

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

The Strength of Awareness:
Seeing the Bigger Picture During *The Burial at Thebes*

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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Chair

University of California, San Diego

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate work to my mother, Theresa Dion. Thank you for always supporting my passions and dreams.

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To the late Van Farrier, for encouraging me to move beyond my barriers and for first introducing me to the world of Stage Management. You will always hold a special place in my heart. “Never say goodbye, because saying goodbye means going away, and going away means forgetting.” –Peter Pan

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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Professor Lisa Porter, Chair

In *The Burial at Thebes*, King Creon uses the metaphor “ship of state” to describe his kingdom. He emphasizes the importance of focusing on the community of *Thebes* instead of the desires of individuals, just like a group of sailors must prioritize arriving at their destination without overly identifying with the needs of the rest of the crew. I have learned that the theatrical production process can be compared to the running of a ship, including a group of sailors, or collaborators, working toward a common goal. As the Production Stage Manager of *Thebes*, I played an important part in navigating the ship

towards the goal of a fully realized production. Much like Creon states at his inauguration about making choices “in the interest of all citizens,” I was challenged to act instead of react and intentionally focus on the big picture.

During my graduate studies, I have been challenged to sustain an embodied presence when triggered by production challenges. I have learned multiple tools to assist in refocusing my energy to the demands of the overall production. My ability to remain present, without judgment, to the needs of all collaborators, has empowered me to make wiser choices. This insight has provided me with an awareness and heightened clarity that will be vital in future endeavors, and the knowledge that subtle choices have a significant impact on the production process. In moving forward, I plan to continue build upon this strength of awareness as I embark on my next voyage.