

REFLECTIVE ESSAY

PRODUCTION 1

ADPB6001

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AI ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated text as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used before, and after the use of AI tools which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

As part of this module, we worked on a show called 'The World Goes Round'. Our production was directed by Matthew Holmquist, musically directed by David Laugharne, and choreographed by Victoria Johns. As a group, we worked on this production as an ensemble, as well as individually to create an immersive and political piece of theatre. In this essay I will be critically analyzing my journey through the rehearsal process and performances, reflecting on what went well and what I could've done differently.

At the beginning of the production, we were tasked with creating our own characters under the context of the show. Our show was set in the midst of WW2 in Europe, in a small tavern used for people to express their true selves without judgment from an unaccepting society, so I wanted to create a character who wouldn't have necessarily been socially accepted out of the Tavern, to convey the safeness of the setting. With help from my director, we found it best that my character identifies as queer and Jewish. These two traits gave me a lot to research and raised the stakes for my character by a mile. After discovering this about my character, I was tasked with reading a collection of leaflets written from 1942-1943 by the White Rose Resistance Group, a group of German students who distributed six pamphlets calling for sabotage and rebellion against the Nazi regime. Their work highlighted atrocities against Jews and urged citizens to fight for freedom. (Wikipedia Contributors, 2018) Once read, I highlighted information that stood out to me, and information that would have been important to my character and chose an extract that I believed was impactful enough to be read during the show. Researching into these leaflets brought me closer to my character and inspired me to dig deeper into the topic, to make sure I gave the best performance I possibly could, and to ensure I successfully educated and struck the audience with the information that I had discovered. Doing research gives

you the foundation and background to help make your character believable to an audience. Research helps you understand a character fully in terms of why he/she does the things they do and thinks the way they think. (Hishon, K. No date)

When preparing the extracts to be read, I found myself unsure of where to go with the readings of them. As I am dyslexic, I stressed a lot about having to read out loud, as it is something I have never felt very confident with, and knowing how much of an important topic was at hand, I was fearful of not doing the leaflets justice. Individuals with dyslexia may have learned that being in the company of others places them at risk for making public mistakes and the inevitable negative reactions that may ensue. (International Dyslexia Association, 2016) The information and research that I had gathered from these leaflets helped a lot in the development of my character, however, I felt that I wasn't going to be able to fully show the audience how much this information mattered to me and character, as I became so focused on reading accurately. To overcome this, I tried my best to learn the extracts at hand and pick up on key words that could prompt me as to what the next few lines would be. As I didn't have time to learn the whole thing for the performances, these techniques worked best for me, and I found that they were successful when it came to reciting the leaflets during the show to an audience.

Our show was set in the round, which meant that we had audience in every direction, and performed in all areas of the stage. In the round staging can provide an intimate atmosphere and fully immerse the audience in the play. (BBC, No date) We were set in a tavern and tasked with interacting with audience members throughout the show to bring the setting to life. This was my first time interacting with audience members during a show and was something that I found equal parts exciting and daunting. The improvisation aspect of conversating with audience members in character was initially quite challenging, as it required me to have to think on the spot, and keep the energy high when doing so, even if I got minimal response back, but I found that the more I pushed myself out of my comfort zone to go and talk to more people, and ask new questions, the more confident I became, and the more fun I had. I discovered that asking the audience questions about themselves right off the bat allowed me to get a feel for how comfortable they are improvising with me, questions that set the scene and allowed them to use their imagination. "The improviser has to understand that his first skill lies in releasing his partner's imagination" (Johnstone, 2018) As mentioned previously, I feel that I pushed myself out of my comfort zone and was able to communicate successfully with most members of the audience. There were some instances where I did not get much response back from people, but I feel as though I dealt with them accordingly and made people feel as at ease as they could under the circumstances. Through this experience, I have gained a new appreciation for improvisation and want to build my skills. Being good at improvisation

can help you stand out, proving that you are engaged, adaptable, character-aware, and comfortable under pressure. Having good improvisation skills can help you land the role you want. (Italia Conti, 2025)

Overall, I learnt a lot from this experience and have gained new skills that I am able to take with me and put into professional practice. Through being challenged personally and creatively, my skillset has expanded and I now have the courage to push myself out of my comfort zone and trust that growth and good things come from it. I now have the skills and techniques I need to conduct thorough research when building a character from scratch, which will prove useful to me in future projects.

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