

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Breaking Down Walls and Cultivating Collaborative Connection:
Exploring and Engaging Authentic Leadership

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Master of Fine Arts

in

Theatre and Dance (Stage Management)

by

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The Thesis of Kasson Marroquin is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

Chair

University of California, San Diego

2018

DEDICATION

In loving memory of friends, family, peers, and colleagues who passed throughout my time at UCSD: Rick Dixon, Trish Hunter, Brian Loncar, Grace Loncar, René Moreno, Jimmy Nguyen, Brianna Shirmer (aka Jette Blaque), and Harrison Zimmerman.

In loving memory of the lives shortened by meaningless violence spurred from hate or lack of fundamental resources.

In honor of all people who have paved roads making it possible for individuals marginalized by society to succeed and thrive in life.

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Breaking Down Walls and Cultivating Collaborative Connection:
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Professor Lisa Porter, Chair

The non-traditional process of *Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again.* was an ideal catalyst for exploring my authentic voice as a leader within the production environment. The director's style and structure demanded constant presence and genuine engagement, which tested my adaptability. I faced internal walls of self-doubt, fear, and resistance that blocked my voice and hindered collaboration. Gaining awareness of the restrictive influence of the walls led me to call the barriers into question and commit to breaking them down. I courageously confronted my fear of judgment and embraced self-compassion and vulnerability. I regularly took risks, followed new instincts, experimented with communication styles, and pushed myself to take up space and

speak in an exposed manner. I employed patience as I navigated discomfort until my new working style felt natural, beneficial, and productive.

By expressing my curiosities, concerns, and excitement about the process to the director, our relationship softened. Space opened for trust, compromise, clear communication, and adaptive change, and our connection strengthened as I honestly engaged and reinforced my boundaries. Despite my fears, I diligently chipped away at the walls with each risk I took. They began to crumble, creating room for cultivating my untapped abilities and building productive, rather than restrictive, collaboration. Situations that I previously perceived as conflicts became merely challenges to investigate and integrate. The *Revolt* process was a culmination of years of work that showed me the capacity of my adaptability, potency of my leadership, and the power of engaging my authentic voice.