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Hamlet is Too Big

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Hamlet is Too Big

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

in

Theatre and Dance (Acting)

by

Brian Smolin

Committee in charge:

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

2015

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The thesis of Brian Smolin is approved and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2015

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my parents, without whose undying support, none of this would be possible.

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Hamlet is Too Big

by

Brian Smolin

Master of Fine Arts in Theatre and Dance (Acting)

University of California, San Diego, 2015

Professor Gregory D. Wallace, Chair

While playing Hamlet, I often felt overwhelmed, stressed out, and afraid. I struggled with the daunting and difficult nature of the role, but within that struggle, I found a deeper understanding of many of the concepts central to my training at UCSD. I had to trust and rely on that training, because Hamlet is just too big to do otherwise.

Hamlet is too big to control. It's too big to be neat or safe. I had to let it to be a mess and allow myself to be wrong. Hamlet is too big to play emotion. How could I ever be sad enough? I had to play actions instead. Hamlet is too big to do all at once, and too

vast to let the story go untold. I had to live one moment at a time and strive for clarity of thought and language. Hamlet is far too big to do alone. I had to listen to my cast mates, and allow them to affect, change, and lift me. Hamlet is too damn long, and too damn hard, not to have any fun, and I found joy and humor in places that I never expected. And lastly, Hamlet is far too big to ever be finished, and every performance was an opportunity to grow, and discover anew.

Playing Hamlet forced me to be active, strive for clarity, discover, have fun, and much more. I'm a better actor now than when I started. Hamlet is just too big for anything less.