

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 2019 Annual Play –  
*Vinegar Tom***

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LOD - Annual Play Reflection

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### **Where Everything Begins**

Everything begins at the winter of 2015, when I was only a college freshman sitting in the SF Theatre watching the play *How I Learn to Drive*. Before this, the field of theatre is as skeptical as magic, it's sometimes confusing yet enchanting. As a freshman, I had no experience sitting in an actual theatre watching an actual play, not to mention having any idea of how a play is conducted, how actors should deliver their lines, and how all the cues work. However, *How I Learn to Drive* had without a doubt opened my eyes and mind, and ignited a small flame of theatre art in my heart. And since then, it has burned into a fireball that made most of my four years of college life devoted in theatre. A place I missed the most after graduation.

“This is what I told my colleague when I was sitting down there, ‘The person over there is Dan. He is a potential actor with good sense and incredible ideas, and his understanding of beauty on stage is phenomenal.’” This is what my theater advisor Derrick Wei, my once and for all idol, said to me after the curtain call of 2017 Senior Play. I was the lighting design for that year's Senior Play, and for the year before that, I was one of the actors, and that's how my four-year theatre career starts to take wing. In the winter of 2016, I was lucky enough to be selected as one of the actors for that year's senior play *Secrets in the Wings*. All the other actors and actresses were all seniors, as you can imagine how intimidating I was surrounded by so many school sisters and brothers. I was so afraid that my ignorance and lack of knowledge could cause disasters. Fortunately, the director Autumn Tsai, she was really kind and patient, she will never flame us if we did stupid things, instead she is always so encouraging and inspiring. All of the actors including me had a really great time working together. Four months later, we had our debut. Despite some setbacks, the play was a success, I tear myself on stage several times. Among all the

compliments I received and the family we had become, I knew in my heart this theatre thing is a true passion that I crave to have more.



( 2016 Senior Play *Secrets in the Wings*)

### **Becoming a Director**

The idea of becoming a director started from the preparation of 2018 Senior Play *The Wonderful World of Dissocia*. Seven was the director of the play and one of my best friends, he chose me as his stage manager to help with forming this team and leading all the crews. Started from summer vacation, Seven and I spent a lot of time discussing through phone about which script we're going to choose and how we are going to select and form this team. We literally started everything from scratch, and it was so inspiring and exciting to witness a 50-person team was formed from nothing and started to work together. That sense of achievement make me want to dream bigger, and that urge makes me want to become a director one day.

I love acting on stage and become the spotlight of the theatre. However, since 2017, I began to work behind the stage, as a lighting design in 2017 Senior Play *All in the Timing*. A lot of people asked me why I didn't choose to attend the audition, they told me that I would definitely be selected. To be honest, the answer to that question, I still don't have a clue. But I am glad I chose a different route. Becoming a lighting design, I started to get more familiar with more technical things, that includes how lighting conductor works, how to adjust light so that there will be absolutely no dark spot on actors' faces,

and how to coordinate with stage manager as well as other crew teams. During my leisure time in the theatre I often play with the lighting conductor, and explored what different lighting effects this machine was capable of, and what might be used in this play. The director of 2017 Senior Play, Rita Liu, she loved what I was doing, she often found the color I created and effects I suggested, were actually incredible. Soon I realized that I have talent in creating images on stage, I am sensitive to how colors can be displayed, and how sound effects and lighting effects can be blended. I found out that I was not only good at this, but I really enjoy myself while doing all these. I know I can do something bigger.



(2017 Senior Play *All in the Timing*)

During the summer of 2018, I agreed to become the stage manager of the following senior play *The Wonderful World of Dissocia*. I knew I was familiar with both acting and most of the technical teams, I was confident I could do well. Start from the preparation, before any rehearsal was held, my partner Helen and I had already have a blueprint of how the stage will look like and how lighting and sounds should work to its favor. However, immediately, we encountered a tremendous setback that had never happened before. We were forced to change our script. Suddenly, everything becomes a disaster. Thanks to Helen and all the hard-working crews, we managed to pull back on track with only two months remaining. Technically, we even raised the bar so high that had exceeded any other year of senior play had ever conducted. We combined the projector, lighting effects, sound effects, and two equipped

factory-used fans, in creating a sky-fighting scene. In the end, CFF Theatre even came to take pictures of our stage, hoping to use it as a sample of how stage can be designed throughout simple cubes and pallets. After having the experience of stage manager, I knew I had equipped well enough and was ready to become a director.



(The set of 2018 Senior Play *The Wonderful World of Dissocia*)



( 2018 Senior Play *The Wonderful World of Dissocia*)

Annual play was the only shot I had to become a director before I graduate. I am really grateful that Dr. John chose me out of the other three as the director of 2019 Annual Play. My theatre career was then completed as an actor, technical team member, stage manager, and a director. Directing was not any easy job. I read a lot of books and counselled a lot of advisors of how to lead and organized a team, as

well as guiding the actors and discuss the script with them. I spent two weeks playing theatre games and exercises with the actors, a good actor have to know how to manipulate their body and limbs well, moreover, all of the five senses should be wide open and try to include as much information as one can receive. All of the above acquires solid practices. This year I was lucky enough to have a group of experienced, talented, and hard-working actors, it was a dream team! Working with these actors were the best days of my college life. We practiced three times a week, and five times a week one month before performing. I not only hear no complaints from them, but the discussion between us were mutual and efficient. Started from analyzing the script to detailed blockings, the atmosphere was so positive and interesting. Not only that, the crews were also working hard and efficient, thanks to the help of Ashley and Irene as the stage managers. I could believe this team I was having was that good and nearly perfect. I was so grateful. In the end the play also turns out to be a great success, several professors even came back to see the play again. One thing that I think I should have done better, is the communication between our advisor Dr. John. Sometimes we made our own decision without counselling him, and that results in some misunderstandings between us. In the end, Dr. John still respected our decision and gave us a lot of freedom to do what we like, and I really thank him for everything.

Days I spent in theatre, were the best memories I have about my college life. It changed me, lifted me, and encouraged me to chase after what I am passionate about. Sad that four-year-college life has come to an end, but the journey of my life has just begun.

