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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

“Vocal and Physical Endurance that Lasts till the End.”
Engaging Your Training in *Native Son*

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements

for the degree Master of Fine Arts

in

Theatre and Dance (Acting)

by

Terrance White

Committee in charge:

Marc Barricelli, Chair
Eva Barnes
Charles Oates
Manuel Rotenberg

2017

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The Thesis of Terrance White is approved and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

Chair

University of California, San Diego

2017

DEDICATION

Dedicated to Zara Laniece Mitchell my beautiful niece. Any dreams you have in this world you chase them and uncle will be right there with you to support your entire journey.

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And a host of family, friends and supporters.

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

“Vocal and Physical Endurance that Lasts till the End.”
Engaging Your Training in *Native Son*

by

Terrance White

Master of Fine Arts in Theatre and Dance (Acting)

University of California, San Diego, 2017

Marc Barricelli, Chair

There’s nothing like needing your training to emotionally and physically survive a show that demands the energy from every fiber of your being from start to finish. I now have a skill set to practically maintain my voice when a role requires a lot of vocal variety, strength and endurance. *Native Son* by Richard Wright adapted by Nambi E Kelly and the role of Bigger Thomas taught me how essential it is to have a skill set that is director proof and that will carry me through a process and run that deals with

extremely sensitive yet heavy topics. Bigger Thomas was a 20 year black boy living in Chicago in 1939 who found his identity after killing two women: Bessie (his girlfriend) and Mary Dalton (his employer's daughter). Due to this content every emotionally sensitive moment had to be technically thought through so that my body could endure the run of the show.

As an actor this role was difficult because not only did I not leave the stage, there were 64 scenes in the play and most of them were about 10 lines long. So, I changed time and space a lot, which in this production meant I would cross throughout the stage as each scene changed. There was also a lot of running. I had to really rely on my breath and voice training in order to ensure I was heard during the latter half of the play when the fatigue really set in. Because of my training here at UCSD I was able to find technical ways to take care of myself as the actor on stage. I would use call instead of just emotionally yelling when the scene called for it. I would use alexander technique when I had to push and pull heavy objects on stage. As I ran behind the audience and into a scene I would use K-breath to intake the appropriate amount of air before I had to speak again. This training allowed me to live freely in the character and not be in my head about my body.

Through it all, UCSD has equipped me with the skills I need to take on challenging material knowing that I have the practical tools to back up my talent. That's what's going to set me apart from my peers in this world...my Master in Fine Arts in Acting from the University of California, San Diego.