Creative Arts – Drama – Individual project transcript

(Duration: 27 minutes 41 seconds)

(gentle music)

I'd like to pay my respect and acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which this meeting takes place and also pay respect to elders both past and present.

This year NESA has made a couple of changes that I want to familiarise you with, and we'll go over those as I start to talk about your individual project. Some of those changes have included the individual project becoming worth 50% of your course, this is to help you focus on that project for the whole time, and so give it your all. You'll be marked on that towards the end of term three, and so I'm hoping to give you some advice and go over the requirements again so you can feel really certain about your project. You've probably been working on this since term four last year, when the course began, and some of you have decided to change what you're doing, find different pieces, explore and develop all aspects of your project. So by now you really will have got to nearly the end of what you're doing, so let's consolidate and think about what you're going to do.

You've chosen to do a project in either performance, which will be performed after the 24th of August, or you've chosen to submit a project that is due also on the 24th of August at 3:00 pm at your school, in either critical analysis, design, script writing, or video drama. Let's start with talking about your rationale and going over what's meant to be in the rationale, which is for every project you do. So your rationale is about the intention of the project and the approach you've taken with different emphasis on different projects. So for the director's folio from critical analysis, design, and video drama, you'll be explaining your directorial concept and also to make a clear vision of your place, so we can understand what you really want to intend with your project. For those of you who've chosen a portfolio of theatre criticism, or applied research in critical analysis, or performance, or script writing, it'll be an explanation of the overall intention of the project; your approach taken, and the reasons given for those decisions.

Let's start with performance. Performance is the most commonly chosen option for the individual project, so I thought we'd start with that. Let's go over what you have to include in your performance, what you have to consider. It's got to be six to eight minutes long, it'll be an excerpt or a combination of excerpts from one or more scripts, or dramatised texts of your own self devised material. It should be a clear theatrical statement that has a clear sense of dramatic purpose, shape, and structure. Remember, this is your own work, no other student, is there doing live sound off stage, on or off stage, they can't be doing sound effects, or acting as a prompt, it's all about you. Let's just talk about that six to eight minutes; sometimes your piece, I know, has taken six minutes, and sometimes it goes for eight and a half, so all I'm saying to you is that's the nature of rehearsal, it will do that because you're experimenting, you're pausing more often, so let's just think about not going over that eight minutes. You don't want to rush, you want to be comfortable, and you want the markers and the audience to enjoy your performance. So make sure you don't have to rush, and it does finish by eight minutes at maximum.

At this stage, you would have rehearsed and performed your piece, maybe for a variety of audiences, most of you might have done that. You will have been experimenting in different styles, your style might be realism, it might be clowning, it might be mime and movement, it could be in the style of absurdism or expressionism, but either way, you've made it your own, it's your own interpretation, and you need to be clear about what you intend tend to do on stage. You've probably received quite a bit of feedback by now, although you could also be one of those people who doesn't want to show it to anybody. But either way, if you've received feedback, you've got it from families, or friends, or your teachers, and they've told you all sorts of different things about what works, what doesn't. You've been a bit like a bowerbird, gathering bits of information, gathering information from your friends, family, teachers, and making them your own, incorporating what you find truthful for you, it's your performance, and you will have selected what you want to use in your performance from that feedback. Some of you might have been more private and not wanting to share it too much with other people, that's fine too, but either way you will have some way of sorting through that feedback to make your performance your own. Some parts of the process have being easier and some harder, that's normal too. Some of you might've found it really hard to have chosen a piece to do, and sorted through and read lots of things that just didn't feel you, but now you've made that decision, you go with it, you make the best of it, and you make sure your piece has a beginning, middle, and end, very important to have that structure, which we'll talk about later on.

So now you're ready to prepare for your exam, maybe you haven't done your showcase yet, you probably haven't, you'll get more feedback after that showcase, and people will say, oh, they loved it to you, but it's about you and what you felt about what you did, but it's normal for all performers to feel, I could do this better or that better, and they wish they'd done this. That's normal, so just feel good about the fact that you've got this far, well done.

What I'd like to start with now is talk about the night before, the day before your exam. That's before you know you've got your exam day, you know when you're going to have to perform, what are the best things to help you get in the zone? So make sure you've organised any costume you're using, any props, you might not be using any, but make sure that they're all there ready to go, they're either at the school, or you've got them at home and you're taking them in, you're comfortable with them, you've rehearsed with them, you've not just thrown in something at the last minute. Remember something about costume too. Your costume isn't just from your neck to your ankle, it's how your hair is, it's if you, you might wear makeup, you might not, it doesn't matter, whatever you think is appropriate for your role, and think about bits and pieces of jewellery. If it's not the character of the role, get them off, don't wear them, if it is wear them, and also what's on your feet, because you have to be comfortable and show us that you're that character wearing the right shoes and you're comfortable in those shoes. Or if you're not meant to be comfortable, then they're huge boots you don't feel comfortable in, or you're barefooted, but either way, that's part of your costume, from head to toe. Make sure if you're using any technology, like lighting or sound that you've got cued script ready to give, you might've already given it, I'm sure you have, to the non-year 12 student who is teching for you. You will have rehearsed that teching, you won't have just thrown it at the last minute. Remember, you're not marked on your lighting and sound, you don't have to have any of that, but if you're using it, you want it to be right. You don't want that sound to be too loud and masking your voice, because that's what we want to hear, so make sure that all those levels are correct as well.

So make sure you've got that cued script ready to go. What I would do is rehearse one more time, the day before or the night before at home or somewhere where you're comfortable and you feel private. Rehearse, read your script, always important just to read it calmly so you're taking that in. Then also before you go to sleep that night, I used to, I think you might find this, if you don't find it helpful, it's just a tip for me is to just go over the lines, in your head, if you've got lines and you're not doing a movement piece, so go over those lines and you might just find you fall asleep going over them in your head, or you might think about a beautiful place on earth you'd love to be, whatever works for you.

So the other things I'd like to start with is talking about breath and breathing, so important. Your breath governs your voice, it governs your movement, it governs your energy, and by breathing, even if you haven't had much sleep the night before, it will garner your energy, which is what you need for the day of the exam. So I'll just show you a breathing exercise I do, and I've done with many, many students, and then you might have your own, but this is just one that I've used. Let's start in neutral position, neutral position is where you stand very much as though you haven't got a character you're just relaxed, but you're also alert. So you stand with your feet about this far apart [approximately 40 centimetres is indicated by the presenter], you stand straight, like you're a tall rectangle, you find a focal point on a wall opposite to you that's eye level, always important, so nothing distracts you, then with your shoulders down, straight, you breathe in two, three, four, five, out two, three, four, five, in two three, four, five, six, out two, three, four, in two three, four, five, six, seven, out two, three, in two three, four, five, six, seven, eight, out one, two, in two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, and out one. We're going back to five, in two, three, four, five, out two, three, four, five, in two, three, four, out two, three, four, five, six, in two, three, out two, three, four, five, six, seven, in, two, out two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, in one out two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine.

Now the next one is the important one, because it's about your breath control on stage. You can't take long breaths before you say something, you take shorter ones, but you need to control the outgoing breath. So this time when I go in, you're going to go out after out, as though you have an apple in your mouth, you're going to make a lovely round sound of an ‘r’ sound, and not scream it out, but make it nice and loud and reverberate in the room, throwing it to that focal point that you're looking at across the room. So I'll demonstrate. In, out, (vocalising). For as long as your breath will let you. So that's just a quick breathing exercise to let you know what I do before I start performance, and with my students I've worked with, and before productions as well. So because you're breathing here, all this part needs to be relaxed, and this is where you get tense in your muscles. So what I usually do is some shoulder rolls, five back, five back this way [demonstrates rolling the shoulders in a smooth backward motion], some head rolls this way, don't go all the way back, five that way, five back this way and back again. Then your mouth, and your voice, and your sounds that are coming from it need to be relaxed and exercised. So start (vocalising) as though you're eating the most delicious lolly, or chocolate, (vocalising) go like this, make a sound. Also start to make vowel sounds like, (vocalising). Looks silly, I know I look silly, but still no one's looking at you, and you can use your tongue and your teeth and roll those sounds around in your mouth. So that you feel them at the same time. So they're not just (vocalising), it's boring, lazy, make it sound like something. Also you could do as though you're having a toffee apple, (vocalising), try and get that toffee apple, or chewing gum, which you haven't got in your mouth, have you? So you certainly don't have chewing gum in your mouth, if you're doing a drama performance, but chew it, chew it. You really get chewing that gum. Alright, so that's some exercises.

As for movement, and if you're in a costume on the day, you can't do wild movements probably because your costume might not let you, it might, but otherwise do some stretches, nice stretches, you might fall onto the ground, if you're doing a movement piece, you'll do something more energetic. But remember that you got to move and you need to feel that, move your legs up and down, do balance exercises, do something just to also keep you calm, that it doesn't throw you into a bit of a frenzy.

Lastly, let's talk about focus. Focus is so important, it's about your concentration and your energy on stage, your focus will give you everything in your performance, so I just mentioned before about staring at that wall, also find another part, look at it, take it in, go somewhere else, look at where you are, be observant. Before you begin your performance, I want you to think about the four W's. Who? Where? Why? And what? Who are you? Who are you? Are you a character who's old or young? Or are you a high status king or queen? Or a low status servant? I'm using these terms loosely, but who are you, and what's the status of your character or role? Even if you're playing an animal, or an object, you have some sort of status at the beginning of your performance. Think about that, get into role. Where are you? You're about to go onto that bare stage, you might have some furniture, you might have some sets, you might just have a chair, you might have nothing, but either way you have to know where you're going. Is it a big open space? Is it a narrow claustrophobic space? Is that your home or your bedroom? Where are you? What does it feel like? Are you comfortable there or is it an alien environment? Are you familiar or is it unfamiliar? Your body language will show us where you are. Then, why are you there? What's driving you to be there? What's your main objective? What is it you want? Are there going to be some obstacles in the way? I'm thinking of the theoretician Stanislavski here, who used this as a technique for actors to get into role. So what are those obstacles that get in the way of what you want? Because this creates tension and it creates dramatic tension for the audience who want you to get what you want mostly. Or maybe they're thinking, "No, he or shouldn't get what they want". But either way, you have to know what you want from your performance and in your place where you are. Why are you there? Why are you there, what is the reason for why you're there? What drives you? What's your mood at the opening of your piece?

Now I want you to think about, how do you get there? When you're rehearsing that night before, not before you go on stage, but when you were rehearsing that night or day before, I want you to think back on what the markers are going to look at you for, what are they going to see in your performance? How are they going to deconstruct it? They're not, they're looking at you, and they're looking at the whole thing. But how are they going to think about what you're doing on stage? So the first one are performance skills appropriate to the style or form. If you are using your voice, do you have control of clarity? Are they clear, your words? I'm trying to make mine as clear as possible. How's your pace, is it too fast, too slow? Do you vary that? What's the pitch? Remember don't scream or yell, but you can be loud, but don't shriek, unless it's, of course, appropriate. Think about your vocal dynamics. You might want to do some tongue twisters as well. I meant to say that earlier is that, red leather, yellow leather, red leather, yellow leather, or unique, New York, unique, New York, they're really great ones for getting that vocal clarity. There's a new one I just learned, I love it. Your furious friends fought for the phone, your furious friends fought for the phone. So that's another good one to do as well.

The next criterion is character or role and how well you sustain that role in the space for those six to eight minutes. So you need to have that belief and truth of what you're doing and who you are. You've worked on this, you've worked on getting there to the stage, but if you suddenly lose your lines and go blank, which happens to all actors, whether they're professional, or amateur, or students, that's a normal thing to happen, hold the character, stay in character and you'll be amazed, it'll just come back and don't worry about it. So don't freak out, they'll come back as long as you stay in that role. I think the thing for this is to lose yourself in the part, to lose it, you've worked so hard to get there, now lose yourself, but stay in control. Again, 95% of you is right in the moment, 5% is just controlling it. Think about the actors having two sides of the brain they're working, analysing, assessing, and then giving over to the emotions, being available to those truthful emotions.

The last criterion is structure and dramatic coherence. Now that's working on the whole piece so that you have a clear beginning, middle and end. You've taken the markers and the audience on that journey from the beginning, we want to find out about you. We've never seen you before. We're so excited to see what you have to give, what you have to do and to share with us. So you'll be creating tension, a mood, you'll be varying that, you'll be using the space, you might not use much of the space, but either way, it's purposeful. You have a thought about what you're using to tell us what your story is about. So you're about to open your piece and perform, you either are making an entrance from upstage, downstage, the side, you might start yelling off stage, or otherwise you're in the space, and you start performing there. Wherever you are in your opening is so important, don't rush it. All actors tend to rush their first opening because you're a bit nervous, but take your time because we are listening, we're listening so hard to what you're doing, and watching you, and we need to feel as though, yes, I'm with you, I want to know more; so try not to rush that opening moment.

Now, looking at the audience. You can look at the audience, you can look at the markers, they're audience, but don't focus on any one person because then they can't enjoy it, they feel a bit embarrassed, and they would feel as though you're talking just to me and no one else. You're not doing that, you're talking to the audience. If you need to talk to somebody in your piece, who's meant to be on stage, find a space between two people's heads, where you can look at them and focus on them. If they're sitting down, if they're standing up, if they move, do that, they're imaginary, but you're placing them in the audience so that we stay engaged, or if it's your alter ego that you're talking to. Finally, you perform this, you've got to your nearly eight minutes, and then it's the end, do not rush off, hold that moment. Let us stay in the spell of your performance for at least two to three seconds. Just stay there, feel it, stay in role and then finish. There's a wonderful phrase by a contemporary drama director whom I've seen her performances, she's wonderful, her name's Ann Bogart, and she said "The will to go out, and the grace to receive." I think that's a wonderful phrase. I've just learned it. It's a new one for me, and I thought, the two things that really go into your performance are your imagination and the audience's imagination, are with you, and the courage to perform. So bravo to you before performing, and remember to say, I'm not trying to impress or show, but experience. Keep calm, break a leg.

Let's now talk about the submitted projects. Those of you have chosen to do a project in critical analysis, design, video, drama, or script writing. I'm going to go through some of the inclusions again, just so you remember that you've got everything there and you're covering everything. You might've finished your project by now, or you might be fine tuning, but I just want to help you remember what you have to have in each of those projects.

Let's start with design, you designers, the visual world. Let's start with costume, the dresses, the pants, the way you look on stage, how you create a vision for the audience. So part of that is having a director's concept in your rationale. You should have a renderings for four to six costumes and they should be for two different characters, at least. They can be in a media such as watercolour, coloured pencils or markers, collage, or computer aided design submitted as hard copy. They should be separately mounted on cardboard with the names of the characters and the scenes, and sometimes there are acts that they're in for the play, when they wear that costume. The figures should be at least 300 millimetres in height. On each of those pieces of cardboard, you'll have some support material, fabric swatches, and/or colour samples of the materials, and the things you've used on those costumes, as close as you can get to show us what materials, what the text is like, what the shimmer in the fabric is, and the colour combinations. If there are specific things like a feather in a hat, you might've been able to have found a feather to have also included in your fabric swatches. You should also include any special construction information, something that we look at and think; well, how would they wear that? Include that in there as well. Or how would they wear that mask or something? Something that is a particular thing that's idiosyncratic, that means special for that character. You need to include preliminary sketches, and all written descriptions for at least four other costumes required for your production. You will have chosen this production from a list of texts, which NESA has on the website that are current right now. We want to be able to look at all your designs and say, I can see this on stage, I want to see this production, and it makes sense to me as an audience member.

Next, let's look at design for poster and promotion. You've had to think of quite a few things to promote your production. So you've included a 300 word rationale with your director's concept and vision. Every time you do a design project, you are still the director of your production, so you have a sense of what it looks like, how you want to see this production that makes sense with the text you've chosen. You've done a poster, an eye catching poster I hope, that makes me want to look at it and say, I want to come to this production. I want to see this. What's it about? It looks interesting. With all the necessary information about where it's on, who I have to ring, where do I get the tickets? So let's look at how big your poster has to be. It has to be at least A3 and no larger than A1. The design can be done by hand or produced as a computer design submitted as hard copy. The next thing you need to include is a flyer, about this big [presenter indicates with her hands approximately 15 centimetres], which should be about 150 words of promotional copy. Now that flyer is a thing that you might find in a supermarket, or in your letterbox, or someone gives it to you, it's something I think, Oh, look, there's that production, I saw it on a poster, it looks like that and here's that information, there is a bit of a blurb about it, that sounds interesting, I'll keep that, and if you love it, you'll keep it as a souvenir as well.

Then the program. Now, the program has to have a profile of the theatre company. This theatre company can be a real theatre company, or it can be an imagined one, a hypothetical one you've made up. So one of those two things, but you need to include that theatre company, its target audience, information about the playwright, the history of the play, the directorial approach, which reflects your vision for the production, and any other information relevant to the production. So make sure you also include suitable cast members, so you're not having somebody who looks 80 playing a 10 year old, so make sure you choose some actors who are right for those roles.

The last thing you have to include is a 500 word media feature story about the production, such as a research article, an interview, that previews the production. So you're actually promoting that production with an interview, say with a director, a designer, maybe the playwright, or some aspect of the production that makes us want to read it, and think, that sounds interesting. You're promoting that, you're not reviewing it, you're previewing this production. Remember it can't be for a school production, this is for a theatre company, it doesn't have to be professional one, it could be an amateur, but either way, it's not a school production.

Next up is set. Wow, set. It has to be identified as a performance space we know, and you know, and it consists of that rationale again, with the director's concept or vision for the production. It's a three dimensional model on a scale of one to 25, or can it be computer aided design that's submitted as hard copy. The model must be a precise miniature of your stage and the setting, and should include a human figure to show the proportion. So that human figures should be an average sized actor so that we can see how high the sets are, how short, what the space looks like in relationship to the actor. The model should be of a very sturdy construction and fixed assembly so that when you send it off, it's not going to fall apart and the packaged weight should not exceed 15 kilograms. Then you need to include a floor plan of a set design in the scale of one to 25, as an indication of the space dimensions of your performance space, the audience configuration, and the sightlines. I just want to remind you of a couple of things that I've noticed over the years is that sightline is when, if I'm sitting this side of the stage, I want to be able to see those actors on the stage. Don't put a huge wardrobe in front of something where a lot of the action is going to happen upstage. I want to be able to see most of the action, even if I'm sitting on either side. Also make sure you put enough entrances and exits for the actors to get on and off the stage so that your, as an audience member, you look at your stage, and you say, I could put this production on the stage set. You also need to include a description and diagrams of any set or scene changes that happen in your production. The last of the design, last but not least is lighting, you light up our lives, or you light up the actors, and the scenes, and the design of the productions, and make it look scintillating for an audience.

So what do you include? The rationale, the 300 word rationale of your director's concept. You also include the lighting plan for two scenes, it's good if they're contrasting scenes so that you can show us the breadth and depth of your production, where the lighting contributes to those dramatic moments on stage. It's a scale of one to 25, or it could be computer aided design submitted as hard copy. It should include a floor plan of the stage indicating significant set features. A plan showing the location of the lantern positions, indication of gel colours and lanterns used for the production, and the area that each light covers. A list and description of the lanterns and gels used for the lighting of the two chosen scenes, and a description of their impact on the dramatic action, mood, and style, don't forget that, we're still imagining what your lighting is doing for that scene on stage to make it come alive for us, to tell us what this production is about. Lastly, a cue sheet and running script indicating the lighting state changes and cue points in the two scenes you've chosen.

Next, we have video drama. Now video drama is the one where NESA has made some changes so that it can accommodate, and make everyone's fair during the process of marking your projects this year. So this time you'll do something quite different. This is for all the students, even if you've done your complete video, this is again to make it fair for all students in the state who've chosen to do video drama and also for those who are working on animation or videos with a single actor. The final video will not be examined this year so listen and read this carefully. You will include a 300 word rationale highlighting what your video drama is about, your directorial vision, the production and post-production decisions and intentions, and the key ideas driving the action. You'll include a five to seven minute screenplay, and up to two minutes of edited footage, showcasing elements of your production and post-production treatment. This should include one of the following, either shot and edited footage of a scene, or sequence, or a montage or moments or scenes, or a trailer of the movie, or location and establishing sequences. So one of those things to include, the materials to be submitted in hard copy, and the existing marking guidelines are able to accommodate this change this year so don't be concerned about that.

Script writing, you're the writers, you provide the roadmap, the blueprint, for the actors, and the director, and the designers for the stage. What do you need to include in your project? You need to have that 300 word rationale, you need a script for a complete play, which is approximately 15 minutes running time. It should be at least 15 and no more than 25 pages. You'll include stage directions in sufficient detail so that it's practical for a live production on a stage. We need to be able to imagine your lines, your words, what's your action on a stage. You'll include script writing conventions, such as a character and a role list at the beginning of your script, and dialogue formatting. It must be typed on A4 size paper with double spacing in Times New Roman 12 point. I would advise you to read your script aloud before you submit it. Well, you should probably have read it a lot, a few times if you've been fortunate you've been able to get family members or friends to read the role so you can hear those words spoken out loud and imagine the action. You don't have to direct a full on production, or a little performance, but you need to hear that dialogue so it sounds right for those roles, or characters, of what you've chosen to do. Make sure you read it before you submit it, because there could be the odd typo or something like that, but that you're happy with this incredible blueprint for the stage. Make sure you submit your script online.

Last but not least for you students who have chosen critical analysis. Let's start with the portfolio of theatre criticism where there's been a slight change. You are now able to use filmed versions of live theatre for your reviews, due to our new circumstances. Now, some of you might've already done four reviews back by February when you saw four plays and you've done those, but some of you may not have been able to do that. So either way, if you've got one of a filmed production, that is totally fine. It comprises of four different reviews of 800 words in length. Similar to performance, try not to go the 800 words and try to be around that 800 words as much as you can, and don't go too much under. It's like a performance; we want performance to not go longer than eight minutes, try not to go over the 800 words. They should include a statement describing the impact and importance of the production, a discussion of significant aspects of that production, information about the style, design, and ideas in the production, and contributions made by the different members of the creative team that produced it. I would try to flesh out some key moments who are on the stage where the lighting contributed to the sound, or the actors had a particularly poignant moment of conflict that you can make, and describe, and analyse that so it becomes alive for the reader, so we feel we're watching that production with you. It's the relationships between all of the creative team that make these moments work. It should be a well-supported and analytical judgment of the quality. So you might have loved it, you might've hated it, you've probably felt somewhere in between, but either way, justify that reason, tell us why you thought this was wonderful about it, or this didn't work, you need to be able to justify that. It should be in a style appropriate for theatre criticism. So if you've done it for four different publications, the tone of your language should be variable, it should be slightly different. You don't have to do that by the way, you don't have to do different publications, that's your choice, it's really your review that counts more than anything. Make sure you've read these reviews aloud, again. When you read things aloud, you can tell if you need a comma here, or there's too many commas, or you've left out italics, or inverted commas for the title of the play, or you've left out the odd full stop. If you're getting mistakes all the way through the reader will find it hard to read. We want to be able to understand what you have to say clearly, and remember to include that word card, state what it there, it saves us a lot of trouble.

The next in critical analysis is applied research. For your applied research project it should be three and a half thousand words in length, or approximately that. It's a structured report on the results of an investigative research into one of these things, the work of one of these aspects, it could be an individual artist, it could be a performance group or a theoretician in drama, it could be a specific dramatic text or production, it could be a theatre arts body, or it could be a critical or technical issue in drama or theatre. It must have a specific research hypothesis clearly articulated in your rationale and present the results of that research in a way that addresses that hypothesis. It should include in each separately titled sections, the 300 word rationale outlining the approach that you've taken, an outline of the hypothesis, a survey on the area of study based on your background research, which could be reading, it could be diagrams, it could be interviews, it might've been a performance you put on, but whatever's relevant to your hypothesis, showing the questions that have come out of that research. You have a description of your research tasks and a summary of the information collected. You might find that you've got so much research, a long interview, or a long article, put that into an appendix at the back of your project. You don't have to put the whole thing, just the bits that are relevant to your hypothesis. It should be an analytical discussion of these results, and finally, a conclusion which refers to the original hypothesis. Now this conclusion proves or disproves it, or responds to a question, if your hypothesis has been a question, it responds to that question. This project takes you on a journey, just as a performance does, you read the beginning, you see the opening, you think this is interesting, wonder what they found out about this? What can I find out about this? You read your research and at the end, yes, I can see why they've come to this conclusion. Your four reviews are to be submitted online.

Last but not least is the director's folio for critical analysis. You are the director, you are the person who's responsible for the whole performance and what happens on stage. You've talked to the actors, you've talked to your designers, you've talked to, you've read the play, you've researched it, you've chosen the right text, and now you are the one who's going to select what you find interesting about this production, the things, the themes, the ideas what's influenced you about putting on your interpretation on stage. If you decided to put it in a different time or setting, that's fine as long as you justify that, but you cannot change the original text. What do you need to include? You need to include a comprehensive discussion of the director's concept and vision integrating the dramatic and theatrical features. So it's like the director's concept, but more information there. Descriptions and explanations of key theatrical elements, features, effects, or images that contribute to the dramatic meaning. You'll have some moments, or some set, some actor’s moments that you think are really crucial to the meaning of your performance, the setting could be as well, performance space, so many things that contribute to your production. Make sure you've had made an analysis of the text and that you've researched that, and you've discussed that somewhere. Now, you don't have to have a full annotated script, in fact, you shouldn't have that, but if you have bits of a script that you think show that moment on stage, a couple of those moments, maybe three, that really show what your performance is about. Usually it's something to do with the relationship between the designers, the actors, and the text on stage. In the discussion of your research make sure you show what that research was, it could have been an article you read, it might've been a production you saw, it might've been a wonderful artwork or photograph you saw, but make sure you include the ones that you think really triggered your interest in that production or show what it's about. Then you need to include an outline of the design concepts for set, costume, and lighting. Now you don't have to be a brilliant designer, but you have to pretend that you're talking to your designers saying, Oh, I'm thinking of this kind of music or sound. I'm thinking of these sorts of costumes, this kind of set, so we get a sense of what you're trying to do in your design for this production. In an ideal world, those designers would go away and try to support your ideas by designing their designs. Make sure you include the discussion of the approach to working with the actors in rehearsal. What does this mean? It doesn't mean simple breathing exercises or warmups, it means the things that are specific for your production. If you're doing realism, you'll probably explain about working with Stanislavski, where you're the actor has to understand the roles. If you're doing movement, you'll be doing lots of physical warmups in some particular way. Find the rehearsal techniques that are specific for your production.

Finally, you should have a statement about the intended experience for the audience. What are you hoping the audience will get out of your production? It's probably what you want to get out of the production yourself. So you're hoping that the audience will feel the same way and think the same way as you do. In your director's folio make sure you've got a balance of textual analysis, stage scenes and production experience. Try and make it so that we can see the holistic thing, it's not just about design, it's not just about the text, it's about all those things together. For all of you drama students who are doing projects, I want you to think about the director. You're all being directors in some way, you're guiding the actors on stage. If you're an actor, you’re using words, sounds, performing the actions to evoke an atmosphere. The designers might use a visual metaphor to enhance the action on the stage. This creates dramatic meaning through the elements of drama, such as tension, movement, space, rhythm, and symbol, so that the audience can understand and appreciate your production.

Congratulations, HSC drama class of 2020 on doing your individual projects and achieving so much this far. Best wishes for your performances, and your submitted projects.

(gentle music)

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