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從紙上到舞台：紀錄編導《意念》之過程與挑戰

From Page to Stage: An Account on the Process and

Challenges of Writing and Directing Niyyat

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Dedication

My parents are my number one supporter and give the most thoughtful advice when I doubt to continue pursuing my dreams. I offer all the success to them.

To Sir Em Mendes, who is an enthusiastic and easy-to-go-with as Playwriting professor back in college.

To Sir Randy Bustamante, who I dearly loved for inspiring us to tell our stories.

and

To all my Muslim Brothers and Sisters. To all the Ummah

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"You are not a drop in the ocean; you are the entire ocean in a drop."

--- Jalaluddin Rumi

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摘 要

本論文主要描述我在編導碩士畢業製作《意念》的創作過程。這份以實作為基礎的質性研究討論了以穆斯林為靈感的劇本創作；套用在我所選定的導演手法之概念與想法；以及在寫作過程中所遇到的挑戰。本論文透過安博格（Anne Bogart）的觀點訓練方法以及拉約什·埃格里的《編劇的藝術》闡述導演在執導與寫作的過程。

關鍵字

意念、導演方法、安博格、觀點方法、穆斯林、拉約什·埃格里、編劇的藝術



Abstract

This written thesis intends to narrate the artistic process that I have gone through in writing and directing my MFA graduation project entitled *Niyyat*.

This qualitative and practice-based research discussed the inspiration of writing a Muslim-inspired story; the concept and ideas applied in exploring my chosen directorial approach; and the challenges that I have encountered in writing the script. Particular attention to Anne Bogart's Viewpoints Training and Lajos Egri's Art of Dramatic Writing was made in this thesis to reveal the director's process in writing and directing.

Keywords

Niyyat, Director's Approach, Anne Bogart, Viewpoints Method, Islam, Lajos Egri, Art of Dramatic Writing

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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Your intention is what makes you move forward

-Abdul
(Scene 2 of Niyyat)

1.1 Director's Biography

My experience watching a theatre performance happened way back in high school when I joined school trips to see live performances in a university. I still remember the first theatre show I watched while sitting on the floor of Dela Salle University sports stadium in Dasmaringas, Cavite. It was Sining Pinagpala's staging of *Florante and Laura*, a play written by Francisco Balagtas - a prominent Filipino poet who wrote plays during the Spanish Colonial period in the Philippines. Sitting in a crowd of high school students, I felt a different urge while watching the play. Despite my only goal of observing the space so I can write something for my reflection paper, which is a requirement in our Filipino class, I became curious about;

- The actors' unique approaches in giving life to their characters.
- The witty use of entrances and exits as well as the placing of actors on stage (which I later learned as blocking).
- The movement that the actors can do to bring the audience into the story.
- Portraying certain events that are not necessarily literal (e.g., rape scene).
- The appropriate use of music to fill in the atmosphere of the scenes.

- And the curtain call after a successful performance.

This play evoked excitement within me and made me decide later that year to stage our school version of *Florante and Laura*. As a director, I felt the desire to lead, share and explore despite the difficulty that it might entail.

Moving forward to college, I joined the Guang Ming College Bachelor of Arts in Theatre program in 2014 where I learned from many theatre professionals. Paul Alexander Morales, the former Artistic Director of Ballet Philippines and who became the artistic director of the Guang Ming College Performing Arts Program, was one of my mentors in the Directing class back in college. His experience in directing is mainly on staging a dance performance or directing in a screenplay. In his tutelage, I staged excerpts from various straight plays and musicals, a full-length play written by a National Artist for Theatre- Wilfredo Ma. Guerro's *Wanted a Chaperone*; and my final graduation project- *Prince Siddhartha the Musical*, which we showcased to our parents at the end of our four years in the University.

Back to *Wanted a Chaperone*, Guerro's work revolves around the life of wealthy Filipino families and the opposing views on their behavior. Staging a Filipino story was easy for me since I have enough understanding of the Philippine culture and traditions. This play has introduced me to a broader view of directing Filipino stories which made me so interested in directing straight plays.

Comparing plays to *Prince Siddhartha the Musical*, producing a musical is an entirely different story. Aside from it is being a story about the life of the Young Buddha, I have done a lot of research to give meaning to the events that I will include in the production. Costumes, music, and designs must be done wisely and must follow with complete dramaturgy. Both

experiences in directing have allowed me to gain a basic understanding of putting a story on stage.

One night, after finishing an evening performance under my direction, two of my professors approached me and asked: "Why do you all have the same directing approach? It feels that after watching your play, we do not enjoy it anymore. It feels that we already know what to expect in your staging."

Upon entering Nanhua University's MFA for Theatre program, I wanted to find an answer to my professors' queries in college. I wanted to learn more about other directing approaches which I fail to explore back in the Philippines. I grabbed the opportunity to study directing and discover more strategies that I can use for my future creations. Through this program, I hope to:

- Discover a new directorial approach that I can apply to my future production.
- Learn about my strengths and weaknesses as an emerging stage director.
- Expand my director toolbox.

1.2 Aim

I am certain that the theme for this graduation performance should focus on the stories of the Muslim community. More than that, I am sure about exploring a new directorial approach that should be different from how I directed my creations back in my college days. Thus, one of the purpose of this thesis is to explain how I explored Anne Bogart's Viewpoint training for actors and directors in staging *Niyat*. I wanted to see an ensemble-driven play while exploring the actor's movements to portray their character and connection with other actors instead of a

static play. Furthermore, I wanted to narrate the challenges and experiences in writing a 45-minute stage play mirroring the outline for the Art of Dramatic Writing by Lajos Egri.

1.3 Research Question

This project is a product of exploration. It has undergone a tremendous amount of trial and error to reach up this point. Thus, I will address the following research questions;

- How Lajos Egri's outline for dramatic writing helped in writing *Niyyat*?
- How were the principles of Anne Bogart's Viewpoint applied in the process of staging *Niyyat*?

1.4 Scope and Delimitation

This study hopes to discuss my overall process in writing and directing my graduation project. Particular attention is given to Lajos Egri's Art of Dramatic Writing and Anne Bogart's Viewpoints training. This thesis will only be focusing on the process of both writing and directing *Niyyat*. Other information such as the design, production and audience feedback are not the focus of this discussion.

1.5 Review of Related Literature

1.5.1 SPUN by Rabiah Hussain

As a Muslim who studied theatre arts, one of my goals is to use theatre as a platform to educate the contemporary audience about the stories coming from our Islamic or Muslim

tradition. When I came up with the theme, I started researching the different events around the world that caused the negative connotation of Muslims. Several events in our history have caused Islamophobia, and out of these events, creators write their own experiences and used arts to make their voices heard. That is when I encountered Rabiah Hussain's work, *Spun*. *Spun* is a story of a British-Pakistani Muslim best friends from London, Safa, and Aisha. They have been best friends for years. They used to skip school, revise for exams, and even went to the same university. Now that they are forging different paths for the first time, Safa will work in the City and Aisha to teach in Newham. After the bombing incident in London, Aisha and Safa reappraise how they see themselves and each other and how the world sees them. Aisha starts to embrace her Muslim identity while Safa starts to distance herself from her Muslim roots.

Spun is a story about friendship and how the few tragic events involving the Muslim community affected those who have nothing to do with it. The story was inspired by Rabiah Hussain's experiences, a British-Pakistani Muslim writer from London.

The story was inspired by the 2005 London attack but more than that;

"SPUN speaks to those of us who are consistently denied the opportunity or agency to speak for ourselves, particularly in the context of Quebec where secularism and (benevolent, white, paternalistic) feminism is used to further oppress, deny, and marginalize, all in the guise of saving and protecting Muslim women from barbaric religious practices. SPUN is *our* story, told by *us*."

(Abdulla, 2019)

Evidently, Hussain wrote the story that I wish to direct for my graduation thesis, but I chose not to stage *Spun*. Although the story was just one way to tell the situation of Muslims facing discrimination, I found it challenging to put in a context that I hope to direct. Furthermore, I wanted a Filipino setting because I feel it is more fulfilling to tell a story that I am familiar with

rather than to try hard to understand another culture. Therefore, I chose to write my own story that mirrors the life of the Muslims in the Philippines. I was inspired by how Hussain dug into a serious conflict of questioning our faith or existence rather than speaking for ourselves. Thus, in my latest piece, Niyyat, several scenarios are somehow mirrored from the plot of Spun. But, before I finally came up with the title, I have gone through many challenging processes. These processes were reflected in the following literature related to this study.

1.5.2 Lajos Egri's Art of Dramatic Writing

I was first introduced to Lajos Egri's work when I was in third-year college during our classes with our late playwriting Professor, Sir Mario "EM" Mendez. Egri's outline for playwriting was one of the most straightforward guidelines to follow when writing the script because he explained it in his book with clear-cut examples that are easy to comprehend. The guideline that Egri has introduced also reflects the process that I have gone through with Sir Pao, who marshalled us by giving step-by-step guidance in staging an entirely new play. First, we started by thinking about the theme, then the core message and structure, which is similar to the process explained in the book of Egri.

Lajos N. Egri (1888-1967) is the writer behind the book "Art of Dramatic Writing: A guide to Playwriting," which is considered one of the successful 'how-to' playwriting book. It attempts to argue against Aristotle's principle of the character being the second element of the play after the plot. Egri argues that character is the heart of any drama and is considered the foundation of a well-plotted story. In his argument, Egri emphasized the necessity of the premise "a thematic truth" in playwriting. That goes through a logical method named after the Hegelian Dialectic. Through giving examples of the stories written by Henrik Ibsen and William

Shakespeare, Egri shows the three crucial elements of achieving the truth in writing. These three are premise, character, and conflict.

1.5.2.1 Premise

"Every sensible intention must have a purpose; every planned sprint proposes a destination."

(Egri, 2004)

Everything has its purpose, whether or not we are conscious about it. Breathing is like the premise. Breathing is something, every human being needs to do to survive. In writing, the premise is the ultimate goal of a writer. According to the Webster's International Dictionary, a Premise is a proposition antecedently supposed or proved, a basis of argument. A proposition stated or assumed as leading to a conclusion."

Below are the different terms that the men (and women) of theatre commonly use, according to Egri (2004)

- Theme
- Thesis
- Root idea
- Central idea
- Goal
- Aim
- Driving force
- Subject

- Purpose
- Plan
- Plot
- Basic emotion

For Egri, the term 'premise' contains all the words stated above, and it is safe from misinterpretation. The premise is something that the writer needs in order to identify "... where you are going," as stated by George Pierce Baker, quoting Dumas the Younger. Many writers or theatre practitioners may have defined it using different words, but it all means one thing: 'premise.'

The following list is an example of premises used in the different plays written by famous directors of the century, as Egri (2004) listed.

- Romeo and Juliet: "Great love defies even death."
- King Lear: "Blind trust leads to destruction."
- Macbeth: "Ruthless ambition leads to its own destruction.'
- Othello: "Jealousy destroys itself and object of its love."
- Ghosts, by Ibsen: "The sins of the fathers are visited on the children."

From this list, we can identify that any premise requires three parts: a character (emotion), a conflict, and an ending of the play. The beginning part of the premise suggests the feeling. The character pertains to the play's protagonist; the second leads to the conflict, while the last and final part means (reveals) what will happen to the character in the end. In short, the premise can be the writer's guide to write a good play with an end goal. As Egri (2004) suggests, "The premise is the motivating power behind everything we do."

1.5.2.2 Backbone of the Character

Creators need to consider that the fundamental material we are working with is the character in both writing and directing. That is why it is necessary to know them thoroughly. As we create a real human being in the story, we must know how a writer can make a real "man" in his/her creation.

Egri (2004) emphasized that a character should be three-dimensional. To appraise a character, we must be familiar with these three: physiology, sociology, and psychology. These three will help us understand the action of an individual. These are the character's motivation that compels him/her to act as he/she does.

Physiology means the physical appearance of the character. Does she/he wear something different from the other? Does she/he look physically different from the other? Does she/he have a long, thick eyebrow, black eyes, long hair, small petite body? These are some physical aspects that may affect how an individual think of herself/himself.

The second dimension is Sociology. This pertains to how a human being would see his/her physicality. Some might make fun of this liability, or it can be a source of resentment. The combination of the first two dimensions will give birth to the mental state dimension.

Understanding these three dimensions in character will help the writers understand the phase of human conduct, thus creating a "human" character in his/her play.

1.5.2.3 A Character at Stake

There is no play if there is no conflict. Thus, a weak character cannot support a play. What a dramatist need is a character who is strong enough to carry the story to its ending. Under the right circumstances, a character would fight. The author must discover how vital it is to catch

a feeling at its peak of mental development. Each living being is capable of doing anything if the given conditions around her/him are strong enough.

1.5.2.4 Conflict: The Origin of Action

Conflict is an essential aspect of the play. It tells the actor or characters whether he /she is ready to reach the next phase of the story. Egri (2004) separates the conflict into four divisions named "static," "jumping," "solely rising," and "foreshadowing."

1.5.2.5 Dialogue

Dialogue is an essential means in which the dramatist hopes to achieve the premise, the character is revealed, and the conflict is carried. Egri (2004) emphasized the various requirements that a dialogue should do in the play.

1. A dialogue must reveal the characters who have achieved the three-dimensional "man" who tries to tell us what he/she is and hint to us what he/she will be.
2. A dialogue also reveals the background.
3. A dialogue must foreshadow the coming events.

Dialogue grows from the character and the conflict (Egri, 2004).

Listed below are notes on how to avoid characters or dialogue from falling flat.

1. Limit the words.
2. Remember that the dialogue must come from the character.
3. Let the man/woman speak in the language of his world.

4. Don't carry occupational imagery to ridiculous lengths, but don't try to do without it.
5. Don't be pedantic.
6. Make clever language truly part of the play.
7. Dialogue should be dialectic.

1.5.3 Anne Bogart's Viewpoints

In my director's biography, I mentioned that one of my goals in continuing my study of theatre arts is to expand my directing toolbox. With the limited experience I had in directing some of our school plays during my college days, I crave to learn a new directorial approach that I can use in my creation.

Last year, during our Directing I class, we staged a devised play based on the events of Covid-19. From that experience, I got so interested in applying physical movements onstage. What I wanted to explore in this work are the possibilities that the actors can do as they fully engage their bodies in action. Searching about the physical theatre, I was introduced to Anne Bogart's Viewpoints; a process generally consists of three steps: Source-work, Viewpoints, and Composition. In her essay, Tina Landau mentioned that "Source-Work, the Viewpoints, and Composition: What Are They?", "the Source-work, the Viewpoints, and Composition are also a map. Tools and ladders. They provide a structure for the artist so she/he can forget about the structure. They are there to free her/him up for the much more difficult, consuming task of expression, getting in touch with and communicating the stuff of the soul. They exist *in the service of Art*" (Landau, 1995 as cited in Ramon, 2003). I chose Anne Bogart's Viewpoints to be used in this thesis because it offers straightforward exercises or pieces of training that help both actors and directors in rehearsal. It also gives a reasonable explanation that the director can use whenever staging a play that includes unrealistic actions, setting, and props.

1.5.3.1 Source-work

Source-work is "a series of activities done at the beginning of the rehearsal process to get in touch --- both intellectually and emotionally, both individually and collectively -- with 'the source' from which you are working. Source-work is also the time to enter your entire being into the world, the issues, and the heart of your material" " (Landau, 1995 as cited in Ramon, 2003).

Source-work is what most directors call table work. However, it is not simply reading and re-reading the script and determining what it all means. When the director, dramaturg, designers, and actors "question the hand and discover the meat," or the life of the script. In most situations, the director and dramaturg use this time to guide the designers and actors into understanding the play independently.

1.5.3.2 Viewpoints

The second part of the Viewpoints process is Viewpoints. Viewpoints are "the set of names given to certain basic principles of movement" (Landau, 1995 in Ramon 2003).

Viewpoints assure the director that actors are in time and focused on the ideas of the play and space in which the production will take place.

Viewpoint is defined as "A philosophy of movement translated into a technique for (1) training performers and (2) creating movement on stage. These are the points of awareness that a performer or creator has while working" (Landau 20, in Ramon 2003). This allows actors to be aware of their surroundings. It also allows the actors to avoid overthinking reactions but let spontaneous action occur naturally.

Anne Bogart coined Viewpoints after collaborating with a dancer, choreographer, and teacher Mary Overlie in 1970 (Perucci 2017, Olsberg 1994). Although Overlie first introduced

Viewpoints to Anne Bogart, her six viewpoint training and Bogart (which later increased to 9 viewpoints) are a lot different (Perucci, 2017). Olsberg 1994 noted Anne Bogart's words,

"It became apparent to me how the six viewpoints applied to the theatre so clearly... to actor, not to dancers necessarily...to stage... to a philosophy of movement on the stage with text, for Chekhov... you know... so I started using it, and developing my thought about it."

(Bogart, 1993)

Olsberg, (1994) mentioned in his later study that Bogart's viewpoint is composed of an exercise called "viewpoints improvisation of both movement and sound. This philosophy became an everything tool, most especially for staging rehearsals.

Anne Bogart coined nine viewpoints separated into two categories, time and space. The viewpoints included in the category of time are tempo, duration, kinesthetic response, and repetition. While on the other hand, the viewpoints in the category of space are shape, gesture, architecture, spatial relationship, and topography. In this specific study, I wanted to discuss six out of the nine viewpoints. These six became an essential aspect of staging my graduation project.

Tempo pertains to how fast or slows the movement was performed or executed on stage. It helps the actors to be aware of their speed.

Duration is about how long each movement was executed on stage. Practicing duration helps the actor define how long something is to make it interesting and how long it starts to die (Landau 40).

Kinesthetic response means an actor's response to the outside action. Some elements that might affect this response are the dialogue itself, the other actors, music, lights, and more.

Spatial Relationship. Although there is no rule on which one goes first in Bogart's nine viewpoints, I consider the Spatial relationship one of the most essential that helped me direct my graduation project. The spatial relationship is another word for 'distance,' the distance that the actors maintain from the other actors (Olsberg, 1994). As cited by Ramon (2003), "distance between things on the stage, especially one body to another, one body to a group of bodies, or the body to the playing space. Actors tend to get into comfortable spaces while on stage" (Landau 23). This viewpoint allows the actor to feel the space so they can give meaning to different scenes in the play by maintaining various relationships with space and the other actors.

A gesture is "movement involving a part or parts of the body. Gestures can be made with the hands, the arms, the legs, the head, the mouth, the eyes, the feet, the stomach or any other part or combination of parts, which can be isolated" (Landau, 1995 as cited in Ramon, 2003).

Architecture pertains to how the actor responds, builds relation, and uses the architecture (elements on stage like set and props). Anne Bogart and Tina Landau (2005) emphasized that "In working with viewpoint, we learn to dance with space, to be in dialogue with the room, to let movement (especially Shape and Gesture) evolve out of our surroundings."

1.5.3.3 Composition

The last part of Viewpoints is composition. Composition is "the practice of selecting and arranging the separate components of theatrical language into a cohesive work of art for the stage. Composition is to the director what the Viewpoints are to the actor: a method of practicing her/his art" (Landau 26, as cited in Ramon 2003)

1.5.3.4 Other work with Viewpoints

Viewpoints have been a valuable tool for both the directors and actors, especially in an ensemble-driven play. While reading on the Viewpoints of Anne Bogart, I have read a Master of Fine Arts thesis by Ricky Ramon entitled, "YOU NEED TO DO YOUR BEST TO SAY IT CORRECT": DIRECTING THE LARAMIE PROJECT WITH VIEWPOINTS." In his study, he mentioned how the viewpoints helped him in staging his graduate thesis. He explained in his writings that the viewpoints training became an essential tool to create a strong ensemble and explore the different perspectives and viewpoints while staying honest to the script.

1.6 Methodology

This study utilized two types of methods, namely qualitative and practice-based research. In writing the script I have read about the Art of Dramatic writing presented by Lajos Egri. On the other hand, I am using Anne Bogart's viewpoints training as the primary directorial approach in this thesis.

Practice is the fundamental method of this study. Practice is the working process where my job as a writer-director was tested through collaboration and application of the training. In the end, a critical reflection on the completion of this play is essential in finishing this whole process.

Practice is the required method of inquiry. In respect of the arts, a practice (creative writing, dance, musical score/performance, theatre/performance, visual exhibition, film, or other cultural practice) is submitted as substantial evidence of a research inquiry.

(Nelson, 2013)

1.7 Outline of the Chapter

Chapter I aims to discuss the vital information of this written thesis namely; the purpose of the study, related literature, scope, and methodology applied. The following chapters will dig into a more detailed explanation of each process. Chapter II will focus on the process and challenges in writing a play guided by Lajos Egri's Art of Dramatic Writing. Chapter III explains the process of how I adapted Anne Bogart's Viewpoints in directing Niyyat. Chapter IV provides the conclusion and the learnings from this production.



Chapter 2: CHALLENGES IN WRITING THE SCRIPT

2.1 Inspiration in Writing Niyyat

When I was in the earliest stage of proposing the play that I will direct for my thesis, I submitted a theme that I wanted to tackle. Considering that I will have a local Taiwanese audience, and not everyone can speak English, I thought of choosing a play translated into Mandarin or Chinese. But due to the limited amount of time and actors that I had, I might encounter so much difficulty. So, my thesis Supervisor suggested choosing a theme that I will be comfortable working on and which I can easily relate to instead. At that time, I thought of Muslim stories.

Spun, written by Rabiah Hussain, was the first play that I researched online. It tackles the life of the Muslim community facing discrimination because of their faith. When I read the Spun, I thought if I can adapt it to the Filipino Muslim culture, it will be a perfect fit for the theme. But, I also consider the fact that this can be an opportunity for me to create something that I can consider as my own creation. So, in the end, I chose to write my own play.

Hussain's Spun inspired Niyyat. Same as with Spun, the main character of my play are two best friends who have a different outlook in life. One is happy-go-lucky while the other worries a lot.

Niyyat is an Arabic term that means the heart or intention of someone to do something. It is a story that tells of how discrimination can dramatically affect how an individual think about herself. In history, many events have come together and changed how people feel about

Muslims. Others would always have a negative connotation when they see Muslims because they believe that they lead terrorism. This mind-set has significantly impacted many other Muslims who have nothing to do with the events that made their image terrible. That is what I wanted to talk about in my story. Enough is enough. We have heard so much about the Muslims who claim that they are just trying to protect their religion; that is why they need to teach those who want to say bad things against their faith. *Niyyat* tells a different side of the story. It is a story of those genuinely affected by the discrimination people face because they are Muslim.

2.2 Synopsis

Niyyat is a 45-minute story. The play started with Fatima performing the Islam ablution or cleansing, a practice Muslims commonly do before praying. As Fatima was about to finish washing, one-by-one, actors began to enter the stage. Some are reciting "Adhan" or the Islam call to prayer while someone is assisting Fatima as she wears her 'hijab' or Muslim veil (hijab is consisting of the head veil as well as the long dress that the Muslim girl wear to prevent showing the shape of their body).

The story begins in Fatima's childhood. She is seen playing 'Langit Lupa' (Heaven and Earth) with her best friend Zulayka together with their neighbourhood friends. Fatima is somehow disappointed to learn that Zulayka is moving to Manila. As childhood best friends, it is their first time to be separated from each other. Yet, they promised to keep in touch by sending messages through their parents. They also promised that when the time comes, they will visit each other. As a young kid, Fatima attended Madrassa class, where she learned the doctrines of Islam. Her father, Abdul, encourages her to keep on practicing the teachings of Allah and

remember her Niyyat. But as she grew older, Fatima starts to question the meaning of their religion; Islam is a religion of Peace.

Ten years later, war broke out in Mindanao forcing Fatima and her family to move to Manila. There, she was reunited with her best friend Zulayka who helped her apply for a job in a Municipal office. Navigating her new life in the city, Fatima experience prejudice against Muslims. To be accepted by her workmates, Fatima starts to do things considered *haram* or prohibited in her religion. She started drinking and going to the bar.

Fatima thought that by doing such things, she will feel accepted. But, after a bombing incident in the nearby town, people still blame the Muslims community that made Fatima decide to unveil.

Cracks in her relationship with her best friend and family occur after she chose to forget her Muslim roots. In the end, Fatima witnessed the hatred against the Muslims community that leads to the death of her father. She struggled with the question of whether to go back to her Muslim practices or continue forgetting her roots.

2.3 Shaping a Strong Core Message of the Play

Before writing the script for Niyyat, I have gone through a lot of processes. In the earlier stage of this semester, I struggled a lot to construct the core message of the play. I have a story and an idea, but one crucial thing that I have forgotten to consider is the ultimate goal, why I am telling this story. Remember the tool called the Premise? As stated in the previous chapter, the premise is what the writer needs to identify in order to know the play's destination. In Egri's outline for dramatic writing, it is the first tool that the playwright should consider so he/she will not get out of track. The premise is a clear vision of the writer that leads him/her to the

conclusion (Egri, 2004). Below is the initial 'premise' (which we call Core Message) that I submitted:

- *Stop the unfair treatment and harsh judgment and generalization against Muslim People because of the few tragic events they are not directly responsible for.*

This core message was not approved. Why? Because this sounds like a protest claim. It is indeed giving us the basic idea of what I wanted to discuss in my play. But this does not specify the goal that I wanted for my piece. This is just a fact (condition). But my goal is not just to present facts on stage; instead, leave a question to the audience of what they can do after introducing the situation to them. Now, let's see the second proposal I made.

- *The judgment against a person's religious belief/faith transform an individual to conform to the world we live in.*

Same with the earlier example, this line is also a fact (condition) that probably most of us know. If the earlier proposal suggests a protest claim, this one sounds like an editorial (opinion) title for a newspaper. What is missing is my claim as the author of the play.

Going back to Egri's structure of a clear-cut premise, the premise comprises three parts: a character (attitude), conflict, and the ending (which tell about what will happen with the character). These three parts, although they sound like flat statements, will define a well-structured premise. Written below is the final Premise of Niyyat.

"Prejudice leads to a broken relationship."

Dissecting this premise, what I presented in this story is the character's prejudicial mind, which is the first part of a premise. I did not focus on the protagonist's primary attitude, instead the external forces' character has made sense in this particular premise. This prejudice affects the protagonist's decision to do something. To be more specific, because of the discrimination that Fatima receives from her workmates, she starts to dislike her own identity, leading her to unveil and violate her own Muslim belief. That leads to the second part of the premise, which is the conflict. The outcome of this character is a broken relationship. After being influenced by the discrimination in society, Fatima made decisions that ruined her relationship with her family and friends.

From this experience of writing the premise, I grasped a better way to think about my structure that leads me to the creation of Niyyat. Setting up a clear premise has helped me in the structure of the play. From that one-line premise, I could negotiate the events that I can include in my story.

Although most of the examples presented by Egri are the protagonist's characters, I found it more appropriate to start my premise with the emotion coming from the outer forces that affect the mindset of my main character. This kind of force sets the emotion going; that is why the main actor starts to make decisions which led her destruction.

Since writing has been a challenging task for me while I direct a play, I found it helpful for a writer-director to start a story with a clear-cut premise because this is the "... motivating power behind everything we do" (Egri, 2004)

2.4 Building a Living Character through Dialogue

Egri (2004) cited the working method of Henrik Ibsen:

When I am writing, I must be alone; if I have eight characters of a drama to do with, I have a society enough; they keep me busy; I must learn to know them. And this process of making their acquaintance is slow and painful... When I first settle down to work out my material, I feel as if I have to get to know my characters on a railway journey; the first acquaintance is struck up, and we have chatted about this and that... when I write again... I have grasped the leading points of their character and their little peculiarities.

(Ibsen, n.d. as cited in Egri, 2004)

In Egri's analysis of this working habit by Ibsen, he summarized that the writer must know the three dimensions of the character; physiological, sociological, and psychological. The writer should have a basic knowledge of these three, so he/she will unmistakably create a 'human being' in the play.

I am already a bit behind the deadline when I finalized the premise and structure for Niyyat. I struggled so much in writing my premise because I am unsure what to focus on in my story. And because of that, I also had difficulty in constructing the structure for Niyyat. That is the main reason why I was not able to spend a lot of time to know more about the characters for my play.

Although the art of dramatic writing was a practice I learned back in college, it never occurred to me to utilize the three-dimensional character presented by Egri when I was writing the script for the Niyyat. That is why I spent so much time revising my script because the lines do not make the character speak like a human being. Here is an example of my earlier version of the script:

Fatima: Hello?

Zulayka: Fatima? Is it you? Finally, you answered. How are you? Where are auntie and uncle? Are you all okay?

Fatima: Our reception was affected by the bombings, so I could not call you. We are all okay here. But we are struggling. The war has destroyed our belongings. We even don't know where to get our daily needs.

Zulayka: Thank God you are all safe. Where are you staying?

Fatima: Our house was destroyed during the war, so we have to stay in the evacuation centre for the meantime.

Zulayka: It is not safe there anymore. Tell your father that there is a vacant apartment near us. You can move here in Manila. It will be more safe here.

Notice Fatima's line from the earlier version to the final one.

Zulayka: Fatima? Is it you? Finally you answered. How are you? Where is auntie and uncle? Are you all okay?

Fatima: Hello Zulayka, it was difficult to find a good reception here. Zulayka, I need your help. I don't know where we will be getting our necessities. Please Zulayka, send some help.

Zulayka: What? Where are you staying right now?

Fatima: We are staying in the evacuation center Zulayka. We are receiving donations but it is not enough Zulayka. Please Zulayka I do not know what to do now. I am worried for Ama and Ina.

Zulayka: It is not safe there anymore. Tell your father that there is a vacant apartment near us. You can move here to Manila. It will be safer here.

In this scene, Fatima received a call from her best friend Zulayka after the war broke out in Mindanao. Fatima has been traumatized by whatever she saw in their hometown, and she feels unsafe to stay there anymore. So, I imagined Fatima to be very determined to leave that place. In Fatima's earlier lines, it sounds so informative that she is just trying to tell her best friend the situation. Of course, Zulayka knows that the situation in Mindanao has gotten worse, , so she does not need Fatima to tell her about it. This is why I let Zulayka start the conversation so we can feel her eagerness to talk to her best friend. When Fatima answered, we can also feel the earnestness in her lines rather than just throwing information about what is happening in their hometown. By changing the lines, the conflict in character became more evident. The stake for Fatima was high that made her decide later on to move to Manila.

For a character to become human, their lines require them to sound as if we speak in real life. I agree with Ayckbourn's advice that "... character must undergo a journey too. Not just the plot" (44). Writing the dialogue is one of the thousand ways to show the characters' journey and remember that overemphasizing it (like what I wrote in the earlier version) would break away the character from being human.

Another struggle I have encountered in writing the script is that I am too wordy. I wrote the script with so many lines that the actors keep on saying the same points. A "talky" dialogue, according to Egri (2004), is a product of shoddy work from the earlier stage; the characters stopped growing because the conflict also stopped moving. In my case, long dialogue is my way of carrying the actor to the next scene. That is dangerous because it will make the audience bored, and add up to my burden as a director. Also, that choice would put my actors in a greater

dilemma of memorizing their lines. Earlier I had mentioned that I first read Spun by Rabiah Hussain before I decided to write Niyyat. Let us see how conflict is made through short dialogues through Spun.

AISHA: 'You stayed for drinks?'

Beat.

SAFA: 'I shouldn't have. I know. But I couldn't say no.'

Beat.

'I ended up trying some.'

AISHA: 'You tried it?'

SAFA: 'You were right. I feel so guilty. And I didn't want to come to your mum's khatam like that. I'm sorry, Aisha.'

Beat.

'Please say something.'

Beat.

'Please.'

Beat.

AISHA: 'Do you want to go out?'

SAFA: 'What?'

AISHA: 'Get something to eat?'

SAFA: 'Isn't there stuff leftover from yesterday?'

AISHA: 'I feel like going out.'

AISHA picks up her scarf and puts it on.

SAFA: 'What are you doing?'

AISHA: 'What?'

SAFA: 'Why are you wearing that?'

AISHA: 'Just.'

SAFA: 'Where did you get it from?'

AISHA: 'It was Mum's.'

SAFA: 'Why do you have it on though?'

AISHA: 'Why can't I have it on?'

SAFA: 'Because you don't cover or practice.
AISHA: 'So? I like it. I think it looks good
SAFA: 'Are you religious now?
AISHA: 'Why do I have to be religious to wear it?
SAFA: 'Isn't that how it usually works?"
AISHA: 'Not always.
SAFA: 'So, start again. You just decided to wear it?'
AISHA: 'Yeah.
SAFA: 'When?'
AISHA: 'Last night.
SAFA: 'Why?"
AISHA: 'I told you. Just.
SAFA: 'So what, you're going to stop drinking and smoking and clubbing.
AISHA: 'No.'
SAFA: 'Then why do you have it on?"
AISHA: 'Why do you keep asking me?"
SAFA: 'Because it's not you!
AISHA: 'It is me.
SAFA: 'Since when?
AISHA: 'Since I needed to prove who I Pause. 'I can clear the rest up myself.'
SAFA: 'There's still so much to do.'
AISHA: 'I can do it myself.'

Hussain's Spun became an inspiration for writing Niyyat. Structure-wise, I admire how the conflict was presented through the script. Although minimal lines were used, it was clear when I first read these lines, that the conflict between the two characters had started. Not 'talky', but we were able to understand where the conflict is coming from. When Aisha learned that Safa tried the drink and tried to change the topic of the conversation, we can already feel the tension between them. And even in the latter part, short lines tell a lot of the characters' emotions; Aisha tries to let Safa feel her anger by giving short answers to why she is wearing the hijab.

Now let us dissect a short conversation from Niyyat.

Zulayka: Fatima, are you okay?

Fatima: I don't understand Zulayka. I already removed my hijab. I even left my own faith. But I felt that it is not right. I thought if I remove my hijab, people will accept me. But our workmate does not talk to me anymore.

Zulayka: Fatima, I told you before that you do not have to be affected by what people think about you.

Fatima: I should not have believed you when you say that Manila is an ideal place to live. I am far from the war. And I can live peacefully? Kalokohan.

Zulayka: Why are you blaming me for your decisions in life?

Fatima: It is your fault.

Zulayka: Stop acting so childish Fatima.

Fatima: You are the reason why I am here in Manila.

Zulayka: What? Grow up, Fatima. Do not be so pretentious.

Fatima: Ako?

Zulayka: Yes you! You have to let people know that what they are telling about you and your faith is wrong rather than changing yourself for them to like you. Because for them you are always a Muslim and you cannot change that!

These are the final dialogue of Fatima and Zulayka in the play. Maybe this dialogue sounds like a 'man', but I am convinced that this is too wordy, and the lines even drag the characters' emotion. The choice of words was also too apparent that it is too spoon-feeding.

Therefore, I lost the excitement and effectiveness of this scene. This scene should have been more dramatic because of their relationship as best friends. What I introduced in the earlier scenes is vital to Fatima's character. I should have crafted these lines well so I, as an audience, will also feel the weight of losing a best friend.

There are so many ways to make a character "speak in the language of his own world" Egri (2004). In the end, I believed that my Niyyat (intention) could have been improved by crafting a dialogue that makes sense and is more human. Yet, I knew that I had a play that somehow reached its goal. I knew that my play had prompted people to question and reflect on their own lives and think about the presented story. But, as Sir Pao always reminds me, that my play should not be preaching about Islam, rather asking the audience to broaden their view and recognize the preconceptions about the Muslim community. This is the story that I wanted to share with my audience. Even though I struggled or maybe failed to write a powerful or effective script, I know for sure that I have learned from the process and know what to consider the next time I write a new play.

Chapter 3: ADAPTING VIEWPOINTS IN DIRECTING NIYYAT

3.1 Overview of the Initial Vision and Rehearsal Process

As mentioned in the earlier chapter, I wanted to explore how physical theatre is applied in directing a play. After producing my devised piece for Advance directing class when I was in the first year, I was astonished how the movements on stage can affect the actor in their characterization and embodiment of persona. This is the main motive why I researched Anne Bogart's viewpoints. Her training is used by many directors and actors who are dealing with a physical theatre.

By using Anne Bogart's Viewpoints, a system I used in directing this play to experiment the different viewpoints and perspectives, I wanted to make it concrete that my job as an artist, a director, and a writer for this play is to present my audience the voices of the Muslim community not only in the Philippines but around the globe. Throughout the process, I let go of the initial plan I had in mind and accept a new perspective into my direction. My actors also helped me in building up a clear structure, and little by little, the dialogue became more explicit and more precise. So, in the end, I did fall short of what I wanted initially for this show; a piece with less dialogue and more actions. But, as the process went by, I agreed that lines are indeed essential to deliver the message of this play. Deciding to choose to write the script, I was able to clarify the story that I wanted my actors and audience to learn. Say, if I were to watch the story, I want it to be able to remind me of my Muslim roots and my exploration as a Muslim director.

Using Anne Bogart's Viewpoints, in creating a solid ensemble and strong transition for each scene, was a huge advantage. In acting and thinking from different perspectives, I had hoped that the actors would be more aware of these standpoints and that they used them in delivering their dialogues. Using Viewpoints in the rehearsal process also helped establish what I wanted to direct-a production filled with my viewpoint. In fact, Bogart's Viewpoints process did help create a strong ensemble piece, and, in the end, it helped to tell the story honestly. To better understand how the process worked, I will now give you my understanding of Anne Bogart's Viewpoints process. I will also provide examples of exercises that I used during the rehearsal process and creation period of Niyyat.

3.2 Actor as the Sole Motivator of the Action

In creating this project, I had to learn how the Viewpoints training is used in the production. I read books and several dissertations to understand the training fully. I needed to be assured that I will be able to interpret it correctly. Though I did not have a lot of time in introducing viewpoints formally to my actors, I found it comforting that I have been using viewpoints all along in my rehearsals.

In one of our sessions, I worked with my main actors who played Fatima and Zulayka. Fatima and Zulayka are best friends in the play, and I find it necessary to build their relationship as childhood best friends. In that rehearsal schedule, I spent 2 hours doing viewpoint exercises exploring their relationship through movement and its relation to space. In that exercise, I have noticed, in the beginning, the awkwardness between the two actors. But as soon as they become comfortable with each other, they started to let their body move without overthinking. And that is what Viewpoints training is all about.

‘Actor is the sole motivator of the action or the scene.’ I introduced movements to my actors during the exercises to help them in portraying their character. In this section I have utilized three viewpoints from the category of time; namely: tempo, duration, and kinesthetic response to demonstrate how an actor becomes the motivator of the action. Going back to the meaning of three viewpoints-- *tempo* means how fast or slow a movement is done on stage. *Duration* pertains to how long a movement would continue, and *kinesthetic response* is the reaction to the motion contributed by external factors. These three viewpoints from the category of time became an essential tool in directing Niyyat.

To set the mood of the play, I started working with the main character Fatima. In this scene, I instructed her to perform the ‘*wudu*’ or *ablution* (cleansing) that the Muslims do before a prayer. In an actual wudu, Muslims clean seven parts of our body.

1. Hands
2. Mouth
3. Nose
4. Face
5. Arms
6. Forehead, ears, and neck
7. Feet

Tempo is about the speed of performing a certain action on stage. The speed is essential to set the mood of the play. Duration, on the other hand, is the viewpoint that reminds me when the action is too long or short that it affects the play. In most of the scenes that require movement, these two viewpoints would come hand in hand.

Going back to the beginning scene of Fatima performing the ablution, both tempo and duration became a vital tool that I used in this particular scene. During rehearsals, I instructed my actor to play on the different tempo and duration as she is cleaning the four body parts (hands, arms, face, feet). I chose only these four body parts to maintain the mood and the ritualistic feeling of the play. Cutting these movements is already one way of applying the viewpoints of duration. Danica (who played Fatima) explored the tempo and duration in washing her hands, arms, face, and feet. Since this is the beginning of the play, we have to be reminded that it is crucial to set the mood of Niyyat. We had several attempts to explore the different speed and length to achieve the mood that I wanted for the play. In the earlier choice, I instructed Danica to perform all four movements in a very slow tempo as I thought it would help maintain the scene's ritualistic feeling. But, performing the movement slowly also affected the duration. This scene already took five minutes of my time. Also, using the same tempo for the four body parts ends up in a boring scene.

On the next attempt, I instructed Danica to do the opposite. I told her to do the cleansing as it is being done in real life. With an actual speed that is neither slow nor fast, I have seen the different effects that set the mood. As mentioned earlier, I wanted to achieve a ritualistic effect for this scene. Using neutral speed and duration is not a way to achieve the effect I wanted.

Finally, we choreographed the movement using four different tempos. Below is the breakdown of the time Danica spent performing/washing each body part. This rundown was video recorded during the last preview we had before moving to the theatre.

Body Parts	Tempo	Duration
Wash the hands (three times for both left and right hand)	Really slow	28 Seconds
Wash the Arms (three times for both left and right arms)	Slow	20 seconds
Wash the face three times	Fast	10 seconds
Wash the feet (three times for both left and right foot)	Neutral	20 seconds

Table 3.1: Tempo and Duration Breakdown for Niyyat Prologue. Previewed (or change to this; Preview date: April 12, 2021. Then delete ‘on’) on April 12, 2021.

Including other transitions, this specific scene lasted two minutes which is a lot different from the first attempt that we did. Using the viewpoints of tempo and duration, we were able to set a point of understanding wherein we recognized when the scene is dragging too long to the point of making the scene boring. Also, the scene may be too short that it cuts the mood altogether. The only challenge in using these viewpoints is when the scene is not well-rehearsed, there is a possibility that the actors would forget the tempo we set for each action. That is why in using the tempo and duration, the scene must have been rehearsed for a few times to achieve muscle memory.

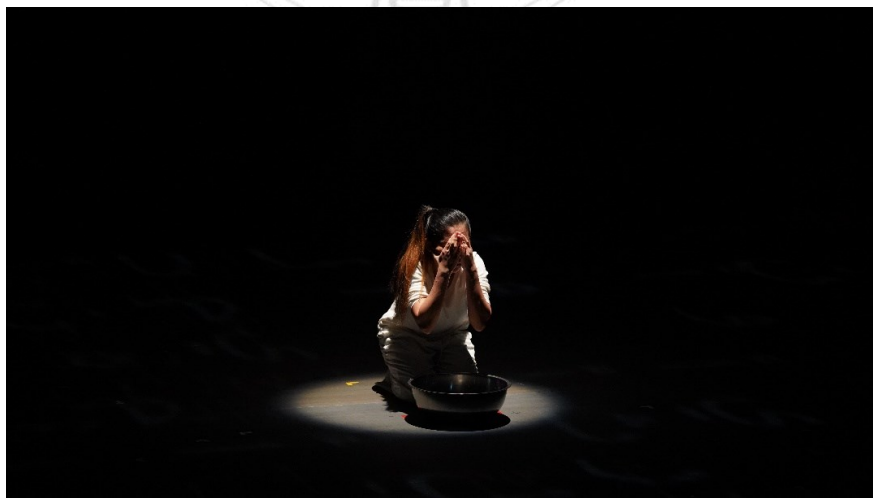


Figure 3.1: Fatima on the center stage performing the Ablution. Picture taken April 15, 202, Niyyat preview.

One observation while rehearsing is that the actors react from what he/she receives from the environment- the viewpoints of the *kinaesthetic (kinesthetic or tactile learning) response*. Besides the elements that actors received in the play, their responses to each other matters. To build a strong connection and relationship, actors must feel their co-actors. In one of the scenes of Niyyat, to show the relationship of Fatima and Zulayka as best friends, actors who played their characters must show an evident closeness during their childhood, thus in the later scene when they shall meet ten years later in the story, it will be more effective. We spent several rehearsals working one-on-one with how we can show the actors closeness. For instance, when Zulayka's mom called her name when they are about to leave, Zulayka's initial reaction must be clear enough to show how difficult it is for her to leave her best friend. Without the lines, we were able to establish a deeper connection between the two.



Figure 3.2: Scene 1. Zulayka looking back at Fatima before she finally leaves for Manila.

Another scene where I applied the Viewpoints of kinesthetic response is when Fatima is in the bar. She reacts to the bar lights and music as if she remembers the war back in her

hometown. That particular scene is my favorite in Niyyat because it shows a great contrast. Fatima reacted to the sound differently from how the other actors reacted to the music. Although this is the intention that I set earlier in its creation, I found that scene one of the most difficult to perform on stage. I struggled a lot in creating this scene because I have to look for a commonly used sound in the bar, and when Fatima hears it, she will be reminded of the sounds that she heard from the war. This scene should not look too indicative so I have to choose the right point where Fatima starts to react to the sound differently. Knowing the right moment to respond to something is also one of the significant aspects of the kinesthetic response. The actor and director must agree to the same moment considering that it would bring the action to the goal of the scene.



Figure 3.3: Fatima starts to enjoy the bar. She starts to drink alcohol with her workmates. The scene captured in the photo is right before she starts to recollect her memories of the war.

The kinaesthetic response was one of the most interesting viewpoints that I have primarily utilized because it tells whether the actor allows her body and instinct to respond rather than overthinking. It heightens the awareness of the actor with the presence of sounds and other

activities within the group. We had several moments in the play that Sir Pao emphasized to the actor the importance of being organic and spontaneous. Aside from other outside factors used in the play such as music, lights, and props, we first started focusing on how the actor will respond when their co-actor gives them something. As a director, it matters to me when an actor reacts first to what the other actor has given him/her because it makes the character more natural and organic. In reality, we may not have music and light that will help us change and define the mood of the moments in our life. Rather, it is our response to the people that matter a lot to us that will give meaning to our actions.

Through the kinesthetic response, duration, and tempo, actors were reminded of the idea of the "give and take" process. These three viewpoints from the category of time became essential training for the actors. These viewpoints give layers to their actions and the story itself. Going back to the initial goal, I achieved a physical theatre and actor-driven play in which the characters use their instinct to move and react to what was given them by their environment.

Repetition is another viewpoint in the category of time. I personally like using repetition in staging a play as it highlights essential moments of the play. Repeating the movements also sets a point of understanding that is not directly uttered to the audience. In the play *Niyyat*, I did not focus much on using *repetition* because of the limited time that I had. Another reason is that somehow; I find it awkward to use in a realistic staging.

3.3 Working with Space

Last year, I watched 'Jane Eyre' in one of the free online screenings of the National Theatre. I was mesmerized by how the actors used the space to bring us into different settings. I am so in love with this devised work because not only did the actors exhaust their bodies playing

multiple characters, they also used the modernist and straightforward climbing frames of wooden platforms to bring us into different settings. For this reason, I used NT's Jane Eyre as the inspiration to my latest creation. The one thing that I have to keep in mind though is the fact that, I have limited resources to build a set, similar to that one in Jane Eyre. That limitation should not stop me from doing what I want. Later I decided to use a bare thrust stage.

As I am utilizing the bare thrust staging, I am challenged with positioning my actors on stage to make it visible in a 3-sided audience seat. I found it challenging to work with the line while blocking. And since the actors will be moving on stage with only five blocks and few props, they have to be clear with the location's geography per scene and moment. This play requires a lot of scene changes, specially that it is written with many settings and almost half of it is used on a short moment.



Figure 3.4: A three-sided (thrust) bare stage with 5 blocks pre-set on the four edges of space. Two blocks were placed on the edge of Upper Stage Right.

I will focus on the three viewpoints under the category of space. These Viewpoints are spatial relationship, gesture, and architecture. The spatial relationship is the distance between the objects on stage, specially one body to a group of bodies. Gesture is the movement that involves part of the body while architecture pertains to the physical environment such as the set or simply the stage.

One of the challenging parts of using viewpoints in this process is the spatial relationship. The spatial relationship is the "distance between things on the stage, especially one body to another, one body to a group of bodies, or the body to the playing space. Actors tend to get into comfortable spaces while on stage" (Landau 23).

Earlier, I mentioned how the actors play a vital role in motivating the story using their own body and instinct. Now, I will discuss how I worked with the actors while considering the space. In my direction, actors only use five blocks that they can rearrange and use in various scenes. The blocks can also hide some of the props, so the actors do not have to worry about carrying so much stuff in and out of the stage. I deemed it necessary that the blocks be made with the same design and strong enough for the actors to be able to stand on them. Using only five blocks was a challenging choice for me since I am utilizing a bare stage.

During the first half of the play, we placed the blocks on the four corners of the stage (2 blocks were placed on the upper stage right). I chose to put those blocks in the corner because what I wanted to emphasize in the beginning is the spatial relationship of the actor from another actor. Although they used it in some scenes like the game "Langit at Lupa" (translated as Heaven and Earth) to emphasize that heaven is higher than the earth, I found it necessary to build the actor-to-actor relationship first.

The viewpoint of spatial relationship is used chiefly in Niyyat. One that showed spatial relationship is the scene where Fatima entered the bar. To emphasize the tension in this scene, I started separating Fatima from the group to emphasize the contrast that is present in the act. While the other actors are placed on the down stage left, I placed Fatima on the center stage right. By blocking the actors this way, I did not only consider the audience who were watching from the three sides of the stage, but I was able to build a certain relationship between the actors. That was the first time Fatima visited a bar, Thus, I have to highlight that she is wondering on what is happening inside. Using such relation, I was able to build up the scene to reach the most important point of this section; Fatima decided to have a drink to fit (blend) in with the group.

Another scene where the viewpoints of spatial relationship was applied was when Zulayka seeks Fatima's forgiveness. This was after her best friend found out that their family is moving to Manila. She has to try different tactics so she can convince Fatima to forgive her. Zulayka keeps on chasing Fatima in the earlier blocking, moving into three distinct parts on the stage. I asked the actors to do this blocking so the actors can be seen by the audience from the three sides of the stage. The note I received at that time was that it looks too messy on stage, that was the scene where Zulayka tries the same tactic and the actors maintained the same distance, which was all very close to each other. We tried blocking the same scene into three different distances. The first is as close as they can get, the second is three steps away, and the third is far away from each other. Exploring these three distances, the actors also were able to explore different tactics so she will be able to ask for her friend's forgiveness. Working in this space, actors discovered more effective, engaging, and more robust ways of communication. These discoveries were later used in scenes needing blocking movements.

One evident scene where the gesture was applied was when Zulayka looked back at Fatima before she left for Manila. That was a clear-cut gesture that helps us understand how close they were as best friends. Gestures helped me in directing the actors. The motion they created on stage offers an in-depth understanding of their characters. On the other hand, architecture is also essential for the actors to be reminded of the space. Although I used a bare stage, we made it clear to everyone that there are several settings in Niyyat. These settings are the prayer room, street, office, a living room, and more. These architectures were clearly stated on stage by placing the blocks accordingly based on their direction or position.



Figure 3.5: The architecture for the office. Blocks are aligned in a diagonal.

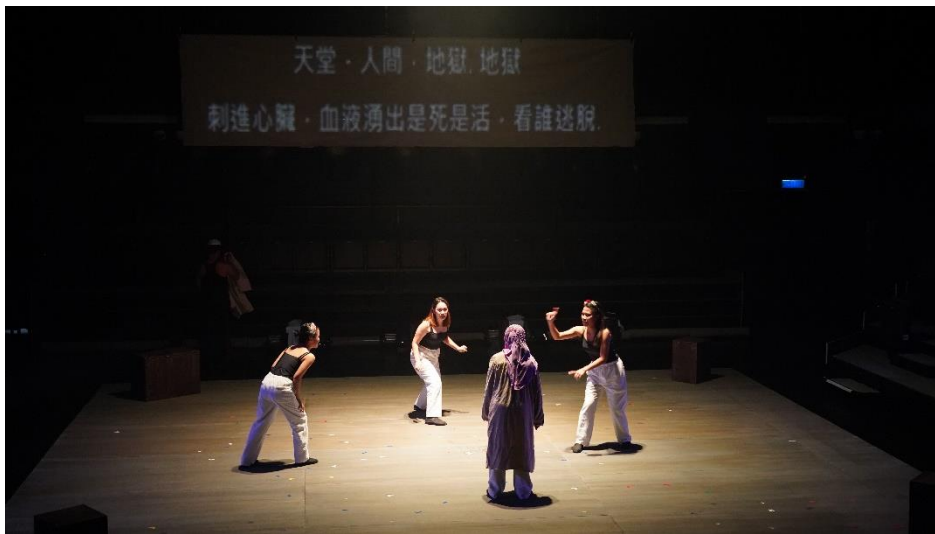


Figure 3.6: The pre-set stage for the prayer room, street and playground.

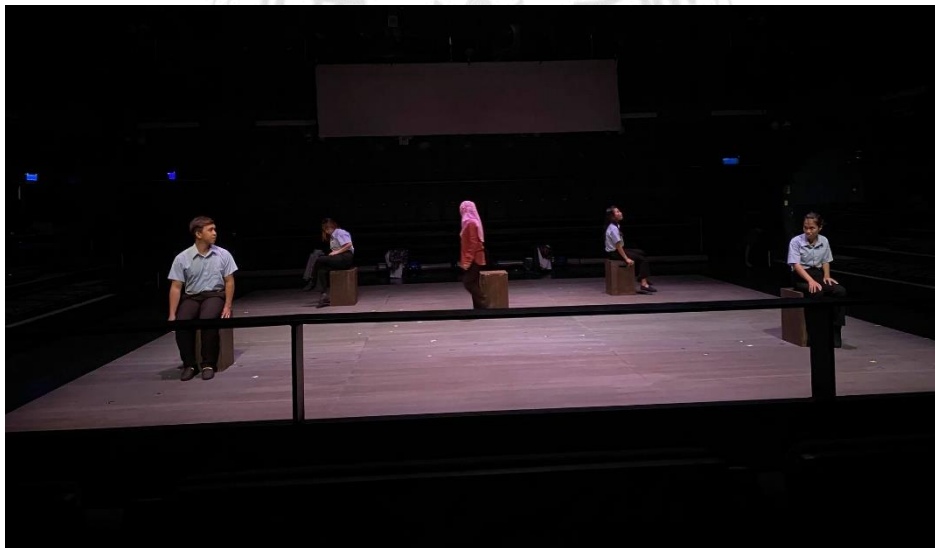


Figure 3.7: The space used for the news. Actors were facing the audience as if they are part of the act. Breaking the fourth wall.



Figure 3.8: Actors at the back stage. The Neutral Space.

One thing that I noticed in using these viewpoints is the importance of dynamics. Although Bogart presented us with nine points of view, it works best when I tried to combine it with some of the trainings I had before. Dynamics is one of those that helped me in utilizing Viewpoints. It gave another POV to the blocking and acting. It also reminded me to avoid the static moments in the script and utilized various movements on stage to make the scenes more meaningful.

Same as with the category of time, I chose to focus on three viewpoints out of the five. Using just three gave me more time to comprehend the usage of these Viewpoints. But that does not mean disregarding the other viewpoints which I did not use. I focused on these three because I am convinced that these are the points of view that I practiced as I staged Niyyat.

3.4 Niyyat as a product of Viewpoints

The viewpoints process is a device which helped directors to create an actor-centered piece. I chose not to use too many props and set design for this piece as I wanted to focus on what the characters can do on stage. I want my show to be actor-driven and not a design-driven show. Using viewpoints, my actors and I were given many chances to compose the movements while considering that these actions made sense.

In some rehearsals, I would give the movement to the actor, and what they need to do is provide layers to this movement so they will understand why it is placed on that specific scene. My job as a director is to shape this composition to make it more appealing to my eye and the audience.

The process of making this graduation performance was indeed a challenging and exciting experience. It was my first time to work with my actors with only a structure in mind. The lines, as mentioned earlier, were created during our rehearsal or at least one after another scene is done with blocking. My mentor has helped me a lot in this process, guiding me to become clear about my structure, as my actors and designers helped me by adding another layer to the ideas that I have in mind. Guided by Anne Bogart's Viewpoints, I was able to set a standard or point of understanding between my actors.

Although many revisions were done in the process, I believed that the rehearsals and merely seeing my play slowly improving were already significant achievements on my part as a director. Though time will always not be enough in creating this piece, I am rest assured that I have achieved the growth that I always aspire from this production. Like my mentor would always mention, it is better to feel that the time is not enough, so we will be pushed to work harder. That idea actually worked! Because of the time pressure and performing for two other

plays, we were able to come up with a pure story in our mind that not only entertains the audience but will also educate and help develop questions in their minds. In the end, if I would be given more time, I would like to work more with my actors and designers and emphasize Anne Bogart's Viewpoints.



Chapter 4: CONCLUSION

4.1 Learning from the production

This thesis is a process of self-discovery. After a long period of agony this creation has brought me, I am glad that I made it to this point. I was able to grasp new ideas that can be used for my future creations. At the same time, I was able to impart my knowledge and deliver my story. I have added new tools to my 'director's toolbox' that I found very useful. When I enrolled at Nan Hua University, I only thought of enhancing my directing skill. But this graduation has opened a new opportunity for me. Besides directing, I also experienced writing a whole new play that I can claim as my own work.

“From page to stage” is a reflection of my artistic process. From writing my own story and scribbling words that I can use for my script. Being able to tell it on stage is the perfect embodiment of the idea of “from page to stage.” My work reflects the struggles that I had to overcome in writing and rehearsing until the staging of the play.

Now, I can say that I am a writer, but perhaps not yet a playwright. I still have so many things to remember and a long journey to travel to become one. After writing *Niyyat*, I can conclude that writers follow the rules and steps in writing and build upon it to achieve dramatic work of art. Although these steps might differ from one writer to another, I know for sure that this time, what worked for me is the knowledge imparted in me by my playwriting professor back in college--the person who also introduced me to the Art of Dramatic Writing by Lajos Egri. Based on this experience, I have noted several takeaways to remember.

1. A writer starts with a clear-cut premise. She/he must be clear with her/his end goal for the play.

2. Once the premise is done, take time to think of the plot and the structure while considering the fact that it is important to know each character in its three-dimensions; physiologically, sociologically, and psychologically.
3. A character should speak in the language of her/his own world. They should be human.

On the other hand, the viewpoint training has helped me to make my characters become like human beings who are able to tell their stories on stage. Thru this experience, I hope that the future student-directors or beginners must learn the following:

1. Understand the Viewpoints training from its definition, use, and execution or exercise.
2. Apply the exercise in the rehearsals. Or at least spend some time doing a workshop with the actors, in order for every to become more familiar with the viewpoints.
3. Appreciate that viewpoints are one way to keep the story moving rather than render it to be static. The training it provides gives reason for the actors to move on stage and relate to all the aspects present.

The production has taught me a lot about my artistic choices as a writer-director and the considerations to create a new play. I have many things to share out of this experience—from designing and directing a play in Taiwan. There are many considerations to be made, but the important thing being able to learn a lot of things after long months of work.

Each chapter is a reflection and an eye toward future collaborations. I know that each creator has their own experiences to share which is an opportunity to learn about it too. In this

overall process, I have seen the importance of communicating with the actors, the designers and the audience. It is indeed essential to hear from all sides.

If there is one thing that I regret in this production was not being able to have the chance for a short talkback. Also, I was not able to send out questionnaires or feedback sheets after the play. This will help me determine if I was really able to reach my goal, for "...one must examine the target after the shots have been fired" (Winkler, 2002). It is essential to hear what the audience grasped from the play as it is a good source for me to know how to improve for future productions. Nevertheless, even with this, I learned not to disregard even a minor idea. I was so caught up with the production that I missed this significant part. In the future, I hope to have talkbacks after the show or send out some questionnaires to know the spectators' response to my creation.

Lastly, this production was the very first production that was not comfortable to watch for me. For some reason, I think it is a good sign. Because being not comfortable this time means only one thing, that I tried to explore the possibilities that I can do on stage rather than stay in my comfort zone. I know that for sure, *Niyyat* is a piece that allowed me to grow. Just as what I wished for. I hope that *Niyyat* has introduced new ideas in terms of writing strategies and the directing choices I have made.

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and right doing, there is a field. I'll meet you there. When the soul lies down in that grass, the world is too full to talk about.

-Rumi on Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing

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Appendix A

Script

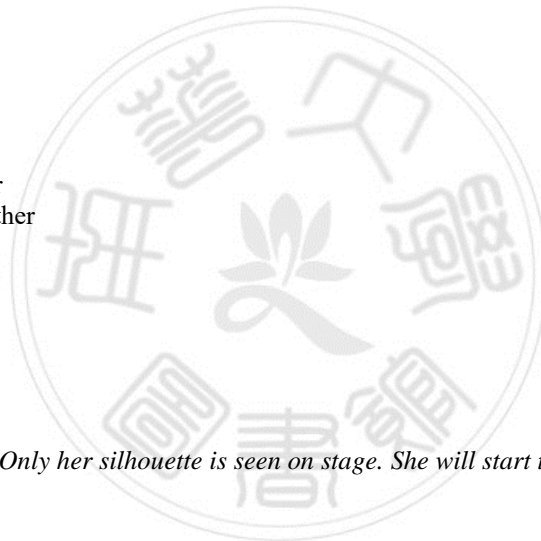
NIYYAT

By: Heidi Salih Emelo

Cast:

Young Fatima
Fatima
Young Zulayka
Zulayka
Abdul, Fatima's Father
Darwisa, Fatima's Mother
Zulayka's Mom

Workmate 1
Workmate 2
Workmate 3



Young Fatima enters the stage. Only her silhouette is seen on stage. She will start the ablution (washing).

Ensemble Enters the stage

Allahu akbar allahu akbar
Allahu akbar allahu akbar
Ash-hadu anla ilaha illah Allah
Ash-hadu anla ilaha illah Allah
Ash-hadu anna muhammadar-rasulullah
Ash-hadu anna muhammadar-rasulullah
Hayya as-salah
Hayya as-salah
Hayya al-falah
Hayya al-falah
Allahu akbar allahu akbar
La ilaha illa Allah

Players enter the stage one by one

Langit Lupa Impiyerno

Langit Lupa Impiyerno
Langit Lupa Impiyerno
Saksak Puso Tulo ang Dugo
Patay Buhay
Umalis ka na diyan sa Puwesto mo (2x)

Until the last two players left were Fatima and Zulayka.

Fatima: Zulayka come down now. We have been playing this game for too long.
I am so tired.

Zulayka: No! I want to play more.

Fatima: Why should I always have to be “it” Zulayka, can you be “it” this time?

Zulayka: It is not my fault Fatima, that is the rule of the game, when my hand points to you on the last lyrics of the song, that means you are “it.”

Fatima: I know, but this time can you be “it?” This will be the last time that we will be playing this game.

Zulayka: Huh? How did you know?

Fatima: My mom said. Is it true that your family is moving to Manila?

Zulayka: Yes. I was trying to find the right time to tell you.

Fatima: I thought we were best friends. Then why are you hiding things from me?

Zulayka: I am sorry na Fatima. Please forgive me na. Please

Fatima: ok ok..you are forgiven.

Beat

Fatima: Just don't forget me when you are in Manila already.

Zulayka: Of course not.

Fatima: I hope I could visit you there in Manila someday.

Zulayka: Nothing is impossible Fatima. Maybe you can go there too someday. And when you're in Manila, we will visit the zoo, the mall, and I have heard that there is a big amusement park there. We can go there with my new friends.

Fatima: New friends? Hmmmmm. You sound like you really wanted to have a new friend.

Zulayka: That is not what I meant Fatima. What I mean is, it is nice to have many friends in Manila so I will know the city more. I don't mean to replace you. (How could I ever replace you)

Fatima: Sure?

Zulayka: Sure!

Fatima: Just promise me that you will always be there for me. Ok?

Zulayka: (nod)

Fatima: Promise!

Zulayka: Promise! (*Music in*)

Zulayka's Mom: Zulayka!

Abdul: Zulayka anak (*Music Cut*) do not be sad. Just believe in Allah. He has a plan for us. Maybe someday you will see each other again. Do you remember what you were taught in Madrassa? About your Niyyah, your intention that will make you move forward. (*Islamic Prayer in*)

Fatima: (nod)

Abdul: Let's go Fatima, it is time for prayer.

Fatima and her dad perform the afternoon prayer.

(Music Fade out)

Abdul: Fatima, let's have a quick review about your learning in Madrassa class. Do you still remember the five pillars of Islam?

Fatima: Yes Amah!

Abdul: Now tell me!

Fatima: The five pillar of Islam: (1) Shahada, *(Music in) Teaching Music SFX*
Allah is the only God,

Lights change with Music: Spot light for the Father. Follow spot for Fatima

Abdul: Muslim believe that "There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God"

Fatima: (2) Salat, Prayer

Abdul: Muslims pray facing Mecca five times a day:

Fatima: (3) Sakat, Alms

Abdul: In accordance with Islamic law, Muslim is required to give a portion of his income to those who are in need.

Fatima: (4) Sawm, Fasting

Abdul: Fasting in?

Fatima: Fasting in...

Abdul: which month?

Fatima: Fasting in the month of Ramadhan.

Abdul: Very good. During Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, Muslims share the hunger and thirst of the needy as a reminder of the religious duty.

Fatima: (5) Hajj, Pilgrimage.

Abdul: Every Muslim who are healthy and financially stable, must make at least one visit to the holy city of Mecca,

Abdul: Very good anak! Now, what is the meaning of Islam?

Fatima: Islam is a religion of Peace

(Change Lights and Cut Music)

Abdul: Very good Fatima. I am so proud of you. *(Music Cut)* You have learned so much from your madrassa class. But do you really understand the meaning of peace?

Fatima: Yes Amah, that means people who are leaving happily together.

Abdul: That is one way to say it anak.

Fatima: But amah, if Islam is a religion of peace, then why do some people think that Muslims are bad?

Abdul: Anak, what is inside is reflected on the outside.

Fatima: What do you mean amah?

Abdul: My meaning anak, always put all the teachings of Allah into practice.

Fatima's mother enters the stage.

Darwisa: You two, you are spending a lot of time reviewing.
Fatima: Inah.
Abdul: I am just making sure that Fatima is learning well in her Madrassa class.
Fatima: Fatima has been learning the Quran for so long. I am sure she is very familiar with all those teachings. Am I right Fatima? **(Islamic Prayer 1)**
Fatima: (Smirk)

(Prayer Music in)

Darwisa: Okay then, let's get ready. It's time for Maghrib prayer.

They perform the Maghrib prayer. After the last bow, change light. Spot light to Fatima. Music faded out.

Fatima: *(breaking the fourth wall)* It was supposed to be a peaceful evening. I was looking at the moon from our window when suddenly,

(War sound in)

Random Voices/ Shout: *We are under attack. Where is my daughter? Anak! (Any random sounds during the war)*

(Remain the war Music low volume and start Cellphone ringing SFX)

Fatima: Hello?

(Cut Music)

Zulayka: Fatima? Is it you? Finally, you answered. How are you? Where is auntie and uncle? Are you all ok?

Fatima: Hello Zulayka, it was difficult to find a good reception here. Zulayka, I need your help. I don't know where we can get our necessities. Please Zulayka, send some help.

Zulayka: What? Where are you staying right now?

Fatima: We are staying in the evacuation center Zulayka. We are relying on donations but it is not enough Zulayka. Please Zulayka I do not know what to do now. I am worried for Ama and Ina.

Zulayka: It is not safe there anymore. Tell your father that there is a vacant apartment near us. You can move here in Manila. It will be more safe here.

Fatima and her family start their journey to Manila.

(Ensemble sings the places they need to travel to reach Manila)

*Marawi Cagayan, Alipao, Mabini, Sison, Bonifacio, Luna, Surigao Balinsasayaw, Mc Arthur, Tambongan, Palo at Paranas, Paranas Tacloban Calbayog at Samar
Cam Sur, Tagkawayan, Lopez, Gumaca, Atimonan, Pagbilao, Lucena, Saria-ya
Batangas, Laguna, Alabang, Quezon City, Tandang Sora, Manila*

Ensemble: (Sounds of Manila)

Fatima is seen in a crowded city with people walking in and out of the stage.

Zulayka: Fatima... Fatima... Fatima...

Fatima: Zulayka.

Zulayka: Kamusta ka na. My God namiss kita sobra. Ang laki laki mo na. Kumusta ang travel mo?

Fatima: Ok lang ako. I never imagined Manila to be this big.

Zulayka: Fatima, Manila is really big and different. There are many things to explore. The important thing is that you are here now. You are safer here and you do not have to worry about the dangers of war.

Fatima: Thank you for always helping me Zulayka. You have been a great help to me and my family. But, I hope I am not asking too much from you, but since I am here in Manila now, I hope to support my mother and father. Do you think you can help me apply for any job?

Zulayka: A job? ...right...I remember, there is a vacant position in our office. Why don't you try? Besides, you are an information technology graduate, that can be an asset in our office.

Fatima: Really? Then maybe I should try. It would love working with you there.

Zulayka: For sure, our workmates will like you.

Fatima: Even though I am a Muslim?

Zulayka: What's wrong being a Muslim? I don't think it is a big issue. Besides, just ignore whatever people think about you. You do not owe anyone an explanation for being a Muslim.

Beat.

So, speaking of. Do you want to try something new?

Fatima: Now?

Zulayka: Yeah. How about some street foods?

Fatima: Is it Halal (Prohibited)? legal

Zulayka: (sigh) Fatima, we can always ask. But for sure it is clean.

Fatima: Okay (*workplace 1 music in*)

Zulayka: There is a place just at the corner of this street. Let's go

A group of Government employees are seen on stage doing their own tasks. Suddenly, Zulayka and Fatima arrive.

Zulayka: Hi Guys, I want to introduce to you the new member of our team, Fatima
Fatima: Hello Guys.
Sam: Hello Fatima. I am Sam in the morning and Samantha in the evening.
Fatima: Hello Sam
Zulayka: This is Melanie
Melanie: Hi Fatima, welcome to the team.
Fatima: Hello Melanie
Zulayka: And that is Nancy!
Nancy: The rules and regulations of this office.
Sam: Rule no. 1 You are expected to be on time every day. Late is considered a deduction to your salary.
Melanie: Rule no. 2 We do not accept anything from our client. That is considered bribery.
Nancy: Rule no. 3 No Personal call while at work.
Zulayka: Rule no 4: All breaks are strictly scheduled. Early break is prohibited.
All: And rule no. 5: We must strictly follow the uniform etiquette in the office.
Melanie: And here is your first project.
Nancy: All of us will be working on the different local government files. The details are stated inside.
Zulayka: And that will be your table.
Sam: You will be sitting next to me.
All: Fatima, Welcome to the team. *(Workplace Music 2 In)*

Voice: To all the employees of this Municipality, we expect your honesty while at work. We are here to be of service to those who are in need regardless of their religion, color, gender and faith. We expect you to perform the best way you can. May God almighty protect us all.

Fatima: Zulayka, is there a place for prayer here?
Zulayka: There is a vacant room at the back maybe you can use that.
Fatima: Ok I will go for prayer first. *(Music Cut)*

Nancy: Zulayka, can I talk to you
Zulayka: Sure. What is it about?

Nancy: How did you know her?

Zulayka: Fatima? We were classmates back in elementary and high school

Sam: So why is she here in Manila?

Zulayka: Their family decided to transfer here because of the war in Marawi. They lost most of their belongings after the war. And the war only ended after five months, they lost most of their possessions, even their home.

Melanie: She must have been through a lot.

Sam: Yeah, I feel pity for her.

Nancy: Why will you feel pity about her? Like duh, she looks okay. If I were you, you should be more careful around her. We never know she is probably planning something.

Sam: What are you talking about?

Nancy: She is a refugee of war. She might carry that mindset in here. You know, a terrorist mindset.

Zulayka: Hey Nancy, stop being so rude.

Nancy: I am just telling a fact. She is still a Muslim

Zulayka: But Fatima was a victim so stop thinking as if she is gonna hurt us.

Sam: Yes Nancy, let us give her a chance to prove herself.

Melanie: They are right Nancy. Stop saying trash

Nancy: I am just saying that she is a Muslim and as far as i know, they are killers.

Fatima: *(overheard the conversation and tried to interrupt)*

Nancy: Just don't tell me that I did not remind you.

Zulayka: Nancy!

Working Scene

Melanie: Hello everyone, do not forget that we will have a company party tomorrow night. All is expected to attend.

Nancy: I don't think all will and can attend. There are some of us here, who are close minded, and cannot drink alcohol.

Sam: Nancy Stop. Okay. You are starting again *(Office Bell SFX in)*

(Zulayka and Fatima will be left on stage)

Zulayka: Fatima, just ignore Nancy ok?

Fatima: I am used to it.

Zulayka: So you will join the party right?
Fatima: Of course, I will join. What made you think that I am not joining? It is just a party.
Zulayka: When they say party, that means party with Alcohol and it's in the bar.
Fatima: In the bar?
Zulayka: Hey, it's ok. You don't need to come. If you are not okay with the idea of going to the bar, then don't go. It is just a party. We can find another day to go out. Just the two of us. For sure you will like it more. We can visit some places that you haven't been too here in Manila... And besides
Fatima: No! I will join.
Zulayka: Are you sure?
Fatima: But... I will not drink.

(Bar Music in)

Sam: Oh, Fatima and Zulayka is here.
Nancy: Why is she here? Why is she still wearing her hijab?
Melanie: It's ok Nancy. Just enjoy the night Nancy.
Nancy: How can I enjoy? Did I not tell you not to wear your hijab? It is either you go home or you remove that.
Fatima: What is wrong with you Nancy? I cannot remove my hijab! I am already here, so please. Can't you see, I am trying my best, trying my best to fit in.
Nancy: Then try harder. How about you Drink!
Zulayka: Nancy, she can't drink
Fatima: No.
Nancy: See, Fatima here just said that she is trying to fit in. But she is not even trying harder. Hypocrite. If you do not want to drink, you better go home or...
Sam: Hey Nancy, that's your favorite song. Common, let's sing. (Stops Nancy from arguing with Fatima)

Fatima is left on the Center Stage.

Fatima: Guys... Guys... Guys...
Nancy: What?
Fatima: Cheers!
Nancy: Attention Seeker talaga.
Fatima: *(drink another gulp)*
Sam: Woooooohh. Fatima
Melanie: Let's party.

Party Music, everyone starts to dance.

Zulayka: Are you ok Fatima?

Fatima: Yes, I'm ok. Do you know what reminds me of these sounds and lights?

Zulayka: What?

Fatima: The War (short silence)

Beat

Let's Party.

All are seen dancing. When suddenly a massive sound of a bomb is heard.

(News headline SFX in)

News Caster:

All: Breaking News.

NC1: Two bombs exploded in a bombing incident at a Catholic Church in Caloocan City Northern Philippines. 18 people were killed.

NC2: The first blast occurred during the Sunday Mass sending churchgoers outside where the second bomb detonated.

NC3: The attack comes a week after the voters declined its inclusion in the Muslim Autonomous area in some parts of Mindanao

NC4: Police report says that the attack was carried out by two (2) Muslim men

(Music Fade out)



(Back to Work Place)

Melanie: Why do we have to suffer because of their own issues. If they cannot live by the rules, then maybe they should be sent back to their hometown.

Nancy: That is what I am telling you since then. We should be careful. You know it looks really weird that she was in the party on that the same day when the bombing happened. Is she washing her hands by making us believe that she is not one of them? Maybe, she is just planning something.

Sam: You are right nancy! We should do something to keep us all safe here.

Zulayka: Can you please stop saying trash. Do not act as if you really know her. She was there with us. Was it not obvious to you?

(Fatima overheard the conversation. Her workmates start to change their attitude towards Fatima)

SAM: Fatima, please do not make it difficult for us.

Zulayka: What...

Nancy: You must take the initiative by now. If you really care about us, then please leave.

Zulayka: Nancy!

Melanie: They are right Fatima. Please stay away from our office. You might put us in danger.

Zulayka: Can you please stop!

Fatima: No!

Do you think it is easy for me? Do you think I don't feel guilty after what had happened? I am also afraid like you. What happened is not my fault. but why do I have to face you as if I am the one who planted that bomb. Why do you always have to question me? Why question my faith? Are you afraid of this veil? This veil. Fuck this veil.

(Removes her hijab) If this will make you all at peace then fine, I will not wear it. *(walk-out)*

Zulayka: Fatima! Fatima! Fatima!

(Zulayka follows Fatima)

Zulayka: Fatima just ignore them.

Fatima: Zulayka, why is it so difficult for them to like me.

Zulayka: Do not listen to them Fatima. You don't need them to like you.

Fatima: You are not in my situation Zulayka that is why it is easy for you to say that.

Zulayka: Fatima, in the beginning I already told that Manila is a different place. You cannot go out always trying to be the person that people asked you for.

Fatima: Because you never told me that I should be like you for people to like me.

Zulayka: What do you mean, to be like me? I never want you to be like me. I want you to be you.

Fatima: Why? So you will always be the best, the friendly, the outgoing?

Zulayka: Fatima? Where is this all coming from?

Beat.

Just go home Fatima. You are just overthinking a lot. Call me if you already have a clear mind. Bye.

Father and Daughter Scene

Fatima: Amah!

Father: Fatima? Where is your hijab?

Fatima: Amah, I don't want to wear it anymore amah

Father: What do you mean Fatima?

Fatima: I am tired amah. After the bombing, life was not easy. I wanted to say something but I don't know what right words to say. I felt that everything that I utter will be used against me. After we came here I felt that everything has change.

Father: Always believe in Allah's plan Fatima.

Fatima: Amah! Allah has Forgotten us.

Father: Fatima where is this all coming from?

Fatima: Why do we have to suffer like this? It's because this is Allah's plan for us.

Father: Do not tell this thing Fatima, Allah is always listening.

Fatima: Father accept it. Allah has forgotten us. He is not the one controlling us. It is us who should decide on how we should navigate our life.

Father: Fatima!

Fatima: If you want to save us, save us from the guilt that we have endured every day. Allow me not to wear my veil. Imagine amah a society that would accept us because we are not different from them. I will be accepted because I wear the same clothes with them. I can go out with them without any restrictions. I am tired father. This veil becomes a burden to me.

Father: Fatima! You wanted to remove your hijab because people are saying something against you?

Fatima: If this will be the way for people to accept me, and to protect us, then maybe I Should, I should forget even my faith. Because Allah has forgotten us also.

Father: What had happened to you Fatima. Do you still remember your niyyat? Your intention?

Fatima: Your teaching will not save us. Stop believing in your faith. You want to protect us? Protect us from the people we encounter every day, not from the God who we can't even see.

Father: What have I done to deserve this?

Fatima: You have done nothing Amah, that is why we are suffering now.

Zulayka leaves the stage

Fatima: Amah won't understand for now, but I am sure that I am doing the right thing.

(Change scene to Work Place)

Fatima: Good Morning Everyone!

Beat

Hi Sam. Do you want to eat lunch with me? My treat!

Sam: No thanks Fatima! I am going out with Nancy

Beat

Melanie, Let's eat lunch together.

Melanie: No thanks. My mother cooked some pork adobo. Do you want to try?

Sam: Melanie... (whisper to Melanie)

Fatima: Hi Sam. Do you want to eat lunch with me? My treat!

Sam: No thanks Fatima! I am going out with Nancy

Nancy: Still trying hard.

Zulayka and Fatima's Conversation

Zulayka: Fatima, are you ok?

Fatima: I don't understand Zulayka. I already removed my hijab. I even left my own faith. But I felt that it is not right. I thought if I remove my hijab, people will accept me. But our workmate does not talk to me anymore.

Zulayka: Fatima, I told you before that you do not have to be affected ~~by~~ ~~of~~ what people think about you.

Fatima: I should have not believed you when you say that Manila is an ideal place to live. I am far from the war. And I can live peacefully? Kalokohan..

Zulayka: Why are you blaming me for your decisions in life?

Fatima: It is really your fault.

Zulayka: Stop acting so childish Fatima.

Fatima: You are the reason why I am here in Manila.

Zulayka: What? Grow up Fatima. Do not be so pretentious.

Fatima: Ako?

Zulayka: Yes you! You have to let people know that what they are telling about you and your faith is wrong rather than trying to change yourself for them to like you. Because for them you are always a Muslim and you cannot change that!

(Change scene)

Fatima: Today, I lost two things, my identity as a Muslim and my best friend.

Beat

After the bombing incident, not only did my life changed but also my Muslim brothers and sisters who stayed believing in their faith.

Beat

One Muslim girl was bullied on her way back home from school calling her “Pangalan pa lang Kriminal na.”

A man on his 30’s was stopped by the security guard from entering a mall because he is a Muslim.

Another student who wears her hijab was stopped by the policeman and had her scarf pulled off.

A Muslim father was stabbed to death one night while walking back home from his small sari-sari store. News said that the man got out of control after hearing the bystanders shouting “Islam is a religion for demons and that all Muslim are killer.” But the real story is that he confronts them peacefully after hearing those words.

And that is my Amah. (*Father’s Death Music in*)

Father: Do you remember what you were taught in Madrassa?

Mother: Fatima anak!

Fatima: Inah

Father: What does peace means to you now?

Fatima: After everything I’ve done, would Allah still forgive me?

Mother: Fatima, what I know he is will always understand!

Father: I am always by your side. You know that right?

(Prayer in)

Mother: Shall We!

(Fatima will walk towards her hijab and get it)

Lights Fade out to black out.

Appendix B

Poster

04.15.21 Thu. 19:30

南華大學民族
音樂學系(所)

**WE AND *our*
CONTEMPOR*ary*
STRUGGLE**

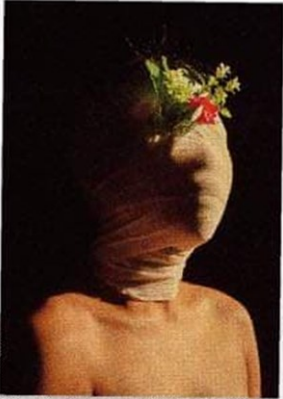
戲劇組
碩士班
畢業公演

我們與當代的
→ 困 ← 獸之鬥


嘉義縣
表演藝術中心
實驗劇場

Theatre
Graduation Production
of Nanhua University
Department of
Ethnomusicology


Chiayi
Performing Arts Center
Experimental Theatre



《另一半》
The Other Half
導演
Wincy B. Ramilo



《意念》
Niyyat
導演
Heidi S. Emelo



《葬禮》
The Funeral
導演
Ralph Jade B. Tampal