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Ecodrama and Sustainable Theatre: A Handbook for Creating Remarkable Change

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Pomona College

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Ecodrama and Sustainable Theatre: A Handbook for Creating Remarkable Change

If nobody does remarkable things dir. Carolyn Ratteray
A Senior Project in Theatrical Performance

Gabriella-Geneviève “GiGi” Buddie
for the role of Anna
Pomona College
May 14th, 2023

—

Kevin Dettmar
Anna Winget
April 21, 2023



This document is submitted in partial fulfillment of the degree requirements of the
Pomona College Department of Theatre and Dance.

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All my love,
GiGi

*To Jim Taylor,
for bringing me into the world of ecodrama and for giving me a new artistic purpose to explore.
You have given me a gift I could never repay.*

2 Dramaturgical Exploration

I. PREFACE

The following analysis is a product of my Native upbringing and culture, in conversation with my Western and higher-education background. My viewpoint on the script, structure for the handbook, and suggested solutions are therefore informed by Indigenous ways of knowing.

Native scholar Greg Cajete writes that traditional knowledge means “we understand a thing only when we understand it with all four aspects of our being: mind, body, emotion, and spirit” (qtd. in Kimmerer 47). Utilizing traditional knowledge in this investigation has allowed me to point out and challenge the shortcomings of a predominantly white college and unsustainable theatre department, while also celebrating the successes and strengths of BIPOC legacy and of an ecological story about grief, loss, nature, and connection.

To my readers, I feel entirely compelled to say this: because it was my *Native* body, mind, and soul inhabiting the role of Anna, and since there cannot be climate justice without Indigenous justice, our production of *If nobody does remarkable things* by Emma Gibson was as much about how we must care for the earth as it was about understanding and uplifting the hands that have always been tending to her, and the voices that have and will always be fighting for her. Mine included.

II. INTRODUCTION

“Perhaps the important test is this: when we leave the theater, are things around us more alive, do we listen better, care more, have a deeper or more complex sense of our own ecological identity?”

— Theresa J. May

The climate crisis is not new to us, nor are the art forms that have taken shape as vital components of the many activist movements that seek to save the planet. Yet, for the first time at Pomona College, a play about environmental devastation and our hand in it finally graced the stage of this progressive institution this past year. This mini handbook is a call-to-action (of sorts), one that stems from the idea that this should not be the last ecodrama performed at Pomona College. These chapters are structured and supported by both experience and research – formulated from what I have learned from advocating for and helping to produce an ecodrama for the college’s mainstage season. This documentation will provide the foundation for a path forward, including next steps the college and theatre department can take, and the most prominent limitations of this institution as it pertains to producing ecodramas *and* sustainable art. It is my hope that ecodramas are more seriously considered in future season planning and that this mini-guide paints a path forward for progress as a department and an institution.

This push for progress is not new, and since the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserts that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” (UN General Assembly art. 1), the necessity and drive for this project can be summed up in two quotes. Despite this article of freedom, Mary Robinson, author of *Climate Justice: Hope, Resilience, and the Fight for a Sustainable Future*, argues that “when it comes to the effects of climate change, there has been nothing but chronic injustice and the corrosion of human rights” (Robinson 13). And, in a conversation I had with political activist Angela Davis, she maintains

the notion that art *is* and *should be* at the core of any revolution or activist movement (Davis). In my experience theatre *must* be a powerful tool to have at the core of this revolution.

III. ECODRAMA AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM

This handbook will assess the needs, limitations, and foundations for success to produce ecodramas and sustainable art – but first, we must understand what an ecodrama is and how it fits into the world of climate and environmental activism. Our show, *If nobody does remarkable things* by Emma Gibson, is a dramatic play with a thematic focus on the environment – an “ecodrama.” As described by Theresa J. May, a director, founder and facilitator of the term ecodramaturgy, and theatre professor at the University of Oregon, an ecodrama “brings focus to ecological concerns of a particular place,” or “takes writer and audience to a deeper exploration of an issue that may not be easily resolved” (May). In the exploration of these issues, ecodramas often utilize their ability to personify and encapsulate environmental crises to increase accessibility and engagement. To do this, they are structured to allow audiences to connect with information and narratives that might not be disseminated in the mainstream media, or even addressed at all outside of their respective fields and origins. For example *Sila*, written by Climate Change Theatre Action founder Chantal Bilodeau, examines the competing interests shaping the future of the Canadian Arctic and the local Inuit population, where values are challenged by the rapidly changing environment and world. *Sila* is structured to capture the “fragility of life and the interconnectedness of lives, both human and animal” by personifying polar bears and putting the most unlikely of groups in conversation with one another (Bilodeau). *Sila*’s structure allows audiences to engage with the realities of stories, lives, cultures, and existences (embellished for the stage, of course) that we often don’t think about when we see headlines that read: “‘Devastating’: Arctic Sea Ice Shrinks to Near Record Low” (Hancock).

Furthermore, ecodrama is a unique genre of theatre that enables us to question capitalistic and anthropocentric norms by working to re-establish the connection between the human and

non-human. The power of theatre is that we may enter the theater with one belief and exit with the beginnings of a new one – the beauty of ecodrama is that the change in belief could inspire anything from individual sustainability to full-on revolution. May writes, “ecodrama stages the reciprocal connection between humans and the more-than-human world. It encompasses not only works that take environmental issues as their topic, hoping to raise consciousness or press for change, but also work that explores the relation of a ‘sense of place’ to identity and community” (May). I believe May’s explanation is a core pillar of theatrical and artistic activism.

Ecodramas often attempt to make social, political, and/or historical commentary by exploring identity and community and will capitalize on the fact that there is no greater community than the one we all belong to and rely on: our planet. However, the hardest thing an ecodrama has to do is push up against the anthropocentric and individualistic systems within modern society. How does one get “climate skeptics” into the theatre? How does one get liberal and progressive audience members to leave with a desire to pursue action? By pushing up against these kinds of barriers, possible solutions emerge from a multitude of sources: marketing, and the way the production company will spread information about a show; or tactics, and the way a playwright will utilize themes more subtly or more prominently. These questions may never fully be answered, but it’s not for lack of effort. The frustrating aspect of any form of activism is that because no one can be forced into supporting or joining a cause, a tactic that might develop is making it as appealing, pressing, accessible, and relatable as one can.

Furthermore, one of the greatest feats that ecodrama has accomplished is creating a new vocabulary and method of engaging with scientific and often inaccessible data. Doctoral student Lydia Borowicz, who studies theatre and climate change literacy, argues that “theatrical performance offers audiences diverse ways to engage with climate change through improving

scientific understanding and connecting with climate change's effects through live, embodied performance, [because] halting climate change will require not just climate science knowledge, but a shift in values toward an ecologically sustainable future, and theatre offers vital space and tools for reimagining that future" (Borowicz iv). Theatre has the power to make environmental content that is supported by climate science more accessible, relatable, and therefore more actionable.

While unquestionably vital to our ecology, science is exclusionary in its data sharing and is often difficult to understand. For instance, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) prepares "comprehensive Assessment Reports about knowledge on climate change, its causes, potential impacts, and response options," detailing the severity of our climate crisis and the responses urgently needed by governments and communities alike (IPCC). However, these reports are structured and written by academics for academics. Multiple articles have been published on the inaccessibility of science and, specifically, the IPCC reports. Sir Mark Walport (Former UK Government Chief Scientific Adviser) told climate change experts in 2013 that they need to learn how best to translate their findings for a wider audience because "science is not finished until it's communicated" (qtd. in Yeo). Ecodrama provides a translation of abstract data into human relationships. When we experience and digest data as words and numbers on a page the disconnect becomes inherently easier. How do we get people to understand the gravity of climate change? One theory is humanizing and re-sensitizing the data, and by doing exactly that, theatre has become a valuable resource in aiding the increased accessibility of scientific data.

Theatre is a mechanism and artistic medium that can disseminate scientific information and knowledge and provide a more inclusive view of the climate crisis which makes it a powerful tool to have as part of this climate revolution. As an organized artistic movement, its

beginnings emerged in the “mid-1980s though its [emergence] can be traced to the 1970s and earlier. These first self-proclaimed eco theater artists acted out of political disillusionment with large corporations, environmental dangers, and existing social structures” (Slagle). This movement is not so dissimilar from the pillars of Theatre of the Oppressed, created by Augusto Boal, which took place in the early 1970s in Rio de Janeiro (Kina 241). Theatre of the Oppressed was influenced by the level of “theatrical education in slum areas and was created to engage the individuals [in Boal's society] in discovery, critical reflection, dialogue and process of liberation” (23). According to a publication in the *Journal of Health Psychology* poignantly titled “Theatre of the Oppressed and Environmental Justice Communities,” “these vital interactions encourage a wide spectrum of social outcomes: community empowerment and organizing, teaching concepts, building issue awareness and agendas, strategizing and rehearsing action, connecting citizens with movements, and widening coalitions” (Sullivan et al. 168). In the eco-theatre movement, the artists addressed concerns “ranging from pesticide use, to waste dumps in lower-class urban areas, to deforestation” (Slagle). These movements emerging around the same time in different parts of the globe continue to touch on the power within the arts, and of joining in community. Many of the strategies used today stem from the same ones playwrights and artists used during the beginnings of the movement, mixed with ideas and facets of progressive theatre like Theatre of the Oppressed.

These varying tactics can include highlighting the connection between the human and non-human, exposing the complexities of the human condition, imagining a dystopian future from the path we are currently on, and yearning for an ecologically healthy tomorrow. For example, the Broadway hit musical *Hadestown*, written by Anaïs Mitchell, is a perfect illustration of an ecodrama that exposes the complexities of the human condition within a subtly

crafted environmental theme. While this is not the only tactic used, it is emphasized to a greater degree than the others listed above. Hades, the lord of the underworld, is also a “suit-wearing boss, a slick con man who promises wealth but suckers in the hungry, poor Eurydice to a life of toil in his factory pit” (Read).

As described by Bridget Read of Vogue Magazine in her article “The Liberating, Radical Politics of *Hadestown*,” during the first act “in a chilling scene reminiscent of *1984*, Hades describes the continual wall his ‘children’ are building—it is never quite clear whether the wall is real or a metaphor, but it is made obvious, in Fox News–style doublespeak, that they ‘build the wall’ to keep out ‘the enemy,’ who ‘want what we have’” (Read, emphasis in original). The coal miners of the underworld, the abuse of power, and the destruction of the natural world are what our main characters rebel against throughout the show, for these are “earth-devouring commodities” and real-life experiences “that are the scourge of this planet” (Read). The show is an ode to human life, learning, emotion, morality, conflict, and death—the core of the human condition (Arendt 518). Ultimately, our characters end their journeys and say, “Let the world we dream about be the one we live in now!,” a fourth wall break directed to the audience that compares the show’s existence with the same capitalist and Anthropocene societal structures we live in today.

In an engaging, flashy, big-scale production like *Hadestown*, it is easy to get pulled into the story, where the songs, lyrics, dancing, and effects keep the mood light and exciting, even though the story of Orpheus and Eurydice is a tragedy and the environmental theme is destructive and sadly part of the audience’s reality. We might enter the theater for the excitement of the musical, but we stay for the story. But if we take away the musical elements, the resources, and the biggest stages across the world – what are we left with? In my opinion, we are left with a

story not so different from the ones our characters face in *If nobody does remarkable things*: a journey of self-discovery and of finding hope for the “world we dream about [to] be the one we live in now.” Similarly to Mitchell, Emma Gibson utilized a range of eco-dramatical tools in crafting her first-ever ecodrama, and it is this mixture of every tactic that aims to inspire conversation, action, and change.

If nobody does remarkable things is not the epitome of ecodrama, nor by any account is the script perfect. But the playwright was able to create an immersive world, character depth, and a technically simple show to produce, on top of utilizing successful tactics. Gibson was able to forge the connection between the human and non-human by dramatically raising the stakes of how the characters interacted with their environment. They were completely reliant on the natural world – there was no room for error. Gibson exposed the complexities of the human condition by making forgiveness a central theme – our characters could not move forward without it. She crafted a dystopian future that stems from the path we are currently on, a future that seems entirely plausible, to grab attention and show the audience that there is a way through. Lastly, Gibson beautifully communicated the yearning for an ecologically healthy tomorrow by revealing the fragility and *need* for hope by the lead character, Anna. My passion for the intersectional field pushed me to advocate for an ecodrama in the mainstage season, but it was these elements that drew me to this specific text. However, finding a script to submit was only the first step.

IV. LIMITATIONS OF THE INSTITUTION

There is any number of institutional limitations that bar a show from being produced. In this section, I will attempt to highlight the biggest factors that impede ecodramas from being produced *and* from being produced sustainably. In the next section, I discuss possible remedies that both uphold the integrity of the department, while also embracing progress, experiences and change in order to create a sustainable path forward. Limiting factors such as budget, size, feasibility, and interest are all pieces that are considered during the play selection process. Some of these factors are easier to address than others. For example, the department and school (as of now) cannot drastically increase the budget and produce a musical every year, and it is likely that something as involved as *Hadestown* will probably never grace these stages. Furthermore, because of these restrictions and considerations, it is a difficult process to have a show approved and selected as one of the four mainstage season productions.

The Play Selection Committee (PSC) is made up of faculty, staff, and students who are charged with taking script submissions and whittling the selection down. At the time I was a rising senior, director preference, senior interest, and department capacity were all large factors in deciding shows for the season. Originally, *If nobody does remarkable things* was not selected, and it wasn't until there were major setbacks in the department that the faculty turned to another viable option. The first big limitation in the department arises here. The PSC has a set of guidelines that they try to follow, like having at least one BIPOC playwright or holding space for a Studio Series where student-directing theses can obtain institutional support. However, the PSC lacks the consistent direction and a concrete guideline basis (a constitution, of sorts) that holds them accountable to the large platform that they have to connect and communicate with the

colleges and surrounding community. The biggest limitation here that ultimately harms an ecodrama's chance of being selected: inconsistent direction and unclear goals.

Jumping ahead, the next big limitation arises with the actual construction of a show due to the veteran infrastructure of the department and school. Since theatre often requires mass amounts of electrical energy, new sets, and newly designed costumes, it is not the most sustainable art form (Beer 10), but as we have already discussed, theatre continues to be a powerful medium for activism and storytelling. How then does the unsustainability of the craft have any place in an environmental movement? The answer: greening theatre. Alex Durham, author of *Green Theatre: A Reference Guide*, says,

In the face of a climate crisis, theatre has the potential to positively shift cultural norms surrounding environmental sustainability. From plays depicting catastrophe to theatres governed by eco-friendly practice, the health of our environment can and should be considered in all facets of theatrical life. Theatre in the U.S., however, has lagged somewhat in building a sustainable backbone. We have a great deal of work to do compared to the U.K., whose efforts include the Royal Court of London's commitment to net-zero carbon emissions this year, and whose arts endeavors, across the board, focus policy on climate action: [such as] the Edinburgh Festival Fringe; Creative Carbon Scotland; Julie's Bicycle; the National Theatre. (Durham)

In the U.S., despite our "lagging," local, regional, and Broadway theaters alike are all implementing small and large green processes into their craft and construction to move towards a more sustainable practice. Why not *this* theatre department that is attached to a liberal arts college with a 3-billion-dollar endowment? (Pomona College Endowment and Investment

Information Sheet). The biggest limitation here that ultimately harms an ecodrama's chance of being produced sustainably: veteran infrastructure and a lack of forward thinking.

Finally, the last big limitation stems from the inflated rate of turnover in higher ed, the historically high rate of turnover in theatre, and the short, four-year retention rate of students. Turnover within any department can negatively affect learning, communication, and the functionality of a department (University of Massachusetts Global) – *especially* if those changes are occurring mid-semester or mid-year, which unfortunately has transpired four separate times in my tenure as a student in the department. These frequent and unpredictable shifts in faculty and staff have impeded student growth, learning, and access to opportunities – not to mention it has made, and continues to make, progress that much harder. “Disruption and repetition of program planning and implementation processes” are cited as one of the negative side effects of teacher turnover – and this is where the last limitation lives. If new initiatives, policies, or methods of sustainability, or inclusivity are proposed under one administration, and then the point person for that initiative like a production manager, master electrician, technical director, or key faculty member leaves (voluntarily or not), that initiative is often halted or stopped altogether. The momentum for student-driven initiatives, projects, or policies gets lost in transition, and the burden of doing the work continues to fall on the students. For example, on a small scale, I proposed a more sustainable option to paper programs for mainstage performances, and this was implemented during the first semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. However, once the production manager left, the department went back to its old ways of programming. It's not *hard* to stop printing single-use programs, but it negates “the way it's always been done.” And, without the infrastructure, forward thinking, or progressive goals to stop the cycle, something as small as the paper programs will keep happening. The biggest limitation here that

ultimately diminishes a chance to run a sustainable department or prioritize student learning:
inept management and a lack of support from the college administration.

V. A PATH FORWARD

Despite all of these limitations, there is a path forward. Just like Anna, Joel, June, and the characters in their world, we have not yet reached the “point of no return” and there is still hope (Gibson 51). The best part is that the school and the department have the tools and the solutions at their disposal.

It is important to point out that many of the limitations I have identified from my experience of advocating for and helping to produce an ecodrama are not new to this department, and most have actually been called out in the past. In fact, in 2020, a group of BIPOC theatre students, led by Black students in the department, published a call to action that urged the department to reevaluate its systems and do the work to dismantle white supremacy within the department structures. The call to action was inclusive of all BIPOC bodies in its writing, but the text was written in the wake of the Summer 2020 Black Lives Matter protests and the murder of George Floyd, and thus the call to action centered a *pressing* need to protect and support the Black students in the department and prospective Black students to the program. On a larger scale, the call to action prompted the department with relevant questions that extended to all BIPOC legacies and even to ecological health, such as: “Are you working to maintain the status quo or are you working to dismantle white supremacist/capitalist structures?” and “is the system that we’re used to--how we’ve been doing things in the department--benefitting all students?” (“Silent No More” 2). I cannot speak to the Black experience in the department that the call to action highlighted, but as a BIPOC student, I can evaluate my experience with these questions, and in my opinion, they haven’t yet been fully addressed. For it is these types of questions that prompted *this very thesis*. To find a path forward, let us listen to the authors of this powerful and necessary piece:

The pandemic has created a real opportunity for us to reevaluate our systems. Do they work well for the benefit of everyone? Do we do the things we do just because we're used to them? It's really asked us to consider 'the why' and the efficiency of how we do things. **Let's use this moment to build better, more effective structures.** We've known for a while that the ones we've been using are broken and outdated. Let's not try to go back to 'normal'. Let's embrace this opportunity to actualize the world/society we want to see. Let's envision and build. We're artists. That's what we do after all. Reform is one thing, but building what we want to see is *the* thing. (1, emphasis in original)

The department has already formed the building blocks to achieving a more equitable, just, and sustainable pedagogy; after all, it's written in its mission statement.

Through a synthesis of body, mind, and spirit, **theatre excites the imagination and address[es] global issues of concern. Rooted in the values of creativity, passion, joy and collaboration, students, faculty, and staff are committed to and excited about creating meaningful, relevant, and inspiring works of art** both in the classroom and in production. (Pomona College Theatre Department; emphasis added)

To remedy the limitation of “inconsistent direction and unclear goals,” the department should create a Play Selection Committee constitution that *at minimum* agrees to build a season that 1. Excites the imagination; 2. Addresses global issues of concern; and 3. Places emphasis on thematic relevance and community needs. However, it is not *just* the department that should deem what a global issue of concern is, or what themes are most relevant. It is the students who should be at the center of those conversations. If the PSC had a living document that changed with the shifts in the department community, world events, and collective needs, while *also*

adhering to clearly stated goals for creating a season, I believe that ecodramas would naturally arise for consideration.

However, while it is my opinion that ecodramas should have a slot in every season going forward, if the committee were to *at least* uphold the second suggestion above, they would be producing plays that addressed anything from climate change to inequality to food insecurity to racism to homophobia...to any number of “global issues of concern.” After all, “environmental and climate justice is a civil rights issue” (NAACP), and since there cannot be climate justice without racial justice, the two work together to strive for equity. Eco-dramatical themes live in more texts than we might think.

To address the limitation “veteran infrastructure and a lack of forward-thinking” while working to create a more sustainable artistic practice, the department should take the time to act upon policy measures described in the “Silent No More” document.

Buy from Black businesses. Carefully consider your industry connections and which economies your business and partnerships support... DO NOT buy from businesses that support the proliferation of police, the prison industrial complex, [ones] that contribute to voter suppression, and the disenfranchisement of Black and brown communities. (7)

The department’s reliance on unsustainable, big corporations like Amazon, for costumes, hair, makeup, sets, and even lighting and sound is problematic. Take a note from “Ecoscenography: An Introduction to Ecological Design for Performance ” written by the leading scholar in ecological design, Tanja Beer, and stop Amazon-shipping things and go to thrift stores or locally source things when you can (Beer). The department could also pledge to hire more sustainable designers or build stock sets that don’t require mass amounts of lumber every time a new show is produced.

Since most of these solutions require more money or a new allocation of funds, the institution could distribute more funds to ensure that the department could function in a more sustainable way. While I understand the web of bureaucracy that entangles conversations regarding funding, at a certain point there won't be a healthy planet to sustain this institution at all. To create a thriving ecological home, taking action on progressive measures is necessary, even if it means reallocating precious money. Furthermore, since it is often the timing set up of the department that usually causes last-minute needs from Amazon, why can't the structure be shifted to ensure that shows are getting produced in sustainable ways for the environment *and* the staff and students? Just because there has "always been" a show before fall break or there has "always been" a musical every other year, doesn't mean this can't be at least open to change. Creating a better timeline for staff might help with being able to be more resourceful and sustainable in the design and construction of shows.

Additionally, the department has connections to some of the most renowned eco-theatre artists in the world such as my mentor, Chantal Bilodeau. The department should use these connections to further their thinking and growth and push to be more progressive in their overall design. Although I have a feeling Chantal would start by saying something like "Put some solar panels on the building!" – we are, after all, in sunny southern California – let's use it. Lastly, and this one is simple, just stop printing the programs and tickets. Why waste the paper when every person who comes to see a show most likely has a smartphone? Simply do the research about the best way to have a digital program – small steps lead to big differences.

Finally, to address the limitation "inept management and a lack of support from college administration," start by putting faculty through leadership and administrative training to learn how to successfully run a department. Take steps to prioritize student learning and put them first

in decision-making. Additionally, the college should be concerned about the high rate of turnover in the department, and should step in to evaluate the causes through their own measures and provide support and insight into stopping the frequent and sudden shifts; for some limitations are far beyond the work of a senior thesis.

However, there is a positive, less examined side of departmental turnover, and that is the lack of institutional memory. In many cases, this is harmful to the functionality of the department because there is a clash of old and new. In this situation, however, the new far outweighs the old. It is a pivotal time to begin building a new institutional memory, one that is built from reform, justice, sustainability, equity, and inclusion. Implement sustainable marketing strategies, offer new courses with progressive curricula, organize town halls frequently for feedback, throw *many* more BIPOC pizza parties, invite students to open forums at faculty meetings, host de-stress and community events, openly support student theatre, invite guest artists from various cultural and artistic backgrounds for workshops, go on more field trips to experience professional theatre, create a partnership with Ecoset LA, the list could go on and on.

The first step in becoming a department and an institution that is just, sustainable, equitable, and inclusive, is to identify, acknowledge, and engineer a plan to minimize or eradicate the limitations. The second step is taking those actionable steps for the betterment of the community. This seems like wishful thinking since there was little follow-through on the “Silent No More” call to action three years ago. But if *If nobody does remarkable things* taught me anything, it’s that hope is the strongest thing we have as individuals, collectives, and inhabitants on this dying earth. There is no solution or tool that the department doesn’t already have. My advice? *Use it.*

VI. CONCLUSION

“Things which do not grow and change are dead things.”

– Louise Erdrich

This mini handbook is a call-to-action (of sorts), one that stems from the idea that we are all part of a grander community and we must do our part for the planet and for one another. Theatre is a valuable tool to have at the core of the environmental revolution, because it creates a platform that is accessible, relatable, and therefore more actionable. The selection of *If nobody does remarkable things* for the mainstage season is just the first half of the first step in *explicitly* contributing to progress and change for the betterment of the planet. And while I *hope* the ecodrama legacy persists past my time here, this handbook gives that hope a practical foundation rooted in academia and tangible goals.

This guide is merely pieces of a foundation for a path forward, and as it cannot be inclusive of every possible solution, I urge the college and theatre department to do the hard work in reflection and reform. After all “action on behalf of life transforms. Because the relationship between self and the world is reciprocal, it is not a question of first getting enlightened or saved and then acting. As we work to heal the earth, the earth heals us” (Kimmerer 340). As artists and theatremakers, we create new, exciting, imaginative, wild, and hopeful worlds every day. It’s time we “let the world we dream about be the one we live in now.”

3 Project Documentation

I. Script Breakdown

If nobody does remarkable things, by British playwright Emma Gibson, is an exploration of the meaning of forgiveness and the significance of the point of no return for both the characters and the planet. The play is guided by the character of Older June as she recounts pivotal moments from her early childhood and life with her mother, Anna. Fulfilling her dream of being an astronaut, June sits in the International Space Station and takes the audience through a narration of vignettes. This play is the world through June's eyes.

June begins the show by recounting the moment her world began to change. It was the middle of a category 6 dust storm when a cargo ship had suddenly taken refuge in the local harbor. Joel, Anna's ex and the love of her life, is on board and desperately needs somewhere to stay. Paul, Anna's husband, and stepfather to June, isn't sure about saving him, and to be honest, neither is Anna... not after what Joel did 14 years ago. However, Anna makes her way to the harbor, brings Joel into her home, and opens the door to let him back into her life. Thus begins a story of grief, loss, love, and forgiveness.

Young Anna is described by June as "an activist" and "a climate change warrior" (15), however after an article and photo (taken by Joel) are published about Anna and the "true" hoax of manmade climate change, she is publicly ridiculed, assaulted, and shamed into hiding. This moment in Anna's life is particularly difficult. Not only has she been blindsided by the love of her life, but she also lost her mother, and just found out that she is pregnant. Both June and Anna regard Paul as the hero of this story. He's the one who saved Anna when she was at her lowest, and he has been there for June since her early years. We get a glimpse of how June perceived herself the last time she ever saw her mother. Younger June makes an appearance in a scene with

Joel and briefly with Anna. She provides much-needed comedic innocence in the midst of a challenging story. All Anna wants to do is protect her, but Joel is jeopardizing the life Anna has built for herself and her family.

Fourteen years after he abandoned her, Joel has come back into Anna's life. He is trying to persuade her to come to the U.S. and work with him on a climate campaign. He says that people can no longer look away, for the destruction of the world is occurring outside their doors. Documents were leaked from a government organization and the truth about the politics of the climate crisis had been made clear, and now, people were rallying. But, he needs Anna. Her face, the photo that he took (the one that ruined her life), had "taken on a whole new meaning," it was the catalyst for change for a generation – "June's generation," he tells her in scene 10 (71). Anna's driving force in her life had been her activism, and when that was taken from her, she felt like she lost a part of who she was, as described by her in scene 6 and scene 10:

"People dismissed everything I said after that piece came out" (36),

"And if they didn't laugh in my face, the nut jobs wanted to gun me down... it was bullshit. I lived with that for years, that fear, and nobody did anything about it" (37).

"I'm exhausted. By this. By you. By the storms. By everything that happened. By what I haven't done (67).

Despite this, she built a life here, away from Joel, away from the city. A life where she is complicit, but at least she is safe. However, Paul (just like always), swoops in to play the hero in her life. He can see that her complacency is slowly chipping away at what she has left. He says:

"I made a mistake. I kept you too safe. I made you slowly disappear until here we are – not laughing, not skydiving, and definitely not caring about the dead fish" (82).

Paul's support, and his promise that he will take care of June, set Anna free. However, Paul is still not willing to give Joel a victory, so Paul tells him that Anna is not coming with him. Paul

also takes this moment to reveal the truth about his daughter. As Joel is leaving, presumably forever, Paul says:

“She looks like you, you know. She really does” (86)

Joel replies, *“Who?”*

“June. It’s always been a joke between Anna and I, that she looked nothing like Anna. And I always wondered who she did take after... and now I know” (87)

Anna writes a letter to June before she leaves. It’s too hard to face her, and “she thinks words hurt less when you read them” (89). And so, Anna is free. Free to find herself again, save the planet, and create a world where her daughter will be safe. The irony that we learn, however, is that she dies within a year of leaving her family.

At the end of the play, we are back in the International Space Station on June’s birthday. June tells us, “I’m now the age my mother was when she died. That feels profound. Like I have finally caught up with her” (88). As June recounts the day her mother left and the inevitability of the choices Anna has made, Anna appears at the door for the final time. Then, the last lines of the play ring through the space, Anna takes a breath and walks out the door.

II. Character Breakdown

Anna Barton, a 37-year-old mother, and former climate activist is thrust into making an impossible choice between duty and love. For the purpose of our production, we changed the setting and nationality of some of the characters to make it more accessible to the Claremont Colleges community, yet to still uphold the original intentions of American vs. non-American characters. It's not a secret that Americans are regarded in not-so-flattering ways by the rest of the world, and that America is one of the largest entities hurdling the world toward climate collapse. Both these aspects of nationality are crucial to the tensions between Paul and Joel, and the weight of Anna's decisions. Our version of the show was set in Newfoundland, Canada, where the originally scripted British characters became Canadian, and Joel remained American. This choice upheld the significance of nationalities, while also reiterating that this play is not specific to a certain time or place. The themes of this play, especially the theme surrounding our climate crisis, affect every inch of the globe. The fact that our changes worked so symbiotically is further proof that this show should and can be adapted to the communities engaging with it.

Anna's dramatic function, or her purpose, serves as the propeller of the play. While June takes us through this story, it is Anna's life and actions at the forefront of the plot. As more and more of her backstory is revealed, we learn that every decision she made, like traveling by plane when she was told not to, having June, or trusting someone again, is what led this story to even be told. The choices that she makes throughout the play continue to drive her toward returning to her calling. However, Anna cannot make the decision to leave her family without Paul's reassurance and permission, so to speak. Selfishness hadn't greeted her since the last time she ran away from a crying baby June. How could she even begin to think about doing that again? Paul

is the one who tells her that this is not running, this is choosing to make an impossible choice – it is strength.

During the summer of 2022, I got the opportunity to speak with playwright Emma Gibson, and we spent a great deal of time talking about Anna’s depth and perseverance. Prior to the meeting with Gibson, she sent an updated version of the script where Anna’s scene and monologues about her pain, exhaustion, and hope were cut out. During our chat, I told her that as a young climate activist myself, those moments were the portion of the script and depth of the character I was most drawn to because I felt those same feelings so viscerally. Gibson said she appreciated my experience and thoughts since it’s often isolating on the other side of the script. I asked her if she would add it back in, and she immediately said yes. She told me that she recognized the limits in this new genre she was exploring and that sometimes the actor’s own thoughts and experiences bring clarity to the whole picture. Because of her openness and generosity, I was able to bring my heart, soul, and experiences to Anna in a way that was genuinely authentic to the life of an activist.

Anna is a complex and multi-dimensional character who exists in pain. She tries her best to be the mother that June needs, and the partner that Paul needs, but it’s almost impossible when even the air around her feels “suffocating” (67). Underneath the anger and pain that clouds her reality, especially during storms like the one that commands this play, we see that she longs for hope. The irony is that Joel, the person who gave her this anger and pain, is also her source of hope. He is beginning to light that flame inside her again, and we see her go through a journey of forgiveness that is hard-traveled. There are so many things that she wants and needs to say to Joel, and once those are out in the open, she stands before him with nothing left to give. But he

knows her – arguably better than anyone. He has nothing left to say but the truth: that he changed, he’s hurting like she is for the planet, and now he is fighting for what he believes in.

Anna’s trajectory toward forgiveness is a web of both internal and external struggles. It’s partly what drew me to play her for my thesis. Her character arc is a true illustration of the human condition, and her force is precisely what makes her “one hell of an activist” (44). The intricacy of knowing she reached her point of no return yet still persists, is an excellent parallel to how humanity must interact with the state of our world. This play is a glimpse into our future and our current reality, and these characters are brief looks into our own internal struggles with grief, loss, love, and forgiveness. Our version of the story ended with Anna and June connecting for the first and only time in the play. I decided that Anna should look up, see her daughter, and know that her sacrifice was worth it. June lived. She fulfilled her dream. And perhaps, this is what brings Anna peace¹. In this theatrical world, Anna is given the luxury of seeing into the future and knowing that her choice was the right one. We, humanity, don’t have that luxury, yet we still must make choices that ensure that there will always be a tomorrow.

¹ Refer to Appendix for annotated version of the script.

III. Objectives and Tactics

To find my objectives and tactics, I decided to follow Stanislavski's seven questions and given circumstances. These seven questions help to orient the character to the people and world around them and provide insight into how the character is existing at any given moment (Sawoski, 6). It's important to note that while I appreciated and ended up using Stanislavski's technique for my character work, I didn't consistently use his inside-out acting technique. This character work gave me something to ground into and helped me understand the complexities of Anna's experiences and life. This particular method of thinking about objectives and tactics was useful for my process, because I fleshed out the motives, wants, and needs before we ever got up on our feet and started blocking. With the character work already beginning to be built, it was easier to motivate action when we started rehearsing blocking and getting into the dynamics of the play, as a whole, and individual scenes.

I formatted the seven questions as such:

1. Who am I?

Pick apart the script to find out what type of person your character is; what they look like, what they believe, how others describe them, and so on. Think about your character's past and the significant events/people that influenced them and made them who they are in the script.

2. Where am I?

The script will usually tell you where you are but the important thing for an actor to consider is how the character feels about the place they are in. The space your character occupies can determine how they behave during a scene.

3. What time is it?

Think about how the specific time of the play changes the character's action.

4. What do I want?

This is a character's primary motivation for everything they do in a scene. All actions should be executed with the goal of getting what you want from the other characters in the scene. This is also called a character's objective.

5. Why do I want it?

There must be a driving force behind your objectives which is your justification. Give your character a convincing reason for acting and you automatically generate high stakes which lead to tension.

6. How will I get what I want?

Use your dialogue, movements, and gestures to try to influence the other characters to give you what you want (to accomplish your objective). This is also called a character's tactic. If one tactic fails, try a new one and see if that works.

7. What must I overcome to get what I want?

There is always something stopping you from achieving your objective. Usually, there is someone or something in the outside world impeding a character's advancement and also some internal conflict with which they struggle. This is also called a character's obstacle.

Ultimately, by answering these questions and tracking the arc of Anna's character journey, I was able to deduce that her overall objective in the play was to find hope. She feels as though she has lost part of herself, and subsequently, her hope for the planet and her own life. We see this in her actions like walking down to the beach every morning to watch the sunrise and search for birds. I believe this was her grasping for any semblance of hope that may be in front of her. She does actually achieve her overall objective, although it's not in the way that she suspects. As I've mentioned in an earlier section, Joel is the force that provides her with hope, and this creates internal struggle after internal struggle for Anna. How could the thing that took away her hope in the first place, be the thing that brings it back? In my scene analysis and

objective/tactic breakdown, it became clear how Anna navigated her relationship with Joel, and how that finally cleared the way to allow hope to seep back in through Anna's broken parts.

Below, you'll notice that some scenes are filled with multiple objectives. For this play in particular, there are a couple of reasons why it's not uncommon for Anna to have multiple objectives in one scene. First, Anna is having contrasting wants because her conflicting emotions are bringing up not only current wants and needs but also past ones that she has been sitting with for 14 years. Second, these scenes are long, and encapsulate layers of the characters finally peeling away aspects of their past. On multiple occasions, Joel or Paul might have inadvertently fulfilled Anna's want, but this often catches her off guard, or it turns out not to be the answer she wanted, and so the objective switches to accommodate for the complexities of Anna's humanity.

Scene by Scene Objectives	
<i>Scene 2</i>	I want to get Joel to tell me why he's here – I want to get him to reveal his motivations and intentions.
<i>Scene 4</i>	I want to urge Paul to support me I want to make Joel feel uneasy, but I want to make him stay.
<i>Scene 6</i>	I want to make Joel give me the answers that <i>I</i> want to hear. I want to make Joel understand even an ounce of the pain and heartache that he has caused me.
<i>Scene 8</i>	I want to save June from this madness.
<i>Scene 10</i>	I want to get Joel to understand how much he has messed up for me and my life since he got off that boat. I just want Joel to understand the pain he left me when he abandoned me 14 years ago. I want to get Joel to understand how much he means to me even though my heart hurts when I look at him.
<i>Scene 12</i>	I want to tread carefully to get Paul to tell me the truth. I want Paul to tell me it's okay. I want him to let me go.

<i>Scene 13</i>	I want to keep June safe. I want to give June the life I never had.
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On the next pages, I have examined the specific character work in scenes 2, 6, and 10, because I believe these specific scenes contain elements that make it a pivotal scene for Anna's character. In addition, whether she achieves her objective in these scenes or not, is indicative of how the story is further propelled.

Scene 2:

What do I want?

I want to get Joel to tell me why he's here. I want to get him to reveal his motivations and intentions.

Why do I want it?

I want to get Joel to tell me why he's here in order to find a way to heal the part of me that he broke.

I want to get him to reveal his motivations and intentions in order to have the power to find a way to deal with the situation and never be blindsided by him again.

How will I get what I want?

I acquaint you, I allow you, I assess you, I caution you, I'm direct towards you, I divert you, I exploit you, I humor you, I judge you.

Anna doesn't achieve her objective in this scene; however, by not yet obtaining the reason why Joel has shown up out of the blue, she allows him to stay longer. Her curiosity and need to know why he was there, pushed her into tolerating him staying in her home. This ultimately drives the story forward, because the longer he is there, the more chances he has to

interact with both Anna and the other family members – ultimately propelling the conflict forward.

Scene 6:

What do I want?

I want to make Joel give me the answers that *I* want to hear.

I want to make Joel understand even an ounce of the pain and heartache that he has caused me.

Why do I want it?

I want to make Joel give me the answers that I want to hear, in order for me to fulfill my fantasy of having this pain diminished with the words “I’m sorry.”

I want to make Joel understand even an ounce of the pain and heartache that he has caused me in order to heal the parts of myself that he broke when he left.

How will I get what I want?

I afflict you, I allow you, I entertain you, I anticipate you, I corner you, I bait you, I challenge you, I charge you, I chastise you, I check you, I confide in you, I criticize you, I discourage you, I dodge you, I dominate you.

Joel point-blank tells Anna that he is not there to apologize, but Anna isn’t willing to give up the opportunity to hear those words and so she finally starts to say all the things she has been sitting with for 14 years. She opens up about her life after his photo ruined everything – striding towards making him understand even an ounce of the pain that he has caused. Per her objective, he doesn’t end up giving her the answers she wanted to hear. In fact, he lets her in on his perspective and reveals information that actually puts blame on other people and entities. But Anna has tunnel vision... all she can put together is that he took the photo that ruined her life, and then abandoned her at her lowest.

Scene 10:

What do I want?

I want to get Joel to understand how much he has messed up for me and my life since he got off that boat.

I just want him to understand the pain he left me when he abandoned me.

I want to get him to understand how much he means even though my heart hurts when I look at him.

Why do I want it?

I want to get Joel to understand how much he has messed up for Anna and her life since he got off that boat in order to finally be able to let go.

I want him to understand the pain he left me when he abandoned me in order to no longer feel alone.

I want to get him to understand how much he means even though my heart hurts when I look at him in order to have a moment where I can breathe with him, just like we did 14 years ago.

How will I get what I want?

I challenge you, I address you, I antagonize you, I beg you, I blame you, I confide in you, I entangle you, I dodge you, I free you, I humble you.

In this best of a scene, we watch as an exhausted Anna finally lets her walls down. We get a glimpse of what she longs for as she confides in someone she once loved. In this scene, Joel calls Anna out on her unwillingness to see beyond her pain. Her response is to open up. He gets to see the broken parts of her that have only been stressed more since his arrival. He begins to understand just how hard this is for Anna. Anna goes on to recount the morning that he left 14

years ago, and at last, Joel fully realizes the extent of his selfish actions. She is stunned when he mentions forgiveness, but she does not shy away entirely.

When the storm clears, a weight is lifted from Anna's shoulders. Perhaps she can see more clearly, perhaps it's a sign – whatever the case, she shares a drink with Joel and, for the first time in 14 years, looks at him with honest and compassionate eyes.

IV. Special Training and Skills Required

Vocal Quality

To prepare for the vocal demand of my scenes with Joel, and for the amount of talking Anna does in the show, I had to create a vocal plan. It just so happened that, for the semester, I was in Professor Talya Klein's class; The Speaking Voice. In Klein's class, I was already consciously working to rectify bad habits that were inhibiting healthy voice techniques. Specifically, we worked to combat my habit of using a higher pitch when talking. My natural register is quite low, and because I've had a complicated relationship with the deepness of my voice, I had to cultivate an awareness of when I was falling out of my natural register (and therefore failing to resonate fully). Just by creating an awareness of this habit, I was able to almost entirely get rid of it. Similarly, to stop tension from occurring in my throat when I was yelling, I was instructed to work on guiding awareness to let my throat, jaw, and neck be free, while also using a focus technique that I learned in class. When I raised my voice in the show, I was not yelling at the audience, the room, or the set – I was yelling at Joel. While it was important for the audience to hear me, a narrowed focus wouldn't change that fact if I was resonating fully. I narrowed the focus on where to send the sound: directly to Joel (Mallery). The product was a healthy technique that I was able to sustain through tech week and the run of the show. My vocal warm-up process, my vocal plan, and my technique training all helped to support my role in my thesis.

Intimacy Training

During the rehearsal process, an intimacy director (Carly D.W. Bones) was brought in to facilitate and guide us through the process of creating moments of safe intimacy. There were

specific moments of intimacy called for in the script, and there were moments that we decided needed to be carved out with an intimacy director.

The script called for a kiss between Anna and Paul three times. However, we ended up only having two lip contact kisses because it was the best choice for the flow of the scene and the energy we were creating with these characters. For this process, we established general boundaries between me and Seb Barnhill (PZ '25), with the agreement that we would check in about any other boundary we had at any given time in the process. Bones was clear that our boundaries could change at any time. Bones guided us through a visualization exercise to connect with the full lives of our characters that existed beyond the stage. This was to help situate our moments of intimacy in something concrete, like their 10+ year marriage. The kisses were choreographed so meticulously that we knew each step, the duration, the pressure, and the movements so that it could not only be replicated in every performance, but also so that Barnhill and myself always felt safe. The purpose of establishing clarity of boundaries and a repeatable process is so that the actors are safe with each other, but also comfortable with the action. Intimacy direction is a relatively new field, and it is all about consent. In a piece about intimacy direction from the University of Idaho, interviewee Tanya Thompson, a Master of Fine Arts candidate in performance at U of I, says that “this is theatre’s answer to the #MeToo movement.” She continues, “your job is to do everything you’re told to do. Before this [intimacy direction] came out there was no mechanism to say ‘No, this makes me uncomfortable’” (O’Neill). Bones prioritized our safety at every step of the process and made the rehearsal room a welcoming environment. Bones worked with me and Barnhill to create backup plans in case boundaries changed. This ensured that every performance had a plan that we could initiate if the original plan was no longer safe for either actor.

For the moments of intimacy that we decided needed to have a director, Bones approached them with the same care and process that she did for the kisses. Anna and Joel had moments of almost touch, touch, and charged touch. We started with the same visualization exercise to situate our characters in their shared past. These moments were also choreographed so that when there was pressure or connection between me and Aydin Mallery (PZ '24), we knew that we wouldn't hurt or cause harm to each other. Even in the intense moments where there was clear anger behind an action, as an actor, my priority was to keep Mallery and myself safe while going through our scenes and intimate moments.

While I had worked with an intimacy director before (during *Circle Mirror Transformation* in 2021) each process for intimate moments will be different from the next. However, the experience that I entered the room with, ultimately allowed me to feel more confident in my ability to voice my boundaries and express any concerns that I had.

4 Project Execution

I. Pre-Show Preparation

During performance week for the show, I would arrive at the theatre an hour and a half before start time. I would begin with a vocal and body warm-up. This show wasn't director/ensemble facilitated for warm-ups and grounding moments like other shows I've been in at Pomona. I mainly warmed up on my own, often accompanied by Mallery.

I followed a vocal warm-up that included elements from two Pomona voice professors (Professor Talya Klein and former Professor Meagan Prah). Since my role in this show was very vocally demanding, I gave myself ample time to properly warm up and get my voice show-ready. My warm-up was split into two sections: Connecting Body to Voice, and Waking up the Resonators. In the first section, I would allow myself to hang over my hips with my knees slightly bent. By hanging in a ragdoll-type position, I was allowing my neck to be free and my body to focus on breathing. I would then roll up my spine, going up on a melodic scale using "huh" as the vocal sound. Next, I would complete a series of four spine rolls that were intended to shake up the sound and begin to warm up my resonators. With each exercise, I focused on keeping my sound unforced and my body engaged.

For the next section, I would start by massaging my jaw to break up any tension I was holding. From there, I would shake out my jaw, and stretch my tongue. As an actor, I've come to recognize that these are the areas in my body that hold the most tension. To combat that, I would spend a decent amount of time making sure my jaw and tongue were properly warmed up so I wouldn't trip over any lines during the show. Next were the teeth and hard palate. I would follow these sound placements with rhetoric practice "tongue twisters" (patterns of alliteration) to focus on controlling my sound and placement. To finish the vocal warm-up, I would individually go

through all four body resonators and focus intently on doing them in a safe, healthy, and sustainable way. Beginning with my nose, I would concentrate the sound to my nasal passageways – which would produce an entirely nasal sound. This was done using “me” as the vocal sound. Then I would move the sound into my mask (the center of my face). For this resonance, that flows from my face, I would use and elongate vocal sounds like “my, may, way, bay” to drive the open sound forward. Then I would take the sound up into my skull. This exercise focuses on the head voice and mix sound that “lives in the skull.” The sound often has a breathy yet strong quality. To do this I used the “ki” or “gi” sound and envisioned the sound traveling from the tip of my head to the ceiling. Last was my chest resonator. To engage my chest resonance, I would ground myself, breathe in, and pound on my chest, (“Tarzan” is the best way to describe this motion) while letting my vocal sound release unforced and in my natural register.

To end, I would say some of my most vocally demanding lines. I would practice them as a way of practicing a good vocal technique that was healthy and sustainable. Outside of the show and during my pre-show ritual I wanted to keep my vocal cords healthy and hydrated since I raise my voice quite a bit in the show. I was able to successfully complete tech week and the run of the show without losing my voice or inhibiting any vocal quality.

My body warm-up was based on grounding techniques that also allowed the connection from my body to my voice to be free. I would stretch in ways that my body needed, focusing on any tightness or unwanted tension. I would do an 8-count shake down, getting energy and blood flow to every part of my body. This would also help to clear my head and get some of the pre-show jitters out. Next, I would go down my body and isolate a muscle group/part of my body to stretch and loosen up. Beginning with my head and neck, I would gently roll my head from front to back and side to side. Then I would move to my shoulders and arms, rolling them

forward and backward. Then, using techniques I learned in my Corporeal Mime class with former Professor Thomas Leabhart, I would isolate movements in my chest and hips. Moving to my legs, I would stretch out my hamstrings, quads, and calves. Lastly, I would roll my feet and ankles to maintain my mobility and strength. Since I spent a portion of the show barefoot, I wanted to make sure that my feet were safely warmed-up. I found this helped me feel more grounded and increased the trust I had in my body to perform and function in the way that my character needed it to.

Before showtime, our stage manager (Emma Lemire PO '23) would run and manage the fight and intimacy call. During this time Barnhill and I, and Mallery and I, would connect on boundary changes and tap into the mindset of our characters. We began with Anna and Paul and would run each of our moments of intimacy, with frequent check-ins by Lemire after each one was completed. Next, Mallery and I would run our moments of intimacy, going at fifty-percent speed for the moments of contact and anger. Then Barnhill and I, and Mallery and I, would reconnect and tap out of our character mindsets, ready for the show and for our intimate moments.

II. Acting Techniques Utilized

My performance was greatly influenced by Konstantin Stanislavski and Stella Adler. I found that the Stanislavski method, specifically the use of the “Magic If,” paired with the imaginative technique of Adler, gave me the greatest sense of understanding of my character and her actions. I was constantly pushing up against, and trying to answer, what would I do in this situation? Often, I realized that my answer was reactive, yet still logical, and I questioned why and how Anna could make vastly different choices. This is where my given circumstances came into play. Anna had an objective and a need that she was working to fulfill, and this sometimes didn’t quite align with my own answer, *but* this paved the way for in-depth character analysis that ultimately made my performance more truthful.

For example, let’s examine Anna’s choice to let Joel stay with her and her family. My initial reaction was *I would never allow him near me again*, and the truth is Anna was also probably having a similar thought; however, her intense curiosity and *need* to know why he was there was overpowering this initial reaction. In this specific instance, this created a tension of being curious yet staying guarded, being perceptive yet keenly alert. These building blocks helped me to create a character that was both internally and externally struggling. These building blocks also kept me, as the actor, safe in my exploration of an angry, hurt, and grieving character.

Ever since learning about Trauma Informed Theatre and Consent with Anaïs Gonzalez Nyberg in her production of *Daphne’s Dive* (2020), I stayed clear of using emotional and sensory memory to access the emotional needs of a character (Leahey et. al, 12). I knew that using my own memories of emotions and situations to fuel Anna’s would not be sustainable, safe, or healthy for me. However, there was *one* moment in the show when I used this technique

willingly. In scene 10, we finally see Anna's walls come down. Under her guarded exterior of anger and hurt, she reveals exhaustion and emptiness. She says,

"I'm exhausted. By this. By you. By the storms. By everything that happened. By what I haven't done. And life keeps churning up more and more as I get older and every year I carry around the weight of the year before and the year before that... and every morning I walk down to the sea and I watch the sunrise and I breathe in the air that smells of salt and hope and I try to let it in but it doesn't work

It suffocates me"

As an Indigenous young woman, artist, and activist, I have felt these feelings. I have seen and lived and existed with this exhaustion. It's a particular exhaustion that runs bone deep, but somehow I, and Anna, kept going. This was the kind of emotional memory that has been at the core of the truth of any social, environmental, Indigenous, etc., justice movement. In that moment, I lent my humanity and my experiences to Anna, and the payoff was a genuine moment of truth for both myself and this character. I didn't have to *believe* it was an actuality, because beyond the stage it was.

5 Performance Evaluation

I. Significant Discoveries

I recognize that this show took a lot out of me, and I would find myself breathing a sigh of relief when it ended for the night. I attribute a lot of this to the state of my character, Anna. This show was an emotional rollercoaster for her, and the content of the show can begin to take an emotional toll on an actor as well. As I learned with Nyberg in *Daphne's Dive*, and with Professor Jessie Mills in *Circle Mirror Transformation*, I had grounding tools that could help relieve me from Anna to re-inhabit myself and this reality. Despite the intensity of this role, I am proud of the performance I gave for each show. Each performance brought forth new discoveries for me, and I feel that over the course of the rehearsal process and the run of the show, I made leaps forward in my abilities to act upon actor instinct². My rehearsal journal details the more intimate parts of my process and how I navigated this show and all its challenges and successes.

Preview Night: Wednesday, October 5, 2022

This was our first time sharing the show with an audience. Preview night was almost sold out, and was filled with students from acting classes and friends. This audience was particularly vocal and responsive. They thought the comedic moments of the show were hilarious, and it slightly threw me off since I had become so used to the silence of those moments. However, playing with the laughter for the first time was an exciting discovery to navigate. My performance shifted from night to night, but preview night was specific in that I found myself moving with the rhythm of the audience in those moments of comedy, and leaning into them in a way that I hadn't yet done in rehearsal. It felt surreal to finally get to share this show with our

² Refer to Appendix for redacted rehearsal journal notes.

community, and after preview night, I walked away with more confidence in my ability as an actor, activist, and collaborator.

Opening Night: Thursday, October 6, 2022

Opening night was nerve-wracking for me. I tell myself that the nerves just mean that I love what I get to do – if I still get nervous after years and years of acting, I must love and care for it. This performance went particularly well for me. This audience wasn't as vocal as the one from the night before, but the new parts of Anna that I found during the last performance, I brought into this one. This only helped to shape and strengthen the complexity of her humanity throughout her character arc. I think it took less time for me to drop in and “find” Anna to become grounded in her character and in the world on opening night, because I was finding and grasping on to more and more qualities and attributes of her that were relatable and undoubtedly human. It helped that the response to the show had already been overwhelmingly positive and heartwarming. This gave me strength and hope, and by proxy, gave Anna some as well.

Second Show: Friday, October 7, 2022

The start of this show was unfortunate, and it briefly took me out of my character and the world, and it became difficult to try and get myself back on track. Unfortunately, there was a sound issue at the top of the show, so the pre-show announcement played four times and the sound cues weren't able to be fixed until the second scene. This show relies heavily on sound to help build the world, and it was frustrating to sit by and not be able to do anything to help. However, the emotions I was feeling for the reality of live theatre were not far off from similar emotions Anna was experiencing: annoyance, irritability, and alertness. The new discovery evolved from this connection, and although my performance felt thrown at the top, I did my best to latch onto Anna's arc and dig my heels in to follow it for Anna and my scene partners.

Matinee: Saturday, October 8, 2022

Sometimes, the matinee of a two-show day can have less energy or power – *but*, I was determined to do what I could to keep the show energy heightened and at pace. The significant discovery here is that often the Saturday matinee at Pomona brings in community members. A lot of the surrounding Claremont community are older, wealthy, white people who enjoy supporting the arts and supporting the Theatre Department. *If nobody does remarkable things* is about climate change, and the message was about the choices we can make every day for the betterment of our world. Generally speaking, the Claremont Colleges community is mainly made up of young, liberal, progressive students who are or have been involved in social justice movements. However, the surrounding community is an entirely different demographic, and arguably, they are the ones who need to engage with this content and receive this message. This is not for their lack of care, but rather their lack of education about the steps they can take to do more for the environment. Both the colleges and community are not immune from ignorance, and it is my hope that this show helped to spark new thoughts, dialogue, and action from all individuals to some degree.

In eco-theatre conversations, I've inquired a lot about how we can get climate deniers to come to see these shows. Almost always, the conversation follows the hard-hitting truth that that population of people likely will not come to see the show; however, the people who will are often more engaged and willing to be pushed into action (if they haven't been already) by the content of an ecodrama. But here, at the Saturday matinee, a population of people who potentially don't engage with such realistic climate change content was filling up the seats of the Allen Theatre. Our show had the chance to be a catalyst for change – especially with these community members in the audience.

Third Show: Saturday, October 8, 2022

This show tested my acting ability in an exciting way. Mallery messed up a line during a pivotal point in the show. Our characters' exchanges were often high stakes, fast-paced, and differed from performance to performance. When the momentum and adrenaline of the scene switched his lines around, I had to quickly find a solution and mend the flow of the exchange. It's quick-thinking moments like that one, that reiterate the most important part of acting: *listening*. Actors are always told that it has to be about their scene partner, and my work throughout the rehearsal process was focused on doing just that. It was an exciting moment! It's one of the reasons live theatre is so thrilling to be part of and to experience.

Closing Night; Sunday, October 9, 2022

Closing night was tremendously emotional for me. Not only was it my last time performing this role with these people, but it was my last time on a stage at Pomona College. I think this ended up giving my closing night performance a new quality. The essence of the entire show is Older June replaying all of Anna's lasts, and my response to this realization on the brink of many of my lasts for this show and my time at Pomona produced a desire in Anna to *hold on*.

In my last scene, during the final moments of the show, I walked onto the stage for the last time. And, for the first time in the run of the show, I began to cry. While Anna had every reason to cry as she left her daughter and her life, it wasn't Anna's tears on my cheeks. They were my own. Suddenly it was me on that stage – it was all my life experiences, all my moments at Pomona, all my trials of activism, and all my past selves. With a head of swirling thoughts, I held Anna's hand, took one last look at the space, and walked out the door.

II. Challenges and Successes

This play, the genre, and the specific story were significant factors in why I strongly advocated for this show for the 2022-2023 mainstage season. When the show was chosen, and I auditioned for and was cast in the role of Anna, I imagined a process that was nurturing of the characters' and actors' experiences, bodies, and stories. Unfortunately, from my experience, this process was undercut by a lack of sensitivity and care on the part of the director. The challenges for our production began on day one in the first rehearsal. The director's decision to cast Older June and Younger June as two different actors of two different races prompted a conversation between the castmates and the stage manager. As a collective, the cast decided to talk to the director and express our concerns and thoughts about what it meant for the character(s) to be a person/people of color vs. white. Our argument was that an actor's body will inherently tell a story and that suspending one's disbelief of race cannot ever be fully realized. Unfortunately, our concerns were met with hostility, insensitivity, and harm. For example, when voicing my own opinion and experience about what it means to have a certain identity and inhabit a character, I was interrupted and my Native identity was publicly diminished by the director. Their comments, mixed with the power dynamic, left me feeling unsafe, invalidated, and overall nervous to continue with the show.

I was not the only person in the room that felt this way, and from my perspective, this immediately stunted the team's ability to show up and be vulnerable. From this point on, there was clear tension and a lack of trust in the room. Since we only had four weeks before opening night, we knew that we had to work through the proper channels, talking to the production manager to establish actionable steps to repair the harm done and get to a place where we could create as an ensemble.

At the start of the second week of rehearsals, a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) coordinator, came in to facilitate a conversation between the cast, stage manager, and the director. While aspects of this conversation were productive, I felt there was still a barrier between how we felt and the director's level of understanding. However, now we had lost a full week of rehearsal, and our time to create a show that we were proud of was quickly dwindling. This script meant so much to me, *Anna* meant so much to me, and so, instead of fighting anymore, I powered through the rest of the process. Therefore, my ability to tackle this script and character with vulnerability and all aspects of my being including my experience as an Indigenous woman, artist, and activist was severely undercut. This was an extremely challenging part of my thesis process. My expectations were not met, and my process suffered because of it.

My expectations for what a rehearsal room should look like are derived from my work with Professor Jessie Mills – where she often says that we should always protect the most vulnerable person in the room. This brief explanation of the first part of the rehearsal process is necessary to understand the challenges that impeded me from reaching my full potential as an actor in my thesis, and the challenges that I felt restricted this show from being the best version of itself that this cast and crew could create.

However, it was from these challenges that I learned about the ways that I best exist and thrive in artistic, collaborative spaces, and the ways I could implement safety and trust in rehearsal rooms. Going forward, I have a more concrete conception of my boundaries and I know how I would treat my rehearsal spaces and fellow collaborators (as an actor, director, designer, or producer): with empathy, care, and support.

In spite of these challenges, the impact that this show mostly had on audiences was what I had hoped for all along. As I stated in my dramaturgical exploration, ecodramas have a specific

purpose that affects the way they ultimately impact audiences. Ecodramas are designed to bring hope, to propel people into conversation, community, and action, and to make aspects of the climate crisis more accessible. While the school had many opportunities to produce a climate-related play and should have taken them, it's still a success to have this show be the first ecodrama ever presented in a mainstage season at Pomona College, and it's a success that the response was filled with emotion both for the characters and our planet.

Even if just one person emerges from the theater as a slightly different version of themselves from when they walked in, I've done my job. I've communicated the pain, the joy, the hope, and the helplessness that comes with fighting for environmental and social justice. And just like Anna, I'll never stop fighting.

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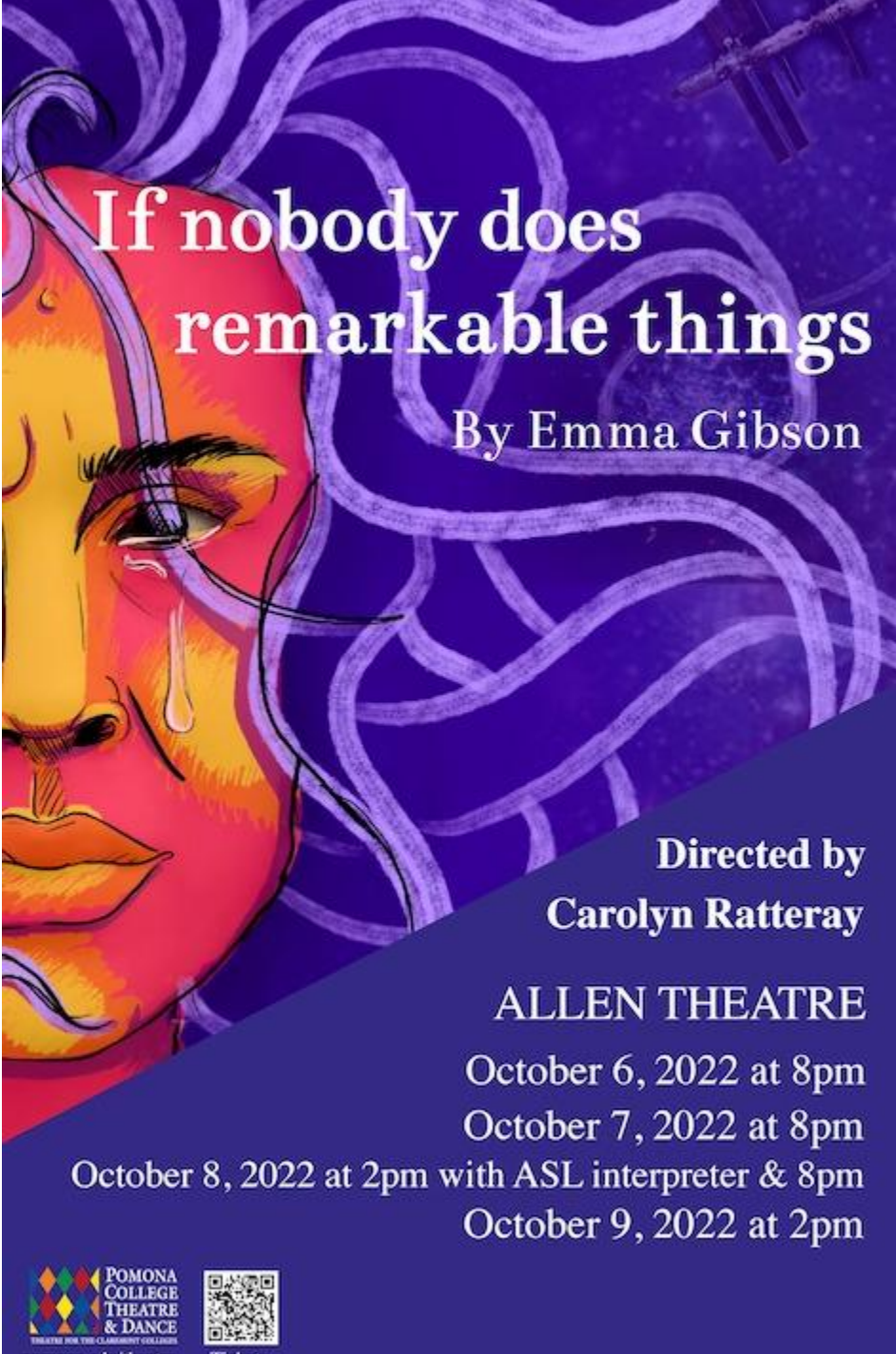
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6 APPENDIX/DOCUMENTATION




**If nobody does
remarkable things**
By Emma Gibson

**Directed by
Carolyn Ratteray**

ALLEN THEATRE
October 6, 2022 at 8pm
October 7, 2022 at 8pm
October 8, 2022 at 2pm with ASL interpreter & 8pm
October 9, 2022 at 2pm

 POMONA
COLLEGE
THEATRE
& DANCE
THEATRE FOR THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES



Tickets

Production Stills:

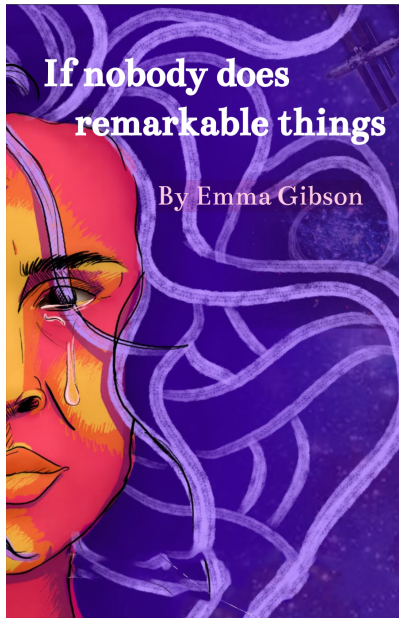








Program:



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OUR PAST AND
COMMITMENT TO OUR FUTURE**

The Pomona College Department of Theatre and Dance is situated on the unceded ancestral homelands of the Gabrieleno Tongva peoples. We recognize and honor the past, present, and future elders and stewards of these original homelands. This acknowledgment takes care to also honor the myriad cultures, languages, and traditions of all Indigenous Peoples and First Nations those that are still being practiced, and those that were forcefully taken, destroyed, and otherwise harmed by direct colonization and settler colonialism. This acknowledgment is the first step in carrying out our moral imperative to continue supporting, building relationships with, and amplifying the voices, histories, and rights of all First Nations and Indigenous Peoples. We have much to learn from the rightful communities of these lands. Learn more about the Gabrieleno Tongva Tribe, Indigenous Sovereignty, and land stewardship by investigating some SC-based programs, resources, and initiatives which include the Indigenous Peer Mentor Program, Native Initiatives, and the Tongva Living History Garden, which is within walking distance from the Pitzer College campus. We need to protect, honor, and celebrate the history and ongoing legacy of the Peoples of the land on which we stand. This has always been, and always will be, Indigenous land.

**POMONA COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND DANCE
FOR THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES**

The Pomona College Department of Theatre and Dance is committed to the highest levels of professional training within the context of the liberal arts tradition. Our commitment begins in the classroom where an emphasis on the quality of learning informs all that we do. A friendly and highly skilled faculty and small class size encourage students to work creatively in exploring the history, theory, literature, and techniques of theatre and dance. Our commitment is furthered by our diverse and dynamic production season. We view productions as important teaching tools, both for our students and for the rest of the College community, and therefore choose works reflecting a wide range of periods and styles. Our commitment is strengthened by the exceptional financial support of The Claremont Colleges, which has given us a strong professional staff and a gorgeous facility in which to do our work. Ultimately, our commitment is inspired and enhanced by the energy and commitment of our students, who bring intelligence, creativity, and verve to our challenging and exciting endeavors. This commitment to the highest quality of teaching and learning, plus an attractive climate and the 5-College liberal arts setting, makes the Pomona College Department of Theatre and Dance an exceptional place in which to work and learn.

**POMONA COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND
DANCE FOR THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES
PRESENTS:**

**If nobody does
remarkable things**

By Emma Gibson

Directed by Carolyn Rattey

Lighting Designer Shannon Barondeau	Scenic Designer Alex Calle	Costume Designer Angela Balogh Calin
	Sound Designer Nayla Hull	Stage Manager Emma Lemire PO '23
Intimacy Coordinator Carly D.W. Bones	Vocal Coach Talya Klein	Fight Coach Mikael Mattson
	Production Manager Alison Andersen	Technical Director Bobby Gutierrez
Costume Shop Manager Suzanne S. Reed	Head of Lighting, Sound & Projection Janelle Asti	
	Program Administrator Marja Liisa Kay	Administrative Assistant Mary T. Rosier

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

From Jackson, Mississippi to the Sindh Province in Pakistan, the climate crisis is here, often stranding marginalized communities at the intersection of environmental emergency and racialized capitalism. While we challenge government/corporate alliances which privatize profit at the expense of the public good and shine a light on the toll of industrial agriculture, our vibrant ecosystem is suffocating. Simply put, we live in a social and economic value system out of synch with life-giving principles and practices.

So, how do we make it through this storm? The answer to that question lies first in acknowledging the long line of indigenous leaders who have always fought against these systems of colonialism and capitalism, and for the right to a life of integrity for all humanity.

We have the marches, petitions, speeches, pleas, and direct actions from peoples across the world. We also have the artists. We have this play, beautifully written by Emma Gibson, which is an appeal to the heart. This is a play about a daughter trying to understand the choices of her mother. It is a story about how a heart can heal and soften even when it has been held over the racks of disappointment and disillusionment. It is a story about unwilling heroes and how it will take acts of forgiveness to heal ourselves and the earth. It is about the small yet impossible choices that can actually change the trajectory of humankind. The need to act is clear.

What will provide us the motivation? This play offers its answer: love.

-Carolyn Ratteray

CAST

(in order of appearance)

OLDER JUNE.....Emily Cummings PO '23
 ANNA.....GiGi Buddie PO '23
 PAUL.....Seb Barnhill PZ '25
 JOEL.....Aydin Mallery PZ '24
 YOUNG JUNE.....Xiangyi "Jazz" Zhu PO '24

SETTING

Newfoundland, Canada

TIME

Sometime in the future. Not too far away, but far enough that the world has changed.

SPECIAL NOTE

For this dystopian play set in a future time, I have opted to cast the roles of older and younger June and the family members across racial and ethnic lines to demonstrate how this story about climate change affects all communities across the globe.

-Carolyn

This performance is approximately 90 minutes and will have no intermission.

The flash photography, videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

PRODUCTION

Hair and Makeup Crew.....Grace Lyde SC '23
 Lightboard Operator.....Ash Ahrenhoerster PO '25
 Run Crew.....Fai Tangkaravakoon CMC '25
 Run Crew.....Rinny Williamson SC '23
 Soundboard Operator.....Nicole Powers Kerschner SC '26
 Wardrobe Crew Head.....Jayce Garner PO '23
 Wardrobe Crew.....Sade Corpuz PO '24
 Wardrobe Crew.....Kate Olsen PO '23
 Wardrobe Crew.....Sydney Yates SC '23

Box Office

Box Office Manager.....Lila Murphy
 Michelle Aguilar-Delgado, Brynn Anderson, Elise Boucher,
 Mia Griggs-Yew, Selene Eli, Maria Jose Najas, Gisele Umotoni,
 Claire Van Note, Ember Yanez

Costume Shop Assistants

Costume Supervisor.....Emily Cummings
 Clarissa Aquino, Thea Barovick, Miriam Clement y Caridad, Iris Ducker,
 Lilly Haave, Phebe Mason, Hannah Murphy, Emma Sar, Grace Valashi-

Front of House/Users

House Manager.....Edwina Polynice
 House Manager.....Claire Van Note
 Bella Ah Moo, Richard Ampah, Elise Boucher, Harrison Brown,
 Zabei Frank, Mia Griggs-Yew, Marcelo Martir, Maria Jose Najas,
 Teechutha "Pine" Netcharussaeng, Nick Russell, Sabrina Wang,
 Minghua "Wendy" Zhang

Lighting and Sound Technicians

Lighting Supervisor.....GiGi Buddie
 Lighting Supervisor.....Rosie Corr
 Ash Ahrenhoerster, Lizbeth Betances, Sofia Centeno, Ethan Diaz, Lena
 Farley, Isa Hahn, Annika Hoseth, Jordan McAuliff, Clara McGilly,
 Sophie McClain, Sarah Meilinger, Avery Smith, Abba Wilson, Yuhang Xie

Publicity and Outreach

Publicity Manager.....Kendall Packman
 Timi Adalakan, Tiana Jackson, Kimseng Suon

Scene Shop Assistants

Ash Ahrenhoerster, Bengisu Bulur, Zoe Cooper, Juliette Des Rosier,
 Lena Farley, Isa Hahn, Carson Hambuchen, Emma Lemire, Aviva Miller,
 Kayla Park, Valentina Puyana, Seiya Shirabe, Nina Smetana,
 Talula Stack, Taylor Tsiamas, Rosalie Weber

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Seb Barnhill PZ '23 (Paul) is a second-year at Pitzer College pursuing a double major in Theatre and American Studies. When not on stage, Seb can be found doing watercolors, working with kids, going on adventures with friends, or thinking about their dog, Penny. Seb's most recent credit is from the 2022 Minnesota Fringe Festival, where they performed in their hometown of Minneapolis as Esau in the new play *Unbelievable!*. They have been seen performing with Pomona College last semester as Orsino in *Twelfth Night*, as well as previously with Children's Theatre Company as Freddie in *Carrie: the Musical*, Youth Performance Company as First Man in *A Woman Called Truth: the Sojourner Truth Story*, and Minneapolis South High as Mama Morton in *Chicago*. Seb would like to thank their family for supporting their performance endeavors, their friends for being on-the-ground backup through this process and everything else, and their dog Penny again, because she deserves a second mention.

GiGi Buddie PO '23 (Anna) is a Tongva Indian and Mescalero Apache "super" senior at Pomona College performing in *If nobody does remarkable things* for her thesis. Over the past four years, she has followed a course of study and pursued a passion at the intersection of theatre and environmental justice. This show is meant to be a little piece of her heart and soul, paired with her dedication to use theatre as a catalyst to inspire people to act and foster climate resilience. While she has spoken on a world stage at the UN (the UN Climate Change Conference 2021), her home is on smaller stages — like this one... It's here that she can story tell and create community. GiGi's time on these stages is coming to an end, and she wants to thank all those who have supported her journey at Pomona. To her mom, who gave her strength, to her friends who always showed up, and to Jessie Mills for always believing in her. She started under the stars in *Metamorphoses*, and she'll end under the stars of *If nobody does remarkable things*.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Emily Cummings PO '23 (Older June) has greatly missed being part of Pomona College's theater department during the chaos of the pandemic. Since deciding to major in theater as a first year, she has performed in several plays within this community, her favorites of which were *Red Velvet* during her first semester, and the student-run production of the *Twelfth Night* during spring of 2022. While she loves acting, she also works in costuming, and spent the past summer in Deer Isle, Maine as the wardrobe supervisor for a production of *Much Ado About Nothing* performed in a field. Now, she is excited to be back in a collaborative theater space this year, working alongside the amazing actors performing in *If nobody does remarkable things*. She is so grateful to be able to act with this cast, and hopes the audience enjoys and feels the impact of this show.

Aydin Mallery PZ '24 (Joel) is a junior studying acting and music. Some of his favorite roles include Lauren in *Circle Mirror Transformation* and Jack in *Into the Woods*. As an active participant in student theatre, he was recently seen in Spotlight Musical Theatre's *Don't Tell Mama* and *Corona Cutie*. Aydin is grateful to be a part of *If nobody does remarkable things* and would like to thank the cast and crew for their dedication to the community. Enjoy the show.

Xiangyi "Jazz" Zhu PO '24 (Younger June) is a junior theatre major at Pomona from Chengdu, China. She is thrilled to be making her Mainstage debut with this remarkable cast and crew! Like June, Jazz grew up dreaming about a life elsewhere. Unlike June, she faints at the sight of cockroaches. Currently, she's directing a Chinese tragedy called *Thunderstorm*, which you can come see on November 19 and 20 at the Large Studio. She dedicates her performance to her mother, who gave birth to her on October 5 twenty something years ago.

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CREATIVE BIOGRAPHIES

Carolyn Ratteray (Director) is an Associate Professor of Theatre at Pomona College and an Emmy-nominated actor and director based in the Los Angeles area. She has appeared in off-Broadway and regional theatres such as The Geffen Playhouse, Pasadena Playhouse, A Noise Within, Antaeus, Boston Court, and the Mark Taper Forum. Some tv/film credits include *Lincoln Lawyer*, *Seasons of Love*, *Riley Parra*, *NCIS*, *All My Children*, *Castle*, *The Young and the Restless*, *Law and Order: Criminal Intent*. She has voiced several video games and an animated series for Netflix as well. Her play, *Both And*, (a play about laughing while black) premiered at Boston Court Theatre this past May and won the Los Angeles New Play Project award, and her episodic (*UN)CLAIMED* which has been touring the festival circuit this fall won Best Screenplay and Best Web Series at the Downtown LA Film Festival. In addition to performing, Ratteray has directed *By The Way Meet Vera Stark*, *In Love and Warcraft*, and *Midsummer Night's Dream* for Pomona College. She is a resident artist at A Noise Within Theatre and a member of Antaeus Theatre Company.

Alex Calle (Scenic Designer) is a graduate of The California Institute of the Arts (BFA Scenic Design) and USC's Marshall School of Business (EMBA). Alex takes a unique approach to design, utilizing his background in theatre to above all, tell a story. He has designed and produced award winning work for Film, Television, Theater, Themed Entertainment, Theme Parks, and Public Art Installations all over the world. Alex serves as Principal of hiddenlemons, a firm that designs and produced Branding Icon Attractions, Themed Experiences, and Live Shows. Alex also sits on the Executive Board for Inverigo Dance Theatre, an institution at the forefront of Los Angeles dance, and has been involved with the company since their 2008 season.

Nayla Hull (Sound Designer) was born and raised in Los Angeles, CA. She's an Alumna of California State University of Los Angeles. She's an artist of many hats from acting to rapping. The self-taught composer has released original compositions for her first design project on all streaming platforms. She is an award-winning Sound Designer receiving a Legacy Award from the Kennedy Center. She loves music and continues to learn to create, design and share her musical creations with the world.

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Shannon Barondeau (Lighting Designer) is a freelance lighting and projection designer in the greater Los Angeles area. Recent lighting design credits include *Unearthed* for Wild Roots Dance and *The Adventures of Wendy & Peter* for The 9 O'Clock Players. Recent projection design credits include *Both And* (a play about laughing while black). Assistant credits include assistant projections designer for *A Trip To The Moon* at the Los Angeles Philharmonic, which was short-listed for the DTS Award for Projection Design from Live Design's inaugural KOI-USA Awards. She got her BA in Theatre Arts from Simpson College and her MFA in Lighting and Projection Design from the University of Missouri Kansas City.

Angela Balogh Calin (Costume Designer) is pleased to be back at Pomona College. She is a costume and scenic designer based in Los Angeles with over 120 productions in local and regional theatres. Her recent credits include *House of Desires* at Pomona College, *Animal Farm* and *All's Well That Ends Well* at A Noise Within Theatre, *In the Upper Room* at Denver Center Theatre, *Into the Breeches* at Asolo Theatre and Cleveland Play House, *Mamma Mia* at Hollywood Bowl, *Outside Mullingar* at South Coast Repertory. Angela is a resident artist at A Noise Within Theatre. Her work has been seen at South Coast Rep., Old Globe, Milwaukee Rep., Denver Center Theatre, Alliance Theatre, Pasadena Playhouse, Orlando Shakespeare, Georgia Shakespeare, Antaeus and various other theatres in Southern California. Angela's designs garnered L.A. Drama Critic's Circle, Ovation, Backstage and Drama Logue Awards. She has 16 film production credits in the US and her native Romania and she holds an MFA in Scenic and Costume Design from the Academy of Arts "N. Grigorescu" in Bucharest- Romania.

Emma Lemire PO '23 (Stage Manager) (she/they) is a Pomona senior theater major who is ecstatic to be working with such a REMARKABLE cast and crew! She has worn many hats in the theater including actor, assistant director, assistant scenic designer, assistant costumer, the deck captain with the better side, and fight captain. A special thanks to her family for supporting from afar, to her friends for making stressful days better, to Jesse Mills for lending a helping hand whenever needed while smiling, and to Janelle Asti for telling her what she needs to hear even if it's not what she wanted to hear. She plans to write a play in space about these people who have done and who will do remarkable things.

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Carly D. Weckstein (Intimacy Choreographer) is a theatre director, intimacy choreographer, sex educator and community facilitator based in Los Angeles CA. She creates at the intersections of theatre, community, healing, sexuality, gender, and art as activation. Carly currently works as an intimacy director for various theatre companies (A Noise Within, The Road, Son of Semele) and university theatre programs (UCLA, USC, Pomona College, CLU), as well as facilitating workshops for Art With Impact and facilitating spaces for theatre companies to work toward building cultures of consent and accountability. Contact: carly@ carlydweckstein.com



FACULTY

Alison Andersen, Lily Bartenstein, Gleason Bauer, Kevin Dettmar (Co-Chair), Monica French, Ernesto Gonzalez Jr., Christina Hurtado-Pierson, Lindsay Jenkins, Talya Klein, Jill Knox, Joyce Lu, Omar Madkour, Jessie Mills, Rose Portillo and Carolyn Ratteray (Co-Chair)

STAFF

Alison Andersen, Janelle Asti, Bobby Gutierrez, Marja Liisa Kay, Suzanne Schultz Reed, and Mary T. Rosier.

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STUDENT THEATRE

The Green Room (TGR) is the largest student run theatre group at the 5Cs. All of our productions are directed, designed, performed, and run by students. We support student directors, playwrights, performers, stage managers and technicians in building a varied and exciting season of shows each semester. In addition, we host events and workshops to build community among artists across campuses and majors. Email thegreenroom47@gmail.com for more information and to get involved.

Spotlight Musical Theatre is the Claremont Colleges' student musical theatre company. We are a community-driven organization, meaning we are producing musical theatre by the community, for the community; both the 5C community and the greater community of Claremont. Follow @spotlightmt on Instagram for more info.

HOME: A BIPOC Musical Showcase

October 21-23, 2022 with two evening shows (8pm) and two matinees (2pm)

Produced by Spotlight Musical Theatre

Seaver Theatre Large Studio

Join us as we honor resistance and pursue release, finding community and solidarity through performance. Come witness our truth!

Rocky Horror Picture Show

Halloween weekend, Oct 28-29

Friday at 9pm, Saturday at 11:59PM

Produced by The Green Room, Spotlight Musical Theatre and 5x5

Conceived by Ellie Griffin & Abba Wilson

Follow @rockyhorror5C on Instagram!



ROCKYHORROR5C

Come see the 1970s cult classic in all its shadow-cast, lip-synched glory as two squares encounter Frank N' Furter, a queer, sexually expressive alien, and the boy toy he just built, Rocky!

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Pomona College President: G. Gabrielle Starr
 Pomona College Dean of Faculty: Yuying Melanie Wu
 Pomona College Dean of Students: Avis Hinkson
 Department of Communications

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 Cal Poly Pomona Department of Theatre and New Dance,
 Maria Alvarez and Gary Gleeson

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POMONA COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND DANCE FOR THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES 2022-2023 SEASON

Head Over Heels

Songs by The Go-Go's

Based on "The Arcadia" by Sir Philip Sidney

Conceived and Original Book by Jeff Whitty

Adapted by James Magruder

Directed by Gleason Bauer

Performances: November 17-20, 2022

Seaver Theatre

Claremont Colleges Ballet Company presents

Excerpts from *The Nutcracker*

Performance: November 20, 2022

Fall Dance Concert: In The Works

Performances: December 1-3, 2022

Pendleton Dance Studio

Three Sisters

By Anton Chekhov

Translation by Sarah Ruhl

Directed by Talya Klein

Performances: March 2-5, 2023

Seaver Theatre

Machinal

By Sophie Treadwell

Directed by Ellie Griffin

Performances: April 7-9, 2023

Allen Theatre

Spring Dance Concert

Performances: April 27-30, 2023

Seaver Theatre

Check out our Instagram!



ANNA
Usually it's passed by now *— does this scare her?*

She goes to a wall and looks at a small metal machine that is on there

There's another one behind it

JOEL
Looks like you're stuck with me then

ANNA
The only hotel in the village shut down last year

JOEL
So I discovered. Why do you stay here?

ANNA
Because it's beautiful = *defensive?*

When it's not like this. Tidal creeks, salt marshes, deserted beaches *] remembering*

Small pause

How is it over there?

JOEL
Lower Manhattan gets battered when the storms hit but we have removable flood barriers and the sea wall around Staten Island stops most of it

ANNA
And the rats? I remember so many rats

JOEL
They're not good swimmers so we are okay, for now. The cockroaches on the other hand...

ANNA
What? *the comfort?*

JOEL
They fly

ANNA
They what?

JOEL
They fly! Freaks people out

moment of husband

ANNA
I'm not surprised that it freaks people

JOEL
/They adapted—
I'm sorry. You were saying?

Anna shakes her head

ANNA
Go ahead *— history in the other direction*

JOEL
Just that...they adapted...the cockroaches *cross back => L*

Anna's pause

You never wanted to come back?

Anna laughs

I could help you...if you wanted to...

ANNA
No thanks. I'm happy here

JOEL
With all the—

She reaches for a towel to dry the cap

Oh, let me help *she'll never let him get close again*

ANNA
I'm fine!

JOEL
Sure?

ANNA
Yes!

JOEL
Sorry

He stares at her

You look good

oh!

getting frustrated

ANNA
Seriously?

JOEL
Your photos online don't do you justice

ANNA
Were you stalking me?

JOEL
No! I mean, I did look, but who doesn't?

ANNA
I don't

JOEL
Of course not

Anna's pause

I can't believe it's been 14 years

Anna looks at how tall they have grown, making the end of the boat appear to float. She turns the cap on to show the work. The water runs a pale orange.

I read this article on the boat. You know how the brain processes time? How one year can feel like ten, and another can feel like a couple of months like on Mars where one earth year is nearly two Mars years, which is—

He stops, laughs

Sorry. I'm nervous. Jesus, I'm nervous!

She stares at him

What I mean to say is that seeing you again. It feels like yesterday

She turns away, reaches into a cupboard for some caps. He takes a step towards her

ANNA
I know that! This is—

Anna drops the cap and it falls on the floor with a clatter

ANNA
if all comes flooding back? does it?

oh!

JOEL
Sorry, I didn't mean to startle you

They both reach down to pick it up

ANNA
You didn't, you just—

JOEL
What?

She stands

ANNA
You called me Annie

He looks at her, confused

JOEL
But that—

ANNA
DON'T call me Annie

JOEL
Don't call you...why not?

ANNA
Why not?

She looks at him, shakes her head, turns away

JOEL
What?

ANNA
I can't do this

JOEL
Do what?

He picks up the cap. She spins back

ANNA
That! This polite back and forth—

JOEL
But I was only trying to—

anger to how one can pretend someone

— how does her expression change?

ANNA
It's ridiculous! All this more talk of cockroaches and sea and marshes and movies and oh you look so great when you're like...what you... when is she not in control?

She steps

JOEL
I'm sorry. I was being polite? I was trying to—

ANNA
/Why are you here Joel?

JOEL
Why am I here? I told you, the ship got caught in the storm

ANNA
Why did you come here? — you want answer my question?

Joel puts the cap on the counter

JOEL
Okay...

Can I have a shower? Clean up a little. I've been on that boat for far too long

ANNA
You said 17 days

JOEL
I'd love a hot shower. Then I can explain

Anna gestures towards a door down a hall

ANNA
There's a towel on the rack

JOEL
Thanks

Joel picks up his bag and begins to exit down the hallway. He steps and turns back

You do look great, you know. You look really great

Joel exits. Anna enters to the locker and flicks a switch. She goes to the fridge and pulls out a large bag of chilling peas. She gets a towel. The sound of the shower starting. She thinks for a moment and then goes back to the locker and turns the switch to off

frantic shift, she's now nervous, doesn't have to start in anger. you can see however, she's now always put together. when is she not in control?

Black out
Scene 3
June (17) International Space Station

JUNE
 In space
 The gravitational pull of a black hole is so strong
 That it sucks in all the light
 And the point at which matter can approach a black hole
 before being pulled into it
 Is called the point of no return
 It's an exit door from our universe.
 If you walk through that door
 You're not coming back



In life
 When you have to choose
 Something so important
 That there's no going back
 Because you'd never be able to extract yourself
 Or be the same person ever again
 That's your point of no return
 Something that changes the spin of your trajectory
 So you tumble into the black hole of possibility
 And hopefully emerge the other side
 Unharmed
 Better for the experience
 Not damaged
 Not angry
 Not like Anna

her point of no return happens and damaged her.

Anna's point of no return...

She made, looks up

She's in New York City
 There's no orange dust then
 Although there are rais
 Lots of rais
 Anna's an activist
 A climate change warrior
 She's trying to save the world
 She's young
 Younger than me!
 But she's got traction
 People listen to her
 Ask her to speak

She's been on the news!
 And when she's not saving the world
 Anna does hip things like
 Smoke weed
 Wear tie dye T shirts
 And go to fortune tellers
 Today's visit is different
 The fortune teller
 Does not tell her
 That she will win the lottery
 Or own a dog called Elvis
 Instead he tells her
 In a small but firm voice
Don't travel by plane for one year
 And then he looks at her
 Really looks at her
 So that it feels like her insides are turning to dust
 Like a special effect on a movie
 Like the center of her stomach is dissolving into nothingness
 So she doesn't

And then a year passes
 Almost
 And her Mother is ill
 Seriously ill
 There's not enough time
 To take a boat
 To save the planer
 To see her Mum
 So she has to book a flight

everything was almost different, everything was almost same. she almost had a better life? but she couldn't have had June.

June becomes her life.

She finds it hard to breathe in the airport
 She keeps thinking
 What if his dates are wrong?
 A day, here, a day there
 A day could make all the difference
 But then it's too late to worry
 And the engines roar
 Hurting along the runway
 And here we are
 At that point of no return

Yes, this is it
 Feeling as though
 She is falling

cool, calculating, vengeful, soft, kind, flirty

Scene 4

you're
Anna and Paul are sitting on two recliner chairs in the lounge. Anna is holding Paul. Paul is standing in the doorway in a small, white towel

Falling down
 Into a black hole
 But instead
 She goes
 Up
 Up above the clouds
 Into the sky
 The glorious blue
 He was wrong
 The fortune teller was wrong!
 And she turns to the seat next to her
 And there is Joel

JOEL
 Do I need to press a button?

ANNA
 Is it not working?

JOEL
 It's running cold

ANNA
 Strange

JOEL
 I wondered if I needed to turn something on

PAUL
 Is the boiler on?

ANNA
 I turned it on

PAUL
 Well I don't know then...Jake?

ANNA
 Joel

PAUL
 Like Noel?

JOEL
 It's one syllable. Like Jole

PAUL
 I'm Paul. One syllable too. You look cold. Are you cold?

JOEL
 A little

ANNA
 Want to boil the kettle?

Paul knows I'm lying but Joel doesn't.

why does Anna answer for him?

JOEL
It's a little early
PAUL
Not for me
JOEL
I should probably go and...
He goes over to the kitchen
PAUL
Don't upset her, will you man?
JOEL
What? No... of course not
PAUL
She's been through enough. I don't want her to... *what's the end of this?*
Another gust of wind shakes the window
But you're glad you're not on that boat
JOEL
I don't come here to make trouble, the opposite actually
PAUL
Good. Just thought I'd mention it
Paul comes at Joel, just before they get together to see the man. Paul makes for over loud music, takes a sip of his drink, lines up some more on the phone, notices her chair and begins to listen to some music
I gether slowly fade

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I gether slowly fade

JOEL
I sat at home
ANNA
Jenna!
JOEL
You're still here then
ANNA
Handy
JOEL
Remember the time you stood on a road and refused to go to the ER
ANNA
Remember when you got a mosquito bite and had to go to the doctor
JOEL
I was allergic
ANNA
You were ridiculous
JOEL
I was a lot of things
He takes her other hand and presses it on the bench
Press here
Anna presses on the bench
ANNA
When did you become a nurse?
JOEL
My ex-wife was a surgeon
ANNA
How old? What happened?
JOEL
There was an issue with her anatomy
Anna laughs

JOEL
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ANNA
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ANNA
How old? What happened?
JOEL
There was an issue with her anatomy
Anna laughs

Such a big beam!
SL BY SINK
move DS

move to SC chair
banter
how does this land for me.

oh my god how he?!
he waves arm
stand slightly lower arm is lower
he takes arm

SL to breaker by door
back to sink
DS to breaker

walk DS L by door
face Joel
towards table

back DS L
pace vertically
build stairs here

ANNA
Then let's hear it. The Great Escape

JOEL
I didn't know what they were going to write

ANNA
You've got to do better than that!

JOEL
I didn't even commission to take photos - a new take on the climate movement. I pitched a piece on the people behind the protests - the young activists in their natural environment. They paid for the photos and then ran them with a different article

ANNA
Come on...they can't do that

JOEL
Well they did. The Heartland Institute was in cahoots with the White House and the White House was commissioning the piece. I was young! and naive!

ANNA
That photograph ended up being the defining image of the decade. Won awards. Must have made you a rich man

JOEL
Actually no. The grads they commissioned? We all got screwed

ANNA
We tried to sue. The union got involved but we hadn't signed contracts. We spent all our money on a court case that got thrown out in seconds. Nobody would work with us for years

ANNA
I'm not going to feed you for you

JOEL
I'm not asking you to

ANNA
People dismissed everything I said after that piece came out. If I picked up a plastic bottle to stop someone littering, they'd take another photo and the next day there would be a headline.

How do we hang together

she observes

mid stage by bench

DS C with him

handbag

pause

Shit he's no longer the most important thing right now

going to get coat and get ready

angry? breaking down?

How does Anna feel?

ANNA
People dismissed everything I said after that piece came out. If I picked up a plastic bottle to stop someone littering, they'd take another photo and the next day there would be a headline.

JOEL
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Has she ever asked Anna about her
born father?
Would Anna have ever said anything about
Joel? When does she know about her
birth?

Scene 10
June (S) and Joel are in the lounge. June is wearing a tee shirt with
NASA on the front
JUNE
Was it the shuttle?
Joel nods
JOEL
We should cover the window with something
JUNE
It's been threatening to go for ages
She sees the bottle of cash
Did you bring alcohol?
JOEL
Er...yes
She laughs
JUNE
He'll want to go skydiving tomorrow
JOEL
What?
JUNE
That's why Anna doesn't let him drink
JOEL
Anna? Is she your Mum?
JUNE
Yes. And I'm June. Who are you?
JOEL
I'm Joel
She looks at him closely
JUNE
Would you jump out of an airplane, Joel?
JOEL
Never

JUNE
I would. If Paul wanted me to. It'd be kinda cool
JOEL
I've never seen the point
JUNE
Don't you think it would be amazing? Floating in the air. Seeing the world come at you
from below
JOEL
Only if your parachute opened
JUNE
You know the astronauts on board the Russian Soyuz capsules used just a couple of
parachutes and a rocket to come back to earth. Imagine that?
JOEL
How do you know this stuff?
JUNE
I'm going to be an astronaut too
Joel laughs, looks at her tee shirt
JOEL
Ah, right!
JUNE
Doesn't laugh
JOEL
Sorry
JUNE
I'm going to study aeronautical engineering in America
JOEL
Good for you
Joel enters in the kitchen with the broken glass. He looks under the
sink and pulls out a large black garbage bag. June follows him, reaches
into the drawer and pulls out some heavy duty tape
JUNE
Why are you here, Joel?

JOEL
I was on a cargo ship and it got caught in the storm
JUNE
Oh
JOEL
The carbon neutral
JUNE
You're wearing leather
Joel looks at his belt
JOEL
Yes
JUNE
So you can't be completely carbon neutral
JOEL
This is old
JUNE
How old?
JOEL
Almost as old as me
JUNE
Ancient then
Joel enters. He comes back into the lounge. She follows him
JOEL
And this storm hit and, well, I remembered that your Mum...Anna...lived near here
JUNE
Did you come here just to see her?
JOEL
No
JUNE
Why do you want to be an astronaut?
JOEL
Because the earth is going to be uninhabitable soon
JOEL
Perhaps

what's the end of
this sentence.
do people think
they can feel
the truth to leads

He comes in the window and starts trying to block the window with the
large black bag. June looks him

JUNE
Are you a climate realist?
JOEL
No. The opposite actually
JUNE
Good. Because if you were I was going to send you on your way. After you've fixed the
window of exatne
JOEL
I wouldn't get very far. I've lost my boots
June laughs
JUNE
She's hidden your boots hasn't she?
JOEL
She does that?
JUNE
When she's really mad. She hides mine when she doesn't want me to see Kev
JOEL
Who's Kev?
JUNE
My boyfriend. He's going to be a plumber
JOEL
In space or on earth?
JUNE
Dad! Spare. It's WAY more interesting. Gravity you know. The system on the ISS recycles
the urine of the crew and lab animals and purifies the water and returns it to the drinking
supply. Kev told me all about it
JOEL
Kev sounds smart
JUNE
He is. He's in honors physics and everything
Joel enters back and looks at the window

JOEL
That should do it
He steps on something sharp
Ouch!
JUNE
You should be wearing boots
Joel starts looking around for his boots
You won't find them
JOEL
I might
JUNE
She'll be out in a minute. Why don't you just ask her
JOEL
I will
JUNE
Can I be there when you do?
JOEL
If you want
Joel sits and pulls a small piece of glass out of his foot
JUNE
Here
June gets a pair of men's slippers from under the milkling chair and
gives them to Joel
Wear these. They're Paul's
JOEL
Who's Paul?
JUNE
He's asleep. Put them on
Joel reluctantly puts on Paul's slippers. They are too big. He starts to clear up a
little more. June watches him
So what's America like then? I want to go there so bad

JOEL
What?
JUNE
Dad! The space program! They don't have one here
JOEL
Ah yes
JUNE
That's why I have to go to America if I'm going to be an astronaut
JOEL
There are big cockroaches
JUNE
In space or in America?
JOEL
Dad! In New York. Where I live
June laughs
JUNE
You trying to put me off?
JOEL
And they fly
JUNE
The Russians put a cockroach into space. She was called Nudobly which means Hope. She
had 33 offspring. The first earthlings to be conceived in space. That's pretty cool isn't it
JOEL
That is cool
JUNE
Nudobly! Isn't that the most beautiful name you've ever heard?
JOEL
Funny name for a cockroach
JUNE
Is it? Why?
JOEL
I don't think anyone would call a cockroach beautiful

JUNE
But everyone knows you can't kill a cockroach. And that's beautiful. Because that means something will survive

JOEL
A cabinet full of cockroaches hardly seems thinking about

JUNE
I think it's beautiful. I'm going to write a play one day and call it *Nutcrack*

JOEL
I thought you were going to be an astronaut

JUNE
I am. And I'm also going to write a play. In space. It will be the first one.

JOEL
What's going to be about?

JUNE
Cockroaches

JOEL
Seriously?

JUNE
I don't know... people doing remarkable things. Wherever. I'll be famous

JOEL
You want to be famous?

JUNE
Who doesn't?

JOEL
Someone doesn't want to be famous

JUNE
True

JOEL
Were you born in June?

JUNE
Everyone says that No. It's short for Juniper. It means evergreen

JOEL
That's lovely too

JUNE
What does Joel mean?

JOEL
I have no idea

JUNE
Kevin means handsome

JOEL
Is he?

JUNE
Of course he is

Small pause

I should go and study. I have a math exam next week

JOEL
Well you'll need that if you're going to become an astronaut

JUNE
And hope

JOEL
Who hopes?

JUNE
Otherwise how else will you climb into the space shuttle?

She turns to leave, turns back

Oh, and don't worry. Annas will be happier when the storm's over. I think it reminds her of everything she hasn't done. And then the storm breaks and everything is okay again. Until the next time.

She smiles at him

I hope you find your books

JOEL
Me too

JUNE
Let me know when you do

JOEL
I will

JUNE
I met Joel He's from America. He says he's not a climate denier, but he wears leather

ANNA
I know what Joel is

You should go and do your homework

JOEL
How's Paul?

ANNA
He had

JUNE
Did he ask you to go studying?

ANNA
Go and study. I'll finish up here

JUNE
But what about Joel?

JOEL
I'll be fine

I think

JUNE
Good luck!

ANNA
Go

JUNE
They also wear a pair of golden chain collars to space and they squeak perfect walk

JOEL
That's very cool

What is Anna's fear?
How does Joel threaten everything?

He looks at her

I didn't know you had a daughter

ANNA
Well over you do

JOEL
She's remarkable

ANNA
I think so

JOEL
She's...?

ANNA
/Why are you wearing Paul's slippers?

JOEL
June gave them to me

ANNA
And you put them on?

JOEL
Well, yes, the glasses...on the floor

ANNA
Where?

JOEL
It's everywhere...I already cut my pinky toe

ANNA
Good heavens. Do you need a surgeon?

Small pause

JOEL
I'll take them off

He takes the slippers off

Have you seen my boots?

ANNA
Did you look outside?

JOEL
How...?

Never mind

ANNA
What are you doing?

JOEL
I thought I should probably get...

ANNA
/You'll read that around the house

JOEL
Yes, but I was going to leave, it seems--

ANNA
/What? Go and stay in the hotel that's shut

JOEL
I thought you didn't want me to be here

ANNA
I don't

JOEL
Well...

ANNA
You can stay

JOEL
It's soon as this is over, I'll get out of here

ANNA
Good

JOEL
Did Paul...?

ANNA
What?

JOEL
Mention the campaign?

ANNA
You really are unbelievable

JOEL
I just wanted to ask in case he--

ANNA
/Coming in here

JOEL
I just wondered if he had--

ANNA
/Bringing alcohol when Paul can't drink

JOEL
He can't?

ANNA
He takes pills

JOEL
Oh

ANNA
You speak everyone

JOEL
I didn't mean to /honestly didn't--

ANNA
/And no daughter? Walking into that

JOEL
I know... I should never have--

ANNA
And now you want to talk about your campaign

JOEL
I'm sorry I...

ANNA
/When then's dust and scorch and glass

She looks around

Everywhere!

JOEL
I tried to clear it up

ANNA
Well I can't see anything

JOEL
How?

Small pause

Let me help

ANNA
/I'm fine

JOEL
You're obviously not fine. Let me help

ANNA
Stop trying to help

JOEL
Annal! Please! I'm sorry I brought whiskey. I'm sorry about the phone. And I'm sorry if I messed up your life

Where are your candles?

ANNA
Under the sink

JOEL
Then let's light some

JOEL
You okay?

ANNA
I'm fine

JOEL
You don't look fine

ANNA
What did you expect?

JOEL
You look tired

ANNA
Well I am exhausted. By this. By you. By the storms. By everything that happened. By what I haven't done.

She drinks

And life keeps churning up more and more as I get older and every year I carry around the weight of the past before and the year before that and every morning I walk down to the tea and I watch the sunrise and I breathe in the air that smells of salt and hope and I try to let it in but it doesn't work

It suffocates me

JOEL
Annal...

ANNA
/I don't want your sympathy

JOEL
I was just going to--

ANNA
/What I want is to see the birds. I haven't seen any for months

She looks to the window

I want to see the cormorants nesting on the cliff again. I want to see the little terns diving low in the sky, skimming across the top of the water looking for the few fish that haven't died because the water is so toxic and warm.

I haven't seen them for months

JOEL
Then do something about it

ANNA
I already read

Just
But you stopped, because of me

ANNA
Good, the milk goes? You think it's all about you. Everything that ever happens. Don't kid yourself. You want the money I respect

JOEL
/Then why? You were so driven. I'd never seen anyone with such purpose. I didn't think you would ever give up

ANNA
Well I did

JOEL
What if you could have a second chance?

ANNA
How you go again

JOEL
Don't live in the grey

ANNA
Is that what you think I'm doing?

JOEL
You said it yourself. You're exhausted by life. You're disconnected from it. Come with me, back to America. Work with me

ANNA
No

JOEL
Why not?

SR cross
go into living room
she headily can't see
is she breaking down here?
SR cross into kitchen
sit at table SR chair

she looks at the sky with a look of...
she's not hearing him
she looks to the window

Joel, exhausted, overwhelmed, caught, confused, longing, desiring

Annas appear at the door

enrich mid door

Cross SL into living room

He looks at Annas

Annas walk to Joel

She looks at him

Annas reaches under the table for a cloth, Joel reaches in the door and opens it. She has books and picks them up

He looks to put them on

Does she not know him or is he naive?

Turn away

What do you want to know?

She never even starts to wipe the surfaces of dust. It rings out her skin on the sink

He hesitates for a minute, then

Annas enter, clean and kind of sad

How is this different from her former house? The atmosphere is so innocent.

I want you to understand how your presence has upset everything here

And if we can find a planet that can sustain life
Then there is some kind of hope
And this knowledge
This comfort
will give us the answers we seek
Paul
Or maybe Paul will
Lights up on kitchen. Paul stammers in
He's the hero, remember?
Although he doesn't want to be
He looks awful
Especially not with this hangover

How has he
driven through
apparently the space
down to earth this stage

Scene 14
Paul. Paul is in the kitchen. He looks around, unsure to the look and
fills a cup with water. When he finishes it, he fills the glass and
drinks again. He looks like he might throw up. He looks at the
clock. Looks at a chair for some protection. Takes them.
He looks around the kitchen. Sees that Anna's coat has gone. Suggests
one of the kitchen. No, she is not in the bathroom, the bathroom. He
comes back into the kitchen. Sees the bag of chips and the milk on the
table. Thinks. Considers having a snack. Shakes his head. Sits at the
kitchen table.
The back door opens and Anna enters
Anna is here
PAUL I didn't know where you were
ANNA I was on the beach
PAUL Of course. How was it?
ANNA Change
PAUL Any birds?
ANNA No
PAUL How are you feeling?
ANNA Like I fell out of a tree
PAUL That bad, huh?
ANNA PAUL I'd forgotten what it was like
PAUL Last night... did I mention... skydiving?

"NIGGA THAT HE KNOWS"
KNOWS WHAT?

ANNA
Yep
PAUL Thought so
He looks at her
Did I hit Joel?
ANNA You missed
PAUL Damn
ANNA He's leaving this morning
PAUL Good
ANNA Everything can go back to normal
PAUL Yes
ANNA Back to the way it was
PAUL Great
ANNA No. More Drama
ANNA Anna, are you happy?
ANNA What do you mean?

the coat vank talk
off coat
Anna asks off her coat and hangs it on the back. Paul for about by
the door. Paul watches her
She hangs her back to him
Why can't/won't she
leave the room?
You'll never see today's happy home?

PAUL
Are you happy? Here. Living with me. I mean, we're in the middle of nowhere. Nothing
going on.
ANNA
Why wouldn't I be? I have you and June and my life is good. Why?
PAUL
Nothing. Just the hangover. And something Joel said
Anna turns back to him
ANNA
What did he say?
PAUL
That you had changed
ANNA
Well of course I've changed, I've aged. Look at me
PAUL
You look like the fight has gone out of you
ANNA
That's just growing up
PAUL
No. It's more than that. You see the dead fish at the beach and you don't say anything
anymore. And when the storms come, you look up and swallow headache pills. And when I
tell you that we are going skydiving you look at me like I'm crazy
ANNA
Or drunk
PAUL
But still... the old Anna would have jumped out of a plane
ANNA
I can assure you she wouldn't. And anyway, who's got enough carbon points to do that?
PAUL
That's not the point
ANNA
Then what is the point?

turn to face
Paul
cross to fridge
and get water

PAUL
I think you should go with Joel and do his campaign
ANNA
You're still drunk
PAUL
No, I'm not
ANNA
There you're talking crap
PAUL
Not this time
ANNA
Then you're crazy
PAUL
I'm not crazy. Anna. I may have a gummy leg and metal pins in my skull, but I know you. I
know you the minute I saw you, shouting at the top of your lungs at that Match. You were a
force of nature. Unstoppable.
He looks deeply at her
But then I made a mistake. I kept you too safe. I made you slowly disappear until here we
are - not laughing, not skydiving, and definitely not eating about the dead fish.
ANNA
I do care about the dead fish
PAUL
And the birds?
ANNA
There are no birds
PAUL
Which is crazy. Why are there no birds? Why aren't we doing anything about it?
ANNA
I don't want to go
PAUL
You you do

Anna looks at him

DS R

ANNA
And I can't

PAUL
Of course you can

ANNA
I have June

PAUL
And so do I

June

Let me keep her safe. I'm good at it. It won't be forever

ANNA
Paul—

PAUL
And I won't let you argue with me. I have the Mother of all hangovers. I literally do not know what to feel more sorry for, my brain, my stomach or my... anyway. It's bad. So no talking. Go and pick your bag. I'm going to cook eggs and then I'm going to go back to bed and I'm going to sleep this bad boy off and you're going to go and save the world

ANNA
I'm not going to save the world

PAUL
Sssh. Yes you are. You're going to do it for June. Or at least you're going to try

June

I've got this

ANNA
I have never deserved you

June

You taste of sex

PAUL
I bet

Get out of here

for Paul

She exits. Paul watches her leave. He picks up a fishing hat. Tries to turn on the stove and then remembers that the power is still out

PAUL
Fuck

He rubs his head, considers the stove again. Picks up the bottle. Throws it in the trash. He sits at the kitchen table

Just enters with his coffee bag and summer can. They look at each other awkwardly, until finally Paul speaks

PAUL
I'd cook you eggs but apparently we need electricity for that

JOEL
Sell out?

Paul nods, unsure

How's the head?

PAUL
Been better

JOEL
Look, I'm sorry if I was out of line last night

PAUL
All good

JOEL
I can get a bit carried away

PAUL
Me too

June

You know we don't actually hate all Americans over here

JOEL
Good

Paul starts at Joel

PAUL
Just some of them

Joel looks towards the door

JOEL
I should go. I've a taxi arriving any minute

PAUL
When time does the boat leave?

JOEL
Tim. I thought I'd pick up some supplies beforehand. Maybe get some breakfast in town before I board

Joel looks around

Is Anna up?

PAUL
She's asleep

JOEL
I thought I heard her

PAUL
No

JOEL
Are you sure?

PAUL
It was probably the radio

JOEL
I wanted to say goodbye

PAUL
You didn't do that last night?

JOEL
Well, no, but—

PAUL
/It'll hit her then

JOEL
Did she mention—

He shakes his head, gives up

Never mind. Is June up?

Paul laughs

PAUL
At "Tim"? We won't get a peep out of her before midday

JOEL
Oh, right

June looks disappointed

Will you give her a message?

PAUL
Sure

JOEL
Just tell her... that I found my boots

PAUL
Anything else?

JOEL
No. No, that's it

Joel turns to leave

PAUL
Hey Joel

He pronounces it right. Joel turns back

Good luck with the campaign. I hope it works

JOEL
Thanks. Me too

He turns to leave again

PAUL
Oh and Joel

Joel turns back

JOEL
Yeah

PAUL
She looks like you, you know. She really does

JOEL
Who?

PAUL
June

It's always been a joke between Anna and I, that she looked nothing like Anna. And I always wondered who she did take after

And now I know

Joel looks confused

Black out

JOEL
Yeah

PAUL
Who?

Save 13

June (??) International Space Station

She is wearing a small birthday hat

JUNE
It was on Earth. I'd be eating carrot cake. Lots of it. But you can't have birthday cake in space. The cake crumbles and a hazard. Small particles can get caught in the air filtration system and cause the astronauts to choke. So we don't eat cake

She looks out

Instead, we come to the Capula. It's beautiful here. A place to get perspective. And we look out. At the earth below us. And feel the weightlessness. The insignificance. Of the great times a new year

She takes a deep breath

Another breath

The fish profound. Like I have finally caught up with her

Small pause

They say she made a difference. Before she passed. And I know that it's her sacrifice. That allows me to be here.

She looks at the window

And you to be there

She starts her eye

If nobody does remarkable things...

She opens them, turns back to the letter

Where was it?

June takes a deep breath

Lights come up softly in the kitchen

Anna considers waking me. She knows that she should. But she can't. I look too peaceful. The last few hours of innocence. Dreaming about a perfect world on Mars. Where Kevin had designed a water filtration system that will be the source of future generations.

She writes a letter instead. She thinks words hurt less. When you read them. Put it on my bedside table.

At 12:31pm

My world collapses

Paul is here. Paul the hero. He still has the mother of all headaches. He's covered eggs. And he tries to explain. What my Mother left out.

How it was all inevitable. Everything that happened. This long line of events. Tumbling into each other. Until they could not be stopped. A divine ordinance. That leads us here. To this moment. Right in front of me.

She looks at Anna

Knowing that it has already past. Like the stars in the night sky. That light taking years to reach us. So that when we gaze upon them. They no longer exist.

Anna enters the kitchen with a release

Duty or love? Love or duty? It's an impossible choice. Someone wins. Someone loses. Every time. In every constellation of its people.

Anna walks towards the door. She stops there, her hand on the handle.

Look at her. Standing on the precipice. At the point of no return. One step away. From something unmeasurable. Not knowing if she is strong enough. To take that final step. Not knowing if I can let her.

She takes a deep breath

She's standing in a room. She's been standing there for a long time. She is so still that she looks like a statue. Her face has this intense focus. Like, if she looks away, something will break. But then something shifts. Her eyes blink.

Anna opens the door and walks out

And she is gone

Light slowly fades

END OF PLAY

looking to order June → I know that the sacrifice I've made has allowed her to live, to grow. I get to see her older, wiser, and I get to smile and laugh. Gaining was the right thing to do?

It's how we start and how we end. How is it different?

Rehearsal Journal:

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SUBJECT: find moments at each step of process

- debrief w/ carolyn from my experience with how we got to here
- framing process. Auditions is step one.
- tracking that relationship over the course of the process.
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

→ what is my experience in context of the project.

- o color conscious vs. color blind. this feels like x, what is the term you would apply
- o can you talk me through this choice. I want to understand this process
- o how are you helping build an ensemble
- I've never worked with you before. what's the best way to approach you.

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SUBJECT: Show thoughts after 1st Readthrough: impacts?

- did Anna ever stop loving Joel?
- how can she forgive him? how is she even able to be cordial?
- does she go through the 5 stages of grief throughout the show?
- Anna is still marring the loss of herself?
- how we treat each other is reflected in how we treat the earth.
- hope - always there but it's not the forefront
- is just a constant reminder for Anna.
- duty vs. love is so painful.
- o the point of no return
- perspective
- having a child after loss of parent.

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SUBJECT: Journal #1

9/4/22 Callbacks

- It's so exciting to hear the words in everyone's voices and bodies. There are tons of amazing humans who want to help tell this story - I'm honored in all the ways - to be here. So many jitters! and so much love!
- thoughts: Anna is the heart of the story, Joel is the body, and Jane is the mind.
- I'm curious as to why Carolyn didn't ask for my thoughts after callbacks. While I didn't expect to be part of the casting process, I did think my identity, experiences, and connection to the story would be wanted and needed.
- [redacted]

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SUBJECT: 9/6/22 Rehearsal Convo

Debrief:

The cast connected after rehearsal to make space for our thoughts and course of action. We all agreed that we felt invalidated, shut down, and harmed by the lack of care and sensitivity that Carolyn gave us and our concerns. We came up with a plan. We do not feel comfortable approaching Carolyn after how she handled the last conversation. Emma will be speaking to Alison, our production manager, and we are hoping for a resolution by the end of the week. Not the best way to start rehearsals or my thesis, with the show that I pushed the department to do, but I have confidence in the people who are going to try and mend/help mend the hurt and harm caused.

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SUBJECT: Table Work day 2

- what memories/moments lead to rolling climax.
 → dropping into the depth of all of this.
- what is she trying to do to Joel?
- Table work has been really helpful — it's such a gift to ask my castmates questions and find/start to find clarity for Anna too. I'm learning a lot about these characters and their potential history. It's painting a fuller picture of the complexity of their relationships, history, and humanity. I leave every night with more questions and that's a good thing! I talk with my castmates about the show when we see each other around campus. This show is dealing with so many complexities and while it makes it challenging, it's also so exciting.

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SUBJECT: Table Work Day 3

I feel like I'm learning so much about what holds these characters together. Anna is so complex and I feel like I walk away every night learning more but always having more questions. I'm having fun trying to put together all the pieces of her puzzle. I learn so much from older June's monologues, too. A glimpse into the future with perspective, can say so much about the past. Using Stanislavski technique to find a logical way into Anna has really helped, and I'll be curious to see how Carly can also help with the charged weight of the content we're sharing.

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SUBJECT: Intimacy into Session

- culture of consent and boundaries
- supporting the mental health of actors — especially with climax crisis.
- characters are in unsafe situations, but actors aren't.
 → physical storytelling of the kisses and the importance of finding the nuances.
- physical body language of the two characters.
- charged touch — pretty expensive. It includes some of Anna and Joel's moments.
 → "No, but" as collaborative as "Yes, and".

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
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SUBJECT: Conversation w/ DEI facilitator

This was tough. I think our cast/ensemble has really taken a hit with trust and it's been rough starting the process, my thesis, off like this. Carolyn apologized, which is bare minimum but the first step in repairing and mending. I think the cast, are still unclear on some things and there isn't really an action plan going forward to answer and find solutions we did come up with an action plan for future disagreements so they don't escalate and spiral like this one did. I think I've come out hopeful, but still with questions that need to be thoughtfully answered, because they were the root of why all of this started. [redacted]
 [redacted]
 we just have very little time.

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
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SUBJECT: transitions + Run

- despite my back being in pretty bad pain, I really tracked Anna's journey through this show. It makes the ending where she looks at June that much more meaningful to what her story is.

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SUBJECT: Scene work

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted] I learned a lot about where Anna might be coming from after talking with Carolyn and asking a bunch of questions.

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
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SUBJECT: Prop tracking / run w/ Seb

Honestly today was rather funky. I couldn't drop in for the run so I felt super detached from Anna and the story. I think it had to do with my health and the fact that Seb wasn't there. There was a clear disruption of energy. I think I need to find tangible techniques to drop in even when it seems hard to get there.

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
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SUBJECT: Designer Run

Wow - tonight went so well. (for me, at least) I felt dropped in and eager to chase after my objectives and listen to my scene partner. Honestly, I had so much fun up there. I think tracking her wants from scene to scene and her emotional status at any given moment is so important to following her journey through June's eyes. I think listening to June's monologues also really helped. They are clues to how Anna was and is feeling and honestly, they are proving to be vital in my process during the show. I had fun and I felt very confident about my work. I'm excited to keep exploring and going up!

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SUBJECT: Notes from Designer Run

- scene 2:
 - good drive + taking out breath in steady beats
 - keep pace
 - earned build with moments at the end. ↳ "that's just paul" changed line
- scene 4:
 - don't ask for permission with painkiller line
- scene 6:
 - pain sound needs to bring us back
 - you get what you want and acknowledge after "I didn't"
- scene 10:
 - physical reaction to compaign and turn other direction - SR
 - turn away from bet when he yells at me.
 - exhaustion monologue rocked — do it again babe
 - try to let salt and hope in.
 - don't smush words: "not now that he (paul) knows"
 - sit after him
- scene 14:
 - Can't put best foot forward "no more drama"

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SUBJECT: Scene 10 rewrite

- today was pretty productive. I wasn't feeling the best, but he updated blocking that keeps the scene dynamic and also allows more of my face to be seen by the audience during my intense monologues and moments. We also kept playing with the exhausted monologue → I was told to keep playing with the confession of this information

- Sometimes I don't exactly understand Carolyn's notes. How do I play fighting a confession? while making the hope painful?

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

SUBJECT: Last Dress

- This genuinely felt great. I felt dropped in for almost the entire time and Carolyn says that I've taken my notes extremely well. I just need to keep pushing towards my objectives and need and continue trying to reflect my partner. Anna has different sides that we get to see — keeping her vulnerability but making sure we don't lose her badass vibes. She is sharp and the tension at the top holds when that part of her comes through. I want to earn all my moments and I want this story to land with every person in the audience. It's all about my scene partner, it's about reaching the back wall, it's about dropping in. I'm honestly so excited.