

Summer 2021

Direction of the play 'ART'

Kathryn Young

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Direction of the play

'ART'

by Yasmina Reza

Project Presented to
The Graduate Faculty of
Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts
Theatre Production

By
Kathryn Young

July 10, 2021

Project Report

'ART'

A Play by Yasmina Reza

Performance held at The Avery Theatre on

May 14, 2021

Etna, CA 96027

Direction by

Kathryn Young

The following documentation includes the conceptualization, research, implementation, and reflection of the entire production process of *'ART'* in May 2021. The documentation includes character and visual production research, historical context and significance, as well as the evaluation of the play as a vehicle for production in the community of Etna, California.

**GRADUATE COURSE OF STUDY
CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
(Submit the original)**

Check One:
INITIAL
REVISED

This course of study form is to be completed before the student has accumulated twenty-five (25) quarter credits leading to a master's degree; however, it may be required prior to that for Financial Aid purposes.

Submit the original of this form, signed by an advisor and the department chair to the School of Graduate Studies and Research (Barge 214). Approved copies will be emailed to the advisor, department, and the student. Unless the advisor and department chair approve substitutions or revisions, the Graduate School will require completion of, or enrollment in, all courses listed below before the student may be advanced to candidacy for the degree.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Kathryn Young

Undergraduate Study:

Simpson University --- Redding, CA, 2011-2014

B.A. in Liberal Studies, Multiple Subject Teaching Credential

Graduate Study:

Central Washington University, 2018-2021

Professional Experience:

Teacher, Director

Scott Valley Unified School District, 2015-2021

Teacher, Director

Jackson Street Middle School, 2021-Present

Acknowledgements

I have been extremely blessed to have numerous people supporting me through my studies with Central Washington University. From my parents, pushing me to follow my dreams, to my beloved husband, Jason Young, constantly reminding me that I am a gifted artist.

I owe a great deal of gratitude to the community of Scott Valley. Our Valley is a small, secluded part of the world that I will forever treasure. With its fantastic greenery and luscious forest, streams, rivers, and lakes, Scott Valley is a storybook location where I was lucky enough to produce amazing work.

The Avery Theatre is a small venue downtown Etna that houses our local community events, and I have fallen in love with its nostalgic charm. There are several places I could have ended up, but I am so happy it was Etna, CA. Providing an outlet for students in my area of Siskiyou County is a gift that I am proud to share.

I want to thank all the hands, minds, and hearts that have contributed to *'ART'* selflessly and graciously. Rural theatre is a steady reminder that we all have stories to tell wherever we hang our hat, and I am very proud to be a small town storyteller. Our small theatrical community has brought something unique to our corner of the world, and I am very proud of the young minds that have contributed to my work with Central Washington University Theatre.

I have always been a dreamer, and I never thought I was smart enough to obtain a master's degree. This process has shown me that I am not only more than capable but also intelligent. I also thank my professors that have guided and coached me through this fantastic program. Your patience and support have made me a life-long learner in the world of theatrical

arts. I will take this experience and use the tools you have all given me. Your time, thought, discussion, and understanding will never be forgotten. Now let's go make some magic.

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Part 1: Preliminary Information

- a. Playscript Approval Form
- b. Copy of the Committee and Option Approval Form
- c. Permission of Hiring Authority at the Venue
- d. Synopsis of the Play
- e. Project Parameters
- f. Project Calendar
- g. Evaluation of the play as a Production Vehicle
- h. Concept Statement

Playscript Approval Form

**MASTER'S THESIS PROJECT
PLAYSCRIPT APPROVAL FORM**

(PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVE READ THE PLAY SELECTION CRITERIA SECTION IN YOUR GRADUATE HANDBOOK)

Student Name: Kathryn Young Anticipated Production Date: May 14, 2021

SCRIPT TITLE ART

PLAYWRIGHT(S) [If musical, list lyricist/composer] By: Yasmina Reza Translated By: Christopher Hampton

NUMBER OF ACTS 1 APPROXIMATE TOTAL PLAYING TIME 1 HOURS 30 MIN.

CAST (fill in with the appropriate numbers)

MEN 3 WOMEN _____ CHILDREN _____ OVER 40 _____

ROLES REQUIRING PEOPLE OF COLOR _____ ROLES COULD DOUBLE _____

TOTAL NUMBER OF CAST 3

OTHER CASTING CONCERNS:

ARTISTIC STAFF (check those needed for this play or production idea) double click on grey box; select checked to mark or use a pen

MUSICAL DIRECTOR DANCE CHOREOGRAPHER FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER

DIALECT COACH SPECIALTY HIRE (specify what kind)

ORCHESTRA/BAND (specify what size) 2 (piano and guitar)

Will you be fulfilling any of the above? No If so, which?

Will a guest artist be fulfilling any of the above? Yes If so, which? 2 Musicians

SCENERY/PROPS (check those needed for this play or your concept of the play)

UNIT SET? YES NO NUMBER OF LOCATIONS 3

HISTORICAL PERIOD: Present GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION France

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SET CONCERNS OR SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

No special requirements or concerns. The set will consist of traditional flats and simplistic furniture pieces

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF PROPS 10 PERIOD Present

DIFFICULT OR UNUSUAL PROPS? YES NO
DESCRIBE:

WEAPONS OR FIREARMS? YES NO HOW MANY _____
DESCRIBE:

COSTUMES (CHECK THOSE NEEDED FOR THIS PLAY OR YOUR CONCEPT OF THE PLAY)

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF COSTUMES PER CHARACTER 2

HISTORICAL PERIOD None

SEASON Spring

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHOICE OF SCRIPT

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS SCRIPT PRODUCED? YES NO

HAVE YOU DONE THIS PLAY BEFORE? BRIEFLY DESCRIBE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE PRODUCTION:

No

WHY SHOULD YOUR ORGANIZATION PRODUCE THIS SCRIPT?

ART is a heartfelt story that brings an in depth view of broken ties that are slowly mended. Characters question themes of friendship, relationships, and true belonging. Due to our current situation around COVID-19, we have been forced to distance and lose potential opportunities to form and continue meaningful relationships. ART brings the importance of belonging and friendship to the forefront, and probes the characters of Serge, Yvan, and Marc to question what circumstances prompted a fallout among the group. This production gives actors a chance to not only discover and hone layered characters, but also recharge their current relationship with one another. These actors are already very close, but I believe ART will give them new depths in their own personal connection.

WHAT ARE THE DRAWBACKS (IF ANY) TO DOING THIS PRODUCTION AT YOUR SCHOOL?

This is a private production due to COVID-19 restrictions. Our community is supporting this project and all are following safety procedures and protocol. Since the cast only calls for three actors blocking can be done safely distanced. There is also a limited number participating on the crew.

PLEASE GIVE A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE SCRIPT ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER AND ATTACH.

PLEASE INCLUDE A COPY OF THE SCRIPT FOR THE THESIS COMMITTEE TO REVIEW.

SUBMITTED BY: (Printed Name) Kathryn Young Date Submitted: 1/4/2021

(Signature)

Thesis Chair Approval: _____ Date Approved : _____

Thesis Committee Members Approval: _____ Date Approved : _____

Graduate Coordinator Approval: _____ Date Approved : _____

Please note: A signature has been redacted due to security concerns.

Copy of Committee and Option Approval Form

**GRADUATE COMMITTEE AND OPTION APPROVAL FORM
CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
(Submit the original)**

Note: This form is to be completed as soon as the student has formed a committee and selected an option from the list below. Submit original to the School of Graduate Studies in Barge 214.

Name: Kathryn Young Birth Date [redacted]
Address: [redacted] Student ID [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

- Check option: Indicate credits to be received for the thesis or option:
- Written Exam*
 - Project
 - Creative Project
 - Studio Project
 - Portfolio Review
 - Thesis (standard)
 - Thesis (journal-ready)
- [redacted]

*Students taking written exam option may omit items 1-5 below.

1. Proposed Title (and title of targeted journal if appropriate): Direction of the play: ART
 2. Purpose of Study: To direct a production in the community of Scott Valley with former students in a community theatre setting. Project will include pre and post production plus an oral defense of the project.
 3. Scope of Study: Pre-production documentation, research, and thesis development. Also including direction and design process, post production, board interview, and defense of artistic and educational choices.
 4. Procedure to be used: I will direct the production in my community theatre, The Avery. Correspondence and support will come from CWU and my committee chair.
 5. Does the procedure involve collection of data obtained from
 Human Subjects (including use of surveys)? Yes** No
 Use of Animals? Yes** No
- ** If yes, your procedures must be approved in writing by the Human Subjects Committee or the Animal Care and Use Committee before you initiate your research.

<u>Committee Chair (typed or printed)</u>	<u>Committee Chair (signature)</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>Committee Member (typed or printed)</u>	<u>Committee Member (signature)</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>Committee Member (typed or printed)</u>	<u>Committee Member (signature)</u>	<u>Date</u>
Approved by:	Approved by:	
<u>Dept Chair/Designee* (signature)Date</u>	<u>Dean of Graduate Studies</u>	<u>Date</u>

*in the case of interdisciplinary programs, this form should be signed by the relevant Program Director/Co-Director AND relevant Dept chair. In cases where they cannot agree to sign for approval, the approval will be made or denied by the relevant interdisciplinary program advisory committee. GS&R 04/10
UPDATED:0417

Please note: Information was redacted from this page due to privacy concerns.

Permission of Hiring Authority

The Avery
Theatre 430 Main
Street
Etna, CA 96027

January 6, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

Kathryn Young has approval to use the Avery Theatre for rehearsal and performance of 'ART' on May 14th. I am aware that this production is her Master's Creative Project with Central Washington University, and she has permission to use all facilities within the Avery to meet her endeavor.

Thank you,

Greg
Lindholm
President,
Scott Valley Theatre
Company PO BOX 834
Etna, CA 96027

Synopsis of the Play

'*ART*' is a piece about three friends at a crossroads determined to find what has gone missing in their fifteen year relationship together. It is a poignant story with numerous twists and turns, each character biding for their opinion to be heard. The story begins with Marc addressing the audience and explaining that his good friend Serge, a successful dermatologist, has purchased a painting by a well-known artist named Antrios. It is four feet by five feet and consists of a white background with faint diagonal lines running through it. Serge and Marc have known each other for fifteen years; however, their friendship has dwindled, and they see less and less of each other. Marc is unimpressed when he sees the painting for the first time and is even more disenchanted when he learns that Serge has spent 200,000 francs (240,000 USD) on the piece. Marc's tone toward the painting upsets Serge, and they then debate their views of what consists as meaningful art. The scene ends with Marc addressing the audience with troubled feelings regarding Serge and his new prize, and he quickly turns to their mutual friend Yvan to share this new troubling information.

At Yvan's apartment, Marc finds his friend on all fours, looking for the top of his special felt tip pen which can supposedly write on any surface. Marc stops Yvan on his quest and discusses the painting with him. He explains the contents of the painting and shares the price Serge paid. The price tag surprises Yvan, who also admits he understands the choice and comments, "If it makes him happy" (Reza 10). This comment infuriates Marc further as he describes his trouble with Serge's newfound "snobbery" (11). Yvan shelves Marc's comment and reassures him that he can make Serge laugh about the entire thing. Marc is not so sure.

Back at Serge's, Yvan visits to inquire about Marc and see the new painting. Serge is concerned that they all have not seen each other in a long while and wishes to rekindle their

relationship. He shows the painting to Yvan, and Yvan sees a simplistic plainness in the piece, which amuses Serge. They have a pleasant chat regarding the painting and laugh about the astronomical price. Yvan makes excuses for Marc's behavior, saying that he has been moody. Serge is not sold, and he goes on to express his feeling that Marc does not have the training to truly appreciate a work of modern art. Yvan is steadfast in keeping them all intact, but Serge tells him to stop trying to smooth things over. Yvan is noticeably upset as he is will soon be married and wants his closest friends involved in the wedding.

The next scene opens in Marc's home. Marc and Yvan share an animated discussion involving Yvan's laugh with Serge regarding the painting. Marc is still not convinced and sees the painting as a costly venture that fosters Serge's ego. Yvan disagrees and calls Marc out on his "smugness" (16). The conversation ends on a sour note with Marc asking if Yvan was "moved by Serge's painting?"

Yvan speaks to the audience revealing that the painting does not make him happy. He discloses, "I am not the type of person that can be happy just like that" (17). His feelings about the painting mirror his clouded feelings about marriage as he continues to wrestle with the idea of overall happiness in his life.

Next, Serge addresses the audience with his feelings about the painting. As far as he can see, "It's not white" (18). For Serge, it has an array of color. According to Serge, Marc sees it as white because that is his limit as a viewer; Marc is hung up on the "idea that it is white" (18). Serge likes that Yvan can see that it is not white, and Serge claims he could care less what Marc thinks.

Lastly, Marc has a short speech, admitting that he could have handled things differently with Serge. He does not understand Serge's fascination with modern art, but Marc makes a pact with himself to improve his behavior with his best friend.

Back at Serge's, Marc and Serge talk about the painting. Marc does his best to be more open minded regarding Serge's views. They both have speeches directed toward the audience revealing their current attitudes toward one another. Serge is frustrated with Marc and his views of the piece. He questions the actual purchase of the painting as the possible trigger of this great animosity from Marc. Ultimately, he concludes that he does not need Marc's approval. On the other end, Marc also questions the purchase of the piece, but he quickly concludes that the estrangement from his best friend began a long time ago when he started to become enlightened with an air of pretention pertaining to his idea to contemporary art.

Yvan enters and is conflicted about a wedding invitation debacle involving his fiancé Catherine and mother-in-law. He laments his confusion and frustration while Serge and Marc question whether marriage the best decision for him. Yvan states that he must go through with it and settle. He leads a disorganized life in terms of his career and home life. Catherine is the best that he is going to get in terms of a partner. She understands his faults and lack of structure. He notes, "There are certain crucial qualities you need when marrying someone like me" (28).

Yvan is exhausted and asks Serge about where he is going to place the painting. His question begins an entirely new row with Serge and Marc as they reveal their true feelings about one another's behavior. Yvan is once again caught in the middle and attempts to patch the relationship between the three. What once was a casual plan to have dinner has turned into an outpouring of feelings that have been bottled up for years. Marc and Serge squabble over their personal relationships with women, themselves, and Yvan.

Everything comes to a halt when Serge asks Yvan for one of his “famous felt tips” (45). Yvan provides a blue pen. In a climactic move, Marc draws a skier floating down a mountain upon one of the diagonal lines in the painting. Yvan is aghast, but once the drawing is complete, Marc and Serge admire his work.

The last scene consists of speeches by Yvan, Serge, and Marc. Yvan reflects on his wedding day and the night with Serge and Marc at the restaurant. They talked about the rekindling of their lost friendship and how Serge’s decision to allow Marc to draw on the painting was the first official step toward reconciliation. Serge regales in the memory of him and Marc cleaning the painting and proudly displaying it. He also discloses that, unbeknownst to Marc, he lied about the felt tip pen being washable. In closing, we witness Marc reciting a poem about a skier gliding down a snowy slope.

In the end, Yvan reflects on the dinner shared with Serge and Marc after the event with the skier drawing. He was hopeful of rekindling the friendship but, “at one point one of them used the expression trial period, and I burst into tears” (47). Yvan is heartbroken over the ordeal between his comrades and shares his grief with the audience. Serge also shares his confusion over his relationship with Marc stating, “Why does my relationship with Marc have to be so complicated?” (47). Lastly, Marc observes the Antrios one last time, arriving to a finite feeling regarding the work. He envisioned “a solidary man glides downhill on his skis” (47). Marc’s speech is the lasting impression that leaves the audience to ponder complex relationships and art alike.

Project Parameters

'*ART*' will be produced as an independent project for my thesis work at our local community theatre space the Avery. The Avery Theatre is located in the rural city of Etna, California, which is in Scott Valley. We reside in Northern California about one hour from the Oregon border, and the community is largely supported by ranchers, farmers, and surrounding small businesses.

I have been employed as a theatre teacher with Scott Valley Unified School district for the past six years. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was reassigned in fall 2020 to a contained classroom as a fourth grade teacher. Because of this change, I did not have access to my regular theatre program and students. Instead, I asked former actors to participate in my creative project.

Since '*ART*' is a small production consisting of three actors, all blocking can be safely distanced. We will use the Avery, a community performance space, for all rehearsal and production needs. Rehearsals will run two hours, twice a week, for ten weeks. I have full permission and access of our community theatre space from Greg Lindholm, the caretaker and President of the board for the Avery. We are very blessed to have this venue to work in.

Our technical elements of the play will include sixteen lighting instruments consisting of older Fresnel lighting instruments, a manual lighting board, a small sound mixing board, and my personal computer to access sound files. There is also a piano we may use for music throughout the production. The Avery is a small space so amplification will not be required. We do not have the latest technical facilities, as the Avery has not been refurbished for approximately twenty years, but our theatre creates a feeling of classic nostalgia.

The Avery was built in the 1950s and served as a movie theatre in the Etna downtown area. About twenty years ago, the theatre was converted into a performing arts space for the

community. Since then, numerous community events and plays have taken place at the Avery. It possesses a very special place in the community of Etna.

Other production information and required resources include:

- Scripts and Licensing \$270.00
- Original Music Composer: Eric Seiler \$400
- Printing Costs \$250
- Photographer: Taryn Burkleo \$300
- Stock Scenery, Painting Supplies, Hardware, and Lighting Accessories in
Personal Storage Facility

We are all very excited to bring this piece to life and I know that there is great support within the cast and crew families. I have multiple friends and family contributing to this project in a variety of ways and am very appreciative. These volunteers assisted with everything from painting construction, feeding the cast and crew, and donating to production needs i.e. lumber and paint. I am optimistic that 'ART' will be a successful undertaking for this special group of people. Our little town has much talent to offer, and I look forward to utilizing and challenging my cast and crew in this artistic adventure.

'ART' Project/Production/Rehearsal Calendar

ART

Mon Mar 1, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART Table Work

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description:
- Character and script analysis - Ensemble Building - Discuss Relationship - Discuss Motivation

Wed Mar 3, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART Table Work

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Table Work - Finish discussion and character work

Mon Mar 8, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Blocking pgs. 5-11

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Blocking

Wed Mar 10, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Blocking pgs. 12-14

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

Mon Mar 15, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Blocking pgs. 15-18

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

Wed Mar 17, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Blocking pgs. 19-23.5

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

Mon Mar 22, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Blocking pgs. 23.5-25 Yvan (Run from Top)

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

ART

Wed Mar 24, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Blocking pgs. 26-32

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

Mon Mar 29, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Blocking pgs. 33-40

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

Wed Mar 31, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Blocking pgs. 41-47

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

Mon Apr 12, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Run pgs. 5-25

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

Wed Apr 14, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Run pgs. 26-47

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

Mon Apr 19, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Run pgs. 5-25 w/fixes

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

Wed Apr 21, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Run pgs. 26-47 w/fixes

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

ART

Mon Apr 26, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Full Run w/fixes

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

Wed Apr 28, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Full Run w/fixes

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

Mon May 3, 2021

3pm - 5pm ART: Full Run (polish + add light)

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

Wed May 5, 2021

3pm - 5pm Art: Full Run (polish with tech elements)

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young
Description: Rehearsal

Mon May 10, 2021

3pm - 6pm ART: Tech Week

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young

Tue May 11, 2021

3pm - 6pm ART: Tech Week

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young

Wed May 12, 2021

3pm - 6pm ART: Tech Week

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young

Thu May 13, 2021

3pm - 6pm ART: Tech Week

Where: Avery Theater, 430 Main St, Etna, CA 96027, USA
Calendar: ART
Created by: Kathryn Young

ART

Fri May 14, 2021

7pm - 8:30pm Art: Private Showing

Calendar: ART

Created by: Kathryn Young

Evaluation of 'ART' as a Production Vehicle

When I first began my theatre program with Scott Valley Junior High, my goal was to challenge students in the craft of acting. Repetition in acting exercises and honing techniques was at the forefront in my thinking as a director. When I began my master's program with CWU, this deeper study fostered my process in the building of a strong and successful program. Our shows went from simple stories with one dimensional characters to complicated plays with layered characters, multiple motivations, and guided choices. With 'ART', this goal has become the ultimate challenge in acting for these now high school students.

When I first read 'ART', I was intrigued by the subtext and passion of the characters. While they constantly debate the legitimacy of Antrios, the real barrier lies in their continuous transforming relationship. With every conversation, this passion deepens as they search for the truth in their broken connections with one another. What drove them apart? Why is there such pain associated with a painting? What is true art? And lastly, what constitutes a true friendship?

Upon my first read I thought this play required older, more seasoned actors. In a perfect situation I would have sought adult actors out for my project. But as I dug deeper and spoke with my set designer, who is also the mother of one of my actors and former students, I began to see correlations between friendships old and young. Since COVID-19 has impacted us on a global scale, we have been asked to distance ourselves. This drastic change has left relationships empty at times, searching for connection.

'ART' is a play that brings people who have been distant together again. Even though these characters are older, they are all going through some sort of reconciliation with one another. This quest for resolution can be seen and felt through any age. I am confident that the actors I have chosen for this production will rise to the occasion and work together to build

realization and correlation with these characters. They are real life best friends, which brings another positive attribute to the production. Since they are already very close, they fully trust each other to practice bravery on stage. As a director, I have worked with these students for the past five years, and I look forward to seeing them take on the challenge of 'ART' head on. It will prove to be a very exciting adventure for all.

A few notes regarding the play's content. There is language used in the play that prompted me to speak with the actors' families. Upon speaking with them all, they agreed that performing this play would be a good experience for their children and they were happy to assist me in my creative project. Every crew member and actor has been counseled on the content of the play and its mature nature. Everyone involved has agreed to handle this work with great respect and tact. We are all looking forward to digging deeply into character and story. 'ART' gives my actors and crew a mature challenge that will promote growth in their given area of theatrical study. It also gives everyone an opportunity to work on a production during this unique COVID-19 time. The actors are also exploring their personal relationships with one another and look forward to connecting their lives with their roles in the play. Even though the play has adult situations, there are ties to a teenage life be it a choice in a significant other, job, or where to go for dinner. Friends go through conflict together whether young or old. Challenges present themselves in friendships throughout life and 'ART' allows my actors to explore how Marc, Serge, and Yvan deal with them.

Actors will be expected to do a character study including motivations, analytics of language, and dialogue study with team actors. My actors are intellectually sound and enjoy these exercises. Since their school year has been so foreign during COVID-19, they are thrilled

to be working on stage again together. The study of theatre is a practice they have treasured for the last five years.

I have the great asset of having a dedicated community behind me of parents in this venture. We have a small community of artists within Scott Valley that have lent their talents to 'ART.' Families of the actors and crew are working with me to keep a smooth schedule, the Avery board has agreed to allow me to use the space for free, and my set designer is a valuable partner to collaborate creatively with. Additionally, my principal at Etna Elementary, Garren Hanon, has allowed me to leave early on rehearsal days to keep with our scheduled time. Having these artistic and logistic resources adds to the value of 'ART' as a community piece as well. Our production has brought together numerous people participating in a variety of tasks thus making it a strong community based production.

As for performance, the theatre will be closed to the general public, only accepting limited guests due to the pandemic. This strategy will further ensure our safety measures. Since 'ART' is a small cast it also allows for proper social distancing. Our crew is also small, consisting of three participants. They will be able to flex their skills with further experience in lighting design, color, sound design, and operation. This small cast and crew size also lends to the overall safety of everyone participating during COVID-19 while a vaccine is on the way.

Ultimately, I see 'ART' as an opportunity to challenge and stretch my cast and crew. Encouraging a polished practice with special attention to stage work as well as technical design is at the forefront in my work as a director. I am looking forward to implementing a polished practice and thorough stage work study in every member of my team. I am thrilled to bring this talented group of young artists together to create a meaningful work. This opportunity not only promotes great potential growth for the cast and crew combined, but also and brings our eager

theatrical community together. We are all motivated to bring 'ART' to life and enjoy the practice of theatrical art again.

Concept Statement

In *'ART'*, three estranged friends wrestle and dodge with witty and sometimes damaging banter over a painting which consists of a white background and small horizontal lines. The question asked by the characters throughout the production is, “Does this painting consist of meaningful art?” The question I pose as a director; “How does one define a sincere and meaningful relationship, and how is it achieved?” Additionally, “Why do friendships evolve and change, and how does one react to these changes?” These questions are central to the characters given their reaction and predicaments with one other. The desire to belong is another theme seen throughout the play as each character strives to connect lost pieces and put them back together again, and that theme is also central to my directorial vision for the play.

'ART' is infused with hearty dialogue between three longtime friends: Serge, Marcus, and Yvan. This dialogue is heightened and driven by the complexity of each character. The root of the production is fixed upon this idea of belonging and the intricate connection between these men. Over the years, their lives have transformed with marriage, divorce, and changes in careers, prompting them to grow apart. In a last effort to keep the friendship alive, Yvan is determined to have them come together for dinner. The evening turns on its end as the gentlemen discuss their opinion on art and dig deeper in their personal relationships with one another. This conversation in turn takes them on an emotional journey to only discover their true feelings about art and each other. These feelings force them to turn inward and conjure deep and difficult conversation asking why they have grown apart and what caused their tumultuous breakdown.

The overlaying message of belonging and friendship will be a dominant theme relayed to our audience as they witness the characters' longing to find the lost pieces of their relationships

with one another and put them back together. The idea of belonging within a strong friendship is one that is reemergent in the production as Serge, Marc, and Yvan grapple together.

The question of true belonging and what it means to create meaningful friendships despite their complexities will be asked during our readings and rehearsals. It is an overlying factor and vital to this work. My actors are already very good friends, so this play is a lovely vehicle for them to explore complications and sometimes surprising developments between them.

The scene design will be a simplistic black box and will consist of a triangular one unit set with a scene change for each of the three apartments. These pieces will be flats of different color and or texture to set a tone for each character. The set furnishings will remain the same throughout the production to show unity between the characters. The set itself will transform for each character allowing a glimpse into their life.

Collaboration with my designer will be key as we discuss the concept of the set. I will share my primary color scheme of red (Marc), blue (Serge), and yellow (Yvan) with Hannah, my set designer, and ask her how we will infuse them for each character at their residence. The revolving set design for each apartment will consist of a triangle, an ongoing theme throughout the world of the play. The triangle shape will signify the ongoing connection between the characters. When in Serge's apartment, the chairs are placed in a triangle setting to offer a sense of unity, and the blocking will also reflect the triangle shape numerous times with characters exchanging corners.

While each character will have their own color scheme, the importance of unity will be enforced with use of the same furnishings throughout the play. The *Antrios* could also be seen as

another 'character' in the play as it oddly brings them together. It helps the men realize they are still strangely connected despite their differences pertaining to the painting.

The sound will include original music written by a local artist. These elements will heighten each character as they will all have their own unique theme. Using this musical strategy will bring familiarity to each character during speeches and key scenes throughout the play. This original music will also integrate the union of the characters during key scenes at the beginning and end of the play.

The overall lighting will reflect the characters gathering together. There will be special attention paid to time of day and notable changes during critical scenes. The use of color will reflect a warm wash with subtle tones utilized for down stage work. This warm lighting wash adds to the feeling of friendship and togetherness as Serge, Yvan, and Marc clash over their personal views and lack of connection. These lighting strategies will also pull out the necessary mood within each scene. Lighting specials will also be used for speeches directed toward the audience to further signify mood and tone. Using this lighting method assists in bringing the actors together on stage to signify their friendship and singles them out to address their inner thoughts and feelings.

The costuming of characters will respond to their overall personality. For Serge, Marc, and Yvan there will be unique pops of color embedded within a semi-casual dress look. There will also be accessories (i.e., scarves, jackets, and/or belts) matching the delegated color and tone for each character. Yvan specifically will wear a scarf containing Marc and Serge's character color to denote his need to bring his friends back together. While connection is a key point in the vision of the play, it is important that the characters have their own look. The scenery and

furnishings will bring a cohesive look that tie the production together while the characters bring their own personal flair.

The overall concept of meaningful friendship and evolution will be seen throughout the production with these technical choices. Using the triangle as a theme and specific color palette in lighting and costuming will further emphasize the relationship between the characters. These technical and design choices will blanket our cast and crew as we embark in a unique and thoughtful production that dives into what we call true belonging and friendship during a time of distance and uncertainty. The distance felt between the characters will be palpable as they strive to find balance in their connection. *'ART'* has the great potential to be a thought provoking piece that will leave the audience questioning true friendship as well as how we critique artistic works.

Part II: Pre-Production Analysis

- a. Initial Action/Conflict Analysis
- b. Previous Action
- c. Given Circumstances
- d. Analysis of Dialogue
- e. Analysis of Dramatic Action (Units, Moods, Tempos of the Play)
- f. Character Analysis
- g. Playwright Biography
- h. Post Production Reviews
- i. Listing of Student Learning Goals

Initial Event and Conflict Framing Analysis

Event

- Serge purchased an expensive painting that consists of a white background and small diagonal lines. His friends question his extravagant purchase, and their insistent probing leads to deep discussion that reveals the tensions and unraveling of their friendship.

Protagonist

- Marc, a middle-aged man, is middle to upper class and a fan of classical art. He seeks understanding in Serge's expensive purchase of the Antrios, and how it can be viewed as a legitimate piece of art.

Catalyst

- Yvan, a close friend of both Marc and Serge, is getting married and wants nothing more than his friends to come together in celebration. Through much heated conversation and overall shedding of feelings, Yvan invites Serge and Marc to dinner in an attempt to reconcile.

Inciting Incident

- Serge proudly displays his new purchase to his friend Marc. Marc despises the work and is wrecked over the amount of money Serge spent. He sees no aesthetic value in the painting and this view creates significant conflict between them.

Complications

- Marc has grown increasingly anxious and smug to Serge and Yvan. He also has become incredibly opinionated toward his friends, even in casual conversation. Marc's fixed ideas pertaining to art and his view of what friendship should consist of has made a negative impact on his relationship with Serge that later reflects on Yvan as well.

- Serge is a successful dermatologist and Marc thinks that he has become too sophisticated. Serge's newly found perspective has depleted Marc's confidence. In order to regain his faith, Marc is determined to prove to Serge that the painting is a waste of money and has no artistic value.
- Yvan is struggling with the decision to get married and is telling himself that he must settle with what he has. He has recently changed careers and now works for his new family. Yvan also receives a great deal of pressure from his mother and deals with her frustrations regarding the wedding as well. His friends have openly proposed canceling the wedding. Serge relayed that if went through with it he would be "in for a hideous future" (28). This comment is very upsetting to Yvan, and he is forced to defend his actions, creating even more turbulence.
- All three men have misunderstandings with one another and quarrel over why their friendship has slowly dwindled.

Crisis

- Marc continues to search for what is actually bothering him, which finally comes to a head when he finally reveals to Serge his feelings confessing, "I loved the way you saw me. I was always grateful to you for thinking of me as a man apart. I even thought being a man apart was a somehow superior condition, until one day you pointed out to me that is wasn't" (40). Has this painting replaced his friendship with Serge? Serge reflects on how this impassioned comment explains how Marc has trouble seeing people for their authentic self, and questions, "Why can't you learn to love people for themselves, Marc?" (41). Ultimately Serge wants Marc to realize that people evolve and change. It is a fact we cannot ignore as we mature and grow.

Climax

- Serge allows Marc to draw on the painting with one of Yvan's felt tip pens, attempting to mend the relationship. Given Serge's feelings toward the *Antrios*, this gesture is a pinnacle moment. It signifies Serge's true feelings toward Marc and a scandalous offer to ultimately test their friendship. Yvan is skeptical and overly emotional given the defacing of the painting. Yvan later reflects on the moment saying, "After Serge, in an act of pure madness, had demonstrated to Marc that he cared more about him than he did his painting, we went and had dinner, chez Emile" (47). Yvan is skeptical and overly emotional given the defacing of the painting, but in the end recognizes Serge's kindness regarding the act.

Denouement

- Satisfied by Serge's grand gesture, Marc is incredibly grateful. He finally can digest the work in its original form after a thorough cleaning, and imagines his skier drifting down a hill. This image gives Marc a moment of much needed resolve.

Final Event

After showing great vulnerability and empathy toward each other, Marc, Serge, and Yvan agree to have dinner. This gathering is the first step to possible recovery of a broken bond. The gentlemen have painfully gained insight and understanding to their true selves.

Previous Action

Events listed took place prior to the beginning of the play and are referenced in the play:

- Serge, a dermatologist, purchases a new painting. He is one of Marc's oldest friends.
 - MARC. Serge is one of my oldest friends. He's done very well for himself, he's a dermatologist, and he's really into *art*. (5)
- Serge describes Marc as an intelligent aeronautical engineer who lacks understanding in modernism.
 - SERGE. He's one of those new-style intellectuals, who are not only enemies of modernism, but seem to take some sort of incomprehensible pride in running it down. (6)
- Marc uses homeopathy pellets for painkillers and stress relief.
 - MARC. When I left his [SERGE's] place, I had to take three pellets of Gelsemium 9C which Paula recommended. (7)
- A tense Yvan has switched jobs from the textile industry to a wholesale stationary business. His marriage to Catherine is taking place in two weeks.
 - YVAN. My professional life has always been a failure and I'm getting married in two weeks. (8)
- Serge, being an admirer of art, has been frequenting multiple art galleries for years.
 - YVAN. He's always haunted art galleries like crazy. (11)
- Marc believes that Serge has lost his sense of humor.
 - MARC. He's always been a freak, but a freak with a sense of humor. (11)
- Serge and Yvan have not seen each other for an extended time.
 - SERGE. It's nice to see you. You never call. (12)

- Serge references his busy schedule and his ex-wife, Françoise, and children he is beginning to see more frequently.
 - SERGE. What with the office, the hospital, Françoise, who's now decreed that I should see the children every weekend-which is something new for Françoise, the notion that children need a father. (18)
- Yvan has a history of self-confidence issues and sees a psychiatrist named Finklezohn
 - YVAN. I discuss everything with Finklezohn. I knew your relationship was under a strain and I wanted Finklezohn to explain. (32, 33)
- Marc has a wife named Paula. It is assumed that they have been together for a long period as Serge and Yvan speak as they have known her for years.
 - SERGE. When you asked me what I thought of Paula...did I say I found her ugly, repellent, and totally charmless? I could have. (36)
 - MARC. You're speaking to me of Paula, the woman who shares my life. (36)

Given Circumstances

GEOGRAPHICAL/DATES

'*ART*' takes place in France. The city itself is not specified, but it can be inferred to be Paris given the dialogue regarding culture. While the city itself is not mentioned there are clues given in the text. Regarding the painting, Serge relays to Marc that, "Jean Delauney would take it off my hands for two hundred and twenty" (5). Delauney is a prominent French artist with a gallery in Paris.

The play takes place around 1994. The action arises in the apartments of Marc, Yvan, and Serge. A majority of the action transpires in Serge's residence as the gentlemen meet for an outing together.

While scenes are not specifically marked within the play, there are breaks between locations signaled by small speeches by each character. The first scene begins in Serge's apartment seating area mid-day. Scene two is in Yvan's apartment later that afternoon. Scene three returns to Serge's apartment the mid-morning next day. Scene four takes place in Marc's residence later that afternoon within the living area. Scene five, the final scene, takes place in Serge's apartment the following evening around seven o'clock. There is no mention of seasonal time within the dialogue of the play.

Scene	Location	Time of Day
1	Serge's apartment	Mid-day
2	Yvan's apartment	Later that afternoon

3	Serge's apartment	Mid-morning the following day
4	Marc's apartment	Later that afternoon
5	Serge's apartment	The following evening around 7 pm
6	Serge's apartment	After 8:00pm
7	Serge's apartment	9:00pm
8	Serge's apartment	9:30pm
9	Serge's apartment	10:00pm

ECONOMIC

Within the play Serge and Marc fall into the upper middle class category and are financially secure. Serge is a dermatologist and Marc an aeronautical engineer. Serge enjoys extravagance in the finer things (i.e. fine works of art and cuisine). He also frequents art galleries and associates with other sophisticated companions. Marc regards Serge as, “One of my oldest friends. He’s done very well for himself, he’s a dermatologist” (5). Serge regards Marc with, “I’ve always valued our friendship, he has a good job. He is an aeronautical engineer” (6). Yvan is newly working in the wholesale stationary business. Out of the three, Yvan is ever changing when it comes to career choices. He speaks of his troubles saying, “I’m just a jerk stumbling from one iffy job to another” (12). When Serge purchases the painting, Marc is concerned: “He’s comfortable but he’s not rolling money” (8). Since the painting was purchased for 200,000 francs (approximately \$226,000 USD), Marc sees the painting as a gratuitous purchase for Serge. Marc struggles throughout the play to uncover a valid reason to for the purchase.

POLITICAL

Political stances of the characters in 'ART' are not explicitly stated. The characters mainly share views of one another on a personal level. The painting itself communicates a political and economic sensibility for Serge in that he feels he had the right to purchase it for his own personal collection. This choice does not require justification to Yvan and Marc. At one point during a heated discussion with both men he states, "Let's stop talking about the painting, shall we; once and for all. I have no interest in discussing it further" (34).

The piece spoke to Serge and at one point he declares, "As far as I am concerned, it's not white" (18). Serge, Marc, and Yan all argue over the validity of the piece as true art. This argument becomes the principal debate as each share their own view. Yvan is on the fence regarding the painting saying, "I didn't like the painting...but I didn't actually hate it" (16). Further, Marc cannot fathom why the painting continues to trouble him saying, "Could it be the *Antrios*, buying the *Antrios*?" (23). This question furthers the debate between the three characters over the validity of the *Antrios*. Is it a true work, and does it possess the qualities of modern art?

RELIGIOUS

The predominant religion in France during the 1990s was Christianity. Since there is no direct mention of a practicing religion among the characters it is inferred that Christianity is dominant. Even though Yvan is getting married, there is no mention of denomination, church, or temple used during the ceremony. This absence of information is further alluded to during the conversation Yvan has with his fiancé and mother-in-law as there is no declaration to a particular

denomination practiced. Moreover, Yvan never states where his wedding is taking place. The only concrete information given in the text is Yvan will be married in two weeks.

Serge does not address religion in the play and shows no ties to a specific religious belief. Lastly, Marc does not speak to practices in the religious realm, but he does have appreciation to classical art works. It can be inferred that he may have Christianity ties as classical artists and works have major ties to the Christian denomination, but it is never formally indicated.

POLAR ATTITUDES

Marc:

Marc begins the play confused over Serge's decision to purchase a white painting with white diagonal lines for 200,000 francs. He has great distaste for the work and cannot begin to comprehend why Serge has made such an expensive purchase of something that has no artistic value. Marc expresses his concern with, "It's unsettled me, it's filled me with some indefinable ease" (6). Because of his strong negative feelings toward the *Antrios*, Marc grapples with Serge and eventually their other mutual friend Yvan. Becoming more uneasy, Marc loses his composure with his friends. He makes more of an effort to be more understanding in his next meeting with Serge but cannot be convinced. To him, Serge has become an extravagant and pompous person that has lost sight of their friendship (25). Regarding Yvan, Marc makes unsettling remarks as well on his character and choices, and at one crucial moment he declares, "Yvan is a coward" (30).

Throughout the play, Marc is constantly grasping at straws to justify his thinking and becomes more annoyed only to realize that he is not unhappy with the painting after all. Rather, he realizes that he feels his friendship with Serge has been replaced by the piece. Marc questions

his lack of supervision of Serge as a friend. He is frustrated about Serge's new companions and new found modern lifestyle and blames himself for not watching over him more closely though the years. In an effort to explain this to Serge he explains, "Your friends need to be chaperoned, otherwise they'll get away" (41). Since his confidence has been lacking, he has lost sight of his true friendship with Serge and Yvan. Through a gesture by Serge to affirm their friendship, Marc defaces the painting and confirms his belonging to the group.

Serge:

Serge is a cultured and successful dermatologist who lives a comfortable life in his apartment and enjoys the pleasures of refinement. He is very proud of his new investment: the illustrious 1970s Antrios work that he has been, "lusting after it for several months" (5). He is tickled by its beauty and design and dotes over his new piece. Serge shares his opinion on color, light, and affect pertaining to the work. He finds it to be "Magnetic" (13) and is eager to show Yvan asking, "You want to see something special?" (13). He takes pride in his new piece but is annoyed with Marc and his opinion disclosing to Yvan, "I don't blame him for not responding to this painting, he doesn't have the training" (14). Serge's discussions with Marc quickly become arguments. He is perplexed on Marc's feeling toward the painting and tries to write it off as a matter of opinion, "All right, listen, it's just a picture, we don't have to get bogged down with it. Life is too short" (19).

Serge ultimately finds a solution to the artistic debate and gives Marc the opportunity to share his feelings in a safe space. The shedding of these feelings leads to allowing Marc to deface the painting as a gesture of friendship beyond material items. Yvan gives one of his precious felt tips and Serge grants permission as Marc draws a skier gliding down a snowy slope.

Yvan:

Yvan is introduced as a tense yet even tempered man switching careers from textiles to the wholesale stationary business. He has been seeing a therapist, Finklezohn, for several years to assist in his looming problems of friendships and his upcoming marriage. Yvan lacks self confidence due to constant changes in his career and unabating strain of his immediate family. He shows little excitement toward his upcoming nuptials between his fiancé Catherine, a “sweet and intelligent fiancé” (8). Yvan must be pushed to share his opinion, and he allows his friends to walk over him with words. At one point Serge exclaims, “Once in a while you could have an opinion of your own” (27). Yvan’s confidence does improve near the ending of the play as he grows more courageous and shares his thoughts openly.

He shares his thoughts and refers to his wedding as a catastrophe. Yvan’s frustration between his two estranged friends grows to a climatic point suddenly revealing, “The only two people whose presence guaranteed some spark of satisfaction are determined to destroy one another, just my luck!” (44).

Yvan is heartbroken that his friends cannot find common ground and is determined to find it with them. He is the unsung hero of the play being that he is the only voice of reason among the non-stop verbal attacks and judgement. It has been fifteen years since the three gentlemen have spent meaningful time together, and Yvan wants nothing more than everyone united.

FURTHER RESEARCH ON GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES

The play takes place in the early nineties when France became part of the European Union (EU) and changed the banking and voting systems. During the 1990s, France was “recovering from a period of economic recession” (Mills). This recession could have played a factor in Marc’s reasoning. He may have been concerned due to the recent drop in the economy thus questioning Serge’s lofty purchase.

While Reza does not formally note that the play takes place in Paris, it is inferred due to the language pertaining to art, cuisine, and residence. Numerous readers agree that the characters are, “residents of Paris, a place deeply rooted in its rich and complex artistic history” (Tanner). Serge, Marc, and Yvan are all distinguished and stylish in their own way which lends to the idea of a Parisian location.

The modern art movement began in France in the 19th Century. The art itself rejects academic tradition, striving to portray the world in a more natural way. “During the 19th century, many artists started to make art based in their own, personal experiences and about topics that they chose” (MoMa Learning). People found a connection to artists such as Pablo Picasso, Edvard Munch, Vincent Van Gogh, and Paul Cezanne in what they wanted to portray within a different perspective. In terms of modernism, Serge has a deep connection. He sees genius within his new work and has found an appreciation to the world of modern art.

Seneca’s *The Happy Life* is also mentioned and discussed in the play. Seneca was a stoic philosopher that, “saw the world as a single great community in which all men were brothers” (Seneca, 15). He had a belief in ‘living with nature’ and had four primary qualities to live by: “wisdom (or moral insight), courage, self-control, and justice. It enables a man to be self-sufficient, immune to suffering, superior to the wounds and upsets of life” (16). Serge owns *The*

Happy Life and proudly displays it in his home. He believes in Seneca's method and gladly shares his views with Yvan and Marc.

Analysis of Dialogue

Overall, the dialogue in 'ART' is elevated, worldly, and culturally influenced. Serge, Yvan, and Marc appreciate fine art and share their point of views. The gentlemen are wordy and tend to be long-winded. There are also strong opinions and assumptions regarding their feelings for themselves and each other, which bring heated conversation within the play. The characters speak with eloquence and have decorum; however, their speech changes to more harsh tones when discussing life choices and opinions regarding the painting.

Marc

Marc is incredibly opinionated and takes every opportunity to share his point of view. He has trouble dealing with anxiety and uses supplements to ease his tension. For Marc, there is an ongoing festering of conflict always happening. He has trouble staying calm and collected and easily loses his composure.

Marc's main conflict throughout the play involves the painting purchased by Serge. The condescending and occasionally smug tone he uses when regarding the piece is evident throughout the play. At one point he addresses Serge with, "You paid two hundred thousand francs for this shit?" (6). The white painting with small diagonal white lines shows no value in Marc's mind, and he cannot possibly understand why Serge has bought it. The fact that Serge has spent 200,000 for it has Marc flustered. He shares, "It's unsettled me, it's filled me with some indefinable unease" (7).

Marc longs to understand Serge's decision to buy the piece, and his emotions are reflected as critical and annoyed. He tries to understand Serge's reasoning and even makes attempts to justify the purchase saying, "Isn't there, deep down, something really poetic about

what Serge has done?” (19). Alas, Marc cannot hold his tone and divulges his opinion once again showing his true colors. Marc proclaims that he molded Serge, and he has since betrayed him stating, “There comes a day when your creature has dinner with the Desprez-Couderts and, to confirm his new status, goes off and buys a white painting” (42). Because of this outburst, Marc is hurt and confused. His overall tone changes when he realizes that Serge has not replaced him with the painting, becoming softer and more understanding. He conveys this sentiment with, “If only I’d been able to express myself without losing my temper” (42).

- ***Towards Serge:*** Marc language is very bitter toward Serge throughout the play. He is harsh at times saying, “You paid two hundred thousand francs for this shit?” (6). Marc still admires Serge, which is troublesome given the purchase of the painting. He is worried that Serge sees himself as a legitimate collector, something that Marc has never thought. If Serge were a legitimate art collector, he would belong to a different and elevated cultural class. This thought is terrifying to Marc, and he is determined to bring Serge back to who he formally was. Since these friends have seen less and less of one another their relationship has suffered. Serge has changed, and this change has been hard on Marc. He explains his feelings sharing, “You enjoyed exhibiting me untamed to your circle, you, whose life was normal. I was your alibi. But...eventually, I suppose, that kind of affection dries up...Belatedly, you claim your independence” (40).
- ***Toward Yvan:*** Marc uses a cocky and smug tone with Yvan. In the beginning, Marc does his best to prove why the painting was a poor purchase on Serge’s part. Yvan does not take his side stating, “If it makes him happy...he can afford it” (10). This comment enrages Marc and sends him down a spiral of accusatory comments toward Yvan denigrating his indecision and poor life choices (i.e., career and upcoming wedding). He

even questions Yvan's dealings with family and his own masculinity asking, "Why do you let yourself be fucked over by all these women?" (25). Ultimately, Marc must dig himself out in order to maintain a relationship with Yvan.

Yvan

Yvan uses a dejected tone emulating his overall lack of confidence. He is settling with his career and upcoming marriage sharing, "My professional life has always been a failure and I'm getting married in two weeks. She is a lovely intelligent girl from a good family" (8). Yvan serves as the glue for Serge and Marc. He wants nothing more than the three to be together on his wedding day. Yvan works to bring them together to the best of his abilities but has trouble siding on opinions which is an avoidance tool for hurt feelings. While his tone is under confident in the beginning, he becomes empowered as the play progresses.

Through this transformation Yvan takes a defensive tone. He speaks with more frustration as the evening discussion escalates. Yvan expresses his aggravation saying, "Why do we see each other if we hate each other? It's obvious we do hate each other! I mean, I don't hate you, but you hate each other!" (42).

Given Yvan's tonal change throughout the play, he can establish a new beginning with each of his friends. In the end he was able to finally express his true feelings without hiding his personal beliefs thus proving his worthiness.

- ***Toward Serge:*** Yvan enjoys Serge's company and is easy going with him when they are together. He is comfortable with Serge and values his friendship, despite that, Serge has become distant. Yvan shows uneasiness in bothering Serge revealing, "I don't like to disturb you" (12). His decorum is reflected with a

respectful tone in the beginning which changes into guarding. As dialogue progresses Yvan is able to speak his truth and Serge is able to finally see him as a friend attempting to keep the relationship alive. This realization is emulated when Yvan boldly speaks to their shattered friendship, “I’m not like you, I don’t want to be an authority figure, I don’t want to be a point of reference, I don’t want to be self-sufficient, I just want to be your friend Yvan the joker! Yvan the joker!” (45).

- ***Toward Marc:*** For Yvan, the problems begin when Marc is added to the mix. Yvan becomes defensive around Marc thus intensifying conversations. He has difficulty taking sides and Marc indicates, “He’ll do whatever you like. whatever you like, he’ll always do” (27). Yvan does not take kindly to such comments and questions the tension between his two best friends and how they could possibly have grown so far apart. He raises the question, “What’s the matter with you? What’s happened between you? Something must have happened for you to get this demented” (38). Eventually, events subside and Yvan is able to communicate on a deeper level with Marc over dinner, bridging the gap between Marc and Serge.

Serge

Serge, a successful dermatologist, has a sophisticated speech compared to his friends. He is tactful with words and is motivated to find the root of problems through meaningful conversation. Serge has a way with words in that he is subtle when listening, using throw away dialogue like “Anyway, in a few years God knows if the Antrios will be worth anything” (19).

Within these types of throwaway comments, we see Serge does not take himself seriously all the time. On the contrary he can also be firm and explicit in his tone to Marc and Yvan, and will share his opinion bluntly: “You want my opinion on your women problems? In my view, the most hysterical of them all is Catherine, by far” (28).

Additionally, since Serge sees himself as an appreciator of fine art, he finds himself doting over his *Antrios*. He is very proud of his unique purchase and conveys this pride to Marc and Yvan. He wishes them to see it as a stunning and eclectic work. Alas, Serge concludes that the true beauty of the painting is unique to himself. His dialogue is softened by the closing of the play and this feeling is solidified when Serge asks Yvan, “Do you have one of your famous felt tips?” (45).

- ***Toward Marc:*** Serge is courteous with his words toward Marc at the beginning with the play. As the dialogue and conflict intensifies Serge explains his indifference in his appreciation of contemporary art regarding Marc with, “I don’t blame him for not responding to the painting, he doesn’t have the training, there’s a whole apprenticeship you have to go through” (14). Serge will defend his choice to buy the painting throughout the play as Marc cannot justify the purchase. Ultimately, with the defacing of the *Antrios*, Serge is able to relay his feelings of true friendship to Marc.
- ***Toward Yvan:*** Serge communicates on an even level with Yvan. He uses considerate language and sees Yvan as a friend that has made questionable choices in the past in regard to career and lifestyle. He expresses to Yvan how he feels about his upcoming marriage relaying, “And if you’re already letting yourself be fucked over by her, you’re in for a hideous future” (28). Serge’s

speech can be harsh at times to Yvan, but he is worried that Yvan will eventually fall into a destructive and unhealthy relationship.

Analysis of Dramatic Action (Units, Moods and Tempos of the Play)

I have included my rehearsal sections layout because the script itself does not have scenes marked. This breakdown into units of action is helpful for the actors during the rehearsal process and for the director as well when marking dramatic action.

Rehearsal Sections

Scene 1: p. 5-8 ending with line “MARC . Obviously.”

Marc, Serge

Scene 2: middle of p. 8 line “YVAN . I’m Yvan.” - p. 11 line “YVAN . He’ll laugh, you’ll see.”

Marc, Yvan

Scene 3: p. 12-14 ending with line “SERGE . Why don’t you admit that Marc is atrophying? If he hasn’t already atrophied.”

Yvan, Serge

Scene 4: p. 15-18 ending with line “MARC . From now on. I’m on my best behaviour.”

Yvan, Marc, Serge

Scene 5: bottom of p. 18 line “SERGE . Feel like a laugh?” – middle of p. 23 ending with line “MARC . “...what sort of friend are you Serge, if you don’t think your friends are special?”

Serge, Marc, Yvan








Scene 6: bottom of p. 23 line “YVAN . So, a crisis, insoluble problem, major crisis...” – ending with line p. 28 “YVAN . There are certain crucial qualities you need when marrying someone like me.”


Scene 7: bottom of p. 28 line “YVAN . Where are you going to put it?” – ending with line p. 34 “MARC . Gelsemium.”




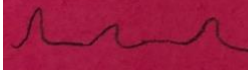
Scene 8: bottom of p. 34 line “YVAN . What else can happen?” – ending with line p. 39




“SERGE . I don’t resent you being with Paula.” – ending with line p. 45 “YVAN...face it pal...you buying this thing is demented...”

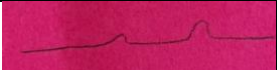
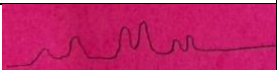
Scene 9: bottom if p. 45 line “SERGE . Do you have one of your famous felt tips?” – ending with line pg. 48 “MARC . It represents a man who moves across a space then disappears.”




Beat	Title	Summary of Action	Moods	Tempo
	SCENE 1			
1	My friend Serge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc meets the Antrios 	Unaffected	 Andante
2	Expensive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge discusses price Marc pushes back and questions the lofty purchase 	Thrilled Shock	 Stretto
3	Valued friendship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge wrestles with Marc’s reaction to the Antrios 	Judgmental	 Mosso
4	“This is shit?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge questions Marc’s comments 	Critical	 Stretto
5	“No Warmth”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge reacts to Marc’s cold tone 	Disappointment	 Ritardando
6	Unsettling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc questions Serge’s purchase 	Jealous	 Moderato
7	Discuss with Yvan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc decides to see Yvan 	Hopeful	 Adagio

Beat	Title	Summary of Action	Moods	Tempo
	SCENE 2			
8	I’m Yvan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan introduction 	Insecure	

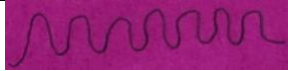
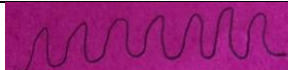







				Andante
9	Special felt tip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan crawls on the floor of his apartment for his pen top 	Disgruntled	 Andante
10	Still looking...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc threatens to leave if Yvan keeps searching for his pen top 	Annoyed	 Mosso
11	White	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc reveals his dismay with Serge's painting Yvan questions Marc's feelings 	Disappointed Curious	 Mosso
12	If it makes him happy...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan questions the idea of true happiness with Marc 	Intrigued	 Moderato







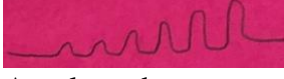


Beat	Title	Summary of Action	Moods	Tempo
	SCENE 3			
13	So what's new	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan and Serge meet 	Unsure	 Adagio
14	Something special	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge proudly shows off the Antrios for Yvan 	Inquisitive	 Moderato
15	Devastated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge shares his concern for Marc 	Troubled	 Mosso

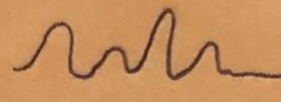
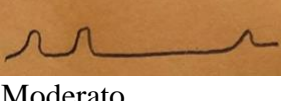



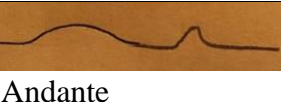

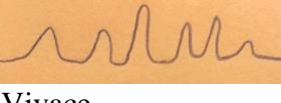
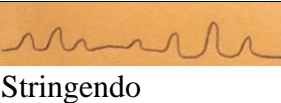
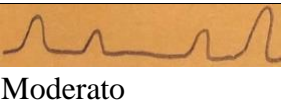
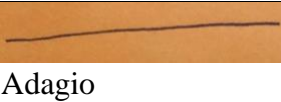
Beat	Title	Summary of Action	Moods	Tempo
	SCENE 4			
16	We laughed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan retells his meeting with Serge to Marc 	Skeptical	 Allegretto
17	A system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan defends his view of a "completion of a journey" within the Antrios to Marc 	Sarcasm	 Stretto




18	Happy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan revisits the idea of happiness 	Emptiness	 Lento
19	It's not white	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge defends his take on the Antrois 	Confident	 Moderato
20	Serious Matter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc evaluates his behavior toward Serge 	Uneasy	 Mosso

Beat	Title	Summary of Action	Moods	Tempo
	SCENE 5			
21	Yvan got it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge examines Yvan's reaction with Marc 	Regretful	 Andante
22	Last nerve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge erupts by Marc's negative tone 	Annoyed	 Stretto
23	The nerve of Marc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge reasons with Marc's behavior 	Doubt	 Stringendo
24	Losing a friend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc mourns about his dwindling friendship with Serge 	Inadequate	 Moderato
25	You're just Marc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge wounds Marc's pride by his past comments 	Insignificant	 Andante
	SCENE 6			
26	Stepmother	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan is in crisis over wedding invitations 	Overwhelmed	 Stretto
27	She wore me down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan's stepmother meddles 	Flooded	 Stringendo
28	Colette vs Mom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collette and Catherine passionately 	Disrespected	 Vivace

		argue about the wedding with Yvan		
29	Catherine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catherine is devastated and visibly emotional 	Anxious	 Vivo
30	Mom solo appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan's Mother attends alone without her ex-husband, Yvan's father 	Ridiculed	 Presto
31	Read Seneca Yvan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge advises Yvan to "Read Seneca" 	Contemptuous	 Moderato
32	Fatty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lyonnaise food for thought 	Brash	 Moderato
33	Where's your sense of humor?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc inquires on Yvan's sense of humor 	Defensive	 Mosso
34	Cancel the wedding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge urges Yvan to cancel the wedding Yvan is in shreds 	Appalled Saddened	 Mosso
	SCENE 7			
35	What color is it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc prods Yvan with Antrios color questions 	Hurtful	 Stringendo
36	Colors touching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan defends his artistic views Marc is irate 	Resentful Furious	 Vivo
37	Man of his time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge dubs Marc a classical "man of his time" 	Inquisitive Rattled	 Vivo
38	Marc's the coward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan leaves due to Marc's derogatory comments 	Humiliated	 Andante

39	Healing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc sees the error in his ways 	Ashamed	 Mosso
40	Yvan returns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan returns and defends his actions 	Provoked	 Moderato
41	Finklezohn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan discusses his personal therapy Marc and Serge are unamused 	Vulnerable Resentful	 Mosso
42	Exhausted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge grows tired of the tirade 	Exhausted	
	SCENE 8			
43	Paul Valery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge laments with Marc on the poetry Paul Valery 	Confusion	 Accelerando
44	Loving a painting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc discloses his love and disappointment in Serge 	Jealousy	 Mosso
45	Paula	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge reveals his true feelings for Marc's wife Marc throws <i>Seneca</i> at Serge in retaliation 	Indifferent Perplexed	 Accelerando
46	You're complete freaks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan comes between Marc and Serge and is hit by the book which injures his ear. 	Disillusioned	 Allegro
47	Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc questions Serge's feelings toward Paula 	Mislead	 Moderato

48	Aspirin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan is in agony Serge assists 	Devastated Empathy	 Mosso
SCENE 9				
49	Replaced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc accuses Serge of replacing him with the Antrios. 	Worthless	 Moderato
50	Proud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc reminisces on his prior relationship with Serge 	Abandoned	 Andante
51	You saw me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc relays his true feelings 	Vulnerable	 Adagio
52	Marc's fault	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc regrets past decisions regarding Serge 	Shame	 Adagio
53	The End-15 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc regrets losing his temper 	Inadequate	 Andante
54	Yvan has to choose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan must choose between Marc and Serge 	Heated	 Allegretto
55	Two against Yvan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge and Marc accuse Yvan of ruining their evening 	Ridiculed	 Vivace
56	Yvan the joker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan regrets his life choices and wishes to return to his old self 	Powerless	 Stringendo
57	A white square defaced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge allows Marc to deface the Antrios 	Compassion	 Moderato
58	Clean up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge cleans the Antrios 	Amused	 Adagio

59	Wedding reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yvan tearfully reflects on his wedding day and yearns for reconciliation 	Hopeful	 Andante
60	Marc reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serge reveals his knowledge of the washable felt tip 	Optimistic	 Andante
61	New perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marc sees the <i>Antrios</i> in a new light 	Open	 Adagio

Character Analysis

Character: **Marc**

Middle Aged Man

Friend to Serge and Yvan

Aeronautical Engineer

Husband to Paula

Desire:

Marc wants to make Serge realize how foolish his purchase was of the Antrios.

He is worried his friend has evolved into a sophisticated snob. He states, "I'm hurt, yes I am, I'm fond of Serge, and to see him let himself be ripped off and lose every ounce of discernment through sheer snobbery..." (11)

He wants to be accepted for what he is by his friends.

Will:

Stubborn, outspoken, rude

Marc is incredibly upset over Serge's decision to purchase a white painting and will stop at nothing to make his opinion known. He corners his friends consecutively in his quest to bring his view to the forefront.

Moral Stance:

Marc's morality is questionable at the start given his strong judgement regarding the Antrios. He gives no regard to how Yvan feels about the painting and proceeds with a selfish attitude. Marc continues to bulldoze through Yvan when he disagrees with his opinion and belittles him repeatedly saying, "You find these

colors touching Yvan!?” (29) This behavior lends to the idea that Marc does not realize his actions will ultimately lose relationships.

Decorum:

Marc has classical taste and despises contemporary art. He sees no value in modern work and is quick to judge Serge and Yvan on their perspective. Marc is an educated man that carries himself with an inner pride and a chip on his shoulder. He slowly becomes aware that his actions are hurtful and selfish and ultimately shows his vulnerability.

Summary Adjectives:

Curious, Manipulative, Hurt, Selfish, Remorseful

Character: **Serge**

Middle Aged Man

Friend to Marc and Yvan

Dermatologist

Divorced with two children

Desire:

Serge desires acceptance, understanding, and respect for his Antrios. He also wants Marc to recognize his sophisticated way of life and respect of modern art. When speaking to Yvan about Marc he states, “I don’t blame him for not being interested in modern art, I couldn’t give a shit about that. I like him for other reasons” (14)

Will:

Serge has great will to achieve what he wants. He is constantly giving examples of why the Antrios is a unique and moving piece. Serge speaks highly of the artist and admires the painting with great delight. He is torn at times with Marc and questions the intent of their relationship.

Moral Stance:

Serge overall has strong morals in right and wrongdoing, and at times he can be the voice of reason. He is quick to call Marc out on his lack of respect and assists in fleshing out the real problem at hand.

Decorum:

Serge has a casual yet firm posture and speaks eloquently to his companions. He is highly educated, cultured, and enjoys the finer things. He walks with a comfortable stride and addresses his friends with respect until he feels threatened. In this case Serge swiftly defends decisions and accusations. In one quarrel regarding the Antrios Serge questions Marc with, “By who’s standards is this shit? If you call something shit you have to have some criterion to judge it by” (7).

Summary Adjectives:

Cultured, Refined, Pompous, Passionate

Character: **Yvan**

Friend to Serge and Marc

Former textile worker

New to the stationary profession

Engaged to Catherine

Desire:

Yvan wants to bring Marc and Serge together to attend his wedding. The men have been connected for fifteen years and he is discouraged Serge and Marc cannot find common ground with one another. Yvan also wishes to be respected as a mature adult by his companions.

Will:

Historically Yvan has had issues following through in various aspects in his life. He has had professional defeats and has never landed on a true career. Along with the lack of career path his immediate family has been a trouble spot as well. His mother questions him with, "Why am I always an afterthought?" (24). His mother's insistence with Yvan getting married has caused Yvan to follow the socially expected example of relationships, pressuring him into marriage.

Moral Stance:

Yvan's morals rest in what is right, and he values relationships. We see this practiced predominately when he addresses both Serge and Marc. He ultimately wants to call a truce with his companions and to have them see each other as long-time friends. Yvan shares his feelings with Marc and Serge and asks, "I don't understand what is going on. Can't we just calm down? There's no reason to insult each other over a painting" (34). Yvan works extensively in this quest and endures vocal pokes and prods from Serge and Marc alike throughout the play.

Decorum:

Yvan has an overall casual posture when conversing with his comrades. This posture changes to a tight stance when he becomes agitated or frustrated, bringing on a boastful vocal tone. His movement is relaxed and easy but can easily become muddled when he becomes confused or flustered. Yvan is a well-mannered, caring individual that sees true and unique qualities in his friends.

Summary Adjectives:

Honest, Emotional, Empathetic, Charged

Playwright Biography

Yasmina Reza was born in France to a Hungarian violinist mother and Russian-Iranian engineer father. Reza attended drama school and had steady work as an actor in Paris when she began writing in between productions. As a playwright, her first works included *Conversations After a Burial* (1986) and *Winter Crossing* (1989). Her breakout play was *'ART'*, which premiered in 1994 in Paris and went on to see success in the United Kingdom and the United States. *'ART'* earned Reza a Moliere award (France) for best production, an Olivier award (UK) for best comedy, and a Tony award (US) for best play. Her prosperity continued with *God of Carnage*, opening in London in 2006 which earned her another Oliver and Tony award. The play then had a very successful run on Broadway in 2009 and has continued to earn great esteem and success.

Reza has also seen success in film and has translated an adaptation of Franz Kafka's novel *The Metamorphosis* for director Roman Polanski. She also wrote several screenplays produced exclusively in Europe and three novels. In reference to her writing Reza states, "I write from my intuition, my sense of freedom, my feeling for words and rhythm" (Leavitt).

One of her most famous works, *'ART'* was a huge success grossing more than three hundred million worldwide in box office sales (Leavitt). She first thought the Paris premiere was a disaster as she heard laughter from the audience. While there may be comical portions within the play, Reza shares, "to me, *'ART'*, is heartbreaking" (Leavitt). One of the key components in Reza's writing is the masterful use of silence. Reza agrees with this idea: "Most writers don't know that actors are never better than in the pauses or in the subtext. Words are useful to the actors, but...they aren't the whole story" (Leavitt). The purposeful use of pause is abundantly

clear in *'ART'*, as audiences ride the waves of friendship, conflict, shame, fear, and love all through its calculated use and subtext.

Reza enjoys her time at home in France with her children and does not indulge in an extravagant lifestyle. She values her family and writes when she chooses. She has said, "Writing helps me survive. I don't write a lot, but I can write anywhere, on anything. It's a strength" (Leavitt). Reza is an extremely gifted storyteller that has made her mark in the performance medium. Her stories focus on the human existence that provoke critical thought. These attributes are a delicious part of her writing method and style.

Past Production Reviews

Yasmina Reza's *'ART'* is a versatile work and has been produced in multiple performance spaces around the world. It has been produced in 45 countries and translated into 30 languages (Vincentelli). *'ART'* had a very successful eighteen month run in Paris in 1995; critics at the time were surprised by the play's structure. The monologues woven throughout the play did not follow the writing style of Reza's previous works. "Oliver Schmidt of *Le Monde* observed the play was "unique in structure, which alternates between short inner monologues, delivered out to the audience, precisely framing the situations and actions" (Giguere 49). Another critic, Odile Quirot, noted in the *Le Nouvel Observateur* that because of the interchanging dialogue the theater would "verge on dizziness and roar with laughter" (50).

The play also had a six-year run in London beginning in 1996, earning an Olivier Award for Best New Comedy. Upon its first American run in 1997 at the Royale Theater in New York, *'ART'* was widely acclaimed by critics. Greg Evans of *Variety* observed, "Reza's play (effectively translated by Christopher Hampton) sharply captures the strategic allegiances of friendship as her three characters take sides, pair off, and gang up on one another" (Evans). *New York Times* reviewer, Ben Brantley, noted, "The underpinning of sadness gives *'ART'* a certain emotional gravity, and Ms. Reza has said she considers her play as much a tragedy as a comedy" (Brantley). Brantley also examines the work as "a limber comic exercise in escalating tensions" and "allows performers to stretch muscles they don't get to use very often" (Brantley).

'ART' has become a cultural phenomenon around the world. With its quick wit and tight timing, this work is a challenging and meaty piece for the ensemble. Various famous actors such as Alan Alda, Victor Garber, Alfred Molina, and Albert Finney have been thrilled to play the

troubled characters of Serge, Yvan, and Marc. With its impressive track record, *'ART'* is a very attractive piece for theatre artists globally.

Student Learning Goals

Show Selection Goals

- Perform a dramatic play that fits within the confines of COVID-19 restrictions
- Select a piece for three actors
- Select a play that stretches actors' ability and technique to promote growth in character development including purposeful table work, motivation, timing, and proper conflict assessment.
- Select a play that deals with the importance of belonging and relationship

Overall Production Goals

- Create a turntable set for three locations. I have not attempted this type of design, and I feel it would be a great learning opportunity for the crew.
- Increase and develop actor understanding of acting, blocking, and performance technique through advanced techniques in character creation, motivation, blocking, and movement.
 - Keeping the cast size small allows for detailed learning opportunities.
- Train a competent stage manager to run the production
 - Having a capable stage manager will allow for the director to work with actors and crew easily and efficiently.

Cast and Crew Goals

- Provide actors ample time to implement advanced techniques for character development, motivation, and acting choices. With a small cast, actors will have more time to devote to their exploration and development.

- Provide time to the crew to fully examine technical elements and choices within the production.
- Give crew members opportunities to focus and create a lighting cues.
- Challenge actors with the overall content of the play i.e., vocabulary, timing, mood, and style.
 - Actors will be responsible for defining unknown vocabulary and collaborating with the director effectively during scenes to establish proper timing, mood, and overall stylization of the play.
- Develop and implement a deep analysis of the script and what each scene entails in terms of conflict and understanding between characters. Actors and crew will have an in-depth sense of the story with extensive table work and research.

My Goals as Director and Teacher

- Be present and find the joy in each rehearsal.
- Trust my students in their choices and what I give them.
- Give myself the care I need to have the creative energy needed.
- Articulate high expectations for my students and recognize growth with each rehearsal
- Experiment with methods of direction i.e., improvisation, discussing the root of the scene, deciphering conflict, and finding real life connection to characters.

Part III: Post-Production Materials

- a. Production Journal
- b. Chair's Production Evaluation
- c. Self-Evaluation
- d. Works Cited

Production Journal

Date: Monday, March 1, 2021

Time: 3:00-5:00pm

Location: The Shickle Home

Notes:

- The cast gathered for table work
- We discussed:
 - Character Development: Examine character backgrounds, relationships, and history. Each actor filled out a background profile of each character and shared their answers. This assisted in creating a full background for each character so actors fully understand where they are coming from within the play.
 - Script Analysis Expectations: Identify unknown language, record acting units of dialogue, discuss general motivations, and the world of the play i.e., culture, location, religion, economic status.
 - Ensemble Building
 - Character Relationship
 - Motivation
- Actors were instructed to read through the script on their own and identify unknown words and record their meanings in a journal.
- Cast read through in person
- Actors will bring journals to next rehearsal and share findings

- We also met with parents and discussed the rehearsal and tech calendar. Our production will have a ten-week rehearsal schedule including one week of tech. There will be one performance on May, 14th @ 7:00pm.

Date: Wednesday, March 3rd

Time: 3:00-5:00pm

Location: The Shickle Home

Notes:

- Actors brought their journals for further discussion on meaning. It was important to understand all the dialogue spoken. Since I was dealing with younger actors I wanted to make sure all dialogue was clear. Actors were very astute and had numerous definitions in hand for rehearsal. We spent the bulk of the time going through their findings.
- Actors also discussed relationships between their characters and how it drives the story.
- Our technical crew were also present for this read through. Crew members included a stage manager, lighting operator, and sound operator.
- Our production of '*ART*' purposefully has a small cast and crew due to COVID regulations in California.
- I also met with our set designer to discuss my concept which includes a triple sided, double flat triangle design on casters. Each side would depict each character's living space.

Date: Monday, March 8th

Time: 3:00-5:00pm

Location: The Shickle Home

Notes:

- Objective: Recording beats of dialogue and blocking pages 5-11
- The Antrios was the first prop we worked with from the very beginning. I purchased four blank canvases to use for rehearsals and show day.
- The actors, stage manager, and director discussed acting units and recorded them in their scripts for first half of the play. I was very clear in defining and naming each unit of dialogue. The actors recorded beats in their scripts pages 5-28
- Since we did not have access to the theatre until the beginning of April, we made a small makeshift set with three chairs in the backyard of the Shickle residence.
Hannah Shickle, my set designer is kind enough to lend her space for our rehearsals in the month of March.
- The actors and I discussed the overall feeling of the first scene between Serge and Marc. We established blocking notes with our stage manager, Gracie, and I was free to concentrate solely on the actors as she took extensive notes. It was an absolute dream to have a competent stage manager. The actors then read through the scene before blocking.
- We blocked the first scene with little trouble. I allowed actors to make some choices as first and then began to weed down movement. As we move further in the script, I will have more extensive pre-blocking notes.

- The actors are quick studies, and we were able to run the scene several times before we wrapped for the day.

Date: Wednesday, March 10th

Time: 3:00-5:00pm

Location: Shickle Home

Notes:

- Objective: Record remaining beats of dialogue and block pages 12-14
- Actors convened and we did a small calming exercise before we began rehearsal.
- The actors and stage manager recorded the remaining units of dialogue in their scripts.
We discussed how these units break up the play and assist with rehearsal sessions in referring to unit numbers.
- The overall feeling of the scene was also discussed as well before we began blocking.
- The actors read through the scene to warm up.
- I gave detailed notes with the scene between Serge and Yvan, and I encouraged the actors to lend their opinion. We were able to run the scene multiple times then start from the top of the show to run all the blocked portions.
- This group of cast and crew are very supportive of one another and have a strong bond. We all have been working together for the past six years, so we are comfortable sharing ideas. Having this bond makes for a solid relationship and understanding between cast and crew.
- Since time is such an asset to us, we do our best to be as efficient as possible. Actors come prepared and the crew keeps us on schedule.
- I also met with Hannah Shickle to discuss costuming coloring and purchasing. She sketched a rendering for design ideas.

Date: Friday, March 12th

Time: 3:30-4:30

Location: Yreka High School Music Room

Notes:

- Objective: Meet with Eric Seiler-Composer of Original Music
- Discuss script and storyline
- I gave Eric a script with feeling and action words placed strategically to indicate specific cues. We also discussed the timetable of each cue which can include:
 - Short Chords for mood
 - A melody for each character
 - Longer cues for monologues
 - Set change cues (30-40 seconds)
- I agreed to record speeches for each character for Eric to use for melody inspiration. We agreed on mid-April as the deadline for completion.

Date: Monday, March 15th

Time: 3:00-5:00pm

Location: Shickle Home

Notes:

- Objective: Block pages 15-18
- Actors and crew convened, and we had a small meeting about timeline and expectations.
- Actors warmed up by reading and discussing the scene.
- I gave detailed blocking notes and together we went through the scene unit by unit.
Actors were coached to experiment if movement did not feel organic. As a director I strive to make my actors comfortable by offering space an open space for discussion, thorough feedback, and artistic breaks.
- We were able to block the scene and run it to obtain muscle memory. We were then able to run from the top of the show to page 18 where we will begin on Wednesday.
- I met with Hannah again to discuss a meeting with Chris Hansen. He will be assisting us in our design construction method. The meeting will take place over Zoom on March 19th.

Date: Wednesday, March 17th

Time: 3:00-5:00pm

Location: Shickle Home

Notes:

- Objective: Block pages 19-23.5
- Actors and crew arrived, and we took a moment of silence and relaxation before we began.
- Actors read through the scene, and we began blocking
- The scene included some more monologue moments for Serge and Marc and we took our time blocking those. The dialogue is quick, and we talked at length about what that means for movement. Each character has a specific stride and method in their movement style. The actors focused on their specific attributes in regard to movement. We also discussed the character spine and how that provokes distinct movement. Serge has a more casual stride whereas Marc is much more rigid. The actors are working on this contrast. Once this was established, we were able to block the rest of the scene swiftly and run it through several times.
- We then ran the show from the top to page 23.5

Date: Friday, March 19th

Time: 4:00-5:00pm

Location: Zoom

Notes:

- Hannah and I met with Chris, my colleague from CWU. Chris has extensive experience in set design and construction and has been kind enough to lend us his talents for ‘*ART*’
- The meeting consisted of a centered discussion around the revolving piece I wished to construct for our black box theatre. I want the set to be as simple as possible in order to highlight the actors. Our stage is also small, so I wanted to make sure it was even possible.
- Our design includes six flats, two on each side, to create a revolving triangle. Each side of the revolve will have each character’s residence. Serge will have the most detail as we spend most of the play in his apartment.
- Chris was able to explain how the design works and gave us an in depth drawing to properly construct the piece.
- Hannah, her family, and I will begin construction on the first weekend in April at the Avery Theatre.

Date: Monday, March 22nd

Time: 3:00-5:00pm

Location: Shickle Home

Notes:

- Objective: Block pages 23.5-25 (Yvan)
- Break down dialogue units and read through scene. We discussed voice options and tonal usage. Each character has its own tonal quality and we spoke about how each is unique. Changes in emotion trigger different tonal qualities and actors will be mindful during the production process.
- The blocking began with small movement to get the character into a rhythm. I gave him some liberties and pointed out places on the stage that he could not cross i.e., upstage areas. From there we worked a solid blocking plan.
- This piece of dialogue is the longest speech that I have ever directed! Words, words, words. The actor and I discussed memorization tactics and flow in the scene.
- We ran the scene three times and wrapped for the day. This particular scene is very taxing on the actor, and he is aware of how much work it will be to perform successfully.
- After wrapping I met with parents to discuss costumes items needed. I showed them our drawing and color scheme for each character. Parents will be purchasing costumes for actors since 'ART' is a self-produced. After a short meeting, parents understood wardrobe choices and will order within the week.

Date: Wednesday, March 24th

Time: 3:00-5:00pm

Location: Shickle Home

Notes:

- Objective: Block pages 26-32
- Actors read through scene and together broke down feeling and tone.
- With detailed blocking notes from me we worked the scene together. I allowed some input from the actors.
- This scene involves all three actors with the action driven by Yvan and Marc. The scene also involves the Antrios and Yvan's feeling about color that Marc severely opposes. We spent most of the rehearsal working this key moment and looking at different angles that bring the meat of conflict to the forefront of the scene.
- At the end of the blocking session I gave actors notes. We took a short break, gave notes, then ran the scene again before we wrapped rehearsal.

Date: Monday, March 29th

Time: 3:00-5:00pm

Location: Shickle Home

Notes:

- Objective: Block pages 33-40
- Read through scene and discuss movement and motivation. Serge and Marc's discussion turns to Paula, Marc's wife, and further escalates. Marc and Serge listen to Yvan's profound thoughts and dismiss them.
- We worked frustrated Yvan's exit multiple times focusing on Marc's reaction.
- The altercation between Serge and Marc was slowly blocked then worked through line by line. We spent about twenty minutes on this moment to get the timing correct. We questioned motivation and reaction to dialogue specifically for this unit of dialogue.
- 10 minute break
- Run scene three more times for muscle memory.
- Formal acting notes. Wrap rehearsal.

Date: Wednesday, March 31st

Time: 3:00-5:00pm

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- Objective: Block pages 41-47
- Begin with relaxation exercise on stage to ready actors
- Discuss and read through scene. Marc laments over the loss of Serge as a friend. He feels he let him slip away and begin relationships with new people. The actors and I discussed how it feels to lose a friend and why Marc feels betrayed.
- Yvan also implodes about the fractured relationship between the three men. Actors worked dialogue line by line. Movement is minimal and pauses are used to create key moments. Drawing on the Antrios is a crucial moment. The actor playing Marc rehearses the drawing on the canvas. We ended by running the new blocking three times through to create familiarity.
- Formal notes were given to actors and crew then we wrapped rehearsal

Date: Saturday, April 3rd and Sunday, April 4th

Time: 9:00-7:00pm (Both days)

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- Objective: Set Painting and Construction
- The Shickle family and Annabelle Yokel (lighting operator) assisted with set painting and construction.
- We traveled to our storage shed and collected six 4 x 8 flats for painting. Other items gathered included paint, brushes, painters' tape, and power tools.
- The set painting was specific to each character residence and color scheme.
 - Marc-Maroon
 - Serge-Blue
 - Yvan-Yellow
- We spent from 10-4pm painting flats then allowed them to dry. Then we broke for dinner and came back to the theatre for finishing touches.
- Hannah's husband Thomas went to the lumber yard to pick up the items needed to create the revolve the following day.
- On Sunday we arrived at 9:00am to begin set construction. Ethan Shickle (Marc) assisted his father, Thomas, in construction. I helped get the bottom finished then had to go home. The entire Shickle family stayed at the theatre to finish constructing the piece from top to bottom successfully.
- They sent me videos and pictures of the finished product and I was very pleased with the results. We wrapped and would return in a week after Spring Break.

Date: Monday, April 12

Time: 3:00-5:00pm

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- Objective: Run pages 5-25 (off book) and work with new set piece
- The actors were trained by Ethan (Marc) on how to properly move the new set piece. We also addressed set changes and timed them as well with a dry tech rehearsal.
- We were then able to run the first half of the show for the first time off book. The stage manager was utilized for cueing and the actors needed a fair amount.
- The actors were not rusty after the break and felt very refreshed. They retained the blocking with ease but had some trouble without their books as I expected. I allowed them to look at their books halfway through as it was holding up action in the scene. They are very skilled with memorization but did not spend as much time over the break working on it. They assured me that by the following week they will have memorization complete. Each character has over 250 lines so I am practicing some leniency.
- We worked specific movements, especially Yvan's speech and combed through each dialogue unit slowly to enrich motivation and action.
- In all, we ran 5-25 once through with stops giving one ten-minute break.
- Gracie, our stage manager, keeps a tight rehearsal schedule. I am thankful she keeps us on track. She also works very well with actors and will not give a line unless asked. She does allow them to work issues on stage and addresses blocking questions with ease. She is a gifted notetaker and efficient in her job.
- Formal notes were given to actors and crew then we wrapped rehearsal

Date: Tuesday, April 13th

Time: 3:00-8:00pm

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- Objective: Lighting Design and Focus work
- Annabelle (lighting operator) and Caden (sound operator) were present for lighting day at the theatre. I needed to wait for our large set piece to be finished before we could properly focus light and add color.
- Caden has worked tech at the Avery in the past and was nice to have to assist in lighting. He is currently home from college due to COVID and was happy to help with the production. He is also the brother of Gracie, our stage manager.
- The Avery still uses the old method with a ladder to focus and Caden climbed to the top to focus from our lighting pipes. We have 18 lighting instruments in all at our theatre. It takes approximately four hours to focus and add color.
- The color scheme included a wash of light blue, amber, and light purple. There are also pink color accents DS right and left.
- After we focused our light on stage, we were able to cue the show from top to bottom. It was nice to have myself and Caden on stage for positioning while Annabelle ran the board from the booth. Writing the light cues took approximately two hours. We cannot program our board as it is manual, but Annabelle does nice work recording the data in her script.

Date: Wednesday, April 14th

Time: 3:00-5:00pm

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- Objective: Run pages 26-47 (as much off book as possible)
- The goal of this rehearsal primarily is to get through the movement. This would be the first day to run the last half of the show. The actors were forthright in relaying to me that they are not confident about memorization for the last half. I in turn allowed them to use books to get through the movement. Gracie was utilized with reminders in blocking. Actors assured me that they will be off book by next week. I have full confidence in them.
- During rehearsal, we focused on the connection to anger and discussing the root of the problem between the characters. I allowed feedback and discourse between actors to break down feeling, tone, and motivation. I relayed that this type of work is very good to fully realize characters and in turn will assist in polishing the show toward the end of rehearsals.
- Lighting cues looked nice. We may work on some focusing but overall I am happy.
- I gave formal notes to actors and crew before we wrapped rehearsal

Date: Saturday, April 17th

Location: My home

Notes:

- Eric sent over the finished music files, and I was able to successfully listen and upload all the cues and put them into Qlab for my sound operator. Eric and I also conferenced over the phone, and he let me know that he would be happy to make any changes if needed. I relayed that I was very excited to run them during rehearsal and would get back to him. We also talked about payment and settled on a date of May 30th. I am very happy with the musical cues and am looking forward to the cast and crew hearing them as well.

Date: Monday, April 19th

Time: 2:00-5:00pm

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- Objective:
 - Meet with Caden to discuss sound cues
 - Run pages 5-25 off book
 - Full Tech
- I met with Caden an hour before rehearsal to go through all the sound cues and operation of Qlab. He did very well and was confident that he could run it with success.
- We addressed a few questions on timing and agreed that we would need actors to run their speeches multiple times for timing purposes.
- I prepped actors and crew and relayed that we will be hearing the music and working with it today. Please be patient as we run portions multiple times.
- During rehearsal, I noticed overall changes in mood and delivery when the music was added. The actors enjoy the addition as it gives them new motivation. We ran speeches multiple times to make for proper timing. We also ran scene changes 2-3 times for timing purposes was well. The actors were quick to choreograph clean scene changes with props and rolling set.
- The stage manager gave assistance to actors struggling during certain sections i.e., Marc and Serge scene. We also broke down Yvan's big speech unit by unit as he was attempting off book for the first time. He did an admirable job but still has a long way to go as far as memorization is concerned. This issue with memorization did not worry me

too much as Ethan (Yvan) is very astute and takes his role very seriously. I can see that he is working very hard on his mountain of dialogue. He is aware that he needs to be off book as soon as possible in order for the scene to come together.

- Formal notes to actors and crew then wrapped rehearsal

Date: Wednesday, April 21st

Time: 2:00-5:00pm

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- I met with Heather, my graphic designer, over Zoom at 2:00 before rehearsal. We talked about our design scheme and shared an inspirational image. It would be a very clean poster design for public with one red, yellow, and blue lines. She was taken with the idea and will give me mockups within a few days. Heather was kind enough to volunteer her time to our show.
- I also refocused a few lights with Caden for better stage coverage as there were dark spots downstage before rehearsal began.
- Rehearsal Objective: Run pages 26-47 (off book) Full Tech
- We ran 26-38 twice and worked out details with building tension and timing the altercation. Actors focused on memorization and needed several prompts from the stage manager.
- We ran 38-47 and worked out the actual drawing on the canvas. I provided butcher paper to put over the top so we could have multiple rehearsals without drawing on the canvas itself. Hannah, our set designer, was also on hand to assist with the style of the drawing and technique.
- Lastly, we chatted about memorization. There are only four more rehearsals until tech week. I gave additional actor and crew notes and wrapped rehearsal.

Date: Monday, April 26th

Time: 3:00-5:00pm

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- Heather sent me images for tickets, programs, and posters. We spoke briefly and I approved them all to my liking and had them sent to our local printer in Yreka. I will pick them up next week.
- Rehearsal Objective: Run 5-25 (off book) Full Tech
- Actors are becoming more confident with dialogue and words are beginning to float off the page. We ran monologues twice to perfect musical and lighting timing. I notice the acting performance is enhanced with the addition of the music. I am very happy we were able to incorporate original melodies within the play.
- We were able to run 5-25 two times with little to no prompts. The first half of the play is in good shape and actors are starting to develop a rhythm.
- Actors continue to work on reaction and motivation. All actors are refining their movement and showing vulnerability. There are some lovely and heartfelt moments occurring during Marc's heartfelt speech directed toward Serge.
- I gave formal notes to cast and crew and we wrapped rehearsal

Date: Wednesday, April 28th

Time: 3:00-6:00

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- Objective: Run pages 26-47 (off book) Full Tech
- Actors are still working on solid memorization as there is a huge bulk of dialogue the second half of the play. The stage manager had to give several prompts toward the end of the play.
- We worked reaction and motivation details with Yvan leaving and coming back. Yvan also worked his last speech attacking Serge and Marc openly and unapologetically. We also conversed about placement, pauses, and creating key moments.
- We also worked all the last speeches of the play for timing and feeling.
- Marc drew on the butcher paper again to practice technique and placement within the canvas.
- I gave formal notes to cast and crew
- Actors had a costume fitting. All pieces look nice on stage. I am happy with the color scheme and textures.
- Rehearsal Wrap

Date: Thursday, April 29th

Time: 2:30-4:30

Location: Avery Theatre/Downtown Etna

Notes:

- Objective: Photoshoot-Taryn Burkleo
- I have hired a professional photographer, Taryn Burkleo, to document my production of 'ART'. Today, she will take formal shots of actors in costume on stage and downtown Etna. Outside, we have a sweeping landscape with a mountainous background.
- We set some scenes for Taryn in the theatre and she took several shots. We then journeyed outside, and she coached actors at multiple locations in Etna i.e., brick buildings, a small outdoor stage, and in front of a large pasture. The cast and crew also had formal headshots taken as well as group shots together.
- This project took two hours and resulted in over 200 images. I will use production and headshots on our bio board in the lobby for the show.
- Taryn is a very talented photographer and my actors and crew respond to her very well. She has photographed this group before and we are familiar with her style.
- I will receive images from Taryn in approximately three days

Date: Monday, May 3rd

Time: 3:00-5:00

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- Objective: Full Run (off book) Full Tech
- Actors did well the first half of the play with very little prompts.
- Blocking was solid, and there is a flow appearing. The actors are finding comfort in the dialogue and it is less labored. Movement and dialogue are becoming natural and organic.
- The second half is still a bit rocky and the actors required multiple prompts.
- I allowed actors to stop themselves and rework portions without me intervening unless needed. Our stage manager also followed suit regarding these choices.
- She only gave blocking notes when something went completely awry.
- Scenery changes and prop usage flowed nicely. The music helps tie it all together.
- I gave formal notes to cast and crew and wrapped rehearsal.
- My husband picked up my completed posters, tickets, and programs from the printer.

Date: Wednesday, May 5th

Time: 3:00-5:00pm

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- Objective: Full Run/Full Tech
- Actors came in early between 1:30-3:00 to run lines together on their own. They ran pages 26 to 47 and felt solid for today's run through.
- We began from and ran the show from top to bottom. The actors needed very little prompts for the second half. The actors seemed very pleased with themselves. The dialogue has a definite flow and the movement is becoming fluid.
- I gave formal acting and tech notes
- We discussed tech week and dress rehearsals.
- Tech week schedule:
 - Monday and Tuesday 3:00-6:00pm
 - Wednesday 3:00-7:00pm (run twice with dinner break)
 - No rehearsal Thursday due to conflict
 - Friday Show Day-Call 5:30
 - Stage manager recorded notes and relayed information regarding call times
- Rehearsal Wrap

Date: Monday, May 10th

Time: 3:00-6:00

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- Objective: Full Run/Full Tech
- Actors came in early to review on their own
- Prompt start at 3:00
- I addressed actors and crew. We have had a major advantage being in the theatre for the past six week as it is a community space. Having access to all the technical aspects has been a blessing. Usually, we are only in the theatre for tech week. Being that this is an independent project I was able to have more time in the performance free of charge. The Avery has been incredibly understanding and we will be giving donations the night of the performance.
- The stage manager took her place in the booth and I was seated in the back of theatre. No notes were given to actors. It was a very clean run through.
- The actors did request to run the scene in which Yvan leaves two times to solidify it. I allowed it and we moved swiftly to the ending.
- Scene changes and technical aspects looked very nice. I am happy with the results.
- I gave everyone a break after the run through. We reconvened after 15 minutes, I gave formal notes, and we wrapped rehearsal.

Date: Tuesday, May 11th

Time: 3:00-6:00pm

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- Objective: Full Run/Full Tech/Dress Rehearsal
- The actors dressed and we began at 3:30
- Our cast and crew had a successful full run with fluid movement, dialogue, sound, and lighting cues. I was very pleased.
- Actors were able to stay in character throughout the run. There were no big flubs and they had a few very nice recoveries.
- The actors voiced that their review sessions on their own helped immensely in memorization.
- I did not want to keep them over time so I gave formal notes, allowed them to change and reset the stage, then wrapped rehearsal.

Date: Wednesday, May 12th

Time: 2:00-7:00pm

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- Objective: Full Run/Full Tech (two times)
- 1st Run: Just a few flubs. Costumes, set changes, lighting, and sound was well done.
There is a flow to the show.
- We broke for a dinner break from 4:00-5:00. Families were welcome and invited to stay for the second run. They all declined as they wanted to wait for the actual performance tomorrow.
- 2nd Run: Solid. The cast and crew are very happy with the production. The actors voiced concern over not rehearsing on Thursday, the day before the performance. I relayed that I could be at the theatre early on Friday and let them in to run lines. They agreed to arrive at 3:00 on and work together until 4:30.

Date: Friday, May 14th

Time: 3:00-10:00pm

Location: Avery Theatre

Notes:

- Objective: '*ART*' Performance
- I arrived early to let actors into the theatre and run lines. They walked around the theatre and ran lines from top to bottom.
- While actors ran their lines, Hannah and I put the bio board together in the lobby. Our bio board includes headshots of all actors and crew and a short bio of theatrical experience they wrote themselves.
- I also included some action shots of the show in the lobby as well.
- At 4:30 I instructed the actors to have their dinner break and be back by 5:30 call.
- At 5:30 our cast and crew were accounted for by stage management, and we began prepping for the show. My husband arrived with his camera to videotape the production for my thesis committee. Taryn also arrived with her family to take photos during the performance.
- The house will open promptly at 6:30
- Actors got into costume backstage and relaxed. The crew handed out programs and ushered family to seats.
- Our production of '*ART*' had a house of about fifty audience members. Only family and close friends were invited to a private performance.

- At 7:00pm I gave a tearful opening speech and enjoyed a wonderful performance. There were a few flubs but I was incredibly happy overall. These young actors and crew worked very hard for me and I appreciated every moment.
- After the show I closed the theatre and wrapped our time on '*ART*'
- We will strike and store our set the following Tuesday.

Thesis Chair Production Response

MA – Theatre Production

Thesis Production Response to ‘*ART*’, written by Yasmina Reza and directed by Kathryn Young

Avery Theatre (Etna, CA)

Live, limited audience performance + archival recording (only for committee response due to COVID-19)

Spring 2021

Thesis Chair: Dr. Emily Rollie

Kathryn Young works and teaches in a small, seemingly close-knit community, and the historic Avery Theatre, where her culminating project production of ‘*ART*’ occurred, is a key gathering place in their community. Throughout her time in the CWU MA Theatre Production program, Kathryn has often commented on and incorporated the import of her local community in her study and artmaking, so it seems particularly apt that her culminating project for this degree similarly drew on and featured those community resources. Although she had originally assumed her thesis project production would be a musical, the events and circumstances of 2020-2021 prompted a different approach, and for her culminating creative project Kathryn selected the play ‘*ART*’ by Yasmina Reza, a play which features roles for three male-identified actors and centers around the interpretive and sometimes controversial nature of art as well as the ebbs and flow of long-standing friendship. While decidedly not a musical, this selection did indeed offer Kathryn an opportunity to not only apply what she had learned in the MA Theatre Production program but also stretch her creative talents in new ways – both of which are beneficial for a culminating project title selection.

It is important to note that Kathryn's production of *'ART'* occurred in unprecedented times, amid converging pandemics of racial injustice/anti-blackness in the US and the COVID-19 virus. Specifically for theatre programs and organizations, COVID-19 presented a significant and ever-changing challenge that required instructors and directors to be not only inventive and flexible but also attentive to cast, crew, and audience safety in new ways. Thus, although Kathryn and her team were able to produce and perform the show live for a local audience, I was not able to attend the production in person as would normally be the case for a thesis committee chair, due to restrictions on university-related travel at the time of production. This response comes in response to viewing an archival recording of the play as well as from my observations of Kathryn's preparatory work and conversations we had throughout the process.

This production of *'ART'* was produced independently, outside of a school or official theatre organization, which undoubtedly required Kathryn to draw on her creative problem-solving skills in her role as producer as well as director. However, it also afforded her an opportunity to bring in community collaborators in a variety of capacities. The fast-paced 70 minute show offered a challenge to her three actors, all of whom had come through Kathryn's middle school drama program, while also allowing them to be conscientious of necessary COVID-19 safety guidelines such as distancing and minimal physical contact. Further, per COVID-19 safety protocols, *'ART'* was performed for a small, invited audience. Throughout the show, the audience seemed engaged, offering laughs and a few gasps at certain moments – even a standing ovation at the end. While audience response undoubtedly varies across productions, it is perhaps useful to note audience response here, as Kathryn and her team emphasized the community nature of the production throughout the process.

Acting elements

As noted above, the three actors cast in *'ART'* were students who had worked with Kathryn in her elementary and middle school drama program. It is my understanding that Kathryn originally had intended to cast adult community members in the roles, as Reza describes the characters having been close friends for over 15 years. However, these three intrepid young men expressed their interest in being part of Kathryn's culminating project. Thus, while the actors were decidedly younger than the characters as written, they tackled the production with gusto and were arguably challenged and encouraged to grow in their creative abilities throughout the process. Although young, the actors involved in the production all demonstrated deep investment and approached the mature material with care, finding connections between their own long-standing friendship and the characters'.

In performance, the actors' investment in the process and performance was clear. They were focused, filled the space vocally and physically, and seemed to listen to each other well. As is common for younger actors, there were some moments of wandering feet that would benefit from clearer physical motivation, but they all generally held their ground and found ways to embody character. The show is also quite fast-paced, and the actors seemed to attend to the need for quick cues and deep listening throughout. In some instances, the pace of the lines potentially obscured the actor's motivation or intention, and as the young actors grow in their craft and experience, I am eager to see them find ways to vocally support lines all the way through. However, for young actors dealing with quite mature material and characters, they seemed to inhabit their characters quite well and were deeply invested in the work. In fact, in times as I watched, I found myself thinking that it would be interesting to see these three young men return to the show when they were the written age of the characters.

Scenic elements

While I was not able to experience the space in person, from the video, it appeared that the Avery has a small proscenium playing space. Kathryn and her cast used the available space well with minimal yet representative scenic elements, consisting of a periaktos – each side of which featured a backdrop representing each character’s apartment. Serge’s backdrop was the most visually complicated, with a geometric pattern that stood in contrast to the white painting that often sat in front of it; another was a brick pattern with a small painting and the third was a partially striped flat with a painted chair rail and small landscape painting. Each side of the periaktos offered Kathryn and her design team a chance to employ some of the painting skills presumably gleaned from her design classes at CWU. In addition to the periaktos, each apartment location utilized slightly different configurations of neutral grey chairs and one or two rehearsal blocks. These multi-purpose set pieces allowed for faster scene changes as the action moved between apartments, and in light of the abstract, modern art focus of the play itself, one might also extrapolate that the multi-use chairs and rehearsal blocks also reflected an abstract rather than realistic approach to each apartment’s scenery.

Directorial elements

Directorially, Kathryn used the chairs included in scenic design to pin the downstage corners of each scene. Pinning the downstage right and left corners in this way naturally offered opportunities to utilize triangles in the production’s blocking as well as places for the actors to sit. Because of the minimal depth of the stage and small cast (as well as presumably COVID safety measures), stage picture options were understandably limited; however, within those limitations, Kathryn and her actors found opportunities to utilize levels, typically sitting and standing, and I was also pleased to see the use of the floor at a particularly heightened moment of

action. While it may have been limited due to lighting capabilities or the stage space (and slightly difficult to determine via video), I might encourage even more use on the areas upstage stage right and left of the chairs which pinned the corners, an expansion of blocking which perhaps would allow the actors to then use the chairs and rehearsal blocks as obstacles and additional areas for the actors to play around and with which to create additional stage pictures.

Directorially, *'ART'* is a challenging play, as it relies heavily on wordplay and requires significant attention to and coaching of pacing and rhythm. Overall, Kathryn and her cast seemed to embrace the quick pace required of the play, while also finding some key moments to pause and let information and moments sink in. Further the more still and isolated moments during individual characters' monologues, further accentuated visually with lighting, also offered necessary distinctions in pace to support the overall arc of the play.

Sound, Costume, and Lighting elements

A particular boon for the production was the original musical compositions created by Eric Seller. These pieces were used as transitions between scenes, and they offered a consistent sound for the production, with variation around each character. Also, the contribution of the original music further reinforced the community-centered nature of Kathryn's collaborative process and the production overall.

Costuming was simple and contemporary, with each costume generally gesturing toward the character's personality. Some additional pieces such as outerwear provided a sense of time and movement between locations, but generally the costumes served a subtle purpose of conveying character.

While I was not able to witness firsthand the lighting instruments or locations available to Kathryn and her design team in the Avery Theatre, it appeared that they utilized a basic plot that

allowed general lighting for each scene as well as isolated areas for the character's individual monologues. These moments of visual isolation in particular helped to separate the monologues from the action in the scenes and visually highlighted the moments as if the characters were expressing their internal thoughts in confidence with the audience. While the lighting was subtle and sufficient to help support the action and view things clearly throughout the production (even in the video, which is sometimes not the case), the final moment of the play in which one actor was silhouetted against the painting was a lovely final image and effective use of lighting for a powerful ending cap.

As an artist and teacher, Kathryn is invested in supporting and bringing artistic experiences to her communities – both her school and students as well as her local community. Her production of *'ART'* speaks to that interest in the ways she was able to bring in a variety of local collaborators and perform in a local historic venue. Further, in terms of her own development as an artist-teacher, Kathryn's choice to direct and produce *'ART'* offered her an opportunity to stretch and expand her own skills as well as those of her young actors. I would argue that is a strong choice for a culminating project toward her MA degree, as it demonstrates her willingness not only to apply her learning and expanded artistic knowledge but also to challenge herself, all of which are key components of learning and growing within Master's degree study.

Self Evaluation

Kathryn Young

Self-Reflection from directing '*ART*'

July 9, 2021

When I first began the MA-Theatre Production program with CWU I was certain I would direct a musical for my creative project. Musicals were my theatrical bread and butter, and I wanted to showcase my students in a rousing song and dance production. Unfortunately, COVID-19 had other plans for my creative project so I had to “get creative.”

Looking back on the process for my culminating project, I am very happy that '*ART*' was my final choice. I had not heard of it prior to this project and was intrigued upon the first read. Directing '*ART*' meant that I had to dive out of my comfort zone and be comfortable with the uncomfortable. I forced myself to think deeper and more critically, given the content of the piece. Over time I connected with the story on a serious and genuine level. I surprised myself with how much I enjoyed digging into the pages and analyzing dialogue. Thus was my introduction to a full-fledged dramatic play, the first I ever directed.

COVID-19 had a major impact on my school year, and I was not in my traditional role as theatre teacher. Due to this circumstance, I did not have access to my usual pool of students at the junior high school as I was reassigned at the 4th grade level. Even though I was very distraught at first, I reexamined how I could make my creative project still happen. Luckily, I have a very giving group of theatrical supporters. Ultimately, these supporters came in the form of parents, local community theatre colleagues, and my family. Together, we were able to make '*ART*' a reality.

Most fortunately, I already had a free performance space available to me. The Avery Theatre is a community space that we have used in the past for our school productions, and they were more than willing to allow me to use it for my thesis. Being a resident in a small rural town can have its advantages. The community was very gracious, and I was blessed to have very good people assisting me.

Non-Artistic Challenges:

Rehearsal Space

The first month of rehearsals were spent at the Shickle home. Hannah Shickle, my set designer, and close friend allowed the use of her home while rehearsals for the high school play were underway at the Avery. We used the living area and made a small makeshift set of three chairs and the Antrios painting. I did not worry too much about the small space, as our play has only three actors and three crew members. The Shickle family was very considerate during rehearsal time, and I was also able to meet with Hannah, our set designer, at her home with ease after we wrapped.

One of the concerns while rehearsing in the home was spacing and having a full understanding of the size of the set. The actors were constrained to a very small space which made some scenes difficult to block. They did, however, acclimate to the space quickly and worked well within the confines. Throughout my work with the MA Program, I was coached on the efficient use of numerous spatial areas large and small.

Potential Artistic Challenges:**'ART' Content and Actor Relation**

The content of 'ART' is mature, complex, and challenging, especially for a high school student. I was concerned about the explicit language and the heightened vocabulary used. My actors were freshmen when they performed this production. They are all experienced actors and have been working with me for the past six years. I was going to look for adults to play the roles but the students asked me repeatedly if they could fill them. After speaking with and obtaining permission from their parents I conceded. It was evident that my actors and crew were serious and welcomed the challenge of this play. I trusted that they would do their very best to make my project as authentic as possible. The entire cast and crew respect the theatrical process of producing a play from beginning to end. Knowing that this belief was a strong suit for all, I took solace and moved forward with the play.

Another challenge seen in the production was relating a teenage life to one of an adult. While my actors are very bright, it could be difficult for them to unpack the adult situations within the play. I was pleasantly surprised when they were able to not only identify with the problems but also correlate them to a teenage mindset. The young gentlemen were very astute with their analysis of problematic scenes and were able to tie the characters' experiences to their own lives. These young fellows are best friends in real life, and their friendship was a major advantage in discussing why these characters have trouble seeing eye to eye. The actors dove into the text and were always prepared to do what was asked of them. I was also impressed by the amount of vulnerability practiced by the entire cast and crew. There were some very raw scenes that required great mental strength and bravery. My crew was also very professional and

always on time. Everyone involved took this production very seriously and that was incredibly impressive to witness.

Artistic Re-Dos

While I was very happy with the finished product of 'ART' there were a few things I would have managed differently.

- **Extra Rehearsal Time:** Our production of 'ART' had a ten-week schedule which included four hours of rehearsal each week. While the schedule allowed for ten weeks, we only met twice a week. It was a quick turn around and we did very well with the time we had. Of course, I would have taken advantage of more time the few weeks before tech to break down scenes with more accuracy and understanding. I believe my actors would have appreciated that. There is also the notion of having more time to properly warm up and exercise actors. We tended to a quick warm up and jump right into scenes and dialogue. As expected, when producing a play scheduling can be a challenge at times for actors and crew. We had our set parameters and met them in the end.
- **Extra Character Discussion Time:** I think my actors would have benefitted from extra discussion regarding the characters themselves. While we used a bulk of time during rehearsals discussing choices, motivation, and feeling, I believe it would have been more suitable to block out another two days of table work to focus on character. Many of our discussions would happen during blocking or running a scene, which in turn stops the action. While I am not completely opposed to addressing these concerns during this process, for efficiency purposes I would have liked to discuss it at another time.

Major Success Stories: Acting and Technical Achievements, and Collaboration:

I am very proud of what my cast and crew created. We were very lucky to have the opportunity to work in the theatre during this unique time. I'm honored to celebrate with them.

- **Acting Achievements:** The three young men who performed in our production of '*ART*' were very impressive. They had acting experience but only with grade level material. '*ART*' was a stretch for them, and they grew in their abilities during each rehearsal. It was helpful that they were serious, and it assisted them in their approach to the content. The dialogue was also challenging, and their memorization and performance skill was to be applauded.
- **Technical Achievements:** During the process of creating '*ART*' I was able to train a stage manager. I have not been successful with training a stage manager in the past but given that we had a small crew I was able to devote specific time to Gracie to properly train her. One of the blessings of '*ART*' was small numbers. Ample devotion to technical aspects was a plus, and since we had our performance space for six weeks, we were able to focus more on the lighting and sound design. I was so pleased with Annabelle, my lighting operator. She has a true love of theatre and was present during focusing and strived to learn as much as possible. She did a marvelous job running our light board during the show. Caden, my sound operator, was a huge help in focusing lighting as well and learning a new sound program. He has an instinct for timing and did a beautiful job operating our sound.
- **Collaboration:** In addition, our set design was a goal that I saw to fruition. I was very grateful to have Chris Hansen, a colleague from my CWU program, assist me in the design of my set. He met with Hannah, my designer, and me to discuss the construction and design of my rolling triangle. I was also blessed to know Eric Seiler, the local high

school music teacher, who wrote all the original music heard in the play. He was wonderful to work with and I hope to do more projects in the future. Hannah, my set designer, painted and constructed my set with the help from generous community members. She also aided in costume design and color schemes. Lastly, Taryn Burkleo documented 'ART' with her photography to give a true representation of the play. Her keen eye and colorful personality put my cast and crew at ease giving a true authenticity to her work.

Conclusion

During the course of my creative project I was fortunate to have the assistance of multiple friends and colleagues in our theatrical community. 'ART' served as a vehicle for me to analyze material that was seen as daunting in the past. While I had originally thought that I would produce a musical, I found a new found love for the dramatic play. This experience taught me that I need to trust my instincts and choices as an artist. Historically I have shied away from works like 'ART' due to the content and design aspects. This feeling contributes to my overall thought on whether I was capable of producing this type of material. I am very thankful that 'ART' became my project after all as it forced me out of my comfort zone to the realization that I am completely capable of creating a space for these works in my professional life.

Works Cited

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APPENDICES

1. Production Photos
2. Costume Design
3. Set Design
4. Play Poster
5. Play Program
6. Ticket Design

Appendix 1: Production Photos



'ART' Cast and Crew

Lobby Bio Board



Left to Right: Marc (Ethan McDonald),
Yvan (Ethan McDonald), Serge (Ean Davis)

Cast of 'ART'

Scene 1: Serge's Apartment



Serge (Ean Davis) and Marc (Ethan McDonald)



Scene 2: Yvan's Apartment



Yvan (Ethan McDonald) and Marc (Ethan Shickle)

Scene 3: Serge's Apartment



Scene 4: Marc's Apartment



Marc (Ethan McDonald) and Yvan (Ethan McDonald)

Scene 5: Serge's Apartment



Serge (Ean Davis)

Scene 6:



Scene 7:



Scene 8:



Scene 9:



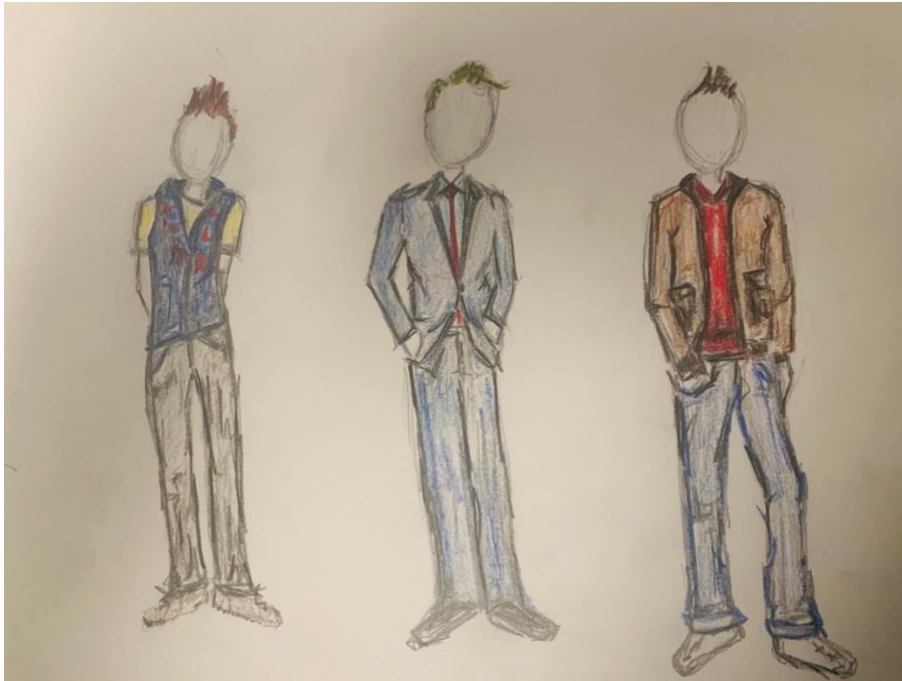


Marc (Ethan Shickle) addresses the audience



Yvan reflects on Marc and Serge's broken friendship

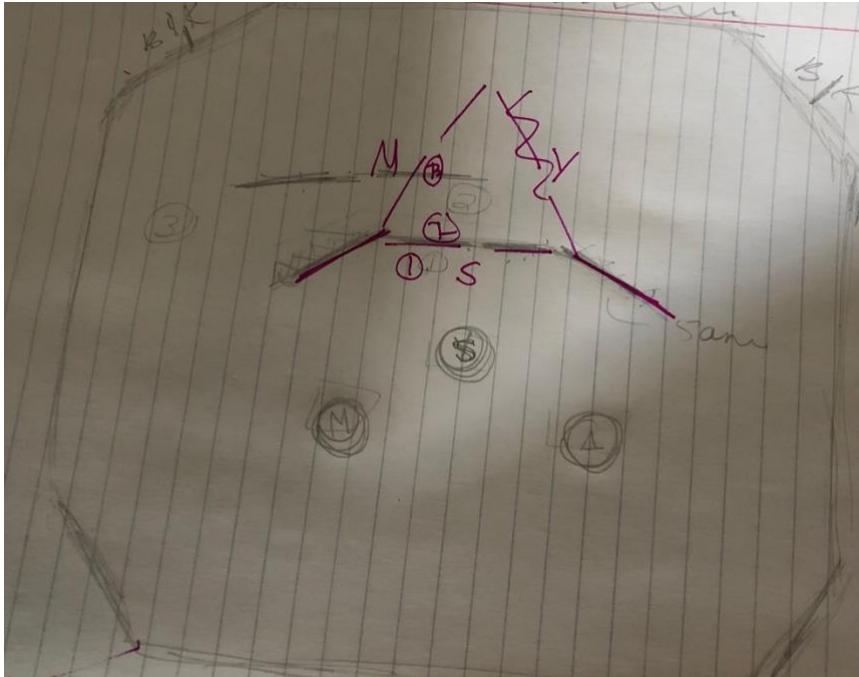
Appendix 2: Costume Design



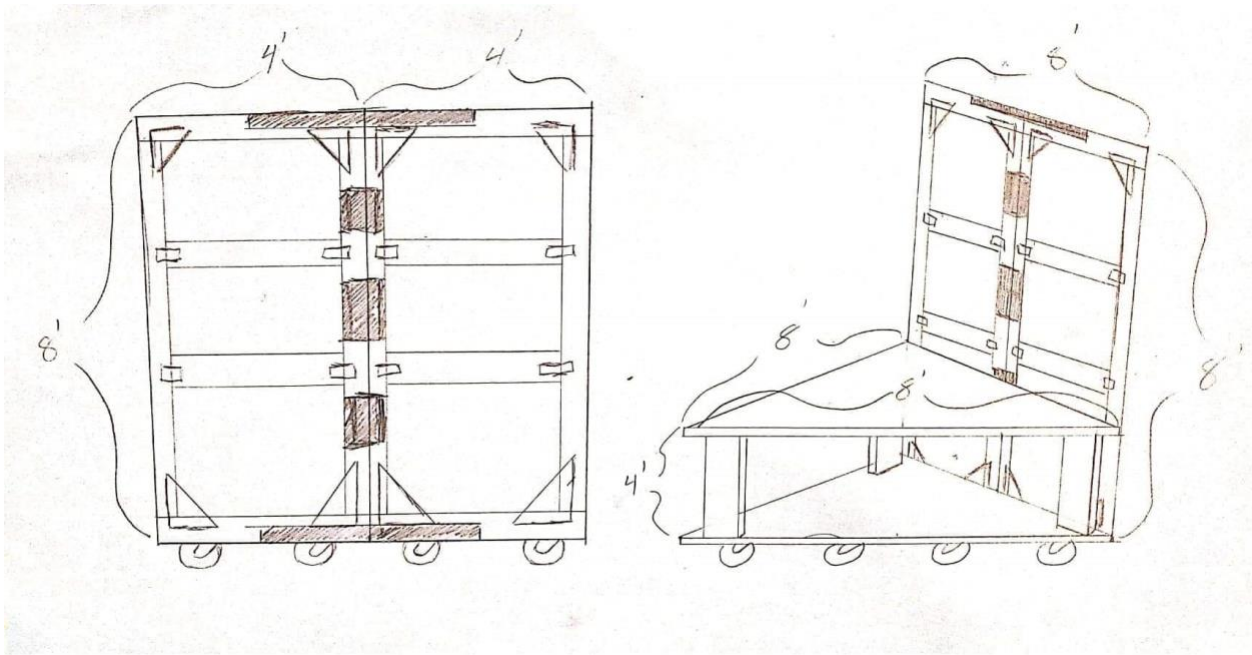
Costume Design by Hannah Shickle



Appendix 3: Set Design

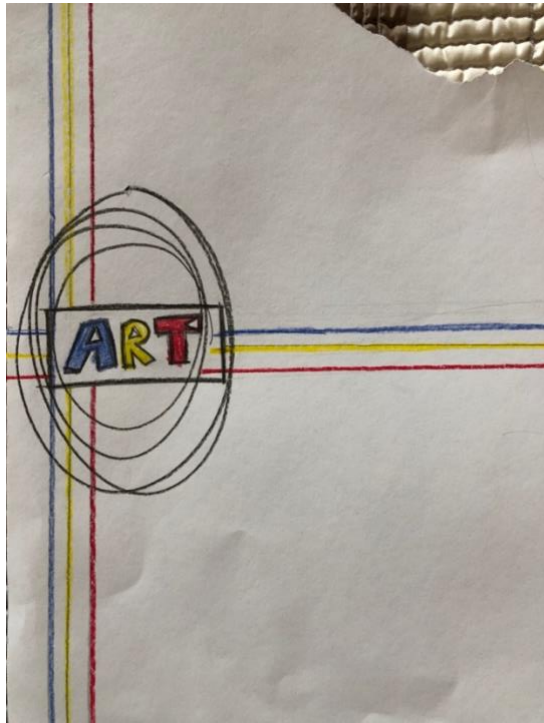


Original drawing by Hannah Shickle and Kathryn Young

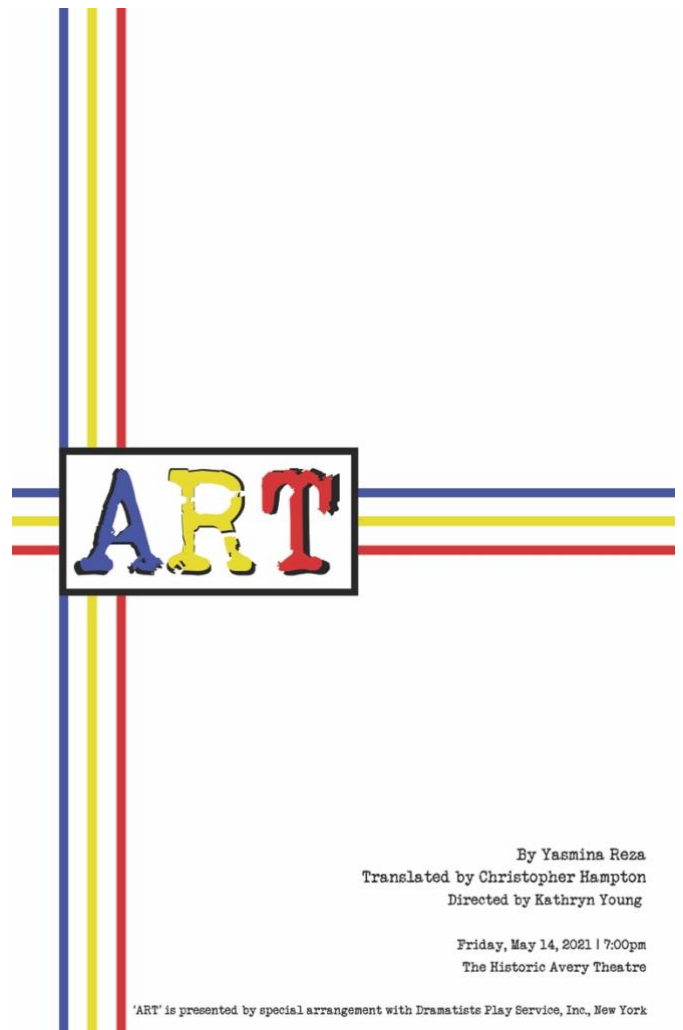


Original design drawing by Chris Hansen

Appendix 4: Play Poster



Original Design by Hannah Shickle



Graphic Design by Heather Dodds

Appendix 5: Play Program Front/Back by Heather Dodds

SPECIAL THANKS:

The Young Boys
Greg Lindholm
Hannah Shickle
Danielle Tokel
The Shickle Family
Eric Sellar
Alan Kraser
Emily Rollie
Tina Barrigan
Chris Hansen
Paul and Linda Vinsaw
Taryn Burklee
Heather Dodds
CWU Theatre Colleagues

The word "ART" is written in a stylized, blocky font. The letter 'A' is blue, 'R' is yellow, and 'T' is red. The letters are contained within a black rectangular border.The word "TRIA" is written in a stylized, blocky font. The letter 'T' is red, 'R' is yellow, and 'A' is blue. The letters are contained within a black rectangular border.

By Yasmina Reza
Translated by Christopher Hampton
Directed by Kathryn Young

Friday, May 14, 2021 | 7:00pm
The Historic Avery Theatre

'ART' is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York

*This performance is dedicated to Jason Young

"Theatre was my first love. I cannot take the theatre out of
me, and I would not want to. To me, it's home."
-Jim Parsons

Interior: Right

Central Washington University MA-Theatre Production Student
Kathryn Young Presents:

'ART'

By: Yasmina Reza
Translated By: Christopher Hampton

CAST

Marc ... Ethan Shickle
Serge ... Ean Davis
Yvan ... Ethan McDonald

SCENES:

Scene 1 Serge's apartment
Scene 2 Yvan's apartment
Scene 3 Serge's apartment
Scene 4 Marc's apartment
Scene 5 Serge's apartment

PRODUCTION CREW:

Director: Kathryn Young
Original Music: Eric Seiler
Stage Manager: Gracie Thompson
Set Design: Hannah Shickle
Set Construction: The Shickle Family
Set Painting: Hannah Shickle, Maddisyn Shickle, Annabelle Yokel, and Zarek Young
Lighting Design: Kathryn Young
Lighting Technicians: Alan Kramer and Caden Thompson
Lighting Operator: Annabelle Yokel
Sound Operator: Caden Thompson
Costume Design: Hannah Shickle
Promotional Design: Heather Dodds
Photography: Taryn Burkleo
Videographer: Jason Young

'ART' is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service Inc., New York

Produced on Broadway by David Pugh, Sean Connery and Joan Cullman
March 1, 1998

Interior Left

DIRECTOR'S NOTE:

When I first began my MA journey with Central Washington University Theatre I was a musical junkie. As soon as I realized our culmination project was a production of our choosing I set my sights on a vibrant musical. For three years I dreamed of this moment, setting my students on stage and creating a colorful masterpiece. Little did I know my journey would end with a white canvas. Indeed, it is comical how life plays tricks.

'ART' is a poignant and relevant story for our current time as we are reminded of how significant human interaction can be. We witness friendships questioned critically and relationships crumble under duress. Human emotion is observed front and center as Serge, Yvan, and Marc grapple with what has gone wrong in their lost connection. Words fly with vigor and feelings are put into check as these characters come to life on stage and remind us all how fragile relationships can be. Alternatively, 'ART' also reminds us how friendships can be mended, thus arriving at true belonging.

'ART' is a challenging work with heightened language and a great deal of dialogue. Actors are asked to be incredibly vulnerable and search deep for meaning and emotional capacity. The actors portraying these characters have done just that. They jumped in head first into a challenge I was not sure they would take. I am beyond grateful for their hard work and dedication to this project. Each one has grown internally and as an actor. I could not be more proud. They volunteered their time and this spoke volumes.

'ART' is a culmination of a community of theatre artists and supporters that I am eternally thankful for. I want to personally thank the actor and crew families for trusting me with their children. I hope that you are just as thrilled as I am to witness their incredible work unfold. Thank you for being here, and enjoy this live theatrical journey of 'ART'.

Kathryn Young

Appendix 6: Ticket Design by Heather Dodds

