

COVID-19: An Intermission for Theatre

by

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Acting

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Artistic Aims

From March of 2020 into the Spring semester of 2021, schools proceeded to do remote teaching via online sessions. Students had to pack their belongings and leave the dorms with only a short amount of time to plan, which resulted in many having to return home to live with their parents. In July of 2020, 52% of young adults lived with one or both parents, and up to 47% in February (Fry). The last time it was recorded this high at 40% was in 1940 during the Great Depression.

COVID created a particularly hard time for students with having to juggle school work and home life. “High levels of depression were associated with difficulties in focusing on academic work and with employment losses” (Kecojevic). Students of all ages and places have been affected. However, some classes were harder to adapt to, such as performing arts, fine arts, and courses for science majors and engineers who need labs. Many students missed being in a classroom environment with peers available right there to interact with and ask questions. Especially those located in different time zones and having learning disabilities.

But it’s not just students, professors and instructors also have to navigate their way through this new way of teaching. “Teachers say they’re spread thin with technology challenges, a decline in student engagement, the fear of contracting COVID-19, and personal child-care or caretaking responsibilities” (Will). Out of 1,000 former public school teachers surveyed, 43 percent quit their job because of stress. Other reasons were because they lived with loved ones who had high-risk conditions due to COVID or they were high risk.

I was a teacher's assistant for an immersive theatre class for David Bassuk, and it was hard to engage with the students for the full three and a half hours. I understood that the students felt disconnected and had a hard time concentrating. This was a class that was supposed to take place in the black box theatre in the film building. Normally we would be sitting together in a group circle, in a nice and quiet room with soundproof walls. But instead, the class took place on a computer screen with squares and names. Some students had dogs barking, kids screaming, and a bad wifi connection.

We had to get creative with teaching a class that relied heavily on our surroundings. We tried creating interactive games online in the form of storytelling. Some projects involved going on photo walks and creating avatars which were then presented in class. Normally students would have to meet in person to collaborate and create a script. But during this time of online classes, students had to collaborate through zoom and make accommodations for others in different time zones. Although it was a new experience, it was a valuable lesson to learn how to collaborate with artists through online sources. In the future, if something similar arises, students are familiar with how to present their craft online. David Bassuk often talks about his collaborations with artists in China and we now know how to do the same. Amazingly we can connect with others all around the world even if we aren't in the same time zone or physically present. Similarly, Prof. Pichlíková leads a study abroad course on Political Theatre in Prague, Czech Republic, collaborating with professors, students, and scholars at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts (DAMU) there.

Although technology provided much comfort, it was still a particularly hard time for performers having to find new ways to showcase their craft. Many students have

been creative by showing their performances through zoom. I attended *Right Behind You*, a senior project that was showcased on Halloween. It was fun being able to interact with other audience members in the chat box, but it was a completely different feeling from being in a live audience. The experience can be compared to when watching a concert recorded on Youtube versus attending one in person. It was convenient being able to attend the show even though I wasn't in New York. The senior project was shown at 8 pm EST because they wanted the audience to have a spooky atmosphere for the night of Halloween, but it was 11 am where I was so it didn't have the same effect for me. While many were typing in the chat that they were afraid to go to sleep, my day was only beginning with the sun shining through my window. Live performances feel more personal and establish a deeper connection with the audience and artists. Some shows were able to have in-person audiences with a limited number. Who knows when the live theatre will open again? It was difficult for venues to accommodate COVID guidelines since it would be hard for the audience and performers to stay 6 feet apart, leaving 27.4% of performers unemployed (Marrone).

Overall, it was a hard time for everyone. Many had been out of work for months, some hadn't seen family members, and being isolated at home for weeks could leave a person feeling suffocated, alone, and depressed. But many were doing so to keep themselves and others safe from being sick and spreading it.

I lost my hotel job back in March. My manager called me to say they wouldn't have me work for a month, but they thought I would be able to come back soon. It wasn't until June that my manager called me back to say they had no idea when they would be able to open again. And having to fly back home and do remote learning at

unusual times wasn't fun at all. Most of my days were spent in my room, even isolating myself from family members. It was encouraging to know that this is what everyone is experiencing and that this has been a universal struggle. All of us were facing uncertainty, confusion, anxiety, and in the process of adapting to a new way of living.

With COVID still present, and being a college student in the performing arts myself, I was inspired to do a film to tell a story from the perspective of Julia, a college student who had to go home to Guam because of COVID. This led her to talk to her mom, her best friend Sahvay, Anthony, and Daehoon about their take on how they should plan for the future. The film was not a documentary, but it was based on true stories.

My artistic aim of this project was to focus on the exciting days to come and the positive sides of being back at home. I wanted to show safe and fun ways of meeting up with friends, and conversations that showed that everyone is unsure about the future. I wanted to remind people to not worry about the future too much to the point of not enjoying what they have now in the present. The time we have now is a great time to plan and create. I was originally going to make my senior project a stage performance but wanted to branch out to film to capture the beautiful scenery I have available to me.

The film starts with Julia talking with her mom, a conversation that might be familiar to many college students, "what are you going to do with your degree and after you graduate?" Julia wrestles with this question, but in the end accepts that she doesn't need to have to answer right away and that it's okay to not know. Julia learns that she has to continue moving on and that mistakes are bound to happen, but it's okay as long as she learns from them.

I didn't make COVID the main topic of conversations because I think the topic of worrying about the future, transitioning from school to work, will always be a struggle for students even past COVID.

Returning home can be a letdown to many people. Back where I live, people look down on you if you return. Many people in Guam dream to go to school off-island and returning gives the impression that you weren't good enough and that you couldn't handle it. I know many people could feel that way returning home or taking semesters off. But I wanted this film to show that coming home also could mean recentering yourself, overcoming doubts, trying again, and returning stronger. I also wanted to show the positive sides of coming home like being more present and appreciative of the people around you, like seeing and reconnecting with old friends again.

The character Julia going around to different activities and hanging out with different friends is supposed to remind the audience to not take what they have around them for granted, especially places in nature. Since a lot of people are returning home, I wanted to remind them to revisit a memorable place whether it's a park, a hidden garden, a favorite restaurant, or a lake nearby. It was fun to explore places I haven't gone to before. When life goes back to normal, whenever that happens, we probably won't have as much time to enjoy nature so freely.

The beginning of the film starts on top of a waterfall where the character Julia says, "I don't think I can make it past these rocks, is it too late to turn back, can I even make this jump?" I think it was a question many students were asking themselves at the time: "can I make it past the next semester or should I take a semester off, can I graduate, can I even pursue this degree right now, do I have the financial means to

support myself?" It was a scary risk, like jumping off a waterfall. Hopefully, the film was encouraging to those thinking about the unforeseen future and helped turn anxious thoughts into excitement and hope.

As an artist I want to challenge myself by creating a film rather than recording myself in one take. I thought it would be a fun challenge to get out of my comfort zone and try writing, directing, and acting. I love how theatre happens in real time and the connection between the audience and actors. But I knew that recording my original senior project (the one-woman show), it wouldn't have the same effect being shown online. Many of the elements would be missing like the lighting, sound effects, and stage presence. I thought it would be much better to make a film so that I would be able to show close ups on facial expression, add narration in the back, and learn new skills. Through this film I hope to grow in acting in front of the camera and learning how jump from director and actor. I also want to learn how to be intentional with my artistic choices; one example would be the locations of the scenes, music, and script writing.

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Shakespeare and the Plague

The moon begins to rise and shine in the sky. People retreat silently into their homes as darkness appears. The bugs of the night begin to sing their song; crickets and cicadas chatter in unison. But bugs aren't the only ones awake in the night. Candlelight flickers through a small window in the Blackfriars Theatre. A man by the name of William Shakespeare dips his quill pen into the ink as he creates another piece. Unsure when his plays would be performed, but still, he continues to write. I wonder how many people told him he was crazy to continue doing theatre during the Black Plague, and how many actors stopped working with him? I wonder what went through his mind as he continues dipping his quill in ink. Was he anxious or scared about the plague coming back again? Did he feel hopeless as he wrote another play not knowing if theaters would open again? Nonetheless, he continues to write day and night in hopes that one day it will be presented on stage again. As the candlelight dwindles, he picks up a new one, lights the flame again, and proceeds to write.

Some of Shakespeare's greatest works were formed and created during the Bubonic Plague -- just like now, though live theatre might be on hold, the interruption gave more time for creative minds to think and be inspired.

From high numbers of casualties to months of quarantine, Shakespeare was not a stranger to pandemics. He lived through the first waves of the second pandemic of the Black Plague; the most fatal illness ever recorded. It even claimed two of Shakespeare's older siblings' lives, Joan, and Margaret Shakespeare. From the 1300s

until the nineteenth century the Bubonic Plague continued devastating the European populations. But amazingly enough, a majority of Shakespeare's plays were written during the times they were hit the hardest in London from 1592 to 1610. Only four plays (*The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, *Henry VIII*, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*) were written after 1610.

How bad was the plague to cause the theaters to close for months and even over a year? To take a slightly later example, the Great Plague of 1665 killed 100,000 in just 7 months (Roos). In London alone from 1560 to 1665 there were roughly 930,000 burials and 630,000 baptisms in 118 of the 130 London parishes," an indication of the ratio of birth and death in this period (Cummins 4). Death was no new news, as Londoners buried the dead in mass graves, burning incense to mask the smell. "One-fifth of the city's population died each time, within the space of a few months..." (Cummins 4). The plague came and left like an angel of death.

England decided to start quarantine laws, something that sounds too familiar to us during COVID-19. The law was set in the 1500s to start separating and isolating the sick (Roos). Gatherings, especially public entertainments were closed off. "All public entertainment was banned, and victims were forcibly shut into their homes to prevent the spread of the disease" (Roos). Church services were the only group gatherings allowed since they believed people couldn't get sick during mass. Starting in 1563 the theatre started to close on and off. It was once again shut down in 1603 after 33,000 died in London alone. Other places like Italy were also doing the same by isolating for 40 days. The number 40 was chosen because of Jesus in the wilderness for 40 days

and Noah being in the ark for 40 days. Luckily quarantine laws are only 2 weeks for COVID, but imagine having to be quarantined over a month every time you traveled? Shakespeare must have felt as though he were in a prison, being at home all the time.

Shakespeare spent most of his life in a pandemic, and because of that, maybe it caused him to be bolder than the average person. He didn't reduce his time on stage and continued to go on tours. "Shakespeare's whereabouts were unclear from 1592-94. He was constantly on the move to different provinces due to the plague causing stages to close, so it was hard to track down Shakespeare's exact locations" (George 1). It wasn't until 1594 that the Chamberlain's Men was created, and we would see in records that they became Shakespeare's longtime company. Although 1592-94 was a blurry time in Shakespeare's life, we do know that he was still creating. Many of his plays were performed by Lord Strange's Men as well as the Earl of Pembroke's Men (George 1). Although the circumstances were not the best, perhaps this was how different creators and artists were able to meet each other.

Although none of Shakespeare's works have the plague as the main plot, he adds hints of the plague written in them; works such as *Venus and Adonis*, *The Rape of Lucrece*, and one of his more popular plays, *Romeo and Juliet* (Maltby).

In Shakespeare's poem *Venus and Adonis* there is a part where Venus faints and Adonis tries to revive her with a kiss. In this dialogue he says,

Long may they kiss each other, for this cure!

*O, never let their crimson liveries wear!
And as they last, their verdure still endure,
To drive infection from the dangerous year!
That the star-gazers, having writ on death,
May say, the plague is banish'd by thy breath.*

Taking these few lines out of the poem shows clear reference to the plague. Even though these lines were somewhat comedic, Shakespeare also writes with a tone of longing and hope for the pandemic to end. *Twelfth Night* is another example of alluding to the plague in a comedic way. Olivia finds herself attracted to Cesario and compares her sudden crush to how quickly someone catches the plague. In Act 1 Scene V Olivia says,

*How now? Even so quickly may one catch the plague?
Methinks I feel this youth's perfections
With an invisible and subtle stealth
To creep in at mine eyes.
Well, let it be.*

It's interesting to see Shakespeare use the plague in a carefree, comedic way. It would be a different story if Shakespeare wrote these *after* the plague occurred, but he wrote these jokes during the plague. It could be that he uses dark humor as a coping mechanism. People deal with tragedies differently and perhaps Shakespeare includes

these lines to lighten the mood during dark times. But it is also interesting to note that Shakespeare's characters die in every way except death by the plague. "Nobody ever dies of plague. It's just taboo," [Shapiro] says. "So the few times that he does mention plague, mostly in his tragedies, it hits with incredible force" (Young). It made sense to not bring death so common in the real world into his fantasy world. In his writing, he could escape the dark reality.

"His works were there to give them comfort and clarity," says Columbia University professor and author James Shapiro. "I do know that when we come out on the other side of this, we're going to need theater and we're going to need Shakespeare — and it'll be there for us" (Shapiro).

Writing tragedy for the stage was a response to the tragedy he was facing in real life. Young and Maltby both talk about Shakespeare writing "trauma literature." Geoffrey Hartman explains that trauma literature is a genre of literature which "expresses unconsciously experiences too traumatic, and too far from human utterance, for the conscious expression" (Maltby). The 1603 outbreak killed over a fifth of Londoners in 1610, and this time it hit too close to Shakespeare's home. It claimed the life of his son Hamnet when he was only 11 years old. Many have suspected that Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet* due to the influence of his son's death. The character Constance in *King John* also has a scene where he talks about losing a son. Shakespeare found a new way to grieve by creating art and escaping from reality. When Shakespeare was in a plague-ridden world, Shakespeare created pieces that took place in plague-free worlds like

King Lear, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, and Timon of Athens (Young).

This made his pieces rawer, more emotional, and more real. “Biographers like to attribute the turns in Shakespeare’s career to his psychological state (so he must have been in and out of love when writing comedies and sonnets, depressed when he wrote tragedies, and in mourning when he wrote Hamlet” (Shapiro). Shakespeare freely spilled all his emotions onto paper.

Shakespeare was not only writing for himself, but he was also writing for the people around him. Shakespeare knew that everyone was struggling and in fear. Perhaps one of the reasons he was so fearless to create art was so that he could provide comfort to those around him. Yachin notes that “the plays he created often grew from an awareness about how precarious life can be in the face of contagion and social breakdown.” He created for his future audience, future playwrights, and future actors. The plague helped shape his plays to have complex characters, memorable plots, and raw emotions.

At the beginning of *Romeo and Juliet*, the young lovers cross paths at a masquerade ball. I wonder if Shakespeare was reminiscing about the absence of social gatherings by putting one right at the start of the play? It is a depiction of mutual hate between Montagues and Capulets until the young lovers break the rules. Romeo goes to a party in hopes to find Rosaline, but instead, he meets Juliet and their story unfolds. A key turning point of the play is caused by an undelivered letter.

In Act V Scene One we see Friar John say:

Here in this city visiting the sick,

*And finding him, the searchers of the town,
Suspecting that we both were in a house
Where the infectious pestilence did reign,
Seal'd up the doors, and would not let us forth;
So that my speed to Mantua there was stay'd.*

We see that the messenger failed to deliver Juliet's message because he was put in quarantine. Somehow, he was suspected of being in an infected household and therefore couldn't be around others. This is a scene I and many others can relate to. I remember staying with a family and someone in the house had flu-like symptoms. Everyone in the house, even those who weren't related, got a COVID test the very next day. The immediate actions taken due to the fear of having the plague are similar to our fears now of catching COVID. If anyone around us is sick we isolate, take the COVID test, and wait for results. We see this in *Romeo and Juliet* as the messenger was taken to quarantine right away.

*I could not send it, --here it is again,--
Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,
So fearful were they of infection.*

The letter contained information on Juliet's secret plan for faking her death. Since it wasn't delivered to Romeo, it causes the two young lovers to, unfortunately, take their lives. Knowing the history behind the time it was written adds more context to the play.

By knowing how gruesome the Black Plague was, it made sense to quarantine the messenger that was only suspected to have been in contact with an infected family. It didn't feel random or out of place that he failed to deliver the letter. Outside circumstances were out of their control, almost like fate was against them. It's interesting how Shakespeare uses the plague almost as an antagonist. It adds to the conflict in the play. One of the conflicts is "man against society," with the lovers being from two rival families. Some scenes could also be "man versus man," and with the plague, it's "man versus nature." For me, I had no idea that the play *Romeo and Juliet* was written around the same period as the plague. Even though the Black Plague wasn't his main focus, it was used as a turning point in the story.

Maltby also mentions the party at the beginning of the play and compares it with attending a party during COVID. Romeo's choice of going to the party can be compared to present-day teenagers and young adults who choose to go to parties during the lockdown. In both cases, you could end up getting killed. Romeo's choice of going to the opposing family's party causes him to meet Juliet and eventually take his life. Present-day teens and college students could choose to go to the wrong party with a COVID positive person, which could also make you risk losing your life.

Unlike *Twelfth Night* where Shakespeare writes plague jokes or *Romeo and Juliet* where the plague acts as an antagonist, in *Henry V*, King Henry is defiant. In Act IV he assures that if his men die, their spirits will go honorably to heaven while their carcasses will cause a devastating plague in France. In *Macbeth* the plague alluded to indirectly. The play has nothing close to social distancing. There are wars, dinners, and

more large gatherings. However, the mood of the play can be compared to one in a plague. Here is an excerpt from *Macbeth* when Macduff asks about the state of Scotland:

Act IV Scene 3 *Macbeth*:

*Alas, poor country,
Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
Be called our mother, but our grave, where nothing
But who knows nothing is once seen to smile;
Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air
Are made, not marked; where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy. The dead man's knell
Is there scarce asked for who, and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.*

(Act IV Scene 3 *Macbeth*)

Although *Macbeth* takes place in a plague-free world, the grief of a new ruler reflects the same feelings of grief during a plague. If you were to take out this passage with no context, it sounds like Shakespeare is writing about the world around him. A fallen country, only sadness in the air, and multiple deaths all sound like the results of the Bubonic Plague.

Shakespeare is known to be the greatest playwright of all time. He wrote and

performed during a pandemic, a time where art couldn't flourish. But instead, Shakespeare used this tragic moment in history to create the plays we have today.

It was hard to imagine that something similar to the plague could ever happen again. In our modern time, we have hospitals, skilled doctors, and new medicine. But our security was tested when the first case of COVID-19 appeared in China on November 17, 2019. But many were still optimistic that this was just a passing contagious flu in China, and that it will never spread anywhere else. Months pass and March comes to show that COVID was spreading quickly in other countries like Europe and the United States. Schools started to close, people wore face masks, hand sanitizer, and other cleaning supplies that were completely wiped out from shelves. Lockdowns and quarantine become a normal routine in life. As of May 2021, there have been 3 million COVID deaths with half a million deaths in the United States alone. Months begin to feel like a whole lifetime as days pass by with no news of life going back to normal again. Workers continued to be unemployed, and patients overflowed in hospitals. Not one area of our lives hasn't been changed because of the pandemic. The virus COVID-19 has no favorites; it affects young and old, rich, or poor.

Seeing everything unfold through the comfort of our phone screen and television felt like watching a horror movie. It almost feels unreal. This virus became something that would be added to history books. Could COVID-19 be like the plague and come back again in waves in the future? Will social distancing be the new norm? Those who rely heavily on in-person collaboration, like theatre artists have suffered drastically. It's been a year since the theatre doors closed.

Like the Globe, the Broadway theatres were closed from March 12, 2020, up until now. At first, it seemed unreasonable to close the stages for so long, but as the COVID cases stayed steady it was the safest choice to make. The time for theatres to reopen is still tentative. The virus is still keeping other institutions closed for an unforeseen amount of time. 97,000 jobs were lost, and 15 million audience members are waiting to return (Lunden). But even if things go back to normal, the first thing that people plan to do isn't to watch a play but to find jobs, get groceries, and pay their rent. A majority of theatergoers have to travel to Broadway in New York to watch shows, but how many people would risk traveling in airplanes, buses, and trains and then confine themselves in seats filled with people? "No one knows when the theaters will reopen, when actors will be able to rehearse in safety or when audiences will feel confident that attending a show won't kill them" (Mcnulty). Theatre artists can imagine the heartbreak Shakespeare felt when the stage had to remain dark for months, as well as the impending fear of the future and what it would mean for live performances.

We have a glimpse of what Shakespeare might have experienced. I had to change my script three times due to the location and cast availability. When I finally wrote down my second script and was about to film it, one of my main actors got COVID. How many of Shakespeare's cast couldn't perform because either they or a family member was sick? How was Shakespeare able to continue with his career and keep writing? I finally wrote a third script but this time set in locations that were available for me to be in due to COVID restrictions.

Being a theatre artist in COVID inspired me to make a film about the uncertainty

of pursuing performing arts during a pandemic. The film opens up with the character Julia on top of a waterfall questioning whether or not she should jump. I used this scene as a metaphor for how scary it can be to jump into the world of live performance when theatres are closed. Not only is Julia facing a conflict with her mother at the beginning of the film, but she conflicts with her thoughts and decisions. Her mother asks Julia at the beginning of the film, “what are you going to do in the future?” And Julia has no answer, she doesn’t know what her plans are. The character Julia is based on my thoughts about my uncertain future, but also many other artists in the world. Throughout the film, Julia has conversations with her friends that end up shaping her answer on her future. Her friend Sahvay says, “think about what you can do now... plan for the now.” Her other friend Daehoon talks about, “going to new places is exciting.” And Anthony tells her to take opportunities and “you’ll regret it if you don’t take them.” In the end, she decides to jump off the waterfall, even though it’s scary and risky. I think that’s the decision Shakespeare also made. Even though the present seemed bleak, he continued to plan for the future. He persevered through every obstacle that came his way and continued creating and pushing ahead.

We can follow Shakespeare’s example and continue art in quarantine.

Sometimes in the entertainment industry, it’s tempting to want to mass-produce scripts and always be making/doing something new. But this pause on the stage gives us time to think and ponder on our works a bit more. It will give us more time to appreciate the works around us and be inspired. Sit. Ponder. Observe. Not only is this time like an intermission, like Idris Goodwin puts it, it’s also a giant rehearsal to practice our craft, make mistakes, and perfect it. In a rehearsal everything happens off-stage, there is no

audience yet. It's a great time to experiment, try something new, and make mistakes. We could also watch and read other pieces of art people have created, revisit favorite plays and movies, and even practice writing our own.

Before You Jump, Don't- was a project out of my comfort zone. I experimented a lot in areas such as directing and filming that I have never done before. Through the process of creating a film, I've made a lot of mistakes. But through those mistakes, I have learned the importance of collaboration and planning ahead. This knowledge is something I'll take with me even past the pandemic and into both film and theatre.

Charles McNulty, theater critic of the Los Angeles Times, interviewed artists whose careers are on pause because of the pandemic. It was refreshing to hear other artists and their perspectives and plans. Some said it was a time to meditate, to dream, and rediscover different ways of theatre. One artist's response is to have clean backstages to know that we will be healthy and protected when we return (McNulty 4). I especially enjoyed Tarell Alvin McCraney's response to the pandemic, he wants to be present in the world and state he is in, to know that there are things he can't control, and to be joyful in all circumstances. Playwright Idris Goodwin, as mentioned earlier, says this pandemic is "an intermission—society on pause." And just like McCraney's response, Goodwin also preaches to think about the now, the moment we are living in, and to seize the opportunities and platform available to us now. Bart DeLorenzo hopes that this time of isolation will show how much theatre is needed, "For our sanity, humans must gather in groups and experience our world together" (McNulty 26). Artists right now are still hoping and dreaming and most definitely, creating. McNulty quotes Aristotle in

his article, talking about the stage not just being a time of extravagance but being a reflective consciousness that distinguishes human nature (McNulty 2).

Even before the pandemic, actors and creators had to always think about what could go wrong: someone forgetting a line, missing prop, lights or sound having their wrong cues, and endless possibilities of disaster. But it's during a disaster that artists can improvise through it and let their abilities shine. The show must go on. Even though we aren't able to meet in person, the theatre community is still creating. Someday the stage lights will shine again. If Shakespeare were to give up on his career as a playwright because of the plague, we wouldn't be able to see any of his great works. It's the same for artists now, staying silent and stagnant will only deprive the world of seeing great art yet to be performed. Theatre isn't gone because of a pandemic; through the perseverance and determination of artists all around the world, it is only getting better. The emotions that were felt during the pandemic will only translate into the art being created, and like Shakespeare, characters and pieces will come out more raw, relatable, and real. This intermission in theatre is a time for all artists to prepare to put all that was felt during the pandemic onto the stage.

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This article is rich in statistics of the birth and death rates in London. They trace back using Ancestry.com to find recorded baptisms and burials. This source provides geographically sectioned out maps of London and the different parishes. It uses darker shades to indicate how far back burials began. They also provide statistics and geographical maps of the distribution of wealth, mortality rate, and reports of the plague.

George, David. "Shakespeare and Pembroke's Men." *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 32, no. 3, 1981, p. 305., doi:10.2307/2870248.

This article focuses on Shakespeare's relationship with Pembroke's Men and their recorded tours and plays they performed. It goes into detail on how the Plague caused theatre companies to go on tour and how bigger businesses had to close down due to the number of people, as well as selling plays due to bankruptcy.

Goodwin, Idris. "What It Means to Be a Playwright Right Now." *AMERICAN THEATRE*, 23 Mar. 2020, www.americantheatre.org/2020/03/23/what-it-means-to-be-a-playwright-today/.

Idris Goodwin talks about what it means to be a playwright during the time of COVID-19. He talks about how it feels like an intermission in life but we are the

inciting incident. He quotes Shakespeare saying that this world is our stage and that we should stay present and not just hope for the time when COVID is finally over.

Lunden, Jeff. "Broadway To Remain Closed For The Rest Of The Year." *NPR*, NPR, 29 June 2020, www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/06/29/884654826/broadway-to-remain-closed-for-the-rest-of-the-year.

New update on the tentative schedule Broadway is supposed to open. It goes into detail talking about how the show business contributes 14.7 billion dollars to the city's economy. Tons of jobs were lost and the yearly audience members were nowhere to be seen.

Maltby, Kate. "What Shakespeare Can — and Can't — Teach Us about Covid-19." *CNN*, Cable News Network, 8 Apr. 2020, edition.cnn.com/2020/04/08/opinions/covid-19-and-plague-literature-maltby/index.html.

This article quotes Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and how the Plague played a part. The messenger was sent to quarantine and was unable to deliver Juliet's message to Romeo. This article also talks about how we can also use literature as a medium to heal during a tragic time like this.

McNulty, Charles. "25 Top Theater Minds Dream the Future: What Will the Post-Pandemic Stage Look like?" *Los Angeles Times*, Los Angeles Times, 20 May

2020, www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/story/2020-05-19/coronavirus-reopening-theater-future.

This article is a series of interviews of artists, playwrights, actors, and other creators and what they dream for theatre during COVID-19. Some dream for a time to come back stronger than before with new ideas. Others want to stay present and think about meditating on what to do now. But many hope to return with newer and better art than before.

Paul Yachnin Tomlinson Professor of Shakespeare Studies. "After the Plague, Shakespeare Imagined a World Saved from Poison, Slander, and the Evil Eye." *The Conversation*, 2 Dec. 2020, theconversation.com/after-the-plague-shakespeare-imagined-a-world-saved-from-poison-slander-and-the-evil-eye-134608#:~:text=We believe in the free flow of information & text=Shakespeare lived his life in, suffering and ghastly to see.

This article goes into depth about Shakespeare's plays being inspired by the Plague or steering away from it like *Romeo and Juliet*, *Cymbeline*, and *King Arthur* where the world is free from the Plague. Much of the tone in Shakespeare's pieces can reflect his mindset during the Black Death: nothing to live for but still living, a world cured, good doctors.

Roos, Dave. "How 5 of History's Worst Pandemics Finally Ended." *History.com*, A&E Television Networks, 17 Mar. 2020, www.history.com/news/pandemics-end-plague-cholera-black-death-smallpox.

A list of deadly plagues that have occurred in the past. Number two is the Black Death and number three is the Great Plague of London. It gives background information on how many outbreaks have happened in 10 years, the percentage of men and women killed, and the laws England created to isolate the sick. It also talks about the efforts to lessen the effects by carrying a white pole to signify who is with an infected family and even killing cats and dogs in fear that they will spread the disease.

Shapiro, James. "How Shakespeare's Great Escape from the Plague Changed Theatre." *The Guardian*, Guardian News, and Media, 24 Sept. 2015, www.theguardian.com/books/2015/sep/24/shakespeares-great-escape-plague-1606—james-shapiro.

This article talks about how the Plague returned to London, causing playhouses to close their doors. Every time the plague number rises to above 30, the theatre has to close again. It also talks about how Shakespeare's home in St. Olave was spared until 1602 where he had to move to Silver Street.

Young, Robin, and Allison Hagan. "'He Didn't Flee': Shakespeare And The Plague." *'He Didn't Flee': Shakespeare And The Plague | Here & Now*, WBUR, 6 Apr. 2020, www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2020/04/06/shakespeare-plague-coronavirus.

This article gives some insight into Shakespeare's past with two of his siblings losing their lives to the Bubonic Plague. It also talks about the plays we wrote during the Plague in London and also quotes the last scene in *Romeo and Juliet* where the messenger was unable to send the letter because he was quarantined.

Overall, this article focuses on how Shakespeare never left London but continued to work on his playwriting career.

Technical Essay

Original Script

My original script was a one-woman show that was meant to be performed as a stage play. It takes place in her bedroom and where we see the character Julia coming back after her high school classes. She talks to herself as if there was an imaginary audience (soliloquy), through a journal, and her thoughts (that are voice recorded and played through the speakers). The audience can see her growth and personality through her bedroom decorations. The set is first decorated with boy band posters, a pink and purple color scheme, and items that just show she is a freshman girl. As she moves up to different grades, we see her bedroom looking less girly and turning into her style. We can tell that she is transferring to different schools by the different uniforms she changes into throughout the play. The piece covers themes like adolescence to adulthood, relationships with family and friends, and passions. Although my final product was nothing like the original script, it still kept the theme of adolescence to adulthood and elements of family expectations.

Plot

Besides the main plot of Julia transferring to different high schools and the difficulties that come with it, there is a subplot where she is struggling with her passion for piano. On the set, there is a piano against the wall, center stage. She plays it often at the beginning of the play. She gets frustrated with school and eventually plays less, and she soon covers it with a cloth. She then uses the piano as a table to hold trophies in subjects she's not passionate about. She doubts herself and instead pursues other things her peers pressure her to do. In the end, she finally breaks down and uncovers

the piano. She finishes the piano song she's been working on since the beginning of freshman year. Once she plays the last note there the piece ends.

A friend created an original song for me to use in the one-woman show, but I decided to write a new script for the film. I was going to use the original song for the film but later decided to save it whenever I have the chance to perform the one-woman show.

Creating New Scripts

After writing my new script for the film, I planned to have it set at a high school. I had the script and the locations mapped out. I divided the scenes into their locations so I could easily shoot multiple scenes in the same area at once. I was going to use an empty classroom at Harvest Christian Academy, my dad's karaoke bar to transform it into a restaurant, and my house. I had a uniform as my costume and found people to act in it, but that script had to be changed because one of my main actors got COVID. I had already filmed parts of this script back in September but sadly had to scrap the whole plan. I had no one that could fill that character's spot, I specifically wanted someone in the LGBTQ community to play this part but sadly couldn't find anyone else. Not only did I lose an actor but a lot of the locations were hard for me to access. Both the high school and the bar had to be supervised for people to congregate in them. I realized I couldn't complete the script with the locations I had. Originally, I was filming 3 times a week and then taking the rest of the time to edit, but I took a week off to make the new script and plan out the filming days.

With the new plot, I was able to have more freedom with the locations, actors, and script. Having the characters changed to college students allowed me to use actors

of all ages. It was also more believable since most of my actors were real college and grad students. Plus, most of the actors I used in my film didn't have prior experience in acting, so it was easy to direct them since it didn't require much of a character change to their real personality. I was glad there were no costumes because I was struggling to find school uniforms that fit the actors for my original high school script. Everyone wore their normal clothes.

Planning Process

After completing the new script, I began to plan out the filming process. I first listed out the equipment, locations, and the number of actors I needed. Luckily, my actors had a lot of time on their hands because of COVID, so scheduling film days was no problem. The cameras I had available to me were my Canon T7i and my dad's



Canon 60D. I used a tripod for still shots and borrowed a Gimbal for the moving ones, and most of the scenes were shot with an external microphone. I am currently taking a photography class, so I had adobe premiere pro available to me to use for the video editing. *(Picture shows equipment and cameras used for the film.)*

In my new script, I focused on locations that were easily accessible and met COVID

regulations: beaches, hikes, outdoor parks, cars, and at home. The first time we filmed, the first few scenes didn't come out great. We had technical problems: some videos were too dark, and the audio quality wasn't good. I was working with a lot of people who weren't used to filming or acting, and I also only had a brief experience with film and editing. I had to do a lot of extensive research on the basics of filmmaking and the editing process. I researched how to take videos of conversations, what angle to use, and how mood is created in the film. It was a fun, new experience filming and directing, but it was also stressful. It made me realize that having a director or even a coordinator was much needed. I re-filmed some parts, and it came out better, but still not how I envisioned it. There were some scenes I had to re-film over three times.

The process of writing the script was very loose. With the amount of time I had and all the scenes I wanted to shoot, I mainly left it to the actors to create their characters. Each scene had a goal and there were some key lines I directed them to say. I would direct Daehoon and tell him, "talk about fainting after jumping off the waterfall," or I would tell Sahvay, "tell Julia that she shouldn't worry so much about the future and get her to make plans for now." So the script was mainly improvised, which I think worked well since most of the characters were being played by untrained actors. Telling them to act like themselves, talk like how they normally would be, made the scenes flow naturally.

Creating Julia

My character Julia is inspired by my thoughts. She's not exactly me but inspired by people around me who are mainly college students. Julia was partly inspired by my

friend, Jenny, who comes from a comfortable home in New Hampshire but decided to leave and study in New York. Julia was also inspired by Philip who went back home because of COVID but still continued to pursue his passion for music. And I'm sure he'll continue to do music wherever he goes.

I prepared my role of Julia by going through Uta Hagen's six steps. I mainly focused on the questions: 1) WHAT DO I WANT? What is my main objective? My immediate need or objective? 2) WHAT IS MY OBSTACLE? What is in the way of what I want? How do I overcome it? 3) WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT?

Julia is similar to me in that we both want to be actors and don't want to be home. Julia's obstacle was circumstances with COVID, her mom, but mainly herself. She doesn't believe in herself and slowly loses hope in her future career. In the opening scene with her mom talking, Julia doesn't fight back. She silently listens, replies a few times weakly, and retreats to her room. In the back of her head, she begins to believe what her mom says about getting another major or a double major. Julia tries to find inspiration and hope again by finding inspiration from her friends. After talking to Sahvay she creates a checklist and slowly rekindles the flame of hope in the future.

Julia's response to her mother is different from mine. Her character is more soft-spoken and kind. I have had conversations with my mom similar to the one in the film, my responses would normally be harsher. Another difference is that my first response wouldn't be to text a friend, but I wanted the character Julia to show that you can talk to others about your struggles rather than keeping it to yourself. In a way, Julia is how I wish to be like.

That goes to question 4) WHAT ARE MY RELATIONSHIPS? How do I stand



concerning the circumstances, the place, the objects, and the other people related to my circumstances? Julia revisits old friends who are also college students going through the same struggle. Julia has close relationships with her friends. She can talk to them about anything and hang out with them one-on-one. Julia's friends also have returned home and don't know what to do in the future either. Sahvay is taking it day by day, Daehoon and Riae plan on moving out but don't know when, and Anthony also plans to leave but isn't sure if he should. Through her relationships and conversations with her friends, Julia feels comforted by the fact that she isn't the only one that doesn't know what to do. Her

friendships are a big part of how Julia begins to believe in herself again. I hope the film was able to give that same feeling of comfort to the audience too.

Filming Each Scene

The first scene I filmed was the mom conversation scene. It was the easiest one to film in terms of scripting and blocking because it was the only part of the original script that I kept. I used my real mom and had her speak in her first language and just

added English subtitles. We filmed it three times from different angles and focused on getting an “over the shoulder” effect. It transitions to going inside a bedroom and Julia texting a friend.

I used a friend’s house and their extra bedroom to film. We had to clean out the room to transform it into what the bedroom looks like in the film.



Me in the role of Julia texting her Sahvay from her bedroom.

The second scene I filmed was at Tanguisson Beach. Many of my actors doubled as the camera operators, so behind the camera is actually the actor who plays “Sahvay”. I did this location first because it was easy to access since it’s a secluded beach. I chose this place because it was the last beach I visited when I left home and the first one I visited when I came back because of COVID. The character Anthony is supposed to be reminiscent of a high school friend who chose to stay home for college. The message I wanted the conversation to focus on is: take the opportunities you have and don’t be afraid to make mistakes. The conversation also shows that both characters have an inner struggle of wanting to leave



their home but also having reasons to stay.

The two characters Anthony and Julia both like to stay home because it’s familiar and there’s family. Staying home meant staying in their comfort zone, and there wouldn’t be a struggle for money since they would live with family. The character Anthony chose to stay home for college, having residency meant that tuition was cheaper too. Anthony says, “For my family, my being here was good, but not for me.” The comfort of staying home is brought up again when Julia says to Anthony, “it’s so comfortable here, but there’s nothing to work with in terms of life.” Leaving home meant getting out of their comfort zone and being

exposed to a new place. Going to the unknown meant learning new things and having a risk of making mistakes. That's why Anthony says, "don't be afraid to make mistakes, the worse thing is not to try." And Julia says, "I regret not going to auditions more than messing up." Another addition to the theme is when Julia throws a rock and it fails to skip. This theme of failing and making mistakes is repeated in the ending monologue where Julia accepts the fact that the future is unknown and there is a possibility that she will make mistakes, but all you need to do is "get out of the mud and continue walking". Looking back at the mushroom rocks scene, I think it would've been a nice addition if Julia tries to skip a rock again at the end of the conversation and is successful.



Pictures of Mushroom Rock and the characters Anthony and Julia walking.

The third scene I filmed was the snorkeling scene. To bring my camera to this snorkeling spot, I put it on top of a floatie. This part of the film was supposed to be much longer, but I looked back at the clips and found that the conversation was not audible. Not wanting to cut the whole thing out and having no time to snorkel out to the location again, I ended up voicing over what I originally wanted that conversation to focus on.

The lesson “Riae” was going to teach was to be fearless in your pursuit of what you enjoy and just go for it. Failures are inevitable so have fun throughout the process. After this scene, I learned how to use the external microphone so I wouldn’t run into an audio problem again.

The fourth scene I filmed was the Subway restaurant scene/conversation in the car. By then we were used to using the camera gimbal and external microphone, I thought this scene came out to be one of the best. We took turns passing the camera to each other to film our parts while “Anthony” sits in the backseat holding an external microphone. The character Sahvay is one who always looks out for her friends. In her conversation, I wanted to show that we shouldn’t be worrying and thinking ahead too much to the point that we miss our opportunities to enjoy what we have in front of us. Because Julia has been too busy worrying about her future, she hasn’t been able to enjoy the activities around her. In the car, she tells Sahvay, “we have been planning to hike there for months but we still haven’t gone.” Julia finds joy in going to Subway because it’s a nostalgic restaurant for her. She often went there when she was in high school, and eating a Subway sandwich with a childhood friend helped her relive those memories.

The fifth scene was the volleyball scene. This conversation was based on a true story. The character Dae Hoon is a real friend who fainted while jumping off the same waterfall and a helicopter had to airlift him out. This conversation is supposed to make the character Julia hesitant in wanting to jump off the waterfall. Julia asks Daehoon if

he's moving to Hawaii, and he replies that he is planning to move even though he's never been to Hawaii and has no idea what to expect. This conversation is supposed to motivate and inspire Julia to try going back to New York even though it's risky and the future is unclear. She's inspired that Daehoon wants to leave home and go to Hawaii by himself just because he wants to. Just like the character Riae, Daehoon doesn't focus on all the worries and risks.

The only problem I had with this scene is the lighting. The sun kept coming in and out of the clouds which gave different scenes either a bright yellow or bright white color, it looked inconsistent in the film. The scene where everyone is playing volleyball turned out really dark, I had to make the video brighter which made it look more grainy. If I were to shoot this scene again, I would do it at a different time when the sun wasn't so bright.

The sixth scene was the scooter scene. Even though the film made it look enjoyable, it was dreadful to film. It took 6 hours, and it was raining on and off. Only some clips came out nice. It was just a short scene recorded on my phone. I wanted to show Julia enjoying her activities more, and I also just wanted to add a scooter scene to have my dad in the film too. He was driving the scooter while I rode behind him. If I were to retake this scene, I would make this scene longer since it was shorter than all the rest. I would also try to use a real camera to film since the quality is drastically different from the rest. My dad's friend rode on the back of a truck to record us riding on scooters.

The hardest and last scene I filmed was the waterfall hiking scene. I had to wait until mid-November to go to the waterfall because the weather kept preventing me from hiking. The hike to the waterfall took over 6 hours. I got “Anthony” and “Sahvay” to be the camera operators until halfway into the hike, and then they turned back. I went hiking with one other person to the waterfall. We ended up getting lost but eventually found the falls. I had to climb the waterfall by myself, so I didn’t have anyone to film Julia looking down or jumping off. I tried putting the camera over the edge to make it seem like she was looking down from her point of view. For the close-ups, we improvised and took shots on top of my rooftop at home.

Many people suggested that I should scrap the idea of hiking to the waterfall, and I almost did. But I wanted the waterfall in the film because I felt like it best describes how it feels like going into the profession: scary, exhilarating, risky but fun. After I completed the conversation scenes, I added scenery as transitions in the beginning. I also added voice-overs afterward because I felt like it added to Julia’s character by making her thoughts audible to the audience.

Putting It All Together

The next huge part was editing the whole video together. The editing process was gruesome, I underestimated the number of clips to cut and audio to fix. I remember Prof. Jack Tamburri offering to send out emails to film students to edit my piece; looking back at it I should’ve accepted the suggestion. The hardest part was picking out key parts of clips and cutting out the ones that weren’t as strong. I was worried that the scenes wouldn’t transition smoothly but I think adding the notebook checklist was able to make it clear.

Overall the experience of making a film was both stressful and fun. It definitely would've been less stressful if I had followed through with the original timeline. But I accepted the fact that there were things that were out of my control like health (with the actor who caught COVID and just gathering restrictions) and weather. This project reminded me of the importance of collaboration. Even though it is possible to direct and edit alone, it was hard and wasn't as enjoyable. Collaborating with others also allowed me to see things from different perspectives that I wasn't able to see and hear suggestions that further improved the story.

I learned through filming that it's always important to have test runs before filming, especially test runs with audio and lighting. It also taught me to take the time to record more than one take: some might come out better than others. I learned a lot from this film in terms of acting. Many subtle facial expressions could say a lot, and how movement is seen on stage is different from how it translates into film. I gained new skills in using premiere pro, directing others, and acting in my original script. Even though I had to change my script from a stage play to a film, it was a great opportunity to challenge myself. Although my senior project wasn't on campus, it was nice to take advantage of the beautiful scenery I had available to me. I also enjoyed creating a piece with friends and family as actors. It was a new experience for everyone and made this project memorable for me and them.

Credits

Screenplay: Angelina Sobredo

Director: Angelina Sobredo

Actors:

Angelina Sobredo as Julia

Sahvay Limtiaco as Sahvay

Anthony Santos as Anthony

Daehoon Kwok as Daehoon

Riae Ahn as Riae

Wendy Wang as Mom

Editing: Angelina Sobredo

Camera:

Anthony Santos, Sahvay Limtiaco, Daehoon Kwok, special thanks to Patrick Padilla for letting us borrow and teaching us how to use his Gimbal.

Music:

A Night Alone - Streams of Melody

Long Stroll - Kevin MacLeod

Wings - HOOKSOUNDS (Royalty Free Music)

Inspirational Flight – AshamaluevMusic

Link to *Before You Jump, Don't* :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DAQUZWkNVEc>

Script

THE SOUND OF WATERFALL AND WIND

EXT. - SIGUA FALLS - ON TOP OF THE HIKE

Heartbeat sound effects, ears ringing. Julia breathes deeply, getting ready to jump down the waterfall. Blackout.

INT. - HOME - AFTERNOON - LIVING ROOM - MOM CONVERSATION

MOM

You need to think about real life.

JULIA

I am.

MOM

What are you going to do after college then?

JULIA

I'll just find part-time jobs in the meantime.

MOM

Do you think you can make a living out of that? Can you cover your rent? Your phone bills?

JULIA

I just said for now.

MOM

You should get another major.

(Julia's inner monologue plays while her mom is talking.)

JULIA

(In her head)

I understand why she's worried, but I wish she could just trust me more.

MOM

So are you going back?

JULIA

Julia stares at her mom in silence. She turns back and goes into her room.

INT. - HOUSE - BEDROOM

Julia looks visibly frustrated. She sits on her bed and starts texting Sahvay to pick her up.

JULIA

Are you busy right now?

SAHVAY

No, why?

JULIA

Could you pick me up?

EXT. - SUBWAY - SUBWAY

Julia and Sahvay get to order their sandwiches. They sit in their car and laugh. Julia looks happier to be out of the house. *Sahvay talks about taking it one day at a time*

SAHVAY

So what's wrong?

JULIA

Nothing it's just my mom asking me about my major. Like, I get that she's worried about me and how I'm going to support myself. But right now, I really don't know and I don't have any plans. And it's just overwhelming.

SAHVAY

Yeah, I get it. She's not wrong for worrying about you but at the same, you're still young and you have time to think about it. No need to pressure you. The future is farther than you think. You should just make memories and take it day by day. If you focus so much on what you need to do in the future, you miss out on what you have now.

JULIA

Yeah... you're right.

SAHVAY

Like there's so much to do since you're back on Guam. We can go snorkeling and play volleyball. Where else...

JULIA

And hike Sigua Falls.

SAHVAY

Yeah, we always talk about going but we haven't yet.

JULIA

Yeah... there's so much that I should be doing now.

(In her head)

Sahvay's right... I need to focus on what is in front of me now.

INT. - HOUSE - BEDROOM

Julia goes home and opens her journal. She writes down a list of activities she wants to do at home: volleyball, snorkel, motorcycle, see mushroom rocks and jump off Sigua Falls.

EXT. - YPAO BEACH - TABLE

Julia is sitting with Sahvay. Daehoon walks in. *Daehoon talks about new experiences being exciting rather than scary*

JULIA

Well, would you look who it is?

SAHVAY

Where were you?

DAEHOON

Just stopped by the gym.

SAHVAY

Wow that's what we should be doing

JULIA

Oh right, weren't you planning on moving to Hawaii?

DAEHOON

Yeah, I wanted to get a job there, hopefully, this upcoming Spring.

JULIA

You've never lived there before right? Aren't you scared of going to a completely new place?

DAEHOON

No, I think it's exciting. It'll be difficult at first getting used to the place and meeting new people but it's also fun.

JULIA

Do you know what else is fun? Going on a hike to Sigua with us.

DAEHOON

Yeah, I'm down to go hike but are you planning on jumping from the top.

SAHVAY

I will if you guys will.

DAEHOON

Just be careful. Last time I went I fainted while going down. I had a phobia of heights that time and just belly-flopped down.

JULIA

(Julia looks worried and stays silent)

SAHVAY

(Points at a car)

Is that Riae?

DAEHOON

I think it is.

EXT. - YPAO BEACH - VOLLEYBALL

Scenes of Daehoon, Julia, Sahvay, Riae playing volleyball.

EXT. - FISH EYE - SNORKELING

Shots of Fish Eye. Sahvay, Riae, Julia go onto the floating boat area and sit down.
Riae talks about making mistakes and learning from them

JULIA

What have you been doing with all this free time?

RIAE

Most just working out and focusing on myself. Yesterday I did glutes, I went hiking, and now I'm here snorkeling. Honestly, I'm just high on life.

SAHVAY

High on life, I love that.

RIAE

Life is too short to be worrying about making mistakes. I think you should just go for it. I mean, you're eventually going to make mistakes but as long as you learn from them then why not?

EXT. - TANGUISSON BEACH - MUSHROOM ROCKS

Anthony and Julia find a spot to sit down in front of mushroom rocks. Julia throws a rock into the water. *Anthony talks about taking all opportunities presented*

JULIA

Do you know if Rona and Philip are going back in the Spring?

ANTHONY

I'm not sure, everyone's plans are up in the air. But hearing them plan to leave makes me want to go somewhere too.

JULIA

Why?

ANTHONY

Staying home is...I don't know, do you want to stay?

JULIA

I do like being home but I'm too comfortable here. I don't exactly have anything to do, especially with my career.

ANTHONY
You're still doing acting?

JULIA
Yeah, I want to go back soon.

ANTHONY
Then why don't you?

JULIA
(She pauses to think)
I don't know. I guess I'm afraid of failing.

ANTHONY
I think you should. I regretted for the past years all the opportunities I didn't take. If you can then you should. I think people look back and regret the opportunities they didn't take rather than the mistakes they made.

EXT. - AROUND GUAM - MOTORCYCLE SCENE

Julia is riding behind a scooter with her dad.

EXT. - SIGUA FALLS - THE HIKE

-it's okay to not know, be thankful for those around you

-keep planning, keep dreaming

-have fun, don't let opportunities pass

-before you jump don't be fearful about the warnings, sometimes fear can stop you

Actor's Portfolio

The Hell House Musical (Independent Project)

Written, Directed, Produced Duane Joseph Olson

Music Directed by Ethan Brown Jones

Music Arranged by Dennis S. Mowers

Choreography by Erin Degnan

Assistant Choreography Claudia Swidzinski

Stage Managed by Cayleigh Hearth

Associate Producer Nakai Falcon

Location: The Southside Theater at SUNY Purchase

Showdates: March 9th and 10th 2018



I was part of the ensemble and my character's name was Kit Kat. Ensemble characters were allowed to create their own character. We met up twice a week to learn the dances and songs. A video of the full production is available on Youtube.

<https://youtu.be/ddiWZCrYDzI>

Austentation (Senior Project)
Written By Virginia Edinger
Directed By Lauren DeLeon
Location: Humanities Theater
Showdates: April 19 & 20 2018

My role was costume and props. When there were quick outfit changes in between scenes I helped actors quickly get into their new costumes. I also helped set up the prop table by making sure props for each scene were put in the right place.





From left to right: Felicity Bell, Ashley Visker, Melina Finck, Virginia Edinger, and Anaela Hurt

Barefoot in the Park
Playwright: Neil Simon
Director: Ruthi Wasserman
Location: Southside Theater
Showdates: April 18th 2019 at 7:30pm



Actors in the photo: Chris and Keymer

I was a crew member in this production. I helped put the stage together in Southside and did scene changes.