the little flirt scenes we've had. I'll go on ahead of Monsieur and Madame to ensure our time.

What is happening currently?

The nurse is in her normal spot with that old lady. I'd normally walk over to her since that old lady isn't mentally there most days, but Monsieur Seurat and his mistress are near. I can't have them spreading rumors around and things getting back to Frieda. The nurse did decide to come by and greet me, but it seems the old lady is miraculously present today. She and I will have to meet again another time. I'd be less annoyed if there were not loud children screaming from the river. Oh and here are Monsieur and Madame. They caught up rather quickly. Today is just an all-around crappy Sunday. Well, now that Monsieur has found Monsieur Seurat, I think there should be enough time to say goodbye to the nurse. I know the two of them will want to leave soon, so I'll just have to tell the nurse we'll have to post pone for the following Sunday, when I finally can spend it on my accord. And just as I thought, Monsieur and Madame wish to leave. Hopefully they didn't see me kiss the nurse's hand as I left. That would be difficult to explain.

What happens next?

I have to take back Monsieur and Madame to the house. What a waste of time this Sunday morning has been. At least I have next Sunday to look forward to. I doubt Frieda would want to leave the house next week again, so I figure I should have plenty of time alone with the nurse.

### **Scene 1.7 – 1.8:**

What happened before?

Just as I feared, Frieda wants to come enjoy the park with me today. She has this strange idea of a picnic and has forced me to put together the basket for our time out. I wonder if this is a sign the nurse and I should probably not continue seeing each other. I just hope Frieda can have a good time. Last time we did something like this, she got mad at me for the tiniest of things. If I can keep her away from the nurse, I'm sure this Sunday will work out just fine.

What is happening currently?

And of course, the nurse is the first person I see. I just have to keep from staring at her and everything should be fine. I'll just drink the wine I brought to calm my nerves and hope for the best. Well, after inspecting the contents of the basket I packed, it seems that I've forgotten the cups for the wine. I can already tell Frieda is in a mood so I'm just going to make do with what I have and drink straight from the bottle. As long as I have these things to worry about, everything will be okay. GREAT! Now Louise is here. Should have guessed the family would go out to the park on a day like this. If there were anything I needed at this point in time though, Louise is not one of them. I feel bad that I am doing this, but Louise seems like the perfect excuse to lash out about a few of my frustrations for the nurse. Yeah I'll get in trouble with Frieda and Yvonne, but it seems like the simplest way to get her out of our hair. I'm so glad I decided to pack two wine bottles. Frieda's not drinking any so I don't really see a problem with the amount I've had so far. It's just so unfortunate how my plans were completely changed by the slightest tweak to my agenda. What's this? Monsieur Seurat is drawing us now. This is amazing. Monsieur would never think of doing such a thing. I've always enjoyed George. Too bad He'll never fully understand what it actually means to do work. I wouldn't say I hate people like him and Monsieur, for even though I find their view on the world to be so simple and without burden on anyone else but themselves, I wish to know what that life style is like. Well, Jules is here now. That's enough of that rant. And now Louise is back with Yvonne. Should be scolded for what I said to Louise when I get back. Here comes the old lady is screaming again for the nurse. That must mean she's leaving soon. I hope the nurse isn't upset with me. I'd hate to have everyone against me. I'm not sure there is anything that could make this day better. I take that back. Louis the baker is here handing out free cream puffs once again. I can't remember the last time I was at the park when he gave out free pastries. I wonder if these cream puffs would put Frieda in a better mood. Better call him over. It seemed to have worked. Louis continues to amaze me. As long as we can leave the park without anything else going wrong, today won't be so bad. Once again, I have spoken too soon. The nurse is now standing a few meters away from us. We need to leave. Hopefully, when we get home, Frieda will remain happy and Yvonne will have forgotten why she was mad at me.

What happens next?

For now I've nothing to do but go home and see what today's events have caused me. I'm already noticing Frieda becoming more suspicious of my actions. Doubt I'll be able to meet with the Nurse any time soon.

### **Scene 1.10b:**

What happened before?

Frieda once again insists on accompanying me to the park this Sunday. It's nice not to have her as distant on days like this, but it would be nice if she didn't feel the need to keep tabs on me to

make sure I'm not cheating on her. I don't feel the need to keep tabs on her whenever she stays at home and decides not to speak a word to me.

What is happening currently?

I'm out at the park once again with Frieda. If we're not arguing, we're gossiping about something. For example, today we discovered that old mistress of Monsieur Seurat is pregnant, about to burst any moment.

What happens next?

We decided to run home and to gossip more with the Monsieur and Madame about this. Times like this are when we actually enjoy their company and get to hear the true gossip going around the city.

### **Scene 1.14c – 1.15:**

What happened before?

Frieda has finally given up on keeping tabs on me after week after week of cautiously meeting discretely with the nurse. Frieda is staying at home once again and I can finally move forward with the nurse. Everything has been building for this moment, so I hope I can finally get my way. On my way to meet up with the nurse, I found Louise running around the fountain the Nurse and I agreed to meet by. I was surprised to hear her say that she was looking for Frieda, for I assumed they had stayed at home and was even more confused by the look of horror on her face, but she claimed to have found Frieda and ran off. I'll worry about that later though because the nurse has finally shown up.

What is happening currently?

No sooner do I finally get to move forward with the nurse, Yvonne comes yelling my name and the nurse runs off. In the heat of the moment, my anger got the best of me, for I almost whipped Madame with my riding crop when I was trying to explain how Louise is not my problem on my day off. Now I have to follow her around so we can find her stupid daughter. Low and behold, she appears out the woodworks telling me she was with Frieda. No need to worry. Wait, why would Louise think Jules and Frieda would be in the park together? They were what? Where is Frieda? I have had it with her, going behind my back inside our own home with our employer. Oh, she claims she has no clue what I'm talking about. Well how about I bring her to talk to Madame and Monsieur and see what actually happened. I can't believe after everything we've done for Monsieur, he would go behind my back and fire the both of us for his own wrong doings. All of the sudden, Monsieur Seurat calls out order and stops the all of the chaos. He begins to place us similarly to the painting he has been working on themed around the park. In this time, I slowly realize how hypocritical I was in being upset with Frieda concerning Jules and her.

What happens next?

After confessing to Frieda about my meetings with the nurse, we both began to understand each other more. We both pursued those people to make light of the loneliness we felt not communicating and assuming the ones that we truly loved wanted nothing to do with us. Being fired turned out to be quite beneficial for us; for although we work as servants for another house, we no longer take care of someone else's kid and have begun to raise our own.

### **Scene 2.1a – 2.1b:**

What Happened before?

Our spirits from that moment in time when Monsieur Seurat painted us have been living in a state

of purgatory on this island frozen in time on that hot Sunday afternoon.

What is happening currently?

Everyone in this painting will not keep quiet, bickering about this and that. Yeah, you may not have you stupid glasses, but at least he painted the side of your face people would enjoy looking at. Life in this painting can be rather restricting, but at least when we aren't being viewed, we are free to move about and stretch. I think everyone is too focused on the bad side of being stuck in this painting and not realizing what Monsieur Seurat has given us. Yes, I am annoyed with this place as much as the next person, but I as the years go on, I understand more and more what George had given us. Now that he is gone, I wish I were able to thank him for showing interest outside what normal artist find worth to immortalize. We had a knack for choosing his material well.

What happens next?

We all keep at our day to day routine in this painting as George's interpretations of our lives. We'll continue for as long as the painting continues existing.

### **Scene 2.3 – 2.5:**

What happened before?

Harriet has invited me to go with her to this light show art thingy at the Art Institute of Chicago. This should be interesting since I've never been to this place. Need to make sure I stay on my best behavior. I don't want Harriet mad at me. We just finished watching the artist's presentation and now we have to mingle. Wouldn't care about mingling normally, but this kind of stuff is not my forte and I've never met a single one of these people in my life.

What is happening currently?

Harriet brought me into the room they display the painting the artist guy drew inspiration from. I could see the correlation between the light show and this painting with the dots and what not, but I don't really get the purpose of it all. Would help if I knew the lingo Harriet was trying to get me to understand. Oh great, here comes the artist himself, and the museum curator is insisting we meet him. Well he seems nice. Hate how Harriet is too bashful to speak and is making me speak out of my ass. Oh great, now I've hurt is feelings apparently. Well his little light show was not a sculpture in any sense of the word. I didn't see any stone. And now Harriet wants to speak with his grandmother. She seemed sweet during the presentation. Never mind, she's a rather mean ice cold dragon lady. Can't carry a conversation with anyone and that divorce comment was the worst thing I've said in a while out of nerves. I'm just going to keep quiet and watch Harriet work her magic. I hope she understands I didn't mean to mess things up; I just had the worst time speaking with that grandmother. That George guy seems nice though, so I hope Harriet can fix things. I need another drink no matter what. I wonder what happened with my business cards. I know Harriet told me to keep them away from here, but I seriously need the money and that George seemed like a friendly enough guy. Maybe he'd be interested in a new car after the money he gets from tonight's function. Damn, Harriet caught me. The rest of the night should be pretty boring, even though I was finally getting a better understanding of the concepts of art in the painting and that guy's machines. I guess there's really nothing else to do but take in all of this crap. Oh, yes! Dinner at last! And of course Harriet wants to make peace with that old lady before we get dinner. I usually wouldn't care less who she's talking to and don't mind waiting up for her, but this lady does not every shut up. I feel bad for finally shutting her up, but at least we can get on to dinner and I will never have to see that old lady again.

What happens next?



Harriet and I get into a series of arguments where we contemplating splitting numerous of times, but have decided that an art opening like that was a little to advanced for me to begin with. She has decided not to take me to any openings for a while and if we continue dating, maybe I'll begin to go to them again.

### Scene 2.8:

What happened before?

George Seurat's great grandson has come to the island and with his is great grandfather's spirit. Through the book given to him by Marie, he is now regaining his drive and passion for his art, the same drive and passion once held by his great grandfather.

What is happening currently?

With Monsieur Seurat's great grandson as a vessel for his spirit, I am finally able to express my gratitude toward him and the life he saw in me and my wife.

What happens next?

With our surge of love and gratitude, I hope this new George goes on to create something new, finding new things worth his while and incorporating the lesser beauties in his works to come.

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### Uta Hagen's Nine Questions : Franzel Betrüger's Character Analysis

#### Who am I?

Hallo! My name is Franzel Betrüger, but I go by Franz. I was born in France in 1855, to German immigrants who migrated from the south of Germany. I am 29 years old, 5 foot 9 inches tall, weigh 175 pounds, have brown hair, hazel eyes, and a prominent mustache. I live with my wife, Frieda Betrüger, at our master's residence, 18 Rue Chappe, in the art district of Paris, France. We are both members of Monsieur Jules' and Madame Yvonne's servant staff. Life there can be nice, but it takes a lot out of you when you are the head servant in the house. I clean, I serve, I take care of their annoying brat of a daughter, Louise, and to top it all off, I have the luxury to drive Monsieur and Madame around the city in the stagecoach. Coming from the lower class, when my parents had me, they wished for me to have a better, more successful life away from the heavy work load they had to do to get by. For this reason my parents decided to name me Franzel, meaning Frenchmen, because they had such an optimistic view of France and the people that lived there when moving to the country. But things don't always go as planned. I work the same job my father did and my son will probably have the same job after me; that is if Frieda and I ever want any children after raising Louise.

**2. What time is it?** It is Sunday an early summer afternoon in 1884. Sundays are usually the only days I have off.

**3. Where am I?** I usually spend my days off exploring the city. As of late though, I have enjoyed visiting the park on the island of La Grand Jatte located in the middle of the Seine River that cuts through Paris, France.

**4. What surrounds me?** It depends on the day, but summers on the island usually consist of vibrant green grass and trees, the bluest of waters, and an array of

colorful citizens and tourists wearing their Sunday bests.

## 5. What are the given circumstances?

I am out on the town this Sunday morning; however, as much as I would like to be spending my day on my terms, I have to drive Monsieur and Madame around. Monsieur Seurat has a new piece on exhibit which Monsieur Jules wishes to see. At least they want to stop by the park on La Grand Jatte after, so they can give George their two cents. I find Jules' critique to be a little harsh as of late, but I have far better things to do while I am at the park. I met a nurse at the park a few weeks ago when Frieda decided not to join me on our day off. Frieda has been a little distant as of late, or at least as distant as one can be working in the same house. It bothers me how silent she has been lately, but at least the nurse enjoys my company. It just so happens the nurse comes to the park, lately, just to see me. She really is a wonderful woman. I just need to make sure Monsieur Jules and Madame Yvonne don't sight me. I should run ahead of them just in case I can't see her for long.

## 6. What are my relationships?

Frieda Betrüger is my wife. She has been working for Monsieur Jules since before our marriage. I was a simple coachman before I met her and because Monsieur Jules enjoyed Frieda's cooking so much, he hired me to work for him as head of staff when we married. Frieda and I have been married for 5 years and were quite the exciting couple in our prime, but have slowly become more distant over the years of working for Monsieur. The cooking, cleaning, dusting, polishing, driving, and raising Louise has brought such a burden to our relationship. If she would just talk to me, I wouldn't feel the need to go out in search of others that give me the attention and respect I deserve. But she'd rather stay at home and do this and that for Monsieur than take her day off with me.

The nurse and I have only just met, so I can't quite tell how we might grow beyond the playful banter we share. She has such a beautiful demeanor though and listens to what I say without complaining or yelling at me back. She is really sweet and caring.

Jules is my employer and is about as interesting as the Boatman from the park. His artistic style does give him some kind of merit but when you compare it to the rest of the artists around the city, it really doesn't stand out to me. That of course may be a biased opinion since I don't really hold much praise for him as a person since he is such an unreasonable and stern employer.

Yvonne is the wife of Monsieur. Although she is kinder than Monsieur and treats Frieda and I with respect, Madame can be quite demanding.

Louise is the most fiendish little girl I've ever met. She is at the prime age when children no longer seem adorable and become a nightmare to raise. I am fortunate that I don't have to care for her as much as Frieda does, but the times that I have to watch her are the most unbearably frustrating moments with my job. It's rather unfortunate, because I truly enjoyed Louise when she was younger. But her current phase is stretching thin the love I have for her. I can't have Frieda know that I do care for Louise in some light though. I couldn't possibly manage raising Louise along with a child of my own.

George is a very fascinating man. I've only ever met Monsieur Seurat while in the presence of Jules. That being said from the discussions I've listened in between him and Jules and from having the chance to witness a few of his paintings he was working on, I can tell he truly cares for what he is making and not about what others might think of his work. I am rather fond of George, for he respects people like Frieda and I, finds the beauty in all things.

## 7. What do I want?

I want to be loved and admired. I see the life of Monsieur and I don't understand how he can have such a loving family and large group of supporters praising the things he makes when there really isn't much work behind it. Almost 30 years of my life wasted and all I can be proud of in that time

is marrying Frieda; which now doesn't even seem like much of an accomplishment for she doesn't seem to want much of me. At least the nurse is there for me.

## 8. What is in my way?

From a Societal point of view, my class level and current employment keep me from pursuing a life of luxury and leisure. But speaking toward the aspect of me wanting to be loved and admired, I find that my wife and employers are what keep me from what I truly wish.

## 9. What do I do to get what I want?

I'll pursue the Nurse for as long as I can and see what happens from there. It would kill me to leave Frieda, but if she doesn't want me in her life anymore, I would have to deal. All I want beyond my own desires is for her to be happy.

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### Uta Hagen's Nine Questions: Billy Webster's Character Analysis

#### Who am I?

How's it going? Name's William Webster, but I'd rather you call me Billy. I was born in Niles, Illinois just a little ways away from the windy city. I am 33 years old, 5 foot 9 inches tall, weigh 175 pounds, have a nice head of brown hair and have a pretty great sense of fashion. I currently live in Chicago in the Robert Taylor Homes apartments inside the Bronzeville neighborhood of Chicago. I own and operate my own auto dealership that currently isn't doing so well, so I've been relying on my girlfriend Harriet Pawling to get by and pay the rent on my place for the time being. I know the business will come around sooner or later, so I don't really see a reason to worry.

#### What time is it?

It is a Sunday evening on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July in 1984.

#### Where am I?

I'm at an art exhibition or something like that, with Harriet at the Arts Institute of Chicago. Never been to this place, but it's nice to see the world Harriet lives in and the type of work she does.

#### What surrounds me?

There are a ton of interesting museum folk, art funders, art critics, and artists mingling around this painting Harriet said was painted a hundred years ago. Looks better than that machine the artist of the night made to commemorate the painting. Don't really understand what he was trying to go for, but at least there are refreshments and free champagne.

### **What are the given circumstances?**

Harriet has invited me to go to this art show tonight where, any minute now, this artist will show us some kind of light show in reference to some old painting. I know Harriet is a little worried about bringing me since this sort of thing is not my forte, so I have been trying to stay well behaved. Being a Webster, I have somewhat of a big mouth and speak without thinking when out of my comfort zone; so this night should be interesting. I should be fine as long as the people Harriet works with are friendly. That's why I go by Billy; makes people more friendly from the moment I introduce myself. Works wonders at the dealership.

### **What are my relationships?**

Harriet Pawling is my girlfriend. She and I have known each other since our high school years. We actually were high school sweethearts, but that all ended when she left Niles for college. Always knew she would make a name for herself and it shows with her being a very notable art patron. I actually hadn't heard much from Harriet until we ran into each other on the streets of Chicago when I was out for lunch. I had no clue she was living here now and was ecstatic when she agreed to get lunch with me. We sat down and reminisced about the old days and updated each other on what's been going on since high school. I found out she recently divorced her husband and claimed she was ready to date again. Although I've missed her and enjoy her company now that we both live in the city, but I can't help to think that she's just using me as a rebound from her marriage. Thoughts like that go away though when I remind myself that she's willingly helping me out of this rough patch in my career. Plus, she's invited me to this art event even though she knows I'm not so knowledgeable about this stuff.

Every other person at this event is new to me, so I really don't have much of an opinion for them. That is everyone except that artist's grandma. I get that she's ancient, but she is not a kind old lady. Every time I've tried to ask questions and keep conversation lively when she's around, she gets snippy and gives me this evil glare that goes away whenever I try to show Harriet.

### **What do I want?**

I want to impress Harriet because she has invited me out here and does so much for me.

### **What is in my way?**

For one, that artist's grandmother, but I'd be pretty damn stubborn if I couldn't recognize my discomfort, lack of knowledge for this stuff, and behavior overall getting me in trouble.

### **What do I do to get what I want?**

I initially tried playing the part, as if I understood this art stuff, but I realized that was worse than me asking a lot of stupid questions when mingling with Harriet. I eventually just started shutting up after making a fool of myself. Hopefully I didn't do too much damage and Harriet accepts my apologies.

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#### Archives

[December 2014](#)  
[November 2014](#)  
[September 2014](#)

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[Uncategorized](#)

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Menu

### Reminiscing the park

Posted on [December 5, 2014](#) by [etcrump](#)

When I began this process, I kept thinking of how meaningful this experience will be to me, in that it is my last time in my college career performing a musical. With that constant thought always nudging me in the back of my head, I knew that this show would mean I would have to culminate all of my previous experiences in the department, in the classroom or on stage, to accomplish the goal of my senior project. I would like to point out that even though I knew I would be graded for my dedication and growth as I built my character in rehearsal and performance, I also knew that this experience was much more valuable to me than a grade. I will be honest when I say that before this show, I never had done the amount of research and character development for a show in my life; let alone in my time here. That being said, I had grown a little rusty with what exactly goes into building a character since my days in acting class, so I knew I had to open up and be very receptive in this process to obtain as much knowledge about my characters, their relationships, and the world that they lived in. I think that I was very receptive in this aspect, for I let so many things come through and influence my performance. I do think there were plenty of moments this semester where I did not always manage my time well and could not post about these influential moments because of my struggle with balancing my other tasks. To make up for not being able to go online and post, I started journaling these moments in hopes of me finding time to add them to the blog. Well, I finally found the time.

I never really had a moment in the first month of rehearsals that really influenced me. I have always had trouble when starting a show with obtaining a good understanding of my character through the script alone. When continuing as an actor outside of here, I will have to work on that aspect and become better at analyzing scripts for important detail. I had made some strides, however, in working with Vanessa Borg, to understand the ages of our two characters and how we worked on finding how it is we may have met and our origins since our first act characters clearly are foreign. For me, the true detail did not come for me until we began to stage the show. It was our new rehearsal space where I began to understand the way in which Franz and Billy moved,

spoke, and held themselves. The addition of props, like Franz's crop, was very integral to my performance, for before I had received the crop, I never understood why Franz had to be out with Jules and Yvonne in the beginning of the show; working on his day off. Not until after I had the crop and began to use it, did I realize that he is a personal coachman to Jules and Yvonne.

Beyond the space and the props given to me, finally being in an open space in which we could explore our characters and bring them to life was very beneficial to my process in understand Franz, but even more so Billy Webster. Billy had for long been a stranger to me. I related to Franz much easier than I did Billy, and I think that was because I had a better understanding of Franz before auditioning for this show. Billy though, who also didn't share the same actor as Franz when performed originally, was a lot harder to relate to and therefore was put aside for a while until we started work on staging "Putting it Together." It was in that first rehearsal of staging "Putting it Together" where I started to realize that Billy himself was somewhat of an outsider. He did not fit in with these art crazy people, but was clearly there for a reason. He, being Harriet's boyfriend, was at the exhibit because she had invited him and upon entering the scene wants to impress Harriet by holding conversations with the artists and patrons around the room. Whether or not he knows he is jeopardizing Harriet's chances with the artists, he does this because Harriet does so much for him. I only got this understanding from that first rehearsal in the scene when Julie Wells, who played Harriet, and I began to feed off of each other, improvising our relationship as we adlibbed in the moments when we weren't the focus when it came to staging. That rehearsal gave me so much freedom and helped me understand the lines and allowed me to explore many possibilities of intention. It was in that first rehearsal two when I began to think about the possibility of Billy owning a car dealership; for in my understanding of a car salesman, they always have a way of weaving the dialogue along that entices the customers to buy their products. As I soon learned in researching Billy Webster's name, the surname Webster derives from a family of weavers. Billy, although he can simply weave his way into conversations, does not delivery in the end. This discovery helped me realize that Harriet might be giving him the financial backing he needs to make a living right now, for his business is probably not doing so well. This explains why he tries so hard to impress her.

Moving on toward tech week, one of the most influential moments in my process of the show had to be the night of the Sitzprobe. It was in the rehearsal that I could finally hear the entirety of the music and from that point on allowed it to energize my performance. Finally into tech week, however grueling the hours we spent working on the detail of the show, this week was the most beneficial week to my entire process. With the addition of my costume and facial elements, as well as the opportunity to finally walk around in the 3 dimensional playing space helped me further develop an understanding of the world in which my characters lived in.

Going into our invited dress rehearsal followed by opening night, I was very unsure of what to expect with the inclusion of an audience. I was shocked at the amount of energy the audience's response gave to me, especially in the first moment I enter the stage as Franz and the audience first hears my German dialect. The fact that the audience found that moment humorous caught me off guard and caused me to stay on my toes for the entire performance. Similarly, I found that during the middle of the run, on nights I would had a flub in lines or something seemed off in my performance, I would feel even more driven to make sure I gave the best performance I could that night. And that's what acting has somewhat become for me. A chance to constantly grow and better myself through the characters and world I am living in on stage. So closing to me meant I have reached the furthest possible limit of growth I can in my performance as a character. The comfort that comes with that and the enjoyment of living in that world performing the cast that has grown with me from the beginning of the process was hard to leave. But that is something I've always enjoyed about theatre. It does end and just as you have to be able to grow in a show, you also have to be able to grow passed a show. Nothing is permanent in life and this business helps me understand that and move on forward to new possibilities. My biggest critique I would have in my process for this show would definitely have to come from my poor time management skills. That being said, I do think that by having this site filled with the work that I have done does account for something and even though my process cannot be followed chronologically, one can still see the process as a whole.

If there were anything I wish to take from this show, it would be Dot's last words in "Move On," "Anything you do, let it come from you. Then it will be new. Give us more to see." This lyric has lived with me since I first discovered the show and now, going to my last semester with this department, these lyrics mean so much more to me.

Thank you for your time. It has been a pleasure to be a part of this production.

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[I'm not surprised](#)

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[I'm not surprised](#)

[Overwhelming Week](#)

[At Long Last](#)

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#### Archives

[December 2014](#)

[November 2014](#)

[September 2014](#)

#### Categories

[Uncategorized](#)

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Menu

### I'm not surprised

Posted on [November 2, 2014](#) by [etcrumpp](#)

It's been a while. Like I mentioned in my previous post, I've been meaning to update this site more often. It's funny how intentions can change with a slight tweak to your already busy schedule. Life in the rehearsal period has left me with limited time to update this blog. That being said, I have been writing down many posts which I wish to add to this site very soon concerning my development with Franz and Billy, the research behind these characters and periods, the influx of new information tech week, my reactions to specific events, my feelings toward the show v.s. my current feelings for the production, and my personal growth and what I still need to work on.

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PREVIOUS POST

[Overwhelming Week](#)

NEXT POST

[Reminiscing the park](#)

#### Recent Posts

[Reminiscing the park](#)

I'm not surprised  
Overwhelming Week  
At Long Last

## Recent Comments

## Archives

December 2014  
November 2014  
September 2014

## Categories

Uncategorized

## Meta

Register  
Log in  
Entries [RSS](#)  
Comments [RSS](#)  
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Menu

### Overwhelming Week

Posted on [September 30, 2014](#) by [etcrum](#)

WHEW... It has been quite the hectic week. With classes, work, and other obligations, rehearsal have become my only time where I have been able to fully engross myself into my character and scene work as of late. I do hope my schedule opens up a little in the weeks ahead, for I feel bad not having enough time in the day to balance my work for classes and my job with the work I need to do for this play. For now though, I am really thankful to have had random increments of time to analyze my libretto and research the periods a little further. I hope to be adding that character and scene work to this site in the near future.

On another note, I wanted to discuss my experiences in the rehearsal space this passed week and my growing understandings of this show as a whole. Having finished off our rough blocking phase at the start of the week, we have now begun to fine tune each scene. Although I have been gaining a better understanding of my characters and motives during the show, I wanted to mention the discoveries I've made about the finales of the two acts. I have always been astounded with the song "Sunday" and how powerful a piece of music it is, but I never quite understood it's importance to the story. I had always viewed it as a resolve for each of the character's personal conflict and becoming enlightened knowing that all of their problems truly don't matter in the end. I feel that I am not wrong in that aspect, but I have been missing a crucial aspect of the show; the fact that this number is when Seurat's painting finally becomes fully realized. The chaotic scene prior is actually an internal conflict inside George's mind and the arguments within, at least in my understanding, are fabricated all within George's mind as well. Every single problem, as George call out "Order," immediately resolves, in the way that I had previously mentioned. It might also be worth mentioning that the problems of the world may also become lessened by the understanding of our characters that George is going to make us immortal. Which ever answer to be true, we all owe it to George. The later theory toward our resolve in conflict is also supported some in the eulogies after "It's Hot Up Here," for even though we do complain about our stagnate situation, we are ultimately grateful for him finding an interest in us and making us immortal.



Living well beyond the short life he had. This appreciation for him is also supported in the company bow we give the great grand son, George, at the end of the second act. When I had initially watched the filmed original production, I felt that bow during the finale was such a beautiful resolution to the shows entirety, but I never understood exactly the meaning behind the bow. As Gregg put it a few nights ago in our rehearsal, "we are acknowledging how grateful we are for making us immortal." This concept completely resonated with my understanding of the show and has helped me further my overall character work with Franz and the growing appreciation he has for George. I hope to speak more on that soon.

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PREVIOUS POST

[At Long Last](#)

NEXT POST

[I'm not surprised](#)

#### Recent Posts

Reminiscing the park  
I'm not surprised  
Overwhelming Week  
At Long Last

#### Recent Comments

#### Archives

December 2014  
November 2014  
September 2014

#### Categories

Uncategorized

#### Meta

Register  
Log in  
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Comments [RSS](#)  
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Menu

### At Long Last

Posted on [September 23, 2014](#) by [etcrum](#)

I am quite overdue in making my first post to this site. And by overdue, I mean about a month since the beginning of this entire process. The excuses behind my delay in posting are neither here nor there, but I had intended from the start of the rehearsal process to wait until I had enough to talk about for my first post. Well, I certainly have enough now.

I mentioned this in my introduction, but I feel as if I need to state again what this show means to me. I originally became familiar with this show through the original Broadway soundtrack two years ago. It was through my research for a paper I was writing that I became so engrossed in the entirety of the show. Its musical motifs, lyrics, rather complex plot line, and the relationships that form throughout really altered my perception of musical theatre. So, when I found out that we would be doing "Sunday in the Park with George," I instantly became terrified. In my mind, this show lives on quite a high pedestal, and I had a hard time wrapping my head around how I contribute to the show. Now a month into the rehearsal process, my fears of undertaking this show have diminished significantly.

Since casting was announced we immediately jumped into our music rehearsals. Although this may be my second Sondheim show, I am still quite amazed by the amount of information Sondheim gives through the lyrics and motifs of his songs. In traditional musical theatre, most songs contain only one thought or feeling and the characters sing about that singular thing for the whole number. Sondheim, however, explores his characters thoughts and external struggles through his music. I am thankful for this, for it has helped me understand my characters in greater detail than I felt I would get to in just the music rehearsal period. In previous years this month seemed to be the simple part of the rehearsal process, but this show is a different story. Even though I have only a handful of songs, I have needed to focus more time toward learning and understanding the music I sing as Franz and Billy Webster. There are so many underlying melodies inside of his music that one may not hear simply listening to the soundtracks of his shows. Both

the underlying melodies and choral work have definitely kept me concentrated and invested in and out of the rehearsal room. I have been struggling with my investment in recent scenes and shows I've performed in recently, so I'm really grateful to be a member of this show.

Now that I finally have been able to update my blog, look forward to hearing from me more.

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NEXT POST

[Overwhelming Week](#)

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Reminiscing the park  
I'm not surprised  
Overwhelming Week  
At Long Last

#### Recent Comments

#### Archives

December 2014  
November 2014  
September 2014

#### Categories

Uncategorized

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