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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN DIEGO

My Growth in Acting Training

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree Master of Fine Arts

in

Theatre and Dance (Acting)

by

Iris Feng

Committee in charge:

Professor Ursula Meyer, Chair
Professor Marc Alexander Barricelli
Professor Stephen W Buescher
Professor Shahrokh D Yadegari

2024

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University of California San Diego

2024

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

My Growth in Acting Training

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Iris Feng

Master of Fine Arts in Theatre and Dance (Acting)

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Professor Ursula Meyer, Chair

The following are not only my goals for grad school but for the years to come: to breathe and speak on a full voice, to play “free time” with black mask off, and to let go when I go onstage.

Before grad school my voice was high-pitched and effortful. My laughs and cries, like my speaking voice, were habitually held back in the throat. Full voice with breath and ease has been my biggest pursuit and with Ursula’s help my voice has gone through the most thrilling and visible growth. In *The Comedy of Errors*, I worked on always sustaining a full voice, not going

in and out or swallowing the end words, as well as flow, not punching but lifting. For physical uninhibition, in one rehearsal of *Dance Nation* my brain turned off and my body moved on its own. I began to bridge the gap between Stephen's class and the rehearsal room, going into uncomfortable positions like nobody's business and playing the maximum all the while having fun. As a diligent student, I like to take notes, receive notes, compile a worklist, and tackle the tasks one by one. The challenge is to be simultaneously "overly prepared" and free from attachment of all the work and ideas when I play. I still fall into the trap of trying to "feel" and agonize over not hitting it after a show. Pursue the action, not the emotion, will be one of my pillars for the years to come.