To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by James Carl Allen entitled "Combining Elements of Conventional Theatre and Readers' Theatre in Adapting and Staging An Original Script for Knoxville Community Theatre." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Speech and Theatre.

Thomas P. Cooke, Major Professor

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and recommend its acceptance:

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COMBINING ELEMENTS OF CONVENTIONAL THEATRE AND READERS' THEATRE IN ADAPTING AND STAGING AN ORIGINAL SCRIPT FOR KNOXVILLE COMMUNITY THEATRE

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Arts

Degree

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James Carl Allen

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ABSTRACT

This oral interpretation performance/research project was conceived to determine whether or not technical theatrical accoutrements such as music, dance, costumes, stage properties, business, movement and line memorization--common to conventional theatre--can be used effectively in a Readers' Theatre production.

This student directed the original Readers' Theatre piece *Many Voices*, compiled by Knoxville Community Theatre members for public performance at ten locations throughout Knoxville, Tennessee during November 1976. It was taped twice during December 1976 for public broadcasting over Channel 20, a local community cablevision station, and WUOT, the University of Tennessee radio station.

This thesis consists of a comparative analysis of Readers' Theatre definitions and theories and a record and analysis of the various technical theatrical accoutrements used in solving the production problems of *Many Voices*. It includes an explanation of the casting, a description of the rehearsals and physical aspects of the production, and an evaluation of the total production experience.

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Language is a very poor medium for expressing our emotional nature. It merely names certain vaguely and crudely conceived states, but fails miserably in any attempt to convey the ever moving patterns, the ambivalences and intricacies of inner experience, the interplay of feelings with thoughts and impressions, memories and echoes of memories, transient fantasy, or its mere runic traces, all turned into nameless, emotional stuff . . . . Language is quite inadequate to articulate such a conception.

Suzanne Langer
Philosophy in a New Key

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The theatre piece *Many Voices* was conceived by Knoxville Community Theatre to provide a 1976 winter production. Since Knoxville Community Theatre does not have a physical plant in which to produce plays, a production which could be adapted for touring was considered the practical method of raising funds and of keeping community theatre viable and before the public eye.

Many Voices was presented at ten locations throughout Knoxville, Tennessee during November 1976 and was taped twice during December 1976 for public broadcasting over Channel 20, a local community service cablevision station, and WUOT, the University of Tennessee radio station. The production was directed by James C. Allen in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Speech and Theatre Arts.

The production staff consisted of the following:

Musical Directors . . . . Charlene Gubitz, Jane Burke, James Allen

Choreographers . . . . Cindy Robertson, Gary Buttrey, James Allen

Set Designer . . . . . James Allen

Costume Designer . . . . . David Bennett

Performance Booker . . . . . Dan Owenby

Production Coordinator . . . . . Fran Shea

Stage Manager . . . . . Mary Kay Rosteck

The cast included:

Wayne Bledsoe	Charlene Gubitz, guitarist
Jane Burke	Martha Lee Osborne
Gary Buttrey	Dan Owenby
Gay Dayhuff	Robert Shaw
Gerry Diftler	

The Knoxville Community Theatre members who compiled the original script[1] included:

Gerry Diftler	Mary Kay Rosteck
Jan Lapidus	Robert Shaw
Ira Lapidus	

The production of *Many Voices* involved staging a script consisting of several literary genres. Prose, poetry, drama selections, song and music, together with numerous dramatic *scene situations* were utilized to illustrate the primary human emotions and(or) conditions of competition, jealousy, love, loneliness, despair, frustration, alienation, responsibility and joy.

Playwright Philip C. Lewis describes this type of script as a *play-out*:

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[1]During actual production of *Many Voices*, alterations to the script were made by the director when deemed necessary to effect a uniformity of production concept. These changes will be discussed in another chapter of this study.

> A play/out is an entertainment where actors announce a theme and then play it out. With the simplest of props and snatches of costume (a shawl perhaps for an old woman; a starched collar for a Puritan, etc.), the players assume a variety of characters in many situations to dramatize the theme. There is no scenery . . . . The whole idea is to give audiences the pleasure of watching actors act and to make ideas fun. Melvin Maddocks in his C-S-Monitor review of "Which Way The Wind?" called this technique "intellectual vaudeville". . . . It might be mentioned too, that play/out was created to provide economically feasible entertainment and to exploit the theatre's one remaining advantage which is direct communication--live, in person contact.[2]

The study presented here is the second part of an oral interpretation performance-research project. A student of interpretation is confronted with numerous inconsistencies between theory and performance practice. Very often theoretical canons give way under the weight of the realities of production: the actual script, available talent, rehearsal time, physical setup and budget. No director is free to ignore any of these realities. More important than adherence to prescribed canons, a Reader's Theatre director (or director of any genre of theatre, for that matter) has a two-fold responsibility: (1) to interest, to entertain, to please the audience, and (2) to do justice to the literature or play. Keeping in mind his two-fold responsibility, this director's problem involved staging a diverse script devoted to excerpts from multiple sources--including literature of constantly changing type and tone.

Since this student was faced with numerous inconsistencies between theory and performance in texts and articles dealing with

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[2]Philip C. Lewis, *The American Dame: A Play/Out* (New York: Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 1963), p. 3.

Readers' Theatre, this study is the result of research to determine if technical theatrical accoutrements can be effectively used in a Readers' Theatre production to achieve the director's two-fold responsibility. For this director, a production style involving the use of music, costumes, properties, line memorization, movement, offstage and onstage locus, as well as offstage and onstage focus seemed to satisfy best the production's responsibility to its audience and to its text. This choice of production style, however, conflicted with a few definitions of Readers' Theatre given by authorities in the field. This paper, then, involves to a limited degree an attempt to find authoritative justification for the style of presentation used in the production of *Many Voices*.

The study will consist of a comparative analysis of various definitions and theories concerning Readers' Theatre, a description of the various elements of theatricality utilized in solving the production problems of *Many Voices*, a description of the physical aspects of the production, and an evaluation of the total production experience.

CHAPTER II

A SURVEY OF READERS' THEATRE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

The impetus for contemporary Readers' Theatre began with Paul Gregory's production of *Don Juan in Hell* in 1951 at Carnegie Hall in New York. Since that time, the medium has received much microscopic scrutiny by theorists who have set up criteria for categorizing and judging it. Upon first searching for governing principles for a Readers' Theatre production, it is immediately apparent that many theorists impose restrictions on both definition and performance style. Furthermore, it becomes apparent that principles, techniques, forms and formats utilized in Readers' Theatre productions continue to vary. The professional philosophy appears to be "if something is found to work, if it elicits the desired response, it justifies itself." The educational concern appears to be "if Readers' Theatre is an art form in itself and consequently worthy of attention, how should it be defined and differentiated from other art forms?"[3]

The restrictive canons regarding Readers' Theatre theory are so numerous and varied that no production can observe all of them. In fact, many articles and texts regarding Readers' Theatre theory follow the same formula: an evasive definition of Readers' Theatre

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[3]Keith Brooks and John F. Bielenberg, "Readers' Theatre As Defined By New York Critics," *Southern Speech Journal*, XXIX (Summer, 1964), p. 288.

followed by "commandments" peculiar to the particular theorist's point of view. What follows within this chapter is a survey of various definitions of Readers' Theatre performance style and technique ranging from the most restrictive to the more liberal theory.

Many theorists have struggled with the need to separate interpretation performance theory and technique from those of acting. In the process, however, the formal and structural needs of the narrative, poetic and dramatic genres, which can benefit from flexibility in performance methods, are lost in rules which frequently ignore the specific needs of the text. One such theorist, and probably the most widely accepted in the field of interpretation, is Charlotte Lee. In her text, *Oral Interpretation*, Lee's theory regarding Readers' Theatre includes the following explicit principles: (1) a reader interprets only one character throughout the performance, (2) locus must always be offstage, and (3) a manuscript (memorized or not) must always be present.[4] Lee offers no discussion in regard to instances in which these restrictions may not be observed, so one must conclude that, according to Lee, these attitudes are to be the governing rules of a Readers' Theatre production. Implied restrictions are also apparent in Lee's discussion: (1) bodily action and properties used must be presentational rather than representational, (2) if used at all, scenery, costumes and make-up must be minimal, and (3) the principles governing an individual interpreter

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[4]Charlotte I. Lee, *Oral Interpretation* (Third edition: Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952), pp. 333-335.

are directly applicable to interpreters in a Readers' Theatre situation.[5]

Another widely used interpretation text is Wilma Grimes and Alethea Mattingly's *Interpretation: Writer-Reader-Audience*. While many of the attitudes expressed in their text are in agreement with those of Lee, the Grimes and Mattingly discussion offers some freedom for artistic expression in a Readers' Theatre production: (1) one interpreter may read several parts, (2) onstage locus may be used in certain situations, and (3) the demands of the literature take precedence over the form of presentation.[6]

Concerning physicalization, however, Grimes and Mattingly state that "the action basis of the words spoken is implied, not demonstrated or completely reenacted," and that the "degree of bodily activity permissible in interpretation differs compared to acting."[7] In the examples then cited, five are lines of direct dialogue given without indications of their form or context and the sixth is narration containing summarized action. In the Grimes and Mattingly text, there are no indications that the literary form should influence the physical expression of the lines. All examples are treated in the same way and the advice to the interpreter is to use suggested action.

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[5]Ibid.

[6]Wilma H. Grimes and Alethea Smith Mattingly, *Interpretation: Writer-Reader-Audience* (San Francisco: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1961), pp. 233-235.

[7]Ibid.

Strict maxims concerning Readers' Theatre also have appeared in speech journal articles. A definition incorporating almost all of the restrictions cited above is that of Margaret Nielson. Nielson states that Readers' Theatre is:

> . . . that activity which involves oral interpretation of a carefully cut script, usually by three to five readers, without memorization, special costumes, lighting, props, or sound effects, portraying their roles by means of vocal and facial expression alone, a narrator possibly providing transitional expository lines for clarification.[8]

More liberal attempts at defining Readers' Theatre generally include two basic elements: (1) provisions justifying some theatrical effects and (2) provisions stating that priority should be given to the demands of the particular pieces of literature. Characteristic of more liberal Readers' Theatre theory are the comments of Baxter M. Geeting in his text *Interpretation For Our Time*. Geeting accepts experimentation in group reading as a valid undertaking:

> The current emphasis is on the preparation of any type of poetic, dramatic, or fictionalized material which can be adapted to group reading on a stage with limited use of technical theatre accoutrements. The total movement presents an exciting challenge to experienced and creative interpreters.[9]

Even though the mainstream of Geeting's discourse does not contain any explicit principles of performance technique, the phrase "limited use of technical theatre accoutrements" stands out in regard to the use of theatrical effects.

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[8]Margaret Nielson, "Have You Tried Readers' Theatre?" *Today's Speech*, XV (February 1967), pp. 22-23.

[9]Baxter M. Geeting, *Interpretation For Our Time* (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Company, Publishers, 1966), p. 291.

Another discussion with more tangible and more liberal proscriptions regarding Readers' Theatre theory and practice is found in *The Oral Interpretation of Literature* by Chloe Armstrong and Paul D. Brandes. They maintain that a staged reading should be a blending of dramatic and oral interpretation technique without making any pretense of presenting a play. Armstrong's and Brandes's theory allows the following practices in the presentation of a staged reading: (1) more movement that is generally used in oral interpretation; (2) two or more readers on stage at the same time in a variety of arrangements; (3) the use of stools; and (4) the use of different stage levels with a portion of the readers standing and a portion of them sitting. They also deem that it is permissible in a staged reading for one interpreter to assume the lines of several different characters.[10] Although Armstrong and Brandes acknowledge a connection between Readers' Theatre and conventional theatre and describe allowable practices in general terms, they do not discuss specific performance techniques.

Armstrong and Brandes further contend that a director must maintain the unity of performance and material and at the same time create the best visual effects on stage. On this point, Armstrong and Brandes are among the more liberal theorists. They accept the concept that extraordinary reading (or the voice) can captivate an audience; they imply, though, that this does not erase the visual

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[10]Chloe Armstrong and Paul D. Brandes, *The Oral Interpretation of Literature* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1963), p. 289.

aspect of performance nor its importance to the overall effect of the performance.[11]

While the theories of Geeting, Armstrong and Brandes do not contain the more limiting prohibitions which are characteristic of the Lee, Grimes and Mattingly texts, they still do not deal specifically with actual Readers' Theatre production techniques.

The theories which follow deal with production technique in such a way as to offer significant freedom for artistic expression and at the same time offer meaningful affinity between theory and practice. In their discussion, Leslie Irene Coger and Melvin R. White find it difficult and unnecessary to separate Readers' Theatre from conventional theatre. They contend that a continuum exists between conventional theatre and Readers' Theatre and that there are similarities and dissimilarities between the two mediums, but that it is pointless to assert arbitrarily that "This is the point at which one stops and the other begins."[12] The Coger and White text even goes so far as to welcome experimentation in Readers' Theatre production technique utilizing line memorization, music, physical movement, costumes, lighting and a combination of onstage technique with offstage focus, as well as direct communication between performers on stage.[13]

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[11]Ibid., p. 290.

[12]Leslie Irene Coger and Melvin R. White, *Readers' Theatre Handbook: A Dramatic Approach to Literature* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1967), p. 67.

[13]Ibid., p. 11.

More importantly, they introduce as a maxim the idea that the material used in a Readers' Theatre production determines what principles of production are applicable explaining that there is no one way of presenting literature in Readers' Theatre:

> . . . we take the view that it is essentially the material itself which should guide and shape the way it is to be handled . . . we believe that rules or rigid formulations tend to hamper creative development. We encourage the use of creative imagination. Instead of saying, "This is THE way to do it," we try to follow the more factual, objective approach of "This is the way it was done."[14]

Further supporting the Coger-White idea of the inseparability of Readers' Theatre and conventional theatre, Alan W. Benson, in his article "The Dramatic Director and Readers' Theatre: Blessing or Curse?", outlines certain maxims which he believes are characteristic of all Readers' Theatre productions. He begins by stating three basic maxims, the second and third of which offer unlimited flexibility in production style and technique: (1) the focus is mostly audience-centered rather than stage-centered but does not have to be; (2) any form of literature can be presented; and (3) selective and suggestive theatrical and oral interpretive techniques are used. All other items, Benson suggests, are matters of artistic and creative judgment.[15]

Benson also suggests in his discussion that lines must be memorized if any competent degree of communication between audience

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[14]Ibid., Preface.

[15]Alan W. Benson, "The Dramatic Director and Readers' Theatre: Blessing or Curse? *The Speech Teacher*, XVII (November 1968), pp. 328-329.

and performer, as well as between performers, is desired. He also maintains that even though the performance style is by and large presentational rather than representational, it does not have to be so. Benson also labels Readers' Theatre as THE medium for non-dramatic materials. In regard to the preparation of a production, Benson states that "in order to present a Readers' Theatre production worthy of being an evening's entertainment, rehearsal time must be equal to that of an average full-length play."[16]

Benson points out that the major challenge in staging a Readers' Theatre production is that of "providing variety in what so often becomes a static reading situation."[17] He explains that solving this problem of boredom is solely the challenge of the director and that the director may find himself relying more and more upon technical theatre devices to provide creative variety.[18]

One of the more lucid texts in the field of interpretation is *The Art of Interpretation* by Wallace Bacon. This book's particular relevance to the topic of this study, in general, and to this chapter of the study in particular, lies in its unusually clear and rational presentation of theory. At the beginning of his chapter on group interpretation, Bacon explains that problems in defining Readers' Theatre should not inhibit exploration in production. He maintains that there are conventions which must not be rigid and that there are outer limits which are not easy to define. Bacon defines Readers' Theatre as:

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[16]Ibid., p. 330. [17]Ibid., p. 331. [18]Ibid., p. 333.

> . . . the group reading of material involving delineated characters, with or without the presence of a narrator, in such a manner as to establish the locus of a piece not onstage with the readers but in the imagination of the audience.[19]

This definition contains two clear cut restraints, in regard to *locus* and to *reading*, but Bacon's examination of theory does not allow his attitude toward locus and reading to be considered fixed rules. Concerning locus, Bacon states that certain elements of a script might require onstage explanation such as the drawing of a dagger or the taking of a potion. If these things are not explained in the words of the script itself, he maintains that it is pointless to confuse the audience by refusing to give onstage explanations or demonstrations simply because Readers' Theatre has been defined as having an offstage locus. Bacon says that there is a rule of thumb to be followed concerning locus: that whenever the material emphasizes something to be seen--rather than heard--Readers' Theatre is required to put it onstage lest its absence ruin the effect of the material. He explains that Readers' Theatre moves back and forth between onstage and offstage locations. Bacon admits that this will seem to some people a denial of form but that it really is not. He compares the onstage/offstage shifting of locus in a Readers' Theatre production to that of the movie or television camera stating that the locus of a piece of literature shifts subtly within itself

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[19]Wallace A. Bacon, *The Art of Interpretation* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1966), p. 311.

just as the movie and television camera subtly shift locus within and between scenes. Bacon believes that if there is any confusion concerning the shifting of locus that it is in the minds of those who try to define Readers' Theatre in such a limited way as to leave it rigid and stultified. He maintains that locus of a Readers' Theatre piece is primarily offstage, but it is not and cannot always be there.[20]

Bacon's text also challenges the concept that Readers' Theatre should appeal only to the ear. Maintaining that *reading* is not the essential element of Readers' Theatre, he explains that both the eyes and the ears are needed for the appreciation of the effect which the author seeks to achieve, and that both the interpreter and the actor need to know how to move as well as speak. In its contribution to the total perception of a performance, Bacon says that the voice is no more independent of the body than the ear is independent of the eye.[21]

In his article "Readers or Rhapsodes?", Hugh Dickinson elaborates Bacon's observations concerning the inseparable fusion of aural and visual aspects in a Readers' Theatre production:

> . . . the aural and the visual belong together in interpretation. The teacher who holds that "it should all be done with the voice" is placing an emphasis, not laying down a rule that can actually be followed. But such an extreme emphasis imposes extreme constraint, as would the attempt to eliminate all dialogue from acting. For one thing, the interpreter must, like any performer,

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[20] Ibid., p. 312.

[21] Ibid., p. 313.

> dominate his audience. He does not do this with voice alone; but also with his physical presence: bearing, vitality, glance, and impression. At a public performance the eye of the audience as well as their ears are engaged--and often for the same purpose. They look to the interpreter as the organizer of their emotions and the purveyor of their understanding of the work. The visual focus which the interpreter provides has far more relevance to public performance, than, for example the presence of the conductor has to the work of his musicians at a symphony concert.[22]

In summing up his observations concerning Readers' Theatre production theory, Bacon maintains, as do Coger and White, that the demands of the material represent the only possible *umpire* which can settle the question of what techniques are to be used in a Readers' Theatre production. He concludes that material which is meant to be dramatic should make use of some of the conventions of the actor and that material which is not necessarily dramatic suffers from being made dramatic. With the material being the arbiter for decision making, Bacon says that Readers' Theatre may definitely employ make-up, entrances and exits, lights, scenery and props.[23]

Bacon emphatically summarizes his position that it is impossible and futile to distinguish between Readers' Theatre and conventional theatre when he states that:

> No fine line can be drawn between the various methods of recreating a character for an audience, and the discussions that have taken place in recent years concerning interpretation-impersonation-acting have merely led to blind alleys and have made no really substantial contributions to interpretation.[24]

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[22]Hugh Dickinson, "Readers or Rhapsodes?", *Quarterly Journal of Speech* (October 1959), pp. 262-263.

[23]Bacon, pp. 314-316.

[24]Ibid., pp. 47-48.

In his text, *The Sound, Sense, and Performance of Literature*, Don Geiger deals specifically with the dilemma of interpretation versus acting in an attempt to show that acting and interpretation are virtually the same. He begins his discussion by saying that it has become common practice in an age of specialization for some Readers' Theatre theorists to say that oral interpretation is not acting. Geiger believes that such theorists are in danger of proving that neither is oral interpretation anything else. He explains that an actor is one who tries to deliver a literary author's words aloud and competently to an audience. Geiger maintains that "if an oral interpreter does not do these things, it may well be asked what function remains to him. Superficial distinctions are really too simple to be admitted by self-respecting scholars."[25]

Other platitudes concerning the acting/interpretation dilemma are skillfully attacked by Geiger. Concerning gesture and bodily movement, he says that for those who have seen gestures used successfully in oral interpretation, "strictures against them are likely to appear merely comical."[26] Geiger points out that it can be empirically shown that oral interpreters generally do not make as many large bodily gestures as actors are likely to make. He says that this is not because there is anything inherently wrong in an interpreter's gestures but is due to the notion that aesthetic distance, which

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[25]Don Geiger, *The Sound, Sense, and Performance of Literature* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1963), pp. 79-80.

[26]Ibid., p. 88.

decreases with bodily movement and accompanying emotional involvement, is considered to be an omnipresent necessity in oral interpretation. Geiger concedes that traditionally there are a greater number of limitations on an interpreter's emotional response to attitudes of speakers within a literary piece, and that these limitations frequently work to suppress gesture. He say, however, that gesture can be successfully used by interpreters, and that "the entire argument can be summed up in a convincing tautology: when the interpreter's gesture is successful, then it is successful."[27]

In discussing the concept of aesthetic distance in the performance of literature, Geiger contends that an actor, on hearing that an oral interpreter should maintain an aesthetic distance, may believe that "when you read a sentence as if you mean some of it, you are an oral interpreter." He suggests that this is a common misconception of the term *aesthetic distance* when applied to oral interpretation. Used in this sense, he says, the term is misconceived by poor readers "who rationalize that the dullness of their reading is merely the result of having aesthetically forced the literary work to keep its distance."[28]

Geiger maintains that "physical circumstances usually discourage a high degree of identification between the oral interpreter and the character or characters speaking in a piece of literature." He says that it is a mistake, nevertheless, to conclude that "the

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[27]Ibid.

[28]Ibid., p. 80.

interpreter . . . ought not to try to reproduce to a high degree the tone or attitude of speakers or characters within a piece of literature."[29]

Geiger reasons that the audience has the right to expect a job of acting from the interpreter:

> The term acting . . . plainly refers to the interpreter's having a high degree of empathic response to the attitudes of speakers within a piece of literature. That is, the audience presumably expects from the interpreter a communication of the piece, and if, as with literature, the piece is probably dramatic in nature, the audience should expect it to be dramatized. If the poem is a little drama, the interpreter should give it a little production.[30]

Geiger contends that the interpreter or director should not fall prey to fallacious reasoning that each line must be read with a certain detachment. He says that as the interpreter finds it necessary or appropriate "to attend to his role as public speaker, critic or sympathetic sharer, the distance between interpreter and literary speaker may widen slightly or grow very great."[31]

Geiger's major premise is that the art of oral interpretation, and consequently Readers' Theatre, lies in what works in the degree of impact of communication between performer and audience. He surmises that the talent which allows an interpreter or a director of Readers' Theatre to perform well cannot be taught in terms of rules and prescribed canons.

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[29] Ibid., p. 82.

[30] Ibid., p. 83.

[31] Ibid., p. 87.

In his article "Acting and Interpretation: The Reader Faces the Contest," Phillip Boyd Stevens beings his discussion of the dilemma concerning acting versus interpretation by saying that all literature has a dramatic function. He bases this statement upon a definition by Daiches, who defines literature as:

> . . . any kind of composition in prose or verse which has as its purpose not the communication of fact but the telling of a story (either wholly invented or given new life through invention) or the giving of pleasure through some use of the inventive imagination in the employment of words.[32]

Stevens says that a dramatic situation--a speaker in conflict with his audience, with those about him, or with himself--can be found in all forms of literature: poetry, prose and drama. He purports that just as all literature can be seen to have dramatic content, "so can all those called upon to present literature, no matter what the form, be said to be actors."[33] Stevens continues that the words *actor/interpreter* and *acting/interpretation* are interchangeable because anyone who represents a character in a fully staged production of a play is simply interpreting the part, just as anyone who reads a lyric poem from the platform is "acting the part of the 'I' or the speaker of the poem."[34]

Stevens also finds fault with theorists who insist that the medium and presence (or absence) of the script are the factors which

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[32]Phillip Boyd Stevens, "Acting and Interpretation: The Reader Faces the Contest," *The Speech Teacher*, XIV (March 1965), p. 116.

[33]Ibid., p. 117.

[34]Ibid., p. 118.

differentiate the actor from the interpreter. He believes that both arguments suffer the same kind of fallacy in that an interpreter without a script is no more of an actor than an actor who paces the stage with script in hand is an interpreter. The actor and interpreter, according to Stevens, face the same problems. Both must adapt and build a character according to their own peculiarities, carefully analyzing the character, his situation and the author's intention as to what the work is about. Stevens contends that "the search for rhythm, crisis, and climax, as well as the development of methods for handling these basic tools of dramatic action, are identical for both interpreter and actor."[35]

He continues that both actor and interpreter have the same raw responsive material, the audience, and that both have the responsibility to remain true to the literature being performed. What both do in relation to the audience and the literature can make the difference between success and failure, explains Stevens. He maintains that both the actor and the interpreter must: (1) keep control as he moves through his scene; (2) must remain consistent and to remain consistent, must remain true to the literature; (3) must work constantly to be clear and to be so, must place his attention on the literature; (4) must be believable and to be so, must work to give life to the literature; and (5) must be exhilarated by his performance to the point of communicating a shared experience

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[35]Ibid., p. 119.

with the audience. Stevens concludes, then, that the basis for settling the dilemma between what is acting and what is interpretation is the literature rather than the molding of the literature to fit a preconceived standard of performance.[36]

In her article "Through the 'I' of the Beholder: A Rationale for Physicalization in Performance of Narratives," Gilda Parrella more clearly pinpoints the rationale and importance of physical expression in the performance of literature than Dickinson, Bacon, Geiger and Stevens do. She explains that the shifting between vocalization and physicalization and a blending of the two provide the vital force needed in the performance of literature which she defines as a "structural interplay between statement and inference, exposition and presentation, idea and image."[37] Parrella explains that this structural interplay which is inherent in literature necessitates physicalization between the performer and the audience. Such an interaction, she believes, calls for performance techniques that are flexible and vital. Parrella contends, for example, that it is logical and appropriate when dialogue is presented for the narrator to use physical involvement to illustrate a particular narrator-character:

> . . . specific actions may be illustrated when they originate with the narrator as the source, and are his

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[36]Ibid., pp. 120-122.

[37]Gilda Parrella, "Through the 'I' of the Beholder: A Rationale for Physicalization in Performance of Narratives," *Central States Speech Journal*, XXV (Winter, 1974), p. 298.

> own actions or reactions. The results may be actions that are "suggested" or "enacted" depending upon whether the performer is portraying a narrator who is at that moment observing and empathizing, or one who is participating in his own person.[38]

In determining the degree of physicalization for narrator-characters, Parrella says that the interpreters and the director must recognize the individual needs of each narrator-character. She says that when the performer's focus is on other characters or events, whether on or offstage, that a variety of techniques of characterization, movement, gesture, scene placement and empathy must be blended together to effect a vital performance. Parrella purports that the performer's physical participation in narrative roles and the recognition of his presence as character by both himself and the audience increases direct communication and should be used when appropriate. This type of audience-performer communication, she says, "markedly increases the dramatic experience through the showing of the total character."[39]

In his article "The Concept of Action in Oral Interpretation," Jere Veilleux points out that most interpretive literature contains symbolic action and that the interpreter and director must find this action and make it into creative scene situations utilizing creative physical actions. He explains that movement and gesture serve to influence understanding and communication:

> . . . most speech is accompanied by movement of the eyes, face, hands and body which reinforces . . . the verbal utterance. The speaker who paces the floor

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[38] Ibid., p. 299.

[39] Ibid., pp. 300-302.

> influences our understanding of his message as much as the speaker who attempts to control each muscle.[40]

Veilleux contends that in either case, if the visual impression were removed, understanding of the message would be diminished--a contention very similar to Bacon's and Dickinson's.

Veilleux sees physical action of the interpreter as a means to stimulate audience imagination. He maintains that the audience, performers and director all inherently feel the need for some type of movement on the stage in all genres of theatre. Movement can be accomplished, explains Veilleux, through actual physical action such as gesture, stage business and blocked movement but also through the director's manipulation of audience vision. In either case, he says, the possibility of a static stage picture is overcome through careful yet constant shifting of the audience's focus. It is the duty of a performer and director of interpretive literature to "creatively stimulate the minds and eyes of the audience through actual gesture and stage movement and through the imaginative use of focus."[41]

Basing their discussion on recent work done in the field of perception theory, Marion L. and Marvin D. Kleinau contend that any analysis of a Readers' Theatre production should begin with the question, "What techniques were operative and how did they function?",

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[40]Jere Veilleux, "The Concept of Action in Oral Interpretation," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, LIII (October 1967), p. 283.

[41]Ibid., p. 284.

not with the question, "Is it theatre?" They explain that:

> . . . rather than being so concerned in keeping the scene offstage, we should turn our attention to the use of tools to free the production to serve best the literature in question. It seems to be a far more useful critical approach to speak in terms of techniques and how each technique has been used to serve a given piece of literature.[42]

The Kleinaus continue that:

> Such an attitude allows the production to communicate on its own terms which . . . are the terms of the literature being presented. It also allows the critical audience to accept these terms. It presupposes that there is more than one way within the scope of Readers' Theatre to communicate effectively a given piece of literature.[43]

Here again, as with Geeting, Armstrong, Brandes, Coger, White, Benson, Bacon, Dickinson, Geiger, Stevens, Parrella and Veilleux a rigid distinction between Readers' Theatre and conventional theatre is considered ineffectual to the goal and development of any given production. Although each of these theorists discuss and emphasize different aspects within the continuum between conventional theatre and Readers' Theatre, they all appear to accept one simplistic, open-ended canon as *The Law* governing the production of any Readers' Theatre piece: Anything works to the degree that it provides a direct line of communication between audience and performer and does justice to the literature being presented. The remainder of this

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[42]Marion L. and Marvin D. Kleinau, "Scene Location in Readers' Theatre: Static or Dynamic?", *The Speech Teacher* (September 1965), p. 246.

[43]Ibid., p. 247.

study will describe the production techniques employed to best serve the literature used in the Readers' Theatre piece, *Many Voices*.

CHAPTER III

THE SCRIPT: SELECTIONS AND ALTERATIONS

> Each of the three literary types (lyric, dramatic, narrative) has its *telos* for performance: song, theatre, Chamber Theatre. Only Readers' Theatre can perform the modern epic: a compiled script, atypical.[44]

As mentioned in Chapter I, *Many Voices* is comprised primarily of lyric, dramatic and narrative literature which convey experiences dealing with Man's primary human emotions or conditions of competition, jealousy, love, loneliness, despair, frustration, alienation, responsibility and joy. Each act or division of the script deals singularly with each of these emotions or conditions. In its original script form, *Many Voices* relied primarily upon speech to convey these emotions and conditions. Secondary forms of communication such as dance, and related movement, song and music, and the subtle connotative communication of material objects such as costuming and stage properties were not called for in the original script. (The original script did include two songs; however, for the sake of production continuity and entertainment, several additional songs were added.)

From the start of production, the director decided not to depend upon speech, in the more conservative style of Readers' Theatre, but to employ all of the varied and colorful communicative means

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[44]Jere Veilleux, "Some Aphorisms for Readers' Theatre," *The Speech Teacher*, XXI (June 1972), p. 65.

Man has at his disposal to express his emotions and conditions. The inclusion of these various forms of communication required major revision throughout the script.[45]

Dance, movement, stage business, sounds, song, music and properties were added to the original script for two reasons: (1) to free the production (and the literature itself) from its original recitative form thereby giving the director and his cast room for creative experimentation in producing Readers' Theatre, and (2) to provide theatrical entertainment or *intellectual vaudeville* (as opposed to strictly literary entertainment) to a wide variety of predominantly *unliterary* community audiences. To more efficiently accomplish these goals, line memorization was also required of the cast.

Due to the vagueness of point and overall static qualities in much of the original literature of *Many Voices*, the visual aspect of performance became as important, and in certain instances more important, than the aural aspects in effecting production continuity and in making the literature directly communicate with audiences. This essential predominance of the visual aspect of performance was accomplished by rewriting parts of the script to include dances, stage business and movement.

Those sections of the original script which required almost complete rewriting were the last two sections--Joy and the Epilogue.

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[45]All deletions and additions to the original script have been indicated in Appendix A of this study; therefore, only select examples of these alterations will be discussed in this chapter.

Both original sections were perceived by the director to be not only static, lacking specific metaphors of joy and dynamic, quick-pace summation, but also detrimental to production continuity in view of their important position at the end of the script. In their original form, the Joy section and Epilogue let the audience down in view of what had previously transpired on stage.

In the Joy section, only two original script pieces of literature were retained in the final production--A. A. Milne's "Christopher Robin" and John Fox's "The Dining Room." These selections were retained because they focused on basic, primary forms of joy, could be paced quickly, and could be staged visually in metaphorically joyous scenes. One other rather abstract poem which relied mostly on aural stimulation was replaced with three song-and-dance numbers which utilized the entire cast, visually capitalizing on the ensemble nature of the entire production. These three songs were spaced intermittently with transitional *one-liners* which express joy in simple statements of "Joy is . . . ." These *one-liners*, although carefully rehearsed as to sequence, were performed with an appearance of zealous, spontaneous random. The *one-liners* and song-and-dance numbers were acted out in present time with the cast conveying simple, primary sources of joy such as singing, dancing, childhood experiences and the securities of food, clothing and friendship in specific aural and visual metaphors and similes.

The Epilogue was shortened considerably retaining only a portion of an original script narrative, *Voices*, which had been written by a

cast member. The Lawrence Ferlinghetti poem, "The World is a Beautiful Place," was added to the Epilogue as a *wrap-up* statement of the message of the entire production. A reprise of Paul Simon's "59th Street Bridge Song" (a portion of which was introduced in the Joy section) provided the Epilogue with musical transition into the *Voices* narrative, cast introductions and stage exits--all at a quick, continuous pace. Performance of the Epilogue relied equally on aural and visual stimulation of the audience with all cast members stripped of role playing, presenting themselves to the audience.

The inclusion of songs, live background guitar music, sounds, stage business and properties throughout the entire production was done for two reasons: (1) to provide smooth transitions between pieces of literature and between sections thereby effecting continuity in production style, and (2) to enhance or emphasize the mood or impact of a particular piece of literature without altering the intentions of the literature.

The inclusion of guitar background music and songs was especially effective in accomplishing these goals in the Love, Loneliness and Despair sections. For instance, in the Love section, Harry Chapin's song, "Mail Order Annie," set the mood for the next two poems, "Time and Waves" and "A Couple," and created a logical, dramatic way to move the performers and audience through each of these three separate scenes. Consequently, "Mail Order Annie" helped unify these three scenes each of which convey characters remembering love. In a similar manner, the song "All the Sad Young Men" served

as a musically dramatic transition between the Loneliness and Despair sections and set a background mood as well as insight into the characters portrayed in the first poem of the Despair section, "Richard Cory." The song (without lyrics) was played softly on the guitar throughout the "Richard Cory" poem, building through the first three lines of the last stanza to an abrupt stop for delivery of the last line, "Went home and put a bullet through his head." The background music along with the performer's pacing and interpretation of the poem served to intensify the dramatic impact of the last line of the poem.

Live vocal and recorded sounds were also used to achieve production unity, smooth transitions, and dramatic emphasis. Perhaps the best examples of the employment of sounds are evident in the Prologue to *Many Voices*. The Prologue begins with recorded percussive sounds of chimes and timpani. The cast members, who are positioned throughout the audience, move steadily toward the stage whispering "many voices." The recorded percussion and spoken "many voices" crescendo into louder discord, then into harmony and finally climax to silence. By this point, the cast is onstage in blocked formation. The recorded percussion continues softly under the poem, "To Understand What I Say," and is faded as each cast member echoes the last word of the poem. The last echo of the word *joy* is barely audible and provides a sharp, contrasting transition into the fast paced, almost belligerently competitive One-Up-Manship section which opens with the song "Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better!" Essentially,

the Prologue includes most of the elements of theatricality used throughout the production--music, live vocal and recorded sounds, blocking and stage business to enhance the literature and to provide dramatic emphasis and impact.

The most often used live vocalization between sections was the phrase "many voices," which was either spoken individually by a few cast members or in unison by all. The phrase was interpreted to either convey the mood of what had just happened on stage or to convey the mood of that which was to come. For example, preceding the Loneliness section, the phrase "many voices" was mixed with the word *loneliness* until the last word audible was *loneliness*. Guitar music then provided the last transitional cue into the first poem of the Loneliness section, "Effort at Speech Between Two People." The word *loneliness* was again spoken between this poem and the last poem of the section, "Incomplete Sentences." The "many voices" phrase was used between each section, except between Joy and the Epilogue, to provide smooth transitions, production unity and dramatic emphasis. The use of the "many voices" transitional phrase had a practical as well as artistic purpose. Between the Despair and PSSST sections, it was used, in part, to provide time for an onstage costume change by all cast members. In a similar manner, between the Responsibility and Frustration sections, the phrase "many voices" provided the time needed for a change in stage position by all cast members and for the disposal of several props. Artistically, it also provided a sharp mood contrast with the screams and other sounds which open the

Frustration section. It should also be mentioned here that in the original script the subject of certain sections was to be announced in order to prevent confusion concerning changes of section. The director was never satisfied with this form of transition, so it was only used twice--to introduce the Responsibility and Frustration sections.

In accordance with the improvisational and ensemble nature of *Many Voices*, appropriate stage business contributed by the cast and the director during rehearsal was retained. The inclusion of business served the same purposes as music, song and sounds in maintaining a continuous and unified performance and in enhancing and intensifying dramatic elements in the script. The machine sequence in the Responsibility section, for instance, helped make literary ideas concrete and fun. The cast created an ensemble machine center-stage with accompanying buzz and whir sounds and mechanical movement. Similarly, the comical scene employed during the politician sequence of the same section served to dramatize the folly of politics with cast members assuming various roles of persons at a political rally. In both sequences, stage business, blocking and characterization were used to dramatize the themes; in each sequence, cast members assumed roles inherent in the poems and acted out scene situations while the poems were being performed by *narrator-characters*. (Several cast members assumed both narrator and character roles stepping in and out of the scenes in accordance with the roles being played. This technique was used to dramatize other narrative pieces of literature as well.)

To further enhance characterization and scene situations and to make them more believable to cast members as well as to the audience, stage props were used.[46] For example, in the performance of A. A. Milne's "Christopher Robin," as the narrator begins the poem with the familiar line, "Little boy kneels at the foot of the bed . . . ," the performer (as Christopher Robin) goes to the prop piece, picks up a Pooh Bear, hugs it, faces the audience, kneels and begins praying, "God bless Mommy . . . ," while the narrator listens in. This type of role playing, with simple, essential props, was used whenever appropriate to convey dramatic impact and believability.

In certain scene situations, props were pantomimed to give characterization a more stylized, *everyman* quality. For instance, in the One-Up-Manship section, the narrative "Some Heady Phrases on Wine" was narrated while characters pantomimed specific scene situations to convey the snobbery of wine tasting.

Pantomimed characterizations and gestures used in this and other scene situations were performed as alter egos of the narrators, in effect, creating an onstage visual picture of the mental picture in the narrators' minds. Such pantomimed scene situations were employed to effect both aural and visual dramatic emphasis. Again, cast members assumed both narrator and character roles in certain pantomimed scenes stepping in and out of the scenes in accordance with

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[46] All props, mostly add-on costume pieces, were arranged on a set piece placed up-stage center. Set design will be discussed in Chapter V of this study, "Physical Production and Conclusion."

the roles being played. This was done to provide dynamic, visually stimulating shifts in audience focus.

CHAPTER IV

CASTING AND REHEARSALS

I. CASTING

Auditions for *Many Voices* were conducted September 15 and 16, 1976 in the Undercroft of Saint John's Episcopal Church. From the 28 people who auditioned on these days, nine were chosen. The number was kept at a minimum to avoid rehearsal and performance conflicts which the director found to be a serious problem when producing an original script for community theatre. The cast was also kept relatively small so that the director would have fewer problems accomplishing his production concept of a close-knit ensemble with several options for characterizations and staging.

The cast was composed of four males and five females with an age range from young adult to middle age in both sexes. (The youngest cast member was a male, high school senior. The oldest was a male in his sixties.) Such a composition was necessary for two reasons: First, because the script was originally written to include an almost equal portion of male and female parts of various ages representative of the Knoxville community and secondly, because such a composition, in view of the script, facilitated a balance of male/female vocal sounds of varying age and increased the options for characterizations and staging.

Due to the nature of the show after revisions, it was important that every cast member could sing, dance and act. However, realistically it was doubtful that nine people of varying ages with exceptional skill in all three areas could be cast from the community at large. Vocal variety, interpretational ability and acting skill were the first considerations in casting because acting was the most outstanding element in the show. Singing ability was the second consideration because the small size of the cast and the material in the show dictated that several of its members also serve as singers. What some cast members lacked in musical ability, they made up for with acting ability to the point of being able to "act" a song. Dancing skill was placed third in importance, although agility was given high priority in relation to acting skill.

The ninth member of the cast, the guitarist, had to have an excellent "ear" for improvising music on the guitar, had to be able to sing well, to be able to act well and to be able to help with musical direction. (As it turned out, the director, the guitarist and one other cast member, who was the best trained singer of the cast, shared the responsibility of musical direction.)

It was also essential that all cast members be able to play the comical and the serious segments with equal ease. This required that all cast members be accomplished and experienced actors and actresses. The director was fortunate in this respect in that his cast members were either veteran performers or had a great deal of raw talent for development.

Many Voices's success with audiences resulted largely from the ensemble exuberance, energy and enjoyment displayed by a cast which varied tremendously in age range. For this reason, the compatability of the cast members and their individual capacities for projecting enthusiasm were taken into account during auditions.

Finally, in casting the show a variety of physical and personality types as well as ages was selected in order to increase the audience's capability for identification with the cast. This was done also to remain faithful to the literature which demanded various types of people with the capability to express universal, varied and contrasting emotions. The effect was that of only nine people portraying many people, hence the title of the show, *Many Voices*.

It should be pointed out here that during the first week of rehearsal, two adult female members of the cast had to drop out--one due to illness, the other due to outside activities which required more of her time than she had anticipated when cast. Both were immediately replaced with equally competent adult females, so that very little productive rehearsal time was lost.

II. REHEARSALS

Many Voices was rehearsed almost every day for nearly seven weeks, a time period which is usually considered adequate. Rehearsal schedule conflicts did occur, however, due to the fact that Knoxville Community Theatre does not have its own physical plant and due to the varied responsibilities of people participating in strictly voluntary

community theatre work. The conflicts were detrimental to ensemble progress in that at least one cast member was usually absent from at least half the rehearsals. This problem was unavoidable but was not devastating since those cast members who were absent from rehearsal worked diligently the next day to learn what they had missed. The cast was extremely cooperative because they were aware of the enormous amount of work which had to be completed in the face of schedule conflicts.

Prior to rehearsals, the director had been concerned that his position as a student might hamper his ability to control the cast. He was also concerned that the cast included two authors of the original script who had their own preconceived production concepts; however, the self-discipline and trust of the cast was excellent and relatively few problems arose. Those problems which did arise with the author-cast members were either resolved through discussion or by peer group pressure exerted by other cast members.

The director believed that the exuberance and enjoyment essential to the success of the production must grow out of as pleasant a rehearsal experience as possible. During the rehearsals, everyone was encouraged to offer opinions, criticisms and suggestions. In an attempt to make the total production a truly collaborative effort, the cast was informed of all technical and artistic problems which occurred and asked to remain patient while experimentation took place. Script memorization became necessary for a successful production when problems in handling the scripts became insurmountable due to the inclusion of stage business, movement, singing and dancing.

In spite of the extremely positive attitudes of cast members who had to miss rehearsals, rehearsal schedule conflicts had some unavoidable negative effects. For example, the amount of ensemble experimentation which could be conducted was either limited or delayed. And, as with most productions, in the last two weeks of rehearsal with the pressure of the rapidly approaching first performance, rehearsal time had to be lengthened, and tempers, including the director's, became harder to control. Although this was inevitable, caution still had to be exercised, so that the vitality of the production would not suffer.

In attempting to make productive use of the time available, the director proceeded with the following rehearsal schedule. At the first rehearsal meeting on September 17, the cast members were introduced, parts were temporarily assigned, and the general production plans and possible alterations to the script were discussed. Since there were no actual parts *per se*, most role assignments were interchangeable, to a degree, depending on who performed what best. During the first half of the rehearsal period, parts were often reassigned. Generally, there were no apparent grudges over reassignment, with cast members usually saying themselves that they felt someone else had a better feeling for a particular part.

In the first week, the Prologue received the greatest concentration, so that the general kinds of script alterations and ensemble exercises the cast could expect would be firmly implanted in their minds. (As mentioned in Chapter III of this study, the Prologue

included most of the elements of theatricality to be used throughout the production--music, sounds, blocking and stage business.) During this week, most of the ensemble work served to physically condition the cast and to allow the director to further assess the improvisational abilities of each member of the group.

During the second week, the emphasis was placed upon interpretations of the literature throughout the show. After each cast member was fairly familiar with the literature for which he would be responsible, blocking of the first half was begun.

During the third week, background music and choreography for the two songs in the first half were added by the guitarist and director. (For choreography in the second half of the show, two choreographers helped the director. One of the choreographers was a cast member.)

The guitarist had been attending rehearsals from the beginning to obtain a feeling for the moods that the background music would have to convey. She continuously improvised music for the first half of the show during these first three weeks.

Since two of the three songs in the first half were solo or duet with backup and since they were performed by the better singers and dancers in the cast, very little time was needed for learning them. Choreography was a problem, however, in the Jealousy section song until the director motivated the cast by giving them game playing exercises.

During this third week, rehearsals also consisted of polishing the first half as much as possible, continuing experimentation with

stage business and intensively rehearsing interpretations of literature with all cast members on an individual basis. The first rough run-through of the first half was conducted on October 7. During this first three-week period, the Prologue was always performed at the beginning of rehearsal serving as a warm up exercise for the cast both vocally and physically.

The first half of the show proved to be the easiest half for the cast and the director since it involved mostly stylized staging for solo, duet or trio scene situations with minimal blocking, movement and stage business. However, interpretating the literature of the first half was not so easy since the first half included most of the sophisticated and serious dramatic material.

By the fourth week of rehearsal, the cast had already discovered that there would be major problems in working through the second half, so they had all worked outside of rehearsal further learning their individual pieces of literature. The second half, which began with the PSSST section, was considered harder than the first because it was much more up-tempo, required excellent comic timing and pacing, and more ensemble work. It also included most of the light, lyrical literature, scene situations and business, songs, dance and movement. (As in the first three weeks of rehearsal, the guitarist was present during the next four, continuously improvising background music and arranging for songs and dances.)

During the fourth week, painstaking rehearsal time was spent solely on the PSSST section which incorporates a montage of spoofs on

television commercials depicting the *commercial brainwashing* of Mankind. The dancing, singing, ensemble game playing and line work had to be incorporated almost simultaneously in order for the cast to grasp and perform the production concepts of this section. (The props which were to be used in this section were pantomimed by the cast until next to the last week of rehearsal.)

In the fifth week of rehearsal, the Responsibility, Frustration and Joy sections were staged involving much of the same type of theatrical accoutrements used in the PSSST section. Consequently, rehearsal techniques were similar. Once the cast members had learned the ensemble concepts and techniques used in the PSSST section, these three sections were fairly easy for them.

During the sixth week and final days of rehearsal, the Epilogue was rehearsed and polished, and run-throughs were begun incorporating props and set. Because of the simple nature of the set and props, adding them this late posed no problems. The set and props were kept simple so that the actor, in a virtually empty space, would be the focal point of the production. The set and props were also kept simple so that they would be easy to transport by car and adapt to a variety of performance spaces.

On November 1 through November 4, run-throughs were conducted with last minute polishing. On November 5, a final dress rehearsal was performed in the Undercroft of Saint John's Episcopal Church for an invited audience.

Every production has its own special problems, and *Many Voices* was certainly no exception. A major portion of the total rehearsal

time had to be devoted to experimenting with ensemble movement in scene situations. Song and dance numbers also required a large amount of rehearsal time since most members of the cast were accomplished actors but were less accomplished dancers and singers.

Many Voices made tremendous demands upon the cast members because they were on stage throughout the entire show. It was extremely taxing both physically and vocally, especially for the older cast members. The physical and vocal stamina necessary to perform this production was made apparent to the cast after the first run-through of the PSSST and Responsibility sections--both of which required almost constant, vigorous movement and dancing. Most of the cast were exhausted after performing these sections and had to struggle to complete the second half of the script, even though the remainder of the show was not as taxing. It was vital, therefore, to have as many nonstop run-throughs as time would permit in order to allow the cast members to learn how to pace themselves. (During the run of the show, some performances were as much as a week apart which meant that the cast had to remain physically and mentally in shape. As a result, several run-through rehearsals were held during the month of the show's run on the day before a performance.)

The smoothest part of rehearsal was the incorporation of the background music because the guitarist fully understood the production concepts and moods the music had to convey. The guitarist was also extremely competent in arranging music and accompanying the cast in song and dance numbers. At times, the director believed that the

music was the only element of production which kept the show unified and paced correctly.

Overall, the director was extremely pleased with the casting, rehearsals and performances. Some of the cast members proved to be weaker in certain areas of performance than their auditions had originally indicated. Therefore, the brevity of the rehearsal period, in view of unexpected schedule conflicts and production problems, forced the director to be content with some aspects of the show which would have been altered with more rehearsal time. However, in view of these problems, which seem to be inherent in producing an original show for community theatre, the director felt that the time allotted had been well used and that the rehearsals were both constructive and enjoyable for all involved.

It should also be mentioned here that the show was often booked as entertainment for a community organization's regular meeting and had to be adapted to fit an allotted time period. As a result, entire sections often had to be deleted which required the cast to think quickly and be adaptable to almost any kind of performance situation--including inadequate stage facilities.

Also, before the radio taping of the show, intense line rehearsals were necessary so that the cast could readily adapt to a performance without the movement to which they had become so accustomed. Surprisingly, to the director and the cast, the radio taping progressed smoothly; the exclusion of movement and visual stimulation was not discernably detrimental to the actual taping nor to the success of the actual radio broadcast performance.

When the show was videotaped, however, technical problems did arise since there was not time for rehearsal with the video director, camera operators and sound technicians. Considering the fact that the show was edited during actual taping, the video director managed to do an adequate job.

The director also learned from the television taping experience that major differences exist between directing techniques for the live stage and directing techniques for the television screen. For example, in staging *Many Voices* for live performance, the director had concentrated on presenting a panoramic stage picture utilizing primary focuses which were not totally independent of secondary or background stage composition and action. In taping for television viewing, however, the video director relied heavily upon isolating specific actions with closeup camera focusing which completely obliterated from the television audience's "eye" any supportive, ensemble background action. This being the case, in the director's opinion, much of the ensemble action (and resultant mood) of the show was not seen (or felt) by the television audience. The seeming lack of ensemble in the aired television performance made the show seem disjointed and sketchy--two inherent problems in the original script which the director believes were alleviated with ensemble action during live performance.

CHAPTER V

PHYSICAL PRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION

I. SETTING

The setting for *Many Voices* consisted of an approximately 22-foot square performance space containing nine wooden stools and a free-standing, large wooden form on which stage properties could either be hung or laid. The stools were arranged in a semicircle at the back of the performance area with four stools stage left and four stage right. The semi-circular arrangement was closed-in upstage center with the stage properties form and the guitarist's stool.

The 36-inch high stools were built of unfinished oak with the surface of the seats sanded and varnished in order to make them slick enough for easy off-on movement by the cast. Since the guitarist's stool shared the upstage center focus with the stage properties form, the director found it necessary to place her stool on a one-foot high, three-foot square wooden platform to achieve a pleasing visual balance in the overall composition of the setting. Elevating the stool also served to keep the guitarist conspicuous--an effect desired by the director due to the musician's importance in controlling the mood changes throughout the production and her participation (from the stool) in several segments of the production.

The stage properties storage form also served as the only abstract thematic set piece for the production. The form was constructed of two seven-foot tall, human-like wooden figures, each with "extended arms." The two figures, one painted a solid autumn brown and the other a solid beige, were connected in such a manner so as to create the appearance of one complete figure with four "extended arms" at right angles to each other.[47] The "arms," "shelves" and "head" of the form served for properties storage. This multi-sided, human-like form, draped with Man's artifacts (props), carried out an attempt by the director to abstractly express the multi-sided personalities of Mankind. The set was exclusive of decoration with the exception of the colorful stage properties employed.

The setting for *Many Voices* was of simple design for four reasons. First, since the majority of performance spaces for *Many Voices* were known to be unadaptable to a variety of setting compositions and types of staging, the director chose a simple setting which would lend itself to proscenium-thrust staging and which would be easy to transport by car. (In actuality, all of the performance spaces for *Many Voices* were virtually invariable proscenium-style auditoriums or recreation areas which, due to the lack of pre-curtain time or the number of people present, could not be rearranged to accommodate variety.) Secondly, the script and production concepts

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[47]See Appendix B for illustration of stage properties set piece.

called for a simple setting design with a dominance of empty space in which actors could move freely in and out of scene situations using easily accessible pieces of costumes and hand properties. Third, the simple set design afforded the production with adequate stage sightlines and visibility in performance areas which were not designed to house theatrical productions. And finally, an extremely limited production budget necessitated economy in setting design. In fact, both the stage properties form and the guitarist's platform were loaned to Knoxville Community Theatre by local businesses.

II. LIGHTING

Due to the fact that *Many Voices* was a traveling show performed before live audiences in ten different places without theatrical lighting equipment, lighting technology was not an aspect of actual physical production. A portable theatrical lighting system was not considered feasible for the production due to the expense which would be incurred by Knoxville Community Theatre and due to the impracticality of transporting and using such a system in a variety of places. Therefore, depending on the place of performance, either general house lights were used to provide adequate visibility of the performance area (and audience area, as well), or when available, full general stage lighting was used (with house lights out) to provide some theatrical lighting effects and good visibility of the performance area.

This director found that sacrifices in areas such as lighting are commonplace when producing low-budget, touring community theatre.

He also found, much to his surprise, that the lack of theatrical lighting did not seem to lessen the audiences's participation in and enjoyment of the show. In fact, a few of the audiences to which *Many Voices* played were comprised of people who said after the performance that they had never seen a play before. Therefore, the director surmises that they either did not know what to expect concerning technical embellishments, or they were more in tune with theatre's primary power--that of direct, live communication--than any so-called sophisticated theatre goer, this director included. In essence, this director found them to be more sophisticated than he was in not letting the lack of technical embellishment such as lighting prohibit their enjoyment in experiencing theatre for the first time.

III. COSTUMES

> In interpretation, as in life, the readers are always in costumes. The question is which ones?[48]

From the beginning stages of production, the director and costume designer knew they did not want to use stereotyped Readers' Theatre costumes--black formal wear or *workshop* attire such as black turtlenecked shirts and slacks. Certain segments of the show, however, did call for dignified or sophisticated color and design in costuming, and other segments called for light, spirited color and design.

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[48]Veilleux, "Some Aphorisms for Readers Theatre," p. 66.

Originally, both the director and costume designer conceived the costumes for *Many Voices* as a multi-colored assortment of street clothing from the cast's own wardrobes. A multi-colored assortment, however, seemed unsatisfactory in creating a theatrical effect with costumes, and this effect was important to the director in view of the fact that so few elements of theatrical embellishment were economically feasible. Eventually, street clothes from the cast's wardrobes in a few, select coordinated colors were used because it was inexpensive and because the use of a few select colors created the desired theatrical effect of setting the cast's street clothing apart from the audiences's clothing. The director and costume designer wanted the cast to *look like* the audiences for purposes of identification, and yet, they wanted the cast to be distinctively separate from the audiences in appearance.

The cast selected their own costumes from their wardrobes and brought them to rehearsal for approval. After some mixing and matching, a costume grouping for each cast member was selected in varying shades of brown, rust and beige. Street clothes in coordinated shades of brown, rust and beige were used for the following reasons: (1) because the show season was Fall; (2) because Knoxville Community Theatre's colors are brown and beige; and (3) because a variety of shades of these three colors could convey gaiety and playful comedy as well as dignity and sobriety. The females were required to have long skirts in varying shades of brown to wear over slacks during the first half of the show; these skirts had to be made since none of the women had an appropriate long skirt.

In general, the costuming helped to lend theatricality to the show as well as contemporaneity. A few special costuming effects were utilized, most of which were achieved with add-on costume pieces, such as hats, from the stage properties form. The major special costume effect occurred halfway through the show at which point a complete mood change in costuming from dignified to playful was needed. Through the first half of the show, which is the more serious half, all cast members were clothed in assorted formal-looking attire--the men in sport jackets or vests, turtlenecked or dress shirts, and dress trousers; the women in turtlenecked or dress blouses and long, wool skirts. Immediately before the PSSST section, during a "many voices" vocal transition, all cast members (except the guitarist) were standing and removed their jackets and long skirts, respectively, revealing brighter shades of rust, beige and brown in their slacks and(or) shirts. Removal of these more somber colored clothes created the desired effect from darker formal wear to a brighter, colored mixture of play or sportswear. The sportswear costumes were worn throughout the second half of the show making it easier for the cast to perform the more active movements of the second half.

In coordinating the costumes for *Many Voices*, the designer considered the following: (1) mobility and actor comfort; (2) individuality of each costume; and (3) general serious and comic effect of each costume. The most important consideration was the comfort of the performer. Because of the active nature of the second half

of the show, the fabrics selected had to be both light-weight and sturdy to facilitate a great deal of movement.

It was important to the show that each costume not be too distinctive. Therefore, before beginning his designs, the costumer attended several rehearsals to determine the general physical and personality traits of the many characters which each cast member portrayed. In general, the costume designer had to be careful not to make an individual costume too distinctive since a variety of characters were portrayed by each member of the cast and since no individual cast member's costume was to stand out visually any more than the others due to the ensemble nature of the show. As previously mentioned, theatrical distinction in costuming was achieved with add-on pieces of costume which were stored on the stage properties set piece during performance.

The following is a brief description of the costumes and stage properties employed by each cast member:

Wayne Bledsoe: Rust turtlenecked, long-sleeved shirt with medium brown vest; medium brown dress slacks; soft-soled dark brown shoes. Stage properties: none. (None of the male cast members wore stage make-up.)

Jane Burke: Dark brown and beige striped, turtlenecked, long-sleeved sweater; matching beige slacks and floor-length wrap-around dark brown wool skirt; soft-soled, low-heeled beige dress shoes. Stage properties: one plastic champagne glass. (All female cast members wore make-up slightly heavier than that applied for day wear.)

Gary Buttrey: Dark brown and beige tweed turtlenecked, long-sleeved sweater; dark brown sportcoat; beige dress slacks; soft-soled dark brown shoes. Stage properties: one plaid, billed cap; one hand-held diaper; one tear-away undershirt.

Gay Dayhuff: Peachy-rust-colored turtlenecked, long-sleeved blouse worn under beige and peachy-rust-colored tweed sweater vest; peachy-rust-colored dress slacks and floor-length wrap-around dark brown wool skirt; soft-soled, low-heeled beige dress shoes. Stage properties: one "Christmas holly" print mob cap; one Pooh Bear.

Gerry Diftler: Light beige, open-collared, long-sleeved blouse; rosy-rust-colored dress slacks and floor-length, wrap-around dark brown wool skirt; soft-soled, low-heeled medium brown dress shoes. Stage properties: one wide-billed, light blue "vacationer's" cap; one pair of sunglasses.

Charlene Gubitz, guitarist: Light beige, open-collared, long-sleeved blouse with small brown print; dark brown velvet suit jacket and matching velvet slacks; soft-soled dark brown shoes. Stage properties: one guitar.

Martha Lee Osborne: Rust turtlenecked, long-sleeved blouse worn under medium brown sleeveless jacket-vest; rust dress slacks and floor-length, wrap-around dark brown wool skirt; soft-soled, low-heeled rust dress shoes. Stage properties: one black walking cane; two crochet needles and small green crocheted piece of needlework.

Dan Owenby: Light beige, long-sleeved sweater; light peachy-rust-colored brushed-corduroy suitcoat and slacks; soft-soled, medium

brown shoes. Stage properties: one "blue-ribbon" Republican party neck sign; one beige "Texas-tall" cowboy hat; one black derby.

Robert Shaw: Rust turtlenecked, long-sleeved shirt; medium brown suitcoat and slacks; soft-soled dark brown shoes. Stage properties: one issue of *Reader's Digest*; one natural straw "vacationer's" cap with attached fishing tackle; one black fur "Russian" cap; one "blue-ribbon" Democratic party neck sign.

IV. STAGING

As mentioned previously, *Many Voices* was staged for an almost bare proscenium-thrust performance area. The blocking, business and choreography were devised, without the aid of special lighting and scenic effects, to create solo and group scene situations on stage, but more importantly, to recreate these scenes more vividly in the imaginations of the audience members. The functions that lighting and setting traditionally serve in the theatre, such as focusing attention, setting scenes, enhancing believability and providing visual variety, had to be fulfilled by the actors and by the audiences to which *Many Voices* played.

In staging *Many Voices*, the director and choreographers considered the following: (1) stage attention and focus; (2) interest, variety and effectiveness of composition and movement; (3) the flow, continuity and unity of performance; and (4) stage visibility and sightlines. Since all cast members were on stage throughout the show, focusing attention and maintaining variety

and effectiveness of composition and movement were the most challenging aspects of staging *Many Voices*. The director believed that if these aspects were executed correctly, flow, continuity and unity of performance would be maintained. For this production, the performance area encompassed three levels--actors seated on stools or the floor or actors standing. In order to provide the audience with variety of focus, visibility and composition, these three levels were used simultaneously throughout most of the show in a variety of staging patterns. At times dominant actors were standing, while the rest were seated on the floor or on their stools; at times all were seated on their stools in various positions of body focus or were standing in small groups or one large group. Even with several options for staging, the director had to guard against the possibility that excessive repetition of the same patterns would become dull. Keeping this in mind, the director attempted to fit the movement to the literature by providing either highly stylized, presentational patterns of staging with offstage locus; by providing ensemble, representational patterns with onstage locus; or by providing a combination of both patterns moving back and forth from on to offstage locus. The nature of the script lended itself to such variety in staging since highly presentational pieces of literature were mingled with highly representational pieces of literature. Due to the fact that the stage area was proscenium-thrust, all areas of the audience were afforded optimum stage visibility.

Generally throughout the show, variety of focus was achieved by: (1) having the dominant actor or actors face the audience on

their stools while keeping the ensemble *frozen* in side focus on their stools; (2) having the dominant actor or actors stand in front of their stools facing the audience or move down stage toward the audience while keeping the ensemble *frozen* in side focus on their stools; (3) moving the dominant actor or actors in scene situations while keeping the ensemble *frozen* or subdued either standing or seated; (4) effecting visual focus by the group on a single actor or group of actors; and (5) allowing the dominant actor or actors to take stage vocally. In the ensemble song and dance numbers, soloists were focused on by setting them apart from the chorus in a variety of choreographed compositions while the chorus participated in the number--an effect easily created on the proscenium-thrust stage. The ensemble was used in linear formations, split into smaller groups, scattered around the stage or used in a tight mass while they assumed standing, kneeling or seated body positions. In order to achieve the rapid changes of focus prescribed by the script, the movement for focusing and refocusing had to be precisely and sharply executed.

The movement and business for the show were generally either active and exaggerated utilizing the entire group in creative scene situations, or they were stylized and constrained to convey the more dramatic, serious elements of the script which were usually solo or small group performances. In general to provoke a more serious tone, the first half of the show employed movements which were more constrained. For the second half, the blocking was patterned largely

after highly playful physical activities, such as dancing, skipping, marching and running.

Specific images for blocking, choreography and business were suggested by the content or style of the literature and music. For example, the playful, lyrical, mimicking quality of the "television commercials spoof" in the PSSST section suggested the use of game playing activities which each member of the group could imitate. The movement during this section employed "London Bridge," "Ring Around The Rosy" and other skipping and dancing games children play. The overall effect was that of children mimicking television commercials while playing their favorite games. The melodramatically sophisticated and rhythmical qualities of the literature in the Jealousy section inspired tango dance steps and a ballroom dancing atmosphere with the cast mimicking dancing couples and orchestral musicians while delivering their lines in "stop action" sequence. The hard-driving, mechanical qualities of the literature in the "machine sequence" of the Responsibility section inspired the creation of an ensemble machine by the cast with accompanying vocal sounds and movement. For the "Battle Hymn of the Burgers" song in the PSSST section, a high spirited, "show-stopper" dance routine with kickline was incorporated into the number.

V. CONCLUSION

Although subjective in nature, the only realistic way this director can judge the success of his artistic choices is to examine

the audiences' responses to the production. *Many Voices* was originally scheduled to run for six performances throughout the Knoxville community during November 1976; however, because of word-of-mouth praise and two voluntary reviews in the local newspapers by audience members in the form of "Letters to the Editor," four more performances were scheduled for November. Several additional performances were requested by various community organizations for the next two months but could not be scheduled due to extracurricular obligations of several cast members. *Many Voices* was also taped during December 1976 for radio and television broadcasts as a result of an audience member's affiliations with the University of Tennessee's radio station and Saint John's Episcopal Church's cablevision station. Also, *Many Voices* was Knoxville Community Theatre's first financial success; it received donations for performances and two governmental performing arts grants. The audiences responded enthusiastically throughout each performance with several performances receiving standing ovations.

As was stated in Chapter I, the study presented here is the second part of an oral interpretation performance-research project to determine if theatrical accoutrements, such as music, dance, costumes, stage properties, business, movement and line memorization--common to conventional theatre--can be used effectively in a Readers' Theatre production to successfully achieve a director's two-fold responsibility: (1) to interest, to entertain, to please the audience, and (2) to do justice to the literature employed. Keeping these responsibilities in mind, this director's problem involved staging,

as a Readers' Theatre production, a diverse script devoted to excerpts from multiple sources--including literature of constantly changing type and tone.

His choice of production style, however, conflicted with a few definitions of Readers' Theatre given by authorities in the field. This study, then, involved to a limited degree an attempt to find authoritative justification for the style of presentation used in the production of *Many Voices*. The director compared and analyzed a variety of theories concerning Readers' Theatre and found that, according to the majority of contemporary theorists, a rigid distinction between Readers' Theatre and conventional theatre is considered ineffectual to the goal and development of any given production. Although each theorist discussed and emphasized different aspects within the continuum between conventional theatre and Readers' Theatre, the majority appeared to accept one simplistic open-ended canon as *The Law* governing the production of any Readers' Theatre piece: Anything works to the degree that it provides a direct line of communication between audience and performer and does justice to the literature being presented. Chapters III and IV and Sections I through IV of Chapter V provide a detailed account of this student director's experimentation with the production techniques and theatrical embellishments which were employed in staging the literature of *Many Voices*.

This project provides insight into the problems encountered in staging an original Readers' Theatre script for touring community

theatre. More importantly, it is hoped that this study will further help to free the medium of Readers' Theatre from the strictures of conservative theory and encourage creative production experimentation. It is also hoped that this study will be useful as a preproduction reference for other directors in the theatre field who encounter similar production situations and problems. Finally, it is hoped that this study will give all directors a broader perspective on directing for the stage even if they do not encounter the same problems.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

THE SCRIPT OF *MANY VOICES:* INCLUDING ORIGINAL SCRIPT WITH PERFORMANCE ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

LIST OF SCRIPT SECTIONS, LITERATURE AND SONG SELECTIONS

(Title)	(Section)	(Author)
	PROLOGUE	
To Understand What I Say		Ira T. Lapides
	ONE-UP-MANSHIP	
**Father William		Lewis Carroll
Mountain Impasse		John Updike
Some Heady Phrases on Wine		Art Buchwald
The Beige Hat		Edward Albee
	JEALOUSY	
The Rich Man		Franklin P. Adams
	LOVE	
*Let's Misbehave		Cole Porter
Rigidity of Reason		Ira T. Lapides
Mail Order Annie		Harry Chapin
Time and Waves		Ira T. Lapides
A Couple		Carl Sandburg
Unforgetable Coincidence		Dorothy Parker
The Little Old Lady in Lavender Silk		Dorothy Parker
Dialogue		Mason Williams
	LONELINESS	
Effort at Speech Between Two People		Muriel Rukeysev
Incomplete Sentences		Ira T. Lapides
	DESPAIR	
*Ballad of the Sad Young Man		T. J. Wolf, Jr.
Richard Cory		Edwin Arlington Robinson
Lament		Edna St. Vincent Millay
As We Sit		Ira T. Lapides
	PSSST	
Tab Folding		Robert Shaw
Battle Hymn of the Burgers		Ira T. Lapides
Double Drunk Bum		Ira T. Lapides

(Title)	(Section)	(Author)
	RESPONSIBILITY	
Science and Survival		Barry Commoner
Portrait of a Machine		Louis Untermeyer
Future Shock		Alvin Totter
The Politician		Ogden Nash
	FRUSTRATION	
Some Thoughts on Thoreau		Robert Shaw
The Perforated Spirit		Morris Bishop
Ether and Me		Will Rogers
The House of Blue Leaves		John Guare
The Basic Training of Paulo Hummel		David Rabe
Twas the Night (Late) Before Christmas		Richard Armour
Everybody Eats Too Much Anyhow		Ogden Nash
Ambition		Morris Bishop
	JOY	
59th Street Bridge Song		Paul Simon
**Morning in Spring		Louis Ginsberg
*Singing in the Rain		Arthur Freed, Herb Brown
*Christopher Robin (song)		Ken Loggins
Christopher Robin (poem)		A. A. Milne
**Renaissance		Edna St. Vincent Millay
**The Dining Room		John Fox
*The Dining Room (edited)		John Fox
*Friendship		Cole Porter
*Happiness		Clark Gesner
	EPILOGUE	
*The World is a Beautiful Place		Lawrence Ferlinghetti
*59th Street Bridge Song (reprise)		Paul Simon
**Voices		Robert Shaw
*Voices (edited)		Robert Shaw
*59th Street Bridge Song (reprise)		Paul Simon

In the preceding list and in the following pages:

*--Single asterisk precedes textual elements added to original script and used in performance.

**--Double asterisk precedes textual elements of original script which were deleted from performance.

In the following pages only:

()--Parentheses enclose stage directions added to original script and used in performance.

[]--Brackets enclose section titles.

Italics designate titles of literature and song selections.

Note: No delineation is shown between role assignments in the original script and role assignments in performance since the original script contained no specific role assignments.

[Prologue]

(All cast members are positioned throughout audience. Recorded percussive sounds of chimes and tympani begin. All cast members move slowly and steadily toward stage whispering "many voices." Recorded percussion and "many voices" crescendo into loud discord, then into harmony, and then climax to abrupt silence. At this point, all cast members are on stage in blocked formation--a staggered semicircle--with varied facings.

SL:	SR:
Gerry Wayne	Bob Jane
Martha Gary	Gay
Charlene	

Dan is USC; Charlene Xs to DSC; recorded percussion continues under Charlene's speech.)

CHARLENE-NARRATOR

To understand what I say, you must see my act, my play. For me to speak to you this way on only our first meeting must make us stranger than any strangers, more removed by our separate hearts beating. This is good, for then you will know you and I me, the necessary condition for us to be!

BOB-VOICE

The voices in you.

GAY-VOICE

The voices in me.

ALL FEMALES

The voices in us.

ALL MALES

The voices in we.

CHARLENE-VOICE

One-Up-Manship!

GERRY-VOICE

Jealousy.

WAYNE-VOICE

Love.

MARTHA-VOICE

Loneliness--

JANE-VOICE

--and despair.

ALL CAST MEMBERS

(Focusing on Dan USC with sweeping head turns.)

PSSSST!!!

DAN-VOICE

Responsibility.

BOB-VOICE

Frustration.

ALL CAST MEMBERS

(Spoken in echo consecutively by each from SR to SL.)

Joy!

(Recorded percussion stops.)

[One-Up-Manship Section]

CHARLENE

(States flatly.) One-up-manship.

(Charlene plays intro chord on guitar to *Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better!*; moves to stool USC and sits facing audience. Charlene performs mostly throughout show on her stool unless designated otherwise in script. She continues to play *Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better!*)

(Martha, Gerry, Bob and Dan X SR into small group; turn toward CS with Gerry nearest CS. Jane, Gay, Gary and Wayne move SL into small group; turn toward CS with Gay nearest CS. Each group is ready for confrontation:)

SR GROUP

(Sings.) Anything you can do, I can do better!
I can do anything better than you!

SL GROUP

(Sings.) No you can't!

SR GROUP

(Half sung.) Yes I can!

SL GROUP

(Half shouted.) No you can't!

SR GROUP

(Shouted.) Yes I can!!

(Dan, Gary, Wayne move US to stools; sit in side focus. Music stops.)

GERRY

(Nose to nose with Gay.) Yes *I* can!

GAY

(Answering Gerry.) Age before beauty!

GERRY

(Standing her ground.) Pearls before swine!

(Gay gives up; Xs USR to stool; sits in side focus.)

JANE-NARRATOR

Lady Astor to Winston Churchill-- (She turns, goes to her stool USL; sits in side focus.)

GERRY-LADY ASTOR

(Crosses SR to Bob.) If you were my husband, I'd give you poison!

BOB-CHURCHILL

(Turns to Gerry.) If you were my wife, I'd take it!! (He turns; goes to his stool USR; sits in side focus.)

GERRY

(Turns; crosses SL to Martha.) Wonderful book, darling! Who wrote it for you?

MARTHA

(Looking down at Gerry.) So glad you enjoyed it! Who read it to you?

(Gerry and Martha turn; go to their stools and sit in side focus-- Gerry SR; Martha SL--as Charlene plays guitar and sings:)

*CHARLENE

I can do anything better than you! (Music stops.)

**_FATHER WILLIAM_

**GAY-YOUNG MAN

You are old, Father William--

**MARTHA-NARRATOR

The young man said.

**GAY-YOUNG MAN

And your hair has become very white, and yet you incessantly stand on your head! Do you think at your age it is right?

**GARY-FATHER WILLIAM

In my youth--

**MARTHA-NARRATOR

Father William replied to his son--

**GARY-FATHER WILLIAM
I feared it might injure the brain, but now that I'm perfectly sure I have none, why, I do it again and again!

**GAY-YOUNG MAN
You *are* old--

**MARTHA-NARRATOR
Said the youth--

**GAY-YOUNG MAN
As I mentioned before and have grown most uncommonly fat, yet you turned a back-sommersault in at the door! Pray, what is the reason of that?

**GARY-FATHER WILLIAM
In my youth--

**MARTHA-NARRATOR
Said the sage, as he shook his grey locks--

**GARY-FATHER WILLIAM
I kept all my limbs very supple by the use of this ointment--one shilling the box. Allow me to sell you a couple?

**GAY-YOUNG MAN
You are old--

**MARTHA-NARRATOR
Said the youth--

**GAY-YOUNG MAN
And your jaws are too weak for anything tougher than suet, yet you finished the goose, with the bones and beak. Pray, how did you manage to do it?

**GARY-FATHER WILLIAM
In my youth--

**MARTHA-NARRATOR
Said his father--

**GARY-FATHER WILLIAM
I took to the law and argued each case with my wife, and the muscular strength which it gave to my jaw has lasted the rest of my life!

**GAY-YOUNG MAN
You are old--

**MARTHA-NARRATOR

Said the youth--

**GAY-YOUNG MAN

One would hardly suppose that your eye was as steady as ever, yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose! What made you so awfully clever?

**GARY-FATHER WILLIAM

I have answered three questions and that is enough--

**MARTHA-NARRATOR

Said his father--

**GARY--FATHER WILLIAM

Don't give yourself airs! Do you *think* I can listen all day to such stuff? *Be off*, or I'll kick you downstairs!!

MOUNTAIN IMPASSE

BOB-STRAVINSKY

(Stands; moves DSR to edge of stage.) I despise mountains!

DAN-NARRATOR

(Stands; moves DSL to edge of stage opposite Bob.) Stravinsky declared contemptuously!

BOB-STRAVINSKY

They don't tell my anything!

DAN-NARRATOR

Stravinsky looks upon the mountain. (Bob looks at rest of cast seated on their stools.) The mountain looks on him. (Rest of cast turns out of side focus to stare at Bob.) They lock, the mountain and Stravinsky, and both their views are dim.

BOB-STRAVINSKY

You bore me mountain!

DAN-NARRATOR

Says Stravinsky--

BOB-STRAVINSKY

I find you dull, and I despise you!

DAN-NARRATOR

Says the mountain--

SEATED CAST MEMBERS-MOUNTAIN

(Stay seated; lean toward Bob; speak in thundering monotone.) Stravinsky, tell me why!

DAN-NARRATOR
Stravinsky bellows at the mountain (Bellows; waves arms wildly.) and nearby valleys ring. (Charlene strums guitar discordantly.)

BOB-STRAVINSKY
You don't confide in me, Stravinsky! You never tell me anything!

DAN-NARRATOR
The hill is still before Stravinsky; the skies in silence glisten! At last, a rumble (Charlene strums guitar again.) then the mountain--

SEATED CAST MEMBERS-MOUNTAIN
Igor, you never listen!

(Bob and Dan return to stools. All return to side focuses and assume *wine tasting* poses as:)

*CHARLENE
(Plays guitar; sings.) I can do anything better than you! (Pause.)

SOME HEADY PHRASES ON WINE

(Charlene plays improvised background guitar music.)

(At beginning of following speech, Gerry Xs SR to Bob, she pantomimes pouring wine. Bob turns to Gerry; he pantomimes drinking wine:)

GAY-NARRATOR I
(Stays seated; turns to face audience.) The problem of besting your friends at wine talk becomes increasingly difficult. It isn't enough to drink wines, you must be able to talk about them, if not intelligently, at least at length. If you're serving wine in your own home, be very modest. When the bottle is put on the table, apologize to your guests--(Stays forward.)

GERRY-HOSTESS
(To Bob.) I'll have to beg your pardon--

GAY-NARRATOR I
You might say--

GERRY-HOSTESS
But this is a small, red wine, inconsequential, with hardly any character! (Bob turns back into side focus.)

(During the following speech, Gerry Xs SL; stands between Wayne and Martha who turn on stools and face audience. All three pantomime wine tasting:)

GAY-NARRATOR I
(Seated; facing audience.) If your guests don't contradict you, start building slowly. After tasting it, remark to someone--(Stays forward.)

GERRY-HOSTESS

(To Wayne and Martha.) In spite of everything, I do believe it has some breed, even if it hasn't hit its pinnacle! (Wayne and Martha turn back into side focus.)

(During the following speech, Gerry Xs SR and stands between Gary and Jane who turn on stools and face audience. All three pantomime wine tasting:)

GAY-NARRATOR I

(Still facing audience.) If no one takes the bait, go a peg higher-- (Stays forward.)

GERRY-HOSTESS

(To Jane and Gary.) You know something, I believe this wine is declaring itself! Why yes, it certainly is! It does have manifestations of greatness at that! (Jane and Gary turn back into side focus.)

(During the following speech, Gerry Xs SR and stands beside Dan who turns his head toward audience; both pantomime wine tasting:)

GAY-NARRATOR I

(Still facing audience.) By this time, if your remarks still go unheeded, let out all stops--

GERRY-HOSTESS

(To Dan.) The French consider this wine to be one of their most magnificent sovereigns! They laughingly call it the Napoleon of Burgandies! It's a pity it has to be wasted on such clods!! (Dan smirks; turns back into side focus.)

(During the following speech, Gerry Xs back to her stool; sits. Gay turns on stool to face Gerry. They toast each other; pantomime wine tasting:)

MARTHA-NARRATOR II

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.) Drinking wine in someone else's home is a much easier problem. The thing to remember is always be polite! After tasting the wine, a comment like this might be used-- (Stays forward.)

GERRY-HOSTESS

(To Gay.) Yes, it does have a pleasing shimmer! Isn't it a pity the nose doesn't live up to the color, for it could have been a big, stout boy! (Gay smirks; turns back into side focus; Martha turns back into side focus, too.)

(During the following speech, Gerry stays seated; pivots on her stool toward Dan who is beside her. Dan pivots to face audience; they pantomime ordering wines in restaurants:)

JANE-NARRATOR III

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.) When ordering wines in restaurants, study with care for a long time, even if you don't know what you're reading! Cluck occasionally (Dan *clucks*.) and then turn (Dan, Gerry turn heads US.) to the **sommelier *wine steward and ask him to advise you on what to order. Never accept his first suggestion! (Dan disagrees with imaginary waiter.) He is testing you, and you don't want to lose face!! (Dan and Jane turn back into side focus.)

(At beginning of following speech, Gerry stays seated; pivots SR; watches Bob:)

BOB-ROGERS

(Stands up in front of stool.) I never met a man I didn't like--Will Rogers!

GERRY-STEINEM

(Xs to Bob; taps him on shoulder.) I never met a man I did--Steinem! (Gerry goes back to stool; sits in side focus.)

(Under the following sung phrases, Martha and Bob X to prop stand USC carrying their stools; get props; X to DSC; place stools; they sit. She knits; he reads:)

*ALL MALES-CHORUS

(Stay seated; turn heads to audience; sing. Charlene accompanies on guitar.) Anything you can do, I can do better!

*ALL FEMALES-CHORUS

(Stay seated; turn heads to audience; sing. Charlene accompanies on guitar.) I can do anything better than you! (Male and female chorus turn back into side focus.)

THE BEIGE HAT

MARTHA-MOMMY

(Seated; knitting.) I went to buy a new hat yesterday. (Pause.) I said, I went to buy a new hat yesterday!

BOB-DADDY

(Nose buried in book.) Oh. Yes . . . yes.

MARTHA-MOMMY

Pay attention!

BOB-DADDY

I am paying attention.

MARTHA-MOMMY

Well, be sure you do!

BOB-DADDY

Oh, I am.

MARTHA-MOMMY

All right, Daddy, now listen!

BOB-DADDY

I'm listening, Mommy.

MARTHA-MOMMY

You're sure?

BOB-DADDY

(Glances up.) Yes . . . yes. I'm sure. I'm all ears. (Reads again.)

MARTHA-MOMMY

All right now. I went to buy a new hat yesterday and I said I'd like to buy a new hat please. And so, they showed me a few hats, green ones and blue ones, and I didn't like any of them, not one bit! (She stops knitting; glances at him.) What did I say? What did I just say?

BOB-DADDY

(Continues reading.) You didn't like any of them, not one bit.

MARTHA-MOMMY

(Begins knitting again.) That's right; you just keep paying attention. And then they showed me one that I did like. It was a lovely little hat and I said, "Oh my, it's lovely! What color is it?" And they said, "Why this is beige; isn't it a lovely little beige hat?" And I said, "Oh, it's just lovely!" And so I bought it. (Stops knitting; looks at Bob. Pause.)

BOB-DADDY

(Continues reading.) And so you bought it.

MARTHA-MOMMY

(Begins knitting again.) And so I bought it, and I walked out of the store with the hat right on my head, and I ran spang into the chairman of our women's club, and she said, "Oh my dear, isn't that a lovely little hat! It's just the loveliest little hat! I've always wanted a *wheat* colored hat myself!" And I said, "Why no, my dear, this hat is *beige, beige*!" And she laughed and said, "Why no, my dear, that's a wheat colored hat--*wheat*! I know beige from wheat, too!" (She looks at Bob.) What did I say? (She stops knitting.) What did I just say?

BOB-DADDY

(Still reading.) Well, my dear, I know beige from wheat, too.

(Martha and Bob quickly break scene; pick up stools; return props to prop stand USC; return to places; set stools; remain standing; turn to face audience to deliver lines in the following dialogue:)

GERRY

(Stands; turns to Gay.) Yes I can!

GAY

(Stands; turns to Gerry.) No you can't!

BOB, GERRY, DAN, MARTHA-ADULTS

(SR: Dan stands to join Bob and Gerry. SL: Martha stands to speak along with SR adults; turns to Wayne. All four adults say in unison:) Yes I can!!!!

GAY, WAYNE-TWO YOUTHS

(Gay responds to Bob, Gerry, Dan; all are standing. Wayne stand to respond to Martha:) No you can't!!! (Bob, Gerry, Dan, Martha sit in defeat.)

GAY, WAYNE-TWO YOUTHS

(Standing; turn to face audience as winners.) Yes *I* can!

JANE, GARY-TWO OTHER YOUTHS

(SL: Jane stands; leans toward SR to answer Gay. Gary stands; turns to Wayne.) No *you* can't!!

GAY, WAYNE-TWO YOUTHS

Yes I can!!!

CHARLENE

(Who has been calmly watching game, *pans* group in control.) NO YOU CAN'T! (Gay, Wayne, Jane, Gary sit; all cast members turn into side focus. Charlene plays guitar; sings to audience:) *I can do anything better than you! (Pause.)

[Jealousy Section]

(Charlene plays chord on guitar; Bob stands; moves DSR.)

Jealousy

(Guitar continues.)

BOB

(Tangos around DSR snapping fingers in air; starts to sing to tune of *Jealousy*:) *Jaloosy*--

MARTHA

(Stands; Xs to CS; music stops.) NOT *JALOOSY*, it's *jealousy*! (Pregnant pause.) Jealousy is the injured lover's hell! (She tangoes back to her stool; keeps standing.)

(Guitar begins again. All cast members stand and begin humming phrase of *Jealousy*; mimick tango dance steps as follows: SL--Wayne stands joins Martha in couple dance; Gary and Jane do same. SR--Bob and Gay do same; Gerry and Dan do same. All dance *in place* and energetically hum phrase of the tune *Jealousy*. In delivering the following lines, each couple *freezes* in *stop-action* as lines are delivered; all begin dancing again between each line for *one* phrase of tune. Charlene accompanies on guitar; stops playing for delivery of lines.)

GAY

(Stop-action.) A tiger that tears not only its prey, but also its own raging heart!

(Music and dancing begin.)

JANE

(Stop-action.) What frenzy dictates, jealousy believes!

(Music and dancing begin.)

GERRY

(Stop-action.) The way to hold a husband is to keep him a little jealous--

DAN

(Stop-action.) The way to lose him is to keep him a little *more* jealous!

(Music and dancing begin.)

GAY

(Stop-action.) Lots of people know a good thing the minute the *other* fellow sees it first!

(Music continues. At this point, Gay and Bob tango DSC. Rest of couples break from each other; sit on their stools; pantomime playing orchestral instruments; continue to hum softly under the following speech:)

BOB

(Tangoing with Gay.) The rich man has his motor car. His country and his town estate. He smokes a 50-cent cigar and jeers at fate! But though my lamp burns low and dim, though I must slave for livelihood, think you that I would change with him? (He *dips* Gay; they freeze pose.) YOU BET I WOULD!! (Orchestral pantomime and humming finish song with Jane singing high soprano ending.)

(Music stops. Pause. Bob and Gay *break* pose; return to stools; sit. All turn in side focus while saying:)

ALL CAST MEMBERS
(Speak in good humor.) Many voices, many voices, many voices, many voices!

[Love Section]

(Charlene plays *Love Makes the World Go 'Round* on guitar:)

MARTHA
(Turns on stool to Wayne; puts her head on his shoulder.) How do I love you? Let me count the ways!

BOB
(Turns to audience.) I shall forget you presently, my dear. (Turns back into side focus.)

WAYNE
(With arms around Martha; both facing audience.) The heart belongs to him who knows it best! (Wayne and Martha *break* hold; turn back into side focus.)

JANE
(Stays seated; turns toward audience.) Love is not more than the wide blossom which the wind assails! (Back into side focus.)

DAN
(Stays seated; turns toward audience; pulls Gerry, who is still seated, across his lap into his arms.) Come live with me and be my love and we will all the pleasures prove! (Both turn back into side focus.)

GARY
(Stays seated; turns toward audience.) Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? (Stays front.)

(Guitar music stops.)

GAY
(Stays seated; hugs Bob, who responds.) Oh, if ever two were one, then surely we! (Gay, Gary, Bob turn back into side focus.)

**LET'S MISBEHAVE*

JANE
(Stands; Xs SR to Dan; touches his shoulder.) I like a man with class, and dignity, and *savoir faire*! (She gently prods him off of his stool. Charlene accompanies following song on guitar:)

JANE

(Sings; she and Dan dance.)
It's getting late and while I wait my poor heart aches on!
Why keep the brakes on. Let's misbehave!
I feel quite sure *un peu d'amour* would be attractive!
While we're still active, let's misbehave.
I know your heart is true when I say you for me care!
Somebody's sure to tell, but what the hell do we care!
They say that Spring means just one thing--two little love birds!
We're not above birds; let's misbehave!

DAN

(Sings; he and Jane continue to dance.)
We're all alone! No chaperon can get our number!
While they're in slumber, let's misbehave!
They say that bears have love affairs and even camels!
We're merely mammals! Let's misbehave!

JANE AND DAN

(Back-to-back.) Let's misbehave! (Return to stools during applause; sit in side focus.)

(Music stops.)

WAYNE

(Stays seated; turns swiftly toward audience as radio announcer.) Woman's love has been described by Louise Bogan, one-time poetry critic of the *New Yorker* magazine, as "an eagerness . . . too tense or too lax, used against themselves!" (Turns back into side focus as:)

GERRY

(Turns head toward audience; stays seated.) You always deny what I say, for the rigidity of reason, the fallacy of complete understanding denies you the power to see that when I said I love you (softer), I was *begging* you to love me! (Slowly turns head back into side focus as Charlene begins intro guitar music to *Mail Order Annie*.)

(Intro music continues to play as Gary stands; Xs SR to prop stand; gets hat; moves to DSC. On each chorus in the following song, Gay, Jane and Charlene sing harmony backup:)

MAIL ORDER ANNIE

GARY

At first I did not think it could be you.
But you're the only one that got off the train.
So you must be my wife Miss Annie Halsey,
And I must be your husband . . . yes, I'm Harry Crane.

GARY AND TRIO

Mail Order Annie, never mind your cryin'.
Your tears are sweet rain in my empty life.
Mail Order Annie, can't you see I'm tryin'
To tell you that I'm glad you're here.
You are the woman who's come to be my wife!

GARY

You know you're not as pretty as I'd dreamed you'd be,
But then I'm not no handsome Fance Dan. (Puts hat on head.)
And out here, looks are really not important.
It's what's inside a woman who's up against the land.

**CHORUS

You know it's not no easy life you're enterin'.
The winter wind comes whistling through the cracks there in the sod.
You know you'll never have too many neighbors.
There's you babe and there's me, and there's God!

**GARY

You know I'm just a dirt man from the North Dakota Plains.
You're just one girl from the city that's been thrown out there on her own.
And I'm standing here not sure of what to say to you--
'Ceptin' Mail Order Annie, let's you and me go home!

GARY AND TRIO

Mail Order Annie, never mind your cryin'.
Your tears are sweet rain in my empty life.
Mail Order Annie, can't you see I'm tryin'
To tell you that I'm glad you're here.
You are the woman who's come to be my wife!

(Guitar music continues. Gary walks USC; puts hat back on prop stand USC; returns to stool; sits in side focus. Jane turns into side focus. Music stops.)

GAY

(Still facing audience.) Oh, I just love that! (Turns back into side focus.)

(Charlene plays improvised guitar music.)

TIME AND WAVES

BOB

(Stays seated; turns on stool to face audience.) Time and waves, tides and change crack--then destroy what I built out of sand as a little boy. (Stays forward.)

WAYNE

(Stays seated; turns on stool to face audience.) Time and age passing quicker now disturb--then destroy all the love I had for you as a little boy. Older now, though only seconds past. Call it finished! (Stays front.)

BOB

At long last, we part with tears in retrospect--(Stays front.)

WAYNE

Remembering years of much neglect--(Stays front.)

BOB

As we let our love die. (Wayne and Bob turn back into side focus.)

(Music stops.)

GAY

(Stays seated; turns head toward audience.) Oh, I just love that!! (Turns head back into side focus.)

JANE

(Stays seated; turns head toward audience. Sings as Charlene accompanies on guitar:) Love is wonderful the second time around. (Hums phrase of tune once; slowly turns head back into side focus.)

(Charlene plays transition straight into background guitar music for following poem:)

A COUPLE

MARTHA-NARRATOR I

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.)
He was in Cincinnati, she in Burlington
He was in a gang of Postal Telegraph linemen.
She was a pot rassler in a boarding house.

GAY-YOUNG WIFE

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.) The cryin' is lonely--
(Stays forward.)

MARTHA-NARRATOR I

She wrote him.

WAYNE-YOUNG HUSBAND

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.) The same here--(Stays forward.)

MARTHA-NARRATOR I

He answered.
The winter went by and he came back and they married,
And he went away again where rainstorms knocked down
telegraph poles, and wires dropped with frozen sleet.
And again she wrote him:

GAY-YOUNG WIFE

The cryin' is lonely.

MARTHA-NARRATOR I

And again he answered--

WAYNE-YOUNG HUSBAND

The same here.

(Martha, Gay and Wayne turn back into side focus. Pause. Transition music plays.)

DAN-NARRATOR II

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.)
Their five children are in the public schools.
He votes the Republican ticket and is a taxpayer.
They are known among those who know them
as honest American citizens living honest lives.
Many things that bother other people never bother them.
They have their five children and they are a couple--
A pair of birds that call to each other and satisfy.
As sure as he goes away, she writes him--

GERRY-ADULT WIFE

(Stays seated; turns head toward audience.)
The cryin' is lonely. (Keeps head forward.)

DAN-NARRATOR II

And he flashes back the same old answer--

BOB-ADULT HUSBAND

(Stays seated; turns head toward audience.)
The same here. (Keeps head forward.)

(Bob and Gerry turn heads back into side focus.)

DAN-NARRATOR II

It's a long time since he was a gang lineman in Cincinnati.
And she was a pot rassler in a Burlington boarding house,
Yet they never get tired of each other, and they are (Pause.)
a couple. (Turns back into side focus as music ends.)

(Pause.)

UNFORGETABLE COINCIDENCE

GERRY

(Stays seated; turns to face audience. Smiles wistfully.)
By the time you swear you're his shivering and sighing.
And he vows his passion is infinite, undying--
Lady, make a note of this--
One of you is lying! (Turns back into side focus.)

(Charlene begins playing and singing *Try to Remember*. Martha stands; Xs to CS; gets walking cane off of prop stand. Supporting her weight on cane, she moves DSC; stops. Charlene stops singing, but music continues softly throughout the following poem:)

THE LITTLE OLD LADY IN LAVENDER SILK

MARTHA-OLD LADY

(Standing.) I was 77 come August.
I shall shortly be losing my bloom.
I've experienced zephyr and raw gust,
And symbolical flood and somoon.

When you come to this time of abatement,
To this passing from Summer to Fall
It is manners to issue a statement
As to what you got out of it all.

So I'll say, though reflection unnerves me
And pronouncements I dodge as I can
That I think, if my memory serves me,
There was nothing more fun than a man!

In my youth, when the crescent was too wan
To embarrass with beams from above
By the aid of some local don Juan,
I fell into the habit of love.

And I learned how to kiss and be merry--
An education left better unsung.
My neglect of the waters Pierian
Was a scandal when grandma was young.

Though the shabby unbalanced the splendid
And the bitter outmeasured the sweet
I should certainly do as I did then
Were I given the chance to repeat.

For contrition is hollow and wraithful
And regret is no part of my plan
And I think, if my memory's faithful,
There was nothing more fun than a man!

(*Try to Remember* background music continues as Martha turns; walks USC; puts cane on prop stand; goes back to stool; sits and turns back into side focus. Music stops.)

(Gay and Gary stand; both X to CS; meet; turn toward audience; link arms; begin strolling DS.)

DIALOGUE

GAY-YOUNG GIRL
Look at all you've given me tonight. You took me to dinner, for a lovely walk, wrote me a poem and made me a bed of rose petals. (They stop walking.) I haven't given you anything, have I?

GARY-YOUNG BOY
(Breaks away from Gay; moves SL.) I wouldn't say that. You gave me someone to eat with; it was a nice night for a walk! (Gay Xs to him.) I write a lot of poems anyway, and it was a chance to do something else with flowers. (He breaks away again.)

GAY-YOUNG GIRL
(Shocked.) Well, then, I guess we're about even!

GARY-YOUNG BOY
(In a hurry.) Yes, I guess so. (He turns to leave; pauses; turns back around.) Night! (Goes back to stool; sits in side focus.)
(Pause.)

GAY-YOUNG GIRL
(Turns to audience.) Oh! I just love *that*!! (She returns to stool USR; sits in side focus as "many voices" transition begins:)

*BOB
(Chuckles.) Many voices--

*MARTHA
(Amused.) Many voices--

*GERRY
(Laughingly.) Many voices--

*DAN
(Sobering.) Many voices!

*CHARLENE
(Abruptly changes mood; moaning.) Loneliness--

*WAYNE
(Hollow.) Loneliness--

*GAY
(Echoed.) Loneliness--

*JANE
(Faint echo.) Loneliness.

[Loneliness Section]

(Charlene plays improvised background music under the following poem:)

EFFORT AT SPEECH BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE

GERRY

(Stands; faces audience; takes four steps forward; stops.) Speak to me. Take my hand. What are you now? I will tell you all. I will conceal nothing. When I was three, a little child read a story about a rabbit . . . who died, in the story, and I crawled under a chair . . . a pink rabbit. It was my birthday, and a candle burnt a sore spot on my finger, and I was told to be happy. (Turns her back toward audience; stands still.)

JANE

(Stands; faces audience; takes four steps forward; stops.) Speak to me. Take my hand. What are you now? When I was nine, I was fruitily sentimental, fluid, and my widowed aunt played Chopin, and I bent my head on the painted wood-work and wept. (Turns back to audience; stands in place.)

GAY

(Stands; faces audience; moves far SR to edge of stage.) I want now to be close to you. I would link the minutes of my days, close, somehow, to your days. (Stays facing audience; lowers head.)

MARTHA

(Stands; faces audience; moves far SL to edge of stage.) I will be open. I think he never loved me. He loved the bright beaches, the little lips of foam that ride small waves; he loved the veer of gulls. He said, with a gay mouth, I love you. Grow to know me. (Stays facing audience; lowers head.)

JANE

(Pivots to face audience again.) What are you now? If we could touch one another--(Stays front.)

GAY

(Raises head.) If these our separate entities could come to grips--**clinched like a Chinese puzzle. (Stays front.)

GERRY

(Pivots to face audience again.) Yesterday I stood in a crowded street that was live with people, and no one spoke a word, and the morning shone. Everyone silent, moving--(Stays forward.)

MARTHA

(Raises head.) Take my hand. Speak to me.

(Under the following "many voices" transition, Gay, Gerry, Jane and Martha turn US; go to stools; sit in side focus:)

DAN

(Softly spoken.) Loneliness--

GARY

(Echoed.) Loneliness--

WAYNE

(Echoed.) Loneliness--

BOB

(Echoed.) Loneliness.

INCOMPLETE SENTENCES

DAN

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.) Incomplete sentences, we two, acting like aggressive verbs with no subjects. Talking in trite adjectives, talking at each other never *to* each other. Never understanding the subjects of these incomplete sentences. (Turns back into side focus.)

(Gay, Dan, Jane, Gary and Wayne all whisper four consecutive "many voices." Over this are heard Bob, Gerry and Martha echoing consecutively the word *despair*. Pause. Charlene says "despair"; then begins playing guitar and singing:)

[Despair Section]

**BALLAD OF THE SAD YOUNG MAN*

CHARLENE

(Stays seated.) Sing a song of sad young men, glasses full of rye.
All the news is bad again; kiss your dreams goodbye.
All the sad young men sitting in the bars,
Knowing young knights and missing all the stars.
All the sad young men drifting through the town,
Drinking up the night, trying not to drown.
All the sad young men singing in the cold,
Trying to forget that they're growing old.
All the sad young men choking on their youth,
Trying to be brave, running from the truth.
Autumn turns the leaves to gold. Slowly dies the heart.
Sad young men are growing old. That's the cruelest part.

(Guitar music to *Ballad of the Sad Young Man* continues to play under the following poem; Charlene hums tune softly:)

RICHARD CORY

GARY

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.)
Whenever Richard Cory went down town, we people on the pavement looked at him. He was a gentleman from sole to crown, clean favored and imperially slim. (Stays front; lowers head.)

GAY

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.)
And he was always quietly arrayed, and he was always human when he talked, but still he fluttered pulses when he said "good morning" and he glittered when he walked. (Turns back into side focus.)

MARTHA

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.)
And he was rich, yes, richer than a king, and admirably schooled in every grace! In fine, we thought that he was everything to make us wish that we were in his place.
(Stays front; looks straight ahead.)

GARY

(Raises head.)
So on we worked, and waited for the light, and went without the meat, and cursed the bread!

MARTHA

And Richard Cory, one calm summer night (Guitar and humming stop abruptly.) went home and put a bullet through his head.

(Charlene strikes discord on guitar. Pause.)

LAMENT

GERRY

(Turns slowly to audience; stands in front of her stool.) Listen children; your father is dead. (Pause.) From his old coats, I'll make you little jackets. I'll make you little trousers from his old pants. There'll be in his pockets things he used to put there--keys and pennies covered with tobacco. Dan shall have the pennies to save in his bank. Anne shall have the keys to make a pretty noise with. Life must go on and the dead be forgotten. Life must go on, though good men die. Anne, eat your breakfast! Dan take your medicine! Life must go on! (Pause.) I forget just why! (Sits; turns back into side focus.)

(Charlene begins guitar background music, *In the Gloaming*, which continues under the following poem:)

AS WE SIT

WAYNE

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.)
As we sit you and I watching dancing lights on the wall, snowflakes drift, softness sits in crystal stillness as winter passes from the fall. (Stays front.)

DAN

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.)
Soft gray winter's smoke from embers glowing over mellowed Spring wine not now worth tasting--feeling our time slowly going, too late realizing that the embers and wine were wasting. (Stays front.)

BOB

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.)
Why did we ride this carnival wheel, spinning round and round till all time was spun? Why grabbing for brass rings when we had bands of gold? Why reaching for what was not, nor could have been while in frustrated love, we grew old. (Stays front.)

(Music stops.)

[PSSST Section]

(All cast members stand in front of stools--except Charlene; turn backs to audience as each speaks four "many voices" in unison. With backs turned, women quickly remove wrap-around skirts and toss them behind stools; men quickly remove jackets and toss them behing stools.)

ALL CAST MEMBERS

(Quickly turn around to the right to face audience; remain standing.)
PSSSST!!!!

GARY

Now you see it!

MARTHA

Then you didn't!

JANE

Where did it go?

WAYNE

Crease carefully along lines CB--

DAN

Placing tab A into slot B--

MARTHA

And fold over!

GAY

But tab A doesn't fit into slot B!!

(Charlene plays intro music on guitar to *Burger King* tune; following sequence is executed with precision-drill choreography; all dance and sing; Charlene accompanies on guitar:)

BATTLE HYMN OF THE BURGERS

(Sung to tune of *Burger King* jingle:)

ALL CAST MEMBERS

We will *sting* you!
We will *zap* you!
We will *con* you!
We will *sap* you!
We will *take* you!
We will *fake* you any old day!
So have it our way!
Have it our way! (Pause.)

(Sung to tune of *McDonald's Burgers* jingle:)

GAY

This is what we hear today!
Come with us; we'll show the way
Through commercials, through commercials!

(Sung to tune of *Burger King* jingle:)

*ALL CAST MEMBERS

We will *sting* you!
We will *zap* you!
We will *con* you!
We will *sap* you!
We will *take* you!
We will *fake* you any old day!
So have it our way!
Have it our way!

(Sung to tune of *McDonald's Burgers* jingle:)

JANE

Coke is good for rusty nails,
And promises to cure your ails
Through commercials, through commercials!

(Sung to tune of *Wrigley's Gum* jingle:)

DAN

(Gets *drunken bum* hat from properties stand; puts it on; moves DL as rest of cast stands CS in block formation.)
Have a rotten, rotten day day
With a double drunk, double drunk bum
A blue, blue double drunk double drunk bum!

ALL CAST MEMBERS

(In drinking song fashion.)
You get a stale stale tale tale
From a double drunk, double drunk bum
A blue blue, double double, drunk drunk, double drunk,
Double drunk bum!

(All move into line across stage during following stanza:)
Rechew your pleasure; rechew your fun
With rechewed, rechewed, recycled gum!

(All cast CS in choreographed block formation; some down on one knee; others standing; all with arms raised. Music stops.)

WAYNE

(Stands; Xs SR to Gary who is still kneeling; pulls tear-away T-shirt out from back of Gary's shirt; tears it in half.) Do you mind if I tear up your shirt for $50? (Gary stands; shocked.)

GAY

(Moves between Wayne and Gary to look at shirt.) Ring around the collar!!

(Wayne raises fist; *stage punches* out Gay who falls into Bob's arms unconscious. During this action, Dan and Jane move US to prop stand to put on "Dolly and Porter" hats.)

BOB

(With Gay passed out in his arms:) We have taken all the Clorox out of Ardvaark, Tennessee!!

(Dan and Jane move DSC as Porter and Dolly. Rest of cast displays general excitement recognizing Porter and Dolly as country music superstars; they split into two groups, SL and SR and sit on floor as audience for the *stars*. They applaud, whistle and catcall as Dolly and Porter stop DSC. During the following song, seated cast clap hands in rhythm; convey hoe-down atmosphere:)

*JANE-DOLLY

(To seated cast and audience.) Look at these towels! You can't buy 'em. (Porter agrees; grins.) You can only get 'em in boxes of Breeze!

(Intro music begins to tune of *Breeze Detergent* jingle.)

*JANE-DOLLY/DAN-PORTER

(Sing.) You can't buy 'em, so don't try to if you please!
You can only get 'em in boxes of breeze! (Music stops.)

*JANE-DOLLY

(Sexily.) Raspberry red, lemon yellow--

*DAN-PORTER

(Grinning.) And huckelberry blue!!

(Music starts again.)

*JANE-DOLLY/DAN-PORTER

(Sing.) You can't buy 'em, so don't try to if you please!
You can only get 'em in boxes of Breeze! (Music stops; seated cast applauds as Jane and Dan take hats back to prop stand USC.)

(Gary stands; goes to get diaper from prop stand; moves DSC to meet Gay who stands and Xs to DSC to meet him.)

GARY

(Holding diaper.) How did you get these diapers so white?

GAY

(Smiling; pleased that he is so pleased.) I used Downy Fabric Softener!

GARY

(Perturbed, he rolls up diaper into a noose; she keeps smiling unaware of what is happening.) I didn't ask how you got them so soft. (Puts diaper-noose around Gay's neck; her eyes widen.) (Sinister.) I ASKED YOU HOW YOU GOT THEM SO SOFT!! (He strangles her; she screams; he drags her SL; they break scene; sit back down on floor.)

(During the above and following scenes, seated cast members watch what happens; they react in *Greek Chorus fashion* to all action.)

(As Gary and Gay break their scene, the following happens:)

MARTHA

(Stands; skips across stage waving arms wildly; circles around stage to USR.) Rinso White, Rinso White, Rinso White, Rinso White, Rinso White!!! (Stops *in her tracks* beside Bob, who stands ominously.)

(All seated cast members and Bob, who is standing, make bird chirping noises; wave arms.)

BOB

(Raises finger to silence chirps.) Time and Tide wait for no Man!

(All look around confused.)

MARTHA

(To Bob.) That doesn't fit!

**DAN

Ajax, the foaming cleanser!

**REST OF CAST

(Sing to tune of *Ajax* jingle.) Blub, blub, blub, blub, blub, blub, blub, blub!

(Charlene, still seated on stool USC, begins playing *London Bridge* tune on guitar. All cast members, who are seated, stand and skip around the stage like children playing and hum tune. Gay and Wayne skip to DSC; stop; raise arms; join hands to form London Bridge as other cast members line up behind and SL of them to *play game*.

(Music stops. Most of the following *one-liners* are delivered in stop-action. Stopping and starting of music and stop-action are designated below:)

GAY

(To Wayne.) Are your sinuses plugged?

WAYNE

(Loud whisper to Gay.) SHHHH! NOT YET!!

(Guitar music starts again; all skip through London Bridge formed by Gay and Wayne.)

MARTHA

(Caught in London Bridge between Wayne and Gay.) This girdle is killing me! (Wayne and Gay raise arms; she skips out of bridge; around SL to back of London Bridge line.)

BOB

(Skipping through bridge.) It's not nice to fool Mother Nature! (Skips around SL to back of London Bridge line.)

JANE

(Also skipping through bridge; she crosses her bosom with hand in Catholic fashion.) Cross your heart?

(Music stops. All *freeze* movement.)

DAN

(Caught in London Bridge between Wayne and Gay.) We put gloves on the left hands of 50 women!

WAYNE

(To Dan as Groucho.) And what did you do with their right hands! (Pause. Music starts; plays for one phrase of *London Bridge* tune as Dan raises Gay and Wayne's arms and skips out from between them SL to back of London Bridge line.)

(Music stops. All *freeze* movement.)

GARY

(Caught in London Bridge between Wayne and Gay.) We've numbered these noses (points with both hands to Gay and Wayne's noses.) to prove a point! (Pause. Music starts; plays for one phrase of *London Bridge* tune as Wayne and Gay raise their arms for Gary to skip out from between them; he circles SL to back of London Bridge line.)

(Music stops. All *freeze* movement.)

MARTHA

(Caught in London Bridge between Wayne and Gay; sniffs; says to Gay.) Did *you* have fish last night?

GAY

(To Martha.) Are your sinuses plugged? (Music starts and continues as Martha raises Wayne and Gay's arms while laughing playfully; she skips out from between them; skips and Xs SL.)

WAYNE

(To Gay.) *No, not* yet!!

MARTHA

(Standing SL; says to audience.) This oven cleaner is so mild--

DAN

(Skipping through London Bridge, moves SL to Martha; says to Martha:) You can use it as a face mask! (Gary also skips through bridge and crosses SL to Dan and Martha.)

(Music stops.)

GERRY

(Caught in London Bridge between Gay and Wayne.) I was not born beautiful, I was born (Pauses, looks around.) DIVINE!!! (She laughs as Gay and Wayne push Gerry out of London Bridge. Jane skips through bridge and follows Gerry far SR as music starts.)

GARY

(Joins hands with Dan and Martha SL; they dance around in circle in place.) This year the pits--

MARTHA

(Dancing with Dan and Gary.) Next year the wrinkles! (She laughs.)

(SR: Jane and Gerry join hands and dance around in circle in place.)

BOB

(Caught in London Bridge between Gay and Wayne.) I just want to talk to you about one thing--(Music stops; all freeze movement; look at Bob.) --diaha--

GAY

(Cuts Bob off.) Are *your* sinuses plugged?

WAYNE

(To Gay.) NOT YET!!!!!

(Music starts again. SL and SR groups begin dancing in circles again. Bob is still caught in London Bridge. Gay and Wayne bend over with hands still joined and arms outstretched to form car; Bob is still between them in *driver's seat*; he raises hands to pantomime driving. Dan Xs to CS; stands beside Gay who is bent over.)

DAN

(As car salesman.) Of course, your mileage may vary with driving habits (Refers to *car* with hand gesture.), local driving conditions and mental capacity of the poor slob in Detroit who assembled this clunker! (He slaps Gay on buttocks on word *clunker*. Music stops; SL and SR groups stop skipping and look at action.)

GAY

(Breaks hand-hold with Wayne; both stand erect; she grabs her buttocks and says:) But slot A doesn't fit into slot B!!!

JANE

(Xs SL to Dan; runs fingers through his hair.) We can be *very* friendly at your Texaco dealer!

(Pause. Charlene, still seated USC, plays intro chord on guitar to tune of *Diet-Rite* jingle. On chord, all cast members strike gypsy flamenco dancing pose with arms in air.)

*ALL CAST MEMBERS-DANCERS

(Dancing individually and singing.)
Yes yes; no no no; yes yes; no no no;
Yes yes; no no no; yes yes; no no no! (*Freeze*.) Hey!

(Music stops.)

BOB

(Breaks *freeze*; points to audience.) Please don't squeeze the Charmin! (Back into *freeze*.)

MARTHA

(Breaks *freeze*; points to audience.) Don't fiddle with the Oreo middle! (Back into *freeze*.)

GERRY

(Breaks *freeze*; points to audience.) Don't leave home without it! (Back into *freeze*.)

WAYNE

(Breaks *freeze*; points to audience.) Don't forget to send by midnight! (Back into *freeze*.)

(Music starts again.)

*ALL CAST MEMBERS-DANCERS

(Some dance *flamenco* style in couples this time; all sing.)
Yes yes; no no no; yes yes; no no no;
Yes yes; no no no; yes yes; no no no!

(Singing stops; music continues for 14 counts as all dance around stamping feet in rhythm; on 14th count, all *freeze* and shout:)
HEY!!!!

(All break *freeze*; remain in positions; watch action:)

JANE

(Xs DSC; bumps and grinds hips.) Hanes makes me feel good all under! (She freezes; watches following action:)

GARY

(Moves DSL to left side of Wayne; places finger over Wayne's left nostril.) We plugged up this man's left nostril! (*Freezes*.)

DAN

(Xs DSL to right side of Wayne; places finger over Wayne's right nostril. Wayne gasps.) We plugged up this man's right nostril! (Wayne falls backward; Gary and Dan *break* his fall; all three *freeze* as:)

GAY

(Sinisterly moves DSL; Xs SR pointing into audience.) Are your sinuses plugged up? (She laughs.)

(Charlene plays guitar intro music to begin reprise of *Burger King* tune. All cast members begin singing and march US to stand in front of their respective stools and face audience. They form *kick line* as they sing:)

BATTLE HYMN OF THE BURGERS (reprise)

(Sung to tune of *Burger King* jingle.)

ALL CAST MEMBERS

We will *sting* you!
We will *zap* you!
We will *con* you!
We will *sap* you!
We will *take* you!
We will *fake* you any old day!

(In kick line:)

So have it our way! Have it our way! Have it our way! Have it our way! (On last line of song, Gay, Gerry, Jane and Martha sit on Bob, Don, Gary and Wayne's knees who are kneeling. All raise arms at end of song in *musical comedy* style. They *freeze* poses for applause.)

[Responsibility Section]

CHARLENE

(Stays seated on stool USC.) Responsibility!

(All cast members, except Charlene, stand and begin individual mechanical movements and accompanying machine noises. They split into groups and *operate* together as parts of various machines. They move mechanically into staggered semi-circle spanning across stage from LS to RS. Machine movements and noises gradually slow down to halt as if power source is being drained. They *freeze* halted machine poses. Pause. As Gay begins following speech, rest of cast breaks freeze and pantomine individuals using appliances--irons, razors, etc.)

GAY-REPORTER

(Breaks pose as machine; raises up; moves down to CS; assumes role of reporter.) On a night in November, 1965, all the electric power in an 80,000 square mile area of the northeastern United States and Canada failed. (All other cast members pantomime effect of power failure on appliances--some shake their appliances, some kick them, etc.) The breakdown was a total surprise. (Pantomimes holding microphone to Bob's mouth while he speaks:)

BOB-CITIZEN

It was a total surprise! (Bob and rest of cast *freeze* their positions and Gay continues:)

GAY-REPORTER

For hours, engineers and power officials were unable to turn the lights on again. For days, no one could explain why they went out; even worse, no one can presume that it won't happen again! (Gay *freezes* position.)

JANE

(Breaks her *freeze*; with uplifted arms turns completely around to face audience as she sings *a cappella* to the tune of *There's a Kind of Hush All Over The World*:) When the lights go on again all over the world!

(Rest of cast break *freeze* and reassume *machine* roles and accompanying movements and noises. Wayne, who is DSC stands unsuspecting as all *machines* turn DS and engulf him. He delivers the following line just before he is engulfed:)

WAYNE-WORKER

(Horrified.) Machines aren't to be trusted!!!

(*Machines* break from around Wayne, who has reassumed his *machine* role. Gary walks out from behind *machines* to CS. Under the following speech, *machines* continue to operate in small groups, but turn to attack Gary on cue:)

SCIENCE AND SURVIVAL

GARY-NARRATOR

(Stands CS.) If we build a machine and instruct it to win war, it may, like the New England power grid, do its duty in a completely unexpected way. Like detergents, synthetics, insecticides, and leaded gasoline, the experience of nuclear war demonstrates our mastery--(All *machines* break from groups; focus on Gary on the word *mastery*; they slowly move toward him. He is unaware of their presence until they engulf him near end of speech.)--of physics, chemistry, and engineering. And like these lesser technological innovations, the nuclear war system is likely to--(He notices *machines* around him.)--fail in its purpose, (He panics.)--defense of the nation, because of the unanticipated!!!! (He is engulfed.)

(All *freeze* hovering over Gary in close-knit group CS. Pause. All begin humming creating effect of smooth running machine. Humming, all quickly break *freeze*; form one large, *interlaced* machine. Each cast member serves as *working part* of one machine. When all are in position, humming stops. Martha, standing beside *machine* SL, grabs Wayne's extended arm and moves it, which starts *machine*. Wayne makes clicking noise with mouth, and *machine parts*--arms, legs, heads, etc.--start moving in synchronization creating gears, cogs, etc. All members vocalize machine sounds. Jane stands with her back to audience SR of the *machine*. Martha speaks:)

PORTRAIT OF A MACHINE

MARTHA-NARRATOR I

(Facing audience.) What nudity is beautiful as this obedient monster purring at its toil! These naked iron muscles (Gestures toward *machine*.) dripping oil, and the sure-fingered rods that never miss! This long and

shiny flank of metal is magic that greasy labor cannot spoil while this vast engine that could rend the soil conceals its fury with a gentle hiss! (Turns her back to audience; stands still.)

(Machine noises abruptly change to *pulsing* vocal sounds; all machine movements continue under following speech:)

JANE-NARRATOR II

(Standing SR; turns to face audience.) It does not vent its loathing, does not turn upon its makers with destroying hate. It bears a deeper malice, throbs to earn its master's bread, and lives to see the Great Lord of Earth, who rules but cannot learn, become the slave of what his slaves create! (Stays forward.)

(Machine movements and sounds stop. Pause. All break from machine formation and move back to stools and sit in side focus except Bob. He stays CS; faces audience and delivers the following speech:)

FUTURE SHOCK

BOB-NARRATOR I

Perhaps the one, underlying commonality of all our lives today is the roaring current of change, a current so powerful today that it overturns institutions, shifts our values and shrivels our roots! Change is the process by which the future invades our lives, and it is important to look at it closely, not merely from the grand perspective of history, but also to understand how it affects the living, breathing individuals who experience it. (Returns to his stool; sits in side focus.)

(Dan turns on his stool to face audience and begins the following speech as Bob returns to his stool:)

DAN-NARRATOR II

(Stays seated.) The acceleration of change in our time is, itself, an elemental force! This accelerative thrust has personal and psychological, as well as sociological consequences! What seems painfully certain is that unless Man quickly learns to control the rate of change in his personal affairs as well as in society at large--(Rest of cast members turn on stools to face audience with arms limp to their sides. All deliver the following line; by end of line, all are slumped over on stools:)

ALL CAST MEMBERS

(Pace of the following line winds down to a halt like a phonograph record slows down when its power source is turned off:)--We are d-o-o-m-e-d t-o a m-a-s-s-i-v-e a-d-a-p-t-a-t-i-o-n-a-l b--r--e--a--k--d---o---w---n.

(Pause.)

THE POLITICIAN

MARTHA-NARRATOR I

(Stays seated; raises up quickly. She smiles wistfully. Rest of cast remain slumped over during delivery of the following line:) Another kind of machine--the political machine!

(Rest of cast members raise up quickly, smiling and applauding as if at a political rally after a speech. Bob stands as they raise up and faces audience, smiling, with arms raised up in *Nixon* style.)

WAYNE-NARRATOR II

(Stands; quickly Xs DSL; stops; speaks to audience.)
Behold the politician!
Self-preservation is his ambition!
He thrives in the D of C
Where he was sent by you and me!

(Applause stops. Gay Xs SL; stands beside Wayne and delivers the following speech. Various *scene situations* are created CS as the narration continues:)

GAY-NARRATOR III

(To audience.)
Whether elected or appointed
He considers himself the
lord's anointed!
And indeed, the ointment lingers
on him
So thick you can't get your
fingers on him!

(During this stanza, other cast members form line SL to shake Bob's hand. Gerry leads line assuming role of politician's grandmother. All shake Bob and Gerry's hand and break up into small social groups. All pantomime chatting.)

WAYNE-NARRATOR II

(To audience.)
He has developed a sixth
sense
About living at the public
expense,
Because in private competi-
tion,
He would encounter mal-
nutrition!

(During this stanza, Bob pantomimes asking for group's attention; he *asks* for money. All dig into their pockets; take money and give it to him. Martha is last to give money; she flirts with Bob.)

GAY-NARRATOR III

(To audience.)
He has many profitable
hobbies
Not the least of which is
lobbies

(During this stanza, Bob looks around to see if anyone is watching him and Martha. All are *chatting* in small groups. He takes Martha into his arms; kisses her. Jane

He would not sell his grandmother for a quarter
If he suspected the presence of a reporter!
He gains votes ever and anew
By taking money from everybody and giving it to a few,
While explaining that every penny
Was extracted from the few to be given to the many!

sees; *shrieks*. All see; draw back in shock. Gerry-grandmother Xs to CS; pulls Bob and Martha apart. Bob frowns; takes Gerry by arm; Xs DS; pantomimes selling her to Dan. Gerry looks toward audience sheepishly. All pantomime laughing-off whole affair. Gary, as reporter, *asks* for everyone's attention to pose for photograph. They pose CS with Bob. Gary kneels in front of them. All *freeze* poses to end of stanza.)

(Gay Xs US to prop stand to get politician neck signs as the following narration begins:)

WAYNE-NARRATOR II

(To audience.)
Some politicians are republican,
some democratic,
And their feud is dramatic!

(During this stanza, Dan steps forward as republican SL facing audience. Bob steps forward as democrat SR facing audience. They are side by side. They point fingers at each other in *feud*.)

GAY-NARRATOR III

(Moves DSC between Bob and Dan.)
But except for the name (puts signs around Bob and Dan's necks with *donkey* and *elephant* sides showing.)
They are identically the same!
(Turns each sign over revealing identical pictures of horses' rearends. She Xs SL and stands beside Wayne.)

(During this stanza, rest of cast members divide into two groups: *democrats* stand SR of Bob; *republicans*, SL of Dan. Each group kneels and bows in reverence as respective political party sign is revealed. When signs are flipped over to reveal horses' rearends, these pictures remain unnoticed by Dan and Bob; they continue to smile proudly at audience. Two groups remain on knees bowing.)

MARTHA-NARRATOR I

(Stands up from kneeling position.)
When a politician talks the foolishest
And obstructs everything the mulishest
And bellows the loudest
Why his constituents are the proudest!

(During this stanza, Bob and Dan, still facing audience, bellow loudly on word *bellow*; continue to smile. On word *proudest*, rest of cast, still on knees, look up and applaud politely.)

GERRY-NARRATOR IV

(Stands; speaks to audience.)
Whenever intelligent people
get together
They talk about politicians
and about the weather,--
(Xs SL; stands beside Dan;
raises palm; looks to *sky*;
freezes pose.)

(During this stanza, all cast members stand; shed previous roles; split into two groups--one group, USR; the other, DSL. On word *weather*, all look up toward *sky*; raise palms; *freeze* poses except to speak.)

DAN-NARRATOR V

(In DSL group with palm still in air; looks at audience; speaks.)
But they are always too decent
To go into politics themselves,--
(Looks to sky; *freezes* pose.)

(During this stanza, rest of cast remain in *frozen* poses.)

GERRY-NARRATOR IV

(In DSL group with palm still in air; looks at audience; speaks.)
And too intelligent even to
go to the polls! (Looks to
sky; *freezes* pose.)

(During this stanza, rest of cast remain in *frozen* pose.)

MARTHA-NARRATOR I

(In USR group with palm still in air; looks at audience; speaks.)
So I hope the kind of politicians
they get will have
No mercy on their pocketbooks
or their souls!

(During this stanza, rest of cast remain in *frozen* pose.)

(All cast members break *freeze*; walk to their individual stools; sit as they speak the following "many voices" transition:)

ALL CAST MEMBERS

(Walk to stools; speak in unison.)
Many voices, many voices, many voices, many voices.
(All are seated in side focus.)

[Frustration Section]

(All, except Charlene who is already facing audience, turn toward audience; raise their fists; pound their knees while screaming and making other vocal sounds of frustration. All quieten down and *freeze* in various poses of frustration. Some pose in partial side focus; others, facing audience.)

CHARLENE
(To audience.) Frustration! (Stays forward.)

SOME THOUGHTS ON THOREAU

DAN-NARRATOR
(Stays seated; faces audience.) One hundred years ago, Henry David Thoreau observed that most men lead lives of quiet desperation. (Rest of cast members *break* pose; sigh pleasantly.) That was one hundred years ago. Today, thanks to progress, most men lead lives of noisy desperation! (All cast members, including Dan, raise fists; scream, etc. All quieten down and reassume poses of desperation.)

THE PERFORATED SPIRIT

JANE-SECRETARY
(Turns head toward audience.)
The fellows up in personnel (Gestures.)
They have a set of cards on me.
The sprinkled perforations tell
My individuality?
And what am I? I am a chart
Upon the cards of IBM!
The secret places of the heart
Have little secrecy for them!
It matters not how I may prate!
They punch with punishments my scroll.
The files are masters of my fate;
They are the captains of my soul!
Monday, my brain began to buzz.
I was in agony all night!
I found out what the trouble was--
They had my paper clip too tight!! (Reassumes frustration pose.)

GAY-GIRL
(Turns toward audience with hands uplifted.) But Tab A doesn't fit into Slot B! (Reassumes frustration pose.)

ETHER AND ME

BOB-WILL ROGERS
(Stands in front of stool; faces audience.) This is a day of specializing, especially with doctors! Say, for instance, there is something the matter with your right eye. You go to a doctor, and he tells you, "I am sorry, but I am a left eye doctor. I make a specialty of left eyes!" A doctor that doctors on the upper part of your throat--he doesn't even know where the lower part goes to! And the highest priced bird of 'em all is another one that just tells you which doctor to go to! He can't even cure corns or open a boil, himself! He is a *Diagnostician*, but he's really nothing but a *Traffic Cop*--to direct ailing people!! (Sits; reassumes frustration pose.)

GERRY-BANANAS

(Breaks frustration pose; looks at audience; smiles timidly. She hesitates, then jumps off of stool; hesitates again; shifts eyes around nervously; picks up stool; carries it DSC; places stool and sits facing audience.) My troubles all began a year ago today--(Pause.) two days ago today? Two years ago today? Today! We used to have a beautiful old green Buick--the *Green Latrine*! I'm not allowed to drive it anymore. But, when I could drive it, the last time I drove it, I drove into Manhattan! And I drove down Broadway--to the Crossroads of the World! I see a scene that you wouldn't see in your wildest dreams! 42nd Street and Broadway! Four corners! Four people! One on each corner! All waving for taxis! Cardinal Spellman! Jackie Kennedy! Bob Hope! President Johnson! All carrying suitcases. (Stands to wave down taxi.) Taxi! Taxi! I stop in the middle of the street--the middle of Broadway--and I get out of my *Green Latrine* and yell "Get in! I'm a gypsy! A gypsy cab! Get in! I'll take you where you want to go! Don't you all know each other? Get in! Get in!" (Pause.) They keep waving for cabs! I run over to President Johnson and grab him by the arm. (Gestures.) "Get in!" And pull Jackie Kennedy into my car and John-John, who I didn't see, starts crying and Jackie hits me and I hit her and grab Bob Hope and push Cardinal Spellman into the back seat, laughing and crying, "I'll take you where you want to go! Get in!! Give *me* your suitcases!" (Pause.) And the suitcases spill open! (Stares in horror.) And Jackie Kennedy's wigs (Gestures.) blow down 42nd Street! And Cardinal Spellman hits me! And President Johnson screams, and I hit him! I hit them all!!! And then the *Green Latrine* blows four flat tires and sinks, and I run to protect the car, and four cabs appear, and all my friends run into four different cabs! (Pause.) And cars are honking at me to move. (Sits back down on stool.) I push the car back over the bridge to Queens. (Pause.) I turn on Johnny Carson to get my mind off, (Pause; she stares in horror and disbelief.) and there's Cardinal Spellman and Bob Hope, whose nose is still bleeding, and they tell the story of what happened to them, and everybody laughs! (Begins crying.) Thirty million people watch Johnny Carson, and they all laugh! At me! At me!! (Pause; says soberly:) I'm nobody. I knew all those people better than me! I know everything about them! (Pause; then pleading:) Why can't they love me? (She stays seated; then:)

(Rest of cast, still seated in *frustration* poses, begin vocal sounds of "bruddump, bruddump" in rhythm. Gerry stands; smiles pitifully at audience; picks up stool; goes back USR to her place; places stool; sits in side focus; resumes frustration pose; begins "bruddump" also. After Gerry is seated, four cast members begin whistling to tune of *You're In The Army Now!*--while other five cast members continue "bruddump's." The whistling and "bruddump's" continue under the following speech:)

GARY-PAULO

(Abruptly turns toward audience; stands; steps forward.) I can't stand it--bein' so cold all the time, and they're all insane! Waxin' and buffin' the floors at 5:30 in the morning is insane! And then, you can't eat till you down the monkey bars, and you gotta eat in ten minutes and can't talk to nobody, and no place in Georgia is warm! **I'm from New Jersey. *I'm from Kentucky. I can jump up in the air; if there's a good wind, **I'll land at Fort Dix. *I'll land at Fort Knox. Uh huh! Fort Gordon! Georgia! So I can be warm! Right? Down South man! Daffodils and daisies! Year round! ("Bruddump's" and whistling stop.) (He yells:) BUT AM I WARM? DO YOU THINK I'M WARM? DO I LOOK LIKE I'M WARM? EVEN IN THE DAMN FURNACE ROOM, I'M FREEZIN' TO DEATH!!!! (Sits on stool facing forward; keeps character.)

(Rest of cast members, except Charlene, turn forward on stools. All, except Charlene, Bob and Dan, assume roles of soldiers in bootcamp barracks. They yawn, stretch as if just waking up in wee hours of morning.)

DAN-CORPORAL

(Jumps off of stool; Xs DSL screaming:) PLATOON!!! PLATOON!!!!!

BOB-SERGEANT

(Jumps off of stool when Dan does so; strides *cocksure* DSR; speaks loudly and sure of himself:) I'M GONNA DO SOME SINGIN' GENTLEMEN! I WANT IT COMIN' BACK TO ME LIKE WE WUS IN GRAND CANYON!! (Stands DSR watching.)

DAN-CORPORAL

TEN-HUT!! (Pause.) DO IT!! DO IT!! (Stands DSL watching.)

(Rest of cast jump off of stools. They line up in front of stools hurridly. All *side-step* toward CS, straightening up line; adjusting for equal distance between each person by extending right arms. All snap to attention.)

DAN-CORPORAL

(Still DSL.) RIGHT FACE!! (All execute military right-face movement facing SR.) FORWARD HARCH!! (All begin marching.)

BOB-SERGEANT

(Singing; marking time DSR.) LIFT YOUR HEAD AND LIFT IT HIGH!

REST OF CAST-SOLDIERS

(Singing; marching in SR direction.) LIFT YOUR HEAD AND LIFT IT HIGH!

BOB-SERGEANT

(Singing; marking time DSR.) ECHO COMPANY PASSIN' BY!

REST OF CAST-SOLDIERS
(Execute military turn; march DS two steps; execute military turn; march in SL direction.) ECHO COMPANY PASSIN' BY!

DAN-CORPORAL
(Singing; marking time DSL.) MOTHER MOTHER WHAT'D I DO?

REST OF CAST-SOLDIERS
(Stop marching; execute military left face to face audience; mark time. They execute military right face on word *do*:) MOTHER MOTHER WHAT'D I DO?

DAN-CORPORAL
(Singing; marking time DSL.) THIS ARMY TREATIN' ME WORSE THAN YOU!!

REST OF CAST-SOLDIERS
(Begin marching toward SL:) THIS ARMY TREATIN' ME WORSE THAN YOU!!!

BOB-SERGEANT
(Singing; marking time DSR.) LORD HAVE MERCY I'M SO BLUE!

REST OF CAST-SOLDIERS
(Execute military right face; march US two steps; execute military right face; march in SR direction as they sing:) LORD HAVE MERCY I'M SO BLUE! IT EIGHT MORE WEEKS TILL WE BE THROUGH! IT EIGHT MORE WEEKS TILL WE BE THROUGH! IT EIGHT MORE WEEKS TILL WE BE THROUGH!! (By the end of this, all have marched back to stools, except Gary and Gay who go to prop stand to get caps for next scene. The rest are seated in side focus except for Dan who stays forward for next speech.)

(Charlene begins playing improvised background guitar music.)

'TWAS THE NIGHT (LATE) BEFORE CHRISTMAS

DAN NARRATOR I

(Stays seated facing audience.)
Twas the night before Christmas
and all through the house
Two creatures were stirring--
just me and my spouse!
To attic and cellar we secretly sped,
As soon as the children lay safely in bed.
And in many closets, as busy as elves
Pulled down all the parcels stacked high on the shelves.
(Stays forward.)

(During this stanza, Gary puts nightcap on his head; Gay puts mobcap on her head. They join hands; tiptoe DSR. Gary pantomimes opening door to look in on children. Gay puts finger to mouth. Gary pantomimes closing door; he pantomimes opening closet door and handing Gay parcels off of shelf. Gay sinks to her knees under weight of parcels.)

JANE-NARRATOR II

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.)
We brought in the tree which we found much too tall
And we topped it and lopped it and stopped it from fall.
We tore up some boxes and badly behaved
While seeking the tinsel we thought we had saved.
And then, upon chairs and with foothold precarious,
We hung up our ornaments, many and various! (Stays forward.)

(During this stanza, Gary and Gay pantomime dragging tree in. They stand it up. Gay pantomimes cutting top out of tree. Gary, kneeling, pantomimes stopping tree from falling. They pantomime digging through box. In pantomiming arguement, he points finger at her in disgust; she looks out toward audience helplessly. They pantomime trimming tree--Gay precariously perched on *chair*; Gary trimming bottom of *tree*.)

DAN-NARRATOR I

(Facing audience.)
The tree now resplendent, except for the fact
That the lights wouldn't light--a connection we lacked!
We filled up the stockings--a job not done quickly
And vacuumed the rugs, which were tinselled so thickly!
And then, when we'd read and reread the directions
Assembled the toys that had come in all sections! (Stays forward.)

(During this stanza, they stand back to look at *tree*. They suddenly realize the *tree lights* are not lit. He, kneeling, pantomimes plugging *cord* into *outlet*. She smiles as *lights* come on. She pantomimes filling *stockings*. He pantomimes vacuuming *rugs*. They fall to knees. She pantomimes thumbing through *directions* for toy assembly. They pause, scratch heads simultaneously.)

JANE-NARRATOR II

(Still facing audience.)
The hour was now midnight and quite a bit past
But our labors, thank heaven, were finished at last!
As we gazed at our efforts through lead-lidded eyes
And thought of the morrow and shouts of surprise,
We prayed that the children the morn of Saint Nick's
Would please not awaken at least until six!

(During this stanza, Gay looks at *wristwatch*; Gary registers fatigue on face--both still kneeling. They sigh relief, having finished labors. They gaze over shoulder US at *tree*. They stare at audience with faces registering horror at thoughts of the morrow. They clasp hands under chins and look up in earnest prayer. They sink down onto floor as if asleep.)

(Music stops. Pause. Dan and Jane turn back into side focus. Gay and Gary get up off of floor quickly; put caps back on prop stand USC: return to their stools and sit in side focus. Gerry and Bob quickly stand; get vacation caps off of prop stand USC; X back to stools; pick them up; X to DSC; place stools CS side by side; put caps on their heads. Pause. All of the above takes place under the following speech and transitional guitar music:)

CHARLENE-NARRATOR III

(Still seated; facing audience.) Of course, there are ways of getting away from it all!! (Begins playing improvised guitar music which continues throughout following scene:)

EVERYBODY EATS TOO MUCH ANYHOW

WAYNE-NARRATOR I

(Stays seated; turns to face audience.)
You gulp your breakfast and glance at the clock!
Through eleventh-hour packing you gallop amok!
You bundle your bags in the back of the car!
You enter; she enters and there you are!
You clutch the wheel; she clutches the maps and longs for a couple of extra naps!
It's *aurevoir* to your modest abode!
You're gypsies--away on the open road!
Into the highway you burst like a comet or
Heat waves climbing on a Kansas thermometer!
The conversation is as sweet as clover
With breakfast hardly, practically over! (Turns back into side focus.)

(During this stanza, Gerry standing SR by her stool, Bob SL beside his stool, pantomime gulping coffee. Gerry glances at *clock* on *wall* USL; pantomimes picking up *two suitcases*. They both run behind stools; Bob pantomimes opening *trunk*; she slings *suitcases* in *trunk*; he slams *trunklid*. They scurry back to sides of stools; sit on stools; pantomime closing *car doors*. He clutches *steering wheel*; she clutches *maps*. She yawns as he pantomimes turning *key* in *ignition*. She *laughs* and waves goodbye to *abode*. Bob looks straight ahead, smiling, with hands on *steering wheel*. She clicks fingers exhuberantly--*gypsy-dancer* style. His face registers sly speed-demon grin; she looks at *speedometer*. She leans toward him and puts head on his shoulder; he belches *breakfast* audibly; she raises head off of his shoulder; she frowns.)

GERRY-WIFE

(Pantomimes holding cigarette.)
Darling, light me a cigarette?

(During this dialogue, Gerry and Bob speak and pantomime suggested action.)

BOB-HUSBAND

(Pantomimes lighting cigarette.) (Same as above.)
At once, and with all my heart,
my pet!

GERRY-WIFE

(Nagging.) (Same as above.)
And by the way, we are off the
track. We should have turned
left a half-mile back!

MARTHA-NARRATOR II

(Stays seated; faces audience.) (During this stanza, Bob pantomimes turning *steering wheel* SL; they both lean to left and straighten back up in rhythm. They stare at road intensely; her eyes begin to wander; her face slowly registers hunger; his eyes remain glued to *road*. She glances about nervously. She sees a *place*; she points with finger blissfully. She begins to speak, delighted. She frowns as they *pass* by the *place*.)

You swing around with a
cherry smile
Thus far, a mile is only a mile.
The road is romance, so let it
wind
With breakfast an hour or so
behind!
Under the tires, the pebbles
crunch,
And through the dust creep
thoughts of lunch!
The speedometer sits on a
steady fifty,
And more and more does lunch
seem nifty!
Your eyes to the road ahead
are glued;
She glances about in search
of food.
She sees a place! She'd like
to try it.
She says so. (Pause.) Well,
you're already by it!
(Turns back into side focus.)

DAN-NARRATOR III

(Stays seated; faces audience.) (During this stanza, Gerry continues to frown slowly reaching the boiling point as stanza progresses. He disgustedly begins to look about in search of an eatery. He points to one; she winces at the sight of it. Her face brightens a little at seeing a *place* she likes. She *instantly boils* as he *passes* it. She raises her brow; she's *steaming*; he is, too. They speak the following dialogue:)

Ignoring the road, you spot
an eatery.
The look of it makes her insides
teetery!
She sees a beauty! You're past
it again.
Her eyebrows look like ten past
ten!
She's simmering now, and so
are you,

And your eyebrows register
ten to two!
She snubs the excuse as you
begin it--(Stays forward.)

BOB-HUSBAND

There'll be another one any minute!

DAN-NARRATOR III

She says--

GERRY-WIFE

There won't!!!

DAN-NARRATOR III

(Still seated facing audience.)
It must be a plot!
She absolutely correct!
There's not!
You finally find one! You stop
and alight.
You're both too annoyed to eat
a bite!
Oh, this is the gist of my
gypsy song--(Stays forward.)

(As stanza continues, Bob begins to panic as if embarking on an unknown journey; he shows relief facially at *finding* an eatery. Her face is still *boiling*. They pantomime stepping out of *car*--Bob SL, Gerry SR. They stand respectively beside stools; both are enraged; stare toward audience. Gerry speaks:)

GERRY-WIFE

(With rage.) Next time, we'll carry our lunch along!!!

(Dan turns back into side focus. Music continues as Gerry and Bob quickly pick up stools; take caps off; put them back on prop stand; place stools back in semi-circle; sit in side focus. Music stops. Pause.)

AMBITION

GARY

(Stays seated; turns to face audience; pantomimes driving car.) I got pocketed behind 7X-3824. He was making 65, but I can do a little more! I crowded him on the curves, but I couldn't get past! And on the straightaways, there was always some truck comin' fast! Then we got to the top of a mile-long incline, and I edged 'er out to the left--just a little over the white line! And ahead was a long grade with construction at the bottom. And I said to the wife, (nudges Jane, who is sitting in side focus SR of him; she turns to face audience as his wife; they both react throughout remainder of scene:) "Now by golly I got 'em!" I bet I did 85 goin' down that long grade! And I braked 'er down *hard* in front of the barricade, and I swung around in ahead of him and landed fine--behind 9W-7679! (Jane and Gary remain facing audience to deliver the following "many voices" transition:)

ALL CAST MEMBERS
(Turn forward on stools; smiling; speak good-humoredly in unison.)
Many voices, many voices, many voices, many voices!!

(Charlene begins intro guitar music to *59th Street Bridge Song*.)

[Joy Section]

59TH STREET BRIDGE SONG

ALL CAST MEMBERS
(Stay seated; begin swaying from left to right on cue during intro music; sing.)
Slow down! You move too fast!
Gotta make the mornin' last!
Just kickin' down the cobblestones!
Looking' for fun and feelin' groovy! (Stop swaying.)

(Music and singing stop; all stay seated facing audience.)

GARY
Joy is--

GAY
A Spring morning!

**VOICE
One morning when I went downtown,
I felt such sunlight capsize down
That streets were glutted with more gold
Than all my heart could ever hold.
I thought a glory much like this
Must have been poured from Genesis.
I had not noticed until now
Such glittering of leaf and bough.
Not for a moment could I doubt
Telephone poles might start to sprout.
Brilliant gas stations, like bazaars,
Were jubilating with the cars.
The traffic in some triumph went
In pageant of astonishment.
And all the things in all the stores
Were like abundant metaphors.
More than the sun and more than light
Seeped on the avenue a wonder
That everything grew porous under.
Houses and people, trees and I
Replied to each, as earth to sky.

I felt all objects linked and set
As in a vast, transparent net.
I felt that everything was part
Of rapture answering my heart;
Until I knew, until I knew
I was the world I wandered through.

*DAN

(Chirps like a bird.) Chirp, chirp, chirp!

*JANE

A sunny day when you're feelin' blue!

*DAN

(Jumps off of stool.) NO, NO, NO! A *rainy* day when you're feelin' blue!

(Charlene begins playing intro guitar music to *Singing in the Rain*.)

*ALL CAST MEMBERS

WHAT??

*MARTHA

(Catching on to what Dan means.) Rain when your flowers are droopy!

*BOB

(Also catching on.) Yeah! Rain when the corn is dry!

**SINGING IN THE RAIN*

(As Dan is singing and dancing, rest of cast members stay seated; sway from left to right on cue; openly enjoy Dan's performance DSC.)

*DAN

(Sings as he Xs DSC; dances.)
I'm singin' in the rain!
Just singin' in the rain!
What a glorious feelin'
I'm happy again! (Those seated, stop swaying.)
I'm laughin' at clouds
So dark up above!
The sun's in my heart
And I'm ready for love!
Let the stormy clouds chase
Everyone from this place!
Come on with the rain,
There's a smile on my face!
I walk down the lane
Singin' a happy refrain!
I'm singin', just singin'
In the rain! (Dan returns to his stool; sits facing audience to watch the following action:)

(Charlene plays musical bridge on guitar as she, Jane and Gay stand; move CS and sing reprise of *Singing in the Rain* in three-part harmony Andrews' Sisters style:)

**SINGING IN THE RAIN* (Reprise)

*CHARLENE, GAY, JANE-TRIO
(Standing CS; sing.)
Let the stormy clouds chase
Everyone from this place!
Come on with the rain
There's a great big smile on my face!
We walk down the lane
Sing a hap- hap- happy refrain
Just singin', just singin'
In the rain!
(They dance back to their stools humming tune with guitar backup; they sit on their respective stools. Music stops. All cast members remain forward. Pause.)

*MARTHA
(To audience.) Joy is a little child!

*GERRY
(Answering Martha.) When it's asleep!

(All cast members laugh and turn into side focus except for Bob and Gay who remain facing forward. Under the following song and Bob's speech, Gay assumes role of Christopher Robin; Xs to USC; gets Pooh Bear from prop stand; walks back to her stool; kneels in front of it holding Pooh Bear:)

**CHRISTOPHER ROBIN*

*CHARLENE
(Sings; plays guitar.)
Christopher Robin and I walked alone
Under branches lit up by the moon.
Posing our questions to Owl and Eeor
As the day passed along all too soon!
(Stops singing; continues to play *Christopher Robin* tune and hum softly under following scene:)

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN (Poem)

BOB-NARRATOR
(Stays seated facing audience.)
Little boy kneels at the foot of the bed;
Droops on the little hands, little gold head.
Hush! Hush! Whisper who dares;
Christopher Robin is saying his prayers! (Stays forward; listens to Gay; reacts.)

GAY-CHRISTOPHER ROBIN

(Kneeling in front of her stool.)
God bless Mommy--I know that's right!
Wasn't it fun in the bath tonight?
The cold so cold and the hot so hot!
Oh, God bless Daddy, I quite forgot.
If I open my eyes just a little bit more,
I can see Nanny's dressing gown on the door.
It's a beautiful blue, but it hasn't a hood.
Oh, God bless Nanny, and make her good!
Thank you God, for a lovely day
And what was the other I had to say?
I said bless Daddy, so what can it be?
Oh, now I remember--God bless me!

(During the following speech, Gay stands; hugs Pooh Bear; Xs back to prop stand; replaces Pooh Bear; goes back to her stool and is sitting in side focus by end of speech:)

BOB-NARRATOR

(Facing audience.)
Little boy kneels at the foot of the bed;
Droops on the little hands, little gold head.
Hush! Hush! Whisper who dares;
Christopher Robin is saying his prayers! (Turns back into side focus.)

(Music stops. Pause.)

**RENAISSANCE*

**VOICE

The world stands out on either side
No wider than the heart is wide.
Above the world is stretched the sky
No higher that the soul is high.
The heart can push the sea and land
Farther away on either hand.
The soul can split the sky in two
And let the face of God shine through,
But east and west will pinch the heart
That cannot keep them pushed apart,
And he whose soul is flat O the sky
Will cave in on him by and by.

*WAYNE

(Turns to face audience.) Joy is a hedonistic, Epicurean, sensuous desire for (Pause.) FOOD!!!

(All cast members remain seated; turn to face audience and Martha who is seated on her stool extreme USL. As they turn, all express love for food by making vocal sounds such as "Ummmmmm!," "Yummy!," etc.)

***THE DINING ROOM*

**MARTHA-NARRATOR

The dining room was the biggest and sunniest room in the house; its walls covered with hunting pictures of game and stag heads. The table ran the length of it. The snowy tablecloth hung almost to the floor. At the head sat Mrs. Dean with a great tureen of calf's head soup in front of her. Before the General was the saddle of venison that was to follow, drenched in a bottle of ancient Madiera, and flanked by flakes of red current jelly. Before the major rested broiled wild ducks, on which he could show his carving skill--on game as well as men. A great turkey supplanted the venison, and last to come and before Richard Hurst, Lieutenant of the Rifles, was a Kentucky ham. That ham, mellow, aged, boiled in champagne, baked brown, spiced deeply, rosy pink within, and of a flavor and fragrance to shatter the fast of a Pope; and without, a brown-edged white layer, so firm that the Lieutenant's deft carving knife, passing through, gave me no hint to the eye that it was delicious fat.

**THE DINING ROOM* (Edited)

*MARTHA-NARRATOR

(Talks to rest of cast as if telling a fairy tale. They react occasionally, verbalizing "Ummmmmm!," "Yum!," etc., for food she talks about.) The dining room was the biggest and sunniest room in the house! Its walls covered with hunting pictures of game and stag heads. I sat at the head of the table with a great big tureen of calf's head soup in front of me! Before General Osborne was a saddle of venison drenched in a bottle of ancient Madiera and flanked by flakes of red current jelly! (Rest of cast react.) In front of Major Hudson rested broiled wild ducks, (Rest of cast react.) on which he could show his carving skill on game as well as men! (Rest of cast chuckle.) And last to come was a Kentucky ham! That ham, mellow, aged, boiled in champagne, (Rest of cast react.) and with a brown-edged white layer so firm that the carving knife, passing through, gave no hint to the eye that it was delicious fat! (Rest of cast laugh.) Why it was enough to shatter the fast of a Pope!! (She laughs.)

*ALL CAST MEMBERS

(Still facing audience. They laugh, and say in unison, overcome with joy:) Joy, joy, joy, joy, joy, joy!!!!!

*WAYNE

(Interrupts above "Joy's"; overcome with inspiration:)
JOY is a DISHWASHING LIQUID!!!!!

*GAY

(Reacts with disgust; rest of cast react in similar manner.) That doesn't fit!! (She stands; Xs to DSC and says:) Joy is snow in Gatlinburg!

*GARY

(To Jane.) Fat chance!

*BOB

(Stands.) Income tax refunds!

*GERRY

(Stands ; Xs SR to Bob.) Someone else picking up the tab!

*MARTHA

(Stands; Xs SR to Gerry and Bob.) Vacation!

*JANE

(Stands in front of her stool.) Graduation day!

*DAN

(Stands; walks DSC to Gay.) Jeans that don't shrink!

*BOB

(Standing; says to Gerry:) Kids who don't reverse the charges!

*GERRY

(Standing; says to Bob:) Kids taking you out to dinner!

*WAYNE

(Stands in front of stool; props up foot on rung of his stool.) *Parents* taking you out to dinner!

*JANE

(Standing; takes Gary by the arm coaching him off of his stool. They walk to DSC and stand beside Gay and Dan.) A date who doesn't insist on going dutch!

*GAY

(Overcome with joy, she jumps up and down.) CHRISTMAS MORNING!!!!!

(At this point, Bob runs DSC to meet Gay, Gary, Dan and Jane.)

*MARTHA

(Taking Gerry's hand.) Joy is friendship!

*FRIENDSHIP

(Charlene begins guitar intro music to song *Friendship*.)

*JANE
(Spoken.) We're together gang, through thick and thin!

*BOB
(Spoken.) Night and day!

*GAY, GARY, DAN
(Spoken.) Right or wrong!

(Bob, Gay, Gary, Dan and Jane sing and dance DSC as Charlene accompanies them on guitar seated USC; Martha and Gerry, USR, and Wayne, USL, look on and sing during choruses.)

*JANE
(Sings.) If you're ever in a jam, here I am!

*DAN
(Sings.) If you're ever in a mess, S-O-S!

*GARY
(Sings.) If you ever feel so happy, you land in jail, I'm your bail!

*ALL CAST MEMBERS-CHORUS
(Sing.) That's friendship, friendship, just the perfect blendship!

*GAY
(Sings.) When other friendships have been forgot!

*ALL CAST MEMBERS-CHORUS
(Sings.) Ours will still be hot! A-loddle-loddle-loddle dig, dig, dig!

*GARY
(Sings.) If you're ever up a tree, phone to me!

*JANE
(Sings.) If you're ever down a well, ring my bell!

*BOB
(Sings.) If you ever loose your teeth and you're out to dine, borrow mine!

*ALL CAST MEMBERS-CHORUS
(Sing.) That's friendship, friendship, just the perfect blendship!

*GAY
(Sings.) When other friendships go up in smoke!

*ALL CAST MEMBERS-CHORUS
(Sing.) Ours will still be O-K (Pronounced Oak.)!
A-loddle-loddle-loddle chug, chug, chug!

(Guitar music bridge; all in CS group sing "Da-da-da-da-da-da!")

*GAY

(Spoken.) WHEEEEEEEEEEE!!!

*DAN

(Sings.) If they ever black your eyes, put me wise!

*GARY

(Sings.) If they ever cook your goose, turn me loose!

*BOB

(Sings.) If they ever put a bullet through your br-rain!

*ALL CAST MEMBERS-CHORUS

(Spoken.) We'll complain!!
(Sing.) That's friendship, friendship, just the perfect blendship!

*GAY

(Sings.) When other friendships have been forgit!

*ALL CAST MEMBERS-CHORUS

(Sing.) Ours will still be it!

*JANE

(Sings.) A-loddle-loddle-loddle dig, dig, dig!

*DAN

(Sings.) A-loddle-loddle-loddle chug, chug, chug!

*BOB, GARY, DAN

(Sing in three-part harmony in *round* fashion.)
A-loddle-loddle-loddle-loddle-loddle-loddle--

*JANE

(Cuts them off with whistle; then she sings:) Remember--

*BOB, GAY, GARY, DAN, JANE

(Sing in *barbershop harmony* as Jane conducts them with arms raised.)
A man's best friend is his, man's best friend is his, man's best friend is his (Pause.) friend!!

(Music, singing, dancing stop. All cast members return to their stools during applause; sit facing audience. During the following *Joy is* sequence, all cast members talk directly to audience and to each other:)

*BOB

Joy is a baby laughing!

(Dan giggles like baby. Rest of cast laugh at him.)

*MARTHA

Sweet sixteen!

*GAY

Maybe at your age!

*DAN

Five o'clock Friday afternoon!

*GARY

Waking up and remembering its Saturday morning--*before* you're already in the shower!!!

*WAYNE

Saturday night!

*GAY

(Dreamily, she stands in front of stool and walks to CS.) Being loved!

*GARY

(Nudges Wayne. All cast members watch, except Gay, as he plays his joke on her. Imitating Elvis Presley, he runs to Gay's side CS; kneels; grabs her leg and paws her as he sings phrase of *Love Me Tender*. Charlene accompanies him on guitar.)
Love me tender,
Love me true,
Never let me go!

(Gay shrieks; runs back to her stool crying. She sits. Bob leans over to her and holds her *fatherly* in his arms. Gary returns to his stool USL; sits. All are laughing.)

*JANE

(Amused at Gay.) A good cry!

(Laughing stops.)

*GERRY

(Dreamily.) A summer's evening!

*DAN

A swimming pool instead of a squirt bottle!

*BOB

(To amuse Gay.) Skinny Dipping!!

(Gay stops crying; sits up straight; giggles.)

*MARTHA

(Matter-of-factly.) That first cup of coffee in the morning!

*GERRY, DAN, WAYNE
(Hating coffee.) YUCK!!!

*GERRY
(Shivering.) Waking up from a nightmare!

*WAYNE
(Agreeing with Gerry.) A light switch by the bed!

*GARY
(Warmly.) A rug by the bed!

*BOB
(Matter-of-factly.) An indoor toilet!

*MARTHA
(Pragmatically.) A walk-in closet!

*DAN
Fresh sheets!

*MARTHA
(Gestures giving.) Giving!

*WAYNE
(Gestures taking greedily.) Receiving!

*GAY
(Stands.) Joy is--(Begins walking to CS.)

*JANE
(Stands.) Happiness! (Xs SR to meet Gay.)

(Gay and Jane walk DC near edge of stage; they sit on floor side by side to sing duet, *Happiness*, as Charlene begins intro guitar music. Rest of cast listen and watch from their stools.)

**HAPPINESS*

*JANE AND GAY-DUET
(Sing in two-part harmony.)
Happiness is two kinds of ice cream,
Finding your skate key,
Telling the time.

Happiness is learning to whistle,
Tying your shoe for the very first time (Gay pantomimes tying her shore.)
Happiness is being alone every now and then,
And happiness is coming home again.

Happiness is morning and evening,
Daytime and nighttime, too.
For happiness is anyone and anything at all
That's loved by you! (Both make sweeping hand gesture to audience from left to right.)

(Jane and Gay stand; stroll back to their stools humming *Happiness* tune with guitar accompaniment. They sit. Music stops. All cast members remain facing audience and deliver the following lines:)

[Epilogue]

**THE WORLD IS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE*

*CHARLENE
The world is a beautiful place to be born into--

*GERRY
If you don't mind happiness not always being so very much fun--

*BOB
If you don't mind a touch of hell now and then just when everything was going fine--

*JANE
Because even in heaven, they don't sing all the time!

*GAY
The world *is* a beautiful place to be born into if you don't mind some people dying all the time--

*WAYNE
Or maybe only starving some of the time--

*GARY
Which isn't half so bad if it isn't you!

*MARTHA
Oh, the world is a beautiful place to be born into if you don't mind a few dead minds in the higher places--

*DAN
Or a bomb or two in your upturned faces--

*CHARLENE
Or such other improprieties as our Name Brand Society is prey to with its men of distinction and its men of extinction--

*BOB
And its priests and other patrolmen--

*MARTHA
And its various segregations and congressional investigations and other constipations that our fool flesh is heir to!

*DAN
Yes, the world is the best place of all for a lot of such things as making the fun scene--

*GARY
And making the love scene--

*GERRY
And making the sad scene--

*JANE
And singing low songs and having inspirations--

*GAY
And walking around looking at everything--

*WAYNE
And smelling flowers--

*BOB
And goosing statues--

*DAN
And even thinking--

*MARTHA
And kissing people--

*GAY AND GARY
And making babies--

*GERRY
And wearing pants--

*DAN
And going swimming in rivers--

*JANE
On picnics in the middle of the summer--

*BOB
And just generally living it up!

(Charlene begins playing intro music on guitar to reprise of *59th Street Bridge Song*. All cast members stay seated and begin swaying from left to right on cue during intro music; they sing:)

**59TH STREET BRIDGE SONG* (reprise)

*ALL CAST MEMBERS

(Sing.) Slow down, you move too fast!
Gotta make the mornin' last! (Stop swaying; stay front.)

(Singing stops, but Charlene continues to play *59th Street Bridge Song* to end of show.)

***VOICES*

**VOICE ONE

It has been pointed out that if a tree were to fall in the forest, a hundred miles away from any hearer, there would be sound waves, but not what we know as sound.

**VOICE TWO

Most of the animals, especially those man knows best, create sound as a part of their natural expression, and the higher in the scale he is, the more the sounds are used in communication. To those who have eyes to see, and ears to hear, communication is the thing that expands the mind and spirit, and brings us out of, and above, our lonesome selves.

**VOICES* (edited)

*MARTHA

(Stays seated; faces audience.) Voices are more than accidental gifts; they are our means for sharing all the moods, from pain to ecstasy, that are woven into our total experience, from the lullaby to the requiem! (Stays front.)

*GERRY

(Stays seated facing audience.) May the voices--

*GAY

(Stays seated facing audience.) That you have heard--

*JANE

(Stays seated facing audience.) Bring you the pleasure--

*WAYNE

(Stays seated facing audience.) Of sharing experiences--

*GARY

(Stays seated facing audience.) That make us human--

*CHARLENE
(Stays seated facing audience.) And sometimes better than human!

(Music continues.)

*JANE AND GARY
(Stand; join hands; stroll down to edge of stage; break hand-hold; face CS; singing.) Just lookin' for fun and feelin' groovy!

*GERRY AND DAN
(Stand; join hands; stroll down to edge of stage; break hand-hold; face CS; singing.) Just lookin' for fun and feelin' groovy!

*GAY AND BOB
(Stand; join hands; stroll down to edge of stage; break hand-hold; face CS; singing.) Just lookin' for fun and feelin' groovy!

*CHARLENE, WAYNE, MARTHA
(Martha and Wayne stand; join hands; stroll down to edge of stage; break hand-hold; face CS; singing. Charlene strolls DS alone and faces audience; singing.) Just looking for fun and feelin' groovy!

(All cast members are now in line along edge of stage facing toward CS, except Charlene who is facing audience. As each cast member introduces self, he or she turns forward to face audience:)

*CHARLENE
(Continues to play guitar.) We are the voices of--

*BOB
Bob Shaw!

*GAY
Gay Dayhuff!

*GERRY
Gerry Diftler!

*DAN
Dan Owenby!

*CHARLENE
(Still playing guitar.) Charlene Gubitz!

*JANE
Jane Burke!

*GARY
Gary Buttrey!

*WAYNE

Wayne Bledsoe!

*MARTHA

Martha Lee Osborne!

(Music continues to play. Curtain call: All join hands and bow; all raise up together; some break hand-holds; others continue to hold hands as music continues and cast exits stage humming *59th Street Bridge Song tune*.)

THE END

APPENDIX B

PHOTOGRAPHS OF *MANY VOICES* AT THE UNITARIAN CHURCH PERFORMANCE AND SAINT JOHN'S VIDEO CENTER TAPED PERFORMANCE



Figure 1

"Joy Is"



Figure 2

"Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better!"



Figure 3

"Let's Misbehave"



Figure 4

"This Is What We Hear Today! Come With Us; We'll Show the Way Through Commercials"



Figure 5

"Yes, Yes, No, No, No!"



Figure 6

"We Plugged Up This Man's Left Nostril! We Plugged Up This Man's Right Nostril!"



Figure 7

"Have It Our Way!"



Figure 8

"Some Politicians Are Republican, Some Democratic . . ., But Except for the Name, They Are Identically the Same!"



Figure 9

"I Stop in the Middle of the Street--the Middle of Broadway . . .
and Yell 'Get In! I'm a Gypsy! A Gypsy Cab! I'll Take
You Where You Want to Go!'"



Figure 10

"We Tore Up Some Boxes and Badly Behaved."



Figure 11

"It's *aurevoir* to Your Modest Abode! You're Gypsies--
Away on the Open Road!"



Figure 12

"God Bless Mommy--I Know That's Right!"

VITA

James Carl Allen was born June 21, 1948, in Cleveland, Tennessee. He grew up in Cleveland and was graduated from Bradley County Central High School in 1966. In the fall of 1966 he entered the University of Tennessee at Knoxville where he received a Bachelor of Science degree "With High Honors" in News-Editorial/Journalism. He received a Master of Arts degree in March 1978, from the University of Tennessee Department of Speech and Theatre.