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Anything You Can Do:

Exploring Gender in Golden Age Musical Theatre Performance

TOOLS

for interrogating & reinterpreting The Golden Age
in classrooms, rehearsal rooms, & stages

The King and I



show info at R&H Org



THIANG You could be great help to all here, sir.

ANNA Lady Thiang, why do you call me "sir"?

THIANG Because you scientific. Not lowly, like woman.

ANNA Do you *all* think women are more lowly than men?
(THIANG translates this to the wives, all of whom smile broadly and nod their heads, apparently quite happy with the idea of female inferiority. ANNA'S voice is indignant) Well, I don't.

THIANG Please, sir, do not tell King. Make King angry.

ANNA King seems to be angry already. (*Thoughtfully*) That lovely girl. He said she was a present . . .

THIANG From court of Burma. I think she love another man. If so, she will never see other man again.

ANNA Poor child!

THIANG Oh, no, sir! She is foolish child, to wish for another man when she has King.

ANNA But you can't help wishing for a man, if he's the man you want.

THIANG It is strange for schoolteacher to talk so—romantic.

ANNA (*Smiling*) Romantic! I suppose I am. I was very much in love with my husband, Tom.

THIANG Tom.

(*She translates this to the wives, who repeat after her, "Tom."*)

Once a woman has loved like that, she understands all and she's on their side,

1. Subjugation, Violence

2. Restrictive Stereotypes

3. Power Dynamics

A. taming a woman

B. male king archetype

4. Gender Typing in Child Development

TOOLS

for interrogating & reinterpreting The Golden Age
in classrooms, rehearsal rooms, & stages

micro view

dramaturgical
strategies

macro view

intention
+
statement

TOOLS

MICRO VIEW:
Actors as Dramaturgs

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Actors as Dramaturgs

- Musical Theatre Performers must hold space for analysis & research
 - Prioritize these skills in classrooms
 - Prioritize table work in production
- Strategies for character building, for Actors-as-Dramaturgs:
 - Psychology
 - Physicality
 - Imagination

The King: psychology

44

No. 13

A Puzzlement

Cue: KING: I do not know. I am not sure.

Moderato $J = 88$ KING: I'm not sure of anything.

Piano

Stgs. W.W.

p

The first system of the piano accompaniment for 'A Puzzlement'. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The music is marked 'Moderato' with a tempo of $J = 88$. The piano part begins with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano). The right hand plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, while the left hand provides a steady bass line.

1 KING

When I was a boy, World was bet-ter spot,

mp

The second system of the score, featuring the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is marked with a first ending bracket '1' and the character name 'KING'. The lyrics are 'When I was a boy, World was bet-ter spot,'. The piano accompaniment continues with a dynamic marking of *mp* (mezzo-piano).

What was so was so, What was not was not.

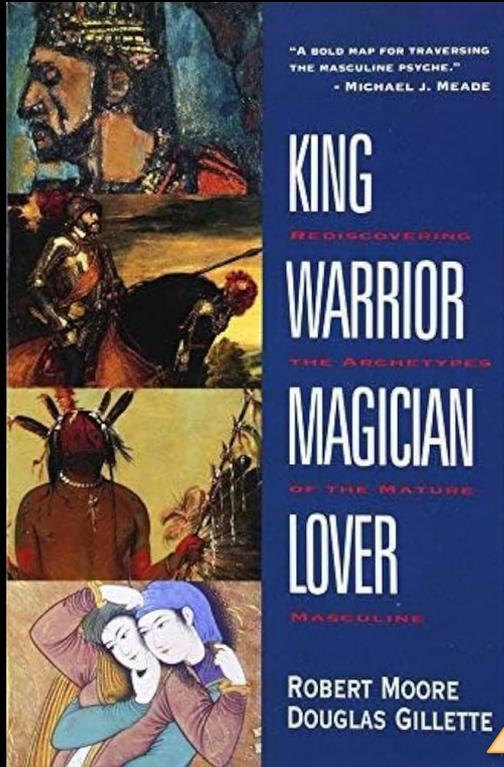
The third system of the score, featuring the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are 'What was so was so, What was not was not.'.

Now I am a man, World have change a lot

gnd.

The fourth system of the score, featuring the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are 'Now I am a man, World have change a lot'. The system concludes with a *gnd.* (grand) marking.

The King: psychology

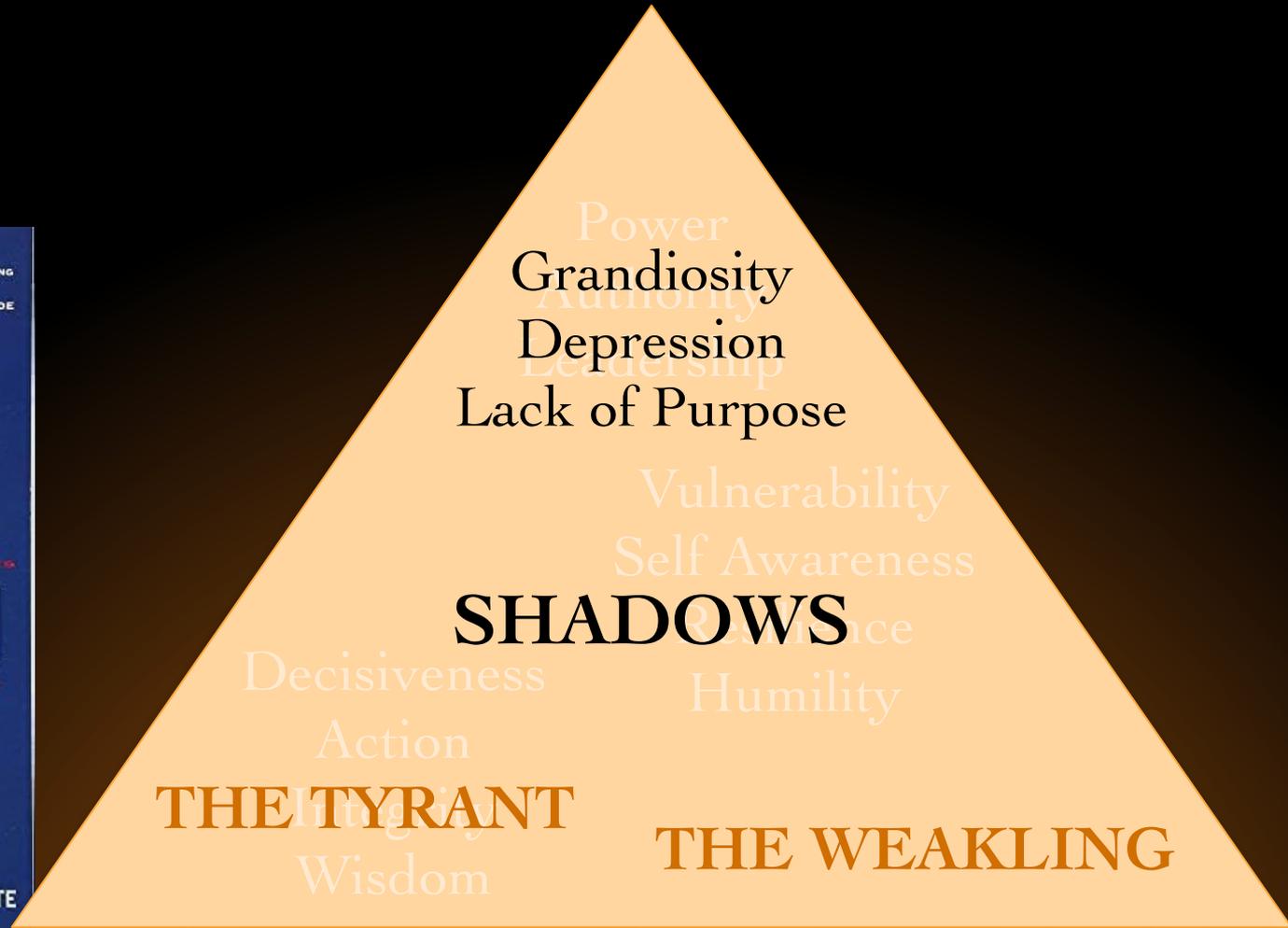
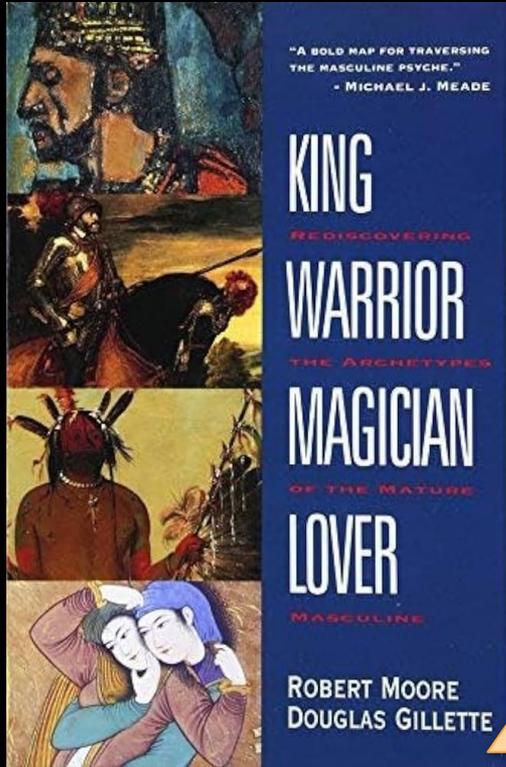


Power
Authority
Leadership

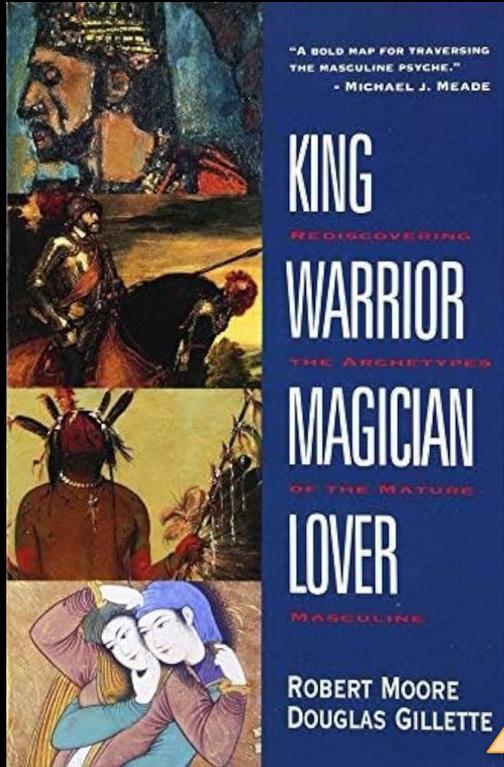
Vulnerability
Self Awareness
Resilience
Humility

Decisiveness
Action
Integrity
Wisdom

The King: psychology



The King: psychology



Self-reflection
Mentorship
Learning
Feedback

King's actions in relation to:

Anna

Kralahome

The royal children and The Prince

Buddha

Self

How do gender roles/expressions from then and now weave together in performance?

44
No. 13 A Puzzlement

Cue: KING: I do not know. I am not sure.

Moderato $\text{♩} = 68$ KING: I'm not sure of anything.

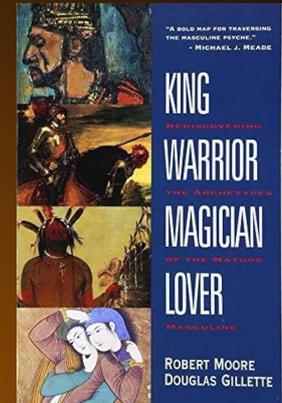
Sigs. W.W.
Piano *p*

1
KING
When I was a boy, World was bet - ter spot,

mp

What was so was so, What was not was not.

The image shows a page of a musical score. At the top, it is numbered '44' and titled 'No. 13 A Puzzlement'. Below the title, there is a cue for 'KING: I do not know. I am not sure.' followed by the tempo 'Moderato' and a metronome marking of quarter note = 68. The score begins with a piano accompaniment marked 'Piano' and 'p'. The piano part consists of a treble and bass line. Above the piano part, there are vocal lines for 'KING'. The first vocal line includes the lyrics 'When I was a boy, World was bet - ter spot,'. The second vocal line includes the lyrics 'What was so was so, What was not was not.' The piano accompaniment continues throughout the vocal lines.



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Actors as Dramaturgs

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 - Psychology ✓
 - Physicality
 - Imagination

No.19 Shall I Tell You What I Think Of You?

Curtain opens disclosing Anna seated on bed.

Allegro $\text{♩} = 124$ Fl.

Piano

*w.w.
Hp.
Va.*

*mf
simile*

+ Vns.

(Anna starts singing to an imaginary King.) ANNA

Your

(repeat till Anna sings)

ser - vant! Your ser - vant! In - deed I'm not your ser - vant (Al -

w.w. & Hp.

Anna:
Physicality

Anna:
Physicality

THE
LADIES' BOOK OF ETIQUETTE,

AND

MANUAL OF POLITENESS.

A COMPLETE HAND BOOK FOR THE USE OF THE LADY IN POLITE SOCIETY.

CONTAINING

FULL DIRECTIONS FOR CORRECT MANNERS, DRESS, DEPORTMENT, AND CON-
VERSATION; RULES FOR THE DUTIES OF BOTH HOSTESS AND GUEST
IN MORNING RECEPTIONS, DINNER COMPANIES, VISITING, EVEN-
ING PARTIES AND BALLS; A COMPLETE GUIDE FOR LET-
TER WRITING AND CARDS OF COMPLIMENT; HINTS
ON MANAGING SERVANTS, ON THE PRESER-
VATION OF HEALTH, AND ON AC-
COMPLISHMENTS.

AND ALSO

USEFUL RECEIPTS FOR THE COMPLEXION, HAIR, AND WITH HINTS
AND DIRECTIONS FOR THE CARE OF THE WARDROBE.

BY

FLORENCE HARTLEY,

AUTHOR OF THE "LADIES' HAND BOOK OF FANCY AND ORNAMENTAL WORK."

BOSTON:

G. W. COTTRELL, PUBLISHER,
36 CORNHILL.



Anna: Physicality

“Let your carriage be at once dignified and graceful. There are but few figures that will bear quick motion; a jerk [is] a most awkward movement.

Let the feet, in walking or dancing, be turned out slightly... to sit with the knees or feet crossed or doubled up, is awkward and unladylike.

Carry your arms, in walking, easily; never crossing them stiffly or swinging them beside you.

While seated, if you are not sewing or knitting, keep your hands in an easy, natural, position, perfectly quiet.

Never gesticulate while conversing. When you open a conversation, do so with a slight bow and smile.

Never point.

BOSTON:
T. T. TRELLE, PUBLISHER,
36 CORNHILL.



How do gender roles/expressions from then and now weave together in performance?

84
No.19 Shall I Tell You What I Think Of You?

Curtain opens disclosing Anna seated on bed.

Allegro $\text{♩} = 124$ Fl.

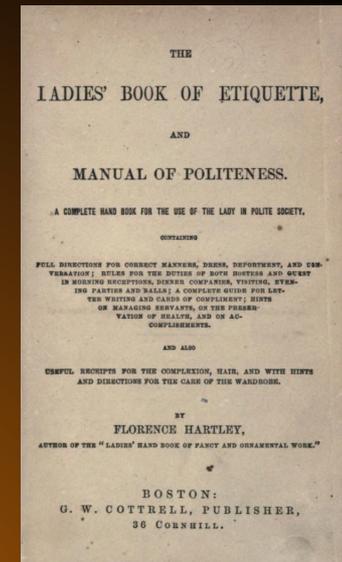
Piano

pp w.w.
Hp.
Va.

mf simile

+ Vas.

(Anna starts singing to an imaginary King.) ANNA
Your



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The Ensemble: Imagination

No. 28 **Western People Funny**
 Cue: LADY THIANG: Whatever Mrs. Anna want us to do is wise and good, but this....

Moderato con grazia $\text{♩} = 127$

LADY THIANG:

Piano

Stgs. Hns. Ob.
P. R.H.

1
 prove we're not bar-bar-i-ans, They dro
 bar-i-ans, We we

No. 35 **The Small House Of Uncle Thomas**
 (Ballet)

A Siamese musician enters, beating a gong in walking rhythm. He is followed by servant who carries his drum and ratchet. Other servants place benches for a chorus of girls and a stool for the musician on opposite sides of the stage. While gong beating continues, chorus enter, bow to the audience and take their places. Then the narrator, Tuptim, enters and after bowing

TUPTIM:
 Your Majesty — and honorable guests
 I beg to put before you "Small House of Uncle Thomas"

Piano

Allegretto
 CHORUS: *)

(quasi parlando)
 gra. Small house of Un-cle Thom-as. Small house of Un-cle Thom-as. etc.

Writ-ten by a wom-an, Har-ri-et Bee-cher Sto-wa.

TUPTIM:
 House is in Kingdom of Kentucky, ruled by most wicked King in all America, Simon of Legree.

*) The chorus, whenever speaking or singing in rhythm, beat Wood Blocks and Ancient Cymbals on the down beat. This applies to the entire ballet.
 **) Notes of this type: ♩ are spoken. An approximation of pitch is indicated throughout.

- What are 5 actions you take in the play that reveal your nature?
- What is your relationship to another ensemble character?
- What is your typical day-in-the-life at the start of the play?
- What events in the play affect that day-in-the-life, and how is it affected?

The Ensemble:
Imagination

How do gender roles/expressions
from then and now
weave together in performance?

No. 28 Western People Funny

Cue: LADY THIANG: Whatever Mrs. Anna want us to do is wise and good, but this....

Moderato con grazia $\text{♩} = 127$

LADY THIANG:

No. 35 The Small House Of Uncle Thomas (Ballet)

A Siamese musician enters, beating a gong in walking rhythm. He is followed by servant who carries his drum and ratchet. Other servants place benches for a chorus of girls and a stool for the musician on opposite sides of the stage. While gong beating continues, chorus enter, bow to the audience and take their places. Then the narrator, Tuftim, enters and after bowing to the audience, sits down in front of the chorus. (Gong stops)

TUFTIM: Your Majesty and honorable guests

Piano

The Ensemble:
Imagination

MACRO VIEW:
An Age of Golden Intentions

March 1951

Gertrude Lawrence

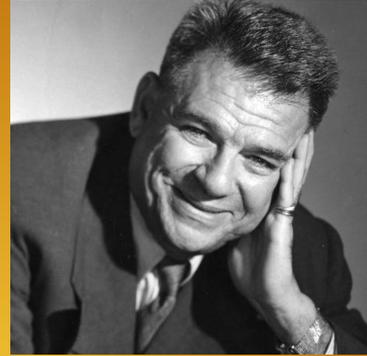


Jerome Robbins

Richard Rodgers



Oscar Hammerstein II



Anna Leonowens



Harriet Beecher Stowe



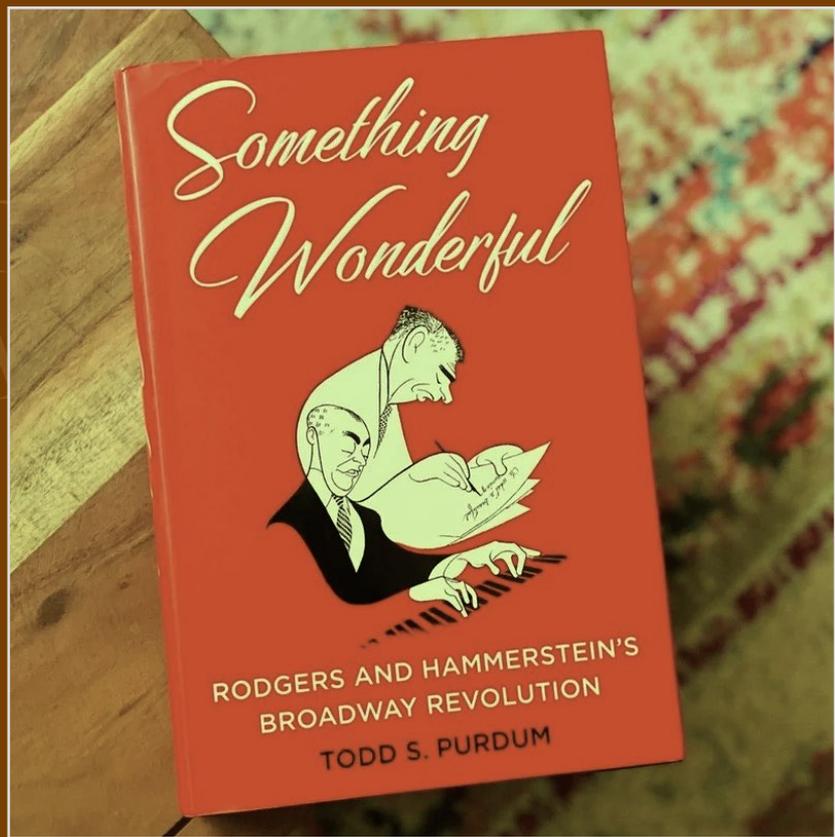
Trude Rittman



Margaret Landon



Robert Russell Bennett



“Oklahoma was the Hamilton of its time...

*We think of them now as traditionalists,
but in their beginning,
they were revolutionaries.”*

- Todd Purdum

MACRO VIEW: An Age of Golden Intentions

- Golden Age works were created in collaboration of genders
- R&H at the forefront for more complex musical theatre and social change

MACRO VIEW:

What do we want to say today?

collaborative theatre > themes & ideas > audience
+ actors

collaborative theatre > themes & ideas > audience
+ actors



What do we want to say about politics now?

No. 15 **Getting To Know You** 61

Eve: I like you very much indeed.

Moderato $\text{♩} = 118$
ANNA (*rather spoken*)

Piano

It's a ver-y an-cient say-ing, but a true and hon-est thought, That if

Sigs.
Hp.
p

(sings)

you be - come a teach - er, By your pu - pils you'll be taught, As a

+ w.w.

collaborative theatre > themes & ideas > audience
+ actors



What do we want to say about politics now?

“...no American characters...
...values to post-war America...

...governments can be changed...
hearts can be softened...
progress can be initiated...
the torch can be passed to a new generation...”

- Laurence Maslon

No. 15 Getting To Know You

Cue: I like you very much indeed.

Moderato $\text{♩} = 113$
ANNA (rather spoken)

It's a ver-y an-cient say-ing, but a true and

Piano *p* Stgs. Hp.

you be - come a teach - er, By your pu - pils you'll be

collaborative theatre > themes & ideas > audience
+ actors



What do we want to say about gender now?

No. 35 The Small House Of Uncle Thomas 135
(Ballet)

A Siamese musician enters, beating a gong in walking rhythm. He is followed by sercant who carries his drum and ratchet. Other sercants place benches for a chorus of girls and a stool for the musician on opposite sides of the stage. While gong beating continues, chorus enter, bow to the audience and take their places. Then the narrator, Tuptim, enters and after bowing to the audience, sits down in front of the chorus. (Gong stops)

TUPTIM: w.w.
Your Majesty — Hp.
Xyl. and honorable guests

Curtain

I beg to put before you "Small House of Uncle Thomas"

Piano

mp
rapido

Allegretto
CHORUS: *

Cymb. *(quasi parlando)*

Small house of Un-cle Thom-as. Small house of Un-cle Thom-as.

8va

The relationships!

The Prince - the future of gender

The Ballet - dance transcends gender

How do gender roles/expressions
from then and now
weave together in performance?

How do gender roles/expressions
from then and now
weave together in performance?

“If we were to put a trans person into these stories, just existing, it humanizes them. I think theatre is about that, the human experience, everyone’s experience.”

As a queer actor, what do you wish that directors and casting knew as you walk in the audition room?

As a queer actor, what do you wish that directors and casting knew as you walk in the audition room?

“...an open mind.

...You’re casting a team.

...As an actor, I have been proven wrong - not wrong, but proven able to open my mind up to a different interpretation based on the director’s vision.”

CONCLUSION

Both Gender and Theatre are Social Constructs

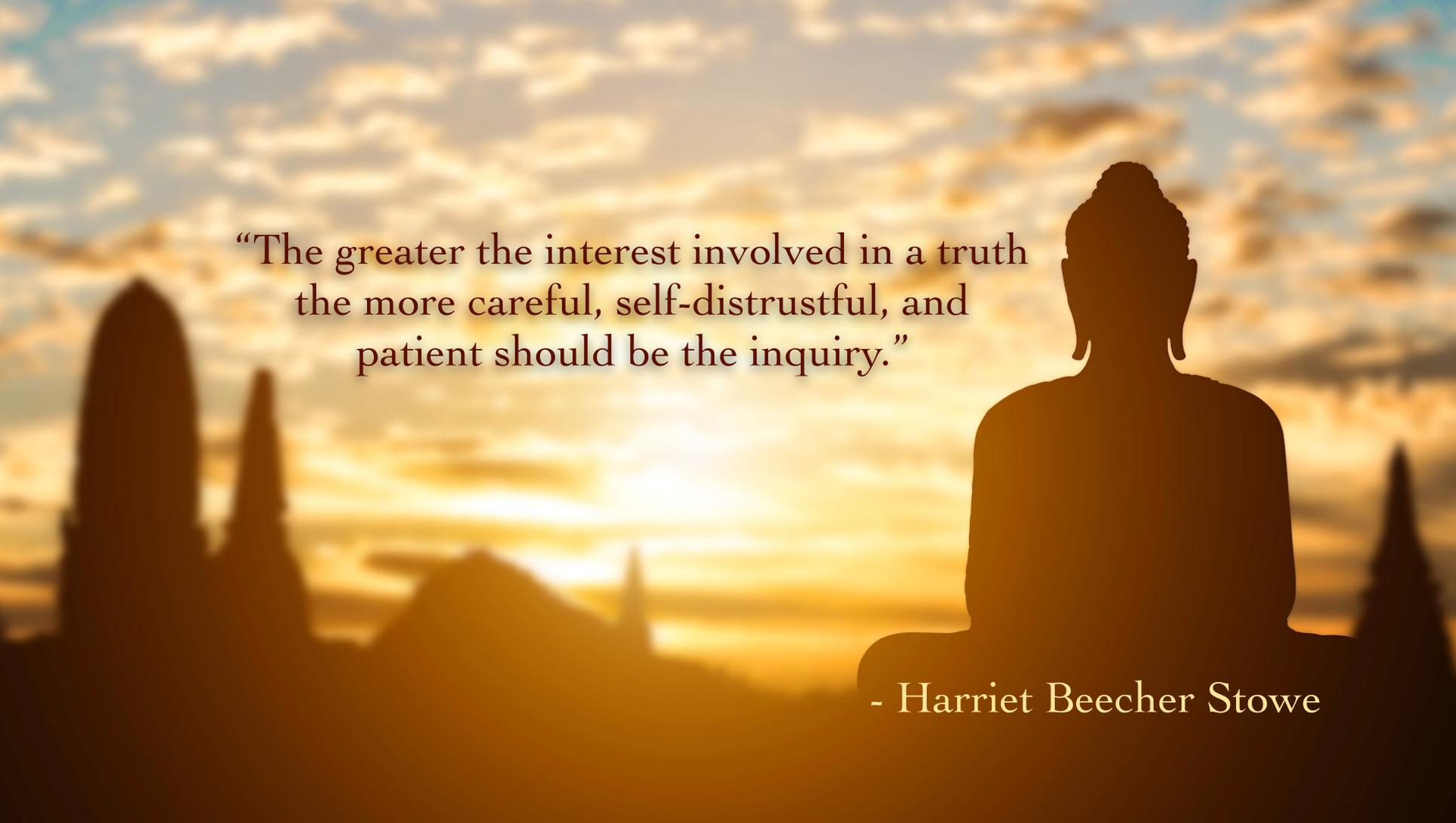
Source material doesn't change, but the meaning we construct inside of it will shift, deepen, and become more and more complex.

CONCLUSION

Both Gender and Theatre are Social Constructs

Source material doesn't change, but the meaning we construct inside of it will shift, deepen, and become more and more complex.

The search for truth does not end.

The image features a warm, golden sunset sky with scattered clouds. In the foreground, the dark silhouettes of a Buddha statue in a meditative pose and several temple spires are visible against the bright light of the setting sun.

“The greater the interest involved in a truth
the more careful, self-distrustful, and
patient should be the inquiry.”

- Harriet Beecher Stowe

