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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

“Through Our Steely Endurations” :
Preparing for the Uncertainty that Follows

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements

for the degree Master of Fine Arts

in

Theatre and Dance (Acting)

by

William Thomas Hodgson

Committee in charge:

Gregory D. Wallace, Chair
Ursula Meyer
Charles Bruce Oates
Manuel Rotenberg

2015

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The thesis of William Thomas Hodgson is approved and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

Chair

University of California, San Diego

2015

DEDICATION

To my family and friends, who have supported me through this process.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Signature Page.....	iii
Dedication.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Supplemental Files.....	vi
Acknowledgements.....	vii
Abstract of the Thesis.....	viii

LIST OF SUPPLEMENTAL FILES

File 1. Sampognetta in *Tonight We Improvise*

File 2. Sampognetta in *Tonight We Improvise*

File 3. Al in *Grapes of Wrath*

File 4. Al in *Grapes of Wrath*

File 5. Vaughn in *In the Crowding Darkness*

File 6. Congregant in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*

File 7. Tony Lumpkin in *She Stoops to Conquer*

File 8. Vishal in *Little Children Dream of God*

File 9. Vishal in *Little Children Dream of God*

File 10. Egungun in *In the Red and Brown Water*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Without my mother, my father, my brothers, my grandparents, my aunts and uncles, and nieces and nephews, I could not have succeeded here. Thank you for your support, even from afar.

Thank you Kyle Donnelly, Greg Wallace, Ursula Meyer, Charlie Oates, Eva Barnes, and all of the other artist that have mentored me through my time here.

Thank you Tes, Tobes, Walker, Corey, Kim, Tammy and Brian. It's surreal to know we are so close to the end. You have all taught me so much.

It's been an honor to work within this community. I have met artists of all types that I have learned from and will continue to learn with.

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

“Through Our Steely Endurations” :
Preparing for the Uncertainty that Follows

by

William Thomas Hodgson

Master of Fine Arts in Theatre and Dance (Acting)

University of California, San Diego, 2015

Professor Gregory D. Wallace, Chair

According to Malcom Gladwell’s *Outliers*, it takes 10,000 hours of practice to achieve mastery in any field. Two-thirds of my 10,000 hours have been spent deep within the fluorescent corridors here at UCSD, but I don’t need to count hours to know I feel like a master. The obstacle course I have navigated these past three years has forged me in the process. The demands of the work dared me to fathom, face, and explore the facets of my own being. Along the way, my mentors have molded me, preparing me to meet any and all obstacles.

It started in Louisiana, I tore my guts out in Italy, I sold myself in Florida, lost my family out west, caused some bloody mischief, ended lonely in Chicago, survived the Gringo Exodus, and rang a really big bell. Through encouragement, advice, and corrections, the faculty here gave me the tools that made success possible in all these places.

My last show here, Mr. Burns: A Post-Electric Play, presented so many challenges, in table-work, rehearsal, tech and performance, but because of my training, I always knew we could overcome them. The tools I've been given have imbued me with such a confidence in my craft that no challenge is insurmountable. My voice, my awareness, my process, is stronger.

The metaphor of my skillsets being tools is inaccurate. They are better described as organs, in me always, regulated without effort by my unconscious. Because they are with me, I am prepared for the unknown.