Artaudian Application in Adaptation of Georg Büchner's Woyzeck

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Artaudian Application in
Adaptation of
Georg Büchner’s Woyzeck

Presented to the Graduate Council
University of Portland
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Fine Arts in Directing

By Matthew Jared Lee
April, 2014
The University of Portland
Department of Performing & Fine Arts
presents

WOYZECK

A play by Georg Büchner
Adapted by Matthew Jared Lee

February 26 - 28, March 1, 2014
Performances at 7:30 p.m.
Two shows on Saturday (2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.)
Mago Hunt Center Theater
Tickets (starting February 17): $10/$5
Mago Hunt Box Office 503.943.7287

For ADA accommodations or any questions, please contact the Department of Performing & Fine Arts at 503.943.7228.
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Note to the Reader

* Throughout the following chapters, when referring to the text, the title Woyzeck will be used, and when referring to the character of Woyzeck, his first name Franz will be used in order to avoid possible confusion.
Acknowledgements

This document is an examination of my thesis production of Georg Büchner’s Woyzeck, for which I wrote a new adaptation and directed on the main stage of University of Portland’s Mago Hunt Theatre in the spring of 2014. Together, the production and this document fulfill the requirements of the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Directing at the University of Portland. This document will examine my process as a director and collaborator. It will also show my process of research, analysis, and adaptation, and how these three aspects influence the final production. Then finally, I will reflect on the process altogether.

I would like to thank all who collaborated with me on this final project. I am grateful for all the hard work everyone put in to bring this story to life. Without their help it would have remained only a disturbing idea. I would also like to thank the Drama Department of University of Portland for continually giving me the opportunity to explore ideas with guidance and support. Additionally, I would like to thank my family and friends for their support, while they may not always understand what I do, or why I do it, they are always there to cheer me on. Without all the people mentioned above, none of this would have been possible. Thank you all.
Chapter 1
Introduction

George Büchner’s *Woyzeck* first captured my interest when I was taking a theatre history course as an undergraduate at Missouri State University. Upon reading the play, the majority of the class was left somewhat dumbfounded as to what they had just read. They seemed to understand the plot and what had happened in the play, but overall most were somewhat confused, myself included, as to the specifics of how everything unfolded in the play. None of us had ever read a play that was so fragmented. This is what I find so intriguing about *Woyzeck*. On its surface it is a deceptively simple play, with a very straightforward plot: “Woyzeck is a soldier who has had a child by a girl named Marie. A drum major seduces Marie away from Woyzeck, who then buys a knife and kills the girl” (Sellin 57). On a basic level, *Woyzeck* is a story about cheating and revenge – but it is much more than that. The complexity comes from the way in which the story is told. The action takes place through small episodic fragments and many times it is up to us as audience members to put the pieces together. This is why I chose this play. I wanted to explore how a simple story can be told in such a unique and complex way.

For me, the characters that inhabit the play have the ability to evoke strong emotions out of each other, and the tactics that they employ to achieve this are very captivating throughout the text. Another interesting aspect is that the point of view of this storyline seems to either change or be quite flexible; at times there is a question of whether or not things are real or through the perspective of the title character. Also, knowing that in order to tell this story, strong, clear, and striking visuals are required.
This can be attributed to the fact that there is sparse detail regarding the visuals provided in the text. These are all simple truths in many plays, but with *Woyzeck* it has a heightened importance because clear visuals become a great story telling tool to aid the audience, where the fragmented structure and language of the text could stand as a barrier.

There were several goals that I set for myself with this production. First, I wanted to take this play and make it accessible for the audience. The structure of *Woyzeck* can often serve as a roadblock to many readers and audience members. The play is unconventional in several areas, but I feel that equipped with the right concept, one that puts a proper frame around the story, the story can become highly accessible to audience members. With a framing device on *Woyzeck* audience members are less likely to be mentally occupied with attempts to connect these fragments together. They are allowed to follow the story in a much more conventional way. While some audience members still might not enjoy the play, it should not be because they did not understand it and could not follow it.

Another goal with this production was to stretch myself in creating strong, clear visuals on stage, including the use of gestural language. I wanted this story to be so crystal-clear that if the actors were told they could not speak, the story would still be completely present and easily followed. These visuals should evoke strong emotions, not only from within the cast but also within the audience members. I wanted to capitalize on how to create these visuals and explore their variety. Everything should be striking and add not only to the story, but also to the mood and atmosphere in the room. Also I wanted to create a gestural language that would also aid in creating a
visual story. Many characters are short on text and character description; however, by creating another way of communication with gestures, the audience will have a new and interesting way to find out more and invest in these characters.

I also wanted to search for opportunities to explore Artaudian theories and concepts in the performance. Knowing that this is the play that Artaud wanted to be his first full production and included in his program to illustrate his ideas of Theatre of Cruelty, I wanted to explore why that might have been, what those concepts are, and where I could use those concepts to tell this story.

And lastly, prior to the actual production I wanted to write and create a brand new adaptation of Woyzeck. I wanted to take this opportunity to explore a type of playwriting that I found very interesting. The process of taking an established text and deconstructing it in hopes of putting it back together with a fresh new take on it, while still respecting the original, is something that I have wanted to attempt. And Woyzeck, with its history of adaptation, was a fitting text to start with. I wanted to apply my concept of this play and formulate it into a brand new text that honors the original script but frames it in a new accessible and unique light.

Some major questions I had going into this thesis project are: How do you tell this story in a clear way while still keeping the idea of fragmentation present? What drew Antonin Artaud to this story and how might he have approached it? What of his theories could I apply to my own production? Where is the line between manipulating the audience and guiding the audience? Where is the catharsis located and how should it be approached in this new adaptation?
Chapter 2
Georg Büchner’s Woyzeck

In order to properly analyze the text of Büchner’s Woyzeck, it is important to know the history and backstory that led to its creation. On June 21, 1821, Johann Christian Woyzeck, a 31-year-old unemployed ex-soldier, stabbed Johanna Woost seven times to death. She was a widow in her forties who had been Johann’s mistress at one point and was, at the time, consorting with a number of other soldiers in Leipzig. Shortly after Johanna’s murder, Johann was brought to trial for his crime. Because there had been reports that he had been raving for some time, a doctor was brought in to assess his mental state.

Dr. Clarus was called in to examine the defendant and assess whether he was mentally competent to stand trial. Clarus’s investigation revealed extensive evidence of what today would be called schizophrenia, but he concluded that, despite numerous delusions, Woyzeck was still capable of reason. “Dr. Clarus declared that ‘a stronger exercise of free will’ would have prevented Woyzeck’s descent into moral degeneracy and violence”. (Wise and Walker 7)

In Clarus’s medical opinion Woyzeck had “soundness of mind and full possession of his faculties; this in spite of obvious instances of strange and hallucinatory behavior, to which several people had been witness” (Rappolt 6). On August 27, 1824, Johann Woyzeck was found guilty of his crime and executed publicly by decapitation. This case would not only become a focal point for the treatment of the criminally insane, but also the point of inspiration for Georg Büchner’s Woyzeck.

Georg Büchner, born in 1813, would become a very successful medical researcher and lecturer. It was during this time that Büchner became more and more interested in the case study of Johann Woyzeck. While Büchner would go on to become
a successful writer of *Danton’s Death, Lenz, and Woyzeck*, it is his play *Woyzeck*, inspired by the crimes of the real Johann Woyzeck, that the majority of Büchner’s fame would derive from.

However, Büchner would never finish *Woyzeck* due to his death from typhus in 1837 at the age of 23. In Büchner’s desk, well after his death, a manuscript with four different versions of *Woyzeck* would later be found: one version with 21 scenes, one with nine scenes, one with two scenes and, finally, one with 17 scenes.

Not only were the manuscripts left in an unfinished state, they were difficult to decipher. The ink had faded . . . [the paper was] chemically treated in a way that made the writing temporarily more legible. Though in the long run the chemicals worsened the deterioration of the manuscript. Even then, because Büchner wrote in such a small, cramped style, a number of errors were made. (Wise and Walker 7)

Discovered in 1879 and published shortly after, it wouldn’t be until 1913 that the first production would be mounted, 77 years after Büchner first wrote it.

Because *Woyzeck* consists of scene fragments in various forms, with their intended order unknown, several different versions, adaptations, and translations of the play exist. It allows every individual to act as a sort of editor and led Mel Gussow to suggest in his review of the New York Shakespeare Festival production that “the play is open to free-handed interpretation and various production styles” (Gussow). This can be illustrated by simply looking some of the highlights in *Woyzeck’s* past production history:

• In 1925 *Wozzeck*, an opera by Austrian composer Alban Berg, premiered.
• In 1979 Werner Herzog adapted *Woyzeck* into a film.
• In 1994 the Handspring Puppet Company creates a production entitled *Woyzeck on the Highveld*. Woyzeck was portrayed as a black South African servant.
• In 1999 the Worth Street Theater Company played _Woah-Jack!_. Adapted and directed by Jeff Cohen, the play portrays Woyzeck as a black American soldier at an army base in the 1960s.

• In 2000 Tom Waits, Robert Wilson, and Kathleen Brennan created a production of _Woyzeck_. [Using an original soundtrack provided by Waits]

• In 2006 the Gate Theater of London played _Woyzeck_ in New York. The production was adapted and directed by Daniel Kramer, using music by Elvis Presley, Dolly Parton, and Beethoven throughout as background music although the play was set in the 1800s.

• In 2007 Jeremy Gable wrote _Re: Woyzeck_. In this play Georg Büchner becomes a character himself.

• In 2008 a South Korean group called Sadari Movement Laboratory performed _Woyzeck_, as a part of the London Mime Festival.

• In 2012 Neil Labute creates a free adaption of _Woyzeck_ setting it in the civil war.

(Chun)

Regardless of the interpretation, adaptation, or translation _Woyzeck_ undergoes, Büchner’s story has remained, and while “the play on the page may at times frustrate editors and readers, the play onstage shows us pieces of a life that coalesce into an emblem of contemporary pain and despair” (Klaus, Gilbert, and Field 531).

The world of _Woyzeck_, created by Büchner, is inhabited by many different characters that range from in-depth, complicated humans to near caricatures of human behavior that operate on such a superficial level that they are not even endowed with full names. The title character, Franz Woyzeck, is recognized as “a low character, the quintessential victim who is driven to commit a crime” (Gainor 90). He becomes the protagonist of the play, pushing the action forward. The play consists primarily of interactions between him and a few other characters, including Marie, The Doctor, The Captain, and The Drum Major. This everyman character is pushed to the breaking point until he becomes alienated from and driven mad by the world that he occupies.

The play has a litany of other characters that range from poor classes to upper classes. The townspeople and poorer classes are made up of: Andres, who appears to be
Franz’s only friend; Margaret, a close friend of Marie’s; a Grandmother and an Old Man; and a series of Apprentices and Children. Then there are the characters of upper classes that take on some form of authority, such as The Doctor, who performs experiments on Franz as well as The Captain, The Drum Major, The Sergeant, The Judge, and The Jew.

It is interesting that Franz Woyzeck is the only character in the drama whom Büchner has given a full name. Four others have first names: Marie, Woyzeck’s love; Andres his friend and companion in the military; Margaret, Marie’s neighbor; and Karl, the fool or idiot. The other characters in the drama, even the main roles, have no names: The Captain, the Doctor, the Drum Major. These three represent everything Büchner hated. Perhaps Büchner did not find these three men worthy of being honored with a name, an honor he reserved for the poor, the downtrodden, the sufferers. (Rappolt 7)

The story of Woyzeck, although told through fragments and dialogue spoken in “short choppy phrases, in allusions rather than explanation, in snatches of songs or of biblical quotations” (Klaus 530), is rather simple. The play takes place in a small town and revolves around Franz’s attempt to take care of his family. He has a child with Marie but, since it was born out of wedlock, the church does not bless it. Franz attempts to earn extra money by volunteering for lab experiments performed by the Doctor, such as only eating peas. These experiments lead to strange and paranoid behavior in Franz. After seeing the high status and flair of the Drum Major, Marie cheats on Franz. Franz finds out about the infidelity and, in a jealous rage, he buys a knife. He takes Marie out by a lake where, after hearing voices that encourage him to kill her, he stabs her repeatedly. After this violent act Franz has a moment of clarity in which he sees what he has done. With this realization he throws away the knife and possibly attempts to drown himself. Due to the fragmented nature of the original manuscripts, the ending has many unresolved questions. His attempt to kill himself is merely one interpretation.
Another is that he is caught and sentenced to death, and another is that he just cleans himself off and goes back to town.

While the conclusion of the play is debatable, there are consistent themes presented throughout. Themes such as the oppression of the lower classes, the moral and philosophical consequences of actions due to mental breakdowns, jealously, morality in the face of others, psychological exploitation, free will, and the tension between human nature and society, are just a few of these themes. All these themes are then presented in various styles.

Woyzeck is more daring and radical than almost all examples of late-nineteenth-century modernism, it thwarts all attempts to tell a linear history of modern drama. Somehow, Büchner anticipated what would become routine only much later. (Gainor 93)

It becomes very hard to pinpoint an approach to this play, which ends up becoming one of its major challenges. Not only is it told in fragments that can be rearranged but also it anticipates and contains elements of “realism, naturalism, expressionism, existentialism, epic drama, absurdism, political satire, black comedy, working-class tragedy” (Wise and Walker 8). Because of all of these elements the play allows for a multitude of types of storytelling, which can be freeing but daunting without direction.

Everything about Woyzeck is fragmented: the themes, the style, the plot, the language, the action, the scene structure, and even the characters. Yet throughout all these obstacles and fragmentation, there is still a story that has been told all around the world and in various ways. It is a story now recognized as possibly one of the first modern workingman tragedies. As a result, it has had an enormous influence on modern drama.
Chapter 3
Artaud Influence

In approaching Woyzeck as my thesis project, I wanted to delve deeply into possible Artaudian aspects contained within this text. Antonin Artaud and his Theatre of Cruelty has been an interest of mine for some time now, and I wanted to take the opportunity with this project and this play to find out exactly what his elusive ideas were, how they could be achieved, and how their applications could aid in my production of Woyzeck.

Who is Artaud and what does he want?

Antonin Artaud was born in 1896 in Marseilles, France. Throughout his tough life, Artaud came face to face with great pain and suffering. Whether these distresses came from mental or physical means, it is safe to say that he was rarely without their presence. However, Artaud had the ability to channel these pains into his art, not only in their creation, but also with his theories of what art and theatre should be and what they could accomplish. First starting as a poet, then actor, then finally a “theatre creator,” he sought “to abolish the boundaries between life and art, and applied this criterion to all his artistic production: poetry, cinema, drawings, and paintings” (Stoppelman 174). Even though he despised the theatre of his day, “he either refused to attend or went with a bottle of red wine and a chunk of salami and ate ostentatiously in the first row” (Gerould 434), the theatre would be Artaud’s greatest tool in expressing his new ideas.

For Artaud theatre is sacred, an institution for accomplishing self-renewal. A performance can inculcate an experience of oneness, forge a temporary community out of strangers, and play out their interdependence. No other art can quite do this, for theatre takes a
congregation of people through adventures-storms, earthquakes, floods, the plague, love, hatred, and death, but all by proxy and brings them out safe. Together they have undergone risks, mended chaos, passed the initiatory trials, and come through whole and healed. Such a theatre will resolve itself into a tribal communion, a cleansing ritual that magically induces peace of mind. (Bremel 31)

However, Artaud would never see his vision of theatre come to full fruition. His own attempts to stage a program to illustrate the principles of his Theatre of Cruelty would manifest in the failure of _The Cenci_, a failure that would devastate Artaud and become his last production for the theatre. Although his theories never came to the stage in any practical sense during his lifetime, his ideas and thoughts about what theatre can and should be are still influential for many theatre practitioners today.

In Artaud’s seminal book _Theatre and its Double_, he lays out several ideas of what his concept of Theatre of Cruelty should be and accomplish. The book, which contains thirteen chapters and a preface, covers a wide range of topics that touch on more than theatre performance and technique. These topics include: culture, plague, metaphysics, alchemy, Balinese theatre, oriental theatre, masterpieces, letters on Cruelty and Language, and even the Marx brothers. However, even though the book covers a wide range of topics, it is more of a manifesto than an instructional manual. The trouble becomes how to pinpoint a specific way of achieving these profound ideas. Even Artaud had said “I lay down rigorous and unexpected principles, grim and terrible in nature, and just when one expect to see me justify them I pass on to the next principle” (Artaud 114). Or, as Arthur Adamov once said “Artaud’s theoretical work was completely inspirational. There was something evanescent about his dramatic ideas, and when one approached them, when one thought he had grasped them, they vanished” (Sellin 101). While the text of _Theatre and its Double_ might be hard to
decipher at times there are many ideas that can be gleaned off and expanded upon –
ideas that many theatre practitioners have used and continue to use to this day.

Starting first with Artaud’s idea of “Cruelty,” a word that conjures up ideas of
punishment, violence, and abuse. While all these aspects are a part of life as
experienced by Artaud, they were not the primary aims of his Theatre of Cruelty:
“Cleansing, transfiguration, exaltation – these are objectives Artaud will accomplish
through the medium of cruelty” (Bremel 22).

He did appear to intend that a punishment of a sort be visited on
spectators. However, it would be a beneficent punishment. Life has in it a
lot of ugliness and evil, which are both natural and man-made. Instead of
shielding spectators from their impact he would expose them, put them
through the experience of a danger and then free them from it. He went to
great pains to explain that his theatre was not a form of torture, but a
facing of the worst that could happen, followed by a refreshing release
from it. At the end the spectators would feel relieved, as if awakening
from a nightmare, the evil and terror cleansed away. (Bremel 22)

There are three features of the Theatre of Cruelty that reappear throughout Artaud’s
manifestos:

First, it does not involve physical or spiritual maltreatment; rather, it
artistically expresses the implacability of life. Second, this theatre draws
on the individual and collective dreams, or the myths, of all men . . . on a
level not counterfeit and illusory, but interior. Third, because it works on
nerves and senses, rather than on the intellect, and because it impinges
on anxieties common to all men, the Theatre of Cruelty is aimed at a
general public, not the usual run of theatregoers only. (Bremel 23)

What are his concepts and how are they applied?

In this section I will attempt to create a concise discussion of some of the ideas
and precepts presented by Artaud in Theatre and its Double.

“The function of the Theatre of Cruelty was to bring onto stage a reality different
from the everyday, the reality of the extraordinary. The extraordinary was
uncontaminated by ideas of morality and culture and implied a return to a primitive consciousness associated with ritual and the notion of magic” (Stoppelman 38). In this he hoped to restore the magical, ritualistic and religious functions of the theatre.

He does not want spectators. He wants participants. Artaud saw the audience as active not passive. He even sought to destroy the barriers between the playing space and the audience seating, instead preferring that the audience be seated in the middle of the action, while it takes place all around them.

He wanted to create a new language for theatre. “I say that the stage is a physical and concrete place that demands to be filled, and demands that one make it speak its own concrete language” (Sellin 83). This language should be derived from the stage and not “superimposed on it from a script composed in the den” (Sellin 83). It should address the senses first, not the mind. It should not be a language of words; it should be made up of gesture, sound, set, lights, props. These gestures shouldn’t simply be the equivalence of words. They should evoke ideas, not just words or phrases: “Theatre must find a unique language halfway between gesture and thought...this language can be defined in terms of the possibilities of dynamic expression in space as opposed to the expressive possibilities of dialogue” (Stoppelman 40). The noise from a word could tell us more about the word, than the word can by itself.

However, through this new language Artaud did not look for the abolition of speech and text, but rather for its subordination to the overall production language. “Artaud hoped to bring about, through his language of the stage space, a change or purgation in the spectator” (Sellin 93). Artaud, like any other theatre creator sought a form of catharsis or purgation. “Artaud felt strongly that purgation must be achieved
through the senses, not the mind” (Sellin 97). However, Artaud’s methods differ from those laid out in Aristotle’s Poetics. They both advocated for the terrible deed and the cataclysmic accident readily found in tragedy that serves for the catharsis, but Artaud also encouraged a place for humor in the tragedy to occur. He called for “destruction-humor through laughter and called for explosive interventions of poetry and humor aimed at disorganizing and pulverizing appearances” (Sellin 99). He did not see comedy or humor as a lesser form than tragedy. As Professor Sellin observed regarding Artaud and Aristotle “One of the fundamental differences between Aristotle’s and Artaud’s ideas is that Aristotle did not feel comedy to be as great as tragedy, and he did not feel that the comic could evoke the same purgative feelings as the tragic” (Sellin 99). Artaud felt that the comedic didn’t need to be detectable in the design. With comedy as a tool he wanted to continue its use through the unexpected, and surprise. He looked for ways of mixing the genres of comedy and tragedy, incorporating the “very strange or ugly in a way that is not normal or natural,” and “extremely different from what is expected or usual” (“Grotesque”) in order to create his ideal: the idea of the grotesque.

Another place where the two theorists disagreed was in the balance of text to action. Artaud was a staunch advocate for the anti-text drama, whereas Aristotle felt that “the plot ought to be so constructed that, even without the aid of the eye, he who hears the tale told will thrill with horror and melt to pity at what takes place” (Aristotle 14). Artaud wanted the text to be secondary to the spectacle and these images created in his new language of theatre. “For Artaud the image of a crime projected in a suitably theatrical setting had a more terrible impact on the soul than merely portraying the actual execution of that crime. He was convinced that the public thought above all with
its emotions, and so it seemed absurd to start off by aiming to explain” (Stoppelman 42).

Artaud wanted, above all, to create an extraordinary reality that returned us to a primitive consciousness, to turn his audiences into participants, to create a new language for the theatre that goes beyond the spoken word, to find ways to incorporate elements of the grotesque, and to appeal to our emotions first not our intellect.

**How can these concepts be applied to the adaptation of Woyzeck?**

*Woyzeck* caught the attention of a young Artaud who had developed a fascination with the play and had the intention of making it his first production, claiming in a letter to Louis Jouvet that “[N]othing these days in the existing theatre, already written, seems to me to be more urgently in need of being performed than this particular play” (Sellin 58). In his first manifesto of Theatre of Cruelty, he lays out a program in which all his ideas and concepts of Theatre of Cruelty would be presented. While many items are listed in his “program of cruelty” the only text that would be presented without distortion or adaptation is Büchner’s *Woyzeck*. He picked this play because he saw in it “a spirit of reaction against our principles and as an example of what can be drawn from a formal text in terms of the stage” (Artaud 99-100).

The reality presented in any version of *Woyzeck* is not an everyday reality. It is the reality of the extraordinary. For my adaptation, I want to continue exploring the world and reality of *Woyzeck*. I want to find a world where, as the text presents, ideas of morality and culture do not conform to our accepted societal norms. In this world the possibility of “returning to a primitive consciousness associated with ritual and the
notion of magic” (Stoppelman 38) might be achieved. In this new extraordinary world new rules and rituals of the world can be created.

While this world is separated from the audience and there is an established fourth wall preventing the two spaces from merging, a merging Artaud would have preferred, there are opportunities to utilize other elements in the design to bridge the gap between the playing space and the audience’s space. Aspects such as sound have the ability to engage audience members and actors at the same time. Examples include using small environmental noises that come from behind the audience at times, in order to fully immerse them in this world, as well as sounds that at times only are apparent to Franz and the audience. These aspects allow the audience to be more than observers from the outside. They are living in the world, becoming witnesses along with the characters.

A strong gestural language will also serve this production, as the text is populated with people who have an inability of expressing themselves through conventional means. A new language can be created that allows these characters to express their feelings and needs in new ways. A gestural language, such as one advocated by Artaud, is needed in order for these characters to express ideas that their words alone cannot.

Artaud sought destruction in some form in almost all of his concepts. He saw it as a transforming force. One way, as previously stated, was with “destruction–humor” through laughter: “[E]xplosive interventions of poetry and humor aimed at disorganizing and pulverizing appearances” (Sellin 99). These elements are presented in Woyzeck. There are several interjections of songs, dances, and jokes interspersed
throughout Büchner’s play that can be utilized for this production. Frequently when the patients have no other way to communicate with others, we find them breaking out into song. These songs can serve as elements for “disorganizing and pulverizing appearances”. For example in scene 4, Franz has just returned from shaving the Captain and finally has a private moment with Marie. In this moment of peace and brief happiness, the Grandmother burst out in a song, with a happy melody, that follows the feeling of the moment, but the lyrics tell a whole other story.

**Scene 4**

**GRANDMOTHER.** (Sings) *Nothing in this world will last. Our lives are like fields of grass. Soon all that is past will pass.*

**WOYZECK.** Troubles and happiness, everywhere. Surely we live in a beautiful and awful world. With all the sorrows and joys that we can handle.

**GRANDMOTHER.** (Sings) *How long we live, Just time will tell, We all gotta die, You know that very well!*

**MARIE.** Humans are fools in search of understanding. *(Pulls Woyzeck away)* But when we listen to the fools, we become the fools. *(Appendix 6 pg. 135)*

Artaudian ideas for catharsis can also be applied to *Woyzeck*. In *Woyzeck* we get the ideal version of a grotesque catharsis: the Artaudian catharsis. Franz starts the show in search of reason, a reason for the voices, the madness, and his position in life. It's an important distinction that must be made that this isn't the first time Franz has heard these voices; this is just the worst time. There is a sense of urgency as the play continues and Franz is able to make out what these voices are saying. As the story progresses the world and the external imposes upon him to the point where he abandons his search for reason and only wants action. Marie has cheated on him and he wants retribution. The voices increase and grow in intensity and Franz doesn’t look for
why they are there, he just wants them to stop. Once he murders Marie, he gets his retribution and the voices stop. Unfortunately, he comes out of his near-fugue state and sees the actions he has committed. In this moment all he wants is to be free of everything: the need for reason, and the remembrance of the actions he has committed. He cannot go back, and he does not want to move forward. There is only one thing for him to do, and he attempts to kill himself, but he lacks the will to finish himself off. In the end The Doctor gives Franz what he wants, through the use of electroshock therapy. Franz now has a blank slate of a mind. Karl runs off with the child/doll, the only remembrance of Marie, and in this new state Franz has no memory of the acts he has committed, he is no longer in search of reason, and is no longer plagued by the voices of his madness. When Franz has peace, we as an audience also receive peace knowing that his suffering is over and catharsis is achieved through this shared moment where we find that we feel that same way as Franz.

Franz’s fall throughout the show is shortened because he starts in such a stressed state. The noose is already around his neck when the show starts, and as the show progresses the noose just gets tighter and tighter. The grotesque side of the catharsis is tapped by not removing the noose, but by simply ending the suffering. We latch in to the peace achieved, not just the hope that he will defeat his opposition, but rather that he will be free of his opposition. This moment is happy and sad, tragic and joyous, a mix: the grotesque.

Artaud’s ideas are vague at times and can be quite hard to grasp or explain. By picking a few concepts and finding ways of applying them, not only in the production, but also in the adaptation, I hope to explore further what Artaud might have hoped for
in his vision of theatre. By exploring these ideas I also hope to tap into a type of experiential theatre that works on the audiences nerves as well as their intellect.
Chapter 4
Conceptual Approach

“...It is certain that we need above all a theatre that wakes us up: nerves and heart.”

- Antonin Artaud, from Theatre and Its Double

This new concept of Woyzeck has the ability to tap into an immersive, experiential, and shared experience. It can do this by first taking the text and making it more accessible for the average audience member. The text should not stand in the way of the production and prevent audience members from being completely engaged. If they spend the majority of the time thinking and putting pieces of the story together, they are not as engaged in the experience as I would have hoped for. While they are still thinking about the story and intellectually connected, that is only one aspect of the possible shared experience. If the story can also tap into the audience’s emotional, instinctual and physiological side a complete and immersive experience might be achieved. This can occur with not only the accessible nature of the text, allowing for easier audience investment in the story, but also by utilizing Artaudian theories.

As stated previously, one of the few plays chosen by Antonin Artaud for his first program to illustrate the principles of the Theatre of Cruelty was Büchner’s Woyzeck. In creating a concept for this production of Woyzeck, elements of Artaud’s methodology will be implemented wherever possible. Examples will be provided through the use of lights and sounds, but the purpose of incorporating these elements are to enhance the story, not simply to showcase the Theatre of Cruelty. Woyzeck has the potential to create this visceral feeling in the audience members who witness the story. Artaud’s theories are notorious for wanted to push the audience to feel something on the
instinctual side, touching on their nerves first, then their intellect. Artaud, himself saw
the potential for the visceral early on with Woyzeck and it is my hope to continue this
exploration with my adaptation and production.

In order to make the story clearer not only for the audience but also actors,
designers, and all other members of the production team it becomes imperative to
create a frame for the fragmented text to inhabit. Büchner’s text gives very little in
terms of stage directions or setting. For example, his locations include “Town”, “Open
Field”, “Carnival booths. Lights. People”, and “Room” (Schmidt). He alludes to places, but
is sparse in description. There is very little in terms of back-story for these characters –
some have names, others do not. There is no real exposition to give any sort of clarity to
previous action. Time is another aspect that seems to have little to no influence; it
becomes hard to tell how much time has passed within the story. Does it happen over a
couple of days? Weeks? With all of these odd aspects the story can get clouded, but by
creating a frame that gives a clear sense of the world and the people who inhabit it, I
feel these pieces can fit together and not distract or confuse, but enhance each other
and serve the story. In creating a new conceptual frame and adaptation many of these
aspects can be clarified, however it is important to maintain some level of
fragmentation in the text. It is a balance of creating an accessible text and using
fragmentation as a story telling device that will be a major challenge of this concept. It is
also very important that this frame be created out of something that is connected to the
text; otherwise there is the possibility of it being superfluous, distracting, or even
confusing, which really ends up being one of the main challenges of the source material
in the first place.
Büchner gives us a play that has a man under great mental disturbances living in a society that is always imposing its will upon him. In looking towards the creation of this mental asylum concept I wanted to use the initial inspiration for Büchner’s play, the murder of Johanna Woost by Johann Woyzeck. This particular case became a focal point in the treatment of the mentally insane due to the question of the sanity of Johann Woyzeck, who is now known to of had schizophrenia. However, I also wanted to justify were a society like Büchner created could exist populated with people such as Franz. This is how I landed in the mental asylum for this adaptation. By placing the story in this setting, there now is a clear world all of these characters can inhabit. There are rules that are created as a result of this world. It is a closed-off and contained world. In addition, when the characters then are grouped into patients and personnel, a new hierarchy is created. This world or frame gives these fragmented elements a place to exist in.

The story of this adaptation of Woyzeck is that of human struggle. It is Franz’s journey we follow and his relationships with the others that we witness. He wants to be a good person and do what is right, but he is treated less than human. Franz wants to be free and live in his natural state, but he is dehumanized to the point of being just another lab experiment and becomes nothing more than an animal reacting on impulse through the manipulation of his world. We see him at the tipping point, vulnerable at the beginning of the play, and then we see him pushed and prodded over into the deep end where his demise is waiting.

Franz is the focal point of all relationships presented throughout the story. His relationship with Marie is one of love and responsibility and it's his sense of duty and
obedience that creates his relationship with The Doctor. The Doctor sees Franz only as another experiment; he is just a lab rat. The Captain sees Franz only as an inferior and a less moral person than he. Frequently Franz is being victimized by his superiors, “The Captain and The Doctor, each in his own way, do everything to devastate a human soul already in danger of disintegrating” (Rappolt 6). Because of this constant pressure from the world the only positive relationship in Franz’s life is severed when Marie cheats on him with the Major. This act of infidelity causes Franz’s attempt to destroy his connection with Marie and then the world.

**Mental illness within the asylum**

By setting this story into a mental asylum, I wanted to look at these facilities and how their history and procedures of operations might influence my adaptation as well as my approach to directing this show. The asylum within *Woyzeck* can be described as a total institution.

A total institution may be defined as a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life. (Goffman xiii)

Within the total institution human needs are under bureaucratic and impersonal control. The patients are typically excluded from decisions and usually without regard to their fate within the institution. These decisions could include things such as concealment of diagnosis, their medication, and duration of treatment. These patients, located and trapped in a total institution, undergo mortification of self through physical and mental abuse brought on by the personnel or administration of the asylum.

A basic social arrangement in modern society is that we tend to sleep, play and work in different places, in each case with a different set of co-participants, under a
different authority, and without an overall rational plan. The central feature of total institutions can be described as a breakdown of these barriers ordinarily used in separating these three spheres of life.

Within the walls of asylums issues such as “institutional syndrome” can and usually do occur. Institutional Syndrome is:

Characterized by deficits in social and life skills, which develop after a person has spent a long period living in mental hospitals, prisons, or other remote institutions. Such individuals may be deprived of independence and responsibility, to the point that once they return to “outside life” they are often unable to manage many of its demands. (Johnson)

There were various types of treatments administered in the asylums, each with their own issues and controversies. These extreme treatments included lobotomy, electroshock therapy, and insulin injections in order to induce comas.

Depending on the time period of asylums, the diagnosis of the patients may differ. As terminology and knowledge of mental illness advanced, patients with the same type of illness could be labeled in various ways. One early label was melancholy, this label eventually opened up to various types of mania that included, simply “mania,” monomania, and hypomania. Another type of mania, one that is exhibited in Woyzeck and on the part of Franz, is homicidal monomania, where the “[I]mpulse is sudden, instantaneous, unreflective, stronger than the will. The Murder is committed without advantage or motive and often upon beloved ones” (Crighton 211).

The mental asylum is a world of oppression, much like the world that Franz inhabits in this adaptation. The cast of characters presented in the production can be categorized into two sections due to this world: the Patients and the Personnel. These patients are in the asylum for various reasons that are not explained explicitly through
the text. While they live in a mental asylum, it is important that they not appear to be merely crazy people. These are the people who appear to be the most grounded. We see their interactions and relationships with each other. This idea of the poorer, or in this adaptation, patients as being more grounded is something taken straight from Büchner. Those who have full names become the most realistic and fully round people, but those with only titles become more like objects with a singular purpose: it is these people who seem the most abstract and dangerous. This is where the personnel come into play. These include The Doctor, The Captain, The Major, The Sergeant, and Attendant.

The Doctor is the head of the asylum. He uses his status and power over the patients to conduct his experiments. We see examples of his past experiments, such as the deformed Karl the idiot. Franz has become his new favorite source of experiments. The Doctor is able to lord his power over the patients due to his security personnel that include The Captain, The Sergeant, The Major and The Attendant. It is important to clarify that these patients are not putting on the show of Woyzeck in some form of Epic Theatre or play within a play variant, but rather living their lives day-to-day in this asylum. This is how the patients are actually treated and how they live in these conditions. As audience members we see the actual story unfolding in front of us as opposed to a version of a previous story being presented.

The focus of this world and the story will be on the relationship between Franz and The Doctor and Franz and Marie. The Doctor has influence over everything within the asylum, including Franz, and it is their relationship that leads to the violent breakdown of all of Franz’s other relationships and then his psyche. Marie is Franz’s most intimate relationship. She is his home life and source of stability. Through their
relationship Franz and Marie have the ability to create a family dynamic in a world that rarely allows moments for that to flourish.

The patients speak in choppy phrases and songs, often using allusions instead of explanations. In fact, we sympathize with them and Franz, who has trouble expressing his feelings often due to these outside forces, because under these circumstances that ends up being the most relatable human reaction. However, those who created and are in charge of this world have a sense of ease and routine, this strikes the average viewer as odd and unsettling under these circumstances.

Significantly, we most mistrust the characters in this play who can speak freely: The Captain, who preaches a meaningless morality while driving Woyzeck mad with his insinuations about Marie... and the Doctor, who preaches human freedom to the man he is using for his bizarre scientific experiments. (Klaus 530)

The world of this play under the new frame of the asylum is familiar, yet strange. While there are images that are familiar references for us to mental asylums as viewed in (Appendix 1.5), they take on the strange and unfamiliar when they are altered through Franz’s perceptions. As the play progresses, Franz’s unsteady psyche takes effect on the world as experienced by the audience. What started out familiar has become strange, just like his mental state. Shadows become larger and deeper. Angles become sharper and more dangerous. There is a feeling of paranoia. Noises are overheard that are only apparent to Franz and the audience. What was once a realistic world has slowly become one of heightened theatricality. In the photo (Appendix 1.1) the mood of distortion is present. A normal hallway is twisted and manipulated just like Franz’s mind.
The asylum world is also closed off to the world outside of the play. The people in this setting are the only things known to exist. They are all locked away, patients and personnel alike. There are hints of a world that is beyond what is seen, but these parts are not fully known and seem almost impossible to reach. These aspects represent the freedom that is possible, yet is not reachable. In the photo (Appendix 1.2) a glow is peering through a window, while this glow could be heavenly or even comforting, it is broken up and trapped behind the bars of the window of the asylum.

The time period resembles the early 20th century, prior to World War II, when scientific research into psychology became more and more popular. This is leaving the late 19th century “moral management” period of mental asylums. This earlier period “was based on the belief that the environment played a vital role in the treatment of the mentally ill. Creating a more domestic feel, beds, pictures and decorations replaced shackles, chains and cement cells. It was thought that recovery would more likely occur if conditions surrounding resembled the comforts of home” (Stringer). Treatment of mental illness begins to change and then eventually moves out of this period because “problems surfaced with patients becoming unruly due to lack of restraints, and concern arose with how patients were to occupy their time” (Stringer). All of these aspects are illustrated in the adaptation of Woyzeck.

Even though knowledge and technology is advancing in the field of mental health it is also pertinent to note that the asylum world has not instituted all of the new standards. Old equipment is still being used; things have become outdated, but are still useful. The amenities and resources have not caught up to the curiosity and inquiry that the Doctor has. (Appendix 1.3)
Conceptual Design Elements

Design elements should serve to help ease the fragmentation that is present in the script. The stylistic unity of these elements should fit together for overall unity but also to allow the action to flow seamlessly from beginning to end. Practical examples of this include using one unit set throughout without set changes, no visible running crew, single costumes with no changes, no blackouts, and no intermission. The purpose of this is to keep the action continuous. By having only one multi-purpose space there is never a moment when the audience is allowed to turn away from the story. Once they enter this world they are not given a moment to leave until the story has finished. This allows the production to maintain an immersive feeling. The play requires only a few items in order to tell the story. Most of these elements are just a sense of place for the action to occur, such as an examination, a shave, a carnival-like show, a dance, a pond, or collection of water. Büchner’s script gives indications of fields, streets, inns, rooms, and a pond, but when compressing this story to a confined space like an asylum, multipurpose rooms and simple set pieces are required. A great example of a multipurpose set piece would be the barber’s chair. While Franz could give the Captain his shave in this chair, The Doctor could also examine Franz by placing him in it during these examinations. This idea also facilitates the concept of taking the real and familiar and then tweaking it slightly to make it strange. Taking some sort of fountain or small wishing well that is usually used for a place of peace and having Franz murder Marie there is another example of turning the familiar to strange. Also by having the patients move the items and set pieces around the audience is never allowed to think that there is anyone else in this world outside of whom they see. The illusion is never broken. The
world may be theatrical and exaggerated during Franz’s madness spells but it is never used to remind the audience that they are watching a play.

A specific moment that illustrates these elements and their unity occurs at the conclusion of the play. While there is debate as to how Büchner’s *Woyzeck* ends, this particular adaptation ends with Franz going back to the wishing well where he has murdered Marie. Seeing the bloody mess around her, and attempting to drown himself in the bloody water as a result of his actions. The personnel watching this attempt are ordered by the Doctor, who has seen all the actions of Franz, to pull him up and out of the water. They then take him to the barber’s/examination chair and strap him down for the Doctor’s final examination. It’s here we hear the personnel compliment Franz.

*Scene 26*

**DOCTOR.** What a murder!

*(Orders the Major, Sergeant, and Captain to pull Woyzeck up and take him to the Doctor’s office. The Attendant grabs the knife)*

**MAJOR.** A good and beautiful murder!

**SERGEANT.** As beautiful a murder as anyone could wish for.

**CAPTAIN.** It’s been a long time since we had a murder like this.

*(Appendix 6 pg. 173)*

The Doctor enters and begins to prepare Franz for electroshock treatment. This occurs while Franz witnesses Karl the idiot playing with his child (the doll), the last remaining fragment of his Marie. These final moments show how the multipurpose space is used with the barber’s chair becoming an examining table, the safe wishing well becoming a place for murder, the characters being in close proximity to view everything and then moving everything and, finally, no break in the action.
This conclusion also consists of three separate fragments of scenes that when taken as fragments would require three separate set changes and blackouts. By compressing them and making the pieces fit together without stopping, again there is no break in the action.

Lighting elements should also follow along with these ideas that as the show progresses, we go deeper and Franz’s point of view becomes more apparent. At the beginning of the show his madness is more internal but as he has more fits and spells it becomes stronger and the world begins to change to make his madness more external. We get glimpses of the world through his eyes. Lighting becomes harsher more dramatic with heavier contrast. Colors lose their subtlety. Lighting should be used as a tool of evoking sensations, not only in Franz but also for the audience – if only briefly – to feel similar to the title character. This again creates an immersive connection to the production. Taking a page out of Artaud’s first manifesto, “light must recover an element of thinness, density, and opaqueness, with a view to producing the sensations of heat, cold, anger, fear” (Artaud 95). While at first these sensations will be only perceived by the characters on stage, they will become more overt and shared toward the end of the story. A great example is scene 13, after Franz has heard the voices telling him to stab Marie, when he attempts to fall asleep. It is during this moment that we enter a hallucinatory nightmare. Marie and The Major reappear moving closer and closer together. Franz, in a terrified state, reaches out for her but cannot move, all the while the other patients, taking on new animalistic forms, start to gather around Marie and The Major in order to consume them. While this scene is going on the lights have become severe with dark shadows, bold colors (harsh bloody reds and purples), as well
as strobos to slow down the action. Then, at the climax of this scene, the lights go black, followed by a flash of bright, blinding white, due to the fact that the Sergeant turned on the “normal” lights to wake everyone up and break the nightmare.

Another example that further illustrates the aspects of light and sound needed for this production is in the murder scene between Franz and Marie. As the two of them leave the rest of the group a sense of impending doom approaches. The entire audience is aware of what is about to happen, but the specifics are still unknown. As this scene progresses a slow steady beat is heard and begins to increase in tempo and intensity. This is the heartbeat of Franz. The beat continues to increase, and so does the harshness of light. These two elements increase up to the point of Franz's line of “Take that!” and for a brief instant the lights and sound become unbearable. This creates, for the briefest of moments, a connection between Franz and the audience members. They feel some form of the same sort of pain viscerally, so that the only escape from it is for the audience to avert their eyes. Then, once that moment has ended and these eyes return to the stage, only the sound of Franz’s knife stabbing Marie is heard. The purpose of this is to take the audience on the journey, along with Franz, through this madness and when everyone reaches the height of it together, audience members can avert their eyes and return to safety and reality. But Franz doesn’t return; he continues on his path.

“We want to make out of the theatre a believable reality which gives the heart and the senses that kind of concrete bite which all true sensation requires” (Artaud 85). It is in this same way the audience needs to feel, even for a quick moment, a sense of a breaking point. This only serves to create a stronger connection to Franz. It also acts as a tool to show a starker contrast between the audience and the title character. The
audience turns away, but Franz does not. He is not human anymore and when he tries to change back, it might be too late.

The costumes also help to frame the world of the story. The patients have a form of uniform that has be given to them to take away their uniqueness. It becomes a form of dehumanization and an order that has been handed down from The Doctor (Appendix 1.5). These uniforms also serve to show who has been there the longest, and who has been at the hands of The Doctor’s experiments. They only receive one uniform, and so the longer they have been there the filthier and more ragged it becomes. It shows who has done the most time and creates questions regarding the patients and their past as a result. This is similar to the uniforms of the personnel. While they are all similar with the same base, different accouterments are added to show status, hierarchy, and raises questions regarding the past amongst the personal. The Doctor is the one exception. Since The Doctor is the head of the asylum, there is a dark brooding feeling around him. It is almost as if in the shadows of the building The Doctor is hiding and watching, omniscient at times. *The Gross Clinic* by Thomas Eakins shows a dark professorial doctor conducting a procedure, but still maintaining a dark, ever-present eye over everyone (Appendix 1.6)

Jerzy Grotowski once defined that theatre as the thing that occurs between the actors and audience. This is what *Woyzeck* can tap into: a shared experience. We are there with the troubles and fever dreams Franz goes through, invested with him. These individual scenic elements will allow us to see and feel what he is going through.

It invites the mind to share a delirium which exalts its energies; and we can see, to conclude, that from the human point of view, the action of theatre, like that of plague, is beneficial, for, impelling me to see themselves as they are... (Artaud 31)
The unity of these elements will serve to create an experience for actor and audience member alike. The end of this show should be followed by a deep breath, maybe a sigh and possibly a “Whoa...” from the audience and actor as we all come down from this immersive, experiential, and shared event of this man’s journey. If this occurs, then it has been a successful production in my eyes.
Chapter 5:
Analysis into Production Text

Given Circumstances of the play

The action of this adaptation takes place inside a mental asylum run by The Doctor. Each patient has their own mental disorder that has put them inside the asylum. These conditions include postpartum depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, severe anxiety, and several types of mania and neuroses. These patients are under the care and treatment of The Doctor and under the watch of The Captain, the head of security, and his other security personnel. Marie and Franz are a couple with some history of being together, but they are not currently married. They had a child out of wedlock but Marie lost it during childbirth, something she continues to deal with by the use of a therapy doll that she believes to be her real child. The hierarchy of authority within the asylum personnel is The Doctor, The Captain, The Major, The Sergeant, and finally The Attendant.

While the play is based mostly in a real world, its point of view shifts from the real to the expressionistic. At times voices and noises are heard that only Franz and occasionally the audience are aware of. This is due to his current mental state, as illustrated in his interactions with Andrea:

Scene 1
Woyzeck. Andrea, did you hear that?
Woyzeck. Shh! Quiet. Don't you hear it? (Pause) Something’s moving! (Appendix 6 pg. 129)

Scene 13
Woyzeck. ...And then there are voices speaking from the walls. Can you hear it?
Woyzeck. It’s piercing. Right between my eyes like a...like a knife.
Andrea. Sleep you fool. (Appendix 6 pg. 155)

**Geographical location**

The specific location of the asylum is unknown to the audience, as is the time of year or day. Although the location is unknown, all characters tend to talk with a cadence and terminology that would be most identified with the United States. While larger concentrations of asylums within the US were located in the Northeast and the South, the location of this asylum could be placed in any of these areas. However, nothing from the text is specific to the location. The asylum is representative of all asylums that would have been present during this time period.

All the action takes place within the walls of the asylum. There are several locations within its walls such as the main room, the doctor’s office, the security office, and the wishing well.

There is a world outside of the asylum, but it is never clearly defined, only hinted at through the windows of the facility. This is a hopeful world, but we do not see it, we only see its darker side that most would prefer to remain hidden. You can see the sunshine, but you can’t feel it in the asylum.

**Date**

The play takes place in the early 20th century, shortly after World War I. This is a period when asylums were starting to take on new procedures and techniques for patient care. Many patients were soldiers dealing with “shell shock,” now known as PTSD. Psychology and the study of the way we think was becoming a more popular subject. In 1917 Freud had published *Mourning and Melancholia* and had suggested that turning guilt-ridden anger on the self caused certain depressions. Also in 1919 Freud
had just published *A Child is Being Beaten* where he began to address the problems of self-destructive behavior. Both of the topics of these books could be applied to the majority of patients living in asylums. The “moral management” technique in asylums had become the predominant way to care for mental patients.

Moral management was based on the belief that the environment played a vital role in the treatment of the mentally ill. Creating a more domestic feel, beds, pictures and decorations replaced shackles, chains and cement cells. It was thought that recovery would more likely occur if conditions surrounding them resembled the comforts of home. (Stringer)

However, this becomes a transitional period for the treatment of mental illness. It eventually moves out of the “Moral Management” period because “problems surfaced with patients becoming unruly due to lack of restraints, and concern arose with how patients were to occupy their time” (Stringer).

**Economic Environment**

The asylum is an old institute that has stood for many years. Due to a lack of funding the building and facilities have gone into disarray. Instead of hiring help to keep the asylum running efficiently, the patients are now charged with its regular care and maintenance. This policy is also used in the hopes that if the patients have occupations they will remain well behaved, something reminiscent of the issues from the moral management period of mental care. The instruments The Doctor has at his disposal are outdated and overused. The uniforms of the patients have outworn their usefulness. The asylum is ready for an update in everyway, but there is no money for this. However, the asylum cannot shut down or close temporarily because there is nowhere else for these people to go.
The majority of the patients in the care of the asylum are also poorer, lower class citizens. These are people whose families have dropped them off at the asylum because they do not know how to care for them and could not afford the continual care that these patients would require.

**Political Environment**

The outside political environment has little effect on the action of the play. However, within the asylum there is an established hierarchy of authority within the security, and when the head of security, The Captain, is perceived as not doing as strong a job as possible, there is an opportunity for other security personnel to move up in the ranks. The interior politics in this world play a role within the small groups of personnel and patients as a result.

**Religious Environment**

There are multiple conflicts within the religious environment of Woyzeck. There is a man of science (The Doctor) who sees the patients as flawed creations of God. With the use of science he feels that he can improve them. The Doctor sees man as in control of his life and with a strong enough will, he could take control of his life without the help from any God. At the same time there is The Captain, who aspires only to be seen as a moral and virtuous man. Since he is in an environment that makes him act less than moral, he is in a constant state of conflict. The Captain is found to be melancholy and depressed most of the time. When most characters are in a time of great strife and conflict, they are frequently seen turning to religion. They do this by praying and asking for mercy, or even quoting passages from the Bible.
Scene 2

Woyzeck. isn’t written: “And lo the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace”?
(Appendix 6 pg. 132)

Scene 18

Marie. ...And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman, conceived in adultery, and set her into the midst...and Jesus said, neither do I condemn thee: Go, and sin no more.”
(Appendix 6 pg. 162)

There is a great conflict between the true nature of the individual as created by God, and the forced nature of society that imposes upon man. In this conflict there is the struggle of the patients wanting to embrace their various issues, attempting to not be ashamed of who they are and The Doctor wanting to cure their diseases with science in order to make them useful members of his society. In scene 11 Patient 2 gives a speech to all the patients urging them to reject the new methods put in place by the Doctor and embrace that they are a product of God and therefore have nothing to be ashamed of.

Scene 11

Patient 2. Listen up! I say unto you, the wanderers, you that are leaning against this stream of time, challenge the new wisdom. So that you may give yourself answers with divine wisdom and styling. These questions such as: Why does man exist? Why is man? - But, verily I say unto you, how could the farmer, the shoemaker, the doctor, and the madman have lived, if God had not created them? Or, how could the tailor exist if He had not implanted in people this feeling of shame? What purpose would there be for the soldiers, if He had not equipped us with the need to kill? Therefore, do not despair- yes, yes, there are things that are lovely and fine, but this world and all its things are earthly and passing, even money passes into decay. But our nature cannot be silenced. To conclude, my beloved friends, I called them mad and they called me mad, and damn them, they out voted me!
(Appendix 6 pg. 152-53)

The idea of sin is also prominent in the text. Franz sees Marie’s sin as being so heavy that he should be able to grab at it with his hands. In the eyes of God she has sinned so greatly that there is no saving her.
Scene 9

Woyzeck. A sin, a sin so great and so fat- it stinks. I should be able to grab at it. So big, I bet you could smoke all the angels out of heaven! You've got a big red mouth, Marie. No blisters on it yet? Marie, you’re as beautiful as sin- but how can mortal sin be so beautiful? It’s not fair.

Previous Action

Franz has agreed to participate in The Doctor’s experiments in order to earn extra money to help support Marie. The most recent experiment that he is participating in is one in which he is allowed to eat only peas. This, along with previous experiments and treatments, has only exacerbated Franz’s mental issues and as a result he now hears voices that no one else hears and has vivid nightmares.

Dramatic Action

The dramatic action that drives the story of Woyzeck is through the focus of Franz. At the beginning of the play, Franz is searching for the cause of his madness in hopes of understanding it. When Franz confides to the Doctor about his current mental state. The Doctor sees an opportunity to manipulate Franz for his own personal gains. In this inciting incident the Doctor has the Major rape Marie, and then hints of her infidelity to Franz. Through this manipulation Franz gives up his search for reason in order to pursue immediate action against his stresses that tell him to kill Marie.

Regretting his action of murdering Marie, Franz attempts to kill himself, but is unable. The Doctor, after seeing no other use for him puts Franz into a new mental state with the use of electro-shock therapy.

Major Events

• Franz hears voices while mopping with Andrea
  This is the first time we see Franz reacting to something that only he perceives. Andrea continues with her activity without interruption, which
makes Franz question if he has actually heard anything. The noises and paranoia escalates to the point of taking cover in order to protect Andrea and him. This continues until there is an interruption from the real environment in the form of a whistle for a security check.

- **Marie flirts with The Major**
  During a routine security check, Margaret and Marie flirt with the Major. The Major appears to reciprocate with Marie. This is the first time that we see Marie connect with another male besides Franz. She then gets defensive when accused of flirting. This exchange sets up the opportunity for cheating later on in the text.

- **The Major decides he wants Marie**
  The Major sees the woman who flirted with him (Marie) and, with the help of the Sergeant, plots a way to impress her and get near her. This action solidifies the connection between Marie and The Major.

- **The Doctor is upset with Franz, but sees an opportunity**
  This exchange illustrates the way in which The Doctor cares for his patients. He is physically abusive and exploitive towards Franz. The current experiment Franz is under is revealed, and Franz, for what appears to be the first time, shares with The Doctor that he is hearing voices. The Doctor sees this as an opportunity and gives Franz a raise as opposed to treating his illness.

- **Marie is caught with a gift from The Major**
  After receiving a watch from The Major, Marie is caught with it by Franz. In order to conceal how she got it, she lies to Franz and immediately feels guilty after his exit for her dishonesty.

- **The Major takes Marie**
  The Major corners Marie in order to receive payment for his gift in the form of her body. What had started out as playful flirtation has escalated to sexual advances from the Major. Marie gives into these advances.

- **The Doctor and Captain hint at Marie’s cheating to Franz**
  The first allusions of Marie and The Major’s fornication are hinted towards Franz. The Doctor takes notes of Franz’s behavior as a result of hearing such things.

- **Franz accuses Marie of cheating**
  After speaking to The Doctor and The Captain, Franz suspects Marie of cheating on him. He searches for proof of her infidelity and attacks Marie. After apologizing for his aggression, he exits.
• Franz sees Marie and The Major dancing
At a dance Franz sees The Major and Marie dancing and flirting close together. This is the first time Franz has seen with his own eyes the relationship between The Major and Marie. This is the proof he was looking for earlier.

• Franz hears voices to kill Marie
Reeling from the pain of seeing Marie and The Major dancing, Franz hears voices again. This time the voices are telling him what to do. They want him to kill Marie. After fighting and attempting to ignore these voices, he gives in to their demands.

• Franz has a nightmare about Marie
Franz goes back to the dance where everyone is now sleeping. He tells Andrea about the voices. Franz falls asleep, where he has a nightmare in which The Major and Marie are dancing again. All the other patients who have now taken on different animalistic forms surround the dancing couple and close in on them. In one unifying gesture all the patients raise their arms and with a stabbing motion come down on Marie.

• Franz seeks out help
After waking up from his nightmare Franz seeks out help and advice from The Doctor. The Doctor uses Franz as a medical specimen instead. After bumping into The Sergeant, Franz is physically abused and left alone.

• Franz confronts The Major
The Major offers Franz a drink. Franz refuses and gets into a physical altercation with The Major. Franz loses the fight and leaves the room.

• Franz buys a Knife
Franz decides to buy a weapon from The Attendant. The only weapon he can afford is the knife. He now has the murder weapon.

• Franz kills Marie
Franz pulls Marie away from the rest of the patients. At the wishing well Franz asks Marie how long they have been together. Marie, sensing that something is wrong, tries to go back to where the other patients are. Franz stabs Marie several times, killing her. He leaves her body in the well and drops the knife.

• The other patients find Marie’s body and accuse Franz of murder.
After returning to the other patients, Franz is accused of murder and Marie’s body is found. Franz runs away and tries to hide the murder weapon.
• **Franz attempts to kill himself**
  For the first time Franz is free of the voices and comes face to face with his actions. After throwing away the knife, Franz attempts to drown himself in the well. He is unsuccessful.

• **The Doctor gives electroshock to Franz**
  Seeing no further use of Franz, The Doctor administers electroshock therapy to Franz. This leaves Franz in a new mental state without his previous ailments or autonomy.

**Themes**

Several themes are presented and explored throughout Büchner's *Woyzeck*, such as what we do when faced with an oppressive and uncompromising world and free will vs. Determinism. While these themes are still present in this new adaptation, other themes now in the new text are the conflict between our natural state and a forced societal state, the treatment of the mentally ill and whether it is better to care for or cure them, science vs. religion, and how madness is defined. By placing *Woyzeck* in an asylum the theme of individuals attempting to escape an oppressive world is most prevalent. Not only is the world oppressive, but also the personnel are the personification of this world and through physical abuse brought on through beatings from the Sergeant or rape brought on by the Major. As well as mental abuse from the Doctor they manipulate the patients to their will. These patients, particularly Franz, are trying to live their lives uninterrupted, while attempting to understand what makes them different.

**Genres**

Due to the fragmented nature of the text, *Woyzeck* often seems to shift or contain many genres. Because of this, there is a blending of genres. At times the story is bizarre and comedic and other times it is quite harsh, dramatic, and even tragic. In order to
help analyze the text I have chosen to classify *Woyzeck* under the term of Grotesque Tragedy. Within this classification there is the idea of the grotesque, which when applied to *Woyzeck* is the idea of creating a mix that is simultaneously happy and wrong, sad and uplifting, triumphant and vengeful, and so on. Eric Sellin, in his book *The Dramatic Concepts of Antonin Artaud*, goes further to define this Grotesque theatre as:

This theatre foreshadowed by Büchner, inaugurated by Jarry, endorsed by Apollinaire, the surrealists, and Artaud, and consolidated by the authors of the so-called Theatre of the Absurd . . . This theatre of the grotesque is characterized by desolation, defeat, waiting, and self-denigration, and even when the individual episodes – for the theatre of the grotesque is frequently made up of brief tableaux – contain actions as violent as murder or suicide, the over-all mood is one of fruitlessness, acquiescence in the futility of life, acceptance of the frailty of the individual, and self-abnegation (Sellin 55).

Although this definition confirms the tragic side of grotesque theatre, in order to get fully at Artaud's vision of the grotesque the mixing of genres is needed. There are those aspects of the classical tragedy, such as the terrible deed: Marie's rape, and the cataclysmic accident: Franz's murder of Marie, and catharsis: Franz's release through electroshock, but at the same time there are elements of Artaud's idea of destruction-humor. Comedy is used in moments of great tragedy:

*Scene 17*

**MAJOR** . . . *Have* a drink, you bastard! I wish the world was liquor, yes liquor - A man must drink! *(Slides drink over) (Woyzeck whistles and lets the drink crash to floor)*
You son-of-a-bitch! You want me to pull out your tongue and wrap it around you?
*(They exchange a look. Pause. Then wrestle to the ground. Woyzeck loses)*

Should I leave some breath in him? How about just enough for an old woman's fart! How's that? *(Woyzeck trembling on floor)* There! Now the guy can whistle till he's blue in the face for all I care!
*(Sings as he exits)* Booze, booze this is my life. Booze, booze can give me courage!
PATIENT 1. I think he got more than he was asking for...
(Appendix 6 pg. 162)

In this moment of great defeat Franz has almost lost everything and Patient 1’s line is both funny and extremely tragic in this context and point of the play. Franz’s has certainly got more than he was asking. It is with this mix that the full grotesque classification of tragedy is created.

**Style**

The style, or point of view for the story, much like the genre, can be viewed in various ways, depending on which section of the text is considered. The story at times focuses on the individual, but at other times it is clearly aware of the societal implications within this world. Due to this shifting of style within the play, it can at times be viewed as through the filter of the individual, Franz, in a theatrical manner. We view the world based on how it feels to this individual. The story shows a subjective truth through the eyes of Franz and the world appears to be based more on how it feels to him as opposed to how it really is.

**Scene 13**

(Woyzeck enters a fevered state and begins to have a frightening nightmare.)

(He sees Marie and The Major dancing again, slowly all the patients move, surrounding the two of them. They take on new violent animalistic forms. As the music continues the patients start to envelope the dancers. Woyzeck’s body begins to contort as his sweating increases. The patients slowly move their arms up in a harmony of stabbing motions. Woyzeck tries to yell out and scream but the ability has been taken away from him.)

(At the peak of this hallucinatory nightmare, the lights change and become bright)
(Appendix 6 pg. 155-58)

At other times, the story feels much more realistic as it attempts to balance the individual and the society within the walls of the asylum. For example the patients go
about their day-to-day activities such as chores, naps, reading/playing games, and taking medication.

The style of this show has the ability to move fluidly between reality and theatricality. By mapping out these shifts of point of view the intensity of Franz’s madness can be charted. As this play proceeds we dive deeper into his mind, therefore the point of view or style starts grounded in reality and then shifts more towards his perspective becoming more theatrical.

**Character Analysis**

The characters in *Woyzeck* are separated into two categories. There are first the patients of the mental asylum: Franz Woyzeck, Marie, Andrea, Margaret, Karl the Idiot, Katey, The Grandmother, and Patient 1 & 2. The second group is the personnel of the mental asylum: The Doctor, The Captain, The Major, The Sergeant, and The Attendant.

**THE PATIENTS:**

**Franz Woyzeck**

Franz is a 30-year-old patient of the mental asylum and suffers from schizophrenia, neurosis and PTSD. He has volunteered for experiments conducted by The Doctor not only to earn more money to help support Marie, but also to gain more privileges in the asylum. He had a child with Marie out of wedlock, but they lost the child at birth (something that she continues to deal with). Franz is tormented by visions, nightmares, and voices that are only exacerbated by the experiments being performed on him by The Doctor. He wants to be free and to understand fully what his mental disturbances. Once he understands and comprehends them we will be able to take steps to live without them.
Scene 5

WOYZECK. ...That’s when the terrible voices will speak to me.

THE DOCTOR. Woyzeck, you have an aberration.

WOYZECK. The mold, sir. That’s where it happened last. Have you ever seen the patterns in which it grows on the floor? If only someone could read that and interpret it!
(Appendix 6 pg. 139)

In a free state he could finally exercise his free will, but the current world around him will not let that be. Throughout the play he and Marie through interactions with the Doctor, Major and other personnel “experience a collision between their natural right to live as and for themselves with alienation and destructive social forces that compel them to actions against others and thereby also against themselves” (Poschman 117).

Marie

Marie is a 26-year-old patient of the mental asylum and suffers from post-partum depression and psychosis. She had a child out of wedlock with Franz, but lost it at birth. In order to deal with her crippling depression she carries around with her a therapy doll that is a representation of the child she lost. This treatment has not been successful, as she now believes the doll to be her actual living child -- a conclusion only supported by Franz. She is tormented by the difference between the things she wants and the things she has. She truly does care for Franz but has a tendency to get easily overwhelmed and lost in herself and her actions. Marie’s previous life as a prostitute is something that continues to haunt her. She falls back to her old ways, only to later repent them, a cycle she is very familiar with. Much like Franz, the world that surrounds her dehumanizes, pushes and manipulates until she has out worn her usefulness.
Andrea

Franz sees Andrea as his best friend. Andrea suffers from severe depression that is treated with high doses of anti-depressant drugs and tranquilizers. Andrea is granted one of the highest levels of freedom within the asylum. This is due to her regular, good-natured, and docile appearance. Unfortunately most of this is due to the large amount of drugs she has been administered causing her to have outbreaks of singing and a strong apathy that has prevented her from having an emotional connection to anything or anyone, including reciprocating Franz’s friendship. She occupies her time with her few duties, such as mopping the doctor’s office.

Margaret

Margaret is Marie’s closest friend. Even though they bicker a lot, they find that they have many things in common with each other. Margaret is a parasite that feeds off the gossip of the asylum. Classified as a “busybody” with how she puts her nose in everyone’s business.

Scene 2

MARGARET. What? Why, look who’s talking! I am a respectable lady, but we all know that you could stare right through seven pairs of leather pants!
(Appendix 6 pg. 131)

While she is concerned with her current quality of life and level of freedom within the asylum, she finds herself occupied more with preventing others from exceeding her own levels.

Karl the Idiot

Karl was born with a physical deformity and is a victim of one of the Doctor’s prior failed experiments. As a result of the flawed experiment, Karl has the
temperament and mind of a child. Because he poses no threat to other patients or personnel he is allowed to roam free with the highest level of freedom within the walls of the asylum. This freedom allows for Karl to see and know almost everything that is going on in the asylum, but since he lacks the capacity to understand and comprehend most of these things, he is unable to share them with others, and is forced to communicate in other ways, such as nursery tales. For example in scene 18, Karl sees Marie weeping and praying for forgiveness. Karl comments on this occurrence through the use of his toes and the little piggy nursery rhyme, telling Marie to go back home.

Scene 18

KARL. (Telling stories with his toes) This little piggy went to the market, this little piggy stayed home, this little piggy had roast beef, this little piggy had none, and this little piggy cried (to Marie) all the way home...

(Appendix 6 pg. 162)

Katey

Not much is known about Katey. She is one of the younger patients of the asylum. She is younger than Marie, but is very outgoing and flirtatious with other patients and security personnel. She is always seeking ways of being the center of attention and tries to find opportunities to exploit and capitalize on this attention. She is also not afraid to use her body to her advantage.

The Grandmother

The Grandmother is one of the oldest residents (not specifically because of age) at the asylum. The title “Grandmother” is a nickname, and the status as an actual grandmother is unknown. The Grandmother does not speak often but is always alert and watching what is occurring in the asylum. Much like the Doctor, the Grandmother is
aware of all the goings-on within the asylum. But unlike the Doctor, the Grandmother does not have the ability or authority to do anything with that information.

**Patient 1**

Patient 1 can be seen as the instigator of most of the trouble that seems to surround Patient 2. Patient 1 enjoys causing trouble and watching the results of that trouble. While not much is known about Patient 1, there does seem to be a close connection to Patient 2.

**Patient 2**

Patient 2 is one of the most outspoken patients of the asylum. Dealing with severe anger issues. Patient 2 is often seen as a danger to himself and others due to his frequent outbreaks. Despite his anger he is still an extremely intelligent speaker, which almost makes him more dangerous.

**THE PERSONNEL:**

**The Doctor**

The Doctor is the head of the mental asylum and is charged with its operations. He takes this opportunity to perform various experiments on his patients while they are in his care. The Doctor is in constant pursuit of knowledge of how science can create a better person. He sees the idea and purpose of the asylum as, we are not here to care... we cure. The Doctor suffers from a severe God complex and, unfortunately for the patients, he has the will and means to exploit this complex and continues to nurture it within his asylum.

*Scene 5*

**THE DOCTOR.** There’s going to be a revolution in science, and I’m going to blow it sky high!

(Appendix 6 pg. 138)
The Captain

The Captain is the head of security for the mental asylum. He is there to make sure that the asylum does not have any issues that prevent the “care” of the patients. He suffers from severe depression and melancholia. These ailments have prevented him from doing his job properly, something that has been noted from other security personnel, and have resulted in him appearing more as a figurehead than a person of true authority. He is in constant conflict between wanting to be a good and moral man and what his duties in the asylum request of him.

The Major

The Major is the 2nd in command for the security of the Mental Asylum, right behind The Captain. The Major is the main enforcer for the asylum; taking on duties that The Captain is no longer capable of. The Major suffers from personality issues, such as an inferiority complex that cause him to overcompensate his manliness and other stereotypes associated with this. He takes out his aggression on the patients with physical and emotional abuse.

The Sergeant

The Sergeant is The Major’s assistant. The Sergeant is charged with making sure all demands of the Major are followed through and taken care of. The Sergeant has observed the Major for many years now and is slowly adopting the same tactics in hopes of taking over his position.

The Attendant

The Attendant is an outsider who has been hired by the asylum to fill in for various odd jobs. The Attendant issues out medications, is in charge of weekly
entertainment, and acts as resident handyman for the facility. The Attendant sees this job as an opportunity and because of his abilities and resources he is able to provide the patients with any item for the right cost. He is seen as the man who can get you anything if the price is right.
Chapter 6
Production Process

Adaptation Process

Upon selecting *Woyzeck* for my thesis, I knew that I wanted to attempt to create a new adaptation of the script. I knew that this practice was fairly common with *Woyzeck*, almost a rite of passage for most directors, and after reading the play I could see why. The play that Büchner wrote is an odd story, full of interesting concepts that are contained within a collection of fragments, and the reader cannot help but attempt to connect these fragments in some sort of order or coherence. Every reader of the play is, to some extent, acting as its editor. This is why Henry J. Schmidt even titled his translation as “a reconstruction of the text.” I wanted to reconstruct my own text and apply my own concepts and theories to this text in order to gain clarity and hopefully accessibility for audience members. Yet I still wanted to maintain the fragmentary style and colorful characters that Büchner established.

Going into this process I wanted to be sure that I was not simply combining and piecing together several translations in a new order and calling it an adaptation. After consulting with Professor Hunter, my dramaturg on this production, I started the process by generating a literal translation of the script. After obtaining an original German script of *Woyzeck* I transcribed this German language script through translation software that would give me only the literal translation of each word and not the meaning behind it. As one might expect, this created quite the mess of an incoherent script. Several items did not translate very well, but even through this mess the story
was still present, and being familiar with the story I could still follow what was occurring throughout this literal translation.

After creating the literal translation of the play I found five other translations of the play that are currently available for performance. These were translations from Carl Mueller, Henry J. Schmidt, Hedwig Rappolt, Gregory Motton, and Dan Farrelly. I then photocopied each scene from all five translations and isolated all the scenes from each other. After this I grouped all the scenes from all the translations together disregarding each translation's order. Essentially putting five versions of the same scene together, then five versions of the next scene together and so on. By doing this I was able to read the same scene five times in a row and, as a result, see the similarities and at times distinct differences between the translations. Taking this knowledge and then finally comparing it to the literal translation I had, I was then able to write my own versions of these scenes, ensuring that I was still keeping the essence of what was occurring in the scenes but creating my own take on the action. After doing this for all 27 scenes I was able to complete what I called “phase one” of my adaptation.

I then started to apply my concept of the play to the script. I looked for opportunities to layer in the mental asylum with as little change to the text as possible. This is largely illustrated by my simplification of the locations within the script. I looked for ways to simplify the settings and place it inside an asylum. For example “the fair booth” scenes in which a carnival barker talks to the townspeople about the “astronomical horse” all the while the Drum Major is eyeing up Marie. I took this event that is made up of two different scenes and two different locations (inside and outside
of a fair booth tent) and placed it in a single scene that takes place in the main multipurpose room that is under the watch of the Major.

In my adaptation all the action takes place in The Doctor’s office and security office, the main room of the asylum, Franz and Marie’s sleeping areas, and in or around a wishing well. A few other ways that I layered in the asylum concept were with the small duties assigned to the patients and the elements of their daily routines within the asylum, such as security checks and lining up for medication.

Next I looked at the status and authority that Büchner had originally implanted on his characters and with the new asylum concept I started to group these characters into two categories: Patients and Personnel. I then looked for opportunities to combine characters that had similar characteristics. As a result, it simplified the cast list and gave the characters that I did keep several new layers, when originally they operated on as mainly background pieces. These changes were:

- The Child is now a therapy doll and not a living character. This change was made in order to look into possible reasons for Marie’s placement in asylum, while maintaining the child connection between Marie and Franz.

- The Jew is renamed The Attendant, is a combination of The Barker inside and outside of the booth and The Innkeeper. I also made him a member of the personnel since Büchner chose to give all these people a title and not a proper name.

- The Apprentices, Children and Townspeople are now patients. Much as these people populated the town of the original text, they now populate the asylum.

- The Grandmother is also the Old Man. The aspects of experience and age was what I sought from these characters and by combining their genders, it is their experience that is the focus and not their gender.

- Andres is now Andrea and a female. This change was made in order to show a positive relationship between Franz and a female other than Marie. I wanted to avoid the feeling that all women are flawed in this world.
• The Drum Major is now just The Major. Stepping away from the military and more towards security, while still maintaining the hierarchy of authority.

These changes of setting and characters compressed the entire play and started to develop the frame I was looking for in my adaptation.

The next step was to look at the order of scenes. Since the play is comprised of 27 different scenes, there are many combinations to choose from and while all the adaptations I had read progressed through the same story using the same scenes, I was quite surprised to find some major variations to their order. I knew how I wanted to end the play, and how I wanted to start it. From there I essentially looked to what would have had to happen prior for each scene to occur, and worked backwards to eventually reach the beginning of the play. I charted the action of Franz making sure that there was a clear sense of cause and effect, and that the progression of his madness made sense. After Franz, I looked at Marie’s progression and did the same. Once this order was established I sought to create small transitional pieces and moments to make the entire play flow from beginning to end without any break in the action, creating layers of sequences, as opposed to individual scenes.

Taking this adaptation, I continued to refine that language and add clarity where needed and reintroduce fragmentation that might have been lost through this process. One example of this added fragmentation is with the choice of starting the play with a voice over that uses text that would late be heard in the second to last scene. This allowed us to hear what the voices might be saying to Franz as well as tap into the idea of the cyclical nature of the play.

Through several versions, three phases, and plenty of rewrites I am confident that I have created a completely original adaptation of Georg Büchner’s Woyzeck. It
takes the same story and colorful characters and provides a new framework with influences from Artaud in the setting of a mental asylum.

**Design Process**

**Costuming and Make-up Design**

Working on costumes with Andrew Wardenaar was a great experience. Since we have worked with each other on various projects throughout our time here at University of Portland, it was very easy for us to communicate with each other. We know each other’s temperaments and have developed shorthand ways of speaking and thinking about aspects within the field of theatre. However, I had never worked with him as a designer on a project prior and was curious how that would change our current working relationship. I was also wondering how the fact that he was still currently working on his own thesis might affect his work on my show. I was pleasantly relieved that neither aspect affected our working together on *Woyzeck*.

Early in the process I had shared my concept and some ideas that I had for *Woyzeck* with Andrew. These conversations regarding *Woyzeck* occurred prior me knowing that he was going to become my costume designer and allowed him, once assigned to this production to already have an idea of the direction I was going in. I had created a Dropbox folder that contained many of the items I was looking at that inspired me or had specific elements that I might want to include in this production. I shared this folder and the script with Andrew, and then gave him time to digest all the information and add any images to the folder that also inspired him.
After our first meeting, Andrew introduced the idea of how the silhouettes of the patients and the personnel might be different. He saw that the personnel might have straight, stronger lines, while the patients would have lumpier, and curved lines. I completely agreed with these ideas and was excited to see where these ideas would end up. These ideas allowed for a striking contrast between the two groups. It created a clear vision of the characters point of view on the world. The strict oppressive armor versus the ripped, tattered, and collaged rags.

We then discussed textures that could be used and ended up moving more towards a woolen feel. As Andrew had pointed out, wool could look really strong and crisp if taken care of, as the personnel might do, but if not kept well, it can look ragged and unkempt like the patients.

After textures and silhouettes, we had several discussions about the difference of the outside world vs. the inside world of the asylum. While as audience members we never see what that outside world is, it was important in the costumes to focus on it, because the personnel came from that outside world and are able to travel back and forth, whereas the patients are trapped. Andrew pushed me to think of possible colors, textures, feelings, and adjectives that might describe these two worlds. After thinking on this, I gave him:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Outside World</strong></th>
<th><strong>Inside World</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yellow (clean)</td>
<td>Yellow (dirty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Blue</td>
<td>Green (dirty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green (grass)</td>
<td>Crème (dirty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>Brown (dirty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>Wet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soft</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Natural</td>
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<td>Clean</td>
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<td>Strong</td>
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<td>Encouraging</td>
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<td>Fast</td>
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<td>Uplifting</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
One thing that Andrew understood from the very beginning was that I did not want this show to be confined to a specific period. While we ended up landing on a period that was late ‘20s or early ‘30s, I did not want it to feel like I was making a comment on that particular time. Andrew clarified this greatly for me by stating that we were going period inspired, but not period specific.

Shortly after these initial meetings, Andrew had sketches ready for me to see based on our talks and the photos that we had shared together. (Appendix 2) After viewing all of the sketches, I knew that we were headed in the right direction. I had a few notes regarding the initial drawings but we were very close to finished designs.

**Franz** (Appendix 2.1): I thought that if all the clothes were too small, he would look like a giant. This pushed him not fitting into the world too much, but after a discussion we thought that maybe a mix of the two ideas would be the right approach. I really liked that he was plainer compared to some of the others, this continued to reaffirm the everyman feel that is present in the character.

**Marie** (Appendix 2.2): I loved the cardigan and that it would not stay closed. This allowed for her to constant in be conflict about her past with the idea of the patch of red being a representative piece of her past. I was not sure about the head wrap, I wanted to be able to see her black hair, but it became and interesting idea about hiding things and revealing them when she wanted.
**Katey** (Appendix 2.4): I really liked the shirt and the top button being undone; it really informed a lot about the character and how openly sexual she was. Andrew added the idea of the flirty scarf this was a great idea because it allowed us to ask questions about her age and gave her a tool to entice others. The black eye was an interesting idea about this character, but it was something that would need to be later discussed with the makeup designer and the actor, because it was such a strong storytelling element it may not fit the vision either one of them had.

**Karl the Idiot** (Appendix 2.6): I loved the striped shirt and clownish idea. This element came from the discussion of what the purpose of the scene 4 “Karl show” was. The mop as a tail for his horse show was also a good idea and started conversations about what could be found in this world and how many different uses there might be for it, depending on who is using it.

**Grandmother** (Appendix 2.7): Andrew’s sketch pushed me to want a male for this role. There was something so bizarre with the male drawing. This odd element seemed to fit very well with the world that was developing with the asylum. Up to that point could have gone either way. I was not for sure about a wheel chair. I wanted to be subtler about why the Grandmother might not get up. The mess of items that covered up the Grandmother came out of this conversation as it hid the reason why the Grandmother might not get up, and gave the storytelling element of how all the patients received their patches on their uniforms.

**Patient 1 and 2** (Appendix 2.8): I loved the similarity between the two characters. I also saw these two characters as interconnected. They fed off each other and the similar costumes introduced this idea.
The Doctor (Appendix 2.9): I really liked the jacket, but wondered what was under it. I also really like the glasses on him. It clearly introduced the idea of the intellectual entering this world. I was not sure about having a hat on him as it hit a little too heavy on the period for me, but I loved the black gloves because it gave the feeling of surgical gloves but a distortion of them. I had shown the Gross Clinic painting (Appendix 1.6) to Andrew, but through our discussion decided that a more youthful approach would make clearer the idea of the new way of thinking about the mentally ill.

The Major (Appendix 2.11): The tassels and hat felt for me too much like a band uniform. This created the ongoing conversation about how far on the spectrum of military should the personnel go. The baton was an interesting idea that made me think more about what is possible in this world and what violence could occur. For Andrew this was a way to incorporate a phallic item, in order to touch on his overt masculinity.

The Attendant (Appendix 2.13): I loved the shirt and the button placement on it. It instantly matched the universal idea of an orderly and was exactly what I was thinking. Having the comb, though, made him look too much like a barber, and that was something that I wanted to be careful about. This character was the one that didn’t fit with the other groups very well and we wanted to make sure the costume carried that idea across. While he is a member of the personnel, he is the newest member and the closest to an outsider. Also by having him in mostly white at the beginning of the show created a clever storytelling device in that the white starts to get darker and dirtier as the show progresses, matching this character’s loss of innocence.

Moving forward with the design for the costumes, we continued to refine what these uniform bases would look like for the patients as well as the personnel. These
discussions went great and became more and more defined when we knew what materials were going to be used, what could be pulled, and what could be found. For example when Andrew found several types of military jackets when could then discuss what colors seemed most appropriate, and what detailing would we want to keep, take off, or add in order to soften the military feel, but still keep in security minded.

Looking back at the entire process I am very pleased with the ability of Andrew and myself to regularly stay on the same page. One thing that Andrew was very accommodating with and made a huge difference for the actors and myself was allowing the actors to wear and see the costumes prior to dress rehearsals. This allowed me to see the world clearer and earlier, helped the actors with their creation of characters, and added to the worn-down feel of the world and the costumes. It also made for an easier transition into dress rehearsals, as the actors had one less element to distract them that first night.

Much like costumes, the makeup design that Shen Telles created really transported us into this bizarre world. Shen and I were able to meet very early on to discuss ideas without attaching them to particular characters. We both had agreed that the patients needed to have a tired and distressed look and the personnel needed to have more polish to them. One particular challenge that I knew there was going to be was for Karl the idiot. I had a very strong vision for how he would look and Shen was great in not only accepting it, also adding to it. I wanted Karl to have microcephaly and look like a pinhead. This would require shaving the actor’s head, creating a deformed brow and exaggerating the ears and other features. Shen added scaring to the temples from previous Doctor experiments and found ways of enhancing the skull without the
use of prosthetics. This ended up being a great benefit because it was one less thing for the actor to have to worry about working with, it did not need to be budgeted for, and I didn’t have to worry about if it would look real or fake to an audience member; possibly taking them out of the show temporarily.

After discussing the idea that the world gets progressively more bizarre as the show continues, Shen had the great idea that the makeup could reflect that as well. The way the patients look could get worse the further into the play we get. By finding moments when the patients smear the makeup through gestures, their faces will match the lights and sound of the grotesque. She also had a great dialogue with the actors, so that once they started creating their character’s backstory and possible mental issues, Shen could translate that into their individual makeup design. Because of this collaboration, the makeup aided greatly in telling the characters individual story. A great example of this was with all the bruising on Patient 2. This patient was one of the most aggressive patients and through a dialogue Shen was able to figure out what punishments would have been administered and what scars would be present from previous fights. There ended up being bite marks on the torso and arms, bruising around the neck as wrists and sections of hair appeared to be missing.

Like Andrew, I added Shen to the Dropbox folder that included all the images I had found, but also the ones Andrew had found that inspired him. I encouraged Shen to take a look at all of them and then to add her own into the mix. This facilitated great collaboration between all the designers and myself and became a wonderful tool as the process grew and evolved.
**Set Design**

I could not have been happier with the outcome of the set design. Professor Larry Larsen not only gave me great tools in my storytelling, but also created a vivid and stark world that matched the story and gave it a place to thrive in. From the moment people walked into the house and saw the set, they knew they were in for a ride.

The process with Professor Larsen could not have gone smoother. There were clear ideas from him and myself, and I always felt as though we were on the same page regarding what ideas could be presented in the set design. Much like Andrew and Shen with the costuming and makeup design, I shared the Dropbox folder of images for Professor Larsen to look at and invited him to add to the mix of images.

One of the first things we talked about was the level of reality in this place. I explained that while it is grounded in reality at times, as the story progresses things become stranger and more distorted as we start to view things through the mind of Franz. (Appendix 1.1) We also talked about how people move through this world. I thought that the set design could possibly tap into the fragmentation of the original script. This world is contained, but the rooms within the contained world could be slightly fragmented by not having doors and making it possible to move from one space to the next. I liked this idea because it allowed for a feeling of fragmentation while still letting the story progress fluidly.

The next significant item we discussed was if there was going to be actual water for use for the production, the text makes use of it, but he was unsure if I had other ideas regarding it. I said yes that there needed to be real water present, and Professor
Larsen immediately went to how this could be achieved. We discussed what the water feature’s purpose in this world and landed on the idea of a wishing well-type of water feature, something that visitors to the asylum could throw a penny into for good luck on their way out from their visit.

A good example of how well Professor Larsen and myself were on the same page occurred after our initial meeting. I thought that based on the photos I had found in asylums, there really needed to be a hallway or corridor with maybe a window off in the distance. I then made a note of it to bring it up at the next meeting. When that meeting arrived I wanted to share this idea and found that Professor Larsen had already put a long forced perspective hallway leading to a window in the design (Appendix 3.2). We were clearly thinking the same thing.

During this second meeting, we looked at a preliminary ground plan and I found several new opportunities that Professor Larsen had given me. Not only had he given me lots of space to work in by utilizing almost all of the Mago Hunt space, but he had given me several portals that allowed me many combinations of entrances and exits, different levels to play in that would break up the visual plane, a great forced perspective ramp, and curtains that allowed me to close off sections and direct the focus of the audience to particular sides of the stage. The curtains would also become a tool to project lights on. He had also put the water feature jutting out into the audience, as I had hoped he would. This would create a small splash section of the audience and put the murder scene in their laps, which I thought would be an interesting effect to play with. I wanted to bring the action to the audience and while I was establishing a strong fourth wall, this seemed like an opportunity to push that wall as close as possible to the
audience. The only thing that was needed was a slight adjustment to allow for the attendant’s booth and we were there.

**Lighting Design**

Working with lighting designer Em Douglas was a wonderful experience. Early on I had specific ideas for moments in my head. I did not know how they would happen on the practical side. I understood how they would feel and the purpose for these moments to look a certain way. What was great with Em was that I could explain these moments and their purpose in a narrative way and Em would come back saying, “Okay, I’ve got it, let’s try this.” A great example of this was with the shadow rape play and how I wanted to play with the sizes of shadows. I wanted to have the Major’s larger shadow taking over Marie’s smaller shadow. I explained the purpose of this and Em ended up trying many different types of lights and different locations to achieve this story. Em had a great approach by telling me early on that we can try as many things and fail as long as we are moving in the right direction. One specific thing that I really enjoyed with Em was that I knew what a moment should look like, and at times I wasn't able to communicate as clearly as I would have liked to on what that moment was. However, Em would continue to probe me for details, using technical jargon at times that helped, but also by taking the initiative and trying something. It was these times when Em would try something, and as a result I could be more constructive with my explanation based on what I saw. The best part was that after trying something and then giving each other notes, we then knew we were both on the same page and that it most likely would not change later in the process.
A couple of specific moments that I had in mind where Em really took the ball and ran with were blinding the audience, creating a shadow play with the curtains (Appendix 4.1), and moments where we entered Franz’s head (Appendix 4.2). When I approached Em about blinding the audience, I fully expected to receive a skeptical “Why?” or “We can’t do that.” However, to my surprise my idea was met with an “Okay, let’s do that.” This was very helpful early on in the process, and while I fully intended to explain why and Em also knew that I was going to need to further explain myself, it was nice to not be confronted with an immediate need to defend my idea. We worked together on this idea of blinding and I explained that it was the idea of peering into the madness of Franz. As his madness and discomfort increases, so does ours in the house. It builds in intensity to the point that the audience is forced to look away for a moment because they cannot take it anymore. Afterwards, when their eyes return to the stage, they find that Franz’s didn’t turn away and he is still completely in the madness. Em was great with finding out how this could technically be achieved, and after speaking with Nat Bartos, the Scene Shop Supervisor, it was discussed that using eye fatigue on the audience would best serve this moment, as opposed to a strobe or other type of flashing light. During the tech rehearsal, Em and I figured out how long the lights needed to be dark prior to the moment of blinding and how long the lights needed to be up on the audience. This took several attempts, and still did not seem to be working as I had envisioned. After the second dress, I came in fully prepared to cut the blinders altogether. But after talking to Em and using the blinders during other moments prior to the full blinding, the effect of mutual discomfort in Franz and the audience that I was searching for was finally achieved.
The color choices for the lights were another great point with Em. I was never overwhelmed with the full spectrum of colors to choose from in this show. Em would approach me with four to five choices of colors or gobos and I could quickly narrow them down to usually two. Then, based on the direction I was going Em could then make the final decision. This was best illustrated during the nightmare scene (Appendix 4.3) and the murder scene (Appendix 4.4). In both cases colors were narrowed down, but the final decision came with Em’s lighting design. Particularly with the murder scene, there was great collaboration. A model of the wishing well was set up in the lighting lab so that Em and myself would see how light would move in the water. Em gave me a couple of options regarding the red gels that would be used. Em was great in not showing preference until I made a choice, which in almost all cases ended up being the same for both of us. These were great moments when we knew that we were both thinking the same thing.

One aspect that I wish we could have worked more on was the upstage center window. This was an item we discussed early on with how it would be used. I wanted to be careful about making a statement about what time of day it was. I really liked that the passage of time in the play is ambiguous and I wanted to keep that. But what was discussed about using this window was the idea that it could clue us in on the mood of the scene, essentially becoming as Em put it, “The mood ring of the play.” I loved this idea, and I wish we could have pushed it further. Some limitations came into play simply because the focus of the lights in the time that remained went to other issues like the blindsers. We also did not have the Plexiglass on the window until late in the process. There was also an issue about not having as much space behind that window
for instruments as previously thought. All these factored into the window being pushed backed in priority. In retrospect, it became a missed opportunity.

There was such an ease collaborating with Em on the lights. I had some bold ideas early on, but Em was great in not just doing what I said or was thinking. Em added to the conversation and drove it at times; giving a great lighting design that really matched the other design elements in creating this stark and vivid world.

**Sound Design**

I knew that the sound design for this show was going to be quite the challenge. Sound was going to be one of the design elements that I wanted to explore based on theories derived from Artaud. I wanted the sound to be immersive and really put the audience into the world and the mind of Franz. It could not simply be music that gave a sense of period, and it could not be sound effects that added only to the theatricality of the show; it needed to set the mood of the entire show and push the audience toward a physiological experience that goes beyond the intellectual experience. This was going to be quite the challenge, since I was tasked with being the sound designer as well.

I knew early on that I wanted to look for music that was mood setting and possibly anachronistic. I looked toward music created by bands such as Nine Inch Nails, Murder by Death, Tom Waits, Amon Tobin, and classical music. I wanted to be careful that the audience was not going to look for clues in the music to help them decide what time period this play was taking place in, so I avoided music that would have been appropriate during the late twenties and early thirties. With the use of anachronistic music the audience would hopefully move past the question of period and see that the time period has little influence on the main story. I also knew that I wanted quite a bit of
atmospheric noise throughout the whole show, so I looked into sound effects libraries for noises like heartbeats, water dripping, creaking floors, wind blowing, fire crackling, pipes groaning, and electrical static.

I started by creating an atmospheric track that would loop throughout the play. This track was made up of all the atmospheric pieces that I had found and pieced together. This track lasted for a little over four minutes and would loop all the way until the final moments of the show. It was my hope that these elements would be very apparent at the top of the show and as the show progressed these sounds would occupy spaces further in our subconscious. Then, when these elements would stop toward the end of the show, we would realize that they indeed have been playing the whole time. Much like how the low static of a TV will be ignored until it is finally turned off. I also wanted to play with how the atmospheric tones could affect the body physiologically. By playing a constant slow heartbeat in the background I wanted the audiences own natural rhythm to start to match that heartbeat, possibly without their knowledge. Then, during specific moments I could increase the rhythm of the heartbeat and essentially start to control how the audience was feeling on a physiological and subconscious level.

In addition to the atmospheric sounds, I wanted to take the opportunity of the pre-show to introduce what the music would be telling us throughout the play. By starting with a classical piece of music like Mozart I eased the audience into this world. I felt it would be easy to accept this music being played in this world in order to calm the patients down. This music then transitioned into a song that was more playful yet had an odd feeling to it. This was a piece by Alex Gibson and was a lullaby version of Nine
Inch Nail’s “La Mer.” This music matched the playfulness of the patients, yet had a faster tempo and slowly introduced many odd feeling elements, which then set up the oddest song in the pre-show, which was Nine Inch Nails “I’m Looking Forward To Joining You, Finally.” This song had a dark brooding tone. It layered in the danger of this world and then matched the severe action on stage, as the personnel got more aggressive with the patients. Through the transition of these three songs, it was my hope to show that the music matched the mood and would eventually put us in sync with the action.

Following the pre-show music, I introduced the first part of the text via a voiceover. With the engineering help of Hal Logan, we were able to move the voiceover all around the space. This created the effect of being surrounded by voices, much in the same way Franz would be experiencing. This was a great effect that would be repeated later on.

Overall I was very pleased with the sound design and what it did to serve the story being presented. I feel that with this design element I was able to tap into a few theories created by Artaud. Theories directed at creating an immersive and experiential event focused to “physically envelope the spectator and immerse him in a constant bath of light, images, movements, and noises” (emphasis added) (Artaud 125). At times during the process, I was worried that the sound would be too distracting and a few times I found myself truly feeling a level of discomfort. It was after these moments of discomfort that I had to pause to think why I was experiencing it and it occurred to me that was the purpose of the sound design during certain times. It was then that I realized I was on the right track and did not need to back away from the ideas I had.
Audition and Casting Process

The audition and casting process at University of Portland entails a single night of monologues and cold readings followed by two nights of callbacks, that include cold readings from the script, as well as, exercises that aid the directors in their casting decisions. A company-casting meeting then follows these nights of callbacks, where all the shows of the semester are casted with consideration of possible undergraduate capstone projects and with preference given to the main stage productions.

Going into the audition process, I was looking for actors who would explore opportunities to show high stakes, a full range of emotions with quick fluctuations, and full body engagement. I knew that while I might not see all three of these attributes in the actors’ monologues or cold readings of scenes, I was hopeful that through callbacks I would be able to give specific opportunities to see what I might not have seen from the actors that first night of auditions.

Having auditions for Cymbeline at the same time as my show was actually a blessing in disguise. In order to do a monologue of Shakespeare, there are inherent high stakes and a full range of emotions, sometimes with quick changes. These were all things I was looking for and I found that the Shakespeare monologues were often more help to me than any other contemporary piece that I heard during auditions.

I attempted to go into the audition process completely blind as to the actors I had in mind for each role; unfortunately, I found that to be impossible. While I did have some ideas for certain roles, I was ready to be surprised by individuals whom I had not previously thought of. One helpful thing that I had previously done in order to help with casting decisions was to take extensive notes from the previous auditions in the fall.
wanted to see where everyone stood after a summer away from school, and I also wanted to see the new faces that were interested in auditioning for the shows. Taking notes throughout the fall auditions and then simply marking individuals that stood out to me for whatever reason in the end was a great help. After the fall auditions ended, I folded up my notes and then did not look at them again until the day before the spring auditions. I then compared notes from the fall and spring to see if there were any changes or people that stood out that I had previously overlooked. I found this to be a very interesting way of going about things, simply because I could track my thought process more clearly, see how I was viewing things differently, and also track the skill levels of the actors and see who might have improved in my eyes since I last saw them.

Overall I was pleased with the turnout at auditions and while a few new people stood out to me that I had not previously considered, it ending up confirming whom I previously thought for the show.

Going into callbacks, I knew that the things I wanted to focus on and see were how people took direction, strong relationships, making choices, and physically being present. The night of auditions had left me wanting much more physicality out of the actors. It seemed like most were not physically present. They were mostly in their head and not in their bodies. For those who were slightly there I wanted to push them further during callbacks, and for those who were not at all, I wanted to introduce ideas that would open them physicality. I did this through small silent improvisations that came from the selecting randomly a word from a collection I provided. These were words that are usually hard to physicalize without words:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Honor</th>
<th>Disappointed</th>
<th>Humble</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paranoia</td>
<td>Flirtation</td>
<td>Attentive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Showmanship Adventurous Resentful Slight of hand Timely Revenge Loss of will Ambitious
Secret Powerful Confession Beauty Contentment Caution Discipline Empathy
Grace Justice Mercy Patience Selflessness Thrift Wonder

After selecting a word I had the actor, without telling me the word or talking, to show me what that word looks like. This was quite challenging for some and others seem to enjoy thinking more abstractly and finding new ways to physicalize things.

Outside of a few minor characters, callbacks did little to change my mind on the people I was considering for certain roles. It did, however, bring up interesting questions regarding the relationships between characters and the various ways to play these relationships, primarily between Franz and Marie. These were questions that I would bring into the rehearsal room with me.

One interesting aspect of the callback process that I had not previously considered of was hearing the text aloud for the very first time. While working on the adaptation I found myself reading the text aloud several times. But it was a different and pleasant experience to hear actors tackle the text and explore who these people are, and why they speak in such a way. This is something I am sure most playwrights experience frequently, but it was a new experience for me.

Going into the casting meeting, I felt very confident that I had found my cast. There were moments during callbacks that I had the right people in the room reading at the same time and could feel that it was right. The actors felt this too, and fed off that energy. I had some flexibility in the casting meeting, but truly I had found my cast and
visually they were correct, their relationships were already strong. They understood the text, and they already were working on an approach on how to work within it.

Rehearsal Process

For me, the rehearsal process on any production is always the most interesting process of a production, and *Woyzeck* was no different. I enjoyed writing the adaptation and starting to picture what this show might look like and who exactly the people in the text are. Working with the designers and seeing my adaptation through their visions and putting concrete visuals to the text is great and the audition process is very interesting as stated previously, but getting into a rehearsal room with the text and the actors eager to dig in, explore and bring words from the page to full life is why I love directing.

I started the rehearsal process really wanting a true first read of the play. Since *Woyzeck* was the first show of the spring semester that was fairly easy to obtain because the actors did not have an opportunity to get scripts and look over them prior to the first rehearsal. The cast list went up on Friday and our first rehearsal was that Sunday. I also facilitated achieving a true first read by making sure that in callbacks I never pulled a scene to be read past scene nine. The actors came into the rehearsal room with a mostly blank slate, not knowing almost two-thirds of the play. I chose to do this to allow the actors to feel and focus on what their initial reaction to this adaptation was, and then to imagine multiplying it a few times with the planned visuals in order to feel how the audience might perceive it when they view it. I feel that if actors get the scripts too early, they tend to go straight into who they are and what they want, which is very helpful in the room to get ahead of schedule. However, I felt that it was more
important for the actors to get a sense of the overall feeling and mood of the play, to just listen and be an audience member first, then be an actor. This allowed me later on in the process to reference and remind the actors how they felt in that initial reading. After the first reading, everyone just sat there and took in the story as a whole. I could sense immediately that they were thinking, “How are we going to do this?” and questions were already forming in their minds. We then took an immediate break in order to better digest the story, and then came back ready to dive into the text.

One of the first things that needed to be done on the first night of rehearsal was to make sure everyone felt safe and comfortable in the room, especially since we were going to be tackling very tough topics such as mental disorders, rape, and suicide. One of the first orders was to establish a cast deputy that could speak on behalf of the cast at any time if anyone felt uncomfortable or had an issue that needed to be addressed. I made sure that my stage manager and I stepped out of the room and the cast as a unit nominated, and voted a member to become the cast deputy. Shortly after that I wanted to establish the expectations I had of them, such as always being on time, to be off book on the assigned date, and to be treated with respect and as a professional, for everyone to be prepared prior to entering the room. I also wanted the to know what they should expect from myself and the production crew, such as that we would always be available to discuss items outside of the room, that we would also always be on time, also would be prepared prior to entering the room, and that I would never ask things of them that I would not be willing to do.

After taking care of the logistical/business stuff, we then moved back to the text and our initial feelings. I opened the floor to discuss what those first reactions to the
story were and what questions we had about the text. Some of the early questions were along the lines of, “Are the patients just crazy people?” I answered by saying no, and actually it’s the patients that we will end up relating to the most and the personnel that we will fear and who will seem to have the most problems in the end. I also said that one of the craziest things to think is that you’re not crazy and that everyone else is crazy but you’re the sane one in the room. This seemed to connect with the cast and provided a great starting point. Another question was, “Does everyone think that the baby is real or is it only Marie?” I was hesitant to answer that one, because I wanted them to develop their characters first and then make that decision for themselves. I did clarify that the personnel knew that it was not a real child but that they let her believe it anyway. The songs in the play came up. The cast questioned how they should sound and what their purpose was. I told them that the songs didn’t need to be sung “pretty” and that they should find their character’s voice first and then match the songs to that voice. Then I explained that in this world and with their various disorders they would find it hard to always communicate ideas to each other for various reasons. This was where all the songs came into play. I told them to look at where the songs were placed and see what might be going on around them that the song could tie into, or look at what the song is trying to get across to someone and find out why you would want them to know this. This started up the conversation about the gestural language we were going to develop and other possible ways to communicate without the support of text.

After this discussion, we went into a vocal exercise. I wanted to establish breath support and complete body engagement in order to open up the voice. I wanted to do this very early on to get the actors accustomed to these exercises so that they would not
feel like last-minute additions to the process. After working on *Waiting for Lefty* last year, I saw that one of my main weaknesses in that production was that there was no vocal support on the actor’s part. There were many times that you could not hear or understand what was being said. This was due in part to a focus on exercises that only engaged the mouth and various enunciation exercises, which did little to help with the text. I did not want a repeat of that, so I made vocal work a priority at the beginning and, with that established, we could progress without the need of focusing on it late in the process. While in Dublin at the Gaiety School of Acting, I picked up some great exercises that engaged the whole body in order to support the voice and breath, as opposed to just focusing on the vocal cords and neck up. These exercise created a greater awareness of the breath by moving around the room on only exhales and making sure that any time the voice was engaged the body was as well. The exercises also loosened up the legs, torso, arms and eventually the whole body to relax the voice and engage the diaphragm, all while focusing on the breath and its control. The cast seemed to really response well to these exercises and I would find times to bring then back up in rehearsals throughout the process.

After all the voice work and discussion I then cleared the rehearsal area and established zones in the room that corresponded with locations in the set. I wanted us to get up and just walk through the text, knowing full well that this was not a time to establish blocking. I just wanted to explore how the text progresses and who they might interact with the most, and also to raise more questions to take with them into the next rehearsals. I had decided early on that I was going to film every time we ran anything that dealt with the text. This was something that I had picked up working with
Hand2Mouth theatre. When they are working on a devised piece they film everything so that they have something to reference and can recreate it faithfully. I knew that I could never take notes fast enough on things that I discovered in the room. Having a cast of 14 and knowing that I wanted most of them on stage the majority of time, filming things allowed me to miss some things and know that I would have the opportunity to watch the film and catch all the things I missed later. I wanted to film this first walkthrough and find new discoveries that the actors would try based on only initial reactions and questions about the text. I knew that most of this would end up not being used, but I wanted to see what the actors would come up with on their own without me guiding their ideas too directly. My hope was that just as they are making discoveries, I too would make discoveries and see things that never occurred to me. This ended up helping greatly with their gestures and how the actors would end up moving around the space. It also aided me in finding out where particular characters were most comfortable and who they were comfortable with.

The final thing I did that first night was to start in the building of an ensemble. This show was going to require a very strong ensemble, not just a strong group of individuals. Something that I continue to do in any production I am involved with that always seems to be effective, especially early on, is to have the cast go around in a circle at the end of the night and comment on something that they saw someone else do that they really liked. It is a great way to make sure that everyone knows each other and is a great way to make a positive and constructive environment. This was something that I picked up from my time performing with The Skinny Improv. It was always a great way
to create support for the ensemble and I continue to do it to this day. As an actor I loved it, and as a director it’s an extremely useful tool.

While the first night of rehearsal was packed with items to do, it established a great tone to continue the process. We created a safe, productive, and professional environment. Expectations were established, many questions were raised and some answers found, vocal work became a priority, the purpose of a gestural language was introduced, exploration occurred, and ensemble support was created.

With the first night of rehearsal completed, several things stuck out to me. Fourteen actors is a lot of people. This was going to take a lot of crowd control tactics and clarity of focus. I was really impressed that they seemed to “get” the play and really go for it, as opposed to being skeptical and needing to be pushed in. They were already experimenting and developing backstories and relationships. While some actors were not the best vocally, they started with strong physicality. I needed to take more time plotting out the journey of each character, specifically how/where they moved through the space (Appendix 5.2). Creating this chart aided me in visually tracking where everyone was during any given scene and became a great logistical tool. I needed to focus and gain clarity on all I wanted to share at this point in the process, there is only so much information I can share in a single night, and I needed to think more on what the actors needed to know at this point and then slowly unfold things as we go on, or as needed. Finally, while I got through everything on the agenda, we had just glanced over it all; it’s was now time to go deeper.

Moving forward, I established the rehearsal schedule two weeks out and attempted to always let the actors know what was going on during the week and what
to expect the following week. I was able to stick to this with little change throughout the process. The thinking behind the schedule was to take the first week to explore these characters and while answering questions, make sure that we had still had questions left to answer. We worked on creating the physical life of the characters and their gestural language of communication. We worked on exploring the larger group scenes and even choreographed some of the stylized scenes, such as the nightmare. We tapped into what the pre-show might contain. However, the main focus throughout that first week was breaking the play into fourths and looking at each scene. We would read it out loud, then discuss the scene touching on what we knew from the text, where we came from, where we were headed, and what we wanted. After taking time to discuss the scene we would then get up on our feet and test our ideas derived from the previous discussion and then comment on what seemed to work. We did this for every scene, and it seemed like a nice middle ground between getting up on our feet, just exploring the text, making discoveries as we go and traditional table work, where we sit and discuss moment to moment until there is nothing else to discuss and then get up. In the end, this was met with mixed results. I know some actors would have preferred to take more time for traditional table work, but some actors seemed to really enjoy pure exploration on their feet. I had started on one end of the spectrum with just physical discovery in hopes of finding the characters while moving. Once I met resistance from some of the actors, we moved to this new model that ended up being a great middle ground between the styles. Now looking back I see that I should have started with the traditional table work and then moved to the middle ground. This way, I could
accommodate the preference of some of the actors while still moving through the story and making discoveries as I had planned.

My goal after the first week was to have attempted to move through the whole show day one, work through the show in pieces, and then end the week by attempting the whole show once again in order to see how much progress was made in the first week. It was a fast pace to start at the beginning of the process, but I felt it needed to be this fast because I knew that I was going to lose my Doctor and Marie for seven rehearsals, due to a scheduling conflict.

After that first week, moving forward I took the play in fourths and then moved to thirds. Then after adding the violence we moved the scenes into sequences (Appendix 5.3) and on February 2nd, after two weeks of rehearsals, we reached the off book day, which almost all of the actors had met this expectation set from day one. While they still could call line over the next week, I was surprised to find that the majority of them rarely did. After the third week, we were doing only full runs of the show, which allowed us to essentially add what felt like a whole other week of dress rehearsals. This allowed me to get a clearer idea of what the show was going to look like, while we didn’t have all the technical elements ready, it allowed me to see the whole picture, as opposed to its smaller parts. This was a great situation to be in knowing that we were going to enter tech rehearsal and then have an entire week off due to the Kennedy Center American Colligate Theatre Festival.

Early in the process I decided to focus more on the physical life of the character than the emotional life in hopes that by giving actors more time to focus on their physical circumstances they would create visually compelling characters. Then, they
would have something more to base the emotional side of the character on. Through homework assignments, the actors were charged with finding out physical traits for mental illness. We discussed that mental illness is inherently hard to show on the stage since the majority of its traits exists in the patients mind. We needed to find ways of expressing mental illness physically through their bodies. Each night for the first two weeks the actors would come in and share their findings for what their possible mental illness is and how to express it physically. A great example is with Franz’s paranoia. The actor, when left alone would dart his eyes and head from side to side to make sure no one was coming behind him.

For many characters there is not much text and not much to work with or derive their characters from. Because of this there was a lot of freedom on the part of the actors. I feared that by starting inwards and then moving outwards there was the possibility of actors falling in the trap of not knowing why they were saying what they were saying and not knowing what they wanted due to lack of context. By starting with the physical I wanted to give them possible context to base those decisions on. For some actors, this was very helpful and for others I feel like it was too different from their current preferred process. For example starting with the physical traits of Karl the Idiot allowed the actor to explore more about whom the character was. These were things that could not have been found simply from the text and due to this exploration the audience saw a fully formed character that was drastically different from the actor who was embodying him. Another example is the use of gestures that Patient 2 used throughout the show. That character really only speaks once, but displayed a range of emotions using a gestural language that he created to illustrate how he felt about
particular things and people. Through this exploration additional layers were added not only to the patients, but also to the personnel. Early on I knew that I wanted the personnel to remain somewhat flat with singular purposes. In my early analysis I had noticed that Büchner had chose to make the upper classes, or in my case the personnel, less life like. He didn’t even give them names, only titles. I wanted to keep to this idea, but as we continued to explore, the personnel become fuller and more complicated characters. The Major started to develop and the weight of his actions took a stronger effect. The Captain became a patient and his downward spiral became increasingly interesting. Instead of stiflingly these discoveries I encouraged them, and as a result the personnel had more depth than originally anticipated.

We created a gestural language using some techniques I received while working with Hand2Mouth theatre. I led the actors through an exercise to find their true neutral positions. I then had them walk back and forth in lanes remaining in that neutral body position. I had them think of one specific thing that they believed their character wanted to communicate to someone else in the room. I told them to make it simple and specific. After this, I told them while still walking in their lanes to start creating a gesture that shows what they are trying to communicate and to keep repeating it. Then I had them create varieties of this gesture by altering the speed, the size, and the quality of movement. After exploring these different attributes of the gesture, I had them turn the gesture into a series of specific steps that had to be repeated exactly in the same sequence every time. These gestures became visually striking, and as an audience member I wanted to find out more about them. We did this exercise to come up with three to four strong gestures that the characters could pull out at any appropriate time.
I had plans to plant these gestures in the pre-show to get the audience asking what those gestures meant, and then wanted moments throughout the story where they became explained due to the situation. Some of these gestures were lost, though, as we continued in the process. But for those who kept them, I felt they told a lot about their characters that the text alone did not. Once the actors moved their focus to the internal life of the character they started to focus more on how they felt as oppose to showing how they felt and I think this contributed to the lose of gestures.

I wanted to add a pre-show to the text. I felt that this would be an excellent way to introduce the audience to this world and take an opportunity to show that these are people who have been living in this world for sometime. This was also a chance to show off these characters and allow the audience to formulate ideas about who they are and what was about to happen. Another thing that the pre-show was meant to do was show an opportunity where Franz is not plagued by the voices and the madness and moments where his relationship with Marie could be seen. The asylum frame doesn't allow for much in the way of the patient’s home life and comfort, but with this pre-show I hoped to give some time to show the patients in their day to day. The last thing that I hoped to achieve with this preshow was to introduce the audience to the idea of having multiple focuses, that at anytime you could look somewhere and see a story occurring. There are several things going on at the same time and this convention was going to be used at times throughout the show. The pre-show was created by really looking at those times of play and exploration that occurred early on in the process. I played the progression of music for the actors and we talked about how the music would change the tone and energy in the room. As the process continued we decided to add small moments that
would serve as “Easter eggs” for audience members. We knew that not everyone would catch them, but for those who did it would add a little to their experience. Things such as Franz’s peeing on the wall, the Doctor giving the major the watch, Karl’s stealing medicine from the attendant’s booth, and the Captain saying “Be careful near the water” to Marie. What ended up feeling like a 15-minute improv scene with the actors prior to the show was actually a highly choreographed and timed event. The pre-show was a way to teach the audience what the next 90 minutes were going to be like.

The fluidity of the show really started to develop when we moved the thinking from scene-to-scene into sequences of scenes. I told the cast to think of this show not as a series of scenes next to each other, but rather a collection of layers that move seamlessly through the story. Out of the 27 scenes there were seven sequences that flowed together very well, these sequences also helped with the tempo and timing of the show, because during the sequence there was a chance to allow the energy to snowball to a point, then break for a moment, in order to rebuild in the next sequence. A good example of this was the third sequence. It started with Franz finding out from Andrea that there was going to be a dance and ended with the nightmare scene. We worked on how these four very different scenes could layer on top of each other seamlessly. This was one of the moments where I wanted to utilize multiple focuses temporarily. While Franz and Andrea were speaking in scene 10, scene 11 was already starting with the patients setting up for the dance. I wanted a moment of two simultaneous focuses going on, then to break them and have a single focus when Franz entered the dance. We would go into his mind, then back out into the room where there were several things going on, then again break the multiple focus during Patient 2’s
rant. This sequence would ramp up the show in energy and pacing. From Franz finding out Marie and the Major are going to dance, to seeing them dance, to hearing voices telling him to stab her, to having a nightmare where she is consumed by the world. Then an abrupt stop with a loud whistle from the Sergeant and the sequence was over. This ramping up followed by a break was something I was looking to build in each of the seven sequences.

I had a moment where I experienced what I was seeking in regards to the application of Artaudian theories during the fifth night of rehearsal. We were working on the final scene and the actor playing Franz decided to push himself and attempt to show what the electroshock zaps would look and sound like in their final form. We had worked up to that moment for most of the evening and were getting close with the emotional intensity needed, but it was when the zaps were finally administered that I as an audience member experienced a level of discomfort that traveled all the way through my body. Hearing the screams coming out of the actor in this moment left me squirming in my seat and eventually I found myself laughing out of complete discomfort, not because I found it funny, but because I was unable to do anything else. During this moment I was experiencing a purely physiological response, I was not thinking on how to respond, my body just took over. This was what I wanted to tap into with this show and I felt we were on the right track.

When we got to the designer run it was clear that some things were working and others were not. Marie and the Doctor had only been back for two rehearsals and needed to catch up very quickly. We still did not have the curtains up so for some of the more intimate and smaller scenes there were focus issues because you could see all the
other patients in the background stealing focus. Some of the patients were not actively in the moment; they seemed to just be sitting until it was their line. There was too high a level of relaxation and loss of status amongst the patients and personnel. The show was dragging and the tempo was steady throughout with little change.

By focusing on and reminding the actors to purse their objective and get what they want now, not later, the tempo started to switch without me even saying the word. After that one note we were able to take 15 minutes off the show. Reminding the actors about the work they had done early on with establishing this world and their relationships to each other, they again became active participants in the show and never dropped out of character again. It was clear that after the designer run the time for exploration was done and any decisions not made needed to be made immediately.

Moving into the tech and dress rehearsals was a relatively easy process. The actors had the chance to wear their costumes for many rehearsals prior to dress. I had been using aspects of the sound design in rehearsals from day one, and we had been rehearsing on the stage as the set was being built. So the only new aspect being introduced to the actors were the lights. Often, moving into tech rehearsals there are usually one or two rehearsals where the actors have to take time to get acclimated to all the new elements. With Woyzeck we were fortunate enough to introduce the majority of these elements throughout the process. This allowed us to slowly create the mood and the world instead of being thrust into it all at once.

The rehearsal process was a rewarding and challenging one. There were times that I perceived frustration on the part of the actors with how the process progressed. But even through those times of frustration everyone was always invested in the show
and how to create vividly this world and these characters. I allowed a lot of freedom in the rehearsal room. That can be something that works for some actors and for others it doesn’t. It was very important early on for me to make sure the actors felt like they owned their performances and characters. Coming in as the director and adaptor, I wanted to avoid the feeling that they were in my play, doing what I told them. Since the text is open to a lot of interpretation there is a lot of room for interpretation on the part of the actors in their creation of character. I wanted to make sure I did not close off the chance to explore too early on. There is a fine line between being open, guiding and dictating. I wanted to be right on that line, and I know sometimes I fell too far in any one direction. I was also requesting a lot from my actors through this process; I gave them a script that by design does not answer a lot of questions, I put them in a world designed and populated by people there to make them feel unsafe, and I had them confront troubling issues. All the while, I was trying to convey an intriguing tale of one man’s decent into loss of self due to an unruly and uncompromising world, and asked them to help create a visceral and challenging experience for audience members. That was a lot for anyone to handle in any production.
Chapter 7
Post-Production Reflections

Post-Production Responses

After opening night the cast, designers, and myself received an amazing response to our production from Professor Brenda Hubbard of Central Washington University. Professor Hubbard’s response was able to touch on almost every aspect of the production. Her notes were very enlightening and, while she brought up some notes that I was expecting, she also brought up larger ideas that really left me thinking about the production in a constructive way. As Professor Hunter stated to me afterwards, Professor Hubbard really set a high standard for how these responses should go from now on.

One of the first things Professor Hubbard touched upon was how strong the ensemble was and how amazing it was to see everyone completely invested and immersed in the story. This was something we worked very hard on and it was great to see that it came through to a highly trained eye. Professor Hubbard admitted that she was not familiar with the story of Woyzeck but had quickly researched it prior to viewing the production. What little she knew about the story was quite incongruous to what she saw at the top of the show and this really intrigued her, it was able to hold her interest for the whole 90 minutes, she wanted to know more, and it left her thinking. One note she gave to the production was that she really enjoyed a lot of the ideas but would have liked to see everything pushed further, particularly the expressionistic elements.
She felt that at times her focus on what was going on in the scenes was split and became hard to follow, and while at times there were scenes that made use of the multi-focus well, there were others that did not. A specific moment commented on was scene 10, prior to the dance scene. Since I had everyone else setting up for the dance, she lost what was going on up in the doctor's office with Franz and Andrea. She was also unclear at times what the perspective of the scene was. She wanted to be clearer on if we were seeing the world through Franz's eyes or not. She did pick up that we were in his head at times and that during the murder scene the audience was having a shared experience of the madness with the use of lights and sound. There were, however, times for her that she was unclear if the moment was based in reality or madness.

The status was unclear for her at times, particularly in the pre-show. She felt that the personnel had a vague comfort around the patients and as a result never had the on-guard feeling she was expecting. Also, on the reverse side the patients seemed to be too comfortable around the personnel, even after seeing the cruelty of the personnel directed towards them. With this idea of cruelty, she felt that a lot of the actors were sending, but not receiving. In her words she saw “the pinch, but not the ouch.” There needed to be stronger moments of cause and effect.

One point Professor Hubbard brought up that really resonated with me was the idea of circles of concentration. While this was not a new concept to me, it was the way in which she explained it that I really took from it. At times the patients when talking to themselves and their focus of where they wanted their words to land was unclear. There is the small and close almost whisper focus, the further out four to five feet in front focus, and all the way out to God focus. At times the patients seemed to be in some
sort of middle ground and it was hard to tell where the lines were meant to go and therefore hard to know where the focus of the scene was. This was an important note that I took, because it made me think about the focus of the scene not only in split focus terms, but also within the scene itself.

One last note she gave was regarding the asylum frame of the story. Because we set the story in an asylum, there are preconceived notions about the people who occupy this world. At times she found it hard to connect and care about these people because they were already so low, particularly Franz. Because Franz starts at such a low point there was not that much room for him to fall. There was little buy-in of hope.

She loved all the expressionistic elements such as the shadow play during the rape scene, the nightmare scene, and the overall sound design. The murder scene for her was very interesting and compelling and in fact she didn’t realize that there was actual water on stage until we used it for the murder scene. She also commented that she though the final moment of the show, with Franz’s smile was one of her favorite, to finally see him have release allowed her to release.

Professor Hubbard also commented on elements of the design. She really enjoyed the set and loved how it added to the world of the play. One element she was a little unclear on was what exactly the water feature was. Because of the larger cross on the entryway behind it, she thought that it was a baptismal font. Once explained that it was a wishing well to through a penny in for good luck, she thought that it became even creepier. She really enjoyed the lighting design, but much like the expressionistic moments she wanted it to be pushed further. She also wanted a bigger payoff on the upstage window, since the forced perspective of the set focused us to that window.
With all the notes and comments she was able to give, she also was able to touch on every actor. She wanted to see Franz fall further since he started so stressed. Marie had lovely sexuality and great presence. She thought Margaret had great commitment throughout the show, and that Karl was tremendous. In fact, she believed Karl to actually be a person with mental illness for the majority of the show. The final moment with Katy singing her song to Franz and Marie was great. She thought that the Grandmother had very interesting moments, but was unclear on the purpose of the fairytale story. Patient 1 was truly scary and consistent all the way through. Patient 2 exhibited great physicality and was very realistic throughout. The Doctor was very creepy and compelling. The Captain was much strong during moments of stillness and wanted to have his steps to his fall better defined. The Major had great stage presence, but she questioned his physicality due to his drinking. The Sergeant had great moments of reaction to things happening around her, but wanted a more “kick-ass” woman vibe. She wanted to know more about the Attendant’s status in this world as he stuck out as to much of an outsider.

Overall Professor Hubbard gave great notes and I was amazed at everything she was able to take in with only one viewing of the show. This show had a lot of moving parts and she was able to touch on everything. The notes really left me with a lot to think on, not only on how to approach directing Woyzeck but also in future productions.

Shortly after closing night, I was also about to receive a response from the entire Drama department faculty. While they touched on many of the same notes that Professor Hubbard had commented on, their responses continued to make me think on how I approached Woyzeck and how I might approach future productions.
Some of the moments that the faculty really enjoyed and thought was well done were the focus of the ensemble, the world remained consistent, the lights and sound had great influence on the storytelling, many actors had great physicality throughout the show, the expressionistic stuff worked the best, and overall very good use of space.

Some specific notes that were given were that the point of view seemed a little confusing when introducing the military aspects into this world. The fact that the security personnel had such a strong military look, it started to raise question of who populates this world. While they enjoyed the point of view of the story with the heavy influence of the Doctor, the militaristic security did not seem to fit as well in this world as the Doctor or Attendant. The rules of the world were not as consistent as they could have been, particularly with the use of the attendant’s booth and the doctor’s office. It felt to them that anyone could come and go through the attendant’s booth. There needed to be a sense that it could be closed off or strongly protected, and not so open to everyone. With the doctor’s office there was confusion on when they could look out over the main room and when there were walls. There was also confusion and inconsistencies on why at times they entered and exited through the side verses going through the upstage portal.

While the Doctor had great physicality and presence on stage they felt that his voice was too soft-spoken and that I needed to find moments with him to hit sharply, then he could have moments to play to in order to have a stronger voice and be able to hear him more clearly while still maintaining his composure and physicality.

There were moments that were missed that should have been capitalized on. Moments such as how we get from the rape of Marie to Marie and the Major dancing.
There seemed to be a huge leap there without understanding completely how we got there. While some of this is due to the script, I should have found ways to show this progression. Another moment was when Marie decided to leave her child. Because the child is so important to her at the beginning of the play, when she leaves it, it needed to be a larger moment, and it was overlooked or lost.

Also, because the story is placed in an asylum, we lose those home life moments that were in the original script. These are moments were we see Franz and Marie in private and intimate moments and then invest more into their relationship and Franz’s character. In the asylum we lose those moments, so anytime there is a moment for some form of intimacy I needed to focus and capitalize on it. “The audience is starved for it,” as Professor Pulver stated.

There was a fuzzy space between the murder scene and when Franz finally gets the electroshock treatment. It was clear after the murder occurred that everyone knew that Franz had committed the murder, so why did no one, specifically the guards, do anything about it immediately?

There seemed to be a lot of side stories going on with the patients that did not tie directly to the main story of Franz. Because they did not support the main story, they only served to distract from it.

Scene transitions felt choppy. At times some scenes flowed, but at other times they felt choppy and disjointed. It was unclear what motivated the changes between them.

Professor Logan felt that Franz never had a chance. Might have been because of the setting, but there did not seem a chance to overcome anything. Need to believe that
he might have had the slightest glimmer. As Professor Larsen stated, "I love the insane asylum, I hate the insane asylum."

The notes given to me by the faculty not only echoed what Professor Hubbard has stated at the response session after opening night, but also gave me more to think on. The faculty had the opportunity to read my adaptation prior to production, and also see how the show progressed. They were able to see how the show was growing and give me notes and comments based the process as a whole, which I found to be greatly helpful. With the combination of these two responses, I have a greater understanding on the elements that worked in the show and what elements did not land. However, I did not only take things from these sessions regarding Woyzeck but also in how I approach directing as a craft and what I need to continue to work on as a theatre artist.

**Self-Reflection**

One of my priorities that I had worked hard on, putting time and focus into was the strong ensemble work is something that I always look for opportunities to exploit in a production. A strong group in an interesting world is more intriguing to me than a few strong individuals living in a moment. Early on I kept questioning myself on having everyone on stage the majority of time, but I keep reassuring myself that one of the main reasons of placing the story in an asylum is because it is a trapped society. There is nowhere to run or hide. By having the patients present most of the time, I could establish that feeling without the help of the text. Larry gave me a great tool to use for these moments through the use of the curtains. With those curtains I could still have everyone onstage, but also control the focus of the scenes. I wish we could have had
those curtains earlier in the process, because I know one of my major notes early on was the focus during the scenes. While in the back of my mind I knew those curtains were going to help immensely with that, I know I missed some opportunities to work harder on some moments simply because my focus during those scenes was all over the place. I was reassuring myself that it would soon be fixed with them.

Working on the physical life of the show and the gestural language of the characters, was a new and fulfilling venture. I really enjoyed working with the actors on creating ways of communication that the text alone could not do, especially for those characters that did not have much text to work with. The gestures coincided with the creation and development of those characters. Each one influenced the other greatly. While some actors seem to grasp at the concepts stronger than others, I found that this approach starting with the physical then moving inward made the most sense to me and served the development of character in this show the best.

The world was strongly established from day one. This was something that I was very pleased with and, if I had the chance to do again, I would do the same. After the first read-through, we went ahead and just walked through the entire play, fully knowing that we were not blocking, but just exploring the world, how we move through it, and what might happen in it. I filmed all these early rehearsals and then would watch them the next day. I made so many discoveries that most likely could have only occurred when the actors were just exploring and feeling out, as opposed to being trapped in their own heads with how it was supposed to be.

Working previously for nine months with Hand2Mouth theatre influenced my approach to table work greatly, and I believe now looking back, this is why I had mixed
results. During Hand2mouth’s process of devising there is a need for exploration because there is no textual support early on for one of their shows. Working with Hand2Mouth and seeing the ensembles eagerness for exploration made me want to apply this process to my own work. By starting my own process this way I was hoping to use some devising tactics and create something through the ensemble that I possibly would not have achieved without the importance of exploration early on. I feared that putting the importance so early on the text would somehow stifle future physical exploration. Particularly with this text, many questions are not answered. However, it was my hope to find the answers through exploration and then apply them to the text.

This was a great way to start, but early on I realized that I could not continue this way and my approach to tackling the text with the actors needed to evolve. They were still trying to wrap their heads around the story and I was pushing them to get up and try things. Once I changed the process, the results were immediate. The process became table work without the table. While I will continue to refine my process, this way was the most successful and efficient way I have approached the text with actors.

I want to continue to refine how I am able to manipulate the focus of the audience. I really enjoy plays that have multiple focuses. There is something I find amazing and alive about plays that make use of it. But there is a fine line between multi-focus and split-focus. I find myself okay with the fact that some audience members do not enjoy having multiple focuses and cannot possibly see everything. As a result they sometimes miss certain things. My goal is that if they missed something, hopefully that it is because they saw something else, and not because they clocked out of the story. This is something that film does very well, but I have also seen theatre that does it well
too. The idea of seeing the same show several times and seeing something new each time is why I love these types of shows. I had many opportunities to experiment with this concept in this production, and I do feel that some moments were successful while others were not. I want to continue to refine how to properly use this tool, because I think in it there is a great opportunity for an interesting effect on audiences. Multiple focuses allows for an overwhelming of the senses, everywhere you look there is something to take in. The stage becomes full of life and while it might push the audiences concentration and ask a lot of them, as an occasional audience member, I feel the overwhelming effect is worth the effort.

The production hit on all the notes I wanted. I was able to show on stage the story as I first read it and as I pictured it while writing the adaptation. The overall reaction I was seeking in the audience of a “Whoa...” at the end was achieved every night. While I was able apply some Artaudian concepts, I wish that I could have pushed them further and found other ways to apply more of his ideas. There are some technical limitations that prevented this, but also I need to continue to explore more concrete ways of expressing all his abstract ideas.

I find it interesting that the expressionistic elements of the show worked the best, such as when we go into Franz’s head and hear the screaming, the shadow play of the rape, or the nightmare. While the show lends its self to this style, the original text did not call for it. All of the moments that relied most heavily on this style were of my own creation. I wanted to take a moment to peer into this man’s mind. I felt the mood of the text supported this, however, this was where my hand as an adapter was the heaviest. While I am pleased that these moments worked as I hoped and in fact could
have been pushed further, I’m unsure how I feel about the fact that they were the most successful moments of the show. These were moments that I invented, completely independent of Büchner’s text. This fact makes me think that since these moments were created out of the mood of the original text, that I am most successful at showing the mood of the story than the story itself.

I also wanted to be careful with the expressionistic moments and moving forward with this play, simply because, I want to be careful with giving the audience a way out or a way to create distance between them and the story. When trying to apply Artaudian tactics, I do not want the audience to be able to be separated. I need to always dance that line of how much I can push their discomforts, but also give the audience breathers with humor and these expressionistic moments all in order to come back stronger and harder.

A real interesting point brought up by Brenda Hubbard was the effect that the preshow had on her. This is akin to the idea of the television being on and how some paid attention and others ignored it. This idea of how we treat and watch the unseemly was very interesting and, while not a point or a message I was going for, it left me thinking about this side effect of the production and its effects on the audience.

Another point that really stuck to me was the concept that Professor Hubbard brought up about “circles of concentration.” I wished I could have worked more on this single point prior to dress rehearsals. I completely understood her point and while I had worked early on about being specific about whom they are talking to, and making sure it is not a direct address to audience. These strong moments started to fade through the process, and I would have loved to touch back on these moments and re-focus them.
This was one of those things that got lost and overlooked in the ramping up to opening night.

In looking at how the show would progress, I made a conscience decision to think of scenes as layers in order to make to show move and flow fluidly. I felt that with these layers there was a better opportunity to feel overwhelmed and let the action snowball to an uncontrollable level. In order to do this, I grouped scenes into sequences that all flowed together as one big movement. This created seven sequences, but only involved 18 scenes. The other nine scenes are where I felt the transitions felt the choppiest. I go back and forth whether or not to fully embrace the fragmented nature of the original text because of these nine scenes that did not fit into these sequences or try to find ways to create more sequences that could have possibly incorporated them. However, I feel that it would have been harder to create this snowballing effect with a choppy fragmented structure. As it was, It seemed like I attempted to do both, which had mixed effects, and as a result those choppy moments stood out as poor transitions. One example where I could have incorporated one of these nine scenes into a sequence is at the end of the Captain shaving scene. The Grandmother could have started singing to the Captain as Franz made his cross over to Marie at the bed. It is a simple fix and would have connected scene three to scene four more cleanly, whereas it felt like a strong break in the action and tempo. Simple things like this could have had a larger impact on the fluidity of the show and the overall tempo.

I knew that in using the asylum frame there were things that I was going to gain and things I was going to lose. This was something that every response covered, and something that every show that uses an asylum must contend with. In the asylum we
gain people with power, a confined environment, a place to play with reality, but the audience comes in with preconceived notions about this world and the type of people who occupy it. They understand that the people living here are not like them and it becomes very easy to create distance between them and the characters. The asylum can make it hard to relate to characters as a result. Because of my concept, I wish I had challenged those pre-conceived notions harder. I touched on them with the idea that, it is not the patients you need to worry about –it is the personnel. But I should have gone further with challenging our ideas of who we think these patients are versus who they really are. This could have been done with grounding the relationships between patients more and finding more instances to capitalize on those intimate moments.

I wish that I had softened the military aspects of the show. Early on when I saw the costume drawings they did feel too military, but I saw it mainly with the hats. Once I struck those I felt better, but after hearing the notes I agree that they should have been softer. Having those strong uniforms created another society in this world. Where I wanted to hit on two, the personnel and patients, but with those uniforms I had patients, medical staff, and security.

In regards to the adaptation process having Professor Hunter as my dramaturg was a great resource. I was able to discuss ideas openly during the adaptation creation as well as the rehearsal process. Professor Hunter was great in making sure that any ideas I had aided in telling the story that I was going for. This was great due to the fact that I had such a strong concept that I was applying. During the rehearsal process Professor Hunter was once again a great resource early on, giving me specific notes such as, to be careful during the pre-show and let the audience know that they can talk,
and make sure that the Captain story isn’t another play, use subtlety. I only wish that I had better utilized the resource throughout the process. We ended up only meeting on four occasions throughout the whole process, and while each meeting was filled with discussion, there could have possible been more. I had never had the privilege of working with a dramaturg and was unsure at times how best to use this resource. Looking back and knowing that on some issues I am unclear whether it was an issue with my direction or adaptation, I’m confident that if I had better utilized my dramaturg I would have been clearer on how to approach some of these issues.

In retrospect, some other things that I wish I had taken the time to focus on and make changes were:

- Tracking Marie and the doll. That was something that was done early on, but after the actor returned from her time off, it was overlooked in favor of other things.

- I wish that the Doctor’s office had been on a slightly higher plane and not equal to the patient bunk level. I enjoyed using the doctor’s space for looking out over the crowd, but some confusion was raised with how I was using that space. By having in a higher plane and requiring steps to get up to that level and maybe scratching the upstage door, it makes for a great piece of storytelling, but also defines how we get there.

- I wish I had Franz attempt to go back to sleep in the doctor’s office instead of the main room, so we could have better seen his struggle during the nightmare scene.

- I think that having the cross in disarray and almost about to fall off the wall would have softened the chapel entrance vibe and also gotten at how the asylum might have been run, but with the Doctor the old ways are out and the new ways are in.

- I should have stuck with my original idea for Andrea being in a drugged state the majority of time and pushed the actor further to embrace that idea. As it stood it felt like Andrea didn’t belong in the asylum because it was unclear what would have caused her to be put there.
• I didn’t gain any storytelling elements by having the Grandmother stationary the whole show. I might have found new and better moments by having the Grandmother mobile.

• A great moment that should have been capitalized upon and would have hit on the tragic and intimate is the suicide scene. We should have seen Franz with his arm around Marie during his attempts. It should have been more about joining her, rather than paying for his sins. Then, when he does not have the will to join her, we see him weeping with her in his arms until the personnel take her away. It is a simple change and makes for much stronger storytelling.

The comments about how Franz never had a chance make me wonder more about whether or not we need to think he has a chance. What seems more important to me are moments where he has peace, moments where the world lets up. It is not so much that we think he is going to “win” the fight, but that there are times when he does not have to fight. In order to achieve this I needed to hit more on those few moments of peace. As a result, the final moment of peace and calm during Franz’s smile could have hit even harder.
Chapter 8
Conclusion

The thesis project here at University of Portland was one of the main reasons why I wanted to attend the MFA Program. To be able to take on a full production with the full support of a department was something that I looked forward to from day one after being accepted into this program. I knew that having the chance to mount a production with the support and budget as any other main stage production, and to be treated, as professionally as any other faculty member was something special this early on in my career. This entire process did not disappoint my expectations. It was during the first production meeting when I was sitting in a room with ten other collaborators discussing the play that I had adapted and how best to fulfill the vision I had for it, that it really hit me how amazing this process can be. There are always going to be trying moments in any process, but everyone was working toward the same goal in the end.

Looking back at the process I knew that I had picked a project that would not be easy on me – especially taking on a new untested adaptation, let alone deciding to write it first. I did not want to play it safe; for me this was the only way I would know what I needed to work on the most. I knew early on and have only been reinforced by my choices that I am a director who likes big ideas and large or unique concepts. This is what draws my interest. This is why sometimes my ideas overshadow my storytelling. This was illustrated in *Waiting for Lefty* and *Woyzeck*. However, I do feel that between the two productions I have made great strides in my storytelling and in the techniques that I apply.
Starting the process was quite the task. Knowing that I had a clear idea for the concept of *Woyzeck* was one thing, but taking on the task of creating an adaptation was a trying and difficult one. This was a labor of love, though, and gave me such great insight on how I wanted to tell this story simply because I was the one creating it and not having to do as much interpretation of text once in the rehearsal room.

The analysis was an interesting process simply because I needed to analyze the original text six different times because of the various adaptations and translations I was employing. Finally, I had a production script to analyze. But doing it that many times allowed me to really refine my process of script analysis.

Working with the actors is why I am involved in this field. I really love working with them in character creation and relationships. I also love being a sounding board for their ideas and giving them the space and support to explore those ideas. This is my favorite type of collaboration in the process. It is also why I love ensemble shows the most.

I want to continue to refine my approach to table work. During the process I found myself trying to do to many things at once. I was looking for discussion of the text, trying to dissect the text, and create physical characters through exploration. That is a lot for anyone with an established text, let alone a new untested adaptation. As a result of attempting so many things at once I lost some detail work with this table work approach. By using some devising tactics gleaned from Hand2mouth in a more traditional setting I unintentionally created this odd hybrid process that made it more difficult to explore because we were doing it without grounding or parameters. In the future using more traditional table work will aid me in creating boundaries that will
end up giving more strength to the actors instincts, which will allow for more exploration.

Looking at all the notes from the responses of the production, I’m pleased that the notes feel very specific and, for the most part, very workable. I feel confident that if given another week of rehearsal prior to opening I could have implemented almost all of these notes. No one note that I was given made me feel like I would have to start all over. Everything still feels obtainable and workable. I only wish I could have had more time to work.

I find myself going back and forth between Is that a script problem that I should have addressed as the adaptor? and Is that a directing problem I should have addressed as the director? A good example of this is in scene 19. When the Attendant gives Franz the knife. As the adaptor I had the Attendant give Franz the knife right through the medicine window during the handing out of medication. Having a personnel member give a patient a murder weapon raises a multitude of questions regarding the world. In order for this exchange to happen I needed to set up other things prior, in order for us to buy into that this purchase could occur in the asylum. However, as the director I missed some opportunities to set up this exchange without text. So as the adaptor, I could have helped myself greatly, but on the other hand, as the director I should have attempted to fix this issue without the help of text. I know there were issues where there were elements of both throughout, but I did wonder frequently if a change in the text would have made it easier on me as a director.

With Woyzeck I wanted to push myself with creating strong and clear visuals on stage, create a new adaptation that was more accessible to audience members, and
explore Artaudian ideas about theatre. Looking back at this process I feel that I was able to obtain these goals for the most part. I was able to create a striking and visceral production through the use of interesting stage pictures, character relationships, and design elements. While at times their use became unclear and clouded the storytelling, they were strong. The adaptation created a much more conventional way of telling Büchner’s Woyzeck, by connecting these fragments together in a much more linear way. However, while the adaption attempted to make the play accessible, the asylum stood as a block for the play to become relatable. I was able to explore deeper than I had previously into Artaud’s ideas, but as most who have done this before have found out, the deeper study given to these ideas, the harder they become to execute in any concrete way. They are at times very abstract and idealistic, ideas that even Artaud was unable to test.

Overall I feel that I made great strides with this play and applying my conceptual frame to this story. But looking back and hearing the responses, I feel like I got 80% there. There are many elements that I wish I had pushed further and eliminate the half-measure feeling of those elements. However, I feel that as a director I was able to grow. More importantly, I have a clearer vision of what I still need to work on and continue to refine, which for me was one of the main purposes of this program. Knowing myself, I know that I will never have a shortage of ideas and concepts that I want to explore. I just need to always make sure that these ideas are grounded in story. I need to look closer at how I’m directing the focus of the audience in order to enhance the story. While I’m personally a fan of multi-focus theatre, I need to make sure that when I do use that technique it aids in telling the main story and main character relationships, as
opposed to sending the audience down another path that will end up confusing the narrative of the story. I also need to work on making sure the actors are more grounded in their relationships to each other before we move into great exploration of the circumstances. When the actors have a better understanding of their characters, they will feel empowered to explore. Also by taking more time to ground their relationships, I’m creating boundaries to explore in. This will prevent my story telling from getting clouded with several ideas, that while are interesting, ultimately don’t serve the story that I’m going for.

I want to continue to explore what makes theatre different than any other type of storytelling. While theatre for me is much more than storytelling, and much more than just live storytelling, it does have to have a story to tell. By grounding my ideas with story, I have a vehicle to explore further all these concepts about theatre the interests me. I want to continue to better define what my ideal theatre experience would look like and how I can accomplish it. Through this process I was able to test some concepts that I found interesting and now feel confident in how to better apply them in future productions. The thesis process and the MFA program have equipped me with many tools to pull from, and granted me with the knowledge of areas that I need more. More importantly the MFA program has allowed me to develop my skills and explore what my theatre is. I’m left with more questions than answers, but now feel empowered to seek those answers.
Appendices

Appendix 1 Conceptual Photos

Appendix 1.1

Appendix 1.2
Appendix 1.3

Appendix 1.4
Appendix 1.5

Appendix 1.6
Appendix 2 Costume and Makeup Photos
Sketches and Actors in complete costume and makeup

Appendix 2.1
Woyzeck

Appendix 2.2
Marie
Appendix 2.3
Margaret

Appendix 2.4
Katey
Appendix 2.5
Andrea

Appendix 2.6
Karl the Idiot
Appendix 2.7
Grandmother
Appendix 2.8
Patient 1 and Patient 2
Appendix 2.9
The Doctor

Appendix 2.10
The Captain
Appendix 2.11
The Major

Appendix 2.12
The Sergeant
Appendix 2.13
The Attendant
Appendix 3 Set Design

Appendix 3.1
Ground Plan
Appendix 3.2 Set Photos
Appendix 4 Lighting Design

Appendix 4.1
Scene 7 Shadow Rape

Appendix 4.2
Entering Franz's Head
Appendix 4.3
The Nightmare Scene

Appendix 4.4
The Murder Scene
### Rehearsal Schedule

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<td>Physical/Character/Wardrobe Work, 1:00–1:15 PM</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7:15–10:45</td>
<td>Dance, Nightmare, Pre-Show Scenes, 1:15–1:30 PM</td>
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<td>7:15–10:45</td>
<td>3,8,26,27, Whole Show (except Doctor/Marie scenes)</td>
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<td>Staggered call times (12, 25, 3, 8, 15, 17, 27, 4, 10, 11, 13, 21, 24)</td>
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<td>Pre-Show, Group Scenes (4, 11, 13, 17, 21, 24), Woy &amp; Andrea scenes</td>
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<td>OFF BOOK (the Game), Pre-Show, Nightmare</td>
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<td>Scenes 18-27, Whole Show, (Designer Run)</td>
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<td>Efficiency Rehearsal (Scenes 1-9)</td>
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<td>Scene 18, 27, Pre-Show, Whole Show, Pre-Show</td>
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<td>7:30–12:30</td>
<td>Performance, Performance, Performance</td>
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**Notes:**
- No Actors
- All (No Captain)
- Woyzeck, Marie, Doctor (Karl @ 9:30)
## Appendix 5.2

### Character/Scene Breakdown

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<th>Scene</th>
<th>Woyzeck</th>
<th>Marie</th>
<th>Andrea</th>
<th>Margret</th>
<th>Karl</th>
<th>Katey</th>
<th>Grandmother</th>
<th>P1</th>
<th>P2</th>
<th>Captain</th>
<th>Doctor</th>
<th>Major</th>
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# Appendix 5.3
## Master Scene List with Sequences

### Master Scene List for *Woyzeck*

| Seq. 1 |  | Seq. 2 |  | Seq. 3 |  | Seq. 4 |  | Seq. 5 |  | Seq. 6 |  | Seq. 7 |  |
|--------|-----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|
Appendix 6 Production Script

_Woyzeck_ by Georg Buchner
Adaptation by Matthew Jared Lee used with permission for the Spring 2013 production at the University of Portland.
This text may not be used in part or whole for any other production without the expressed permission of Matthew Jared Lee

_Woyzeck_
By
Georg Buchner

Adapted
By
Matthew Jared Lee
Cast:

Patients:
Franz Woyzeck
Marie
Andrea
Margret
Karl the Idiot
Katey
Grandmother
Patient 1
Patient 2

Personnel:
The Captain
The Doctor
The Major
The Sergeant
The Attendant

Setting:
Asylum for the Mentally Ill
(Voice Over)
(Faint voices are heard; a slight echo follows each voice)

DOCTOR
What a murder!

MAJOR
A good and beautiful murder!

SERGEANT
As beautiful a murder as anyone could wish for.

CAPTAIN
It’s been a long time since we had a murder like this.

DOCTOR
Quite the murder!
Scene 1
[Doctor's Office/ Security Office]

(Woyzeck and Andrea are mopping the floors. Andrea is whistling)

WOYZECK
Andrea, did you hear that?

ANDREA
...

WOYZECK
Did you know this place is cursed? See how the light shines through there, right where the mold’s growing? That’s the place where people say they seen heads rolling around every night. Once somebody picked one up. They said, “it looked like a Hedgehog” and three days and three nights later, they were in a box.

(Softly)
Andrea, it’s cursed. I’m sure of it.

ANDREA
(Sings)
There were two little rabbits,
Eating all the green, green grass...

WOYZECK
Shh! Quite. Don’t you hear it? (Pause) Something’s moving!

ANDREA
Eating up the tiny shoots
Eating the green grass
Right down to its roots

WOYZECK
It’s behind me. Or below me? (Stomps the ground)
Hollow, do you hear it? It’s all hollow down there.

ANDREA
(She utters a small noise)
I’m scared.

WOYZECK
It’s so strangely silent. You almost want to hold your breath. (Pause) Andrea!

ANDREA
What?
WOYZECK
Say something! *(Stares into the distance)* Everything is so bright! A fire raging in the sky. Noises coming down like trumpets. It’s coming closer, closer! – We need to go! Don’t look behind you! – *(Drags her into the corner)*

ANDREA
*(After a pause)* Woyzeck, do you still hear it?

WOYZECK
Silent. It’s all very quiet. It’s as if the world was dead.

*(A loud buzzing is heard. Red lights start to flash. A security check has begun)*

ANDREA
Listen. The buzzer. We better go!
Scene 2
[In the Main Room]

MARIE
(Doll teetering on her arm)
Hey, little fellow! Buzz, buzz, buzz! Can you hear it? They're coming!

(The patients line up)

(Major enters followed by the rest of the security personnel. The buzzing stops.)

MARGARET
(Whispers to Marie)
What a man, built like a tree.

MARIE
He stands up on his two feet like a lion.
(The Major inspects Marie, she curtsies and smiles at him. He continues the inspection)

MARGARET
My, what a friendly look you gave him neighbor! We're not accustomed to things like that from you.

MARIE
(Sings)
Soldiers are such handsome lads...

MARGARET
Oh my! Look your eyes are still shining!

(Security check completes and patients go back to their various activities)

MARIE
And what of it! You can take your eyes straight to the Attendant, and let him shine them up for you. Maybe then they'll finally be worth something.

MARGARET
What? Why, look who's talking! I am a respectable lady, but we all know that you could stare right through seven pairs of leather pants!

(Margaret moves to a different area)

MARIE
That bitch! - Come on, my boy! What do they want from us anyway? You're just a poor child of a silly whore. But, your mother is very happy with you even with your shameful face.
(Sings)
What will you do with your eyes that are wild?
What will you do with your fatherless child?
There’s nothing to do
But sit here and sing,
Rockabye my baby, you poor tired thing,

Maiden, now what’s to be done?
You’ve got no ring; you’ve had a son.
Oh, why worry me head,
I’ll sing here at your bed:
Rockabye my baby, my baby are you,
Nobody cares what I do.

MARIE
Is that you, Franz? Come here.

WOYZECK
Can’t stay. I have to finish my duties. (Completely scattered)

MARIE

WOYZECK
Marie, it happened again. Only more things this time– noises...lights...isn’t written:
“And lo the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace”?

MARIE
Stop it!

WOYZECK
It’s always there, behind me, following me. Something I can’t understand... it will drive
us mad. What is this?

MARIE
Franz!

WOYZECK
I have to go.
(Exits)

MARIE
That Man! Talking about things like that. He didn’t even look at his child!
He’ll go mad with those kinds of thoughts. Why are you so silent tonight?
Are you scared? It’s getting dark; you’d think you’ve gone blind. I can’t stand it all, it
gives me the shivers.
Scene 3
[Captain's chair/ Doctor's office]

(Captain in chair, Woyzeck begins to shave him)

CAPTAIN
Slowly, Woyzeck, slowly, one after the other! You make me so dizzy moving around like that. What am I supposed to do with the 10 extra minutes that you saved me by finishing early today? Woyzeck, think about it, you still have a good... thirty years to go, thirty years! That makes three hundred and sixty months! And the Days! The hours! My god the Minutes! What are you going to do with yourself with all that time? Pace yourself, Woyzeck!

WOYZECK
Yes, sir.

CAPTAIN
It frightens me to think about the world and eternity. Work, Woyzeck, Work. That’s it. That’s eternal: that means eternal, is eternal - you can at least understand that. Only it’s not eternal, it’s just is a moment, a mere moment. Woyzeck, I shudder when I think about the fact that the world rotates completely in one day. What a waste of time! Where does that get us? Back where we started, that’s where. Woyzeck, I can’t even look at a windmill anymore without getting melancholy.

WOYZECK
Yes, sir.

CAPTAIN
Woyzeck, you always look so frazzled! A good man doesn’t look that way, at least not a good man with a clear conscience. - Anything to say, Woyzeck! (Pause) How about the weather? How is it today?

WOYZECK
Bad, sir, terrible wind.

CAPTAIN
I can sense it already. There must be a harsh storm coming. Something like that can make me feel like a mouse. - (Slyly) I believe we have something coming in from the north-south?

WOYZECK
Yes, sir.
CAPTAIN
Ha ha! North-South! Ha, ha! Oh, you imbecile. Just shamefull! Oh but, Woyzeck, you are a good man- but you have no morals! Morality, that is, when one is moral, do you understand? It’s a good word. You see, you had a child without the blessing of the Church, as our right reverend chaplain said – “without the blessings of the Church”. His words, not mine.

WOYZECK
Sir, the good Lord will not look at the poor worm differently whether or not amen was said over him before he was made. The Lord said: Suffer little children to come unto me.

CAPTAIN
What are you talking about? What a bizarre answer.

WOYZECK
Us poor people - You see, sir: Money, Money! If you don’t have money – well it’s hard to set a man like me off in this world on morality alone! We are flesh and blood. Us wretches are cursed in this world and the next. I expect if we ever get to heaven, we’d be put to work to help out with the thunder.

CAPTAIN
Woyzeck, you have no virtue! You are not a virtuous man! Flesh and blood? When I look out the window and see all the white stockings after their wash moving together in the breeze- hell, Woyzeck, I feel pressure come over me! You see, I’m flesh and blood too. But, Woyzeck, virtue! Virtue! How else can a man kill all this time? (Looks in mirror) I always tell myself: you are a virtuous man. A good man... a good man.

WOYZECK
Yes, sir, virtue. I still haven’t figured that one out yet. You see sir: us common people, patients I mean, have no virtue, it’s how nature makes us, but if I were a gentleman and had a hat and cane and could talk refined. Then I’d be very virtuous. There must be something nice to virtue, sir. But, you see I’m just a nothing.

CAPTAIN
That’s fine, Woyzeck, fine. You’re a good man, a decent man. But you think too much, it eats away at you, and you always look so frazzled. - This discussion has worn me out. You can go now, and don’t run so fast. Slow, very nice and slow, no rush.

(Woyzeck exits and hurries to meet up with Marie)
Scene 4  
[Main Room]

GRANDMOTHER  
(Sings)  
Nothing in this world will last  
Our lives are like fields of grass  
Soon all that is past will pass

WOYZECK  
Troubles and happiness, everywhere. Surely we live in a beautiful and awful world.  
With all the sorrows and joys that we can handle.

GRANDMOTHER  
(Sings)  
How long we live,  
Just time will tell,  
We all gotta die,  
You know that very well!

MARIE  
Humans are fools in search of understanding. (Pulls Woyzeck away) But when we listen to the fools, we become the fools.

ATTENDANT  
(In front with Karl the idiot, seated, dressed as a monkey)  
Ladies and gentlemen! You see here a creature, as God made it: He’s a nothing, nothing at all. But, now see the effect culture has on him. (Puts a hat on Karl) Now he walks upright, has a coat and pants. Why, he even has a cane! Take a bow! So what if he is still made of the lowest stuff of the human race. Now he’s a Baron. Give us a kiss! (Karl blows a raspberry) This little fellow’s even musical. – Gentlemen and Ladies, tonight we have quite the show for you. We have the astronomical horse, who, by the way, is a favorite of all the crowned heads of Europe and members of all the learned societies. He can tell you everything! How old you are, how many children you’ll have, what kind of diseases and ailments you might have or will have. The performance is about to begin! Please take your seats and ready yourselves for the Commencement of Commencements.

WOYZECK  
After you.

MARIE  
This should be fun. Look at his little tassels. He’s so adorable!

(Patients start to take their seats)
MAJOR
Stop! Do you see her! That's the woman!

SERGEANT
Good eye, sir! She looks like she could be more than a little fun.

MAJOR
Damn good enough for me! I bet she could handle a few of my soldiers!

SERGEANT
The way she carries her head, you would think all that black hair could draw her down to her knees. And those eyes, black as ... 

MAJOR
It's like looking down into a well or a chimney. Quick! After her -

(Lights change, the show begins)

MARIE
Look at the lights!

WOYZECK
Yes, Marie, like black cats everywhere all staring at us with fiery eyes.

ATTENDANT
(Showing off Karl now dressed as a horse)
Show us your talents! Show off your beastly wisdom! Put our human society to shame! Gentlemen, this animal, you see here, with tail attached and four hooves, is a member of many learned societies. He's also a professor at one of our esteemed universities, where students can learn to ride and fight duels with him. – But that you see, is with easy understanding and reasoning. Now, use twice the reasoning! What do you think of with twice the reasoning? Sir, among this knowledgeable union do we see a Jackass? – (The horse shakes his head) – Ha! Now you see that is double reasoning! This is what we call horse sense. Yes, but you see this is not a stupid animal! This is an individual who is a person, a human, and an animal person - but still a beast. Yes a Beast. (The horse gets unruly) That's it indulge, shame this Society! You see, this beast is still in a state of nature, but un-idealized nature! You can learn from him! Just ask the good doctor, it's very unhealthy! He has said that you were created from dust, dirt, and filth. Don't you want to be more than dust, dirt, and filth? – Just look here at his reasoning; he can add but he can’t count on his fingers. Why is that? Why, he can’t even express himself, or even explain himself for that matter. You see he is a transfigured man. Why don’t you tell the gentlemen what time it is! Who among you has a clock? A watch maybe?

MAJOR
A watch? (Pulls out a fancy watch) Here. Here you are! (Moves to front)
MARIE
Oh! I want to see this. – (Sergeant helps her up, blocks Woyzeck and takes her next to the Major)

(Karl begins to stamp out the time)

MAJOR
(Whispers to Sergeant)
Now this is a woman.

DOCTOR
(To Woyzeck)
I would like to speak with you.

(Doctor and Woyzeck exits)

(Marie briefly looks around for Woyzeck, but the Major redirects her attention)
Scene 5
[The Doctor’s office]

(Doctor stares waiting for Woyzeck to speak. Then speaks)

DOCTOR
Don’t you have something to say Woyzeck? I thought you were a man of your word.

WOYZECK
What is it, Doctor?

DOCTOR
I saw it, Woyzeck. You pissed in the corner, pissed right on the wall, like a dog. - And here I’ve been so kind giving you compensation, a bed and free food daily! Woyzeck, that’s terrible, this world is turning terrible, absolutely terrible!

WOYZECK
But, sir, when nature calls...

DOCTOR
The call of nature, the call of nature! Ha! Nature! Have I not proven to you that the *musculus constrictor vesicae* is subject to the will? Nature! Woyzeck, man is free; in man alone do we glorify the idea of individuality into freedom. – And you couldn’t even hold your own urine! Have you already eaten your peas today, Woyzeck? Nothing but peas remember that! There’s going to be a revolution in science, and I’m going to blow it sky high! Let’s see. *(Inspects small urine sample)* Urea 0.10, ammonia chloride, hyperprotoxide. Woyzeck, don’t you have to piss again? This sample is at least a week old. Go over there and try again!

WOYZECK
I can’t, Doctor.

DOCTOR
But you can piss on the wall! *(Threws urine sample at him)* I’ve got our written agreement here in hand! I watched you with these very eyes. I had just stepped out of my office to blow my nose in order to study the act of sneezing, and there you were...*(Starts to hit him)* No, Woyzeck, I am not angry, anger is unhealthy, and it’s very unscientific. *(Stops hitting him)* I’m calm, very calm, and see my pulse is at it’s usual sixty, and I’m telling you this, with the utmost composure. God Forbid, I should be annoyed by a simple man! Now if you were a cat specimen, maybe! But, Woyzeck, you should not have pissed on that wall!
WOYZECK
Yes Doctor, but you see sometimes a person of a certain character, with a particular structure...(Starts to have a fever fit, but fights it) But with nature it’s different, you see, with nature – it’s kind of a… which is to say, for example …um (loses words)

DOCTOR
Woyzeck, you’re philosophizing again.

WOYZECK
(Confidential)
Doctor, have you ever heard of the idea of double nature? Like when the Sun is at noon but it looks like the whole world was on fire. That’s when the terrible voices will speak to me.

DOCTOR
Woyzeck, you have an aberration.

WOYZECK
(Puts finger to temple)
The mold, sir. That’s where it happened last. Have you ever seen the patterns in which it grows on the floor? If only someone could read that and interpret it!

DOCTOR
(Increasing interest)
Woyzeck, you have the most beautiful aberratio mentalis partialis of the second species, it’s beautifully marked. (Puts hands on Woyzeck’s skull) Woyzeck, you will get a raise! Second species: (writes in file) obsession with ideas but generally in a reasonable condition. – Apart from that, everything else going as usual? Still shaving the Captain?
WOYZECK
Yes.

DOCTOR
Eating your peas?

WOYZECK
Same as always, Doctor. The money’s for Marie and the child.

DOCTOR
Yes, right, the child. And keeping up with your duties?

WOYZECK
Yes.
DOCTOR
You're an interesting case, patient Woyzeck. You'll get your raise. But keep yourself well behaved. Now let me feel your pulse. Yes. There it is. I can feel it.

(The Doctor finishes the exam and lets Woyzeck free)
Scene 6
[Marie and Woyzeck’s sleeping area]

MARIE
(Sits child on her lap, a piece of mirror in her hand)
Look how the light hits it! What kind is it? What did he say? - Sleep, my boy! Shut your eyes, tight! Still tighter! Stay quiet, or he will get you!

(Singing)
Hurry child better close up tight
A gypsy lad is out tonight
He’ll take you by the hand
And off you’ll go to Gypsyland

(Back to mirror) It’s certainly gold! How will it look when I’m dancing? My kind has only this tiny corner and this little piece of mirror in the world, and yet I have lips as red as any of those fine ladies with their mirrors from top to bottom and their handsome gentlemen who kiss their hands. Who am I kidding; I’m just a lost nobody! - Quiet, boy, shut your eyes! The Sandman is coming! Close your eyes or he’ll gaze into them and you’ll go blind!

(Woyzeck enters. Marie covers the watch.)

WOYZECK
What’s wrong? What’s that?

MARIE
Nothing.

WOYZECK
Something’s shining under your fingers.

MARIE
A watch. I found it.

WOYZECK
I’ve never found anything like that. And lucky, it still works!

MARIE
What are you trying to say?

WOYZECK
It’s fine, Marie. - Look the boy’s asleep. He even has little drops of sweat on his forehead. Everything under the sun is hard at work. We wretches even sweat during our sleep. Here’s some money, my pay and some extra help from the Doctor.
MARIE
God bless you, Franz

WOYZECK
I have to go. I'll see you later. Goodnight Marie. (*Goes in to kiss her and child on the head*)

MARIE
(*After a pause*)
What an awful person I am! I could stab myself. What a miserable world this is! But in the end everything goes to hell anyway, man, woman, and child! So what's it matter?

(*Woyzeck exits as Major enters. They catch eyes; Woyzeck quickly averts eye contact*)

WOYZECK
Evening sir.
Scene 7
[Marie and Woyzeck's sleeping area]

MAJOR
Marie! Still enjoying your gift I see.

MARIE
(Looking at him intently)
Step out in front of me! Take a few steps. That's it, a chest like a bull and a grin like a lion! Nobody else comes close! - I am the proudest woman alive!

MAJOR
Wait till Sunday when I'll have my uniform cleaned and pressed. I always shine like a beacon. Damn! The Captain always says to me “now there’s a man!”

MARIE
(Sarcastically)
Oh is that so! (In front of him) A man!

MAJOR
And you're quite the woman! (Grabs her) Hell, let's create a whole swarm of Majors. What do you say? (Attempts to kiss)

MARIE
(Annoyed) Leave me alone!

MAJOR
You Wildcat! (Kissing all over)

MARIE
(Violently) Don’t touch me! (Pushes away, hitting him)

MAJOR
(Slaps and grabs her) You’ve got the Devil in your eyes.

MARIE
What do I care! It’s all the same. What’s the difference? (Gives up)

(Major continues to kiss all over her and takes her over)
Scene 8
[Hallway]

(Captain enters as Doctor is leaving the office)

CAPTAIN
Doctor! Please wait, don’t walk so fast! Moving through the air so fast! You’ll run yourself into an early grave that way. A decent man who has a clear conscience doesn’t move so fast. A good man... (Catches up to Doctor) Doctor, allow me to save a life!

DOCTOR
I'm in a hurry. What is it?

CAPTAIN
Doctor, please help me. I’m so melancholy, I get so blue. I start crying even when I think of my jacket hanging on the wall... See! There I go. (Starts to weep)

DOCTOR
I see. Let’s take a look. Bloated, fat, thick neck: apoplectic constitution. Yes, Captain, you can expect a cerebral apoplexy any day now. But you might get it only on one side. Which in that case you would be paralyzed only that side down, or if you’re lucky you will be mentally paralyzed and will simply have to vegetate away here for the rest of your life. Yes! Those are your prospects for the next four weeks! Give or take a few. By the way, I can assure you, you would be one of my most interesting cases, and if God wills that your tongue shall be a paralyzed as well... I promise you, we will make some unforgettable experiments together.

CAPTAIN
Doctor, please don’t scare me like that! There are some people who have died of terror, pure fright. I can already see my funeral party now with their hats in hands walking, but they will say, “He was a good man, a decent man” You Devil! How dare you say things like that to me!

DOCTOR
You’re wasting my time, Captain.

CAPTAIN
What I wanted to say was...

(Woyzeck hurries past)

Hey! Woyzeck, where are you rushing off? Stay for a second! Running through here like a razor, we’re likely to cut ourselves on you. (To Doctor) He’s as frantic as if he had to
shave a group of eunuchs from top to bottom and would be hung if something were discovered missing. But while on the subject of shaving – Wait. What did I want to talk to you about? Woyzeck, why was I thinking about beards...? Ha! Oh yes! Hey, Woyzeck, have you found any hairs in your soup bowl lately? Hey, do you get me... Maybe the hairs of a friend, or a Sergeant, or maybe a Major, huh... Woyzeck?  

(To Doctor) Oh, but you see he has a good woman. He doesn’t have to worry about that like all the others.

WOYZECK
Yes, sir... Wait, what do you mean, sir?

CAPTAIN
How about that! Look at the face the guy makes! Maybe it’s not in the soup bowl, but maybe if you hurry you might find some on a pair of lips. A pair of lips, Woyzeck. Ha! Look he’s as white as a ghost!

WOYZECK
Sir please, I am a poor devil and I’ve nothing else in this world but her. If you are just joking with me...

CAPTAIN
Me joking? Me joke with you!

DOCTOR
Your pulse, Woyzeck! Your pulse! It’s small, hard, jumpy, and irregular.

WOYZECK
(Staring to unravel) Sirs, this world is hellish hot – but I’m suddenly cold as ice. Hell must be cold, I bet... It can’t be. It’s Impossible! That bitch! I don’t believe it!

CAPTAIN
Look here! You wanna have a few bullets in your head? He’s staring daggers through me with his eyes. I’m just trying to help him, because he’s a good man, Woyzeck’s a decent person.

DOCTOR
Facial muscles rigid, tense, with occasional twitches. (Takes notes) Condition strained, and excitable.

WOYZECK
I’ve got to go. It’s not possible. Jesus! Anything is possible. We are having beautiful weather, sir. You see, with such a beautiful, solid, gray sky like this you could drive a stake in it, and hang yourself from it. All because of the difference between yes and no. Sir, yes and no? (Starts to ramble) Is it the No on Yes or Yes on No to blame? I need time to think about it. –

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(He exits, first slowly, then faster)

CAPTAIN
Ugh! I always feel so dizzy around these types. Ha! Look how fast the rascal takes off running. Like trying to outrun his shadow. Legs of lightning and feet of thunder. Ha-ha ... How grotesque! That poor fool!
Scene 9
[Marie and Woyzeck's sleeping area]

WOYZECK
(Enters in a frenzy)
Hm! I don’t see it, I don’t see anything. I should be able to see it. God if only I could grab at it with my fists!

MARIE
(Scared)

WOYZECK
A sin, a sin so great and so fat - it stinks. I should be able to grab at it. So big, I bet you could smoke all the angels out of heaven! You've got a big red mouth, Marie. No blisters on it yet? Marie, you're as beautiful as sin – But how can mortal sin be so beautiful? It's not fair!

MARIE
Franz, you're raving! It's the fever talking!

WOYZECK
Damn it! – Did he stand here? Like this? Or this?

MARIE
The day is long and the world is old and many people can come and go and stand in one place, one after the other.

WOYZECK
I saw him!

MARIE
You can see a lot since you have two eyes and aren't blind. That is as long as you keep your eyes open.

WOYZECK
Whore!
(Goes for her)

MARIE
Don't touch me, Franz! I'd rather have a knife in my body than your hand on me. Let me go!
(Pushes back)
WOYZECK
No. It should show on you. *(Let’s go of her)* I would be able to see it. Every man is an abyss, and it can sometimes get dizzy when you look into him. I’m sorry. But, even though you look innocence. Innocence now has a mark on it! But I can’t prove it. Can I? How do I know? Who knows?

*(Scrambles out. Marie starts to weep)*
Scene 10
[Doctor’s Office/ Security Office]

(Woyzeck enters. Andrea is mopping the floors)

ANDREA
(Sings)
Our hostess, she is a pretty maid.
She sits in her garden all the day.
In her garden so she sits...

WOYZECK
Andrea.

ANDREA
What?

WOYZECK
Nice weather.

ANDREA
I guess so. Can you hear it? They’ve been playing music. Everyone is in there. The men stinking and sweating, the women screaming, and everyone is probably drunk or drugged. I’m sure it’s quite the party!

WOYZECK
(Uneasy)
A dance? Andrea, they’re going to dance!

ANDREA
So what?

(Sings)
In her garden so she sits
But when that bell, twelve it hits
She’s out the window and...

WOYZECK
Andrea, I have no peace.

ANDREA
Calm down you fool!
WOYZECK
I have to get out of here. I can see them in my head. Dance, Dance! With their hot hands all over each other! Damn it, Andrea!

ANDREA
So, what do you want?

WOYZECK
I have to go; I have to see it for myself.

ANDREA
Don’t do that to yourself! All because of what? That whore?

WOYZECK
I have to go. God why is it so hot? I’m on fire.

(Exits in a dizzy state)
Scene 11
[Main Room]

[The Dance]

(Doctor walks around observing patients and taking notes)

PATIENT 1
(Sings)
This shirt I've got, I don't know whose.
My soul, my god it stinks of booze.

SERGEANT
Friend, Shall I show you a bit of your true nature? (Pulls patient 1 down to his level) I want to bore a hole in your nature. As one friend to another, come on! Let me punch a hole in your face! I'm quite a guy, you know. I'll help you out and knock that stench right off of you! (Grabs patient 1)

PATIENT 1
My soul, my soul stinks of booze! (Sergeant smells him and pushes him over to the captain, and Patient 1 grabs ahold of Captain) All things decay, even money decays! Oh but don't forget this world is so beautiful! Brother, I could fill a rain barrel full of my tears. I'm so melancholy. (Captain agrees, they weep together)

(Woyzeck enters. Marie and the Major dancing past without noticing.)

CHORUS OF PATIENTS AND CAPTAIN
A hunter came in from the snow
Riding through a forest with fists in tow
Hallelu- hallo, he called to me
from high on the mound so open and free.
A hunter’s life, now that's for me.

WOYZECK
Him and Her! God damn them!

MARIE
(Dancing pass)
On and On. On with it!

WOYZECK
(Choking)
On and On! (Falls to floor) ...and on, and on. Spin around and roll around. Wallow in each other! Why doesn't God blow out the sun, then everyone can fall on top of each
other in their own fornication! Man and woman, man and beast! But no, instead do it in broad daylight! Do it with your hands in front of us just like flies!

MARIE
(Laughing) Don’t Stop!

WOYZECK
Yes! You’d better listen. Don’t stop.

KARL
(Walks over to Woyzeck)
This stinks.

WOYZECK
Yes, it stinks! Her cheeks are red, bright red! But why does she stink already? What is it you smell Karl?

KARL
I smell. I smell blood.

WOYZECK
Why is everything I see red now! They are rolling in a sea of blood. That woman is hot, hot! Look how he grabs her, all around her body! Pawing at her! He has her just like I do... did...in the beginning.

(Collapses stunned)

PATIENT 2
(Doctor gets too close and Patient 2 jumps on the table and beings to rant)
Listen up! I say unto you, the wanderers, you that are leaning against this stream of time, challenge the new wisdom. So that you may give yourself answers with divine wisdom and styling. These questions such as: Why does man exist? Why is man? - But, verily I say unto you, how could the farmer, the shoemaker, the doctor, and the madman have lived, if God had not created them?

(Doctor orders security to restrain patient)

Or, how could the tailor exist if He had not implanted in people this feeling of shame?

(Rips off shirt and throws at doctor)

What purpose would there be for the soldiers, if He had not equipped us with the need to kill?

(Captain, Sergeant, and Attendant fight to restrain him)

Therefore, do not despair- yes, yes, there are things that are lovely and fine, but this world and all its things are earthly and passing, even money passes into decay. But our nature cannot be silenced.
(Breaks free)

To conclude, my beloved friends, I called them mad and they called me mad, and damn them, they out voted me!

(Attendant injects patient and hauls him away)

ANDREA
(Walks over to Woyzeck)
Hey, what are you doing down there?

WOYZECK
What time is it?

ANDREA
Ten.

WOYZECK
That’s it? I wish it would go faster.

ANDREA
Why?

WOYZECK
So it would finally be over.

ANDREA
What?

WOYZECK
The fun.

(Runs off, leaving the dance)
Scene 12
[Doctor’s Office / Security Office]

WOYZECK
On and on! Just keep on going! Let the record keep on turning. (Hears something)
Quiet! Stop your playing! What’s down there? (Stretches out across floor) Yes, what,
what are you saying? Louder! Louder – Stab? Tear the bitch apart? – No! Stab, stab the
she-devil dead! - Should I? I Must. No I can’t. It’s the fever again. But I can hear it in the
wind too! Destroy her. – (Covers ears) Enough please stop! Please. (Fights it) I hear you
again and again… always. Stab her dead! (Gives in) Dead.

(The dance has concluded, everyone is lying down wherever they passed out)
Scene 13
[Main Room]

(Woyzeck carefully enters, stepping over everyone. Andrea is lying down)

WOYZECK

(Quietly lays down near Andrea)

Andrea. (Shakes Andrea) Hey, Andrea. Andrea!

ANDREA

What is it?

WOYZECK

I can’t sleep! When I close my eyes everything starts spinning, and I keep hearing music, always, always. And then there are voices speaking from the walls. Can you hear it?

ANDREA

Yes – there was a dance! Remember? I’m tired, go to sleep.

WOYZECK

Andrea!

ANDREA

God help us all, amen.

WOYZECK

There it is again! It keeps saying Stab! Stab! It’s piercing. Right between my eyes like a...like a knife.

ANDREA

Sleep, you fool!

WOYZECK

There’s something in the air. No. In the ground. Don’t you hear it? Listen, knocking on the walls, yelling stab! I hear it constantly. Stab, destroy the-

ANDREA

Go see the doctor; you’ll get some schnappps with powder in it. Should cut your fever. Now go to sleep!

WOYZECK

On and on again. On and on.

(Lays back down and closes his eyes)

(Woyzeck enters a fevered state and begins to have a freighting nightmare.)
(He sees Marie and The Major dancing again, slowly all the patients move, surrounding the two of them. They take on new violent animalistic forms. As the music continues the patients start to envelope the dancers.

Woyzeck's body begins to contort as his sweating increases. The patients slowly move their arms up in a harmony of stabbing motions. Woyzeck tries to yell out and scream but the ability has been taken away from him. )

(At the peak of this hallucinatory nightmare, the lights change and become bright)

SERGEANT
   (Loud whistle)
   Everyone up, get moving!

(Everyone wakes up)
Scene 14
[Doctor’s Office]

(Doctor at desk with Patients entering and seated around)

DOCTOR
Gather round gentlemen. Today, we are here to answer an important question regarding the relationship of the subject to the object. If we take one of those things, in which the organic self-affirmation that the divine manifests itself in, and view its relationship to space, to Earth, to the whole universe... (Blank stares from patients) Gentlemen, if I were to throw this cat out a window, (Picks up cage with cat inside) do we think it will behave according to its centrum gravitationis...its center of gravity and its own instincts?

(Woyzeck enters caught up in his own world)

Hello there, Woyzeck. (Yells) Woyzeck!

WOYZECK
(Snaps out of it) Yes doctor? (Doctor tosses cage at him)
(He catches the cage) But, doctor, she bites!

DOCTOR
Ha! He holds the beast as tenderly as if it were his own Grandmother.

(Laughs from patients)

WOYZECK
Doctor, I’m trembling. I need to speak to you.

DOCTOR
(Very pleased)
Oh, oh! Beautiful, Woyzeck! (Takes the cage and tosses it) Gentlemen, that animal had no scientific instinct ... Here, now you get the chance to see something else. Observe this beast, (Sits Woyzeck down) see this specimen, who for three months has eaten nothing but peas; notice the effect, feel how uneven its pulse is. Look at its sweating due to a fever! And it’s eyes! How grotesque! (Invites patients to touch) Come take a look!

WOYZECK
Doctor, sir, everything is getting darker.

DOCTOR
Courage, Woyzeck, courage! A little longer, and then everything will all be over. Do you gentlemen feel it? (Patients touch all over) Now Woyzeck, wiggle your ears! I
want to show everyone, here, see how it only uses two muscles to operate his ears. Here and here. Come on! Do it!

WOYZECK
But, Doctor. Please.

DOCTOR
Shut up you bastard! Shall I move your ears for you? Would you like to end up like the cat? See gentlemen; see how this illustrates the transition into an ass, unable to complete the simplest of tasks, often the consequences of your upbringing. Now look how frail and sunken his eyes have become. Yes! The peas, gentlemen, the peas!

(Woyzeck jumps out of the chair and stumbles across the other patients, scrambling to get out. They continue to paw at him, while the Doctor chuckles and takes notes of this behavior)
Scene 15
[Hallway]

WOYZECK
What is it our good Lord God cannot do? What? He cannot undue what is done, Ha! -
But that is how it is and how it should be. But to make things better would make things
better. A respectable man loves his life, and a person who loves his life has no courage
in him. A virtuous man has no courage, and a man with no courage is as low as a dog.

(Bumps into Sergeant)

SERGEANT
You seem to be forgetting yourself in front of one of your superiors!

WOYZECK
Oh. I’m sorry sir. I wasn’t talking about anybody. I wasn’t talking about anything.

(Serget into him again)

SERGEANT
Damn it! Will you watch where you’re going or I’ll see to it that you drink a pot of your
own piss and swallow a razor! (Grabs Woyzeck around the neck)

WOYZECK
Sir, please don’t torment me. My name is science, and every week I’ve worked on my
scientific career and get compensation for my service. You can’t cut me down or I’ll
is Nature then? More dust, dirt, and filth! Poor stupid man. We must be friends. (Grabs
Sergeant) What is this? Woyzeck’s arm, flesh, bones and veins? No what is it? Filth. Why
is it rooted in filth? Must I cut off my own arm? No, man is selfish; he beats, shoots, and
stabs his own kind. (Starts to sob) We must be friends. I wish our noses were
two bottles, and then we could pour them down each other’s throat. What a beautiful
place this world is! Friend! My friend!

(Sergeant throws him down and starts beating him)

This world! Look! (Grabs Sergeant’s ankle) The sun’s coming through the clouds,
(Sergeant shakes free) it’s like God’s emptying His bedpan on the world. (Continues to
cry on ground)

SERGEANT
If you live among shit, you become the shit!

(Exits)

(Andrea walks by and sees him weeping)
Scene 16
[Hallway]

WOYZECK
(Without looking)
Have you heard anything?

ANDREA
What? Oh, yes, he’s been bragging to everyone.

WOYZECK
What has he been saying?

ANDREA
Why do I have to be the one to tell you?
Well, he laughed, and then said “what a tasty woman” and that she had great thighs and was hot all the way through.

WOYZECK
(Cold)
So, that what he said?
What was I dreaming about last night? A knife or something? (Gets up) What crazy dreams we get sometimes!

ANDREA
Where are you going?

WOYZECK
Nowhere. But, Andrea, you know something? There aren’t many girls like she is...was.

ANDREA
What... was?

WOYZECK
Forget it.

(Exits)
Scene 17
[Main Room]

(Woyzeck enters, sits, and watches Major)
(Katey and other patients have been picking up the room from the dance)

MAJOR
(Still drunk from dance)
Look at what a man I am! (Strikes his chest) A man, I tell you. Who wants to test me? Unless you’re the Lord God Himself, or drunker than I am, you had best leave me alone. That is unless you would like me to shove your nose up your ass! Let’s see I want… Hey, you there! (To Woyzeck) Have a drink, you bastard! I wish the world was liquor, yes liquor - A man must drink! (Slides drink over)

(Woyzeck whistles and lets the drink crash to floor)
You son-of-a-bitch! You want me to pull out your tongue and wrap it around you?

(They exchange a look. Pause. Then wrestle to the ground. Woyzeck loses)

Should I leave some breath in him? How about just enough for an old woman’s fart! How’s that?

(Woyzeck trembling on floor)
There! Now the guy can whistle till he’s blue in the face for all I care!

(Sings as he exits)
Booze, booze this is my life
Booze, booze can give me courage!

PATIENT 1
I think he got more than he was asking for…

KATEY
Look he’s bleeding. (Tries to help)

WOYZECK
(Pushes her away and leaves)
One thing after another.
Scene 18
[Wishing Well]

MARIE
(Leafing through a Bible)
"And no guile is found in his mouth" ... Lord, Dear Lord! Please don't look down at me! (Continues reading) "And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman, conceived in adultery, and set her into the midst ... and Jesus said, neither do I condemn thee; Go, and sin no more."

(Clasp hands together)

(Karl enters and sees her)

My God! My God I can't! – Please Lord; give me enough strength so that I may pray this sin away. (Looks at child) - This child is like a knife in my heart.

(Begins to weep)

KARL
(Telling stories with his toes)
This little piggy went to the market, this little piggy stayed home, this little piggy had roast beef, this little piggy had none, and this little piggy cried (to Marie) all the way home...

MARIE
Oh sweet Karl. (Kisses him on the forehead) Franz hasn't been here yet has he? (Karl shakes no). My it's getting hot in here! Isn't it? (Karl shakes no) "And stood at his feet weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet and anointed them with ointment."(Strikes her breast) What have I done! It's all dead! Everything! Savior! My Savior! I wish I could anoint your feet!

(Karl kisses her feet and Marie continues to weep)
Scene 19
[Medicine Window of the Main Room]

(Woyzeck walks over to the Attendant, who watched the previous fight)

WOYZECK
The pistol cost too much.

ATTENDANT
Well, buy it or don’t. Which is it?

WOYZECK
What about the knife?

ATTENDANT
It’s straight and very sharp. What? You want to cut your throat with it? How about it? I’ll give it to you as cheap as anyone of these suckers. You can have a cheap death, but not a free one. What do you say? You’ll have an economical death.

WOYZECK
Can it cut more than bread?

ATTENDANT
Ha! “Can it cut more than bread?”

WOYZECK
Here.
(Exits with Knife)

ATTENDANT
Here! Just like it was nothing! Hey, that’s a real knife, you know! You had better be careful!
All right who’s next?

(Patients line up for medication)
Scene 20
[Marie and Woyzeck’s sleeping area]

(Woyzeck pulls Andrea out of line and starts going through his things)

WOYZECK
Andrea, here, this jacket isn’t part of our uniform but, here you can have it.

ANDREA
Ok. (Starts to walk away)

WOYZECK
(Pulls her back) And here. This cross was my sister’s and this was her little ring.

ANDREA
Ok. (Starts to walk away)

WOYZECK
(Pulls her back) I also have this picture here. It has two hearts on it, in real gold! It was in my mother’s Bible, and see it says:

“May pain be my reward.
Through pain I love my Lord.
Lord, as you were red and sore
So be in my heart forevermore”

Now my mother only feels the sun shining down on the grass, 6ft above her. So here, it does nothing for me.

ANDREA
Ok. Fine. (Walks away)

WOYZECK
(Pulls out a paper, pulls her back)
Friedrich Johann Franz Woyzeck. Enlisted infantry, Rifleman in the 2nd Regiment, 2nd Battalion 4th Company. Born on…. Andrea, today I’m 30 years, 7 months and 12 days old.

ANDREA
Franz, you really need to go see the Doctor. You poor man, your fever looks awful. Like I said drink a schnapps with some powder in it. That will kill the fever.

WOYZECK
Sure. You know, when the carpenter nails those boards together, no one knows who will end up laying on them.

(Exits. Andrea gets back in line)
Scene 21
[Main Room]

(After all medicine is handed out, everyone settles into activities. Reading, checkers, drawing, etc.)

PATIENT 1
(Sings)
The sun was shining on Candlemas Day,
The corn was blue and yellow was the hay
Oh what a glorious and beautiful day.

As they went walking, two by two
All the fiddlers followed on through
A fiddler played a mournful song,
And all the pretty girls had red stockings on...

PATIENT 2
Stop it! I hate that song.

KATEY
Why are you always looking for a fight?

(Marie enters)

MARGRET
Marie, why don’t you sing us a song!

MARIE
I can’t.

PATIENT 1
Why not?

MARIE
Because.

PATIENT 2
Because, why not?

MARIE
(Snaps) Cause I don’t feel like it! Ok?

KATEY
Hey! Grandmother, why don’t you tell us a story then!
GRANDMOTHER

All right. Let me see... *(Everyone gathers around)*

There once was a poor little girl who had no father and no mother, everything and everyone was dead. You see, there was no one else in the entire world. All were dead. She would go out and cry and wail all day and night. And because there was no one else on earth, she desperately wanted to go to heaven. So she looked up to heaven and first saw the moon, and the moon looked back at her all friendly-like. When she finally got to the moon, it turned out to be a rotten piece of wood. So she looked up to heaven again and saw the sun, but when she got to the sun it turned out to be a dead sunflower. Then she looked up again and saw the stars. She went to the stars but they ended up being nothing but little bugs stuck in a spider’s web. When she decided that she wanted to go back to earth, she turned around but saw that the earth was now only an upside-down pot. And there she was, all alone. So she sat down and began to weep and she is still sitting there to this day, all alone.

WOYZECK

*(Appears)*

Marie!

MARIE

*(Frightened)*

What is it, Franz?

WOYZECK

Marie, we have to go. It’s time.

MARIE

Time? Where are we headed?

WOYZECK

*(Pulls her along)*

God only knows.

*(They exit)*
Scene 22
[Wishing Well]

(Woyzeck pulling Marie along)

MARIE
But, everyone’s back there and it’s getting dark.

WOYZECK
We can’t go back yet. Come sit down.

MARIE
But I have to get back.

WOYZECK
You’re gonna run your feet sore.

MARIE
What’s gotten into you?

WOYZECK
Do you know how long it is been, Marie?

MARIE
What?

WOYZECK
Us. How long?

MARIE
Two years next Pentecost.

WOYZECK
And do you know how much longer we will last?

MARIE
I’ve got to get back. I think dinner’s going to be served soon.

WOYZECK
Are you cold, Marie? And yet you feel so warm. What hot lips you have. Hot as coals, with hot whore’s breath. And yet I’d still give up Heaven to kiss you again. – Are you freezing? Don’t worry when you’re cold all the way through, you won’t freeze anymore.

MARIE
What are you saying? What’s going on..
WOYZECK
Nothing.

(Silence)

MARIE
Look how red the moon is!

WOYZECK
(To himself) Red as a bloody blade.

MARIE
What’s on your mind? Franz, you look so pale. (He takes the Knife). Franz... stop! Please, for heaven’s sake. Wait! Help!

(He stabs)

WOYZECK
Take that and that! Why can’t you die?
There! And there! Still twitching? Again! Not yet? On and on! -
(Plunges again) - Are you dead! Die! Die!

(Runs away leaving the knife)
**Scene 23**  
*Hallway*

PATIENT 1  
Hold it!

MARGARET  
Did you hear that? Quiet. Over there!

PATIENT 1  
Wait! There! What's that sound?

MARGARET  
It's coming from over there. I don't like this. Let's get out of here. I don't wait to hear it anymore!

PATIENT 1  
Ohh! There it was again. It's like a person dying!

MARGARET  
This is eerie. Let's go!

PATIENT 1  
No. It's coming from over here. Come on!

*(They move over to Marie's body. Margaret lets out a scream. Horrified they run off)*
Scene 24
[Main Room]

(Woyzeck enter in the midst of full on fever, He turns on the record player)

WOYZECK
Dance all of you! Come on dance everyone! Yes! On and on and on! Sweat and stink! You will all get yours in the end. (Grabs Katey)

(Sings and Dances)

Oh. Daughter, sweet daughter,
what have you done?
You’ve gone off with the soldier
And polished his gun

Oh but tell me, you had to know
that sleeping with all those men
would bring you so low!

Ha! So there, Katey, sit down! I’m hot! Are you hot! (Takes off jacket) It’s just as well. Guess this is what happens when the devil takes hold. He takes the one and lets the other one go. Oh but, Katey you’re hot as well! (Touches her cheek) Why is that? Don’t worry Katey, one day even you will be cold. So, take care. Can you sing us a song?

KATEY
(Sings)
For Swabian hills I do not yearn
and flowing gowns of which I’ve spurn,
for flowing gowns and pointed shoes,
the poor servant girl should never choose.

WOYZECK
Ha! Well Good point, no need for shoes, one can get to Hell just as easily without them.

KATEY
(Sings)
Oh! Shame my dear, such an ugly tone.
Keep your lips and go sleep alone.

WOYZECK
Yes, of course, I wouldn’t want to make myself bloody again.

KATEY
What’s that?
WOYZECK
What? Where?

KATEY
It’s red! Blood!

WOYZECK

ATTENDANT
What? Where’s blood?

WOYZECK
I must have cut myself. See, here on my hand.

ATTENDANT
But then how did it get on your elbow?

WOYZECK
I must have wiped it off.

ATTENDANT
What, with your right hand on your right elbow? That’s quite a talent!

KARL
And the Giant yelled “Fee fie fo fum, I smell the blood of an English”...no...a woman! I can smell it. I can smell human flesh. Wow, it stinks already!

WOYZECK
What the hell are you looking at? What do you want? What’s it to you? Stay away or I’ll...Hell! Do you think I killed someone? Am I a murderer? What are you staring at? Look at yourselves! Out of my way!

(Exits pushing through everyone in a mad rush)
Scene 25
[Wishing Well]

WOYZECK
(Alone, searching frantically)
The knife? Where is the knife? I know I left it around here. It will give me away! Closer and closer! (His fever breaks) What is this place? What’s that? Shh! Something moved. Quiet! Over there. Marie? Ha, Marie! Quiet. Everything is so quiet. Why are you so pale, Marie? Why do you have a red ribbon around your neck? (Fever starts up again) Who was it that helped you earn that collar with your sins? (Fever takes hold) You were black with sin! All black! Now I’ve made you white. Why is your hair so wild? Did you forget to put it in a braid today? ... The knife, the knife! I have to get rid of it! There!
(Throws the knife into the water)

There! That will get rid of it. It sinks into the dark water like a stone. No! It’s still too close...they’ll surely find it.
(Tries to fish it out, but can’t)

Bah, it will get rusty, no one is going to recognize it. Damn it! I should have broken it! Am I still bloody? I need to wash myself. There’s a spot, and there’s another, and here...

(Frantically tries to clean himself. Slowly decides to drown himself. Putting his head under the bloody water, he holds it down)

(Several attempts and failures occur, but ultimately he is not up to the task)

(The Doctor, Major, Sergeant, Captain, and Attendant enter and watch Woyzeck’s several attempts at suicide)
Scene 26  
[Wishing Well]

DOCTOR
What a murder!

(Orders the Major, Sergeant, and Captain to pull Woyzeck up and take him to the Doctor's office. The Attendant grabs the knife)

MAJOR
A good and beautiful murder!

SERGEANT
As beautiful a murder as anyone could wish for.

CAPTAIN
It's been a long time since we had a murder like this.
Scene 27
[Doctor’s Office]

(Woyzeck is strapped to a chair, and the doctor prepares the electrodes)

KARL  
(Playing with child/doll)  
He fell in the water. He fell in the water! Lookey here! This one fell in the water!

WOYZECK  
(Spits out bite plate)  
My boy! My baby boy!

KARL  
He fell in the water!

(Doctor gives Major the electrodes who places them next to Woyzeck’s temples)

WOYZECK  
My god! Please my god!

KARL  
This one fell in the water...

WOYZECK  
My boy! Please look up at me. I’ll take care of you I promise! I’ll buy you a horsey. Ok?  
Yes! That’s it I’ll get you a hobby horsey!

(First shock to temples, Woyzeck convulses and begin to make horrifying noises)

KARL  
(Stares at him)  
Hop! Hop! Horsey! Hop!

WOYZECK  
(Speech is staggered through pain, as the Doctor continues to administer shocks)  
Yes! Yes! Hop! Hop! Horsey!

KARL  
Hip-Hop! Hip-Hop Horsey! Hip-Hop! (Runs away with child)

(Woyzeck beings to weep through the pains)
Doctor turns on a record to drown out the screaming, and continues the therapy. Woyzeck finally stops convulsing and is completely still. The session is over.

The major removes the electrodes and sets them aside. The Doctor checks Woyzeck’s pulse, makes note of it. Then leaves with the rest of the personnel, leaving Woyzeck staring off in the distance alone.

BLACKOUT
Works Cited


**TV/Film Media**


**Web Sites**


Works Consulted


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