

“In what ways has your work on the production helped to realise the director’s intended vision of the piece?”

I believe Geinor and Dan’s intended vision is to show the communities (ensembles) view on their surroundings/setting and on the principal characters. I believe their vision is also to show the humanity of the characters. They also had the vision of the production to look like a film onstage, with the use of transitions and a zoom in on the characters’ lives.

Their vision of the piece through the community’s eyes meant that they want the audience to come in to the auditorium and believe they have been transported back in time to the 1800’s. I have helped this vision through my research into the treatment of women and their role in society, *‘The first thing of importance is to be content to be inferior to men, inferior in mental power in the same proportion you are inferior in bodily strength.’* (1) I implemented this into my portrayal of the character and I understood how unique Bathsheba was during the time period to be independent and speak up against men. To show the communities view on my character I have had to find the truth within Bathsheba, which in turn allows the ensembles reaction to my truth bring their vision to life on stage.

Their vision of humanity within the characters I have helped to realise through my emotional understanding of the character which has developed throughout the process. At the beginning of the process I was struggling with the vulnerability of the character, I was stern and harsh in my portrayal of her and in order to help their vision I had to find the emotional depth of the character and not just play her with one emotion throughout. I was struggling with this and it wasn’t until scene 13 that I found humour within the character; this was my hook into starting to understand her emotional depth and the way she was feeling. As we progressed further into rehearsals I found that if I was focused enough to think the way Bathsheba does then I was able to conjure up this emotional vulnerability that Geinor and Dan were asking me to bring to certain scene. I had my ultimate breakthrough in Scene 32 in which Fanny’s coffin is being brought in; I used the Stanislavski technique that I learnt in Bella Merlin’s *‘The Complete Stanislavski Toolkit’*. Merlin says *‘respiration plus rhythm forms the foundations of your creative work.’* (2) I used this technique and thinking what Bathsheba would, about how this is the woman who Frank truly loved, to allow myself to become emotionally vulnerable. It wasn’t until a full run through where my emotion had built up and I was thinking Bathsheba’s thoughts throughout, that I was finally able to let this emotional climax happen.

I have helped to create this film like style for the piece through understanding that all the scenes especially in Act II roll into one, but more importantly that time has passed between each of these scenes. Therefore, I have had to understand and plot exactly what this time is and what has happened, in terms of the story line and my emotional journey, to allow the audience to follow the story clearly.

Bibliography:

1 – ‘Victorian Women’ – Joan Perkin – 1993 – John Murray Publisher’s Ltd – Chapter 2

2- ‘The Complete Stanislavski Toolkit’ – Bella Merlin – 2007 – Nick Hern Books Limited – Chapter 1 Pg 42