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Publication Date

2017

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Permission

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements

for the degree Master of Fine Arts

in

Theatre and Dance (Acting)

by

Katherine Sue Ko

Committee in charge:

Marc Alexander Barricelli, Chair
Eva Wielgat Barnes
Charles Bruce Oates
Manuel Rotenberg

2017

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The Thesis of Katherine Sue Ko 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 my family. Thank you for doing the best you can to support me. I know it is difficult to understand what an MFA in Acting will yield—besides the fact that I can teach at a collegiate level. I also dedicate this to my fiancé. Thank you for being my support and encouragement. I love you. And one more! To the future Asian-Americans who will grace the stages of UC San Diego—BE LOUD!

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File 2. *Kat lady*

File 3. *What do you see?*

File 4. *I am Kate*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the wonderful acting faculty and administration at UC San Diego. Thank you so much. For everything. And to my wonderful class. Each of you has changed and impacted my life in such a real way. I love you all so dearly.

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Permission

by

Katherine Ko

Master of Fine Arts in Theatre and Dance (Acting)

University of California, San Diego, 2017

Professor Marc Alexander Barricelli, Chair

Permission. A word gifted to me at a very young age. And for a long time I have been wearing this word around my neck, figuratively, like a scarlet letter, but with a question mark at the end. Permission? Permission to speak, permission to move, permission to act?

Coming into this program, I was still wearing this word. In classes, with my classmates, and on stage. And in this high stress environment, this word manifested into something I could not control. The word began to multiply and I, willingly, offered this

word out like business cards to everyone and left nothing for myself. This sounds like a tragic story, but I promise there is a happy ending.

There were several moments in my time here that helped me take ownership of the word. But one that comes to my mind, so clearly, is 2nd year fall quarter. I was playing the role of Juliet. And for ten full weeks I struggled. Hard. How could a girl, like me, play such an iconic character? And I remember a few days before our presentation, Marco said to me, “No one is here to see ‘Juliet’, they’re here to see your Juliet, Kat’s Juliet”. When I heard that, something clicked.

That was the moment I gradually took back all those “Permissions” I had given away so freely. This word belongs to no one, but me. So one by one I started changing the punctuation. Permission. And I signed it Kate. I mean, Kat.