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**Reflection on Participating in the 2018 Senior Play: *The Wonderful World of Dissocia***

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Reflection on 2018 Senior Play – The Wonderful World of Dissocia



Acting in Senior Play has long been one of my goal during my college life. When I first watched the senior play- *How I Learn to Drive* in my freshman year, I was totally amazed by the performances and stage. Theatre is like a magical world created by a group of dedicated and enthusiastic people. Each rehearsal could bring the new inspiration. Every settings on the stage helps create an imaginative world. In the theatre, there is no day and night, lighting could make everything happen with those gorgeous lights which are combined with different colors. From this 3-month-journey, I have learned and gained much more than I expected. Here's my story for being an actor in the play. Those stressful, intense, joyful, touching, and passionate moments I have been through give me this unforgettable journey in my college life.

This is my first time being an actor. Acting is actually much more complicated

than I thought before. The preparation before each play takes time, effort, and teamwork. Thanks to our director, Seven, has helped me a lot for acting, my body language, and my projection of voice. First, I would like to talk about the warm-up activity we did before every rehearsal. Seven has come up with many warm-up activity for all the actors. These activities are funny and also helpful for acting. One of the most impressive one for me is that he asks us to imitate an animal. We have to imitate that animal to do several things, for instance, interacting with others, praying for God, or becoming the leader of the group. The interesting and also the hard part of this activity is that we have to actually become that animal, which means we have to keep mimicking that animals for about 40 minutes. In that activity, I choose to be a seal. That is a hard choice cause I turn out to lie on the ground and keep yelling for 40 minutes. That is really exhausting. Another activity that we did is that we are all required to close our eyes. We are only allowed to interact with people through sense of touch. We have to explore the environment with our eyes closed. Then Seven would ask us to find a partner. We have to sense that partner with touching, and smelling to recognize who that partner is. At the end, we will all gather together and become a big group of people. It's like we all become an individual. This activity could really calm people down. Whenever I was tired of my school work, or struggled by other annoying stuff, I always gain calm and peace after these activity. These activities may sound a little pointless about the play, but it does help with the actor's mood and body. Before I experience these processes, I wouldn't have understood.



In this play, I have 3 characters to play, they are Insecurity Guard, Laughter, and Dr. Faraday. Let's talk about Insecurity first. Before the final presentation on the play,

this character has been through several edited. In the plat, they are two insecurity guard. They work at the gate of the world of Dissocia. Their job is to check whether emigrates bring any prohibited items into Dissocia. They are like the twins in the Alice of the Wonderland. Insecurity guards are more like friends than colleagues. In the first version, the two insecurity guards are portrayed like a gay and a straight guy. By comparing these totally two different characteristic, it should be very dramatic. However, in this version, we couldn't express "insecurity" of them. Therefore, this version is abandoned. Then, here comes the final version, which is also the one we present on the play. We act like a pair of twins. To be like a pair of twins, the two insecurity guards have to act in a similar way, including the voice, tone, and body language. To help us become more "twins," Seven lets us practice an activity called "Mirror." In this game, Dean who plays the role of another Insecurity Guard, and I have to imitate each other's movement. By doing this, Dean and I would gradually notice each other's breathe, and moving pattern. Therefore, this could help us perform more like a pair of twins. Beside body language, another big problem is the voice. My voice is a bit higher than him. To adjust to the same tone, I have to lower my voice and project my lines. At first, I had a tough time projecting my lines. It is hard for me to pronounce the words and lower my voice at the same time. My pronunciation would be unclear if I put too much stress on lower my voice. Therefore, it takes more

practice to play this role. In this play, Insecurity Guard is in charge of making audiences laugh. Sometimes, it's harder to make audience laugh than cry. I remember the lecture that our instructor, Hegel Tsai, told us, "don't try too hard and be natural." This really helps me a lot. When I want to make audience laugh, I used to consider that just be more dramatic, it often works. However, in fact, sometimes, it doesn't work. Being dramatic is not only one way to perform on the stage. On the stage, the most important thing is to become that character.



“I tend to just laugh and hope it fits. It fits more things than not, I find.” This is from my second character, Laughter. In *Dissocia*, he is at the hot dog stand to help



Britney hide the secret from Lisa. He seems like a normal customer at the stand, however, he is actually a retired soldier. This character is quite challenging for me. First, he always

laugh at the awkward moment. I have to burst into laughing and laugh like it's really funny even though there's nothing funny about it. When we rehearse this part of play, I often wonder whether I couldn't laugh or laugh too much that I couldn't help myself stop laughing. Though no one blame me for wasting the rehearsal time, it's still not appropriate to lose control of my laugh. On the last day of the play, something unexpected happens. At the hot dog stand, we have to eat the real hot dog and pretend that it's really gross to eat. At the same time, I have to burst into laughing when the moment comes. On that day, the hot dog is hard to swallow because it becomes a bit too dry. Then when I had a hard time chewing and trying to swallow that bite of hot dog, it's time to burst into laughing. Therefore, even though I haven't finished that bite of hot dog, I started to laugh. Unfortunately, a slice of hot dog just spitted out of



my mouth and stick it on my lips. I was a bit frightened because it's quite obvious that there is a small part of hot dog dangling on my lips. Fortunately, I suck it right away after my laughing. Some audience and crew member still witness this accident but they all think it's even funnier. There is another accident happened in the last two rehearsal before the play. Laughter will turn into a solidier to protect Queen Sara. The key that his identity transform is



that I will have a crew member from custom to give me a sword and a cope. On that day, I tend to act like a superhero so I shake my sword. At that time, that sword just broke into two pieces. It is too ridiculous and tragic that cause all the actors just couldn't help themselves and laugh on stage. That was both the most tragic and impressive rehearsal. Beside these funny accidents, I have learned a lot when I play this role. I learn to control my voice. To project the voice, especially on the stage, it is important to be clear and loud. To project your voice loudly, you have to learn to use your "dantien" rather than throat. During the three presentations of the play, I didn't make a great use of my "dantien," therefore, my voice cracked for several times.

This is my first time being an actor. I used to consider that actor and actress is the most tiring position in a play. However, actor is a tired job, but it is also the most beloved one. It is hard to imagine that there are about 30 to 40 people working for you with all their heart. Once I broke the sword, the property give me a new one on the very next day. Once I need to become some else, the costume and make-up team help

me with their gorgeous make-up and clothes. They even sacrifice their chance to watch the play but to stay in back stage for the whole time. As for lighting and sound effect team, what they have done helps all the actors and audience to be attracted to the world of Dissocia. Without them, this imaginary world would not have existed. Not to mention the publicity team who helps us raise the fund; translation team translate the lines to help audience understand, everyone in the crew member matters. In the end, I would like to appreciate those people who have helped us. A play is a teamwork. It is really blessed and honored to be an actor. Dissocia will be one of the most impressive memory in my college's life.

