

The World Goes Round: Reflective Journal

Unlike traditional theatre, “immersive theatre aims to transform audience members from passive recipients to active participants” (Woltmann, S., 2023). This was true in our Production 1 ‘The World Goes ‘Round’. As a performer, I took on both an individual character and my role as an artist, requiring adaptability and detailed character work with a high level of audience engagement.

The purpose of this reflection is to evaluate my performance and creative process. Identifying strengths and areas for development in order to improve my training within the musical theatre degree. This reflection will be structured using Gibbs’ Reflective Cycle to gain insight, learn from mistakes, and improve future achievement.



Lewis, A. (2026) ‘Coloured Lights’ moment from dress run. In: *The World Goes ‘Round*: WAVDA

Description

The musical itself was a 1991 *revue*, featuring the work of an American composer John Kander and lyricist, Fred Ebb. It celebrated their collaboration of songs from acclaimed production such as *Chicago*, *Cabaret*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, and many others. With over 20 songs and stories, the revue showcased jazz music, bold storytelling; exploring social issues, theatrical compositions and complex characters. (Theatre Trip, 2026). 'A perfect intro of what to explore of their work without watching an entire musical.'

Our director, **Mathew Holmquist**, shared his vision with the team. He imagined the piece set in 1942 tavern in Europe, where we, as the cast, were the artists creating music despite the world beyond the walls. He also explained that the performance would be staged *in the round* and at the *Haywood Black Box Theatre* and emphasized that the process was going to be warmly collaborative.

Following the casting process, I was given the song ***The Grass Is Always Greener*** from ***Woman of The Year*** (Stageagent, 2025), which I performed as a duet with Ella Foster-Smith. We

Our director collaborated with us to help us develop our character. Through background research and immersing myself in the era and story I developed, Lola Felli, a refugee who worked hard to start a new life in Europe working as a housekeeper and nanny but living with the new fear of occupation by the Nazis. I was also asked to develop a piece of spoken words that reflected my character. I selected two poems, which I combined and adapted to create an original ending.

In addition to my main character I participated in several ensemble numbers, contributing through singing and choreography by **David Laugharne** and **Tori Johns**. These numbers included *The World Goes 'Round*, *Dear One*, *Money Money*, *Go Back Home*, *Sara Lee* and *All That Jazz*.

The 4-week process concluded with four performances, needing me to use all the skills and development from my training at WAVDA.

Feelings

During the rehearsal process, I felt a whirlwind of emotions-excitement, curiosity, and a touch of nervousness. Matt's concepts of an immersive experience left me both puzzled and curious about how the songs and story will fit' within the context of the piece. However, his evident passion and the opportunity to meet him before rehearsal made me feel at ease and excited for the process.

The auditions results left me displeased and self-conscious because I got a duet not a solo. I questioned my audition song choice, whether I had showcased my abilities enough, and I was anxious about relying on and working with a partner. Despite that feeling I focused on the training I received, on my technique, being prepared, being organised and rehearsing as much as possible.

As the rehearsals continued, my excitement grew. My confidence with the duet has improved. My duet partner is neurodivergent, so I did my best to support her too. I loved exploring the music with David, experimenting with choreography under Tori's guidance, and gradually discovering my character. At times, I felt frustrated when I missed cues or struggled with lines (e.g. Money Song and Grass Is Always Greener), but these moments taught me resilience and the importance of rehearsal etiquette.



Lewis, A. (2026) *'The Grass Is Always Greener' moment from dress run.* In: *The World Goes 'Round: WAVDA*

During production I experience a mix of nervousness, excitement and sometimes frustration when things didn't go perfectly. Still, I cherished connecting with my peers and fully inhabiting the world, leaving me with a deep sense of appreciation for the entire cast and crew.

Evaluation

The biggest positive of the rehearsal process was the opportunity to collaborate with skilled peers and the creative team. Working with Matt, David, and Tori allowed me to explore new approaches to performances, while Matt's use of Michael Chekhov's technique helped me understand 'Psychological Gestures' (Webmaster,2025), using physical movements to express Lola's inner emotions. Eve Wilson's set and costume designer also enhanced my ability to inhabit the world of the musical, and seeing the complete vision connected me more deeply.

Through my collaborative work with DGH and my ensemble work in previous modules this year, I was able to recognise a clear improvement in my ensemble performance skills. I found it easier to pick up material and was able to secure my harmony parts early in rehearsals, which demonstrated how my prior training has strengthened my musical awareness and confidence within a group setting.

On the other hand, there were challenges. Being constantly active was energy-sapping; and mentally draining, especially with bright lights and working in the dark, secluded spaces. At times, the energy needed for certain numbers left me worn out. There were moments where cast members could not sustain professionalism during production.

My own preparation, including keeping a binder with all materials and using an Excel spreadsheet to track scores and ensemble recordings, helped me manage these challenges effectively.

Analysis

Reflecting on the rehearsal and production process has helped me to identify the factors that influenced both the successes and challenges I experienced. The collaborative approach encouraged by my director allowed me to explore my character in greater depth. Through guided questioning and experimenting with gestures that felt natural, I was able to communicate Lola's emotions more effectively, enhancing audience engagement.

The immersive nature of the production, particularly acting in the round, required adaptability and a heightened awareness of audience interaction. As noted, "*acting in a round space exposes you the most and can be the most thrilling*," (Rodenburg, 2002, p. 282) which I found to be both challenging and rewarding. At times, my energy levels did not align with certain numbers, highlighting the need to further develop my stamina and physical resilience. This reinforced the importance of physical preparation in maintaining consistent performance quality across all four productions.

Additionally, my preparation methods, including maintaining a binder of materials and tracking ensemble work, had a positive impact on my performance. This experience emphasised the importance of organization, proactive problem-solving, and critical thinking within a professional performance environment.

Kailyn Nieva Todd-Rosal (2404772)
Production 1
ADPB6001
Written Reflection Journal

Accessed to personal research:

[The World Goes 'Round: Character Development - Google Drive](#)

[The World Goes 'Round: Context Research Notes - Google Drive](#)

Bibliography:

Woltmann, S. (2023). *What Is Immersive Theater?* [online] Backstage.com. Available at: <https://www.backstage.com/magazine/article/immersive-theatre-explained-75850/>.

Everyman Theatre. (2023). *The World Goes 'Round | Everyman Theatre*. [online] Available at: <https://everymantheatre.org/event/world-goes-round/> [Accessed 27 Mar. 2026].

Theatre Trip. (n.d.). *The World Goes 'Round: Musical Info & Synopsis*. [online] Available at: <https://www.theatretrip.com/the-world-goes-round/>.

McLeod, S. (2025). *Gibbs Reflective Cycle*. [online] Simply Psychology. Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/gibbs-reflective-cycle.html>.

Ovrtur.com. (2026). *Woman of the Year (Original Broadway Production, 1981) | Ovrtur: Database of Musical Theatre History*. [online] Available at: <https://ovrtur.com/production/2882263>.

Themusicallyrics.com. (2026). *Woman of the Year - PLOT SYNOPSIS*. [online] Available at: <https://themusicallyrics.com/w/83-woman-of-the-year-musical-songs/8245-plot-synopsis.html> [Accessed 27 Mar. 2026].

Stageagent.com. (2025). *Woman of the Year (Musical) Plot & Characters | StageAgent*. [online] Available at: <https://stageagent.com/shows/musical/2029/woman-of-the-year>.

Webmaster (2025). *What is Chekhov's Acting Technique?* [online] Acting Magazine. Available at: <https://actingmagazine.com/2025/05/what-is-chekhovs-acting-technique/>.

Kailyn Nieva Todd-Rosal (2404772)
Production 1
ADPB6001
Written Reflection Journal

Rodenburg, P. (2002) *The actor speaks: Voice and the performer*. 2nd edn. London:
Metheun Drama.