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Portraying the Role of Ezra Chater in Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*

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PORTRAYING THE ROLE OF EZRA CHATER IN TOM STOPPARD'S ARCADIA

PORTRAYING THE ROLE OF EZRA CHATER IN TOM STOPPARD'S ARCADIA

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the degree of
Master of Fine Arts in Drama

By

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Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre, 2008

December 2011
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ABSTRACT

In January of 2011 I began working on the role of Ezra Chater in Tom Stoppard's 1993 masterpiece Arcadia. The production was under the direction of Mavourneen Dwyer. After a month and a half of rehearsal we opened on February 25th, 2011, and began a run of performances that lasted until March 6th. Ezra Chater appears twice over the course of the play, first in Act 1 scene 1, then in Act 1 Scene III, and his character is integral to the mystery that connects the past and present scenes together. In this paper I will be detailing the process I took in rehearsing and performing the role.

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Abstract

In January of 2011 I began working on the role of Ezra Chater in Tom Stoppard's 1993 masterpiece Arcadia. The production was under the direction of Mavourneen Dwyer. After a month and a half of rehearsal we opened on February 25th, 2011, and began a run of performances that lasted until March 6th. Ezra Chater appears twice over the course of the play, first in Act 1 scene 1, then in Act 1 Scene III, and his character is integral to the mystery that connects the past and present scenes together. In this paper I will be detailing the process I took in rehearsing and performing the role.

Character Analysis

Chater is a small minded perpetually wounded man of minimal talent who desperately desires to gain approval from other people. He first appears onstage very close to the start of the play and does much to set the tone for the themes of sex, art, and cleverness throughout the rest of the play. He is also responsible for much of the comedy at the beginning of the play, as his scene has a bit broader of a comedic premise than the more sophisticated events that follow. Chater is a natural foil to Lord Byron. While both are poets who are known in the time period, Byron is a man of genius and daring who never actually appears in the play. Instead, it's Stoppard's little joke that the poet we actually meet in the flesh is Chater, a man who would not be worthy of a passing thought even from the most ardent researchers of the period. It is a tendency of Stoppard's that he often selects the forgettable passengers of history's ride and puts them in the forefront. It's a similar flipping of the spotlight to his 1966 play Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead. In the analogy of Arcadia, Byron might be Hamlet, and Chater and Septimus Hodge, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. This may seem like a tangential point, but it's

very instructive to an actor playing a character in a play like this, and especially Chater. We all see ourselves to a certain extent as Byrons surrounded by lesser people who aren't able to comprehend what we see as higher truths, and we desire to see history the same way. We assume that back in the 1800's Byron stood out instantly and obviously as a man worthy of greatness, but the truth is he was much of the time mixed in with the Chaters and Hodges. For every Byron, there are many Hodges, people with perhaps equivalent talent in many ways who never find the outlet to showcase the astonishing genius that Byron could tap into. For every Hodge, how many Chaters are there? These people with the passion and desire to succeed are totally unaware of their own massive limitations. They spend so much time trying to prove themselves in ways they cannot possibly effect that they constantly toe the line of the ridiculous. But these people are every bit as real and as much a part of life as the Byrons, and their hearts beat possibly even harder than most at the prospect of achieving their desires. Chater's heart certainly does, and that's what makes him so endearing a character to play and root for, despite his flaws.

In Tom Stoppard's Arcadia, even in his glorious Arcadia, death is ever present, hanging around to even the playing field at the end. Yet none of the characters are as aware of this as they should be, and Chater is certainly no exception. The characters waltz through life (many of them waltzing, literally, at the end of the play) with every intention of being able to control their destiny. Chater's very name suggests the foolishness and futility of his actions. Surely it is no accident that the name so closely resembles the word chatter, meaningless prattle, loud jabbering of no consequence. That is Chater in a nutshell. He preens, he poses, he prostrates, yet he cannot pierce the

shadow of death, and his own insignificance in it's face. However there is a glory in his effort, a humanity, and a hilarity..

The first step I took on my journey to creating Chater was, of course, to read the entire script from start to finish, to get a sense of the show's flow. I found that the early scenes that Chater was in were, tonally, the lightest of the entire play, and that the play got darker as it went on, especially in the second act, which Chater does not appear in at all. To my eyes, there's a definite reason why Chater's big scene comes so early in the play. As the play becomes darker, there's less room for such a broad, ridiculous peacock. He belongs in the idyllic part of Arcadia, before one realizes the death that is about to envelop it and him. Once he and Brice are shooed away from Sidley Park, the quiet, intimate dramas can come to sharper life. The play is nearly three hours in length, which is long by modern standards of playgoing, and the vast majority of the humor is very witty. Having Chater appear so early is in my eyes an attempt by Stoppard to get the audience clued to the fact that the show is meant to be enjoyed as a comedy in many respects. Afterwards, I reread the play in order to precisely map out what is said about the character by the author, the other characters in the world of the play, and the character himself.

What Stoppard says about him: He is described by Stoppard to be a poet, aged 31. On his entrance, Stoppard claims 'the door is opened, somewhat violently.' Stoppard writes that Chater read his inscription in his book to Hodge in 'ringing tones'.

What other characters say about him: The first mention by another character about Chater comes within the first ten lines of the play. Thomasina then refers to him as "Our Mr. Chater," In our production the director and actors interpreted this to mean that Chater belonged to them in

the sense that an inside joke does, a lark for ridicule and mirth. This sets him up as a ridiculous figure before he even enters. This impression is fortified by two insults of Chater's new poem by Septimus. "He *believes* he has written a poem" and a reference to "it's...absurdities" (Stoppard 2.) Once Chater appears, Septimus says many things to his face in order to flatter him out of his course. I think we can't obviously take these quotes at face value as Septimus's actual perception of Chater, but we can't entirely throw this information out as useless either. They're very instructive in showing what's important to Chater (his values) and what he most wants to hear from other people. At first, Septimus calls Chater "my dear friend" (Stoppard 6.) This does not get Hodge anywhere, and in fact incites Chater further. Chater certainly does not want to be put on the same level as Septimus in any respect. So Septimus finds a different approach- flattering Chater's talent, stating "There are no more than two or three poets of the first rank now living" (Stoppard 7) and labeling Chater as one of them. He puts Chater on a par with Milton and above Robert Southey. He also senses in Chater an aggrieved nature, intuiting that Chater feels that the respect and reverence owed to him by his contemporaries is being withheld for unfair reasons. "My dear Chater, they judge a poet by the seating plan at Lord Holland's table" (Stoppard 7) Chater readily agrees to this, confirming how these values play highly into his life and his perception of those around him. Septimus promises him that his poem "will take the town" and "make your name perpetual" (Stoppard 8.) This opportunity is what finally gets Chater to relinquish his challenge, and changes his inner-life one hundred and eighty degrees.

On page 21, Hannah and Bernard discuss Chater. Bernard gives biographical information, stating that Chater was "born in Twickenham, Middlesex, 1778, author of two verse narratives, 'The Maid of Turkey', 1808, and 'The Couch of Eros', 1809." And they also mention that shortly after his death, he'd "been completely forgotten" (Stoppard 21.)

Septimus later tells Chater “you are an honest fellow with no more malice in you than poetry” (Stoppard 40) This is instructive in telling us that despite his repeated antagonism to Septimus, at no point should Chater be taken seriously enough to the extent that he becomes unsympathetic. However, later in the scene, Septimus loses his patience and lets out a tirade of exasperation. It’s always good to be in a scene with a character as literate as Septimus because the character’s analysis of others is very useful in bringing out the playwright’s image of each character. He says “Ovid would have stayed a lawyer and Virgil a farmer if they knew the bathos to which love would descend with your sportive satyrs and noodle nymphs” (Stoppard 42.) This gives us a great picture of the saccharine, ridiculous poetry that Chater writes.

In the later scenes Bernard says in his dissertation that “neither as a man or as a poet did Ezra Chater cut such a figure as to be habitually slandered or even mentioned in the press.” (Stoppard 56) This is further evidence of the actual distance between Chater and the greatness he so desperately desired and absurdly felt he deserved.

In describing the scene before the flight of Captain Brice and the Chaters from Sidley Park, Jellaby gives a small detail of Captain Brice and Chater’s activities during the night. He mentions they “were drinking cherry brandy. They had the footman to keep the fire up until 3 o’clock” (Stoppard 68) This small detail tells us two things: One, that Chater also enjoys carousing and being an irresponsible nuisance late at night, and that he and Brice have no respect for the staff and people who work under them, requiring the footman to work extra hours for their benefit.

At the end of the play, Chater’s demise is confirmed. Hannah states “that Ezra Chater of the Sidley Park connection is the same Chater who described a dwarf dahlia in Martinique in 1810 and died there, of a monkey bite” (Stoppard, 89) This is yet another color for Chater. That a

man who strove for greatness and attempted to cut such a romantic figure should find death in such a ludicrous and inauspicious way confirms even more what a ridiculous man he was, how comical his striving efforts turned out to be.

What Chater says about himself: During his first scene with Hodge he describes his relationship with his peers, towards whom he feels resentment for their lack of respect for his talent. “God knows one is little appreciated if one stands outside the coterie of placemen and hacks who surround Jeffrey and the Edinburgh...And I would very much like to know the name of the scoundrel who slandered my verse drama *The Maid of Turkey*” (Stoppard 7) This demonstrates how dearly Chater holds on to grudges and how important the views of literocracy of his time were to him. Chater clearly feels he has a lot to prove. Finding literary respect is his only possible path to gaining respect from those he cares about, as well as social mobility. He mentions that after a particularly scathing review, “When Mrs. Chater read that, she wept, sir, and would not give herself to me for a fortnight” (Stoppard 8.) This is an extra key to personify Chater’s failures as having a direct consequence. If he cannot succeed in his endeavors, his wife will never give him the affection and love he so desperately craves.

As far as Chater’s physicality was concerned, I wanted to give as much information to the audience about him as I could immediately. Because Chater’s mind is so active and he is so frequently pulled in different directions, I wanted him to have a fast twitch physical life that reflects the extreme changes in his thought process. Chater is very conscious of the impression he makes on the people in his immediate vicinity. He is very often posing for them, always wrangling his way into the most heroic positions so that his “audience” might see him in a stronger, more powerful light. A base movement structure for Chater would be to start in a romantic pose of the period, then to have him quickly scuttle about or change direction, then

indulge himself in another flattering pose. Chater is constantly performing for the other characters during the play, acting the part of the enraged masculine figure to Septimus, and the great intellectual poet to the Crooms. At first, I must admit, I wanted to make Chater flat out, flamboyantly homosexual. It would explain what I saw initially as lack of real concern for his wife. Also, Chater, Noakes, and Captain Brice make up what I saw as the trinity of clowns in the play, and I wanted us all to be different. Captain Brice has a blustery, mock-macho nature, and Thomas Hunter as Noakes had a stoicism that would make Buster Keaton crack a smile. Therefore I wanted a feminine, airy contrast to these two. It might, I reasoned at the time, also be humorous. For the blocking in this production, I enter unannounced from Stage Left and take a few steps in until I hit the table. Septimus acknowledges me before I say anything, but Maury is turned around talking to Thomasina at the time. I wanted to make sure he heard me coming, so I rush on very quickly as a man on a mission and make a quick pose with hands on my hips in stern disapproval, punctuated by a loud foot stomp as I land in place as still as a statue. This is a good way to establish Chater's physical pattern, how he feels about the characters in the scene, and if done right, might earn me a laugh before even speaking a word. After Septimus dismisses Thomasina, I stalk upstage right, showing Hodge I'm not afraid of his territory and staring out at the offending gazebo with a romantic and tragic air of a great man whose suffering is too much to bear. More on the table: One of the challenges of presenting any production of Arcadia is dealing physically with the table planted in the middle of the stage. And our table was massive. I (as Chater) approach the table as a bullfighter might approach a bull or a dancer might approach his partner- with finesse. The other props I must work with in the scene include an ink well, a pen and book of poetry to inscribe. Chater handles these objects with great care, these are his tools of creation. Another thing I developed during rehearsal was the idea that the big

Chater/Hodge scene was a seduction scene. This combined with how much Chater attempts to ingratiate himself into the Croom household encouraged me to get very close to my fellow actors onstage, as if closing in physical distance could narrow emotional distance. I found this choice working very much to my satisfaction, the intimacy between Ezra and Septimus adding a humorous level to the dialogue.

I also concentrated heavily on fine-tuning and adding specifics to Chater's relationships to different characters. As a supposed artist and intellectual, his status is a more interesting and fluctuating one. It's more complicated than one based entirely on wealth. Therefore there is a slight difference in how he'll approach different characters, whether he perceives them to be beneath him or above him socially.

One aspect that affected my interpretation of Chater's relationships in the play was the given qualities of the other actors and what they brought to their roles. For instance, Thomasina and Chater do not in the text interact directly despite having stage time together, and at first look, I assumed Chater would be too caught up in his social climbing and domestic squabbling in order to pay her much attention. But with Jordan Scott playing the part, Thomasina acquired an empathy that is not often found in the role. During the tense moments between stronger, somewhat hostile characters such as Captain Brice, Lady Croom, and Septimus, Jordan and I worked out a few moments of understanding between the two characters. Both are after all, powerless in this society, Thomasina due to her age and gender, and Chater due to lack of standing and his own stupidity.

The most important relationship to Chater during the course of the play is with Septimus Hodge, as the majority of Chater's interactions on stage are with him. No clues are given as to the extent of their relationship prior to the play, but I imagine that the best choice would be that

their interaction would be minimal. To start with, as a guest, Chater would instantly feel superior to Hodge, in terms of status and mental capacity. Because Hodge would offer Chater no leverage on his social climb, Chater feels no threat from him and dismisses him on sight. This, however, all proves to be erroneous, and all the more painful of an irony when Hodge jumps into Chater's "seat." Chater tries his best to keep the encounter with him as formal as possible, attempting to use his status in order to intimidate Septimus, referring to him frequently by his last name. I made a note to really hit "Hodge" in order to make him feel contemptible. However, the scene does not go in the direction that Chater has hoped for. Instead of the imagined fight scene, we have, in fact, a seduction scene, with Septimus using flattery and gain in order to conquer Chater in presumably the same way he earlier conquered Mrs. Chater. Chater also willingly takes the lower status of the two once he becomes aware of Septimus's connections and ability to make or break him. It is an immediate series of reversals from Chater's earlier expectations of how the scene might go. Then, obviously, once Hodge's lies are revealed to him, Chater goes back to feeling contempt for the man who has burned him in so many different ways.

Chater puts much stock in pleasing the Crooms. As "a respected guest of Sidley Park" (Stoppard 9,) he aims to keep his newly found status and build upon it, so he is highly deferential to the family. Captain Brice pretends at least to humor him, and Chater is attracted to his strength. Chater would probably refer to Brice as his best friend, an irony all the sadder considering what he's actually being used for. Lady Croom is highly intimidating to him, but he follows her around fawning on her in an attempt to soften her.

Another relationship that is of great importance is one that is never seen on the stage, and that is his relationship with Charity, his wife. She is an embodiment of what he stands to gain

through success, and how painful and lasting his failure would be. Although Mrs. Chater is not in the play, I have a perfect image in my mind of someone who would make a great Mrs. Chater- a young lady I was in a relationship with recently who also had a hard time with fidelity. It's a good thing when stuff like this happens to actors. You never know when it will come in handy!

I created a sort of character history for Chater. Bernard states in Act 1, Scene II that Chater was "born in Twickenham, Middlesex, 1778, author of two verse narratives, 'The Maid of Turkey', 1808, and 'The Couch of Eros', 1809. That's the extent of the biographical information, but it is relatively generous information as opposed to the information we get concerning many of the other characters. We know of course, that Chater is married to a woman named Charity, and that the marriage is not in supremely healthy shape at the time of the play. We know that he is ultimately killed by, of all things, a monkey bite. We know that Chater is ridiculed by his peers, disrespected by essentially everyone in the Croom household, and of little or no historical value to future historians of the period on his own merits. Other than that, I thought it more instructive and helpful to paint an overall picture and perspective rather than fill in more specific yet irrelevant details. I created a general pattern and history of messing up, of disappointment, of not living up to others expectations. My Chater had full knowledge of the people who were unsatisfied with him in life, his parents, his trophy wife, even people in the street who instantly saw through him as an absurd chump. This would provide a major chip to Chater's shoulder, and I used a few exercises to explore what it would mean to be hit with disaster and embarrassment every time one attempted to improve their situation. This would be a great moment-before well to draw from immediately preceding my violent first entrance in the show.

The initial event of the play is the seduction of Chater's wife by Septimus. This obviously has an effect on Chater, and he strenuously objects to this turn of events, finding it another

personal blow to him as a man. This also leads to Chater's objectives in both of his scenes. In the first scene, his objective is to regain his honor by terrifying Septimus. This objective changes when Septimus begins to praise him and reveals that he is reviewing Chater's book. Chater's objective becomes to ingratiate himself with Septimus in order to gain a favorable review. In the second scene Chater has realized that Hodge has been toying with him. An unimaginative man, he returns to his first objective, that of attempting to terrify Hodge. Both attempts are unsuccessful.

Journal

One of the first steps that I took in my process was before I was even cast. Knowing that there was a strong chance that I could be in Arcadia, I took in a performance of my first Tom Stoppard play, The Real Thing. This was a very well done production put on by the Paragon Theatre in Colorado. There were two very important things I gained from the show that would be helpful in performing Stoppard's works. The first is that language is very important. One must show fidelity to the text and really have it under their skin, because all of Stoppard's characters are smart in their own way, and all have their own genius with language. The second thing is that comedy will carry a good actor through even the densest passages of the playwright's work.

After my first audition for the role of Chater, I thought about how mediocre and incomplete my reading had been. I don't remember who read with me as Septimus, but I was a bit caught off-guard by the amount of precision necessary for this scene. It is rapid fire, and I felt exhausted from the quickness and dexterity required to leap back and forth between playing accuser and the man underneath who wants so badly to believe the lie. One of the biggest lines I would have to toe in order to bring this character to life would be to balance his gullibility so as to make him funny and yet still, at the same time, believable. This was because the character

very often turns, even from one line to the very next, from one idea to the direct opposite idea in an instant. He has a mind constantly checking himself in order to see if he is being made a fool of. He also, at his very core, is paramountly concerned with increasing his credibility in the eyes of others, and this more than any other trait proves to be his downfall. One of my biggest blocks throughout the beginning of my process was my initial judging of Chater, seeing him as a simple comic fop meant merely to be ridiculed by Septimus and the audience, and not developing him as fully as I could have for a great deal of the process.

Due to weather, my flight to Fayetteville was cancelled and I was unable to attend the first rehearsal on January 11th. On the 12th I finally made it into town and got ready to work. We would be focusing the next three days on the text in tablework, reading the play multiple times. Tom Stoppard's plays are all extraordinarily dense and *Arcadia* is certainly no exception. The breadth of knowledge and wit required to comprehend his intellectual dialogue concerning such disparate elements as architecture, classical allusions and romantic love far outweighs my sophistication and, at times, attention span. I was quick to write out the references made in scenes with my character in order to bookmark them for later investigation. These include Robert Southey and his *Thalaba and Madoc*, Jeffrey and the Edinburgh Review, Walter Scott, Horace Walpole, English Bards and Scotch Reviewers, and The Piccadilly Recreation. The other major hurdle to us aged twenty-something American actors attempting this work is the dialect. The play is set in Derbyshire, England, and especially the actors portraying upper class characters in scenes set in 1809 must work to create RP accents that are true to the time period and easily comprehensible to a modern American's ear. Luckily for me, I've had experience with this accent in both classroom and in performance, and thus came in with a British accent that was very nearly unembarrassing to start with. Words I've had trouble with that are in the text:

brought, author, Horace Walpole, command, and insult. “Insult” was the major one I had trouble with, frequently neglecting to say it correctly. To be said properly in this role, it must be rhymed with “cut.”

January 18th: Today was the first day of blocking for Arcadia. They ran through the Thomasina/Septimus stuff before I got there. Maury and I got to play around a lot with blocking. I really enjoy working with these folks and this material. It’s challenging certainly. Playing Chater as flamboyantly homosexual is a lot of fun. It helps me make a lot of physical choices and move with more freedom, and it’s out of character for me (possibly.) We’ll see how long I’m allowed to continue pursuing this choice. I’m still adjusting and not hitting my turns fast enough from accuser to fawner. I also have to be very specific in calibrating whether or not Chater chooses to believe him from line to line. The table is also a hindrance. It’s very big, and hard to get around. The scene that follows seems a little slow right now (once it’s more than me and Maury onstage). Having a Captain Brice might help with a few things. My favorite line is “*The Castle of Otranto*, my lady is by Horace Walpole.” Chater says it to Lady Croom. It’s such an unimportant point, but Chater thinks showing off his expertise will win points with the Crooms, so he will enjoy having what he considers power, at least temporarily. I just have to say the line without cracking up, a bit of a challenge at this juncture.

January 24th: Today we blocked my other scene in the play. I don’t think that, as written, it works quite as well as the first. This is easily the most farcical section of the play and our blocking reflects that, with Maury on one side, me on the other, and whoever will be playing Captain Brice in the middle, in absurdly close quarters. Chater’s a pretty big loser. I want to start him off very strong in his first scene, enough so that the audience can perceive him as a threat initially. By the time this last scene ends, he’s sort of a cartoon fop with a strong cowardly

streak, very dependent on the stronger people surrounding him. Everyone in the play, and probably everyone in Chater's world, has more power and a stronger will than he does. I like his gentleness but this is a different man from myself.

January 31st: We had our first run off-book of Act I today, very fun. Arcadia is so very dense. Another interesting factor about this play is that with the two time periods, it's like there's two casts, or maybe more accurately, two teams putting on two different plays that are very tonally different. My favorite part of doing the play at present is throwing stuff at Maury, who plays the tutor Septimus. He's very game to try new things and Mavourneen as well is content to let us try them out. I think the combination of sex, violence, and comedy inherent in this production makes for fun rehearsing. Because we veer back and forth from dear friends to enemies so frequently, there are many different actions to try out on each other. We are constantly playing, trying out the moment that's most fun to intimidate, to seduce, to discover. I'm taking a bit of a break from the show though. I'll only have one rehearsal in the next 12 days as they start working on Act 2 without me, so we'll see what comes back with me and what changes after that.

February 13th: Today Mavourneen nixed my homosexual interpretation. I will admit that it's just possible I was going too far in this vein. We start tech in a few days, and I'm a little scared to so suddenly change what I've been doing for the past month. We played a few exercises to help me out of the patterns I had developed that will be discarded. At first we improvised the scene (I worked with Jared, who's playing Bernard, since Maury wasn't there.) This led to a far more contemporary realistic approach, and as I was encouraged to drop the accent for the sake of the game, my natural New York came out as well as a lot of salty language that was amusing because of how dramatically different it is. I wasn't enamored with this as I

feel Chater and myself have entirely different values, but it was important that I try to bridge the two interpretations in some way to give the scene at least a little bit of emotional heft for myself. After that, we tried a slightly different game where Mavourneen asked me to revert back to a child-like state, a more insecure, emotionally younger and rawer Josh. We had tried this exercise a few times in her Voice and Speech class, and I feel it is quite beneficial, especially for scenes where men must express a certain amount of vulnerability. We'll see where I can take this for the next two weeks.

February 23rd: Today we brought in all the elements of the show. The 1809 scenes are helped immeasurably by the addition of costumes, I feel like a strutting peacock in my ensemble. The glasses I wear gives me an added air of intellectual snobbery that I quite enjoy. Also the boots give me a little bit more height to tower over Maury and Will. I'm not used to being the tall guy in the scene, and it's even more humorous, given how frightened Chater is of the other two characters. I'll have to start hanging around during the second act for curtain call. They've been very good about dismissing me during the rehearsal process. We'll see how the audience likes the show. I'm looking forward to it.

March 6th: Tonight we closed Arcadia and struck the set... which was pretty much just a massive table. The experience of performing the play has been quite thrilling. Some nights we won them over better than others. I felt very good about my contribution. I wanted to create lots of laughs in Chater's first scene with Septimus to start the ball rolling on the comedy. That is what I consider the most important responsibility of any actor playing Chater. The student nights were my favorites. At one performance it was a Jerry Springer Show type atmosphere, with students letting out audible groans of shocked delight when Maury revealed his infidelity to me, as if he had "cracked on me" in the playground. It was a great moment of bridging the gap

between the cultures and time periods. I'll miss Ezra. He is a very earnest, heartfelt character, very fun to play. I can't think of anything I would have done differently. I saw the David Leveaux production in New York in late March, and David Turner's Chater was very different to mine. It was quite a low key and subdued performance, and failed to create much comedy. Indeed, to me, it seems the rest of the show was thrown off and never quite got off the ground comedically, which is so important to do in a Stoppard play. If I were to be cast in the role of Chater again, I would take the basic principles that I developed in this process and see how they worked when applied to a different production. In general, I was very satisfied with my performance and the overall production of Arcadia. The interplay, the inner-life, physical life, and the arc of the scene all went very well. I thought the scenes were played very well and I immensely enjoyed performing them.

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