

天主教輔仁大學英國語文學系學士班畢業成果
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT, FU JEN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY
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Reflection on Participating in the 2017 Senior Play:
All in the Timing

學生：范傳鈞撰

Austin Chuan-Chun Fan

Austin's Graduation LOD

Senior Play—All In The Timing



2017 fall

Position: Actor (Fluff, Gus)

Performing date: 5,6,8 January 2018

Director: Rita Liu

Instructor: Jun-Zhan Wei

Austin's Graduation LOD Senior Play—All In The Timing

The story began with a college boy who has never thought one day he would be stepping on the stage, performing a whole play with his best teammates on Earth. Yeah, it was me, Austin, about to graduate from English Department in Fu Jen Catholic University. Throughout the four-year journey spent in English Department, the most impressive feature is beyond questions, our Senior Play. And without further ado, let's stay with me and go through my magic journey in Senior Play.

In fall 2017, I got the information about the recruit of a senior play performance online. To be honest, I had been fascinated with the magic power of the theater since I played in the Annual Play in spring 2017. However, senior play seemed to be a greater challenge for me not just because I used it as my graduation project, no! but because it was a precious opportunity to cooperating with my classmates who spent four years accompanying me through so many difficulties. But that's another story. Anyway, I signed up for the audition, and luckily I got chosen to play two characters in senior play. It was that exciting moment that my actor's life got started.

In the play, I had two beautiful characters, Paul but later changed to Fluff in Seven Menus and Gus in Long Ago and Far Away. They are both weird and maybe even more weird than you think! But in order to fit in the characters, you HAD TO become them! Let's start with how to get along well with Fluff. He was a 20 year old teenager, maybe his made up age, floating in the field of booty calls and not-that-romantic romances. Okay I know it's still vague, but to put it simply, he was a just jerk who hung out with people he didn't love but still slept and made love with them. How about that? But it was that kind of characteristic that I fell so deeply in love with him. It was just amazing, wasn't it? But here came the problem...I had never had such bed-shaking event before, how could I become Fluff. Ha! It was easy to tell you the truth if you find out how harsh Gus was later! Fluff was kind of arrogant and didn't give Barry and Dawn a sh*t when they hung out. Also, he didn't believe true love and permanent successful life; he was like, "uh,how come people love to suffer themselves from dedicating to their lives? Life is like, listen kid, you wake up and eat and sleep and eat and sex,

and again, sleep! What a heaven! (send a flying kiss to you) ” If you happened to notice that Fluff was the only character that showed up in only one scene, which fit his image of a passenger of a lifetime. Think about it, how many people would you encounter and lost in connection in the end? Numberless. Therefore, the moment being Fluff, I had always thought every person was destined to be in your life, no matter who the ~~hell~~ he was, just grab it and don't let him or her slip out meaninglessly. Oh one more thing, if you meet Fluff, tell him I say hello!



Fluff...3Fs(evil smile)

Let's meet my another friend, Gus, he had married with Laura (before she disappeared...). He was a fun person to be with, and he always told you bad jokes with his exaggerating body gestures; however, these all were meant to make you happy! Very sweet huh? But his wife Laura was not a big fan of these jokes, and even played “ghost” with him, poor Gus... What Gus impressed me was the ups and downs of his emotions. In the beginning of Long Ago and Far Away, he was incredibly delightful since he and his wife were finally approaching “happy days”, which in Gus' language was moving to a new apartment downtown; however, Laura didn't think that it was so-called better days. They had a fierce fight where Gus started to gain anger while he still pleased and persuaded his wife. This part was so hard for me to play since I seldom become furious or yelling at someone; plus here I needed to present not only anger but also stressfulness and hopelessness, and a little bit self-doubt. With so many emotions howling in mind, Gus was like a little desperate kid, trying to persuade his mom to buy him a transformer robot. I know it sounds not that harsh to play Gus, so I'm about to disclose the rehearsals!

With the official performing days approaching, I nearly went for rehearsal every day and night because I knew only if I practiced much, I could handle one tenth of Gus. Indeed, you don't see it wrong. Playing Gus was the biggest challenge and difficulty in my college life since I, Austin, was totally different from Gus. Oh maybe our sense of humor could be familiar but overall from every aspect I was not mature enough, either age or life experiences. I remembered the first time I played Gus, and I had no ideas what this middle-aged man would think of or was going to do. I was speaking up the lines like a numb stiff without emotions from the bottom of my heart. On seeing me playing like this, our teacher, Jun-Zhan, stopped me in the middle and told me to start from the beginning. I would always remember that moment, disappointed and helpless, and this was the first time I was being blamed about my acting skills. I like to mimic others' gestures or voices, but this time, it took both mind and body to succeed acting a role, not just learn the way how they spoke or gestured. From then on, I knew it was gonna be a tough winter for me...

After many times of rehearsal, my teacher and play director Rita still saw no differences and improvements on me. They were confused and so was I. I just could not interpret the feelings of Gus with his life experiences and his versatile emotions. In addition, I was afraid of opening my mind and body to try new things, so Rita asked our school sisters and brothers to help us during the rehearsals. They were all great experienced directors or actors/ actresses, and they did give some useful advice on how to better explore Gus' depth. One important thing was to organize the "subtext" in mind before acting every little movement. First I had to be packed with different thoughts like why Gus said things in this mood, why Gus turned back from Laura, or why Gus was yelling at Laura, etc. Second, I needed to organize them into a reasonable order in my mind and let these subtexts lead me to actions instead of memorizing the lines and speaking out loudly, which was not going to work out!



F...Fireplace!

I should also give tons of thanks to my best partner, Irene, who played Laura in Long Ago and Far Away. She was like me, possessing the great passion about plays and theater but lack of training of the acting skills. Besides she was a sophomore which meant we did not know each other before senior play, so we didn't cooperate well in the beginning. However, as we practiced more and more, we got to know each other and even became the best friend in the theater! That was totally amazing! While behind the scene, we often played a game in which we were Cantonese and about to move to Shanghai due to an accident. In the end of season one, we were going to persuade our mother to lend us some money and meanwhile looked for a decent and affordable apartment in Shanghai, and just then, we heard that our neighbor, Wang, was captured in Xinjiang! The scene stopped on our confusing faces and "to be continued" just showed up. Anyway, it was the relaxing moment for us to shed the heavy pressure of acting and also a boost to gain better acquaintance of both of us. Till now, I still appreciated her efforts on Long Ago and Far Away because during the rehearsal this scene was always less complete and prepared than other three scenes. To fix that, Irene and I always supported each other and made the best use of our limited time to practice as much as we could. Although we often felt disappointed and defeated after rehearsals, we still overcome the stress and made it on the stage eventually. So proud of us, really!



3,2,1, A big hug for Irene!!

Speaking of my great partners, I would like to thank our play director Rita and my acting tutor Charveil. During the rehearsals, they tried their best to guide us and shared their experiences and thoughts, which truly helped a lot before really getting into the scene. In addition, they often arranged their time for us just to discuss about the subtexts of the texts or give us some warm-up tasks to explore more depths of the characters. Most importantly,

during the whole time they kept supporting and encouraging us not to give up. Indeed, if we gave up that time, I will not sit here and tell you the story right now! Looking back at our senior play from now, I still cannot believe we did it! I would like to thank all of the members in the crew since the victory belongs to all of us!

Out of curiosity, I just read my handbook again and saw so many marks and lines on it. Every mark stands for a special meaning, and every line takes me even further. Those memories suddenly come up to my mind, like the iron forest, the starfish warm-up exercise, the laughs in the make-up room, and the most vivid, the moment we shoulder to shoulder, hand to hand, yelling for encouragement before the show officially started. And that moment, everything was just worthy. Now I am about to graduate from English Department, and maybe I will not have such opportunity to perform on stage in the future, I still want to thank Rita for choosing me to play Gus and Fluff. Although the two haunted me every night and made me so stressful that I could barely sleep well, I still had a great time colliding with them, struggling with them, and finally improving with them. My name is Austin, and thank you for coming to our senior play.

