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From Stowaway to Emperor: Understanding Brutus Jones in Eugene O'neill's The Emperor Jones

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From Stowaway to Emperor: Understanding Brutus Jones in Eugene O'Neill's
The Emperor Jones

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 & Theatre
Acting

by

Justin William Davis

B.S Southeastern Louisiana University, 2017

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Abstract

The body of this thesis is a documentation of the process of creating the character of Brutus Jones in Eugene O'Neill's The Emperor Jones, including research, character analysis, rehearsal journal, list of actions and activities, and the play. The Emperor Jones was produced by the University of New Orleans Department of Film and Theatre in New Orleans, Louisiana in the fall of 2020. Due to the Coronavirus, all actors and crew were tested and masked during rehearsals and filming. The play was filmed in the Robert E. Nims theatre and presented online on the evenings of November 21st, 22nd, 25th, 26th, 27th, and the 28th in the year 2020.

Keywords: Eugene, O'Neill, Play, Coronavirus, Film, Theatre, Brutus, Jones, African, Emperor, Slavery, Ghosts, Death, Silver Bullet, America, Caribbean islands, Robeson, Gilpin, Washington, Racism, Acting, Controversy, Haiti

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Introduction

In August of 2019, I submitted options for my thesis role which included, Martin Luther King, Jr. in Katori Hall's The Mountaintop, Lincoln in Suzan-Lori Park's TopDog/UnderDog, Boy Willie in August Wilson's The Piano Lesson, and Brutus Jones in Eugene O'Neill's The Emperor Jones. As time went on, it seemed as if The Mountaintop was going to be the option chosen for me. But in March, everything changed.

The University of New Orleans issued a shut down of in-person teaching and gatherings on campus due to the rise of cases of Coronavirus. By April, it seemed as if the entire world was shut down. All over the city of New Orleans, shows and productions were being cancelled, including the production of Tennessee William's Summer & Smoke by the Tennessee Williams Company in which I had signed to do. In July, I was told in an email that the 2020 Season would take place online. This meant certain shows would require special rights of which, The Mountaintop, was one. This being the case, one of my choices, which would not require any special rights, rose to the top of the list, being The Emperor Jones. This selection brought other challenges. The major concern with the play was that some critics had labeled it a racist play, and did not combat racism but added to it. The question was asked why I wanted to explore this piece. I answered by saying:

“I'm attracted to tragedies. I like when the results of a character's actions are of great consequence and then understanding the motivation for those actions; what

did they see as a child that created this path, how were they raised by their parents, were they raised by their parents, when did they ultimately choose the path, can they be forgiven, will they be forgiven.

At first glance, Brutus Jones is clearly sick, nasty, and simply evil. But he isn't a character, he is human like us all. So if we are quick to judge and don't seek to understand why someone speaks and moves the way they do, we become the villain. For who are we to pass judgment when we also have our own flaws? So I wanted to bring light to this issue, and Brutus Jones was a nice candidate for this exploration. It forces me to look at a character with a non-judgemental mind.

The play also is a product of someone who is considered a great playwright, Eugene O'Neill, which indicates to me I'll be working with something that is not perfect, but worth it. The language also fascinated me. Not the actual words spoken but the accent that may be used. I want to fully immerse myself for my thesis. Working with this language would give me an added bonus when finding Brutus's voice and losing my voice.

Knowing that three African-American actors, who I respect and admire, have played the part at some point in their respective careers also steered me in this direction: Charles Sidney Gilpin, Paul Robeson, and Denzel Washington

The atmosphere or climate of the world, currently, may not be the best for me to explore this character, but the backdrop and story of the play coupled with the language fuels my interest. The concerns of some faculty are certainly understandable.

There are also other plays with characters that may satisfy my needs as well. I am not rejecting those. This one just caught my eye and attention first.”

I was asked to further clarify my thoughts with the understanding there might be an outside director. I responded with:

“There is no particular reason I am choosing this play at this time. I chose this play as an option back in November or December of 2019. It was, I believe, my 3rd or 4th choice. My other choices slowly became not doable and now this is the play I have left as an option that excites me. And now, as I knew back then, this would be a bold choice. But this is my thesis and I may not get a chance to take this kind of risk. I believe there are truths in this show, and in this character, I will learn and take with me outside of UNO.

I'm not entirely sure what you mean by content of the piece but to me, it encompasses the language, characters, and story to give an overall topic or message.

The goal, as with any role I do, would be to portray Brutus Jones as humanely as possible. In doing so, the audience may see that though his actions and ideas justify certain judgments or condemnations from them, they are just like him. We are all just a couple of wrong turns from being our own version of Brutus Jones. And also, this is what hate can produce in the world. He chose his actions, but it was the world in which he was born that limited his choices.

If finding someone to direct this piece or any piece because of the content and subject is difficult then I won't do it. It's not the end of the world. I honestly, at this point, just want to make sure I am able to have a thesis and to perform it. For an audience or not.

I must also say that though I am stating my reasoning behind this choice, I am willing to look at other options that you all believe will be able to be done with the new guidelines.”

After this was stated, I was told this piece would require a strong director and that this piece is right for the times for what it is saying and of its produc ibility. With the

Pandemic, the idea for producing this show in the Amphitheatre with a minimal cast was a given. Safe for performers and audience members. After much talk, it was decided that Brutus Jones would serve as my thesis role in the second show of the 2020-2021 season.

It was not mounted in the Amphitheatre and I'm not quite sure why it wasn't. It was, however, filmed in the Robert E. Nims theatre safely. All persons involved were asked to be tested regularly for Covid-19 and masks were incorporated in the costumes for certain characters.

The following thesis is a documentation of the process I underwent to create the role of Brutus Jones. The first part is a history of The Emperor Jones. Here I researched where O'Neill got the idea or ideas to create the story of The Emperor Jones and also the productions and reviews of it. Second is a character analysis that includes research into three prominent African American figures of the early 1900s and the possible effects they might have had on Brutus Jones. The third part is my rehearsal journal which I kept during the rehearsals and the first week of filming. I only have the first week because once filming began, I honestly forgot to journal. That week was a long week. A scored script with blocking and little notes with also a detailed list of actions that Brutus takes in each scene following the first scene are included in the thesis. This was done to aid me in memorizing the lines and actions. My works cited page includes the sources of where my information was gathered. And lastly, the Vita provides some basic information about myself.

History of The Emperor Jones

In the year 1920, American Playwright, Eugene O’Neill won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama for the play, Beyond the Horizon and completed three other plays, Anna Christie (originally titled Chris Christopherson), Diff’rent (Originally titled Thirty Years), and The Emperor Jones (Originally titled The Silver Bullet). Around the same time of completing the plays, O’Neill lost his father to cancer. He is quoted as saying this after his father’s passing, “My Father died broken, unhappy, intensely bitter, feeling that life was ‘a damned hard billet to chew... This after seventy-six years of what the mob undoubtedly regard as a highly successful career! It furnishes food for thought, what?...his {dying} words... are written indelibly – seared on my brain – a warning from the beyond to remain true to the best that is in me though the heavens fall.” He would keep this promise and write some of his better/best work post-1919. Though Beyond The Horizon won him the Pulitzer, the play that would establish O’Neill’s name, was The Emperor Jones.

The Emperor Jones tells the story of Brutus Jones, a black Pullman porter from the United States who cheats, manipulates, and tricks his way to becoming an Emperor of a small civilization of people on a small island in the Caribbean. While Emperor, he imposes taxes and disrupts their way of life. He treats the natives of the island like they are less than human. In hopes of discouraging the natives from overthrowing him, he tells them that only a silver bullet can kill him. He knows they have no silver and use lead for their bullets. He owns the only silver bullet on the island and says he is the only one who can kill him. The natives come together and devise a plan to kill Brutus Jones themselves.

The Natives run into the forest in the middle of the night to call upon their god by beating on a drum while also making a silver bullet. Smithers, a white cockney trader who is Jones's side kick, catches one of the natives escaping and is surprised to learn of their plan. After hearing of the plan, Smithers wakes up Jones in the middle of the night to alert him and hopefully scare him into leaving the island. Smithers succeeds and Jones is startled to hear of the plan but has a plan of his own already in place for this situation. He has a small boat on the other side of the island and will take that boat to another island and escape the natives. Once in the forest, Jones comes across his past in the form of ghost-like appearances. He is first "attacked" by tiny little creatures, which do nothing but laugh at him and then disappear after he fires a shot at them. He is then visited by a ghost-like form of Jeff, a black man Jones killed while in the United States; a prison guard and convicts; a slave auctioneer, slave buyers and black people awaiting to be sold; a slave ship with chained Africans and finally the witch doctor and the crocodile god. Each of these apparitions causes Jones to fire his gun until he is out of bullets. The natives, who are keeping the beating of the drum throughout Jones's pursuit, find him and shoot and kill Jones with their own silver bullet.

O'Neill breaks away from his usual writing style which up to that time included some aspect of his family and the sea. Here, he writes an experimental, imaginative play full of terror and a sort of psychoanalysis of the black man in America. This process started after O'Neill heard the story of the late President Sam of Haiti in the early 1900s. O'Neill's friend, an old circus man named Jack Croak, told him that President Sam said the people of Haiti would never get him with a lead bullet and that he would kill himself first with a silver bullet. This president, Jean Vilbrun Guillaume Sam, was the fifth

president of Haiti after revolts and resignations of the first four. Some of President Sam's own regime or team would revolt against him for continuing to work with the United States. In fear, President Sam ordered the death of 167 political officials. Hearing this, the people of Haiti started a revolt and eventually captured President Sam at the French Embassy. They killed him and paraded the streets with his cut off limbs. This story influenced Eugene O'Neill as well as the story of Henri Christophe. Besides being a leader in the Haitian War of 1791, Henri Christophe also proclaimed himself as King Henry I of Northern Haiti in 1811 to 1820. During his reign, he had eight palaces built, dress codes, a court full of princes, dukes, barons, and knights. In 1820, a stroke left him paralyzed and vulnerable to revolts. In failed attempts to bring peace and order, Henri Christophe shot and killed himself. In 1821, the Haitian republic absorbed his kingdom. Another element of Brutus Jones that O'Neill wanted to focus on was his time on the chain gang in prison and if it was even possible for a convict to free himself of the chain. A friend of his, Slim Martin, who worked on a chain gang provided O'Neill with the necessary information. He stated, "I thought we lived in a free country, and a seventeen-year-old kid could go state to state looking for work... Well, I got arrested for vagrancy – carrying concealed ideas, I guess – and I found work, all right. Sixty-eight days on a chain gang in the South, using a pick and shovel from sunup to sundown... You can saw through the chain with a hack-saw blade... But you can also slip the fetter off if you file off the head of the toggle on which the oval-shaped metal cuff is hinged. After filing, you put the fetter solidly against a big stone and hit it with something heavy; this springs the cuff into a more circular shape, and then you can ease it over the ankles and feet." Understanding this, O'Neill thought it was possible for people to believe that Brutus

Jones escaped prison by cutting off the chain. Other than the story, the elements of The Emperor Jones; the forest, the pulse-beat drums, and the human imagination, would take a while to manifest for O'Neill. O'Neill is quoted in Arthur and Barbara's biography saying this, "About six months later I got the idea of the woods, but I couldn't see how it could be done on the stage, and I passed it up again. A year elapsed. One day I was reading of the religious feasts in the Congo and the uses to which the drum is put there; how it starts at a normal pulse-beat and is slowly intensified until the heart-beat of every one present corresponds to the frenzied beat of the drum. There was an idea and an experiment. How would this sort of thing work on an audience in a theatre?...The effect of the tropical forest on the human imagination was honestly come by. It was the result of my own experience while prospecting for gold in Spanish Honduras". Eugene O'Neill used this to create an 8 scene experimental theatre experience that even Broadway was not ready for.

Due to it being only 8 scenes and theatrically experimental with the use of drums, forest, and appearing and disappearing figures, O'Neill would have to rely on the Provincetown Players to produce it. After hearing O'Neill read it, George Cram Cook, one of the founders of the Provincetown Players, had this to say, "This marks the success of the Provincetown Players...Gene knew there was a place where such a play would be decided. He wrote it to compel us to the untried, to the impossible". It would be concluded that The Emperor Jones would open their new season. Cook believed in the play so much so that he decided to take upon the building of a sky dome himself. This sky dome would aid the forest scenes and give it depth and space to create a sense of infinity during the last scenes as the forest slowly goes away. This idea of the sky dome

was experimented with in Europe and this marked the first time it would be used in a New York theatre. Cook's dome idea was to build it with iron and concrete and reflect light. The cost to build was high but Cook was determined. "We listened to Jig (George Cook), truly a madman, telling us over and over again that we must risk our all and put in the dome for the emperor. None of us had read the script yet; we took it on faith as Gene's best play. But we said, all of us, that the dome couldn't go in- not yet. We suggested putting off the emperor to the second bill or the third; whenever we said that Jig never failed to pick up his hat and walk out" He would return and simply say, "We have to do this". After awhile, Cook would have the dome completed and now the casting process could begin.

Founder of the Hedgegrow Theatre in Rose Valley, Pennsylvania, which is one of the first regional theatres in the United States, Jasper Deeter, would be the one who convinced or suggested to Cook and O'Neill to let a black actor play the part instead of a white actor in black face. There are some opinions that say Cook wanted a black actor from the beginning while Deeter said that Cook wanted Charles Ellis to play the role in black face. The only fact I know is that the role went to Charles S. Gilpin, a black actor who garnered attention from his role in the Broadway play, Abraham Lincoln by John Drinkwater. This would mark the first time a black actor would play a major role in an American tragedy.

"The Emperor Jones is so unusual in its technique that it might wait in vain for a production anywhere except in so adventurous a playhouse as the Provincetown Theatre. As a matter of fact, the setting of the play on the little stage is fine and imaginative and the lighting effects uncommonly beautiful The Emperor is played by a Negro actor

named Charles S. Gilpin, who gives the most thrilling performance we have seen any place this season...It is a performance of heroic nature”. These are the words from Heywood Broun of the Tribune.

Alexander Woollcott from The Times wrote, “It reinforces the impression that for strength and originality [O’neill] has no rival among the American writers for the stage”. And from Kenneth Macgowan, writer for the magazine, *Theatre Arts*, “These eight short scenes shake free from the traditional forms of our drama; they carry forward easily and honestly upon the track of discovery. We follow a path that gathers bit by bit the progressive steps in a study of personal and racial psychology of real imaginative truth”

The attention and success brought Broadway audiences to fill their seats and received over 1500 new subscribers. They started to receive new plays and Cook did not believe there were any other playwrights the group could produce that promoted their mission. This created a rift between some of the players that continued until their shutdown in 1929 with help from the stock market crash. The playhouse continued to be the home of many plays including, Samuel Beckett’s Krapp’s Last Tape, Edward Albee’s The Zoo Story, and also plays by Sam Shepard, David Mamet and John Guare.

The Emperor Jones would see its day on Broadway, playing at the Selwyn Theatre and then later at the Princess theatre where it played for over 200 performances. The success of the play would bring Charles Gilpin an invitation as an honored guest at the Drama League’s annual dinner. The Drama League is a national organization with two primary goals: to influence the professional production of the best plays by alerting members to performances that warrant their support; and to ensure the continuity of professional theatre by educating the audiences of the future. It was founded in 1910 in

Chicago. The organization is still around today and recently in 2020, added an award; audience-selected award for distinguished performance in a theatrical production. But the Drama League withdrew their invitation after receiving complaints from members about having to dine with a Negro. Eugene O'Neill declined his invitation and asked other actors, writers, and directors to boycott as well. One of the actors he would ask to protest would be Jacob Ben-Ami. Invited for his performance in Sven Lange's Samson and Delilah, Ben-Ami had this to say after being asked, "...I said that I would of course, and I believe that all other actors they visited did the same." The Drama League would re-invite Gilpin and he accepted.

Though O'Neill had this to say about Gilpin around the year 1946, "As I look back now on all my work, I can honestly say there was only one actor who carried out every notion of a character I had in mind. That actor was Charles Gilpin as the Pullman Porter in The Emperor Jones", they still had their differences. Gilpin started to change some of the lines in The Emperor Jones, particularly the word "nigger" and show up drunk for some performances. O'Neill is quoted as saying this about Gilpin on one occasion, "If I ever catch you rewriting my lines again, you black bastard, I'm going to beat you up". Because of his behavior, a young Columbia Law School graduate named Paul Robeson would replace Gilpin. "Honestly I've stood for more from him than all the white actors I've ever known – simply because he was colored! There is humor in the situation but I confess mine has worn out. I'm 'off' him and the result is he will get no chance to do it in London. He was drunk all of last season. So I've corralled a young fellow with considerable experience, wonderful presence and voice, full of ambition and a damn fine man personally with real brains – not a 'ham'. This guy deserves his chance

and I don't believe he'll lose his head if he makes a hit – as he surely will, for he's read the play for me and I'm sure he'll be bigger than Gilpin was even at the start.” This is a quote by Eugene O’Neill when he talked with Mike Gold, a reporter. After seeing a performance of Robeson as the Emperor, Gilpin is quoted as saying this to a friend, “I feel kind of low. I created the role of the Emperor. That role belongs to me. That Irishman, he just wrote the play.” This would prove to weigh heavy on Gilpin, never playing another major role in New York and passing away 5 years later in 1930 at the age of 51.

Paul Robeson would go on to star in the 1933 film version of The Emperor Jones. He also starred in another one of O’Neill’s plays, the 1924 play, All God’s Chillun Got Wings. This play tells the story of Jim Harris, an African American man studying to become a lawyer, Ella Downey, a white woman and also the wife of Jim Harris, and their relationship. An Opera version of The Emperor Jones was written and produced in 1933 as well. In 1960, there was an Australian adaption of The Emperor Jones which starred Joe Jenkins that would be known as the first time a black actor would be the lead on an Australian TV show. Ossie Davis starred in the 1955 film adaptation. In 1973, an audio recording of the play starring James Earl Jones as Brutus was produced. The Emperor Jones served as the New York stage debut for Denzel Washington in 1975. An experimental theatre group in New York known as The Wooster Group produced a version of The Emperor Jones with a white female in black face for their 1993 season. The Bush Theatre in London produced the play in 2005 and the Irish Repertory Theatre did a revival of the play in 2009.

The Emperor Jones has stood the test of time and helped garner success for many African American actors. The latest production of this play was at the University of New Orleans; adapting it to the screen while on a stage due to the pandemic of the Coronavirus. Directed by William Ware, it starred Justin William Davis as Brutus Jones and Drew Stroud as Smithers.

Character Analysis

Eugene O’Neill has, in a way, gifted African American actors or simply black actors with a tragic, complex character. Born in perhaps the late 1800s, Brutus Jones is an example of a person to look at when analyzing the effects of slavery and oppression in the United States. Not every African American was a W.E.B Dubois, Booker T. Washington or Marcus Garvey. Some thought only of themselves and from hatred and lack of love, only knew how to hate. Exploring these qualities and utilizing heightened language led me to submitting this role for consideration. The description O’Neill provides of Brutus scared and enticed me; “Jones enters from the right. He is a tall, powerfully-built, full-blooded negro of middle age. His features are typically negroid, yet there is something decidedly distinctive about his face—an underlying strength of will, a hardy, self-reliant confidence in himself that inspires respect. His eyes are alive with a keen, cunning intelligence. In manner he is shrewd, suspicious, evasive. He wears a light blue uniform coat, sprayed with brass buttons, heavy gold chevrons on his shoulders, gold braid on the collar, cuffs, *etc.* His pants are bright red with a light blue stripe down the side. Patent leather laced boots with brass spurs, and a belt with a long-barreled, pearl-handled revolver in a holster complete his makeup. Yet there is something not altogether ridiculous about his grandeur. He has a way of carrying it off”. The main points I took from his description were the underlying strength of will, confidence, keen and cunning intelligence with his eyes, and having a way of carrying it off. Those were the main points I related to because I believe I fall short of the “powerfully built” and

“negroid features” aspect of Brutus Jones. The features of my face are rather soft, like my nose. On certain days, I could pass as an entirely different ethnicity. But because of this, I knew I would have to work on the confidence, strength, and intellect to help me pull this off. The idea of Brutus pretending to be a big bad Emperor when underneath, he’s a mother-less child needing to be held, helped me immensely.

In hopes of helping myself understand the spirit of Brutus, I thought about the prominent African American figures and their philosophies in the early 1900s and the relationship Brutus had with those philosophies. I’ll start with a life history of Brutus, or the facts Eugene O’Neill provides, then move on to the philosophies being introduced by African Americans within the period of the play, and then a break down of my methodology and technique I used to achieve the final performance. I’ll end with a conclusion containing my overall thoughts.

Believed to be born in the late 1800s, Brutus Jones was born in southern Louisiana. I took liberty with his birth-place and also with the relationship with his parents. I talked to Bill, the director about Brutus’s parents and I came to the conclusion his father and mother were killed by white men when Brutus was just 12 years old. The specifics of their encounter with the white men were never solidified. Is that important? Yes, I believe the more specific you are, the better grasp you can have on a character. But in this situation, just knowing his parents were killed by white men and were not there for the important stages in Brutus’ life (adolescence) was enough for me. Having no relatives, he grew up on the streets where he learned to survive. After years of this, Brutus finds himself working as a Pullman porter. This job was named after George Pullman, the creator of luxury sleeper cars for trains. George made sure to hire Negro

porters because, according to historian, Larry Tye, “He was looking for people who had been trained to be the perfect servant...He knew they would come cheap, and he paid them next to nothing. And he knew there was never a question off the train that you would be embarrassed by running into one of these Pullman porters.” Brutus, being a Pullman porter, tells me he knows how to show or fake respect for white people in order to get what he wants. He’s intelligent in that way. As a Pullman porter, Brutus encounters many different people. One person in particular is Jeff. What we get from O’Neill about Jeff and Brutus’ relationship is from Brutus’ prayer in Scene 3, “When I catches Jeff cheatin’ wid loaded dice my anger overcomes me and I kills him dead! Lawd, I done wrong!”. Brutus and Jeff were playing a game of dice and Jeff must’ve won all or most of Brutus’ money. Upon winning, Brutus gets upset and assumes Jeff cheated. After making this assumption known, Brutus finds out he was right and Jeff did cheat with a pair of loaded dice. In a fit of anger, Brutus attacks Jeff with a razor. I know this from the text in Scene 3 when Brutus sees an apparition or ghost of Jeff and says, “Dey tol’ me you done died from dat razor cut I gives you.” I can also gather from this information that Brutus was either taken away immediately or ran away right after he cut him since he did not personally see him die. He was told he died perhaps when the police arrested him. Nonetheless, Brutus kills Jeff and finds himself in prison. While in prison, he is forced to be part of a chain gang. A chain gang is simply a group of convicts chained together outside of the prison doing hard labor such as shoveling rocks or breaking down rocks with the appropriate tools. While one was working on the chain gang, there was a white prison guard who had authority over the convicts. Authority such as a master has over his slave. After one too many whips, Brutus grows angry and when the prison guard has his

back turned, Brutus hits him in the head with his shovel, killing him instantly. He then breaks free from the chain and runs away. This tells me Brutus has a temper, obviously, but also that he can't control it. He is also unaware of the consequences of his actions. I know this information from Scene 1, "Maybe he hits me wid a whip and I splits his head wid a shovel and runs away and files de chain off my leg and gits away safe", and scene 5, "When dat guard hits me wid de whip, my anger overcomes me, and I kills him dead. Lawd, I done wrong!" Now on the run, Brutus makes his way to the docks and stows away on one of the boats going to the Caribbean Islands. Once making it to the island, Brutus finds himself among other black people who happen to be the natives of this island. They cannot speak English very well and Brutus sees this miscommunication as a sign of weakness for them and hatches a plan to become Emperor of this island. Before moving forward, he befriends a cockney trader named Henry Smithers. Smithers himself is a racist when it comes to the natives and possibly all black people but he shows respect to Brutus, possibly out of fear. He tricks the natives into believing he cannot die by lead bullets, which are the only kind of bullets the natives have. While involved in a meeting with the natives regarding trading, he manipulates them and provokes some of the officers, one in particular, Lem, to fire on him. All of their guns misfire and Brutus takes this moment to assume the role of emperor. He uses the method of "cheating death" as his way of becoming "invincible". All the natives believe and are now under his lordship. While Emperor, Brutus imposes taxes on the natives as a way to increase his own wealth. All of this has happened prior to the first words being spoken on the page. Right before Brutus enters in the palace to make his first appearance in the play, we find out the natives have all run away into the forest to call upon their god and create a silver bullet.

These are the given circumstances in which I created the character. I will now move on to the philosophies of three prominent African Americans during the early 1900s. This, in hopes, would help me in understanding just what or who is Brutus Jones.

The Black Thought

During the early 1900s to about 1918, When Brutus would have left the states to the islands; there were three African Americans who led three different approaches to the life of blacks in a post civil war United States. The question I would have for Brutus would be who, if any, would he agree more with; who would he despise the most; and who would he agree with but stay silent for. The three African Americans I'm speaking of are W.E.B Dubois, Booker T. Washington and Marcus Garvey. I will give some details of each of their movements and then show the conclusion I came to and how I tried to use the information in my performance.

W.E.B Dubois believed it would take intellectual findings and teachings to combat the issue of racism and the so-called Negro. Before the creation of the NAACP organization, Du Bois began another movement in 1905 called the Niagara Movement. It was in opposition to the philosophy of Booker T. Washington and his Atlanta Compromise. The Niagara Movement consisted of over 20 intellectual African Americans who met secretly in Fort Erie, Ontario, near Niagara Falls. It is here where they created a manifesto in which they called for full civil liberties, abolition of racial discrimination, and recognition of human brotherhood. In 1908 in Springfield, Ill., after a withdrawn rape accusation on a black man, white residents went on a violent spree of attacks. A mob was formed and wanted two prisoners from the city jail so they could kill

them. After the police shut that down and secretly drove the prisoners out the city, the mob went to a small black business district and destroyed it. Busting windows, destroying merchandise, and lynched a black barber who wanted to protect his shop and also lynched an elderly black resident in a white middle class neighborhood. The riot or attacks would cease after state troopers were called in. This act of violence brought white liberals on board with the Niagara Movement and together formed a new organization, NAACP or the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The main point behind W.E.B Du Bois philosophy was the concept known as the Talented Tenth. He believed that every 1 in 10 African Americans should educate themselves fully, sacrifice their personal interests and use their knowledge to create change in their communities. He believed this was the best way to better the African American community, through knowledge and political change. He wanted more representation of African Americans in politics. He believed it was the responsibility of the African American to help their community.

Fighting the same fight as Du Bois but having a different method, Booker T. Washington was also a leading figure in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Most notably, his Atlanta Compromise in 1895 created a rift between some African Americans, Du Bois being one of them. Washington laid out a compromise with the white communities saying that we can “be as separate as fingers” socially but still a part of the same hand. Washington did not care for advancing African Americans in politics or higher education. It would be the white community who would make sure that not just the African American communities, but communities of all colors would be sufficient economically; separate but equal. Many intellectual African Americans would disagree with this

philosophy, deeming it a problem that would cripple African Americans having to depend on any one else but themselves. In his book, The Soul of Black Folk, Du Bois stated, “Mr. Washington represents in Negro thought the old attitude of adjustment and submission...[His] programme practically accepts the alleged inferiority of the Negro races.” As stated earlier, Du Bois and others would fight for full civil rights and push more African Americans into higher education and politics. There is a third person who, like Washington and Du Bois, wanted to help other African Americans but in his own unique way, Marcus Garvey.

The last prominent black leader of the early 1920s is Marcus Garvey. Marcus Garvey, out of the 3, was the loudest when it came to addressing the race issues in America and the world. Garvey, after finding the Universal Negro Improvement Association or UNIA, would tour around the world lecturing about uniting all people of African descent and creating a nation of African Americans or those who descend from enslaved Africans. He went so far as to make himself a “President” of Africa. He was so loud, that J. Edgar Hoover wanted to silence him. He employed the first Black undercover F.B.I agent. This would result in Garvey being jailed for 5 years and eventually banned from America. Brutus is much like Garvey when it comes to talking. In fact, Garvey’s UNIA first international convention featured over twenty-five thousand people, bands, choirs, men and women in beautiful African colored uniforms. It was an army. And this could be the reason J. Edgar Hoover wanted to silence him. Besides ruling with an iron fist, Brutus has nothing in common with Garvey’s philosophy. This quote from Garvey, in a way, lines up with Brutus’s philosophy of survival at any cost: “If you want liberty you yourselves must strike the blow. If you must be free, you must become

so through your own effort ... Until you produce what the white man has produced you will not be his equal.”

All three of these men were fighting for roughly the same cause, empowerment and rights for African Americans. They were all selfless and serving, the two main things Brutus is not. He only cares for the empowerment and rights of himself. Brutus is what I call, “the lost child”. He is whom others would have said, “He had all the potential in the world...if only he could have listened”. Life was no cakewalk for him, neither was it for Du Bois, Washington, or Garvey. Brutus could have been a prominent figure like those three, fighting for his brothers and sisters, but he didn’t. He used his gift of charisma for evil. He wouldn’t want to accumulate knowledge in a university setting like Du Bois. He wouldn’t want white men giving him handouts like Washington was proposing. And he wouldn’t want to be united with other Africans from around the world. He was very much a part of the world and did not have the “bigger picture” as did these men. He ignored their teachings and continued looking for the next way to eat. Knowing this information helps me when I speak the word “nigga” or “black trash”. Even to this day, African Americans still call each other “Nigga” in pop culture music, film, and on a regular daily basis. Now with all of that information, I will move on to my creation and/or experience with bringing the spirit of Brutus Jones to life.

The main acting technique I used was imagination. Stella Adler and Sanford Meisner both agree that an important element every actor needs is a strong imagination. When the director, Bill, told me there wouldn’t be an actual throne or stones, I knew my imagination would have to be in top-notch shape. And in a sense, all of the forest scenes could be interpreted as Brutus just seeing things through his imagination; I think the more

interesting choice is believing the images are real and allowing them to be real sightings and sounds. I didn't think imagination would help me with the language and body movement of Brutus but in a way it did. Brutus is imagining himself as being this invincible Emperor when behind the veil he's just a scared and vulnerable man. Having this duality helped me when I had feelings of doubt or the thought of "going too far". For however long it would take to finish filming I wanted to stay in the imaginative world and not judge myself until after. This sense of imagination is how I achieved behavior instead of acting.

Not Acting, Behaving

Every time I picked up the script and just read it, not as an actor, I never really saw it as a true play. We follow this man and are led on this journey through his actions or rather reactions. Now as an actor, I see it as a man just reacting to his surroundings, his sightings, and his senses. This man happens to be Brutus Jones, a black Pullman porter from the U.S who killed two people and is now Emperor of a civilization. If they see him, then they see "Brutus behaving" and not "Justin acting". My voice, body and imagination would be the main tools I used to achieve this. I began with the body and then added the voice to match the body. Lastly, I worked on the mind or the thought process of Brutus to help learn the lines. I created an action or activity list of everything Brutus does in each scene. So instead of learning the lines first, I learned the actions first. I didn't want to say, "How come all these stones when I only remembers one" until I first understood that I saw more than one stone. Knowing the actions and what exactly Brutus was doing or seeing helped formulate an image or story with the lines; and the lines became reactions.

Figuring out his walk or body was pretty simple. He wants to intimidate the natives and Smithers with his height and build, so I came to the conclusion that he walks strong, chest up, head up, shoulders back with long to moderate steps. This is his “Emperor” mask or look. Brutus is a tad more relaxed but still sturdy and strong. He switches from Emperor to Brutus after his first lines and realized it's just Smithers. He already has Smithers afraid of him so no need to act Emperor-ish around him. But there are instances where Brutus feels a bit “challenged” by Smithers. The main one is in the first scene when Smithers says to Brutus, “Gawd blimey, you was glad enough for me ter take yer in on it when you landed here first. You didn’ ‘ave no ‘igh and mighty airs in them days!” He brings up his past time on the island, before he was Emperor and just simply a man on the run and Brutus sees this as contempt and a breach of respect. He responds with, “Talk polite white man...I’m boss heah na, is you fergettin ?” In this instance, Brutus becomes Emperor to bring Smithers back to fearfulness. But this “Emperor” character is all but dead by scene 7, so I saw a journey within a journey. From Emperor to Brutus and also, Emperor to the shore. O’Neill gives wonderful descriptions of the “Emperor” being stripped away. In each scene, there is a piece of clothing that has now come off of Brutus while making his way through the forest. With each piece of clothing leaving, he is becoming “Brutus” again thus leading to his death. I really liked the costume pieces the director and designer settled on. There was a panama hat, which comes off by scene 3. An army jacket with medals on them that Brutus probably didn’t earn which comes off by scene 5. An off-greenish color button down shirt that gets ripped and ultimately destroyed by scene 6; boots and spurs that are taken off by Scene 5, and my favorite, the green pants that start off crisp and clean and end in rags. This all helped

me in understanding the mental degradation of Brutus for each scene since we were filming out of order.

The language was intimidating. I felt uncomfortable at first. I was speaking lines as if I was afraid of saying the words. I realized I was saying them half-heartedly. For me to succeed in this role, I would have to break from that discomfort and speak with the confidence of Brutus. I needed to think that, "I'm the smartest man in this room". I no longer questioned what the correct pronunciation was of the words in the script, I just said whatever was closest and the same intent. You'll notice in the film/play, I pronounced the word, "Ha'nt" two different ways. One way was as if I was saying the word, "Hate" with an "N" between "a" and "t", so "Ha'nte". Another way was as if I saying the word "Haunt" with the "u" elongated. This was mainly because at first I believed he was saying it as if he was saying "Haunt", but then I thought that perhaps the more interesting choice would be if he was saying it like "Hante". I also heard James Earl Jones and Paul Robeson pronounce it that way when they performed it so I kind of wanted to do it too. But because it was filmed and edited, and some takes of the scene I said it one way and other takes the other way, it seems to be inconsistent. From this, I learned to make a decision and stick with it, regardless if its film, because I would have to make sure to be consistent in each scene live as well as each take filmed.

The last thing I want to mention are my thoughts on O'Neill using the name Brutus Jones. I've found no information regarding O'Neill's thoughts on this but perhaps my research isn't too far fetched. In Latin, Brutus means "dull or stupid". Though in the play, Jones boast about how he is ahead of the natives, prepared for anything, and has a fancy uniform; it seems, ironically, to go against his name. There is also the correlation

between the Brutus Jones in The Emperor Jones and Marcus Junius Brutus. Marcus Brutus was a roman senator and a friend of the general Julius Caesar. Loyal to Rome and opposed to Julius making himself a dictator and over the senate, Brutus sided with the senate and agreed to assassinate Caesar. This assassination led to many civil wars, which eventually led to Augustus Caesar as Rome's first Emperor. After a loss in battle to Marc Antony, Marcus Junius Brutus killed himself. Besides Judas Iscariot, the second most noticeable name in history with regards to betrayal and death is Marcus Brutus. Maybe if I would have made this connection during the performances my choices would have been affected or perhaps nothing would have changed; but this correlation is interesting and, I believe, important.

In Conclusion

I felt vulnerable when doing this play. More vulnerable than really any other play or role I've performed. I felt so vulnerable that I actually cried after a rehearsal. It was a sort of preview night/rehearsal; the other grads and some faculty came to watch a run of it. I was feeling like I was still in the "looking dumb" phase and not ready for anyone to see me still figuring things out. I knew I was at a good place but still felt unready. It felt like an opening night and I did not know my lines. I respect their opinions and judgments and wasn't ready for them to judge. I didn't really speak to anyone afterwards and just got undressed and went to the car and cried. But after that, I was ready to go for day 1 of filming. I was still exploring choices in each scene but I felt comfortable exploring. I just wished I didn't do too much exploring because I messed with the continuity of the film/play a bit. For example, in some shots my jacket is buttoned and other shots it's

unbuttoned. The big one was in scene 6 after Brutus prays, I sit with my ripped button down shirt on and make a comment about my feet and shoes and the next shot, I'm in my undershirt. So I could have stuck more to set movements and their timing but I just wanted to ride a new wave each time. I know now that there has to be set actions or movements that aren't taken out of their timing while exploring on film. Besides the vulnerability, I came across a hard fact about filming this show and that was maintaining energy. Every take was as if it was the first take. This process was more draining than doing a live production for two weeks. Other than that, after watching it once, I believe I achieved behavior instead of acting.

Actions and Activities

Scene 2

1. Arrives in forest, dog tired, asking for air. *“Sho’! Gimme air! I’s e tuckered out sho’nuff”*
2. Finally see the woods and takes it all in. How magnificently dark it is. *“My goodness, look at dem woods, will you? Dat no-count Smithers said dey’d be black an’ he sho’ called de turn.”*
3. Checks feet for blisters. *“Feet, you is holdin’ up yo’ end fine an’ I sutinly hopes you ain’t blisterin’ none.”*
4. Rests for a while and hears the Drum in the distance. *“Cool yo’ selfs. Remember you done got a long journey yit befo’ you. Bush niggers! Wonder dey wouldn’ get sick o’ beatin dat drum”*
5. The thought of them being close rattles me and I try to see if I can spot them. *“I wonder if dey’s startin after me?”*
6. Reassure myself that I am far ahead of them. *“Sho’ dey miles and miles behind”*
7. Laces up shoes and calm myself down. *“You know what? Yo’ belly is empty, dat’s what’s de matter wid you. Come time to eat!”*
8. I begin the search for the grub. *“White stone, white stone, where is you?”*
9. After some searching, I can’t find it. *“Ain’t heah! Gorry, is I in de right place or isn’t I?”*
10. Realizing I might have to go back in the woods while still hungry. *“Gorry, has I got to go hungry into dem woods all de night”*
11. Begin to rapidly search but still can’t find it. *“Gorry, I gotta find dat grub high an’ low somehow!”*
12. I begin to look again and notice how dark its gotten. *“Why it come dark so quick like dat?”*
13. I light a match and notice a ton more white stones. More than I remember. *“How come all dese white stones come heah when I only remembers one?”*

14. I realize the match I lit can give away my position. *“Nigger, is you gone crazy mad? Is you lightin’ matches to show dem whar you is? Fo’ Lawd’s sake, use yo’ haid.”*
15. I really start to question the white stones and my food missing. *“But how come all dese white stones? And whar’s dat tin box o’ grub I hid all wrapped up in oil cloth?”*
16. I try to see where I am by looking at the trees/woods. *“Can’t tell nothing from dem trees!”*
17. I realize I may be lost and how scary it is out here. *“I’s done lost place de place sho’ nuff! It’s mighty queer! It’s mighty queer!”*
18. I think the woods is putting a curse on me so I threaten the woods. *“Woods, is you tryin to put something ovah on me?”*
19. I take out my gun and begin to question these little dark moving objects. *“What’s dat? Who’s dar? What is you? Git away from me befo’ I shoots you up!”*
20. I get no response; I shoot a shot at them. *“You don’t?”*
21. Firing the shot instills some power and pride back into me (Yeah, can’t nothing mess with me) *“Dey’re gone. Dat shot fix ‘em.”*
22. I realize that gunshot **definitely** gave my position away. *“Gorry, you give de game away when you fire dat shot. Dem niggers heah dat fo’ su’tin!”*
23. I hype myself up and dive in. *“Ain’t nothin’ dere but de trees! Git in!”*

Scene 3

1. I come stomping out the woods. I got hit in the head a couple of times by branches and scratched my legs and arms on sticky plants. *“No mo’ buttin’ yo’ foold head agin’ de trunks an’ scratchin’ de hide off yo’ legs in de bushes”*
2. I notice this clearing because of the light of the moon and I am relieved. *“So cheer up! From now on you has a snap”*
3. I take a moment to gather myself. *“what time’s it gittin’ to be, I wonder?”*

4. I realize I must have been moving for at least a couple of hours. *“How long r been makin’ tracks in dese woods? Must be hours an’ hours. Seems like fo’evah!”*
5. I reassure myself with my plan and the guarantee of my money and safety. *“Never min. It’s all part o’ de game. Dis night come to an end like everything else. And when you gits dar safe and has dat bankroll in yo’ hands, you laughs at all dis”*
6. I relax by whistling and realize this could give away my position. *“What yo’ whistlin’ for, you po’ dope! Want all de won’ to heah you?”*
7. I go quiet and hear the drum. *“Hear dat ole drum?”*
8. I start to move into the woods again until I hear an odd noise that forces me to investigate it. *“Whats dat odder queer clicketty sound I heah?”*
9. I realize the noise is somebody playing dice and cower. *“I better beats it quick when I gets them notions”*
10. I get closer and realize its Jeff and question him. *“Jeff! I’s sho’ mighty glad to see you! Dey tol’ me you done died from dat razor cut I gives you! But how you come to be heah, nigger?”*
11. With no answer, I get scared and take out my gun. *“Is you-is you a ha’nt?”*
12. I realize this may not be Jeff and shoot my gun. *“Nigger I kills you dead once. Has I got to kill you agin? You take it den.”*
13. I feel the power from the gun and it calms me. *“He’s gone, anyway. Ha’nt or no ha’nt, dat shot fix him.”*
14. I hear the drum notice the close distance of the sound. *“Dey’s comin’ fast! And heah I is shootin’ shots to let ‘em know jes’ whar I is”*
15. I jump in the woods to get away. *“Oh, Gorry, I’s got to run.”*

Scene 4

1. I have been running for some time now. I’m hungry. It’s hot. I’m sweating bullets. I’m exhausted. I rest. *“Den! Dat’s better! Now I kin breathe”*
2. I assure myself I have plenty of distance. *“I must ‘a put some distance between myself an’ dem – runnin’ like dat- and yit- dat damn drum sound jes’ de same”*
3. I question the road I’m on and I become frighten of the woods and dark night and idea of haunts. *“How’d dis road evah git heah? Good level road, too”*

4. I reassure myself that I'm hungry and that's the reason I'm seeing things.
"Ha'nts! You fool nigger, dey ain't no such things!"
5. I cool myself down and begin to rest. *"Rest! Don't talk! Rest!"*
6. I see people and try to escape but fear paralyzes me. *"Lawd Jesus!"*
7. I coward and listen to him; I pick up my shovel and dig. *"Yes, suh! Yes, suh! I'se comin'."*
8. After taking the hit, I plan to kill him with my shovel. *"God damn yo' soul, I gits even wid you yit, sometime."*
9. While trying to hit him, I realize my shovel is missing. *"Whar's my shovel?"*
10. I ask the other prisoners to use their shovel. *"Gimmie a shovel, one o' you, fo' God sake!"*
11. They don't answer, I realize I have a gun, I fire at him and run back into the forest. *"I kills you, you white debil"*

Scene 5

1. Confession/Repentance
2. I pray and confess to God: *"Lawd Jesus, heah my prayer! I'se a po' sinner, a po' sinner! I knows I donewrong, I knows it! When I cotches Jeff cheatin' wid loaded dice my anger overcomes me and I kills him dead! Lawd, I done wrong! When dat guard hits me wid de whip, my anger overcomes me, and I kills him dead. Lawd, Idone wrong! And down heah whar dese fool bush niggers raised me up to the seat o' de mighty, I steals all I couldgrab. Lawd, I done wrong! I knows it! I'se sorry! Forgive me, Lawd! Forgive dis po' sinner!"*
3. I am reassured that God has me and I'm safe. *"De Lawd'll preserve me from dem ha'nts after dis*
4. I question what they want and realize they trying to sell and buy me. *Is dis a auction? Is you sellin' me like dey uster befo' de war?*
5. Once shots fired, everyone is gone.
6. I run off into the woods.

Scene 6

1. Death/Desperation/Rock bottom/ Last Resort

2. I notice it's darker and moon has disappeared
3. I find a small space of light and lie down to rest
4. While lying there, I see figures in the dark
5. I am scared. I cover my eyes and try to remain still
6. The figures start to moan loudly and I join in with them
7. We start to slowly rock back and forth
8. While rocking, I see images of enslaved Africans on ships. Some jumping off the ships. Babies being tossed off the ship from their mothers. Men crying.
9. The thoughts or images stop and I run off into the woods

Scene 7

1. Time to meet Death
2. I come across a tree stump which looks like an altar. I begin to worship to settle myself down.
3. I break free from the prayer and look around at my surroundings
4. Everything I see looks familiar; as if I've been here before just hours ago
5. I throw myself down in fear and a figure appears
6. The Witch Doctor
7. I try to run but am possessed by the witch doctor
8. While possessed, A crocodile emerges from the river
9. I realize a sacrifice is being made with me
10. I beg for mercy. *"Mercy, Lawd! Mercy!"*
11. With no avail, I take out my gun and shoot the crocodile with the silver bullet.
"De Silver Buller! You don't git me yit!"
12. Witch doctor disappears and I lie face down, tired, terrified, shaking, paralyzed.

Transcript of Journal Entries

Sept. 22, 2020

First Official Rehearsal

What exactly is Brutus wearing? He is awoken by a noise, and thinks it's the natives?

Sept. 19, 2020

How far does Jones actually travel in the woods? The Natives are getting close but Jones puts no distance between himself and them.

Perhaps he is traveling straight to them.

Or he is going in a circle.

He goes nowhere.

What happened to his food?

In the last scene, Smithers alludes to Brutus going in a circle in the woods and probably didn't know it.

I think that's what happens in the woods;

Brutus goes in circle causing the natives to seem like they're moving fast but they really aren't.

I was told that it is going to be filmed. So the director has to block the show to a "T", leaving me with little room to "go with the flow". After this rehearsal, realizing Jones truly doesn't fear Smithers. But Jones does get scared. He is also very prideful, boastful, loud, and wise.

Sept. 24, 2020

Rehearsal/meeting for Scene 7

Dance/Death scene

Knowing that this will have to be treated as a film has its pros and cons. I truly wanted to do this play live and free of "set" blocking and allow the forest to drive me. I will have to treat this [like] a movie. Pro: Many takes. Con: Many takes.

I will not lower my voice for the microphones.

Intimacy!

Sept. 28, 2020

First rehearsal for Scene 2

Entrance into the woods.

Sept. 29, 2020

First rehearsal [of] Scene 4

Went through Scene 1 again.

Really starting to find Brutus.

Sept. 30, 2020

5,6,7,8

Because of Covid-19 guidelines and having to film it, the stage directions are being altered.

Oct. 7th, 2020

With each Scene, there are fewer and fewer words and thoughts. He is dehydrated, hungry, tired, beat up, and has no energy left. Each scene plunges him deeper into his demise.

IDEA: Scene 5, start with singing “Daniel, Didn’t God deliver?” – [Didn’t my Lord deliver Daniel?] Low mumbling, then remembers I shouldn’t be singing, then go into prayer.

Have to try this.

Oct. 8th, 2020

The discovery of the “Slaves” or “figures” is slow; fear shocks him, paralyzes him with shakes. Then becomes transfixed by the rocking/swaying and wailing. Shown images of Slaves on ships in his mind/thoughts and then breaks free.

Oct. 12th, 2020

Scene 1-3

Scene 2: What is it that sparks the thought of the match giving his position away?

THE SOUND OF [the] DRUM!

Scene 3: IDEA: Feel for the white stone and lookup so audience can see your surprise.

NO DATE

Lyrics to song ideas:

“Didn’t my Lord deliver Daniel?”

“Amazing Grace”

When to sing: Scene 1, Scene 3, Scene 5 or 6?

Oct. 13th, 2020

Come in DSR with same energy in the previous scene 6 – screaming NO,NO,NO

I fall down and [praise by the Alter] {Give a moment}

Oct. 14th, 2020

Scene 4 and 5

I’ll lie completely out on the upper stage. I tried to speak as if there was another person there (another version of myself). Not quite sure if that works, but gives the impression that I’ve gone crazy. I’ll try again next time.

Scene 5: singing “Didn’t God deliver Daniel” gives me a great place to start for the prayer.

Oct. 15th, 2020

Scene 6 and 7

I thought I would see the figures but instead I just hear them and that provokes fear in me: We’ll be trying both ways since the script says I see the figures. I like the idea of seeing them rather than just hearing. Then I’ll try to leave but I am forced back. Still will run away screaming “NO NO NO NO” (rising with it).

Will start with moaning then go to wailing.

The show, with the use of the word “Nigger” brings perspective and awareness to it. Being it is used in pop culture music, this show allows everyone to see how dirty this word can be and possibly is.

Scene 7: Beat before Altar Worship. Notice and know that I must do it. No arms, medium arms, all arms then break free from fear and go into dialogue. Notice I may have seen this place before then fear overcomes again.

Oct. 19th, 2020

I have to stomp on the match to put it out.

I still feel a disconnect with Scene 2, why?

Scene 4: When scolding myself, I have been speaking as if outside my body. As if there are “two” of me. Good idea? Reading well?

Reason: More intense? crazier as each scene goes on? Losing sense of reality? Is it too far? What is an alternative?

KEEP WORKING ON IT!

Scene 7: Coming in more delirious. Energy bit too high. Easier to go into the praying and bigger contrast when getting into line “what is I doing”

Using breath to break the trance. Nice. Invest more. Good work. Too much when possessed? Not sure yet?

Oct. 20th, 2020

Scene 1 and 5

Note before: Live and react. Speech-to-text. Not the other way.

Addition to scene 5: Wearing shirt and take it off during the scene.

Prayer is still off to me.

This question must be answered:

Is the prayer sincere?

Does the prayer start slow then build or is it all one note?

What drives him to pray?

Oct. 21st, 2020

Costume Work

Scene 1: Boots, shirt, tie. Putting on Jacket – button up after throwing bell “No use in fussin”. Put on belt – “Den de revolution is at de post”

Hat on – “See you in Jail sometime”

Tissue in pocket to clean shoes?

Come in holding the jacket, then put on with [the line] “Oh, its you Smithers”

Scene 2: take off tie and unbutton

Scene 3: Hat gone, first 3 or 4 buttons [unbuttoned] Jacket still on

Scene 4: Jacket off

Spurs off

Changed into other shirt [more distressed shirt]

Scene 5: Shirt off, Boots off

Scene 6 and 7: Pants really ripped (in scene 7) bare foot and muscle shirt

Thought: Eyes closed for Scene 6.

New song: "I got the new world in my view"

Filming Day 1:

Scene 2

Continuity: Hat tilted to the right and front

Discover place to sit after seeing opening

Look through trees quicker, realistically; whatever that means.

Find 3 stones after lighting match

Filming days were long and I did not find to time journal afterwards so that is why my journal entries stop after day 1.

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Vita

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