Thursday Night - August 19, 2021 w/ Mike

Superbad 1st time

Kristin: I feel like we could’ve rehearsed a little more but honestly I was pleasantly surprised that what she was saying was hitting me. I was worried I didn't have anything but it was fun. It was our first time doing it with Zach and Greg. I would’ve felt more prepared. (Part of the magical thing was the surprise of them. The brilliance lends itself to the unpolished aspect.) Process- I was trying to not aim and just let it flow. I had so much resistance working on it.. our first scene went so well. I thought it was hilarious and precious how we reworked it so I was hesitant to work on it bc it’s so funny. (It does feel like it’s aged up but not to where you’re at maturity wise.) They’re just not as mature as us. We changed it so much that we don’t have a script. I was trying to come up with scenes prior to this scene so I didn’t flesh them out. I’m still shaking and changing what happened, trying to justify stuff. I think I just need to write down the outline of what’s fully happening. I think that’s probably why I was having a hard time. I didn’t have a script to read.

Recall: Everything your’e doing is working beautifully and you understand the comedy of it. The only thing I’d say is I’m not surprised it was hard to sit down and work on. The keys to belief would’ve nailed it down to you. You’re responsible for grounding it but you’re also funny so you’re not just the straight man. You gotta be disciplined. I think you’re pretty disciplined but in certain situations you slip. You need to lock down the specifics of the relationship between you two. What I said to her applies to you too about being too precious. At some point in the process you have to sit down and take a look at. When you do it again, it’ll be totally different.

Storie: I’ve wanted to do Superbad but have been scared for years. It’s weird to say that “vagina” but I don’t talk like this to my friends. It’s a very vulnerable place and I fucked myself bc I thought there’d be a break for some reason. There was a moment when I wasn’t in the scene rather than being focused on what happened.. I wasn’t ready to start and kicking myself when no one laughed. There’s also nothing on stage to react to. I got a few laughs in the beginning but thought we were drowning. When we’re in rehearsal and no one is in front of me then I feel full of myself. Normally I’m fine. This is the same critique that I get from every acting teacher.

Recall: I saw that you weren’t ready to go on so your adrenaline shot up and so the first 30 seconds of the scene was hard to decipher. Here’s the lesson in this… The guys, the party, HR, Greg peeing in his pants… if you slow down and take in the reality and make sure it’s landing on her, then it’ll hit us and ground you and breathe, then you get traction and it’s gold. You fly by the seed of your pants like a champ, but plus that you doing a little bit of homework and making it real for yourself, then you can’t be wrong and get off track bc you’re grounded in circumstance. I love what happened here and there’s nothing to be embarrassed about. There are always times in your life when you’re not ready and fuck up but be a pro about it and take a second/stop the scene. You have so much talent and with discipline you are going to be unstoppable. Do your own homework and your own circumstances, no Jonah Hill, make it personal to you, that’s what you’re needing to do. In tv and film, there’s no rehearsal. It helps with process and alerts things to you that don’t feel good. The environment wasn’t real for you guys. I want you to win in the way by doing the work. The scene was a huge success but I’m offering something different. It’s your art and your superpower. You’re brilliant at it but I want to add a little foundation and discipline. I’m not interested in beating you up, all I’m interested in… DEAL- try something new, cut out time everyday, discipline yourself out and do texting and believe in yourself, and if it doesn’t make you feel sure of yourself then you can go back to doing what you did. I just want to see you give it a shot. There’s no place where you need keys to belief than in comedy. The truth is whatever rage you have is your defense mechanism. You can make people laugh. For me, rehearsal tells me what I don’t have and it gets me out of my head. You don’t have rehearsal time on films so you have to come ready to play and have all your shit. Your scene was good, I’m just giving you tools.

Promising Young Woman 1st time

Sam, Recall: I got this guy and I’ve got his paradigm. I’m a pediatric surgeon. I remember her from school because she was at the top of the class. I’m single and dating and I fucking hate it. Seeing her again I gotta shoot my shot. (Does that ugly incident that went down a part of the scene?) No. To me this is just running into a college friend.

Critique: I thought you were upstage a little bit so I want to open it up a bit. I think that night that you went through, I want to see if any of that can bubble a little bit.

Recall #2: That note definitely gave me something to play with. This take I was more active and liked it better. (The guys that you’re playing are all very differentiated. I agree it was more active.)

Recall: #3 That was perfect. It was everything I wanted out of this shoot. It’s great writing, you see the whole movie on the page. You know exactly what you’re supposed to do when you read the scene so it was nice to do something different. (It was nice to shake it up a little bit and find the magic.)

Katie, Recall: I really connected with this piece when I saw it, I love the message of the piece. This character I feel the anger. That’s something I really focused on. With trauma it’s easy to hold onto the anger. Sometimes I think the friends are angrier than the actual victim because they don’t have the guilt. I just feel and empathize with her a lot. My prep was music and also planning what I was going to do tonight. Where I was going to go, how I was going to dress. I thought Sam was perfect for this and we haven’t worked together in so long. (This story specifically different from Blackbird?) Yes this time I wasn’t the victim. The main guy that assaulted Nina I haven’t thought about. In my mind all the guys in the club are her rapist. This guy brings her back into this group of friends. He’s the blast from the past. I have no feelings toward him but I am kind of watching myself.

Critique: I want to give you guys an undercurrent note. When he drinks the spit. I don’t know how you don’t consider at least that he’s not as evil as the rest. If he’s gonna pry you open down the road, let him be a little charming in some beat that you choose. I want to see if you can go further with that before you shut it down and give him the fake number.

Recall #2: I still feel good. I have fun in this scene, it’s just two people existing. There’s not a lot going on with their relationship. (Did the note speak to you?) Yeah. I think I am charmed. I’m not one to wear my heart on my sleeve but I am watching him the whole time. I don’t think she expects him to drink it at all.

Critique: I’m not sure you’re as open as I’d like you to be. I want to see how far you can go before going back to giving him the fake number. There’s more ground for you to cover here.

Recall #3: I think I was maybe a little too loose but it was fun. (The possibility of him of you guys, needs to be felt, needs to be explored. Obviously it’s not right and what you did the first time was more close to what it needs. It was a sloppy take but the looseness of it and the ability to play and not be careful, that’s what’s pro about it, that’s what’s important. I’m reminding you that when you go down the rabbit hole there’s also other possibilities.)

Cameron, “Pitch Perfect” (new)

Recall: I’m singing in the shower, it’s my alone time and she interrupts my moment. I’ve never sang with anyone before and that’s cool. The difficult part of the scene is I’m supposed to listen but I’m also really distracted and uncomfortable. (What’s the discovery?) That I’m someone worth listening to I guess. (And also like the whole accapella concept and she touches you. It’s fun, I'm connecting in a way I haven’t before. And maybe this is interesting. What about process?) It’s going good. I would visit the circumstances whenever I felt like it, some days I’d feel sad and go to different places and then I’d pocket it. I was trying not to overthink everything. I didn’t want to double, triple check myself. When I’m hear I’m focusing on her. (Your discomfort was clear and palpable. She’s a fish out of water, everyone at college feels weird. This is her only moment to be alone and enjoy the singing. Your moment to be alone.)

Critique: Sing out. She’s gotta discover you, your voice.

Recall #2:

Recall #3: I think at this point I’m like oh shit no one laughed, I’m not funny. And I’m expecting her to scare me. (You got a ton of laughs for being fake naked which got a lot of mileage. You got the laughs.) I’m saying I don’t need to feel shitty if I don’t get the laughs. I’m bothered that it bothers me. (I’m not looking for the laughs but how engaged are you guys with each other. Did you have a moment in the singing where you made a discovery and felt different after?) Yeah. And I felt more comfortable in the later takes. (You were having your moment. You were vulnerable tonight. I thought you were right where you needed to be. I thought you did a beautiful job with your prep.)

Nina, “Pitch Perfect” (new)

Recall: I’m doing fine, not bad. I feel more grounded in this scene. I feel like I’m present and being affected by her. I feel like I could’ve done more work on everything that leads up to this. I’m hooking up with someone in the shower and I hear her singing and need a replacement in the Bella’s. Anybody who can sing is fair game and earlier when we met she said she doesn’t sing. (Is the problem alive in you?) Yes and I was trying to hide that from her. (She solves a huge problem for you. And yes you can mask it but don’t just play the power end of it. It’s the solution to a giant problem.)

Critique: Wrangle her ass.

Recall #2: I felt weird at the end. I think that’s the discovery, like we sounded so good together. (That was her audition, you need her in the thing so that’s what makes this different than the beginning. You can’t let her go now.) I feel like I ended it weird. (You don’t have to do anything. Let her sing a little bit.)

Recall #3: Felt good. I just feel more grounded, Tuesday I was a mess. What I think it is, depression has been real this week and I think I brought it in a little today. (You brought in how you were feeling?) Yes. I let her feel this way, up until today I’ve felt like she always wears a mask. She has power but she kind of lets the others walk over her.

Critique: The idea of the Bella’s and their success and the problem that they have could be a bit more solid for you. Somewhere I’m wondering if you’re enjoying the process of discovery. She may be depressed or not, but you do know she has a problem. And I’m not sure it’s your personal problem yet. You have a ticker in your head that it’s going on too long. You’re coming in where the script says but I’ve over-ridden that. You’re not really inspired by her singing yet, you’re still thinking about too many other things. Forget that, listen to the song. Make sure the problem with the Bella’s is alive and real in you and let the music at the top and end be what it’s going to be and not about the cues.

Sam, “Pillowman” (new)

Recall: I’m feeling good. In my world the stories are more important than anything else. It was interesting to feel telling this story for the first time. I was telling it to him and I got lost in it a little which is good. I know that these stories are fucked up but that there’s little sprouts of positivity. The Pillowman is there for good. He’s trying to make the most of his time. (And only someone who understands that trauma can understand it.) And that’s why I have stories of the little green pig, there’s happiness to it. My discovery to his admission was different tonight. I didn’t really want to hear it tonight. I went into myself. I didn’t wanna push. I was trying to listen and figure out how I felt. It felt kind of shitty. Felt like I was just dancing alone over here. Overall it gave me a good appreciation for the core of this guy. (In terms of prep did you have the state?) It fell away. (I think the physical state throughout will help embed you in the environment.)

Critique: The story itself, it feels like when you wrote it, it feels different than how you told it tonight. When you were looking down you were kind of hiding a bit. When you look out you feel that energy. Giving up your eyes to the balcony it’s a scary thing but it also fills you with juice. I think the story itself can have discoveries for you. In terms of the final discovery I think the way you described it was beautiful. I do think you were swirling inside yourself but I don’t think you were connected to him. I feel like you were just catching up to yourself right at the end of the scene.

Brad, “Pillowman” (new)

Recall: We talked about some of the unknowns that I still kind of have. This week’s work I found more chunks that changed the beliefs I already had. So I was excited to get to this part and there’s still so much more after this. (How’s the homework on this piece? How do you do homework on someone that’s missing some cognitive abilities?) In the time that I discovered about my beliefs changing. I wanted to have concrete answers but I’m thinking in reality I have pieces of these beliefs and nuggets and trying to piece that together in my cognitively disabled mind. He’s allowed to kill our parents and shouldn’t I be allowed? All of these come together to justify why I’m doing it. And his stories told me, he read them to me. I feel good about that. It wasn’t all this vengeance thing, what I did to them was nothing that was done to me. (Doing the homework on it from Michael’s POV?) Yes. And again that feeling toward Aaron the little boy. (Is it connected to setting the children free or is it the work of someone that doesn’t understand cause and effect?) I think it’s more of the latter. (It seems to me, the title of the piece, I don’t know the answer it might be too simple.) I feel part of me working against the idea that I’m the Pillowman. I don’t think it’s as on the nose as I am the Pillowman. (When you met Aaron were you seducing him to kill him and set him free?) I wanted to try out the story and see how farfetched they are. I think there’s more to it, being mad at him for killing me in the story.

Critique: I think with a piece like this, it’s an onion. Sometimes the answers aren’t there, if you keep investigating it, like’s what makes it deeper for you. I love the child that you’ve found with the itchy ass and you’re the banality of evil. You really do inhabit that. Is it enough? I don’t know. I do think that at the end of the day there’s logic somewhere in this. There’s a line in this. I think if there’s a deeper reason behind it we’ll never know at the audience. For you, owning the secrets, is it enough for you or is there a deeper knowledge for you? It feels like in every scene I’ve seen, there’s so many layers going on and nothing is at it seems. It feels like this writer has so many themes. It’s a blackbelt play and sometimes the writer’s logic is one way and we find a different way. I want to know more of what’s going on with this guy. The itchy ass brought you into a helpless childlike state he clearly can’t function in an adult world. I thought it was amazing to see what you admitted. You committed to physical state. The child within you, the story so directly relates to you personally. I don’t know how much you’re thematically aware of but you are the pillowman. (I don’t know. I don’t think fully.) I respect that you’re still investigating it and I’m asking you to make a decision for next time. I want you to have answers. Why’d you do this? (Because I’m mad at him and he killed me in the story.) I don’t think it’s fully clear yet. I don’t feel like you know whether you have the answer yet. I see you digging deeper and not saying it’s black or white and that’s beautiful.