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### Dramaturgy: A Critically Necessary Practice

Dramaturgy is a situated practice to apply historically backed knowledge to a production process, and we are at the beginning of the age where dramaturgy is a normative process. This practice is heavily important to understand a piece of Theatre, but also acts with respect both to a playwright and the audience a company is presenting it to. Although, to discuss dramaturgy, it is important to address the lack of its practices in institutions as taught to undergraduate students at UC San Diego. My first interaction with dramaturgy happened during an Asian theater performance production, *Sotoba Komachi*, which I was working on at the beginning of my fourth year of undergraduate studies. After seeing the impacts dramaturgical work had on the actors and company in the production, I knew I wanted to research and understand more about what dramaturgy meant, but I wasn't sure where to start. So, I threw myself into an honors thesis project as a dramaturg in search of some understanding. The following reflection is the product of that project, where I will advocate for dramaturgy to become a situated practice in required coursework at UCSD.

As a practice that seeks to find a deeper understanding of dramatic text, dramaturgy is a crucial aspect of production. Considering this, it is critical to introduce the importance of positionality into the dramaturgical process. Positionality is a term born of research studies that refer to a critical analysis of one's approach to work that centers and identifies their intersections of identities and how that affects their studies. As described in an article by Martin and Gunten, "positionality is a concept that acknowledges that we are all raced, classed, and gendered and

that these identities are relational, complex, and fluid positions rather than essential qualities” (46). I am a cis-gendered white woman with chronic health issues that grew up with a single mother in the working class. As such, I approach play analysis with a mindset that frames the various identities I hold. I look for the women in my plays, and I explore what it means to be a woman in that world when they are present. But on top of that identity, I look for the representations of disability in these plays and acts of performance. I ask questions such as, how do we see women as full intersectional people and where are the moments of truth, and what is contested about living with disabilities, both physical and mental. I have the privilege of easily seeing my Irish and German heritage take place on the stage. Acknowledging the various aspects of my identity, I hope to continue this discussion of dramaturgy both as a formal practice, as well as a personal practice.

To move forward in this reflection, it is important to define the practice of dramaturgy, although I will leave the telling of historic timelines to other authors, such as Turner and Behrndt (2008) who have done much research on this. Although we will discuss a few definitions for dramaturgy and dramaturg, it is an ever-changing role, so this should continually be re-examined. Dramaturgy is described by Michael Chemers in their book *Ghost Light: An Introductory Handbook for Dramaturgy* as the process of being a “member of the artistic team of a production who is a specialist in the transformation of a dramatic script into a meaningful living performance” (Chemers, 5). My understanding of this definition is to see the dramaturg as a company member who aids in adapting a play from the two-dimensional script into a physical manifestation on stage while staying true to the discussions and conversations of the script. One additional comment Chemers adds to identify the situated practices of a dramaturg is how they are “keepers both of the knowledge of theater practice of the past and of the wisdom necessary to

apply that knowledge to create the theater of the future” (5-6). This statement was helpful in situating my practices as it digests the impacts of dramaturgy and what the role can take shape as in the rehearsal room of a production process. This practice of a dramaturg as someone who actively builds the future while framing the knowledge of the past reminds me a lot of the practices we take up in education and politics. To shape the future, we have to know the past, and in doing so we can create a future of equity and harmony.

As this is a reflective process, I would also like to add my own working definition of dramaturgy. After the process of *Everybody*, I define dramaturgy as the practice of supporting a theatrical production through historical, social, and environmental research. Firstly, it starts with discussion and extensive research on the time period of the show being examined. This means finding books, pop culture icons, music, and symbolism of a time period when applicable to the show. It also means researching social factors shaping the influence of both the playwright and their personal time frame, as well as historical time frames with worldwide, local, and hyper-local news and events. In the case of *Everybody* which has a modern setting, I accomplished this in a different way, which will be discussed later. In addition to all of this, there is also the importance of environmental research which can mean the impact of economic factors, social standing, climate change, healthcare access, racism, sexism, and homophobia amongst other similar factors. Researching these various things will give you an insight into the work that is being produced and give you specific knowledge of references and symbolism inside of the dialogue, structure, and movement of a play. After these three steps, there is the additional part of dramaturgy in the room where alongside the cast and director, one discovers new sections of research and discussion that are applicable to the specific production. For instance, this happened

in the room with *Everybody* when we began exploring auras and their various meanings in meditation, as I will discussed later.

Now that we have explored my personal understanding and definition of the concept of dramaturgy, I would like to explore my process with dramaturgy for *Everybody* by Branden Jacob-Jenkins. This thesis exploration is all due to the completion of a capstone project during my senior year which was completed in the production of *Everybody* for the Department of Theatre and Dance at the University of California, San Diego for the 2021-2022 season. This production was a great space for me to start off my dramaturgy journey and explore how to support one production in its artistic process. This production included a significant amount of research into the original play this is based on, *Everyman*, which has no known author. Before being able to discuss our production, its process, and my work as the dramaturg, it is important to address the impacts of COVID-19 on this production. As the company began working on the play, COVID-19 reached a new peak and sent us online for the first two weeks of the production process, as well as extending the process by two weeks. As COVID-19 is a large concern, processes in the room for rehearsal and possibilities for the presentation of the production were also adapted for cautiousness and safety. Understanding this, I want to explain some of the most important themes present in *Everybody*, and how they impacted the dramaturgical process in light of the pandemic.

*Everybody* is a play that explores death, its randomness, and what happens once we die and go to the other side. Ultimately though, this play teaches its audiences about love and life, telling viewers to cherish what is in front of them as we have no way of knowing what happens once we die. The director of our production, Daniel Jáquez was interested in exploring this show as a meditation on death and its different stages, as well as using the 3-minute interlude of Scene

13 to explore the Aztec folklore of Mitclān and Mictlantecuhtli. These ideas of love, death, randomness, afterlife, and Aztec stories were the driving points for my personal research and understanding of the show. It was imperative to stay as close as possible to the randomness of the show while being proactive for the health of the company and COVID-19 guidelines. This was a large hurdle for the production as it is written to be a lottery for five of the actors, having their roles be chosen on the stage during the second scene of the play. Brandon Jacob-Jenkins emphasized the role of randomness through this lottery but also having these actors, and those playing death, usher, love, evil, and little girl all emerge from the audience at various points throughout the play.

The reshaping of how the story was told with limited audience interaction came from decisions made by everyone in the faculty of the department, as well as between the various levels of the company members' comfortability. Ultimately, the show participated in the lottery for looks only and the actors had predetermined roles at the start of the production process. The actors all were placed only in the front of the audience, and Death was removed from the audience, coming from backstage instead. These changes challenged our company to face enhancing the elements of randomness as much as possible in ways beyond the lottery and audience selection.

Despite COVID-19 providing the challenges we explored, I still got to do a lot of amazing work as a dramaturg, which we shall explore now. In my role as dramaturg, I began first by reading the script three times. I used the first reading as a chance to explore and record my first impressions and reactions to the show, as well as noting the places I found confusing. The second reading is a much slower process that allows me to stop, reread, and gain an understanding of the various places of confusion. Additionally, I use the second round to note

any words, concepts, or historical context that would need to be researched and defined. After completing my second reading, I stopped to research my list and was in the process of recording research for the actor's packet and preparing for my third reading before going into our rehearsal process. Truthfully, this type of in-depth reading is one of the foundational steps to being prepared for the rehearsal room, and it was one of my first times taking this step. The productions I engaged in previous to COVID-19 were very different in treating intimacy and dramaturgy as foundational posts for the play to exist. The work I was presented within the Text Analysis for Directors class taught in the Fall of 2021 with Vanessa Stalling, taught me how valuable it is to read a script multiple times before even entering a room. The class worked on finding common themes, super objectives, the big idea, the major dramatic question, root action statements, crisis, climax, and catastrophe just to name a few. This class was impactful for me, as it taught me how a director begins to break down a script which all came in handy coming towards the script as a dramaturg. The main lesson that I applied from this class is the research methodologies used to understand the emotional, socio-political, and personal circumstances that affect the various characters to create the structure of the play and reveal the lessons the play is teaching us.

The dramaturgy packet is an essential culmination of the research completed, and to understand how the research fits together, we should explore my process of making the packet. The process started with meeting with director Jaquez to explore any expectations, questions, or concerns he had for the show. One of the first things that became evidently important to include in the packet was the chronological order of the show. The reason being was to aid the exploration Jaquez wanted to experience with our production as a meditation on death and the cycle of those stages. Although, the packet just included a general breakdown of the stages of the

show and didn't include the ways in which meditation might appear or take shape, which is something I would change for the future. During tech we got to discuss this more by talking about the various stages of auras and chakras and how the color cycle of the show extended in a sequential motion aligned with aura and chakra colors. This is something I have reflected on as a change that I would have made to include in the original packet as it helped add some foundation to how colors have a presence and influence on the show and emotional states. The other important aspect of the dramaturgy the director and I discussed was exemplifying to the cast that our production was not like the original *Everyman*. It was important to Jaquez that we made the distinction of this play being modern and applicable, instead of dated and old-timey.

Throughout the process of the show, and creating the dramaturgy packet, I worked very closely with the Director. The relationship between director and dramaturg is a unique and important space. My experience revealed how the director is crucial for seeing a vision of the show through, between design and actors, while the dramaturg aids in ensuring the integrity of the script and playwright in the director's vision. From the beginning of this process, Jaquez and I would meet on a regular basis to discuss the show's progress and its various goals for the upcoming weeks. Ensuring the integrity manifested in a few different ways including providing feedback on changes to stage direction. An example of this for *Everybody* was to explore why the Little Girl leaves in scene eight with Kinship and is it imperative for the little girl to leave to become time? There is a more in-depth discussion of this question included in the supplemental materials, but to shortly explain, it was important for Kinship to bring her off-stage for tactics of Kinship as well as an additional element of randomness in the play. Additionally, to become Time, the exit was necessary to clear the space of her having time metaphorically run out for *Everybody*. Feedback was also applied in the final process of the production phase, tech and

dress rehearsals. In these spaces, I would sit in various spots around the theatre creating notes on how the music, lights, set was impacting the story we were trying to tell. There were moments when I gave feedback on the color pallet for the scene with Friendship as the colors did not align with those that we had discussed in the meditative cycles. The important interactions to highlight in the dramaturg and director connection were how we both were supporting the show's vision and I helped by making sure his vision and the playwright's intentions showed throughout the play.

Equipped with this developed sense of a dramaturgical lens and in-room process, it's important to acknowledge how dramaturgical research on historical processes tie into world-building. A large part of the process for *Everybody* is understanding the historical context of where the play comes from. This is a morality play which is a concept of play that discusses life questions through the personification of qualities, seen in this play with Death, Time, Stuff, and Love. To begin understanding this, I started my dramaturgy process by reading through *Everyman* and looking at the allegorical concepts present in the original play versus our adaptation. The original play deals with a similar timeline and structure, asking for the company of friends, then from cousins and kinship, and finally for Stuff's company. I found this structure interesting as it has some commentary on our social circle and how its presence in life is valued in the face of death. It says something about who we might talk to when faced with death. Firstly, we find Friendship who says they would go to hell and back but upon hearing about the scary journey backs out. This set-up was particularly interesting to me, as friendships are a large source of our social and emotional well-being, but this model also reveals how friendship can be easily betrayed or not as long-lasting as we presume it to be. As *Everybody* continues on the journey they find Kinship and Cousin next, who also both refuses to join on the journey.



Although Cousin does offer some interesting insight as to why Everybody will not find a person for companionship on their journey, this will be explored further later. Everybody again is failed by their social circle, but the interesting historical facet of this interaction is the examination of the family and social dynamic. The family structure and group have always been a sight of contradiction and this could be why we can consider family as the second step of this search for companionship.

The final point of desperation for Everybody leads them to ask their belongs to take the journey to death with them. Once again, they are faced with a no, but this scene discusses the long-standing obsession with material objects that human beings are faced with. After a conversation with the director, I got to dive into some research on the human obsession with materialistic objects and ownership. One of the things that became prevalent was the idea of the Ikea Effect. Researchers Norton, Mochon, and Ariely talk about the term coined the Ikea Effect which discusses how the labor poured into our material objects, i.e. building Ikea furniture, creates increased importance to the builder (Norton et al). The other interesting psychological impact of stuff and ownership was talked about by Belk who says, “possessions can also symbolically extend self, as when a uniform or trophy allows us to convince ourselves (and perhaps others) that we can be a different person than we would be without them.” (Belk, 145). These perspectives on object ownership offered the company insight on how Everybody tries to find comfort in Stuff, but yet again is let down. Knowing the psychological effects of ownership on material possessions, influenced the impacted the emotional drives of the character Everybody in their journey, ultimately leading them closer and closer to death with a resigned spirit.

As *Everybody* has now come to a close there are a few takeaways from this process that act as teaching and learning moments for the future. The takeaways that resonate profoundly from this process include that of creating a dramaturgical lens born of understanding the world through a pandemic, discovering the holistic development of a world through research, and the necessity of dramaturgy to become a pedagogical practice not only in the university setting but throughout a theatrical career. To understand the work that produced *Everybody*, it became evident that navigating a mid-COVID world, especially in a Theater performance that so heavily interacts with audiences, was only possible by looking through a specific dramaturgical lens. This lens came from an understanding of the world that is centered on how precious the gift of life is, and how quickly we can find ourselves losing that gift. Just like one might have experienced during the Spanish Flu pandemic, the company of *Everybody* found ourselves navigating the sickness or loss of our family members, which informed a sense of agency in the framing of randomness and highlighting themes of love in the production. The main impact that should be highlighted from this experience is the discovery that informing our performances with personal and historical experience produces work with an increased impact. When work is coming from the heart and letting the production members bring their authentic selves into the room, there is healing, exploration, and lessons learned. This applies to the dramaturgy lens with its attempts to make space on the stage to understand the socio-political impacts of the Theatre. *Everybody* broke down socio-political impacts by addressing how as a society we can be so caught in between social standing and material wealth, we lose sight of the connection between each other. Additionally, this work engages with political stances on the ultimate question, what happens when we die, and recenters audiences to remind them that by being stuck on this question, we miss the life that is happening in the present.

Earlier, there was an extensive discussion on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the production process for *Everybody*. Not only did these impacts shape the importance of the dramaturgical lens for the process, but it also relates to the importance of understanding how history impacts a production. The COVID-19 pandemic is history in the making, and every single person is currently navigating their way through it. History changes our perception of the world, both from making it and from learning about it, which is another key takeaway from this production. Being a Dramaturg for the first time taught me just how important the history of society affects the lessons we are learning on stage. *Everybody* challenged me to get more intimately familiar with the inquiries on death that various societies have experienced, like with my research of Mitclān. History informs us how after all the advancements that have been created by modern society, we do not and will not know what happens after death, and this will remain a major philosophical question. Even though every show explores and teaches different topics, the crucial nature history plays in theatrical works even when they're new plays is a major lesson. After this production and paper, it is my hope that we can begin to develop a culture that addresses history as the first step in understanding any production.

Finally, there is a need to address the impacts of everything that has been discussed here to look at how this applies to the undergraduate, high school, and all levels of theatrical work. I was in a space of privilege to be given the opportunity to work as a dramaturg on a show at UC San Diego, and I am forever grateful for that opportunity. Knowing this, I should not be an exception to the rule. Being a dramaturg gave me the space to explore history as well as interesting psychology to gain a more in-depth understanding of a play. At UC San Diego, there are a plethora of history classes to take as a Theatre major, but not a lot of opportunities to apply this knowledge. Dramaturgy is only offered in a graduate-level class and an undergraduate class

that is offered every other year. This is problematic because there are many requirements for the Theatre major as well as general education classes, creating little to no space for undergraduates to take this class. Working on dramaturgy was so fundamental in instituting my own learning, both in research methodologies and a grander understanding of the material, that it is something I wish I had more opportunity within the undergraduate system. This being said, the lesson I take away from this and that I urge you to take as well as the urgency with which we treat dramaturgy. If we are to train the next generation of Theatre makers, we should give them the tools to not only learn about history, but to apply it. Application of classroom knowledge is one of the greatest tools we have to learn, and we should inspire our theatre-makers to learn how to do this. This could take shape in multiple ways, but I suggest that moving forward there is an analysis of our history classes and creating a capstone class for the upper-division history series that is a quarter on Dramaturgy, where students learn to implement their historical knowledge into a dramaturgy packet for a play, even if it's not a staged production and just a theoretical one. These plays can increase diversity and inclusion on campus, getting to work with play materials not always seen on stage, such as Indigenous plays like *Kamloopa: An Indigenous Matriarch Story* by Kim Senklip Harvey, or by authors with disabilities like *The Things We Carry* by Oya Mae Duchess-Davis. Creating this pedagogy at UC San Diego would enable students like myself to graduate with empowerment in conducting work that is meaningful and has researched roots.

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# EVERYBODY

By Branden Jacobs-Jenkins



Directed by Daniel Jáquez

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## A Note from the Dramaturg

The play *Everybody* is Branden Jacobs-Jenkins's humorous adaptation of *The Somonyng of Everyman*, which was written in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The director's statement provided by Daniel Jáquez gives a directive that we are approaching this adaptation with heed in acknowledging the multitude of challenges present in our lives. These things include COVID, incurable sickness, violence, wars, and injustice, but the list does not end there. These are our current forefronts that are taking mental and physical space in the life of every one of us and our audience members. In a mid-pandemic world, I want to highlight the importance of this play being taken on right now.

In the past two years, and maybe all our lives, we have watched numerous friends, family, and community members lose their lives. We are always faced with the ultimate question: What is after death and how do we know we did life correctly? That is exactly what the original play intended to ask as well. Written in the 15th century, a time where continental Europe was facing the Sweating Sickness, an epidemic much like what we are facing today, and many people were dying at a rather quick and alarmingly high rate. Thus, we see plays of an allegorical setting rise and give us the work that Branden Jacobs-Jenkins has adapted to this modern age. Why is this important? If people in the 15th century were trying to discover and understand what happens after death, much like how people are today, we can surmise that this question might be unanswerable. This question clearly stands the test of time to rattle human beings into continuous wonder about what is in the unknown, and how random death truly is, even to this day.

Knowing that we are still grappling with this large life question, I want to note how connected it is with the element of randomness included in Jacobs-Jenkins's play. Connecting to the lottery aspect of *Everybody*, we watch multiple people have a chance at being the chosen EVERYBODY. While we may not be participating in this element exactly in our version, we still follow randomness as much as possible. This randomness, much like how life chooses who



passes on and who does not in a certain moment connects us to the idea of what does happen after death. We do not know, yet it seems to be a question that is looming on the mind of any society, any person. This is also how we attain the origin stories and death rituals of various cultures, such as my family's personal ritual of hosting a Celebration of Life instead of a funeral, where we uplift the deceased with music, food, and fellowship between family and friends. There is lots of work to be done in the world, and with this production of *Everybody*, each of us is working to tackle that in regards to the pandemic and loss of many lives. May you head this production with a knowledge of how we approach death as individuals, societies, cultures, and at each angle of the intersectionality in our lives.

## Background

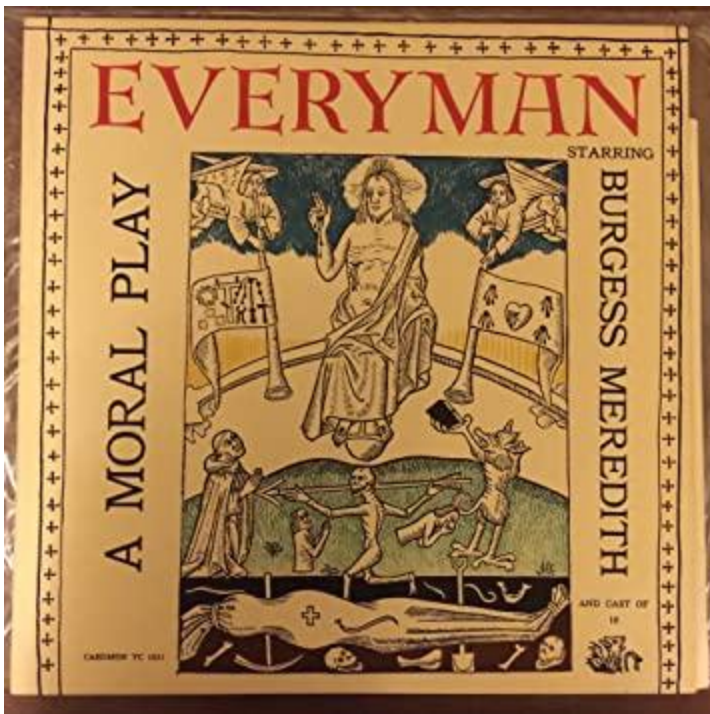
The original Off-Broadway Production of *Everybody* took place from January to March 2017 at the Signature Theatre in New York. The original production included a cast of 9 actors and was presented as part of Branden Jacobs-Jenkins's work in his Residency 5 program with the theater. Linked here, is a [trailer](#) of the original production, as well as an [inside view](#) of the first rehearsal for this production.

A “modern riff on the fifteenth-century morality play *Everyman* follows *Everybody* (chosen from amongst the cast by lottery at each performance) as they journey through life's greatest mystery—the meaning of living” (Dramatists Play Service).

*Everybody* is based on the play *Everyman* by an unknown author written during the Tudor period, 1485-1603 in England and Wales, and was amongst the first morality plays recorded in English. A short summary of this original play provided to us by the British Library states, “The play dramatizes Everyman's encounter with Death before the final judgment. God sees Everyman walking along with his mind on ‘fleshly lustes’, and sends Death to ask him for an account of his life, as a tally of good and bad deeds (A2r–A3r). Everyman tries to get other allegorical characters such as ‘Fellowship’ and material ‘Goods’ to join him on his journey, but he is forced to realize that they are no help to him. Ultimately, Knowledge directs him to make a Confession, and he gains forgiveness. But when he dies, Everyman is left only with his Good Deeds to help him get to Heaven” (British Library). In a Comparative Drama piece, Earl Schreiber writes about *Everyman* as done in a 1975 adaptation of the German version and how much we do not know, and what we do. He poses some important questions about *Everyman*, “How can spiritual values be dramatized for a society which is generally unreligious? How can death be depicted for an audience accustomed to cosmetize death? How can abstractions such as

Good Deeds be realized? How can the very familiar fable of Everyman be made fresh for a modern audience? How can the spectacle of theater be transformed for a visually jaded audience?" (Schreiber, p 106).

Found on the next page are images of what it is that *Everyman* might look like, something we are not. Please see the Director's Statement, to be reminded of the vision for this production.



There begynneth a treatyse how þe  
 fader of heuen sendeth dethe to sa-  
 mon euery creature to come and  
 gyue a counte of theyr lyues in  
 this worlde/and is in maner  
 of a morall playe.



# Director's Statement

*Everybody* by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins

The play *The Somonyng of Everyman*, written in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, is an allegorical morality play intended to guide humanity towards salvation. Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' version, **EVERYBODY**, with wit, humor, and the realness of present-day society, allows us to ask ourselves fundamental questions regarding the behaviors and the priorities in our lives.

It is said that everybody dies, that what's important is the journey. Nonetheless, there is a fascination with death. What do we actually do when we are faced with death? Do we take inventory, do we look back, do we look forward? Who do we do the looking with? Are we alone?

I don't know what I will do. Will I rejoice on the release of burdens the End brings? Be compelled to make amends? Relish on the possible pain inflicted on others upon my End? Maybe I will be inconsolable to the fact that I will exit this world alone.

As it was in the 15<sup>th</sup> century it is now a time when death is at the center of our everyday existence. Not the plague, nor duels, nor sweating sickness (which might have been the flu); but COVID, cancer, war, car crashes, gun violence, suicide. I strongly believe that we must own up to our responsibility as a Civilization, fulfill the ethical-moral contract we have as a species with our communities and focus more on the totality and less on the individuality. It is believed that Death is "just" and "unbiased" and that it takes "everyone" alike. Look around you, that is not what I see.

## Danse Macabre

La Danse Macabre is an allegorical concept of which the “all-conquering and equalizing power of death, [is] expressed in the drama, poetry, music, and visual arts of western Europe mainly in the late Middle Ages” (Britannica). To better understand this, it is necessary to note that an allegorical concept is a story or a poem that can be found to have a deeper, secondary meaning which is typically about politics or mortality (Merriam-Webster).

The most popular song for La Danse Macabre, published in 1538, is also known as the Dance of Death. Composed by Camille Saint-Saëns, has been performed numerous times to get a sample, here is a [recording](#), as well as a live [orchestral performance](#). The director for our show is working with inspiration from Aztec sounds and rituals, a sample of the [Danza a Mictlantecuhtli](#). The music included above should help you develop a feeling for what will be created in the room towards our “Scene XIII. La Danse Macabre”.

As noted above, Aztec mythology will play an important role in our production, so it is important to examine this now. Mictlantecuhtli (Pronunciation in English- a Video of [pronunciation](#), and written out, Meekt-lahn-te-koot-ly), the Aztec god of death and the underworld, is where our focus is grounded in for La Danse Macabre. Mitclān (MEEK-tlahn) is the underworld of Aztec mythology and contains nine layers, which it takes four years to cross. The levels of the underworld consist of, in the order they must be crossed, the river and the yellow dog, the mountains that must be crossed which are colliding, the obsidian mountain, the bitter winds, the banners, the place of being pierced by arrows, the place of wild beasts, a narrow palace, and finally the place where the soul is at rest (Dils, Part I). Should you wish to grasp a large understanding, the Podcast Youtube Series, Mexico Unexplained has [this great video](#).



## Definitions and Pronunciations

**USHER** “itself an adaptation of a slightly different, Dutch play called Elckerlijc-or Den Speyghel der Salicheyt van Elckerlijc-and about...” (3)

[Link](#) to a Website for a pronunciation video on *Elckerlijc-or Den Speyghel der Salicheyt van Elckerlijc*

**USHER** “So think about that and what you want to with the rest of your life, vis-à-vis that.” (4).

Vis-a-vis: In relation to/with regard to - Pronunciation [vee-zuh-veez] -

<https://youtu.be/gNXP2x72CS0>

**GOD** “The omniscient, The omnipotent, the omnipresent” (6).

Omniscient: Knowing Everything [aam-ni-shnt]

Omnipotent: Having unlimited power [aam-ni-puh-tnt]

Omnipresent: Widely or constantly encountered [aam-ni-preh-znt]

**DEATH** (Waxing poetic.) “And now out of thy sight I flee so make thee ready shortly for here's the day from which they say that no one living gets away!” (19).

Quote from the original writing of Everyman.

**SOMEBODY C** “It has something to do with your REM cycles” (22).

REM cycles, also known as rapid eye movement cycles, occur approximately 90 minutes into one's sleep and allow the person to have more vivid dreams. [Link](#) to a video for pronunciation of rem here, pronounced “rem” as it is an abbreviation not "arr ee emm". \

**EVERYBODY** “Your great tchotchke collection” (46).

A tchotchke is a small trinket that is typically more decorative than functional.

Pronunciation: chaach-keez

**EVERYBODY** “What does our being friends have to do with whether or not you're a cryptoracist” (53).

Cryptoracist: Someone who keeps their racism secret.



## Character Breakdown

Usher and Understanding: <b>Morgan Scott</b>	Played by an actual usher - or at least it should initially seem so.
God (Voice Over): <b>Colby Muhammad</b>	Voice Over. "God"
Evil: <b>Frida Villeda</b>	Virtue appearing in "The Journey"
Death: <b>Abby Huffsteler</b>	Played by the oldest actor in the company.
1st Somebody and Everybody: <b>Natalia Quintero-Riestra</b>	Played by an actor until they become something else. Played by a Somebody.
2nd Somebody and A and Cousin and Strength: <b>Sabrina Liu</b>	Played by an actor until they become something else. Played by the remaining somebodies.
3rd Somebody and B and Kinship and Mind: <b>Iris Feng</b>	Played by an actor until they become something else. Played by the remaining somebodies.
4th Somebody and C and Stuff and Beauty: <b>Kat Peña</b>	Played by an actor until they become something else. Played by the remaining somebodies.
5th Somebody and D and Friendship and Senses: <b>Ellen Nikbakht</b>	Played by an actor until they become something else. Played by the remaining somebodies.
Girl/Time: <b>Lisette Velandia</b>	Played by a young child stolen from the audience- or at least it should initially seem so.
Audience/Love: <b>Josiah Cajudo</b>	Played by an audience member- or at least it should initially seem so.

## Scene Breakdown

Scene Name	Page Numbers and Characters
I. Here beginneth a treatise on how someone or something - God? - Sendeth Death to summon every creature to come and account for their lives in the world, presented in the manner of a morality play	Pgs. 1-5 Usher
II. The Summoning	Pgs. 5-19 God, Death, 1st SMB, 2nd SMB, 3rd SMB, 4th SMB, 5th SMB, Usher
III. "And that's when I woke up..."	Pgs. 20-22 Everybody, A, B, C, D
IV. A Chorus	Pgs. 23-24 Everybody, SMBS
V. Friendship	Pgs. 25-32 Friendship, Everybody
VI. "This is a dream?"	Pgs. 32-34 Everybody, A, B, C, D
VII. A Chorus	Pgs. 35-36 Everybody, SMBS
VIII. Family	Pgs. 36-43 Cousin, Everybody, Kinship, Girl
IX. "I'm sorry I just have to say something"	Pgs. 43-45 Everybody, A, B, C, D
X. A Chorus	Pgs. 46-47 Everybody
XI. Stuff	Pgs. 47-52 Everybody, Stuff
XII. "You know what? Fuck you!"	Pgs. 52-56 Everybody, A, B, C, D, Audience Member (Love)
XIII. La Danse Macabre	Pg. 66

XIV. The Journey	Pgs. 67-82 Death, Everybody, Love, Usher (Understanding), Strength, Senses, Beauty, Mind, Evil, Time
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\*SMB = Somebody

\*\*Page Numbers Based on the updated script created by the PSM, Allison Bailey.

## Supplemental Materials

### Thoughts on Materialism, Objects, and Ownership.

- Obtaining stuff is a part of the human experience of the twenty-first century, but how that stuff impacts us is a bigger question.
- The phenomenon book, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up* by Marie Kondo, explores how to go through our things and let go of those that do not serve a purpose of joy. And how this ultimately makes us happier, and lighter and lets us appreciate the things we have and use.
- IKEA Effect: Psychological study on the impact of the work that goes into the labor of building the furniture gives it increased importance to the builder/owner.
  - Norton, Michael I, Daniel Mochon, and Dan Ariely. "The IKEA Effect: When Labor Leads to Love." *Journal of consumer psychology* 22.3 (2012): 453–460. Web.
- Even touching something, or closing your eyes and perceiving touching an object registers a sense of ownership over an item. This sense of ownership, or perceived ownership, gives a sense of belonging and adds to the general sense of connection and desire for objects.
  - Peck, Joann, Victor A Barger, and Andrea Webb. "In Search of a Surrogate for Touch: The Effect of Haptic Imagery on Perceived Ownership." *Journal of consumer psychology* 23.2 (2013): 189–196. Web.
- "Objects in our possession literally can extend self, as when a tool or weapon allows us to do things of which we would otherwise be incapable. Possessions can also symbolically extend self, as when a uniform or trophy allows us to convince ourselves (and perhaps others) that we can be a different person than we would be without them." (Belk, 145).
  - Belk, Russell W. "Possessions and the extended self." *Journal of consumer research* 15.2 (1988): 139-168.

Overall, the psychological impact of stuff, belongings, and possessions greatly contributes to the psychological grounding of who we are and our place in the world. Knowing this importance, it is important to recognize why EVERYBODY seeks out the comfort of bringing the stuff with them in this traveling to death. It represents who Everybody is, as we literally are our stuff, so

these things of importance make up who Everybody is and would aid in explaining her life to GOD.

**The question you proposed: Does the little girl have to leave to become time?**

My thoughts are yes, she does need to leave to become time. The way the little girl leaves during Scene VIII, *Family*, works to emphasize the element of randomness. She is randomly chosen by Kinship in order to escape the imminent death upon Everybody. Her being dragged off stage also works to emphasize the lack of choice in the matter.

If we closely look at the text, in Scene XIV, *The Journey*, the reentrance of the little girl now as time interrupts the ending between Understanding and Death. Her reentrance acts as a pivot on the final senses, and also represents the change in time. There is this exchange of words on page 78:

TIME

Are you guys almost done?

DEATH

Yes, yes. Just finished.

TIME

Great, sorry. Something entirely different has this space reserved, so we've gotta wrap things up, okay?

DEATH

We're just leaving.

If the little girl remained on the stage throughout instead of having her exit, it loses the strength and emphasis in the change of her role from little girl to time. The element of a shift in the space in the above dialogue would not be as impactful without her exit. The reappearance symbolizes the shift that we observe in this space that is continually moving on, despite the death, we have just witnessed with Everybody. Time being present for the death of Everybody would take away the element that she comes in within moving the space along. Moments before her entrance, Understanding is trying to break down what just happened to Everybody, and the reentrance of Time interrupts that to keep the world moving along. I believe that this reentrance acts as the interruption we find in life that keeps us moving even after something like death has happened, and thus leaving the stage to become time is necessary for the little girl.

## Works Cited

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### **Danse Macabre:**

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### **Danse Macabre Video Links:**

Camille Saint-Saëns - Danse Macabre: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyknBTm\\_YyM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyknBTm_YyM)

Camille Saint-Saëns - Danse Macabre (Live Orchestra):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=71fZhMXIGT4>

Danza a Miclantecuhtli: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKwJi0OBTs>

Miclantecuhtli, Aztec God of Death: Mexico Unexplained:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fp8bnNxdFZg>

How to Pronounce Mictlantecuhtli: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=78JlaS\\_RDG8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=78JlaS_RDG8)

**Definitions and Pronunciations:**

How to Pronounce Speyghel Der Salicheyt Van Elckerlijc:

[https://forvo.com/word/speyghel\\_der\\_salicheyt\\_van\\_elckerlijc/](https://forvo.com/word/speyghel_der_salicheyt_van_elckerlijc/)

How to Pronounce REM Sleep: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74pFKs3n3a0>