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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

The Other Side of Complexity

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

in

Theatre and Dance (Acting)

by

Catherine Anne Campbell

Committee in charge:

Professor Kyle Donnelly, Chair
Professor Ursula Meyer
Professor Charles Oates
Professor Manual Rotenberg

2011

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2011

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to Jim Winker, who understands.

EPIGRAPH

"Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication."

Leonardo Da Vinci

"There are a thousand me's."

Cate Blanchett

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The Other Side of Complexity on file at Geisel Library

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My training would not be possible without the love and support of my family: Hugh, Sue, and Scott Campbell, who are all Masters, and who have mastered the art of loving me.

I am also grateful to the teachers who allowed me to fail in order to grow, repeatedly: Kyle Donnelly, who has seen me act terribly more times than I am comfortable with; Charlie Oates, who got me to fly (literally); Kim Rubinstein, who loved me into one wildly responsive creature; Linda Vickerman, for introducing me to my beautiful singing voice; Ursula Meyer, for insisting that I am enough; Eva Barnes, for reminding me that, in spite of it all, my scene partner has a nose.

ABSTRACT OF THESIS

The Other Side of Complexity

by

Catherine Anne Campbell

Master of Fine Arts in Theatre and Dance (Acting)

University of California, San Diego, 2011

Professor Kyle Donnelly, Chair

A recurring note that I have received during my time here has been, "Learn to be more simple." *What does this mean?* I would ask myself. It seemed that the simpler I would try to be, the more boring I would feel.

It is no secret that I like to work hard, even incessantly. When I approach a role, I attack it, looking up each and every word, finding my beats, my objectives, creating back-story, deciding what she eats for breakfast.

Jim Winker, who cast me in *The Misanthrope* my first year, said to me after one of my evaluations where simplicity came up yet again, "Cate, you will be hearing this feedback for the rest of your life. That's ok." Jim and I share the same birthday, and the same outlook on many things, including our acting process. He never asked me to do less; rather, he would smile in recognition when I ran into the rehearsal room, cheeks flushed, with some new character revelation that came from watching yet another relevant movie about the time period of the play.

Recently, I read a quote by Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes: "I would not give a fig for the simplicity on this side of complexity, but I would give my life for the simplicity on the other side of complexity." *That's it!* I thought to myself. It is this simplicity that I understand, that I am interested in: the simplicity that comes after the hours of rehearsing, researching, reciting, reflecting. And at the end of

that process, trusting the simple fact that I, standing on stage with all that I know, feel, and believe, am enough.