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BIRTH OF A STAGE MANAGER
AN UNORTHODOX FIRST

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THEATER ARTS

by

Maranda Kleinert

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The Thesis of Maranda Kleinert
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Birth of a Stage Manager An Unorthodox First

What is a Stage Manager Anyway?

“Only when the list is flexible and is secondary to collaboration, perception, anticipation, and sensitive problem solving is the stage manager approaching the art.”
– Doris Schneider¹

As stated by website aact.org stage managers are said to “provide practical and organizational support to the director, actors, designers, stage crew and technicians throughout the production process.” Above and beyond this, stage managers also often provide communication, mediation and emotional support to all of these people. The position of stage manager always seems to be defined by its organization and its long list of duties, included but not limited to: creating and organizing paperwork, being a liaison between the director and the rest of the production team, scheduling and running rehearsals, and calling the show while keeping a keen eye on performances to ensure they maintain the director’s artistic vision. Within the Theater Arts Department at UC Santa Cruz, stage management has further responsibilities² which include running auditions, coordinating stage hands, and moving scenic structures.

Stage management both at UC Santa Cruz and all other theaters has a plethora of paperwork. At UC Santa Cruz, this includes organization of audition forms, calendars, cast and crew contact information sheets, props lists, character/scene

¹ Schneider, Doris. *The Art and Craft of Stage Management*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College, 1997. Print. P.2

² These responsibilities are disallowed by the stage management union, Actor’s Equity.

breakdowns, daily calls, rehearsal and performance reports, program information, and production meeting minutes.

1. Audition forms ask specific questions regarding contact, experience, conflicts with rehearsal and performance times, as well as an actor's level of comfort with certain necessary aspects of production (such as altering their appearance or their willingness to perform in the nude). Stage management and the department's student production liaison "run" these auditions, which involve creating a binder with these completed forms, a contract defining the responsibilities of the actor in question, and additional paperwork from the actor such as resume and headshot photo.
2. Production calendars include dates and times of rehearsals and performances, crew design, budget bid, and other pertinent information. (See Appendix A for *Birth of Stars* Production Calendar)
3. Cast and crew contact sheets are created by stage management and handed out to all involved in the production, and include name, title, phone number, and email address. (See Appendix B for *Birth of Stars* Contact Sheet)
4. Props (short for properties) lists include all hand props (physically handled by actors), furniture, paper props, and consumables (meaning edible or disposable – requiring a quantity larger than one) props. (See Appendix C for *Birth of Stars* Props List)

5. Character/scene breakdowns or “French” scene breakdowns list which characters are in which scenes, often breaking them down by entrances and exits, and by page numbers in the script. This is called “French” as many productions of French plays from the 17th century had few ways of tracking the beginnings and ends of scenes other than a character entrance or exit. This breakdown can be particularly helpful within performances which have a significant number of quick costume changes, and it assists stage management in scheduling actors into the daily call. (See Appendix D for *Loot* Character/Scene Breakdown)³
6. Daily calls give actors information on when they are needed in rehearsals, if they have costume fittings, and a general overview of what the rehearsal will look like. Daily calls are also sent out for performances, laying out schedules both for performers and support crew. These daily calls are sent out no later than the night before each rehearsal and performance. (See Appendix E for example *Birth of Stars* Daily Call)
7. Rehearsal reports relay a significant amount of information to the rest of the performance team, including (but not limited to): run times, what was accomplished during a rehearsal, late or absent cast members, notes or requests from the director to the production team regarding rehearsal needs. Performance reports are rather similar, but

³ Due to the ensemble nature of *Birth of Stars* we did not utilize this form as – with exception for the first scene – actors were on stage throughout the entirety of the performance.

include reports on run time, number of audience members in the house, and audience reactions to the performance. (See Appendices F and G for sample *Birth of Stars* Rehearsal Report and Performance Report)

8. Program information is submitted by stage management to our front of house/arts event organizer via a template of their creation to which stage management adds names of cast and crew, and relays notes from the director, the dramaturg, and notes of special thanks to those who helped in the process.
9. Production Meeting Minutes are written up by stage management after meetings with the production staff and crew. These include information regarding who attended, calendar updates, notes given by various production heads on their own timelines and issues that arise from builds, purchases, or changes made by the director. (See Appendix H for sample *Birth of Stars* Production Meeting Minutes)

Any show with technical components and support crew who will run the sound, light, and media boards requires that the stage manager know where these cues go in terms of dialogue and actor blocking and to use this knowledge within the stage management binder (also known as the Production Book) to call the show on performance nights. “Calling the show” is a process which actually begins during technical rehearsals. Throughout the rehearsal process the stage manager has created a binder with the script and blocking notes (actor movements on the stage), and

begins to input technical cues in with the script and these notes. The cues can include lighting, sound, media (projections), and actor entrance cues. These cues are “called” by the stage manager, and they relay information on where a light needs to change, or when a sound needs to happen to the appropriate board operator. (See Appendix I for sample pages from *Birth of Stars* Production Book)

In regional theater it is not typical for the stage manager to run auditions or to enlist crew members; however this is a typical practice at UC Santa Cruz. Regional theaters typically use casting directors or administrators to carry out these tasks. This is one of many ways in which the UC Santa Cruz Theater Arts Department differs from regional theater companies with Equity contracts.

Above and beyond this list of duties, stage management acts as an unwavering foundation during the occasionally turbulent process of putting on a production. The stage manager acts as the communication hub and often the emotional support person for both cast and crew. Although the process (at least for cast) is as playful as it is performative, interpersonal conflicts and personal distress tend to happen more often when working against the calendar. In the *Stage Management Handbook*⁴, Daniel A. Ionazzi states, “Many stage managers of long-running commercial productions believe that 10% of their work (once the show is up and running) is related to issues

⁴ The required text for the introductory stage management class at UC Santa Cruz.

[from pre-production, rehearsals, and performance]. The other 90% is associated with the issues [of human behavior in organizations].”⁵

Even early on in my stage management career, it became clear that the list of duties holds a great deal of importance to the whole of the production, but also a great deal of importance should be held upon the ability of the stage manager to successfully provide enthusiasm for the project and emotional support for its contributors. These responsibilities turn the stage manager into what I like to call the “managing midwife” – one who goes beyond the laundry list of duties (on the analytical and organizational side) to become a support person for the collaborators and the collaboration (on the responsive and communicative side). It has been with this role in mind I have practice stage management as a graduate student.

My Journey into Stage Management

“Stage managing is the perfect example of catch-22: You have to be sane to carry out the job; you have to be insane to want the job.” – Doris Schneider⁶

My choice to pursue a degree in Theater dates back to my childhood passion for acting. I went through cycles throughout my life of both relishing the opportunity to perform and feeling a disdain for the process of becoming a commercial performer. While I had a few good commercial opportunities, the impersonal rejections from many and various auditions for film, television and commercials in the Bay Area hindered the desire to pursue this beloved activity further, but never stopping me from

⁵ Ionazzi, Daniel A. *The Stage Management Handbook*. White Hall, VA: Betterway Publications, 1992. Kindle.

⁶ Schneider, Doris. *The Art and Craft of Stage Management*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College, 1997. Print. P.7

giving my all. This cyclical pattern followed me through community college and into university. By the time I made it to university pursuing acting was my aim, but I found myself more drawn to learning technical aspects of production.

By the beginning of my second quarter in winter of 2013, I found myself terribly unhappy with auditioning and attempting to act. Rather than find something different to do, that something found me. A friend had relayed that the stage management team for UCSC's production of *Peer Gynt* needed a production assistant. This job would require me to be at all rehearsals and performances, and would not require a high level of expertise (just an enthusiasm to be a part of a production, which I had in spades). I found myself thinking during the production that what these stage managers were doing was intensely difficult, and I wanted no part of the level of responsibility that they had. Yet within that same thought there were aspects I enjoyed. I loved the team. I loved coming in before rehearsal to set up the space (sweeping became oddly therapeutic and continues to be). During a small group table work the director asked what I thought of the scene that went on, and I loved being able to contribute my thoughts to their process. I loved being in the booth as the light board operator and watching the show every night. I fell in love with the show and its content not only because it was a phenomenal artwork but because I was a part of the team that made it possible.

All of these factors led to my choice to ask one of my stage managers if she needed help in her next production, to which she responded with a resounding yes

and I took on the role assistant stage manager (ASM) on the dance production she was doing in the spring quarter. Going from a large scale drama performance which took place in two locations during every performance to a single venue dance performance was a very strange experience. Dance productions often don't require stage management to assist in every rehearsal. I became constantly available to one of the choreographers to help communicate needs to my stage manager and the head choreographer/director. I had to quickly learn how to run the backstage for performances, which – for me – was an entirely new process. Unlike my experience in *Peer Gynt* this required making sure all dancers and musicians were on time and in places, and smoothly transitioning between pieces with their different instruments or set needs⁷. It all seemed rather complicated and stressful at first, but I took pride in our ability to pick up the pace in our transitions and make them smoother every night.

After this production I was asked to ASM over the summer for a fringe festival production. It was between that point and the beginning of fall quarter of my senior year in which I realized that I sincerely enjoyed stage managing and wanted to continue working in that capacity at the university. When I started mentioning this desire, people started approaching me to stage manage for their shows. I was asked to work on the “Michael Becker Experience” sketch comedy show, and *Stupid F*cking Bird* (which I worked on as an ASM) in the spring quarter. I also took initiative to work on two productions during my winter quarter, which included Shakespeare-To-

⁷ Changing from a modern dance to the African dance, striking all of that at the end of their piece, then bringing on squares of marley – a material used for dance flooring – for the final dance piece.

Go's production of *Hamlet* (which tours in the spring quarter), and *Machinal*, a department production on the Main Stage. Because these shows did not have conflicting schedules, I was able to do both at the same time.

During this time I feel I honed my skills in working backstage. I became quick on my feet at creative and critical thinking. I learned to solve problems often before others knew the problems existed. These shows each had their own individual challenges, some of which seemed incredibly daunting at the time. During the course of *Stupid F*cking Bird* I was required to turn a very long transition during an intermission into a short transition without an intermission. It required rethinking how everything would be moved on and off the stage, and choreographing exactly when each stage hand would bring each furniture piece on, and from which area backstage. Under these constraints, the 9 minutes it took before was chopped down to just under 3 minutes. This particular production was also an experience in learning how to communicate with cast, crew, and department staff when tensions become high. I know that I did not always handle the situations which popped up with the most grace, but in the end, I realized sometimes grace does not get the job done. From this experience I created the "rules" I used during *Birth of Stars* to protect the performers from backstage distractions during performance nights⁸.

⁸ Because the director of *Birth of Stars* was new to the production process in the theater, I politely asked her and her assistants to give actor notes via email or at the end of dress rehearsals. This was to keep the directors from entering backstage or the dressing rooms so the actors could maintain focus on their performance before going on stage and work on their notes prior to performances.

After finishing *Stupid F*cking Bird* and before the school year ended, I jumped into my internship at Santa Cruz Shakespeare. I was the sole stage management intern, on a team of two stage managers, two ASMs, and the production liaison (who also stage managed the fringe production). I started this internship off feeling burnt out, and at first I never truly felt sure of what I should have been doing. I learned quickly that the schedule was relentless. I was often in rehearsal for 12 hours a day (on a few occasions as long as 18 hours), and would need to be there early and stay late – a schedule I was accustomed to in UCSC performances – and work through most breaks during each day.

The work, in and of itself, was simple. Create paperwork, be on book⁹ during rehearsals, take line notes, move rehearsal props and furniture, and help to prepare for tech and performances. I learned how to accomplish these tasks in new and often more effective (though not always more efficient) ways. Working under the ASMs proved particularly rewarding when it came to learning how to run a tighter ship backstage. Both of them took meticulous notes during rehearsal of prop locations during scenes, or when quick changes needed to happen, so I always felt prepared to do my job during performances. The process for checking props for correct placement was also done with painstaking care as well. During that process I felt as though they were over-prepared, but looking back I respect that level of professionalism and hard work that went in to these people doing their jobs. Recently I have looked back with fondness on the well-oiled machine that was the performance run of *As You Like It*

⁹ This involves verbally feeding lines from the script to an actor as needed.

and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Everyone took their jobs very seriously, which is not necessarily the case when taking on a college production. That level of professionalism was a luxury that I now miss, and now strive to emulate and model for my assistants.

There is little room for error in this type of repertory theater. Every mistake garners a strict reprimand, even down to the smallest of details missed. That sort of pressure, along with the long work days made the work incredibly difficult. After the internship had finished and my evaluation was received (from which the words “needs improvement” were repeated throughout), I felt a large spike in anxiety. I had no idea how I would be able to stage manage a full production (let alone the three I would be expected to do in the graduate program) when I felt like I had utterly failed at my job, in spite of all I had learned. Thinking back on this and the number of times I wanted to simply walk away, I’m grateful that I stuck to the internship and had the complete experience. Santa Cruz Shakespeare made me a better stage manager, but it also made me grateful to go back to working on university productions.

Between Stage Management and Anthropology

“Ethnography provides a real-world way of looking at a problem or opportunity, applying social and cultural understanding to the topic.” – Gavin Johnson, anthropologist¹⁰

During my enculturation into technical theater and production work I’ve realized the similarities between my work, and past studies in cultural anthropology. Though methodologies of theater and cultural anthropology differ on many levels, stage

¹⁰ Johnston, Gavin. "Ethnography: Your Guide to Doing It Right." *Ethnography: Your Guide to Doing It Right*. AIPMM, n.d. Web. 28 Apr. 2015.

management utilizes many ethnographic approaches toward the production process. This is possible due to a trend explained by anthropologist Brian A. Hoey, “The term ethnography has come to be equated with virtually any qualitative research project where the intent is to provide a detailed, in-depth description of everyday life and practice.” The nature of cultural anthropology is the study of humanity and culture, from thorough looks into the micro view of personal lives and the macro lens of the greater world in which people live. For this reason, this study lends itself well to many interdisciplinary notions. Richard Schechner knew this when he met Victor Turner at a lecture given by the highly influential anthropologist Clifford Geertz in 1977 (*Between Theatre and Anthropology*¹¹), and it formed a lasting impression upon both men who went on to write many scholarly essays and books which constantly connected Schechner’s work as a director and Turner’s background in cultural anthropology (focusing on structural functionalism).

In *From Ritual to Theatre* Victor Turner states, “the roots of theatre are in ‘social drama,’”¹² a unit of description and analysis for his anthropological study. Combining the science of his study to realize the social dramas of the African villages he lived in with his family “revealed the ‘taxonomic’ relations among actors (their kinship ties, structural positions, social class, political status, and so forth),” and Turner’s artistic background allowed him to recognize, “the drama revealed individual character, personal style, rhetoric skill, moral and aesthetic differences, and choices proffered

¹¹ Schechner, Richard, and Victor W. Turner. *Between Theater & Anthropology*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania, 1985. Print.

¹² Turner, Victor W. *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*. New York City: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982. Print.

and made”. Even early on, Turner’s view of his own cultural studies was influenced by his mother’s career in theatre. Turner noted the social dramas he witnessed created a “public breach [...] in the normal workings of society,” and when those breaches slid into crisis, “the critics of crisis seek to restore peace.” He calls the work of these critics a “redressive machinery” which can range anywhere from judicial process to therapeutic ritual. At times the crises of the social drama called for the *performance* of a major ritual which seeks to transcend “the divisions of the local group.”

Performance and theater undeniably act as a type of redressive machinery for society. Turner goes on to state that these modes of redress act as “a public way of assessing or social behavior, [have] moved out of the domains of law and religion into those of the various arts,” and that the genres of theatre “probe a community’s weaknesses, call[ing] its leaders to account, [...] portray its characteristic conflicts and suggest remedies for them, and generally take stock of its current situation in the known ‘world.’”

An important and modern example of this is the flash mob – a method by which people physically gather through text messaging, email, or social media in order to quickly perform some playful act before disbursing. The types of flash mobs are numerous and the messages behind them either do not exist (other than as a means to make adults engage in types of child-like play) or have a varying level of opacity in their political message. Regardless of the content of the flash mob, these performances directly or indirectly attempt to both make awareness of the

problematic nature of our capitalist culture and also to “reclaim’ public space that is otherwise often choked with tourists and overtaken by commercial uses,”¹³ which temporarily redresses the problem through its atypical use of the space for play rather than for purchase. Thus flash mobs become a sort of ritual to recover a kind of childish play for adults and forever alter the way public spaces are seen and utilized.

I argue that theater and performance as areas of study and cultural practices are intricately and inextricably linked to cultural anthropology. What could stage management possibly have to do with any of this? The stage manager takes on a very key role in the theatrical rehearsal process, having an in-depth knowledge of the respective visions of the director and designers, coupled with close professional relationships with those people and (one hopes) a slew of past life and performance experiences which allows the stage manager to, at times, participate in the collaboration of the production process. I make the case that stage managers are the providers of understanding (both in terms of comprehension and empathy) and the hub of communication for the team. Thus I contend that stage management acts with three roles, that of the ethnographer for the production in question (in my case, *Birth of Stars*), as a critic of crisis who attempts to remedy the social drama that arises so that the show may go on, and as a managing midwife who directly engages in maintaining the collaborative process.

¹³ Molnár, Virág. "Reframing Public Space Through Digital Mobilization: Flash Mobs and Contemporary Urban Youth Culture." *Space and Culture* 43-58 17.1 (2014): 43-58. Sage. Web. 7 Apr. 2015.

In the beginning of my stage management career, I started to call stage management a holistic process. From pre-production to closing night, the stage manager has perhaps the clearest vision of the production as a whole (aside, of course, from the director), and on its own terms¹⁴. Eventually I began to see the stage manager – with their role as record keeper for all of the many and various aspects of the production process – as the closest thing a production has to an ethnographer. The stage manager’s work produces the same dual nature of ethnographic study, “[t]o enlighten a deeper understanding of human experiences and cultures, a long-term and sustained attachment with the concerned agents and settings is a necessity in one hand, and, the interpretation of the processes and meanings of a cultural system from an insider’s perspective is imperative on the other.”¹⁵ This interpretation of the data stage management receives from sustained attachment to the production team gives the stage manager the ability to maintain the director’s vision while they call the show during its run. In a way, the stage manager researches in the format of participant observation as we “stud[y] the life of a group by sharing in its activities” (participant observation). The stage manager can neither be a “complete participant” nor a “complete observer.” They must take on these contrasting roles much in the same way as an ethnographer must in order to build a rapport with the team and effectively observe their way of life.

¹⁴ For instance, stage management has less of a stake in the way in which the collaborative process shapes the overall performance than the director with their own artistic vision.

¹⁵ Dey Mullick, Pinaki, Paramita Sen, Kaustav Das, and Koel Mukherjee. "The Basics of Ethnography: An Overview of Designing an Ethnographic Research in Anthropology and Beyond." *Journal of the Anthropological Survey of India* 893-902 62.2 (2013): n. pag. Web. 4 Apr. 2015.

Stage managers also willfully tread into territories anthropologists would be remiss to engage in. The stage manager has to act as a critic of crisis in order to restore peace when communication (inevitably) begins to break down. Much in the same way that theater can be both a study of the agents of culture and an enactor of cultural agency, stage management acts as ethnographer (an occupation which makes attempts not to interfere with culture in any large scale) and a purposeful agent of interference. Stage management must also participate in and interfere with the culture/community it involves itself in, by acting as shaman, mediator, and occasionally as a sort of law enforcement. In doing so, stage managers assure the safety of the cast and crew by applying the rules of the union (when applicable) and the theater company or department (if in a university setting), and with all hopes, maintain a working environment focused on achieving the goal of getting the performance on stage in front of an audience.

Managing Midwife: Birth of Stars

“The stage manager is the guardian of the [collaborative] process, encouraging participation, clarifying misunderstandings, and protecting creative exposure.” –
Doris Schneider¹⁶

Calendar

I came into stage managing *Birth of Stars* at the end of the spring quarter of 2014. I was asked by Professor Chemers to stage manage the show he would be spearheading in the fall quarter (October/November) of 2014. I was invited to attend one of the ongoing concept meetings which occurred during spring quarter in the

¹⁶ Schneider, Doris. *The Art and Craft of Stage Management*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College, 1997. Print. P.2

DANM (Digital Arts and New Media) Department. I attended one meeting in May. At this time the crew of DANM, Astrophysics, and Theater Arts students and faculty were coming together to determine what sort of content would be used in the production, and essentially what that production might end up looking like. Very few ideas from these meetings were used in the final script. Choosing whether or not to keep elements tends to happen quite a bit in the script writing process, and these changes can often continue well into the rehearsal process. Initial meetings had included ideas of using the mezzanine in the Experimental Theater as an acting space, having a Greek chorus, and using great deal of renderings and artistic creations to visually explore the universe from the big bang down to the creation of galaxies, stars and planets. The first real draft of the script would come within a few months of this meeting.

Script

The first draft and table read¹⁷ came on August 4, 2014. Professor Chemers asked me to be the liaison for this meeting by asking actors I know to read, and to stay in contact with those who he asked. Also I came in early to make copies of the script for everyone. This initial stage was problematic to plan because of other time commitments I had at the time (SCS), but we managed to pull the reading together with just the right number of actors. The actors who came in gave excellent, critical feedback regarding the need to create more fully formed and relatable characters, and the need expand the plot. At this point, the story resembled little of what was

¹⁷ When actors come in to read the script aloud for the crew.

brainstormed in the previous months. We knew then it wouldn't be an elegant projection show of the stars created by DANM and Astrophysics, but instead would have elements of these joined to a very human story.

September 6th was our next table read. We had fewer actors this time, but the level of engagement seemed even higher. A few students commented that it was one of the best faculty written pieces they had read in a long time. Critiques were more specific this time, questioning whether or not certain characters were more like caricatures and what motivations they had. These points made the writing team question the main objective of the protagonist. Analyzing this problem brought about the small shifts needed to make this draft the closest it would get to its final form before the first cast read-through. After these readings with actors, the director Joan Raspo, the assistant directors Cynthia Simunovich and Patrick Denny, the dramaturg Hailey Shapiro, the playwright, and I got together to do an another table read. This came after further changes had been made to the script, based on the recommendations of the actors.

Although changes were made after we had an initial read-through at our first rehearsal on October 6th, our script was truly, at its core, the closest of the drafts to the final performance script at this time. Throughout rehearsals words were altered occasionally to make actors feel more comfortable with what they were saying. Changes also accommodated corrections in the scientific jargon, and some cuts were

made to work around media cues as far in as tech rehearsal. Tech rehearsal was when final changes were completed in the script.

The plot is structured as such: Sofia is a 14 year old genius with a passion for astrophysics. Sofia and her highly religious mother Ruth move to a new town in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Sofia must deal with the challenges of being a teenager of high intelligence in a new school filled with bullies who would love nothing more than for her to go back where she came from. She meets other new kid Jamie, they become friends but he has romantic intentions that Sofia cannot reciprocate. Sofia's brilliant ideas become a lecture series on Youtube about the stars, and when she challenges a highly debated scientific model, her series becomes a problem for high ranking university professor Stephen Heider. Heider meets with Sofia and they work through a solution for the problems which arose from the model, but Heider takes the credit for the work. Sofia is given a scholarship to work directly with Heider in the future, but the "gravity and pressure" of this and the rest of her life finally amasses enough for her to transcend in the way she had always desired. Sofia becomes the thing she adores most in the universe – a star.

Design

Our first production meeting was held on October 3rd, which was also our final day of auditions. At this time the director explained briefly what her vision for the production was, and asked the question she would ask repeatedly throughout the process, "What would you give up to gain the universe?" The repetition of this

question came from a huge theme of *Birth of Stars*, acknowledging the sacrifices made by the main character (and in the bigger picture, all of us) in order to achieve her dreams. The set designer presented his model via projector, though at this time the design had not been fully approved. The costume designer also shared her designs. At this point we were not sure who our lighting designer would be. Although UC Santa Cruz typically decides fall quarter designers by the end of the spring quarter the year prior, this occasionally is not the case. This underscores the nature of working in university theater versus professional theater, as professional companies would hire a designer months in advance.

Video for the projections started trickling in during the rehearsal process, and more was created in rehearsal by filming certain scenes in the DARC Lab. Media designs had not come in yet at this point, however the media designer began to send us renderings during the rehearsal process. Although our sound designer had been working on the project since spring quarter, his designs were not heard until just before tech. It is not typically necessary for the stage manager to hear these before tech, but designs should be shown to the director. This resulted later in miscommunication issues between the director and sound designer which had to be resolved by stage management. Sounds had to continue to be created during tech and dress rehearsal, as what was brought in before tech was minimal.

The set design changed throughout the process of the build. When it came to the attention of the director that splines¹⁸ interfered with the upstage projection surface, she wanted them removed. The designer did not want to have these removed their design was meant to break the audience's line of sight from the large, flat projection surfaces to a small degree. The director and designer compromised in moving the splines by a few feet stage left. The director had also wanted to change construction of the stage right projection surface, however through the technical operation director's clarification the director was dissuaded from this idea. The costs for this change would run over budget and the shop would not have time to complete this along with all of the other set pieces. Although these changes only affected stage management indirectly, it did require a bit of extra communication between stage management, the director, and the scenic designer. As an observer in the process, it was important to see how compromises occurred between members of the creative team.

Costume design had more or less stayed the same from the designer's original renderings. The biggest problem however was that the designer had been given specific instructions as to what and where to purchase the costumes, and thus most of the costumes were not built but rather purchased – and the designer had to use her entire budget for the show on the purchases. As an observer of this process between the director and the designer, it was interesting to find out that this was not the typical way this process occurs. Additional shirts also had to be purchased for an actor, as the

¹⁸ Long painted wood planks hung above the audience and behind the stage left projection surface.

director decided during rehearsal that stage blood should be utilized in a more dramatic way so it would get on to the character's shirt. This resulted in a compromise: the director would purchase shirts in order for a new shirt to be utilized every night.

Additions to the media design were brought in all the way until final dress, at which point the media director no longer felt comfortable altering the media any further prior to opening night. The final media alteration which occurred during final dress was for the finale; the director felt the design for Sofia's transcendence appeared incomplete during tech. The director scrambled to pull together a final look for the show, pulling together clips from previous work she had done. In the 11th hour, the media designer sent in a different video which was closer to what the director wanted, and this became the projection at the final moment of the play.

According to the audio/visual cue script created by the director prior to the beginning of rehearsal, the sound design was expected to include a score that would play throughout many of the scenes and the transitions between scenes. This did not make it into the final sound design. On top of this, due to a death in the family our sound designer was not available (and did not work) during the week approaching tech, and did not make it back in to production until the second day of technical rehearsals. In spite of these issues, the sound designer was able to finish his design during tech and the show moved on with the completed work.

Vision

During my first meeting with the director, we discussed her vision for the media design, as well as the beginnings of an audio/visual cue script she was creating at the time. At this time we both explained our backgrounds and got to know each other. The director explained her level of experience, which was primarily based in film. The director's vision from the beginning had focused a great deal on the spectacle of the production. The visuals (the media projections) were always at the forefront of the director's vision. As a stage manager, my main concern with this approach was how the actors would fit into this vision. While I appreciated her aesthetic vision, I wondered how her experience in working with the actors whom I consider my peers, and how her lack of experience in the theater world would affect her work with them and the process as a whole. I knew that her assistants had background in the areas in which she did not, and this helped to quell some of these fears. At this time I recommended some readings on directing that I had seen in my undergraduate studies, which the director seemed to appreciate.

I believe (as an enthusiastic participant in the process) that we ended up with a production which showcased the director's vision for a visually pleasing production. In terms of lighting design the show had to become a well-orchestrated balance between making sure the actors were lit, but not over lighting and which would bleach out and encumber the impact of the projections. On occasion, this meant the actors were not always well lit. As previously noted, the director's vision for the show did include more from the sound design which did not make it into the performances. These challenges meant the director had to make some compromises to her vision in

certain aspects, but the result maintained the beauty of the projections and provided an opportunity for the incredibly talented cast to showcase their skills.

Projections

The projection design was a process in and of itself. The director had contacted an outside media designer to create the visual effects for the performance. These projections often worked in conjunction with the actor's performances to tell part of the story which could not otherwise be told. In particular, there were three major scenes in which the actors had to work with the projected media in order to time themselves in their scenes. This included our first scene with Stephen Heider having a panic attack during a lecture, our protagonist Sofia giving a lecture on stellar formation over Youtube, and another Youtube scene in which her lecture is filmed and interrupted live by those bullying her. During the panic attack, the projection design was left open ended enough to allow the actor to take his time in delivering his lines as he wished. It interfered little with his performance. The protagonist's first Youtube lecture was created by using a recording of the actor reading off the lines in the scene. The video was created in such a way that the actor had to time and adjust her line delivery for every performance in order to sync up well with this projection. Fortunately, the actor was able to recreate that performance with consistency for all performances.

The final (bully interrupted) Youtube lecture was a little more complicated. The filmed pieces were edited without specific line timings as was the first Youtube

lecture. As this portion of the media was created by the director, it meant she had to go back and re-render her video, allowing for additional time for the actors to get their lines out. This process was not precise, and resulted in cutting portions of the actors lines during technical rehearsal to accommodate the timings we had in the video. The end result was well timed and appeared intentional.

Confusions, Questions, and Problems

Tech rehearsals started out with a great deal of miscommunication between the director, the designers, and me. The learning curve was steep. The director and her assistants had not done technical rehearsals in their respective capacities before, nor had the lighting designer, the sound designer, the assistant stage manager, or me. Thanks to the coaching/coaxing of lighting design Professor David Lee Cuthbert, the lighting designer and I slowly started learning how to build the show. In addition to the stress of learning how to become a managing midwife during this process, having a director who was unsure of where and when to interject made first few hours a jumbled mess. It became a juggling act sort of conversation, being on the clear comm system with the media and lighting designer, as well as having the director (not “on comm”) speaking to me all at once. The comm system is a headphone/microphone system which connects the stage manager to the assistant backstage, the designers during tech and the board ops during runs, and is not typically used by the director. Nothing can prepare a person for that level of chaos. We had to quickly come up with a system of communication to show that the designers were working on a cue, and

when it was time to start making requests of the designers. Unfortunately this system was not created instantaneously, or even quickly, but took a few tries and heated words during break times to establish. It was incredibly overwhelming. Thankfully, the technical operations director came in and mediated a discussion between the director and me in order to establish communication once again. After this discussion and our dinner break, we came back and managed to become more productive and communicate more effectively. Sometimes all it takes to tame the occasionally torrential moods of oneself and others is a good break with a good meal.

Another issue arose from the sound designer being unavailable from dress first dress rehearsal until our second day of tech. After the mishaps of the first day, it was up to the media designer and me to quickly teach our sound designer how to use the comm system and how to incorporate his work into the technical rehearsal. He learned quickly and with relative ease. The need to simultaneously teach while learning remains one of the more difficult tasks I've taken on as a stage manager during a technical rehearsal.

One of the issues which arose often with the director had to do with miscommunication. We found out that our sound designer was unavailable for the last week of rehearsal, which put us in a time crunch. During our final production meeting, I heard from the director that the sound designer "probably hadn't done any work." This note was relayed in the production meeting minutes, which prompted the sound designer to email me directly to let me know that work was already loaded into

the QLab system (the sound cue system) in the theater, and he had communicated this to the director (though not previously to stage management). I checked QLab almost immediately after this to find his work there. I realized that prior to sending out these notes I should have emailed the sound designer to see what had been done.

Communication had broken down with the majority of the collaborators during the production, and a great deal of good faith was lost on the side of the production team prior to this. There were not a great deal of sound cues loaded, but the completed work was in QLab. I resolved to communicate all sound design related information directly to the designer before speaking to the director so that this would not happen again.

Nearly all of those working in this project had never worked in the capacity in which they were working on this. When mistakes were made, they often occurred due to this reason. This production certainly was not run like any other production I have ever worked on in the past, and there is little a stage manager can do to psychologically prepare for something that has never happened before. Going back to the *Stage Management Handbook*, Ionazzi¹⁹ writes, “No one can anticipate all the problems a production will encounter because each production is unique, and there is no past experience from which to learn.” I take this statement as gospel. Ionazzi goes on to say, “There is no one job description for a stage manager that applies to every production. Because every production is different, every stage management position

¹⁹ Ionazzi, Daniel A. *The Stage Management Handbook*. White Hall, VA: Betterway Publications, 1992. Kindle.

is different.” If I had to write a job description for myself during *Birth of Stars* it would include doing the job while simultaneously learning how it’s done.

Before rehearsals began the director did not know exactly how scheduling would work, and asked me to come up with a preliminary, bare bones sort of schedule from which she could build on during the process. She ended up creating a daily schedule, which she sent to me and expected me to work from. Due to the short amount of time allotted for rehearsals, we’d often have to use multiple spaces in order to rehearse all of the scenes we needed to do. While the director’s daily schedule was very helpful, it often did not answer the question of which space held priority for which actor, and often there was overlap of where an actor needed to be according to her schedule. It required me to keep the director in the room once rehearsal had ended so that we could go over the schedule thoroughly before I could send it out to the actors. Most times, actors were called all at once, and some actors did not get to do much or sometimes any work during a rehearsal, but their presence reinforced the notion of working as an ensemble. It was for this reason we could not stagger calls or not call actors for specific days. Due to our shortened rehearsal process (4 weeks from start until tech for 15 hours a week – the department more often has 5-6 week rehearsal process during winter/spring), it was imperative to utilize every available moment to work before opening night.

Even if didn’t get to certain scenes in which actors had dialogue, actors were able to get used to being on stage in their space as the action went on. While it proved

difficult during tech for the actors to maintain focus while always being on stage, the director thanked the actors profusely for their patience when the day was done. Even with this particular way of running rehearsals, actors in general seemed pretty happy to work on this production, and rarely complained to stage management about their calls or the way rehearsals were run. The primary complaint was simply of not having enough time to do more character or table work. The director chose to give less time to this due to her past experience of working with actors for commercial film did not develop psychology of their characters with the director during the filming process. Happily, I can say the actors dug in to their parts as deeply as they would in the time allotted and not only performed well but worked well with each other and with stage management.²⁰

The directing team had a significant number of communication breakdowns during the rehearsal process. One of the assistant directors and the director had distinctly different ideas of how rehearsal should be run. Power dynamics came into play, which led the director to shorten the time that AD had to work with the cast, and to not give her as many opportunities to help with blocking scenes or doing character work. It finally came down to the point the director had told me she was ready for that AD to no longer work on the production. Instead of letting the situation devolve into further chaos, as a critic of this crisis I advised the director to speak to the faculty advisor for the production about what to do, and knowing from past experience that

²⁰ The actors were nearly always on time, always polite, and were genuinely lovely to work with. There is some amount of fear I had going in to an authority position when working with my peers, but this cast was consistently respectful of my role in the production.

due to our close proximity to tech, the ADs would become less involved in the process. Thankfully, by the time the show had opened, it seemed that much of the animosity between them had resolved itself.

Cultural Interpretations in the Ethnography of *Birth of Stars*

An incident in *Birth of Stars* recently brought me back to George Gmelch and his study of professional baseball players and the everyday uncertainty and risk created by chance for pitchers and hitters²¹. This has sparked within baseball culture the use of routines, rituals, and a strict refusal to break personal as well as well-established cultural taboos. While these activities do not necessarily ensure a win, they boost the player's confidence in their performance. Theater practitioners also have their own rituals, routines, and taboos as a certain amount of risk and uncertainty arises when working in a theater. Will the audience respond well to the show? Will the projections work correctly and will the performances sync up with the videos? Will the stage manager's voice crack and a cue is called incorrectly (or not at all)? While *Birth of Stars* didn't have to worry much about the life threatening nature that once was "the stage" in the past (the university as with most modern theater stages are much safer places today, especially in a space like the Experimental Theater which does not have a fly loft/system), but instead had only to worry about their personal safety as they made their way to and from the theater. So why do the actors still feel afraid, if – for instance – the new director doesn't understand the taboo of saying the name "Macbeth" within the walls of the theater?

²¹ Gmelch, George. "Baseball Magic." *Society* 8.8 (1971): 39-41. Web.

This fairly common story usually occurs with the “new guy” (usually a young actor) saying the name of the Scottish play, believing the taboo to be silly or antiquated. The rest of the cast feels a chill down their spines, as they frantically attempt to undo the curse. Many anecdotes follow of past production experiences in which actors became deathly ill on opening night, or ghostly apparitions appearing backstage. Happily, I can say that while none of these consequences occurred, the director did in fact say, “What’s the big deal with saying Macbeth in the theater?” At which point the lead actor stiffened and appeared quite afraid of what may come after.

In order to quell this fear it was crucial that I “interfered” (as an anthropologist would not), I turned to the playwright who happened to know the antidote to this problem, a short ritual which involves spinning around, cursing, reciting a line from Hamlet, and then going outside of the theater, and repeating the spinning before asking to be invited back into the theater. This process, while incredibly silly, not only quelled the nerves of the actors but also changed the energy of the theater space. The very “silliness” of the ritual breaks any tension felt from the rigidity of rehearsing. The cast bonds over their mutual fear and inherently fun nature of practicing this ritual, and the crew has a good laugh.

Routines are also an important part of the process. During *Birth of Stars* the assistant directors would lead the actors in warm up exercises, a “checking in” to see how the actors were feeling before getting to work (often leading to some interesting

questions such as “what is the most energetic thing you’ve seen today?”), and some basic actor training techniques such as Viewpoints²². Stage management participated in other typical routines of rehearsal and performances such as stretching, vocal warm ups, and fight call. During the fight call the stage manager ensures the safety of the actors while they perform fight choreography at varying speeds (25%, 50%, and 75%) to prepare to perform the choreography during the performance. This was the first time I had run fight call, but this became one of my favorite parts of warming up as it allowed for a small amount of time in between running choreography for joking around to cut the tension of the fights themselves (which typically revolved around the bullying of characters). During the performance run (to ensure that the stage manager’s voice wouldn’t break) I would also participate in the vocal warm ups with the actors. During this time the cast and I were able to bond over humorous tongue twisters and strange alliterations of phrases we had heard during the day.

Through constant interaction the cast and crew built a sort of fictive kinship. This is not the sort of kinship one has with blood relatives, but instead with bonds of friendship and personal relationships based on shared time together. Technical and dress rehearsals became an experience in “Communitas”; our common experience seemed a rite of passage for us all, 2 assistant directors, a director, a lighting designer, a sound designer, an assistant stage manager, and a stage manager all going through our first “tech weekend” in our different roles and with their new responsibilities.

²² Viewpoints is a method of actor training created by Anne Bogart and used regularly in the acting classes and rehearsal processes in the UC Santa Cruz Theater Arts Department.

This experience seemed to level the playing field in the technical side of the show (as rite of passage rituals are inclined to do). Tech rehearsal became a liminal space, between the performance side of the show and the show in its whole, technically complicated “finished” form. We all grew and became (hopefully) better from the process. While I cannot speak for anyone else’s personal experience, I can say that this is true for me.

Conclusion

Birth of Stars, with its number of problems, was one of the best shows I’ve ever worked on. Between the deep admiration I developed for my cast and crew, along with the experience of working on a production with a script that I really stood behind, this will always remain a favorite in my mind. It was a great start for what I can only hope will be a long and mostly happy career in stage management. I made a number of mistakes (and may continue to do so), but that is an integral part of the learning process. *Birth of Stars* allowed me reclaim the feeling of accomplishment I first felt at learning how to problem solve on my feet as an ASM. I now understand the feeling of elation I’ve heard from other stage managers when the show is called just right. I know the joyful feeling that comes when the cues come together to create a beautiful transition, and the pride of watching a cast of actors come together after a short rehearsal time to create a quality production.

Appendix A: Birth of Stars Production Calendar

UCSC Experimental Theater
Fall 2014

BIRTH OF STARS DIRECTED BY: JOAN RASPO

General Calendar v.5
October 22, 2014

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
		1	2 Quarter Begins AUDITIONS	3 AUDITIONS	4 CALL BACKS	5 CALL BACKS?
6 First Rehearsal 7p-10p Scenic/Costume Design Due Poster Due	7 Rehearsal 7-10p	8 Rehearsal 7p-10p	9 Rehearsal 7p-10p	10 Rehearsal 3:30p-6:30p Scenic and Costume Bids Due	11 No Rehearsal	12 No Rehearsal
13 Rehearsal 7p-10p Lighting Design Due Scenic/Costume Bids Due	14 Rehearsal 7p-10p	15 Rehearsal 7p-10p	16 Rehearsal 7p-10p Photo Shoot 7:30p	17 Rehearsal 3:30p-6:30p	18 No Rehearsal	19 No Rehearsal
20 Rehearsal 7p-10p Light Bid Due Prop/Sound/Media Add Deadline Discount Ticket List Due	21 Rehearsal 7p-10p	22 Rehearsal 7p-10p Props/Sound/ Media Bids Due	23 Rehearsal 7p-10p	24 Rehearsal 3:30p-6:30p	25 No Rehearsal LIGHT HANG	26 No Rehearsal LIGHT HANG
27 Rehearsal 7p-10p Dark/Quiet Bids Due	28 Rehearsal 7p-10p	29 Rehearsal 7p-10p	30 Rehearsal 7p-10p	31 Rehearsal/Crew View 3:30p-6:30p Paper Tech 7p	1 TECH 10 of 12 10a-10p	2 TECH 10 of 12 10a-10p Daylight Savings
3 No Rehearsal	4 Dress #1 5p Call 7p GO	5 Dress #2 5p Call 7p GO (Film Shoot)	6 Final Dress 5p Call 7p GO (Film Shoot)	7 OPENING* 5:30p Call 7:30p GO	8 Perf #2* 5:30p Call 7:30p GO	9 Perf #3 12p Call 3p GO D. Photos
10 No Rehearsal	11 No Rehearsal Veteran's Day	12 Pick-Up Rehearsal 7p-10p	13 Perf #4 5:30p Call 7:30p GO	14 Perf #5 5:30p Call 7:30p GO	15 Perf #6* 5:30p Call 7:30p GO	16 CLOSING 1p Call 3p GO STRIKE

*PSD= Post Show Discussion

** This schedule is subject to change,
check the callboard for the most updated version.

Prepared by M. Kleinert

Appendix B: Birth of Stars Contact Sheet

UCSC Experimental Theater
Fall 2014

BIRTH OF STARS MASTER CONTACT

Master Contact v.8 (final)
October 30, 2014

Production Team			
Joan Raspo	Director	917-806-6488	joan.raspo@gmail.com
Patrick Denney	Asst. Director	703-867-7226	prdenney@ucsc.edu
Cynthia Simunovich	Asst. Director	831-840-1463	csimnov@ucsc.edu
		831-429-1205 831-222-0655 831-459-2174	
Jim Bierman	Faculty		lope@ucsc.edu
Michael Chemers	Faculty Advisor	412-913-5782	chemers@ucsc.edu
		510-761-2929	
Mark Krumholz	Faculty/Science Consultant	831-459-1312	mkrumhol@ucsc.edu
Steve Gerlach	Scenic Designer/Media Director	917-701-9814	scgerlac@ucsc.edu
Joel Home	Tech Designer	919-602-9477	jshome@ucsc.edu
Joseph Holquist	Technical Director	408-507-9977	josephrmh@gmail.com
Ellen Howes	Costume Designer	925-708-3746	ehowes@ucsc.edu
Ian Roque	Asst. Costume Designer	650-315-1515	iroque@ucsc.edu
Anne Maroon	Projection Designer		anne@annemaroon.com
David Murakami	Media Consultant	831-704-6872	murakami.davidm@gmail.com
Allie Riggs	Social Media Designer	914-588-4793	ariggs00@gmail.com
Izzy Quistian	Lighting Designer	408-390-0035	iquistian@yahoo.com
Gilbert Monteverde	Asst. Lighting Designer	424-210-6177	gmonteve@ucsc.edu
Nathan Ober	Sound Designer	312-342-3259	nober@ucsc.edu
Zav Hershfield	Props Master	310-963-9708	zhershfi@ucsc.edu
Hailey Shapiro	Dramaturg	408-910-9486	halshapi@ucsc.edu
Wendy Burr	Writing Team	209-648-1305	waburr@ucsc.edu
Giles Henderson	Writing Team	760-393-1800	gshender@ucsc.edu

Stage Management			
Maranda Kleinert	Stage Manager	209-499-9242	mkleiene@ucsc.edu
Victoria Irberri	Asst. Stage Manager	909-631-9716	viriberr@ucsc.edu

Performance Crew			
Darrel Ruppel	Sound Board Op	909-293-3669	druppel@ucsc.edu
Addie Smith	Light Board Op	818-319-6786	adwsmith@ucsc.edu
Stuart Camenson	Media Board Op	925-768-3585	stuart.camenson@gmail.com
Sara Campbell	Run Crew	559-731-3707	sarcampb@ucsc.edu
Daniel Hoisch	Blood Technician	818-224-8673	dhoisch@ucsc.edu
Gabriel Carlos	Wardrobe Master		gdcarlos@ucsc.edu

Prepared by M. Kleinert

Appendix C: Birth of Stars Props List

UCSC Experimental Theater Fall 2014
prepared by: M. Kleinert

BIRTH OF STARS

Props List Version 5
Updated October 20, 2014

Item #	Act/Sc.	Pg	Prop	Character	Notes	Reh.	Show
1	I.1	3	Notebooks with loose paper	Sofia/Stephen	With pens		
2	I.2	4	Lots of books		to be flung about the stage	X	
3	I.2	4	Backpack	Sofia			
4	I.2	4	Binoculars	Sofia			
5	I.2	4	Apple	Sofia	consumable	X	
6	I.2	5	Primping items	Nicki/Megan			
7	I.2	8	Cigarettes (6)	Bullies	E-cigarettes, with lighters, in packs. One cigarette dressed like a joint possibly in an altoids tin.		
8	I.2	8	Beer	Bullies	Cans		
9	I.2	8	Radio	Jake		X	
10	I.4	16	Pill bottle	Stephen	pills inside - consumable	X	
11	I.4	16	Laptops (2)	Sofia/Stephen			
12	I.5	17	Deck of cards	Jake	Practical	X	
13	I.6	27	Manila envelopes (2)	Lacey/Stephen	No writing on envelopes. Paper inside.		
14	I.8	37	A bible	Ruth	not to be flung		
15	II.3	66	Telescope w/ tripod	Sofia/Jamie			
16	II.4	75	Cell Phones	Bullies	Can be actor's personal cell phones		
17	II.5	77	Digital video-camera	Nicki	handheld, a real camera with a live feed		
17	II.6	83	Wash Cloth	Sophia/Ruth	Not wet		
18	II.6	83	Basin	Sophia/Ruth	No water		
19	II.6	84	Bandages	Sophia/Ruth			
Furniture							
F1			Desk	Stephen	Down left, staked with books, papers, enough room for a laptop, facing downstage		
F2			Modern chairs (3)	Stephen/Sofia/Ruth			
F3			Podium	Stephen	can use music stand		
F4			Desk	Sofia	Down right, minimalist, with computer equipment, table lamp and chair		
F5			Small bed	Sofia	by the worktable down right		

Appendix D: *Loot* Character/Scene Breakdown

LOOT
CHARACTER/SCENE BREAKDOWN

Act & Scene Script Page Numbers	I.1 195-198	I.2 198-202	I.3 202-206	I.4 206-211	I.5 211-219	I.6 219-222	I.7 222-227	I.8 227-236	I.9 236-241	I.10 241-243	I.11 243-246
McLeavy	X	X	X		X	X			X	X	
Fay	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Hal		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Dennis			X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Truscott					X			X	X	X	X
Meadows					X		X	X	X		

Act & Scene Script Page Numbers	II.1 247-249	II.2 249-255	II.3 256-258	II.4 258-266	II.5 266-268	II.6 268-272	II.7 272-275
McLeavy	X	X	X	X		X	X
Fay	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hal		X	X	X	X	X	X
Dennis		X	X	X	X	X	X
Truscott	X	X	X	X		X	X
Meadows			X				X

Appendix E: *Birth of Stars* Sample Daily Call

UCSC Fall 2014

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23

Birth of Stars Daily Call

1st Call		Costume Fittings	X-Space
*You Have a Fitting		Costume Shop	Rehearsal
Brandon Blum*	7:00P	1:30p Blum (30min)	7:00p Viewpoints with Patrick
Alex Doble	7:00P	2:00p Schneiderman (15min)	Full Cast Called
Danielle Goupille*	7:00P	2:15p Goupille (15min)	
Nina Mostowfi	7:00P		7:30p Blocking Act Two
Josh Orlando	7:00P		Full Cast Called
Sierra Parsons	7:00o		
Emily Schneiderman*	7:00P		8:30p Actor Exercises with Cynthia
Gwen Vahey	7:00P		Full Cast Called
Taras Wybaczynsky	7:00P		
			8:45p Blocking Act Two
			Full Cast Called
			9:55p Powwow
			Full Cast Called

cc=no call

**This call is subject to change, check the callboard for the most updated version.

Appendix F: *Birth of Stars* Sample Rehearsal Report

REHEARSAL REPORT # 15

Production: BIRTH OF STARS

Date: October 24, 2014

Stage Manager: Mandy Kleinert

Assistant Stage Manager: V. Iriberry

Guests: n/a

Late: D. Goupille (3:34p)

Absent: H. Shapiro

Call Began: 3:30p

Breaks: 4:48-4:59p

Ended: 6:21p

Run Time: 1:12 (from 10/8 read through). Act One – 50:42 (from 10/20).

Rehearsal Breakdown		
Time	What	Who
3:30-3:55p	Check in and Viewpoints with Patrick	All Called
3:55-4:48p	Blocking Act Two	All Called
4:59-5:24p	Actor Exercises with Cynthia	All Called
5:24-6:03p	Blocking Act Two	All Called
6:03-6:21p	Powwow	All Called

Scenery/Technical Direction:

1. Thank you for adjusting the splines!

Media:

1. Thank you for installing the projectors! We're excited to see how things look in tech next week.

Sound:

1. No notes, thank you.

Lights:

1. No notes, thank you.

Costumes:

1. Fittings for tomorrow: Danielle G (2:00-2:15p), and Nina M (3:45-4:00p).
2. Just a reminder, our film shoot with Emily is Thursday and we'd love to have her shirt on that day.

Props:

1. When should we expect to start seeing more props in rehearsal? We'd love to see the telescope size and how long it takes to set up.

Dramaturgy:

1. No notes, thank you.

Front of House

1. No notes, thank you.

General:

1. Our first stumble through is on Monday.

--End of Notes--

Appendix G: *Birth of Stars* Sample Performance Report

BIRTH OF STARS
UCSC THEATER ARTS DEPARTMENT FALL 2014
UCSC Theater Arts

BIRTH OF STARS

Performance Report # 5

House Count: 105

Date: Friday, November 14, 2014

House Manager: Maria

Start Act 1: 7:37p

End Act 1: 8:22p **Act 1 Run:** 45min

Intermission: 17min

Start Act 2: 8:39p

End Act 2: 9:14p **Act 2 Run:** 35min

RUN TIME: 1hr 20min

GENERAL:

Absent/Late: None

Replacements: None

Accident/Injury/Illness: None.

Other: None

Performance Notes

Tonight's performance had a much better flow and energy than last nights. The cast's energy was higher; they still had a few stumbles in lines but overall improved on last night's performance. The audience really seemed to enjoy themselves tonight, and there was a significant amount of laughter during the performance.

BIRTH OF STARS

UCSC THEATER ARTS DEPARTMENT FALL 2014

Technical Notes

SETS:

1. Thank you Joseph for fixing the facing on the small platform.

PROPS:

1. The cigarette cartridges seem to be acting a little finicky and not wanting to work correctly. They seemed to work fine tonight, but they've been requiring more maintenance than they typically would before shows.

COSTUME/ WARDROBE:

1. While the blood bag did pop tonight, it was a bit harder for Alex to pop and therefore a smaller amount of blood came out and not as quickly as it typically does.

SOUND:

1. No notes, thank you.

LIGHTS:

1. No notes, thank you.

MEDIA:

1. No notes, thank you.

END OF NOTES

Appendix H: *Birth of Stars* Sample Production Meeting Minutes

UCSC Theater Arts
BIRTH OF STARS
Production Meeting #4 Agenda
Wednesday October 22, 2014

In attendance: J. Weiss, E. Mack, J. Raspo, P. Denney, E. Howes, I. Quistian, G. Monteverde, S. Anderson, N. Ober, V. Iriberry, M. Kleinert, M. Chemers, Z. Hershfield

PRODUCER-

1. Arts Events has posted a really nice article about the show. We are hoping this helps draw more media attention.
2. Thank you, Nathan! The posters have been printed and they look fantastic. These will be posted up around campus soon.
 - a. Small amounts can be given to crew per request to distribute off campus.

DIRECTOR-

1. Thank you for putting the platforms and ramp in the space! Having the raked platforms makes blocking easier.
2. DANM has mics that we can use for our film shoot during dress rehearsal.
 - a. Joan will talk to Kristin Erickson about mic use and how to hang them in the space.

TECHNICAL OPERATIONS DIRECTOR-

1. Board op crew needs have been met. For run crew we have one TA50 and our ASM, and we have a wardrobe master along with one wardrobe crew.
 - a. Actors will be asked to help set up pre and post show. The small round platform needs to be struck out of the way for classes, and needs approximately 4 people to move.
2. Mandy will email the updated props list to Joe.
3. Calendar-
 - a. Props, sound and media bids are due today.
 - b. Mandy will send out the discount ticket list today.
 - c. The gel order is going in today. This may or may not be in in time for light hang.
 - d. Light hang is this weekend. We're hoping to have the splines and hanging pieces up by this weekend. The cyc is not currently a priority to get into the space before light hang, so it will be installed next week.
 - e. TA20 Intro to Acting class which typically uses the Experimental Theater for class Tuesdays and Thursdays will be moved to mainstage tomorrow to keep the crew working in the space.

Appendix I: Sample Pages from *Birth of Stars* Production Book

TOS

Scene One

TOS
Lights 3

A lecture hall at a University.

STEPHEN HEIDER enters. His demeanor is antsy, he half trips on his way to the podium. He reaches the podium and looks up unsure. He clears his throat. He seems unsure of what's going to happen next.

STEPHEN waits. He produces a pair of reading glasses and puts them on. His hand is shaking. As he speaks, a really terrific simulation of the science he discusses is projected on the screens. As he speaks, he becomes more and more anxious, more and more distracted. His voice becomes distorted.

TAB 8

STEPHEN

Okay, let's get started. Gravity...

...in our universe, there are four fundamental interactions, or patterns of relations in physical systems, that we are sometimes pleased to call forces. These are gravity, electromagnetism, strong nuclear, and weak nuclear. These express themselves dynamically as fields. The first two fields appear to be universal, infinite in range, at least potentially, while the other two ---

(he drops a sheaf of papers, stops to collect them)

Just a minute, I'm a little --- hang on. Okay.

The other two forces occur at nuclear distances only. But all four of these forces work together to give shape to the universe. The search for a framework that would unify all four interactions is a problem---

SB Lights 4-5.5

TAB 12-14

Actors 1+2
Sound A-C

... is a problem with which theoretical physics currently grapples. But work done by astrophysicists can confirm, with evidence derived from experiments, what theoretical physics postulates. Take as an example the tricky and persistent Eddington-Jeans problem, which has vexed us since the first decades of the 20th century...

Lights 4
Sound A

TAB 12

It was the models of stellar structure and formation by A. S. Eddington that heralded the creation of what we might call "theoretical astrophysics", presenting a new way of justifying new theories about---

Lights 4.5

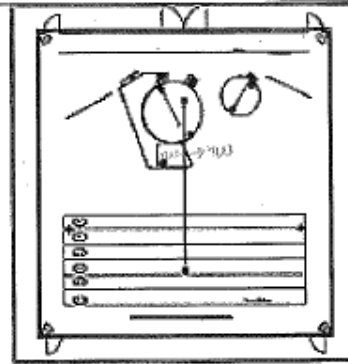
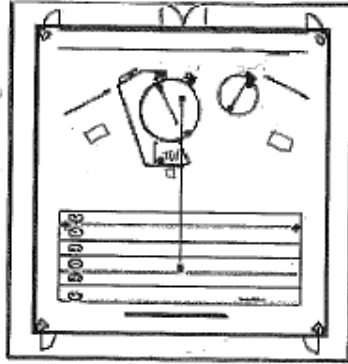
TAB 13

Actors 1
Sound B

He stops, looks at the audience in a panic. He clutches his chest. He collapses. Lights snap off. In the darkness, stagehands strike the podium.

SOUND: Siren. Projections, sound and lights snap off. We sit for a beat in complete darkness.

- 1 _____
- 5 (TW) ENT UR x DC to parlour in camp with PD
- 15 (TW) x UL of pod
- 20 _____
- 25 _____
- 30 (TW) look ↑ to US PS
- 35 (TW) x US of pod
- 40 (TW) x ren pod L@ papers
- 45 _____
- 50 _____
- 55 _____
- 60 _____
- 65 _____
- 70 _____
- 75 (TW) x UL of pod
- 80 (TW) use breath, x UR of pod
- 85 (TW) x UR of pod
- 90 (TW) F ↓ w/ pod + papers
- 95 (TW) x + S+ @ SR dock
- 100 _____



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