Thursday Night, Mike Teaching 10/14/21

Greg, “Rounders” (new)

Recall: I forgot going up first, I probably should’ve stayed back there longer. I can’t banter because you guys are talking. (If you feel like you need prep I agree standing on stage can be weird, if you notice it.) So the coming in felt a little weird but then I felt present with Malachi. Once I had to sell him, him being out affected me. (Are you selling him on your plan? These three separate games or are these your expectations?) That would be an interesting way to think about it. (You know his buttons. It’s up to you if it’s a master plan. Expectations are everything. ) I wanted to do this scene because I do get auditions for this hustler sketchy character and I don’t feel like I relate to it. It took a second but now I get this. It’s like a devil may care thing but I’m starting to understand the philosophy for sure. You can’t make it anywhere in life if you don’t have an angle. I like to prove my own philosophy true.

Recall: Beginning makes a lot more sense.

Recall: That last one was exhausting.

Critique: He’s always pushing. He can’t help himself. There’s an addiction going on and the belief you’re one hand away from glory.

Critique #3: I understood the beginning of the scene this time.

Malachi, “Rounders” (new)

Recall: I was looking up a lot of poker rules and what not. I’m doing alright. I feel like and it’s very general. I feel flat. I was trying to find my agenda. This scene, I pick him up and we’re driving home. Tha’ts my agenda picking him up, and I know that I'm gonna have to tell him. That’s what we do. I have to tell him I’m not playing anymore. I know there’s disappointment in that for him and also trying to do homework on the losing of the money. I need 30k to lose 30k. Those were areas I was struggling. As far as being connected to him, I felt connected. This is my first meal with food.

Recall #3:

Critique: You’ve got a lot going on in this scene, the relationship feels good. The loss of KGB that’s a bottom for him. That loss and getting cleaned out, I think the agenda for this, yeah pick up your buddy and get him his meal. The actual agenda, this is the new me, and I'm not going with you. He’s not going to be easy and he’s not going to let you off the hook. By the end of the scne he’s got his hooks in you. The apparent agenda, pick up my buddy, the actual agenda is I’m not doing this anymore. That’s a tough job especialy because he’s good. You come in with a strong agenda and he’s just good and he gets you and you’re itching for a game. When you lose money you shouldn’t have bet, there’s an awful self-loathing feeling. This guy lost everything. He’s done. Let yourself get swept up a little bit.

Critique: You’ve got cards. You need to use your poker face. Here you are now, listening a little nod. Don’t give up the farm, don’t show him too much. (I think too it’s the first time I’m seeing him so that joy.) yeah there’s love there but I feel like you’re not trusting what your actual agenda is. You guys are clearly brothers. He knows you more than anybody. He knows which buttons to push. You come in here resolute. You got a great hand and you’re ready to play it. Just listen to him. You’re still resolute at the end but you gotta get behind it. Your best talent? You’re done. It’s hard sitting at a poker table. They only believe what you tell them. They can’t read your mind. Does that make sense? I believe that you guys are brothers. Trust that. He’s gonna pull you down if you’re not strong. You’re not supposed to be around things that trigger you. You’re not the same guy. Push back. There is homework to be done and that is paradigm. What his life is like. Those two lives can be more deeply investigated in. You’re gonna have to learn poker a little better and get down the paradigm where you’re coming from. Driving that fucking truck. You’re thinking I’m gonna stay clean, I’m gonna drop him at that game and leave. Maybe I’ll stay a little.

Critique: How’d it feel? (It was hard because I felt it creeping up on me.) That’s the scene. He hooked you at the end. You can even take more time. You don’t always have to show your cards and I want you to play poker more, I really do. There’s a poker game going on here. When you hid your cards it forced him to work harder. It took a lot for you to hold that back. In 3 scenes you’ll be back in. The bottom could use a little more work. The bottom is the loss and how devastating it’s been. You’re driving a fucking truck, how many days? (I think similarly to Greg I have a hard time. I’m very responsible. So that mentality, plus he’s going to law school. He’s smart.) So why the fuck is he doing this? (He’s obsessed.) I don’t know, let’s find out. Read a little about gamblers. Plus he’s great. He’s brilliant and he can get rich on it. Work on the bottom for this guy. (It made sense and I had to be more engaging.)

Sam, “All the President’s Men” (new)

Recall: I feel like the givens that you’re talking about are so much juicier. “Like why are you ragging on me? I’m just doing my job.” If I have that paradigm then I have to fight for my life more. Agenda and where we are in the story is all firing. // I switched the paradigm and tried to take control. When he was reading the stories it mattered to me. I was more active. I liked some of the colors on that one. I’m learning that I can play active and fun and involved.

Critique: You got the lines you have and the attitude and that’s working for you. You have a new job and a good job, and I want you to not dilute some of your zingers. You are the new job and lower in the hierarchy. It almost feels too easy for you to be cocksure- this is where the audience realizes that you are a genius. You don’t want him to out you. You guys are about to be married and discover the story of the century but don’t burn the bridge. // I hamstrung you a tiny bit. There is room in this scene for brashness and also for humility and trying to make this work. Split the difference. “Now forget the notes.” Own all the work that you’ve done then throw it away and be free.

Brad, “All the President’s Men” (new)

Recall: I feel good, connected to myself, I feel a little lost with Sam and the frustration toward this guy. When I start to read that feels real to me. This is what I live breathe sleep. I’m good but not in comparison. Coming in here I want to make him know what I feel, it’s a hard pill to swallow. Take the L, admitting my shortcomings. Some of the time it felt driven by adrenaline. // “I sure couldn’t hurt it”- it’s so bad it couldn't get any worse. // That was fun, I picked up new things each time. There were discoveries each time and I do feel good about the third one. It was sweet but I was also mad.

Critique: You’re one of Bradley’s favorites and he is brash toward you. He really has a problem with the integrity (in the other script) so that has to be firing for you. There’s a reason you bring him here bc you don’t want to lose your cool in front of everybody. You’re both saying things in the back and forward but you’re not pushing and it’s not landing on the other guy. He’s brash af. The private beat at the end- you know he’s GREAT. // Listening is what just happened. The second take is all about listening. I’m not saying there needs to be yelling but I want you to feel that fact that he’s giving you digs. It’s not like he’s a real threat but he’s certainly an annoyance. He’s not afraid of you and that’s a discovery. He’s right and that’s the worst part. // I don’t know which take I like best but I like the blocking at the end. They’re never lovey, they work well together. I want to move through this. Here is what I really want- the paradigm. This is period now. Coming from where we are now, this was pre IG and fake news. There was a serious problem with authority then and people needed to pay attention. I’d love to track these guys, lot of interviews. There are some good scenes with the editor, a lot of agenda driven scenes. First- get the bottom, the issue. Two- agenda, where you are in this case and then what you need. It doesn’t call for getting too mushy.

Storie, “Superbad” (1st repeat)

Recall: I thought it was better. I fucked off with all the worries. I changed the line bc I didn’t get any laughs and it was fine. It felt good, felt a little “acty” and playing it up more than I needed to. It’s a stand up character. That’s how I wanted this scene to feel- less planned. Before I had a general outline. “Let’s just fucking do it.” Girls talk about this and objectify men. // We didn’t get as much laughs but it felt good.

Critique: Some jokes are gonna land and some jokes don’t get the laughs, so you can’t be hung up on some line. The writing is so bazaar- you’re adults. The only thing you can do in a situation like this is commit to the friendship and the bottom, then you can play forever. I wouldn't call it “acty” but there are moments where you’re looking for a laugh at the expense of your truth. (It’s my timing taking over so I play to that.) It’s not a trap but it is a trap, the addiction to laughs. Make sure you dig into circumstance. If we do move forward with Superbad, don’t be funny. This is all about the party, Julien and Robert. The things that you’re sharing, the conflict, that’s real. You have to deal with what’s really going on, and that includes the baseball. You’re gonna sacrifice some laughs for circumstance. // This is great exercise for you. The speed that you go at is so fast and furious and we can’t quite reach onto them. The work is so much more invested in her.

Kristin, “Superbad” (1st repeat)

Recall: It was very fun. I felt much more connected to the party, her, and Robert. I have a Robert and the bottom. She likes him but doesn’t know how to move it forward but she doesn’t know how to do it. // It made a lot more sense to me from the top of the scene. It connected the pieces. Once Robert came up, fuck the game and it was all about Robert.

Critique: I was tough on you last time- are you playing a game, what’s your paradigm? I’m wondering if we can take this partnership and take the tone of this scene and take it to a place where you wouldn’t have to rewrite 18 year old boys. It’s about your belief in the circumstances. While you’re playing 30ish, how you’re dealing with eachother is not 30ish. If we do move forward with Superbad, don’t be funny. You can be bored with the baseball, but when you get busted you gotta deal with that. // While she’s flying by the seed of the pants character, you’re more reverenced. The joy of this thing isn’t the laughter, my mission in this is to ground you in the story. I’m not interested in how funny this can be. Don’t forget that you’re the straight man. You’re not going to get the laughs but the laughs are at your expense.

Genny, “Bombshell” (shoot) **COMPUTER DIED DURING SECOND TAKE AND WOULDN’T RELOAD SORRY.**

Recall: The first question is me going after his position on women. Somehow Trump knows the question. In the set up for the movie I have food poisoning. I think for the script I need to be poisoned. I suspect it. I never drink Starbucks coffee but my driver insists and brings me the coffee. (So your resolve at being sick is even more.)

I’m feeling pretty good about it actually. There’s a lot to pay attention to. I don’t want this random sickness to take me out of the game. I feel like shit but I’m not willing to throw in the towel. (Is this a surprise? His entrance?) That’s a good question. I hadn’t thought about it. I’m thinking part of me does expect him to call me on it. I’ve researched the hell out of everthing and have every weapon I can in my arsenal and I’m not backing down. This is too important. (You need that in the scene, with the physical state. And I’m not giving up this question either. Don't’ make her less sick and don’t dampen her resolve.)

Critique:

Kamri, “Bombshell” (shoot)

Recall: I’m doing good. My main priority is I want to make sure Meagan’s good to go. I’m her assistant. Making sure she’s good to go, needs to be prepped and ready. I feel like I’ve been with her a couople years. Doing the homework on it, I’ve been an executive assistant before, so I know how to relate to that. I feel good with where we’re at. I just know I can go deeper into the fox culture. (What’s your sense of it?) I know it’s a boy’s club. From what I’ve read and where I’ve worked, there are other executives and producers there that will say things to Meagan and that they say things to me too. As Lilly, I’m trying to deal with that. I think that’s also why I want to back her with this Trump thing. We’ve been prepping for two months. We have a huge binder titled Trump and women. We’ve done our homework, I want her to go after him. (Is this Meagan’s MO, how she rolls?) She does not get sick. I guess because she’s not like this normally and this is the first debate, maybe I need to be shaking in my boots a little bit. (Remember back to this, it was climbing up to this, you’ve been prepping for weeks and months, t-minus five hours and your quarterback is puking and she doesn’t puke. You guys are present and active and this is highly irregular.)

Critique:

Greg, “Bombshell” (shoot)

Recall: When we did the blocking rehearsal, I was just assuming they gave me a heads up that she’s sick. I guess he just doesn’t care. (You can play that the stakes are much more important than the stomach bug.) Outside of that I felt good, I felt a little nervous about the blocking. I think the main thing was just in terms of her sickness and where I’m at. (Our story tonight is going to go however you decide. You see she’s sick.) I’m her producer, she’s mainly my boss. (I agree with you, it’s interesting when a head coach is talking to a star player that makes 50 times what he makes. Roger probably doesn’t want her to ask this, how do you get this job done. Maybe there’s other tactics.)

Critique:

Jane, “Bombshell” (shoot)

Recall: I’m one of her assistants. (What’s your POV on Greg?) I think my loyalites lie with Meagan. He’s a little bit of a weenie. I feel like he’s also team Meagan. Not the bad guy. My POV is that she’s going to ask this question and he can deal with it. Our moment before is me being like yeah Meagan’s a little under the weather right now, I show him what she’s going to ask. (Let’s re-write the beginning. He found out what the first question is however Greg found out about it, try to keep him out. You’re not going in there Gil. Just POV wise, he’s not the enemy but this is not the time to bother her.

Critique:

Brad, “No Worries” (1st repeat)

Recall: Better. You sent me away with the notes to really get to the bottom what that is. Played around there, I landed somewhere. I feel like last time you said, you are constantly working against getting pulled down into this thing. I looked in the mirror and felt it all and then put on a smile. I fantasized about ending up with more crazy physicality wise. You said whatever happens when I break down that’s fine. I think that ties into how I feel with physicality and taking up too much space. I wasn’t where I wanted to be in my head but that’s alright. A couple times I felt like this really fun feeling inside this real battle of machines, but I was still happy with this. I feel much better about this. Also maybe just having done it once on stage. The lines weren’t an issue, it really flowed. It was never too much of a concern. That flow was there for me. (What about your use of time? You’re clearly not driving towards some agenda, the bottom just drops out.) I think, yeah you encouraged that too, just to give it time. I never thought too hard, just feeling that pull and trying to get out of there. (Yeah you create this awkward pace of this thing, it’s awkward, your ability to sit in that mess and allow it to be awkward is extraordinary and makes me anxious but I know I’m in good hands.) That’s a win from this monologue, I was worried about doing this piece because of my relationship with the audience. I intentionally did want to make eye contact more. That felt like a little achievement. I was more worried about me being in it.

Critique: I don’t know that I’ve seen someone take on the audience like you did. You starred at us for like a minute and a half. That ability to take us on. You created it and then forced us on your terms to deal with it. I couldn’t believe this moment, whatever that dysfunction is it feels true to you and is super fucking dark. As a performance piece I might play with time a little bit. These are just stupid notes I’m tacking on. As you get to the turn I would begin to accelerate into the turn. By the time you get to the disturbing things I feel like maybe you have to stomp and maybe get to those grounds deliberately. You take us into that so methodically that I’m a little hypnotized by your rhythm and why does he take us there? (Yeah I get that.) At some point you seemed like you got enraged with us.