

Conference Presentation: “Acting Adjudicated Ex.”

Memory: The Musical, Asst. Prof. Olivia de Guzman

Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE), Summer 2024

Peer Review by

Professor Tom Pacio, Department of Theatre Arts, University of Pittsburgh

PRESENTATION SKILLS

Highly Clear & Effective

“The presentation was delivered with clarity-- all participants seemed to know what to do next and de Guzman anticipated needs and responded to questions with skill and kindness. The beginning of the presentation was friendly and gentle and have wonderful examples of prior students' work.”

Highly Engaged & Energetic

“Ms. de Guzman tapped into the imagination and sense of play of the exercise participants with both skill and passion. Her energy was infectious, not only for the exercise participants, but for all of us watching.”

Highly Organized

“This exercise could have "gone south" at many moments if it were not meticulously prepared. There was a clear progression to the exercise and space for questions and concerns from participants.”

Highly Exhibits Knowledge of Material

“Yes, there was a clear mastery of the material in the exercise. Also when de Guzman sang for just a moment, it definitely put the participants at ease. I think if I had one criticism, it would be that it is clear the presenter knew the vocabulary of a “song- verse, chorus, etc.” and I think it could have been a slight improvement on an excellent exercise to define this for the participants and possibly give some examples from popular songs or very well-known musicals.”

Highly Adaptable/Responsive to Participants

“Yes! This was a risky exercise and the participants had questions and very likely some anxiety about the fast pace of creation it demanded. The presenter was extremely patient, kind, and clear with answering questions and side-coaching. She was very encouraging and empowering- I can only imagine how much this would be needed in a room full of undergraduates.”

CONTENT OF EXERCISE

Mostly New/Relevant to Emerging Practices

“Yes- I think so but I think it could be explained with a bit more clarity how this exercise would apply to other practices. This is wonderful for a devised musical moment, but in what ways could it help students beyond the "musical theatre nerd" acknowledged in the introduction? Whether at the beginning of the exercise, or at the end, I think it could be strengthened by suggesting application beyond the intersection of devising and musicals. I believe clowning was mentioned? But even then - to what end(s)?”

Highly Clearly Structured

“Yes- 100%-- there was a very clear progression. That said, in other hands, I wonder if the structure would hold up with a less experienced instructor. I think the exercise would benefit from some built in

"what if this happens..." for other teachers. While there were some questions that got answered quickly and effectively, this exercise succeeded in many ways because of the strength of the instructor. I want to celebrate that but also encourage de Guzman to build in some "cheat codes" if she decides to share or publish this exercise."

Highly Challenging/Evocative

"I believe this exercise to be incredibly challenging! I was actually scared at the beginning that it may be too challenging. That said, it was delivered with such care and joy. I think it could really open up some students who love musicals but have notions of what "good" is- this is a wonderful exercise to break habits of perfection and preciousness."

Mostly Clear Learning Outcomes

"I believe so- as said earlier, I think the exercise could benefit from designing these outcomes to a wider range of student- but this is splitting hairs. How could the outcomes be shaped by assessing prior knowledge and skill sets? I know this was taught in a context, but I am imagining a delivery of this exercise outside of the given context because I think it has a broader appeal. In the given context, the outcomes are clear."

Highly Fun/Interesting

"So fun! Scary and fun! I think what makes the exercise so effective through this lens is how the beginning writing invites quiet moments for students and then they are asked to jump into being bold, loud, and creative without restraint. This balance makes it extremely interesting and it was so clear how much fun the participants were having at all times."

Highly Equitable/Inclusive/Consent Based

"This exercise invites a wide range of experience in its devised nature. I think one very picky thing could be that musical theatre as a genre has not recognized a wide range of human experience and that is why this exercise is needed- we need to devise new musicals to reflect a greater number of voices and lived experiences. This was delivered well and also explained well for the context of the institution, but, again, thinking about the exercise being taught by someone else- this could only improve it."