

## **Process Workbook for Improvising and Devising**

### **The Process**

Improvising and devising has been one of the most enjoyable but challenging modules that I have done so far. It was enjoyable because of all the freedom we had as creatives, we were able to try out whatever we felt would work for the characters we created, it was also challenging for the same reason because we haven't done anything like this before and a lot of us were not used to directing ourselves and developing our own scenes for a full on show.

When we first started these sessions, I didn't expect to learn more about Improvisation and realise just how useful and important it is to us as actors, I have never used improv in this way before, in my past experiences with the skill I have only used it as a warm-up and to block a scene that we've had yet to play out in a play or a musical, but I've never used it to devise, such as creating a background for my character or a storyline on the spot.

The challenging aspect of this module was knowing what enough and what was not enough for our scenes and our characters, not just for this but for general improvisations and the bits that did not make it into the final cut of our show, sometimes it was hard knowing when it was dragging on and if it was too short. We did get over the pacing issues in our finished scenes by speed running through the lines and movements so we could discover where that awkwardness and pause was, but it was difficult to overcome for the improv games we played.

A secondary challenge for me and the group faced was scenes changing due to continuity issues or them being no longer needed because they don't offer anything more to the current story, many of us had to adapt to so many changes but I felt that we were able to adapt really considering all the changes that were made to our scenes, we were able to knuckle down as a group and figure out a solution to our problems faced.

### **Session Rules**

As a group we came up with a list of rules that we would follow in our improv sessions so that we could work together to our fullest potential, those rules include;

1. Listening to each other
2. Respect Others
3. Don't Play for Laughs
4. Be Ok for Normalcy

5. Open to All Ideas
6. Never say No!
7. Be Playful
8. Know when to give up the Spotlight

### **Character**

My character's name is Thomas, he is in a relationship with Cat, and he feels that he can himself around her as he is very shy and has confidence issues around other people at the reunion. His confidence issues come from being bullied and shot down by the ones he has feelings for so many times when he was younger. He is not looking forward to the reunion because of people like Joe, who were responsible for picking on him when they were in school and seeing him will bring back those memories, but he is still going to the reunion regardless because Cat is really excited about it and he wants to see Cat happy so he's putting his personal history behind to make it to the party with her.

Throughout Thomas's appearances in the show, we see those trust issues come back when Cat meets up with Joe at the reunion and they talk, Thomas overhears the last of the conversation and begins to question things when Cat refers to him as her "Friend" causing him to leave the reunion heartbroken. The last time we see Thomas is when he walks in on Cat and Joe playing Wii Golf and he is upset because they are playing without him because playing Wii Golf is Thomas's and Cat's favourite thing to do, the issues are resolved when it is confirmed that Joe and Cat are only playing a game together which reassures Thomas and he is able to work on his relationship with Cat and he even becomes friends with Joe.

### **Thomas's Story Arc**

In one of our sessions, we created an arc that our characters go through in the play so that we were able to show that journey and physicalise the emotions these characters go through, Thomas's Arc goes like this;

Act 1 – Nervousness and Panicked – Thomas starts off very nervous and panicked because he and Cat are only reminded about the reunion a couple of hours prior to the event, so there is a mad rush that happens to make sure they look the part.

Act 2 – Betrayal – This comes from Thomas overhearing the conversation between Cat and Joe and being called a “Friend”.

Act 3 – Reassured – This comes from finding out that Cat and Joe were only playing a game and not Cat cheating on Thomas.

### **Script**

The script for our devised show contained about 35 pages and over 9000 words when we combined all our script material together. Our show is called ‘One Night Only’ and follows an array of different stories that interlock with one another, all centered around a reunion between old friends from secondary school, things don’t turn out well for some as there is a lot of problems that arise such as lies and cheating.

### **Evaluation**

Overall, I think that the show went incredibly well considering all the nerves everybody had prior to the performance but we managed to keep each other calm and put out a good show, I do think it was the best I've done it although I do think I could have been louder in some scenes, such as the party scene, I felt that I was too quiet for every audience member to hear properly and my emotions didn’t come across correctly because of that, if I were to do this show again that is what I would work on.

### **Reference List**

Big Think (2016) A Lesson on Improv Techniques, With Chris Gethard | Big Think. Available at: [A Lesson on Improv Technique, with Chris Gethard | Big Think - YouTube](#) (Accessed: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023).

Christopher Farlow (2015) Rules of Improvisation. Available at: [Rules of Improvisation - YouTube](#) (Accessed: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023).