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Rachel's Madcap Theater

Joseph Laura
University of New Orleans, jlaura@uno.edu

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Rachel's Madcap Theater

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts
in
Film Production

by

Joey Laura

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December 2014

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Abstract

This paper will cover the making of my thesis film *Rachel's Madcap Theater*. I will break down all of the interdisciplinary aspects and collaborations with other artists that formed the final film: screenwriting, production design, directing, cinematography, sound, music, and special effects. For each of these categories, when appropriate, I will compare and contrast the changes made during the main stages of filmmaking: pre-production (all decisions made before shooting begins), production (all decisions made while shooting the movie), and post-production (all decisions made after shooting ends). I will then provide self-analysis of my process in order to judge both the ultimate success of my thesis film (did I make the film that I originally intended to make?) and the strengths and weaknesses of my personal abilities.

Introduction

When I was in grade school, I was not popular by any means. My best friend talked behind my back. I did not play sports, I barely played an instrument, and I did not read books. But I had one thing anchoring me throughout my childhood and even into high school: the movies. I loved discovering new worlds, becoming absorbed into new lives, and seeing the big wide world from a new perspective. For me, film was not just about escapism; it was about finding my place in the world, finding an order in the chaos, and forging my own path as a unique individual.

Looking back, there were plenty of movies I hadn't seen yet. However, there was one particular important moment in my movie-watching experience as a child. When I was in eighth grade, my lack of popularity scared me. If the twenty kids with whom I shared homeroom for the past six years didn't like me, how was I going to fare in a high school with all new students that I would be meeting for the first time? At home, I found my newest rental from Netflix in the mail: Ernst Lubitsch's *Heaven Can Wait* (1943). While watching the film, I responded as I had to many other comedies that I loved. I felt like I was put under a spell, and I was taken to a new, euphoric mental space. This time, however, something special happened. The "great comedy movie" no longer seemed like a magical alchemy, because the "sense" and "rhythm" of comedy was clear to me. In fact, I felt like I could see a formula for comedy before my very eyes. I remember watching Eugene Pallette put down his newspaper and widen his eyes for a reaction shot, and it hit me: "*Now I know what funny is.*"

From this point forward, comedy had an unprecedented influence on my life. I realized that I had the agency to make *myself* feel better whenever I wanted, mainly through the funny art that I discovered (all of which I feel had a major influence on me) such as issues of *MAD*

magazine; cartoons by Chuck Jones, Tex Avery, and Bill Plympton; and lots of funny movies, including *Modern Times* (Charlie Chaplin, 1936), *Mon Oncle* (Jacques Tati, 1958), and *Airplane!* (Zucker, Abrahams, Zucker, 1980). All of these works were funny, but in wildly different ways. Jones and Avery lay out the chaos in our emotions through wild characters that defy physics. Jones' Wile-E-Coyote always gets back up after being squashed by an anvil or an Acme weapon that backfires, and Avery's wolf has eyes that literally pop out of his head and his tongue rolls onto the table, to capture his unbridled lust. Chaplin and Tati found a mass disorder in technology. Using sight gags and slapstick humor allowed these directors to make audiences notice the breakdown in humanity that comes from an over-reliance on technology. The ZAZ team regularly defied expectations in their films, making the audience think one thing and surprising them with an unlikely, but fitting, response. Note one of my favorite exchanges from *Airplane!*, between an old woman and a young man on the titular plane: Woman: "Nervous?" Man: "Yes." Woman: "First time?" Man: "No, I've been nervous lots of times." An audience cannot passively enjoy these movies and possibly understand everything that they have to offer: these films constantly challenge the audience to re-wire their brains, to re-think their assumptions, and to see the world in a way that they did not think to look at it before.

On a deeply personal level, I also realized that if I was funny, I could make other people feel better, much like Joel McCrea's character asserts in *Sullivan's Travels* (Preston Sturges, 1941): "There's a lot to be said for making people laugh. Did you know that that's all some people have? It isn't much, but it's better than nothing in this cockeyed caravan." If I could imagine a fulfilling emotion—whether it was laughter, humanistic empathy, or some combination of the two—and transfer that same emotion to an audience, then I would have made the world a better place for just a moment. This original discovery—along with my first viewing

of *Annie Hall* (Woody Allen, 1977)—is what made me want to make movies. And if my thesis can be of any importance, I want to show the eighth-grade me—and all the boys and girls like him—how to make art that can give them and other people fulfillment.

Chapter 1

In short, I have always wanted my thesis film *Rachel's Madcap Theater* to be a classically inspired live-action cartoon. In the April 2013 draft of my thesis prospectus, I noted in the Scope and Purpose section, “As a creative endeavor, I hope that this project will further my independence as a filmmaker; but more specifically, I would like to be able to construct a heartfelt comedy that is also aesthetically clever, in the style of Jerry Lewis (*The Disorderly Orderly*, *The Ladies Man*) or Frank Tashlin (*Artists and Models*, *Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?*).” Basically, I wanted the look of the Technicolor comedies of the 1950s and 1960s, studio productions like *Gentleman Prefer Blondes* (Howard Hawks, 1953) and *How to Marry a Millionaire* (Jean Negulesco, 1953).

This was my starting point to a short film about Rachel, a female puppeteer, whose puppets are independently alive. Her boyfriend is a goofy loser, but he is not a bad person; he is just not the right person for Rachel. The puppets see this, and she can, too. However, she is willing to settle at this point in her life; her puppets, who are like her children, only want to help her avoid a regrettable relationship. The manic and cynical Brick—a Punch-style puppet who inspires anarchy and chaos in Rachel’s home—however, misguides the quietly optimistic puppets to create only more chaos in Rachel’s life. Can Rachel, the creator, establish a balance in her own home controlled by cartoon logic?

Screenwriting

My earliest drafts of the script were written in Erik Hansen's class, Writing the Thesis Screenplay. The original idea, which involved a male puppeteer as the protagonist, was quite different from the resulting film. I pitched my idea, as required, on January 22, 2013; my pitch went as follows: "Greg is a professional puppeteer with a classy girlfriend who doesn't respect him or his craft. She vows to leave his hobby alone if he impresses her pretentious friends. He is more than willing to show that he can change, but his over-protective puppets have other plans..." The story was based on an idea from David LeBlanc (a 2012 graduate of this same MFA program) that he originally discussed with Owen "Chip" Hornstein (a 2008 graduate of the undergraduate film arts program at UNO). I saw the potential movie that would come from this idea as a sweeter, less violent version of Joe Dante's *Gremlins* (1984): The puppets would be mischievous but fun creatures that wreak havoc on an otherwise ordinary world. This would give me a chance to play with a whimsical magical realism, which is a style I had been interested in exploring more. I have a strong fondness for "coarse" genres—crude comedies like *Kingpin* (Peter Farrelly & Bobby Farrelly, 1996), gory horror films like *Brain Damage* (Frank Henenlotter, 1988), and "blow-'em-up" action movies like *Taken* (Pierre Morel, 2008)—that manage to still communicate both emotion and a personal understanding of humanity to the audience.

I made lots of story changes over the course of writing plenty of drafts of the script. Before I even wrote a draft, I realized that the protagonist—the puppeteer—could not be a man. In my previous collaboration with LeBlanc, *Date of the Dead* (Laura, 2013), which we wrote together, we ended the movie with the female protagonist being left high-and-dry by a zombie date. I paraphrase what I told LeBlanc at the time: We can't destroy female main characters

twice in a row, or we'll look like we have a complex about women. That is when I decided to make the main character (the one with agency and the willingness to change and/or take action) a *female* puppeteer, Rachel.

At this point, the script was originally—and, admittedly, poorly—titled *Brick & Rachel*. Every time that I would tell the title to someone, it did not seem to fit the ideas inherent in the story. A title needs to capture all the intricacies that happen between various characters and, at the same time, imply the genre and style. The title was not doing any of these things. There were plenty of other reasons why the title did not seem appropriate for the story: Brick is merely one of Rachel's foes (the other, her boyfriend Cal), and they never battle one-on-one. So if the story is not about the two of them, who or what is it about?

After strong encouragement from Laura Medina—who evolved into my committee chair—to change the title, I knew it needed to be different. Then it hit me: This script is about a woman versus her world. While it is crazy and somewhat disorganized, her home life has an appealing sweetness to it. After quickly flipping through some thesaurus pages, I came across the right title: *Rachel's Madcap Theater*. I finally felt like the title (which, in the end, was the hardest part about writing the script) captured the essence of what kind of movie I wanted my thesis to be: funny, puppet-filled mania, full of laughs and silliness.

Subsequent writing exercises yielded various ideas that didn't make it into the final draft of the script. For example, more scenes with Rachel and Cal together made their relationship clearer earlier but stalled the reveal of her puppets; the manic Brick puppet took control over Rachel's body (along with a small constructed "set" that would stand-in for "inside Rachel's head"), which would have been, for the most part, a pragmatic design problem; and, at one point,

Rachel enjoys the anarchy that Brick inspires her to create, which was intended to be a refinement of her flaw but only ended up complicating the story too much.

At this point in the writing process, my biggest challenge was how to connect character and theme. Recognizing my challenge, Hansen offered an exercise to force me to externalize the theme of my story. This is what I outlined in the March 3, 2013 assignment: “If you look at life in the small, chaotic details, you get disappointment and frustration. Life in the big-picture sense, however, has a more appealing structure to it all. Rachel needs to see life, as Chaplin would say, in ‘a long shot.’ She has become obsessed with the trivial details in her life to the point that her life is at a stand-still: She’s having trouble finding work.” Many details that I had suggested or outlined about Rachel’s past and present job status—she has trouble paying the rent, she can only get small local commercials for gigs—never made the final draft. While those details helped me understand Rachel as a character, I did not think they were necessary to grasp the character.

By the third draft, assistant producer Alex Aaron (who also graduated from this department’s MFA program, in 2013) pointed out a problem with the breakfast-table intervention in which all the puppets tell Rachel that she needs to break up with Cal. In addition to all the problems that may arise in shooting such a scene from a practical standpoint, it not give the characters a lot of room for action. (The characters, and therefore the scenes, come off as totally static.) Combining action with revealing character traits would make the intervention that much stronger, and maybe even funnier. After I re-wrote the scene (relatively intact in the early edits of the film), we were both extremely happy with the results. Instantly, the script seemed more grounded. From this point forward, other than some minor tweaking of lines and reduction of stage directions, the final draft of the script closely resembled the fifth draft. (My shooting script was numbered as Draft Eight.)

Although every draft of the script contained an opening nightmare sequence (Rachel fending off her angry puppets, complete with her puppet booth being set ablaze), the crew and myself were nervous about such a scene. While the sequence itself might be a really strong visual and might set up the conflicts and characters of the story rather quickly, it became clear to me that the sequence would be too dark tonally for the rest of the movie. This decision, however, was not made until production. While shooting the scene in which Rachel (Cecile Monteyne) wakes up from her nightmare, the moment seemed out of place, like from another movie. I took Monteyne aside, and we discussed her character: How does Rachel wake up every day? We talked about potential living arrangements between Rachel and Cal—he sleeps over but does not live with her—and we crystallized the flaw in their relationship: He is never there when she needs him (which explains why it is especially problematic when she later leans in for a kiss on their anniversary and he passes her up for chocolate truffles). Monteyne suggested that Rachel would wake up with her arms wrapped around something, talking in her sleep about making breakfast (a reference to a “punch of brown sugar” would tie the scene to the end of the film during the puppet show), and it would be revealed that Cal is not there. I discussed the idea with Sean McKinney, the Director of Photography (D.P.), who said that he felt like we could still get the shots we needed (the new shots would require slightly different camera setups that we did not plan beforehand). This is the new beginning of the movie. [Note: By the end of shooting, I realized that there was no room in the schedule for the original nightmare sequence planned for the beginning of the film. Although we scheduled time for the sequence (and planned to shoot it up until the end of the first weekend of shooting), the studio time that we had for the last scene ended up costing more time than we expected. If we would have tried to shoot it, we would have had to pick-up the entire sequence.]

The “shooting script” was not the final draft of the script before shooting began in the sense that the final film is not a replica of the script used during production. I wrote the “shooting script” that I have attached—and refer to throughout this document—for the benefit of the editor so that he could have an accurate reference for the storyline based on what we shot. Actors improvised lines, and ideas in the “final” draft had to be discarded for both aesthetic and practical reasons; these are some of the reasons that I needed to write a specific draft for the editor. (To compare the third draft and the shooting script, refer to Appendix A and Appendix B.)

Production Design

I worked with the same production designer, Ellen Bull, as I had on *Date of the Dead*. She has a marvelous attention to detail, and above all, she is a wonderful collaborator. By the time we started to discuss *Rachel's Madcap Theater*, we felt like we could read each others' minds about how the two of us were each seeing a given scene design, costume, or character. She would also bring ideas that I never considered; especially in meetings with the cinematographer, the ideas only got more complicated (in a good way).

From the beginning, I had a strong sense of what I wanted the movie to look like. In my thesis prospectus—the final draft of which I wrote in mid-April of 2013—I first outlined my ideas about production design: “I would like to associate warm, saturated-neon tones for Rachel (which keeps with my [Jerry] Lewis/[Frank] Tashlin influences).” I wanted strong colors to seem as if they were popping off the screen, particularly the color of the puppets and Rachel's costumes. This was probably the simplest part of the production design process. Bull and I used a similar color palette for the bedroom scene in *Date of the Dead*, so she already had a solid idea about what I was envisioning for the final edited version of *Rachel's Madcap Theater*. We talked regularly about how to incorporate saturated primary colors and saturated pastel shades in set design and costume elements.

One of the most challenging factors regarding production design was the puppet-making process. Bull had never worked with puppets before, but she has an extensive crafts background and is an excellent sewer. Starting in late May 2013, Bull researched puppet-making styles and techniques. She was going to use what she found as guides, but she ended up finding it easier to do it her own way:

I tested out a few patterns that I had found online. Most didn't work for what we needed. There is one that we were able to pattern off of Croc and Muscles [two of the main puppets]. Both have heads that were manipulated off of the pattern, but it was really just used as a starting point. Everything else was made from our own patterns. . . . The monsters [featured during the climax of the movie] were loosely based on a tutorial I found online. Nothing was traced or anything[,] though.
(Bull)

I regularly checked in with Bull, and we exchanged ideas every other week as the process continued. She would show me the start of a head or a torso that she put together or a puppet costume fashioned by Laura Sumich, who assisted her with the creation of the puppets. I would make general suggestions, but I trusted her designs and aesthetic, especially since we mapped it out through sketches that we both did (see Appendix C).

Since Bull was designing puppets from scratch, I also asked the actors for their input. Since they would be the ones operating them, it made sense to see what they would find most helpful in their performances. On August 27, 2013, I sent Bull an e-mail with some of the actors' suggestions. Natalie Hultman, who performed as Georgie, had some great ideas for the possibilities of Georgie as a constructed puppet:

Since he is described as doe-eyed and innocent, I imagine a lot of his expression is going to come from his eyes. I would love it if he had eyelids that could open and close fully (to give looks like shock and sadness) and expressions in between Also, I'm not sure what else is going to be movable on him[,] but if he has ears kind of like a Furby[,] it would be great if those could move[,] too (even just up and down). My friend's dog Quinn is a [F]rench bulldog with these big ears . . . that moves [sic] up and down depending on what's going on[,] and it's so funny to watch her because her ears are so expressive. (Hultman)

In the end, even though these were all great, character-driven ideas, Bull was unable to incorporate these ideas into the structure of the puppet while maintaining simplicity of operation for the performer. Matt Standley, who performed as Muscles McGee and was the only puppet cast member with professional puppetry experience, also had ideas for his character: "I'm more interested in both [of] Muscles' arms working than having a fully functional head. I would need

an extra hand if the head is another component” (Standley). He also pointed out, “I love the idea of a moving moustache. We could have some fun with that” (Standley). Since Standley’s character is silent (he only mumbles from time to time), Standley did not need to operate a mouth, so we looked for alternative ways that he could operate the face. While Bull was unable to make a pragmatic moving moustache, she allowed more room in the head—Muscles’ head was not padded with stuffing like Croc’s or Georgie’s—so that Standley could contort Muscle McGee’s face unlike the other puppets. Because there was no mouth to move, the subtle movements on his face, especially in close-up shots of the puppet, were incredibly expressive. Although both of his arms were functional, Standley could not operate both of Muscles McGee’s arms on his own because one of his hands was in Muscles’ head. For shots that required both of Muscles’ arms to be used, a second operator was present.

Lots of decorative props were used for atmosphere. Bull shopped around New Orleans at various thrift shops to find the cheapest items possible that would reflect the color scheme (and character traits, if applicable) that we had discussed. There were some major props, however, that had to be specially purchased or fabricated. The frying pan that is used to smack Rachel in the face in the moment precipitating the climax was made of foam rubber and was purchased from a retailer through Amazon. The anvil for the climax scene was borrowed from the New Orleans Opera Association. The art team made the sticks of dynamite, which were simply decorated paper-towel rolls and toilet-paper rolls; they fashioned weights, also featured during the climax scene, out of Styrofoam and spray-paint. Bull and her art department crew assembled a puppet theater with a painted backdrop and a fake “camping tent” from scratch. This was used for the final scene that features Brick and Croc performing a show together. They assembled the

puppet booth in such a way that it could be disassembled, transported in a small hatchback-style trunk, and re-assembled on-site for shooting purposes.

Bull and I discussed how we could use set design to make story elements clearer.¹ For example, we realized we could make it clear early in the film that Rachel is a puppeteer by including posters of her previous shows in her bedroom. For the design of each of them, I would make very basic layouts of posters (almost glorified sketches) and then send them to Bull, whose proficiency with design programs allowed her to make them look more professional (see Appendix D). I decided we could use the posters as an opportunity to showcase each puppet and their personalities. The “Brick vs. Croc” poster shows a division between the two: We wanted it to be clear that they are puppets with two very different ideas. Even though they never fight each other over the course of the narrative, their ideas battle each other. We also wanted to show that there was “Only one more show!” for the duo, which would show that Brick’s “retirement” to the suitcase might not have been totally voluntary on his part. Georgie’s poster—with his name written in crayon and the “R” in his name backwards—featured a pastoral background and floating music notes, showcasing Georgie’s innocence and optimism. For Muscles McGee, we thought it would be funnier if his poster was played straight, rather than showcasing his goofiness. I used one of Bull’s pre-production sketches of Muscles as the basis. Her lines made the character look particularly masculine and well-built. I told Bull I wanted it to resemble a vintage poster showcasing a “fight of the century.” With a black border and diagonal, shadowed text, the poster resembles an artifact from the 1920s. This would make his bumbling nature funnier later when we see that he is not a mean strongman. Because the two monster puppets

¹ This reminds me of an interview I read with *Sealad 2021* (Adam Reed & Matt Thompson, 2000) and *Archer* (2009) creator Adam Reed, who said, “Once the episode is in production, the animators are putting in sight gags and putting in stuff to make the writing funnier than it is” (Faye). Although I tried to write all the funny parts into the script, we would constantly find new ideas in rehearsals and production-head meetings.

featured in the climax only appear in two scenes in the latter part of the film, we wanted to foreshadow their appearances. We gave them their own poster (Bull charmingly dubbed them “Franz” and “Belinda” during pre-production, and the names stuck), and they are featured in the beginning of the film through a series of poster inserts.

Directing: Casting and Rehearsals

I was excited about casting my thesis film because I was looking forward to working with new, talented actors. I always pay my actors (a rule I started with my advanced project for grad school), so I believed that I was likely to get more quality actors. I was open to casting (I had no particular preference for whom to cast quite yet, though I had a few actors in mind), but there was one actress that I knew I wanted. As soon as I decided to make the main character a woman, I knew I wanted to offer the role to Monteyne, with whom I had worked previously on *Date of the Dead*. She has a theater background and appreciates trying a scene 100 different ways; but she also has an improv background, so her ideas remain fresh throughout rehearsals and even during shooting. While the script was still in the outline stage, I offered the role to her, and she accepted. I kept Monteyne updated as the script changed and gave her new drafts as they were written.

We held auditions the weekend of August 17, 2013. We provided sides—using the dialogue from the bedroom confrontation scene as if it was from one puppet character—for actors to read as puppets. I was looking for a solid performance, the ability to perform with the puppet, and a strong voice. About ten people total came to the auditions, but the best work from various actors was spread throughout the weekend.

Jacob McManus, who also worked on *Date of the Dead*, was cast as Brick, the mischievous Punch-like puppet, because I knew that he would be willing to try anything as an actor. He does not care if he looks silly or screws up a line during rehearsals. He is willing to explore. For a character like Brick, I was interested in an actor who was willing to go as wild as possible with his performance, and Jacob is that actor. While auditioning, his puppet grabbed a piece of chalk and wrote an expletive on the chalkboard. The action was not in the script, but it

was completely in character, and it expanded, in my mind, what the puppets were capable of doing. Despite having no previous puppetry experience, McManus expertly performed with the puppet, making it do just about anything that he wanted it to do.

Mike Spara, co-founder of the New Movement improv group in New Orleans and a local comedy actor in various sketch and improv groups, was cast as Croc. I invited Spara to the auditions because I had seen him perform at Monteyne's New Movement show "You Don't Know the Half of It," which features an actor performing his/her lines from a pre-written script and an improviser making up the other half of the lines. I was a contributing writer that evening, and I was blown away by Spara's performance. His improv surprised me: He was able to conjure new multi-faceted characters as soon as the spotlight shone on him. (He also came up with a voice for one of the characters that he played, which I thought was an added bonus.) He brought this same kind of excitement to auditions. Like McManus, he wielded the puppet quite easily for having never had experience with one.

Hultman, a local actress who is a part of the Screen Actors Guild (for SAG Contracts, see Appendix E) and has been featured in plenty of short films by students at the University of New Orleans, was cast as Georgie. I had always wanted to work with her—for years, I heard she was a hard-working actress who enjoyed rehearsals—and I thought she could be a natural choice for Georgie. At first, her puppet-handling was average, but the more she played with it during her audition, the more expression she got from it. I knew that if she could practice in her spare time or if she regularly came to rehearsals (both of which she ended up doing), she would be able to handle the puppetry aspect of her performance. She nailed the voice and performance for Georgie pretty quickly into her audition. Some other performers attempted screechy animalistic voices, but I was looking for a tender, innocent voice (high-pitched, for sure, but more cute than

annoying). She even fashioned a laugh for Georgie that was adorable, which made her version of Georgie an even stronger character.

Matt Standley, a theater actor with extensive puppetry experience, was cast as Muscles McGee. The biggest challenge about his character had to do with the fact that he did not speak. The performance of this character could not rely on a strong voice; instead, he would have to be operated expertly. When Standley auditioned, he allowed Muscles McGee to perform with the broadest of strokes and touches of subtlety. With the most puppetry experience, Standley was the clear choice for Muscles McGee.

Michael Krikorian, an actor also featured in a number of UNO film productions, showed enormous promise when I saw him in the undergraduate thesis film *Lavanda* (Josue Martinez, 2013) during the 2013 University of New Orleans Film Festival, a showcase for the film students at the University of New Orleans. In the film, Krikorian played Jason, a character who is at first likable but later assaults another character. When I saw that he was capable of being such a “bad guy,” I kept Krikorian in mind for the part of Cal. He would be able to capture that the character was intellectually dense, with the potential to be mean and angry.

I made it clear to the puppet operators that their normal voices would not be allowed for puppet performances. I think the strongest voice actors are the ones who are constantly creating new voices for their characters rather than slight variations on their normal voice (the latter is, unfortunately, the case for most voice actors that you see on animated television shows nowadays). I grew up watching animated television series on Nickelodeon and Cartoon Network that featured Charlie Adler, Billy West, and Tom Kenny constantly reinventing themselves, whether playing a main character in a TV show or playing a supporting role or background

character. This was my only iron-clad rule for my actors, and they all delivered voices that were appropriate to the character and total transformations from their normal voices.

I think rehearsals are really important for a director and the actors (and, frankly, everyone involved in the making of a movie) because everyone needs to know that they are on the same page (and if they are not on the same page, they need to know how to get there). Through rehearsals, the cinematographer learns the blocking of the actors; the production designer can see what angles will be necessary (and, therefore, what needs to be decorated) and what props will be used regularly; and the assistant director (A.D.) can see how complicated a scene could be to shoot. Because of all of these factors, the pre-production of *Rachel's Madcap Theater* included five weeks of rehearsals (a one-hour to two-hour rehearsal a week). Since half the film was to be shot in my house, the actors were able to rehearse “in the space,” or in the exact location where they would be during production.

British director Mike Leigh, who has a strong interest in controlled improvisation, inspired my rehearsals. After spending time with his actors and talking about character (there is no script at this point), Leigh allows them to improvise scenes with each other. From these improvised rehearsals, Leigh writes a script, which has been sculpted organically by actors who understand their characters better than anyone else on set and a writer/director who has the final decision on how the final film should be shaped.

My process is slightly different. I started off with a script, and after one read-through with the cast (so I could see and hear what dialogue, action, or pacing was not working and get an idea for the actors' individual approaches to each character), I allowed them to use the script as a blueprint. If an actor struggled with a line because it didn't make sense or didn't feel natural, I would let him or her improvise a few different lines, and this would give both the actor and me

some choices in refining the character. I combined this with what I learned from Phil Karnell, a former member of the UNO film and theatre faculty: directing is all about communication and forging a unique relationship with each actor. I discovered that the actors know their characters as well as, if not better than, the writer/director, and their opinions should be of great value to, not readily dismissed by, the director. While I believe the director has the final say in how a character/line of dialogue/emotion should be approached by an actor, there needs to be an intense dialogue and open line of communication between the actor and director, or no real emotional truth can come out of the performance.

Cinematography

My vision for the cinematographic look of the film, as I mentioned previously, was largely based on Jerry Lewis' films, particularly the ones that Frank Tashlin directed. I have always admired the wide shots that capture a lot of action at once; the bright, saturated color palette throughout a movie; and the color contrasts within a given shot, which are typical of Lewis' films (and even Tashlin's films that he did not make with Lewis).

Despite our wishes to stick as closely to that style as possible, we had to make a few minor compromises. Director of Photography (DP) Sean McKinney and I quickly realized that we could not do very wide shots. Since we constantly had to hide the puppeteers, wide panoramas were out of the question, for the most part. There are plenty of scenes that could not be shown in one big wide shot, and for scenes that involved a lot of action (particularly the climax with the dynamite explosion), we had to rely on "standard coverage" (medium shots and close-ups). This gave us a valuable opportunity, however. Especially for the more sentimental scenes (Rachel opening her heart to her puppets on the bed, Croc expressing dismay when Georgie "dies," or when Rachel stitches Georgie back together), the reliance on mostly medium shots and close-ups helped amp up the drama of the scenes. I realized that even though the Lewis/Tashlin influence was strong, the stylistic choice did not apply in all cases, especially when I wanted a more heartfelt reaction from the audience.

When it was relatively easy to hide the puppeteers, we were able to get wider shots. For example, when Rachel pulls the shower curtain to reveal Croc in the shower, Spara (the puppeteer for Croc) only had to lie down in the tub, so this allowed us to get a wide shot. When all of the puppets are lined up on Rachel's bed, all of the puppeteers were hiding underneath the bed, so we were able to get a few wide shots from various angles for that scene, also.

Sound

I never had very specific plans for sound design, but I had some ideas that I outlined in an updated version of my prospectus from the fall of 2013. As I stated in the document, “[W]hile I don’t know a lot about sound design, I definitely know what I *don’t* want from sound for this project. While the movie will be cartoony, I don’t want a preponderance of ‘bams’ and ‘pows’ throughout the movie. This would be an appropriate place for foley sound effects [reproduced sounds made from scratch in a studio space that may have an exaggerated effect on-screen].” Since the story of *Rachel’s Madcap Theater* is essentially about people (the puppets help to highlight the emotions and feelings of the people characters), I did not feel that a Chuck Jones/Tex Avery vibe of completely unrealistic sounds and noises would be appropriate for underlining the cartoonish nature of the film. In order to avoid the film being too grounded in reality, however, I decided that foley sound effects could perfectly capture my vision for the final film: “While still based in reality (made by people in a physical space with tangible objects), foley sound effects still sound ‘cartoony’ without being unrealistic in their sound.” In addition, I hoped the sound design could divide the two “worlds” of the film. The “real” world in which Rachel has to face Cal and her real-life problems and the “cartoon” world in which the puppets are active members.

Editing

Unlike the dialogues that I had with various production heads during pre-production of *Rachel's Madcap Theater*, my editor Spencer Kancher and I did not have a set editing style for this film. When he set up the first cut, he simply followed the script and placed the clips in the proper order. The running time of the first cut was 18 minutes and far too long for what I thought would be ideal for the final cut (which I was hoping would be around 12 or 13 minutes). We both agreed there was a lot of “fat” to trim from the cut, and we went back and forth exchanging ideas. I would mark moments that I thought were problematic (whether I knew exactly what the problem was or I had no idea why I thought a given moment was problematic), and he created a second cut from those notes. This relationship was helpful for me because I could still see the film as an “outsider.” I have edited my own film in the past, and after the first or second cut, it is easy to overlook the scope of the picture for minor details. Having someone else do the editing and deal with the picture on a microcosmic scale allowed me to continue to see the “big picture” regarding how everything fit together thematically.

We would occasionally show cuts to various people (students, professors, everyday movie-goers) to get new ideas. We did not show a version of the film to anyone until the fourth cut or so, because it was not until then that it at least started to appear as the film that I intended to make. I showed a cut to my committee members, production designer Ellen Bull, a few film school friends, and my composer Jack Clark (we made some minor tweaks as he composed the music so that the music could be paced more appropriately with the visuals). We made adjustments constantly, not just from what other people suggested and made sense but also from new details that Kancher and I noticed.

There were a few particular editing ideas that developed during the editing process. After a screening for committee members Laura Medina and Henry Griffin, they suggested that the film was not as “cartoony” as they expected. To incorporate such a note into the film, Kancher came up with a wonderful reference point: “What happens when you go into a cartoon villain’s lair? Everything goes Dutch.” (By “Dutch,” Kancher was referring to the Dutch angle, another name for a canted camera angle.) During the climax scene, he rotated all of the shots so that it gave the impression the camera was canted during filming. This definitely gave a more exaggerated look—particularly more diagonals in the image—to a scene that needed to be “cartoony” through and through, and I think it helps tremendously. The other moment occurs when Croc screams, “This means war!” which is the transition to the climax of the film. In all the takes that we did of actors Cecile Monteyne and Michael Krikorian reacting to the puppet’s rallying cry, they could never time their heads turning—their reaction to Croc’s scream—simultaneously. Kancher was able to overlay one take of the shot over another, and he could time one actors head turn against the other actor’s head turn in another shot. As one can see in the finished film, their heads turn exactly at the same time; and there is a sharp precision to it that seems almost *too* perfect, much like a cartoon.

Music

I worked on the music with my close friend Jack Clark. We both play music, but he is much more proficient than I am when it comes to composition and overall technique. We have very similar taste in music and film, and, if I ever had an idea, I could express it in musical terms or directly on the piano. He was hands-down the best possible collaborator for scoring my thesis.

After watching a few cuts of the film, Clark sketched out an outline, broken down by scene and pinpointing each musical cue (something like a sound map, but for music) so that we could see how the music worked structurally and thematically for the film. Some of Clark's comments actually resulted in editing tweaks (see the previous section on editing the film).

We decided the “theme” of the film should be based around a bouncy piano piece that flirts with ragtime without sounding exactly like the work of Scott Joplin. Every piece of music features the same chord structure as the theme (so it always sounds slightly familiar, as if it all comes from the same aesthetic place). When Brick or Cal is present, or when danger approaches the characters, Clark introduced dissonance or an octave jump to heighten the tension. During the climax (between Rachel waking up on the floor and the dynamite exploding in her apartment), the music begins with a bass-heavy, surf-rock sound (greatly inspired by Duane Eddy), then breaks into a punk composition, as if the music is literally about to “explode.” Although I had originally outlined in my prospectus that “a small amount of ‘mickey-mousing’ (the score purposely synching up with a character walking, for example, like in old Mickey Mouse cartoons) may be fun,” Clark and I decided not to pursue this idea. Instead, we allowed the score to act as score. He wrote the music to underline what was happening thematically, not the exact actions that were happening on-screen.

Chapter 2

Self-Analysis

Overall, I think that *Rachel's Madcap Theater* is a great representative of what I set out to make. Is the film that I made the exact film that I had pictured in my head since the first idea that I had about making a puppet movie? Of course not! A lot of the ideas that I had about the film evolved as early as the screenwriting stages. However, I always set out to make a film that inspired laughter and genuine emotion in the audience. The success of this attempt alone was proven to me when I screened an early cut of the film at the 2014 University of New Orleans Film Festival. During the scene in which Rachel stitches Georgie's head back together, and Georgie's cough signals his return to life—and his return to his home with his family of Rachel and his fellow puppets—the film received a round of applause—in the middle of the movie, nonetheless! This was a dream come true in my sense of growth as a filmmaker. I was able to make the audience laugh as much as I was able to make them sympathize with the characters (even the ones that were not human).

As I outlined before, I wanted to approach *Rachel's Madcap Theater* as a classically inspired live-action cartoon. Even though it was a good start for a throughline—the aesthetic “heart” of a given piece of art—it was not concrete enough. The crew and I felt like we had an understanding on what this should mean in regard to the overall design of the film (exaggerated sounds, bright colors, bouncy music, etc.), but the throughline was still too vague. This resulted in a film that does not have a single, unifying idea in which every visual and aural element of the film is rooted.

I'm proud of a lot of the elements in the film (the character arc of Croc, the emotional punch behind Georgie's beheading and resuscitation, the vibrant color palette), and the result of

the work of all the department heads is quite strong. However, there were a lot of things I was trying to refine and craft in terms of style, and it prevented me from seeing the overarching vision of the film as a whole. Just like the directors who I admired growing up, I wanted to have wild exaggerations of character, to connect humanity to sight gags and slapstick, and to offer unexpected feelings/thoughts/assumptions from moment to moment as both a source of comedy and a way to discover something new about how someone sees the world. I feel like the exaggerations were done least successfully and could have been remedied with a longer phase for pre-production and a higher budget that allowed the puppets to perform other actions (like the moving moustache or moving eyes suggested by the puppet handlers) or the sets to be re-designed from scratch (rather than real living spaces that had to be worked around) so they could be more fully integrated into the world of the movie.

I feel like the sight gags and slapstick reveal characters' personal feelings about themselves, other people, and the world, but not as strongly as the brilliant wide-shot gags assembled by Chaplin and Tati. To approach such genius would take a much better understanding of craft and skill on my part, along with having the scope to design such gags. Even though I reached for the stars with that particular approach, I still feel like the sight gags and slapstick in *Rachel's Madcap Theater* are a success. People will enjoy it and find a personal connection to the silliness of trying to organize your life and keep it together, which is what I think the film is ultimately about.

While watching the final version of the film again, I do think that the film regularly challenges audience assumptions, which I think might be its greatest aesthetic feat. The audience does not expect a puppet to be hiding in a shower, a puppeteer to have such a complex and emotional relationship with her creations, a lame boyfriend to be so potentially dangerous, and

basic puppets to rig contraptions full of anvils and dynamite. While all of these examples are sources of comedy, I think it challenges the audience to reassess what they can get out of such a movie. When people hear “puppet movie,” the two things that I imagine would come to mind would either be the condescending approach of baby-talk puppets from childish kids’ shows or the snarky approach of cursing and smoking puppets, like in Peter Jackson’s *Meet the Feebles* (1989), two styles that I made clear to the cast and crew would not be influences on the final version of *Rachel’s Madcap Theater*. I believe that each of the examples that I gave above as challenges to the audiences assumption—“The audience does not expect a puppet to be hiding in a shower, a puppeteer to have such a complex and emotional relationship with her creations, a lame boyfriend to be so potentially dangerous, and basic puppets to rig contraptions full of anvils and dynamite”—allowed them to re-evaluate the very assumptions of what they could expect from a movie like *Rachel’s Madcap Theater*, and I think I ultimately delivered a funny, humanist comedy that transcended the form of what a regular audience member might expect from a “puppet movie.”

Since originally writing the screenplay for my thesis film, I took an additional writing class: I had Justin Maxwell’s playwrighting seminar at UNO during the Spring 2014 term. After trying a completely different style of writing (especially one that does not take advantage of the glory of editing), I found a more comfortable sense of rhythm when it comes to writing a script. There are questions that I would ask now regarding the script for *Rachel’s Madcap Theater* that I did not ask at the time I wrote the final draft. For example, if the main idea of the film is to show how people deal with their exterior world versus their interior world—or two sides of the same brain, much like a favorite film of mine, *Something Wild* (1986, Jonathan Demme)—why do we not see more of Rachel with the real world? I had some suggestions to show Rachel with her

“public” in one way or another. For example, committee member Erik Hansen mentioned during his Writing the Thesis Script class that we could see Rachel at work (perhaps working on a commercial or taking her time in rehearsals) so that we could see her judged by her peers (like a competing puppeteer, or, at the least, by her superiors, like a boss). Even my chair Laura Medina and committee member Henry Griffin suggested during the editing stages that I shoot a brand new scene: We should see Rachel disappointed that Cal did not show up to one of her shows; not only would this act as a natural bookend for the ending (a behind-the-scenes look at how Rachel conducts her puppet show, and, therefore, another look into the “story world” of the film), but we could establish more about Cal’s character and the puppets’ feelings about Cal before he even shows up. Not only would this give more context for Cal’s character, but we could get a more complex sense of what he represents besides the simplistic Bluto-inspired gruffness that he embodies in the final film. However, I did not follow this advice. My actors were largely unavailable during the spring semester of 2014 (Monteyne, McManus, and Standley were all in rehearsal for plays), and since I was trying to graduate in that semester, I did not think that I had enough time to shoot such a scene. This would have also required me to get together various crew members who were trying to get well-paying gigs on major studio films that were proliferating in New Orleans.

The production design could not be more spot-on. There are occasional spots in which I notice a blank-spot (a place where an extra prop or piece of design could have been placed) when I watch the film, but those were on the shooting days that the overly-attentive (in a good way) production designer Ellen Bull was unable to be on set. I treasure her for her spot-on attention to detail, and unfortunately, we were not able to harness the same attention to production design detail when she was not on set. Her work, nonetheless, shines immensely, even if only

considering the design of the puppets. Each one of them embodies their characters completely—winningly underscored by the actors' performances—and they do not look like they were made overnight. The work and effort that Bull and Sumich put into those creations are totally clear to the audience. In addition, the props (posters, anvils, foam cast-iron skillet) that Bull was able to get together for the film were wholly appropriate in terms of the cartoonish atmosphere. Rarely did those items look like they belonged in a normal, everyday world, and that part of my vision for the film.

I could not be prouder of the performances from all the actors (Monteyne, Spara, McManus, Hultman, Standley, and Krikorian). I cannot imagine a prouder collaboration. The same goes for my cinematographer, sound designer, and composer. Every one of these stages involved me working with different personalities and styles to achieve my vision, and I feel like we made a film that both represents my vision and takes into account the valuable input of producer Lizzie Guitreau and all my actors and production heads.

Chapter 3

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Appendix A: Script, Draft 3

BRICK & RACHEL

By

Joey Laura

Story by

David LeBlanc

Draft 3A
05/26/13

Campground setting, with tent and woods sketched into the background, fake bushes and fake campfire in the foreground. We hear kindling burn and leaves crackle.

BRICK--a basic Punch-style puppet, his face stuck in a maniacal smile and a bat attached to one of his hands--and CROC--a more sophisticated muppet with rounded teeth and a dopey voice, a harmless crocodile--eat out of bowls.

BRICK
(as if setting up a joke)
Say, Croc, why are Smith's Baked
Beans so good?

CROC
I don't know.

BRICK (OS)
It's the extra "punch" of brown
sugar in every batch!

With an annoying laugh, Brick smacks Croc across the face with his bat. Croc dizzily spins as a graphic appears with the brand name.

ANNOUNCER (VO)
Smith's Baked Beans: Smashingly
Good!

The puppets go limp. The hands within these puppets pull up RACHEL--30 years old, pretty but goofy, not at all hip or stylish.

Applause roars off-screen as Rachel looks to her puppets on her hands and the limp puppets at the bottom of the booth.

RACHEL
Brick? Croc? They love us. They
really really love us!

BRICK
(Rachel's lips don't move)
They hate you!

Rachel seeks out the voice in the face of her puppet.

BRICK (CONT'D)
You're a mess, Rachel! Your rent is
always late, your boyfriend is a
loser, and you can't match a blouse
with a skirt to save your life!

2.

The puppets' mouths start moving.

PUPPETS
We're not listening to you anymore!

Brick and Croc jump off her hands, and the other puppets become mobile. A scary moshpit ensues.

One PUPPET jumps on Rachel's face. Her arms flail as she tries to fend it off.

Croc pours gasoline all over the puppet booth.

Two SMALL PUPPETS hold a tripwire: Rachel goes flying, falling onto her back.

Brick, using his bat like a torch, sets the puppet booth into flames.

The face-hugging puppet smothers Rachel as she flails on the floor.

Brick's cackle reverberates and crescendos until--

2 INT. RACHEL'S PLACE / BEDROOM - DAY 2

Rachel wakes up, clawing at a "puppet" on her face. It's okay: There's nothing there. It was all a harmless dream.

She looks at the clock.

RACHEL
I'm late!

3 INT. RACHEL'S PLACE / KITCHEN - DAY 3

Rachel, complete with a mismatched blouse and skirt, carries a puppet case in one hand.

She gasps as she notices--

A collection of her brought-to-life muppet-style puppets are sitting at the breakfast table, intervention-style: Croc, who seems to be the ringleader; GEORGIE--a furry doe-eyed creature who has the voice of a baby chick and the heart of a young child; and MUSCLES MCGEE--complete with handlebar moustache, big burly arms, and 1930s style wrestling outfit.

CROC
Rach, we need to talk.

RACHEL

You do talk. And you're trying to
kill me.

The puppets talk over each other, surprised she is fearful
of them.

PUPPETS

No, no, Rachel, we would never hurt
you.

Muscles McGee pulls out Rachel's chair for her, as if to
say, "We mean no harm." She sits down, and Georgie pushes a
plate to her with an unwrapped granola bar.

GEORGIE

It's only because we love you,
Rachel.

She sweetly pets Georgie on the head, remembering how fond
she is of her puppets.

CROC

We just... know you're at a stage
where you're probably close to--
getting your life together.

RACHEL

(relieved)
If this is about me getting
married, which I'm not--

As Rachel responds, Muscles McGee whips out a stick of
dynamite and tries to ignite it with a matchstick: no luck.

CROC

Where did you get that? Put that
away!

Muscles McGee pockets the dynamite.

GEORGIE

Cal sucks! We don't want him to be
our dad!

RACHEL

Georgie, Cal could never--

CROC

But then why are you wasting your
time with him? So you can end up
settling for less than you deserve?

Georgie shakes in fear.

RACHEL
Fellas, I think I can handle
myself.

They all look at her mismatched outfit. She gets up to
leave.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
Look, we'll talk about this when--

A KNOCK at the door.

GEORGIE
(more worried than assertive)
Is it him or us?

Rachel grits her teeth in shame of her answer.

4 INT. RACHEL'S PLACE / BEDROOM - DAY

4

The door shuts in the puppets' faces.

RACHEL (OS)
Just for right now.

GEORGIE
(disappointed)
But I said that we love her...

CROC
I don't understand. I reasoned with
her the best I could. What else is
there besides diplomacy?

The puppets hear a KNOCK of another kind: from within
Rachel's puppet case. Muffled noises emanate from the
shaking case. All of them look to Muscles. Bravely, he
unlocks the case.

The top launches open, knocking him to the floor.

A cloud of smoke.

The other puppets stare at Brick, who steps out from the
fog.

CROC (CONT'D)
Uh oh.

BRICK
Diplomacy is for cowards.
Revolution is for freedom fighters.

CROC
Who died and made you captain?

Brick puts his bat up to Croc's throat.

BRICK
Well, I'm hoping that doesn't have
to happen.

Croc gulps. Brick walks around like a commanding officer,
the captain of the ship.

BRICK (CONT'D)
Face it, fellas. Rachel is screwing
her way to the middle. If she
settles for a guy like Cal, we're
stuck for good with him! He may
even try to get rid of us!

Georgie gulps.

CROC
Well, I think we can have faith
that whatever happens, Rachel will
put us first.

Croc looks to a picture on the mantelpiece of Rachel and all
the puppets sitting together.

CROC (CONT'D)
She always has.

BRICK
There's a first time for
everything, Croc. And I'm not
taking my chances. Who's with me?

Brick smacks his bat into his other hand: he means business.

5 INT. RACHEL'S PLACE / LIVING ROOM - DAY

5

Rachel walks to the door. On her way, she notices a picture
on the mantel: she and a cute guy--late 20s, cute but not
handsome, with a sweet smile that's too good to be true.
This is CAL.

Another KNOCK.

Rachel answers the door.

Cal pats Rachel on the shoulder as he enters.

RACHEL
Hey sweetie!

CAL
Babe, this totally sums up why I
love you.

Rachel laughs as she bashfully smooths out her dress. Cal
takes her unopened granola bar and chows down.

CAL (CONT'D)
Oh, and here you go.

Cal tosses some keys into the air. She sloppily catches
them.

RACHEL
You took my car?!

CAL
I gave it back, didn't I?

He chows down again.

In the background, we can see the puppets crawling on the
ceiling and on the wall, setting "something" up: they're
pulling ropes, setting up gears, using anvil-like weights.

Rachel refers again to the picture on the mantel.

RACHEL
Cal, I have something--

CAL
Woah, not so fast! I have something
else for you, buttercup.
(puts his hands behind his
back)
You think I came empty-handed?

She starts to get giggly again. Before she can go
full-giggle, Cal hands Rachel some cash. She's not
impressed.

RACHEL
What's this for?

CAL
No, I borrowed forty from you the
other day.

RACHEL
Three dollars?

CAL
Give or take. You know I'm good for
it!

He laughs, as if what he said was funny. Rachel chokes out a few brief laughs as she looks at the breakfast table where her puppets gave her sage advice. She looks at Cal again, his "sweet smile" now looking more like a shit-eating grin.

RACHEL
Cal, can we talk for a sec?

The puppets notice her words, turning their heads as they hang like rockclimbers from ropes on the ceiling.

CAL
(his mouth full of her
breakfast)
Babe, that's why I'm here. I think
we have something very important to
discuss.

Rachel is relieved. They sit on the couch.

6 INT. RACHEL'S PLACE / CEILING - SAME 6

Georgie leans down.

GEORGIE
I can't hear what they're saying.

7 INT. RACHEL'S PLACE / LIVING ROOM - SAME 7

Rachel extends her arm to hold Cal's hand.

RACHEL
(trying to be nice)
Cal, we've been doing this for a
long time.

CAL
I know, tell me about it.

He laughs. She doesn't.

RACHEL
And I think it's important that we
be on the same page.

He nods.

8 INT. RACHEL'S PLACE / CEILING - SAME 8

Not paying attention to Georgie, Muscles holds the dynamite to Croc. He motions toward Croc, as if to say, "Can I light it now?"

Denied.

Muscles gives a small nudge to Croc.

CROC
(mad, but trying to stay
quiet)
I said "no," okay?

Georgie starts to lose his footing.

CROC (CONT'D)
(whispers, but fearful)
Georgie, be careful!

Croc reaches out to grab him, but misses. Georgie flutters on the rope, then falls.

9 INT. RACHEL'S PLACE / LIVING ROOM - SAME 9

Georgie hits the floor right next to Cal's foot.

Georgie does his best to remain lifeless and still. Cal picks him up and holds him, like evidence.

CAL
Just what I came to talk about.

Rachel's confused: she thought she was talking about something else.

RACHEL
What? About what?

CAL
You have them just hanging around here, like their part of your family. You spend too much time with them. Sometimes I don't know who you love more.

RACHEL
Are you trying to give me an
ultimatum with my work, Cal?

CAL
Rachel, it's not about that, it's
about what you want to tie yourself
down to. I'm real, I'm alive.
(grips Georgie by the head)
They're not your children. They're
just stuff. Stuff that you can find
in the trash.

He tears off Georgie's head. Thread tears and hangs from
Georgie's neck. Stuffing pops out.

The puppets gasp in horror. So does Rachel.

RACHEL
What do you think you're doing?

CAL
I'm trying to show--

Rachel stands up from the table.

CROC
Give it to him, Rachel! Knock his
lights out!

Rachel points to the door.

RACHEL
Get out!

10 INT. RACHEL'S PLACE / CEILING - SAME

10

Croc stares blankly as if unsatisfied. He only hears the
humans mumble as Cal tries to argue with Rachel, but she
doesn't want to hear his side.

Brick approaches Croc.

CROC
(choking up)
But, it's not enough. She can't
just leave him. He killed our
friend.

BRICK
(convincing, but almost
taunting)
(MORE)

BRICK (CONT'D)
 You still think she'll always put
 us first? You still want diplomacy?

Croc shakes in anger.

CROC
 THIS. MEANS. WAR!

11 INT. RACHEL'S PLACE / LIVING ROOM - DAY 11

Rachel and Cal hear Croc's outcry.

Muscles McGee hits Rachel in the face with a cast-iron
 skillet. She goes out.

12 INT. RACHEL'S PLACE / BEDROOM - DAY 12

Rachel wakes up calmly. She stretches out her arms, as if
 from a good night's sleep, which she hasn't had in weeks.

Brick pops out of her chest and maniacally screams at her.
 Blood spurts onto her sheets and the bed. Rachel yells at
 the top of her lungs.

13 INT. RACHEL'S PLACE / LIVING ROOM - DAY 13

Rachel wakes up on the floor of her living room. No puppet
 in her chest: Just another dream. But how much was a dream?

She looks around the ceiling and sees safes, anvils, and
 other weights hanging from the ceiling by ropes and gears.
 Muscles McGee holds a rope that connects to all of the
 weights.

White x's are marked on the floor and a few household
 objects: fragile wooden end table, glass coffee table, fine
 vase. As a just-in-case, banana peels are scattered all over
 the floor.

Rachel gasps as she notices Cal tied to a chair, his mouth
 covered in tape. Brick hits Cal in the shins again and again
 with his bat, Cal writhing in pain.

The puppets notice Rachel is awake.

BRICK
 Rachel. About time you finally
 joined us.
 (whacks Cal's shin one last
 time)

Or have you? Is it him or us?

Rachel looks to Croc, who has a bloodlust in his eyes, his eyebrows pointed inward like a cartoon villain. Rachel tries a little reasoning.

RACHEL

Look, he doesn't deserve this. I know he's crass and immature and irresponsible.

(Cal shakes his head, as if he disagrees)

But he doesn't deserve to get hurt.

Cal shakes his head, as if he agrees with her.

BRICK

You're right, Rachel. Instead, he deserves to die!

The other puppets cheer on. Cal's protests are muffled behind the tape on his mouth.

RACHEL

You-- you can't do this! Let's reason this--

CROC

(outraged)

Reason? You've been "reasoning" out this relationship for years.

Reasoning is for cowards.

(rallying to the puppets)

Action is for freedom fighters!

The puppets cheer again. Muscles McGee drops down a can of gasoline. Brick lights his bat like a torch.

Fear strangles Rachel. Images of her recurring dream haunt her in her waking life: the smothering puppet, the burning puppet booth. It all comes back, it's all too real.

Croc pours gasoline over Cal's feet. Cal tries to kick it off, but his feet are tied to the chair: He's helpless. Brick takes his torch-bat and gets close to Cal's shoes until...

RACHEL

Hey!

(the puppets turn to her)

Eat this!

Rachel is holding a banana peel. She throws it at Muscles, and it lands on his face. He shakes blindly, the darkness scaring him. He lets go of the rope.

He gets the peel off his face--

and watches the rope unravel from the gears.

MUSCLES MCGEE

Uh-oh.

CROC

(looking up)

Run for it!

The puppets, screaming, scatter across the room. Anvils and safes rain down, breaking an end table, the glass coffee table, the vase.

An anvil falls near Croc, narrowly missing him.

A safe lands on Brick's bat-less arm. His torch continues to burn as he wriggles underneath the safe.

Muscles McGee searches around for something but can't find it.

RACHEL

Looking for something?

She's holding his stick of dynamite. She picks up Brick and uses him like a lighter to ignite the dynamite. Sparks fly from the explosive as the wick burns.

Muscles McGee looks in awe.

MUSCLES MCGEE

I love you.

The dynamite explodes in a massive, cloudy explosion.

BEAT.

The dust settles, and we start to see more clearly.

The dynamite, still in Rachel's grip, is split down the middle and flared at the top, like cartoon TNT.

Black soot covers everybody's faces. Broken glass and shattered wood scatter the floor.

The picture of Rachel and Cal lays in shards and splinters among the rubble.

Everyone is lying limp, as if they are all inanimate puppets. Rachel begins to cough, and they all start coughing. They all made it out alive.

RACHEL
Everybody okay?

The puppets continue to cough and nod accordingly.

Rachel makes her way to Cal and tears the tape off his mouth.

CAL
Babe, that was great. You really do
love me more than them! I didn't
realize until--

14 EXT. RACHEL'S HOUSE / FRONT OF HOUSE - DAY 14

We hear Cal's muffled protests O.S.

Cal's body is upside down in a trash can. His legs kick like a spastic puppet and his body squirms as he tries to get out.

15 INT. RACHEL'S PLACE / BEDROOM - DAY 15

Rachel re-attaches Georgie's head with a needle and thread. She rubs his back while the other puppets watch patiently.

She sits him on her knee, like she would her own baby. She gives him a few light pats on the back.

Georgie lets out a small cough.

CROC
Georgie, you're okay!

Georgie joins his puppet friends. He hugs Croc.

RACHEL
Now, what do we say?

PUPPETS
(in unison, except Brick)
We're sorry.

RACHEL
Brick?

Brick turns away from her. She gives him a sharp look, and he turns back around.

BRICK
 (begrudgingly)
 Sorry I inspired mass chaos and
 anarchy.

RACHEL
 No.

The puppets are all caught off-guard.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
 You should be sorry that you almost
 got a few of us killed.
 (Georgie shakes in fear)
 But I couldn't have broken up with
 Cal if I didn't have a little push
 from you guys. We balance each
 other out.

The puppets pat each other on the back as they nod in
 agreement.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
 So from now on, we're partners. We
 work together. Promise?

PUPPETS
 (in unison, including Brick)
 We promise!

16 INT. PUPPET BOOTH - DAY

16

Same campfire settings and props. Brick and Croc eat out of
 bowls.

CROC
 Man, Smith's Baked Beans sure are
 good!

BRICK
 Yeah, almost as good as a "knock
 knock" joke!

Brick repeatedly hits Croc over the head again and again. We
 hear audience laughter off-screen.

Rachel is sitting behind the puppet booth, controlling no
 one, joined by Georgie and Muscles as they munch on a bowl
 of popcorn and enjoy the show.

High-fives all around.

CREDITS ROLL.

Appendix B: Shooting Script

RACHEL'S MADCAP THEATER

By

Joey Laura

Story by
David LeBlanc

Draft 7A
10/27/13

1 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

1

The eclectic bedroom of a puppeteer, not at all hip or stylish. A puppet case sits on a chest at the foot of the bed.

RACHEL--30, pretty but goofy--sleeps in pajamas, holds her arms around something OS.

RACHEL
(sleepily mumbling)
Hey, you gonna make breakfast? With
a punch of brown sugar?
(beat)
Cal?

She wakes up, only to notice her arms are around a lump of throw pillows: No Cal here.

We look around her room: small posters from puppet shows she has done, a blue hand-and-glove puppet on her dresser, a red puppet on her chair.

She looks at the clock: it's past noon.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
Oh no, oh God! I'm late!

She runs by a calendar, covered in X's up until a circled day: "Happy Anniversary!"

2 INT. BATHROOM - DAY

2

Rachel rushes in and turns on the shower.

She hears a water-on-plastic noise from behind the shower curtain. Like an aggravated and suspicious mother, she turns off the shower and opens the curtain to find CROC--a crocodile puppet, full of reason and intellect--with a small umbrella under the running water.

RACHEL
Not now, guys.

CROC
Get rid of him, while you still
can.

RACHEL
I'm not breaking up with Cal!

2.

CROC
(sarcastic)
If you don't love him so much, why
don't you just marry him? Oh wait,
you probably will.

RACHEL
Let me take my shower in peace.

Croc gives up and motions as if to exit out of the bathtub.

3 INT. BATHROOM - LATER

3

Rachel opens the shower curtain, a towel wrapped around her hair and her torso. She jumps in surprise.

MUSCLES MCGEE--complete with handlebar moustache, big burly arms, and 1930s style wrestling outfit--finishes writing on the bathroom mirror in lipstick: "Can't you see he's a d-bag?"

RACHEL
Yeah, that's real mature!

She moves him out of the way, like a cat on the counter.

Rachel looks for a rag and opens a drawer. She jumps back again, surprised.

GEORGIE--a furry doe-eyed creature who has the voice of a baby chick and the heart of a young child--is cramped in the drawer, holding a hand towel.

GEORGIE
Don't you care about us, Rachel?

Rachel sighs in aggravation.

RACHEL
Anything but the pity card.

She reaches for the hand towel, but Georgie won't let go. A tiff ensues, and Rachel wins. She shuts the drawer, and Georgie's yelps are muffled in the drawer.

4 INT. BATHROOM - LATER

4

Rachel blow-dries her hair. The puppets frame her face, each one screaming over the loud blowdryer.

CROC
What about the first anniversary,
when he forgot to pick you up?

GEORGIE
Or the second one, when he made you
pay for dinner?

RACHEL
(sing-song)
I can't hear you!

GEORGIE
What about now?

They all scream as obnoxiously as they can over the humming
hair dryer.

RACHEL
That's it! Emergency meeting!

The puppets immediately stop screaming and politely leave to
ready themselves for the meeting.

5 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

5

Rachel, dressed in a mismatched blouse and skirt, paces like
a captain of a ship. Her three puppets are lined up in front
of her.

GEORGIE
We love you, Rachel.

CROC
We just don't understand. Why are
you doing this to yourself?

Rachel looks to a picture of her and her puppets on her
dresser.

RACHEL
(like a mother to a child)
Look, do you remember when I made
you?

They look to each other then shake their heads.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
It was right after my first major
breakup. He wanted me to quit my
work. So I made each of you as my
inspiration.

As she interacts with each puppet, they bashfully chuckle.

RACHEL
Muscles McGee, you're the strength
I always wish I had. Georgie,
you're the innocence I was afraid
to lose. And Croc. I never felt so
lost, and I needed to reason my way
out of pain. And I couldn't have
done it without you. Any of you.

GEORGIE
What about Brick--

RACHEL
We won't talk about him.

CROC
But why is Cal any different?

RACHEL
I feel like I owe him something.
He's not bad, he-- I just don't
want anybody to get hurt.

CROC
But what if you get hurt?

RACHEL
(after thinking about it)
It'll work for now.

Rachel gives them a parting brush on the arm and a pat on
the head, and she leaves the room.

The puppets are all alone.

GEORGIE
(disappointed)
But I said that we loved her.

CROC
How else can we show her that--

The puppets hear a KNOCK from within Rachel's puppet case,
which shakes. Georgie watches, half curious and half scared.

The top launches open. In fear, Georgie rushes behind a
pillow. The other two puppets scurry but wait in
anticipation.

CROC (CONT'D)

Uh oh.

BRICK--a Punch-style puppet, his face stuck in a maniacal smile and a bat attached to one of his hands--steps out and walks on the top of the case, looking down at the other puppets.

BRICK

Face it, fellas. If Rachel settles for a guy like Cal, we're stuck with him for good.
(strokes the case)
He may even try to get rid of us.

Georgie pokes his head up and gulps.

CROC

Well, I think we can have faith that whatever happens, Rachel will put us first. She always has. We've always been good to her, why wouldn't she ever do the same?

BRICK

There's a first time for everything, Croc. And I'm not taking my chances. So, who's with me?

Georgie hides again.

6 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

6

Rachel puts flowers into a vase, arranging them perfectly. She has chocolate truffles arranged in the shape of a heart on a cutting board.

A romantic picture: Rachel and a cute guy--late 20s, cute but not handsome, with a sweet smile that's too good to be true. This must be CAL.

She also sees a note underneath the cutting board. She unfolds the note to read Muscles' familiar handwriting: "Tell him to rot in hell." She looks to her picture with Cal and tosses the note in the trashcan.

A KNOCK. Rachel answers the door to see Cal.

RACHEL

Hey, you!

She gives Cal a hug. Cal looks amazed as he surveys the romantic layout.

CAL
Babe, this totally sums up
everything I love.

Rachel laughs as she bashfully smooths out her dress. She goes to kiss him and he zooms past her.

CAL (CONT'D)
I love chocolate.

Rachel just bitterly laughs and shakes her head.

RACHEL
Well, I just thought it'd be
special since it's our...

He doesn't answer, but he sure looks excited for a surprise.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
(resigned)
... anniversary.

CAL
Baby, that's the best surprise
ever! I never would've guessed.

Rachel looks at Cal again, his "sweet smile"--although genuine for him--now looks more like a shit-eating grin.

RACHEL
Cal, can we talk for a sec?

They make their way over to the couch. She frustratingly takes off her apron.

They sit down, a tall bookcase sits next to the couch. She's *trying* to make this work.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
I think it's important to remember
that love is hard.

CAL
(he really thinks he means it)
Tell me about it!

RACHEL
And as much as we love each other,
sometimes we're going to make each
other a little upset.

7.

Cal looks really engaged, but he's probably not.

7 INT. BOOKCASE - SAME

7

The puppets, at the top of the bookcase, have set up camp.

The puppets lean over as they listen to the humans' conversation.

GEORGIE

I can't hear what they're saying.

Georgie leans over a little more. Maybe a little too much.

Not paying attention to Georgie, Muscles holds a stick of dynamite to Croc. He motions toward Croc, as if to say, "Can I light it now?"

CROC

No. Discretion is the better part of valor.

Muscles gives a small nudge to Croc.

CROC (CONT'D)

(frustrated, but trying to stay quiet)

I said "no," okay?

Muscles nudges Croc into Georgie. Georgie loses his footing and takes a perilous fall.

CROC (CONT'D)

He's in God's hands, now.

8 INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME

8

Georgie hits the floor right next to Cal's foot. Georgie does his best to remain lifeless and still.

RACHEL

And if we're going to take this a step further--

Cal picks him up and holds Georgie, like evidence.

CAL

(an adolescent fit)

Really? You have them just hanging around here, like their part of your family. Sometimes I don't know who you love more.

RACHEL
What are you trying to say?

CAL
Rachel, it's about what you want to
tie yourself down to. I'm real, I'm
alive.
(grabs Georgie's head)
They're not your children. They're
just stuff. Stuff that you can find
in the trash.

He tears off Georgie's head. Thread tears and hangs from
Georgie's neck. Stuffing pops out.

The puppets gasp in horror. So does Rachel.

RACHEL
What do you think you're doing?

CAL
I'm trying to show--

Rachel stands up from the table and points to the door.

RACHEL
Get out!

9 INT. BOOKCASE - SAME

9

Croc stares blankly as if unsatisfied. He only hears the
humans mumble as Cal tries to argue with Rachel, but she
doesn't want to hear his side.

Brick approaches Croc, much like Iago approaching Othello.

CROC
(choking up)
But, it's not enough to leave him.
In the name of Georgie...

BRICK
You still think she'll always put
us first?

CROC
She has to. Right?

BRICK
She's letting him get away. And
he'll keep coming back. Who's she
going to sacrifice next?

Croc shakes in anger.

CROC
THIS. MEANS. WAR!

10 INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME 10

Rachel and Cal hear Croc's outcry and see the puppets on the bookcase.

Muscles McGee hits Rachel in the face with a cast-iron skillet. She goes out.

11 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY 11

Rachel wakes up. She looks to the ceiling and sees safes and anvils hanging by ropes and gears.

White x's are marked on the floor and the coffee table. Rachel almost slips on another booby-trap: a banana peel.

She also notices a mountain of red dynamite in a wagon, attached to a detonator pump à la Wile E. Coyote.

She gasps as she notices Cal tied to a chair, his mouth covered in tape. Brick, Croc, and Muscles surround Cal, including FRANZ and BELINDA--the red and blue puppets we noticed in Rachel's bedroom.

The puppets notice Rachel is awake.

BRICK
Rachel! About time you finally
joined us.

Muscles McGee is holding the rope that is connected to all of the anvils.

Rachel looks to Croc--who's on top of the bookcase, looking down on everyone--for support. Croc just stares back.

RACHEL
(to Brick)
Look, I know Cal is crass and
immature and irresponsible.
(Cal shakes his head, as if he
disagrees)
But he doesn't deserve to get hurt.

Cal shakes his head, as if he agrees with her.

BRICK
You're right, Rachel. Instead, he
deserves to die!

The other puppets cheer on. Cal's protests are muffled
behind the tape on his mouth. Rachel looks up to Croc.

RACHEL
Croc, do something! You can't just
stand there!

He sure does: Croc folds his arms and says nothing. The
voice of reason has been corrupted.

Fear strangles Rachel as she clutches at her chest. She
looks around the room for inspiration: she sees a stray
banana peel and gets an idea.

Brick hits Cal in the shins again and again with his bat,
Cal writhing in pain.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
Hey!
(the puppets turn to her)
Eat this!

Rachel is holding one of the banana peels. She throws it at
Muscles, and it lands on his face. He shakes blindly, the
darkness scaring him. He lets go of the rope.

He gets the peel off his face and watches the rope unravel
from the gears.

MUSCLES MCGEE
(through his grunts)
Uh-oh.

BRICK
(looking up)
Run for it!

The puppets, screaming, scatter across the room. Anvils and
weights rain down.

An anvil breaks the coffee table in half.

A large weight lands on Brick. He writhes in pain.

Muscles McGee, Franz and Belinda panic in front of the
coffee table.

RACHEL

Hey guys!

She lifts the detonator pump. They run to hide.

Rachel pushes down on the detonator. The dynamite explodes in a massive, cloudy explosion.

The dust begins to settle, and we start to see more clearly. The picture of Rachel and Cal lays in shards and splinters among the rubble.

Rachel begins to cough, and they all start coughing. They all made it out alive.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Everybody okay?

The puppets continue to cough and nod accordingly. Muscles McGee calls out for attention, and so does Brick.

Rachel ignores them and makes her way to Cal. She tears the tape off his mouth.

CAL

Babe, that was great. You really do love me more than them! So I guess I do love you more than chocolate! I didn't realize until--

12 EXT. RACHEL'S PLACE - DAY

12

We hear Cal's muffled protests OS.

Cal's body is upside down in a trash can. His legs kick like a spastic puppet, and his body squirms. trying to get out.

13 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

13

Rachel re-attaches Georgie's head with a needle and thread at her sewing desk. All the main puppets crowd around Rachel in anticipation.

Croc, in glasses, leans over Rachel's shoulder. She takes the glasses off his face and puts them on hers.

Rachel sits him on her knee. Like a burping baby, she gives him a few light pats on the back. Georgie lets out a small cough.

CROC
Georgie, you're okay!

They couldn't be more excited.

RACHEL
Now, what do we say?

PUPPETS
(in unison, except Brick)
We're sorry.

RACHEL
Brick?

Brick, sitting on his case as if in time-out, turns away from her. He can feel her stare, and he turns back around.

BRICK
(begrudgingly)
Sorry I inspired mass chaos and anarchy.

14 INT. STUDIO - DAY

14

Puppet booth, same campfire setting and props. Rachel is behind the scenes, watching with the other puppets.

CROC
Man, Smith's Baked Beans sure are good!

BRICK
Like hell they are--

RACHEL
Brick! Who's show is this?

Brick looks to Rachel, her face quite stern.

BRICK
I mean, um-- Yeah, almost as good as a "knock knock" joke!

Brick repeatedly hits Croc over the head again and again. We hear audience laughter off-screen.

Rachel is joined by the rest of her puppets as they munch on a bowl of popcorn and enjoy the show.

High-fives all around.

13.

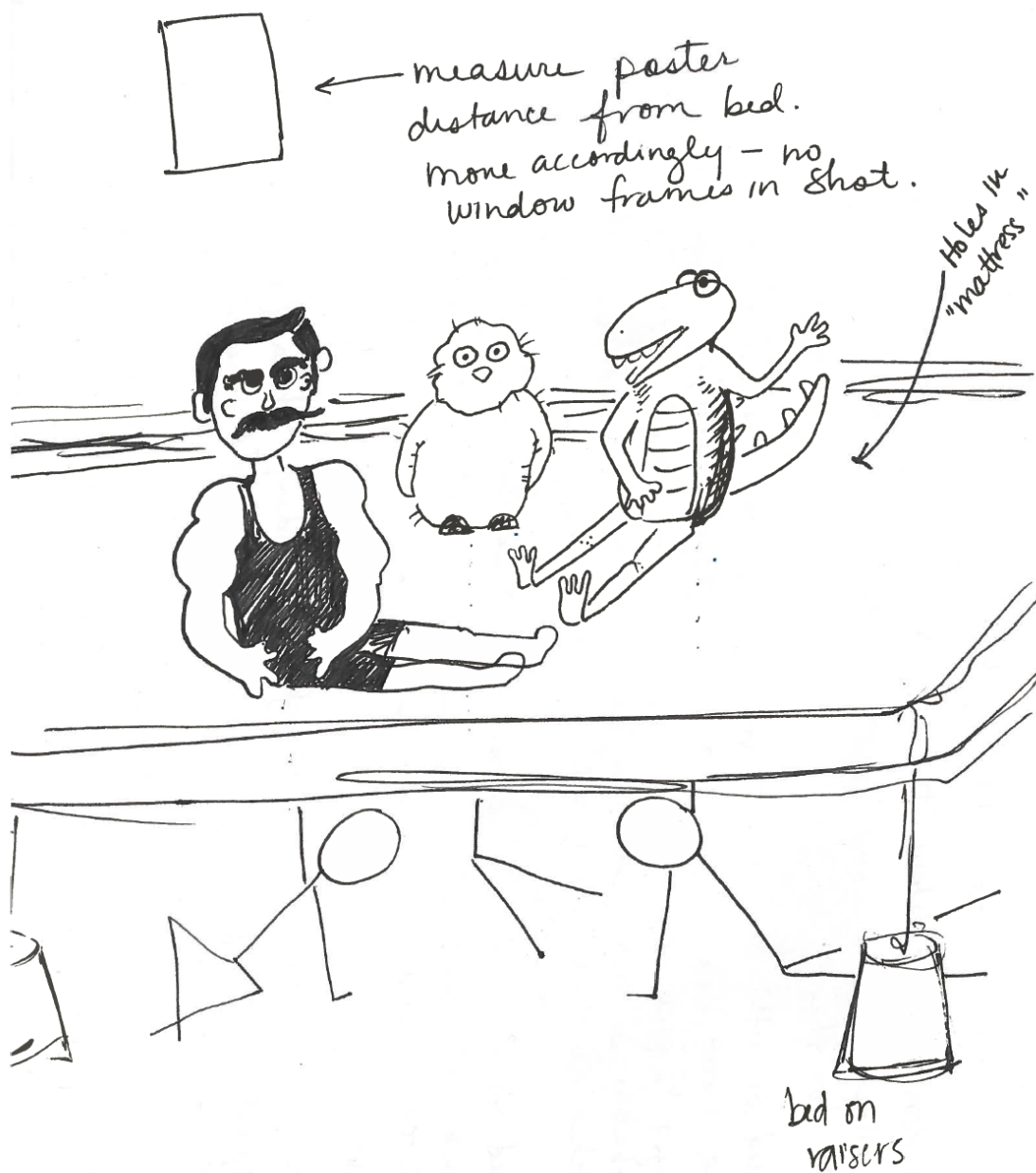
MUSCLES MCGEE
You guys keep me young.

Everyone turns in shock to the silent character.

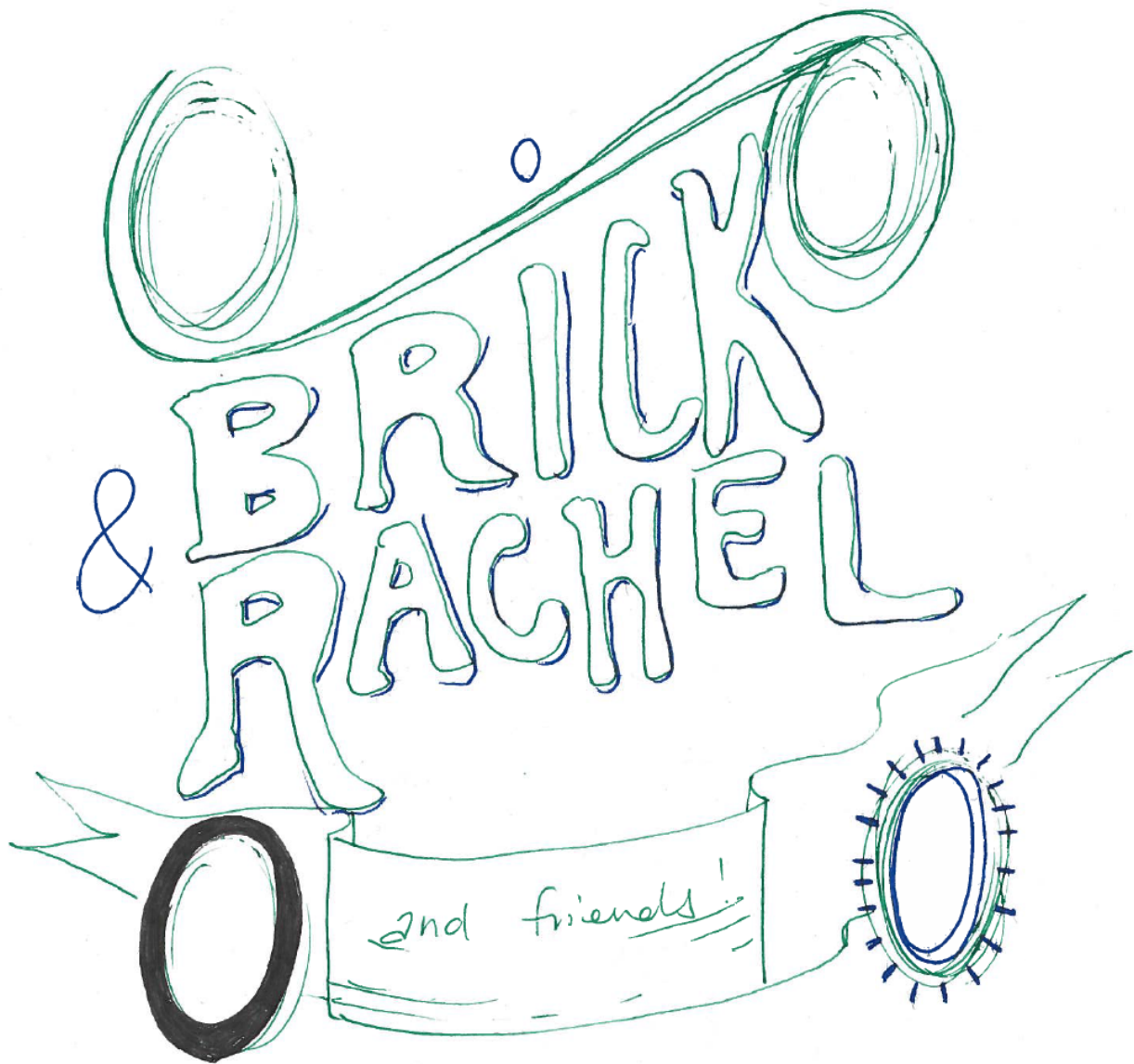
BLACK.

CREDITS ROLL.

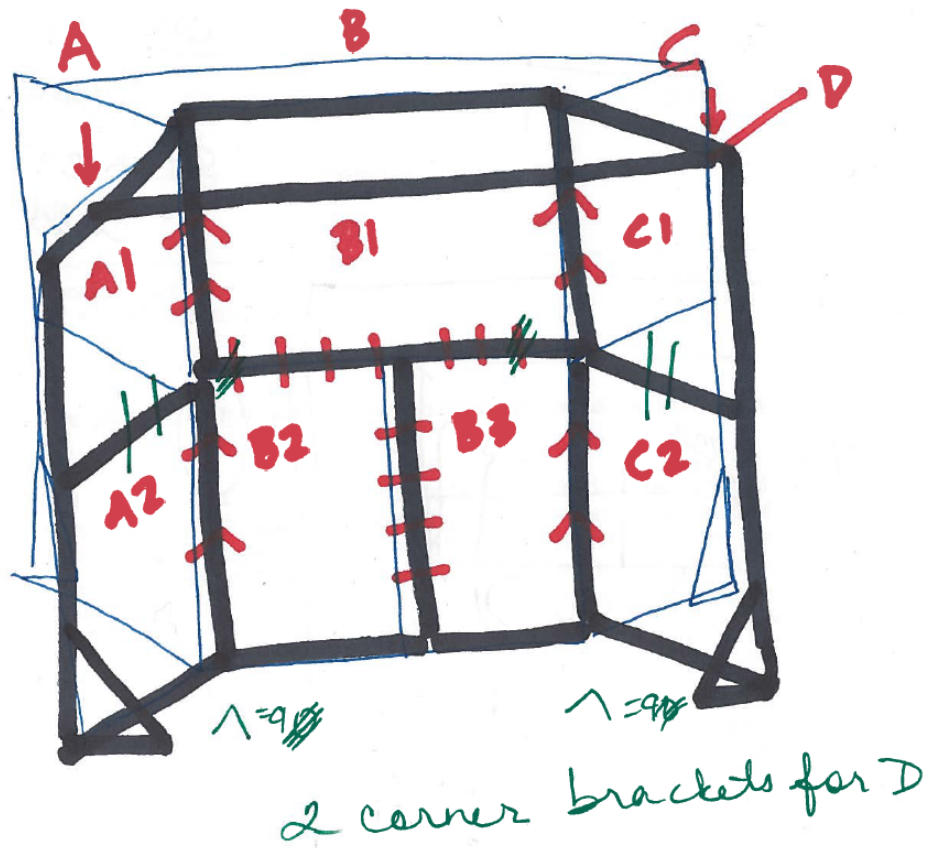
Appendix C: Pre-production Sketches



Sketch of Puppets-on-bed Setup, by Ellen Bull



Sketch of Original Puppet Show Logo (based on previous thesis title), by Ellen Bull



Sketch of the Puppet Booth's Construction, by Ellen Bull

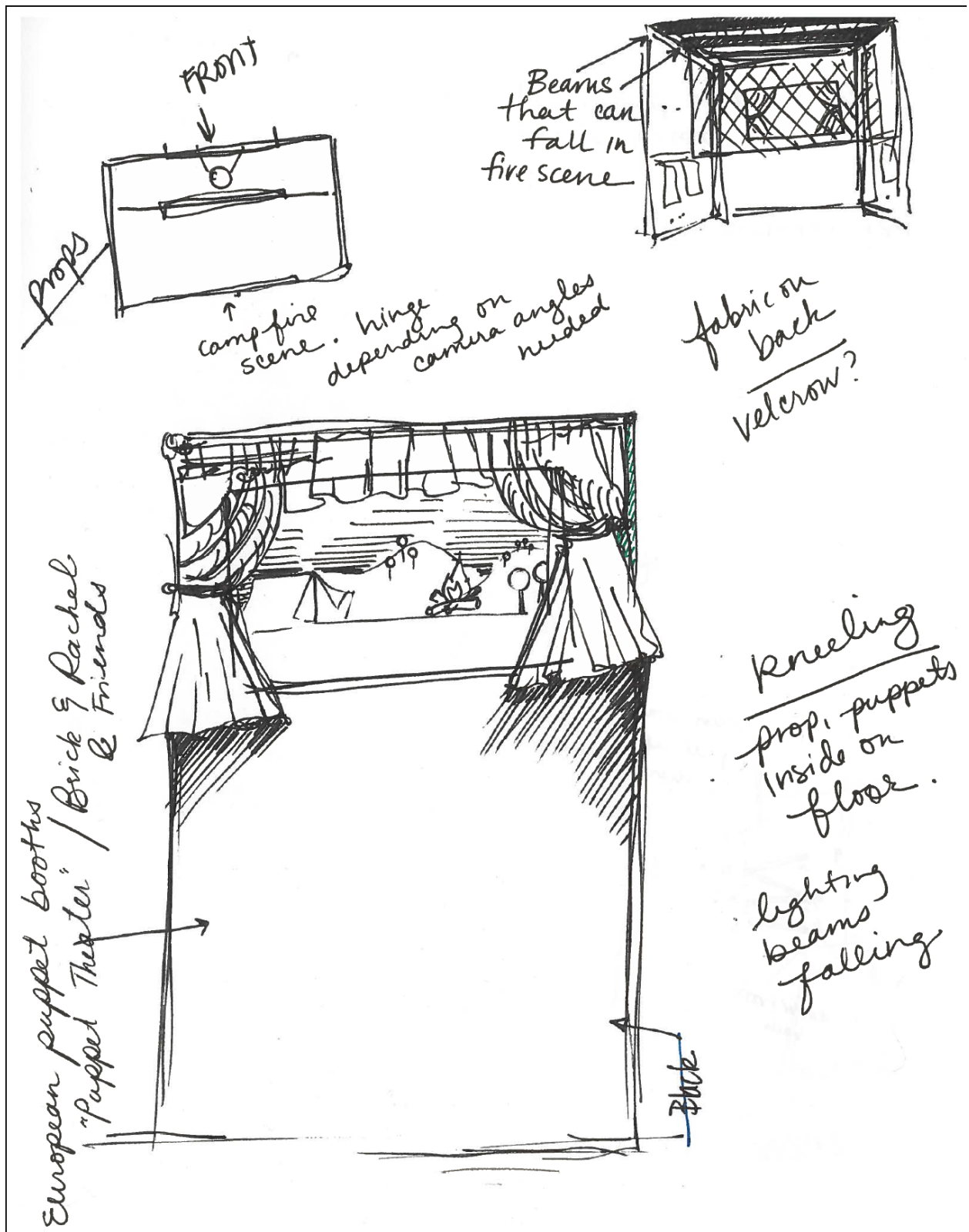
georgie

... I I break away thread.



8.11.13

Sketch of Georgie, by Ellen Bull



Sketch of Puppet Booth with Notes, by Ellen Bull



Poster Featured in the Movie, designed by Joey Laura and Ellen Bull



Poster Featured in the Movie, designed by Joey Laura and Ellen Bull

Appendix E: Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Contracts

SCREEN ACTORS GUILD- PRODUCERS PENSION AND HEALTH PLANS THEATRICAL WEEKLY REPORT OF CONTRIBUTIONS						Page 1 of 2
ALL INFORMATION ON THE FORM MUST BE COMPLETED FOR PROCESSING						
Studio Code # Signatory Employer <u>Joseph Laura</u> Street Address <u>1500 Colony Rd</u> City & State <u>Metairie LA</u> Zip <u>70003</u> Telephone (<u>504</u>) <u>376-3601</u>				Liquidated Damages: Reports received over 30 days after the PAYROLL PERIOD ENDING date will be assessed 10% of the contributions due. Reports received over 60 days after the PAYROLL PERIOD ENDING date will be assessed 20% of the contributions due. Effective January 1, 1989: Failure to supply project titles and social security numbers of all performers for which contributions are being remitted will result in the assessment of liquidated damages in the amount of 10% of the Pension and Health contributions due. If the Producer's failure to supply the data requested continues for 60 or more days, then liquidated damages of 20% of the contributions due will be assessed.		
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY Check No. _____ Amount \$ _____ Date Received _____				Start Date of Principal Photography <u>11/01/2013</u> Payroll Period End Date <u>11/10/2013</u> Name of Picture <u>Rachel's Madcap Theater</u>		
List only the Performers employed during the above indicated week <u>WHO WORKED UNDER S.A.G. JURISDICTION</u> and for whom contributions are due the Pension and Health Plans. Picture ID <u>00363401</u> Picture Type <u>MP</u>						
Report Performers and Background Actors Separately						
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER	PERFORMER/BACKGROUND ACTOR NAME			CATEGORY		REPORTABLE GROSS COMPENSATION
	Last	First	Initial	Performer Sessions-S Residual-R Deferred-D	Background Actor (E) Choreographers (CHR)	
435814914	Montagne, Cecile			S		\$500
10182229 (SAG ID)	Hultman, Natalie			S		\$400
Total Gross Compensation Subject to Contributions <u>900</u> \$						
Employer's Contribution @ 14.8% of Gross Compensation <u>131.20</u> \$						
Special Rate Code (please see page 2 for codes) _____						
Liquidated Damages @ 0% (See above) _____ \$						
Make check payable to: SCREEN ACTORS GUILD-PRODUCERS PENSION AND HEALTH PLANS Check No. <u>1715</u> P.O. Box 54867, Los Angeles CA 90054-0867 Phone (818) 973-4472						
Only Producers who are signatory* to an applicable collective bargaining agreement of the Screen Actors Guild are eligible to make contributions to the Screen Actors Guild-Produrers Pension and Health Plans on behalf of the eligible Performers employed by such Producers. Any contributions submitted by a non-signatory* Producer will not be accepted.						
I certify that the above-named Employer is signatory* to such a collective bargaining agreement with the Screen Actors Guild. By signing this agreement, Producer acknowledges that it has accepted and agreed to be bound by the Pension & Health Provisions established by the collective bargaining agreement to which Producer is signatory. I further certify that the information contained herein is correct, and that all compensation subject to contributions earned by performers in our employ during the period covered and only for work within the jurisdiction of such collective bargaining agreement has been reported herein.						
Signature <u>Lyndsey Guitreau</u> Name <u>Lyndsey Guitreau</u> Title <u>Producer</u> Date <u>11/14/2013</u>						
*A Producer will be considered to be "signatory" if the producer is a party to a collective bargaining agreement with the Screen Actors Guild, or, if the collective bargaining has expired, the producer is obligated by federal law to continue to make such contributions.						

Revised 01/12/2012



SAG-AFTRA PERFORMERS PRODUCTION TIME REPORT

Exhibit G

Picture Title Rachel's Madcap Theater Production No. 00363401 Date 11/01/2013 Contact Lyndsey Gureau Phone No. 225-439-0841
Company University of New Orleans Is Today a Designated Day off? Yes ☐ No ☒ Production Type: MP ☒ TV ☐ MOW ☐ Industrial ☐ Other ☐
Shooting Location Metairie, LA

SELECT FROM DROP-DOWN LIST		WORK TIME		MEALS		TRAVEL TIME				WARDROBE		PERFORMERS SIGNATURE			
WORK - W START - S	REHEARSAL - H HOLD - H	Report on Set	Dismiss on Set	ND Meal	1ST MEAL	2ND MEAL	Leave for Location	Arrive on Location	Leave Location	Arrive at Studio	Minors Tutoring Time		No. of Outfits Provided	Forced Call	
CAST	M I N O R ?	CHARACTER	Report Makeup Wardrobe	Dismiss on Set	Dismiss Makeup Wardrobe	In	Out	Start	Finish	Start	Finish	Stunt Adj.			
Cecile Monteyne		Rachel	S	5:30	16:40			11:10	11:40					<input type="checkbox"/>	Cecile Monteyne
Natalie Hultman		Georgie	S	5:30	14:45			11:10	11:40					<input type="checkbox"/>	Natalie Hultman
			W											<input type="checkbox"/>	
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*This refers to the two (2) days (one (1) day on overnight location) which Producer can designate as day(s) off for the production for which performers are not paid continuous employment.

Exhibit G

Phone No. 225-439-0641

*This refers to the two (2) days (one (1) day on overnight location) which Producer can designate as day(s) off for the production for which performers are not paid continuous employment.



SAG-AFTRA PERFORMERS PRODUCTION TIME REPORT

Exhibit G

Picture Title Rachel's Madcap Theater Production No. 00363401 Date 11/03/2013 Contact Lyndsey Guitreau Phone No. 225-439-0641
Company University of New Orleans Is Today a Designated Day off? * Yes ☐ No ☒ Production Type: MPI ☒ TV ☐ MOW ☐ Industrial ☐ Other ☐
Shooting Location Metairie, LA

CAST		SELECT FROM DROP-DOWN LIST WORK - W REHEARSAL - FITTING - FT TRAVEL - TR START - S HOLD - H TEST - T FINISH - F		Report Makeup Wardrobe		WORK TIME Report on Set Dismiss on Set		MEALS ND Meal 1ST MEAL 2ND MEAL				TRAVEL TIME Leave for Location Arrive on Location Leave Location Arrive at Studio				WARDROBE Minors Tutoring Time No. of Outfits Provided		PERFORMER'S SIGNATURE	
	M I N O R ?	CHARACTER																	
Cecile Montayne		Rachel	W			6:30	16:10		12:05	12:40									<i>Cecile Montayne</i>
Natalie Hultman		Georgie	W			7:32	13:40		12:05	12:40									<i>Natalie Hultman</i>
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*This refers to the two (2) days (one (1) day on overnight location) which Producer can designate as day(s) off for the production for which performers are not paid continuous employment.

SAG-AFTRA PERFORMERS PRODUCTION TIME REPORT

Exhibit G

Picture Title Rachel's Madcap Theater Company University of New Orleans Production No. 00363401 Date 11/08/2013 Contact Lyndsey Guitreau Phone No. 225-439-0641

Shooting Location New Orleans, LA Is Today a Designated Day off? * Yes ☐ No ☒ Production Type: MP ☒ TV ☐ MOW ☐ Industrial ☐ Other ☐

[illegible]

*This refers to the two (2) days (one (1) day on overnight location) which Producer can designate as day(s) off for the production for which performers are not paid continuous employment.

Exhibit G

1

*This refers to the two (2) days (one (1) day on overnight location) which Producer can designate as day(s) off for the production for which performers are not paid continuous employment.

Pictu

17. The "off" for the production for which performers are not paid continuous employment, which Producer can designate as day(s) off for the production for which performers are not paid continuous employment.

SAG-ATTRA
5757 Wilshire Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90036-3600

Picture Title: Rachel's Makeup Theater
Production Company: Joseph Laura
Address: 1500 Colony Road, Metairie, LA 70003
Phone: (504) 876-3601
Distributor: N/A

Shooting Location: Metairie and New Orleans, LA
Start Date: 11/01/2013
Federal ID #:
Picture #00383401
Check One: ☒ MP ☐ MOV ☐ OTHER TV ☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ OTHER ☐

Completion Date: 11/10/2013
State ID #:
Date Filed: 11/16/2013

To establish Residual payments, see Section 5.2 of the 1980 Basic Agreement.

* PERFORMER NAME & SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER		* NAME OF LOAN-OUT CORPORATION & FEDERAL ID #	PERFORMER ADDRESS INCLUDING ZIP		(1) Period worked			(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	Total Units	Salary Units	Total Units	For SAG-ATTRA Use Only
					Days	Weeks	Start Date	Finish Date	Contract Type	Performer Type	Total Gross Salary	Base Salary			
Cecile Montoyne 435814914	N/A	40106 Champion Tr Corralles, LA 70737			5		11/01/13	11/09/13	D	A	\$500	\$100.00/Day			
					4		11/01/13	11/07/13	D	A	\$400	\$100.00/Day			
Natalia Huizman 10182228 (SAG-ATTRA ID #)	N/A	1018 North Hendon New Orleans, LA 70119													

- (1) Include days not worked, but considered worked under continuous employment provisions. Report contractually guaranteed work period or actual time worked, whichever is longer.
- (2) Insert D for Daily or S for Weekly Payment.
- (3) Insert: A= Actor; S= Standby; P= Pilot; SG= Singer; ADP= Automated Dialogue Replacement
- (4) Include all salary, Overtime, Premium and Stunt Adjustments. Do not include any penalties paid (i.e. Meal Penalties, Forced calls, etc.).
- (5) List base contractual salary (i.e. \$1,500.00/week or \$500.00/day).
- * If performer was employed and paid through his/her loan out corporation, list both the performer's name/SSN and the corporation name and Federal ID number.



SCREEN ACTORS GUILD-AMERICAN
FEDERATION OF TELEVISION AND RADIO
ARTISTS STUDENT FILM LETTER AGREEMENT
DAY PERFORMER EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

FILM: Title " Rachel's Madcap Theater "

FILMMAKER: Name: Joseph Laura

PERFORMER: Name: Cecile Monteyne SS#: 435814914

Address: 40104 Champ on Tif, Gonzales, LA Zip 70737

Performer's Phone: (504) 430-4353

EMPLOYMENT: Rate of Deferral: \$ 100.00 per day

Role: Rachel

Start Date: 11/01/2013 (Total Guaranteed Employment 5)

The Student Film Letter Agreement allows professional performers (both SAG-AFTRA members and non-SAG-AFTRA members) to render services in the film project on a deferred salary basis. No monies will be due the performer (with the following exceptions) until the film is released into a commercial market (i.e. Pay Cable, Theatrical Motion Picture Houses, Free Television, Videocassette, Educational/Industrial, etc.).

Non-deferred Payments

The following monies shall be due during the current production period:

1. Car mileage allowance reimbursement (30 cents per mile).
2. Meal penalties (if meal not provided within six (6) hours).
3. Per diem (on overnight location only).
4. Reimbursement for special hairdress, make-up or wardrobe.
5. Overtime for work in excess of 12 hours in any day (excluding time spent for meals), more than five consecutive days in each week, or for production which exceeds 20 total shooting days.
6. Late payment charges to performers (for payment due in #5).
7. Rest period charges (if performer not given at least 12 hours rest).
8. Re-takes, added scenes, looping, performed after allowable 20 shooting days or overall 6 calendar week production period has expired.



Performer affirms that he/she has received a copy of the full 11-page Film Letter Agreement, executed between SAG-AFTRA and the Filmmaker for the above film project.

By [Signature]
Filmmaker Signature

By [Signature]
Performer Signature

Date 11/01/2013

Date 11/01/2013

3 copies: Original: To SAG-AFTRA
Copy 1: To Performer
Copy 2: To Filmmaker



SCREEN ACTORS GUILD-AMERICAN
FEDERATION OF TELEVISION AND RADIO
ARTISTS STUDENT FILM LETTER AGREEMENT
DAY PERFORMER EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

FILM: Title " Rachel's Madcap Theater "

FILMMAKER: Name: Joseph Laura

PERFORMER: Name: Natalie Hultman SS#: SAG-AFTRA # 10182229

Address: 1016 N Rendon New Orleans, LA Zip 70119

Performer's Phone: (310) 383-2312

EMPLOYMENT: Rate of Deferral: \$ 100.00 per day

Role: Georgie

Start Date: 11/01/2013 (Total Guaranteed Employment 5)

The Student Film Letter Agreement allows professional performers (both SAG-AFTRA members and non-SAG-AFTRA members) to render services in the film project on a deferred salary basis. No monies will be due the performer (with the following exceptions) until the film is released into a commercial market (i.e. Pay Cable, Theatrical Motion Picture Houses, Free Television, Videocassette, Educational/Industrial, etc.).

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Performer affirms that he/she has received a copy of the full 11-page Film Letter Agreement, executed between SAG-AFTRA and the Filmmaker for the above film project.

By [Signature]
Filmmaker Signature

By Natalie Hultman
Performer Signature

Date 11/01/2013

Date 11/01/13

3 copies: Original: To SAG-AFTRA
Copy 1: To Performer
Copy 2: To Filmmaker



Student Film	Film Letter Agreement and	have rec'd the Day Perf. Contract
Short Film or Student		Short Film or Student

Rachel's Madcap Theater

[illegible]

Vita

Joey Laura was born in New Orleans, Louisiana. He obtained his bachelor's degree in English at the University of New Orleans in the spring of 2011. The following fall, he began the MFA film production program at the University of New Orleans.