5-2015

An Actor's Freedom

James Taylor Odom

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

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An Actor’s Freedom
An Actor’s Freedom

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

by

James Taylor Odom
Brenau University
Bachelor of Arts in Theatre 2012

May 2015
University of Arkansas

This thesis is approved for recommendation to the Graduate Council.

__________________________________
Jenny McKnight, M.F.A.
Thesis Director

__________________________________  __________________________________
Amy Herzberg, M.F.A.            Michael Landman, M.F.A.
Committee Member                Committee Member
ABSTRACT

This thesis is an exploration and reflection on the discovery of an actor’s freedom following an intense, three year study of the craft. It contains my statement of artistry, documentation of my thesis project and performance, as well as my future professional development materials.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to:

Amy Herzberg, for helping me discover the courage to access and reveal my heart.

Michael Landman, for helping me discover my body’s relationship to heart, space, objects, and others.

Kate Frank, for providing me with methods that allow me the release of unwanted physical tension.

Mavourneen Dwyer, for nurturing my voice through breath and text, to discover its freedom.

Bob Ford, for guiding me through Meisner where I discovered the freedom in honesty.

Gail Leftwich, for coaching me through styles of dance, where I discovered the freedom to make dance my own.

Jenny McKnight, for helping me to discover the freedom of living on camera.

TheatreSquared, for being an artistic home, where I explored the freedom of professional experience.

Jim Hammond, for being my life-long coach of artistry and dear friend.

My family, for their encouragement, investment, and love.

Stefanie, for always seeing and expecting excellence in me, where I have often doubted it.
DEDICATION

This is dedicated to:

My father: An entertainer of such magnitude. Thank you for the gift of laughter, song, and lyric. You were my biggest fan and sometimes my biggest foe. We celebrated through the cheers and found forgiveness through the tears. I remember some of your very last words, “I’m proud of you and I love you.” Let these words in here be an echo back to you: my dad, the dreamer.
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STATEMENT OF ARTISTRY

The truth will set you free (John 8:32). It’s interesting that this text that the world has heard time and time again, could be a source of inspiration as if it were just spoken to me for the first time. Truth brings freedom to those who so desperately need it. As an artist I have always struggled to be free of myself, my best and worst critic. I have been desperate for that abandonment. These last 3 years have been a journey and discovery of freedom through truth and an understanding of my heart, body, and voice.

I have been performing in front of people my whole life. When I was young I performed for my family and anyone that I encountered. I would put on voices, play Sherlock Holmes, or run around the house believing I was in some other circumstance. I began acting on stage when I was 14 and I’ve never stopped. All the while, I never realized that I was disguising myself. I became void of my own person, to put on something else.

In college I became familiar with the saying “Acting is living truthfully under imaginary circumstances.” I was aware of this definition but I didn’t grasp what it meant for me. It wasn’t until I met Amy Herzberg that I heard that “without the use of your heart, you’ll be a heartless character.” The idea of using my heart seemed so antithetical to everything I thought I knew about acting. I always heard acting was “disappearing into the character” or “to wear the mask of another.” So I asked myself, if acting is living truthfully under imaginary circumstances, is masking myself honest? It took exploration in scene work to answer that question. I discovered that using my own heart, and revealing the biggest truth about me in my work was a recipe for successful acting. The access of my heart made me feel alive and free in a way that I had never experienced before. I could be confident about my work because my job was being done. I’m
telling the truth. The only truth I can tell, is the truth I know. Here’s where it becomes tricky though: “Acting is living truthfully under imaginary circumstances.” I can’t just reveal the truth of James. It’s the truth of me in someone else’s experience. I discovered I had to find what was true for me and make it compatible for the character I was playing.

As soon as I understood that the reveal of my heart was what I must do as an actor, I became so unsure of what to do with my body. I was so afraid that this choice or that choice of movement might not be telling the truth. Can I have a large, expansive physicality and it be honest? So for a while my choices were small and close to the vest and I became frustrated. In discovering freedom through the truth of my heart, my body became entrapped in a state of boring and weak physicality. I had no confidence to explore the space, objects in the room, and the other people within the scene. It wasn’t until Michael Landman allowed me to see that there is truth to both large movement and small movement as well as fast tempos and slow tempos. There is truth in that as long as it is born out of the need of the character. There is nothing too much or too little, as long as it is in line with what the character wants. Viewpoints is a technique of acting in movement that Michael Landman taught as a course where I could explore the vast world of movement and gesture. It is there that I was able to comprehend the freedom of movement and discover the strength that it gives an actor on stage.

The voice is one of the hardest parts of acting for me. I love to color my voice with style, character and description. The problem is that I am in control of my voice and it’s unable to be free like my heart and body. When I am in control of it, I am usually unable to give the truth. I indicate and describe instead of living. That’s the other key to the definition: “Acting is living truthfully under imaginary circumstances.” How do I live? Well it involves the freedom of heart and body as well as voice. If my heart is enough for the character, then surely my voice is more
than enough for the character. There lies the discovery of the power of the actor’s voice. His or her own voice is powerful when it is released and there are no holds and the actor is out of control.

It’s interesting to take these things apart to look at heart, body and voice. With each one, I can assess my growth and discovery of freedom. However, in the end, the last truth is that they all are reciprocal. What that means is that one informs the other. When I free my voice, my heart becomes free. When I free my heart, my body becomes free. When I am free on stage, I am not worried about my best or worst critic. I am living truthfully and there is nothing to worry about. I can now enter the professional world with complete abandon and not second guess my work. I will always strive to uphold the power of freedom as an actor and encourage other actors that their heart, voice and body is more than enough.
KIN PRODUCTION PROGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE PATRONS

SUPER ANGELS: Cherie and Susan Hall, Barbara Shadden, Trice Theatre

ANGELS: ---------------------------------- Allie & Terry Johnson


FRIENDS: ---------------------------------- Dick Bennett, Jo Bennett, Eugene Donnors, Brandon James and Elizabeth Barnes Kerker, Sylvia King, Barbara Moore, Denise Neurint, Polly Rea, Nadine Purvis Schmidt, Anne Scoggs, Frank and Sara Sharp, Carolyn & Murray Smart, Charlotte Taylor and Tim Hudson, Bobbie Nell Templeton

For more information on how to become a patron of the Department of Theatre, please call (479) 575-9844.

Coming Soon to the University of Arkansas...

Talking Pictures: By Horton Foote November 20th-23rd Studio 404 at Kimpel Hall

The Mountaintop: By Katori Hall January 20th-February 3rd Studio 404 at Kimpel Hall

The Foreigner: By Larry Shue February 20th-March 1st University Theatre

The University of Arkansas
Department of Theatre
Proudly Presents

Kin
By Bathsheba Doran

Directed by
Amy Herzberg

Scenic Design
Shawn D. Irish

Costume Design
Cayla Greer

Lighting Design
Jacob Hofer

Projection Design
Kiah Kayser

Program Courtesy of UARK THEATRE
Meet the Cast

Dear University Theatre Patron,

First of all, welcome to the University Theatre's second production of the 2014-15 main stage season under the newly named Department of Theatre! You may be wondering why we decided to change the name from Department of Drama to the Department of Theatre. The short answer is quite simple. We are a department made up of directors and artists who “make theatre.” The training our students receive is rooted in the principles and techniques one needs to know in order to produce a wide range of high quality, imaginative, and engaging theatre. We believe that the subtitle name change more clearly reflects who we are and what we do.

2014-15 is an exciting year for us as we continue to make changes in an effort to grow our season subscriptions and patron list as well as make it easier for you to find us on campus. I hope you saw the “Sondheim Brand” sign guiding you to our theatre – we know many of you know your way around, but some of you may be attending for the first time and we wanted you to feel welcome as you maneuver through our beautiful campus. We will also be using them for our Studio Series productions guiding you up from the Haunton Garage, and into Kinsey Hall where our studio theatre is located on the 4th floor. We also invite each of you to stop and have your picture taken in front of our “Stop & Repeat” wall located in the lobby of the University Theatre. We would love for you to share it on your favorite social media to let everyone know you were at the University Theatre.

I am so pleased to report that between 2013 and 2014, the number of patrons who support University Theatre has grown by 95% with an increase in giving by 85%. Not only will your contribution continue to allow us to produce theatre at the highest level, it will also give our students the opportunity to experience a range of different training using state-of-the-art technology. In an ever changing technological world, it’s more important than ever to give the students at the University of Arkansas a leg up on the competition by providing outstanding training – your generous gift helps to make that a reality for us. Although we do receive state funding that supports some of our production costs, by no means does that cover the expenses associated with providing the highest caliber training possible.

As chair of this fine department, it is my desire that each of you will become a member of our theatre “family” by subscribing to either our Main Stage Series here at the University Theatre, or our Studio Series in Kinsey Hall Studio 454. Both will provide you an outstanding live theatre experience at an incredible value; I would also like you to consider supporting our exceptionally talented students by contributing to our University Theatre Patron Program. By becoming a Friend ($50-$99) Patron ($100-$199), Grand Patron ($200-$499), Angel ($500-$999) or Super Angel ($1000+)

I hope you enjoy this evening’s (or afternoon’s) performance of 42.

Brett

Program Courtesy of UARK THEATRE
### Staff for the Production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage Manager</td>
<td>Danielle Wahl</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asst. Stage Managers</td>
<td>Celeste Rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Director</td>
<td>Weston Wilkinson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Makeup Designer</td>
<td>Casey Greer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sound Designer</td>
<td>Kaitlyn French</td>
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<tr>
<td>Light Chaperogist</td>
<td>Adam Rose</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Coordinator</td>
<td>Melissa Chang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department Manager</td>
<td>Michael McKnight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sound Board Operator</td>
<td>Mattie Roudman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Crew</td>
<td>Jeremy Green</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage Clerk</td>
<td>Emily Collins</td>
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### CAST

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<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>Lupe Campos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helena</td>
<td>Stephanie Signault</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sean</td>
<td>Jason Shapman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel</td>
<td>Priscilla White</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luke</td>
<td>Laura Shapman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ray</td>
<td>Britney Walker-Morrone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon</td>
<td>James Odom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>Bill Rogers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Max</td>
<td>Robert Hart</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gideon</td>
<td>Grant Hockenbrough</td>
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### Special Thanks To...

Bob Ford, Kathy Logelin, Megan Monaghan Rives, Kholoud Sawaf

### Staff for the Department of Theatre

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<tr>
<td>Chair of Theatre</td>
<td>Michael R. Khil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice Chair of Theatre</td>
<td>Patricia J. Martin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Director</td>
<td>Weston Wilkinson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Costume Shop Manager</td>
<td>Valerie Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Theatre Administrator</td>
<td>Jeanette Lee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theatre Business Manager</td>
<td>Ashley Collins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publicity Manager</td>
<td>Stephanie Fazi-Mury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Manager</td>
<td>Brittany Taylor</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The play is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service Inc., New York.

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Program Courtesy of UARK THEATRE

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"What can I say? God help me, what can I say? Silence will stifle me..."

-Sophocles, Electra

"I saw a crow running about with a stone. I fancied long and investigated their case in order that I may find the clue to what it was they had in common. When amazed and bewildered I approached them and asked if both of them were sane..."

-Ruskin, Spiritual Couplings

"A man who calls his Aryan or a Jew or does not do to save them from slavery. They all have food in their own homes. When we gather together in the moonlit village, it is not because of the moon. Every man can see it in his own compound. We come together because it is good for Aryan to do so."

-Christ Aske, Things Fall Apart

Kin will be performed in Two Acts, with one ten minute Intermission.

The video taping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited. As a courtesy to other patrons, PLEASE TURN OFF CELLPHONES AND OTHER DEVICES during the performance.
WHO’S WHO IN THE PRODUCTION

Amy Harding (Director) is a cofounder of TheatreSquared (TS) and directs
MPA/BA acting programs at U of A. Acting credits include work at La Jolla Playhouse, George Street Playhouse, Valdosta State University, New Harmony Project (Indiana), New York Theatre Workshop, Theatre J (Washington DC), Cambridge University, and English Theatre Berlin (Germany). For TheatreSquared, she has directed Good People, One Man, Two Guvnors, Red Dog, The Last Five Years, Moonlight and Magnolias and Next to Normal. She appeared in T2’s world premiere of My Father’s War, a play about her father’s experiences in WWII, and is a consultant for the Arkansas New Play Festival. She has directed over 20 productions for the U of A, including most recently, A Streetcar Named Desire. She has received numerous honors for her work, including the Kennedy Center’s ACT- National Acting Teacher Fellowship (2005), U of A’s Charles and Nadine Baun Teaching Award (2005), Fulbright College Master Teacher Award (2012) and the Governor’s Arts Award (2013). Her former students regularly perform on and off Broadway, in major regional theatres, and in film and television. She holds an MFA in Acting from CalArts and directs with additional training from American Conservatory Theatre and the Actors Studio Center in New York.

Stephanie Sigmon (Ariel) is a 3rd year MFA Actor from Atlanta, Georgia. She received her BA in Theatre Arts from Pennsylvania College in New York. She has had recent credits include Harrison and Company (Sarah in Time Stands Still), While in Florence andDevice in T2’s A Streetcar Named Desire. This past summer, Stephanie appeared in the Arkansas New Play Festival as Camille in Diplomacy in April, she will be playing Lubov in the University Theatre’s production of The Cherry Orchard. Following her graduation in May, Stephanie will be moving to LA to pursue her acting career.

GETTING TO KNOW...

Britney Walker-Merritt: Kay

Who is Britney Walker-Merritt?

I am a native of Houston, Texas. I was born and raised in Houston, Texas. I have a baby brother who is now a freshman in college. I received my BA in Dance/Theatre/Film from Oral Roberts University, and I am currently a second-year MFA in Acting candidate. Something that I did in my free time was write poetry. I am a spoken word poet, and this is something that I want to pursue as well as acting. A fun fact about me is that I have been a camp counselor for the last three summers. I hope to continue the tradition. I have a heart for kids and this is an excellent way for me to show my love for them when I am free during the summer.

What made you decide to pursue an MFA in Acting?

I was 18 years old, and I had the opportunity to see "The Lion King." I remember being absolutely amazed by the performance and thinking that I would love to do what the actors were doing. Unfortunately, I did not fully pursue acting until I received my first role as Robin in "What's Up?" when I was a sophomore in high school. I remember thinking that this is what I want to do with my life.

Why did you choose the University of Arkansas?

I chose the U of A because my two favorite professors (Courtney Sanders and Chris Crawford) received their training here. I love what they taught me at Ole Miss and decided that I wanted to get the same training as them.

What is your favorite thing about this role? What is the most challenging?

My favorite thing about this role is that I get to play Kay, the most loving and joyful woman I have ever played. I love how she is just so full of life. I would love to be friends with a woman like Kay. The most challenging thing about her role is that it is so close to home for me. During this intense process, my Aunt passed away from cancer, which has also been. It is a challenge because it forces me to separate my personal life from my theatre life. I am grateful that I am surrounded by such a great cast and crew that keep me laughing.

If you could play any role in the world, what would that be and why?

If I could play any role in the world, I would love to be either in "Hamilton," but I have always been interested in the character of the character. I think it would be a challenging role for me and I would love to take on this role.

What do you plan to do after you graduate from U of A?

After I receive my MFA in Acting, I plan to move back to Houston and pursue Acting and spoken word poetry. I would love to teach Acting at a community college level. Hopefully, I believe in giving back what I have learned.

If you had to give one piece of advice to undergraduates applying to pursue an MFA, what would it be?

I would recommend that you do research on which schools are interested in you. Every program is different and has different techniques that they use. You need to find the school that best suits you. Also, make sure that you do everything possible to visit the school, see what environment you will be in and the people you would be working with. Ask yourself if you would like to be in this environment. You need to choose the right school for you. I can say that the U of A was the right fit for me.

Program courtesy of UARK THEATRE
GETTING TO KNOW...

Cayla Greer: Costume Designer

Who is Cayla Greer?
I grew up in the tiny town of Wiltonga, Oklahoma. My sister Carla named me after Cayla on Days of Our Lives. This is my third year at the University of Arkansas as an MFA Candidate for Costume Design and Technology.

What made you want to do costume design?
I love costume design because there is always something new to learn or do.

What do you wish people knew/understood about costume design?
It's more about designing and discovering a whole person rather than just picking clothes.

If you could design any show, what would it be and why?
So far I've had great experiences on every show I've been able to work on, they always become my favorite. Honestly, I would love to design anything.

What do you plan to do after you receive your MFA?
I'm getting married in June! And then I plan to work as a freelance costume designer anywhere I have the opportunity.

If you were not working in costume design, what would you want to do?
In another life, I'd have loved to be an Olympic gymnast. In real life, there is nothing else I'd rather be doing.

---

WHO'S WHO IN THE PRODUCTION

Grant Hookenbruch (Gideon) is a Senior Theatre Major from Dallas, Texas. Previous University credits include Kevin in IV, 5 is for Viola, Duke Pedrollo/Jacques de Boys in As You Like It, Daniel in Tribe, Aust. Stage Manager for 33 Variations and Random House, and Spotlight Operator for Spring Awakening. He also directed Nothing is the End of the World for Broken Branch Theatre Company this past summer. Grant plans to pursue a career in Acting, Directing and Stage Management regionally before attending Graduate School.

James Taylor Olson (Simon) is a 5th year MFA Actor from Lawrenceville, GA. He holds a BA in Theatre from Colgate University. Previous credits include Charlie, Merlow in the Shires to Compete, Hanschen in Spring Awakening, Larry in Company, and Nothing’s the End of the World at the University of Chicago. He plans to attend a graduate acting program to pursue a career in acting.

Bill Rogers (Adonis) is a 3rd year MFA Acting Candidate originally from Memphis, TN. Credits include TheatreSquared productions of Sons of Anarchy, The Prophet (Blithe) and Sundown Town (Scratch) as well as internships with Van Gogh (Ivanov) as part of T2’s 2013 Arkansas New Play Festival. Uark Theatre credits include Transitions (Tinman Jack), She Stoops to Conquer (John Ford/Charles) and Time Stands Still (Richard). After graduation, Bill hopes to pursue a career as an actor as well as teach and/or work at a performing arts center.

Laura Shalutis (Cindy) is a 5th year MFA Acting Candidate from Elgin, IL, she holds a B.A. in English from the University of Illinois and has studied acting at various studios in Chicago. Previous roles include The Full of the House, Me in Arkansas (Amboy), The New Now (Artistic Laboratory Theatre), Art Out Loud: Gertrude Stein & Passion at the Lapham Agile (Arkansas Stage), Eliza Doolittle in My Fair Lady, and The Woman in Black. Previous roles include The Man in the Moon (Guthrie Theatre), The Three Sisters (Arts Club Theatre), and The Importance of Being Earnest (Northwest Screening). She has appeared in the following roles: Gertie, 33 Variations, A Midsummer Night’s Dream (photography) at the University of Illinois. Laura has appeared in the following roles: Gertie, 33 Variations, A Midsummer Night’s Dream (photography) at the University of Illinois. Laura has appeared in the following roles: Gertie, 33 Variations, A Midsummer Night’s Dream (photography) at the University of Illinois. Laura has appeared in the following roles: Gertie, 33 Variations, A Midsummer Night’s Dream (photography) at the University of Illinois. Laura has appeared in the following roles: Gertie, 33 Variations, A Midsummer Night’s Dream (photography) at the University of Illinois.
WHO'S WHO IN THE PRODUCTION

Jennifer M. Spelman (Grom) is a 3rd year MFA Acting Candidate from Alexandria, Virginia. She holds a BA in Fine Arts with a Minor in Anthropology from USC. Jennifer's credits include work with ThawTeaSquare, Artistic Laboratory Theatre, Arkansas New Play Festival (2013), The Warehouse Theatre, Tactus Theatre, The Lost Colony, South Carolina Children's Theatre, and The Distraction Globe. Jennifer's credits include Spring Awakening, Shostakovich in Contact, SS Vonstrons, Hamlet and Decafur, and A Doll's House.

Brittany Walker-Morillo (Kay) is a native of Houston, Texas. She received a BA in Drama/TV/Film from Oral Roberts University and a 2nd Year MFA Acting. One of her favorite roles was Auntie Mame in ThawTeaSquare. Brittany's credits include Karen in Poor Relations, Fezzi in The Black Tie, Jack in Bound by Blood, and The Tempest, and the Landlord in Lucky Stiff. This spring she will be performing the role of Cassandra in The House of Blue Leaves and the Landlord in Lucky Stiff. This spring she will be performing the role of Cassandra in The House of Blue Leaves and the Landlord in Lucky Stiff.

Priscilla White (Machi) is a Senior Theatre Major from Bentonville, AR. She has appeared on stage as Edith in Little Women and can be seen later this year as Donna/Juliet in The Cherry Orchard. She has appeared on stage as Edith in Little Women and can be seen later this year as Donna/Juliet in The Cherry Orchard. Priscilla's stage credits include Karen in Poor Relations, Fezzi in The Black Tie, Jack in Bound by Blood, and The Tempest, and the Landlord in Lucky Stiff. This spring she will be performing the role of Cassandra in The House of Blue Leaves and the Landlord in Lucky Stiff. This spring she will be performing the role of Cassandra in The House of Blue Leaves and the Landlord in Lucky Stiff. This spring she will be performing the role of Cassandra in The House of Blue Leaves and the Landlord in Lucky Stiff.

Caylee Green (Costume Designer) is a 3rd year MFA Costume Candiate in Costume Design and Technology from University of Kentucky. Previously, Caylee's design credits include Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and The Lady's Man (in a role created by MFA). After graduation, she plans to move to Nashville to pursue theatre and music simultaneously.

Kiah Kaper (Projection Designer) is a 3rd year MFA Costume Candidate from Young America, MN. She holds a B.A. in Theatre from Iowa State University. Previously, Kiah's design credits include Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and The Lady's Man (in a role created by MFA). After graduation, she plans to move to Nashville to pursue theatre and music simultaneously.

Jacoby Hafer (Lighting Designer) is a 3rd year MFA Lighting Design Candidate from Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He holds a B.S. in Theatre from South Dakota State University. He has served as Lighting Designer at SDSU and was the Lighting Designer at Prairie Repertory Theatre for the past six summers. He previously worked lighting for The Host at the University of Arkansas. In the future, he plans to move to Chicago or Minneapolis and pursue a professional career in Lighting Design.

Keeler Pack (Sound Designer) is a Junior Theatre major from Trumann, AR. Kim marks his Sound Design debut. His work can also be heard in Talking Pictures later this semester. Previous credits include Fair Lady/Prince in Romeo and Juliet (The Oracle Shakespeare Company), Jesus in Goodbye, Okla! in Spring Awakening, Roger in Shostakovich and Solidier/Thane in Macbeth (U of A). After graduation, he plans to move to Nashville to pursue theatre and music simultaneously.

Dandee Walsh (Stage Manager) has called Fayetteville home for the past four years. She is a senior at the University of Arkansas and is currently studying to get her Bachelor's of Arts in Theatre. Her previous stage management credits include Into the Woods with New Threshold Theatre, The New Nine with Arts Laboratory Theatre, The Jungle Book with Tikka Theatre, and Assistant Stage Manager on Shostakovich in Contact. After graduation, she plans to find work at local theaters and someday moving to Chicago to pursue a stage management career.

Celeste Richard (Asst. Stage Manager) is a Junior Theatre Major from Monticello, Arkansas. Previous credits include Assistant Stage Manager for Spring Awakening, A Christmas Carol, and As You Like It. She is also a member of the Wibby Theatre, and was an assistant stage manager for Shostakovich in Contact. She is a Junior Theatre Major from Monticello, Arkansas. Previous credits include Assistant Stage Manager for Spring Awakening, A Christmas Carol, and As You Like It. She is also a member of the Wibby Theatre, and was an assistant stage manager for Shostakovich in Contact. She is a Junior Theatre Major from Monticello, Arkansas. Previous credits include Assistant Stage Manager for Spring Awakening, A Christmas Carol, and As You Like It. She is also a member of the Wibby Theatre, and was an assistant stage manager for Shostakovich in Contact. She is a Junior Theatre Major from Monticello, Arkansas. Previous credits include Assistant Stage Manager for Spring Awakening, A Christmas Carol, and As You Like It. She is also a member of the Wibby Theatre, and was an assistant stage manager for Shostakovich in Contact. She is a Junior Theatre Major from Monticello, Arkansas. Previous credits include Assistant Stage Manager for Spring Awakening, A Christmas Carol, and As You Like It. She is also a member of the Wibby Theatre, and was an assistant stage manager for Shostakovich in Contact. She is a Junior Theatre Major from Monticello, Arkansas. Previous credits include Assistant Stage Manager for Spring Awakening, A Christmas Carol, and As You Like It. She is also a member of the Wibby Theatre, and was an assistant stage manager for Shostakovich in Contact.

Emily Riggs (Asst. Stage Manager) is a Sophomore Theatre Major from St. Louis, MO. St. Louis theatre credits include Sherlock Holmes in The Magician's Nephew, Dead Man's Cafe and A Christmas Carol. She was recently in Warehouse Crew for Dead Man's Cafe and a Costume Designer for the upcoming production of The Magician's Nephew. She plans to attend graduate school and pursue a professional acting career.

Program courtesy of UARK THEATRE
KIN PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo Courtesy of UARK THEATRE

(Pictured from left, James Taylor Odom and Lupe Campos)
Photo Courtesy of UARK THEATRE

(Pictured from left, James Taylor Odom and Lupe Campos)
Photo Courtesy of UARK THEATRE

(Pictured above James Taylor Odom)
The University of Arkansas
Department of Theatre
Proudly Presents

The Foreigner
By Larry Shue

Directed by
Michael Landman

Scenic Design
Joseph B. Farley

Costume Design
Patricia J. Martin

Lighting Design
Jacquelyn R. Cox

Sound Design
Priscilla White

Program Courtesy of UARK THEATRE
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DIRECTOR’S NOTES

How I wish… playwright and actor Larry Slade might be alive today, continuing to share his inimitable comic gifts. Mr. Slade was only 39 years old when he died in a small plane crash in 1965, less than a year after The Frogman opened Off-Broadway. At that time his career was burgeoning, he was adapting The Frogman as a screenplay for Disney, and was cramming in his first Broadway role in The Mystery of Edwin Drood. While he didn’t get to perform on Broadway, in 1957 his play The Bard was produced offshore, where it ran for over a year. The Frogman continues to be immensely popular and is regularly produced by professional, university, and community theatres.

New York… the organization the village of our play is associated with, the Unitarian Church, had long ago disbanded. Unfortunately, this true group remains active in small forum throughout the United States, with its still-galvanized national headquarters here in Arkansas. Their benevolent intelligence reminds me of the world of one of our Founding Fathers, Benjamin Franklin, who said, “Being ignorant is not so much a shame, as being unwilling to learn.” Er, as Martin Luther King, Jr., stated, “Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than chronic ignorance and cruel untruths.

Michael Landman
Director

WHO’S WHO IN THE PRODUCTION

Michael Landman (Director) is an Associate Professor of Theatre and head of the UA

Production Program here at the University of Arkansas. He is the author of more than 30 publications, including articles in such journals as The Shakespeare Review, The American Drama, and Theatre Journal. His most recent book, Shakespeare and the Modern World, was published by Cambridge University Press.

Mary G. Crum (Stage Manager) is a 2006 graduate of the University of Arkansas with a BA in English and Theatre. She has worked extensively in theatre production and management, including productions of The Foreigner, The Glass Menagerie, and The Importance of Being Earnest. She is currently pursuing a Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Directing at the University of Missouri.

Robert Pfeiffer (Technical Director) is a 2007 graduate of the University of Arkansas with a BA in Theatre and a minor in Cinema Studies. He has worked on productions of The Importance of Being Earnest, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, and The Tempest. He is currently pursuing a Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Design at the University of Missouri.

Jane Smiley (Choral Director) is a 2006 graduate of the University of Arkansas with a BA in Music Education. She has directed choirs and ensembles at the University of Arkansas, The College of the Ozarks, and a high school in Missouri. She is currently pursuing a Master of Music Education at the University of Missouri.

Mary Crum (Costume Designer) is a 2006 graduate of the University of Arkansas with a BA in Theatre and a minor in English. She has worked on productions of The Importance of Being Earnest, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, and The Tempest. She is currently pursuing a Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Design at the University of Missouri.

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WHO’S WHO IN THE PRODUCTION

Community theatre productions, film credits include film in Improv and London House.

Some background information: This is the second time the play has been performed at the University of Arkansas. The first was in the fall of 2002. This production included

Program Courtesy of UARK THEATRE

John and Mary, who are in their late 50s. The play is set in a small town in the 1950s. The play follows the lives of John and Mary and their family over a period of several years. The story focuses on the challenges and joys of life in a small town during a time of significant social change in the United States.

John is a struggling farmer who is trying to make ends meet with the help of his wife Mary. Mary is a homemaker who supports her husband and children by working in the local textile mill. The couple has three children: two boys and a daughter.

As the play progresses, we see the effects of the great depression and the social changes of the 1950s on their lives. The family faces challenges such as poverty, illness, and the struggle to provide for their children. Despite these challenges, John and Mary remain determined to make a better life for their family.

The play concludes with the family reflecting on their lives and the impact of the events that have shaped them. They realize that the challenges they have faced have brought them closer together and have taught them valuable lessons about the importance of family and hard work.

The play is a touching and heartfelt portrayal of life in a small town during a time of significant social change. It is a reminder of the resilience and strength of the human spirit in the face of adversity.
GETTING TO KNOW...
Actor/Playwright Robert Flaherty Hart

Who is Robert Flaherty Hart?
I was born in Little Rock, AR, and grew up in the suburbs of Overland Park, KS. My undergraduate degree is in Theatre from Emporia State University. I worked for many years as a writer and editor – for a weekly newspaper, a parenting magazine, a non-profit child sponsorship organization, and ultimately a decorative communications for both Sprint and AT&T. Although I worked in community theater in the KC area for many years, I wasn’t until I was past the age of 40 that I decided to go back to school and pursue a career in the arts.

What made you decide to pursue not one, but two MFA degrees at the University of Arkansas?
I came to Fayetteville in 2010 to begin the MFA Acting program, which was a wonderful experience. I managed to take more elective outside the very challenging acting curriculum during those three years – a course in somatic movement. That led unexpectedly to my being invited to join the MFA Playwriting program, which has been an extraordinary adventure as well.

What is your favorite show that you have ever worked on?
Oh, that’s probably ‘A Christmas Carol’, here at UA Little Rock in the fall of 2012. It was a beautifully directed by Amy Pease and I was a member of the cast (playing Bob Cratchit). I got to work with my wonderful cast and crew. (I have to mention to Ford Patterson, a piece I wrote that was directed by Nick Nemeroff in Studio 81 last fall.)

If you had to pick either acting or playwriting, which would you choose? Why?
Acting: I have always had a love/hate relationship with writing. I love having done it, but don’t necessarily enjoy the process. Acting, on the other hand, is sheer joy, particularly since everything gets and the audience actually seems to experience something live and exciting.

What do you plan to do after you receive your MFA?
I plan to stay in the Chicago to be a new and, hopefully, now standing theater artist.

What would you say is the biggest or most important thing you’ve learned in your time here at the University of Arkansas?
I trust myself. Trust your mentors. All the time spent second-guessing is truly wasted.

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GETTING TO KNOW...
Scenic Designer Joseph Farley

Who is Joseph Farley?
I am a first year scenic design candidate from Northwest Arkansas called Ponca City. I received my high school degree from Ponca City High School. I also received my bachelor’s degree from Henderson State University in Arkadelphia, AR.

What made you come to the University of Arkansas to pursue your MFA in Scenic Design?
Graduate school is a place where I can continue to develop my skills and put them into practice. I’m always looking to take my skills to the next level. I was always interested in the practical side of stage design and a master’s degree was a natural progression. I am also looking to attend graduate school to further my professional work and available educational options of our field. This was the land of me, that I was looking for and was glad to find that it was in my own back yard!

Where are the major challenges to designing this production?
One of the biggest challenges was putting together a new physical space and creating a new environment. I’ve been on a few shows that have been designed for a much smaller space. I was able to adapt to the space and techniques for this new space.

If you were asked to choose any show to design, what show would it be?
I would love to design for a Shakespearean production. I think the opportunity to do scenic design for a musical is one of the most exciting possibilities. I have been on many plays and musicals because it has a countless opportunities for design.

What do you plan to do after you receive your MFA?
I plan on spending 5-10 years as a freelance designer, including resident work with other professional theater companies, Broadway, Chicago, and even LA if possible. After spending the younger part of my life as a freelance artist, I would like to settle down as a professor at the college level in tech and design. I would like to pursue the professional field in technical theater and possibly work in the arts world.

Do you have any advice for undergraduate theatre students who want to go to graduate school?
Graduate school is the gateway into the professional world. Find a graduate program that will help you take your skills to the next level and challenge you to work harder. The graduate program is the final step in the everything is always developing. There is no need where you stop learning. Some to learn all you can and you will find ultimate success.
Dear University Theatre Patron,

First of all, welcome to the University Theatre’s third production of the 2014-15 Mainstage Series! We have an exciting line up of productions both here at the University Theatre, and at our Studio Theatre – 404 located in Kemper Hall as well. We hope you have a chance to experience the fine work being done in that intimate, 70 seat black box space.

2014-15 is an exciting year for us. We continue to make changes in an effort to grow our season subscriptions and patron base as well as make it easier for you to find us on campus. I hope you saw the “Random Acts Board” signs guiding you to our theatre – we know many of you know your way around, but some of you may be attending for the first time and we wanted you to find us easily as you maneuver through our beautiful campus. We will also be using them for our Studio Series productions guiding you up from the Hampton Gardens, and into Kemper Hall where our Studio Theatre is located on the 4th Floor. We also invite each of you to stop and have your picture taken in front of our “step & repeat” wall located in the lobby of the University Theatre. We would love for you to share it on your favorite social media to let everyone know you are at the University Theatre.

I am so pleased to report that between 2013 and 2014, the number of patrons who support University Theatre has grown by 50% with an increase in giving by 83%. Not only does this contribute revenue to our theatre at the highest level, they also give our students by offering them experience and training using state-of-the-art technology. In an ever changing technological world, it is more important today than it has ever been to give our students at the University of Arkansas a leg up on the competition by providing outstanding training – your generous gifts help to make that a reality for us. Although we receive state funding that supports some of our production costs, by no means does that cover the expenses associated with providing the highest caliber training possible.

As chair of this fine department, it is my desire that each of you will become a member of our theatre “family” by subscribing to either our Mainstage Series here at the University Theatre, or our Studio Series in Kemper Hall Studio 604. Both will provide you an outstanding fine theatre experience at an incomparable value. I would also like to consider supporting our excellently talented students by contributing to our University Theatre Patrons Program by becoming a Friend (500-999 Patron) (1000-1999), Guardian Patron (2000-3000), Angel (3000-4999) or Super Angel (5000+).

I hope you enjoy this evening’s (or afternoon’s) performance of The Foreigner. Best.

Jane Landman

Coming Soon to the University of Arkansas—

Follies/Beth by Rachel Washington
March 5-8 - Studio 604 at Kemper Hall
The Cherub by Eugene Ionesco, Translated by Rob Melrose
April 2-5 - Studio 604 at Kemper Hall
The Cherry Orchard by Anton Chekhov
April 17-25 - University Theatre

The Foreigner is presented by special arrangement with Dramatics Play Services Inc., New York.

Program Courtesy of UARK THEATRE
WEBSITE LINK

http://jamestaylorodom.com
HEADSHOT AND RESUME

Photo reprinted with permission from photographer, Jen Odom.

(Pictured above: James Taylor Odom)
JAMES TAYLOR ODOM

Range: Baritone/tenor  Height: 6'2  Weight: 200

THEATRICAL EXPERIENCE

Sherlock Holmes & West End Horror  
It's a Wonderful Life  
One Man 2 Guvnors  
Disfarmer  
Hamlet  
A Christmas Carol  
Confessions: The Musical  
The Foreigner  
Spring Awakening  
She Stoops to Conquer  
Company  
The Importance of Being Earnest  
25th Annual P. G. S. Spelling Bee  
Hairspray  
Singin' in the Rain  
The Wedding Singer  
Thoroughly Modern Millie  
Antigone

Sherlock Holmes  
George Bailey  
Garth (+8 others)  
Vance  
Rosencrantz/Marcellus  
Scrooge U.S. (all roles)  
Dylan Bennett  
Charlie Baker  
Hanschen  
Marlow  
Larry  
Jack Worthing  
Douglas Panche  
Wilbur Turnblad  
Rebecca Dexter  
Ensemble  
Halmon/Teresa  

Sherland Repertory Theatre  
Gainesville Theatre Alliance*  
Theatre Squared  
Arkana Repertory Theatre  
Theatre Squared  
Gainesville Theatre Alliance*  
The Blue Gate Theatre  
University of Arkansas  
University of Arkansas  
University of Arkansas  
University of Arkansas  
Gainesville Theatre Alliance*  
Gainesville Theatre Alliance*  
Gainesville Theatre Alliance*  
Gainesville Theatre Alliance*  
Gainesville Theatre Alliance*

TRAINING

Acting, Meister  
Voice & Diction  
Dance  
Shakespearean Voice  
Suzuki  

Amy Hersberg  
Rita Carlson  
Dana Rosemari  
Jocelyn Cappy  
Monica Bell  

Prof., University of Arkansas  
Prof., University of Arkansas  
Dance Ctr., Rockford's Annie  
Professor, Coastal Carolina Univ.

DEGREES

Master's of Fine Arts  
Bachelor's of Arts  

Acting  
Theatre  

University of Arkansas  
Brenau University

SPECIAL SKILLS

Musical Instruments: Piano, Violin, Guitar, Accordion  
Impersonations: Reagan  
Dialects: RP, Cockney, Irish, German, French  
Musical Improv: Piano  
Creator of original One-Person Musical: The Mystery Bookshop

REFERENCES

Jim Hammond  
Bob Ford  
Alan Kilpatrick  
Gainesville Theatre Alliance  
Theatre Squared  
Atlanta Lyric Theatre

*The Gainesville Theatre Alliance is a nationally acclaimed collaboration of University of North Georgia, Brenau University, theatre professionals and the Northeast Georgia Community

Photo Courtesy of Jen Odom

(Pictured above: James Taylor Odom)
WORKS CITED

APPENDIX A.1

Email Correspondence with Jen Odom

James Odore
Hey Jen,
Would you be willing to allow me to use the head shots you took for me in my thesis?

Jen

Jennifer Odom
Sure! Feel free to use any of them any way you like.

Genie
Jen
Sent from my iPhone

Click here to Reply or Forward
APPENDIX A.2

Department of Theatre Publicity Release Memo

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If there are any questions on this matter, or any dispute over whether a program is being used in an inappropriate manner, please contact the Department of Drama business manager, listed below.

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228 Fine Arts Center
University of Arkansas
(479) 575-6067