Classical Mythology and the Contemporary Playwright

Lou May Wilhelmina MILLER

This thesis is submitted by Lou May Wilhelmina MILLER to Kingston University as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Drama April 2014.

Kingston University

April 2014

ABSTRACT

This practice-based thesis explores, through the creation of three new full-length plays, the ways in which a contemporary playwright might engage with classic mythology, specifically ancient Greek mythology in the development of new work. The plays form a triptych, each inspired by a single, yet interconnected Greek myth: their mythic inspirations are as follows, *Sodium* (2010-11) Theseus and the Minotaur, *Sulphur* (2011-12) Ariadne at Naxos, and *Silver* (2010) Icarus and Daedalus. Non-dramatically extant ancient Greek myths were selected in order to seek to explore dramatic possibilities beyond Greek tragedy. The diverse ways in which this body of work was approached is framed by the influence of contemporary theatre practice. Alongside this creative enquiry, the thesis explores the impetus which prompted practitioners to turn to classical mythology for inspiration over two millennia since the myths were created. Reflection on the processes which led to the creation of these plays in relation to the author's own highlights potential conflicts between ancient and contemporary theatre practice, and seeks to explore ways in which the juxtaposition between traditional and contemporary approaches to theatre making can spark creative engagements. The fission between tradition and subversion was a key factor in the creation of the plays now presented, offering possible insights into the ways in which contemporary practitioners can benefit from a playful engagement with traditional practice in order to generate new work.

Acknowledgements

At the beginning of this journey I had no idea of my final destination, and it's thanks to some truly inspiring mentors that I have got this far. This thesis would not have been possible without their insight, encouragement and acceptance and it's my pleasure to be able to thank them here. I would firstly like to recognise the guidance and wisdom of my supervisor Professor Ian Brown. I have been fortunate to have his mentorship throughout this academic and creative journey, in which he has been a constant source of encouragement, perception and understanding. His wit and passion for the craft has kept me going through many figurative walls, and even got me over the first hurdle, when I almost refused this call to adventure. Thanks also is also due to Professor Colin Chambers and Doctor Alex Mermikides who helped to steer the path of my practice through both troubled and calm waters, encouraging me to continue to write through walls and reminding me when to come to a stop.

I am equally indebted to the academic team at Kingston University who enthused my passion for drama throughout my first degree and postgraduate studies. Frank Whately who continued to fuel my love of the classics as an undergraduate, Doctor Jackie Smart for always encouraging me to think outside the box, the late Steve Knapper who inspired my curiosity of archetypes through his passion for Commedia dell arte, and last but in by no means least Doctor Trish Reid for her reminder that

Contents:

INTRODUCTION

Research focus

This PhD explores through a creative enquiry the possible approaches to, and applications of classical mythology for the contemporary playwright. My definition of the contemporary playwright rests in part upon the context of my own practice. Therefore this study on the whole focuses upon contemporary theatre in Britain, with some reflection upon the wider theatre landscape. A new play is just as likely to be the product of a collaborative as a solo act of authorship in contemporary theatre, as Kenneth Pickering (2010) observes 'the boundaries between "writing" and "devising" have become imprecise.'(p.16). However, British theatre continues to place a particular investment in new writing, Aleks Sierz (2011) sees it as the 'heart of British theatre' (p.16) and new plays created at the dawn of the third millennium are influenced and inspired by a variety of sources, driven by artistic, personal and political agendas, as playwrights' embrace many creative and structural possibilities in the development of their work.

My practice has been inspired, influenced and fostered by two of Sierz 'big six' New Writing Theatres, the Royal Court's Young Writer's Programme (2001) and the Writer's Centre at Soho Theatre through workshops and writer's clinics. I, like many of my contemporaries, have been inspired and influenced not only by the workshops and writers programmes that they offer but also indelibly by the plays they and other new writing theatres produce. As Sierz observes; '[w]hen British theatre lets its hair down, and starts to loosen up, a whole world of experiment becomes available to writers of every generation' (2011 p.223). Approaches to the

development of new plays can range diversely from the classic to the contemporary.

One of these experiments with a long antecedent in the development of new work is

to respond to pre-existing narrative sources. The focus of my creative practice as

research enquiry was to explore and experiment in the ways in which contemporary

playwrights could be inspired by pre-existing sources, specifically classical myths in

the development of new writing which reflected the contemporary world.

The Plays

Between the summer of 2010 and spring 2013 in response to this creative

engagement, I developed three new plays *Silver* (2010 - 2013), *Sodium* (2010-11),

and *Sulphur* (2011-12) inspired by non-dramatically extant classical mythology, in

order to explore possible approaches to classical myth for the contemporary

playwright. The results of this enquiry are relevant in the first instance to

practitioners and theatre-makers that work with, or are considering working with,

classical mythology in the development of their own work. Although myths inspire

many playwrights and practitioners, there are few practical or theoretical guides. The

discussions here go a little way towards filling this gap. Some of the discussions will

also be of relevance to scholars of contemporary drama and new writing, along with

those with an interest in the lasting relationship between classical mythology and

western theatre. Equally this body of work adds to the growing contemporary studies

prompted by theories of intertextuality, of the nature of adaptation, appropriation and

revision in contemporary playwrights practice.

1. Research Questions

Essentially this practice-as-research study focuses on the practice of making plays; how do we make plays in response to pre-existing narratives? This over-riding question contains a number of other subsidiary questions: is there a specific method by which we can respond to them in contemporary practice? Could a mythic narrative support what Martin Middeke observes to be the 'transgressions of the traditional boundaries of theatre' (2011 p.28) which could in turn reflect the changing face of the contemporary world and in so doing, contemporary theatre itself? Maya Roth observes in her monograph on Timberlake Wertenbaker, a playwright well known for her translations and adaptions of the classical cannon that 'the Latin roots for the word "translation" derive from "to carry" or "to bring" and "across."' (2008, p.11). A translation attempts to be as faithful to the source as possible, whilst an adaptation *brings across* the narrative in a way which highlights the sources connection to its destination, bridging and *carrying* forward the narrative whilst also altering it for a new audience.

Yet adaptation is not the only way in which a source can be carried over. In *The Shadow of the Precursor,* an anthology which explores the diverse engagements between source texts and those which echo, resonate and embrace them, Diana Glenn, Md Rezaul Haque, and Ben Kooyman (2012) observe 'The accommodation of the precursor can take many forms – direct citation or adaptation, veneration or homage, intertextual play or association [...]' (p.9). I set out to explore the different forms and possibilities of, adaptation, appropriation and re-visioning, along with a

collage of approaches to develop and *carry* the initial inspiration the myths provided

for the development of new work.

Throughout this process I asked the following questions of my practice and

that of other playwrights and practitioners. What is the dramatic precedent for this

process and how does it inform contemporary engagements with classical myths?

What is the spectrum of approaches by which the contemporary playwright can

engage with and utilise the material of a pre-existing source myth, from faithful

homage to a playful bricolage, and what are the possible challenges faced and

benefits gained when engaging in these approaches? How far could a playwright go

in pushing the myth into the realms of contemporary theatre before it was no longer

a myth at all? What could mythic structures and archetypes offer to the

contemporary playwright, and was there a way which these could be applied to a

mythic method? Finally could aspects of recurring narrative structures, which had

been perceived by Claude Levi-Strauss, Joseph Campbell and other structural

anthropologists be used in the transposition of a mythic narrative from one age to

another? These questions where key to the genesis of the three plays and the related

research.

Classical mythology

William Hansen in his *Handbook of Classical Mythology* observes that:

Greek and Roman myths and legends are essentially *stories*. Since they are
anonymous narratives that were transmitted from one person to another and
from one generation to the next, they can be further described as *traditional*
stories. And since for the most part they developed at a time when writing
was unknown or little used, they are mostly *oral* stories. (2004 p.2)

The genesis of mythic narratives makes them a ready source for dramatic transpositions and engagements. Along with this Miriam Chirico (2012) who devised the term 'mythic revisionary drama' observes that the oral nature of myths 'necessitates the act of revision or transformation each time' (p.16) they are retold. In *A Short History of Myth*, a concise companion to series of Canongate books in which contemporary novelists were asked to respond to diverse myths including Theseus and the Minotaur, Heracles and Oedipus, mythographer Karen Armstrong (2005) claims that 'Human beings have always been mythmakers.' (p.1)

Since the dawn of antiquity we have developed myths through series of stories which have been told and retold for generations. The Greek word 'muthos' has, after all, the core meaning of 'story'. Classical myths have been interpreted in multi-various ways, and therefore offer multiple sites of meaning-making. The critique and literary historian Gilbert Highet (1949) observed that in the western world, for centuries we have been 'captivated by the Greek legends, [telling] them in different ways, elaborating some and neglecting others' (p.520). The Metaphoric tales are protean: we can play with them, manipulate them, and transform them, reshaping the myth with every engagement.

Classical myths were first generated and recorded by the ancient Greeks. These myths formed part of a pre-literate oral storytelling culture until the advent of writing. The Greek tragedies are our first significant record of many of these myths, which went on to inspire the first act of drama criticism which still has an impact on the way we teach, critique and evaluate plays in the contemporary world, Aristotle's *Poetics*. However it is certain that the stories were re-enacted and performed by storytellers, bards and poets including Homer and Virgil, before playwrights drew

their own responses. These myths where then retold and revised by the Romans, including Seneca to reflect their own civilisation. In their revisions these myths were joined by a host of other mythic tales from the birth of the Roman Empire. Each teller took a different view of mythic revision and contextualised the myth for their generation making changes to serve their own purpose.

Non-dramatically extant classic myth

In the introduction of *Theatre Histories* Phillip, B, Zarrilli (2010) demonstrates the connection between mythology and classical theatre, and observes that mythology can offer a 'rich storehouse' (p.13), of narrative possibilities to explore. It is significant to note when we turn to this *storehouse* that '[t]here is never a single, orthodox version of a myth.' (Armstrong 2005, p.11). However in myths which have been canonised in dramatically extant versions, preserved through the ages and still performed on contemporary stages across the globe there is a significant dramatic version, the endurance of which offers an air of orthodoxy despite being a revision of a source myth. I define non-dramatically classical mythology as Greek myths, and Roman re-visions of myths, which do not have an extant representation through Greek tragedy or comedy.

Myths are polymorphic, and unfixed, there is a synergy between the open quality of a myth and the pluralistic possibilities a contemporary theatre might offer practitioners. The benefits of using classical non-dramatically extant source myths as a source of inspiration for new writing lies in their uncertainty, their unfixed nature. Writer and mythographer, Marina Warner (1994) observes that part of myths power is their openness, their power to be transformed through each revision; 'myths aren't

writ in stone, they're not fixed [and] change dramatically both in content and meaning' (p.13). The myths' multiplicity and plasticity of meanings and possible interpretations allows freedom in the ways in which we choose to creatively interpret and engage with the material they offer.

The French literary theorist, Roland Barthes published a collection of essays, *Mythologies* (1957) exploring the semiology of myth creation, in which he saw myths as elevated, second level signs, asserting 'it is the reader of myths himself who must reveal their essential function.' (1993, p.115). Interpretation is central to the process of meaning making and thus, the practitioner is responsible for interpreting the myth through their own contextual filters. Therefore each time a myth is re-made it is refracted through the artist's context. Myths can be fixed by the artist's interpretation, or indeed the artists can choose to utilise the flux of uncertainty as a creative spark.

In my revisions I have sought to side step prior dramatic references to mythic sources, through the selection of non-dramatically extant mythic sources, whilst being aware that as Verna A. Foster (2012) states:

> [S]ources in myth and sources in literature are not entirely separable since in some instances the best-known version of a particular myth is an earlier literary work.' (p.3).

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is a key to our understanding and knowledge of non-dramatically extant myths. Renaissance dramatists including Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare were inspired by translations of Ovid which became popular in the Renaissance period. Ovid's revisions of the Greek myths inspired

dramatists, visual artists and musicians, and continued to be a site of inspiration in the twentieth century. In *Twentieth-Century Plays Using Classical Mythic Themes: a Checklist,* Susan Harris Smith (1986) lists over 700 hundred plays which utilise mythic themes from myths enshrined by Greek tragedies and those of a non-dramatically extant nature. She records 22 plays from 1911 to 1972 which have been inspired by the non-dramatically extant Cretan myths, which I sought to respond to in my own practice, including John Ashbery's, *The Heroes* (1978) and George Bernard-Shaw's *Heartbreak House* (1919) which draws less directly from its mythic inspiration than his earlier mythic revision *Pygmalion* (1912). The diverse responses through a process of reinterpretation and revitalization' (Highet, 1949, p.520) that mythic narratives prompt are impressive. Certainly there are many more instances of playwrights developing work in response to non-dramatically extant classic myths who do not directly reference the source of inspiration, alongside those who make direct connections. Every year of the third millennium has seen at least one West End production directly attributing connections to classical mythology, as will be discussed in greater detail in chapter two.

2. Research Context

In recent years there have been many creative engagements and dramatic re-telling of classical myths. Playwrights from Timberlake Wertenbaker to Joanna Laurens and companies from Kneehigh to The Wooster Group have all engaged in dramatically revising classical mythology for the contemporary stage. Many contemporary productions do not solely seek to re-tell the myths, they engage with them in new, exciting, current and sometimes unexpected ways. Often these practitioners turn to the myths of the past to tell the stories of today, each re-telling

holding contemporary currency, not just in their artistic forms but in the way they connect the contemporary experience to classical civilisations In 2011 Ioannis Souris had researched the possible sources of inspiration offered by the myth of Helen of Troy in solo and collaborative theatre making in her PhD thesis *The myth of Helen of Troy: reinterpreting the archetypes of the myth in solo and collaborative forms of playwriting.* As a contemporary playwright and deviser who sought to respond to a myth with a dramatically extant version, unlike the myths I sought to explore, Souris drew directly upon Jungian archetypes in her creative engagement and reflection. The concept of the Jungian archetype as Carl Jung states 'is derived from the repeated observation that, for instance, the myths and fairy tales of world literature contain definite motifs which crop up everywhere.' (Jung, 1964, p.451). Thus the archetype can allow the playwright to draw upon a series of connecting motifs along with the resonances they hold in their own creative work.

The creative context of contemporary playwriting is inspired and influenced by three core drives: dramatic traditions, individual artistic context and the urge to push the form forward into new territories. Inspired by the work of playwrights and academics such as Ian Brown, I chose to explore the possibilities of ancient Greek myth as a source of inspiration in the creation and development of new plays through this practice-as-research enquiry. Brown had been inspired in writing his plays on such figures as Andrew Carnegie, Mary, Queen of Scots, and David Livingstone by an interest in the way our perception of history, and its theatrical representation, changed the way we see individuals and their 'history'. Out of that historiographical and dramaturgical connection he developed an interest in the links between history and myth, which he explores in the reflective aspects of his thesis, *History as*

Theatrical Metaphor. These review the development of and reflect upon his own dramatic responses to, the mythification of key historic figures in the development of the plays which formed the basis of his thesis.

Indeed history and mythology have a common bond of the known and the unknown for the audiences of work responding to them. In an act of revision the audience is made to review their prior awareness of the myth and in this way the playwright has the opportunity to build upon prior knowledge and awareness in the audiences mind: Susan Bassnett (2000) observes the way in which this double awareness can work in the case of historic and ergo mythic tales revised for the stage;

> To some extent, a process of evaluation of the original historic material is bound to take place and in consequence the audience cannot avoid being made to rethink what they know. (p.79)

3. Research Methodology

My own creative approach to classical mythology was driven by a self-commission and the rigours of an academic enquiry, and my selection of myths was a personal one. It was also rooted in the research for my Masters in Making Plays at Kingston University (2009-10), which had a dual focus on playwriting and devising. This allowed initial experiments of mythic potential as a source of inspiration for the contemporary playwright with the development of an earlier version of *Silver*. That research focused, as has its evolution into my doctoral research, on artistic

engagement with myths and reflection upon how they have inspired my solo practice and therefore might inspire other playwrights and practitioners, rather than on the plays in production. In my doctoral programme, I had no pre-conception of the shape, form or structure the plays would take and the specific ways in which these mythic narratives, forged over two millennia ago, would inspire my work. I did not set out with a specific methodology but forged one as a cumulative response to the experiments and experiences with myths which I gathered throughout the development of the plays.

The creative methodology was a mixture of both intentional exploration and moments of serendipity, as there is no one single method offered for the playwright who seeks to re-tell classical mythology. Each play was developed first individually and latterly was drawn into the inter-connective triptych of plays. In this way, I could build upon each new development, discovery, experiment and insight, and draw them into the next creative encounter with the following mythic source. Each of the three plays I created engaged with a different non-dramatically extant classical myth through a different approach to the source material. *Silver* was an experiment to see if the monomythic structure set out by Christopher Vogler in *The Writer's Journey* (1992) would support a mythic re-vision for the stage. *Sodium* was an exploration into the possible uses classical myth in the development of a contemporary tragedy. And finally *Sulphur* was generated by an experiment with the archetypal characters and conventions of the Hero's Journey structure, which integrated dreamlike-imagery drawn from both mythic and contemporary emanations of mythic archetypes, which were explored and developed with the use of stream of consciousness writing exercises.

The three plays were intentionally informed by contemporary theatre practice. I did not seek to re-create or adapt in a faithful fashion nor pay homage to the myths themselves. Instead I sought to play with the myths and allow them to form a significant part of my contemporary bricolage of narrative influences and inspiration in the development of new writing. These three plays are presented in Chapter 3 with a reflection upon my approach illustrating some of the tools which I utilised and developed in the process in Chapter 4.

Thesis Map

The Literature review maps the research that I drew upon throughout my creative practice and offers an overview of work which is synergistic and germane to this creative enquiry. In Chapter 1, I set the scene for this mythic involvement, signposting the influences and inspirations which have an impact on playwrights who seek to develop new work in relation to classical mythology and other distant source narratives. In Chapter 2, I offer a reflection on a selection of mythically inspired plays which offer dramatic precedents and parallels for playwrights making creative connections with classical myths, along with practitioners and scholars who seek to understand the ways in which an artist might engage with dramatic and non-dramatically extant classical mythology. It equally offers an insight into the changing terms of dramatic connections with classical mythology throughout the last hundred years, developing alongside developments in New Writing in Britain.

With each new innovation and development in form we continue to return to classical myth as part of the contemporary repertoire. The selection of plays ranges from classical, modern, and postmodern approaches to both dramatically extant and

non-dramatically extant mythology. I reflect upon the ways in which classical mythology has been adapted, translated, revised and re-told throughout the last 100 years on the western stage. In Chapter 3, I present the three plays, *Silver*, *Sodium*, and *Sulphur*. Finally, in Chapter 4, I reflect upon the ways in which the process of revision, led to their creation and offer possible signposts for other practitioners.

Literature review

I sought to discover publications which were germane to my study as they equally sought to explore the connection between mythology and the contemporary playwrights and practitioners of their times. Three are from 1969, and the others are three more recent enquiries. Thomas Porter's *Myth and the Modern American Drama* (1969), Hugh Dickinson's *Myth on the Modern Stage* (1969), and Angela Belli's *Ancient Greek Myths and Modern Drama* (1969), traced common mythological threads in relationship to playwrights' practice. Over thirty years later Lizbeth Goodman selected and introduced an anthology of plays, excerpts and performance pieces, *Mythic Women/Real Women* (2000). The anthology focuses upon the notion of 'real' and 'mythic' women, and includes contemporary revisions of classical myths, along with Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Love of a Nightingale.* This was followed by Edith Hall's *Dionysus Since 69: Greek tragedy at the Dawn of the Third Millennium* (2004) which picks up some of the strands, offering a critical response to the continuing influence and inspiration classical mythology, its title referring to Richard Schechner's *Dionysus in 69* (1969), a postmodern response to the myths of Dionysus and Euripides' tragedy *The Bacchae.* However the focus of Hall's study is upon Greek tragedy in revision and does not take into account the wider sources of inspiration offered by non-dramatically extant myths.

The following studies from the twenty-first century focus on the inspiration contemporary practitioners draw from connections between mythology and other oral narrative genres including fairy tale and folklore. Sharon Friedman's *Feminist*

Theatrical Revisions of Classic Works (2009), Frances Babbage, whose PhD thesis

Re-visioning Myth: Feminist Strategies in Contemporary Theatre (2000) had focused

on mythic re-visioning, drew insights from her enquiry into this approach to ancient

myths in *Re-visioning Myth: Modern and Contemporary Drama by Women* (2011);

and Verna Foster's *Dramatic Revisions of Myths, Fairy Tales and Legends* (2012).

Unlike Porter, Dickinson, Belli, Hall and Foster, Babbage and Friedman focus purely

on the work of female practitioners with centring on gender as a spark to re-vision

ancient and classical texts. As Frances Babbage (2011) reflects:

> 'Classical myth inevitably holds special interest to European feminism since
>
> the art, philosophy and science of western civilisation developed with
>
> reference to its terms.' (p.22).

These studies all demonstrate possible approaches to the practices of

adaptation in relation to ancient Greek mythology, and the continuing precedent of

this work in contemporary theatre practice, which in turn supports the primacy of

research in relation to the creative approach to making new work in relationship to

ancient mythic sources. They, along with Porter, Belli and Dickinson's studies, offer

a wealth of examples of responses to the task of re-imagining myth for a

contemporary stage. Yet they only offer an external view of the practice, responding

to the artefacts of mythic encounters, rather than exploring this process from an

internal creative process. One of the key recurrent themes in these studies is the

practice of adaptation and all its many forms, from translation, appropriation and

revision.

In seeking to discover a formative methodology for an engagement with

mythic sources I searched many playwriting guides from the classic to the

contemporary with the aim of finding a possible paradigm for dramatic engagements with Classical mythology, but found little to guide the writer who sought to engage with pre-existing sources, especially mythic ones. There are of course many publications which claim to guide the playwright from their initial ideas to a final draft, and some even to the opening night. Yet what literature is available to the contemporary playwright who seeks to develop new work in response to classical mythology?

Methodological approaches to the development of new work in response to classical mythology was scarce when the part that classical mythology has to play in contemporary theatre is considered. I sought a methodological approach to the creation of plays which respond directly to classical myths I discovered a gap in possible methodological approaches. I sought to fill with this lacuna as research thesis studies in depth the ways in which a contemporary playwright might benefit from a creative engagement with non-dramatically extant classical mythology. This study offers a reflection on my own process in relation to that of other playwrights. The creative body of this work spans several areas of practice and research. It is situated between the fields of contemporary playwriting, classical mythology, literature which relates to other creative engagements with mythology, including cinema and, applied theatre settings most germane to my own creative enquiry, literature which relates the ways in which practitioners can and have drawn upon classical mythic sources alongside adaptation theory.

The focus of my creative exploration into the uses of non-dramatically extant classical myth for the contemporary playwright led me to take a wide overview of the literature available on the subjects of playwriting, creative writing and screenwriting in relationship to my intentions to explore possible methodological

approaches to the development of contemporary plays in relationship to ancient Greek mythology. There are several books on the subject of myth in revisions which are germane to the research presented in this thesis, but significantly they focus on an external examination and reflection upon the work of other practitioners rather than a practice as research reflection.

Undoubtedly many more guides exist for playwrights than did in 2001 when I joined the Young Writers Group at The Royal Court, eager to learn the principles of play, led in this exploration by Simon Stephens. Certainly the playwright's armoury of skills is often now attained by attending workshops, engaging with other playwrights, through mentorship programmes, at educational establishments and most significantly by watching and reading plays. All of this I continued to do throughout this creative development, through the Soho Theatre's Writer's Programme and workshops run by the playwright Dianne Samuels along with others. Though the most creatively profitable ways to understand what works dramatically in your own work is to hold readings, stage work and receive feedback from literary departments. They are all effective ways to fine-tune your process and practice. Yet these guides are growing as the practice of playwriting is drawn into the academy, both as a taught pedagogy and a source of creative enquiry. We want to know what makes a play and in turn breaks it. Even when our creative engagements seek to develop new forms, we want to know the rules before we break them.

In search of a formative methodology with which to develop a contemporary creative engagement with classical mythology I turned to the literature available to guide contemporary playwrights in the development of new plays. Since the first recorded act of dramatic criticism in the western world, Aristotle's *Poetics* was written in the fourth century BC, critics, practitioners, playwrights and academics

have continued to explore the constituents and conventions of playwriting. Including

Lajos Egris's *The Art of Dramatic Writing* (1960) which draws deeply upon

the *Poetics*. Any survey on guides which offers a formative writing pedagogy will

reflect upon the impact of the *Poetics* as a foundation through which we view and

review the act of playwriting and those who engage in it, though it is significant to

note that Aristotle was writing, not in response to his own work, but to plays which

had been first staged before he was born. He was not reflecting upon playwriting in

the light of his own practice. However at the beginning of the third millennium,

guides are being created in response to playwrights' reflection upon their own craft

and are therefore offering first hand reflections upon the practice of playwriting from

the writing room.

These guides have been influential in facilitating discussions about

playwriting and its techniques and conventions. Seeking to understand the ways in

which plays can be created and developed, with each new guide comes a different

angle on how plays should be created and developed and what the essential elements

of storytelling are. I explored some contemporary playwriting guides in an effort to

discover methodological and pedagogical approaches to source narratives,

specifically classical mythological ones. With each new guide comes a different

angle on how plays should be created and developed and what the essential elements

of storytelling are. The theatre of the third millennium has inspired the creation of

myriad of playwriting guides which offer playwrights exercises, approaches and

practical tools along with reflections upon pre-existing examples of practice. These

include Paul Castango's *New Playwriting Strategies* (2001), which focuses on a

language-based approach to developing new drama, Stuart Spencer's *The*

Playwrights Guidebook (2003) and Alan Ayckbourn's *The Crafty Art of*

Playmaking (2002) which is divided between a reflection upon playwriting and directing, focusing his reflection on the craft on Ayckbourn's own plays.

Noël Greig's *Playwriting: a Practical Guide* (2004) offers practical exercises for the development of new plays, often underpinned by character-centred development. Janet Neipris' *To Be a Playwright* (2005), Tim Fountain's *So, You Want to Be a Playwright?* (2007), David Mamet's *Writing In Restaurants* (1986) and *The Three Uses Of the Knife* (2007), and John Freeman's *New Performance/ New Writing* (2007), which offers reflections on approaches to solo and group authorship in a contemporary frame, all offer valuable perspectives. Michelene Wandor's formative pedagogy is seen in her *Art of Dramatic Writing* (2008). David Edgar, founder of the first MA Playwriting course, at Birmingham University, has produced *How Plays Work* (2009). These works were complemented and developed by Steve Waters in *The Secret Life of Plays* (2010) and by Lisa Goldman in *The No Rules Handbook for Writers* (2012), which offers a different way of looking at playwriting pedagogy by responding to forty rules, which Goldman and the group of contemporary playwrights she consulted in the development of the book challenge with 'rule breakers'.

Though they all have something to offer to the contemporary playwright seeking to develop and explore the conventions of their craft, as Waters (2010) himself states, 'the great plays tumbled out heedless of all this theorising' (p.3) and playwrights have always sought to challenge and experiment with form. Certainly there is very little to guide the playwright in the adaptive re-visioning process. Though Neipris does offer a chapter on adaptation, this focuses upon the adaptation of books or movies to stage, not the non-dramatically extant classical myths I sought to transpose. Waters (2010) concludes *The Secret Life of Plays* with the coda that the

way that plays are developed is still a 'mystery' as the craft continues to 'elude definition' (p.202).

Though the practice of adaptation and appropriation has largely not figured in contemporary playwrights' training, adaptation theory has become a growing point of academic research and offers the playwright and practitioner a way of beginning to think about the process of inspiration and the interrelation between their work and sources of inspiration. Around the end of the twentieth century a playwright might have turned to the field of film studies for a pedagogical response to the art of adaptation such as those offered by Kenneth Portnoy's *Screen Adaptation: a Scriptwriting Handbook* (1998) and Mireia Aragay's *Books in Motion; Adaptation, Intertextuality, Authorship* (2005). These offer reflections upon approaches to the practice of adaptation specifically for screenwriters, though some aspects are transposable to stage. Graham Allen (2011), in *Intertextuality* observes that 'Adaptation studies has its origins precisely in the study of film's intertextual relationship to literature. '(p.205).

The field has widened to include the impact of adaptation and appropriation in the creation and development of new work across contemporary media as Julie Sanders and Linda Hutcheon have offered key studies into the theory of adaptation, having both staked the claim for adaptation as a creative act in its own right. Linda Hutcheon, in *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006), offers five key foci for those who seek to think about adaptation, the forms in which we seek to adapt work, both to and from (the what), the adapters (the who and why), the audience and those we seek to receive our adaptive versions (the how), and the context of the adaptation (the when and where). Julie Sanders (2005) in *Adaptation and Appropriation*, however, offers the reader a reflection on the nature of adaptation and appropriation through a

reflection on the different approaches to different narrative sources throughout the centuries.

Sanders and Hutcheon equally reflect upon the process and practice of adaptation and appropriation for the contemporary playwright, but again, from an external viewpoint. In editing *Performing Adaptations: Essays and Conversations on the Theory and Practice of Adaptation* (2009) Michelle MacArthur, Lydia Wilkinson, and Keren Zaiontz offer a comprehensive review of adaptation studies and performance in the third millennium, which include a preface and an interview with Linda Hutcheon. Altogether it offers reflections about the changing face of adaptation on the contemporary stage and the ways in which receptions of adaptations are changing. Alison Forsyth (2009) drew together a reflection on different responses to the Antigone myth in her essay in this collection, *Pacifist Antigones* and, thereby, offered a reflection on the possibilities of ancient Greek myth as a source in the adaptive field. Yet, again this reflection was from an external rather than internal view of the practice of adapting myth. Though these studies offer insightful reflections and responses on the development of adaptation as an art form in its own right, the breadth of their studies and responses did not offer the focused review of mythic adaptation from a playwright's perspective that I sought to achieve.

The guidance offered by Stuart Harcourt on behalf of the ITC (2004) for the playwright seeking to adapt is 'to study how successful playwrights [...] take a novel and eventually create a successful play' (p.25). A playwright seeking to draw inspiration in a creative adaptation in the contemporary age could equally draw inspiration from successful companies who devise and collaborate in response to pre-existing narrative sources. Gardzienice, Shared Experience, The Wooster Group, and Kneehigh who have all responded to the challenge of re-visioning ancient Greek

myth for the contemporary stage and have reflected upon this practice in journals and reflective studies of their own bodies of work. *Hidden Territories* (2003) reveals Gardzienice's approach to ancient Greek myths. Emma Rice's reflections upon the selection of source material and the company's adaptive approaches to narrative sources is related in the introduction to the *Kneehigh Anthology, Volume 1* (2005), offering some insights into their art of adaptation. And other reflections upon creative practice are often posited in anthologies of artist's reflections on their creative work: *Rage and Reason: Women Playwrights on Playwriting* (1997) and Jonathan Croall's *Buzz Buzz!* (2008). A playwright might also gather insights from monographs such as Aleks Sierz's (2006) reflection on the work of Martin Crimp, or Normand Berlin's (1982) study of Eugene O'Neill.

Once inspired to respond to a classical myth there is a wealth of material the playwright can respond to. No student of classical mythology will ever be at a loss for a starting point for their exploration into the nature and classical application of these classical sources. I myself drew upon many mythic texts in my initial stages of research, from Robert Graves's *Greek Myths 1 &2* (1960), to *Bulfinch's Mythology* (1998 [1934]). Many texts re-tell Classical myths which include the eminent texts of Homer's *Iliad* (1987) and *The Odyssey* (2003), *The Library of Greek Mythology* by Apollodorus (2008), and the Roman poets: Virgil's *Aeneid* (2003), the poems of Catullus (1996) and Ovid's versions of the myths in the *Heroides* (1990) and *Metamorphoses* (2004). Indeed a playwright seeking to understand how a classical myth can be used to reflect a postmodern world would be advised to turn to James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1960 [1922]) for inspiration, as the epic novel draws mythemes and mythic archetypes from Homer's Odyssey.

Whilst developing my dramatic responses, I discovered a fascinating, well-researched survey, of the myths I sought to re-tell in Ann G. Ward *et al.*'s (1970) *The Quest for Theseus.* Though the survey was dated and did not include, therefore, more recent responses and discoveries in relation to the myths, it offered in-depth reflections upon both the historic antecedents of the myths and parallel explorations of the creative inspiration the myths had afforded to artists throughout the centuries. Offering an opportunity to explore the ways in which the meanings of the myths had changed throughout those centuries. And, if as playwrights we seek to explore the dramaturgical conventions of the Greek tragedies and the intentions of their creators, there are innumerable guides that furnish the student of Greek tragic and comic drama with reflection on these practices and the extant works of the ancient Greek tragedians Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, not to forget the comedians Menander and Aristophanes.

Since 2008 I have worked as a drama facilitator with often socially-excluded groups who have complex mental health support needs and/or learning disabilities. In this work, I often utilise mythic narratives along with fairy tales and folklore. In this practice, I had drawn inspiration from the field of drama therapy, discovering that myths could be powerful tools in enactment and improvisation. At Roehampton University's Dramatherapy Summer School in 2009 I was introduced to not only Carl Jung, and Jungian theory specifically through *Memories, Dreams and Reflections* [1962]. In *Psyche and the Arts*, Susan Rowland (2008) explored the impact of Jungian theories upon the ways in which we understand the development of artistic expression in contemporary times.

Jungian concepts help us to tell stories that shape ourselves [...] Jungian ideas offer an understanding of creativity, and, they provide a means of interpreting the results of that creativity. (Rowland 2008, p.2)

Significantly for this body of creative practice, American mythographer, Joseph Campbell was profoundly inspired by Jungian theory. In response to Jung's work, specifically Jungian archetypes and dream analysis, Campbell offered the concept of a monomyth, a comparative structure which he claimed to re-occur across continents throughout the centuries. This monomythic structure was addressed in his seminal text *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1993 [1949]). It offered a way of using ancient myths and stories, along with the archetypal characters and images that peopled them to develop and structure stories in group work, a practice which I would later draw upon in the creation of my plays. I had also been inspired in my practice by Nicola Groves and Keith Park's (1996) *Odyssey Now* which set out ways of delivering workshops for adults with learning disabilities using Homer's *Odyssey* as a structural device for creative play and workshop exploration.

Applied theatre practitioners and drama therapists who have worked in these settings and reflected upon this practice can be found in the psychoanalytic psychotherapist Jenny Pearson's (2008) edited collection of reflections upon drama-therapeutic practice *Discovering the Self through Drama and Movement,* specifically the articles 'The Minotaur in Three Settings' by Bernie Spivak (2008) and 'Working with Myth and Story' by Pat Watts (2008). Though, of course, mythic narratives are one of many approaches into drama therapeutic and applied theatre settings, they appeared to offer rich pickings in my practice as a facilitator and story-teller and I sought to explore the ways in which these myths might inspire my writing. Was there a guide or applicable methodological structure that a contemporary playwright

could draw upon in the creation of new writing inspired by ancient Greek

mythology, just as I had found guides for practitioners using them in applied theatre

settings?

Contemporary audiences are influences by a wide variety of storytelling

mediums including film, video games, and television. The contemporary playwright

takes these forms of influence into account when developing new work, and many of

the storytelling techniques used in these mediums have been assimilated into the

dramaturgical toolbox of the contemporary playwright, including flash backs, voice

over, and the use of multimedia. Equally films use of structure has had an impact on

the way in which audience receives and expects to receive story. Therefore the

centrality of the Hero's Journey Structure and its influence on film was of key

interest to the playwright who determines to explore the possible ways in which

mythology can inspire the generation of new work. There is a wide selection of

publications which attempt to guide the artists in their creative practice and offer an

insight into the creative development of new work to the student of the craft. On the

whole, literature relating to the development of new work inspired by mythic

subjects, structures, characters and narratives came from the school of screen writing

and creative writing.

Most significantly in relation to my creative enquiry was Christopher

Vogler's *The Writer's Journey* (1992), which offered a structural tool, along with an

insight into the possible uses of mythic archetypes as a structural primer for the

screenwriter and storyteller who sought to develop work in relation to what Joseph

Campbell had termed the monomyth in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1993

[1949]). Sue Clayton in *Mythic Structure in Screenwriting* (2007) notes connections

between screenwriting and mythology through classic and monomythic story structures, observing that 'the mythic material itself becomes continually new by being reused in different contexts alongside other sources' (p.221), perceiving an enduring connection between the ancient and the contemporary in screenwriting prompted by 'frequent references in screenplay manuals to Aristotle's *Poetics'* (ibid p.209).

Lisa Goldman (2012) refers to the Hero's Journey in her *No Rules* guidebook for playwrights to illustrate her reflection upon our relationship to the principles of storytelling and relates how elements of the structure can be perceived in a classic five-act play structure described in her 9th rule (pp.64-5). However, *The Writer's Journey* (1992) is mainly focused upon writers who seek to develop screenplays; with many references are to Hollywood blockbusters, which include the *Star Wars* trilogy (1977-1983). George Lucas along with the Disney studios had been inspired by the Hero's Journey structure, which Christopher Vogler set out from Campbell's research and reflections.

In 2011 Vogler followed up his structural pedagogy for screenwriters with David McKenna (2011) in *Memo from the Story Department, Secrets of Structure and Character.* In which he draws connections between Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey structure and Vladimir Propp's Wonder Tale structure set out in *The Theory and History of Folklore* (1968 [1946]) and *Morphology of the Folktale* (2003 [1928]), making direct connections between the structural nature of the formative narratives of myths, folklore and in turn fairy tales. The nature of these formative engagements with narrative structures and forms, was explored in depth by Bettelheim's 1976 study *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of*

Fairy Tales, which can offer further insights into the foundations of our structural engagements with and expectations of narrative. Whilst those seeking contemporary reflections upon the ways in which fairy-tale and mythic motifs and archetypes are, and can be utilised and re-vised in the contemporary world, alongside reflections on their antecedence should turn Marina Warner's insightful and significant body of work which includes *No Go the Bogeyman (2000) and The Beast And The Blonde (1995).*

Chapter 1:

Classical mythology as a source of inspiration for the Contemporary practitioner

Critical debates about the nature of authorship have made it clear that even in original work we are drawing upon a number of influences, with this in mind Graham Allen (2011) is keen to observe 'the intertextual nature of all texts.' (p.206). However when a playwright turns to mythology as a source of inspiration there is something more at work than intertextual acts of bricolage. The impetus to develop new work in relation to classical mythology has an extensive antecedence in the western world. In this chapter I reflect upon this antecedence and the impact it has upon contemporary engagements with myth. In the first section; I provide a background to the foundation of dramatic engagements with classical mythology in the west, through a reflection upon the indelible connection between tragedy and classical mythology, which provides a critical context for this contemporary engagement. In section two, I illustrate the antecedents of contemporary engagements with classical mythology, including the impact of the Renaissance. In section three, I consider the possible tensions between contemporary practice and creative engagements with classical mythology. In the final section of this chapter I catalogue a spectrum of possible approaches to classical mythology for contemporary playwrights.

Section 1: Tragedy and Classical mythology

Simon Goldhill perceives that 'Greek tragedy is the foundation and origin of Western Theatre.' (2007, p.222), and in turn tragedy has an indelible connection to

classical mythology. Greek tragedians Aeschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles used Greek myths as a source for their tragic dramas. Alan H Sommerstein examines the way that mythic material was reworked in diverse ways 'over and over again [with myth accounting for the basis of] well over 99 percent of all the tragedies that were written.' (2005, p.163). Greek tragedies were written for yearly competitions to be performed at the festival of Dionysus with three dramatists each creating a trilogy of tragic plays to compete for the title of best 'tragic playwright'. Relatively few of these tragedies exist in extant form; seven extant plays are attributed to Aeschylus including the *Oresteia*, the only fully extant trilogy, seven to Sophocles and nineteen to Euripides.

Greek tragedy told the stories of great men and women, of hero's and gods and in turn developed dramatic techniques which are still discernible in contemporary drama. Though they often drew upon the same wellspring of mythic sources tragic narratives unlike the epic poems of Vergil and Homer, that preceded them, conveyed a myths through *mimesis,* whereas epics had represented action by recounting the story by *diegesis.* Tragedies followed a linear narrative structure whereas epic narratives had often commenced *in medias res.* Characters in tragedy experienced *peripeteia,* a reversal of fortune which was central to the tragic plot as the protagonist's fate changed from good to bad and their stature from high to low. Tragic heroes could suffer from *hubris,* an exaggerated self-pride or self-confidence which often resulted in fatal retribution. This *hubris* might be the reason for a tragic hero's *hamartia,* a fatal flaw which Christopher Vogler (1992) observes place the hero 'at odds with their destiny, their fellow men, or the gods.'(p.92). From Greek tragedy we also inherit the term *nemesis,* a force of retribution for these acts of

harmartia. Before the tragedy ends the protagonist may experience *angorisis* the moment of insight when they understand the impact of both their actions, and their fate, which has led to their tragic end.

Fate was central to tragic plot in ancient Greece as Rowland Wymer (2008) observes in his essay on the *Tragedy and the Future*:

> In many tragedies, choices made and deeds performed before the start of the play initiate a chain of consequences whose inexorability can be conceptualized by both characters and spectators as "fate". (p.262).

The ancient Greeks believed in a fate which was prescribed by the gods and from which there was no escape even for heroes. 'The word most commonly translated as "fate", *moria,* carries with it the implication of the inevitable retribution.' (Wymer 2008, p.262). Director, Dominic Dromgoole reflects on the role of the chorus in Greek tragedy, who commented upon the action of the play, and formed an 'integral part of the drama.' (2001, p.43) calling judgement upon the protagonists actions and choices. Karelisa Hartigan (2013) argues that there are 'two types of choice in ancient tragedy.' (p.38). She defines these choices as firstly 'where people make deliberate choices and cling to them all costs' and secondly in a situation in which 'a character must choose between two options, either one of which will lead to disaster.' (ibid).

The myths status in Greek society allowed the tragedians to work with a body of narratives, the details of which, the audience had a shared prior knowledge of. Conflict was as central to ancient tragedy as it is our contemporary emanations of the form, Eric Bentley observed 'at the heart of tragedy is a tough dialectical struggle

in which the victory of either side is credible.'(1991, p.55). Greek tragedy drew its

protagonists and antagonist from a cast of mythic archetypes to embody the *agon.*

Sommerstein (2005) perceives that to the Ancient Greeks a myth was a starting

point, a framework within which they could develop original responses; 'exploiting,

renewing' (p.117), taking an existing story to 'modify' (ibid, p.166) for their own

dramatic ends. One of the theatrical conventions the Greeks developed in order to

revision the myths in new ways was the *dues ex machina,* which allowed innovations

in the retelling of myths.

Tragedy is indelibly connected with ancient Greek rituals and performance

'the etymology of the word tragedy, comes from the Greek *tragos,* or goat song,

because goats were often used as sacrificial stand-ins for the yearly sacrifice of the

king.'(Vogler 1992, p.346). Yet the word tragedy is also used to describe real events

in which humanity is faced with horrific suffering and loss. In 2001 millions of

viewers watched live news unfold as the first tower of the World Trade Centre fell

and the second aeroplane headed inexorably towards the remaining tower. It seemed

like a disaster movie, and yet the tragedy was a reality, which would be forever

remembered as 9/11.

In the third millennium we have the ability to vicariously experience tragedy

on a daily basis, both through dramatized acts and via reports of real human tragedy

from across the globe. Wars, tsunamis, earth quakes, forest fires, viruses which

threaten to decimate entire communities are projected on our screens, along with

those more personal tragedies; missing children, fallen soldiers, lives which are

taken from the world too soon. A tragedy is a disaster, an event after which our

experience of the world is changed irrevocably and there has never been a time in

human history where we have been able to experience these tragedies on such a scale. Surely we would grow sick of tragedy, turn off our TV's, switch off our devises, stop reading newspapers and close our doors on the world tragedies, yet in most cases we don't. In fact we often turn to tragic drama in order to understand the harsher realities of our lives.

Aristotle's *Poetics,* the first act of dramatic criticism, central to our relationship with tragedy in the Western World, propounded the claim for the cathartic benefits of dramatic tragedy over two thousand years ago. He claimed tragedies main objective was *katharsis*, a purification or purging of the spectator after experiencing pity and terror, induced by the tragic plot. The *Poetics* focused on the formal aspects of tragedy which could bring about this *katharsis* in the audience, and sets out an ideal for tragedy which continues to exercise an influence on drama to this day. As Jennifer Wallace (2005) observes in *The Cambridge Introduction to Tragedy* 'nearly all writing on tragedy returns to Aristotle.' (p.117). Yet Aristotle was a critic not a playwright, and as David Edgar (2009) notes, playwright Timberlake Wertenbaker is keen to observe that Aristotle's thesis 'such as they are- don't apply to all or even the majority of the classical Greek plays.' (p.18).

Aristotle used Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* to exemplify his thesis and was didactic in his approach to the form, declaring that 'tragedy depends for its effect on six constituent elements: plot, character, language, thought, the visual, and music.' (Aristotle 2007, p.10). Of these six elements Aristotle held the *visual,* the spectacle with the least regard and the plot the highest; 'The visual, the way the dramatic event looks, is important but not essential to artistic meaning.' (Aristotle 2007, p.11). The plot, or *muthos* frames the structure of events and in the case of the Greek tragedies

this *muthos* was often inspired by myth. Throughout the centuries Aristotle's claim

that plot is the most significant aspect of tragedy has been challenged and brought

under scrutiny. Surely plot and character are non-devisable as character is shown by

action and action relies upon an active protagonist. Though not all dramatists, theatre

theorist and academics agree with all of Aristotle's claims for a tragic theatre, the

Poetics serve as a springboard for debate and enquiry into the nature of theatre both

now and throughout history.

Throughout the centuries tragic philosophers continued to turn to the ancient

Greeks to illustrate their theories, and in-turn influenced and inspired engagements

with the tragic cannon. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) 'presented

tragedy as arguably the dramatization of historical forces and their casualties.'

(Wallace 2005, p.121). In Hegel's view a tragedy occurred when two individuals

with disparate yet equally valid belief systems come into conflict with each other.

Antigone typified his theories with his 'account of tragedy being an expression of the

conflict between two ethically correct contradictory positions.' (Wallace 2005,

p.174).

Hegel's theories where followed up by Friedrich Nietzsche's *The Birth of*

Tragedy 1866, it is key to our contemporary understanding and interest in tragedy

and classical civilisations in relation to the modern world. When it was published

James I. Porter (2005) observes it 'gave new life to the modern reception of tragedy.'

(p.68). Questioning three concepts; 'intuition, appearance and imagination.' (ibid

p.71), at the heart of his discourse on tragedy is the opposition between the Greek

gods, Dionysus and Apollo. Dionysus, the bearer of intoxication, music, ecstasy and

dance, versus Apollonian Calm and restraint is explored. The dionystic impulse

versus the apollonian control which stops us acting on these impulses is illustrated as 'pain and bliss are intertwined with Nietzsche's contradictory view of tragedy.' (Wallace 2005, p.127). Years later Albert Camus explored the tragedy of despair, rooted in the absurdity of existence in *The Myth of Sisyphus*.

In *Modern Tragedy* Raymond Williams (2006 [1966]) surveyed tragedy through the ideas of various philosophers, including Aristotle, Hegel and Camus and through the work of dramatists throughout the twentieth century. Williams selected key dramatists to explore the different ways in which tragedy has been approached connecting movements in both drama, philosophy and critical thought to these developments in form, subject and structure. His reflections on dramatic tragedy include the following dramatists and categories by which Williams approached and reflected upon their work; the 'liberal tragedies' of Henrik Ibsen and Arthur Miller, the 'private tragedies' of August Strindberg, Eugene O'Neill and Tenessee Williams, The 'tragic deadlock and stalemate' envisioned in the work of Anton Chekhov, Luigi Pirandello, Eugène Ionesco and Samuel Beckett, the 'tragic resignation and sacrifice' embodied by the work of T.S.Eliot and finally Bertolt Brecht's 'rejection of tragedy'. Though their dramatic output is diverse, Williams traced the ways in which tragedy had influenced and inspired their work, including reflections upon the ways in which Eliot and O'Neill directly revised Greek tragedy, which is discussed in greater detail in Chapter two.

Williams observed that even when the form was rejected tragedy had an influence and informed the work of the dramatist, perceiving that dramatists and audiences were continually drawn to tragic narratives because the experience of tragedy is so 'central' to human existence. Key to our enduring interest and appetite

for tragedy is the cathartic opportunity it offers the spectator. By witnessing suffering through tragedy we can find strength, as Simon Shepherd and Mick Wallis (2004) attest the experience of tragedy can lead to the audience feeling 'emotionally purged.' (p.275). Witnessing dramatic tragedy offers us the opportunity to make sense of what often seems to be senseless. Dramatic tragedy is often something we turn to in times of change, times of crisis, times of transformation. Sarah Freeman (2010) perceives that 'Western culture employs tragedy to understand itself.' (p.202). Wallace (2012) concurs that tragedy allows us to observe 'the most difficult experiences we face: death, loss, injustice, thwarted passion, despair.' (p.1). So we continue to return to tragic discourses and indeed the mythic discourses they often engage with, in order to understand human experience in a postmodern world, 2,500 years after the Greek's began developing and experimenting with the form. Yet at first glance the presence of a postmodern tragedy might seem somewhat paradoxical. Postmodernism questions, challenges and subverts the stability of form, subject and structure, yet Aristotle's didactic approach suggests that these aspects should be fixed. However Sarah Anne Brown (2008) perceives in a postmodern world:

> 'The persistence of tragedy may be in part ascribed to its capacity to be adapted and transformed across periods and cultures, indeed to be enriched by such displacement.' (p.1)

The postmodern playwright might therefore benefit from the intertextual and meta-theatrical practice which classical tragedy affords. Katja Krebs (2013) notes the ways in which classical tragedies can be recycled intertextually 'in relation with other postmodern techniques, such as bricolage, remake, adaptation, pastiche,

palimpsest and so on.' (p.183) which we will see in the following sections of this chapter.

Section 2 - The antecedents of Contemporary engagements with classical myths

Over forty years ago Angela Belli (1969) perceived a growing trend in which playwrights were turning to ancient Greek mythology as the basis of *new creations,* a practice which she observed was 'hardly a new one [as] dramatists frequently have been attracted to the old Greek legends and have put them to various uses' (Belli 1969 p.vii). This practice has an antecedent which dates back to the first dramatic revisers of ancient Greek mythology, the playwrights of ancient Greece, and then can be traced to the Roman dramatists, through to theatre of the twenty-first century. Though Belli's study focused on the first fifty years of the twentieth century, the practice that inspired her study still has a contemporary currency. Susan Harris-Smith (1986) collated *Twentieth-Century Plays Using Classical Mythic Themes: a Checklist,* exposing the breadth of plays inspired by myths, many of which were non-dramatically extant. The list is not exhaustive as Harris-Smith (1986) relates in some cases 'the relationship between the content and the source may be purely allusive, though thematically important' (Harris-Smith 1986 p.110). A playwright seeking inspiration in their use of classical myths would be advised to refer to some of the plays listed to explore the ways in which other dramatist had responded to mythic inspiration.

Despite the diverse developments of contemporary practice the playwright is informed by what has passed, building upon what has gone before in order to develop new forms and experiment with pre-existing ones. The further playwrights

engage with and explore the history of their craft the more we are 'alive to the possibilities of the form' (Waters 2010 p.5). In a world that has changed so dramatically, the playwright might search for the aspects that resonate across the centuries, a search which includes classical narratives. Elinor Fuchs (1996) states in *The Death of Character* that; '[p]ostmodernism was inherently backward-looking and nostalgic.'(p.144), however this *nostalgia* was not prompted by a desire to uphold traditions but instead respond to them with 'subversions of narrative, realism, centring, and closure' (ibid).

T. S. Eliot (1923) encouraged artists in his essay 'Tradition and The Individual Talent' that this awareness of the antecedents of our practice should at all times underpin our contemporary engagements; 'the poet must develop or procure the consciousness of the past [and] should continue to develop this consciousness (p.17). This *consciousness* though drawing upon tradition, does not preclude invention in and experimentation for the individual artist as 'the material of art is never quite the same' (ibid p.16). Maya Roth (2009) perceives; 're-shaping classical myths to speak to audiences of one's day.' (p. 42) has been part of dramatic tradition for centuries. This tradition dates back to the foundations of western Theatre as Greek tragedians 'revised the familiar myths to express their new ideas' (Foster 2012, p.34). The origins of this practice illustrate how a fusion between tradition and contemporary context can inspire diverse dramatic responses as Aeschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles took the myths and revised them in relation to the *ideas* of their contemporary world view. This long-held tradition of dramatic engagement with classical mythology holds benefits and challenges: one of those is the

audience's pre-conceived idea of the mythic discourse, yet this equally has its

benefits, as will be discussed in Chapter 2.

Metamorphic Myths

Classical myths relied upon consecutive acts of re-telling and performance to

endure. As Frances Babbage (2011) discerns that myths 'depend for their

continuance on being retold' (p.22). These subsequent retellings have led to multiple

versions of singular mythic tracts. In order to endure the mythic narrative must

metamorphose, even myths with dramatically extant revisions often have plural

versions. Gilbert Highet (1949) states that according to Jung the 'universality' of

myths is the reason why 'they can be attributed to no one author, and can be

rewritten again and again' (p.254) developing therefore a work which is 'truly

"collective"'. (ibid). In this way myth develops and evolves, filtered through the

context and contemporaneous position with each re-telling, made up originally from

Greek and Roman myths which 'are essentially *stories' [...]* anonymous narratives

that were transmitted from one person to another and from one generation to the

next' (Hansen, F. 2004 p.2). Every generation that receives, interprets and re-tells a

myth adds a new layer of meaning.

Hansen goes on to reflect that classical myths 'are mostly *oral* stories' (ibid

p.2). Therefore the myths are inherently intended for performance and to be heard

and seen. Therefore even in a non-dramatically extant state the myths are

conceivably an inherently dramatic medium in their original state. The closest one

gets to an original response to the myth might be the initial acts of re-telling; a

dramatic revision, or a poetic response from Virgil or Homer, or indeed the later

Roman poets Ovid and Catullus. Each generation finds a different way to respond to the myths and make them their own and thus a singular myth can provide a practitioner with over two millennia of responses, offering a rich resource a playwright might draw upon in their own creative response.

Renaissance revisions

The Renaissance is a key age in the history of western engagement with classical mythology as '[m]any manuscripts of forgotten Latin books and lost Latin authors were discovered' (Highet 1949, p.15) which opened 'a vast storehouse of new material to western European writers in the form of classical history and mythology' (ibid p.20). It created an adaptive bridge between the myths origins and the Renaissance artists who sought inspiration from the classical age, and the practice of revision was considered as 'a creative, dynamic exercise' (Glenn et al. p.156), re-visioning them freely and writing in response, rather than reverence, to the pre-existing sources of mythology both in its dramatically and non-dramatically extant forms. As Paul Cobley observes the Renaissance marks a point in time when 'the narratives of Ancient Greece [were] incorporated into a 'Western tradition'. (2013, p.37) which would continue to inspire artists for centuries to come.

Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593) responded to Virgil's epic Latin poem, the *Aeneid* with *The Tragedy of Dido Queen of Carthage* (1586). Our relationship with the Dido myth in the west is explored in detail by Michael Burden in *A Woman Scorn'd* (1998), which reflects upon the way that Marlowe reignited our interest in the Greek Queen, an interest which continues to inspire dramatists such as director Katie Mitchell who with her company and the ENO developed a postmodern approach to the myth and it's countless revisions in *After Dido* (2009). Marlowe's

contemporary, Shakespeare drew from a multitude of sources not only mythic ones.

As Linda Hutcheon observes (in MacArthur et al. 2009) 'only one of Shakespeare's

plays is not an adaptation' (p.1).

He drew inspiration like '[m]any renaissance playwrights [...] from the plays

of ancient Greece and Rome' (Zarrilli et al. p.551), drawing as he did upon 'Ovidian

echoes of the Golden Age' (Warner 2002, p.64), along with his awareness of his own

time. His long poem *Venus and Adonis* (1592-93) was a direct revision of the

metamorphic myth and clear references to classical mythology occur in *Pericles,*

Prince of Tyre (1607-8) and *Troilus and Cressida* (1602) along with more playful

ones in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1590-6) among many other mythic references

in Shakespeare's canon. Ted Hughes's *The Goddess of Complete Being* (1992)

reflects upon the influence of classical mythology upon Shakespeare suggesting all

artists could draw upon the wealth of offered by the 'myth-kitty' (p.41). He went on

to create his own version of selected myths' metamorphosis in 1997 in *'Tales from*

Ovid, which brought Metamorphosis to a huge new readership and Ovid himself

fresh fame.' (Warner 2002, p.211) and inspired a dramatic adaptation *Tales from*

Ovid (2000) by the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Young Vic. Hughes's

dedicated the last year of his life to completing translations of *The Oresteia* (1998)

and *Phedre* (1998) and *Alcestis* (1998).

In *Among Barbarians; Ovid, the Classics and the Creative Writer,* May

McCrory (2010) reflects upon contemporary creative engagements with Ovid's

Metamorphic tales which are 'laden with material [...] with a sense of deja-vu'

(p.195) for the contemporary writer, which in McCrory's view has given 'rise to

magic realism and surrealism as favourite approaches [which holds a] neo classical

imprint.' (ibid p.196). With this is in mind Aleks Sierz claim that in the new millennium 'evidence suggests that the 'in-yer-face' sensibility is giving way to a more magic realist aesthetic.' (Sierz 2012, p.47) it is clear that contemporary playwrights seeking to further develop the form might turn to classical mythology for inspiration.

Section 3 - Contemporary Playwriting

Contemporary playwriting in Britain cannot be simply defined. It is eclectic, often engaging in multidisciplinary practice and intertextual referencing, whilst being self-reflective and meta-theatrical. Made up of both solo and collective acts of authorship, and often multidisciplinary as it draws upon the language of music, dance and circus along with others to tell its stories. It is as diverse in its forms as it is in the subjects it chooses to embrace. Aleks Sierz (2012) defines the 'New Writing' scene by the 'provocative nature of its content or its experimentation with theatrical form [along with a] contemporary flavour of [the playwright's] language and themes.' (p.54). Examples of New Writing range from the verbatim theatre of Alexy Blythe's *London Road* (2011), to the expressionistic and surreal plays including Ed Harris's *Mongrel Island* (2011), Anthony Nielson's *The Wonderful World of Dissasocia* (2004) and Phillip Ridley's *Mercury Fur* (2005), from the epic scale of recent plays including Mike Bartlett's *13* (2011) and David Eldridge's *Market Boy* (2006), to the state of the nation plays; Jez Butterworth's *Jerusalem* (2010) and Richard Bean's *Great Britain* (2014), to the poetic drama of debbie tucker green's plays including *Stoning Mary* (2005), *Random* (2010) and *Nut* (2013) through to a continuing investment in contemporary adaptations including Duncan

Macmillan's *1984* (2013) which posits meditations on contemporary existence just as clearly as his non-adaptive work which includes *Lungs* (2011). Needless to say 'new writing' is not confined to new and young writers, Not exclusively confined to young and 'newly arriving playwrights' (Sirez 2012, p.54), though often applied to their work.

Theses playwrights and many more have carved out new responses to the contemporary world and in turn challenged what theatre can be. Alongside these practitioners are the playwrights engaged with forging contemporary responses to classical texts and adaptations of books, film and myths. The spectrum of possible approaches to playmaking is divergent in a theatre where 'transgressions of the traditional boundaries [...] amount to a search of alternative ways of looking at twenty-first century life.' (Middeke et al. 2011, p.28). Rapid technological developments at the end of the twentieth, and beginning of the twenty-first century have prompted a reassessment of what theatre might be. Personalised technology, the dawn of the internet, C.G.I movies, immersive video games and virtual reality have had a major impact on the way a contemporary audience accesses stories, tantamount to the dawn of the cinematic age. Contemporary theatre has responded to the challenge these storytelling forms bring, developing and devising new ways to respond to our changing world, whilst reflecting the dramatic changes in our lived existence.

In their conclusion to *Making Contemporary Theatre*, a book which reflects and records the creative practice and process of a number of contemporary theatre practitioners, Jen Harvie and Andy Lavender (2012) suggest that 'theatre-making in the first decade of the twenty-first century is plural, contingent, influenced by many

sources and open to all sorts of influences and experiment' (p.243). Classical

mythology is one of the *many sources* a contemporary playwright can draw upon in

the creation of a new play. The plurality of contemporary theatre is echoed in the

spectrum of possible approaches to classical mythic sources for the playwright.

Claims of myth's universality can be challenged or upheld; structural experiments

can draw upon the mythic structures and the key mythic events, actions and

engagements, 'mythemes' as Claude Levi-Strauss entitled them (1963, p.221)

which have been perceived to reoccur in myths by structural anthropologists. Myths

themselves, rather than the written discourses they inspire, are equally 'plural' and

'contingent'. Having no singular original authorial records they are often unpinned

and in flux. Myths have been re-awakened and re-told across the centuries and as

Wendy Doniger in her introduction to Strauss's *Myth and Meaning* 'like all things in

constant use, break and are fixed again, become lost and are found, and the one who

finds them fixes them, the handyman who recycles them' (1979, p.ix-viii). This

handyman often takes the guise of the artist but equally myths are subject to acts of

cultural fixing.

On first inspection a creative engagement between the classical and the

contemporary, might seem paradoxical. There is an inherent tension between the old

and the new, between a theatre that continues to push forward as a form, and the

classical tales of ancient civilisations. However, many contemporary playwrights and

practitioners are drawn to classical mythic sources. How can this tension inspire new

writing? What challenges and rewards might greet the contemporary playwright

engaged in this practice? Steven Berkoff (1992) reflects upon the antecedence of his

own adaptive engagements to myths and other classical stories, and in turn other

practitioners, as part of the playwrights' role. There is a sense that it is the

playwright's role to 'carry' the stories forward, to be 'responsible for the baton until

one must pass it on.' (p.10). Concluding that all playwright have within them a

narrative store:

> We are all carriers of traditions and, like an exercise, we change the
> information given to us in turn by adding our own input.' (Berkoff 1992,
> p.10)

Re-telling stories through the filters of our own time is a central aspect of the

dramatic tradition yet why choose mythology when there are so many other

narratives to draw upon? As Simon Malpas (2004) observes postmodern practice

includes approaches which lead to 'fracturing, fragmentation, indeterminacy and

plurality.' (p.5) often drawing upon a variety of sources to develop 'work that is

challenging in terms of both form and content.'(ibid. p.30). There is a juxtaposition

between classical mythology and the postmodern and therefore post-structural

undercurrent of contemporary theatre. It seems at first puzzling that the postmodern

condition does not preclude engagement with the 'grand narratives' of classical

mythology.

Sarah Anne Brown (2008) perceives that there are 'two main reasons' for the

clash between tragedy and postmodernism, and in turn a clash between the way we

perceive classical mythology in the West due to its interrelation with Greek tragedy.

Postmodernisms questioning of the 'stability' of the subject and Aristotle's call for

'coherence' through the unities. However theses postmodern engagements often

approach classical myths very differently than those who seek a faithful engagement

with the mythic discourse. By breaking 'the rules of both form and content' (Malpas

2004, p.30) they challenge, critique and continue to develop new ways of relating to

their subject and ultimately their audience as mythic discourses are re-told in diverse

ways. In *Beyond Adaptation* Phyllis Frus and Christy Williams (2010) uphold this

view and observe that postmodern practitioners often to the classics in order to

'deconstructs master texts using techniques such as intertextuality and parody.'

(p.191) and in turn challenge the foundations of both classic and contemporary

ideologies.

Section 4 - A spectrum of possible approaches

Miriam Chirico observes that throughout the decades there have been

'divergent means of handling mythic material.' (Chirico 2012, p.31). And as has been

observed in the literature review, there is no singular methodological approach to

classical myths for the contemporary playwright. Here with a relation to adaptation

and narrative theory, I reflect upon three approaches which appear particularly

conducive to the diverse demands of contemporary practice in a spectrum of possible

approaches; collage and bricolage, revision, and creative 'theft' and spontaneity.

Approaches to mythic sources ranges from the faithful to the playful, from acts of

homage to bricolage. In this section I seek to focus upon the more playful

approaches to mythic engagement through mythic collage, re-visioning the

playwright as 'thieving machine' and finally the spontaneous subconscious drive. It

is of note that none of these approaches to creative engagement with myth need

operate in a vacuum, and neither are they as set out here by myself or the theorists

and artists who have explored them as a method by which a myth can be

dramaturgically developed. They do however offer some sign-posts along the road of

mythic contemporary engagements with myths and other distant sources. Before a

playwright engages with a mythic narrative a process of interpretation often takes

place. The treatment of the source myth depends upon many factors, including the artistic intentions of the playwright, current theatrical zeitgeists, and, perhaps of greatest significance in the initial stages of engagement, the playwright's interpretation of the mythic source.

Abbott Porter (2008) sates that 'Interpretation is a fine art involving many considerations.' (p90) and observes that there are three different approaches to interpreting a narrative: 'intentional', an approach which seeks to interpret the myth via its authorship; 'symptomatic', an interpretation which takes into account the original context of the source, and 'adaptive', where the source is interpreted through the playwright's relationship to the mythic source and their intention to develop in response to it. In *adaptive* interpretations, the interpreter is 'no longer supporting [...] but creating a reading' (ibid p.101), whereas *intentional* and *symptomatic* interpretations 'are oriented toward a meaning that is presumed to lie behind the narrative' (ibid p.99). An adaptive interpretation therefore might take into account both *intentional* and *symptomatic* interpretations as they explore the historic antecedents of the classical myth, but their main focus is to create a response to what the mythic source might offer, and offer this in turn to their audience. The faithful homage response might lead to a contemporary or cultural translation which seeks to serve the myth's discourse as faithfully as possible. On the other extreme is a playful act of bricolage that draws upon classical myth as part of a wider body of inspiration, which does not specifically seek to serve the mythic discourse, but instead to use the myth to serve the creative and artistic purposes of the playwright or practitioner in the creation of a new body of work. This would result in a synergy between tradition and innovation, in which the connection between classical texts

and practices are developed in relation to contemporary dramaturgy and cultural

contexts.

Myth and the Contemporary Collage

Roland Barthes reflected in *Image Music Text* (1979) the ways in which

etymologically 'text is a tissue, a woven fabric' (p.177). Therefore playwrights

collect aspects of experience and influence and weave them into the fabric of every

new creation as 'all texts [...] are made out of other texts.' (Porter Abbott 2008,

p.94).Whether playwrights intentionally engage with a pre-existing source or it seeps

into our dreams, woven into our imagination, waiting to be written out upon the

page, undoubtedly the unconscious makes connections, as Simon Malpas (2005)

observes it has 'a significant influence on the desires, motivations and interactions

that shape the course of our everyday existence.' (p.66). Emma Rice (2005) of

Kneehigh Theatre Company states 'Stories have an ability to present themselves as if

from nowhere. But they never are from nowhere.' (p.11). Playwrights draw the

found texts they have gathered over their lifetimes into a loom of sometimes subtle,

sometimes complex relationships with the story they are drawn to tell.

Intertextuality makes clear the way in which texts are made up of many other

texts and as Mireia Aragay (2005) suggests when we seek to understand the ways in

which new work is developed in relation to pre-existing sources; 'intertextuality

explains much better than adaption the complex interplay of sources and the different

kind of relationships involved.' (p.239). Mythic material can form part of this

contemporary collage of influences and can be threaded and woven into a new

dramatic forms but the myth need not be central to this creative collage of inspiration

and ideas. For those who intentionally seek a dramatic engagement with myths,

however, the mythic discourse itself can provide a central focus for this collage,

acting as a knot which draws the imaginative threads together, shaping the tapestry

of ideas to reflect what resonates from the myth for the artist. It is significant to note

that this tapestry can be formed via 'a dialogue with prior texts, consciously or

unconsciously. ' (Frus and Williams 2010, p.10).

Myths about the nature of love, death, home, family and the monsters that

haunt our dreams can be drawn, amongst others, into creative and cultural re-

appropriations, a process discussed by Roland Barthes in *Mythologies* (2009 [1957])

and later by Marina Warner in her 1994 Reith Lectures, *Managing Monsters; Six*

Myths of Our Time. Barthes sees narratives as 'a prodigious variety of genres,

themselves distributed amongst different substances – as though any material were

fit to receive man's stories.' (Barthes 1977, p.78). Classical myth is received as part

of our contemporary culture; it continually evolves with each re-telling. We

understand that, though the context has changed, the core of these mythic apparitions

continues in different guises and contexts metamorphosing across the ages. Warner,

writer, academic and mythographer, has written extensively about the power and

nature of narratives from fairy tales and folklore to ancient and contemporary myths.

She observes the ways in which myths endure, but also reflects that they are truly

ephemeral in their nature and rely upon retellings to survive by 'cultural repetition-

transmission through a variety of pathways.' (Warner 1994 p.xiv)

Levi-Strauss's approach to mythology as a cultural anthropologist was to

draw comparisons between different mythic tales advocating 'a strategy which

involves looking further than the surface of a myth to identify homologies of

structure among seemingly different narratives.' (Cobley 2013, p.32). This strategy

included the search for 'mythemes', structural building blocks which he claimed

recurred across mythic narratives from diverse cultures. In *Myth and Meaning* (1977)

he went on to observe the ways in which a collage of inspirations and influences are

drawn into each new creative work, a collage which includes the mythemes of

classical mythology which endure, as aspects of the myths are drawn into new

artistic creations which Miriam Chirico perceives can be utilised by dramatists and

story tellers as 'transferable units of storytelling' (2012, p.18). Classical sources can

sometimes be subject to acts of 'plundering' and 'radical reshaping' (Glenn 2012,

p.11), and contemporary playwrights and practitioners alike can seek to creatively

respond to source material like Levi-Strauss's (1979) 'rag-and-bones man' (p.viii).

This way of expressing the artist's imagination and internal process of

gathering creative inspiration might well be applied to the re-telling of any pre-

existing source, and suggests that myths and mythemes are one of many rags or

bones the artist draws into their net. Even if a myth forms the central core of the

work, many other influences and inspirations will be drawn in to the conscious and

unconscious workings of the artist's mind. Therefore, myths form only an aspect of

this contemporary bricolage. The mythic source can provide a continuous point of

structural reference to which contemporary allusions are connected: it may be a

foundation from which a whole new narrative emerges, drawing out from the threads

of the source to take its own form, with the playwright seeking to challenge and

deconstruct the mythic offerings until it bears little resemblance to its original form.

Re-visioning: Mythology Revised

Re-visioning is a practice which engages the source in a creative act of conversation, in which the mythic discourse is challenged and exposed and is rewritten in relation to its contemporary context. This process is often engaged with by playwrights and practitioners who seek to expose cultural biases of the original source, which may be in the form of gender, race or indeed what might be considered a negative ideological view which is held in the crucible of the mythic discourse. Miriam Chirico (2012) defines mythic re-visioning as ' the act of creatively re-writing a myth in order to move closer to the myth's essential meaning.' (p.16). This approach has been frequently enlisted by feminist practitioners who seek to challenge the patriarchal dominancy of the classical canon by offering the mythic discourse from a female perspective or by highlighting the patriarchal dominance of the society which produced and enshrined the discourses. Feminist revisions of Greek tragedies remind us that for centuries tragedy has been a male dominated genre, as Victoria Wohl observes, feminist have posed searing questions for the treatment and indeed representation of the female subject in classical tragedy:

> Feminist scholars of tragedy both classical and post-classical, have
> questioned the universality of tragedy's humanism, asking what bearings its
> insight into the nature of "man" have upon "woman". (2005, p.145).

Poet Adrienne Rich (1972) offers a way of thinking about feminist retellings of myths and classic texts, that of re-visioning which she describes as 'the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction' (p.18). Re-visions take creative liberties with the sources they seek to re-tell.

Undoubtedly the patriarchal dominance of the classical canon has fuelled the desire to explore classical myths from a female perspective; as Rich (1972) states '[w]e all know that there is another story to tell.' (p.26). Of course gender forms only part of the playwright's creative context, and therefore the way they interpret mythic tales. Over forty years later Chirico (2012) offered a new way of thinking about re-visioning as 'the act of creatively re-writing a myth in order to bring it close to the myth's essential meaning.' (p.16). This meaning is in the re-visioner's hands and therefore the *essential meaning* can be contextualised by the artist's own response to the mythic material. Re-visions therefore can be culturally, politically, socially and artistically rendered in response to what the myth offers. The old is woven into the new in a creative act which might subvert, challenge or change the form in which it is told, thus making it a unique and original work of art in its own right and in relation to the source of initial inspiration.

Classical myth and the contemporary 'thieving machine'

In *I Like to Take a Greek Play,* playwright Charles Mee (2007) reveals the deconstructive approach he takes to classical myth as a source of inspiration for new work; 'I like to take a Greek play, smash it to ruins, and then, atop the ruins, write a new play.' (Mee 2007, p.361). In the creation of a new work he states that he feels 'no need to be faithful' (ibid) to the source and that his impulse is drawn towards 'pillage' (ibid). He admits that this may be viewed as a form of 'theft' and observes that this act is now more commonly called, 'appropriation', whilst preferring the term 'sampling' (ibid, p.363) for his own purposes. This is by no means a new approach to the development of new work responding to an 'original' source, eighty years prior to Mee's declarations T.S.Eliot (1923) claimed '[t]he poet's mind is in

fact a receptacle for seizing and storing up numberless feelings, phrases, and images'

(p.19). Eliot affirmed that the way artists utilise these numberless sources of

inspiration in the development of new work is what makes their expression unique,

and the product of an original and contemporary voice. Though the writer might

draw from a classical source, the result need not be a copy, or indeed an echo, but a

creation which builds upon diverse forms of inspiration. As Karelisa Hartigan (2012)

in *Greek Tragedy Transformed* reflects in the case of Charles Mee, and other

playwrights who approach original sources in this way, the act of 'theft' can offer

'radical reconsiderations of found texts' (p.40)

The contemporary practitioner, Tim Etchells (1999) of Forced Entertainment,

calls himself in *Certain Fragments* a 'thieving machine' (p.101). He recollects the

means by which he and the company draw upon their lived experience to gather

material for the company's productions which actualise 'collage as a form' (ibid.

p.98). Mythic strands can be prominently threaded into a creative collage, but not all

playwrights and practitioners seek to openly expose the roots. Many draw upon a

collage of inspiration, often at a subterranean level. Though the seams between

diverse sources might not be so easy to perceive, this composition is active in all

creative endeavours. Tradition merges with innovation, and the classical coalesces

with the contemporary as they are interpreted through individual artistic filters.

Together they gather in the creative imagination to form the fabric of the

practitioner's context. Whether sought consciously or driven by a unconscious urge

in the western world it is likely that classical myth will form part of the collage of

artistic inspiration in the development of new work.

Polymorphic and unfixed, there is a synergy between the open quality of a myth and the pluralistic possibilities a contemporary theatre might offer us. Myths are at heart ephemeral: with no singular extant version of the original oral myth, except the fragmented relics of classical civilisation, it is almost impossible to respond with a truly faithful homage, not even if the playwright were to return to the Greek tragedians for the closest classical revision of the myth. A playwright might spend years researching the historical antecedents of the myth and its origins, but equally in the twenty-first century a playwright might choose to playfully respond to what the myth means to them in their contemporary context. As Potter Abbott (2008) reflects 'good' adapters need not repeat, or indeed recreate; instead they often 'are raiders; they don't copy, they steal what they want and leave the rest.' (p.105). In the hands of a contemporary playwright classical myths can be interpreted, deconstructed and re-created to reflect contemporary concerns. Indeed the act of interpretation which is at the heart of an engagement with pre-existing sources becomes a creative act in its own right as 'at a certain point [...] what we call interpretation is looking more and more like what we call creation.' (ibid p.101). So where is the line drawn between interpretation and creation, and when does the play stop being an adaptation of a pre-existing source and become a new creation?

A wealth of examples of dramatist re-telling myths, ranging from faithful translations through to playful engagements. With so many *stories* to draw upon why do playwrights decide to *retell* mythic *stories* in *new ways?* Potter Abbott (2008) claims that myths form part of the artist's and audience's 'narrative consciousness' (p.6) which in turn forms 'Narrative templates in our mind.'(ibid p.7). The playwright can respond to this shared awareness, and seek to extend, subvert or

uphold this culturally conditioned *templates* through a variety of approaches from translation, adaptation, appropriation, revision, deconstruction and bricolage. There are as many different reasons why a playwright seeks to re-tell a myth as there are different means in which these myths can be re-told. Equally Peter Brook observed that adaptations are often temporal and do not always have the power of the original discourse to transcend the era in which they were created. Therefore he calls upon dramatists and practitioners to:

> [R]eassess existing adaptations regularly - they are always coloured by the /
> time in which they were written, just like productions, which are never there
> to stay.' (Brook 1968 p.156-7)

Therefore this approach might not be seen as an act of theft but instead a renewal of the myth for a contemporary age as the discourse is 'recycled' for a new age via 'postmodern techniques, such as bricolage, remake, adaptation, pastiche, palimpsest and so on.' (Krebs 2013, p.183).

Subconscious and spontaneous connections to classical mythology

Hutcheon (2006) detects that a playwright has their 'own personal reasons' (p.92) for three choices they make when creating work in relation to pre-existing sources. First, the conscious decision to respond to a pre-existing narrative; secondly, the selection of the narrative to be re-told; thirdly, the form this re-telling will take. Joseph Campbell (1993 [1949]) claims that myths are products of the 'spontaneous operations of the psyche' (p.15). The connections Freud, Jung and Campbell drew between classical mythology and the unconscious might offer insight into the appeal of classical mythology for the contemporary playwright. As Anthony

Neilson reflects 'The story is the route by which your subconscious finds expression in the real world.' (1998 p.ix).

The *contingent* nature of contemporary theatre offers a principle of practice that is based on chance or serendipity and offers random and often unpredictable responses to the practice of playmaking. The unconscious connections to classical mythology can be unforeseen, are often hidden and intuitive, acting on a subliminal and, therefore, not consciously seen level. Since not all of these choices are taken consciously, as Rice (2005) says, in responding to pre-existing narratives, often the 'subconscious stakes its claim.'(p.11). We can engage with these subconscious tracts through the use of automatic and stream of consciousness writing which I will discuss in Chapter 4. This is a key approach for playwrights who seek to build upon their personal connections to the myths, yet do we draw upon these mythemes at a subconscious level even when we do not seek an intrinsic engagement with mythic narratives?

If we accept that classical myths do form a part of our subconscious narrative currency in the west, and thus form an integral aspect of our creative inspiration, then why should we not draw upon the myths intentionally and explore the ways in which they can inspire creative practice? Our unconscious has been informed and influenced by many paratextual responses to myth through the multi-various re-enactments, in different forms and genres of its narrative; in the field of art, music, playwriting, dance and of course the relics which the ancient civilisations left behind. These re-tellings provide vast resources of inspiration for multidisciplinary theatre practice. A collage of responses might be gathered as the practitioner begins to

engage with the myth, both conscious and unconscious as these re-tellings can inform a multitude of diverse creative responses.

In conclusion, the history of mythic engagement has informed, influenced and inspired contemporary playwrights and practitioners. The process of re-imagining and re-making seems to offer a wealth of possibility for dramaturgical approaches, a map of pluralistic signposting which can be drawn upon in the contemporary age. There are strong proponents for the use of classical sources in contemporary practice, from the classical through to postmodern practitioners. The singular element that changes is the nature of this engagement, from the faithful to the playful, from homage to collage. The source might be altered, shifted or modified, offering a reworking or variation on the narrative, characters, theme or resonance. Throughout the centuries playwrights have explored 'divergent means of handling mythic material.' (Chirico 2012, p.31). The creative engagement may entail adjustments and modifications which allow a conversion from one form to another, from one setting to the next. No matter what form it takes and how greatly or subtly the source changes, a transformation takes place. The following chapter illustrates some of these approaches discussed through the work of several playwrights and practitioners offering examples of the above approaches along with other possible modes of adaptive engagements.

Chapter 2 - The Dramatic Precedents for engagements with Classical Myths; selected examples of playful mythic re-visioning and re-making in the Modern and Postmodern Theatre

Introduction

In order to illustrate the diverse ways in which classical mythology can yield and metamorphose in the hands of contemporary practitioners this chapter presents examples of plays that seek to dramatically respond to classical mythology. The plays range from the last hundred years and have all been staged on contemporary British stages. The plays are grouped together in four sections which exemplify a number of approaches that can be taken by a playwright or practitioner seeking to engage with classical mythology. Miriam Chirico suggests approaches by which mythic revisions can be examined as 'thematic, comparative, or structuralists' (Chirico 2012, p.17). And for each play I reflect upon the ways in which the myth has been appropriated thematically, how it compares to the original source and what aspects it draws from earlier versions of the myth. In so doing, I will also explore possible reasons why the writer was drawn to the myth, and any impact the source of inspiration had on its critical reception. As Linda Hutcheon observes:

> Clearly adaptation is driven by passion-personal, political, or (most often) both. This is why adaptation can be a critical act. (in MacArthur et al. 2009, p.xii).

The plays offer examples of psychological, political, post-colonial, feminist and postmodern critiques of classical mythic structures and sources and I endeavour

to explore the ways in which these critical acts, have affected the re-visioning of these myths. Though there is a wealth of examples of devised work developed in response to ancient Greek mythology, the study is focused on the whole upon playwriting, though it is of significant to note that *The Island* and *A Mouthful of Birds* were products of a collaborative process.

In *Section 1* I explore two adaptations of the myth of the *Oresteia;* T. S. Eliot's *The Family Reunion* (1939) and Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931) revisions influenced and inspired by psychoanalytical theories, in their engagement with the mythic discourse. Drawing then on acculturated responses to the subject of fate and the supernatural in poetic and political appropriations of *Oedipus*, Rita Dove's *The Darker Face Of The Earth* and Steven Berkoff's *Greek* (1980), the section will conclude with a reflection on the creation of *Electra* (2006) by the Polish Company Gardzienice which explores an approach to mythology that attempts to return to the pre-literate sources of the myth before it was fixed by Greek tragedians. *Section 2* relates the ways in which a singular mythic character can inspire the playwright and offer a direct connection to a mythic discourse, taking into account the impact of post-colonial and feminist revisions of classical mythology, through the myth of Antigone and the appropriations her myth has inspired. Focusing upon Jean Anouilh's *Antigone* (1944), Athol Fugard's *The Island* (1973) and Moria Buffini's *Welcome to Thebes* (2010), though there are other influential responses to the myth, including Bertolt Brecht's (1948) and Seamus Heaney's *Burial at Thebes* (2004).

Amelia Howe Kritzer (2008) observes that in the plays of Martin Crimp and Sarah Kane 'postmodernist thought is deliberately explored' (2008, pp.21-2). In

Section 3 the impact of this thought on approaches to mythic re-appropriation is explored through reflections upon Sarah Kane's *Phaedra's Love* (2001 [1996]) and Martin Crimp's *Cruel and Tender* (2004) with relation to postmodern practice. *Section 4* discusses three plays that were created in response to non-dramatically extant myths, Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Love of a Nightingale* (1996), Caryl Churchill's co-creation with David Lan and Ian Spink; *A Mouthful of Birds* (1986), and Joanna Laurens's *The Three Birds* (2000) and *Poor Beck* (2004).

Section 1 – Greek myth is complex; revising the *Oresteia* and *Oedipus*

Eric Bentley claimed that 'The point of any myth is to provide a known element as a starting point and preserve us from the vacuum of absolute novelty' (Bentley 1987 p53). If this is an artist's intention then how do they seek to ensure that there is a *known* point of reference for the audience? T.S. Eliot argued that 'No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone' (Eliot 1923, p.15). The work of Eliot and O'Neill illustrates the ways in which psychoanalysis deepened the meanings of myth for both society and its artists as Karen Armstrong relates:

> When Freud and Jung began to chart the modern quest for the soul, they instinctively turned to classical mythology to explain their insights, and gave the old myths a new interpretation. (2005, p.9)

From their reflections on myth and clinical experience, Freud and Jung developed the Oedipus and Electra Complexes offering the dualistic meaning of both myth and modern psychology for artists seeking to adapt the myths. Modern psychology has offered a connection to myth which still endures in the contemporary consciousness of our age. It is certain that Freudian and Jungian theories have had an impact on the way we view ancient Greek mythology, and the tragic discourses they inspired. No matter how you receive this approach to human psychology, the myths

65

have been indelibly linked to our contemporary awareness of the human condition,

and have made these mythic characters household names, though we cannot ensure

an audience knows the mythic narratives which inspired them.

I now reflect upon a selection of plays which actively sought to revision the

mythic tragedies of Oedipus and Electra, and in so doing benefited from the cultural

currency of the myths in modern imaginations. The notion of fate is transposed to the

nature of humanity and the impact of social conditioning on the human psyche.

Almost certainly the concept of humankind fated to follow a path of self-destruction

is the central drive of our contemporary fascination with Oedipus and Electra.

The *Oresteia* - Ancient Greek tragic trilogy

Aeschylus is the first recorded playwright for whom we hold complete

dramatically extant versions of his work. Aeschylus' trilogy of plays, the *Oresteia*

written in 458 BC, formed by the tragedies *Agamemnon, The Libation Bearers,* and

The Eumenides. Being a sole surviving example of a dramatically extant trilogy, a

playwright seeking a model for the creation and development of classical mythology

for the stage, would be advised to turn to this dramatically extant trilogy for

inspiration. In *The Secret Life of Plays* (2010) Steve Waters proposes the trilogy is a

'prototype' for the 'three-act structure, each of its three plays equivalents to one act'

(2010 p37). For Waters, *Agamemnon* is a 'thesis', *The Libation Bearers* an 'antithesis'

and *The Eumenides* the 'synthesis' (Waters 2010 p36). In the 1930s Aeschylus'

Oresteia Trilogy was re-appropriated by Eugene O'Neill in *Mourning Becomes*

Electra and T. S. Eliot in *The Family Reunion.* Eliot and O'Neill were exploring

approaches to contemporary appropriation of classical myths, and in the process of

experimenting with the ancient narratives hoped to develop a new style of theatre which could dramatically reflect their changing societies on stage.

O'Neill's society was America at the heart of the Depression and Eliot's an England struggling to recover from the impact of The Great Depression. The playwrights had both explored Greek tragic form in their work before developing their own responses to the *Oresteia*. T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935) had employed the tragic genre and style, and *Desire under the Elms* (1925) has been critically considered O'Neill's 'first "Greek" tragedy' (Berlin 1982, p.71). Jennifer Wallace (2005) notes that O'Neill was experimenting with mythic sources to develop new ways of dramatically representing America. American drama had previously drawn upon the dramatic and literary canons of the many cultures that peopled its states. Driven by a desire to create '[...] a new dramatic language which probed American dilemmas with equal profundity and power to those classically explored in the past' (p.75). O'Neill's work with mythic sources was founded on an understanding of myth's connection with modern psychology and a desire, inspired by current thought on the nature of mythology, to express it through a new dramatic form for his contemporary stage.

Raymond Williams (2006) perceived that in *Mourning Becomes Electra* O'Neill had intentionally 'substituted psychology for the Greek action.' (p.146). Nonetheless, as Zarrilli *et al.* (2006) observe, the inspirations for *Mourning Becomes Electra* and undoubtedly O'Neill's other plays were diverse:

> [M]any factors may have influenced [O'Neill]. Greek mythology, the work of Nietzsche, and O'Neill's family history as well as psychoanalysis [...] (p.383).

Williams (2006) supports this, reflecting that 'O'Neill identified the family as a destructive entity.' (p.144). Whilst exploring dramatic possibilities, O'Neill drew on the trilogy's structure to create three interconnected plays: *The Homecoming*, *The Hunted* and *The Haunting*, each responding to one of the *Oresteia*'s tragedies. The plays are often produced as a complete production, either over consecutive nights or in its entirety, as in the 2003 production at the National Theatre. The plays transposed the mythic narrative from the end of the Trojan War to the aftermath of the American Civil War, 'The three plays [taking] place in either spring or summer of the years 1865-1866' (O'Neill 1931 p10). Thus O'Neill sought to connect key moments in American history and Greek tragedy by creating a historic transposition which embodied the Civil War. The Greek House of Atreus was transposed to the American house of the Mannons, the surrounding community acting as their chorus, passing comment on the fate and fortunes of the family, offering historical exposition, and drawing connections with the source narrative and hinting at the fate to come.

Stylistically O'Neill experimented with the Greek tragic dramatic convention of masks, but found they jarred with the psychological realism he sought to inject in his re-vision, as is illustrated by his *Memorandum on Masks* (1932) in Toby Cole's *Playwrights on Playwriting* (1960, p.65-9.). Instead, he called for actors to wear a mask-like faces, suggesting a heightened dramatic form which some critiques interpreted as melodramatic, with claims including Eric Bentley's that they 'often failed to achieve tragedy, [yet] succeeded as often in achieving melodrama' (Bentley 1987 p214). This was perhaps inevitable as the style and grand narrative offered by the mythic account often jarred with O'Neill's desire to explore and engage with a

psychological understanding of the myth in his own contemporary context, relating to contemporaneous connections between myth and psychology.

It is worth reflecting the ways in which the use of masks might has been explored and championed by influential practitioners such as Jacques Lecoq and Peter Hall and the impact this has had on contemporary performance practice. An example of this influence was John Barton's *Tantalus* (2000), dramatically responding to the Trojan War and its aftermath in an epic ten-hour production which toured to the Barbican with Denver Arts, directed by Peter and Ed Hall. The production used masks throughout, attaining a tragedy with contemporary overtones which equally framed the historic foundations of storytelling from classic to contemporary. If O'Neill had developed his tragedy in the theatre of the third millennium, no doubt the use of masks would have been read and received by his audience in a different way.

However, masks were not the only dramatic convention he drew from ancient Greek tragedy. Along with the form of trilogy, O'Neill adapted elements of choric narrative into snatches of contemporaneous music. The Chantyman's singing drew his audience into the depths before Brant's murder, 'They say I hanged my mother' (O'Neill 1931, p.175), with the recurrent refrain of 'Shenandoah' underscoring the narrative. O'Neill's Orestes, Orin, returns a weary soldier, a shadow of his former self, discovering bloodshed has not been contained by the battlefield. He finds a family at war with themselves: 'To think I hoped home would be an escape from death!'(O'Neill 1931, p166). Thus O'Neill illustrates the impact of war on the domestic environment as many of the ancient tragedies sought to do. Vinnie, O'Neill's contemporary embodiment of Electra, is consumed by a wish for revenge

and a desire to be free from her mother Christine's (Clytemnestra's) matriarchal dominance.

The actions, desires, drives, and super-objectives of O'Neill's contemporary revision are drawn directly from the *Oresteia* with some contemporary adjustments. The ability to develop contemporary characters from ancient sources suggests that the archetypal qualities of human nature and primal instinct that drive us to success and also to destruction are universal and can be adapted to reflect the concerns of any age by skilled dramatists. However in O'Neill's and Eliot's versions of the mythic narrative, the characters are distanced from their archetypal source with contemporary names, suggesting that this is an emanation in character type for a new age, rather than an attempt to re-setting the myth for a modern stage

Eliot, much like O'Neill, experimented with dramatic forms and conventions, bringing together elements of Greek tragedy, modern drama, poetry, spiritualism and the supernatural in the claustrophobic environment of *The Family Reunion* (1939), a tragedy which he presented in two acts, rather than adopting the sources' trilogy form. Certainly, Eliot's collage of approaches anticipates contemporary trends in theatre, where forms merge and boundaries blister, as practitioners draw from various sources and forms in the creation of new work. Eliot drew the inspiration into a new form, re-casting the myth in a country house in North England, where his Orestes, Harry returns home for his mother Amy's birthday. Eliot's matriarchal re-visioning of Clytemnestra is reunited with her son after a seven-year absence in which his wife died under suspicious circumstances, hovering over the proceedings like the shadow of death which haunts O'Neill's Orin after the war.

David Pattie (2012) perceives the way in which Eliot applied the *Eumenides* to an 'English country house murder mystery.' (p.80). Indeed when the play was revised in 2008, 70 years after it first premiered Dominic Cavendish perceived that the play was many layered:

> 'This isn't one play but three - an intense revenge drama taking in Greek tragedy, a conventional potboiler and a satire on mid-20th-century country-house drama - interwoven with a slim volume of modernist poetry and an agonised chapter from Eliot's otherwise unwritten autobiography.' (Cavendish, 2008, p.16)

This multifaceted approach to mythic revision works on numerous intertextual levels as it is studded with mythic resonances. With the cause of death in question throughout the play, the tragic plot is restructured to suggest the structure of a 'who-done-it' rather than tragedy. Though with revelations about Harry's relationship with his mother, we perceive the tragic root of his actions. Amy has controlled him throughout his life, even in death she wishes to tie him to the country estate, selecting him to inherit, rather than his two hapless brothers who never arrive due to further mysterious road accidents. Even as Harry rejects this bequest, he is plagued by the Eumenides, an emanation of his mental disturbance and a form of family curse, which continue to haunt him after Amy dies. Stylistically Eliot drew from Greek tragic form the use of choral episodes and verse, and supernatural emanations and rituals, closing the play with a quasi-ritual, recalling a libation;

> *'AGATHA and MARY walk slowly in single file round the table, clockwise. At each revolution they blow out a few candles, so their last words are spoken in the dark'* (Eliot 1939, p.124).

Significantly the Eumenides drawn directly from the myth seem out of place in his otherwise contemporary setting, causing some of the greatest incongruities in the re-visioning. Comparable to the masks which O'Neill soon disposed of, the Eumenides belong to another world and performance style. Their appearance jars with the contemporary style and though originally they symbolised the Furies following Harry to the grave, they lack relevance in this contemporary context. *The Family Reunion* therefore illustrates the obligation of the contemporary dramatist to approach mythic territory with awareness not only of the source narrative's style but also contemporaneous ones when appropriating and transposing supernatural elements which can de-rail the frame of dramatic realism, a disturbance which, may or may not be of dramaturgical use depending on your intentions.

Bentley observes, '[a]t the core of any good tragedy is a profound disturbance of the human equilibrium.' (Bentley 1987, p.303). Eliot and O'Neill both eloquently transpose this disturbance in their contemporary appropriation of their mythic counterparts, with the action of the plays pinned upon their protagonist's psychological states. Eliot's Harry runs out into the world seeking escape, followed by the Eumenides, whilst O'Neill traps Vinnie inside the house, a mausoleum of familial dysfunction. They continue to be haunted by their actions and discoveries; Vinnie is tormented by the ever-present family portraits, whilst Harry is pursued by seemingly supernatural entities. In both plays the influence of Freud's developments in psychology can be clearly traced in the context of these dramatic explorations of myth. In part one, *The Homecoming* (1931), Brant exclaims:

'Well, I suppose that's the usual way of it. A daughter feels closer to her father and a son to his mother' (O'Neill 1931, p.41).

Thus, O'Neill directly signposts connections to the Electra complex which Freud drew from the same mythic character. This closeness leads to the destruction of the entire Mannon family, as Christine blames her love affair with Brant, the core inciting incident of the play, on the absence of her son:

> CHRISTINE: I never would have fallen in love with Adam if I'd had Orin with me' (O'Neill 1931, p.57).

The besieged families that O'Neill and Eliot create are cursed by mental disturbance heightened to supernatural, rather than purely psychological, levels. Tonally the plays share other-worldly atmospheres, which do not entirely gel with the performance styles they are retold in. Both playwrights were not entirely satisfied with the results of the bridge between narrative and form they had created; however what they learned from these experiments with myth led to further dramaturgical developments in their work and that of other playwrights. T. S. Eliot created *The Cocktail Party* (1949) as a contemporary revision of Euripides' tragedy *Alcestis,* and Wallace (2007) see's O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (1941) as a direct continuation of O'Neill's engagement in the development of a new style, where the Greek sensibility has become more refined and more understated, an American tragic form: 'A combination, in other words, of new world and old world attitudes' (Wallace 2007, p.79).

Though O'Neill and Eliot may not have explicitly drawn upon mythic sources again, its traces can be observed in their choices of themes and archetypal characters, and dramatic conventions were refined in the plays that followed, and those that were inspired by them. Raymond Williams sees the difference between O'Neill's initial experiments with Greek tragedy and those that followed as 'more

internal, and to that extent more moving.' (Williams 2006, p.14) in their tragic effect. However Sarah Bay-Cheng (2012) reflects that 'the poetic realisation Eliot calls for in 'Poetry and Drama' never emerged on stage [though] he has left behind moments of unquestionable poetic beauty on stage' (Bay-Cheng 2012, p.118). The plays illustrate the struggles we face in trying to break the mould of nature and nurture, and their experimentations with myth marked a pivotal movement in their writing styles, challenging the then-prevailing style of naturalism and leading to further questions about dramatic form which they continued to explore throughout their practice, influencing those that followed them.

Oedipus - A Tragic Hero for the Twentieth Centaury

> The mythic heroes of the Greek story cycles, like Oedipus, like Jason, like Orestes, served as tragic warnings; their pride, their knowing and unknowing crimes, the matricides and infanticides, self-blindings and suicides, all the strife and horror they undergo and perpetrate didn't make them exemplary, but cautionary: they provoked terror and pity, not emulation. The tragedies they inspired offered their heroes as objects of debate, not models. (Warner 1994, p.27)

The debates at work in the following appropriations of Oedipus, like those of the *Oresteia*, take the essential discourse of the source and transpose them to reflect the cultural context of their re-staging. Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* frames the crimes of patricide and incest. First staged c.429BC, the play includes appearances by oracles and supernatural agencies in such a way that is almost impossible to transpose these references to a contemporary age, without losing the plot completely. A way of bypassing the possible incongruities of supernatural elements of mythic narratives to a multi-cultural and multi-faith society is to re-centre the myth in a specific culture or society whose belief system offers the possibility of directly transposing these supernatural elements, something which in varying degrees the following

appropriations do. Treating their appropriations in a self-referential way, embedded within their contemporary text, the authors make the myth and its ritual antecedents become part of the landscape of their re-telling.

Drawn to use the Oedipus myth as a filter – Berkoff recollects 'Greek came to me via Sophocles, trickling its way down the millennia until it reached the unimaginable wastelands of Tufnell Park' (Berkoff 1980, p.97) – Steven Berkoff created Greek (1980) in the wake of 1979's Winter of discontent which brought a Conservative government led by Margaret Thatcher into power and ushered in cuts in the arts which would have a major impact upon theatre. Berkoff developed the play as a political critique to the changing landscape of Britain and to respond to what he perceived to be a dearth of stories for London's East End. In Greek 'London equals Thebes and is full of riots, filth, decay, bombings, football mania, mobs and the palace gates, plague madness and post-pub depression.' (Berkoff 1992, p.139). Helen Foley perceives that the landscape of his revision 'intertwines class and sexual issues' (Foley 2004, p.87). Ancient Greek culture is thus transposed to the East End, with Berkoff approaching supernatural elements of the myth by transposition.

The prophecy of his Oedipus, Eddy, is delivered by a funfair fortune teller, and the riddle by radical poetic feminist Sphinx. As Elaine Aston and George Savona observe, 'pioneering semioticians and formalists have been quick to recognise that a text which subverts expectations may usefully serve to reawaken our perceptions of literary construction [...]' (Aston and Savona 1991, p.18). Greek reframes and subverts the tragedy as 'a love story' (Berkoff 1992, p.139), breaking its tragic form by a final twist in the tale, Eddy deciding, despite the incestuous nature of his marriage to Wife, that he loves her, thus denying the audience the expected

gruesome end. Foley noted 'Many modern, post Freudian adaptations of Sophocles'

Oedipus Tyrannous enlarge on the gender relations between mother and son and

frequently make them more sexually explicit than in the original' (Foley 2004, p.80).

This is passionately illustrated by Eddy's lusty closing speech:

> Oedipus how could you have done it, never to see your wife's golden face
> again [...] it's love I feel it's love, what matter what form it takes, it's love I
> feel for your breast, for your nipple twice sucked / for your belly twice
> known [...] loving cunt holy mother wife / loving source of your being / exit
> from paradise / entrance to heaven (Berkoff 1994, p.140)

A knowledgeable audience thus oscillates between the known and unknown,

the expectation and Berkoff's creation. In Berkoff's production of the play references

to its classical roots were accentuated by aspects of staging, with the actors wearing

chalk white face paint 'like the masks of Greek statues [...and...] the family the

Greek chorus for each other and also playing the roles.' (Berkoff 1992, p.139). In

creating a mythic re-vision we can subvert expectations by offering a mixture of the

familiar and the new, a connection to something known, in a new shape or form, or

perhaps somehow disrupted and redirected, offering the reader comfort and

knowledge, whilst creating a new vision of the source it is drawn from.

Nicole Borieau discerns that in *Greek* 'Berkoff achieves a symbiosis between

the abstractly literary and the mythical, between the ritualistic and the subversive.'

(Boireau 1996, p.77). However an audience without prior knowledge of the source

will not understand the double intentions of a playwright's adaptive work, and

therefore will not experience this symbiosis. The adaptive text therefore must stand

on a double level for the knowing and unknowing audience. Yet *Greek* offers enough

embedded references to the source myth that even an audience without prior

knowledge of the myth can see the correlations between the ancient and contemporary Oedipus.

Though it is significant to note that the influences which inspired Berkoff were diverse as his environment, political views and personal context along with other narrative sources inspired his creation. He recognises that Greek was a response to a 'cross-fertilization of the many influences that were then prevalent.' (Berkoff, 1992, p.9). Greek certainly provides this double pleasure and intertextual richness of the known and the unknown with its sometimes free-wheeling verse, explicit language and violent imagery which punctuate the play with poetic aplomb. Eddy's weapon of choice in the unwitting battle with his father is one of words, in which he wins out, to win the hand of Wife, his birth mother.

Berkoff's choice of title along with embedded and intertextual references to mythology, specifically the myth of Oedipus, signifies to the audience what he is doing with the myth and letting them in on the game of cultural references and deviations to the source. And in turn by disrupting these expectations, Berkoff 'destabilizes his audience' (Boireau 1994, p.84). The mythic discourse serves Berkoff's intention to challenge and question his audience and in-turn society, for as Boireau affirms, '[b]reaking taboos needs tradition, yet the burden of tradition cries to be broken.' (ibid). The ability to break taboos and challenge expectations is central to our continuing engagement with mythic sources in contemporary theatre and Berkoff playfully allows the knowing audience to oscillate between their awareness of the tragic account and its traditional reception and their experience of his re-vision in which he jestingly subverts expectation, whist providing contemporary corollaries

to situate aspects of the tragedy which he remains faithful to, offering a vibrant

interplay between the source and his remaking of it.

As Sanders (2005) observes, T. S. Eliot felt the audience should have an

awareness of the source myths that the new narratives were being drawn from so that

'the comparative and contrastive relationships that [he] regarded as crucial to the

aesthetic process' (p.97) could be made. An interest in 'Archetypal subjects' (Berkoff

1992, p.9) has been key to Berkoff's engagement with re-writing many classics from

the dramatic and literary canon in his own comparative and contrastive style

throughout his career, from his first significant adaptation, of Kafka's

Metamorphosis (1969) onwards. With Greek Berkoff creates an immoral society in

which Eddy's unnatural desires outweigh the plague it prompts. Personal desire and

self-preservation are prioritised over the demands of society, unlike our next

Oedipus, Augustus, who conversely gives up everything for his community. As

Berkoff explains the plague he summons in *Greek* the ways in which the mythic

source were used as a crucible for Berkoff's diverse influences and intention is

apparent:

> 'the plague symbolized the gross acts of violence being perpetrated the length
> and breadth of Britain, which for me meant a fairly bitter, strife-ridden
> society[...] that solved it's differences with bombs in pubs and massive
> displays of frustration at the weekly ritual called football. Of course I am
> being a touch ironic here, since Greek was also in part inspired by the pain of
> a bitter relationship I was going through... [...] The love letters that were
> unsent were recycled in the text.' (Berkoff 1996, p.4)

Steven Berkoff talks about his approach in developing Greek in his various

memoirs he proudly admits that he 'ransacked the entire legend.' (Berkoff 1992,

p.139). As Boireau (1996) observes 'Turning everything upside down, carnivalizing

ordinary reality to better confront patterns of moral oppression, is Berkoffs strategy

for creating electrifying theatrical events.' (p.81). Though he subverted the mythic materials, Berkoff recognises that the influence of mythology and in turn the foundations of its retellings in Greek tragedy, inspired the way in which he sought to explore and in-turn present characters, the plays East and West as well as Greek:

> I attempted to write plays whose themes were non-representational images of human behaviour rather than simply lifelike 'characters' [...] all of which could not have been written had I not been stimulated by the idea of a theatre drawing on its ancient myths.' (Berkoff 1992, p.10)

Following Eric Bentley's aphorism, 'A tragedy is a kind of poem' (Bentley 1982, p.69), the next tragic revision we turn to, The Darker Face of the Earth (1996), was written by former American Poet Laureate (1993-5) and Pulitzer Prize winner (1987) Rita Dove, a writer who has crossed genres and forms determinedly proclaiming her right to; 'I'm a writer, and I write in the form that most suits what I want to say.'(Dove 1986, p.240). Peter Burian describes the relationship of the Oedipus myth and the unconscious as follows: 'Freud in our own century raised the Oedipus myth to the status of master discourse of the unconscious' (1997, p.240). With *The Darker Face of the Earth* Dove took this master discourse and made it her own, drawing together historical facts and classical mythology. In her revision of Oedipus Dove offers a post-colonial 'counter-discourse' which is made possible by her use of canonical classic. When asked why she choose to revise the myth, rather than purely retell it, she reflected that 'I didn't follow it exactly because I didn't want the play to be a kind of checklist against a Greek myth.' (Dove 1999 p.186). Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins (1996) reflect on the possibilities of these counter discourses and in turn illustrate the significance of canonical classic mythology for the post-colonial practitioner:

> There are many counter-discursive possibilities even within one culture's encounter with the master narratives which have impacted upon its history. Whatever the route taken, the subversion involved in these practices can free up a space for the colonial subject to renegotiate an identity that is not necessarily constituted by the authority of the coloniser's perspective of the past, present, or future. (Gilbert and Tompkins 1996, p.50-1)

The play re-envisions this discourse on a cotton plantation, staffed by slaves in pre-Civil War 1840s South Carolina. Jocasta is re-imagined as Amelia, daughter of the Plantation owner, and Oedipus, her illegitimate son, Augustus, who returns home twenty-two years after his birth and exile. Rather than focusing on the sexual relationship between mother and son, the political application of the mythic revision in cultural and historic terms is central. Dove calls on the classic to frame a key point in the history of racial equality in America, following the precedent set by *Mourning Becomes Electra*. As a postcolonial appropriation of the *Oedipal* discourse the choice to revise the myth from this point in history an act of 'historical recuperation' which is a direct way in which post-colonial discourse can critique not only the cannon, but the claims for universalism which do not embrace the cultural experience of those whose story was left untold by those who oppressed them:

> Historical recuperation is one of the crucial aims and effects of many post-colonial plays, which frequently tell the other side of the conquering whites' story in order to contest the official version of history that is preserved in imperialist texts. (Gilbert and Tompkins 1996, p.12)

Dove's central theme is the liberty to love, and the last words of the play a call to freedom: the theme is filtered and amplified through Oedipus, yet its consequences are revolutionary, rather than purely psychological. Dove transposes the ancient Greek systems of belief through representation of diverse forms contemporary to the setting; spiritualism, voodoo, superstition, Christianity and

astrology. We are introduced to a world where beliefs are troubled and complex, different ideologies clash and spar, until finally they congeal to create an environment of uncertainty. Scylla's curses arrest imaginations, Hector hunts snakes to keep evil away, and the spirituals of the gospel ebb and flow chorally underscoring the action.

Louis, the plantation manager, searches the skies above for signs:

LOUIS: The stars can tell you everything - / war and pestilence, love and betrayal (Dove 1999, p.102).

His beliefs draw his attention from what is happening in his home, as his wife's baby, whom he had exiled and cruelly scarred in his crib, returns to the plantation and begins a love affair with his mother. Our stories are written on our bodies as well as in books; symbolically the scars Louis gave him are in the shape of stars and moons and Augustus's slavery and origins is marked on his back:

AMELIA: Your back is like a book / no-one can bear to read to the end - / each angry gash, each proud welt... (Dove 1999, p.89).

The need for stories and those that can tell them is a recurrent theme throughout;

SCOPIO: You always wanting a story! / how many stories do you think I got? (Dove 1999, p.32).

To weave the narrative strands Dove opens the play with a prologue, which presents Augustus's story, his origins and exile; then we are transported in time to twenty-two years later and the main action of the play. Giving the audience pre-

knowledge of Augustus's origins dispenses with the need for the prophecy, though Scylla's words point to the fates that face him, as does Louis's commentary of the stars.

However with the narrative frame already cast by the prologue, these references can be subtle, passing and lightly metaphorical. Dove engages with the myth to explore issues of cultural identity with Augustus acting as a bridge between the black slaves and the white plantation owners, as the love child of Hector and Amelia. After breaking the codes of their world with an illicit affair, Hector and Amelia lose their son, and are imprisoned by the expectations and conditions of their society. Amelia draws Augustus into her world to read her stories and offers her what Hector once did, the intellectual stimulation and companionship her husband Louis never gave her, and all on her own terms. It can also be debated that she brought him in, a rebellious and educated slave, to overturn a system she no longer believes in.

Augustus unwittingly forms an attachment with his mother and is drawn into a coup for freedom on the plantation; he has the choice between his new-found love and freedom for his community. He must sacrifice his happiness for everybody's future and chooses the greater good over his personal desires. With that choice, he unknowingly agrees to destroy his mother. He also unwittingly murders his father whom, since Augustus was exiled as a baby, is a broken man caught in superstitions. Hector inhabits the swamp-land, catching snakes and guarding the plantation and his former lover from the threats he perceives;

SCYLLA: He thought evil could be caught (Dove 1999, p.93).

Hector is a cipher for Oedipus' father and also the Sphinx which Augustus must destroy; when Hector challenges Augustus, he is destroyed. Augustus's mother and father stand in the way of freedom, not only for him but for all the slaves; it is a choice between personal passions and his commitment to community. Dove's characters reflect on the power of love as a force for change: If fear eats out the heart, / what does love do? (Dove 1999, p.79.) Yet central to Dove's appropriation is the question when pushed to the edge how do we chose between: 'love or freedom - it's the devils choice' (Dove 1999, p.102). Dove's Jocasta, Amelia, 'grew eviler year for year' (Dove 1999, p.21). Her character has traced a trajectory from equal to owner since the loss of her child. Some boundaries can be crossed whilst others are impenetrable. Amelia's first act of rebellion, the love of Hector, sets into motion a chain of fateful events:

'DOCTOR: Some mistakes you live with until you die' (Dove 1999, p.14);

Yet these events lead to a future in which freedom and love will no longer be in opposition. Dove's work can be seen as activating the binary oppositions inherent in the myth and adding to them in order to reflect other forces of opposing ideology. Combining historic culturally-conditioned forbidden desires of black/white with mother/son, both loves in this landscape are a challenge to its culture, and yet Augustus/Oedipus chooses freedom to love outside social conditions, his love of equality holding greater sway other the love of his mother/lover.

Aston and Savona (1999) note how Sophocles' version of the myth uses chorus to underline the action: 'The sequences involving the Chorus do not reveal story-line information, but comment upon it, reinforcing the dominant concerns of the tragedy' (p.27). Dove utilises the dramatic techniques of chorus, and the singing

of spirituals to form a frame for the actions of the play, along with the occasional use

of a narrator. There is a self-reflexivity in the embedded references to storytelling as

an act of meta-theatrical meta-text:

> AMALIA: You think, if I tell you, / the sad tale of your life / Will find its
>
> storybook ending? (Dove 1999, p.111).

The play highlights education, as a way out of systems of oppression. Amelia

is warned about this challenge: 'Ma'am, an educated nigger / brings nothing but

trouble' (Dove 1999, p.28), But accepts it willingly, perhaps because on an

unconscious level she herself wants to challenge the system as she did once before.

The contrast between those with and without an education is stark:

> 'DIANA: What are poems?' (Dove 1999, p.33).

Augustus's tuition means that he questions and challenges the world he has

been brought into and Scylla's authority:

> AUGUSTUS: You feed on ignorance / and call it magic (Dove 1999, p.43).

The stories he brings to the Plantation, inspire the other slaves to challenge

the oppressive regime and dream of something better. They also challenge the power

of superstitions and Scylla's voodoo rituals and cause a schism in the belief systems

on the Plantation which operate another form of social conditioning and control:

> 'SCYLLA: Your stories stir up trouble, / young man' (Dove 1999, p.43).

Augustus at first appears as an outsider, like the archetypal hero in the Hero's

Journey Augustus steps out of the 'ordinary world [and becomes a] fish out of water'

(Vogler 1992, p.10). He stands as a symbol for a time of metamorphoses, social

change which has been a long time coming, standing between two communities,

challenging inequality which exists between the races, bridging two cultures in one

body. Augustus is a product of an act of love and freedom, which is short-lived and

disinterred, suggesting in this landscape that it is dangerous to ask for both. Led to

believe all his life that he was conceived from a rape of a slave by a plantation

owner, he only discovers this was a union of love not aggression just as his

mother/lover kills herself:

> 'AUGUSTUS: My own mother gave me away/ But I found my way back... / a
> worm crawling back into its hole' (Dove 1999, p.110).

In the journey to freedom he is orphaned, but has gained knowledge about his

origins. At this point of realisation, Dove closes the play with a call to freedom

rather than an oedipal blinding. The union between Hector and Amelia may have led

to their destruction, but their son has helped to raise a revolution to challenge the

need to choose between love and freedom. Dove embeds intertextual references from

the mythic origins through Augustus's educated references to the Greeks and the uses

of Greek characters names for the girls on the Plantation:

> 'AUGUSTUS: In my opinion, the Greeks / were a bit too predictable' (Dove
> 1999, p.56).

As Sanders observes:

Mythic paradigms provide the reader or spectator with a series of familiar
reference points and a set of expectations which the novelist, artist, director,
playwright, composer, or poet can rely upon as an instructive shorthand,
while simultaneously exploiting, twisting, and relocating them in newly
creative ways, and in newly resonant contexts (Sanders 2005, p.81).

It is interesting to note that both O'Neill and Dove choose to *relocate* the classical mythic resonance in order to frame and comment on key moments of change in American history, while Berkoff and Eliot choose to *locate* theirs in their contemporary world. They have made an act of 'diagetical transposition' which 'ignite[s] a spark of recognition' (Chirico 2012, p.19) in the audience in relation to political and postcolonial views of tragedy and in turn the classics. *Greek* and *The Darker Face of the Earth* make clear in their texts that they are drawing upon the myth of Oedipus. This can have its drawbacks, as the audience often may already know the major points of the plot before the play has even started, bringing their expectations and pre-conceived understanding of the myth, which can hamper dramaturgical freedom. However, there can be positive benefits of this knowledge which can be manipulated by the playwright. Berkoff attests that regardless of our background and training '[w]e are all carriers of traditions and, like an exercise, we change the information given to us in turn by adding our own input.' (Berkoff 1992, p.10)

Berkoff allows the audience to believe that, like Oedipus, Eddy's discovery of his true origins will lead to the death of his wife and self-blinding. Berkoff uses this knowledge to twist the tale and sends Eddy back to glory in the love of his mother/wife. Playing with audience expectations has ultimately made the myth his. In the same way Dove uses the frame of the source plot to draw her audience into a deeper debate about freedom and love which is made accessible by the audience's foreknowledge, engaging the myth to form part of a dramatic body of post-colonial discourse. Unlike Augustus Eddy chooses to satisfy his own desires rather than society's needs, a critique or perhaps a foreshadowing of Thatcher's politics, which

advocated self-reliance as an antidote to welfare dependence but became associated with images of unalloyed selfishness.' (Howe Kritzer 2008, p130). Monique Prunet (1996) reflects that Berkoff's continuing political commitment the 1980s led him to respond to The Conservative policies in the 1980s, and Margaret Thatcher, who is referred to in *Greek,* by Eddy's father as 'Maggot Snatcher' with 'sharp criticism.' (p.91). Dove and Berkoff have offered an informed contemporary audience a significant revision of the source myth, playing a game that offers an opportunity to make these connections and trace inspirations.

Electra and Oedipus in the 21st Centaury

In 2006 The Barbican staged a contemporary production of *Electra* by the Polish Company Gardzienice. Unlike O'Neill, Eliot, Berkoff and Dove, their artistic director Włodzimierz Staniewski desired to explore the myth through a search for its ur-text, the non-dramatically extant pre-text to Aeschylus' dramatic response to the ancient myth. Instead of turning to the Greek tragic version of the myth, the company looked instead for sources of the myth in ancient Greek relics including vases, which recorded the story. In this way the company's artistic director Wlodzimierz Staniewski determined to understand the innate resonance of the myth, not the tragedy it inspired: 'I am dancing with the text not the author. I ask what is the intelligence beyond the composition of the words?' (Staniewski 2004, p.137). From this stimulus the company had created an entire grammatical physical language of gestures for dance devised from research into the relics of ancient Greece. The iconographic images from the vases and other visual artefacts had become an integral source text in the creation and development of their response to the myth.

Rather than seeking to develop their revisions in relation to a dramatic tragedy, they had sought to go further back, in search of the essential meaning of the myth.

Whilst finalising my plays I participated in a Weekend Lab workshop at the Barbican Theatre (October 2012) with Polish theatre company TRWarsaw's director Grzegorz Jarzyna, who was developing a piece based on the Orestes myth cycle. When he spoke about his process, he discussed the need to step away from the Greek tragedian's version of events and turn to other sources in which the myth is recorded, whether through art, historical archives, or the non-dramatic narratives which still exist, in order to be saturated in the mythic material. Like Staniewski he sought to engage with the resonance of the source myth rather than its tragic authors. He explored and explained the ways in which he sought to approach the Oresteia myth in the creation of his own version, a project which is still in development. In seeking to create contemporary resonance he decided to draw upon the mythic narrative rather than the dramatically extant version by Aeschylus.

However, in the workshops it was clear that it was almost impossible to totally side-step Aeschylus' version of events: workshop members drew upon their prior knowledge which had been informed by their awareness of the dramatic version of events, and the psychological interpretations it had prompted. The very name Electra brings to mind her tragic character pre-figured by Aeschylus and, in the contemporary consciousness, Freud. However, investigating the myths in this way does offer new insights and, in sidestepping the classical trajectory of the myth to explore and investigate it as a found text rather than a dramatic one, allows a contemporary engagement which is unhindered by its dramatic precedents. The following section reflects upon the ways in which a dramatist might respond to the

inspiration offered by a mythic character, and the ways in which our pre-existing

awareness of mythic characters can inform our creation and development of the

characters in new dramatic structures.

Section 2 – Playing Antigone; a Reflection on the Appropriation of the myth

Sophocles' version of the Antigone myth was written in 441BC. In her essay,

'Pacifist Antigones', Alison Forsyth observes the ways in which the myth has

become part of our narrative discourse, a continuing site for re-telling because it is

'so very implicated in Western cultural tradition and history [and provides] sites for

not only aesthetic, but also socio-cultural re-investigation and "rereading"' (Forsyth

2009, p.25). Forsyth chose to focus upon the re-telling of the Antigone myth in Irwin

Shaw's *Bury the Dead* (1936), Bertolt Brecht's *Antigone* (1948), Griselda

Gambaro's *Antigona Furiosa* (1984) and Seamus Heaney's *Burial at Thebes* (2004).

There are, of course, many other examples of mythic re-visioning of the Antigone

myth which seek to re-tell or embed the iconic protagonist Antigone in their texts. I

now turn my focus on three of these appropriations of the character of Antigone,

which allow her character to traverse not only the dramatic structure of the extant

myth, but also come to embody political acts of resistance in other dramatic

narratives. Simon Goldhill (2007) claims that 'No play of the ancient world has been

produced as often in modern times as Sophocles' Antigone' (p.135).

Chirico (2012) observes that the use of mythic characters in this way can be described by Gennette's term 'transfocalization' in which a playwright can examine the 'character's motivations more fully.' (2012 p.19). However the playwrights who deploy Antigone's character are all writing after the initial source narrative, and therefore drawing together a web of meanings as each appropriation joins the narratives on the mythic map, responding to the cultural and political approaches of the myth, throughout the centuries along with its initial source. Therefore they are not just examining the characters motivations but are also by virtue of the myths place in society examining and reflecting upon the motivations of those playwrights who have before them turned to the myth. 'Antigone is the rock around whom the play revolves.' (Dromgoole p.56), she dies for the love of justice; it is this love that draws us to the character for political purposes. Sophocles' Antigone has been translated for diverse reasons:

> Sophocles Antigone has also received considerable counter-discursive attention because it disputes the state's definition of justice and champions a figure who is imprisoned for maintaining her sense of moral and legal principle. (Gilbert and Tompkins 1996, p.41)

Equally some of this attention in the retelling of Antigone's plight has been to give voice to communities that have been silenced or marginalised unjustly, through the use of dialect, linguistic translation and re-setting in another culture. Ian Brown created a version of the play in 1969, and then revised it in 1996. This translation of the classic myth into Scots and, in 1969, partly English, illustrating the discourse between these two linguistic registers in the contemporary society and the Scottish state, was a political act, highlighting the importance, not only of linguistic

frames but also cultural attitudes that can be brought into play in the creation of translated texts: 'At a deeper level, it enabled exploration of the rights of the individual to self-expression as against society's desire to control and the potential for free thought and free will against predestinate certainty' (Brown and Sherlock 1998, p.27).

Antigone is often returned to as a point of revision and discourse due to its intrinsic ability to challenge authority and therefore the authorities who gave it canonical status. Antigone's mythic discourse embodies both the classical designs of the imperialist whilst critiquing abuses of power in no uncertain terms. McLeish (1998) describes the attraction of the Antigone story for dramatists as follows: 'It is really only in Oedipus Tyrannos, and Antigone that "destiny" is seen in such stark and unflinching terms' (McLeish in Aristotle 1998, p.21). Naturally, we might perceive echoes of Antigone shut up in her tomb in Lavinia's final act in *Mourning Becomes Electra* in which she cuts herself off from the world, boarding up the windows of the house, echoing Antigone's defiant entombment. The following re-appropriations of the Antigone myth reflect this 'destiny' not in the hands of the Gods but of the state; *Antigone* (1944) by Jean Anouilh, *The Island* (1973) by Athol Fugard and *Welcome to Thebes* (2010) by Moira Buffini. Each playwright approaches the myth as a filter to critique structures of power, drawing correlations between the character of Antigone as an archetypal voice of the oppressed and Creon as an icon of state oppression, forming an iconic act of binary opposition.

Their approaches are divergent. Anouilh's *Antigone* is a direct revision to occupied France in World War Two. It discreetly draws correlations between the original discourse of Sophocles' Thebes and the French resistance under Nazi

occupation with political intent to protest at the Nazi occupation and challenge its power through the archetypal iconography of a Greek tragedy. Antigone becomes an icon for resistance with Creon symbolising Nazi repression. As Oedipus' daughter, Antigone is from a cursed family, yet the actions leading to her death are not prompted by destiny but by determination. Her religious and cultural requests are denied; she has to choose between her moral beliefs or her freedom, liberty and eventually life. Anouilh's modernist appropriation allowed him to critique the politics of his society through the filter of the myth and make comment without censorship. As a script it has been studied and reproduced frequently across the globe and stands as a cipher for resistance and repression. Antigone's suicide is often seen as an ultimate act of will, using the only power that she has left in Creon's repressive society:

> ANTIGONE: 'You've chosen life. I've chosen death' (Anouilh 1944 p48).

Her love of justice is her fatal hamartia, just as Creon's unbending will is his, staging a dialectic opposition of meta-discourse. Wherever there is oppression, there is a place for Antigone's mythic resistance, a classical cipher for the immovable force (Antigone) and the unstoppable object (Creon): 'Anouilh's use of the myth [...] demonstrated ways in which the myth could be recreated to deal with contemporary events in a modern non-Greek culture' (Brown and Sherlock 1998, p.27). Brown observed this in addressing, with Sherlock, his own exploration of Sophocles' myth, and he was not alone in seeing Anouilh as a paradigm to shift cultural reference in translation of mythic texts.

The Island - Antigone and Apartheid

Writing after Anouilh's *Antigone,* Fugard utilised the myth to critique another regime of state oppression, this time in South Africa, that of apartheid. Though published as Fugard's work, he widely acknowledges the collaborative nature of the play which was co-created with the actors John Kani and Winston Ntshona. Together they drew upon diverse performance styles, combining storytelling and performance traditions of Africa with Greek tragedy. In *The Island, Antigone* is staged as a play within a play and an act of resistance by John and Winston, prisoners of the notorious Robben Island. As the play develops, we become more aware of the impact the re-enactment of *Antigone* will have, as it acts as a challenge to the deep inequality lying behind their imprisonment. John is the driving force behind the staging and Winston constantly questions and challenges his determination to stage it. Yet, as John is given a reprieve, discovering he will be a free man, in three months' time, the stakes change. Winston realises that he is fated to life imprisonment.

The bond between the men who came to the prison as equals has been broken and the scales of fate have now tipped in John's favour. They are an active metaphor for the conflicting treatment by the Theban state of the bodies of Antigone's brothers. The first stage image is a mnemonic for Antigone's father Oedipus: symbolically Winston's bloodied eye, and John's bleeding ankle, act as an index for Oedipus' pierced ankle and later act of self-blinding. In parallel with Oedipus, they are prisoners of fate; however, not the fate of the Gods' but of the state which makes them prisoners of conscience. John's determination to stage the play ultimately,

regardless of the ramifications of its seditious intentions, so close to attaining

personal freedom, illustrates that his determination for equality and justice outweighs

self-preservation. Just as Antigone dies for justice, he risks a revocation of his parole

to stage her story and give voice to their plight; the staging is a defiant act in the face

of oppression. Of this Athol Fugard observes,

> My thinking about the complex of Robben Island ideas and images reached a
> point yesterday where it suddenly occurred to me that they require a style and
> a form very different from the four plays of the past ten years. Words like
> 'distance', 'elevation', 'objectivity' occur to me. 'Classical' in the sense of a
> cool detachment, is another. (Fugard 1983, p.209)

The Island developed from this process of thinking, which was inspired by

real life accounts, including the staging of *Antigone* on Robben Island in the 1960s

which is referred to in the play. As Gilbert and Tompkins (1996) observe 'any

freedom that these men may obtain from incarceration is mediated by their release

into the 'prison' of apartheid.' (Gilbert and Tompkins 1996, p.42). The audiences for

the first production of *The Island* were aware of this as a lived reality, yet the context

of the original Robben Island production of *Antigone* is evidence of the power of

theatre and this myth as a tool for social change.

As intertextual references are drawn together in the creation of each new

play the audience experiences an echo, or indeed a shadow to the original source

texts, and when these sources are already dramatic meta-theatrical possibilities

abound. The inherently meta-theatrical elements of many mythic revisions often

allude to the power of theatre as a tool for cultural intervention, as we will see in the

work of Timberlake Wertenbaker who has advocated that 'If theatre can change

lives, then by implication it can change society, since we're all part of it.'

(Wertenbaker 1997, p.133). *The Island* is a clear example of this power, as it

highlighted the inhumane conditions on Robben Island and in turn placed the spot light on apartheid in South Africa for all who saw it.

Staged as part of the Royal Court *South African Season* in 1973 along with *Sizwe Banzi is Dead* (1972) and *Statements after an Arrest under the Immorality Act* (1972), it was part of an anti-apartheid protest. The critical responses to the production included J.C.Terwin who perceived in *The Island*, the story of Antigone had 'dreadful relevance ' (1974 [n/p]). Whilst Michael Billington observed that it was plays like these which 'remind us that we are members, one of another.' (1974 [n/p]). Questions about the nature and power of stories to transpose cultural, geographical and historical modes of discourse and be of any cultural significance are neatly embedded by Fugard, as Winston asks can myths be relevant to contemporary culture:

> WINSTON: Only last night you tell me that this Antigone is a bloody... what do you call it... legend! A Greek one at that. Bloody thing never even happened. Not even history! Look, brother, I got no time for bullshit. Fuck legends. Me? ... live my life here! I know why I'm here, and its history, not legends. I had a chat with a magistrate in Cradock and now I'm here. Your Antigone is a child's play, man. (Fugard, 2000, p.210).

Winston questions the hierarchy of the classics and implicitly reminds John and the audience to question, why this myth, why now? However, the final act proves the ability of this myth to speak through the ages: as Winston stands dressed as Antigone, giving voice to her words, we see how aptly her struggle typifies theirs, at which point there is a metamorphosis that Dennis Walder witnessed as he 'tears off his disguise, discarding the tragic role of a Greek princess accepting her doom, to become a black South African man going to his "living death", unrepentant' (Walder in Fugard 2000, p.xv). In throwing off the 'mask' of Antigone, Winston stands as

himself, a prisoner of conscience using the discourse of ancient myth to declare his right to freedom. The power of myth to inspire is questioned and upheld by the play; its ability to provide a cipher for the concerns of contemporary man is justified. In its revival at The Young Vic in 2013, it was clear, though forty years had elapsed since its first premiere, the revision of the classic continued to resonate with a contemporary audience. As Hugh Dickson observed in his review the play 'had lost little of its force.' (2013).

Welcome To Thebes - Antigone in the Twenty-first century

Moria Buffini was one of the ten original founders of the Monsterist Movement with the following policies and aims as recalled by Andrew Haydon (2013):

> [F]ormed as an artistic pressure group for theatres to start letting living writers write 'big plays'. They demanded: 'the elevation of new theatre writing from the ghetto of the studio "black box" to the main stage; Equal access to financial resources for plays being produced by a living writer (i.e. equal with dead writers); (p.90-1)

Their manifesto included the following, as recorded by playwright David Eldridge in a Guardian article '*Massive Attack*' (27th June 2005):

> The key aesthetic tenets of the Monsterist work are:
>
> • Large scale, large concept and, possibly, large cast
>
> • The primacy of the dramatic (story showing) over storytelling
>
> • Meaning implied by action (not by lecture)
>
> • Characters caught in a drama (not there to facilitate a polemic)
>
> • The exposure of the human condition (not sociology)
>
> • Inspirational and dangerous (not sensationalist)
>
> (The Monsterist, 2005)

Five years later in 2010 Buffini achieved these aims, including implications of the manifesto as *Welcome to Thebes* opened on the National Theater's Olivier stage. Andrew Haydon (2013) entitled it 'a mash-up of Greek classical tragedies re-imagined in contemporary Africa.' (p.91). With the play she proved that through the filter of contemporary appropriation and revision 'Greek tragedy permits a political response to irresolvable, extreme situations without being crudely topical.' (Foley 1999, p.3). In an interview in the Times on the 19th June 2010 with Laura Silvermen, Buffini reflected on the initial inspiration to write *Welcome to Thebes* 'Two and half years ago I was asked to write a big play about politics with lots of parts for women.'(Buffini 2010). Though it might at first be received as a feminist critique of the roots of war in a mythic African state, Buffini reflected that the most significant theme for her was 'the growing divide between rich and poor countries' (Buffini 2010).

In his review Michaell Billington (2010) observed the way in which Buffini had used 'classical characters to create a contemporary political fable'. However he perceived that with the use of classical characters also came the audiences pre-awareness of their mythic fate, which for him trapped them into 'fulfilling a preordained destiny' (p.23) and felt that the playwright could 'never quite overcome the mythical baggage of the past' (ibid.). Yet this predetermination offered a sense of the inexorability of the struggle between weak and powerful, rich and poor and the individual versus that state that the original mythic discourse so powerfully encapsulates, and in turn, though there is hope in some of the characters voices, as an audience we are aware this hope is yet futile as history repeats itself once again. In

her review Libby Perves (2010) remarked that the play was 'full of resonances you weren't expecting'. Resonances which Henry Hitchings observed to coalesce with the plays classical origins;

> the contemporary resonance is obvious: we think only of West Africa but also of Obama and Iraq. Yet the classical imagery persists, and so does an unsettlingly oedipal notion of destiny. (Hitchings 2010).

Ian Shuttleworth proclaimed the power of such a juxtaposition between contemporary and classical narratives 'myth and reality constantly clash and send out sparks' (Shuttleworth 2010 p.11). Susannah Clapp's review expresses the territory which a contemporary revision of classical mythology must compass, including the possibility of references being lost of audience members who do not hold sufficient prior knowledge of the mythic material you seek to address and or subvert in contemporary versions:

> 'There's some classical-education anxiety in the bars of the National, where most people can manage a chuckle at Moira Buffini's oedipal references - "our father and our brother" - but are stumped when it comes to Tydeus. Buffini's new play Welcome to Thebes is enormous in scale and political range.' (Clapp, 2010, p.36)

Buffini's practice can be compared with that of Timberlake Wertenbaker. Susan Croft (2001) reflects that Wertenbaker is 'a successful translator' (p.267) and has translated all the Oedipus plays, including *Antigone* from Sophocles and 'profoundly engages both classical traditions and postmodern theatre practices' (Roth 2009, p.42) with a 'depth of knowledge of the ancient works' (Roth 2009, p.42). She perceives that 'As always, in moments of crisis, we return to the Greek playwrights and we find they have already sketched the terrain' (Wertenbaker 2004, p.368).

Buffini's Antigone meanwhile stands as force of change at a time of crisis in Buffini's contemporary (2010) Thebes; she demands action rather than diplomacy intent on seeking justice by any means possible:

ANTIGONE: What good did talking ever do?
    The only thing to do is act – and you
    Have never done
    Anything
    (Buffini 2010, p.42).

The argument has clarity and timelessness, giving a wide-ranging influence and making adaptations possible across generations. The discourse can be engaged to tackle new conflicts in our contemporary worlds, as Buffini does in *Welcome to Thebes*. Wallace suggests that 'Tragedy is the art form created to confront the most difficult experiences we face: death, loss, injustice, thwarted passion, despair' (Wallace 2007, p.1). Buffini's Antigone is part of a wider society envisaged by Buffini in drawing the story of a contemporary African city trying to find independence and peace after the crushing onslaught of concurrent civil wars: she is one of the women attempting to rule the city in peace. Together they seek freedom from the patriarchy that has dominated the city, and those who wish to take power in peace as they did in war, but all their hard work is in vain and the tragic consequence is paid by all, as dictatorships continue their tyrannical control. It offers a bleak world view: child soldiers open and close the proceedings, haunting images of the future to come if change is not forthcoming. Its narrative is peopled with characters from ancient Greek myth, drawing correlations between the Trojan War and the horrors of modern warfare and dramatizing the impact of war on domestic landscapes. Its protagonist's love of justice ultimately leads to her death.

Buffini at the beginning of a new millennium was writing in response to not only Sophocles' version of the myth, but also its filtrations from Anouilh to Fugard and the many other writers who had already approached the myth before her. A relay of re-appropriation has therefore taken place; each new appropriation brings an addition layer of meaning: we read and respond to the mythic adaptation, not purely through the filter of the myth but all the narratives that have sought to reframe it. When looking at systems of oppression and the significance of Antigone's voice, it is salient to note that Buffini's play was only the second written by a living female playwright to be staged at National's Olivier Theatre, modelled on the Ancient Greek Theatre Epidaurus. The extant plays were written, staged and performed by men to a male audience in ancient Greece. In female re-appropriations of the myths we cannot avoid the implications of a female character being given voice by a female playwright. Carol Martin observes in her essay *The Political Is Personal: Feminist Democracy and the Antigone Project* (2009) 'Feminist readings of *Antigone* centre on her willingness to act, to reject passivity even as a strategy for survival, and to assert her own point of view [...]' (p.81). As a feminist, Buffini draws upon the myth to address the ongoing struggles women face across the globe for equal representation and an equal voice, and she is not alone in turning to Antigone as an archetypal image of a woman who will not be silenced in a classical world, where dramatically they in fact were.

In conclusion, the ways in which these playwrights, among others, have utilised the archetypal mythic character of Antigone illustrates the ways in which mythic characters have become iconic signifiers of the mythic discourse. By adapting the characters of ancient Greek myth, one can embed a reference from

classic texts into a new play, without needing to transpose the other aspects of the myth to a dramatic form. A mythic character can, therefore, offer the possibility to transpose a mythic discourse solely through a mythical figure. It allows, as can be seen in the work of Fugard, Kani and Ntshona, a layering and oscillation between the contemporary play and the mythic discourse it embeds, and, in the case of Buffini, an opportunity to develop dramatically in response to a pre-existing character drawn into her contemporary revision.

As can be clearly seen, when we revise these well-known characters, we take part in a relay of accumulating meaning. As the myth is revised by each subsequent practitioner, the meaning builds upon what Martin (2009) observes 'is a foundational Western text' (p.80). When we watch *The Island* we are reminded of Jean Anouilh's *Antigone,* and, by the time a knowing audience receives the discourse of *Welcome to Thebes,* we have connected in our imaginations three dictatorships: the Nazis, the South African National Party, and Buffini's fictional yet contemporary African dictator. All of these contexts resonate with Antigone's calls for democracy. Antigone draws from the mythic tales of the House of Labdacus. She, thus, connects in the educated audience's mind her myth with that of Oedipus, part of an interconnecting mythic epic, and therefore forming part of a wider landscape of narrative discourse, allowing connections to be made across a wider canvas. How you view Oedipus affects how you view Antigone, and vice versa.

Section 3 – Postmodern play; Greek Tragedy through a postmodern lens - Martin Crimp and Sarah Kane

Simon Malpas observes that postmodern plays, like all postmodern art, are often 'deliberately difficult and disturbing, challenging accepted practices of presentation and understanding [with] potentially disrupted forms' (Malpas 2005, p.29). This section observes the way in which two influential postmodern playwrights approached the re-visioning of two ancient Greek tragedies. Both acted under a commission, Sarah Kane commissioned by the Gate Theatre, and Martin Crimp working under a co-commission by Luc Bondy.

Howe Kritzer (2008) detects that both playwrights 'employ a postmodern critique of the individual, pointing to the fragmentation, discontinuity, and instability that propel and inhibit desire and action.' (p.130). How does this *fragmentation* and *discontinuity* impact on the Greek myths they seek to revision? Jennifer Wallace (2007) has asked:

> Given the surplus of images today and the ambiguity of televised or photographed horror, is it any longer possible to shock? Does tragedy have a place? (p.6).

These plays provide a resounding 'yes' to Wallace's enquiry, illustrating the ways in which the Greek tragedies can offer direct correlations to contemporary theatre practice, the narratives playfully subverted in order to respond to pressing contemporary concerns, as they draw these 'horrors' into their re-visions. And perhaps this is one impact of contemporary re-visions of ancient Greek tragedies, the

presence of violence on stage, which would have been classically related by

messengers. Kane and Crimp were both unafraid of staging violence, Mark

Houlahan (2008) notes that Kane takes its staging to the brink with 'scenes of ultra-

violence' (p.258) and the dramatic worlds they created in response to these

tragedies, when I watched them, held audiences at the Young Vic and the Barbican

in a surer grip than any horror film.

Kane critiqued the monarchy and the cult of celebrity, whilst Crimp critiqued

the private and public corruptions of warfare and those who benefited from the spoils

of war. In searching for a contemporary relevance for their audience, they find clear

corollaries between the tragedies and their contemporary society, and find ample

material for their postmodern purposes, as we shall see; 'postmodernism confronts

the reader or viewer with a work that is challenging in terms of both forms and

content.' (Malpas 2005, p.30). Both Kane and Crimp did this in vastly different ways

whilst keeping the contemporary resonance of the classical myths alive for their

audiences.

Babbage argues, with regard to contemporary resonance:

> Since myths are frequently best-known in the form they have assumed within
> the canon of classical drama, today's playwrights immediately find their work
> measured against this regardless of the intentions of a new work or attitudes
> towards the old (Babbage 2011, p.3).

How can we 'measure' the work of Martin Crimp's *Cruel and Tender,* a

contemporary adaptation of Sophocles' *The Women of Trachis,* and Sarah Kane's

Phaedra's Love, a response to Seneca's *Phaedra* after Euripides' *Hippolytus,* 'against'

the pre-existing 'form' and in turn how much did their awareness of this process of

measuring influence their re-visioning of these two myths? T. S. Eliot urged the

artists to challenge pre-existing structures and forms: 'To conform merely would be for the new work not really to conform at all; it would not be new, and would therefore not be a work of art' (Eliot 1923, p.15). Crimp and Kane subvert the expectation of these dramatic works in such a way that the plays they create in response to them are freed from the restrictions of conformity and answer the new artistic questions of their age. These subversions are most pertinent in the gaps between the source and the plays they inspire, the point at which Sarah Annes Brown (2008), co-editor of *Tragedy in Transition* a collection of essays which seek to explore the changing face of tragedy in our contemporary age, perceives that 'tragic intensification is dramatized.' (2008, p.9). As between the source and the postmodern revision there is a point of amplification.

In these two re-workings, the myths filter critiques of postmodern uncertainty with allusions to consumerism, violence and depravity. The excesses of post-Thatcherite Britain are deconstructed as the social elite begin to clash with the reality that waits outside their ivory towers of splendid isolation. Julia Boll observes that 'Greek tragedy seems to be particularly adaptable to portrayal of contemporary war.' (Boll p.131). *Cruel and Tender* (premiered 2004) was created in the midst of the war on terror and *Phaedra's Love* (premiered 1996) was created just at the end of the Bosnian war: violent images, both staged and un-staged, suggest the impact of violence on domestic society. The plays also focus on the impact of infatuated love, with the desires of Phaedra and Amelia, Crimp's contemporary reincarnation of Deianeira, unwittingly destroying the subjects of their obsession. Although commissioned, Crimp and Kane had a choice of which of the extant plays they

would adapt and connections can be drawn between the myths they have chosen and their authorial voices.

1. *Classical myths in Crimpland*

'Crimp has carved out his own theatrical territory, Crimpland, full of hollow folk, all with offstage lives of loneliness and mystery, suddenly trapped together in mutual obsession' (Dromgoole 2002 p.62). This mythic version of 'Crimpland' is set in the vestiges of the 'War on terror' drawing direct correlations between contemporary warfare and the Trojan War of Sophocles' *The Women of Trachis*, operating 'as a palimpsest.' (Boll p.2). The Young Vic Theatre's production revealed a sterile, suffocating and contemporary apartment in which Crimp's Deianeira, Amelia, is a spoilt but encaged housewife, tended upon by a chorus of housekeepers, therapists and beauticians, passing comment upon the lifestyles of those they serve. Unlike Crimp's other creations Amelia's life of 'loneliness' is centre-stage, trapped in the liminal space of her apartment, close to the airport, as she awaits her husband's return. Crimp focuses the narrative centres on mythic hero Hercules' 'personal betrayal of his wife.' (Boll 2013, p.135).

Heracles is transformed into a modern general, who, in trying to wipe out terrorism, has become a terrorist himself, bringing his war back to domesticity. He transports the classical myth to a contemporary frame by 'reassessing the geographical parameters and the character's' social background.' (ibid. p.18). Amelia's words are imbued with passive aggression and her acerbic outbursts are tainted with violence. As guilt, confusion and jealousy bubble, with the report of each new atrocity, her attempts to draw her husband back to her bed with a love potion backfire as it is revealed to be a chemical weapon. In his review, Michael

Billington (2004) observed the 'ingenuity' Crimp had shown in 'finding modern equivalents' for the ancient events in this contemporary setting. Crimp utilised his research on modern warfare to transpose the supernatural element of the myth to points of contemporary relevance: 'I couldn't imagine writing a play that wasn't cut, linguistically, culturally, from the material of contemporary life [...]' (Crimp in Sierz 2006, p32).

Crimp chooses, like O'Neill, to use snatches of music to comment chorus-like upon the action of the play. The sick recurrent refrain of 'I can't give you anything but love, baby' is laden with irony as The General falters after the death of Amelia, while Billie Holiday's 'My Man' offers an archetypal view of love, which is ironically undercut by the ensuing plot. Music is a way in which the modern dramatist can draw dramaturgically on the choric elements of ancient Greek mythic discourse without losing contemporary resonance or stepping outside of contemporary performance frames: 'The entry of the chorus was usually spectacular set piece, poetically rich and establishing the emotional landscape of the play much as the prologue set out its narrative parameters' (McLeish In Aristotle 1998, p16).

2. Sarah Kane's Classical Cruelty - Phaedra's Love

Ken Urban observes that 'The defining culture of 1990s drama is its cruelty' (Urban 2001, p.43). *Phaedra's Love* is no exception. Kane created *Phaedra's Love* in response to a commission from the Gate Theatre in 1996. It was her second professionally staged play after *Blasted* (1995) a play *which* had prompted 'media furore over the shocking content and unsettling form of the play [putting] British new writing on the map.' (Sierz 2012 p.55). She was looking for new approaches to dramatic style and this commission facilitated her exploration into Greek tragedy and

its Roman applications, drawn as she was towards the Roman playwright who wrote 'nine tragedies loosely based on Greek originals, including his *Medea, Phaedra, Oedipus, Agamemnon,* and *Thyestes.*' (Zarrilli et al. 2006, p.108). She chose Seneca's appropriation of Euripides' *Hippolytus* rather than Euripides' extant text, or the later version by Racine, of which Ted Hughes made a contemporary translation of in 1999. Kane felt an affinity with the work of Seneca,

The conflict between chastity and desire is central to all these appropriations, however Zina Giannopoulou observes that this theme is central to all of Kane's work as: '[...] Kane makes sexuality the common denominator of the life of all her characters' (Giannopoulou 2010, p.59). She thus chose to transpose Hippolytus' love of chastity to a nihilistic inability to feel or express love. Subverting as she does the character's original misogynist view, Kane's stark adaptation emphasises, distorts and amplifies the central thematic of the myth, unrequited love. Hippolytus' nature is thus transposed; he is no longer a bastion of morality, but its antithesis. In Kane's re-appropriation Hippolytus exists in a dystopian paradise, completely cut off from society and yet exalted by it. Urban (2001) noted that 'Hippolytus can be seen as an example of Nietzsche's "last man", who has killed god and substituted himself in God's place' (p.48). The only time that Hippolytus is happy is at the point of his own destruction.

Semiotically and structurally Aston and Savona (1991) note 'In the case of Oedipus the King and Phaedra the dramas are both myth-based and the story-line is therefore closed or fixed, and known to the reader' (p26). Yet Kane's narrative frame is almost unrecognisable from its source, though key events and themes of the source myth are retained to signify its connection and frame of response, along with the use

of Phaedra's name in the title. The character's names are retained. Phaedra still forms

a hopeless attachment for her step son and Hippolytus still rejects her affections but

this time, not her sexual advances. As Christopher Innes notes 'Phaedra hangs herself

because of her son's indifference to having sex with her' (Innes 2002, p.532). Kane's

transposition acts as a critique, not purely of the morality of love, but also her

contemporary consumerist society and the media that manipulates it. Phaedra's ill-

fated love is no longer caused by external forces of fate; Hippolytus is loved and

desired by all due to the power that monarchy wields as a pseudo-celebrity. Kane

also critiques what she sees as a quasi-incestuous relationship between the monarchy

and religion. The image of the God-head is playfully transposed as the priest

performs fellatio on Hippolytus, and, unlike the choral reports of off-stage violence

in Greek tragic form. 'All these appalling images are not only presented as irrational

– barely motivated by sexual desires or perversions – but also in full view' (Innes

2002, p.532). All but Phaedra's suicide is staged.

A year after writing *Phaedra's Love*, Kane discussed her political position in

relation to playwriting, stating that she did not like to label her work or that of other

people, seeing the divisions as a 'diversion' and instead expressing a humanist view,

claiming that 'The problems [she was] addressing are the ones we have as human

beings.' (Kane 1997, p.134). Kane's experiment with Greek tragedy was imbued with

her own style, known for her use of 'poetic language, [and] experimental structures'

(Babbage 2011, p.187). *Blasted* had already staged violent and visceral images and

Kane noted her decision to bring this to *Phaedra* rather than using the chorus to

report the news: '[...] I thought you can subvert the convention of having everything

happen off-stage and have it happen on-stage' (in Graham Saunders 2009, p.68).

Aleks Sierz compared aspects of her work to Harold Pinter, Edward Bond, and Howard Barker; particularly insightful for this play was the way he perceived that she 'examines violence in its personal and social meanings' (Sierz 2001, p.119). As the play ends a choric community emerges, drawn to the Palace, a gang of vigilantes' intent on destroying Hippolytus.

In her review of the revival at the Barbican in 2005, Lyn Gardner observed the way that Kane had taken the classic and distilled it 'as a brutal black comedy, a savage farce' (Gardner 2005). Hippolytus was portrayed as an icon of apathy, a sofa for a throne, surrounded by the detritus of human existence; the only thing with an ability to prompt emotion in his world is violence. But integral to this staging of violent acts is what it prompts, both in the characters and the audience who perceive their dramatic journeys as Graham Saunders perceives by 'galvaniz[ing] an evaluation of what it is to be human.' (Saunders, 2009, p.35). Kane plumbed the depths of human despair and depravity in a postmodern landscape offering a bleak and cynical view of monarchy, the church, and society charged with immorality, violence, consumerist mores and hypocrisy tracing the shape of a broken Britannia. As Innes notes, '[...] Kane can be seen as taking the feminist principle that "the personal is political" to its extreme, where her own psychological turmoil becomes a register for the sickness of modern civilisation' (Innes 2002, p.530). 'Sarah Kane's career in theatre has defined itself by extremes.' (Sanders 2012, p.1) and Kane's transposed Seneca's vision into her own which was termed 'In-Yer-Face' by Sierz (2001).

Dan Rebelloto observes that '[v]iolence is central to Aleks Sierz's definition of in-yer-face theatre.' (2007, p.192), and we can see the antecedents for this style in

Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty. 'The plays' cruelty - like the cruelty theorized in the writing of Nietzsche, Artuad and Bataille - challenges the cynicism and opportunism of the historical moment.' (Urban 2007, p.53). Correlations can clearly be drawn between Seneca's body of work, the work of Jacobean dramatists influenced by Seneca and the contemporary dramatic landscape of Kane's dramaturgy: Wallace comments that '[...] Seneca's plays focus upon the depiction of psychical violence and went on to influence the sensational excesses of Jacobean revenge tragedy' (Wallace 2007, p.30). *Phaedra's Love* broaches a movement towards the poetic and metaphorical elements of Kane's later works, perhaps illustrating how dramaturgically engaging with myths enriched and influenced her theatrical style, even if the transposition itself was not greeted with great critical acclaim at the time.

Kane was one of several playwrights at the end of the nineties along with Mark Ravenhill, and Anthony Nielson that Sierz observed to be key proponents of In-Yer-Face theatre. He defined these In-Yer-Face playwrights by the themes they were drawn to, and the way they depicted them 'psychological and emotional extremes' with 'direct, powerful language, often with fast and furious results.' (Sierz 2012, p.57). And though centuries divide their careers Euripides equally enjoyed breaking taboos and subverting expectations and was subject to the notoriety not dissimilar to Kane at the height of her career. Glynne Wickham (1992) observes that in 'his own lifetime Euripides enjoyed a reputation of an *enfant terrible*.'(p.37). Illustrating that myths have been used to equally upturn as well as uphold expectations from the birth of tragic theatre in the western world.

Section 4 -What's the Story: re-visioning non-dramatically extant Greek Mythology –*The Love of a Nightingale, A Mouthful of Birds* and *The Three Birds*

Along with the Greek Tragedians versions of classical myths a plethora of non-dramatically extant mythic narratives are available for the contemporary practitioner to use as inspiration in the development and generation of new work. There are plentiful examples of devised responses to non-dramatically extant myths, yet not so many plays which directly site the intertextual engagement between their work and the myths which inspired them. In this section I reflect upon the ways in which three contemporary playwrights directly and openly approached mythic re-visions of dramatically non-extant myths and the ways in which their practice relates to my own creative choices and approaches to dramatically non-extant myths in making my trilogy. Many non-dramatically extant classical myths have been kept alive and are still part of our contemporary cultural background. This is partly thanks to the work of Roman poet Ovid who was inspired by Greek and Latin myths along with other narrative sources. *The Metamorphoses* has been used as a countless artists from a multitude of disciplines across the centuries. Ted Hughes (1997) relates how in 'the Middle Ages throughout the Christian West it became the most popular work from the Classical era, a source-book of imagery and situations for artists, poets' (p.vii)

In seeking to develop my own approach to Ovid and the myths he retold, I turned to plays that were inspired by his mythic narratives and therefore existed outside the theatrical performance history of extant texts. Its influence is still felt

today in the work of the many artist it inspired, the following plays are drawn

directly from metamorphic myths re-told by Ovid, though it is of note that the

playwrights did not rely solely on Ovid's poetic account of the myths and also looked

back to the myths' origins in ancient Greece. The plays are connected by their

embedded references to Bacchanalian cult practice, arguably an apt subject for

contemporary female playwrights. Bacchanalian practices stage a world of

temporary female freedom from the social conditions of patriarchy, present in the

Ancient Greek society in which the extant plays were generated. Using Dionysian

ritual to stage the silenced and marginalised, a shift from patriarchal dominance to

subversive matriarchal anarchy, offers a chance to redress the balance, often in a

revolutionary way.

There is a meta-theatrical flavour in these mythic adaptations, especially

those inspired directly by Ovid. The plays we look at now all revolve around the

theme of voice, whether it is in the abusive act of silencing voices in Laurens's *The*

Three Birds (2000) and Wertenbaker's *The Love of a Nightingale* (1989) or the

hearing of voices in *A Mouthful of Birds* (1986), the co-creation of Caryl Churchill,

David Lan and Ian Spink. All of the plays draw upon the symbolic image of birds in

relation to acts of silencing and in turn finding a new voice. Marina Warner observes

that:

> Birds' language inspired a large body of stories in classical myth: the most
>
> popular form of metamorphosis, they were credited with the invention of
>
> aspects of human culture. (Warner 1995, p.56)

The choice of this archetypal image takes on deeper significance as these

female writers' write in response to mythical structures developed and canonised by

the male voice, which has been given patriarchal privilege in the classical canon. Choosing to create plays that focus on the importance of the voice and giving power to the voiceless to tell their stories is a political act of re-appropriation, whether intentional or not. Female playwrights choosing to develop re-appropriations of these oral myths, many of which were enshrined in patriarchal structures or left out of the dramatic canon, can offer critiques and alternative perspectives to the cannon of Greek tragedy in which the female subject was 'mediated by a text written and produced exclusively by men.' (Wohl, 2005, p.147).

Laurens and Wertenbaker choose to explore the myth which inspired one of Sophocles lost tragedies, the myth of Tereus, and draw on aspects of production and performance history of ancient Greek tragedy, including the use of chorus, verse and structure, thus seeking to 'recall Sophocles, Shakespeare, or Racine' (Bentley 1987, p.42), and, in so doing, critique our relationship to the classical canon. Churchill, Lan and Spink drew on the archetypal nature of Dionysus to create a performance that re-contextualised Bacchic possession in a contemporary frame, drawing on dance and the appearance of Agave, Dionysus and Pentheus at key moments, with embedded references to the performances of Bacchic rites, whilst a chorus of the possessed tell their stories of possession and madness. Janelle Reinelt observes that they 'developed a collaborative style' (2000, p.174), which led to a 'flexible dramaturgy which is not trapped in linguistic modes of textuality.' (ibid p.187)Wertenbaker was already an established writer, but for Laurens like Rita Dove her dramatic response to myth was the first play she had written. Laurens admits that when she wrote when she wrote *Three Birds* she 'knew absolutely nothing about

theatre [...] I neither held expectations of what a play should be, nor tried to emulate any other successful playwright.' (2003b. p.12).

Laurens and Wertenbaker set their re-appropriations of the myth in ancient Greece, and are in some ways responding to the construction of ancient Greek tragic theatre, whereas Churchill, Lan and Spink set about creating a new form in which the language of dance meets the textual discourse, framing, underscoring and resonating the themes of Bacchic possession. All of the plays stage a Bacchanalian act of dismemberment and infanticide as recounted in Euripides' *Bacchai*. However unlike the Euripidean *Bacchai*, the viewpoint comes from inside the world of the Bacchanals, whether in the physical embodiments of Bacchic possession as a metaphor for schizophrenia in *A Mouthful of Birds* or as the sister's revenge for the rape and silencing of Philomela in Laurens's and Wertenbaker's re-telling of the Tereus myth. Bacchanalian possession is staged as a response to repression and the marginalisation of women or those on the outskirts of society rather than purely an act of cult worship, and is therefore an implicit warning to any society which chooses to silence a body of people. Instead of impromptu acts of violence spurred on by the gods, it is staged as an act of deliberate deconstruction in response to abuse and repression.

Greek tragedy presents us with a canon of strong female roles. As Wertenbaker rallies, 'Who are the blazing characters? Clytemnestra, Electra, Hecuba, Medea, Phaedra, Antigone – women. And what is the relation of these women to self-knowledge? To the rational? None. None at all' (Wertenbaker 2004, p.362). But what kind of message does the dramaturgical treatment via male authorship of these strong female roles send out? Wertenbaker is renowned for her translations of Greek

myths, including a faithful version of Euripides' *Antigone,* but in 1989 she created

The Love of a Nightingale from one of the non-extant myths, a play which

'intricately layers myth, feminism, and politics' (Roth 2009, p.43). Stephenson and

Langridge (1997) refer to Wertenbaker as 'one of our greatest contemporary

playwrights' (p.136). Both 'multi-lingual and multi-cultural' (Croft, 2001, p.267), she

is well known for her power to draw on diverse influences and create 'deeply

intertextual and intercultural plays, [which] draw equally from ancient and modern

sources, exposing genealogies of culture.' (Roth 2008, p.23). *Our Countries Good,* a

play which was inspired by and included imbedded, meta-theatrical and clear

intertextual reference to George Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer* premiered in the

same year, as *The Love of The Nightingale.* Like much of Wertenbaker's work, Jane

Milling noted; 'contained a mediation on the role and cultural purpose of theatrical

performance itself.' (Milling 2012, p.255)

The myth of Tereus, Procne and Philomela is recorded by Ovid in book 6

(412-674) of the *Metamorphoses.* Audience's familiar with Shakespeare's *Titus

Andronicus,* will also see connections to Lavinia, the tragic heroine who, after being

raped, had her tongue cut out to keep her silent, though, unlike Lavinia, Philomela

keeps her hands. Wertenbaker stages the myth of Phaedra, as a play within a play,

providing an inciting incident for Tereus who regards it as justification to follow his

passion, and pursue Philomela. The series of cruel actions his love prompts, act as a

metaphor for the psychological impact drama can have upon society, and in turn the

responsibility that dramatists bear. Wertenbaker therefore drew on her in-depth

knowledge of Greek tragic structure, shaping and developing the myth to critique the

structures of Greek theatre, especially the depiction of the women by Greek

dramatists as she 'profoundly engage[d] both classical traditions and postmodern

theatre practices' (Roth 2009, p.42).

Wertenbaker used the dramatic chorus conventions with a male and female

chorus, the female chorus made up of female heroines who are mostly silenced by

the end of their individual myths, the male chorus a band of unnamed soldiers.

Intentionally she chose to stage all the graphic acts of violence on stage, confronting

the audience with Tereus' brutality, centralising the violent act of silencing the

female voice. Despite this silencing in Wertenbaker's powerful revision. In Sophie

Bush's monograph of Wertenbaker's work, she observes that:

> Philomele and Procne have a far greater presence in Wertenbaker's version
> than in Ovid's, both in the number of scenes/ episodes that feature them, and
> in the way they are portrayed in these. (Bush 2013, p.100)

Procne and Philomela come from a world of reason, of logic, and of

sisterhood. When they leave their home, they find themselves becoming gradually

incapable of the freedoms they once enjoyed. They are silenced by a lack of thought,

a lack of logic. Brought up to question the world, an elemental creature in a civilised

society which worships both male and female deities, spontaneous and driven,

Philomela finds herself cabined in and controlled by Tereus. Both sisters endure a

harrowing displacement from their culture, their family and their sense of self which

'a recurrent theme in Wertenbaker's work' (Bush 2013, p.9). The play is heightened

and reflective as it calls on meta-theatrical components: a play within a play,

Phaedra, is staged and Philomela re-enacts her fate with a puppet show which

Babbage (2011) observes 'evoke[s] carnivalesque effigies' (p.132). The thematic

drive of the play is to stage the voice of the silenced and the society they are a part

of. 'By choosing a lesser-known ancient myth [Wertenbaker] imagined the play

might provide "a kind of jolting," jarring consciousness more effectively than a familiar story might'(Roth 2009, p.44), and certainly this jolt of the new, suffused with subverted classical conventions of tragedy, proved popular with contemporary audiences; 'The Love of a Nightingale is also one [Wertenbaker's] most popular plays, an intriguing observation given the relatively conservative climate for feminist plays in professional theatre in the past two decades' (Roth 2009, p.46).

The Three Birds was Joanna Laurens's first play and was met with critical acclaim, winning awards from Time Out and The Critics Circle for Best Newcomer. Compared to Wertenbaker's version, ten years earlier, this is a far sparser retelling, but the simplicity facilitates a distillation of the story to the key narrative strands of obsessive love, violation, and the silencing of the female voice. Laurens altered the story in order to allow her audience some emphatic connection with Tereus who is portrayed in Ovid as a remorseless rapist. She felt this would not translate into a contemporarily accessible narrative and so adapted the story so that the nature of the love for Philomela was long-standing, not purely based on lust. The staging appears to be timeless, but there are references made to Greece and the characters' names are drawn from the source myth. Linguistically, Laurens experimented with different languages, some ancient Greek, Welsh, Irish and ancient English words intermingle with more contemporary frames of speech in her poetic form, in which she also creates new words. Lyn Gardner (2000) in her review of the play drew correlations between her Laurens and Sarah Kane, which is illustrated in the way words meld together in Three Birds, forming new lexicons, creating a feeling of otherworldliness to the play, in which we feel outside of time:

Enter CHORUS seeping in. They whisper simultaneously the relevant lines
for each group so that the English comes to be spoken in unison across the
groups. Forms in brackets to give the effect of a slow mutation to English.
(Laurens 2006, p.58)

The script is full of linguistic symbols, metaphors, double-entendres and colloquialisms, playfully exploring speech in a world where its loss is an act of abuse. When Michael Billington reviewed her work in 2003 in The Observer, he perceived that her use of language was the key to her power as a playwright; 'urgent yet lyrical blank verse with no regular beat or rhythm, full of made-up words and inversions -which marks her out' (Billington 2003b., p.203). The sense of freedom, but also compulsion to use language for change is the image we are left with by Laurens:

PROCNE: We've finished the story / the words are yours / yours!'
(Laurens 2000, p.60).

The sense that this myth and many other non-dramatically extant myths are just waiting to be spoken, to be rewritten, to be embodied is palpable. Unlike Wertenbaker, Laurens stays true to Ovid and has Philomela encode the message to her sister in the form of a tapestry, an apt metaphor for the way Laurens weaves references and poetry and form in her text. However 'Ovid's version is the basis of Wertenbaker's drama, [with] two notable changes: first, theatre, not weaving, is the means by which Procne discovers her sister's treatment; second, Itys is killed but not eaten' (Babbage 2011, p.125). Thus the myth and its revisions offer a dark justice, as the crimes of love and lust must ultimately be paid for with the death of that desires' fruit.

Like Wertenbaker, Laurens subverts the Greek dramatic structures, as did Kane by staging the most violent scenes on stage. The cutting out of Philomena's tongue and her rape are the most extreme examples leading the audience, not the chorus alone, to judge the situation, critiquing a society which chooses to keep these actions behind closed doors and equally staging the change in what is dramaturgically acceptable in modern theatrical styles. The play is raw and sparse when compared to Wertenbaker's version of the myth. It is a distillation of form and subject where the violent enactment of rape is central to it limbic landscape. Laurens went on to create *Poor Beck* (2004) inspired by another ancient Greek myth, Myrrha, another tale of incest and metamorphosis recounted by Ovid, but not present in extant play form. It is hard not to draw connections between her re-appropriation of myths and Kane's linguistically fractured, emotionally charged poetic terrain.

The tapestry in *The Three Birds* can be seen as a poignant metaphor for the history of narratives woven rather than written by women centuries ago. In classical Greece women 'could not speak in public and were thus excluded for the discourse of governance' (Babbage 2011, p.130). As Marina Warner reflects:

> Spinning a tale, weaving a plot, the metaphors illuminate the relation while the structure of fairy stories, with their repetitions, reprises, elaboration and minutiae, replicates the thread and fabric of one of women's principal labours [...] (Warner 1995, p.23).

Thus a tapestry allowed a female narrative to be recorded, preserved and shared for generations after their deaths, after they were unable to tell the tale with their own tongues. The act of silencing Philomela is a potent metaphor for a female narrative being stripped from the mythic terrain by patriarchal control of the ancient Greek theatres that staged it. The inaudibility of the silenced Philomela is palpable

and difficult to witness: 'We should crave intentional noise/speech at this point'

(Laurens 2000, p.45). We are left in the silent world of Philomela for a while to

experience the uncomfortable reality of her loss and think on those still without a

voice in our own societies. In both plays it is Bacchanalian frenzy which offers

Philomela the chance to break from her bounds of captivity and give voice to the

atrocity that has left her mute. The puppet show that Wertenbaker's Philomela stages

can be seen as a metaphor for the power of theatre to give voice to those who are

silenced and marginalised by society, something which *A Mouthful of Birds* sought

to do in staging the interior or world of extreme mental disturbance.

In reflecting upon their own production of *Mouthful of Birds,* Frances

Babbage and Margaret Llewelyn-Jones (1994) observe that the form of the play did

prompt some negative reviews because of its form yet the form is an expression of

these internal workings of a psyche in turmoil and is therefore essential to the work

as the form expresses the content; 'The play's structure, language and images are

'fragmented' and even 'bizarre' because they have to be.' (p.58). As Michael

Patterson (2003) perceives, this in turn that which is open and fragmented calls for

an active spectatorship as 'opens up possibilities rather than urging a particular

viewpoint on her audience.' (p.162)

'The most acclaimed post-war British woman playwright,' (Croft 2001, p.41),

Churchill's practice is constantly evolving spanning the decades with approaches to

playwriting since the beginning of her career, 'exploring daringly theatrical

possibilities by combining densely poetic text with the visual, aural and physical.'

(ibid. P.42). 'Identifiably a feminist writer.' (Patterson 2003, p.158), she has worked

both as a solo playwright and collaborator with Monstrous Regiment and Joint

Stock, and has ushered many innovations in style and subject treatment to the British

stage. Both 'political commitment' and 'artistic audacity' mark the work of Carly

Churchill for Paola Botham (2012 p.99) and she has influenced and continues to

influence countless practitioners, including Sarah Kane, who Saunders (2009) notes

had been inspired to work with Seneca's *Phèdre,* by Churchill's version of Seneca's

Thyestes (2001). Her collaborative creation *Mouthful of Birds* stages the internal

monologue of seven characters expressing the conflict between conscious and

unconscious thoughts as they are each in turn possessed by a Bacchic frenzy which

appears completely out of their control. The internal world of mental disturbance,

possession, schizophrenia and breakdown is staged externally with the recurring

motif of Bacchus who, as the God of inspired madness, is envisioned as a malevolent

force that dances as equilibrium is destroyed, interjecting between discordant and

montage scenes.

Bacchus is the running thread which weaves the desperate narratives of

possession together. The Bacchanalian is also related in the form, as narrative free

flows, openly exploring the worlds of the characters at their point of crisis or

possession. The unseen forces, the inner daemons and voices are physically

embodied and expressed whilst internal monologues are staged. At the point when

the characters make their excuses, cut off and withdraw from the world, we are

allowed inside theirs. The title for A Mouthful of Birds came from one of the

participants who had spoken to the company as part of their research. This image of

an affective silencing, a block in communication, is an effective image for the

essential message in these plays: in order to speak, something must be let out, and set

free. The words fly from her mouth as she lets go of the fluttering fear of in-

expression in her world. Churchill's adaptation provides a critique of patriarchal

dominance of Greek tragedy were women were as often objects as subjects and an

authorial voice for a story that has been marginalised and silenced by the passage of

time. As Raima Evans reflects in *A Mouthful of Birds:*

> [...] we find an echo of The Bacchae, but we also find the echo of something
> else, older than The Bacchae, as old as culture itself: the story of women and
> violence.(2002, p.284).

As has been illustrated through a reflection on this selection of mythic

revisions, they are often 'politically motivated' (Foster 2012 p.3), with postcolonial

and feminist re-readings of mythic sources, along with critiques of contemporary

society and calls for untold stories to be given a voice. Throughout these

engagements with classical myth moments of meta-theatricality have prompted the

audience to reflect not only on the relationship between the play and the myth that

has inspired it, but also the layers of meaning which have been attributed to them and

the gaps between the source and the new work it has sparked making

'transformations much richer and more complex by suggesting multiple

interpretations, depending on which other text the viewer emphasizes or notices in

the first place.' (Frus and Williams 2010, p.11). With each dramatic engagement

with myth the audience, as well as the playwright have experience and 'sense of

looking again, [which] places more emphasis on interpretation' (Foster 2012, p.3).

Greek myths are especially subject to literary and dramatic revisions

throughout history and therefore hold a specific resonance with audience who have

prior knowledge of these other senses. Is that why we return to Greek mythology or

is it the source material of the myth itself which resonates for us. In my revisions I

have sought to side step prior dramatic references to mythic sources, through the

selection of non-dramatically extant mythic sources, whilst being aware that 'sources in myth and sources in literature are not entirely separable since in some instances the best-known version of a particular myth is an earlier literary work.' (Foster 2012, p.3).

In 2012 Miriam Chirico developed a term for 'dramaturgical adoption', for a pattern of approaches to classical mythology which acknowledges the direct impact of the antecedence of our relationship and historic engagement with Greek mythology in the West. This connection can result in a play which intertextually references and assumes 'dramaturgical devices from classical Greek theatre in order to convey the transcendental aspect of the myth.' (2012, p.20). This may include use of a chorus, mask work, verse and indeed the structure of Greek tragedy, yet their inclusion does not necessitate that these devices will be used classically, as these devises can be subverted and revised. Even though Wertenbaker and Laurens were not responding to a Greek tragedy they adopted tragic conventions in order to revision the myths and in turn critique the male dominance of the classical cannon. In the following chapter are the three plays I wrote in response to non-dramatically extant myths, followed by a reflection upon their development in Chapter 4. It goes without saying that my work was influenced by the plays in this chapter and indeed the dramatic antecedence of western theatre with classical mythology. However in of the diversity of the playwrights and therefore their different approaches to source myths I have derived inspiration but not a methodological approach to the development of a contemporary response to classical mythology. Undeniably the diversity of their approaches to myth has inspired me to explore, experiment and play with the myths in the development of new work.

CHAPTER 3

_____

SODIUM

After Theseus and the Minotaur

By Louise Miller

Louise Miller

128 Brighton Road

Surbiton

Surrey

KT6 5PR

gypsydog99@msn.com

CAST:

Simon

Tom

Jimmy

Cass

Hope

Adrianne

Danni

Chris

Charlie

John

Witness

SETTING:

Three different worlds exist; the world outside Simon's studio, the world inside it,

and the world online. SIMON's studio is a black hole, anything that he draws into it,

gets absorbed, and it's dangerous even entering the surrounding edges of his

inhabitation. In the centre of the space are a Meditation mat and a statue of Buddha.

A few candles light the space. The Studio is a shrine to modern technology.

In SIMON's studio there is a front door and a side door which leads off to another

room. The space outside of the studio is in sharp juxtaposition to his fears, full of

energy, light and life.

ACT 1

SCENE 1

SIMON's studio, candle light, incense fills the air.

SIMON is sitting in a meditative pose. He breathes slow, measured breaths, his lips mouthing almost soundlessly as he chants a mantra. The words are quick, tripping across his lips, they start to get louder, and louder and as they do the speed of the words slow down, until they are loud and drawn out. He has a watch by his side and notebook by his side.

SIMON: Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam...

The doorbell rings.

SIMON: Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam...

The Bell rings again. He continues. Motionless.

SIMON: Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam...

The internet alerts online activity. The Doorbell rings, rings again and keeps ringing. SIMON opens his eyes.

SIMON: For God's sake!

He snatches out of his meditate pose and goes to the doorway, answering the intercom.

SIMON: Hello?

126

JIMMY talks through the intercom.

JIMMY (O.S): I have your delivery sir.

SIMON: I'm not expecting anything.

Simon goes to the computer and looks at the screen. The bell rings again. He goes back to the intercom.

SIMON: I haven't ordered anything.

JIMMY (O.S): You're Mr S Dances?

SIMON: Danes?

JIMMY (O.S): That's right. Mrs Danes! You've won the top prize!

SIMON: I don't want anything.

JIMMY (O.S): I am counting all your lucky stars! You are the lucky 100,000 customer. You have won a very, very, special prize!

SIMON: That's great news. Leave it in the hall way.

JIMMY (O.S): You are our one in a million winner!

The internet alerts again.

SIMON: One in 100,000.

JIMMY (O.S): Very lucky. Luckiest customer!

The internet alerts. Multiple messages.

SIMON: I'll pick it up later.

Simon goes back to his computer. Cass is online.

CASS (ONLINE): Simon, Simon? Are you there?

SIMON (ONLINE): I'm busy. Sorry.

CASS (ONLINE): We need to talk.

SIMON (ONLINE): Later.

CASS (ONLINE): I can't do this without you.

Intercom begins to ring incessantly.

SIMON (ONLINE): You're fine. / You'll be fine.

CASS (ONLINE): But Simon?

JIMMY is buzzed in to the main building.

SIMON: Jesus!

SIMON turns on one of the house lights. The studio is revealed, dark, dank and lifeless.

SIMON (ONLINE): Everything is going to be OK.

CASS (ONLINE): But it isn't. / Is it. I know it isn't.

SIMON (ONLINE): Talk later. I have to go.

JIMMY knocks at the door. He stands in the corridor outside the studio. They talk through the letter box.

SIMON: Who let you in? You can leave it by the door.

JIMMY: It's very special.

SIMON: It's fine. Leave it there/ it'll be fine.

JIMMY: I need your signature, / proof, identity.

SIMON: Please. Leave it.

JIMMY: I will. When I have your signature.

SIMON: What if I don't want it?

JIMMY: You will.

SIMON: What company are you from?

Pause.

JIMMY: You won the competition Sir, now you must sign the paperwork.

SIMON: I'll do it online?

JIMMY: Not everything can be done online sir. Not everything... You entered the competition. I must have proof that the genuine 100,000 customer got it.

The internet bleeps again

SIMON: I didn't enter anything... OK... I understand. Just leave it there. If the company calls, I'll say I saw you. Say I gave you a guided tour of my studio and we had tea and cake to celebrate.

JIMMY: That would be nice!

SIMON: Just please, for the love of god, just leave it in the hallway.

JIMMY: No paperwork. No prize.

The internet bleeps.

SIMON: Put it through, I'll sign it, then post it back under.

JIMMY: It's not / as simple....

SIMON: Fine. / Fine!

SIMON turns of the intercom. He looks at the computer screen, turns away, then turns off the lights. He sits back on the floor. JIMMY knocks again, then talks through the letter box.

JIMMY: Excuse me, Mr S Danes, I need your signature. I cannot leave it here

SIMON begins to chant as before.

SIMON: Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom si nam... Retsnom...

The internet bleeps.
JIMMY knocks at the door again. SIMON makes the chant louder and louder trying to block the sound out.

SIMON: REtsnOM si Nam... RETsnom Si NAM... RETSNOM si nam... Retsnom si NAM... RetsNOM SI nam... RETSNOOOom si NAAAMM... RetsnoOOOOm si naMMMMm...

JIMMY begins knocking on the door to the tune of William Tell Overture. SIMON gets up and goes to the door puts on the latch. JIMMY stops knocking. SIMON unlocks the door and opens it half an inch.

SIMON: I told you. Leave it.

JIMMY: I can't quite make out...

The internet bleeps.

SIMON: Leave it.

JIMMY: Can't you just sign?

Pause

SIMON: Slide it through.

JIMMY: It's a machine. Automated. Paperless.

SIMON: For god's sake!

JIMMY: We are very proud of our low carbon footprint.

SIMON opens the door further and manages to take the machine from JIMMY.

JIMMY: You should always check first, you never know what you're signing for.

The internet bleeps out another alert.

SIMON: I'll check it later.

JIMMY: You could be signing your life away.

SIMON: Here.

SIMON goes to pass it back through the crack in the door.

The internet bleeps again.

JIMMY: And I need something that proves who you really are.

SIMON: But I've already signed your machine

JIMMY: I need I.D. Proof. Before we can complete the procedure.

SIMON: I haven't got anything.

JIMMY: Passport?

The internet bleeps again.

SIMON: No.

JIMMY: Driving Licence?

SIMON: No!

JIMMY: No I.D. No parcel.

SIMON: No parcel. No machine!

JIMMY: I don't understand.

SIMON: If you don't leave the parcel. I won't give you back your machine. Is that clear?

JIMMY: Yes.

SIMON: Does it make sense?

JIMMY: Are you threatening me sir?

SIMON: Do you feel threatened?

JIMMY: Do you want to threaten me? Are you sure? Are you sure you want to threaten me, and the company?

SIMON: I've signed!

JIMMY: It's a question of identity.

SIMON: What do you want blood? Christ!

JIMMY: It could be forged!

The internet alerts.

SIMON: Just leave the parcel. I won't tell the company.

JIMMY: You're trying to corrupt me, sir?

SIMON: I'm just asking / you to...

JIMMY: Are you trying to / bribe me sir?

SIMON: No, just...

JIMMY: You don't think it would be a good idea, Sir, to bribe me?

SIMON: Do you?

JIMMY: It's not company policy.

SIMON: What's your policy?

JIMMY: My policy could be different / to the company policy.

SIMON: What would make the difference?

JIMMY: Open the door. We can talk about it.

SIMON: Is it necessary?

JIMMY: You never know whose looking.

SIMON: Spies?

JIMMY: You never know.

SIMON: Spooks?

The internet alerts.

JIMMY: Could be anywhere.

SIMON: How much?

JIMMY: I couldn't say, not here...

JIMMY tries to force the door.

SIMON: What are you doing!

JIMMY: I know what you're game is.

SIMON: I don't know what you're talking about.

JIMMY: Let me in and I won't tell anyone.

SIMON: I'm not letting you in.

JIMMY: No? You won't have to.

JIMMY jams the door open. A flood of electric white noise. The lights flicker, to darkness, we can see his shadow in the door way, he drops the package.

JIMMY: Your face it's...

SIMON: Come in.

JIMMY doesn't move.

SIMON: Be my guest.

BLACK OUT.

White noise.

In the black out a radio tunes in and out of frequency with the current report.

RADIO: Armed police and bomb disposal experts were called to the scene after ... a man walked ... Threatened to blow it up... they revealed that the explosive was... terrorist activity

Metallic interference.

RADIO: A woman's body was found washed up on the shores of the south bank ... As yet her identity is unknown. Her body was found by a man out walking his dog this morning.

Metallic interference. A burst of sharp electric music. White noise. Silence.

SCENE 2

Simon's studio. SIMON is online with multiple girls.

DANNI (ONLINE): Why are you still talking to me?

SIMON (ONLINE): You're interesting, you're funny, you're...

DANNI (ONLINE): Funny?

SIMON (ONLINE): You. The things you say. They make me laugh, smile. When I talk to you... And you're obviously very clever.

DANNI (ONLINE): That's what you think.

SIMON (ONLINE): I know.
DANNI (ONLINE): You don't know me.

SIMON (ONLINE): I'm a good judge of character.

DANNI (ONLINE): You don't know me at all

SIMON (ONLINE): I'd like to.

DANNI (ONLINE): You'll regret it.

SIMON (ONLINE): Just give me a chance. Everyone deserves one chance.

DANNI goes off - line.

HOPE (ONLINE): You're running out of time.

SIMON (ONLINE): Why?

HOPE (ONLINE): I'm not planning on being around much longer.

SIMON (ONLINE): On the site?

Pause

SIMON (ONLINE): What's happened?

HOPE (ONLINE): No one wants me anymore.

SIMON (ONLINE): That's not true.

HOPE (ONLINE): I mess everything up.

SIMON (ONLINE): Maybe it just feels that way.

HOPE (ONLINE): I can't do it anymore.

SIMON (ONLINE): You can do anything you set your mind to.

HOPE (ONLINE): Some people can. Everything I touch falls to pieces.

HOPE goes off line.

SIMON (ONLINE): What are you doing now?

DANNI (ONLINE): Now?

SIMON (ONLINE): Right now?

DANNI (ONLINE): I don't know. Looking out of my window.

SIMON (ONLINE): What can you see?

DANNI (ONLINE): Drunks... War torn soldiers... Returning from their nightly battles.

SIMON (ONLINE): Wasted?

DANNI (ONLINE): One of them is singing. Sounds like he's in pain.

SIMON (ONLINE): Do you like soldiers?

DANNI (ONLINE): No. God no! Are you? You're not... are you?

Danni goes off -line.

FAY (ONLINE): It's just war. Death. It doesn't mind who you're fighting for. Violence doesn't solve anything. Delete me for it.

SIMON (ONLINE): You are entitled to your view.

FAY (ONLINE): It's one of the many things that are wrong with the world. One of the things that makes me want to.

HOPE comes back online.

SIMON (ONLINE): Did you go out tonight?

HOPE (ONLINE): Yes... You?

. SIMON (ONLINE): Clubbing?

HOPE (ONLINE): No. I get lost in those places. No one wants to talk, they / just...

SIMON (ONLINE): I know.

HOPE (ONLINE): I went for a walk... like you said to. Walked so long... forgot what I was looking for. Forgot where I was going.

SIMON (ONLINE): Where were you coming from?

HOPE (ONLINE): Here... there... everywhere.

SIMON (ONLINE): Did you meet yourself coming back?

HOPE (ONLINE): Some of me.

SIMON (ONLINE): What did you see?

HOPE (ONLINE): Trees, cars, flashing past me. Running like rivers. Couldn't focus. Wanted to keep going until I couldn't stop.

SIMON (ONLINE): And now your home.

HOPE (ONLINE): Do you know what it feels like when you don't belong. You just wake up one morning and you just don't fit anymore. Anywhere.

SIMON (ONLINE): Yes. Once. But it passes.

HOPE (ONLINE): What if I'm not meant to be here at all.

SIMON (ONLINE): But you are. You're here talking to me.

<p align="center">*HOPE goes off-line.*</p>

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): It's stopped. The towns silent again. Only the stars.

SIMON (ONLINE): Can you see them?

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Yes. Can't you?

SIMON (ONLINE): Hardly ever.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): You must be able to see a few?

SIMON (ONLINE): Pollution, cities full of it. Light, dust everywhere, drips with it. No chance of ever seeing anything clearly.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): The great bear, a crown of stars, a map to anywhere. So many other planets, so many other worlds...It's what keeps me going. Knowing that I'm just a tiny spot on the universe. Everything that happens. Everything that goes wrong. So small. When you look up and see all that space.

<p align="center">*ADRIANNE goes off line.*</p>

<p align="center">*HOPE goes online.*</p>

HOPE (ONLINE): I feel small sometimes. Like I'm just going to disappear... sometimes it's like I'm weightless ... a tiny spec...

SIMON (ONLINE): Of starlight?

<p align="center">135</p>

HOPE (ONLINE): Of nothing.

SIMON (ONLINE): Small is beautiful.

HOPE: (ONLINE): Nothing compared to this. Nothing. I could just slip off the surface and no one would notice, no one would know.

SIMON (ONLINE): I would.

HOPE (ONLINE): Only for a moment and then you'd forget me. That's what happens.

SIMON (ONLINE): Not with me. Not with you.

HOPE (ONLINE): We all disappear eventually. Then all that's left is photos, passwords, and a collection of quotes that we stole from someone else. Useless knowledge caught in the net.

SIMON (ONLINE): Memories are important.

HOPE (ONLINE): Memories can play tricks on you. They mean nothing.

HOPE goes off line. Adrianne back online.

SIMON (ONLINE): I wish I could see the world like you.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Come and see me. I'll show you.

SIMON (ONLINE): I would love that. Love that more / than...

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Then come.

SIMON (ONLINE): I wish I could.

> *The lights flicker, the internet connection breaks off and ADRIANNE fades.*

> *Simon gets up and starts checking the connections on his machine.*

> *Lights flicker up again and CHRIS is on line.*

CHRIS (ONLINE): Simon? Simon... Are you there?

SIMON (ONLINE): Yes. I'm here.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Stop fucking about!

SIMON (ONLINE): I'm listening.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Can you just, for one moment?

SIMON (ONLINE): OK, ok.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Yes?

SIMON (ONLINE): Go on.

CHRIS (ONLINE): You've got time for me now?

SIMON (ONLINE): Shoot.

CHRIS (ONLINE): You're sure?

SIMON (ONLINE): Yes.

CHRIS (ONLINE): I had that dream again. Watching him fall, felt like I was falling too. Like for a moment I was back on the bridge.

SIMON (ONLINE): It's just a dream.

CHRIS (ONLINE): You know it's not / it's a nightmare.

SIMON (ONLINE): Yes. But you can get through this.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Can I...? I'm not crazy.

SIMON (ONLINE): I know.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Can't eat, can't sleep, can't... Without thinking of, you know what it's like. I know you do.

SIMON (ONLINE): It was years ago.

CHRIS (ONLINE): You were a mess, after it happened, in pieces.

SIMON (ONLINE): Yes, but / that was...

CHRIS (ONLINE): He was your brother.

SIMON (ONLINE): My half-brother.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Couldn't cope.

SIMON (ONLINE): Yes back / then

CHRIS (ONLINE): The black outs. You lost everything.

SIMON (ONLINE): It's in the past now. I'm over it.

CHRIS (ONLINE): You still have the attacks. Still lose track. Lose time? / You told me. That's why you've never gone back to the city.

SIMON (ONLINE): Sometimes. But you have to move on.

CHRIS (ONLINE): He was your brother. How can you forget?

SIMON (ONLINE): No. Of course I haven't forgotten. I've just moved on.

CHRIS (ONLINE): So you still have the dreams? Flashbacks?

SIMON (ONLINE): No.
CHRIS (ONLINE): Not at all?

SIMON (ONLINE): I don't want to talk about it.

CHRIS (ONLINE): There's nothing / wrong...

SIMON (ONLINE): Subject change / please.

CHRIS (ONLINE): No / I need to...

SIMON (ONLINE): Watched any good porn lately?

CHRIS (ONLINE): Stop.

SIMON (ONLINE): Smoked any / good weed?

CHRIS (ONLINE): Just listen. I need / to talk about this.

SIMON (ONLINE): You should try meditating.

CHRIS (ONLINE): I just want to talk about it. You spent years training to help total strangers, why won't you help your best friend?

SIMON (ONLINE): That's my job. You're my friend I...

CHRIS (ONLINE): Exactly. And you haven't worked for months. You have to help?

SIMON (ONLINE): I've got to go.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Why? Where do you have to go? You never leave the flat, not /
since...

SIMON (ONLINE): I have things to do.

CHRIS (ONLINE): What? What do you have to do? You never do anything. / Not
now.

SIMON (ONLINE): Leave it.

CHRIS   (ONLINE): You need to get out.

SIMON (ONLINE): I'm fine.

CHRIS (ONLINE): There was nothing you could have done to save him. You can't give up on everything just / because of one....

SIMON (ONLINE): I know. I haven't.

CHRIS (ONLINE): You could do it again. / Go back.

SIMON (ONLINE): I can't go back.

CHRIS (ONLINE): You could help me. Here. /You could help me now.

SIMON (ONLINE): I have to go.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Selfish bastard. Lazy fucker! Sitting at home all day. You've got skills. You could do something with your life. You used to do something. You made a difference.

Pause

CHRIS (ONLINE): You are going to spend the rest of your life in that shit hole if you don't wake up.

SIMON (ONLINE): Good bye Chris.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Sorry. Sorry mate. I just really need to talk to someone. I'm not sleeping. If I can't sleep I'll lose my job, / I can't live like you. It'll be the end of everything.

SIMON (ONLINE): You haven't told anyone? Chris, tell me you haven't?

CHRIS (ONLINE): Your breaking up... the signals... fucking server...

Light flickers CHRIS disappears.

The doorbell rings. HOPE is online.

HOPE (ONLINE): Simon?
SIMON (ONLINE): I'm here.

HOPE (ONLINE): Simon?

SIMON (ONLINE): Your back.

HOPE (ONLINE): I need your help. I need to get away... I've decided it's time. Can I come and see you?

The doorbell rings again.

SIMON (ONLINE): I have to go. I'll just be a moment.

HOPE (ONLINE): But...

SIMON goes to the intercom.

SIMON: Hello?

CHARLIE stands outside the studio by the intercom.

CHARLIE: I have a delivery for a Mrs Danes.

SIMON: Mr?

CHARLIE: Yes. Mr Danes, Sir.

SIMON: Great. Leave it in the corridor.

The internet bleeps.

CHARLIE: I can't do that sir.

SIMON: You'll have too. I'm busy.

The buzzer rings continuously.

SIMON: What?

CHARLIE: I must have receipt of delivery Sir. Its 'life'... cannot be leaving it out here sir. My colleague was sacked for doing just that thing. Just last year and the RPSSA are still after him!

SIMON: The RSPCA?

CHARLIE: And the animal rights brigade too. Tried to torch his car, shit through the letter box, the full works!

The internet beeps.

SIMON: I didn't order anything / live

CHARLIE: Eggs thrown / death threats.

SIMON: I can't sign for them now. I'm a bit caught up.

CHARLIE: He left them there. A box of chickens! Some hippy dippy free range good life nonsense. The sort of thing people like these days. Makes them feel close to nature.

SIMON: You're delivering chickens?

The internet bleeps in rapid fire of messages.

CHARLIE: Sometimes sir. I deliver all sorts. To all places.

SIMON: I don't want a chicken!

CHARLIE: You don't understand Sir. These chicken were not well marked. Not labelled. Just in a box. Not the delivery man's fault sir.

SIMON: I don't want a chicken in a box.

CHARLIE: Not take- away. Not chicken sir! It's' life'. I have box with 'life'. Says on box, on paperwork. 'Life' Sir. 'Life' needs proof, needs a signature.

SIMON: So what is it? Are they?

CHARLIE: I cannot say. It's a surprise package Sir. If you just let me in?

SIMON: I don't like surprises. Tell me what's inside / and...

CHARLIE: What's inside is a surprise even for me.

SIMON: What does sound like?

CHARLIE: Sorry sir?

SIMON: The box. What's it sound like inside the box?

CHARLIE: Are you suggesting I get inside the box sir?

SIMON: Is it that big?!

CHARLIE: It wouldn't be a surprise.

SIMON: I don't want to be surprised with a box of chickens. If I was, I'd wring their necks.

CHARLIE: The Company will not have a problem with that. I'm not sure about the activists/ but I won't tell if you don't.

SIMON: I don't want livestock. I live in the middle of the city. This isn't a place for anything that's living.

The internet bleeps again.

CHARLIE: Just open the door sir. Sign the paper work. Then you can do what you like with them. Once it's all signed for, it's your responsibility. The company is no longer liable. That's where we went wrong with the chickens.

SIMON: Fuck the chickens!

CHARLIE: I don't think the company would like that sir. Or the animal rights! But if that's what you really want to do Sir, I don't mind, as long as you sign for them.

SIMON: Can you tell me who it's from?

CHARLIE: Yes sir.

SIMON: You can do that? Doesn't break any company codes?

CHARLIE: Yes, yes. I mean no. The package is from... Here we are... Surprise package from Tim?

SIMON: Tom?

CHARLIE: That's what I said!
SIMON: I'll sign for it.

SIMON buzzes him into the building.

CHARLIE: You have made my day. You have made the right decision.

He goes back to the computer.

SIMON (ONLINE): I've got someone at the door. I've got to go.

HOPE (ONLINE): I need to talk.

SIMON (ONLINE): We can talk later.

HOPE (ONLINE): It might be too late.

SIMON (ONLINE): You are going to be ok, I promise.

HOPE (ONLINE): I can't do this on my own.

SIMON (ONLINE): You're not planning / on doing?

HOPE (ONLINE): No... / No... I'm leaving. I'm leaving everything. I'm going to start again. Like you said.

SIMON (ONLINE): Good. I'll be here. Just give me a minute.

Knock at the front door.

SIMON goes to the door.

He places the latch, opening the door half an inch.

CHARLIE: I have the paperwork.

SIMON: First I need you to do something for me?

CHARLIE: What?

SIMON: It's a surprise.

CHARLIE: No funny business, the company wouldn't like it.

SIMON: I need you to turn around and face the wall.

CHARLIE: I wouldn't like it!

SIMON: Please, for me?

CHARLIE: For no one sir! No one! Fucking chickens and wringing their necks! I don't / think...

SIMON: Relax. I just don't want you to see my flat... It's in a state.

CHARLIE: Secrets / surprises?

SIMON: You said you liked them.

CHARLIE: Yes but...?

SIMON: A surprise box all signed for and taken in. No trouble.

CHARLIE: No?

SIMON: No calling the company. No calling to say you failed to deliver.

CHARLIE: No!

SIMON: Exactly. I'm opening the door. Turn around.

CHARLIE doesn't move.

SIMON: I can see you. Please do as I say.

CHARLIE: It feels.

SIMON: Just.

CHARLIE turns around and faces the wall.

SIMON: Don't turn around until I say. We don't want any nasty surprises.

SIMON begins to slowly unlock the door.

CHARLIE sniggers.

SIMON: Is something amusing you?

CHARLIE: No. No. It's just funny.

143

SIMON: Not very professional.

CHARLIE: No Sir.

CHARLIE giggles again.

SIMON opens the last latch.

CHARLIE: Sorry. It's reminding me. Reminding me of a childhood game. What was it? Back to the wall... Somebody shouting out the time... But not the real time... All made up time. And every time getting closer.

SIMON slowly steps out from the door.

SIMON: Grandmothers footsteps?

CHARLIE: No, no, what was it?

SIMON slowly moves further towards CHARLIE.

CHARLIE: Is it that they grab you, or you try to catch them? Stab in the dark... Winking murder... Duck, duck, Bang?

SIMON steps forward to pick up the packages.

The light flickers.

CHARLIE: That's it! That's it, I remember! What's the time Mr Wolf?

CHARLIE turns to face SIMON.

CHARLIE: Your face, your face it's...

CHARLIE begins to laugh nervously.

BLACK OUT.

Metal soundscape.

The sounds of doors being locked reverberates.

RADIO: Police are still asking for anyone who might have information about the brutal murder of a young man whose body was found in bins outside...

Metallic interference

RADIO: ...Greek street on Friday evening.

Blast of music.

Scene 3

Simon is online with Danni.

DANNI (ONLINE): Why would someone send you a chicken?

SIMON (ONLINE): It's not a chicken.

DANNI (ONLINE): How do you know?

SIMON (ONLINE): It's been in the box since last night. It hasn't clucked once.

DANNI (ONLINE): What if it's dead?

SIMON (ONLINE): I've been busy, cleaning up, around the flat.

DANNI (ONLINE): Why don't you open it up now? While I'm with you?

SIMON (ONLINE): OK.

He brings the box over to the screen. He pulls out a cat skull. He looks inside then looks further into the box. He turns away from the screen and draws out a gun. He puts it back in the box. Turns back.

DANNI (ONLINE): What is it?

SIMON (ONLINE): I don't know.

DANNI (ONLINE): Is it alive?

SIMON (ONLINE): Definitely not.

DANNI (ONLINE): Simon, I've got to go... Chat later?

DANNI blows him a kiss and he catches it in the air absent minded. He pulls the gun out of the box. Children's voices at play out-side filter through. The sound fills the room.

The door opens suddenly and TOM stands there.

TOM and SIMON play like children. SIMON hides the gun behind his back.

TOM: Give it to me.

SIMON: What?

TOM: I know your hiding it.

SIMON: It's mine, you can't have it.

SIMON and TOM wrestle. SIMON concedes, and puts the gun on the floor.

They look at it.

TOM: They're coming to get you. Tonight. I heard them.

SIMON: I don't care.

TOM: You should.

SIMON: Why? Won't make any difference.

TOM: You could run.

SIMON: Where?

TOM: I don't know. Anywhere. If they catch you, they'll kill you.

SIMON: I'll dig a tunnel. Go underground.

TOM: The great escape?

SIMON: Journey to the centre of the earth.

TOM: Down to the core.

SIMON: No one would follow me there.

TOM: No one.

SIMON: Why are you running?

TOM: I'm not, just saying if I was, that's what I'd do.

SIMON: They're after you too? Aren't they?

Beat

SIMON: What have I got in my pocket?

TOM: A Kit-Kat?

SIMON: What else?

TOM: Your key?

SIMON: I've got something else, look.

SIMON holds up the cat's skull.

TOM: Where did you get it?

SIMON: I found it in the back garden.

TOM: That cat was evil. Remember when she had the litter. Ate one of her kittens, the last one, the runt. Swallowed it up like it had never existed.

146

SIMON: She was saving it from something.

TOM: It was sick.

SIMON: It wasn't strong enough. It's what they do in the wild.

TOM: A sacrifice.

SIMON: It might have survived.

TOM: It was weak.

SIMON: I could have looked after it.

TOM: You couldn't.

Pause.

SIMON: She put it out of its misery. She did the right thing.

TOM: Survival of the fittest.

Pause

SIMON: I know it was you. When I found her hanging in the backyard. Those laces tied to the branch.

TOM: She was evil. She scratched me. She was always scratching me.

SIMON: You were always teasing her. It serves you right.

Pause.

TOM: Why have you dug it up?

SIMON: I'm going to keep it. Mummify her.

TOM: You can't mummify a skull!

Pause

SIMON: They worshipped cats in ancient Egypt. Used to bury their cats next to them.

TOM: She was a mangy old flea bag.

SIMON: The Egyptians worshipped Bastet, half woman, half cat. A goddess. The penalty for killing a cat in ancient Egypt was death.

Pause

TOM: Why do you do it?

147

SIMON: What?

TOM: Come out with stuff like that?

SIMON: Like what?

TOM: Talking like that. Acting like a mentalist.

SIMON: I'm not mental!

TOM: You're weird. Come out with all this weird / stuff and...

SIMON: We learnt about it at school.

TOM: If you were smart you'd keep your mouth shut.

SIMON: Hecate used cats to conjure the dead.

TOM: I wished you'd been swallowed up.

SIMON: Shut up.

TOM: Put us all out of our misery.

TOM tackles SIMON again.

SIMON: Get off me.

TOM: I think that's why. I think that's why she did it.

SIMON: Get off me. Ow! Bastard!

Tom twists Simon's arm.

SIMON: OK! OK! Please?

TOM breaks hold with SIMON.

SIMON kicks at him then picks up the skull.

SIMON: You nearly smashed it.

Sound of children in the corridor.

TOM starts to draw back into the shadows.

TOM: So what are we going to do?

The Lights flicker

SIMON: I don't know.

TOM: They know what you've done. They know what you're doing. They're coming for us Simon. They're coming.

TOM disappears into darkness. The door slams shut.

SIMON looks at the Buddha and the meditation mat. Looks at the radio.

He turns it on, flicking between channels.

RADIO: The threat level has not increased but remains 'substantial', meaning that an attack is a strong possibility...

Interference, the channels change.

Sharp burst of discordant music.

Interference, the channel changes.

RADIO: The family of Miss Tallis today spoke about their daughter, a talented physicist and musician who had her whole life...

SIMON switches the radio off.

Scene 4

Simon is on the computer. The girls are on line.

CASS (ONLINE): You just need to look at what's already happened in the world, in our lifetime and no one's safe. Not from what's coming. Not the third world, not the first. Tsunamis, earthquakes, nuclear meltdowns, wars, uprisings, terrorist attacks. It's not just the climate changing, it's everything. Everything's falling into complete chaos. The forecast isn't good. I don't know if I want to bring someone into it. Don't even know if I want to be there to see it.

SIMON (ONLINE): What is the future?

CASS (ONLINE): Uncertain.

SIMON (ONLINE): Uncertainty isn't the end of the world.

CASS (ONLINE): I think it's coming. Something's coming for all of us and it's not going to care what kind of person you are.

The Doorbell rings.

SIMON goes to the intercom.

JOHN (O.S): Delivery for Mr S Canes.

SIMON: It's Danes.

JOHN (O.S): Sorry, this computer's driving me crazy.

The internet bleeps.

SIMON: I'm busy at the moment. Do you mind leaving them in the hallway?

JOHN (O.S): I need I.D. Cause of the alcohol?

SIMON: I didn't order / any

JOHN (O.S): We need your proof of age sir. Can't deliver without it.

SIMON: I'm forty two.

JOHN (O.S): Very good sir but we still need your I.D. Lots of kids online. Know the internet better than the grownups. Hacking, interfering, downloading, sharing and God knows what else. Get online with Mummy and daddies credit card and before you know it, who gets the blame?

Internet bleeps.

SIMON: I can assure you I'm over 18.

JOHN (O.S): How do I know that I'm speaking to the right person Mr Canes?

SIMON: Danes.

JOHN (O.S): Exactly. How can I be sure?

SIMON: What if you take the alcohol and leave the rest?

JOHN (O.S): That would be theft.

SIMON: Call it a tip.

JOHN (O.S): I don't think the supermarket would see it that way.

SIMON: I won't tell anyone.

JOHN (O.S): You have to take the whole order. And I have to see some I.D. I'll lose my job if I don't complete delivery within the allotted time scale.

Pause

SIMON: OK.

Simon buzzes the JOHN up to the flat and goes back to the computer.

SIMON (ONLINE): Adrianne? You still there?

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Simon. There's something I have to do. Chat tonight?

JOHN knocks at the door.

SIMON places the latches on the door.

He opens it half an inch.

JOHN: Right. If I could just have some I.D. I'll be on my way.

SIMON: What kind?

JOHN: Anything you've got. Bank statement, anything, with your name and address.

SIMON: I'll have to look.

SIMON looks around the room, searching.

JOHN: Silly this. Can tell that you're not some spotty teenager on the lookout for a piss up. Champagne on your order, not Strongbow. But you can't be too careful. There's all sorts of people on line pretending to be someone else. Like no one wants to be themselves anymore.

Internet bleeps.

JOHN: Already late for my deliveries. They've closed the main high street. That poor girl found dead this morning. No one wants to answer their door. Suspicious. Don't know who to trust. Told us to be on the lookout you know, but what are you looking for? How can you tell?

Pause.

JOHN: No one trusts anyone these days. We used to have a community, now it's all online, virtual. My daughter spends more time on her computer than she does with me. I don't know what she's up to... who she's talking too.

SIMON: I've found it.

JOHN: She'd believe anything. So naive. But you can't stop them. They're all on it, all at it. Twittering. Updating. Tapping their lives away. Adding, deleting, and creating themselves. She's got 1,234 friends online, but she doesn't talk to the next door neighbour's kids. She hardly spends anytime with the family, the only living thing she spends time with is her cat. And if some sick old man was chatting her up I'd be none the wiser... paedos... mentalists... trolls... scum all of them. The internet's full of it.

Pause.

Light begins to flicker.

SIMON goes to the door.

SIMON: Why don't you come in?

JOHN: Thanks, but I'm runnin late.

SIMON: Have a drink, sounds like you need one.

JOHN: I best be off.

SIMON: Please, come in, relax.

JOHN: I'll leave the stuff outside.

SIMON opens the door.

JOHN has turned away.

SIMON: Be my guest?

JOHN turns and looks at SIMON.

BLACK OUT.

Sound of locks closing and electric bursts of white noise.

RADIO: A bomb threat warning has been received in central London today. The threat is non-specific in relation to location or time...

Interference. The channel is returned.

RADIO: ... it could happen at any time, in any space

Lights flicker back up.

Simon is sitting on his meditation mat.

Eyes closed. Alternating humming and then mouthing his mantra under his breath, then humming.

SIMON: Am ruin to... am nit our...tam in our... riot nu...am trio uu... mm tiro nu...

TOM steps out of the shadows.

TOM: I've been waiting for twenty minutes!

Simon trips out of his meditation. They are children again.

SIMON: Sorry.

TOM: Why do you keep on doing this?

SIMON: What?

TOM: Disappearing. Wondering off.

SIMON: I don't. I haven't moved.

TOM: Exactly.

SIMON: I'm here now.

TOM: Where do you go? When you go off like that. When you disappear?

SIMON: It's like someone switches the lights out.

TOM: In your head?

SIMON: Feels nice.

TOM: Sounds strange.

SIMON: I don't mind. I'm used to it. The doctor says it'll get better.

TOM: When?

SIMON: I don't know. When I stop thinking about things. When I stop remembering.

TOM: When you stop thinking you die Simon. Your body forgets how to breathe and boom, that's it, times up.

SIMON: I don't mind. It's better than...

TOM: Do you remember what it was like? What was it like finding her there?

SIMON: I told you already.

TOM: Tell me again.

SIMON: No.

Long pause.

SIMON: It was Sunday evening.

TOM: After church?

SIMON: After church.

TOM: And we'd had our dinner?

SIMON: Roast chicken...

TOM: With all the trimmings...

SIMON: Parsnips...
TOM: Yorkshires...

SIMON: Sprouts...

They both mime being sick.

TOM: Gravy...

SIMON: Apple crumble...

TOM: Custard / and...

Pause.

SIMON: And I walked into the kitchen and / there she was...

TOM: There she was hanging / above the table...

SIMON: Like an angel....

TOM: Dancing angel...

SIMON: Her red shoes dancing.
TOM: You couldn't look at her face...

SIMON: I couldn't look at her face because I knew ... I knew / it was

TOM: Our mother... And what did you do?

SIMON: I can't remember.

Lights flicker. A feint metallic noise drifts into white noise.

SIMON closes his eyes.

TOM disappears into the darkness.

SIMON: I can't. I can't Tom.

TOM: You've got to remember before it's too late.

SIMON: I don't want to. You can't make me.

SIMON starts to mouth his mantra silently.

The computer alerts ADRIANNE'S presence.

She is wearing red shoes.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Hello.

Long Pause.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Hello?

Long Pause.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Simon, you there?

SIMON gets up and crosses over to the computer.

SIMON (ONLINE): I'm here.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): What are you doing?

SIMON (ONLINE): Trying to relax.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Shall I go?

SIMON (ONLINE): No. Just.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Hard day?

SIMON (ONLINE): Something like that.

Pause

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): What do you do Simon?

SIMON (ONLINE): I work from home.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Doing what?

SIMON (ONLINE): It's complicated.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Secret service?

SIMON (ONLINE): No.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Stuffing envelopes?

SIMON (ONLINE): Nope.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): You unemployed?

SIMON (ONLINE): What? No!

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): You're always on here.

SIMON (ONLINE): It's to do with the job.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Really?

SIMON (ONLINE): Networking, making connections.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Unemployed?

SIMON (ONLINE): I can't tell you.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Student?

SIMON (ONLINE): No.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): It's a secret?

SIMON (ONLINE): Yes.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Well I guess we all have are secrets then.

SIMON (ONLINE): I guess we do.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Working from home must be... cool. You don't need to go anywhere. You just wake up and your there?

SIMON (ONLINE): Yes.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): But you do?

SIMON (ONLINE): What?

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Go out?

SIMON (ONLINE): No... Sometimes...No.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): I'd go crazy!

SIMON (ONLINE): I have everything I need here.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): I'd be bouncing off the walls!

SIMON (ONLINE): I choose when I work. What I do.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Does anyone else work with you?

SIMON (ONLINE): It's all online.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Don't you get bored?

SIMON (ONLINE): No. Yes. Sometimes.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Being stuck in all day.

SIMON (ONLINE): But you live in the country.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Yes?

SIMON (ONLINE): Here it's just wall to wall concrete. Nothing worth looking at. No reason to go out.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): I hate that. Hate the way people idealize it. Like it's some kind of fairy tale.

SIMON (ONLINE): You've got all that space, nature, / surrounded by it.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Nature? Nature isn't all fluffy lambs and forest walks. It's brutal, cruel.

SIMON (ONLINE): Brutal?

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): You don't live here. You don't see it.

SIMON (ONLINE): Tell me what you see?

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Cold fields, frozen, lifeless. Trees like skeletons. The fields after the crisis. DEFRA. Great swathes of smoke... And nothing but the smell of death in your lungs...

SIMON (ONLINE): Foot and mouth? BSE? But that was...

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): I remember. Still have nightmares. We lost everything. The fields were studded with black holes. Drawing everything in. Leaving nothing. When you see the world like that it's difficult to remember there was anything else.

SIMON (ONLINE): But you. The countryside. Recovered.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Yes. Perhaps. But you never forget.

SIMON (ONLINE): But you like it there? Like living there?

ADRIANNE: Dark nights with nowhere to go. Miles and miles of space... stretching out... forever in front of you.

SIMON: But you're free.

ADRIANNE: Free?

SIMON: Not closed in by neon fences and concrete walls.

ADRIANNE: The cities exciting!

SIMON: You've never been?

ADRIANNE: When I was younger... Your cities beautiful.

SIMON: It's the difference that attracts you.

ADRIANNE: Why do you hate it?

SIMON: Live here and you'd understand.

ADRIANNE: You'd understand. If you'd lived your entire life in the country.

SIMON: It's breathless here, like you never quite surface. Underground, packed in, there's never enough space. Late running services... Suspicious packages... Terror...

ADRIANNE: Terror?

SIMON: Threats. Uncertainties... Never knowing when we'll next be under attack... Wiped out. Destroyed.

ADRIANNE: It's not like that all the time?

SIMON: Threats always there.

<center>*Beat*</center>

ADRIANNE: You can't stay in all the time.

SIMON: I can't... I can't leave the flat.

ADRIANNE: What happened?

SIMON: It happened to the city.

ADRIANNE: Were you injured?

SIMON: It's not like that?

ADRIANNE: This isn't physical?

SIMON: I'm not afraid.

ADRIANNE: What happened?
SIMON: Nothing.
ADRIANNE: Something must have.

SIMON: I was caught. Trapped. The world changed that day. I don't want to talk about it.

ADRIANNE: I'm sorry, I / shouldn't...

SIMON: It's ok. I just don't go out.

ADRIANNE: There's nothing to stop you from coming to me.

SIMON: No. No.

ADRIANNE: I can help.

SIMON: I've tried before.

ADRIANNE: You just need some encouragement.

SIMON: No.

ADRIANNE: Perhaps, if there was something, you really wanted.

SIMON: I have everything I need.

ADRIANNE: Everything?

SIMON: I order and the net provides.

ADRIANNE: But don't you want to meet me Simon?

The lights go out and the computer screen goes black.

Only candle light.

SIMON: Damn!

The doorbell rings.

He goes to the intercom.

SIMON: Hello? ... Hello is anyone...? Damn kids!

WITNESS (O.S): Hello sir?

SIMON: Before you start I haven't ordered anything.

WITNESS (O.S): You do not need to order to be delivered.

SIMON: Sorry?

WITNESS (O.S): I want to talk to you about something very special.

SIMON: I'm busy.

WITNESS (O.S): I can come back.

SIMON: That won't be necessary.

WITNESS (O.S): It is always necessary to share the news of the Lord.

SIMON: Oh your one of those.

WITNESS (O.S): Excuse me?

SIMON: A God botherer!

WITNESS (O.S): It's no bother.

SIMON: Listen I don't believe in God. In the Bible. I don't believe in anything.

WITNESS (O.S): The Lord opens his hands to non-believers. He shares his good news with everyone.

SIMON: Not with me.

Pause

WITNESS (O.S): I'll come back tomorrow.

SIMON: What? I don't...

WITNESS (O.S): The Lord can wait. Patience is a virtue.

White noise filters through the intercom.

SIMON tries to switch it off but it continues.

He goes to the radio, trying to change the frequency.

RADIO: The third day of searches....

Interference.

RADIO: Police want anyone who has information ...

He changes channels. Loud music. Changes channels again, tinkling calm music. Interference. He changes the channels.

RADIO: A controlled explosion... suspicious package... Car bomb... echoes of terrorist...

White noise filters through the intercom. SIMON tries to switch it off but it continues. He goes to the radio, trying to change the frequency.

RADIO: A woman has been found fatally injured below a block of flats. Police are investigating...

Interference. He turns the radio off.

TOM (O.S): Their coming Simon. Their coming...

Lights flicker.

The lights come back on, and with it the computer, ADRIANNE is online.

ADRIANNE (ONLINE): Can I come and visit you?

SIMON: It's a long way.

ADRIANNE: It's not that far. I've planned a route.

Pause.

SIMON stares at the screen.

SIMON: I haven't had a visitor in a very long time.

ADRIANNE: Don't worry. I won't bite.
SIMON: It's just...

ADRIANNE: What?

SIMON: What if...?

ADRIANNE: I don't look anything like my profile?

SIMON: I'm not like that.

ADRIANNE: You've got someone lined up?

SIMON: No.

ADRIANNE: Scared I'm an axe murdered?

SIMON: Are you?

ADRIANNE: I'll let you decide.

SIMON: The place is a mess.

ADRIANNE: I want to meet you.

SIMON: When?

ADRIANNE: Tomorrow?

Pause

SIMON: OK.

ADRIANNE: OK.

Pause

SIMON: I better get things sorted.

ADRIANNE: I've got to get ready too. It's a long journey.

SIMON: But you said.

ADRIANNE: I know.

SIMON: Night Adrianne.

ADRIANNE: Good night Simon.

> *He blows her some kisses. Interference crackles, the lights flicker. SIMON stands up looks around the flat. The radio flickers into sharp sprightly music. SIMON starts clearing and preparing both himself and the studio for ADRIANNE's arrival.*

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SCENE 1

> *Simon's studio. Tom is stands in the doorway watching. SIMON is half dressed, trying to get ready for*

> *ADRIANNE'S arrival. He's a changed man.*

TOM: What are you up to?

SIMON: Nothing.

TOM: You're meeting that girl. Made your choice?

SIMON: No.

TOM: Look at you.

SIMON: She's going to be here any minute.

TOM: This one's special... isn't she?

SIMON: No. Yes. / Yes she's special.

TOM: You really think you can save this one?

> *Beat*

TOM: Do I get to meet her?

SIMON: You will.

TOM: Cross your heart.

SIMON: And hope to die.

TOM: I hope you haven't forgotten what we agreed.

The computer bleeps.

SIMON moves to it, he talks to ADRIANNE and SIMON talk online.

TOM disappears.

ADRIANNE: Simon. Simon? I'm sorry I can't come.

SIMON: Why not? Are you... sick?

ADRIANNE: No?

SIMON: Why then?

ADRIANNE: They won't let me.

SIMON: Who won't?

Pause

SIMON: Adrianne? You still there?

ADRIANNE: Yes.

SIMON: If you could go anywhere in the world. Right now. Where would you go?

ADRIANNE: Anywhere?

SIMON: Anywhere.

ADRIANNE: I've always wanted to go to the place in France. With the cave paintings?

SIMON: Lascaux?

ADRIANNE: Etchings, memories...

SIMON: Everything underground...

ADRIANNE: Hidden...

SIMON: Waiting to be explored...

ADRIANNE: Discovered.

SIMON: Why go to the moon...?

ADRIANNE: When the thing you're looking for...

SIMON: The thing you want is here...

ADRIANNE: Within reach.

SIMON: So close.

ADRIANNE: Travelling to find the answers...

SIMON: When they're right here...

ADRIANNE: underground.

SIMON: Fossils...

ADRIANNE: Relics...

SIMON: Ancient texts...

ADRIANNE: Hidden.

SIMON: In the underworld...

ADRIANNE: So beautiful...

SIMON: Haunted...

ADRIANNE: I'd like to go. To see it...

SIMON: Trace your hands across the walls.

ADRIANNE: Feel history under my skin...

SIMON: We could go together. You and me, we could.

ADRIANNE: How?

SIMON: The worlds at our finger tips. We can explore anywhere right now.

ADRIANNE enters Simon's space.

They are together but they do not touch.

ADRIANNE: Together?

SIMON: Take my hand.

Pause

ADRIANNE: It's dark.

    SIMON: Breathless.

ADRIANNE: ...hidden

    SIMON: In the shadows...

ADRIANNE: ...treasure...

    SIMON: ...knowledge...

ADRIANNE: ...secrets of the past.

    SIMON: We're under the world...

ADRIANNE: ...I can't breathe.

    SIMON: You'll be OK.

ADRIANNE: Feels like I'll never breathe again.

    SIMON: Listen. The earth?

ADRIANNE: It's like it's alive, pulsing.

    SIMON: Are you frightened?

ADRIANNE: No. I have your hand.

    SIMON: Hold tight.

ADRIANNE: Don't leave.

    SIMON: I'll stay.

ADRIANNE: I want to go back.

    SIMON: It's OK. You're safe.

ADRIANNE: What if we can't get back.

Pause

ADRIANNE: Can't see the light again.

    SIMON: All those secrets under the surface.

ADRIANNE: Breathing...

SIMON: Sleeping...

ADRIANNE: Waiting to be woken.

ADRIANNE coils back up to the world outside of SIMON's flat.

Pause

SIMON: Adrianne... How old are you?

The internet connection fades and breaks off and with it so does ADRIANNE.

Lights flicker to almost B/O.

ADRIANNE disappears.

Lights flicker again and the sound of footsteps and sirens echo through the corridor outside SIMON's Studio.

There's a screech of breaks, a sharp black out then light.

TOM stands in the door.

TOM: Their coming for you.

SIMON: Who?

TOM: It's happening tonight.

SIMON: But...?

TOM: They're going to crucify you.

SIMON: Why?

TOM: You know why. They've found out what you're up to. What you've been planning.

SIMON: If we leave now.

TOM: I'm not going anywhere.

SIMON: They'll be after both of us.

TOM: It's not my fault.

SIMON: I'll stay then.

TOM: I don't need you.

SIMON: But...?

TOM: If you stay, I'll tell them all about your little secret.

SIMON: You can't.

TOM: I'll tell them what you did to the cat too.

SIMON: That wasn't me.

TOM: Stringing her up like that.

SIMON: I didn't do it.

TOM: Leaving her to hang.

SIMON: Shut up!

Pause

SIMON: It was you?

TOM: No one will believe you.

SIMON: It was you. Wasn't it? You pushed her to it.

TOM: It was your fault. You pushed her just like all the others. You pushed her to do it, and when you found her you did nothing. You're going to push this new girl too, aren't you? I just hope you don't get caught this time.

Sound of a siren.

TOM: Run now.

SIMON: What?

TOM: Run!

SIMON: Where?

TOM: I'll give you a head start.

SIMON: I haven't got anywhere to go.

TOM: Then you'll just have to keep on running.

SIMON: Why are you being like this?

TOM: Twenty... nineteen... eighteen... start running... seventeen... sixteen... fifteen...Run Simon... Run!
Tom disappears. The lights flicker, almost to darkness.

The radio flickers on.

RADIO: A coded bomb threat has sparked fears... the controlled explosion was carried out on a suitcase abandoned outside a hotel ...

Interference. A storm of internet connectivity.

RADIO: At the moment it's very unclear as to exactly what happened but I believe the woman may have fallen from an upstairs flat. Police are asking for witnesses to come forward, and her death is being treated as suspicious...

Interferance. Electric noise bristles to fever pitch. The lights black/out.

RADIO: Londoner's were urged to go about their usual business but to look out for 'unusual activity or behaviour ... advised to 'be highly vigilant to ensure the safety of London' ...

Simon lights candles.

Computer alerts that CHRIS online.

CHRIS (ONLINE): I'm going to tell them.

SIMON (ONLINE): You can't.

CHRIS (ONLINE): I have to.

SIMON (ONLINE): They'll think you're crazy.

CHRIS (ONLINE): I need to talk to someone.

SIMON (ONLINE): Talk to me.

CHRIS (ONLINE): His face, the way he looked at me before he went over the edge, every night it's there.

SIMON (ONLINE): He was a sadist.

CHRIS (ONLINE): He was your brother.

SIMON (ONLINE): He tried to kill me.

CHRIS (ONLINE): He didn't deserve to die.

SIMON (ONLINE): Death comes to us all.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Not like that.

SIMON (ONLINE): Accidents happen.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Was it an accident?

SIMON (ONLINE): Don't you? OK, what do you remember?

CHRIS (ONLINE): Going to the bridge, Tom was chasing you, I followed.

SIMON (ONLINE): And?

CHRIS (ONLINE): All I can see is him falling, his face was. And running, running until my chest was on fire.

SIMON (ONLINE): You don't remember what happened on the bridge?

CHRIS (ONLINE): No.

Pause

SIMON (ONLINE): He fell. We didn't push him.

CHRIS (ONLINE): We could have stopped him. Saved him.

SIMON (ONLINE): He was stupid, fucking around on that bridge. Showing off like he always did. He fell. End of story.

SIMON begins preparing the space to meditate.

Turning off the lights and lighting candles as he talks.

CHRIS (ONLINE): He's haunting me... Simon... fucking server... I can't...

The CHRIS is dragged out of sight by something unseen.

The lights flicker.

SIMON (ONLINE): Don't let him.

Simon sits down to meditate.

TOM creeps from the shadows and grabs SIMON's arm twisting it behind his back.

SIMON remains motionless and keeps his eyes tightly shut, not looking at TOM.

SIMON: I don't want to do it anymore.

TOM: You have to.

SIMON: I can't. I've cut them off. Shut the site down. Deleted everything.

TOM: Because of her. You've cut off their life line.

SIMON: No.

TOM: She's trying to come in between us. You can't save her.

SIMON: I can / this time.

TOM: They'll find out what you've been doing.

SIMON: You can't make me.

TOM: Stick to the plan.

SIMON: She's special.

TOM: Everyone's special.

SIMON: I'm not.

TOM: You think she likes you?

SIMON: No. I don't know.

TOM: No one will believe you.

SIMON: They might.

TOM: I didn't fall that day. Did I Simon?

SIMON: I won't let you take her. Not like the others. She's different.

TOM: You pushed me. Right to the edge.

SIMON: You made me do it. I tried to save you.

TOM: You can't save anyone.

SIMON: I can save her.

TOM: She's flesh. She's infected. She's part of this city.

SIMON: She's not. Not yet.

TOM: What about the other girls. You promised to save them, and look what happened.

SIMON: I didn't have enough time.

TOM: Why do you want her?

SIMON: I hadn't worked it out, but I have now, I know what I'm doing.

TOM: She won't be happy. Once she finds out what you are, what you've done, she'll never be happy. She'll realise everything you've told her is a lie.

SIMON: I have to try.

TOM: You want to keep her here?

SIMON: She'll be safe.

TOM: She'll die here. Just like the others.

SIMON: I won't let you do it. I won't let you touch her.

TOM: You can't do this on your own. / You'll need me to take over again.

SIMON: I can. You're not in control anymore.

TOM: Aren't I?

SIMON: I gave you what you wanted. You got the deliveries.

TOM: But it's never going to be enough.

> SIMON snaps out of his meditation and looks directly at TOM who stares back at him.

SIMON: I'll tell them. I'll tell them what you did to the others.

TOM: No one will believe you.

SIMON: Believe me.

TOM: It doesn't matter anymore.

SIMON: Doesn't matter.

TOM: You understand?

SIMON: I understand.

TOM: So you're not going to say anything. Are you? It wouldn't make any difference?

SIMON: No difference.

TOM: It's our secret. You're not going to tell anyone.

> Pause.

> The lights flicker. Metallic sounds in the distance.

TOM: No one will believe you.

TOM disappears into the shadows.

SIMON: No one's going to believe / me...

TOM (O.S): No one.

Lights flicker.

SIMON picks up the radio presses a few buttons and it comes to life.

RADIO: Police have found a potentially viable explosive device...

Interference.

RADIO: In the early hours of the morning police found the body at a central London flat... Police are treating the deaths as suspicious and want to speak to anyone...

The radio flickers off into blaring loud music switching from channel to channel until it stops at one.

RADIO: It's obvious if the device had detonated there could have been serious injury or loss of life...

The doorbell rings and rings. SIMON goes to the intercom.

WITNESS (O.S): Hello Mr Danes?

SIMON: Yes?

WITNESS (O.S): Do you have time?

SIMON: I'm a bit tied up?

WITNESS (O.S): I have good news to share.

SIMON: You again.

WITNESS (O.S): You're not ready to talk?

SIMON: Listen I'm not interested.

WITNESS (O.S): It could help.

Pause

WITNESS (O.S): I'll be back. When you're ready.

SIMON: I don't need...

WITNESS (O.S): Good bye Mr Danes. Peace be with you...

SIMON paces the room then lights candles and sits on his mat.

172

He tries to meditate.

The computer alerts him of ADRIANNE's presence.

SIMON is motionless.

ADRIANNE: (online) Simon?

Pause

ADRIANNE: (online) Simon? I'm coming tonight. I've got to talk to you. I'll see you soon.

ADRIANNE disappears.

SIMON goes to the computer.

SIMON (online): Adrianne? I don't think you should...

TOM appears from the shadows.

SIMON: She's mine. This one is mine.

TOM: She's perfect.

SIMON: You can't have her.

TOM: We're offering a service.

SIMON: It's not right. Not for her.

TOM: She signed up. Joined your little site.

SIMON: She didn't. She doesn't know about it. She just needs a safe place to stay.

TOM: We have her details. Her file. I know what she was planning.

SIMON: I haven't told you everything.

TOM: You really think you can save her?

SIMON: Yes.

TOM: You didn't save the others.

SIMON: She's young. She's got a chance.

TOM: Chances to make mistakes. Chances things might get worse. She might take another dose.

SIMON: She won't.

TOM: I read the file, so much suffering, you could save her.

SIMON: I am.

TOM: It's only going to get worse.

SIMON: She has everything.

TOM: To look forward to?

SIMON: People get better. People change.

TOM: Did I? Did you manage to help me? Did you stop me that night?

SIMON: No.

TOM: Well then.

SIMON: But I can do this.

TOM: Really?

SIMON: I survived. I made a choice. I changed.

TOM: Because of me.

SIMON: Because of people like Adrianne. If I can just help her. Just save one person then it will all have been worth it.

TOM: You tried to save mum, you tried to talk her out of it, look what happened?

SIMON: I was a kid. I didn't know what to say.

TOM: You weren't a kid that night on the bridge. What you and Chris did.

SIMON: I tried to stop you.

TOM: You didn't know what you're doing.

SIMON: This time it's different. You know it is.

<p align="center">*Pause*</p>

SIMON: When you turned up that night it was like I got a second chance.

TOM: You were so lonely, so cut off. I saved you.

SIMON: You helped me clear the pills. Took away everything that I could use... to...to...

TOM: Gave you a purpose.

SIMON: Yes.

TOM: Your skills. Could be put to such good use.

SIMON: I asked you to help me end it all.

TOM: You begged and pleaded, but the moment that death starred you in the face.

SIMON: I changed my mind.

TOM: And that was the plan.

SIMON: It was crazy.

TOM: It was perfect.

SIMON: I should never have agreed.

TOM: But you did. You wanted to offer a choice to other people like you. You didn't want anyone to suffer alone. Starring into an empty bottle counting out pills. Jumping in front of trains. Such a selfish way to end it.

SIMON: Such a waste.

TOM: If they wanted to die then why not offer them the service of a professional?

SIMON: Assisted suicide.

TOM: Finding them on line. Filtering them out. Such a talent for detecting human suffering.

SIMON: It was a stupid idea. An experiment, I didn't.

TOM: But it worked. They wanted it. They needed us.

Pause

SIMON: I can save her. You agreed that if they didn't sign. If they changed their mind. If I could convince them that there was something worth living for.

TOM: You just want someone to live in your cave.

SIMON: She talks to me. Trust me. I'm making a break through.

TOM: This one is under your skin. Itching, scratching, drawing you in.

SIMON: It's not like that.

TOM: Do you really think you can make her happy?

SIMON: You can't have her.

TOM: You gave me the others.

SIMON: You said it would stop.

TOM: You're a failure. You haven't saved anyone yet.

SIMON: This isn't a game.

TOM: But I'm winning.

SIMON: I won't let you have her.

TOM: Is that why you haven't told Adrianne about the service?

SIMON: I saved Hope.

TOM: I'll find her.

SIMON: You can't. You have to stop.

TOM: I found you again because you needed me. You'd given up. You had nothing to live for. Here in your pathetic, stinking little hole.

SIMON: It's not safe out there, every night another incident.

TOM: You're afraid of your own shadow. I put your skills to use... 'Control', 'Alter', 'Delete', such a simple command, but so effective.

SIMON: I wanted to help them.

TOM: And if you couldn't I'd take over.

SIMON: A peacefully death.

TOM: They don't all go quietly. The last one didn't. Jumping out of the window. Very messy but what can you do.

SIMON: She changed her mind?

TOM: I didn't have to do anything. I just turned up at the allotted time and before I had a chance to complete the transaction...

SIMON: You didn't push her?

TOM: I didn't have to. You'd be surprised how hard people fight when deaths staring them in the face.

SIMON: It's got to stop.

TOM: Where would I find the next sacrifice? In this maze of a city, how would I find them without you?

SIMON: It's over.

TOM: But it's not Simon.

SIMON: You've had enough. I'll report, I'll inform.

TOM: No one is going to believe you.

SIMON: I can prove it.

TOM: What? What can you prove? That you groomed victims online? That you stalked them? Offered them an easy way out, without the pills and preaching? It's all there.

SIMON: I didn't think anyone to take the option. Like you said, like that night, death starring me in the face and I stepped back from the edge. They were supposed to step back.

TOM: Willing sacrifices.

Pause

SIMON: But you're breaking the pattern. If you kill her, they'll...

TOM: They'll follow the path right back to you.

SIMON: But if they take me. It will stop. It will all stop.

TOM: I'm getting bored of the game anyway.

SIMON: Is that why you took the delivery men?

TOM: You did try so hard to warn them.

SIMON: They didn't want to die.

TOM: I'll let you in on a secret... no one wants to die.

SIMON: The last one he had a daughter and...

TOM: There all just trash. Con men, mindless idiots, clones. Have you read the papers recently? The cities overcrowded. We're in need of a cull.

SIMON: I won't let you kill her.

TOM: She'll be the last one I'll ask you for. After that you'll be free.

SIMON: I'll warn her. Call the police. I've got nothing to lose now.

TOM: OK... If you want I'll play fair. I'll watch you trying to save her and then when you fail, you can join me in putting her out of her misery.

Lights flicker.

TOM disappears into the shadows.

RADIO: The 80 year old man, who was assaulted on the early hours of the morning has died, police said...

Metallic discord.

RADIO: ... hit over the head with a blunt object ... in south London... they are appealing for any witnesses...

Lights flicker.

The computer alert, CHRIS is online.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Simon? Are you there? I need to talk...

SIMON: I haven't got time. Someone's coming round.

CHRIS (ONLINE): A girl?

SIMON: Maybe.

CHRIS (ONLINE): It's ok, just leave it on. I can talk while you get ready.

SIMON: OK, shoot.

CHRIS (ONLINE): I was thinking. Why didn't they find his body?

SIMON: Who's?

CHRIS (ONLINE): Tom's?

SIMON: People go missing every day.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Someone should have found him... but nothing. I've been checking and it's nowhere. It's like he vanished of the face of the earth that night.

SIMON: Perhaps it was best.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Someone must have seen him.

SIMON: Maybe they did. Not everything gets reported. If they thought it was a suicide. They won't have reported it. They get frightened of copy-cats, suicide pacts.

CHRIS (ONLINE): He tried to kill you that night.

SIMON: Did he?

Pause

CHRIS (ONLINE): I've remembered.

SIMON: Everything?

CHRIS (ONLINE): I saw you push him.

SIMON: He was high as a kite that night. We all were. He tried to pull us off the bridge. Thought we could fly. He would have killed us all.

Pause

CHRIS (ONLINE): It was self-defence. I know. It was you or him.

SIMON: It's in the past.

CHRIS (ONLINE): I was in London last week. Long haul. I'm sure I saw him.

SIMON: You've been travelling too much. The mind plays tricks.

Pause.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Good luck with the girl. / You need someone to bring you out of yourself. Stop you from working yourself into an early grave.

SIMON: Thanks.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Is that champagne I see? Don't think you'll need... luck... fucking... server...

CHRIS disappears.

SIMON turns on the radio.

Feint music is interrupted by a report.

RADIO: A car bomb planted in central London would have caused 'carnage' if it had exploded... a controlled explosion was carried out on the car ... was packed with 60 litres of petrol, gas cylinders and nails...

Interference.

RADIO: The current terrorism threat has been classed as severe... one level lower than the highest 'critical'...

Interference.

The radio cuts out.

SIMON throws it at the wall.

The intercom rings.

SIMON answers

SIMON: Hello?

ADRIANNE (O.S): I'm here.

SIMON: Adrianne... Just... push the door.

He buzzes her in.

Beat.

A knock at the door.

SIMON opens it.

ADRIANNE stands there wearing a white dress and red shoes.

Moment.

ADRIANNE: Can I come in?

SIMON: Yes. Please. Be my guest.

ADRIANNE: Thank you.

ADRIANNE walks in.

SIMON: Can I get you a drink? Tea, coffee...

ADRIANNE: Something cold.

SIMON: Water, fruit juice, something stronger?

ADRIANNE: Water would be fine.

SIMON: And ice?

ADRIANNE: It's so warm out there. The heat, it's oppressive.

Pause

ADRIANNE: I feel terrible, coming here like this disturbing your peace.

SIMON: Yes. I mean no, no you haven't, not at all. Peace is over rated. I'm pleased you came.

ADRIANNE: Really?

SIMON: I know, understand, it must be a bit strange, coming here.

ADRIANNE: Do you do this often?

SIMON: What?

ADRIANNE: Invite women round. Off / the site?

SIMON: No. God no!

ADRIANNE: Never?

SIMON: No, I'm / not...

ADRIANNE: I'm your first then?

SIMON: I've never / had....

ADRIANNE: The first one to come into your world.

SIMON: Yes I suppose.

ADRIANNE: The first one you asked to see you, here, in your studio? From the site?

SIMON: You wanted to come.

ADRIANNE: I did.

SIMON: And you're here.

ADRIANNE: In the flesh.

SIMON: Yes.

ADRIANNE: All those girls and you choose me.

SIMON: I'll go and get your drink.

> *SIMON leaves the room.*
>
> *ADRIANNE looks around. Inspecting the space.*
>
> *She goes to pick up the Buddha and nearly drops it.*
>
> *SIMON returns with the drinks.*

SIMON: It feels strange?

ADRIANNE: I know.

SIMON: Yes.

> *Pause*

ADRIANNE: So what do you do here? Show me.

SIMON: I thought you needed to talk.

ADRIANNE: We do that on line.

SIMON: But you can. It's safe here. You can relax now.

Pause

SIMON: I'm here for you if you want to talk... but maybe....

ADRIANNE: I do, but first, let's talk about you.

SIMON: But...

ADRIANNE: I want to get to know you. You're an enigma.

SIMON: You know everything there is to know.

ADRIANNE: I want to understand you. Want to understand what you do. Before...

SIMON: OK.

ADRIANNE sits at the computer screens.

ADRIANNE: So show me what this does.

SIMON: I don't think...

ADRIANNE: Come on. I just want to look. You run everything from/ here, it's...

SIMON: It's private. Boring. Let's talk about you?

ADRIANNE: I feel a bit breathless. It's so hot.

He offers her the water.

She turns it down.

SIMON: Have some. Please.

ADRIANNE: There's no air.

SIMON: I'll turn the fan on.

ADRIANNE: Could we just open a window?

SIMON: There isn't one. We're on the lower ground. Below street level. There are no windows in this part of the complex.

ADRIANNE: Seriously?

SIMON: Missing the country air already?

ADRIANNE: I couldn't live / like this.

SIMON: I like it.

ADRIANNE: Enclosed. Trapped / underground.

SIMON: Secure.

ADRIANNE: But you're so cut off. So isolated?

SIMON: That's how I like it. An Island away from everything. Safe.

ADRIANNE: You've got no way of knowing what is happening in the world. If anyone's alive out there?

SIMON: The internet tells me everything I need to know. Sometimes it's nice, switch everything off, and time melts away. Everything's on my time here.

ADRIANNE: Like a black hole.

SIMON: I'm in control of what comes in, and what goes out. I have everything I need, everything you could possible want really, all at my fingertips.

ADRIANNE: I'd get lonely.

SIMON: I have my friends... on line.

ADRIANNE: Like you and me?

SIMON: Yes.

<center>*Pause*</center>

SIMON: But you're special. You know that, don't you, Adrianne?

<center>*Pause*</center>

SIMON: I brought you some chocolates.

ADRIANNE: I don't really eat chocolate.

SIMON: Mind if I?

ADRIANNE: Go ahead... You haven't done this before?

SIMON: No I told you...

ADRIANNE: Do you have a girlfriend?

<center>*SIMON chokes on his chocolate.*</center>

SIMON: No...

<center>*She gives him the water.*</center>
<center>183</center>

SIMON: No... I never have... enough time.

He doesn't drink it.

ADRIANNE: And you haven't left here in?

SIMON: It's fine. I like it here. It's my home, my office, self-contained.

ADRIANNE: Why did you start talking to me?

SIMON: What?

ADRIANNE: Online. Why did you start talking to me?

SIMON: This isn't some... I mean you know I'm not one of those... you know?

ADRIANNE: But why me Simon? You could have picked anyone on the site. I know you were talking to other girls.

SIMON: I liked talking to you. Seemed like you needed a friend... I like you.

ADRIANNE: Did you think I was lonely? / I have friends.

SIMON: No. No I didn't. You just. I thought you were in trouble. Thought you needed someone.

ADRIANNE: You saw my posts / they worked.

SIMON: Yes. I don't understand.

ADRIANNE: You thought I'd do something. / Something stupid?

SIMON: I didn't know. I was worried about you...

ADRIANNE: Don't you think this is dangerous?

Pause

ADRIANNE: Coming to see you? Coming to the flat of a man I've never met before?

SIMON: I'm not. I wouldn't hurt you.

ADRIANNE: Isn't it a risk. You could be anyone. / I could be anyone...

SIMON: I'm not like that. You know I'm...

ADRIANNE: I don't know you Simon. And you certainly don't know me. I've been watching you.

SIMON: I don't understand.

ADRIANNE: I've been following your every move. Every turn and twist you've taken.

Pause

ADRIANNE: Did you think you'd get away with it?

SIMON: Who are you?

ADRIANNE: All those women who put their trust in you. Cass, Danni, Hope, Faye... how many others?

SIMON: I don't know what you're talking about.

ADRIANNE: You thought I was caught in your web, but it's you, you're caught in mine. I've been watching you. Faye's my sister. She told me about your little site. Told me how you were helping her, how things were getting better. She's clever, but she's also a little naive. I thought I'd find out what made you so special. Nice little business you're running here, how's it feel to make your money out of someone else's despair?

SIMON: I help people.

ADRIANNE: You feed of their fear, their depression, you promise them a cure. You don't know what you're doing, what you did.

SIMON: I'm qualified. I trained. I practised, until...

ADRIANNE: Until what Simon? Were you struck off, or do you like operating like this, do you like using people?

SIMON: I didn't use anyone. I was just trying to help.

ADRIANNE: And if you couldn't help your friend was ready. To offer something more than a little chat.

SIMON: I don't know what you are talking about. What you think I've done, or who you think I am but you've got it wrong. I helped those women, the ones that I could, I helped you. Your here. Your still here because of me.

ADRIANNE: I'm here because of my sister, because of Faye, because of your sick little friend and what he offered her. What he offered to do.

SIMON: Faye left the programme. She said she was going to get help.

ADRIANNE: She's been missing for days. You don't have to lie to me. Do you think I haven't got the email as well? Do you think I didn't receive the offer?

SIMON: I don't know what you're talking about. I like you. I thought you liked me... I think you should go.

ADRIANNE: Not until you tell me where my sister's gone, and the others.

SIMON: I don't know. I shut the site down.

ADRIANNE: Liar. You lied to me to every woman on that site.

SIMON: I don't lie. I'm not a liar. I was trying to help you. You don't know what it's like to see someone you love go through that. To loose someone you love in that way.

ADRIANNE: You don't know anything about me.

SIMON: But you... we talked... We..?

ADRIANNE: I made it up Simon. I made it all up so I could get to you. So I could find my sister, before it's too late, and she agrees to take part in your sick little experiment. Where is she? Is she here?

> ADRIANNE starts moving things around, searching the flat.

> She finds the cat skull, looks at it and drops it back on the table.

SIMON: Stop it. Please, stop.

ADRIANNE: Where's Cass? Where have you put her, and Hope and Danni? Did you really think you were the only one talking to them? Oh sorry I forgot, Cass is dead, she died yesterday, an overdose.

SIMON: She was unwell, there were complications, she wasn't right for the programme.

ADRIANNE: She's dead Simon. Thanks to your help she's dead. She trusted you. How many other women have you helped?

SIMON: You have to leave now.
ADRIANNE: Is that a threat?

SIMON: You have to trust me. It's not safe here.

ADRIANNE: Trust you? I'd rather trust my boyfriend. He's on his way.

SIMON: I'm giving you a chance. Get Out before it's too late.

ADRIANNE: Stop trying to threaten me. I'm not leaving until you tell me where my sister is, and the others.

SIMON: I deleted them. I deleted all of them. There not on the system anymore.

Pause

ADRIANNE: He contacted me, Tom, to make sure I knew what the deal was. To let me in on your special offer, your little game of roulette. Sounds like he's been winning.

SIMON: I don't know what you're talking about.

ADRIANNE: Did you kill him as well Simon? If that is your real name, never know who you can trust online, everybody wants to be someone else.

SIMON: No, but he might, if he finds you here....

ADRIANNE: You're him aren't you? You're Tom. I was scared of coming here today. I was scared of meeting you, but now I see you, you're just a silly little boy playing games with other people's lives. I thought I'd find a monster but you're not even a man Simon.

SIMON: You need to leave now. He's coming.

ADRIANNE starts rummaging around the desktop, searching for something.

ADRIANNE: Who is? The boogie man? There's no one else here. He's not real. None of this is real. Where's Faye? Tell me where she is. It's ok if you don't want to talk to me the Police will be here soon. They have your address. They have everything.

Pause.

ADRIANNE: What's the matter Simon, Don't you like me anymore? What did you have planned for me? It wouldn't have been easy I guess. You'd have to find a way of getting me out of here first. Unless you want to spend time with a rotting corpse.

Pause

The gun drops to the floor.

SIMON lunges and grabs it.

ADRIANNE: You've killed her, haven't you? You've killed my sister. She's here. You sick bastard,

TOM (O.S): You're times running out.

SIMON: You have to leave now. I'm giving you a chance. Get out before it's too late.

ADRIANNE: Are you going to kill me?

SIMON: No. No I don't... I'm not like that. But he will. You need to run now.

ADRIANNE doesn't move. The doorbell rings.

SIMON (TO INTERCOM): Hello... hello...

WITNESS (O.S): Are you ready to be saved?

SIMON: It's you.

Pause.

ADRIANNE: Who is it?

SIMON: Yes. Yes. I'm ready

SIMON presses the buzzer.

ADRIANNE: Have you got someone else coming? Is there someone coming here to? Is it Tom? Please, just tell me where my sister is and I'll go, I promise. I won't tell anyone, please, I promised I'd look after her.

SIMON opens the door.

SIMON: I don't know where she is, I promise you. You have to go.

ADRIANNE: I'm not moving. I'm not leaving without her.

TOM appears from the shadows. ADRIANNE doesn't see or hear him.

SIMON: You can't have her.

ADRIANNE: Who are / you, I don't....

TOM: Why? So you can save her? I don't think she's in need of your help.

Noise in the corridor.

TOM: Who was it? Simon, who have you let in?

SIMON: I don't know... I wanted her to leave ... Wanted to save her... Please don't.

TOM: She has to go. She'll ruin everything.

. *ADRIANNE tries to wrestle the gun from SIMON..*

TOM: The will to live it's such a strong instinct!

SIMON: I can't do it.

TOM: Of course you can, you must.

SIMON tries to aim the gun at TOM.

The gun fires, ADRIANNE falls to the ground.

SIMON looks at her, checks for vital signs, nothing.

Moment.

SIMON: You didn't have to...

TOM: It was the plan.

SIMON: She didn't want to die?

TOM: She told you she did.

SIMON: She was acting. Playing out a role.

Pause.

SIMON: You made me do it. If I hadn't you would have done those terrible things to her. Done the same things to her just like you did to the others.

TOM: Would I? Did I?

SIMON: What did you do with her sister? What did you do with Faye?

TOM: Don't you remember? She's at her friend's house, safe and sound. You told her to go to her GP, get some tablets to get her through the nights until she felt better, gave her the address of that retreat centre. We supported her. Gave her the advice she needed. You're good at that Simon.

SIMON: But you told me she was... You told me you'd killed her and the other girls?

TOM: That's what I love about you Simon. So trusting. It doesn't matter now. They didn't need me. Just the fear of what might happen. I was only playing with you, and now look what you've done, it was only meant to be a game, but you took it too far. You always take it too far.

SIMON: What about the reports. The news? Those girls.

TOM: People die every day. Accidents happen.

SIMON: What have I done?

TOM: It's all part of the plan.

TOM disappears into the shadows.

SIMON takes up the gun, fires it, and slumps on the floor.

WITNESS disappears into the night.

Alert. CHRIS is online.

CHRIS (ONLINE): Hallelujah! Thank God for high speed internet connection!

Pause

CHRIS (ONLINE): Simon? Simon, are you there... Simon? How did it go with the girl?

Sirens start ringing O.S.

CHRIS (O/L): Look I just wanted to say... I'm sorry I shouldn't have brought up the past like that. I think it's time for me to come home. We can meet up. I'll come to your flat. You won't have to go anywhere. I promise.

BLACK OUT

END OF PLAY

Sulphur

After Ariadne at Naxos

By Louise Miller

Characters:

Adrianne - Shipwrecked survivor

Tom - A misleading, leading man

All the other characters shift and change at will, they are aware of the games they are playing, and are essentially all products of Adrianne's imagination.

Danni - Not a princess

Cat Man - Half man, half cat, simple as that

Game - The controller

Face - A mask, and what hides behind it.

Right - Adrianne's right mind, or at least a piece of it

Setting:

Adrianne's mind, an active imaginations playground; landscape for a dream, backdrop to a nightmare.

ACT 1

Scene 1

Living Room. No doors. No Windows. A trunk downstage, a TV, a couch and an easy chair. Filled with all the trappings of a Domestic Goddess, Adrianne is a fish out of water holding a tray of tea and biscuits unsure what to do with them.

Tom is busy adding finishing touches to a model ship. Adrianne wonders around the space trying to find her bearings.

ADRIANNE: I hate it when this happens... Walk into a room and it's completely gone. Don't you ever do that? I know I came in here for something.

TOM: What darling?

ADRIANNE: Nothing. It's as though nothing was in your mind. But, you know only a second ago it was there, and it was itching to be discovered, to be dealt with. It's very important, but it can't have been... or I'd know what it was?

TOM: Yes dear.

ADRIANNE: I don't remember, it's completely gone, no point really. Can't have been that important?

TOM: It can't...

TOM looks up.

TOM: Are you going to put it down?

ADRIANNE: Put what down? / I know there was something...

TOM: The tray / you're tired. If you don't put it down.

ADRIANNE: I'm not, I'm just... there was something... I came into this room to do something... just...

TOM: Tea?

ADRIANNE: What?

TOM: You were making tea.

ADRIANNE: I don't drink tea, makes me nervous, puts me on edge. I know I was doing something....

TOM goes back to his intricate work.

TOM: You were fetching it for me.

ADRIANNE: I'd lose my head if it wasn't... I don't know. No. What was I... I just seem to lose everything.

TOM: What are you doing?

ADRIANNE: The thing... the reason... the what, I came here for.

TOM: Just relax. Put your feet up. You'll remember then.

ADRIANNE: Remember, yes, must, just remember... *Beat...* Where am I?

TOM: You're at home.

ADRIANNE: This isn't... my home.

TOM: Don't be silly darling.

> *Pause. She looks at him for the first time.*

ADRIANNE: Who are you?

TOM: Stop playing games.

ADRIANNE: I'm not.

TOM: You're saying you don't know who I am?

ADRIANNE: I don't.

TOM: We've been married for five years.

ADRIANNE: We haven't.

TOM: Very funny.

ADRIANNE: I don't have a husband.

TOM: So convincing. You should be on the stage darling.

ADRIANNE: I've never been married.

TOM: You're confused.

ADRIANNE: I'm not. I'm perfectly fine.

TOM: You don't know what you're saying.

ADRIANNE: I don't know who you are.

> *Pause.*

> *TOM goes to the tea tray and picks a cake.*

TOM: Are you hungry? You must be starving. Look at you.

ADRIANNE: I'm fine.

TOM: You must be ravenous. These fairy cakes are so moreish you should have one, before / I polish them off.

ADRIANNE: I don't like them.

TOM: But there perfect, the best fairy cakes I've ever tasted. So light. It's like there's nothing there. They just melt in the mouth.

ADRIANNE: I don't want anything.

She slams the tea tray down on the trunk.

TOM: You'll wake the children.

TOM returns to his model.

He begins the intricate task of rigging a sails.

TOM: They're sleeping upstairs.

ADRIANNE: What are they doing there?

TOM: I put them to bed.

ADRIANNE: Why?

TOM: They were tired.

ADRIANNE: Why are they here?

TOM: Where else would they be?

ADRIANNE: I don't know. They shouldn't be there. What if they wake up?

TOM: Wrapped up like little angels.

ADRIANNE: Do their parents know?

TOM: There ours.

ADRIANNE: Yours.

TOM: There our children.

ADRIANNE: I don't have children.

TOM: Our little angels.

ADRIANNE: I don't.

TOM: There upstairs.

ADRIANNE: Why are you lying to me?

TOM: Darling, calm down the neighbours will here. Now / where did I put those hooks?

ADRIANNE: I'm not married. I don't have children. This isn't my home.

TOM: You're tired. Confused. It's been a very long day.

ADRIANNE: I don't want to, to, to hush. I don't want to be calm. I want to know where I am.

TOM: Sweetheart. You need to sit down. You need a rest.

ADRIANNE: I'm not tired. I came here for something, but it's not here? No. Not at all. Where have you hidden it?

TOM: You've had a very long day. You're tired. I'm tired. You must be exhausted.

ADRIANNE: I'm wide awake.

TOM: You can't stand up for falling down.

ADRIANNE: I'm fine.

TOM: You're falling on your feet.

ADRIANNE: How do I get out of here?

Pause.

TOM: The door.

ADRIANNE: Where is it?

TOM: What?

ADRIANNE: Where? Where's the door?

TOM: You're funny sometimes.

ADRIANNE: Please. I need to... To... To go.

TOM: It's late. You need sleep. I'll finish this and then we'll go to bed. You'll feel better in the morning.

ADRIANNE: I don't want to go to sleep. I want to go out.

TOM: It's dark now. You won't be able to see your way. It's not safe.

ADRIANNE: I don't care.

TOM: You'll catch your death out there.

ADRIANNE: Where's my coat?

Pause

ADRIANNE: My coat, where is it?

Pause

ADRIANNE: Where have you put it?

TOM: What are you talking about now sweetheart?

Pause

ADRIANNE: It's got to be here somewhere.

I'll just leave without it.

I don't need it anyway.

TOM: It's late. Relax. Everything will look better in the morning.

ADRIANNE: I had it. I had my coat and... my things?

Pause

ADRIANNE: Where are my things?

TOM: There in the bedroom.

ADRIANNE: My phone...

My bag...

Where are my car keys...

What have you done with them?

TOM: There all upstairs. In the bedroom.

Pause

ADRIANNE: I don't know you.

TOM: Come on Darling. I'll show you.

She pulls at her apron, but can't untie the strings.

ADRIANNE: This isn't me.

TOM: It's your favourite.

ADRIANNE: I've never seen it before.

TOM: I bought it for you.

ADRIANNE: Where are my clothes? Where have you put them?

TOM: It's time for bed now.

ADRIANNE: I don't want to. I'm not tired.

TOM: A little rest. Everything will be back to normal.

ADRIANNE: This isn't...

TOM: In the morning we can take the children for a walk in the park. We can walk by the river, we could try out the ship, and the children could feed the birds.

ADRIANNE: I don't like birds. Dirty. Filthy. Full of disease.

TOM: But the swans.

ADRIANNE: I don't want to feed the birds.

TOM: So graceful. So delicate. So beautiful. So like you.

ADRIANNE: Violent. Break a man's arm. If given the chance.

TOM: We'll go to that nice little coffee shop then. The one in the high street. Get your favourite coffee and the children can have some sweets.

ADRIANNE: It'll root their teeth. Spoil them, ruin them.

TOM: A little treat won't hurt.

Pause.

A wave of electric white noise discordant and momentary, sweeps through the space between them.

ADRIANNE: What have you done to me? What are you doing to me?

TOM: Sweetheart?

ADRIANNE crumples to the floor. TOM comes over.

ADRIANNE: Get away from me.

TOM: Sshhh. It's...

ADRIANNE: Leave me. Please.

Pause.

TOM: Do you think I like seeing you like this? Do you think it makes me happy to see the woman I love... my own wife...like this.

Pause.

ADRIANNE picks up a cake.

ADRIANNE: Liar.

TOM: Darling.

ADRIANNE: None of this is real, none of it! / You're lying.

TOM: You're not well.

ADRIANNE: It's all a lie, all of it! The children, the house, the marriage, none of this happened, none of it. It's a game, a sick joke.

TOM: It is real... what else is there? What else could you ever need?

ADRIANNE: I know there's something. I had a future.

TOM: Our future.

ADRIANNE: So much hard work... so much and now.

TOM: Now?

ADRIANNE: This?

TOM: Don't you remember, you must remember. My poor darling. This is our life, our dream, to be together.

ADRIANNE: This doesn't belong to me.

TOM: I never thought I'd be as happy as the day I married you, not until the twins were born. Even if you've forgotten everything else, you must remember, you must remember them...

ADRIANNE: A girl and a boy...

TOM: Yes. And our beautiful home.

ADRIANNE: Beautiful...

TOM: Not too close to the city, not too far into the country, the green belt.

ADRIANNE: Too tight, I can't breathe.

Electric waves pulse.

Pause.

ADRIANNE: Where are we?

TOM: We're at home.

ADRIANNE: Where? Where is home?

TOM: Don't be silly sweetheart.

ADRIANNE: I'm sorry. I'm tired. I forget.

TOM: You should go to bed. Get some sleep.

Pause.

ADRIANNE: Where is home?

TOM: It's here. Silly. This is your home. Our home. All the things from your life and all the things from mine. We built it together Adie.

ADRIANNE: Our home?

TOM: Your dream home.

ADRIANNE: That's not my name.

TOM: Adie, sweetheart.

Pause

TOM: It's my little pet name...

ADRIANNE: I don't... nobody calls me that... my name is...

ADRIANNE sits down on the sofa.

TOM: Yes dear?

ADRIANNE: My name is...

TOM: You're very tired.

ADRIANNE: I don't know what's happening.

TOM: You've got to rest now. Adie. Please, for me? Everything will be fine in the morning. / promise.

ADRIANNE: I don't belong here. I don't fit. This is a nightmare.

TOM pulls a blanket over her.

TOM: It's ok.

ADRIANNE: It all feels so wrong.

TOM returns to building his ship.

ADRIANNE begins to fall asleep.

TOM: You're going to be all right. Everything is going to be all right.

Pause.

ADRIANNE: Hold me.

TOM: What dear?

ADRIANNE: Please. Just hold me.

TOM: It's time for bed.

ADRIANNE: I'll go. I promise. But just this once, hold me.

TOM: You can hold the children in the morning. So lovely, so perfect, so like their mother.

ADRIANNE: I'll see them in the morning.

TOM: You'll see them in the morning.

ADRIANNE: Kiss me?

TOM: Kiss?

ADRIANNE: Yes.

TOM: Kiss you.

He blows a kiss at her from across the room.

Beat.

ADRIANNE: Why won't you kiss me?

TOM: I did.

ADRIANNE: Why won't you hold me?

TOM: I'm tired. You're tired. I've got to go to bed. I have work in the morning.

ADRIANNE: But the children?

TOM: You'll see them / in the morning.

ADRIANNE: You said we'd take them out. You said we'd treat them.

TOM: Yes I said we would.

ADRIANNE: But if you have to go to work?

TOM: Someone has to pay for the ice cream.

ADRIANNE: But if you have to go to work... I'm so confused. .

TOM: You must go to sleep sweetheart. You must.

Pause.

TOM pulls up black sails.

ADRIANNE: But I still don't understand.

TOM: Just go to sleep Adie. Just....

Pause.

ADRIANNE relaxes.

Sound filters through a distorted alarm, pulses and waves through the space, white noise.

ADRIANNE: My name... My name is Adrianne.

TOM: What dear?

ADRIANNE: My name is Adrianne.

TOM: Yes dear.

ADRIANNE: I'm not tired.

TOM: Yes dear. It's late.

ADRIANNE: I do not have children, I do not have a husband. And I don't know who you are. None of this is real. None of this.

Pause.
He leaves the model and looks at her.

202

TOM: Your face.

ADRIANNE: This isn't funny.

TOM: Look at you. Just look at you.

ADRIANNE: Stop it!

TOM: You don't believe me.

ADRIANNE: Stop it.

TOM: You think I can?

ADRIANNE: You're a liar.

Beat.

TOM drops the mask of domesticity.

TOM: I'm your friend. Your only friend. If I leave you, you'll be all alone here, no one's coming.

Pause.

ADRIANNE: Please don't go. Don't leave me here.

TOM: I offered you a dream.

ADRIANNE: It wasn't mine.

TOM: You rejected it.

ADRIANNE: It doesn't belong to me.

TOM: They'll be others. Many others. It gets easier.

ADRIANNE: I have to go back home.

TOM: This is home.

ADRIANNE: It's not...

TOM: I'd advise you to get used to it. You're not going anywhere.

Pause

TOM: Good night Adrianne. Sweet dreams.

TOM picks up the boat.

The sound of waves lapping the shore.

The lights flicker and he disappears through a wall.

ADRIANNE: Don't leave me. Please. I must.

TOM (OFF): Good night... / You'll never find your way out.. You'll never remember.

ADRIANNE: Wait. No. Stop.

A storm at sea brews as ADRIANNE tries to follow him and is unable to.

ADRIANNE: This can't happen again.

She searches for another way out.

She picks up the tea tray ready to hurl it at the floor stops and then puts it down.

She lifts the lid of the trunk.

ADRIANNE: You can't leave me here.

She climbs into the trunk.

The storm subsides.

Sound of waves. A distant hurdy-gurdy whirly-gig of a sea-side amusement arcade fills the space.

Scene 2

DANNI is swept in on a glittering wave.

She looks like a cross between mermaid and a sea-swept Marie Lloyd impersonation act, dripping with pearls and seaweed; she carries fish and chips wrapped in newspaper.

DANNI: Oh cheer up you lot.

Pause

You look like you've lost the plot and it's only just begun.

You'll just have to try to keep up.

Hey didn't anyone tell you it's rude to stare.

Where I come from this is high fashion.

If I could just remember where...

Anyway none of that matters anymore.

I'm here to put on a show.

That's what you've come for isn't?

Something live, something, in the flesh.

Moving, breathing, and other things.

Pause.

I could die at any minute.
I could be dying right now.

Pause.

You didn't expect this?
Didn't anyone warn you?
Don't you know that's what this place is all about?
Expect the unexpected, cause that's just what you're going to get, like it or not.

She starts singing:

Oh! I do like to be beside the seaside
I do like to be beside the sea!

Flirting with the audience:

Do you fancy a chip?
Don't look at me like that.
God's have turned themselves inside out just to spend a night with a girl like me.

Sings again:

I do like to stroll upon the Prom, Prom, Prom!
Where the brass bands play:
"Tiddely-om-pom-pom!"

Talking to the audience again:

Are you sure you don't want some?
I've got some fish as well.

Pause.

Don't look at me like that, it's fresh out of the sea just like me!

Singing again:

So just let me be beside the seaside
I'll be beside myself with glee

She looks around and finds someone in the audience and tries to get them to sit beside her on the trunk.

She pours them a cup of tea.

Pulls a flask from her garter and pours some into her cup.

And there's lots of boys and girls beside,
I should like to be beside
Beside the seaside!
Beside the sea!

There's a knock from inside the trunk.

DANNI tries to ignore it.

The knocking starts and carries on.

Sorry.

This always happens.

DANNI sends off the member of the audience and lifts the lid of trunk.

ADRIANNE re-enters from the trunk, looking slightly sleep warn and dishevelled.

ADRIANNE: Where somebody waits for me. Sugar's sweet and...Who are you?

DANNI: Who's waiting?

ADRIANNE: I'm sorry.

DANNI: No need to apologize. Who's waiting?

ADRIANNE: What?

DANNI: Pleased to meet you.

ADRIANNE: What are you doing here? I mean... I'm sorry, but who are you?

DANNI: I already told you no need to apologize.

ADRIANNE: I'm sorry/ but how did you...

DANNI: You've got apologetic tourettes. Do you want a chip?

ADRIANNE: No I don't...

DANNI: Didn't look as though you did.

ADRIANNE: How did you get here?

> *ADRIANNE starts looking round again to find possible exits.*

DANNI: What, here?

ADRIANNE: Yes. / It's just...?

DANNI: She asks me? The lady of the trunk!

> *ADRIANNE starts clearing up.*
> *Collecting chips and other bits of flotsam that DANNI has scattered during her act.*
>
> *She continues absent minded throughout.*

DANNI: Did you love him?

ADRIANNE: Who?

DANNI: The man who put you here?

ADRIANNE: I don't know how I got here

DANNI: Well, there's always someone along the lines, somewhere in the story. A lover, a father figure, a stranger you barely know. Mine was a god, showered me with gold. Gave me everything I ever dreamed of, then, nothing.

ADRIANNE: I don't know. I just woke up here.

DANNI: I wake up every morning and tell myself, remind myself, you are not a princess. You are not a princess...Well when you're shipwrecked there's not much you can do. Looks like you came in on the tide.

ADRIANNE: This? This isn't mine.

DANNI: I don't believe in love / but lust, yes I believe that can go a long way...

ADRIANNE: I'm sorry to hear that, but I need to find a way out.

> *Pause.*
>
> *DANNI tries to rearrange ADRIANNE's clothing.*
>
> *Adding a few bracelets and pearls to her attire during the following.*

DANNI: We get dazzled by all that armour, the declarations, the proclamations. It's all a fairy tale. Like it or not we all end up on the shore. We all get thrown back when they've had their fun. You ought to have seen the one that put me here.

ADRIANNE: I don't remember anything.

DANNI: It's all right. No need to be shy. It happened to me. It happens to all of us.

ADRIANNE: I'm just a little lost.

DANNI: Aren't we all.

ADRIANNE: Well... There was someone. Something strange, but I think it was just dreaming.

DANNI: We're all dreaming.

ADRIANNE: This was different.

DANNI: They all say that. Do you know what he said to me, he said. I want to be the guy that gets the girl. I want the happy ending. You're my princess. Turned out he was already married. He was so happy, for a little while, he forgot.

CATMAN enters, nonchalantly easing his way into the space, through a flap in the wall.

CATMAN: You been here long? I forget sometimes, how long it's been.

ADRIANNE: Where did you come from? Do you know what day it is?

DANNI: I wouldn't bother asking him. His heads full of fur-balls. Mangy old thing.

CATMAN: At least it's not empty, unlike some people!

ADRIANNE looks at the wall and tries to work her way through.

It is solid.

It is a pointless exercise.

CATMAN: Let me see. Today is today and tomorrow is tomorrow, and yesterday well that's gone so... it's today. They don't teach you anything these days!

ADRIANNE: Have you got a newspaper, something with the date?

CATMAN: Don't watch TV, no newspapers, radio all blaring at me, telling what I don't need to know. Reminding me of time passing by. Bothering me with other people's lives so I haven't got time to get on with mine.

ADRIANNE: But there's one here...

ADRIANNE tries to turn on the TV.

There is a flash of light and she jumps back.

CATMAN: See I told you dangerous. You don't listen either. I don't have time for it now.

ADRIANNE goes to inspect the TV, and finds the wires are cut.

DANNI starts to rummage in the trunk, pulling out jewellery, make - up, fish and other flotsam and jetsam, trying things on as she goes.

CATMAN: I used to be up at 6am every morning. Radio on in one room, TV in another and the papers being pushed through the door. Too much paper. Too much noise. The news of the world surrounding me. And whose news is it anyway. Who decided what I need to know? What did it do for me? What did I learn in all those years...? No news, is good news. You don't want to know what's happening out there, it would drive you mad if you did, you're better off not knowing.

CATMAN starts to fall asleep.

ADRIANNE: Where are we?

DANNI: Exactly. Look where it's got me. No one has time to play happy families anymore?

ADRIANNE nudges CATMAN.

ADRIANNE: Excuse me, sorry.

DANNI: Again with the tourettes! Just ask him / for f...

CATMAN: Language! Language, there are ladies present.

ADRIANNE: How long have you been here?

DANNI turns her back on both of them and sits on the trunk.

CATMAN: I used to count the days. Kept a diary, held it close to my chest. Wrote the dates in myself, but then you lose count, and some years have more than others, and some days seem like a lifetime. Then there's the temptation for it to be Christmas all year round. You can do that here, you can do that in a place like this. Every day is a new year. Every life, starts, now.

ADRIANNE: But how do you know what you have to do? / How do you...

CATMAN: I've got no appointments. No tea with the queen. If there is one / I haven't met her.

DANNI: No one wants to see him.

CATMAN: The only appointment I've got is with him upstairs and no one knows when he's coming to call.

ADRIANNE: But how do you know if you'll ever be free.

CATMAN: Free, free? Free from what? This? Do you think they're holding me here? Do you think I couldn't walk straight through the door and back to all that?

ADRIANNE: There's a door?

CATMAN: There's always a door.

DANNI: But why would you want to open it? You never know what you might find.

CATMAN: You might never find what you're looking for.

DANNI: Save yourself the disappointment.

ADRIANNE: Sorry I really / need to find the door now.

DANNI: Always apologizing, always sorry for yourself. You'll apologise yourself into thin air if you're not careful.

CATMAN: It happened to a girl I knew, she just disappeared one day, and there's no coming back from that. You'll never find your way out, if you think like that.

ADRIANNE: You know where it is?

DANNI: Do you think I'd still be here if I did?

ADRIANNE: But there's a way out, isn't there?

CATMAN: There's always a way.

DANNI: For those who know how.

CATMAN: But the question is do you really want to take it? Do you really want to go back to that?

Pause.

CATMAN begins to fall asleep.

ADRIANNE: But if you don't?

DANNI: He's always does this at the most important moments. Just likes the suspense. Likes to draw attention to himself.

DANNI gets up off the trunk and pulls CATMAN's tale.

CATMAN: Yes?

ADRIANNE: To stay here, to stay indefinitely.

CATMAN: A life time.

ADRIANNE: And never know anything but this?

CATMAN: It could be worse.

ADRIANNE: But...

CATMAN: Much, much worse. You're still young. You have less regrets.

CATMAN falls asleep.

DANNI begins to pull more clothes out of the trunk.

She dresses herself and tries to dress ADRIANNE throughout the following.

ADRIANNE: How long have you been here?

DANNI: I forget. I'm too busy with other things to worry about stuff like that. Always best to keep busy, if you haven't got anything to do, find something.

ADRIANNE: You must know. Must remember?

DANNI: Do you? I'm forgetful. I'd forget my own name / if it wasn't...

ADRIANNE: When are you going home?

DANNI: What? Home. No. Why? Why would I want to go and do that? Why would I want to leave? There's a party every day. It's party time all the time. Come with me, we can leave behind this old sourpuss!

ADRIANNE: No. Sorry. Thanks but I have to...

DANNI: Have to this. Have to that. Why don't you just let your hair down?

ADRIANNE: I haven't got time.

CATMAN mumbles in his sleep.

CATMAN: Time. Yes. Time.

ADRIANNE: I've got to get back.

DANNI: To what?

ADRIANNE: I can't... remember...

DANNI: What's the point in remembering, some things are better off forgotten. Well if you change your mind...

DANNI takes the dresses that she has tied into a rope and throws it up, she's pulled away, out of the space.

ADRIANNE tries to follow her.

DANNI offers her hand, but as she leaves, lets her go laughing as she exits and muttering her song.

ADRIANNE tries to follow her but is unable to.

ADRIANNE falls to her feet and crawls around, looking for some way out.

She finds some pearls by the trunk they're connected to a thread.

ADRIANNE: I think you left these?

She puts them in her pocket. As she moves around she leaves a trail of pearls. CATMAN wakes and stretches.

CATMAN: Time waits for no man. So there's no point waiting for him.

ADRIANNE: Where are you going?

CATMAN: Here, there, everywhere. Nowhere in particular.

ADRIANNE: Are you going home?

CATMAN: Going? Home, home? Dear girl didn't anyone ever tell you, cat's sleep anywhere.

CATMAN curls up on the trunk.

ADRIANNE: But. Wait. Please. Somebody tell me where we are?

CATMAN: Take a look at this.

CATMAN pulls a contraption out of his pocket.

ADRIANNE: A compass?

CATMAN: Stopped working the first day I got here. Never worked since. How do you explain something like that?

ADRIANNE: I don't...

CATMAN: Exactly. You don't because you can't.

ADRIANNE: But...

CATMAN: There's no way of explaining that. And my watch. The same. Just stopped.

ADRIANNE: The batteries?

CATMAN: Do you think they don't have batteries.

ADRIANNE: Perhaps it's broken?

CATMAN: This is quality. Special. Resistant. Lifetime guarantee.

ADRIANNE: Maybe it had come to an end... of its life time.

CATMAN: No, no this isn't broken, but something is. That's the problem, so quick to throw things away.

ADRIANNE: It's probably just a coincidence.

CATMAN: The same day. I'm telling you they both stopped the same day.

ADRIANNE: Bad luck.

CATMAN: Look around. Everywhere. Nothing like that works. Nothing.

ADRIANNE: Broken.

CATMAN: Got the threads to put it back together?

ADRIANNE: Sorry?

<div align="center">

Pause.

CATMAN inspects the trail she has left behind her.

</div>

CATMAN: You're spinning something. A spider? Cats' cradle?

<div align="center">

Pause.

ADRIANNE looks behind her.

</div>

ADRIANNE: Yes?

CATMAN: That's a talent. That's a skill. Could use that. Who taught you?

ADRIANNE: I can't remember.

CATMAN: Memories are often the key. If you can just find the right one.

<div align="center">213</div>

ADRIANNE: Yes?

CATMAN: Now where was I? Yes the right.

CATMAN begins to fall asleep.

ADRIANNE nudges him.

He wakes startled.

CATMAN: You seen her? My cat. She's small, black. Missing tooth here, lost it in a fight, somewhere.

ADRIANNE: No.

CATMAN: I've got to find her. My daughter won't sleep till I bring her home.

ADRIANNE: Is she here?

CATMAN: She's got to be here somewhere.

ADRIANNE: Your daughter?

CATMAN: No. No, of course not. It's too late for her to be out.

ADRIANNE: But how do you know?

CATMAN: She'll be home. Tucked up in bed. That's where you should be. A little girl like you.

ADRIANNE: I'm not tired. And I'm not.

CATMAN looks up to something unseen.

CATMAN: Why is she here? Why is she out of bed? It's not safe. Not safe to be walking the walls at this time of night.

ADRIANNE: I don't want to go to sleep.

CATMAN: They won't stand for it. It'll be front page news and no news is good news. I've wasted enough time with you. Time wasters. So many time wasters. You could be doing something but you're wasting away, playing your games.

CATMAN pushes past her.

She stumbles.

CATMAN: Move out of my way. I've got a cat to find.

The lights flicker.

CATMAN disappears again through the flap in the wall.

ADRIANNE tries to follow him, the wall is again solid.

Sound of waves merging into a sea of electricity.

Scene 3

A distorted techno beat whistles, hums, and then stops like a machine rebooting.

GAME enters through a wall socket.

ADRIANNE tries to make her way out through it.

GAME: I wouldn't try that if I were you. It's a job for the professionals. You might get a nasty shock if you try.

He stops her and secures it.

ADRIANNE sits back on the couch.

GAME: Did anyone follow you here?

ADRIANNE: What?

GAME: Follow you? Follow you through the door.

ADRIANNE: What door?

GAME: Oh it's useless when you're like this. Something must have got in with you. An animal? An insect? Some other source of life.

ADRIANNE: There was a cat?

GAME: You brought a cat in here?

ADRIANNE: No. No the cat was already here. It was here when I arrived.

GAME: Impossible.

ADRIANNE: There's a man looking for it.

GAME: Impossible.

ADRIANNE: It's black. A small black cat.

GAME: Anyone walked over your grave? Recently?

ADRIANNE: I don't..?

GAME: No that's the point. You wouldn't.

ADRIANNE: I don't understand. Please, just, slow down.

GAME: You're the one running at everything. All day running round, asking questions. You've only been here five minutes.

ADRIANNE: You've got the time?

GAME: I don't. No one has it. It's a law onto its self.

ADRIANNE: I just want to find out how to get home.

GAME: You're wires are crossed. See.

He points at the string of pearls.

GAME: Some things should never happen. It shouldn't be allowed.

ADRIANNE: Where's the door is?

GAME: What?

ADRIANNE: The exit? The way out?

GAME: How should I know?

ADRIANNE: You know other things.

GAME: I don't know everything. No one knows everything and he's crazy. Even the most intelligent men in the world only know a quarter of everything. No one can take it all in. No one.

ADRIANNE: Can you help me to get home?

GAME: Help you, help you?

Pause

GAME: Oh please help I don't know what to do? Please help I can't find my way home? You've got to help yourself. That's the only way you'll get anywhere in this life.

ADRIANNE pushes the walls trying to find a way out.

ADRIANNE: I need to get out of here.

GAME: You need to go to sleep.

ADRIANNE: I've got to find the exit. There must be some way out of this madness.

GAME points at possible exits, which are revealed in the walls, she runs to them. Each one disappears as she reaches it.

GAME: Here, there, everywhere. You of all people should know your way out.

ADRIANNE: I only just got here.

GAME: Exactly. You should still be able to remember how you got here, and more importantly why you want to get out.

ADRIANNE: What if I can't?

GAME: Well if you can't, no-one can... If you want me to be here I'm here and if not...

GAME disappears through an exit and then reappears.

ADRIANNE: But if I can make you disappear I should be able to find the door.

GAME: Maybe you haven't made one. Or perhaps you've hidden it somewhere. Going around accusing everyone else / of taking it from you.

ADRIANNE: Make one? How do I / make one. Please I want to go home.

GAME: Too many questions. What you want will change if you don't do something about it.

ADRIANNE: But I am doing something. I'm looking right now.

GAME: Too many people get lost in here. The whole of their lives absorbed in places like this. Asking for help. Asking other people when they should be asking themselves.

ADRIANNE: But I don't know the answers.

GAME: Don't you? Or is it just easier to not know? Sometimes it's easier to forget that anything other than this world ever existed. But you're not like that, are you Adrianne?

ADRIANNE: You know my name.

GAME: You wanted me to. Perhaps you wanted me to remind you who you were. Who you are.

GAME begins to follow the twisted and crossed threads like a tightrope walker. ADRIANNE follows him falteringly.

As she goes along she collects the thread behind him.

ADRIANNE: Wait.

GAME: For what?

ADRIANNE: You know my name, what about yours?

GAME: You haven't given me one yet.

ADRIANNE: I didn't know I had to. How do / I do that?

GAME: Good bye Adrianne, you must stop crossing your wires. The easiest way is to walk in straight lines, head up... And don't whatever you do look down. ...

He exits.

She arrives at the trunk with her thread, it opens.

The sound of a dial-up connection, then the sea merge together.

A hand reaches out of the trunk.

She takes it and is pulled inside.

GAME: It's the only way to hold on to a train of thought.

The trunk closes on ADRIANNE.

Scene 4

Lights flicker FACE enters.

She is carrying shopping bags.

She begins to unpack them, picking out items and examining items as she goes.

The contents of her many bags begin to litter the floor as she speaks.

FACE: Does my bum look big in this?

Pause, she smiles fixedly, waiting for an answer.

FACE: I'm obviously not worth it... Low fat, no fat, I'm fading away. My carbon foot-print is disappearing. My issues are dissolving. I'm proud to announce, soon, they'll be nothing left of me.

Pause

FACE: The world is going to end. Listen to me... I'm not crazy... I'm not fucking... In the head! I know what I'm talking about. I've seen it all coming. I've been waiting, preparing, and you can ignore it and say I'm crazy if you want but that's the truth... You're all just sitting there...

Pause.

She forces her face into a fixed grimace.

FACE: Don't let your face hold you back.

She rummages in her bags.

FACE: *(singing)* Pack up your troubles in your make-up bag, and turn back time...

She begins to throw items out of her bags.

FACE: Stop the clock and use this wonder cream.

Maybe she's born with it, maybe its nicotine?

We can transform you, we guarantee to try our best not to deform you...

I've been under the knife and over the moon.

Never look a nightmare when you can live the dream.

She stops. Looks around.

FACE: Why are you here, why aren't you out there doing something about it? Look at you, you think you're clever. You don't know anything. You won't know what's hit you and it's coming soon. Better go out there and find out, better go, prepare yourself.

Pause.

She looks through her bags, searching.

FACE: That girl Medusa, she had such problems with her split ends... *(singing to herself)*. Now hands that do dishes can feel soft as a blade... They say that Helen had a face, a face women wanted to scorch from the earth, but where's her face now? Two face, turn face, that miserable bitch. It wasn't her fault, she didn't lead them on. They just had a scratch to itch...

Pause.

FACE: The storms coming and none of you are ready. If you want me to keep quiet. Go. Go sit over there. Get out of my space... but let me tell you this before you go... your world is over. Your world is coming to an end, it's time to start planning for a

new one and if you don't want to be a part of it then it's your funeral. I'm sorry I didn't mean to disturb you, but that's what you need, all of you, a wake-up call.

Pause

FACE: Whatever I wear, wherever I go, no means yes and yes means no... I mean no... I don't know... I mean it shouldn't happen, yet some say they deserved it.

And the women of Troy, all those songs for one boy, who wanted a leg up with that girl, and all those who turned them away and shut up shop, never stopped the war, never stopped a cock.

Pause

FACE: When it happens we've all got to get out. Get out of the cities, do you hear me? You want to be able to get out quickly, get yourself free, cause this is the first place it's going to hit!

CATMAN enters

FACE: Your oyster won't get you anywhere. Forget cars, the fuel will fail you. Forget everything you thought you knew...You got to work out your plan... Take action, make sure you can do it.... Get out of the city ... Get together... Make connections now... You're going to need each other... Find your skills, we're going to need them to build a new world, Forget IT, forget your computers, your gadgets, this will be the end of the 'I' generation you best work as a team or you'll be fucked!

CATMAN: Language!

GAME wheels on a trolley.

CATMAN and GAME wrestle FACE onto it as she continues to rant.

FACE: Technology is not going to be able to help anybody, anybody! It's what's up here that will count and only what's up here!

GAME: See what I mean?

FACE: You got to rely on yourself. No one is going to save you. Forget the big society; it's not going to be there. All that clasping and clamouring of media hype. Desperate to get a hold of your hearts and minds. Scavenging for your soul. It's empty. More desire, more straining, more attempts to reach something that didn't exist in the first place.

Pause

FACE: Erase those lines a thousand times. Eliminate imperfections. That's the way a war is won. What a beauty spot, a blot, a dot on the landscape of perfection. There is

no place for those without beauty to find a little affection, and here I am wallowing in post - idolatry rejection.

GAME: Lost it. Definitely lost it. Completely!

GAME and CATMAN wrestle FACE off.

FACE: It's going to turn everything on its head everything. The world isn't going to keep this up. We can't keep turning at this speed. You can see it already. People are falling off every day. You're falling off even as we speak. You can't stand up for falling down. The only thing we have to fear is fear itself and I'm terribly afraid, the end of the world can't come soon enough.

The lights flicker.

Waves of electricity surge into the space.

Scene 5

TOM enters and begins tidying up the mess that FACE has left.

There is a knock from the sideboard.

He ignores it and continues to tidy up.

The knock comes again, and again.

He ignores it.

The knock comes again.

He knocks back.

Pause.

The knock comes again from the trunk.

He knocks back.

Then walks away and continues cleaning up.

Beat.

The knocking becomes furious and exaggerated.

TOM goes to the trunk and opens it.

ADRIANNE comes up quickly and gasps for breath, her hair is wet.

She tries to crawl out.

TOM gets a towel, hands it to her and then lifts her out.

ADRIANNE: What's happening to me?

TOM: You want my help now?

ADRIANNE passes out.

TOM pulls her onto the couch.

ADRIANNE: I remember...

Pause.

TOM: Yes?

ADRIANNE: You were there? That night?

TOM: Maybe. I've always been here for you.

ADRIANNE: Why are you here now?

TOM: Do you want me to leave?

ADRIANNE: No. I don't know. You must be here for a reason. What happened that night?

Pause

TOM: I saved you.

ADRIANNE: You did?

TOM: Yes.

Pause.

ADRIANNE: What happened to you?

TOM: Happened?

ADRIANNE: You know, before, before this?

TOM: Before?

ADRIANNE: What brought you here? Got you here? Landed you at this?

TOM: I don't know what you mean.

ADRIANNE: There must have been something.

TOM: I can't remember.

ADRIANNE: You're lying.

TOM: This isn't about me.

ADRIANNE: You must remember something?

Loud music burst from the stereo.

TOM beckons ADRIANNE to her feet to dance with him.

ADRIANNE: Don't play games.

They dance the tango throughout the following.

They do not touch yet keep in perfect time.

TOM: I don't like to remember.

ADRIANNE: But if you don't know where you came from, how do you know where you're going?

TOM: Memories trick you. Make you forget what you have to do.

ADRIANNE: What about the happy ones?

TOM: Exactly they catch you out, leave you spinning.

ADRIANNE: I like memories there all I've got.

TOM: Then you've got nothing.

Danni enters and watches.

ADRIANNE: I have everything.

TOM: Nothing.

ADRIANNE: I have my home.

TOM: A fallacy.

ADRIANNE: I have my family.

TOM: A myth.

ADRIANNE: I have...

TOM: Just a fairy story.

ADRIANNE: It's my story.

TOM: You borrowed those.

ADRIANNE: I lived them.

TOM: Only for a while.

ADRIANNE: I'm not making it up.

TOM: You may as well.

TOM drops ADRIANNE to the sofa.

TOM begins to dance with DANNI retracing the same movements of the dance he'd made with ADRIANNE but more intensely.

ADRIANNE: Those things happened. They happened to me.

TOM: It doesn't matter.

ADRIANNE: Yes it does... Playing in the garden. Dancing round in circles with my sister 'til I thought I'd pass out. Running through the sprinklers on a hot day. My mother telling me bedtime stories about giants, and pixies, dragons and princess and a boy who flew just like the birds, and the monster at the heart of it all.

The dance speeds up through this.

ADRIANNE: There was something sad about that one. I always wanted to hear it, again, and again, and again. Knowing the, what next, but wanting to hear it, all the same. The maze, the twists, the turns and that single thread... and the... the first strawberries of summer... sitting outside, outside of here... And Simon... Simon was... another dream?

DANNI is sent flying into the shadows, she cowers there and watches.

TOM: Simon, Simon, always Simon. When are you going to forget about him?

ADRIANNE: Why would I want to forget?

TOM: He tried to kill you. Don't you remember? Your heads so full of stories you can't remember what happened.

ADRIANNE: He... he... he...

ADRIANNE begins to hyperventilate.

They dance again.

This time slowly.

224

TOM: Breath. Deep... Close your eyes...My hand in your hand. Feel it?

ADRIANNE nods.

TOM: Where are you now?

ADRIANNE: Here.

TOM: So?

ADRIANNE: So?

DANNI vanishes into the shadows.

TOM: So what matters about what you can remember? About what you think you are? Where you think you came from?

ADRIANNE: It's my life.

TOM: It's meaningless.

ADRIANNE: It's my story.

TOM: Do you think anyone here cares?

ADRIANNE: Someone might want to ask me, might want to talk about it.

TOM: Do they?

ADRIANNE: They say it's important to remember.

TOM: Who?

ADRIANNE: If I remember they might find out.

TOM: What do you want to find out? / I can answer your questions.

ADRIANNE: I might get the key. They / say remembering is the key.

TOM: They just want your stories to fill the paper, so they can write more papers, about more stories.

ADRIANNE: They might be able to set me free. Stop all this.

TOM: You're the only one who can do that.

ADRIANNE: If I tell them my stories.

TOM: There's no one here but me.

ADRIANNE: But I've heard them. I've talked to them, a girl, a boy and this old man.

TOM: You're imagining things.

ADRIANNE: They wanted to help me.

TOM: What about what I want?

ADRIANNE: You?

TOM: Me. Me and you here together.

ADRIANNE: I can't. I don't remember how.

TOM: You're beginning to remember everything else, why can't you remember this, your hand in my hand.

ADRIANNE: Together.

TOM: No one else. Nothing / else.

ADRIANNE: Nothing.

<div align="center">

Pause

</div>

ADRIANNE: No! I need to remember.

<div align="center">

ADRIANNE opens her eyes.

</div>

TOM: Look what they're doing to you. Don't you want to stay with me? I've given you everything.

<div align="center">

DANNI enters slowly pushing a pram.

She stops and leaves it in the corner.

</div>

DANNI: You think you're the only one.

ADRIANNE: No.

TOM: Yes.

DANNI: The only one suffering. The only one trying to find her way out...You think you're story is the only one that matters. There are so many that haven't been told. So many forgotten.

ADRIANNE: Tell me yours then.

TOM: You won't want to hear it.

DANNI: She might.

TOM: Even if she did, you can't, you can't remember. You never wrote anything down.

DANNI: I remember sometimes.

TOM: You think you do.

DANNI: You saw to that.

TOM: You begged me to help you forget.

DANNI: You mixed them up, got them wrong.

TOM: You like to hear them / you like to tell them, but they don't belong to you.

DANNI: You stole them. You changed them. You steal everything and make them your own. As if nothing else ever existed.

ADRIANNE: You're not taking mine.

DANNI: Tell them to me. I've forgotten mine but I'll help you remember. You can tell them to me every night, we'll keep telling stories 'til we never forget.

TOM: She's already forgotten.

DANNI: There might be something left?

TOM: She's already forgetting who I was. Look at her. She has no idea who you are.

ADRIANNE: I do, I do.

<p style="text-align:center">To Tom.</p>

ADRIANNE: You're not to be trusted.

<p style="text-align:center">She turns and looks intently at DANNI who becomes her mirror.</p>

<p style="text-align:center">Moment.</p>

ADRIANNE: And you?

DANNI: Yes.

ADRIANNE: You?

TOM: This is pointless.

DANNI: Stop pressuring her.

TOM: She can't remember any of it.

ADRIANNE: I can.

TOM: She's lost it.

ADRIANNE: I know what happened.

TOM: You're imagining things.

ADRIANNE: I'm not.

TOM: She's losing it.

ADRIANNE: It was late. There was a room with no windows. And a witness who wasn't looking. A man, or a monster, or maybe they were both there together. I remember...

<div align="center">Pause</div>

DANNI: What happened?

<div align="center">ADRIANNE begins to fall forward, DANNI catches her.</div>

<div align="center">ADRIANNE mumbles something to her.</div>

DANNI: But you're still alive?

TOM: Stop, this is pointless.

ADRIANNE: I can't, if I don't tell the story, it will never end.

DANNI: What happened?

ADRIANNE: I stopped breathing. The breath stopped. Light blinded. Cold. Then nothing, 'til I woke up here.

TOM: It's ok.

ADRIANNE: I can't breathe.

TOM: Open your eyes.

ADRIANNE: I'm dying.

TOM: Breathe.

ADRIANNE: Suffocating.

TOM: Take my hand.

<div align="center">They do not touch.</div>

ADRIANNE: Trapped.

TOM: Can you feel that?

<div align="center">228</div>

ADRIANNE: Your hand in mine.

TOM: My hand in yours.

ADRIANNE: Connected.

TOM: Together.

ADRIANNE: Don't leave me.

TOM: Don't give them your memories.

ADRIANNE: I won't. If I could just piece things together.

DANNI: Tell me, we can do it together.

TOM: Your stories. Your memories. What do they mean?

ADRIANNE: They mean everything.

TOM: Then don't give them away.

DANNI: I want to understand.

TOM: They want to take your stories and make them their own.

ADRIANNE: I'm not stupid. I wouldn't have walked into that if I had of thought he was the killer.

DANNI: You were in danger. Put yourself in danger.

ADRIANNE: I had a witness.

DANNI: Who?

ADRIANNE: What if he's still out there? What if he's in here? Searching for me?

TOM: Are you happy now?

TOM resurfaces from the shadows.

A sea of electric noise fills the space.

TOM: It was you all along, pushing him, pushing the buttons. Making him want more. Feeding him, fuelling him. Bating the monster.

ADRIANNE: I didn't. Please let me out.

ADRIANNE tries to find a way of working herself free, moving frantically around the room.

ADRIANNE: It wasn't my fault.

TOM: You pushed him. Provoked him.

ADRIANNE: I just wanted to know. To understand.

TOM: You were the key Adrianne.

ADRIANNE: If I'm the key then why can't I get out?

DANNI: Why?

TOM: Because you've locked yourself in.

ADRIANNE slumps on the floor.

TOM leaves.

The noise dissipates.

DANNI tries to wake her up, she shakes her, nudges her, and finally slaps her.
ADRIANNE sits bolt upright like she's had an electric shock.

DANNI: It's ok. He's gone.

ADRIANNE: Who are you?

DANNI: We're not here to talk about me. We're here to talk about you.

ADRIANNE: You're not a Princess.

Pause

ADRIANNE: Oh God I thought I'd woken up. Where's the door?

DANNI: Why do you want to leave? If he's really out there isn't it safer to stay?

ADRIANNE: You believe me?

DANNI: Yes.

ADRIANNE: You believe there's a killer?

DANNI: I'm your creation, I have no reason not to believe you.

ADRIANNE: What if he's in here. What if he's followed me in, and there's no way of getting out?

DANNI: Well there's nothing I can do. You are trapped.

ADRIANNE: I thought you were going to help.

DANNI: It's good to talk.

DANNI goes to leave but ADRIANNE stops her.

ADRIANNE: Why are you here? Why have I created you?

DANNI: I don't have the answers.

ADRIANNE: You said you were swept up. Shipwrecked... Someone hurt you?

DANNI: We've all been hurt.

ADRIANNE: Why should I trust you?

DANNI: Why should you trust anyone?

ADRIANNE: Ok, but if your part of me. Do you remember the message?

DANNI: The message?

ADRIANNE: We had to give them a message. A warning, something...

DANNI: Something of nothing.

ADRIANNE: I need to remember. Something about a boy.

DANNI: There's a story there.

ADRIANNE: Someone's in danger.

DANNI: In danger, yes? I almost forgot.

DANNI goes to the pram.

ADRIANNE: What did you say about stories?

DANNI: You mustn't tell stories.

She looks in the pram.

Picks up the blankets.

No baby.

DANNI: It's gone again. How many times? I know it's here somewhere? I had it. I'm sure. I'm so forgetful these days. No I promise it's not just for effect. I know I had it. It's so easy to misplace it. It used to make a lot of noise. But now you'd hardly know it's there. So quiet.

ADRIANNE: What?

DANNI: I don't know why I bother. Always wondering. It's not even mine. Don't worry. You've got enough problems of your own.

DANNI exits.

ADRIANNE gets up and looks at the ceiling.

ADRIANNE: He's too close.

Sound of birds filters through, and is then drowned out by waves.

ADRIANNE: If I could just remember...It was very hot. There was a fire. Yes. Light the yellow touch paper stand back and watch it... watch it melt. All your troubles melt away.

FACE enters pushing her trolley.

FACE: What's that dear? Yes. Troubles dear. Yes. Melt dear. Yes. I wouldn't dear. A bit too hot in here already. No windows you see. NO air. It's very stuffy. I carry one of these.

She takes out a dusk mask.

FACE: You never know what you might pick up.

ADRIANNE: That's it.

FACE: Exactly!

ADRIANNE: That's the way out.

FACE: The only way!

ADRIANNE: Yes.

ADRIANNE moves FACE's trolley to the centre of the stage and drags the bag of rubbish that TOM was collecting into it.

She pulls out a lighter and looks up.

ADRIANNE: This is what you meant. This is the answer.

FACE tries to wrestle the trolley from ADRIANNE.

FACE: Violence answers nothing.

ADRIANNE: I'm not going to hurt you.

FACE: That's my property. That's my home. That's all I have.

ADRIANNE: Don't you see? If this works they'll have to let us out.

FACE: We'll be burnt alive.

ADRIANNE: They'll have to open the doors. They'll have to.

ADRIANNE lights the trolley of rubbish. It begins to catch.

She looks up.

Waiting.

It begins to rain.

FACE dances in the water.

Black out.

End of act 1.

ACT 2

Scene 1

DANNI is wearing ADRIANNE's dress.

She mimics her cruelly whilst making stories with GAME.

DANNI: How can it be in my head? How can the whole of this world be inside my head? And anyway if was all in my head then surely I could take it out of there. Take a can opener to it and remove every last inch. Crack it open, separate it up and start afresh.

GAME: The troubles she's caused already today. Wait until he hears about it.

DANNI: He hears about everything. He's probably just enjoying the show. Always was a bit of a pervert. Probably loving every minute.

GAME: It's my turn.

DANNI: OK.

GAME: So you're sitting in the stairwell and you suddenly see...

DANNI: What?

GAME: A man... he's in a long dark coat. His face is covered from the weather. With a... long... black scarf. He looks at you.

DANNI: At me?

GAME: Peers from under this scarf.

DANNI: Yes?

GAME: Looks down at you.

DANNI: Down?

GAME: Yes he looks down at you. You on the step below. He on the step above.

DANNI: But what's he doing? What's he going to do?

GAME: He seems surprised. Alert. He's on guard. And as you turn to meet his gaze, he flinches.

DANNI: I see.

GAME: He reaches for... something in his pocket... something catches the light... glimmers.

DANNI: Glimmering in the light. Like a... like a star.

GAME: No not like a star. Not at all like a star. No like... like a... knife, but not a knife. Metal glistening in the light, looks like a knife, but could be a gun... could be....

DANNI: It's a weapon, so he's going to use a weapon against me?

GAME: No.

DANNI: Not against...?

GAME: No.

DANNI: No?

GAME: He's offering it to you.

DANNI: To me. And then?

Swell of the sea.

ADRIANNE crawls out of the sofa.

She is wearing the same dress as DANNI.

DANNI: You're still trying to get out?

ADRIANNE: Of course I am.

GAME: Who'd want to stay?

GAME exits.

DANNI: What's the best way to get out of your head? Come on think about it. It could be a way out.

ADRIANNE: I don't know.

DANNI: Just imagine it.

ADRIANNE: Ok, ok.

FACE and GAME enter drawing on GAME's trolley decked out like a drinks cabinet. It's full of colourful bottles.

GAME juggles bottles as he passes them to FACE.

FACE places the bottles on the floor in a clock face then places one in the middle to spin.

DANNI: You're running out of time.

ADRIANNE: This isn't the answer.

DANNI: It's worth a try.

She spins the bottle, and picks one out.

DANNI: Drink this...

Spins and picks a second.

DANNI: Oh and a bit of this...

Spins and picks a third.

GAME juggles them and pours them into a cocktail shaker.

DANNI: With some of that on the side... voila!

FACE pours the cocktails into glasses.

ADRIANNE: I don't know if I should.

DANNI: It'll be knock out.

ADRIANNE: Exactly.

DANNI: Exactly!

ADRIANNE takes a deep breath closes her eyes and drinks.

ADRIANNE: It's bitter.

DANNI: It's working.

ADRIANNE: It's strange... I'm going to be sick.

DANNI: Keep it in... Hold it!

DANNI takes a drink.

DANNI: Wow! That is good stuff!

ADRIANNE: It's weird, it's like I'm not here anymore.

DANNI: Drink some more. It's the only way.

ADRIANNE: OK.

DANNI: I've started so I'll finish.

ADRIANNE: I'm disappearing, right now I'm... Can you see me?

DANNI: Don't be stupid.

ADRIANNE begins to giggle.

DANNI laughs.

ADRIANNE points at her and they end up laughing together.

ADRIANNE: I can see the door.

DANNI: Where?

ADRIANNE: Over there.

DANNI: Well go an open it, it's your way out of this place.

ADRIANNE: No, no, I couldn't.

DANNI: Why not?

ADRIANNE: I can't stand up.

They giggle again.

DANNI: What?

ADRIANNE: I can't.

DANNI: Try.

Pause.

ADRIANNE: I can't... can't.... Oh I just can't be bothered.

DANNI: Go on.

ADRIANNE: No... Can't.

DANNI: Yes you can.

ADRIANNE: Why would I want to go? This is fun!

DANNI: But?

ADRIANNE: I know.

DANNI: You wanted...

ADRIANNE: Yup.

DANNI: Oh I can't be bothered either. No point reasoning.

ADRIANNE: We should have some music.

GAME starts playing whirling helter-skelter music.

DANNI: Yes! Yes! Music!

ADRIANNE: And bubbles! And balloons!

DANNI: People, we should have people, lots of people!

FACE: Party?

DANNI: Whoop!

ADRIANNE: Whoop!

Pause.

ADRIANNE: I'm tired, I'm going to sleep.

DANNI: It's too early. You haven't found your way out.

The lights begin to flicker.

ADRIANNE is slumping over.

GAME stops playing the music.

He comes over.

DANNI: Wake up, come on.

ADRIANNE: Leave me alone.

DANNI: If you don't wake up it's all going to disappear.

ADRIANNE: Yes and we can go to sleep.

FACE comes over and slaps her.

No response.

DANNI: The lights are going out!

FACE: You haven't even opened the door.
DANNI: Help someone please.

CATMAN enters.

CATMAN: You called?

DANNI: She's falling asleep!

CATMAN: Finally.

DANNI: No it's not good. If she falls asleep all of this...

GAME: A little sleep might solve things.

FACE: This is different. It's the wrong kind.

DANNI: It's not her, it's this.

Pointing to the drinks.

FACE: If she falls it's all over?

DANNI: Yes. All of it!

CATMAN: Well you best wake her up then.

DANNI: I can't! Not on my own.

CATMAN: Look at you. You ought to be ashamed... I warned her... I tried.

DANNI: Help us then.

CATMAN: You're a zombie. You're all zombies.

CATMAN exits.

DANNI: It's not my fault!

FACE: She's trapped, got stuck in the machine, been connected too long. She doesn't know how to disconnect anymore.

GAME: There's nothing wrong with the machines. It's the operators that are the problem!

DANNI: Well you do something then.

FACE: The lights are going out. We're losing her.

GAME draws out some wires from the trunk.

GAME: This should do it!

DANNI: Don't!

FACE: Stop!

GAME: Don't blame me.

DANNI: Please.

GAME: She needs a shock!

DANNI: The whole place will be up in flames.

GAME: If we don't do something, we won't exist, none of this will.

CATMAN enters.

FACE stands in front of ADRIANNE.

FACE: You can't do that.

GAME: There's no other choice.

CATMAN: Who gave her a drink? Come on it must have been one of you?

GAME: Could you move out of the way.

FACE doesn't move at all.

GAME: Excuse me. If you could just?

FACE: I won't let you. Violence never solved anything.

DANNI: If we don't do something, we'll all disappear.

CATMAN: Do it!

GAMES and CATMAN try to pull FACE away but GAME shocks her instead of ADRIANNE The lights flicker then become painfully bright and flash.

ADRIANNE wakes up startled.

ADRIANNE: Go to hell!

DANNI: Oh my God what have you done to her?

FACE: My hairs coming out. My nails are crumbling.

ADRIANNE: What a nightmare.

DANNI: I am not a Princess. I keep telling myself I am not a Princess.

CATMAN: She's back with us.

ADRIANNE: I was on a plane. I was flying over everything. Over all of this... You all looked so small, and nothing mattered anymore, because I was flying away from all of this.... And we were... crashing.

FACE falls tries to walk but keeps falling to the floor.

They ignore her struggles.

She pulls out a pocket mirror and looks at her reflection.

FACE: I'm falling apart at the seams. No one seems to care. No one seems to notice.

ADRIANNE: Face... you look... amazing.

FACE: No one sees the cracks. I've been dragged to hell and back.

ADRIANNE: That was one hell of a party.

GAME: Does hell even exist in a dream?

DANNI: If it does then what the hell does it look like?

They all look at FACE.

CATMAN places a blanket around her.

CATMAN: Depends on your upbringing... Strange... The way that we think about down there, rests upon how we're brought up.

DANNI: Who say's hells down there anyway.

FACE: It's here, right here, and now.

ADRIANNE: And I want to get out.

DANNI: I thought we'd got past that! You wouldn't take the exit when you had it!

FACE grabs GAME.

FACE: Aren't you afraid? I mean doesn't it worry you? What if there is something out there, something bigger than this? Maybe there's a heaven and you go and stuff it up and you weren't quite ready and had to come back for more, and you end up right back to level one and you lose all your bonuses on the way back? Everything that you did right, just shot to pieces.

DANNI: I think she needs a drink!

ADRIANNE: It was you! You did this to her. To me.

FACE: Maybe you have to start at the beginning every time, beginning all over again, game over and just in time for it all start again, and God knows if you can remember the things you learnt along the way. Going through the motions until you finally make it through to the end and, Game over! It would be such a relief to not have to do it all again.

CATMAN: Good God she's been enlightened.

DANNI: Party!

GAME: Whoop.

CATMAN takes FACE off.

GAME clears up the drinks.

ADRIANNE: Wait. You forgot. What about me?

DANNI: They'll be back.

ADRIANNE: How can I believe you?

GAME: That's not a question. How can you believe anything? Now that's a question.

ADRIANNE: How do I know if any of this is real anymore?

Pause

DANNI: Do you want me to pinch you?

ADRIANNE: No.

DANNI: Go on. Please?

ADRIANNE: What's wrong with you?

GAME: She's trying to help.

ADRIANNE: I don't need your help.

GAME: Don't look a gift horse in the mouth.

Pause

GAME: It might bite you!

ADRIANNE: You could help by keeping quiet. I'm trying to work my way out of this mess not into more.

DANNI: Sorry I thought you wanted to know whether this was real.../ I thought...

ADRIANNE: It doesn't really matter what you thought. It doesn't really matter what anyone thinks. The only person that matters is me.

DANNI pinches ADRIANNE.

ADRIANNE: Ow! What did you do that for?

GAMES: There's your answer!

ADRIANNE: Just please... Stop it!

DANNI: But you're real! It hurt! It's not a dream.

ADRIANNE: It doesn't mean anything.

GAME: Yes it does a pinch and a punch/ for the

ADRIANNE: Don't hit me.

GAME: What? It's getting to you here... They told you it would. I told you. Right in here, right inside your brain. Twisting you inside out... outside in! See...

ADRIANNE: Go away

GAME: If I'm not real then you could make me disappear.

Pause.

GAME: I'm real, you must be awake.

Pause.

GAME: If I wasn't real I wouldn't be able to do this....

GAMES turns a somersault then picks up ADRIANNE and spins her.

He puts her down.

242

He jumps on the sofa and swings across the space.

ADRIANNE: Your just the product of an over active imagination.

Pause.

TOM enters and watches from the shadows.

DANNI: Cut yourself.

ADRIANNE: What?

GAME: Cut yourself. If you bleed then you know it's real.

ADRIANNE: You're insane.

DANNI: I'm whatever you want me to be.

GAME: Maybe I need to be out of my mind so you can get back into yours.

ADRIANNE: I'm not going to cut myself... anyway I don't have anything to cut myself with even if I wanted to.

DANNI: There must be something.

ADRIANNE: I don't...

GAME: There, a biro!

ADRIANNE: What am I going to do with that?

DANNI: The pen is mightier than the sword.

GAME: Why don't you just write your way out of this?

ADRIANNE: How?

GAME: I don't know.

DANNI: You can think of something...

GAME: You thought of all this!

ADRIANNE: Where are you going?

GAME: Bored now!

GAME and DANNI leave.

ADRIANNE: But if I'm not really here, then where am I? And how do I get back to where I am, to where I started?

TOM: You're the only one who can answer that.

ADRIANNE: But I told you I don't know.

TOM: If you don't answer the questions no one else will.

ADRIANNE: But if I'm not here... there... they must be looking for me.

TOM: Who?

ADRIANNE: The others.

TOM: The others?

ADRIANNE: The ones I left behind.

TOM: You're not making any sense?

ADRIANNE: There must be someone.

TOM: Must there?

ADRIANNE: Somebody. Please.

TOM: Don't push too far. You might not like what's on the other side.

ADRIANNE: This is nonsense. Farcical nonsense.

TOM: What's that then?

The sound of muffled voices and snatched music, overtaken by a racing heartbeat.

ADRIANNE: Just special effects.

TOM: Really, are you sure?

ADRIANNE: You're just playing mind games.

TOM: Are you sure you want to see what's out there? Are you sure you could take it? It might just blow your mind.

Pause.

He turns on the television. It's news coverage.

She watches and then draws away gagging for air.

He turns it off.

TOM: I warned you.

ADRIANNE: Is that me?

TOM: I told you not to.

ADRIANNE: But what's happened?

TOM: You're a ghost. We caught you here. Held you. Until you can find a way back.

ADRIANNE: Can you wake me up?

TOM: Not yet. You're not ready.

ADRIANNE: When?

TOM: No one knows. Perhaps never.

ADRIANNE: Can I speak to him. The doctor?

TOM: He can't hear you. No one can.

ADRIANNE: But... I...

TOM: We tried to save you from this.

ADRIANNE: But who's looking after me?

TOM: You have to look after yourself.

ADRIANNE: But there must be?

TOM: There is no one else.

Pause.

ADRIANNE: I'm trapped. Trapped in my own head?

TOM: The mind is a very powerful thing. Maybe if you tried to make contact. The message might just get through.

TOM exits. She picks up the phone, the cord is cut.

ADRIANNE: Is anybody there? Is anybody listening anymore? I know you can hear me. At least I think you can... Can you...? This is killing me and they don't begin to care. Why won't anyone help?

A sea of electric sounds washes through.

FACE enters on her trolley pushed by GAME.

FACE: You have 600 friends.

ADRIANNE: Excuse me.

FACE: Oh it's 598. Your profile has been updated.

245

ADRIANNE: I don't understand.

FACE: You have 155 unread messages, and 12,666 updates.

ADRIANNE: Who are you?

FACE: They are sad. They are so upset about what happened to you. They cannot quite believe it.

ADRIANNE: What? What happened to me? Who are they?

FACE: They send their love. They send their prayers. They send cute pictures of fluffy animals.

ADRIANNE: Who do?

FACE: Your friends.

ADRIANNE: Slow down. I don't understand.

FACE: I cannot slow down. This is hyper-speed.

ADRIANNE: Please tell me. Who's sent me messages? What did they say?

FACE: So sad. So shocking. So unbelievable. So lovely. Such a lovely girl... so...so...so... so many friends. So much love.

ADRIANNE: Tell me whose there.

FACE: They care.

ADRIANNE: Who? Tell me who's there.

<div align="center">*Pause.*</div>

GAME: Something is happening. System updating. It's OK.

FACE: Someone has deleted you.

ADRIANNE: Who?

FACE: They are deleting you.

ADRIANNE: You must stop them.

<div align="center">*Pause.*</div>

FACE: Deactivation?

ADRIANNE: Tell them not to delete me. Please.

FACE: The numbers are decreasing. They are losing interest. They are forgetting you. Giving up on you.

ADRIANNE: Don't give up. Please don't give up.

FACE: They have to. You've been very quiet. You've grown distant. They don't think you're coming back.

Pause.

FACE: Your status has been updated.

ADRIANNE: How?

FACE: You have 500 friends.

ADRIANNE: Ask them. Ask them for help?

FACE: They are helping you. You are in their prayers. You are in their thoughts. They care about you.

ADRIANNE: But why were they deleting me?

TOM: It's been a long time Adrianne, a long time. After a while people stop wanting to be reminded by pictures, by updates... people need to forget. Need to move on.

ADRIANNE: But I'm still here.

FACE: Yes you're here, and they are there, and they want you to come back.

GAME: But they are letting go now. They are letting you go.

ADRIANNE: Someone's got to tell them. Got to warn them. Make sure they know that I'm here. That I care.

FACE: You have 342 friends.

ADRIANNE: No, please, make it stop.

Sharp, shrill wave of electric noise.

FACE: You have been tagged in 5 new photos.

ADRIANNE: Let me see.

FACE: These photos are considered offensive. They have been deleted.

GAME: Soon everything will be gone.

ADRIANNE: But who's doing it? Who's..?

FACE: Your profile will be deleted.

ADRIANNE: No. Stop. You can't do this.

FACE: They are deleting you.

GAME: They are forgetting.

FACE: Without friends there is no point, no reason, to keep updating.

ADRIANNE: I have friends. You told me I have friends who are waiting for me.

TOM: They have stopped waiting.

FACE: This will not hurt.

GAME: You just need to let go.

ADRIANNE: No. I won't.

GAME: Move on.

ADRIANNE: No. I can't. I want to go back.

GAME: You can only go forward. You have no other choice.

ADRIANNE: But there are. There were other ways.

GAME: Follow the path.

ADRIANNE: But I don't know where I'm going.

TOM: You are being deleted.

ADRIANNE: No. Please.

FACE: They want to forget you.

GAME: Forget what happened.

ADRIANNE: There's got to be another way.

TOM: Let go.

ADRIANNE: I can't.

GAME: Trust me.

ADRIANNE: I need them. They need me.

TOM: We're all you need now.

CATMAN: Soon we'll be all you know.

FACE: You are being memorialized.

ADRIANNE: But I'm not dead. I'm coming back. I'm finding my way back.

GAME: You will be remembered.

ADRIANNE: You can't do this.

FACE: This is your home now.

ADRIANNE: All my connections, everything that is keeping me there, that's reminding them. It'll all be lost. I'll be lost.

TOM: Just let go. You can start all over again.

GAME: You get to make new memories.

GAME takes out a camera and photographs ADRIANNE who is close to tears.

The following pictures are mawkish and macabre.

All the other characters come on stage to help create the tableaus.

FACE uses items from her trolley to stage images of holidays, parties, dancing, and family visits.

The lights flash as each is taken.

GAME: A beach holiday.

FACE gives ADRIANNE a broken umbrella, an empty bottle of beer and a stuffed toy.

FACE, DANNI, and TOM stand with her in a beach pose.

GAME: Smile for the camera

The lights flash.

GAME: Wedding! Everybody loves a wedding.

FACE gives ADRIANNE a bunch of dead flowers.

TOM and ADRIANNE are surrounded by the others.

The lights flash.

DANNI: Baby's first Christmas?

FACE takes a putrid blanket out of the trolley and makes gurgling noises to it, rocking it and then throws it at ADRIANNE.

She pulls out a piece of plastic Christmas tree and throws it to TOM who holds it above ADRIANNE and the blanket.

He makes babyish noises at the blanket and ADRIANNE makes it into a 'baby'.

Face throws the camera to DANNI.

DANNI: Wonderful....

Lights flash.

FACE: Family portrait?

TOM stands with ADRIANNE.

GAME and DANNI kneel by their feet like children.

GAME throws the camera to FACE who takes the picture.

FACE: Beautiful!

Lights flash.

DANNI: Party time!

DANNI throws the camera to GAME, she grabs ADRIANNE and makes a series of group shots.

GAME shoots the camera at each change.

DANNI realises that ADRIANNE is not smiling and forces her face into exaggerated grimaces.

CATMAN puts up his hand.

GAME: Oh how could we forget? The family pet.

CATMAN curls up between ADRIANNE and TOM.

GAME takes the shot.

Lights flash.

CATMAN takes over with the shoots.

CATMAN with umbrella, lights flash.

CATMAN with Christmas tree.

Lights flash.

CATMAN holding the baby.

Lights flash.

DANNI: Where did you find it? I've been worried sick.

She takes the blanket from CATMAN and rocks it in her arms.

CATMAN: Hung-over?

DANNI: Sea-sick actually. There, there now, mummies here.

CATMAN: Some people aren't fit to be parents.

DANNI: What did you say?

CATMAN: Nothing.

The images flash up.

ADRIANNE: These don't belong to me. These aren't my memories.

TOM: Those memories made you sad.

FACE: We've made you new ones.

DANNI: I've been looking for it everywhere.

CATMAN: Finders keepers.

CATMAN tries to grab the blanket from DANNI.

They have a tug of war with it.

DANNI: It's mine.

CATMAN: It? It! You don't even know if it's a boy or a girl.

DANNI: It's doesn't matter!

FACE: I think you'll find it belongs to me!

FACE grabs the blanket from DANNI.

DANNI: How could you.

FACE: I just can't stand mess.

FACE rolls her trolley off stage.

DANNI: I've been looking for it all day. I'm not a bad mother. It's just not easy. It's so small, so easy to lose it.

CATMAN comforts her.

She strokes his hair.

ADRIANNE looks around her.

ADRIANNE: So this is it? This is my life?

TOM: For the moment.

ADRIANNE: This is all that's left?

TOM: It's all you need.

TOM leaves.

CATMAN: At least here you know there's nothing.

DANNI: Nothing to prove.

GAME: Nothing to fight for.

CATMAN: No more of all that's out there. All that sent you here.

DANNI: Out there it's frightening. You've seen it. You know what's waiting for you.

GAME: The roller coaster.

CATMAN: If you exist anymore.

GAME: The ups, the downs.

DANNI: The disappointments.

GAMES: The twists and turns.

DANNI: You know all this. You know what's out there.

CATMAN: All this you know.

FACE re-enters without her trolley.

GAMES: So why do you want to go back?

ADRIANNE: I don't belong here.

FACE: You broke the rules.

ADRIANNE: But I can fix things.

252

FACE: You didn't follow procedure.

ADRIANNE: But I can explain.

FACE: You brought yourself to this. No one else.

ADRIANNE: They pushed me.

CATMAN: Who?

ADRIANNE: The, I don't know, someone. I didn't come here by choice.

FACE: Didn't you? Are you sure?

GAME: Weren't you tempted?

CATMAN: Aren't we all?

FACE: Side step reality. Responsibility.

CATMAN: Very seductive.

DANNI: Tempting.

GAME: Hard to refuse.

ADRIANNE: I am not responsible for this.

DANNI: But you are. You said you were.

<p align="center">*TOM enters.*</p>

ADRIANNE: What happened wasn't my fault.

TOM: What about Simon?

FACE: What about him?

TOM: You found him. You tracked him down.

ADRIANNE: I don't want to talk about it.

DANNI: Why?

ADRIANNE: Because I was. I can't remember.

TOM: I think you can.

GAME: She can't do anything.

FACE: We should bring him here.

TOM: What?

FACE: If she brought us here, then surely she can bring him.

TOM: She could. But you won't? Will you?

ADRIANNE: I. He. I don't remember.

CATMAN: What did I tell you?

ADRIANNE: What?

CATMAN: You never learn. Never listen.

ADRIANNE: I did. I was. I did listen. Something about time... and....

CATMAN: Yes?

DANNI: This is pointless. Just forget about it.

CATMAN: Like you forgot about the baby.

DANNI: I haven't forgotten. I'll find it. I just need time.

CATMAN: Exactly.

ADRIANNE: Yes.

DANNI: Stop judging.

ADRIANNE: This isn't about you, it's about me, and if time doesn't matter. If it doesn't / exist then...

TOM: You can't.

ADRIANNE: This is my world. I can do anything I want to.

TOM: Raise the dead?

ADRIANNE: None of you are real. None of this is real. The only thing that's real is me. I decide. It's my choice.

TOM: Do you think you're strong enough.

DANNI: Help me find my baby, please, it'll only take a moment.

CATMAN: And my cat, my daughters cat, if I can just find her I can go home. I can see my daughter again.

FACE: Will you make me beautiful?

GAMES: Just stop crossing the wires. Stop getting caught up in all of this. It will make my life so much easier.

TOM: She can't do it. She can't do any of it.

ADRIANNE: Don't tell me what to do.

CATMAN: That's it. You tell him.

DANNI: Please just find my baby. It was with me when I was shipwrecked.

ADRIANNE: I'll do it, sort it out, all of it. But first I've got to remember.

DANNI: Give her some space.

ADRIANNE: It was a job. My job. I had a job to do.

FACE: And you didn't do it.

ADRIANNE: No... Yes... Yes I did the job. I found him...

CATMAN: Found who?

DANNI: And then?

ADRIANNE: Then, then... I don't remember.

DANNI: You can do it.

CATMAN: Just concentrate.

ADRIANNE: I can't.

CATMAN: I think of my daughter every day. Ever since I arrived. That's the way to do it.

DANNI: Practice makes perfect.

ADRIANNE: But I've only just got here. I haven't had time.

FACE: You've had a lifetime already.

ADRIANNE: Time doesn't count here.

CATMAN: So many excuses for such a small girl.

ADRIANNE: I'm a woman.

FACE: You're shrinking. / Vanishing.

ADRIANNE: I'm not.

GAME: She's reverting.

DANNI: She's just trying to remember.

CATMAN: She'll be climbing back in.

FACE: That's what she wants to do.

GAME: That's what you want to do?

FACE: Curl up in a little ball and return back under.

GAME: That's what she's doing now. Right now. That's what's she doing. Just look at her.

ADRIANNE: I'm not.

TOM: You can't remember anything, can you?

ADRIANNE: I want to get out.

TOM: She can't remember anything because none of it really happened.

ADRIANNE: Show me the door.

TOM: She's making it all up. Playing games again. How do we know she's in control anyway? How do we know that this is her creation?

DANNI: Whose else would it be?

ADRIANNE: I need to get back. Tell them what happened.

FACE: Tell them it wasn't your fault?

CATMAN: Tell them you weren't responsible.

DANNI: Tell them to forgive you?

ADRIANNE: No, no, yes. I don't know.

TOM: Tell them about me?

ADRIANNE: I need to find the door.

TOM: No one's keeping you here.
ADRIANNE: Stop hiding it from me.

They begin creating doorways and possible exits and signs which offer her hope.

GAME: What this door?

FACE: You want this one?

256

CATMAN: There's one over there.

DANNI: Over here.

ADRIANNE: Stop it. Just stop moving the door.

GAME: This one's far too small.

DANNI: If you find my baby. I'll find your door.

ADRIANNE: What does it look like?

ADRIANNE is frantically looking around.

FACE: You don't want to go through that one!

DANNI: I don't know. I can't remember. It was so small.

GAME: I wouldn't if I was you.

ADRIANNE: How small?

CATMAN: What about my cat?

ADRIANNE: If I find the door, I'll bring them back, I promise.

DANNI: Tiny, it was in a little tiny box, we travelled here together.

ADRIANNE: I'll find it. I promise.

FACE: Don't forget me.

ADRIANNE stands at a door ready.

CATMAN: No one ever came back through that one.

ADRIANNE: Then that's the door.

GAME: Really?

ADRIANNE: That's the one. I've made my choice.

TOM: She thinks she's found the door.

GAME: She thinks she's found the door.

FACE: You're too late.

ADRIANNE: No I found it. This is the door.

The door disappears.

ADRIANNE: Where's it gone?

DANNI: Your times up.

CATMAN: You're out of time.

ADRIANNE: But you said time didn't exist here?

CATMAN: Yes.

DANNI: What?

GAME: So?

ADRIANNE: Well then I can't run out of something that doesn't exist.

CATMAN: You've got all the time in the world, but you just wasted it.

ADRIANNE: Bring it back. I demand you bring it back.

FACE: It's got nothing to do with us.

GAME: Do you think we're in control.

CATMAN: You're the only one in control. You've just got to work out how to control yourself.

FACE: So fearful.

DANNI: So quick.

FACE: So annoying

GAME: So needy.

ADRIANNE: Stop it. All of you stop it.

CATMAN: He won't be pleased.

FACE: No he won't. This is going to make him mad.

ADRIANNE: Who?

GAME: You know. The controller. You've ruined his plans.

ADRIANNE: But you said I was in control. You said I made the decisions.

FACE: Yes. We did. And while you were busy not making your mind up. You decided to make him God.

ADRIANNE: I didn't. I don't even know who you're talking about. I don't even believe in God. Why would I make one up?

DANNI: He's coming.

GAME: He's going to be crazy.

CATMAN: He'll put a stop to all of this.

FACE: Put her out of her misery.

CATMAN: Or into his.

GAME: If only I could be a fly on the wall.

FACE: You are.

GAME: Oh yes. Yes. The wires are finally uncrossing.

GAME crawls off stage.

ADRIANNE: I didn't want a God. I wanted Simon. He was who I wanted. All I ever wanted.

DANNI: You did love him.

ADRIANNE: Yes.

DANNI: That's why.

ADRIANNE: I didn't believe he was the killer.

DANNI: So you went there. On your own?

ADRIANNE: I got too close. I took a risk. I thought I was doing the right thing. I made a connection. I thought I could save him.

ADRIANNE looks at Danni's wrists.

She removes a cat collar which she has been wearing as a bracelet.

DANNI: A life-line.

ADRIANNE: I think this belongs to you.

She gives it to CATMAN.

CATMAN: Some people just can't be saved. Even a cat has only nine lives to fall through.

CATMAN leaves.

ADRIANNE: I became the profile. Became someone else.

DANNI: But you have to be yourself.

ADRIANNE: I wanted to be someone else. All my life I've wanted to be someone else.

TOM: Who are you now?

ADRIANNE: I was stupid / now...

FACE: You were in love.

FACE goes to leave with her trolley.

ADRIANNE: Face?

FACE stops.

ADRIANNE: You are beautiful.

FACE smiles and hands her matchbox then leaves.

ADRIANNE looks inside then places it in her pocket.

TOM: You were in love with danger.

DANNI: There's always someone dragging us to it.

TOM leaves.

ADRIANNE: I found it.

DANNI: Where?

ADRIANNE: It's in my pocket.

DANNI: Show me.

ADRIANNE brings a match box out of her pocket.

She opens it.

The sound of a baby crying gently.

She hands it to DANNI.

The cries become a soft gentle gurgle DANNI coos to it.

DANNI: Will you keep it for me? It doesn't need much. Just feed it occasionally, and talk to it, it likes stories. Just don't fill its head with fairy tales, too much of that stuff rots the brain. It's like sugar for the soul, only causes decay, spoils you for anything else.

DANNI hands ADRIANNE the box and goes to leave.

ADRIANNE: Danni. You are a princess.

DANNI: Be careful you don't fall for the shining armour. It can blind a girl if you're not too careful.

ADRIANNE: I won't. I promise.

DANNI exits.

RIGHT enters in a suit.

RIGHT: Excuse me.

ADRIANNE: Yes.

RIGHT: What are you doing?

ADRIANNE: I'm waiting for a God.

RIGHT: Could you help me? While about you're waiting.

ADRIANNE: Probably not... But since I'm in control of this madness, I'm probably the only one who can.

RIGHT: I'm looking for the way home.

ADRIANNE: Join the club.

RIGHT: I need to get back.

ADRIANNE: To where exactly?

RIGHT: My family are waiting. / I need to get home by six. My dinner will be getting cold.

Pause.

ADRIANNE: Why would I create you? Why would I create you now? When I'm surrounded by all this?

RIGHT: I'm sorry is it the suit? People often take offense to the suit.

ADRIANNE: I dressed you. I don't see anything offensive in looking smart.

RIGHT: Too smart. Too smart for my own good. That's what they say. That's what they all say.

ADRIANNE: Who are you?

RIGHT: I'm... I'm lost.

ADRIANNE: Well you may as well join me.

RIGHT: I can't do that. Your home and my home might be in a different direction. / We might be miles apart.

ADRIANNE: At least wherever I'm going isn't here.

RIGHT: Are you sure. You're walking round in circles.

ADRIANNE: I'm not.

RIGHT: You are. Can't you see?

She carries on walking.

Bumps into him.

Looks back.

Looks forward.

Looks at him.

ADRIANNE: Well maybe I am. What's it got with you?

RIGHT: Well you're not going to get anywhere. Are you?

ADRIANNE: Well I don't see you going anywhere either.

RIGHT: I'm just saying. It's not very mindful. Unless your planning on wearing a hole in the floor. Making a door that way? It would be a solution.

ADRIANNE: Who are you?

RIGHT: Don't get tetchy. I'm me. Just me.

ADRIANNE: Well nice to meet you, me.

RIGHT: And who are you?

ADRIANNE: What?

RIGHT: Who are you? Really?

ADRIANNE: Why is everyone so bothered with what's real all of a sudden? What's reality got to do with anything in this place anyway?

RIGHT: Well I hadn't thought of it that way. But since you're asking... Wouldn't it help if we injected just a little bit of realism?

ADRIANNE: I don't understand you?

RIGHT: Exactly. Perhaps you would if you could just see past all this. See past it and think of something else.

ADRIANNE: Another dream. Another nightmare. I've already had enough of that and I haven't even been to sleep.

RIGHT: Are you tired? Silly question. Must be. I'm exhausted.

ADRIANNE: Weren't you going somewhere?

RIGHT: Well I was trying to make my way out of here. I thought you might like some help. But if you don't...

ADRIANNE: I didn't say that. Ugghh this place is so frustrating.

RIGHT: Well stop. Stop for a moment and just think about it.

Pause

RIGHT: Well?

ADRIANNE: What?

RIGHT: A light bulb?

ADRIANNE: Yes.

RIGHT: And?

ADRIANNE: Nothing.

RIGHT: Nothing, or almost nothing?

ADRIANNE: Almost nothing?

RIGHT: Yes, not quite, almost there... Peace?

ADRIANNE: I haven't got time.

RIGHT: Yes you have. Of course you have. You said yourself.

ADRIANNE: But it doesn't exist. How can I have something that doesn't exist?

RIGHT: Exactly.

ADRIANNE: Uggh... You think you're so clever.

RIGHT: I know I am.

Pause.

RIGHT: When was the last time things felt real?

ADRIANNE: Is this another trick? Another test?

RIGHT: Trust me.

ADRIANNE: I don't know I can't remember.

RIGHT: Well you're in control. Why don't you make it up?

ADRIANNE: If I'm in control then you can make it up for me

RIGHT: Touché! Now you're getting the hang of it.

ADRIANNE: Ok.

RIGHT: Ok. You're eight you're playing with your dolls house / and then...

ADRIANNE: No, not that. That can't be last time things felt real.

RIGHT: Maybe it can. Maybe for us that was the last time we felt real. When we were children. Before all of this.

ADRIANNE: It can't be. No. I don't want to go back to that anyway.

RIGHT: The world before it all went global. Before reality was a way of selling a dream.

ADRIANNE: Yes the world before. But there was something after that. I know there was. There has to have been.

RIGHT: Yes?

ADRIANNE: Yes.

RIGHT: Your sister needs you.

ADRIANNE: Yes.

RIGHT: Faye needs you.

ADRIANNE: Yes.

RIGHT: She's met someone. Someone new.

ADRIANNE: Yes.

RIGHT: But something's wrong. Something doesn't quite add up.

ADRIANNE: Something's not right.

RIGHT: She tells you about the site. Tells you where she met him.

ADRIANNE: I'm worried.

RIGHT: You're jealous.

ADRIANNE: I join the site. Everyone does it. Everyone, these days.

RIGHT: And that's where you met him.

ADRIANNE: He's a player.

RIGHT: There all players. But, he's different, he's got an agenda. Your intrested, intrigued, excited.

ADRIANNE: Faye goes missing.

RIGHT: Stops picking up the phone.

ADRIANNE: She's just happy. She must be happy, I'm happy for her.

RIGHT: The other girls on the site start to disappear.

ADRIANNE: One by one. Stop telling stories.

RIGHT: The only one telling stories is Simon, and you. You went looking for Faye, and the path lead you straight to his door.

Pause.

RIGHT: Its coming back isn't it.
ADRIANNE: Yes. Yes. I can almost see it.

RIGHT: You can see Simon. /Your monster, / your killer, / your prey.

ADRIANNE: Yes, yes / No / He wasn't /...it wasn't.
RIGHT: All the signs had been pointing to him. Everything the girls had said, the warnings fell into place.

ADRIANNE: And, yes, I remember.

RIGHT: Like a web. A puzzle! You could finally see the picture.

ADRIANNE: All of the links coming together.

RIGHT: It was him.

ADRIANNE: I could see it.

RIGHT: All leading back.

ADRIANNE: But no one would listen.

RIGHT: No one was listening to you.

ADRIANNE: I knew.

RIGHT: You knew.

ADRIANNE: I had to find him.

RIGHT: You walked into his trap.

ADRIANNE: But it wasn't him.

RIGHT: You knew the minute you walked into the studio you were in danger.

ADRIANNE: I had to find out. I had to find out what he'd done to them. What he'd done to her.

RIGHT: You were curious.

ADRIANNE: I had to know.

RIGHT: You couldn't let it be.

ADRIANNE: I just wanted to see him, to talk to him, to make sure it wasn't his fault. Make sure he hadn't driven Danni and the others to it.

RIGHT: You lied to him.

ADRIANNE: It was worth it. I found him.

RIGHT: Or did he find you?

ADRIANNE: Surfing, sifting, signalling. I was determined. I realized I was being stupid. What was I thinking, going there, meeting that stranger. Going to a strange man's house. I cancelled.

RIGHT: Then the phone call.

ADRIANNE: He strange voice, familiar, yet...

Distorted ringtone merges into the sound of waves

RIGHT: How did they get your number?

ADRIANNE: He said he knew him. Said he'd been watching. Said he'd seen my sister, seen Faye...

RIGHT: Sick bastard.

ADRIANNE: He said he'd back me up. Be my witness. We made a plan.

RIGHT: But going there. Going to his flat.

ADRIANNE: I wasn't on my own. I had back up.

A ringtone bleeps out.

RIGHT: The voice. The voice on the end of the line.

ADRIANNE: And it was real. He was real. I know he was.

RIGHT: Really?

ADRIANNE: He's here. He was here. If I could just...

RIGHT: Why won't they believe you?

ADRIANNE: That's not what I'm here for.

RIGHT: Then why are you here?

ADRIANNE: I was here because, because, because I needed to remember.

RIGHT: Then why are you still here?

ADRIANNE: I don't know.

RIGHT: Think/

ADRIANNE: I can't.

RIGHT: Don't give up now.

ADRIANNE: You do it. You're so good at this. You've got me this far. I'll just get you to answer the questions.

Pause

RIGHT: You fell in love with him.

ADRIANNE: You don't know what you're talking about.

RIGHT: Oh, but I do. I'm your creation. I know everything about you.

ADRIANNE: Only what I want you to know.

RIGHT: Well something about you, wants me to know this. Something about you, wants me to know that you fell in love with him. All that time spent online. All those stories you wove together. You got trapped in the threads. That's how you learnt to do all this. How you learnt to create worlds within worlds. That's why you can't even remember your own name.

ADRIANNE: No. You're wrong. This is another game. Another... I'm going out of my mind.

RIGHT: But I'm your right mind. That's why you've created me. You've created me so you can remember.

ADRIANNE: Go on you may as well start climbing the walls, juggling with fire, flipping somersaults. Or any of the other things my stupid, over active imagination can come up with... go on... won't be anything I haven't thought of before... where are the elephants? There should be elephants, this is a circus after all.

RIGHT: I'd be careful what you wish for.

ADRIANNE: And tigers and dogs dancing. Go on... where are they? Start throwing knives, see if I can catch them. Why not throw in some magic. Where's the bullet catch? I'll take it. I'm ready. I'm ready to do anything.

RIGHT: You want this. Part of you created all of this so you could escape from what's really happening. From what's really going on. Out there. You fell in love with a murder. You walked into his flat like a fly into a trap. But he wasn't who you were expecting. He was someone else. Someone you didn't recognise and then ... no one's fault. No one's except your own. The funny thing is. The really funny thing. You don't want to leave. You've created this world and you're intoxicated by it. You don't really want to go home. You want to be lost, here, forever. Here where you can create everything. Where you're control.

ADRIANNE: No. That's not right. You can't be right.

RIGHT: Well change it then. Come back. Unless... you haven't got anything to go back to?

ADRIANNE: I have.

RIGHT: Really?

ADRIANNE: I don't want to be here. / I want...

RIGHT: There's a difference between not wanting to be here, and wanting to go back. Don't worry. There's a lot of people here who don't ever want to go back, and some, like you. Who don't anything to go back to? That's why they don't find the door. That's why they stop looking. That's why your still here Adrianne. Or was that ever really your name at all?

ADRIANNE: You're wrong. I have things to go back to. I have a... Real things to go back to. My home, my job, my life.

RIGHT: Is it worth living?

ADRIANNE: What?

RIGHT: You should know.

ADRIANNE: You're my right mind?

RIGHT: Life isn't always easy. In fact it's never been easy for you. Are you sure you want to go back to all of that?

Pause.

ADRIANNE: There are people. There are people who will miss me.

RIGHT: Here you can create anything you want. Anything your heart desires. As long as you will it, you can have it. You could be queen of all this. A goddess.

ADRIANNE: I have something there.

RIGHT: Do you? What is it compared to all this, all you ever dreamed of. You could have everything you've ever wanted.

ADRIANNE: I have responsibilities.

RIGHT: Really? It's nothing you can't escape from.

ADRIANNE: I'm going back. Yes. Yes. I got lost. Got caught up in all that. But that's gone now. It's behind. I don't need it anymore. None of it matters.

RIGHT: Really, then give up. Go to sleep. Stop fighting.

ADRIANNE: Stop?

RIGHT: Stop.

ADRIANNE: OK.

Pause

ADRIANNE: I don't think I can.

RIGHT: You have to.

ADRIANNE: Help?

RIGHT: Really?

ADRIANNE: Really.

Enter CATMAN.

He begins to sings a lullaby of confusion to Adrianne and continues singing whilst the following action takes place.

FACE enters dressed as a nurse, she pushes on a hospital bed.

GAME enters with a trolley of machinery.

CATMAN:

This is the lullaby,
The lullaby of confusion.
My secret lullaby,
Is driving you to a conclusion.
When insomnia comes calling,
Into my cords start falling
Let me wrap you in this rhyme,
Broken strings will heal in time.

RIGHT picks up ADRIANNE with GAME and lifts her onto the trolley.

They wrap her in a blanket and she begins to fall asleep.

A rhythmic percussion of electronic beeps and waves, underscore the lullaby.

CATMAN:

Your heart no longer heavy,
The pain you'll leave behind. .
When you can't sleep,
I've the cord to lull you,
The note to hold you,
The form to keep you,
And drive the requiem,
From your mind.

GAME connects ADRIANNE to the machine.

CATMAN:
This is a lullaby,
A lullaby to disturb you.
You won't sleep safe tonight,
The monsters are out to get you.
But I'm not trying to scare you,
I'm sure it's not the case.
Maybe just a little
one will come,
And peel the skin
from your pretty face.
I'll be the memories that swarm,
The thoughts that drive you,

270

The beasts that harm you,
Your knight in shining armour,
To charm you and disarm you.

CATMAN disappears.

The soundscape fades into a simple bleep.

ADRIANNE wakes up, but is immobilised.

She does not speak; her voice is disembodied from outside the space.

None of the other characters can hear what she says.

Throughout GAME is using the machine to change the programming.

RIGHT: We still seem to be having problems with the programme.

GAME: It appears she is resisting it.

RIGHT: Has this happened before?

GAME: There are still some gremlins, viruses, ghosts in the machine, it's just a matter of adjustment. The old man is beginning to respond and that girl in room fifteen seems to have stopped struggling against it.

FACE: Perhaps an alternative programme?

ADRIANNE: Something wrong.

RIGHT: I was sure this was the right one for her.

GAME: Sometimes the mind is strong enough to override it.

FACE: Poor thing. She must be really trying to come back.

RIGHT: She can't like this. The shock would kill her.

ADRIANNE: She can hear you.

RIGHT: Until we find a cure this is where she's staying.

GAME: We'll just have to bring down some levels. We underestimated her imagination, her creativity.

ADRIANNE: I'm not meant to be here. I'm meant to be at home.

RIGHT: She's thinking too much.

FACE: If only we could wake her.

ADRIANNE: I am awake.

GAME: There a few adjustments and were ready to go.

RIGHT: She should accept it this time.

FACE: Poor woman.

RIGHT: She just / needs more rest.

ADRIANNE: Don't let them do it.

FACE: You know it's almost as if she's trying to communicate. Those eyes. I almost can't / bring myself to look at her.

RIGHT: Enough of that. Ready.

ADRIANNE: No!

GAME: Ready.

ADRIANNE: Please, you can't do this, not again, not again.

The lights flicker to black out.

The sound of the seaside, waves lapping at the beach.

Seagulls.

The beeping subsides.

ACT 3

The sun is setting on another day. ADRIANNE is humming the cords of the lullaby dusting and polishing the room. TOM enters.

TOM: Hi huni, I'm home.

ADRIANNE rushes over and kisses him on the check.

ADRIANNE: How was your day?

TOM: Oh, busy, busy, you know how it is. Thank God it's Friday.

TOM picks her up and spins her round.

ADRIANNE: The cat came back.

TOM: Oh that's wonderful darling.

ADRIANNE: We found him hiding in the shed.

TOM: I told you not to worry.

ADRIANNE: I know but he's so old, and the children adore him. I've made you a surprise.

TOM: Wonderful.

ADRIANNE: The children helped me.

TOM: Are they in bed yet?

ADRIANNE: No, I let them stay up, just this once.

GAME and DANNI come rushing in pushing a trolley with a cake and candles.

DANNI: Daddies home! Happy Birthday Daddy!

TOM: My little princess!

CATMAN comes in stretches and lies across the trunk.

DANNI: We found him Daddy.

TOM: That's very clever sweetheart.

GAME: Can we have some cake now mum?

ADRIANNE: Not yet, we have to light the candles first.

DANNI: And make a wish. Daddy can I help you?

TOM: Of course, of course you can darling.

GAME: Can I light them.

TOM: No, daddy will do that, you mustn't play with fire.

TOM goes to light the candles, but the lighter doesn't work.

GAME: Let me try daddy?

TOM: No, now hold on a moment, let me just...

It doesn't work.

ADRIANNE: I'll just look for some matches.

She begins to look around.

DANNI: Can we get some sweeties tomorrow daddy?

TOM: Yes, yes, of course.

DANNI: And feed the swans.

GAME: Mummy doesn't like birds.

ADRIANNE: Well you can go with Daddy and I'll have my favourite coffee..

ADRIANNE finds the matchbox.

ADRIANNE: Ah here we are.

She opens it and a baby begins crying.

No one apart from ADRIANNE hears the noise.

Beat.

She shuts the box tight and puts it back in her pocket.

ADRIANNE: There's not one left.

TOM: Don't worry darling, we can pretend there lit.

DANNI: Yes mummy, let's pretend.

GAME: I'll light them.

GAME makes a mime of very carefully lighting the candles.

DANNI: Don't forget to make a wish Daddy!

TOM: I wish this day would never end!

ADRIANNE watches as DANNI and TOM blow out that candles.
There's a flare of light and then BLACK OUT.

END of Play.

SILVER

After Icarus

By Lou Miller

Louise Miller

59 Sunnyside Road

Chesham

Buckinghamshire

HP5 2AR

SETTING:

The play takes place in 1993 and 2010. Time is indicated for each scene.

CHARACTERS:

HOPE: nearly 17

STELLA: 30

CHRIS: 24 / 42

SIMON: 25

TOM: 25

Scene 1

Spring 2010

Hotel room.

The radio is on.

The room is filled with music.

CHRIS comes out of the bathroom.

He looks at his phone then goes over to the window and surveys the London skyline.

Moment.

He goes to the mini bar and opens and then closes it.

He opens the door again.

Pauses.

He takes the bottles out and lines them up along the window.

He takes mimed guns out of his pockets and starts aiming them at the bottles.

In quick fire he shoots each one down, apart from a can of soda which he picks up and starts drinking.

RADIO (V/O):   And now it's time for another track form the 1990s.

CHRIS picks up the remote control and switches off the radio.

He sits on the edge of the bed and opens his case. He looks through it, organising the items inside, he's precise.

He pulls out an envelope and looks at an invitation inside.

He sends a message on his mobile, then stands by the window shifting the bottles out of the way lines up a perfect view of the coming sunrise.

The Hotel phone rings. He hesitates. As he reaches it the phone rings off.

CHRIS: Typical.

He goes back to the window and squares up.

The hotel phone begins to ring again.

CHRIS: You can wait.

Pause.

CHRIS: Just.

Pause.

CHRIS: Perfect.

He goes to the phone.

It rings off again.

He returns to the view.

The hotel phone starts ringing.

He goes back.

It hangs up.

CHRIS dials a number.

CHRIS: You were ringing my room... Yes I know it's not you but someone
                was... No... You didn't disturb me... I didn't ask for a wakeup call
                because I didn't need one...

                I don't want breakfast...That's correct...

                Look I really haven't got time for this... If they call back give them
                my mobile... I know... I know... yes... It could be anyone couldn't it...
                I appreciate that......

                But... but it's not anyone, is it? I'm not asking you to give my number
                to anyone am I? I'm asking you to give my number to the person who
                has already tried to call this room three times...

                ...Yes I know... I understand...

                ...I don't care... I'm sorry? Just give them the number... okay...

                Yes I'm sure it is being recorded. How nice for you.

He slams the phone down.

He picks up the soda.

His mobile rings.

He answers it and spills the soda.

CHRIS: Jesus... No, not you... It's ok... I just... I can't make it... I know... I said
                I'd try... I wanted to see you... I'm on standby...

The calls cut.

CHRIS goes back to his bag and pulls out a jiffy bag.

He takes out a small packet from inside and looks at it.

He picks up his mobile and calls a number.

CHRIS: Simon... I know your there. Stop playing games...

The hotel phone ring.

CHRIS puts down the mobile and picks up.

CHRIS: What now?

Yes, sorry, I was expecting someone else.

Of course.

They haven't suspended everything?

TOM's disembodied voice fills the room.

TOM: The Volcanic ash cloud is set to cause the largest disturbance of European airspace since World War Two..

CHRIS: I know...

TOM: 100,000 flights are grounded.

CHRIS: But surely...

TOM: Millions are stranded across the world.

CHRIS: I can do this. You know I can...

TOM: The skies over most of Europe usually congested with planes are silent, and still.

CHRIS: It's going to cause chaos.

TOM: Yet pilots fly through ash clouds frequently.

CHRIS: I understand.

CHRIS throws the phone down on the bed.

TOM: You can fly over it, or under it, but it's best if you avoid it all together.

CHRIS takes some pills from the packet.

TOM: When the pilot realises he's in the middle of the cloud it's often too late.

CHRIS takes one, then another.

TOM: Eerie signs of static electricity in volcanic material immediately indicate that something is amiss. St Elmo's fire can cause green flashes to appear on the windows.

CHRIS lies back on the bed.

TOM: The mouth of the plane's motor may start to glow and pilots might notice the smell of sulphur.

CHRIS starts to choke.

He gets up and finds some soda.

TOM: Radio transmissions become less clear, and the plane's wind shield can become more opaque because pulverised lava particles are made of silicates, like glass, sand the front of the plane, including the window.

CHRIS falters and falls to the floor.

TOM: If they enter a jet engine, they melt just a glass melts, then solidify, coating it and raising its temperature, potentially destroying it.

CHRIS crawls into the bathroom.

TOM: All pilots are trained to navigate their way out. But any jet engine exposed to volcanic damaged is totalled beyond salvation.

TOM fades away.

The sound of planes soaring overhead fills the space.

HOPE and STELLA enter in their own worlds, oblivious to each other.

HOPE: They look so small up there.

STELLA: Big metal birds, ripping up the sky.

HOPE: Always know where they are going.

STELLA: When they'll arrive.

HOPE: There's always plan.

STELLA: New worlds.

HOPE: Second chances.

STELLA: A chance to....

HOPE: Start again.

STELLA: Leave everything behind but...

HOPE: No matter how far you go...

STELLA: Some things you just can't leave / behind.

HOPE: Take off in one cities sunrise.

STELLA: Touch down to another cities sunset.

HOPE: Everything in perspective.

STELLA: All those foot prints blackening the sky.

HOPE: The only time you realise what it all means...

STELLA: Is when it's gone.

SCENE 2

Spring 1993.

Hotel room.

CHRIS stands looking out at the view over the city.

The sun is setting.

There's a knock at the door.

CHRIS opens it.

STELLA stands in the doorway.

Pause.

STELLA: Chris?

Pause

STELLA: Have I got the / right... Simon's friend?

CHRIS: Yes of course... Please... Come in.

She comes in.

STELLA: It's such a big place.

CHRIS: It can be confusing.

She walks over to the window.

STELLA: The room's perfect.

CHRIS: The views pretty spectacular.

Pause

STELLA: So where do you...?

CHRIS: Whatever's easiest for you?

STELLA: Um. Ok. By the window?

CHRIS: I'll move the sofa.

STELLA: Great.

CHRIS struggles moving it.

STELLA: Can I?

CHRIS: No, no, it's fine.

STELLA: How much time have we got?

CHRIS: About half an hour

STELLA: Really, but...?

CHRIS: It'll be fine.

STELLA: Ok.

Pause.

CHRIS: If you think we need more time, we could reschedule?

STELLA: No... It's ok. I'll just have to work what we've got.

CHRIS: Great.

STELLA: I brought some things with me. Do you mind if I...?

CHRIS: No, not at all.

STELLA: It's pretty awe inspiring.

CHRIS: It has its moments.

STELLA: The things you've seen?

CHRIS: I guess.

STELLA: You're lucky.

CHRIS: So how are we going to do this?

STELLA: I haven't got a lot of time?

CHRIS: We could rearrange?

STELLA: Let's just get started.

CHRIS: So?

STELLA: Tell me about your work.

CHRIS: Don't you need me to...?

STELLA: Just relax.

STELLA gets takes a sketchpad out of her bag and a camera.

CHRIS: Nice camera.

STELLA: Thanks. Do you...?

CHRIS: I'm not very artistic. Not that you need to be. It's all point and shoot. Sorry I didn't mean...

STELLA: It's ok.

CHRIS: Everything's disposable these days.

STELLA: Not everything.

Pause.

STELLA: I don't want this to look staged.

She starts photographing CHRIS.

CHRIS: I'm just a bit...

STELLA: Jet lagged?

CHRIS: Never quite get over it. I'm constantly trying to catch up.

STELLA: Sounds exhausting.

CHRIS: Constantly tired.

STELLA: I couldn't.

CHRIS: The hours are a little, anti-social. They say you get used to it.

STELLA: Can't be easy, being up in the air all the time, but I'm sure you'll find ways round that.

CHRIS: Different cities every few days. Sometimes I forget what day it is.

STELLA: But you get to fly the world. And you're still so young. You were the youngest pilot to qualify in decades. Quite an achievement.

CHRIS: And you're exhibit?

STELLA: 'The perspective and perception of gravity'

CHRIS: Why flight?

STELLA: It interests me.

CHRIS: Well it certainly puts everything into perspective. Everything else just fades into the background.

STELLA: I don't know. I've never flown.

CHRIS: Never?

STELLA: I'm afraid of heights.

CHRIS: Vertigo?

HOPE: Acrophobia.

CHRIS: When Simon told me about you I was intrigued. ·

STELLA: He's been very helpful.

CHRIS: He's a good friend.

STELLA: Yes.

CHRIS: I'm pleased for him. Pleased for both of you.

STELLA: We're not... Not like that.

CHRIS: Oh. Sure.

Pause.

STELLA: Could you just... Yes... Perfect.

284

Stella stops photographing.

CHRIS: Nothing on earth compares to the feeling.

STELLA: Nothing?

CHRIS: Nothing.

Pause.

STELLA: Is Chris short for Christian? Christopher... Patron saint of travellers?

She shows him a small pendant round her neck.

STELLA: My mother gave it to me.

CHRIS: It's just Chris.

Pause.

CHRIS: Do you believe in all that?

STELLA: What?

CHRIS: Religion?

STELLA: I guess you don't?

CHRIS: That's an understatement.

STELLA: Well for me, sometimes it helps. I means I don't feel so alone.

CHRIS: Alone?

STELLA: To feel like something's out there. Something's looking out for me.

CHRIS: All anyone needs is a reason, something that keeps you going, even the whole worlds against you.

STELLA: A reason?

He pulls a picture from his wallet and shows it to her.

CHRIS: There she is, that's her, that's my reason.

STELLA: She?

CHRIS: Lockheed Electra1935. She's what got me hooked.

STELLA: Is this your plane?

CHRIS: No, she's what inspired me. My dad took me to the Science Museum. I was ten years old. Knew from that day it was all I wanted, I wanted to fly, and nothing was going to stop me....It wasn't easy. Years of study, then a fluke, I got the scholarship it was the happiest day of my life.

Pause.

CHRIS: Are your parents artists?

STELLA: They were in finance. They wanted me to do a *proper* job but...

Pause

STELLA: I prepared a few questions?

CHRIS: For the portrait?

STELLA: For the portrait.

CHRIS: Shoot.

STELLA: What does it take? To fly one of those things?

CHRIS: Good reflexes. You've got to be ready for anything.

STELLA: Isn't it all autopilot?

CHRIS: Yes, mostly, but ...

STELLA: You don't like taking risks?

CHRIS: The passengers are in safe hands. It's still safer to fly half the way around the world than it is to take the car, bus, train, even crossing the road.

STELLA: Statistically?

CHRIS: Statistically, it's a fact.

STELLA: It's a big responsibility... when you're jet lagged?

CHRIS: You get used to it.

STELLA: Always up in the air.

CHRIS: There's always a flight plan.

Pause.

STELLA: Favourite destination?

CHRIS: I don't have one.

STELLA: Surely... You've travelled the world?

CHRIS: Its airports... You don't always have time to explore. Some pilots
            spend a lifetime in the same hotels / the same bars...

STELLA: You're not adventurous?

CHRIS: I am. I can be.

STELLA: To see so many cities, so many cultures, you're lucky.

CHRIS: Anyone can travel the world now.

STELLA: If they can afford it.

CHRIS: People are the same the world over. Doesn't matter where you're
            from, you still need, want, the same things.

STELLA: And what are they?

CHRIS: Food, security, a place to stay.

STELLA: What about family, community, love?

CHRIS: It's the same the world over.

STELLA: And you get to see it. It's a miracle, really.

CHRIS: It's a science, a relationship, between dynamic forces.

STELLA: Yes but it's / more than that.

CHRIS: Lift generated by forward motion through the air. Caused by the
            thrust of the engines. Drag produced by resistance to forward motion.

            He draws his hand rapidly back and forth through the air.

CHRIS: Try it. You can feel the resistance and the weight / of course...

STELLA: Caused by gravity dragging you down...

CHRIS: The force of the thrust must be greater than the drag.

STELLA: And the lift is greater than the weight.

CHRIS: You know all this?

STELLA: It's still a miracle.

            They make their hands into aeroplanes, and lift them upwards.

CHRIS: Just one element goes wrong,

STELLA: One imbalance.

CHRIS: And you fall back down to earth.

STELLA: The unthinkable?

CHRIS: Not with the controls at play.

STELLA: Without that relationship?

CHRIS: It's impossible.

Pause.

STELLA: What would you do if you couldn't fly?

CHRIS: Times up I'm afraid. I've got to get to my pre-flight.

STELLA: Oh course.

CHRIS: Can I drop you somewhere?

STELLA packs away her camera and notebook.

CHRIS: We can schedule another date?

STELLA: That would be great.

SCENE 3

(2010)

Outside the hotel.

HOPE is trying to find her way through the clouds.

CHRIS and STELLA are in another world.

HOPE: Excuse me. Excuse me. Sorry!

CHRIS: I don't stop.   STELLA: Gym, yoga, meditation.

HOPE: Could I just...? Jesus! No! Move.

CHRIS: No one's going to do it for you. STELLA: I like to treat myself.

HOPE: Just ... Get out of my way.

CHRIS: Who cares about the impact... STELLA: It worries me sometimes.

HOPE: Let go of me...

CHRIS: So what if the worlds going to end.

HOPE: No...   STELLA: No one knows what the future holds.

CHRIS: I'll be dead before it happens.

HOPE: I don't want to....

CHRIS: Just enjoy it while we can.   HOPE: Just leave me alone...

                                    STELLA: But sometimes I wonder...

HOPE: What are you doing...?

CHRIS: Settle down...? There was a girl once.

HOPE: What? ... No... Fuck off!

CHRIS: But that was... you know...

HOPE: Sorry...I've never done this before...

                                    STELLA: I know I shouldn't complain,

HOPE: You haven't got any spare change have you?

                                    STELLA: But you're never really satisfied
                                                til you've got it all.

HOPE: No... No! I said no...

                                    STELLA: Well I just... I'm not happy.

HOPE: Sorry, but... then I can get the bus?

CHRIS: My friend's a recluse. Says his got agoraphobia?

HOPE: I only need another 50p...?

CHRIS: He hasn't left the house in years.

                        HOPE: No I'm not. Just...

CHRIS: I mean what's that do to you?

                        STELLA: What is happiness really?

CHRIS: He says it's not a problem. You can get everything online.

                    HOPE: Get off me!

CHRIS: And I mean everything

                    CHRIS and STELLA melt into the cloud.

HOPE: Just a couple of quid so I can get something to eat?

                Please, anything, anything you can spare...

                    Pennies fall from above.

HOPE: Thanks... great... yeah...

                HOPE stoops to pick up the Pennies on the ground.

                    TOM enters from the shadows.

TOM: You ok love?

HOPE: I'm fine.

TOM: You don't look it.

HOPE: I'm bloody brilliant.

                    He tries to help her picking up the money.

TOM: You wanna smoke?

HOPE: No. Thanks. / I don't...

TOM: You look lost?

HOPE: I'm fine. / Really.

TOM: I could help. / If you wanted...?

HOPE: No. Thanks.

TOM: Come on love.

                    HOPE tries to get up.

                    TOM blocks her.

TOM: What else you gonna do?

HOPE: Get off me.

TOM: It'll be over soon.

HOPE: I'm not.

TOM: That's what they all say.

CHRIS enters in a hurry.

He trips on HOPE's bag and stumbles into her.

CHRIS: Oh. Sorry. Shit. Shit. Sorry... Here let me help.

CHRIS offers HOPE a lift up.

TOM skulks away into the shadows.

CHRIS: You OK?

HOPE: I'm fine.

CHRIS: Was he... bothering you?

HOPE: I can look after myself.

CHRIS: Of course.

HOPE: He's just a weirdo. The cities full of them.

CHRIS: Well... if you're...

HOPE: Thanks.

Pause.

CHRIS: You heading home? I could walk with you?

HOPE: Look I don't know what you think this is. / Or who you think I am but...

CHRIS: No. God no! I mean...

HOPE: I'm not like that. OK?

CHRIS: Of course, yes... well I'll...

Moment.

HOPE: You could walk me to my stop? I'm heading to central.

CHRIS: Plane cancelled?

HOPE: Something like that.

CHRIS: It's just a nightmare.

HOPE: I guess.

CHRIS: Did you manage to get a room?

HOPE: Won't be for long. Will it? It'll all blow over by the morning.

CHRIS: No one really knows. Where were you heading?

HOPE: Oh... um... the states.

CHRIS: Me to. Which part?

HOPE: San Francisco.

CHRIS: First time?

HOPE: Yes.

CHRIS: God its cold out here.

HOPE: Is it?

STELLA: You're shivering.

HOPE: I'm fine.

STELLA: How fars this bus stop?

HOPE: It's just down there. Past the M and S.

CHRIS: We best get going then,

HOPE: I'm fine. Really!

TOM steps out of the shadows.

TOM: She's not interested.

HOPE: I don't want you either!

TOM: They don't know what they want. Half the time.

HOPE: If you come near me.

She goes to swipe TOM.

TOM: I'd keep away from that one.

HOPE: Crazy bastard!

TOM: Too highly strung.

CHRIS: Come on, let's go.

TOM: She'll learn.

HOPE runs at him.

CHRIS pulls her back.

CHRIS: Don't give him what he wants.

TOM: She normally charges.

HOPE: I don't know who you think I am, but I genuinely feel sorry for her.

TOM: Enjoy your little game. But don't forget the rules.

HOPE: I can look after myself.

HOPE strikes TOM.

TOM falls to the ground.

HOPE pulls CHRIS away.

HOPE: Look I don't know what you think this is. Or what you think I am but I'm not interested.

TOM skulks into the shadows and watches her.

HOPE: The bus stop is a hundred yards that way, just opposite the coffee shop.

CHRIS: Let me buy you one.

HOPE: I don't need your charity.

CHRIS: I saw you.....

HOPE: So you just thought you'd what... Take advantage? Try your luck? I'm not like that! You're sick! After one thing. And when you don't get it...

CHRIS: It's fine. You obviously can look after yourself.

CHRIS walks away.

HOPE: I've been doing it all my life.

TOM creeps from the shadows

HOPE: Look. I'm sorry.... Please. Can you... I didn't mean it.

TOM drags her into the shadows.

Scene 4

November 1993

Hotel Room.

The radio is on.

STELLA is prepping her things to travel.

CHRIS enters from the en-suite.

He watches her for a while.

STELLA: I'm fine. It's Ok. Really

Pause

CHRIS: Just OK?

STELLA: Pass the camera.

He passes it over to her.

Moment.

STELLA: I can't stop thinking about that poor boy.

CHRIS: What?

STELLA: What they did to him.

CHRIS: Oh... Yes.

STELLA: It's so unreal

CHRIS: A nightmare.

STELLA: It's like some kind of twisted fairy story. How can kids do that to each other?

CHRIS: Children can be cruel.

STELLA: So violent. Hateful.

CHRIS: It's the world we live in.

STELLA: His poor / mother.

CHRIS: He's in peace now.

STELLA: But she isn't. What possessed them?

CHRIS: Best not think.

STELLA: How could they? How could anyone do that?

CHRIS: Things happen sometimes. Things we just can't explain.

STELLA: They're evil.

CHRIS: They're kids.

STELLA: What did we do to them, to make them behave like that? Must have
             been something?

CHRIS: It's not that simple.

STELLA: But you believe in a logical explanation for everything.

CHRIS: It was an accident. Things get out of control / and...

STELLA: Someone should have done something.

CHRIS: We all think we could, would, but in reality.

STELLA: Games, movies, videos, it's all so violent.

CHRIS: That's just an excuse.

STELLA: Who'd want to bring a child into a world like this?

CHRIS: Lots of people would. Lots of people do.

STELLA: Would you want to bring a child into the world to face the possibility
             of ... / of God knows what.

CHRIS;   It wouldn't happen.

STELLA: You don't know that.

CHRIS: I know it wouldn't.

STELLA: You can't tell for sure.

CHRIS: Well I don't need to think about it. Do I?

He tries to help her with the packing.

STELLA: I can do it.

CHRIS: Let me.

STELLA: I don't need your help.

CHRIS: What's wrong?

STELLA: I'm just tired.

CHRIS: Stop then. Stay another night.

STELLA: I can't.

CHRIS: I can pay.

STELLA: It's not about the money.

Pause.

He picks up her camera.

STELLA: You haven't got time.

CHRIS: Just a quick lesson.

STELLA: I've got to pack.

CHRIS: Come on.

STELLA: Wait 'til you're really inspired.

CHRIS: You inspire me.

He turns the lens on her.

STELLA: You know I don't like...

CHRIS: But. You. Interest me.

STELLA: You'll be late for your pre-flight.

CHRIS: Just one photo?

STELLA: OK.

CHRIS: OK. Ready, aim, shoot.

STELLA: Wait. You'll waste the film. Naturalistic or staged?

CHRIS: Natural, of course.

STELLA: Where do you want me?

CHRIS: Just sit on the edge.

STELLA: Here pass it to me.

CHRIS: No, I want to do it.

He squares up to take the photo.

STELLA: Shutter speeds... apertures...

CHRIS: Exposure is about those combinations in balance.

STELLA: The slower the shutter

CHRIS: The more light...for an image to be captured on the film it must be exposed to light. I've been taking notes.

He changes the settings on the camera and looks through the lens.

STELLA: Depth of field.

CHRIS: Just. Let. Me.

CHRIS moves her hair and tilts her head.

STELLA: You wanted me to be natural?

He runs off a few shots.

CHRIS: I want to see you as I see you.

STELLA: I've only got a few rolls left.

CHRIS: Well, we'll have to make it perfect then.

STELLA: Use the grid. Three squares up, three squares down.

CHRIS: Yes.

STELLA: Focus on one of the points. Where they intersect. Not too high or too low.

CHRIS: I know.

STELLA: Find the points were those lines meet. Where they connect. That's where the eye is naturally drawn.

He takes a few shots.

STELLA: I wasn't ready.

He takes some shots.

CHRIS: I want to remember you. Just as you are now.

STELLA: You're wasting it!

He takes one last shot.

CHRIS: Perfect.

She gets up and starts to finish her packing.

STELLA: I have to go.

CHRIS: Can I have the film?

STELLA: Why?

CHRIS: I want to get it developed.

STELLA: It's not finished.

CHRIS: I can take some more.

STELLA: We're leaving in ten minutes.

CHRIS: Next time?

STELLA: OK.

CHRIS: Take me to your dark room... I'm being serious. Teach me how to develop the negative into positive.

STELLA: It's not that simple.

CHRIS: I could be a photographer.

STELLA: It's not easy.

CHRIS: I wouldn't have to keep flying away.

STELLA: Nothing's going to pin you down. Just pick up a disposable at the airport.

CHRIS: A point and shot?

STELLA: You can take some shots, while you're in the air.

CHRIS: I might not be so inspired.

STELLA: How can you not be? The world's at your feet.

CHRIS: But your here right now.

Pause.

She goes back to her packing.

CHRIS goes to the en-suite.

Scene 5

2010

Hotel room.

CHRIS opens the door.

HOPE is standing there.

HOPE: Chris?

CHRIS: Yes.

Pause.

HOPE: Can I come in?

CHRIS: I think there's...

HOPE: Chris Vogel?

CHRIS: Yes.

HOPE: There's no mistake.

CHRIS: What do you want?

HOPE: I don't want to talk about it here. Can't I just?

CHRIS: I really don't think...

HOPE: Please?

CHRIS: I don't know...?

Pause.

HOPE: Your face.

CHRIS: What?

HOPE: Nothing.

                                    Pause.

CHRIS: You've got the wrong person.

HOPE: You're not very good at lying.

CHRIS: I know. That's why I don't lie.

HOPE: If you don't let me in now. I'll scream. I'll scream and when they come
             and find us. And they will. I'll tell them what you did to me.

CHRIS: I haven't done anything to you. / I'm not planning on doing anything
             to you as long as you leave now.

HOPE: You don't have to. Everyone will know you if you don't let me in.

             HOPE readies to scream and he pulls her into the room.

       She struggles with him and finally she stands close to the door he shuts it.

CHRIS: Happy now?

HOPE: Yes.

CHRIS: You going to tell me what's going on?

HOPE: No.

CHRIS: You should.

HOPE: Maybe.

CHRIS: I'm calling the police.

HOPE: Ok.

CHRIS: You want me to? Is that what you want me to do?

HOPE: Your choice.

CHRIS: Ok.

                    He goes to the hotel phone and starts to dial.

                           HOPE starts screaming.

                           He puts the phone down.

CHRIS: You said...?

HOPE:	I said it was your choice.
CHRIS:	What do you want?
HOPE:	I don't know.
CHRIS:	Do you want money?
HOPE:	No. Yes.
CHRIS:	Is that why your here? Is this what you want? What you want from me?
HOPE:	Maybe.
CHRIS:	Who really sent you here?
HOPE:	Tom.
CHRIS:	I don't know anyone called Tom.
HOPE:	You do.
CHRIS:	Maybe. It's a very common name.
HOPE:	Yes.
CHRIS:	So what does he want you to do?

Pause.

CHRIS:	He's paying you?

Pause.

CHRIS:	Why are you here?

Pause.

CHRIS:	Tell me.

HOPE passes out.

Scene 6

29th December 1993

Hotel room

CHRIS comes out of the en-suite.

He pours himself a drink from the mini bar.

There's a knock at the door.

CHRIS goes to the door, he looks through the keyhole.

He opens it. SIMON stands there.

Moment.

SIMON: You look like you've seen a ghost mate.

Pause

CHRIS: It's been a lifetime.

SIMON: Feels it.

CHRIS: Sorry. Come in.

SIMON enters.

CHRIS closes the door.

SIMON: Do you want a drink? I brought some stuff.

CHRIS: I can't. I'm flying tomorrow.

SIMON: Sorry, course.

CHRIS: So?

SIMON: Something soft?

CHRIS: I'm fine.

SIMON: Go on.

CHRIS: Maybe later.

SIMON: OK.

CHRIS: So what's the plan?

SIMON: I'm easy.

CHRIS: Central?

SIMON: We could just stay here?

CHRIS: What about that place, down Greek street?

SIMON: Is Stella coming?

CHRIS: What?

SIMON: I thought she might be out tonight?

CHRIS: She's busy.

SIMON: With the exhibition?

CHRIS: Something like that.

There's a knock at the door.

SIMON: Maybe her plans changed?

SIMON goes to the door.

There's the sound of a key in the lock.

The door opens and TOM stands there in full military gear.

Moment.

TOM: I hope you didn't start the party without me?

CHRIS: Jesus Tom, you nearly scarred the shit out of me!

SIMON: I thought you were...?

TOM: Change of plan.

CHRIS: But...

SIMON: How did you know..?

TOM: Tradition boys. I got the key from reception. Look at you. Come here.

He drags them into a bear hug.

CHRIS: I thought you were...?

TOM: They sent me back for Christmas. Guess there is a Santa after all.

SIMON: You could've called.

TOM: What are we drinking boys?

SIMON: Chris's is on the wagon again.

TOM: How many times do we do this?

CHRIS: I'm on standby.

TOM: How many times?

SIMON: A couple of drinks won't hurt.

CHRIS: Look if you guys want to have some fine that's fine with me, but...

TOM: Lightweight.

CHRIS: They messed up the rotas.

SIMON: We can still have a laugh.

TOM: Well if you don't wanna drink. There's always an alternative.

He pulls out a package from his coat.

SIMON: Where did you get it from?

CHRIS: What's wrong with you?

TOM: Come on.

CHRIS: I can't.

SIMON: I don't need this.

TOM: I didn't say you did. Chris?

CHRIS: I can't mate.

TOM: Come on. What you afraid of?

CHRIS: Nothing.

TOM: Then do yourself a favour.

SIMON: He doesn't want it.

TOM: Suit yourself. Excuse me.

TOM goes through to the en-suite.

CHRIS: What's he doing here? You said he was on tour?

SIMON: He was.

CHRIS: So you invited him?

SIMON: I didn't.

CHRIS: How the hell did he know we'd be here?

SIMON: Keep your voice down.

CHRIS cracks open a bottle of beer and necks it.

CHRIS: What's he doing in there?

SIMON: What do you think?

CHRIS: I can't believe this.

SIMON: I'm sorry.

CHRIS: You've got to get him out of here.

SIMON: How?

CHRIS: I don't know. He's your brother.

SIMON: This isn't my fault.

CHRIS: It will be if you don't fix it.

SIMON: Fine. Look we'll get him out. Tell him we've got plans in town.

CHRIS: Like that?

SIMON: What choice do we have?

CHRIS: Then what?

SIMON: He'll be off his face by the time we leave. We can lose him.

CHRIS: Why don't you just tell him to fuck off? Remember what happened last time.

TOM enters from the en-suite.

TOM: So lads, you ready for a night you'll never forget?

Scene 7

2010

Hotel room.

HOPE is lying on the bed.

CHRIS is looking at HOPE's camera.

HOPE wakes.

She watches him.

CHRIS: These are good... Some of them.

HOPE: You an expert?

CHRIS: I know my way around a camera.

HOPE: Who taught you?

CHRIS: I taught myself.

HOPE: That's what I've been doing. That's why I came to London.

CHRIS: You can take photos anywhere. Where are you from?

HOPE: Here, there, everywhere.

CHRIS: Right.

Pause

HOPE: What about you?

CHRIS: Ditto.

CHRIS: Are you going to tell me why you're here?

HOPE: Not yet.

CHRIS: Aren't you afraid. There's a killer on the loose. Haven't you heard the news?

HOPE: I try not to. There's no point in worrying about what's happening in the world unless you can do something about it.

CHRIS: Everyone's afraid of something.

HOPE: What are you afraid of?

CHRIS: I don't know. Having to run by someone else's schedule.

HOPE: Well no one likes that.

CHRIS: Lots of people live their lives by someone else's rules.

HOPE: You follow your own?

CHRIS: I try to. I like to keep my options open.

Pause.

HOPE: I'm not afraid of anything.

CHRIS: Without fear we'd do nothing, never succeed.

Pause.

CHRIS: Do you want a drink? You've been out for hours.

HOPE: Got any vodka?

CHRIS: I meant water.

HOPE: Ok. Cheap date.

CHRIS gets some water from the minibar.

CHRIS: I wasn't expecting guests.

HOPE drinks slowly.

HOPE: You not joining me... With the drink?

CHRIS holds up a plastic bottle.

CHRIS: Cheers.

HOPE: How do you know so much about cameras?

CHRIS: I know this little number would set you back a few grand.

HOPE: So?

CHRIS: So where did you get it?

HOPE: Who are you?

CHRIS: Who are you?

HOPE: Who do you want me to be*? Pause.* Look I got it fair and square. It's mine ok. I earnt it.

CHRIS: It took me years to save for one of those.

HOPE: So you are a photographer?

CHRIS: You've got some nice shots there.

HOPE: But?

CHRIS: A good eye / but something's missing.

HOPE:　　　Thanks. I think.

CHRIS:　　　You need to try something new, something different. But first you need to tell me why your here.

<u>Scene 8</u>

30th December 1993.

The morning after the night before.

Hotel room

SIMON and CHRIS enter the hotel room.

They look like they've been to hell and back.

SIMON:　　　You ok?

CHRIS:　　　Yes.

SIMON:　　　Sure?

CHRIS:　　　Course.

SIMON:　　　It's going to be ok.

CHRIS:　　　Perfect.

SIMON:　　　No one needs to...

CHRIS:　　　I know.

Pause.

SIMON:　　　Why did he have to do it?

CHRIS:　　　God knows.

SIMON:　　　Stupid. Selfish. Bastard.

CHRIS:　　　It was an accident.

SIMON:　　　Was it?

CHRIS:　　　He didn't mean to.

SIMON:　　　You don't know that.

CHRIS:　　　It happens. Stuff happens and / you just have to deal with it.

SIMON: We can't tell anyone.

CHRIS: We have to.

SIMON: No. Why?

CHRIS: We can't just..?

SIMON: Can't we. Have a drink.

CHRIS: I'm fine.

SIMON: You need one.

CHRIS: They'll find him.

SIMON: Eventually.

CHRIS: Then they'll want to know. They'll have to know everything.

SIMON: They won't.

CHRIS: But we were there.

SIMON: There was nothing we could have done.

CHRIS: We should have stopped him.

SIMON opens a can of larger and almost downs it.

CHRIS: We'll tell them it was a mistake. We'll tell them that there was nothing
            we could do to stop... There was nothing we could do was there
            Simon, was there?

SIMON: You need some rest.

CHRIS: I need to talk to someone.

SIMON: You're talking to me.

CHRIS: We need to get him help.

SIMON: No one can help him now.

CHRIS: But his body... His...?

SIMON starts on a second can of larger.

SIMON: He's dead Chris. There's nothing I can do. There's nothing anyone
            can do.

CHRIS: Did you plan this? Jesus you planned for this to happen.

SIMON: What are you talking about?

CHRIS: You said we should lose him. You said we should take him there and lose him?

SIMON: I said lose him not help him off the fucking bridge!

CHRIS: I saw his face. When he fell I could see it looking up at me. What if he's still alive? What is he's somewhere down there bleeding to death?

SIMON: No one could have survived that.

CHRIS: He's your brother?

SIMON: We can't talk about this to anyone. Do you understand Chris? If you tell anyone we'll lose everything. Your licence, I only just got my contract at the practice. It's not going to make a difference. It won't change anything.

CHRIS: I won't. He was always crazy. / Always...

SIMON: Exactly. Trust me. There was nothing either of us could do. He thought he could fly. Nothing was going to stop him. You have to promise me you won't say a word.

CHRIS: I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

CHRIS heads into the en-suite.

He starts retching.

SIMON sits down on the edge of his bed.

SIMON: Stupid selfish bastard.

CHRIS comes out of the en-suite and picks up the phone.

SIMON: Who are you calling?

CHRIS: I have to.

SIMON tries to wrestles the phone from him.

CHRIS: I need to call Stella.

SIMON: You don't need to call anyone.

CHRIS: We broke it off. Today, yesterday, before you came. We broke it off.

SIMON: Sorry to hear that, but I don't think three o'clock in the morning is a good time.

CHRIS: You don't understand. She told me. She told me this was going to happen.

SIMON: What are you talking about?

CHRIS: She warned me and I didn't listen.

SIMON: You're not making sense.

CHRIS: I have to speak to her.

SIMON: You're tired. Call her in the morning.

CHRIS: It'll be too late.

CHRIS and SIMON wrestle for the phone and CHRIS falls to the floor.

CHRIS: It was you. Wasn't it? You pushed him.

Scene 9

2010

Hotel room.

CHRIS is sitting on a chair watching TV.

TV: The clouds drift by above us, as night draws in, and reveals the stars that have guided man for centuries. Travellers and mystics followed them, lovers wished upon them, and the lucky continue to count on them, in this millennium as they did in those past.

But behind their beauty lies a fierce science of chemical reactions. A nuclear fusion of hydrogen and helium reacting at their core brings stars bursting into life to shine steadily most of their lives... When they use up their fuel, they begin to die, passing through a phase where they brighten and swell becoming red giants. Finally dying in spectacular explosions called super novas. So much energy is released that the star blasts across the entire galaxy, providing material for new generations of stars and planets. Like a Phoenix rising from the flames, a new star is created.

CHRIS switches off the TV.

CHRIS: I hate that stuff

HOPE enters.

She's wearing a dressing gown, camera round her neck.

HOPE: What stuff?

CHRIS: All this poetic licence. Wrap up the world for the new age generation. It's dumbing down. It's not a miracle or even magic. It's science and cold hard fact.

HOPE: What are you talking about?

CHRIS: Oh just something on the TV.

Pause.

CHRIS: Do you never take that thing off? I hope you haven't got it wet.

HOPE: It's ok.

CHRIS: You slept like a baby. Out like a light before I crashed.

HOPE: I was tired.

CHRIS: You can't live like this.

HOPE: Some people don't have a choice.

CHRIS: Perhaps you do, now...

HOPE: It's not forever.

Pause.

HOPE: What?

CHRIS: You scrub up well.

HOPE: I try. Are we going to get something to eat?

CHRIS: Maybe, maybe I can take a photo first?

HOPE: OK.

She turns back into the bathroom.

CHRIS: Hang on.

HOPE turns.

CHRIS: I want to take a photo of you.

HOPE: I don't... You promised.

CHRIS: Not like that.

HOPE: I don't like having my photo taken.

CHRIS: I just want to try something.

HOPE: Please.

CHRIS: Trust me?

HOPE: You said you wouldn't.

CHRIS: And I didn't... The lights perfect.

CHRIS guides her to the edge of the bed.

He rearranges HOPE's dressing gown, she goes to stop him, then lets him.

He goes to take her camera.

She stops him.

She looks at him and then hands it to him.

He runs off a few shoots.

She lets him.

She pulls the camera away.

HOPE: Now can we get something to eat?

CHRIS: I think you should get dressed first.

HOPE takes her clothes from the bed and goes back into the bathroom.

Scene 10

2010

The hotel room.

HOPE comes out of the en-suite, her hair is wrapped in a towel.

CHRIS is eating a room service meal.

HOPE: Christian?

CHRIS: No.

HOPE: Christopher then?

CHRIS: Wrong again.

HOPE: Then...

CHRIS: It's not, it's not short for anything. Just Chris.

HOPE: I think it suits you.

She shows him a pendant of St Christopher around her neck.

HOPE sits down to eat meal.

CHRIS: Do you believe in all that?

HOPE: Yes, maybe, you've got to believe in something.

CHRIS: Have you?

HOPE: Let's just say I'm open to the possibility.

CHRIS: It's just superstition.

HOPE: It's more than that.

CHRIS: So you're religious.

HOPE: No, I just believe there's something more, than all this.

CHRIS: Religious wars, blood shed, organised religion has a lot to answer for.

HOPE: That's people, not belief.

CHRIS: There's a difference?

HOPE: I like to think so.

CHRIS: How many sugars are you going to put in that coffee?

HOPE: Are you gonna use yours?

CHRIS passes them to HOPE.

CHRIS: It's just illogical. One God who decides how we should live our lives, then makes all the excuses so we don't have to take any responsibility, when we get it wrong.

HOPE: That's your interpretation.

CHRIS: I just don't need anyone to tell me how to live. The laws of science and physics are all I need.

HOPE: Sometimes it helps, believing there's something more, something bigger than this.

CHRIS: It's a myth, a metaphor.

HOPE: That's what you believe.

CHRIS: It's what I know.

HOPE: Some people need something to believe in.

CHRIS: There's nothing wrong with stories and metaphors. The problem comes when people believe they're real.

HOPE: You gonna eat that toast?

CHRIS passes it to her.

HOPE: Just sometimes, it's nice to feel, I'm not completely alone.

CHRIS: You're not. You're never alone. There are billions of people in the world. Thousands of CCTV screens monitoring your every move.

HOPE: That's different.

CHRIS: Is it?

HOPE: You can't trust people.

CHRIS: You trust me.

HOPE: That's different.

HOPE walks over to the window and stares at the sky.

HOPE: Do you think it will last much longer?

CHRIS: It should clear soon.

HOPE: It's been days.

CHRIS: It's not been that long.

HOPE: The cities been stuck in the cloud for a lifetime. It's just so quiet.

HOPE takes her camera from CHRIS and starts to photograph the sky and then turns it on CHRIS.

CHRIS: Why? Why do you trust me Hope?

HOPE: Because I do. Is there any reason I shouldn't?

HOPE takes some photos of him.

HOPE: That girl's still in a comma. They recon she might never come out.
            Might be lost in a dream forever.

CHRIS: I don't understand how anyone could do it.

HOPE: Maybe they didn't believe she mattered. Didn't believe anyone would
            miss her if she fell off the edge of the earth.

CHRIS: I believe everyone's here for a reason.

HOPE: Don't ever wonder what's out there?

CHRIS: Clouds, atmosphere, space and all its wonders?

HOPE: You don't know that for sure.

CHRIS: If there was anything else up there I'd known by now.

HOPE: So if you can't prove it, it doesn't exist?

CHRIS: It's the biggest myth of the world.

Pause.

HOPE: I'd love to fly somewhere. Just to be somewhere else. Somewhere
            different. Somewhere you don't fit in.

CHRIS: I've never fitted in anywhere. I make a point of it.

HOPE: I wish I could do it. Just fly away and leave all of this behind.

CHRIS: What's stopping you?

HOPE: Nothing. Everything. I don't know.

CHRIS: An artist should travel.

HOPE: That's why I'm here. Why I came to London.

CHRIS: Is sleeping on the streets going to teach you how to be an artist?

HOPE: I don't. I'm not. I just had problems with accommodation. The ash
            cloud. Everywhere else is booked out.

CHRIS: You haven't slept in days.

HOPE: I do. Sometimes.

<u>Scene 11</u>

December 1993

Stella is working on a laptop.

STELLA: That twists in your stomach, the pleasure of take-off and then soaring somehow above everything, away from the world.

CHRIS returns with a wash bag.

CHRIS: Best feeling in the world.

STELLA: It's only when things start to go wrong, you get that falling feeling. Why do they call it falling in love?

He looks at the screen.

CHRIS: The Eros?

STELLA: Yes.

CHRIS: Son of Aphrodite. I love that painting.

STELLA: He's a symbol.

CHRIS: Of what...?

STELLA: I thought I knew.

CHRIS: Something about love.

STELLA: The ancient Greeks believed he helped to unite people. Helped them show their true feelings.

Pause.

STELLA: Joining hearts and minds and then... It's just a story though, isn't it?

CHRIS: It's romantic.

STELLA: It's not an arrow but a harpoon to bring them down.

CHRIS: He has wings to fly. Maybe you're right. Love is like flight.

STELLA: It's meaningless.

CHRIS: Love?

STELLA: It's just a fairy tale we tell ourselves so we can sleep at night.

CHRIS: So you don't believe in love?

STELLA: I didn't say that. It's just the exhibition. All of this. It's meaningless.

CHRIS: It's not. It means something to you. It means something to me.

STELLA: None of its right. The photos, the ...everything is wrong.

CHRIS: If you really don't like them, you can go back, take the shots again.

STELLA: You can't go back. Things change... light, people.

CHRIS: Then stop worrying about something you can do nothing about.

STELLA: There are children fighting men's wars, dying in men's wars and I'm writing about love.

CHRIS: Don't say it then. Let the pictures speak for themselves.

STELLA: They wanted a commentary.

CHRIS: Let them make up their own minds.

STELLA: I should be doing something.

Pause.

STELLA: I had that dream again. Last night.

CHRIS: You're just nervous about the exhibition

STELLA: It's not that.

CHRIS: I couldn't do what you do.

STELLA: This feeling.

CHRIS: You'll be amazing.

STELLA: I don't want you to go.

CHRIS: I don't like leaving you either.

STELLA: It's not...

CHRIS: I'll see you in a couple of weeks.

STELLA: Will I?

CHRIS: I don't...?

STELLA: It's stupid...

CHRIS: What?

STELLA: Crazy.

CHRIS: Just tell me.

STELLA: I can't. You haven't got time.

CHRIS: Trust me?

Pause.

STELLA: The dreams different. I'm not the one who's falling.

CHRIS: It's just a dream.

STELLA: I look down and there you are, your face looking back at me, falling uncontrollably.

CHRIS: I haven't got time for this.

STELLA: But it's not just your face, it's Simon's. Falling from the sky. A pinioned bird, lame but still struggling, struggling against the force of gravity. It's always your face. When he falls it's your face I see.

CHRIS: It means nothing.

STELLA: Everything happens for a reason.

CHRIS: You're tired.

STELLA: What if it's a sign?

CHRIS: Of what? That you've drunk too much coffee? That you're over worked?

STELLA: I shouldn't have / said...

She returns to the laptop.

Chris picks up his bag.

CHRIS: I've got to go.

STELLA: I'm sorry.

CHRIS: What for.

CHRIS exits.

Scene 12

Spring 2010

Hotel room.

Red gold light form the sunset begins to spill through and intensify throughout the following until the stage is bathed in firelight.

HOPE: What do you want from me?

CHRIS: Nothing.

HOPE: Why have you let me stay?

CHRIS: Why does anyone do anything these days?

HOPE: Because they want something.

CHRIS: What if they want to help?

HOPE: It's still selfish. Making them look, feel good. Just an ego trip.

Pause.

CHRIS: You remind me of someone.

Pause.

HOPE: Don't think I'm here to re-live some fantasy.

CHRIS: I wouldn't / dream of it.

HOPE: I don't like playing games.

CHRIS: Why are you still here?

HOPE: Because.

CHRIS: Because?

HOPE: You know why?

CHRIS: You can leave anytime you want.

HOPE: Can I?

CHRIS: No one's stopping you. You'll have to as soon as all of this has blown over. I'm on standby for the minute it clears.

Pause.

CHRIS: I think / I'm falling...

HOPE: I can't be that for you.

Pause.

HOPE: Why do you do it?

CHRIS: What?

HOPE: Why do you fly?

CHRIS: It's my job.

HOPE: It's more than that though, isn't it? You don't just walk into job
            seekers one morning and fly out with a pilot's licence.

CHRIS: I like planes. I like flying. I like to travel.

HOPE: You don't like being tied down?

CHRIS: I didn't.../

HOPE: Don't want to settle, for anything? For / anywhere?

CHRIS: No / I...

HOPE: For anyone?

CHRIS: I've wanted to be a pilot since I was ten.

HOPE: Have you?

CHRIS: I saw a plane at the Science Museum and from that day it was all I
            wanted.

HOPE: Is that what you tell yourself?

CHRIS: It's the truth.

HOPE: Wasn't it to do with your mother?

CHRIS: I don't know what you are talking about.

HOPE: You were there when she fell from the cliffs. You couldn't do
            anything. There was nothing that could stop her fall. You were only a
            kid. You shouldn't have blamed yourself... but ...

Moment.

CHRIS replays the moment in his mind.

HOPE: It must have been terrifying. Did you hear her screaming?

CHRIS: Who told you? How did you find out about...?

HOPE: I know everything about you.

CHRIS: How can you?

HOPE: Every memory, every moment, every second of your existence is up here, and here.

CHRIS: Is this, are you... I mean blackmail?

HOPE: I don't want your money.

CHRIS: Because if you'd needed something I would have given it to you. I would have helped you freely.

HOPE: That's what you like to tell yourself. You like to tell yourself you're a good person. Most people do. It's easier that way.

CHRIS: Think it's time for you to leave.

HOPE: Don't you want to know how I know everything. Don't you want to know who told me?

CHRIS: How much money do you need?

HOPE: This isn't like that.

CHRIS: Isn't it. We can go to the cash point.

CHRIS goes to his bag and starts searching through it.

HOPE: What's it like being on the ground? Finally coming back down after all these years?

CHRIS: I don't understand.

HOPE: She waited for you Chris. But you never came. In the end she gave up. I knew there'd come a time when you'd fall. I knew I had to wait, just wait for that moment.

Pause.

He sits down on the edge of the bed.

HOPE: The sun's setting.

CHRIS: The skies on fire.

HOPE: You want to go back. Fly away. Like you always do.

CHRIS: Who told you? Who told you those things? Told you to come here,
            last night?

She kisses him on the forehead.

Pause.

HOPE: What if I'm the dream?

CHRIS: I don't...

HOPE: What if this is all just a story?

CHRIS: I don't think.../ I think...

HOPE: Where did you first see me Chris?

CHRIS: I don't... Here, last night.

HOPE: When was the first time you saw me. Before that?

CHRIS: I've never seen you in my life til now.

HOPE: Are you sure? London's a big city. It's easy to forget / names, faces...

CHRIS: I would have remembered.

HOPE: That's what they all think. But they're wrong.

CHRIS: I don't forget things. I have an almost photographic memory.

HOPE: Why didn't you remember what happened to Tom, to Stella, to
            Simon?

CHRIS: I don't know who's set you up to do this but... You don't know what
            you're saying. You need to leave now.

HOPE: What happened that night and what happened afterwards?

CHRIS: I want you to leave.

Pause.

HOPE gets her coat on. Goes to the door and then stops.

HOPE: Are you sure you don't remember, or have you just decided to forget.

CHRIS: I have never seen you in my life.

HOPE: Outside the hotel. You were so charming. Charging in, the good
               samaritan, come to save the girl in need.

CHRIS: That was you? You followed me? Is that what this is? You followed
               me to... for what?

HOPE: And before then?

CHRIS: I don't...?

HOPE: At the airport?

CHRIS: I see thousands of people every day.

HOPE: You really don't know who I am?

CHRIS: Tell me then?

HOPE: What happened to Stella? *Pause.* That night after you left?

CHRIS: I don't know. When I came back she'd disappeared. Did she send you?

HOPE: She was frightened? She tried to warn you.

CHRIS: I haven't got time for this.

HOPE: You have all the time in the world. You made sure of that. No ties.
               No connections, no one waiting for you. But there was someone
               Chris. There was always someone.

CHRIS: This is clever. Really clever.

HOPE: I thought you liked me Chris. I thought you wanted me to stay? You
               tried to pick me up that night do you remember? Do you remember
               who I reminded you of?

CHRIS: Here...

                    CHRIS pulls some notes out of a wallet.

CHRIS: That's all I've got.

HOPE: Why did you leave her?

CHRIS: I didn't leave her. She left me.

HOPE: Really?

CHRIS: It happened years ago.

HOPE: Seventeen years ago?

CHRIS: Yes.

HOPE: When you pick up girls, do you / ask them how old they are?

CHRIS: I don't pick up girls.

HOPE: You tried to pick me up.

CHRIS: I tried to help you.

HOPE: So you see a girl and you think. She looks like she needs help?

CHRIS: I have never. You're the only one.

HOPE: That's not what he told me. He told me you're quite the regular.

CHRIS: I don't know who you're talking about.

HOPE: I know you do.

CHRIS: Are you working for the police... some kind of undercover...?

HOPE: Are you going to ask me? Are you going to ask me how old I am?

CHRIS: You came to me. I didn't bring you here. You came to my hotel. You asked to be let in.

HOPE: But on the street... you would have... If I'd come with you.

CHRIS: No.

HOPE: No? But you have. You would have if he hadn't come along.

CHRIS: I was going to take you for a coffee. You told me that you were stranded. Grounded like the rest of us. Waiting for a plane that wasn't going to come til this thing passed.

HOPE: But you didn't believe me? You didn't believe the story. Did you?

CHRIS: It didn't matter. I was trying to help.

HOPE: You knew I was vulnerable. You knew what he was going to do. You'd seen it before.

CHRIS: You said you didn't need help.

Pause.

CHRIS takes some drinks out of the mini bar and drinks in succession throughout.

HOPE: You still haven't asked me.

CHRIS: What?

HOPE: How old I am.

CHRIS: Does it matter?

HOPE: You know the killer.

CHRIS: I can't do this.

HOPE: You have to.

CHRIS: I've been away. For a long, long time. I don't know. I don't know anything anymore.

HOPE: Where is Simon?

CHRIS: He's at home.

HOPE: Why isn't he picking up the phone?

CHRIS: Perhaps he's out.

HOPE: He never leaves the house.

CHRIS: How old are you?

HOPE: What did Simon do all those years ago? What did you see him do?

CHRIS: I can't remember.

HOPE: But you did. A few weeks ago you remembered and you should have done something, but you didn't.

CHRIS: I didn't remember. It was a dream, a nightmare.

HOPE: You remembered everything but you did nothing.

CHRIS: How do you know?

HOPE: You spoke to Simon. You told him what you'd seen.

Pause.

HOPE: Ask me again.

CHRIS: How old are you?

HOPE: I was seventeen.

CHRIS: Was?

Pause.

HOPE: I think it's time for me to go.

CHRIS: I need you to tell me. / Tell me how you..?

HOPE: You didn't tell anyone what happened that night. When Simon killed Tom?

CHRIS: It was an accident.

HOPE: You know it wasn't.

CHRIS: He fell from the bridge. Simon couldn't do anything.

HOPE: Simon pushed him. He pushed him because Tom knew the truth. Because Tom knew what he was capable of.

CHRIS: I don't, didn't remember.

HOPE: But you did.

CHRIS: We made a promise not to tell anyone.

HOPE: What happened to Stella?

CHRIS: I don't know. It was years ago.

HOPE: Didn't Simon tell you? She went to him for help for advice.

CHRIS: She could have talked to me.

HOPE: She didn't want to have the baby. But he said / he'd help, said he'd be there for her.

CHRIS: What baby? You expect me to believe any of this?

HOPE: Stella didn't make it, but the baby did.

CHRIS: Simon would have told me.

HOPE: Would he. You always flew away when people needed you most. She warned you that day. She warned you about Tom and Simon. / She warned you what would happen that night.

CHRIS: What happened to her?

HOPE: What happened to the girl in a comma?

CHRIS: Stella wasn't well. She told me herself. She was seeing Simon because
of...

HOPE: Because?

CHRIS: She wanted to fly.

HOPE: You helped, for a while, but then... Do you want to know what Simon
             did to her? What Simon did to all those women he tried to help. What
             he did to that girl in a coma? He offered them hope. Do you know
             what hope does to you? What it did to Stella? Hope lifts you up and
             then drops you down. It gets you so high that you can't see anything,
             it all disappears and then... It's the fall that kills you. Such a
             wonderful feeling flying.

HOPE takes the Memory card out of her camera and gives it to CHRIS.

HOPE presses it into his hand.

She embraces him.

He pulls away.

CHRIS: You're seventeen?

HOPE: It was your turn to fall Chris.

HOPE stands close to the window.

CHRIS: You were seventeen?

The glass melts and HOPE falls through the window as though she was never there.

SCENE 13

Jan 1993

STELLA and SIMON are sitting in a room.

SIMON: You're having the dreams again?

STELLA: Every night.

SIMON: Tell me about them?

STELLA: It's stupid.

SIMON: Take some deep breaths.

Pause

STELLA: To begin with it feels like I miss step. I stumble. Lose my footing and then I'm falling out into infinity. I scream and nothing comes out. I feel as if I'm falling forever, and then I'm on solid ground, looking down and at first I think it's me. That's me, I'm watching myself fall and then I see the face and it's not my face. It's a man's and he's falling, falling forever and I can't stop him...

Moment.

STELLA: My mum told me if you wake up someone when there dreaming, they'd die.

SIMON: Did you believe her?

STELLA: It's an old wives tale I guess.

SIMON: What happens in your dreams?

STELLA: Do you think that dreams come true. I mean, I guess... that people can have premonitions?

SIMON: It can feel that way.

STELLA: De ja vu, but not de ja vu, almost as if you're seeing it happen, like a movie trailer.

SIMON: Dreams offer us a chance to play out possible scenarios.

STELLA: I was meant to fly out to the states. It's my father, he's sick. It's terminal.

SIMON: I'm sorry.

STELLA: Don't be.

Pause.

STELLA: He wasn't really part of my life. Occasional card, a gift when he remembered, odd phone call. I want to go so I can tell him. I can tell him to his face that I'm ok. I turned out ok, despite, in spite of him.

SIMON: You could call?

STELLA: It's not the same.

SIMON: Yes.

STELLA: If I could just get over this stupid fear.

SIMON: It's not stupid. It's rational. Humans weren't built to fly.

STELLA: But we do?

SIMON: Yes.

STELLA: So...?

SIMON: It's primal. You're instinct says stay on the ground.

STELLA: But... How do I get past that?

SIMON: How do you get past anything you don't want to do?

STELLA: Avoid it... I don't...?

SIMON: Sometimes you smile when you feel desperately unhappy. You go to work when you want to stay in bed. Doubtless you got up this morning and thought I would rather walk through hot coals than see my counsellor. But you're here. How did you do that? How do any of us cope?

STELLA: Because we have to.

SIMON: Because we learn how to. I have a friend. I think you should meet him.

STELLA: Ok?

SIMON: He's a pilot.

STELLA: I told you I can't.

SIMON: It might help. Talk to him. You could use him as research.

STELLA: For the exhibition?

SIMON: Why not?

Pause.

STELLA: If it doesn't work. The other option? Is it still possible?

SIMON: Well it's in its early stages.

STELLA: But if it works?

SIMON: Of course. But let's try this first.

STELLA: Ok. If you're sure. Thank you Simon. You really are a life saver.

SIMON: I'll talk to my friend. I should have something arranged by next week.

Scene 14

2010.

Hotel Room.

An alarm goes off and the radio comes on.

RADIO (V/O): We're waking up this morning to the news that the ash cloud is clearing and British aerospace is ready to take off. Here's another hot track from the 90s.

'Aeroplane' by the Red Hot Chilli Peppers fills the space.

CHRIS wakes from sleeping on the coach.

He opens his hand and discovers a memory card.

He looks over at the time then places a memory card in his laptop.

He clicks through the images.

As he looks pictures of stars and nebulas begin to fill the hotel room.

The room is gradually fills with light until it explodes into darkness.

END OF PLAY

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION

The plays presented in chapter 3 hold little direct resemblance to the myths that inspired them. So how did the myth of Icarus and Daedalus inspire *Silver*, a play about a pilot whose past comes back to haunt him when he tries to get high to avoid being grounded? Why did Theseus and the Minotaur inspire *Sodium*, the tale of a serial killer who destroys the one woman he's ever loved? And what was it about the myth of Ariadne at Naxos that inspired *Sulphur*, a darkly subverted fantasy in which a woman comes to terms with real life trauma in a virtual world? In this chapter I reflectively seek to explore some of my creative choices in relation to the plays' development, and thereby illustrate the possibilities of a contemporary creative engagement with classical myth.

Though the playwright might draw upon contemporary dramaturgical models, there is no one singular methodological approach to mythic engagement. Yet even the development of a new work, not directly inspired by other sources is a constant learning curve as each play is different to the next; 'You only learn to write the play you're writing at the moment. With each new play you start the process again' (Spencer 2002, p.71).Therefore the development of the plays presented in Chapter Three was dynamic based on trial and error, spontaneity and serendipity, whilst equally being underpinned by the historic antecedents of drama's relationship with classical mythology.

Each play was developed in a different approach to the mythic source of inspiration. *Silver* was initially an experiment to explore the ways in which the

Hero's Journey Structure could inspire the development of a contemporary response to classic mythology. *Sodium* was a postmodern response to tragedy inspired by classical tragedy and aspects of the Hero's Journey. *Sulphur* was a response to the Jungian archetypes presented in the hero's journey. I do not present them in any way as a paradigm for the practice.

Through their flaws and imperfections they illustrate my experimentations and offer the practitioner signposts along a creative path of engagement with the classics through distilled accounts of their development. I hereby proffer the insights I gained and some of the approaches I discovered which might in turn aid the development of contemporary dramatic responses to classical mythology. In so doing I observe how my experiments might inform and inspire other practitioner's creative engagements, offering approaches they can use to generate their own mythic responses. I do not seek, however, to provide a mythic method, and instead offer insights into their development and tools that other practitioners seeking to respond to classical myths might draw upon.

In *Part One bridging the classical and contemporary* I relate the intentions and impact of a contemporary engagement with classical mythology in the creation of the three plays. *Part Two: the spark, the source and the self,* explores the relationship between the mythic source, the sparks of initial inspiration and the way in which the source is filtered through the playwright's self, via artistic and contextual intentions. I offer signposts for the practitioner to apply to their own creative engagement and illustrate how the creative synergy between the source, the spark and the self, inspired my own creative responses, including the choice of mythic subjects, ways in which they can be interpreted and how mythic resonance can be exploited. In *Part Three: The spark and spontaneity* I will briefly reflect upon the tools by which a

practitioner can keep the initial sparks of mythic inspiration alive and refreshed

throughout the development of their dramatic responses, reflecting upon the impact

and influence of stream of consciousness written responses to mythic material, prior

non-dramatic responses to the source myths and the benefits of work shopping and

embodying the myths during the creative engagement. In *Part Four: The dramatic*

materials of myth, I illustrate the ways in which a playwright can exploit the

dramatic transposable elements of a mythic discourse; the themes, structure,

characters, conflict, setting and metaphors. Reflection and analysis on *Sodium,*

Sulphur and Silver will illustrate the ways in which these aspects can be transposed

and subverted in dramatic responses to mythology.

Part One: Bridging the classical and contemporary

I sought to examine the ways in which myths can offer correlations and

connections to the contemporary world and in turn the audience. However not all

playwrights who engage with classical myths do so to contemporise the narrative. As

illustrated in Chapter 2, all are equally valid artistic responses to mythic material. In

my own engagements I investigated the possibilities of myth to inspire dramatic

responses that directly responded to key aspects of contemporary experiences. My

intention to transpose the myths into contemporary settings, using them to respond to

contemporary concerns, was inspired by rapid developments in technology over the

past twenty years and the impact it might have upon society. How could a classical

myth be transposed to a technological environment? After all, 'Levi-Strauss has

always insisted that a myth can be translated only by another myth, never by a

scientific formula' (Doniger in Levi-Strauss 1995 p.x). Could a contemporary *myth*

offer the key to *translate a* classical one? The world of technology offers a fair share

of urban myths, mythical on-line predators, inspired by real ones, first lives absorbed

into second life experience, the digital image that once shared can never be taken

back. The desire to respond to specific aspects of contemporary experience can

influence the myths that practitioners select to respond to. The myths of Daedalus

offer clear contemporary corollaries, the scientist, architect and inventor whose

craftsmanship had been the cause of many mythic adventures, pre-figured

contemporary scientific developments including flight and IVF, though of course

metaphorically.

Whilst developing the final play I discovered a dramatic president for using

the myths as a source for tragedy, Sophocles, Aristophanes and Euripides, had all

written plays that responded to the character of Daedalus and his adventures, all lost

in antiquity as Pierre Brunel reveals:

> Sophocles and Aristophanes do appear to have had an interest in Daedalus. It
> seems Sophocles wrote two tragedies based on the Sicilian episode, but only
> the titles Daedalus and Camicus, and a few fragments remain; while the same
> is true of the comedies Daedalus and Cocalus, by Aristophanes. In addition it
> is also possible that Daedalus appears in *Theseus*, part of a lost trilogy by
> Euripides. Apart from this though, he does not feature in Greek literature.
> (1995 p.267)

Daedalus fascinated me and seemed to provide a direct connection between

the classical mythology and my contemporary context, between the ancient world

and our technologically saturated one. The connection between his inventions and

contemporary developments offered an opportunity to explore them through a

mythic filter. It is significant to note that I had already been exploring the themes of

technological advance and its impact upon contemporary society before I

commenced this creative engagement with myths. I sought within the myths the possibility not only to re-vision, but to reflect the ways in which contemporary society was changing in response to technological advancements. The image of flight in Icarus and Daedalus inspired reflections on the impact of globalisation, but also wider impact of transience and impermanence in a digital age.

The technological focus of *Silver* came to be digital memory, and the ways we seek to record, capture and contain our very existence on a daily basis. *Sodium's* re-vision of the vast Cretan labyrinth became a metaphor for the internet which held the isolated and marginalised character of the Minotaur / Simon, in a direct transposition labyrinth of stone to a virtual one. The image of a double existence symbolised by Ariadne at Naxos and the dysphoria it prompted, as she was caught between two ways of being and two lovers found a contemporary emanation in the virtual worlds of second life, video games and the adaptive possibilities of websites such as Facebook. With these in mind I reflected figuratively on the impact they might have, in the surreal liminal space where I trapped Ariadne. Illustrating the a simplistic way in which mythic metaphors or resonances applied to contemporary experience can be used as starting point for creative enquiry. And can be explored and interpreted in ways which inspire a playwright's creative engagement with a contemporary theme or topic to which they seek to dramatically respond.

My selection of source myths was equally driven by the desire to develop a triptych or trilogy of interconnecting plays to explore the way in which the Greek tragedians had responded to mythic material. As I searched for these connections I soon discovered that classical mythologies interconnecting discourses offer ample possibilities for the playwright who strives to develop a series of interconnecting

plays, or embed references to other mythic stories within their revision. A key source

for those seeking these connections is Ovid's Metamorphosis which contains *books*

of interconnected myths. I belatedly discovered after developing my plays in

response to the selected myths that the three myths I selected are all retold in book

eight of the Metamorphosis.

A mythic narrative is distinct for not only what it offers to the dramatists but also

for what it does not. A non-dramatically extant myth offers at most the narrative

nexus of a short story. Of course if a practitioner were to select a myth from the epics

of Homer or Virgil they would be met with a rich supply of narrative material. A

classical myth which has not been fixed by a Greek tragedy, offers a template for

enactment but the material itself is, nonetheless, slight in relation to other sources of

narrative inspiration for the dramatist. Unlike other narratives sources the playwright

might draw upon the myth seems rather lacking in narrative meat and often

inconsistent in its details. The possibilities to play with mythic uncertainty, however,

is palpable as the practitioner can engage in an exploration of not only the points of

certainty but also those questions left unanswered.

Gaps in knowledge about the myths origins and in turn their original form

can be a challenge, yet the gaps in information offer space to weave the

contemporary world into the myths. With a narrative skeleton of character, structure

and theme the playwright can extend and expand the narrative to serve their own

purposes. The mythic discourse relies upon subsequent acts of re-telling to survive

and is open to interpretation and derivation from its initial form. A myth therefore

provides a starting point, a spark which can inspire the playwright's responses and

the myth which can then be re-written at will. It uses mythology as an anchor for the

development of new work, but it is not tied to the myth for its survival and can be viewed with or without a prior knowledge of the mythic source of inspiration. Chirico observes that this relationship between a playwright and mythic material could be perceived to be a 'pragmatic transformation'. Gerard Genette created this term as a way of thinking about the intertextual connection between the source/text which Chirico has applied to the task of interpreting and analysing mythic revisions. 'Pragmatic transformation' illustrates a relationship in which the 'the myth serves as a germ of an idea, a basic jumping-off point, from which the playwright takes a full licence to create.' (Chirico, 2012, p.19).

A playwright may approach transpositions from the classical frame to the contemporary in a number of ways. The choice to transpose the mythic character of Icarus to a pilot in *Silver,* who is suffering a literal and metaphoric burn-out, is an example of a literal transposition. The playwright can seek a mythic parable, in the case of Icarus, perhaps, pride comes before a fall and in these ways direct correlations can be drawn between the source myth and the playwright's contemporary context and therefore, their intended audience. However less literal transpositions, which derive from deeper meanings the playwright might perceive and in turn interpret into contemporary terms may offer opportunities to develop not only the *rags and bones* of the mythic discourse but what resonates within it.

Part Two: the spark, the source and the self

A simple way of thinking about the relationship between the contemporary playwright and the mythic source they seek to respond to is to think of it as an engagement between the source (myth), the spark (inspiration that drives the connection) and the self (creative context). The playwright first selects, or discovers

the mythic source. Their imagination is then sparked by an aspect of the myth, be it

the story, a character or a theme they seek to engage with. Then the playwright's

context comes into play as it drives the way in which they interpret and therefore

dramatically responds to the mythic material. The source, the spark, and the self,

come together in the development of the dramatic response and fire the engagement.

Keith Johnstone's *Impro for Storytellers* (1999) offers insights into the ways

practitioners can draw upon stories in spontaneous ways and therefore make

unexpected and imaginative connections. He talks about the difficulties of

interpreting stories; 'a story is as difficult to interpret as a dream, and the

interpretation of a dream depends on who's doing the interpreting.' (1999 p.110). The

story of any myth can be interpreted on many levels – as a story, as a metaphor, as a

historic article, as a source of inspiration. The playwright can look at different

interpretations of the myth throughout history, make spontaneous responses, and

draw upon interpretations gathered in workshops and through collaborative

engagements. Each interpretation has something to offer the contemporary

playwright and their choice of approach will have an impact on the ways in which

they develop a creative response. Centuries of mythic interpretation can offer a

multifaceted view of a singular mythic narrative; and interpretation, filtration and

then playful application of the mythic source's narratives are all part of the approach

I employed in response to mythic material.

Before the playwright can transpose the myth within their adaptive frame

there is first an essential act of decoding '[...] all interpretation involves some level

of creativity in the sense that we are all active collaborators in making meaning out

of narrative'(Potter Abbott 2008, p.101). If after this process of interpretation the

initial spark of inspiration is no longer present the playwright might seek again to return to the myth kitty and select another myth for this act of creative bricolage. The playwright may equally discover through interpretation that the material of the myth is too resonant with their own experience and seek out another mythic engagement, though, as Vanda Zajko (2001) notes, Ted Hughes claimed the myth must have a specific resonance for the writer, which 'forms an "umbilical" link between the structure of the mythic imagination and the author's own psyche' (p.109). Therefore engagements with mythology are not for the faint-hearted, as aspects of our own psyche are woven within the myth consciously and unconsciously as it drawn through the filter of personal and artistic context.

When we come to interpret a mythic source there are three initial questions we might seek to answer; firstly what it's about, secondly what happens in it and thirdly what it is? When asking the first questions of the myth the practitioner would be advised not just to investigate its literal meaning, but also its possible metaphoric applications. Ostensibly the myth of Icarus and Daedalus could be about a failed escape plan, but on a metaphoric level it can, among other things, be seen to represent the fall of innocence. The practitioner should be open to the different layers of meaning the myth might offer, though of course a literal transposition of story events is an equally valid response to mythic material. Indeed the second question might offer challenges, the myth often have more than one version. In the case of Ariadne at Naxos we have three possible fates to draw upon, suicide, murder or marriage. We may choose to select one of these versions or indeed develop a dramatic response to this uncertainty, a key decision central to the development of *Sulphur.*

The answer to the third question is simply a myth, but myths like all narratives are open to various interpretations and it is worth thinking in terms of contemporary genres as we interpret the myth for a contemporary audience. Therefore the myths of Theseus and the Minotaur, Ariadne at Naxos and Icarus and Daedalus can be subsequently interpreted respectively as rites of passage, a subverted love story and a tragedy. This process alone could lead to direct and faithfully adaptive responses. However the playwright can choose to playfully rather than faithfully engage with what the myth offers.

Different structures can be applied to subvert mythic material. Re-creations can add or highlight different political and ideological dimensions of the myth. The Greek tragedians saw this opportunity to approach a source myth from different angles with mythic sources offering a 'framework, but never [a] straightjacket.' (Sommerstein 2005, p.177). Myths can be re-told from the perspective of a marginalised character as is the case in my plays. As Anne G Ward (1970) perceives this choice to focus attention on different mythic characters has a long held precedence, with each age focusing on different mythic characters: for instance, Ariadne was of particular interest to Ovid, Catullus and the medieval moralists (p.6). Vogler and McKenna (2011) reflect that, though the settings and locations of myths have changed, these characters reoccur in contemporary settings throughout films and other storytelling mediums;

> Modern heroes may not be going into caves and labyrinths to fight their
> mystical beasts, but they do enter an innermost cave by going into space, to
> the bottom of the sea, into that own minds, or into the depths of modern city.'
> (p.42)

Sodium is a response to Theseus and the Minotaur re-created from the view of the Minotaur. The action takes place inside Simon's studio rather than the Cretan Isle. The myth is viewed from the perspective of the 'monster' at the heart of the labyrinth, as the story is told from the Minotaur's perspective, rather than the hero who seeks to destroy him. The world of the labyrinth is transposed to the twists and turns and infinite opportunities offered by the worldwide web. It's a dark place full of possibilities where trolls stalk, and spies lurk in the shadows, and Simon seeks to save women but ends up destroying the one woman he will risk everything for. Haunted as he is by Tom his alter ego he grows more anxious about the threat of outsiders and tries to save Adriane's life. Simon and Tom are two parts of the same psyche, an expression of the dualism of the Minotaur, half beast, half man. The choice to develop a contemporary play in response to the Minotaur is foregrounded by a modern fascination with its 'strange dualism' (Ward 1970, p.6).

The myth of Ariadne at Naxos is often marginalised and told as an adjunctive ending to the myth of the Minotaur's destruction. Yet in *Sulphur* the focus is on Ariadne's story through her contemporary projection, Adrianne, whilst the structure is subverted to extend the moment of metamorphosis through to a full-length play. The liminal space in which she is trapped is a response to the character of Bacchus. As mythic, fairy tale allusions are cast across a disturbing interior landscape, she is shipwrecked. Ward *et al.* (1970) reflected, the character of Ariadne had faced three different possible fates, even '[t]he ancients were not agreed as to exactly what happened' (p.16). Caught between the suicide/murder/marriage which has been variously accounted as her fate, she is trapped between a traumatic past and an uncertain future. Which inspired me to take an absurd and surrealist approach to the mythic material. Steve Waters (2010) observes that 'absurdist reveals its roots in

342

surrealism, where apparently solid worlds morph into treacherous ones, behaving with the threatening unpredictability of dreams.' (p.57).

Though it is significant to note that the influence of these dreamlike and surreal landscapes had an effect on each of the plays as they sought to express not only a contemporary bridge between the source myth and my contemporary context but also the interior states of the character's minds. Though Daedalus was a famous mythic inventor whose exploits inspired the Greeks I sought instead, in *Silver* to dramatise the fate of his hapless son Icarus. The play responds to the myth after his fall, re-imagining Icarus as Chris, a grounded pilot who takes one last chance to get high. These examples illustrate how re-tellings and responses may start midway through the mythic event, or before or after the act of metamorphosis. Responses to mythic material need not be bound by what the myth offers but can be drawn just as clearly from what it inspires.

Initial engagements between the contemporary practitioner and the classical myth entail a 'reading' of the mythic source. Dr Richard Harland (1999) reflects in postmodernist-poststructuralist terms the 'reader' must bring their own significance to any text which is discovered 'through the channels of her/his own desires.' (p.242). Playwrights might instinctively *read* and respond to themes on a subconscious level, but, when the significance of the resonance is consciously recognised it can be drawn upon more deeply to effectively transpose the metaphor of myth for a new age. At the heart of the approach I utilised to develop my dramatic responses to classical mythology is the relationship between the source, the spark and the self which allows the resonance to be discerned. The 'source', as I have said, is the myth, or the body of mythic tales, the artist seeks to respond to, the site of initial engagement with the myth which is to be interpreted, explored and experimented with in the generation of

new work. One of the main reasons classical mythology is such a significant source of inspiration is the consecutive acts of interpretation and re-readings which it has gathered throughout the centuries. The 'source' offers more than just the mythic discourse but also the history of a culture's relationship with the myth, an antecedence which can have an impact on the ways which a practitioner interprets and re-tells a myth in the contemporary age.

There are two major categories of research that you can address when creating original work, and work which is inspired by another narrative source such as a myth. External research, the world outside your imagination, which includes historic details, data and images, and then research drawn from the writer's own personal context, the ideas and instinctive connections you make to the source you seek to develop. The practitioner needs to strike the balance, especially when developing new work in relation to classical myths as the wealth of sources that can be drawn upon could easily overwhelm the creative response. The research should act as a satellite to support the development of the creative heart of the play to help strike the balance between research and play. Therefore, before the practitioner seeks to research the myth's antecedents in depth, it is beneficial to observe the initial and instinctive sparks of inspiration, taking note of what the discourse prompts, which can then be returned to throughout the process.

If, as Madeline Anderson-Warren and Roger Grainger (2000) claim, '[m]yths are stories of great personal and social resonance' (p.145), then resonance is central to the endurance of mythic discourse. Yet, how can the playwright develop work in response to it? Ted Hughes claimed all artists could infuse their work with mythic resonances by taking a 'dip into the myth-kitty' (Hughes 1992, p.41). The 'spark' is

the initial connection to myth which stimulates the creative imagination of the artist. It is a point of effective synergy between the artist and the source and can be inspired by numerous factors including a desire to examine or transpose the meaning of myth to a contemporary context or indeed respond to myth's plurality of possible meanings as Pat Watts attests: '[t]here is no one meaning; a myth is multi-faceted.' (2008, p.27). This uncertainty amplifies the resonance of the myth and can be drawn into the mythic retelling.

Every time we engage to retell a pre-existing source myth are own context comes into play in the both what we see and how we project this. An example of this is Steven Berkoff's admission that he wrote Greek 'as a mask for my own feelings and ambitions.' (1996, p.2). Each of these personal and contextual filters offers a new aspect of the 'self': our gender, our age, our political views and initial engagements with the source myth and so on, all affect the ways in which we view and interpret the mythic narratives. Whether we are aware, as Berkoff was of this filters, or they act on a subconscious or indeed unconscious level as we dramatically respond to the mythic material. So do our artistic intentions, the history of our craft, and the effect we intend to have upon the audience. Therefore, contextualised responses to myth have a deep impact upon the work created as 'dramatist's experiences speak loudly through the voices and selves they conjure up from within their imagination.'(Waters 2010, p.97).
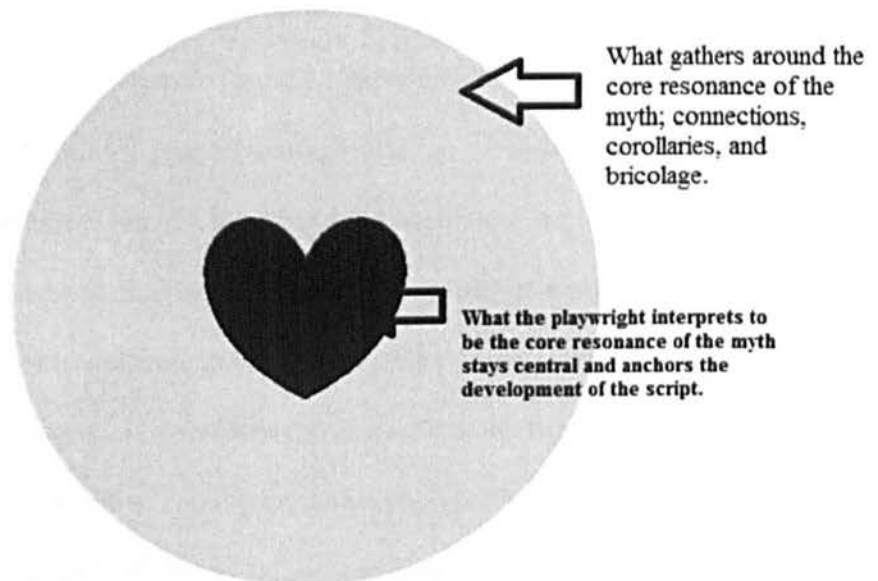
Context is, of course, significant: as Lisa Goldman (2012) states, the dramatist's '[v]oice is always dependent upon context' (p28). Through the playwright's context, even creative engagements with pre-existing narrative sources develop work which is original. This engagement between the source, the spark and

the self is central to discovering what resonates in the mythic material. The resonance offers the key, unlocking myth for the contemporary practitioner and in turn their audience, whilst developing the initial spark of inspiration to re-tell the myth.

In the approach I used to develop dramatic responses to classical myths the playwright first defines the heart of the myth using it as the central focus of creative engagement and transposition from myth to drama. Opposing forces are at work throughout the myths of metamorphoses where conflicts are exposed in what Marina Warner observes to be 'moments of crisis' (2002, p.16). These crisis points often operate at the heart of the myth and can be interpreted as a metaphor for the contemporary world of the practitioner, who seeks to re-tell it. We are dealing with extremes: archetypal binaries of opposition draw across the myth. An example of this is the way 'Daedalus and Icarus represent the two principles of creative life, the one rational and earthbound, the other aspiring and heroic' (Ward *et al.* 1970, p247).

The resonance of mythic discourse is often central to the conflict occurring at the point of metamorphosis between one state of being and the next. Theseus and the Minotaur can therefore be encapsulated as the conflict between man/monster or nature/nurture, Ariadne at Naxos lamentation/liberation, and Icarus and Daedalus the dynamic between rise/fall. The friction provided by these opposing forces within mythic discourse can spark and inspire the creative imagination, and may well be one of the key reasons why we continue to return and re-tell. By distilling the myths into these central dichotomise a practitioner has a key by which they can respond not only the readily transposable elements of character and event but also to the tension at the heart of the myth.

Once you get to the heart of the myth you can build the world of your play around it, it can act as a hub for a series of interconnected influences and points of inspiration, providing a central spark for an act of creative bricolage in which a practitioner can playfully draw connections and corollaries together in their response. It provides a core for the creative engagement allowing the playwright to weave new and contemporary worlds around it. If we take Roland Barthes metaphor, that all 'text is a tissue, a woven fabric' (1979, p.177), we observe that the resonance provides a central frame by which we can anchor and weave the threads of our adaptive responses to a mythic source.

What gathers around the core resonance of the myth; connections, corollaries, and bricolage.

What the playwright interprets to be the core resonance of the myth stays central and anchors the development of the script.

The resonance may instinctively be at work within the artist's imagination from the moment they select their mythic source, but it is not always so easy to pinpoint. A playwright might discover the key resonance in a myth or indeed story by using the following exercise. It is based upon an approach used by the artistic

director of the Soho Theatre Steve Marmion when directing Shakespeare. He introduced the exercise at a Soho Theatre Workshop in 2012, and I immediately saw the way it could be applied as a shortcut to interpret themes and key resonances of myths. Marmion suggests that after the initial reading of a play he selects 12 images, then 6 images, then 3 images and finally 1 image that can be used to tell the story. From the three images he ascertains the major themes and the final image offers him the key to the dramatic narrative. A practitioner can explore this process with the use of images or text, but as my relationship to the myths was in the first case a literary one, I choose to engage in this practice with words and phrases rather than visual images.

I had already used a twelve point structure in my interpretation of the myths by applying Vogler's version of Hero's Journey structure in the initial developments. I then sought to apply Marmion's method to the distillation of the myth into six key events, and then selected three phrases to define the three acts of the myth and finally the core resonance of the myth distilled. In the following table I use my responses to Theseus and the Minotaur to illustrate this tool. The stages of the Hero's Journey are defined by Vogler. It is essential to note that this interpretation of the myth is contextualised by my own creative and interpretative choices. The myth itself has already gone through a series of revisions before it reaches the playwrights imaginative forces, and the material may be viewed and therefore revised in diverse ways and a another practitioner may interpret the mythic material I now present in a completely divergent way. As Lizbeth Goodman (2000) observes, this ability to build and contain diverse meanings is central to the appeal of classical myths for the contemporary practitioner:

The myths build, layer upon layer, one upon another. The common roots of stories are exposed, while the many different interpretations and form of presentation bear witness to the power of writers, audiences and readers to take hold of any myth and mould it to mean something new. (Goodman, 2000 p.xi)

In the following grid it is clear to see how my own *interpretations* of the myth have had an impact upon the ways in which I have utilised its material, and *moulded it.*

Theseus and The Minotaur – Using Christopher Vogler's Hero's Journey Structure as an initial map for the myth		
1.Ordinary World: '**Heroes are introduced in the ORDINARY WORLD, where...**' **(Vogler 1992, p.26)**	**2.Call to Adventure:** '[T]hey receive the CALL TO ADVENTURE.' (Vogler 1992, p.26)	**3.Refusal of The Call:** 'They are RELUCTANT at first or REFUSE THE CALL, but...' (Vogler 1992, p.26)
Theseus lives with his mother. He is exceptionally brave and strong.	*Discovers his father's real identity and is reunited* *Learns of Mino's sacrifices*	*His father tries to stop him. Choice between his father and the quest.* *Theseus becomes a sacrifice*
4.Meeting with the Mentor: '[A]re encouraged by a MENTOR to...' **(Vogler 1992, p.26)**	**5. Crossing the First Threshold:** 'CROSS THE FIRST THRESHOLD and enter the Special World, where' (Vogler 1992, p.26)	**6.Tests, Allies, Enemies:** '[T]hey encounter TESTS, ALLIES, AND ENEMIES.' (Vogler 1992, p.26)

Theseus meets Ariadne	*Theseus trusts Ariadne and tells him of his quest to kill the Minotaur.*	*Ariadne helps him, offering him the secret keys to the labyrinth (the clew and the thread).*
		The test will be if he can kill the Minotaur or die trying.
7. Approach to the Inmost Cave: 'They APPROACH THE INMOST CAVE, crossing a second threshold'(Vogler 1992, p.26)	**8. Ordeal:** '[W]here they endure the ORDEAL.' (Vogler 1992, p.26)	**9. Reward (Seizing the Sword):** 'They take possession of their REWARD and...' (Vogler 1992, p.26)
Entering the labyrinth	*Theseus finds fights with and beheads the Minotaur*	*Theseus flees with Ariadne.*
10. The Road Back: '[A]re pursued on THE ROAD BACK to the Ordinary World'(Vogler 1992, p.26)	**11. Resurrection:** '[T]hey cross the third threshold, experience a RESURRECTION and are transformed by the experience.' (Vogler 1992, p.26)	**12. Return With The Elixir:** 'They RETURN WITH THE ELIXIR, a boon or treasure to benefit the Ordinary World.' (Vogler 1992, p.26)
Sailing to Naxos. Celebration and Consummation at Naxos.	*Leaves Ariadne at Naxos and forgets to change his sail from black to white.*	*Theseus' father is dead (jumps from the cliffs when he thinks his son has died).*
The story distilled into 6 key events		
Theseus and Father	*Theseus accepts the quest*	*Theseus connects with*

reunited		Ariadne
Theseus enters the labyrinth	*Theseus Kills the Minotaur*	*Theseus flees with Ariadne*
Three key themes		
Theseus as sacrifice	*Connection to Ariadne*	*The beast within the man.*
The core resonance of the myth		
Man/monster		

This approach comes with a coda; it might be overly prescriptive and lessen

opportunities to spontaneous responses to mythic material. Indeed, the mythic

resonance may already be operating at an unconscious level. Therefore before using

this exercise it is advisable to first observe what the myth offers and how it inspires

you instinctively through the use of automatic writing, which may allow you to

connect with your unconscious responses to the mythic material. You may discover

that the instinctive and intellectual responses to the mythic material are similar, or

might be surprised with the results. You can then choose which interpretative

response to develop in your dramatic re-creation of the myth. What resonates within

the myth might also be viewed as a metaphor that can be transposed across time and

story-telling form, though a practitioner might equally seek to develop a response to

mythic material by drawing directly upon characters and events in literal responses

to the mythic material. Approaching dramatic responses to mythology by first

discerning its mythic resonance offers the playwright a holistic approach, which does

not seek to transpose individual dramatic elements but, instead, places the resonance

of the myth at the centre of the process, informing every consecutive creative response, the over-arching theme of the dramatic response.

I now turn to *Sodium* to illustrate the ways in which resonance can be used to inspire a contemporary creative response to classic mythology. After defining the resonance of Theseus and the Minotaur as the dichotomy of man/monster, the binary opposition at the core of the myth 'Minotaur, half man, half beast' (Ward *et al.* 1970, p.13), I developed a response which focused on the battle to come to terms with this conflict of self in which ultimately Simon/Tom, the contemporary Minotaur, would have to choose between the monster and the man. The key themes of sacrifice, connection and murder were developed in the creation of *Sodium*. Sacrifice occurs at many levels, as Simon sacrifices his liberty for a false sense of security, the visitors to the studio become sacrifices in Tom's game and finally the one woman Simon makes physical contact with is sacrificed in order to save her from Tom.

A practical way of thinking about the playwright's creative connection to the mythic tales is to observe the ways in which the myth itself might offer a first draft, with characters, events and conflict which need further development, an act of creative extension. Once the playwright has decided on the key theme, or resonance for their own creative response, they can then use this tool to investigate the possible corollaries between the resonance and their contemporary world. A tool which may aid the playwright to develop contemporary connections to what resonates within the mythic narrative, was first introduced to me at Soho Theatre writer's Clinic (Jan 2011), by senior reader Sarah Dickenson. It is often used as a tool at the re-writing stage, but with myths already offering many of the insights of a first draft this can be applied to test the possibilities of mythic resonance, to have an impact on a larger

canvas. It also offers a map from which a playwright might select to re-tell the story

in a different time, past or future, to their current one, and widen the impact of what

they discover from a personal to global level. The theme, or in this case resonance,

is mapped across the table, with each box being filled with the ways in which the

resonance relates across time and space. This develops a resource which can be

returned to when developing the script, and if it done visually is an instantly

accessible tool for the playwright. I used the tool to develop the myth's resonance

and indeed test the possible wider significance for the audience as is illustrated

below in relation to *Sodium.*

Nature/nurture			
	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
PERSONAL	Simon's childhood days in the boarding school where he meets Christopher. He's different, he's bullied, he's ostracised. He finds places to hide, caves, hillsides, mountains outside the world of the civilised state school.	Hiding in his studio afraid of the light, hiding in the shadows. Connected to the world through the internet though, cut off and under cover.	If he can't make connections to society he will self-implode. Yet with connection he will be a prisoner of the state rather than his own fears.
SOCIAL	The high-rise flats, and greater industrialisation and globalisation pull us away from the country, pull us away from nature and pull	Human beings are transported across the world like cattle. The underground brings them closer to death, closer to the reality that we will all one	The population increase will send us to space not just for a holiday but for our own funeral.

	us away from the earth.	day be six feet under.	
GLOBAL	Lascaux Caves. Images which record man's formative relationship to nature. Discovered by teenagers in the 1940s.	Terrorism is sweeping the nation, unsure of what are future holds, hiding under the umbrella of universal fear and condemnation.	Climate change forcing us to look at the world and its resources in different ways. The natural environment is being destroyed.

Part Three: The spark and spontaneity

In myth we find [...] the tri-dimensional pattern [...]. But myth is a peculiar system, in that it is constructed from a semiological chain which exists before it: it is a second-order semiological system. [...] We must here recall that the materials of mythical speech (the language itself, photography, painting, posters, rituals, objects, etc.), however different at the start, are reduced to a pure signifying function as soon as they are caught by myth. Myth sees in them only the same raw material; their unity is that they all come down to the status of a mere language (Barthes 1993 p.99).

What were the *raw materials* of classical mythology? And how can a

playwright trace their history in order to inform their adaptive process? Any survey

of the creative responses to classical mythology will reveal the way in which they

have been visually reinterpreted throughout the centuries. Visual representations

offer visceral responses to source myths and illustrate how the meaning of myth has

been mediated by centuries of visual artists. If 'the fundamental character of the

mythical concept is to be appropriated' (Barthes 1993, p.105), each visual

representation offered an act of re-appropriation which responded and retold a

mythic concept. Keir Ellam (2001) states that an image, therefore, can act as a site

for mythic re-creation. An icon can be seen as 'the image, the diagram, and the

metaphor' (Elam 2001, p.21). Metamorphic myths operate on this metaphorical level and, therefore, a practitioner might adapt the icon into a system of dramatic language through the filter of their own context. Practitioners often use images as a starting point for generating new work and myth offers a wealth of artistic responses, from ancient civilisations in the form of antiquities to the present postmodern responses. This is perhaps something that sets myth aside from more contemporary narratives. The weight of artistic responses it has gathered over the years mean we have greater opportunities to engage with the myth through the filter of multiple representations it has prompted. Barthes has championed the power of images to convey meaning: 'more imperative than writing; they impose meaning at one stroke, without analysing or diluting it' (Barthes 1993, p.95). Therefore re-tellings of classical myths are readily accessible for the practitioner in galleries and museums across the world and of course in book and online catalogues.

Playwrights can submerse themselves in artistic responses to mythology gathered throughout the centuries by other artists and theorists. Key responses can offer a visual shorthand, a snap-shot for the mythic concept which can fuel the initial spark of inspiration. It also might be used as a point of enquiry or debate relating to the ways in which the myth has been perceived throughout the centuries. A playwright might select a specific image as a source of inspiration or draw upon various visual versions of the myths throughout their creative engagement. In the development of *Sulphur* I was drawn to Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne* (1502-3) which has often been received as a romantic vision, yet dark undertones can be perceived in the liminal space between one way of being and the next. Initial inspiration in the creation of *Silver* had come from Herbert Draper's *The Lament for*

Icarus (1898), which focused on the moments after the fall, literally illustrating the parable that pride comes before a fall. Pablo Picasso's *Vollard Suite*, eleven of the etchings capturing Picassos' recurrent figure of the Minotaur provided inspiration in the development of *Sodium,* specifically *Minotaur Caressing a Sleeping Woman* (1933) in which tender menace is suffused with sadness. Picasso had been inspired by the Minotaur, creating 'a series of eleven etchings' (Ward *et al.* 1970, 244) depicting him. There is not space here to reflect upon the influences and context of the creation of these works, but suffice it to say, as is illustrated in the following images, the different qualities of each mythic response imbued my revisions of the myths.

↑Minotaur caressing A Sleeping Woman, from The Vollard Suite. (1933) by Pablo Picasso (1881-1973).

↑ Bacchus and Ariadne (1520-03), Titian

↑ The Lament for Icarus (1898) Herbert Draper (1863-1920)

Images can stimulate creative connections to the myths and can be used to navigate the changing responses to mythic resonance throughout the centuries.

Along with the myth itself, they can be used a stimulus for creative enquiry, along

with 'rites', an approach to creative writing which had been introduced to me by the

playwright Diane Samuels, first at a Soho Theatre Clinic (2011) and then in her

writing group, which I attended whilst developing *Sodium* and *Sulphur*. This

technique combined automatic writing with key stimuli, an anchor which provided a

point of departure and return for the writer throughout the exercise, usually lasting

20 minutes. In this the writer wrote their stream of consciousness in connection to

their own set question about the story, character, or theme they sought to probe.

Likewise a playwright may seek to respond to the mythic material by using exercises

to investigate what they have found through automatic writing, and other stream of

consciousness writing tasks. This allows the practitioner to connect instinctively and

spontaneously with mythic material and can help to form adaptive responses. As

John Freeman detects in *New Performance/New Writing:*

> 'Rather than regarding the automatic as something completely random or
>
> arbitrary, we might from a performance-writing perspective view it more
>
> usefully as a synonym for spontaneity.' (2007, p.44).

The spontaneity that these writing approaches can offer to the practitioner

helps to re-engage the playful and instinctive connections to mythic sources amidst

other areas of research, and can 'also help you write through blocks.' (Goldman 2012

p.29). Use of these techniques can afford a playwright the essential distance between

research into myths and the imaginative engagement with the mythic material which

is central to the creative endeavour.The exercises can facilitate a connection to

instinctive responses to classical mythemes, the 'various key events, actions or

relationships' (Cobley 2013, p.33) that Levi-Strauss had observed recurring

throughout mythology, along with the images they inspired. 'Myth, like the rest of language is made up of constituent units.' (Levi-Strauss 1963 p210-11) and these units or mythemes can be used as building blocks for new work as 'transferable units of story-telling' (Chirico 2012, p.18). Images, like the mythic resonance which inspired them can therefore act as anchors for creative exploration.

Part Four: The dramatic materials of myth

Classical myths offer intrinsically dramatic elements, characters, settings, events, symbolism and conflict. The conflicts that can be perceived in metamorphic myths offer dramatic potential, diametrically opposed characters and moments of crisis as one form gives way to another. If conflict is at the heart of these myths, how can we structure dramatic responses to this conflict? Structure can be broken down to the basic essence of storytelling expectations, 'beginning, middle, and end'. However, in contemporary theatre, this expectation might be subverted, distilled, expanded or condensed in a diverse manner of ways. The thesis-antithesis-synthesis model can equally be used as a way of thinking about the structural possibilities of theatre. Aston and Savona propose that '[e]ssentially, story is the basic narrative outline; plot, the means by which narrative are structured, organised and presented' (Aston and Savona 1991, p.21). Myth offers us a strong story, open for re-telling and re-visioning, but how do we structure a myth? Is tragedy the best way to restructure a source myth given its historic connection to ancient Greek mythology or are there other possibilities? Classical myths offer resonant stories which differ from the plot 'fabula (story) and sjuzet (plot)' (Aston and Savona 1991, p.21).

Structure is inbuilt; it is inherent; we recognise this three-act structure in our daily lives; we are drawn to it in our interpretations of the world and, therefore, in our relationships to stories. It provides a vehicle for meaning, and is part of the journey we take with the character; it is about dilemma, the big question staged in your play. It can offer a road map, but the playwright can take short cuts and scenic routes, and indeed go off-map. You need to know why you are playing with structure; if you subvert it you must look into the reason for this subversion, remembering your view of the world affects the way that you structure your work. With all this in mind, how can a practitioner structurally respond to the stories offered by in dramatic responses?

As David Edgar (2009) observes, 'every structural form has its advantages and disadvantages' (p.99), offering the structural model developed by Stephen Jefferies of open/closed time and open/closed space as a possible way of thinking about dramatic structure whilst developing the model further with the option of dislocated time/space. A playwright can think about these structural possibilities as they approach dramatic developments of myths, but equally it may be beneficial to add a category of mythic space; a space where the mythic archetypes, meta-theatre and the unconscious can be engaged and explored adding a new layer of possibility, though this may form part of the dislocated space/time that Edgar recognizes.

Time /space	Open	Closed	Mythic/dislocated
Open			
Closed			
Mythic/dislocated			

In reflection on the structural development of the plays, I found surreal transpositions of location to a seemingly closed space were more sympathetic to the material in the development of mythic tales. The landscape of Adriane's unconscious mind and Simon's studio allow projections of mythic time and space. The closed locations offer a landscape in which surreal and mythic elements can punctuate the reality of the space. The personal and contained spaces offer a direct transposition to the psychological and emotional subtext the myths inspired in my work. The larger canvas of *Silver* in the first version, though intended to take place in Christopher's imagination, was too widely spread and caused a diffusion of this effect. The movement of the story across locations diluted the resonance and lead to a play that was filmic in its compass. In the development of *Sulphur* and *Sodium*, and the later version of *Silver* I discovered that classical myths could inspire work in a contained yet surreal location. The new version of *Silver* operates in dislocated time and open space as Chris's memories weave with his dreams, when he is grounded by the ash cloud.

The clock which is ticking in *Silver* is connected to Christopher's desire to seduce Hope before he flies off again. *Sodium* ostensibly operates in a closed space, with an exception that the closed space has three levels: the world outside the studio, Simon's studio and the worldwide web. The narrative is staged through dislocated time, presented through a series of flash backs, mini-reflections, time spent online and 'real' time. As Simon declares, in his studio time can disappear, along with the world outside. *Sulphur* operates in dislocated time and space. The notion of time is seemingly amorphous, though until the second act Adrianne is pushing the panic button to get out of her self-generated nightmare. Adrianne is in a nether-where,

trying to get free, yet always returning back to where she started. The world is

uncertain and unsteady offering a mirror to the unconscious mind, in which none of

the rules of waking logic apply, as the shipwrecked environment acts as a metaphor

for her troubled psyche.

The Hero's Journey - An approach to re-structuring classical mythology

All the plays in Chapter Three were in some way inspired and informed by

Christopher Vogler's version of Joseph Campbell's Monomyth. They offer examples

of experiments with the Hero's Journey structure of which there are twelve stages, as

set out by Vogler (1992) in *The Writer's Journey;*

> [1] The 'Ordinary' World [2] Call to Adventure [3] Refusal of The Call [4]
> Meeting with the Mentor [5] Crossing the First Threshold [6] Tests, Allies,
> Enemies [7] Approach to the Inmost Cave [8] Ordeal [9] Reward (Seizing the
> Sword) [10] The Road Back [11] Resurrection [12] Return With The Elixir
> (p.14).

The stages can be applied to a three-act structure of thesis-antithesis-

synthesis, the first act consisting of the first four stages, the second act stages 5-10,

and the final act stages 11 and 12. The structure can be considered classical as it

adheres to McKee's (1999) definition of classical design, the 'archplot' (p.45) whose

features include causality, closed ending, linear time, external conflict, consistent

reality, and active protagonist. But contemporary theatre recognises the value of

subverting classical structures and, therefore, I chose to explore three different

structural approaches in the development of the plays which investigated the

possibilities of fusing the Hero's Journey structure with other structural approaches.

First, the Hero's Journey Structure as set out by Vogler (1992) was applied in the

initial development of *Silver.* Aspects of classic tragedy were developed in relation

to the structure in the development of *Sodium*, and finally the development of

Sulphur was informed by an experiment with automatic responses to the myth,

which like the other plays, came to be equally influenced by the Hero's Journey. In

this way I sought to imbue contemporary structures with elements of mythic

structure as perceived by Campbell and in turn Vogler. It is of equal significance that

Propp's Wonder tale structure based on a comparative study of folktales, holds many

points of similarity with the Hero's Journey structure and can equally be utilised by

the contemporary practitioner who seeks to examine the structural possibilities of

oral narratives, in the development of new writing.

Vogler and McKenna (2011) explain that the twelve points of the Hero

Journey Structure need not be strictly adhered to, but can be utilised as a structural

source of inspiration: 'the stages can be deleted, added to, and drastically reshuffled.'

(pp.42). Therefore the playwright can use the stages of the hero's journey as a source

of creative inspiration in their responses to mythology and select the elements which

best serve their creative purpose. There were overlaps between the plays I created

and it can be seen that this experiment led to a hybrid of forms in each of the plays.

In their development I tried three different structural approaches. An over-

prescriptive application of the hero's journey structure in the initial drafts of *Silver*

led to the development of a play which was generically a cross between a surreal

tragedy and a road movie. Indeed, Hollywood's responses to the Hero's Journey

structure have pre-disposed this filmic connection, which can be incongruous when it

is deployed as a theatrical structure. *Sodium* started as an enquiry into how a non-

dramatically extant myth might support the development of a contemporary tragedy,

though it owed many of its more surreal elements to inspiration offered by the Hero's

Journey. Sulphur was developed by further experiments with the surreal and expressionistic elements I had explore in *Sodium.*

Myth's symbolic nature can offer a creative impetus for dramatic exploration. Its heightened nature can be supported by meta-theatrical elements as it often was in Greek Tragedy. Contemporary playwrights may equally seek to employ magic realism in their responses to the heightened and surreal elements of mythic discourse. Lois Parkinson Zamora and Wendy B Faris (1995) perceive that magic realism is a genre that has gained a 'widespread appeal' (p.2). Luis Leal (1995) observes that through magic realism 'the writer confronts reality and tries to untangle it, to discover what is mysterious in things, in life, in human acts.' (p.121). Magical realism allows you to create a space where anything can happen, as the mythic characters and events, are woven in contemporary landscapes and magic elements are drawn into 'real' world. The nature of magic-realist texts seemingly provides the perfect prototype for playful bricolage in one's approach to classical mythology as they are often 'subversive: [in] their in-betweenness, their all-at-onceness' (Zamora and Faris 1995, p.6).

This magical quality is present within all the plays I developed. *Sodium* takes place in three worlds, punctuated by flashbacks from Simon's childhood, interruptions from the outside world, and online assignations. The expression of Simon's subconscious through Tom's character embodies the archetype of the shape-shifter and is a projection of his desires and greatest fears whilst Adrianne is magically transported through a virtual world into Simon's studio. *Sulphur* is set between Adriane's shipwrecked subconscious, which is peopled by the archetypes of her dream world, and her reality, a hospital bed. It is only in the second act that her

reality is glimpsed. The nightmare landscape of Adriane's subconscious is however more magical than real as characters melt into shadows and nothing is what it seems. *Silver* is set in central London across two timescales which are drawn together by dreamlike moments. Being grounded sends Christopher in search of another way to get high, as projections of his conscious and subconscious mind interweave as the past and the present collide.

The playwright can create imaginary mythic and magically inspired worlds, but they have to set up and seed the rules of that world for the audience and setting the rules of that world it is part of the contract they make with the audience. These rules may not be clear in the first draft, for example the amorphous character of Tom needed specific rules in order to secure his place as a bogie-man, a phantom. In *Sodium* this meant he could not be seen by any of the other characters, and could not touch or move anything except for his engagements with Simon. The mythic world of Simon's studio equally had pre-set rules which inspired the development of key scenes with the delivery men. Nothing could go in or out of Simon's studio, it was a black hole: if anyone tried to get in or out, they would disappear. The one person who can get through is Adriane, but the challenge is to get out. I equally applied rules to the character of Simon who takes on his alter ego, Tom, when challenged or threatened.

Sodium subverts the structure of boy meets girl, through the contemporary ritual of online courtship, with tragic consequences. A classical tragedy on a contemporary scale, there is a sense of the possibility of redemption, which under-lines his final self-destruction and most significantly the death of Adriane. Throughout the play there is a sense of being haunted and hunted as the imminent

destruction of Simon is seeded. The surreal world of *Sulphur* which Adriane enters

after she is struck unconscious in *Sodium* is at first a false marriage, in which Tom

offers her a version of reality which she rejects. She then spends the middle of the

play seeking a way out of the fantasy which she eventually finds. With her return to

reality, the hospital bed, she realises that though the marriage is a farce it is better the

devil you know than the one that you don't. Though her fate can be considered tragic,

she has gained the 'elixir' of knowledge as she returns to Tom's version of the

'ordinary world'. The knowledge is symbolised by the match box, the creative spark

which reminds her of the reality that underscores her existence, which can also

symbolise the fragile inner child of her tortured psyche. Chris finding himself

grounded is reminded of all the things he has run away from and in turn seeks a

distraction, which is when he finds Hope. Allusions arise about connections between

Stella and Hope: was she the daughter Chris never knew he had and will he find out

before he makes a mistake he'll regret for the rest of his life?

Tim Fountain observes that plot and character are not separate entities in

classical approaches to playwriting – 'Character is decision under pressure' (2008,

p.14) – and in this way drive the plot forward as the plot reveals the characters in

their response to the situations and changes we test them with. Therefore, being

inspired by archetypal characters can affect the ways in which we structure our

stories, and in turn mythic structures might have the same impact upon the way we

develop characters for a contemporary age. Mythic inspiration in either aspect will

have an impact upon the play as a whole. Myths can offer the contemporary

playwright a short cut for character development, something to work with or against

as you respond to it. Myths often offer a small cast of characters, and therefore a

revision of a myth can respond well to the economic demands for a small casts in contemporary theatres. When responding to classical mythology the playwright can choose who will be the subject of their own mythic revision. It need not be the central character of the myth and they might seek to examine and develop characters that are not central to or are indeed marginalised by the mythic discourse in the development of dramatic response. The hero of the story need not be the hero of the play, the playwright might seek to subvert heroic acts and portray them in a different light, in so doing offering an alternative viewpoint. In this way they can subvert expectations and creatively respond to the inspiration the myths offer. However it is of equal significance to observe that not absolutely all drama needs to be driven by a character and responses to mythic material may 'not [be] character generated' (Fuchs 1996 p.49). Therefore, you do not need to develop characters in order to develop the myth, yet mythic characters can offer a source of inspiration for new work.

Karelisa Hartigan (2012) observes that arguably the 'archetypes developed by the Greeks are the basis of much modern literature, that the old themes are forever new.' (p.34). It is therefore comprehensible that one of the reasons a contemporary playwright might be drawn to working with classical myths is an interest in archetypal characters, themes and situations and their antecedence in mythological narratives. Archetypal characters and images inspired the creative development of the central protagonists of *Sodium, Sulphur* and *Silver*. Susan Rowland observes that Archetypes are 'inherited structuring patterns in the unconscious with potentials for meaning formation and images.' (2008, p.184). In the same way that we interpret the myths in relation to our own contexts, the way we receive archetypal images is

connected to influences which are both 'cultural and historical' (Rowland 2008, p.184).

The archetype is contextualised by our own experience. The Minotaur represents the archetypal monster, yet a psychological approach can inspire a dramatist to seek the roots of his behaviour. Ariadne is an emanation of the princess archetype, yet in my response in the development of the character Adriane, the archetype is subverted. She, not Theseus, seeks the Minotaur. However she is a tragic hero eventually trapped within an uncertain landscape of her unconscious: she chooses the lesser of two evils, accepting a false marriage whilst keeping the creative spark of her imagination in a matchbox. Icarus fulfils archetype, but can also be seen as a shape-shifter, turning from boy to winged man. Yet, in Chris he is transformed into the tragic hero. How were these characters inspired by mythic discourses which Waters (2010) claims offer 'stereotype or archetype, on physically conceived characters, and a world of action inhabited by heroes and monsters' (p.101)?

The archetypes offered by a mythic discourse can inspire the development of contemporary characters. As you explore the myth, you can get inside the head its character as the process becomes one of digging, detecting and immersing yourself in the possibilities their world holds. An archetypal character can hold a strong force over a writer's imagination, invading dreams as the writer makes unconscious connections to its archetypal resonance. These connections, whether conscious or unconscious can allow the playwright the opportunity to develop characters from the archetype of myths by using automatic writing tools, described in part three to investigate elements of their story and fill in significant details for the appropriation. As conflict was at the heart of the mythic resonance I detected in the myths, I

transposed the resonance in the dramatic responses to develop central conflicts which informed the character and in turn the structure of the plays. *Sodium* stages the internal conflict between man and monster, between Simon and his alter-ego Tom, directly drawing upon the mythic resonance. *Sulphur* stages a conflict between reality and the imagination. As Ariadne battles to get out of her mind, the reality that waits outside forces her deeper into her imagination. She can lament her loss and continue to try to find a way out, or accept it and be liberated by her imagination. *Silver* stages the conflict between Chris's desire for connection and the impulse to fly away from all complications. His personal fears are at the heart of the play and the resonance of rise/fall is central to his characters motivations.

'Literally, an archetype is an original or founding image or figure.' (Coupe 1997, p.139). Therefore the mythic character offers a foundation, a starting point, an archetype that can be transposed to the contemporary age. Archetypes like myths need the artist's context in order to endure and be transposed. Each re-telling of a myth therefore offers not only the archetypal but the contextual response to the characters mythology can offer. Indeed, Angela Belli (1969), whilst encouraging playwrights to draw upon this perceived universality in the development of dramatic responses, claims '[t]he value of a mythological character rests precisely in the fact that he is not an individual but a type.' (p.192). Simon and his brother Tom were inspired by the dualistic figure of the Minotaur, as the Minotaur's duality was symbolised by two characters, Simon and his alter-ego. Ariadne is refigured as Adrianne who is fighting with social conditioning of a patriarchal society inside her own mind. Icarus becomes Chris a contemporary pilot who is faced by his greatest fear, when he is grounded by an ash cloud.

A way of avoiding the stereotypical overtones that archetype can prompt is to explore the possible motivations your character might have and indeed develop obstacles for the character to face, which may be inspired by mythic resonance. The problem at the heart of each of the plays are as follows: *Sodium* – coming to terms with the monster within the man; *Sulphur* – what can you do when your mind is your own worst enemy?; *Silver* – once you've learnt to fly, how do you come back down to earth? Adriane's central motivation is to return to what she's already lost. Simon wants to save women, but kills the one woman he's ever loved. Chris risks everything to get high. The motivations are met with obstacles both real and imagined.

These obstacles can be internal in the form of a fear or phobia, external in relation to society and or government, and interpersonal in terms of relationships. Some of the obstacles can be drawn directly from the mythic discourse. For example, the Minotaur's entrapment led me to develop the obstacle of agoraphobia for Simon, and Ariadne's abandonment on Naxos inspired me to create a world in which Adrianne faced the obstacle of a complete lack of knowledge of social rules or expectations. And for Icarus, the obstacles presented by being grounded (falling) had an effect on his interpersonal relationships as he flew from commitment. A playwright can draw upon these obstacles in the development of their own responses to mythic discourse as illustrated using Adriane's character in *Sulphur.*

Obstacle that can face characters:

Internal (e.g. Fear/phobia)	External (e.g. Social/e.g. government ect.)	Interpersonal (e.g. relationships)
Fear of being lost	The rules that govern her	She does not trust men due to

(lamentation/ liberation)	imagined world, via social conditioning. Fear of doing something wrong. (lamentation/liberation)	what has happened in her past. She therefore has problems with the masculine archetypes in her world. E.g. Catman and Tom. (lamentation/liberation)

A playwright might equally seek to engage with mythic archetypes using contemporary character development tools to question the character and generate a back-story inspired by the archetype. Germaine to many playwriting guides, these ten question character exercises and other exercises for character development such as those offered in Noel Grieg's *Playwriting a Practical Guide (2004)* can be used to develop the archetypal character into a naturalistic one, or indeed inspect other creative and imaginative responses to the mythic material.

1. What is their deepest fear?
2. What is their greatest joy?
3. What are their coping strategies?
4. What makes them laugh?
5. What makes them cry?
6. Who do they really love?
7. Who they really hate?
8. What secrets do they hold, from the world, and from themselves?
9. What is their hobby, sport, or passion?
10. What is their spiritual belief or lack of?

Of course the playwright can develop other characters which do not form part of the mythic discourse. In *Sulphur*, though Adrianne is a direct response to Ariadne the other characters that populate the play are inspired by archetypes which do not inhabit the Ariadne at Naxos myth. Catman, Game, Face, Danni, Tom and

Right were developed in relation to contemporary and classical mythic characters. Face is a response to the archetypal projection of the beauty industry, Game an embodiment of technological advances, and Catman is an embodiment of Chronos. Right is a reflection of social conditioning's attempts at normalisation, and Danni is caught in the myth of the feminine mystique, whilst also being in part inspired by the myth of Danea, an archetype who was also fated to receive the love of Greek God, Zeus. Tom is an archaic character drawn from the world of *Sodium*, in the world of *Sulphur* he represents a bogie man, who haunts Adrianne's unconscious and finally traps her in her own nightmare as a domestic goddess with two point four children. It is also significant to note that a mythic archetype can inspire not just characters but the environment of a play. The Greek God Bacchus became an inspiration for the shipwrecked landscape of Adrianne's subconscious.

After engaging with this exercise, the writer may have developed aspects of the character which may have surprised and inspired her or him. These can be explored and developed in response to the myth. In this way one may choose to develop the response at a different time in the characters' life, as I did in the development of *Silver*, a play which creatively responds to what happened before and after the fall. However, with a mythic character a playwright might seek to develop the more supernatural elements of their persona; there is space to create, interpreting and imagining aspects of your characters' personality and experience which occupy a magical realist realm.

CONCLUSION

Marina Warner (1994) reflected that one of the key qualities of myths was that they were 'never set so hard they cannot be changed again' (p14). The ability of myths to inspire creativity is equal to their malleability at the service of an artist's imagination. I found the non- dramatically extant nature of the myths prompted a more playful response, though no doubt there have been practitioners who have sought and will seek in the future to be faithful to the historic antecedents of mythology in their adaptations and revisions: 'Each telling of a myth draws upon their rags and bones, and each piece has its own previous life-history that it brings into the story.' (Doniger in Levi-Strauss 1979, p.xi). Far from feeling tied by the mythic discourse, I felt this pre-existing *life-history* liberated my creative practice, offering inspiration and the anchor which could draw my practice and process together. The archetypes, structures and themes can be equally used by the playful and faithful approaches to ancient Greek mythology by the contemporary playwright in process and practice.

I might have written three plays in relation to rapidly developing technology in our contemporary age, but I would not have devised these characters or situations without the inspiration of the myths. The 'fusion of elements' (Eliot 1932 p19) between the old and the new, and the challenge of attempts to creatively bridge my contemporary world with an ancient one, prompted me to make playful leaps of imagination, and acted as a constant source of inspiration throughout my practice. I can see the artistic benefits of drawing upon myth for inspiration. With the sources that have gathered round the myths on a daily basis as they form part of our cultural capital, one's imagination can metaphorically swim in an ocean of mythic inspiration, gathering resources from across the centuries, from other artists and

academics. At some points, though, the wealth of material relating to mythology may overwhelm the creative process and it is important to strike a balance between research and creative development.

I have offered a way of approaching the instinctive adaptive response to non-dramatically extant classical source myths that practitioners can engage with as they seek to benefit from the source of mythic inspiration. I proffer this reflection of practice as signposts along the road for playwrights who seek like me to gain inspiration from classical mythology and other historically distant narrative sources. Sophie Bush (2013) observes that part of Timberlake Wertenbaker's success as a playwright is due to her ability to engage in a 'playful interaction with the literary cannon' (p.3). The playful plasticity of the myths is underpinned by arguably universal themes and archetypal characters which, therefore, offer us our own playful way of re-visioning the archetypal and universal in our own contemporary cultures. The method I have presented for a contemporary playwright or practitioner to approach a creative response to classical mythology, specifically non-dramatically extant mythology, prompts playful and spontaneous responses alongside research into the myths antecedents. It encourages improvisations and subversions of mythic tales, their characters, themes and structure, in order to develop new work that responds but is not defined by its mythic source.

The first response to myth should be instinctive; this is often the heart of what sparks one's inspiration as an artist. As Berkoff (1966) explains, he engaged with the myth of Oedipus, he was so drawn by it that '[t]he theme had entangled itself in my craw' (p.4). One can then engage with other responses to the myth – and indeed there is much to engage with – but holding on to that initial spark is essential

in the development of new work which is one's own. Building upon this initial

engagement with a classic myth, one can then explore what the myth means for

oneself, understand the myth in one's own instinctive and contextual terms, and

distil its resonance which will aid and underpin one's transposition of mythic

material. One should work instinctively to find this connection with the myth and

trust one's connection to the material, one's contexts, and one's view.

Other approaches I have found helpful include fostering connections between

the instinct and the intellect, as one needs both to engage in the generation of new

work. Freeman (2007) observes that 'For Breton, Surrealism was automatism. He

defined automatic writing as the absence of critical intervention in the creation of

text.' (p.41), as the weight of the mythic subject can at times led to an over critical

view of the task of creating new work in relation to the mythic discourse this

approach can be beneficial for a number of reasons. These surrealist techniques can

lead to unexpected connections to the myth, and the writer can draw upon a collage

of inspiration which can be spontaneously responded to and used as a tool to return

to the initial sparks of the mythic engagement. Which can support spontaneous

responses to mythic material.

Allow the world of myth to fill one's imagination and begin to gather ideas

which surround one's interpretation of it. In the creation of the plays key literary

connections were made between the myths archetypal images; as I perceived the

echo of the Minotaur's duality in R, L, Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll

and Mr Hyde* (1886) and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), refractions of

Ariadne's dysphoria in childhood classics including Lewis Carroll's *Alice in

Wonderland* (1896) and *Through the Looking-glass* (1871), and Icarus's joyous

freedom before the fall in Richard Bach's *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* (1972). These

connections allowed me to observe the way in which my relationship to the myths

had been informed by the re-occurring archetypal images throughout classical

literature whilst equally inspiring my creative relationship to the mythic sources.

Observing the way in which the resonance of a mythic archetype resonates for you

can in turn reflect the ways in which it might reflect for your contemporary audience.

Begin then to draw corollaries between the mythic resonance and the

contemporary age, by making connections and bridging experiences via the

resonance and then the characters and events. Use these connections to fill the gaps

offered by the narrative nexus of the myth and begin to weave a response which

draws upon the interplay between classical and contemporary responses to the myth.

Transpose the resonance, the heart of the myth, to the contemporary world of the

play. The energy of what resonates for the artist can fuel the creative process. This

will have an impact on the way one develops characters and structure the myth,

along with other adaptive choices. Myths are often already much distilled; they carry

the essentials of the story so that they can be expanded and embroidered by each new

storyteller.

Though myths, like all narratives, have the potential to inspire creative

responses, to endure throughout the development of a full-length play, the myth

selected must inspire in the playwright the potential to sustain this engagement. It

could be debated that the body of mythic research on offer to those who seek to

creatively engage with them might provide enough material for the playwright to

develop multiple responses. However, to sustain a creative enterprise the myth must

prompt more than a logical gathering of fragments and echoes throughout the ages.

To spark inspiration the myth must resonate within the artist's imagination, and make available points of connection to the artist's contemporary world.

Myths can be used in this way to provide starting points, seeding the artist's imagination as objects of inspiration, points of inquiry and a core around which new plays can be developed. Myths need not dictate, but instead can inform and inspire the form, structure, and content in the final creative responses. The practitioner can use the mythic discourse as a springboard, a blueprint, as a point of departure, a known beginning heading towards an unknown end. With the many creative choices open to the playwright who engages with mythic material the adaptive process can offer the playwright beneficial moments of *jouissance* as the myths inspire playful connections between 'the source' of inspiration and their contemporary context.

In the findings of my creative enquiry into the possible uses of classical mythology for the contemporary playwright, I have discovered connections, narrative sources and the notion of play, instinct and the inherent adaptive imperative of the playwright, whether working from an 'original' idea or an 'adaptive' response. Even playwrights who do not seek to respond to pre-existing sources are adapting the world around them to weave into new stories and forms. We are never creating in an artistic vacuum; we are being inspired by multiple sources all the time, so why not use one of these sources as a conscious rather than unconscious influence? Myths, not being covered by copyright law, offer a way for a playwright to investigate the creative possibilities of an adaptive engagement before taking on less distant narrative sources. By focusing on myth as the source of enquiry to shape the creative process and practice in the development of a new play, one starts the creative process

with a shared known which provides an anchor for a creative journey into the unknown.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adams Leeming, D. (1992) *The World of Myth: An Anthology*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Aleks, S. (2003) Art flourishes in times of struggle: Creativity, Funding and New Writing. In: *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 13:1, pp.33-45.

Allain, P. (1997) *Gardzienice: Polish Theatre in Transition*. London, Routledge.

Allain, P. and Harvie, J. (2006) *The Routledge Companion to Theatre and Performance*. London, Routledge.

Allen, G. (2011) *Intertextuality*. London, Routledge.

Andersen-Warren, M. and Grainger, R. (2000) *Practical Approaches to Dramatherapy: The Shield of Perseus*. London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Anouilh, J. (2005) *Antigone* translated by B, Bray. London, Methuen Drama.

Apollodorus. (2008) *The Library of Greek Mythology*, translated by R, Hard. Oxford, Oxford Paperbacks.

Aragay, M. (2005) *Books in Motion. Adaptation, Intertextuality, Authorship*. New York, Rodopi.

Archer, W. (2004) [1912] *Playmaking: A Manual of Craftsmanship*. London, Chapman and Hall.

Aristotle. (2007) *Poetics*. Translated by K, McLeish. London, Nick Hern Books.

Armstrong, K. (2005) *A Short History of Myth*. Edinburgh, Canongate.

Arnott, P, D. (1991) *Public and Performance in the Greek Theatre*. Oxon, Routledge.

Ashbery, J. (1960) *Three Plays: The Heroes, The Compromise, The Philosopher*. London, Carcanet.

Aston, E and Harris, G. (eds.) (2006) *Feminist Futures?* Hampshire, Palgrave Macmillan.

Aston, E and Savona, G. (1991) *Theatre as a Sign System: A Semiotics of Text and Performance*. London, Routledge.

Aston, E. (1995*) An Introduction to Feminism and Theatre*. London, Routledge.

Aston, E. and Reinelt, J. (eds.) (2000) *Modern British Women Playwrights.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Atwood, M. (2005) *The Penelopiad.* Edinburgh, Canongate Books Ltd.

Avery, Helen, P. (1965) "The Family Reunion" Remembered. In: Educational Theatre Journal. 17:1. pp.10-18.

Ayckbourn, A. (2002) *The Crafty Art of Playmaking.* London, Faber & Faber.

Babbage, Frances and Llewellyn-Jones, Margaret. (1994) A Mouthful of Birds: Questions of Creativity and co-operation. In: *Contemporary Theatre Review.* 2:1, pp.47-58.

Babbage, Frances. (1997): A review of The Open Page: A Journal of Women's Thoughts, Questions and Visions for Theatre, edited by Geddy Aniksdal, Maggie Gale, Teresa Ralli and Julia Varley. Issue one: "Theatre-Women-Myth", *Contemporary Theatre Review,* 6:2, pp.95-99.

Babbage, Frances. (2000) *Re-visioning Myth: Feminist Strategies in Contemporary Theatre.* Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. University of Warwick. Britain.

Bacchilega, C. (1997) *Postmodern Fairy Tales: Gender and Narrative Strategies.* Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press.

Babbage, F. (ed.) (2011). *Re-visioning Myth: Modern and Contemporary Drama by Women.* Manchester, Manchester University Press.

Bach, R. (1972) *Jonathan Livingston Seagull.* London, Turnstone Press.

Barthes, R. (1977) *Image Music Text,* translated by S. Heath. London, Fontana Press.

Barthes, R. (1993) *Camera Lucida,* translated by R, Howard. London, Vintage.

Barthes, R. (2009). *Mythologies,* Translated by S, Lavers. Vintage Press, London. (First published Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1957),

Barton, J. (2000) *Tantalus: An Ancient Myth for a New Millennium.* London, Oberon Books.

Bassnett, S. (2000) *The Politics of Location.* In Aston, E. and Reinelt, J. (eds.) *Modern British Women Playwrights.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. Pp.73-81

Bauby, J. (2005) *The Diving bell and The Butterfly.* London, Harper Collins.

Bay-Cheng, S. (2012) T.S.Eliot: Plays of the 1950s. In: Pattie, D. (ed.) (2012) *Modern British Playwriting the 1950s.* London, Methuen. pp.95-118.

Beaton, M, E. (1996) *The Magic Mirror: Myth's Abiding Power.* New York, State University of New York Press.

Belli, A. (1969) *Ancient Greek Myths and Modern Drama*. New York, New York University Press.

Bentley, E. (1987) *The Playwright as Thinker*. London, Minnesota Press.

Bentley, E. (1991) *The Life of the Drama*. North Devon, Roundhouse Ltd.

Berger, J. (1986) *Ways of Seeing*. London, Penguin Books Limited.

Berkoff, S. (1992) *The Theatre Of Steven Berkoff*. London, Methuen Drama.

Berkoff, S. (1994) *Overview*. London, Faber and Faber.

Berkoff, S. (1996) *Free Association an Autobiography*. London, Faber and Faber.

Berkoff, Steven. (1994) *The Collected Plays Volume 1: East, West, Greek, Sink the Belgrano!, Massage, and Lunch*. London, Faber and Faber.

Berlin, N. (1982) *Eugene O'Neill*. London, Macmillan Press Ltd.

Bettelheim, B. (1976) *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. London, Thames and Hudson.

Billingham, P. (2007) *At the Sharp End: Uncovering the Work of Five Leading Dramatists*. London, Methuen Drama.

Billington, M. (1974) The Island. *Guardian*, 3rd Jan 1974, [n.p]

Billington, M. (2003a.) Morning Becomes Electra. *The Guardian*, 29th November 2003.

Billington, M. (2003b.) Who? Joanna Laurens. What? Playwright. They say: 'The most original theatrical voice to have emerged since Sarah Kane'. *The Observer*, 7th December 2003.

Bilington, M. (2004) Cruel and Tender. *The Guardian*, 14th May 2004.

Billington, M. (2010) Fable for modern times fails to break free from destiny: Welcome to Thebes Olivier, London 3/5. *The Guardian*, 23rd June 2010.

Blake, W. (2008) *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. London, Tate Publishing.

Boireau, N. (1996) Steven Berkoff's orgy: The Four-letter ecstasy. *Contemporary Theatre Review*. Volume 5, Issue 1-2. Pp.77-89.

Boll, J. (2013) *The New War Plays From Kane to Harris*. Hampshire, Palgrave Macmillan,

Boireau, N. (1996) Steven Berkoff's orgy: The four-letter ecstasy. In: *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 5:1-2, pp.77-89.

Bond, E. (2010) Epilogue: 'The Mark of Kane'. In: Laurens De Vos and Graham Sanders (eds.) (2010) *Sarah Kane in Context.* Manchester; Manchester University Press. Pp.209-220.

Bond, Edward. (2011) Epilogue: 'The Mark of Kane'. In De Vos, L. and Sanders, G. (eds.) *Sarah Kane in Context.* Manchester, Manchester University Press. Pp.209-220.

Booker, C. (2004) *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories.* London, Continuum.

Botham, P. (2012) Caryl Churchill. In: Chris Megson (ed.) *Modern British Playwriting the 1970s.* London, Methuen. pp.99-122.

Bowers, M, A. (2004) *Magic(al) Realism.* London, Routledge.

Brandes, R. (2001) The Anthropologist's Uses of Myth. In: (eds.) Gifford, T. *The Cambridge Companion to Ted Hughes.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp.67-80.

Brook, P. (1972) *The Empty Space.* London, Penguin Books.

Brook, P. (1987) *The Shifting Point 1946-1987.* New York, Harper and Row.

Brown, I. (1969) *Antigone.* Typescript

Brown, I. (1991) *Bacchai.* Typescript

Brown, I. and Ceri Sherlock (1998)'Antigone: A Scots/Welsh Experience of Mythical and Theatrical Translation' In Bowker, L. et al. (eds.), *Unity in Diversity?; Current Trends in Translation Studies.* St Jerome Publishing. Manchester. pp. 25-37.

Brown, Ian. (1991) *History as Theatrical Metaphor.* Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. Crewe & Alsager College of Higher Education.

Brown, S, A. (2007) Introduction: Tragedy in Transition. In: Brown, S, A. and Silverstone, C. (eds.) Tragedy in transition. Oxford, Blackwell. pp.1-15.

Brown, S, A. and Silverstone, C. (eds.) (2008) Tragedy in Transition. London, Wiley-Blackwell.

Brunel, P. (1992) *Companion to Literary Myths, Heroes and Archetypes.* London, Routledge.

Buffini, M. (2010) *Welcome To Thebes.* London, Faber and Faber.

Buffini, M. and Neill, H. (2010) *Playwright Moria Buffini Updates Greek Tragedy.* Theatre Voice Interview. [audio] 3rd September 2010. Available at: < http://www.theatrevoice.com/audio/playwright-moira-buffini-updates-greek-tragedy/ > [accessed 15th December 2012]

Buffini, M. and Silverman, L. (2010) Talking to... the Welcome to Thebes writer Moira Buffini. *The Times,* Jun 19 2010, p.18.

Bulfinch, T. (1998) *Bulfinch's Mythology.* New York, Modern Library Inc.

Burden, M. (1998) *A Woman Scorn'd Responses to the Dido Myth.* London, Faber and Faber

Burian, P. (1997) Tragedy Adapted for Stages and Screens: the Renaissance to the Present. In: Easterling, P, E. (eds.) *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. pp 228 -283

Bush, S. (2013) *The Theatre of Timberlake Wertenbaker.* London, Methuen.

Bushnell, R. (eds.) (2009) A Companion to Tragedy. West Sussex, Blackwell Publishing.

Caldarone, M. and Lloyd-Williams, M. (2004) *ACTIONS: The Actor's Thesaurus.* London, Nick Hern Books Limited.

Campbell, A, P. Sarah Kane's Phaedra's Love: staging the implacable. In De Vos and Sanders (eds.) (2011) *Sarah Kane in Context.* Manchester; Manchester University Press.

Campbell, J. (1969) *Primitive Mythology: The Masks of God.* London, Penguin Books.

Campbell, J. (1970) *Creative Mythology: The Masks of God.* London, Penguin Books.

Campbell, J. (1972) *Myths to Live by.* London, Souvenir Press.

Campbell, J. (1976) *Occidental Mythology: The Masks of God.* London, Penguin Books.

Campbell, J. (1986) *The Inner Reaches of Outer Space; Metaphor as Myth and as Religion.* California, New World Library.

Campbell, J. (1990) *The Hero's Journey.* San Francisco, Harper and Rowe.

Campbell, J. (1990) *Transformations of Myth through Time.* New York, Harper and Row.

Campbell, J. (1993) *The Hero with a Thousand Faces.* London, Harper Collins.

Campbell, J. (2001) *The Power of Myth.* New York, Broadway Books.

Campbell, J. (2001) *Thou Art That: Transforming Religious Metaphor.* California, New World Library.

Campbell, J. (2002) *The Inner Reaches of Outer Space: Metaphor as Myth and as Religion.* California, New World Library.

Campbell, J. (2004) *Pathways to Bliss; Mythology and Personal Transformation.* California, New World Library.

Camus, A. (2004) *The Myth of Sisyphus.* London, Penguin.

Calasso, R. (1994) *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*. London, Virago.

Carlisle, T. (2000) Reading the Scars: Rita Dove's *The Darker Face of the Earth*. In: *African American Review* 34:1 2000, pp.135-150.

Carlson, M. (1996) *Performance: a Critical Introduction*. London, Routledge.

Carlson, S. (2000) Language and identity in Timberlake Wertenbaker's Plays. In: Aston, E. and Reinelt, J. (eds.) (2000) *Modern British Women Playwrights*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. Pp.134-149

Carroll, L. (1962) *Through the Looking-Glass*. London, The Folio Society.

Carroll, L. (1962) *Alice in Wonderland*. London, The Folio Society.

Carpentier, M, C. (1989) Orestes in the Drawing Room: Aeschylean Parallels in T. S. Eliot's "The Family Reunion". In: *Twentieth Century Literature*. 35:1. Pp.17-42

Castagno, P. (2001) New Playwriting Strategies: A Language-Based Approach to Playwriting. Oxford, Routledge.

Catullus. (1996) *The Poems*. Translated by P, Whigham. London, Penguin Books.

Caulderón de le Barca, P. (1991) *The Mayor of Zalamea, Life's a Dream, The Great Theatre of the World*. Translated by Adrian Mitchell. London, Absolute Classics.

Cavendish, D. (2008) Bringing Eliot back from the waste land: A new Donmar Warehouse season reassesses the neglected, experimental plays of the poet and dramatist T S Eliot. The Daily Telegraph, 22nd Nov 2008.

Chambers, C. (ed.) (2002) *The Continuum Companion to Twentieth Century Theatre*. London, Continuum.

Chambers, C. and Prior, M. (1987) *Playwright's Progress: Patterns of Post-war British Drama*. Oxford, Amber Lane Press.

Childs, P. (2000) *Modernism*. Oxon, Routledge.

Chirico, M. (2012) Hellenic Women Revisited: The Aesthetics of Mythic Revision in the Plays of Karen Hartman, Sarah Ruhl and Caridad Svich. In Foster, V, A. (eds) (2012) *Dramatic Revisions of Myths, Fairy Tales and Legends*. London, McFarland. pp.15-33.

Churchill, C. (1986) *Plays 3: Ice-cream; Mad Forest; The Skriker; Thyestes; Lives of The Great Poisoners; A Mouthful of Birds*. London, Nick Hern Books.

Churchill, C. (1990) *Plays 2: Softcops, Top Girls, Fen, and Serious Money*. London, Methuen.

Churchill, C. and Cousin, G. (1988) The Common Imagination and the Individual Voice. In: *New Theatre Quarterly*, vol 4. pp3-16.

Clapp, S. (2010) Review: Critics: Theatre: THE MAIN REVIEW: A knockout performance: Two urban lords of the ring offer some fancy footwork, while Greek myth and Alice produce alternative wonderlands: Sucker Punch Royal Court, London SW1, to 24 July: Welcome to Thebes Olivier, London SE1, to 19 August: Alice Crucible, Sheffield, to 24 July. *The Observer*, 27th June 2010.

Clayton, S. (2007) Mythic Structure in Screenwriting. New Writing. Vol 4:3, pp.208-223

Cobley, P. (2013) *Narrative*. Hoboken, Taylor & Francis.

Cohn, R. (1996) Digging the Greeks: New Versions of Old Classics. In: Shank, T. (eds.) (1993) *Contemporary British Theatre*. Hampshire, Macmillan Press. p41- 54

Cole, T. (ed.) (1960) *Playwrights on Playwriting*. New York, Cooper Square Press.

Costa, M. (2008) The Family Reunion. *The Guardian*, 27th November 2008.

Cook, R. (1993) *The Love of the Nightingale* by Timberlake Wertenbaker. In: *Theatre Journal*, 45:3, pp. 381-382.

Cotterell, A. (1999) *The Encyclopaedia of Mythology*. London, Lorenz Books.

Counsell, C. (2003) *Signs of Performance: An Introduction to Twentieth Century Theatre*. Routledge, London.

Coupe, L. (1997) *Myth*. London, Routledge.

Coveney, M. Mouthful of Birds. *Financial Times,* 28th November 1986, [n.p]

Crimp, M. (1997) *Attempts on her Life*. London, Faber and Faber.

Crimp, M. (2004) *Cruel and Tender*. London, Faber and Faber.

Crimp, M. (2005) *Plays 2*. London, Faber and Faber.

Crimp, M. (2006) Martin Crimp in Conversation with Aleks Sierz; The Question Is The Ultimate In Discomfort. *New Theatre Quarterly*. 22(04), pp.352-360.

Crimp, M. (2008) *The City*. London, Faber and Faber.

Croall, J. (2008) *Buzz Buzz! Playwrights, Actors and Directors at the National Theatre*. London, Methuen.

Croft, S. (2001) *She Also Wrote Plays*. London, Faber and Faber.

Cross, R. (2004) *Steven Berkoff and the Theatre of Self-Performance*. Manchester, Manchester University Press.

Culpepper, J. (2001) *Language and Characterisation: People in Plays and other texts*. Harlow, Pearson Educational.

Cushman, R. (1974) The Island. *The Observer*, 6th Jan 1974, [n.p]

De Jongh, N. (1989) A Violent Silence. The Guardian, 23rd August 1989.

Denith, S. (2000) *Parody.* London, Routledge.

De Jongh, N. By Spirits Possessed. *Guardian*, 29th November 1986, [n.p]

De Vos, L. And Saunders, G. (eds.) (2010) *Sarah Kane in Context.* Manchester, Manchester University Press.

Diamond, E. (1988) *(In)Visible Bodies in Churchill's Theatre.* In: Theatre Journal. 40:2. pp188-204.

Diamond, E. (1997) *Unmaking Mimesis.* Oxon, Routledge.

Dickinson, H. (1969) *Myth on the Modern Stage.* London, University of Illinois Press.

Dickinson, A. The Island - Review. *The Guardian,* 14th November 2013.

D'Monte, R. and Saunders, G. (Eds.) (2007) *Cool Britannia.* London, Palgrave.

Dove, R. and Dungy, C, T. (2005) Interview with Rita Dove. In: *Callaloo,* 28:4, pp. 1027-1040

Dove, R. (1999) An Interview with Rita Dove with Malin Pereira. In: *Contemporary Literature.* 40:2, pp.183-213

Dove, Rita. (1996) The Darker Face of *the Earth.* London, Oberon Books.

Drakakis, J. and Conn Liebler, N. (1998) Tragedy. Essex, Longman.

Droomgoole, D. (2002) *The Full Room.* London, Methuen.

Dromgoole, N. (2001) *The Playwright As Rebel.* London, Oberon.

Duffy, C, A. (1997) *More Grimm Tales.* Adapted from the Brothers Grimm by Carol Ann Duffy, dramatized by Tim Supple and the Young Vic Company. London, Faber and Faber.

Easterling, P, E. (1997) A Show for Dionysus. In: Easterling, P. E. (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. pp. 36-54.

Edgar, D. (2005) Unsteady states: Theories of Contemporary New Writing. In: *Contemporary Theatre Review.* 15:3. pp.297-308.

Edgar, D. (2009) *How Plays Work.* London, Nick Hern Books.

Egris, L. (1960) *The Art of Dramatic Writing.* New York, Simon & Schuster.

Elam, K. (2001) *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama.* London, Routledge.

Eldridge, D. (2005) Massive Attack: Dramatists should stop fooling around in little black boxes and think big. *The Guardian,* 27th June 2005

Eliot, T, S. (1962) *Collected Plays 1935-1958: Murder in the Cathedral, The Family Reunion, Cocktail Party, The Confidential Clerk, The Elder Statesman.* London, Faber and Faber.

Eliot, T. S. (1923) *Selected Essays.* London, Faber and Faber.

Eliot, T. S. (1939). *The Family Reunion.* London, Faber and Faber.

Fromm, E. (1951) *The Forgotten Language: Introduction to the Understanding of Dreams, Fairy Tales and Myths.* New York. Grove Press.

Esslin, M. (1988) *The Field of Drama.* London, Methuen.

Etchells, T. (1999) *Certain Fragments.* London, Routledge.

Euripides. (1970) *The Bacchae and other Plays.* Translated by P, Vellacott. London, Penguin Books.

Euripides. (1972) *The Orestes and Other Plays.* Translated by P, Vellacott. London, Penguin Classics.

Euripides. (1991) *Iphigenia at Aulis.* Translated by D, Taylor. London, Methuen Drama

Euripides. (1991) *Plays Two: Hecuba, The Women of Troy, Iphigenia at Aulis and Cyclops.* Translated by Peter D. Arnott, Don Taylor and J. Michael Walton respectively. London, Methuen.

Euripides. (2002) *Bacchai.* Translated by C, Teevan. London, Oberon Books.

Euripides. (2004) *Hecuba, a new version by Frank McGuinness* (from a literal translation by Murphy, F.). London, Faber and Faber.

Euripides. (2009) *Helen, in a new version by Frank McGuinness* (from a literal translation by Murphy, F.). London, Faber and Faber.

Euripides. (2009) *Trojan Women.* Translated A. Shapiro. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Evan, R. (2002) Women and Violence in "A Mouthful of Birds". In: *Theatre Journal.* 54:2. Pp.263-284.

Eyre, R. and Wright, N. (2000) *Changing Stages; A View of British Theatre in the Twentieth Century.* London, Bloomsbury.

Foley, H, P. (1999) Modern Performance and Adaptation of Greek Tragedy. In: *Transactions of the American Philological Association.*129. pp. 1-12..

Foley, H. (2004) Bad Women: Gender Politics in Late Twentieth-Century Performance and Revision of Greek Tragedy. In: Hall, E., Macintosh, F., Wrigley, A. (eds.) *Dionysus Since 69; Greek tragedy at The Dawn of the Third Millennium.* Oxford, Oxford University Press. pp.77- 111

Forsyth, A. (2009) Pacifist Antigones. In: MacArthur, M., Wilkinson, L., and Zaiontz, K. (eds.) *Performing Adaptations: Essays and Conversations on the Theory and Practice of Adaptation.* Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing. pp.25-42.

Foster, V, A. (eds) (2012) *Dramatic Revisions of Myths, Fairy Tales and Legends.* London, McFarland.

Fountain, T. (2008) *So You Want to be a Playwright.* London, Nick Hern Books.

Fraser, R. (1994) *The Golden Bough.* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Freeman, J. (2007) *New Performance/New Writing.* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Freeman, S. (2010) Tragedy After Darwin: Timberlake Wertenbaker Remakes "Modern" Tragedy. In *Comparative Drama.* 44(2),Pp.201-227

Freeman, S. (2012) Timberlake Wertenbaker. In: Jane Milling (2012) *Modern British Playwriting the 1980s.* London, Methuen. Pp.192-219

Freshwater, H. (2009) *Theatre and Audience.* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Friedman, S. (2009) *Feminist Theatrical Revisions of Classical Works: Critical Essays.* Jefferson NC, McFarland & Company.

Frow, J. (2006) *Genre.* London, Routledge.

Frus, P. and Williams, C. (eds.) (2010) *Beyond Adaptation.* London, McFarlane and Company.

Fuchs, E. (1996) *The Death of Character; Perspectives on Theatre after Modernism.* Indiana, Indiana University Press.

Fugard, A., Benson, M. (eds.) *(*1983) *Notebooks 1960/1977.* London, Faber and Faber.

Fugard, Athol. (ed., Walder, D.) (2000) *Township Plays: No-Good Friday, Nonogogo, The Coat, Sizwe Bansi Is Dead, The Island.* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Gardner, L. (2000) The Three Birds. In: *The Guardian,* Tuesday 24th October 2000. [n.p]

Gardner, L. (2005) Phaedra's Love. *The Gaurdian,*31st October 2005.

Gaskell, J. (1974) Outside World in a Cell. *Daily Mail,* 3rd January 1974, p.3. [n.p]

Geuss, R. and Speirs, R. (eds.) (1999) *Nietzsche; the Birth of Tragedy and other Writings.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Giannachi, G. and Luckhurst, M. (1999) *On Directing: Interviews with Directors.* London, Faber and Faber.

Giannopoulou, Z. (2010) Staging Power: The Politics of Sex and Death in Seneca's Phaedra and Kane's Phaedra's Love. In: De Vos, Laurens, and Graham Saunders (eds.) *Sarah Kane in Context.* Manchester, Manchester University Press. pp.57-67.

Gifford, T. (ed.) (2011) *The Cambridge Companion to Ted Hughes.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Gilbert, H. and Tompkins, J. (1996) *Post-Colonial Drama: Theory, practice, politics.* London: Routledge.

Glenn, D., Hague, R. M. D., Kooyman, B. and Bierbaum, N. (2012) *The Shadow of the Precursor.* Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Goldhill, S. (2007) *How to Stage Greek Tragedy Today.* London, University of Chicago Press.

Goldman, L. (2012) *The No Rules Handbook for Writers.* London, Oberon Books.

Goodman, L. (2000) *Mythic Women/Real Women: Plays and Performance Pieces for Women.* London, Faber and Faber.

Goodman, L. (ed.) (1998) *The Routledge Reader in Gender and Performance.* London, Routledge.

Gottlieb, V. and Chambers, C. (1999) *Theatre in A Cool Climate.* Oxford, Amber Lane Press.

Graves, R. (1960) *The Greek Myths: Volume 1.* London, Penguin.

Graves, R. (1960) *The Greek Myths: Volume 2.* London, Penguin.

Greig, D. (2011). I Let The Language Lead The Dance: Politics, Musicality, and Voyeurism. *New Theatre Quarterly,* Volume xxvii, part 1, pp.3-13

Grieg, N. (2004) *Playwriting: A Practical Guide.* London, Routledge.

Griffiths, T. & Woddis, C. (1991) *Bloomsbury Theatre Guide.* London, Bloomsbury.

Grove, N. and Parks, K. (1996) *Odyssey Now.* London, Jessica Kingsley Publishing.

Hall, E., Macintosh, F. and Wrigley, A. (eds.) (2004) *Dionysus since 69; Greek Tragedy at the Dawn of the Third Millennium.* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Hansen. W, F. (2004) *Handbook of Classical Mythology.* California, Santa Barbara.

Harcourt, S. (2004) *The ITC Practical Guide for Writers & Companies.* London, Independent Theatre Council.

Hardwick, L. (2007) Translating Greek Tragedy to the Modern Stage. In: Theatre Journal. 59:3, pp. 358-361.

Harland, R. (1999) *Literary Theory from Plato to Barthes: An Introductory History.* Basingstoke, Macmillan.

Harris Smith, S. (1986) Twentieth-Century Plays Using Classical Mythic Themes: A Checklist. *Modern Drama, Vol. 29, number 1.*

Hartigan, K. (2012) Greek Tragedy Transformed A.R. Gurney and Charles Mee Rewrite Greek Drama. In: Foster, A. (ed.) (2012) *Dramatic Revisions of Myths, Fairy Tales and Legends.* London, McFarland. pp.34-49

Hartnoll, P. (2005) *The Theatre: A Concise History.* London, Thames and Hudson.

Harvie, J. (2009) *Theatre and the City.* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Harvie, J. and Lavender, A. (eds.) (2010) *Making Contemporary Theatre.* Manchester, Manchester University Press.

Harwood, R. (1984) *All the World's a Stage.* London, Methuen.

Haydon, A. *(2013)* Theatre in the 2000s; National theatre. In Boon, R and Roberts, P. *(*eds.) (2013) *Modern British Playwriting: 2000-2009 Voices, documents, new interpretations.* London, Bloomsbury. Pp.86-29

Heaney, S. (2005) *The Burial at Thebes: Sophocles' Antigone.* London, Faber and Faber.

Heddon, D. and Milling, J. (2006) *Devising Performance: A Critical History.* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Helmer, J. and Malzacher, F. (eds.) (2004) *Not Even a Game Anymore: The Theatre of Forced Entertainment.* Berlin, Alexander Verlag.

Hesiod and Theogins. (1973) *Theogony and Works and Days, Elegies.* Translated by Dorothea Wender. London, Penguin.

Highet, G. (1949) *The Classical Tradition; Greek and Roman Influences on Western Literature.* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Homer (1987) *The Iliad,* translated by M, Hammond. London, Penguin.

Homer (2003) *The Odyssey,* translated by E, V, Rieu. London, Penguin.

Houlahan, M. (2008) Postmodern Tragedy? Returning to John Ford. In: Brown, S, A. and Silverstone, C. (eds.) *Tragedy in Transition.* Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell. pp.249-59.

Howe Kritzer, A. (2008) *Political Theatre In Post-Thatcher Britain.* London, Palgrave.

Hughes, T. (1992) *Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being.* London, Faber and Faber.

Hughes, T. (1997). *Tales from Ovid.* London, Faber and Faber.

Hughes, T. (1999). *Tales from Ovid.* Adapted by Tim Supple and Simon Reade. London, Faber and Faber.

Hughes, T. (1998) *Phaedra by Jean Racine; a new Version by Ted Hughes.* London, Faber and Faber.

Hughes, T. (1999) *The Oresteia: A Translation of Aeschylus' Trilogy of Plays.* London, Faber and Faber.

Hutcheon, L. (2006) *A Theory of Adaptation.* London, Routledge.

Hutcheon, L. (2009) Creators and Critics on Adapting: Learning About Critical Adaptation. In MacArthur, M. Wilkinson, L. and Zaiontz, K. (eds) (2009)

Performing Adaptations: Essays and Conversations on the Theory and Practice of Adaptation. Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Newcastle upon Tyne. Pp.xi-xiv

Hutcheon, L. (2009) The Art Of Repeating Stories. In Michelle MacArthur, Lydia Wilkinson. and Karen Zaiontz. (eds.) (2009) Performing Adaptations: Essays and Conversations on the Theory and Practice of Adaptation. Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing. pp.1-10

Huxley, M. and Witts, N. (2002) The Twentieth Century Performance Reader. London, Routledge.

Ingersoll, E, G. and Rubin, S, S. (1986) A Conversation with Rita Dove. In: *Black American Literature Forum.* 20:3, pp. 227-240

Innes, C. (2002) *Modern British Drama: the Twentieth Century.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Johnstone, K. (1989) *Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre.* London, Methuen.

Johnstone, K. (1999) *Impro for Storytellers.* London, Faber and Faber.

Joyce, J. (1960) *Ulysses.* London, Bodley Head.

Jung, C, G. (1964) *Civilization in Transition.* Translated by Gerhard Adler and R.F.C. Hull. USA, Bollingen Foundation.

Jung, C, G. (1970) *Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche.* Translated by R, F, C, Hull. USA, Princeton University Press.

Jung, C. G. (1994) *Memories, Dreams and Reflections.* Translated by Richard and Clara Winston. London, Harper Perennial.

Kafka, F.(2007) *Metamorphosis and other stories.* London, Penguin.

Kane, S. (1997) Sarah Kane. In Heidi Stephenson and Natasha Langridge. (eds.) (1997) *Rage and Reason Women Playwrights on Playwriting.* London, Bloomsbury. pp.129-135

Kane, S. (2001) *Sarah Kane Complete Plays: Blasted, Phaedra's Love, Cleansed, Crave, 4.48 Psychosis, Skin.* London, Methuen.

Kelleher, J. (2009) *Theatre & Politics.* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Krebs, K. (2013) *Translation and Adaptation in Theatre and Film.* London, Routledge.

King, G. (2006) *Orestes.* [online]. Shared Experience. Available at <http://www.sharedexperience.org.uk/media/education/orestes_edpack.pdf> [accessed on 17th November 2011]

Kirk, G. S. (1974) *The Nature of Myths.* London, Penguin.

Kitzler, A, M. (2011) *The Influence of Absurdist Theatre On Contemporary In-Yer-Face Plays*. Saarbrücken; VDM Dr. Müller GmbH &Co.

Kritzer, A. H. (2012) Damaged Myth in Carly Churchill's The Skriker. In Verna Foster (ed.) (2014) *Dramatic Revisions of Myths, Fairy Tales and Legends: Essays on Recent Plays*. Jefferson NC, McFarland & Company. pp.112-123.

Lane, D. (2010) *Contemporary British Drama*. Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.

Langridge, N. and Stephenson, H. (eds.) (1997) *Rage and Reason; Women Playwrights on Playwriting*. London, Methuen.

Laurens, J. (2000) *The Three Birds*. London, Oberon.

Laurens, J. (2003a.) *Five Gold Rings*. London, Oberon.

Laurens, J. (2003b.) Arts: Make it up: Reality took over TV. And now it's clogging up our theatres. Enough, says playwright Joanna Laurens. *The Gaurdian,* 11th December 2003. p.12.

Laurens, J. (2004) *Poor Beck.* London, Oberon.

Leal, L. (1995) Magical Realism in Spanish America. In: Lois Parkinson Zamora and Wendy B Faris (eds.) (1995) *Magical Realism; Theory, History, Community.* London, Duke University Press. pp.119-124.

Leavell, L. (1985) Nietzsche's Theory of Tragedy in the Plays of T. S. Eliot. In: Twentieth Century Literature, 31:1, pp.111-126.

LeCompte, E. (2006). Taking It off Centre: Perspectives On To You, The Birdie! (Phédre) An interview with Elizabeth Le Compte. In: Andrew Quick (ed.) *The Wooster Group Work Book*. New York, Routledge. pp.262 - 267

Lecoq, J. (2000) *The Moving Body; Teaching Creative Theatre*. Methuen, London.

Lehmann, H. (2006) *Postdramatic Theatre,* translated by Jurs-Munby, K. London, Routledge.

Lepage, R. (1992) *Robert Lepage in Discussion.* In: Michael Huxley and Noel Witts (eds.)(2002) *The Twentieth-Century Performance Reader* (2nd Edition). Routledge, London. pp. 279-288

Levi-Strauss, C. (1963) *Structural Anthropology.* USA, Basic Books.

Levi-Strauss, C. (1979) *Myth and Meaning: Cracking the Code of Culture.* Translated by Wendy Doniger. New York, Random House.

Levi-Strauss, C. (1984) Structure and Form: Reflections on a work by Vladimir Propp. In: Propp, V. (1984) *The Theory and History of Folklore.* Translated by Ariadna Y. Martin and Richard P. Martin. Manchester, Manchester University Press. Pp.167-188.

Lightfoot, Marjorie, J. (1968) Charting Eliot's Course in Drama. In: Educational *Theatre Journal,* 20:2 pp.186-197.

Littleton, C. S, (ed.) (2002) *Mythology: The Illustrated Anthology of World Myth and Storytelling.* London, Duncan Baird Publishers.

Luckhurst, M. (2003) Political Point-Scoring: Martin Crimp's Attempts on her Life. *Contemporary Theatre Review.* 13 (1) pp. 47-60.

MacArthur, M., Wilkinson, L. and Zaiontz, K. (eds.) (2009) *Performing Adaptations: Essays and Conversations on the Theory and Practice of Adaptation.* Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Macintosh, F. (1997) Tragedy in Performance: Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Productions. In: P.E. Easterling (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. pp. 284-323

Macintosh, F. (2004) Oedipus in the East End: From Freud to Berkoff. In: Edith Hall, Fiona Macintosh and Amanda Wrigley. (eds.) *Dionysus since 69; Greek Tragedy at the Dawn of the Third Millennium.* Oxford, Oxford University Press. pp. 313-360

Macintosh, F. (2007) Patricide versus falicide: Oedipus and Medea on the Modern Stage. In: Sarah Annes Brown and Catherine Siverstone (Eds.) (2007) *Tragedy in Transition.* Oxford, Blackwell. pp.192-211.

Malnig, J. (2009) All Is Not Right in the House of Atreus: Feminist Theatrical Renderings of the Oresteia. In: Sonia Friedman (ed.) (2009) *Feminist Theatrical Revisions of Classic Works: Critical Essays.* North Carolina, McFarland & Company Publishers. pp.21-41.

Malpas, S. (2005) The Postmodern. Oxon, Routledge.

Mamet, D. (1986) *Writing In Restaurants.* London, Faber and Faber.

Mamet, D. (2002) *Three Uses of the Knife: On the Nature and Purpose of Drama.* London, Methuen Publishing.

Maranda, P. (1972) *Mythology.* London, Penguin Books.

Martin, C. (2009) The Political Is Personal: Feminism Democracy and the Antigone Project. In: Sonia Friedman (ed.) (2009) *Feminist Theatrical Revisions of Classic Works: Critical Essays.* Jefferson NC, McFarland & Company, pp.79-94

McCall Smith, A. (2006) *Dream Angus.* Edinburgh, Canongate.

McCrory, M. (2010) Among Barbarians: Ovid, the Classics and the Creative Writer. *New Writing.* 7 (3), pp.192-200.

McGuinness, F., Harrison, T. and Hare, D. (2005) *Faber Playwrights at the National Theatre.* London, Faber and Faber.

McGuinness, F. with Cavendish, D. (2004) *Playwright Frank McGuinnes explores Greek tragedy.* Theatre Voice Interview. [Audio] 13th August 2004. Available at: < http://www.theatrevoice.com/audio/interview-frank-mcguinness-the-irish-playwright-talks-abou/> [accessed 9th December 2012]

McKee, R. (1999) *Story: Substance, Style and the Principles of Screenwriting.* London, Methuen.

Mee, C, L. (2007) I Like to Take a Greek Play. In: *Theatre Journal.* 59:3.pp.361-363

Megson, C. (2012) *Modern British Playwriting the 1970s.* London, Methuen.

Meitner, E. (2008) On Rita Dove. In: *Callaloo,* 31:3, pp. 662-666

Middeke, M., Sirez, A. and Schnierer, P, P. (eds.) (2011) *The Methuen Drama Guide to Contemporary British Playwrights.* London, Methuen.

Milling, J. (2012) *Modern British Playwriting the 1980s.* London, Methuen.

Mitter, S. and Shevtsova, M. (2005) *50 Key Theatre Directors.* London, Routledge.

Murphy, B. (2005) Tragedy in the Modern American Theater. In: Rebecca Bushnell (ed.) (2005) *A Companion to Tragedy.* Oxford, Blackwell Publishers. pp.488-504.

Nagy, P. (1999) Hold Your Nerve: Notes for a Young Playwright. In: David Edgar (ed.) *State Of Play: Playwrights on Playwriting.* London, Faber and Faber. pp.121-135.

Needlands, J. and Dobson, W. (eds.) (2000) *Theatre Directions.* London, Hodder and Stoughton.

Neilson, A. (1998) *Plays 1: Normal, Penetrator, Year of the Family, The Night before Christmas, The Censor.* London, Methuen.

Neilson, A. (2008) *Plays 2: Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness!, The Lying Kind, The Wonderful World of Dissocia, Realism.* London, Methuen.

Neill, H. and West, S. (2008) *Samuel West talks about TS Eliot.* Theatre Voice Interview. [audio] 11th November 2008. Available at: < http://www.theatrevoice.com/audio/samuel-west-talks-about-ts-eliot/> [accessed 10th December 2012]

Neipris, J. (2005) *To be a Playwright.* London, Routledge.

Newham, P. (1998) *Therapeutic Voice Work: Principles and Practice for the Use of Singing as Therapy.* London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
Nicholson, H. (2009) *Theatre & Education.* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Nietzsch, F. (1993) *The Birth of Tragedy: Out of the Spirit of Music.* Translated by Shaun Whiteside. London, Penguin.

O'Neill, E. (1966) *Mourning Becomes Electra.* London, Jonathan Cape.

O'Neill, E. (1991) *Long Day's Journey into Night.* London, Nick Hern Books.

Ovid. (1990) *Heroides.* Translated by Harold Isbell. London, Penguin Books.

Ovid. (2004) *Metamorphoses.* Translated by David Raeburn. London, Penguin Books.

Parry, J. Dancing tenderly with a pig. *Observer* - 23rd November 1986, [n.p]

Patterson, M. (2003) *Strategies of Political Theatre.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Pattie, D. (2012) *Modern British Playwriting the 1950s.* London, Methuen.

Pearson, J. (ed.) (2008) *Discovering the Self through Drama and Movement; The Sesame Approach.* London, Jessica Kingsley Publishing.

Pevlin, V. (2006) *The Helmet of Horror.* Edinburgh, Cannongate.

Petit, P. (2003) *To Reach The Clouds.* London, Faber and Faber.

Pickering, K (2010) *Key Concepts in Drama and Performance.* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Pinkola Estés, C. *Women Who Run With The Wolves.* London, Rider.

Porter Abbott, H. (2008) *The Cambridge introduction to narrative.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Porter, E, Thomas. (1969) *Myth and the Modern American Drama.* Detroit, Wayne State University Press.

Porter, J. (2005) Nietzsche and Tragedy. In: Rebecca Bushnell (ed.) (2005) *A Companion to Tragedy.* Oxford, Blackwell Publishers. pp.67-87

Portnoy, K. (1998) *Screen Adaptation: A Scriptwriting Handbook.* Woburn, Focal Press.

Propp, V. (1984) *The Theory and History of Folklore.* Translated by Ariadna Y. Martin and Richard P. Martin. Manchester, Manchester University Press.

Propp, V. (2003) *Morphology of the Folktale.* Translated by Laurence Scott. Austin, University of Texas Press.

Prunet, M. (1996) The outrageous 80s: Conservative policies and the church of England under fire in Steven Berkoff's Sink the Belgrano and David Hare's The Secret Rapture and Racing Demon. In: *Contemporary Theatre Review,* 5:1-2, pp.91-102

Quick, A. (2006) *The Wooster Group Work Book.* New York, Routledge.

Raccine, J. (2001) *Phedra.* Translated by Julie Rose. London, Nick Hern Books.

Rae, P. (2009) *Theatre & Human Rights.* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Rank, O., Raglan, L., Dundes, R. and Segal, R. A. (1999) *In Quest of the Hero.* Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Rebellato, D. (2007) 'Because it feels fucking amazing': recent British drama and bodily mutilation. In: Rebecca D'Monte and Graham Saunders. (Eds.) (2007) *Cool Britannia.* London, Palgrave. Pp.192-

Rebellato, D. (2010) *Theatre & Globalisation.* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Rees, C. (2012) *Sarah Kane.* In: A, Sierz. *Modern British Playwriting the 1990s.* London, Methuen. pp.112-137.

Reinelt, J. (2000) Caryl Churchill and the Politics of Style. In: E, Aston and J, Reinelt. (eds.) (2000) *Modern British Women Playwrights.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. pp.174-193.

Reinelt, J. (2007) Navigating Postfeminism: Writing out of the Box. In: E, Aston. and G, Harris. (eds.) (2007) *Feminist Futures.* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan. pp.17-33.

Reinelt, J., and Roach, J. (eds.) (1992) *Critical Theory and Performance.* Michigan, University of Michigan Press.

Renton, A. Mouthful of Birds. *The Independent,* 2nd December 1986, [n.p]

Rice, E. (2005) Foreword. In: Carl Grose and Anna Murphy (2005) *Kneehigh Anthology.* London, Oberon Books Ltd. pp. 9-13.

Ridley, P. (2009) Philip Ridley in Conversation with Aleks Sierz – 'Putting A New Lens On The World': The Art Of Theatrical Alchemy. *New Theatre Quarterly,* 98(2). pp.109-117.

Righelato, P. (2008) From Understanding Rita Dove In: Callaloo, 31:3 p. 668.

Righter, W. (1975) *Myth and Literature.* London, Routledge.

Rose, H, J. (1958) *A Handbook of Mythology.* London, Methuen.

Rosenbergh, J, L. (1988) Situation Hopeless, Not Terminal: the Playwright in the Twenty-First Century. In: *New Theatre Quarterly.* Vol 4: pp 226-231.

Roth, M, E. (2008) Wertenbaker & Translations in Theatre. In: S, Freeman. and M, E, Roth. (eds.) (2008) *International Dramaturgy Translation and Transformations in the Theatre of Timberlake Wertenbaker.* Belgium, European Interuniversity Press. Pp11-34.

Roth, M, E. (2009) The Philomela Myth as Postcolonial Feminist Theatre: Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Love of the Nightingale.* In: S, Friedman. (ed.) (2009) *Feminist Theatrical Revisions of Classic Works: Critical Essays.* Jefferson NC, McFarland & Company. pp.42-59.

Rowland, S. (ed.) (2008) *Psyche and the Arts: Jungian Approaches to Music, Architecture, Literature, Painting and Film.* London, Routledge.

Ruthven, K. K. (1976). *Myth: The Critical Idiom.* Methuen, London.

Rylance, R. (1994) *Roland Barthes.* Hertfordshire, Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Sanders, J. (2005) *Adaptation and Appropriation.* London, Routledge.

Saunders, G. (2002) *'Love Me or Kill Me' Sarah Kane and the Theatre of Extremes.* Manchester, Manchester University Press.

Saunders, G. (2003) Just a Word on a Page and there is the Drama. Sarah Kane's Theatrical Legacy. In: *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 13:1, pp.97-110.

Saunders, G. (2009) *About Kane: The Playwright & the Work.* London, Faber and Faber Ltd.

Saunders, G. and D'Monte, R. (2008) *Cool Britain? British Political Drama in the 1990s.* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Savran, D. (1986) *Breaking the Rules: The Wooster Group.* New York, Theatre Communications Group.

Schechner, R. (2006) *Performance Studies: An Introduction* (2nd edition). London, Routledge.

Segal, V. (2004). Theatre: Yet more jaw-jaw on war-war. *Sunday Times,* 16th May 2004.

Seger, L. (1992) *The Art of Adaptation: Turning Fact and Fiction into Film.* New York, Holt Paperbacks.

Shakespeare, W. (2008) *The RSC Shakespeare; The Complete Works.* London, Palgrave Macmillan.

Shaw, G, B. (1941) *Pygmalion.* London, Penguin.

Shaw, G, B. (2000) *Heartbreak House: A Fantasia in the Russian Manner on English Themes.* London, Penguin.

Shellard, D. (2000) *British Theatre since the War.* New Haven and London, Yale University Press.

Shelley, M. (1992) *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus.* London, Penguin.

Shepherd, S. and Wallis, M. (2002) *Studying Plays.* London, Arnold Press.

Shepherd, S. and Wallis, M. (2004) *Drama/theatre/performance.* Oxfordshire, Routledge.

Shepherd, S. and Womack, P. (1996) *English Drama: A Cultural History.* Oxford, Blackwell.

Sherman, J, F. (2010) Steven Berkoff, Choral Unity, and Modes of Governance. In: *New Theatre Quarterly, 26,* pp.232-247.

Shulman, M. (1974) Life and hard times for two... *Evening Standard.* 3rd January 1974, [n.p]

Shulman, M. (1986) Mouthful of Birds. *London Standard,* 1st December 1986, [n.p]

Shuttleworth, I. (2010) Welcome to Thebes. *Financial Times,* Jun 26th 2010.

Sierz, A. (2001) *In-Yer-Face Theatre: British Drama Today.* London, Faber and Faber.

Sierz, A. (2005) Beyond Timidity? The State of British New Writing In: *A Journal of Performance and Art.* 27:3. pp. 55-61

Sierz, A. (2006) *The Theatre of Martin Crimp.* London, A &C Black.

Sierz, A. (2011) *Rewriting the Nation: British Theatre Today (Plays and Playwrights).* London, Methuen.

Sierz, A. (2012) *Modern British Playwriting the 1990s.* London, Methuen.

Siverstone, C. (2007) Afterword: Ending Tragedy. In: S, A, Brown. and C, Siverstone, C. (eds.) (2007) *Tragedy in transition.* Blackwell, Oxford. pp. 277-286.

Sleigh, C. (2011) *Literature and Science.* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Smith, A. (2007) *Girl Gets Boy.* Edinburgh, Cannongate.

Sommerstein, A, H. (2005) Tragedy and Myth. In: Rebecca Bushnell (ed.) (2005) *A Companion to Tragedy.* Oxford, Blackwell Publishers. pp.163-180.

Sontag, S. (eds.) (1993) *A Roland Barthes Reader.* London, Vintage Classics.

Sophocles (2006). *Oedipus Rex.* Translated by R, D, Dawe. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Souris, Ioannis. (2011) *The Myth of Helen of Troy: Reinterpreting the Archetypes of the Myth in Solo and Collaborative Forms of Playwriting.* Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Essex.

Spencer, S. (2003) *The Playwright's Guidebook.* London, Faber and Faber.

Staniewski, W. (2004) *Hidden Territories: The Theatre of Gardzienice.* London, Routledge.

Star Wars: The Original Trilogy (EpisodesIV-VI). (1977). [film]. Director, George Lucas.USA, 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment.

Stevenson, R, L. (2002) *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde and Other Tales of Terror.* London, Penguin.

Styan, J. L. (1981) *Modern Drama in Theory and Practice 1: Realism and Naturalism.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Styan, J. L. (1981) *Modern Drama in Theory and Practice 2: Symbolism, Surrealism and the Absurd.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Styan, J. L. (1981) *Modern Drama in Theory and Practice 3: Expression and Epic Theatre.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Styan, J. L. (1988) *The Dramatic Experience: A Guide to the Reading of Plays.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Sullivan, E, B. (1993) Hailing Ideology, Acting in the Horizon, and Reading between Plays by Timberlake Wertenbaker. In: *Theatre Journal* 45:2. Pp.139-154.

Tanner, R, G. (1970) The Dramas of T. S. Eliot and Their Greek Models. In: *Greece & Rome.* 17:2, pp. 123-134.

Taplin, O. (1978) *Greek Tragedy in Action.* London, Routledge.

Trewin, J, C. (1974) Arts Review. *Birmingham Post,* 3th January 1974, [n.p]

The Wizard of Oz (1939). [Film] Director, Victor Fleming. USA, Warner HomeVideo.

Trussler, S. (2000) *Cambridge Illustrated History: British Theatre.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Tufnell, M. and Crickmay, C. (1990) *Body Space Image.* London, Dance Books.

Urban, K. (2001) An Ethics of Catastrophe: The Theatre of Sarah Kane. In: *Performing Arts Journal,* 69 (Winter 2001), pp. 36-46.

Urban, K. (2007) *Cruel Britannia.* In: R, D'Monte and G, Saunders (Eds.) (2007) *Cool Britannia.* London, Palgrave. pp.38-55.

Varley, J. (2001). Dramaturgy according to Daedalus: the Odin Teatret Production of "Mythos". In: *New Theatre Quarterly,* 66. vol. xvii, number 2. pp. 110-122

Vickers, S. (2007) *Where Three Roads Meet.* Edinburgh, Cannongate.

Virgil. (1986) *The Aeneid.* Oxford, Oxford University Books.

Vogler, C. (1992) *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Storytellers and Screenwriters: 2nd Revised Edition.* London, Pan Books.

Vogler, C. and McKenna, D. (2011) *Memo from the Story Department: Secrets of Structure and Character.* Studio City CA, Michael Wiese Productions.

Voytilla, S. (1999) *Myth and the Movies: Discovering the Mythic Structure of 50 Unforgettable Films.* Studio City CA, Michael Wiese Productions.

Wallace, J. (2007) *The Cambridge Introduction to Tragedy.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Wandor, M. (2008) *The Art of Writing Drama.* London, Methuen.

Ward, A, G. (1970) *The Quest for Theseus*. London, Praeger Publishers.

Wardle, I. (1974) The Island. *Times,* 28th November 1974, [n.p]

Wardle, I. (1986) Mouthful of Birds. *The Times*, 28th November 1986, [n.p]

Warner, M. (1994) *Six Myths of Our Time: Managing Monsters – The Reith Lectures 1994*. London, Vintage.

Warner, M. (1995). *From the Beast to the Blonde: Fairy Tales and Their Tellers*. London, Vintage.

Warner, M. (2000) *No Go the Bogeyman*. London, Vintage.

Warner, M. (2002) *Fantastic Metamorphoses: Other Worlds*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Warner, M. (2003) *World of Myths*. London, The British Museum Press.

Waters, S. (2010) *The Secret Life of Plays*. London, Nick Hern Books.

Watts, P. (2008) Working with Myth and Story. In: Pearson, J. (ed.) (2008) *Discovering the Self through Drama and Movement; The Sesame Approach*. London, Jessica Kingsley Publishing.pp27-33.

Weiss, A, S. (2007) Artaud's Anatomy. In: Sally Banes and Andre Lepecki. (eds.) (2007) *The Senses in Performance*. London, Routledge. pp.200-208.

Wertenbaker, T. (1996) *The Love of a Nightingale*. London, Faber and Faber.

Wertenbaker, T. (1997) Timberlake Wertenbaker. In: Heidi Stephenson and Natasha Langridge. (eds.) (1997) *Rage and Reason Women Playwrights on Playwriting*. London, Bloomsbury. pp.137-145.

Wertenbaker, T. (2004) The Voices We Hear. In: Edith Hall, Fiona Macintosh and Amanda Wrigley. (eds.) (2004) *Dionysus since 69: Greek Tragedy at the Dawn of the Third Millennium*. Oxford, Oxford University Press. pp.361-368.

White, C. and Oddey, A. (eds.) (2006) *The Potentials of Space; Theory and Practice of Scenography and Performance*. Bristol, Intellect.

Wickham, G. (1992) *A History of the Theatre*. London, Phaidon Press.

Williams, R. (2002) Argument: Text and Performance. In: Michael Huxley and Noel Witts. (eds.) (2002) *The Twentieth-Century Performance Reader: 2nd Edition*. London, Routledge.

Williams, R. (2006) *Modern Tragedy*. Broadview. Broadview Press Ltd. Plymouth.

Wilson, M. (2006) *Storytelling and Theatre: Contemporary Storytellers and their Art*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Winterson, J. (2005) *Weight*. Edinburgh, Canongate Books.

Wohl, V. (2005) Tragedy and Feminism. In: Rebecca Bushnell (ed.) (2005) *A Companion to Tragedy.* Oxford, Blackwell Publishers. pp.145-159.

Woodford, S. (1986) *An Introduction to Greek Art.*London, Duckworth.

Worth, K. (2005) Greek Notes in Samuel Beckett's Theatre Art. In: Edith Hall, Fiona Macintosh and Amanda Wrigley. (eds.) (2005) *Dionysus since 69; Greek Tragedy at the Dawn of the Third Millennium.* Oxford, Oxford University Press. pp.266-283.

Wu, D. (ed.) (2000) *Making Plays: Interviews with Contemporary Dramatists and Directors.* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Wymer, R. (2007) Tragedy and the Future. In: Sarah Anne Brown and Catherine Silverstone. (eds.) (2207) *Tragedy in Transition.* Blackwell, Oxford. Chapter 14, pp.260-276.

Zajko, Vanda. (2001) Hughes and the Classics. In: Terry Gifford (eds.) (2001) *The Cambridge Companion to Ted Hughes.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. pp.107-120.

Zamora, L. P. and Faris, B. W. (1995) *Magical Realism: Theory, History, Community.* London, Duke University Press.

Zarrilli, P., MacConachie, B., Williams, J, G., and Sorgenfrei, C, F. (2006) *Theatre Histories: An Introduction.* London, Routledge.

[n.a] (2003) 50 women to watch: Theatre: Joanna Laurens, 25, playwright. The Guardian, G2- 2.8. 30[Th] September 2003.

Performance Texts:

After Dido. By Katie Mitchell and Company inspired by Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas.* (2009) [Young Vic and the ENO, Young Vic Theatre 15th April 2009]

Amato Saltone. By Shunt. (2005) [Shunt, Shunt Vaults, London. 27th November 2005]

Antigone. By Sophocles, adapted by Timberlake Wertenbaker. (2011) Directed by Tom Littler. [Southwark Playhouse. 27th May 2011]

Attempts On Her Life. By Martin Crimp (2007) Director Katie Mitchell. [NT, Lyttelton Theatre 8th March 2007]

Blasted. By Sarah Kane. (1995) [Play]. Produced 29th March 2011. Royal Court Theatre, London. Director: James MacDonald.

Chronicles - A Lamentation. By Song of the Goat Theatre. (2007) Directed by Grzegorz Bral [Bite, Barbican Theatre. 9th August 2005]

Cleansed. By Sarah Kane. (1998) [Play]. Produced November 2005. Directed by Sean Holmes. [Oxford Stage Company, Arcola Theatre, 2nd November 2005]

Crave. By Sarah Kane. (1998) [Play]. Produced 8th May 2001. Royal Court Theatre, London. Director: Vicky Featherstone.

Cruel and Tender. By Martin Crimp (2004) Directed by Luc Bondy. [Young Vic 12th May 2004]

Electra and Metamorphoses. (2006) [play] By_Gardzienice Centre for Performance Practices. The Barbican Theatre, London. Director Staniewski, W.

Hippolytus, By Euripides. (2004) Directed by Mitchell Moreno. [Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond, 9th June 2004]

His Dark Materials Part 1. (2004) By Phillip Pullman, adapted by Nicholas Wright. Directed by Nick Hytner. [NT, Olivier Theatre. 1st Jan 2004]

His Dark Materials Part 2. (2004) By Phillip Pullman, adapted by Nicholas Wright. Directed by Nick Hytner. [NT, Olivier Theatre. 2nd April 2004]

Iphigenia at Aulis. By Euripides, translated by Don Taylor. (2004) [play] Directed by Katie Mitchell. [NT, Lyttelton Theatre. 23rd June 2004.]

La Didone. An Opera. by Francesco Cavalli, Libretto by Francesco Busenello. (2007) Directed by Elizabeth Le Compte. [The Wooster Group. Royal Lyceum Theatre. 18th August 2007]

Lacrimosa. By Song of the Goat Theatre. (2007) Directed by Grzegorz Bral [Assembly Aurora Nova, Edinburgh. 9th August 2007]

Money. By Shunt. (Devised 2009)[play]. First Produced October 2009. Bermondsey Street Warehouse, London. .

Mourning Becomes Electra. By Eugene O'Neill. (1931) [play] First Produced November 2003. Directed by Howard Davies. [NT, Lyttelton Theatre, London. 28th November 2003]

Oedipus. By Sophocles, in a new version by Frank McGuiness (2008) [play]. Directed by Jonathan Kent. [NT, Olivier Theatre. 15th October 2008]

Phaedra's Love. By Sarah Kane. (2005) Directed by Anne Tipton. [Barbican Theatre, 17th November 2005]

Phedre. By Racine, adapted by Ted Hughes. [play]. Previewed 12th June (2009) Directed by Nick Hytner. [NT Lytelton Theatre, London. 12th June 2009]

Phaedre's Love. By Sarah Kane. [play]. Directed by Anne Tipton [Barbican Theatre (The Pit), London. November 2005]

Psychosis 4.48. By Sarah Kane. Directed by James Macdonald. (2000) [play] [Royal Court Jerwoood Theatre Upstairs. 12th June 2000]

Tantalus. By John Barton (2000) [play]. Directed by Peter Hall [Barbican Theatre 19th May 2000]

The Architects. By Shunt. (2012) [devised play] V22 [The Biscuit Factory, Shoreditch London. 27th Nov 2012.]

The Bacchae. Adapted from Euripides by Anna Maria Murphy and Carl Grose. (2004) [play] A co-production between Kneehigh Theatre and The Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith. Directed by Emma Rice. [Kneehigh Theatre Company, Lyric Theatre Hammersmith. 3rd November 2004]

The Bacchae. By Euripides in a new version by David Greig. (2007) [play] Directed by John Tiffany. [King's Theatre, Edinburgh. 10th August 2007]

The Bacchai. By Euripides in a translation by Colin Teevan. (2001) [play] Directed by Peter Hall. [NT, Olivier Theatre, 17th May 2001]

The False Servant. By Pierre Carlet de Chamblain de Marivaux, adapted by Martin Crimp. (2004) [play] Directed by Johnathan Kent. [NT, Cottesloe Theatre, 13th July 2004]

Tristan and Yseult. By Carl Grose, Anna Maria Murphy, and Emma Rice. (2005) [play] Directed by Emma Rice. [Kneehigh, NT, Cottesloe Theatre. 13th May 2005]

Welcome To Thebes. By Moria Buffini. (2010) [play] Directed by Richard Eyre. [NT, Olivier Theatre, London.22nd June 2010]

Women Of Troy by Euripides in a new version by Don Taylor. (2007) [play] Directed by Katie Mitchell. [NT, Lyttelton Theatre. 28th November 2007]

Video/multimedia:

Anthony Nielson: The Wonderful World of Dissocia Promo at:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4w0ps_1OKFE [accessed 15th April 2012]

Crimp, M and Sierz, A. In conversation – *Attempts On Her Life* Audio at:
www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/microsite/attempts/audio.html [accessed 5th January 2010]

Workshops:

The Clinic. Diane Samuels, Sarah Dickenson, Nina Steiger. [Soho Theatre, Playwrights Workshop, 29-30 January 2010]

VBA Workshop: Structure. Jack Bradley. [Soho Theatre, 7 February 2011]

The Clinic. [Soho Theatre, 14-15 January 2012]

The Clinic. Nina Steiger, Ed Harris, Gemma Kennedy, Sarah Dickenson. [Soho Theatre, Playwrights Workshop, March 2012]

The Clinic 3: Summer School. Oladipo Agboluaje, Mike Packer, Catriona Craig, Ed Harris, and Sarah Dickenson. [Soho Theatre, Playwrights Workshop, 21-22 July 2012]

Grzegorz Jarzyna. *Weekend Lab: TR Warszawa.* [Barbican Theatre, London, 3- 4 November 2012.]