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Reflection on Participating in the 2016 Senior Play: *The Secrets in the Wings*

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### Senior Play Reflection

In my last year in college, I am honored to join the graduation production. About two years ago, I joined Annual Play of 2015; in the play, I was a member of accounting group. It was my very first time to participate in a real play. Before it, I only joined one play which was mini play of Introduction to Literature Class. In the mini play, I was stage manager which was believed to be an extremely important role in a play. However, at that time, I was so young that I did not learn much about how a play was designed and how it should be going. Therefore, in Annual Play of 2015, with the lead of the Professor and school brothers and sisters, I gradually understood what a play was really like, especially the administration part. As a member of accounting group, I learned how to decide how the budget should be used, like how to manage money and how to prevent it from overspending. Thanks to my group leader, Eva, I learned many skills which were not only about accounting, but also things like arrangement. Moreover, during the process, I could have chances to observe how a play was composed, which was also something fresh to me.

Following, in my third year, I participated in Senior Play of 2015. In the play, I turned to join in property team, which was definitely different from the previous experience. For the property, we had to join the composition of the play. Beginning with reading the script, we had to collect and design what property to be used in different scenes. During the rehearsal, we had to practice with the actors as most property was put on the stage by them, and we were the ones who should remind them of the timing. However, it seemed to be an easy thing for most people, but for me, at that time I barely had a concept about a play, so it became a difficult job for me. Thanks to my members and my group leader, we successfully finished the play. This could be seen as my first time that I participated in the production of a play.

Then, I became a senior. With the previous experience in the Senior Play, I had decided that I had to join Senior Play which belonged to us gradulators. Therefore, in June of 2016, some volunteers of my classmates started the audition of crew. At that time, I signed up for the coordinator position because I thought I was capable of it, and I then became the coordinator. Following, we decided how to select the script and the director. We came up with an idea that those who would like to be the director should propose a script and everyone who wanted to join the production would vote, and decide who the director was. Unfortunately, we made the wrong call, which I believed to be a mistake that should be avoided in the future. We, in the beginning, asked people to vote for the script and the director separately since there were some scripts proposed by people who did not have desire to be the director. However, the result showed that we had a director but his script was not chosen, and he thought that he did not really know the chosen script much because it was even his idea. Therefore, we then vote again and people chose the other director then. I think it was something that we had missed in the very beginning, and we were so sorry to the first chosen director no matter what damage we had caused to him.

Perhaps we could say the process was like “Before the first wave subsides, a new wave rises.” We initially had a vice coordinator who was supposed to work with me. Nonetheless, after one or two meetings, she decided to drop out. I was so sorry for the whole incident because I believed that it happened because we had less communication with each other and we really did not talk much before she dropped. By the incident, I sort of lost a good friend too, and I believe if it happens again in the future, I will try harder to communicate with my coworkers, and of course no matter how it ends, I will respect them.

Meanwhile, some alike things had happened among the three main leaders of the play, who were the director, the stage manager, and I. The director was in charge

of managing actors, the stage manager was in charge of managing technique groups, and I was in charge of managing administration groups including art and design group, the publicity group, and also the budget. In fact, the director and I were not familiar with each other so well before this cooperation. Therefore, in the beginning of the meetings, we did not really communicate with each other; rather, we did what we thought was right before asking others' opinions. At that time, I deeply believed that the show was going to be ruined because of us even if we barely started preparing. Fortunately, we got help from the director, Laura, from last year's play. She talked to me and the director separately, and found out that everything bad happened because we did not talk with each other. Therefore, she strongly suggested that we should try to work and talk with each other despite the fact that we thought we did. Ever since then, every time when I needed to make decisions about the play, I asked the director and the stage manager's opinions. By doing so, I believed that we made a team work and solved the problems together.

Then, we decided the people of the crew, and also the actors. Thanks for everyone who had helped us in the process, so that we were able to have a nice start with little experiences. Mentioned above, I was in charge of managing the publicity and the art and design group. Therefore, I had to make sure that every movement corresponded to the schedule, which means that they had to make a schedule first. It involved other groups' schedule since all teams had to work with others in order to create the most efficient working way. Unfortunately, during the process, it was discovered that some predicted schedule could not successfully correspond to the schedule because of delay and many reasons. Still, I believed that it related to communication. Because of lacking communications, numbers of accidents and errors occurred during the process, but it was hardly to make the situation better because people usually believed they did not do anything wrong. I think this was one of the

most important things I learned from the production. Luckily, although bad things kept happening, most members used their knowledge to solve the troubles wisely, which was also another learning opportunity for me.

Finally, it was the day of the play. As usual, like what I said, bad things happened. On the first day, I came to the theater late because of my part time job. When I got there, I noticed the publicity group was using tapes in the theater during the rehearsals. During the break, the professor, Derrick, mentioned directly that he believed the noise made by the tapes was very rude and disrespectful for others in the rehearsal. It could be seen as my fault because I thought that they already had the permission and when I saw them doing it, I should stop them immediately. Moreover, the professor even pointed out that he thought it happened because three leaders, the director, the stage manager and I, failed to have enough communications, and he did not see the crew work as a team. I was stunned as he could see the problem among the crew so easily, and we never tried to fix it at all. Therefore, we had another meeting, and decided again that we should respect others especially in the theater.

The first performance ended successfully, but not perfectly. I could notice that some audiences were not satisfied with the performance. I think how the audiences reflected could not hurt me much but they could hurt the actors and the crew very much and easily because they were in the play. However, they were not beaten, but everyone worked harder and paid more attention to it. On the second day, the actors and the crew practiced scenes they did not do well on the previous day more than ten times. Undoubtedly, they did well in the second play, which was kind of revenge for their first performance. Following the third performance, everything ended perfectly as some part in us were transformed. In the end, what I got from the play was not just a lot of arrangement skills, and also what other members taught me. For example, the stage manager, Laura, was someone who could finish one thing very efficiently and

perfectly, but I was not. So from her, I learned how to finish something fast and well. She was one of my good friends, and this play made her also my idol.

Time flew, and six months had passed. From the very beginning to the end, everyone was learning from others. And I think I had things I had to reflect. For instance, I had problems of procrastination, so I tended to finish my tasks in the last moment. Sometimes it seemed fine because I still accomplished my missions successfully. However, if the content of my stuff had error, I did not have much time to fix it.

In addition, I felt that I was too confident in myself because I sometimes thought what I was doing and what I believed were always right. Truths proved me wrong, and I still had a lot to learn before I became a better person. I am glad that I signed up for the production, and I enjoyed everything ups and downs during the process. Things that I considered to destroy me never succeeded. Perhaps aside from blaming myself all the time, I still had to have some faith in myself, because that was exactly what made one stronger.

