

Monday, November 16, 2020

Announcements:

Leah

Marriage Story

2nd incarnation

Recall: You know what my biggest struggle is--whenever I feel like I do solid work one night, I always feel haunted by that. This week I had a conversation with myself trying to lay that performance to bed and not allow it to taint my next performance, because I often find that I am consumed with trying to recreate what I have previously done. Not consumed, but it haunts me, it's this thing that's always on my mind. I think the start, I was haunted by that, and there were a few moments I felt I was pushing and trying to recreate, but when we got into the monologue I felt freed. And I was connected to Heather, words were my own, I felt in story, words and place were alive. I felt good about it, but that was a present thing for me. (Question: are you saying that the entire scene up until the monologue you were comparing it to the other run?) No. There were moments where the thought--not even a comparison--the thought of trying to recreate moments that are in the past, so not necessarily truly allowing myself to be--it's almost like meditation, you have a thought that comes in when you're meditating and you just allow it to leave. It didn't really influence.

Critique: So wait, how'd that scene go again? (I think there were some really nice moments and I think there were some moments where I was aware--) you mean it wasn't perfect? (That's not what I'm striving for.) Leah you just did some really beautiful work, and I think you need to be aware of it. (I'm in class and I think we talk about what's working and what's not working.) Definitely. But I want to stop thinking in moments. There was life in the scene. From beginning to end, there was life in it. I think it's thinking in moments that bites us in the ass. You were authentically affected by a relationship you never had, and a child you never carried, and a man you never loved. And yet when you were there, all that shit mattered to you. And on our journey, one of the things that's really important is ownership, because that has been a struggle before. And yes, we want to look at the things that aren't working as well as the things that ARE working. (I thought about that this week. And I was raised by a mother who's a devout Christian, and taught me to be humble. So it's something that's really built into my psyche, being humble. So I really struggle with being boastful. That's why I hate fucking social media, it's a struggle for me.) Let me say, I hate boastful also. I am a firm believer in humility. I mean like. I'm a deep believer in humility. I don't think that saying something went well or you're good at something, I don't think that's being a braggart. I think when we mistake the quality of a skill as being the quality of the human, that's when we have a problem. When we see it beyond what it is. Look, I'm a badass teacher, I'm gonna own that shit right now. And I can't make anyone a good actor. As good as I am, any success I have is on your own steam. I can bring up ideas and challenge you, help you get out of your own way. But at the end of the day, it's your imagination, your body, your thoughts. And you are alone, it's all you. I know teachers who love to take credit for

their students. That's different. That now is taking credit for something that is not yours. Now we're getting into a lack of humility. A lack of seeing it for what it is. I could be a really fucking horrible person and a good acting teacher. I am in fact a better acting teacher than I am a human being. I do want to be better. I want to acquire that compassion. Don't have it now. So I think you can own what you do well without being "that person." If you don't own what you've got, it makes everything a lot harder. (I know I've been trying. I really am putting forth effort. In class, I appreciate you bringing it to my attention. I realize that as an actor--being a professional in this industry, it doesn't serve anything.) I think in this environment it's about honesty and authenticity. Not about me blowing smoke or making you feel good about anything. I am only here for the work. It's about honesty, authenticity.

So how'd the scene go tonight? Go ahead, we know the answer. (I felt good about it.) Are you a good actor? (Fuckin a. I have my moments! Yes. Look at how weird I get. You're making me uncomfortable now.) I understand that. I'm open to the experience of making you uncomfortable. I'm going to lean into it, in fact. The reason I am doing this again is because you will drive yourself crazy about everything you've done wrong, and the experience will suffer for it. And you'll make it worse--you'll compare yourself to others--you'll make it worse. I am not doing this to be kind or do you some kind of nicety. Where you crash is when you talk yourself out of things. You'll talk yourself out of roles, out of a lot of shit. And there becomes this war.

So I know you said you love it when "things like that" happen. It depends on where your head is. The difference between a blessing and a curse onstage is your working attitude. Just your headspace. How much we accept it. I've seen you onstage riff with someone when they're giving you a lot. And I've seen you watch them and forget you're in the scene and you're not quite there. (I hate when that happens. Because they're so good!) I don't care who you're working with, there's times when you're in it, it's headspace. The dog in the office was purely because you were embracing what was happening. You're going to have thoughts like, ooh I should do this. And then you give it up to what's actually in front of you. You're going to have thoughts that feed an insecurity. It's going to happen. Let it go, keep going. That's not a problem. It's only a problem when it takes you out. Like when you go down that rabbit hole and you're not in this world anymore. That never took place, it kind of went right through you. That's you working well. Working well is not having no divergent thoughts. It's when they don't fuck you up. It wasn't a haunting tonight. It was thoughts. That's all.

Heather

Marriage Story

2nd incarnation

Recall: I was connected to myself and definitely connected to her. To the point where I was tearing up during her monologue too. I might have--I thought I had avoided this, but I don't know if I had taken her note, that it's to my advantage if she hates him. And trying to--I don't know if that brought me a little bit more into--sometimes this time around, my focus was to take care of her at any cost, to let her know I would be her knight in shining armor. And I don't know if that got me into a little bit more of an idea of a lawyer. This go-around--(do you think lawyers are all

about taking care of people??) No. But the few moments where I was like--"we can do both."
No, but we can get him. I don't know if those were a little bit utzed. In general I felt connected to her. After our rehearsal I went, I needed to slowww down. And I even put it in story--I need to control this meeting. The first couple pages I was rushing through before. I felt like a did a better job with that this time. (If you're suspicious of yourself that perhaps there was a bistle of utzing. What do you do about that?) I just brought it back to her. As if as the lawyer, I am going, don't let her in on that, that's not what she is shopping for. (And is there anything else you would do with that in process? I love the in the moment fix. But in terms of process. If you're shooting and you have a break. And you go, I don't know if it's a big deal but I kind of want to pay attention to this. You can't go, oh I'm not going to utz.) I think I would just, those moments, I would go back and explore, what am I saying here. (I think that's great, I would also ask you to complicate it.) More than--this is what I do but it's not what she's looking for? (Give yourself oppositional beliefs. It doesn't have to mean only one thing and come out one way. There's an idea now that because the note is this, when I say that it has to be this. That's what's creating the utz. I want the beliefs there, but it doesn't have to be on that line. You know that line speaks to that note. You have a high IQ, of course you know that. It doesn't mean you said "I have to execute said note." I mean you recognize it in these lines, there's a tendency to go down that path. Complicate it. See where you are in the moment.) I could definitely wade more into oppositional thinking in general. (I know, that was my other note. Oppositional thinking is going to tend to create more nuance in general.) There's another way around that, that's what you're saying. (Yes.)

I thought this was a really solid take, I am understanding it really well.

Kevin
1984
2nd incarnation

K: That was good. I have so much going on around me in my apartment and that's why I started over. I was grounded, and connected to everything.

S: Do you think that the party views it as dystopian?

K: no. That's why when I was working, I was listening to classical music and focused on my beautiful life. These people are a thorn in my side. I'm doing my job well. The hierarchy is a more evolved race.

S: Is it a form of eugenics? The idea of that homosapiens are not one thing but there are levels to it.

K: It's a class deal.

S: is the class distinction about money? The elizabethans believed that where you were born was determined by god and the more noble the family, the closer to god you were. Is that what we're talking about or is it genetic.

K: It's more of a luck of the draw.

S: If you can find a way to dehumanize him so it's not just a choice, we want to make him actually lesser.

K: The dehumanizing, is that more how I feel about him or is it in the scene.

S: Here is a commonality in genocides and other places where man has been inhuman to man. In Rwanda, they referred to the Hutus as rodents. They referred to Jews as rodents, sometimes it's dogs. George Bernard Shaw was into eugenics. That's a genetic hierarchy.

K: I focused on more of a class thing.

S: there can be divinity. The scene went really well. Without it, it makes the person purely sadistic. That's easy for me to do. They're not really human so it's not really that fucked up is different than a true sadist.

K: that adds another level.

S: if you were going to do it again, that's the only thing I would dig deeper into. It's a very subtle thing.

Curtiss

1984

2nd incarnation

C: That went pretty well. I was connected to myself. It felt like I was going between 1 and 2 in connecting with Kevin. I didn't really mind that based on the situation and state. It was a rolling fight to be present but it wasn't outside the circumstances. My sense of place was weak. The words were my own.

S: How about the rats?

C: The rats are getting there. When I'm by myself, I hate them. When there's all this... The rats will eat my face but he doesn't tell me that, he just brings the rats out in a contraption.

S: What a fun guy Orwell was. Where do you go from there.

C: Julia could be stronger. If I was going to continue, this is the end of a huge scene so I would want to absorb the whole thing. He has some speeches and I'm cursory on them. It's a goldmine that I have yet to completely unearth.

S: How long are you in state before the scene starts.

C: 10 minutes after we got into the breakout room I started to build it.

S: Was it optimal? Did we line it up tonight so that you were in state for the 10 minutes of the scene?

C: I don't know. I could have been muscling the state.

S: I don't think you were.

C: the state was taking over from time to time. It was strongest right before I went. I lost a little but not where it cost me.

S: I think that is a perfect assessment. Your state was really strong. I thought you started a little early. When I saw you in the breakout room you were in it. It's not that it was bad in the scene but there were 2 different realities. How long does it take you to create that body when you're flowing in it and it is alive. I think it takes you 4 minutes.

C: I think it takes me 15.

S: When you're exploring physical state and you recognize that I need breaks. You're going to have recovery and a way to get back in.

C: I almost threw up.

S: We want to really be aware of how much time it takes to get involved and then be disciplined and only give yourself that amount of time. Extra time doesn't always help you. You start an hour before and by the time you're onstage, you're numb.

K: You talked last week about going in the bubble. Or you have a half hour, then go into the bubble.

S: If you're on set, your prep can be being open to the other people on set. Sometimes you need to take more time. Know how long it takes to get into the state.

Question: LB: We were talking about in an audition, getting under it in a short period of time is harder. Any recommendations to get to the life of a character with more alacrity. I want the same level of life in an audition as I do when I have more time. I'm trying to get faster at it.

S: You want to get faster, slow down. Slow down your text analysis. When I ask people what's going on in texting I hear "It's just..." It's not longer a life anymore. We tend to reduce our realities because if it's reduced, it's easier. I don't think that's the case. Don't you think getting under circumstances that are rich are easier. We tend to rush our texting and we reduce the experience to being thin. We are prejudiced on the sides or the writing. When we're in that reductive mindset, it doesn't help.

LB: I know it's a muscle I have to practice. You helped me with sides. I didn't see what you saw. I was judging it so I didn't spend the time with it. I shut down when I have judgments.

S: Everybody does this. I'm always going to see more in your sides than you do because they're not mine. You're not dumb. My insight is going to be good because I've spent decades doing this for other people, studying it in my free time.

CT: You gave me advice to prioritize auditions. I had one that was low priority and I don't know if I texted it well. I connected with the other characters in the other sides. I have judgment. It's 7 pages for 5 scenes. I had fun with it. I could have complicated it more.

S: How long did you have to put it together?

CT: half hour.

S: If I have 30 minutes, especially if I'm in judgment, I think conventional wisdom would be to read the story, learn your lines and let it rip. My advice, 15 minutes on text, 5 on exploration, 10 to absorb. Once you really get into it and will get past the judgment the exploration will fly. Logun called me and we made a schedule and we texted it together and then layered in exploration. We weren't just doing one piece, we would move to the other one. That way by the time you get to your half hour, it will already be ahead of things.

JF: Last week you said don't worry about the accuracy in texting. You said don't make assignments with text analysis.

S: Sometimes we can identify that this line is an opportunity for that belief work. It's not a decision, you just see it and it is what it is. The more narrow our perception the more aware of what that moment should be. Sometimes things can be trappy. We can go "He's being a dick there". That doesn't tell me much. There are lots of ways for someone to be an asshole. There was a girl that I had a crush on in 5th grade and I thought I was flirting and I saw her years later and she said "You were so mean". I was horrified and I guess I was teasing. I was trying to get

her attention. Our experience on the inside is so different on the outside. Basing your exploration on what it should look like. If you're doing that scene, the kid wants her to think he's cool but he doesn't know how. We want to be open and not try to create that thing. Someone might have read that dialogue and thought he didn't like her when it's the opposite. That's why oppositional thinking is good. Everything we do is leaning on impulses and will look different in play than someone making choices.