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The role of Judas Iscariot in Stephen Adly Guirgis' The Last Days of Judas Iscariot: a production thesis in acting and the actor director relationship

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THE ROLE OF JUDAS ISCARIOT
IN STEPHEN ADLY GUIRGIS'
THE LAST DAYS OF JUDAS ISCARIOT:
A PRODUCTION THESIS IN ACTING AND THE ACTOR DIRECTOR RELATIONSHIP

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University
and Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree
of Master of Fine Arts

in

The Department of Theatre

by
Scott Matthew Woltz
B.S., Towson University, 2003
May 2009

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Abstract

Directing *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* and playing the title role was chosen as the basis for a thesis project in the fall semester of 2008 to be presented to the Graduate School of Louisiana State University in partial fulfillment of the graduate requirement for the Master of Fine Arts degree in Theatre. The thesis will contain an introduction, a text analysis, a director's concept, a chapter on the rehearsal process (to include a physical score and a tactical score), a chapter on performance, and a conclusion. The purpose of this thesis is to explore both an actor's interpretation as well as a director's interpretation of the play as they interface, contrast, and finally combine. Beyond documentation of the experience as both an actor and a director, the central focus of this thesis will determine whether acting in a central role while simultaneously directing can ultimately be judged as liberating or limiting in the process of creating a theatrical production.

Introduction

During the two years that had passed since my graduation with a Bachelors of Science degree in theater from Towson University, I had developed a considerable number of concerns about acting and the part it was to play in my future. As an undergraduate, theater had provided a concrete degree of certainty for the future. The requisite classes were not difficult to complete, and performing had become highly enjoyable than it had been previously. However, the final product was apparently more interesting to me than the process of achieving that final product. Upon completing Towson's undergraduate program I was fortunate enough to be cast in a classical touring company, the National Players. The importance of technique became much more evident during this time. Of the twelve members of the cast on the tour, I perceived that my craft in acting was less developed than that of the other actors. These issues stemmed from neither a lack of talent nor a passion for acting. Rather, there was a fundamental sense that what seemed to be missing was an ability to develop a consistent process leading to a final product. This his discovery that led to a desire to seek further training, and in the spring of 2005 my search for a graduate program in theater began.

When accepted into Louisiana State University, I committed to using the ensuing three years as a time to meet personal and professional challenges. An actor must be willing to commit himself to the study of history, philosophy, religion, and numerous other disciplines, while in the context of working as a theatre artist. An actor must simultaneously endeavor to explore what defines humanity while striving on a technical level to comprehend the various other components of theatre and production. This led to a desire to delve into the areas of design, teaching, and possibly directing. In my first two years at LSU and within the limited time the MFA schedule allowed, I was given the opportunity to assistant direct a Mainstage show, enroll in additional classes, and teach many students in and outside of the classroom. In an effort to satiate this

passion for acting, I sought all additional sanctioned opportunities available to learn much more than the basic requirements of the MFA curriculum.

During the spring semester of 2008 the requirement and, needless to say, the privilege as an MFA candidate arose to audition for the production of *High School Musical*. This was to be performed at the campus Equity theatre, Swine Palace. I did hope, however, that permission might be granted to forgo the requisite participation in the production. This would provide additional time to focus on a directing project for the commencement of the fall semester of 2008. George Judy, the director of the MFA program, was keenly aware of my desire to direct. It was determined that the December production of *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* was to serve as the class MFA project. Unfortunately, there was no alternative but to perform in the mainstage musical. Upon seeing my disappointment Judy sent an email with a specific proposition:

Scott, I would like to make this MFA show a directing project for you if you are up for doing the work. Do you have a copy of the script? If you want to read and think about whether it interests you let me know. The options are these:

1. We can cast another actor as Judas and just let this be a directing project for you. I will assist you and be the primary acting coach.
2. I can direct your scenes as Judas and let you take primary responsibility for directing the rest of the show.
3. We can just collaborate as "co-directors" with you taking on as much as you feel you can and leaving to me whatever you feel is best.
4. We can keep things as they are...let you focus on acting and I will take primary directing responsibility with you as an assistant director.

I am considering playing the role of Judge Littlefield if you are up for directing. This will be a studio budget show, with little technical support, but I am envisioning it as primarily an opportunity for actors anyway and think it can be done fairly simply... It will use all the 3rd year and 1st year MFA students; so a cast of probably 16-17. It would be tricky for you as you would have to direct your classmates, but could also be exciting and give you a chance to develop some of the skills we have discussed.

Although intrigued by the proposal, I had many reservations concerning the project.

Above all, there was distinct discomfort at the proposition of directing my fellow MFA

classmates. Despite working with the class for two years as an actor, there was not only a hesitancy to take on a role as director with my peers, but there was also a lack of familiarity with the newly admitted class. There was no way to predict the quality of the working relationship with these actors. Though there is ideally a collaborative process between an actor and director, there would be some directorial authority within the position. This could potentially lead to uncomfortable situations in the rehearsal process. However, the prospect of assuming the role of Judas was particularly exciting. Typically, one would scoff at any director who also acted in his own project. Additionally, it seemed difficult to comprehend how a director could at the same time act in a production and not have one responsibility fall to the wayside. At the very least, there seemed to be the distinct possibility that he might lose some opportunity for exploration of one of his two roles. Finally, there was a concern about assuming a directorial position in a play for which I did not have a strong passion.

The choice of the play soon became much less worrisome. After reading it through three times, this play spoke on a variety of levels, and an enthusiasm promptly developed about the prospect of assuming the direction of *Judas*. The two additional problems I presented to Judy. He alleviated my misgivings about working with the actors while at the same time directing with reassurance that there was no reason for worry or doubt. Judy provided a guarantee that he would serve as an acting coach and mentor to my direction. Likewise, he would direct the scenes in which Judas was on stage. This provided a greater degree of comfort, and though some trepidation still remained, I accepted the offer to act and direct the show. However, the curiosity regarding how the time would be divided between the two roles still lingered. Can one work as both a director and actor in the rehearsal process and, if so, how? How could the balance of both roles be maintained without attention being split in too many directions? Ultimately, it was in the addressing of these questions that the topic of my thesis focused developed.

Oral articulation has never been challenging for me, but the process of attempting to convey rehearsal experiences in written composition often becomes convoluted and reductive which devalues the work. Moments and discoveries may be lost or misunderstood when sifting through past experiences and expressing feelings in writing. However, it is my hope that the amount of work and passion put into this project as both a director and actor will document an experience few have in the theatre: The melding of the actor/director relationship, for better and for worse. This thesis will reflect my experience with *Judas* and an understanding of my working process.

Text Analysis and Background

The Last Days of Judas Iscariot Synopsis

Set in a corner of downtown Purgatory, a darkly comic world imagined between Heaven and Hell, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* is a thought-provoking courtroom fantasy in which an appeal is being launched to clear the name of Christ's most notorious disciple. What led to the disgrace of Judas? Were his actions actually his fault? Did Jesus want him to do it? Did Jesus still love Judas after the betrayal?

In a time-bending trial marked by raw and beautiful contemporary language we are met with a cast of flamboyantly street-savvy characters both famous and infamous. Among others we find Sigmund Freud, Mother Teresa and Satan, who take the stand to prosecute or defend one of history's most infamous accounts of betrayal. In the end we are inevitably led to reflect upon our own views of love, spirit, and despair.

The Last Days of Judas Iscariot, by Stephen Adly Guirgis was presented by the LSU Department of Theatre at the Hatcher Hall Theatre on the Baton Rouge campus of Louisiana State University, December 2 through December 7, 2008, and the cast was as follows: Fabiana Aziza Cunningham, Leigh-Erin Balmer; Satan, Yohance Myles; Judas, Scott Woltz; Judge Littlefield, George Judy; Yusef El-Fayoumy, Kenneth De Abrew; Gloria, Lauren Stotts; Mother Teresa, Jessica Wu; Caiaphas and St. Matthew, Andrew Fafoutakis; Loretta, Mary Magdalene, and Sister Glenna, Sarah Smith; *Bailiff and Simon the Zealot*, Josh Dawes; Sigmund Freud and St. Thomas, Alex Galick; Pontius Pilate, St. Peter, and Uncle Pino, Nick Rhoton; Matthias of Galilee, Natalie Mejer; Jesus of Nazareth, Reuben Mitchell; St. Monica, Michele Guidry; Henrietta Iscariot, Josephine Hall; Butch Honeywell, Scott Siepker; understudies, Steven Bailey, Butch Honeywell; and John Fletcher, St. Matthew, Caiaphas.

The production crew included director, Scott Woltz; scenic designer, Katie Headley; lighting designer, Ken White; costume designer, Sarah Bacot; sound designer, Eun Jin Cho; vocal and text coach, Joanna Battles; dramaturg, John Fletcher; acting coach/directing mentor, George Judy; videographer, Nick Erickson; and stage manager, Nichole Ingalsbe.

In analyzing and discussing the text, it is imperative and vital that one study the author who penned the script as well. Stephen Adly Guirgis, known for such plays as *Jesus Hopped the A-Train* and *Our Lady of 121st Street*, is one of the most highly praised young playwrights of the American theatre. After finishing college, Guirgis came together with fellow actors, directors, and writers to form the LAByrinth Theater Company. He began as an actor, but much like the Group Theatre of the twenties and thirties, the LAByrinth was a collection of artists who created original pieces. This connection provided Guirgis with an opportunity to write. Guirgis, originally from the Upper West Side, is known for his New York street stylization of language and for his exploration of characters society has tossed to the side. The head critic for the New York Times has observed, "*The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*...shares many of the traits that have made Mr. Guirgis a playwright to reckon with in recent years: a fierce and questing mind that refuses to settle for glib answers, a gift for identifying with life's losers and an unforced eloquence that finds the poetry in lowdown street talk" (Brantley). After analyzing the script multiple times, I came to the conclusion that the three attributes of which Brantley spoke are clearly contained in each of his plays, but this may be found especially within the script of *Judas*. These specific attributes were essential in uncovering the importance of Guirgis' text in this production.

A Fierce and Questing Mind that Refuses to Settle for Glib Answers

As an eight-year-old in Catholic School, Guirgis was taught the story of Judas Iscariot's downfall. Immediately, Guirgis was confused by some of the hypocrisy he noticed. He didn't

understand why an all powerful, yet merciful God would cast Judas away to hell. “I just didn't get, it. It's like: if God is God and is all-forgiving, why didn't he forgive Judas? Why would Judas be in hell? Why would anybody?”(Schillinger)

In dissecting the text, I realized that *Judas* posed many questions to its audience. What led to the downfall of Judas? Was it really his fault? Did Jesus want him to do it? Did Jesus still love Judas after the fact? Although the quest for satisfaction of these questions might be challenging, it is most probable that they do not have answers. People had asked these questions for centuries resulting in many differing opinions. Producing Guirgis' *Judas* allowed us to examine our own opinions of the betrayal of Christ and confront many personal questions directly or indirectly associated with the play. A central indirect question related to the production would be, as previously stated: “*Can I act and direct in the same production without compromising one of the two roles?*” The answer to that question was yet to be determined.

A more direct question would be: *Can I deal with the religious aspects of the play without becoming entangled in the negativity of my own religious background?* These issues stem from being raised as an extremely devout follower of the Mormon faith. Following graduation from high school I fell away from the church for numerous reasons and became very bitter toward organized religion, causing me to shy away from most discussions of this topic. Hence I did not know if it would be within my capability to take on the task of directing a play with such religious overtones, yet as theatre artists it is our responsibility to assume the roles of characters and stories that may remove us from our comfort zone. What followed was a conscious decision to view the text from a different perspective. Realization that the story spoke more on a humanistic level than it did a spiritual one came with an interview in which Guirgis fully explained the level of humanity in the play. “We're all human; we're all fallible, so in some sense, we're all Judas” (Schillinger). Surprisingly, the essence of Guirgis' words are applicable

to my personal religious issues in that they both stem from the need to be the “perfect” human being. Without devotion, I felt guilty of the choices made in life. At that time, I felt it necessary to constantly carry the “Christian guilt,” but through Guirgis’ *Judas* I was able to recognize that there is no flaw in letting go of the “perfect” and discovering what it means to be a flawed human being. A personal connection is always a good starting place within textual analysis.

A Gift for Identifying With Life's Losers

Guirgis, known for such plays as *In Arabia, We'd All Be Kings*, *Jesus Hopped the A-Train*, and *Our Lady of 121st Street*, primarily focuses on lower socioeconomic figures whom society would rather forget. “The characters are working-class and below,’ he says, ‘and that’ll probably be the way until I start hanging out with rich people” (Rees). In *Jesus Hopped the A-train* we follow two inmates (one who shot a man in the buttocks, and the other a serial killer who has found god) through discussion of their own grace and morality. In *Our Lady of 121st Street* a local nun has passed away and we are introduced to numerous characters that are in one way or another damaged or destroyed. Guirgis’ plays typically relate to god and a character’s loss of faith. *Judas* is interesting, in that it directly correlates to a biblical story with which we are familiar. We know the account of Judas and his downfall. If we are “identifying” with a “loser” in Judas, then this might be the story of the most iconic loser in history.

An Unforced Eloquence that Finds the Poetry in Lowdown Street Talk

Another reason for Guirgis’ popularity as a playwright lies in his remarkable usage of the urban vernacular. Hailing from New York and working with urban youth as well as in prisons, Guirgis had picked up a superior knowledge of the language that his characters, who were primarily from New York or at the very least having New York wits about them, would use to verbalize their wants and needs. The accessibility of the language to today’s modern audiences creates a world in which we are able to laugh and cry with these characters. This is no where

more true than in *Judas*. One remarkable example of Guirgis' use of language in the script is Saint Monica's speech. In it, she speaks to the audience of her ability to intercede in times of need:

I am a Nag, and if I wasn't a Nag, I wouldn't never made it to be no Saint, and the church wouldn't a had no Father of the Church named Saint Augustine—cuz I birthed the mother fucker, raised him, and when he started messin' up, like, all the time and constantly, I nagged God's ass to save him! I nagged and nagged and nagged and nagged till God got so tired of my shit that he did save my son, and my son—Saint Augustine—he stopped bangin' whores and sippin' on some wine and he became learn-ed, so fuckin' learn-ed that he's know as one of the Fathers of the Church, and you could look that shit up! Go ahead, look it up right now, I'll wait! (Guirgis 13)

The language assists in identifying each character and their particular setting. James Martin, a priest and theological advisor for the play, has referred to it as being “inculturated for a new audience...the streetwise lingo represented the playwright's attempt at what theologians call an ‘inculturation’ of the Bible—that is, a translation of the Gospel texts not simply into a different language, but a specific culture” (Martin186). Apparently in inculturating the text it is more readily comprehended by modern audiences. Ironically, Monica, known as the Patron saint of verbal abuse, uses the language to create a New York type atmosphere. Many of us have heard these words in one form or another. Such unconventional use of profanity through this urban vernacular creates a fast paced, rhythmically charged feeling which in turn allows us to relate to the audience outside of their religiously iconic representations. There is a flow of eloquence that not only forces us to believe in Monica's strength but it also offers comedic tidbits in an often darkly saturated play. This approach holds true for many of the characters of the play. From Pontius Pilate's rebuttal of Cunningham's questioning, “You better check the resume two times before you start tryin' ta sweep your dirt under a Roman's rug! I am clean like dove and ready for love, missy! I live in heaven! Where you live at, girlfriend?!” (Guirgis 106), to Satan's attack

on the Judge, “No! Don’t you fuckin’ “Lou” me—you little fag—God’s been fuckin’ stealing souls again, hasn’t he...What? I don’t got enough to contend with?—Now I gotta deal with God crusin’ the barnyards of hell poaching condemned poultry like some kind of silver fox-tailed thief in the fuckin’ night?” (Guirgis 109) Similarly this is true in the way that the character Judas assailed Jesus,

I’ll tell you what I know: I watched you trip over your own dusty feet to heal the sick, the blind, the lame, the unclean—any two bit stranger stubbed their fuckin’ toe! When some lowly distant relative—too cheap to buy enough wine for his own fuckin’ wedding suddenly runs out of booze—no problem, you just “Presto Change-O”—and it was fuckin’ Miller time in Ol’ Cana wasn’t it bro. But when I fuckin’ needed you—where the fuck were you, huh?! (Guirgis 125)

It would be imperative that one appreciate the essence of this language and its distinctive rhythms in any effort to direct the play and in the specific creation of the role of Judas as an actor.

Director's Concept

A director's concept should illustrate the look and feel of the play for the audience. It might also permit a director to either alter or change the script to suit a specific vision, time frame, or mood. The first design meeting required the initial presentation of a concept for the production. Ideally, once a concept was delivered, the designers would be able to grasp the ideas for the production and begin their own investigation based upon the world and mood which needed to be created. Needless to say, I was very nervous in meeting with the heads of all the various technical departments, as I did not want to appear unprofessional or inexperienced. As simply as possible, I stated what feelings the script evoked and the expected achievements within this particular production. Initially I spoke of the feelings which the audience should take away from the show. As someone walked into the theatre they should have felt as if they were in a place with which they were familiar but where they would have preferred not to be. The remarks made were off-the-cuff, "like a Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)." Following the prologue it should have become evident that the audience was to spend the next two hours as members of the jury who would ultimately decide the fate of Judas. The audience should have experienced Judas's life and the tragedy behind the man through the eyes of those who surrounded him. In the script Guirgis attempted to avoid having the audience sympathize with Judas or affirm the traditional views of his culpability. Needed was an illustration of a man who had a strong, passionate drive to do the right thing and who might or might not have made misguided decisions along the way. Most importantly, the audience should have felt that the essence of Judas and the decisions he made were those which also reside within each of us.

Katie Headlee, the set designer for the show, took the idea of a DMV and implemented it. There were to be many meetings over the next few weeks to establish the feeling of the space. Although there were points of disagreement with how literal the design was to be, the

collaboration and the eventual realization became a source of great pride. Since the play was to be produced in the black box theatre, a two hundred and fifty seat house with seating on all four sides, it was necessary that the set be relatively bare. It needed to include an abnormally large area for the judge's oversized bench, a witness stand, and two spots set up for the lawyers to sit when not interrogating a witness. Of significance was the place for Judas to sit in a catatonic state for the majority of the show with the exception of the moments during which he was expressly in a scene. There were no stage directions calling for Judas to be on stage. However the image of a broken man frozen in a catatonic state would not only serve as a reminder for the audience, but it would also intensify the various characters' arguments throughout the performance. For example, at the point that Judas' lawyer, Cunningham, broke down at the end of the show, she could have had a moment of seeing Judas's despair as a reflection of her own. This did not mean that we treated Judas as if he was actually in the courtroom. Rather in an abstract way his placement on stage represented the Ninth circle of hell, something that could be seen but would not be there. With this in mind, Headlee decided to use the four corners of the space; one corner for the Judges bench, one for Judas' area, and the other two for small benches that would wrap around the pillars for the prosecution and defense. The witness stand would be on a small platform in the center of the stage and would allow both lawyers to move around the space freely.

Although the design concept which Headlee had brought forward was excellent, there was a fear that the feel of the DMV, with its crisp, clean color, would not evoke the right feeling of "downtown Purgatory". Lighting designer, Ken White, would later speak about what feeling would be most appropriate given the space limitations of the Black Box. The feeling of "downtown Purgatory" needed to be present within the space. Perhaps a court room set in an old building which had once been used for something important would be acceptable. The

appearance of the space might create the image of a courtroom given to trials that no one cared about any longer and in which there were dozens of other rooms exactly like it. A conclusion was eventually reached that it would have a sort of old warehouse feel which could allow for slashes of cooler, dimmer lighting to shine through a possibly dilapidated old roof. The lighting would then in turn dirty up the atmosphere of Headlee's cleaner and much more sterile DMV set.

In working with Sarah Bacot, our costume designer, I outlined to her that the iconic characters such as Pontius Pilate, Mary Magdalene, and Caiaphas the Elder should be recognizable but that they should possess a contemporary feel. This would allow the audience to move away from any preconceived notions of a dry retelling of the story and create a more accessible understanding of these characters who maintain the same humanity as everyone in the world. It was decided that Judas and Jesus should be costumed in the same clothing, with the exception that Jesus' clothes were to be immaculate while Judas' were sullied. Bacot then developed the idea to have both characters dressed in Silk Noil, a less refined form of silk, which gave the look of a natural homespun quality, which back then was what everyone wore. This material would then be incorporated into the costume design of the majority of the biblical characters. This would create the idea that all of the characters seemingly had a little bit of Judas and Jesus connected to them.

Working with E.J. Cho, the show's sound designer, soon became the most enjoyable part of the technical design process. As with the other designers, Cho wanted to know what images, sounds, or thoughts came to mind. She requested that a list be provided of the music and sounds that would embody the feeling of the show, and I gave her a mixture of non-verbal sounds and songs with lyrics that best represented the story. With additional music from Cho, a mixture of this music was created to be played during the pre-show while Judas was in his catatonic state.

Different parts of these songs were then used throughout the rest of the show as well. It was a joyous collaboration which I hope will serve as a model for future collaborations.

Documentation and Analysis of Rehearsal Process

Though totally prepared to begin the rehearsal process, there was a distinct feeling of anxiety that plagued me. A lingering fear continued that, upon being ambushed with numerous questions for which I did not have the answers, an immediate loss of respect from the cast would occur. Earlier in the day a passage of *A Director Prepares* calmed my fears; “There is no disgrace in not knowing what you are doing and not having all the answers. But your passion and excitement about something will take you the distance through uncertainty” (Bogart 58). I certainly did possess a deep passion about the project, and it appeared that directing this show would become a positive learning process. The first rehearsal commenced with a “first supper” or pot luck which was designed to allow the group to meet and begin to come together as an ensemble. The read through followed with good results. At the conclusion of the first rehearsal, I suggested that each ensemble member begin applying the ten rehearsal goals (Appendix A) which Judy had been teaching the class. The rehearsal goals have become an important navigational tool in the process of producing a play. It is important to explore these goals physically and imaginatively both inside and outside of rehearsal until any ideas are revealed which may come to life through experience. It is not enough to answer these questions intellectually. They must become a part of a daily physical discipline and will evolve throughout the rehearsal process. My personal rehearsal process consists of doing the actor’s basic homework (the ten rehearsal goals) and then rewording that work into character statements.

An essential first step for an actor and a director is that one note in writing what is said about the character being portrayed. This should be accomplished either in what a character says about themselves or in what other characters say about them. This informs a director or actor with the given circumstances of a character or the “living what” (Appendix A). As an actor it is important to understand the given circumstances of Judas so that I will know what stimulates

Judas' condition and compels him to do what he does throughout the play. As a director knowing each character's given circumstances is imperative to be able to guide the actor towards knowing what is crucial in each scene. As a director, I had to know how each scene built on top of each other in order to continue to move the story forward. It was also helpful to understand why an audience would want to follow the story. Knowing the given circumstances allows a director and an actor to understand what is necessary within the scene.

What Does Judas Say About Himself?

"My father's dead...the Romans kilt him" (Guirgis 28).

"That's a nice thing to say. Yeah. Been a while since I heard something nice" (Guirgis 61).

"I'm mildly afraid of going to Hell"

Satan: "Why?"

"Minor incident last night—miscalculation on my part—nothing serious"

Satan: "...I wouldn't worry about going to Hell.

"Even if I did something, perhaps a little controversial?" (Guirgis 61)

"Well, say, what if someone were to betray, for example...the Messiah—say some idiot had a choice to betray the Messiah or not betray him, and he chose to betray him...I say the guy's fucked right?" (Guirgis 63)

"...I haven't been laid in three years, bro...I wasted my prime man. And then I wasted my prime after my prime" (Guirgis 64).

"I made a mistake, please, please..." (Guirgis 96)

"And don't you get that I don't fuckin' care" (Guirgis 125).

"You just, you just—I made a mistake!" (Guirgis 126)

"All I know is you broke me unfixable—and that I'm here..." (Guirgis 126)

"...I loved you. That's all I did. And that's the truth. And now I'm here" (Guirgis 126).

“(to Jesus) I don’t love you” (Guirgis 128).

“...They shoulda buried me standing up—cuz I been on my knees my whole life!” (Guirgis 128)

“I would never believed that you could have left me.”

Jesus: “I never left you.”

“That you didn’t love me” (Guirgis 129).

“I can’t hurt...”

Jesus: “I love you, Judas.”

“I can’t.”

Jesus: “Please stay.”

“I can’t hurt...”

Jesus: “Please love me, Judas.”

“I can’t” (Guirgis 129).

What Do Other Characters Say About Judas?

Judge Littlefield: “Your client is Judas Iscariot! Your client sold out the son of God...”

...Judas Iscariot committed the one unforgivable sin....and then he did the world a favor and he hung himself!” (Guirgis 11)

El-Fayoumy: “When then authorities came to arrest Jesus—after your client sold him out with a kiss...” (Guirgis11).

Monica: “He looked fuckin’ retarded, he wouldn’t talk or nothing. He didn’t seem to hear me...” (Guirgis 13)

Monica: “He couldn’t look at me. Or he looked through me. I couldn’t tell. His eyes was empty. He barely breathed. He was like a catatonic statue of a former human being. And I detected sadness in him.” (Guirgis 13).

El-Fayoumy: "...dripping with anticipation to defend...the Kingdom of Heaven...against the Satan-spawned traitor Judas Iscariot" (Guirgis 14).

Judge Littlefield: "So consider this: you friend Judas? He had Jesus for three years...Three years in the foxhole with the best friend ya ever had, then he shot him the back for a pack of Kools. Think about what that says about the essential character of the man" (Guirgis 17).

Cunningham: "My client is catatonic" (Guirgis 18).

Judge Littlefield: "Someone who was aware of his own self-inflicted erosion of the capacity to be filled by grace...Someone too prideful to ask for forgiveness even in the face of the fiery furnace. Or maybe, he don't bother askin', cuz he knows he don't deserve it!" (Guirgis 18)

Judge Littlefield: "What does Judas Iscariot have to do with my truth? I didn't hang myself from some olive branch!" (Guirgis)

Gloria: "So anyways—about Judas, not a lot is know except that he was chosen to be an apostle, he betrayed Jesus, and then he hung hisself" (Guirgis 21).

El-Fayoumy: "You were a single parent raising many children, Judas being your eldest, and the man of the family" (Guirgis 24).

Henrietta Iscariot: "Selfish boy, you will come to no good" (Guirgis 25).

El-Fayoumy: "Judas Iscariot—he is in hell—yes?"

Mother Teresa: "Well, we can't never know for sure, but, it doan look good" (Guirgis 37).

Mother Teresa: "Judas, he succumb to despair. The music of God's love and grace kept playing, but he, he made himself hard of hearing...Judas, he threw his earphones away—and that is very sad, but that is what he chose and that is what happened" (Guirgis 39).

Cunningham: "Was Judas Iscariot a zealot?"

Simon the Zealot: "Well, he didn't go to the meeting or nuthin, but, yeah, he was pretty much a zealot if you ax me" (Guirgis 44).

Cunningham: “Were you at the disturbance at the Temple?”

Simon the Zealot: “Yeah.”

Cunningham: “What did you think about that?”

Simon the Zealot: “Ya kidding? I love it. Judas too. We all did” (Guirgis 46).

Simon the Zealot: “Personally, I think Judas was trying to throw Jesus into the deep end of the pool—make him swim. I knew Judas pretty good...What I believe is this: Judas knew that if the Romans grabbed up Jesus, that Jesus would have to act...Judas did what he did to help Jesus realize his destiny and fulfill his mission.”

Cunningham: “Judas tried to help Jesus?”

Simon the Zealot: “I believe so. Yes” (Guirgis 48).

El Fayoumy: “...Judas Iscariot—he sought to create God into his own image—God as earthly avenger, which was not God’s way” (Guirgis 50).

Satan: “When I encountered Mr. Iscariot (on the night of the betrayal) he appeared to have already taken full advantage of the Happy Hour” (Guirgis 56).

Satan: “It seems like you preferred to be alone” (Guirgis 57).

Satan: “I can see you’re a man of wealth and substance...” (Guirgis 57)

Satan: “I’d say that if this clown we’re talking about betrayed the Messiah, that, probably, ‘It would have been better for that man if he had never been born’” (Guirgis 64).

Mary Magdalene: I also knew Judas Iscariot very well. Out of the twelve, he was the most moody and the most impetuous, and yet, he was my favorite. And in some ways, I think he was Jesus’ favorite too...Judas was almost an alter-ego to Jesus—he was the shadow to Jesus’ light. He was the sour to the sweet and the cool to the warm. They often walked together, more often than not arguing—no one could get a rise out of Jesus like Judas could...I think that if someone were to say that Judas was good for Jesus that they would not be mistaken (Guirgis 68).

Cunningham: “In your expert opinion Dr. Freud, was Judas Iscariot a psychotic?”

Sigmund Freud: “Without question...a decision to take one’s own life can only be precipitated by a failure of the mind”.

Cunningham: “And what would you say to people who would say that Judas brought about his own mental illness by betraying Jesus and getting him crucified?”

Sigmund Freud: “I would say this: Number one, you cannot conjure or “bring about” mental illness. Number two, any god who punishes the mentally ill is not worth worshipping; and, number three, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”—the person who could have prevented this tragedy was Jesus, not Judas” (Guirgis 71-72).

El-Fayoumy: “So, Caiaphas the Elder: In the Bible, it says that Judas Iscariot made an approach to you—a dark and nefarious approach—to offer up the location of Jesus of Nazareth, and to, in fact, turn him in to you and the authorities” (Guirgis 78).

Caiaphas: “It was Judas Iscariot who approached me at the Temple, not the other way around” (Guirgis 79).

El-Fayoumy: “Judas crossed the line...he betrayed the ideal in betraying Jesus—the rabbinical ideal” (Guirgis 80).

El-Fayoumy: “But in your opinion, was Judas Iscariot ‘loyal’?”

Caiaphas: “Obviously not.”

El-Fayoumy: “Was he ‘honest’?”

Caiaphas: “No.”

El-Fayoumy: “...Was Judas Iscariot obedient?”

Caiaphas: “to his own will and desires—yes” (Guirgis 83-84)

Caiaphas: “he served a necessary purpose, but as a fellow Jew, I confess he disgusted me” (Guirgis 84).

Cunningham: “And yet, Judas Iscariot, who came forward in the face of this “great threat,” is, in your eyes, not a patriot but a traitor. A traitor who, in your words, ‘disgusted you’. Why is that Caiaphas?”

Caiaphas: “Because he handed Jesus over for money” (Guirgis 88).

Cunningham: “...Judas recanted and tried to return the silver, did he not?” (Guirgis 91)

Thomas: I thought Judas was a bit of a jerk-off. Actually “fuckin’ dick” would be more accurate. Judas was the kinda guy—at least with me—where, one minute he’s your friend, and the next minute he’s making fun of you in front of everybody. He used to like to say that the reason that Jesus had to do the Miracle of Loaves and the Fishes was because I ate all the food when no one was looking...other times, he could be real nice...like once we were partnered together to go into town to heal people and cast out demons, and well, I had some problems that day—everyone I tried to heal ended up getting worse...but Judas fixed it. He healed them...and that tells me his faith was genuine. And when we got back to camp that night, he didn’t tell anybody how I messed up, in fact, he said I did a good job...Judas was kind of a dick but he wasn’t shallow or petty. He really was pretty large. He wasn’t the best, but he was far from the worst. Jesus liked him...Judas was right up there in the top three with Mary Magdalene and Peter...some people say Judas did what he did cuz he was greedy...the guy wasn’t wandering around the desert for three years...cuz he was looking to get rich. Other people say that the devil got into him...Judas was loyal to a fault...Judas would have taken on the devil and his entire army one against a thousand if he had to...other people say Judas did it cuz he knew the ship was sinking and he was trying to get himself a “nut” to have something to fall back on...Judas was not a “fall back” guy, he was one hundred percent “fall forward” (Guirgis 94).

Cunningham: “Judas Iscariot came down to your tent to recant his testimony...You bare the responsibility for the death of Jesus Christ—not Judas Iscariot...” (Guirgis 99)

Cunningham: “Judas came to your office and begged you on bended knee to take the money and release Jesus...he tried to return the money—first to the Sanhedrin and then to you...” (Guirgis 99)

Pilate: “Unlike Judas, that Nazarene boy had character. He didn’t come up on me begging and groveling—crying like a bitch” (Guirgis 106).

Pilate: “Judas Iscariot had no remorse—his fear left no room for it. His fear was one hundred percent ego-driven and self-serving. One hundred percent panic. Zero percent remorse” (Guirgis 108).

Cunningham: “Mr. Satan—does God love Judas Iscariot? Yes or no!”

Satan: “God loves everybody.”

Cunningham: “And yet Judas is in hell—so what use is God’s love to Judas if my client is allowed to languish in damnation?”

Satan: “Your client is free to leave whenever he wants to—if fact I wish we would...” (Guirgis 119)

Cunningham: “You failed to meet God’s conditions, and he threw you in the trash! Judas failed—and he’s in a catatonic stupor!”

Satan: “Your client succumbed to despair” (Guirgis 119).

Jesus: “I miss you Judas” (Guirgis 123).

Jesus: “I love you Judas” (Guirgis 127).

Jesus: “You think your suffering is a one-way street?” (Guirgis 125)

Jesus: “...and you’ve got no nerve at all! Where’s your heart in all this, Judas? You think you were with me for any other reason than that?! It was your heart, Judas. You were all heart. You were my heart!” (Guirgis 125)

Jesus: “What if I were to tell you that you are not here? That you are with me in my kingdom even now, and that you have been there since the morning of my ascension and that you have never left?” (Guirgis 126)

Jesus: “Stand up Judas.”

Judas: “You know I can’t do that!”

Jesus: “No. What I know—is that you can” (Guirgis 127).

Butch: “We found you guilty, Mr. Iscariot” (Guirgis 130).

Butch: “You cashed in silver, Mr. Iscariot...” (Guirgis 130)

Examining Character Through Physical and Tactical Scores

What follows is the physical score for the character of Judas in the play. Due to the fact that Judas only physically moves throughout the space twice within the play, it is only necessary to score those two scenes. Although Judas did interact with Jesus in the final scene he did not move from his catatonic state.

A physical score is defined as a move-by-move analysis of the physical activity accomplished within a scene. As an actor, the purpose of the physical score is to illustrate the character’s journey as clearly as possible through *movement*, not solely through psychological analysis (as in a tactical score). Since the play was performed in a black box theatre (in-the-round), it is important to define the stage directions of the space. In this particular score, Downstage (DS) faced toward the stage managers booth. Upstage (US) was the direction opposite Downstage, facing away from the booth. Stage right (SR) was the right side/direction of the stage when facing the stage managers booth and Stage left (SL) was the left side/direction of the stage when facing the stage managers booth. Any movement was indicated with the term cross (X).

Following the physical score, the next element is a representative tactical score. A tactical score is defined as a moment to moment list of acting choices used in playing the role of Judas. In completing a tactical score, an actor can begin to create the character’s inner life. As mentioned earlier all characters have a spine or an overall objective within the play. As a director finding each character’s spine will allow for the creation of the spine for a play. As an actor, after

finding the individual spine for a character we must find the tactics, or the different ways a character goes about getting what he wants, tactics crucial to achieving those objectives. The director’s job is to illuminate the various tactics each character employs to propel the scene forward but simultaneously to honor the story.

The score consists of three columns including text (the original words of the script), actions (what is hoped to be achieved in order to obtain goals/wants), and obstacles (what was standing in the way of obtaining those goals.) To further appreciate the actor’s need for tactics one may look to William Ball, director and founder of American Conservatory Theatre. Ball, in *Sense of Direction*, stated the importance of wants:

Wants. Wants. Wants. Wants are what create drama. Wants are what give life to the character. Wants are what the walking individual is never without. Wants are perpetual. Wants cause action. Wants create conflict. Wants are the very energy of human life and...are the aspect of character to which the actor gives his relentless and obsessive attention. When I succeed in (finding) my wants, I succeed in the process of acting (Ball, 76).

Physical Score

First scene: Judas meets Matthias
 Second scene: Judas meets Satan

Text	Action/Activity
Henrietta: Well, Judas didn’t come home ‘til very late. I waited by the fire. I was worried, he was only eight. I was concerned that maybe the Romans had detained him for shoplifting again—	Start preshow in my sitting position UL pillar. Leap up X clockwise around the bench.
El-Fayoumy: A shoplifter! So please the court!	
Henrietta: But then he came home.	Sit down DSL, making sure not to sit behind the witness stand, and play with spinning top.
JUDAS: Hi Mommy.	

<p>Henrietta: Judas! I was so worried</p>	
<p>JUDAS: Look what I got, Mommy? A spinning top!</p>	<p>Spin top.</p>
<p>Henrietta: Judas, did you catch any fish? Your sisters are weeping with hunger—</p>	
<p>El-Fayoumy: Weeping, your great sir! Weeping and wailing</p>	
<p>JUDAS: I caught five fish, Mommy!</p>	<p>Showing five fingers.</p>
<p>Henrietta: But where are they?</p>	
<p>JUDAS: I sold them in the market and bought this spinning top. Look how it spins, Mommy!</p>	<p>Spin top.</p>
<p>Henrietta: Judas Iscariot, I am ashamed of you!</p>	
<p>JUDAS: But Mommy—</p>	
<p>Henrietta:--Selfish boy, you will come to no good!!!</p>	<p>Hang head in disappointment.</p>
<p>El-Fayoumy: “Selfish boy you will come to no good,” was that your statement at the time?</p>	
<p>Henrietta: He was only eight!</p>	
<p>El-Fayoumy: Eight—and too late!!! Nothing further, great sir!</p>	
<p>Judge: Cross</p>	
<p>El-Fayoumy: No, thank you.</p>	
<p>Judge: I wasn’t asking you.</p>	
<p>Cunningham: Ms. Iscariot, what happened the next day?</p>	
<p>Henrietta: Well, he ran away from home</p>	<p>Fiddle with top, but do not spin it.</p>

<p>that night, and I searched for him all day. Late in the afternoon, I observed the following—</p> <p>Matthias: Hi.</p> <p>JUDAS: Hi.</p> <p>Matthias: Hi.</p> <p>JUDAS: Hi...My name's Judas. What's yours?</p> <p>Matthias: Matthias of Galilee.</p> <p>JUDAS: Hey, I got an idea: Why don't you go home and get your spinning top, and then, when you get back with your spinning top, we can play battle of the spinning tops?</p> <p>Matthias: I don't got a spinning top.</p> <p>JUDAS: Oh.</p> <p>Matthias: I wish I had a spinning top, all my friend got one except me.</p> <p>JUDAS: Yeah that's rough. I used to not have one too.</p> <p>Matthias: All the kids, they call me "sissypants" cuz I don't got no spinning top.</p> <p>JUDAS: You should ask your mommy to buy you one.</p> <p>Matthias: I don't got a mommy.</p> <p>JUDAS: Ask your daddy then.</p> <p>Matthias: I got a daddy, but he's very stern. He don't believe in spinning tops, so I can't never get one.</p> <p>JUDAS: Wow</p>	<p>Hearing voice, but believing no one is around, I look up in wonder.</p> <p>Turn upstage.</p> <p>Raise spinning top in the air.</p> <p>Continue to play with spinning top.</p> <p>Look back up at Matthias.</p>
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<p>Matthias: You prolly think I'm a sissypants too.</p> <p>JUDAS: No. Hey man—don't cry.</p> <p>Matthias: It's just very hard to get through life without a spinning top, you know?</p> <p>JUDAS: You...You wanna try mine?</p> <p>Matthias: For real?</p> <p>JUDAS: Here</p> <p>Matthias: Wow! Nobody in Galilee's got a spinning top like this—this is a wicked cool spinning top, Judas.</p> <p>JUDAS: I picked it out myself.</p> <p>Matthias: Boy oh boy, your father must really love you to buy you such a most-definitely dope sinning top as this!</p> <p>JUDAS: My father's dead.</p> <p>Matthias: What!!!???</p> <p>JUDAS: The Romans kilt him.</p> <p>Matthias: Yeah? The Romans, they took all our goats last month and now we don't have no money for nothing, even food, and so my father makes me go to the butcher and ask for bones for my dog but I don't have a dog and the butcher knows I don't have a dog, but he gives me the bones cuz he takes pity on me and then I give them to my father and he makes soup for us with the bones and we eat it and it tastes really bad and my grandmoms says my father's pride is wounded cuz he can't earn no money cuz the Romans took our goats and that's why everything's messed up and I can't have no spinning top or nothing.</p>	<p>Stand up and counter Matthias, X USL.</p> <p>X DS hand spinning top to Matthias.</p> <p>X Back up slowly US.</p> <p>Sit down USL, making sure not to be behind witness stand.</p> <p>Lift up right leg to hide behind.</p>
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<p>JUDAS: Wow!</p> <p>M: Uh-oh!</p> <p>JUDAS: What?</p> <p>Matthias: I betta go home now. I have to be home before six. My father's very stern.</p> <p>JUDAS: Oh. Okay.</p> <p>Matthias: Thank you for letting me play with your spinning top, Judas. Maybe someday my daddy'll get some more goats and then I'll get a spinning top, and then I'll come back and play spinning tops with you, and we can play spinning tops and stuff, cuz that was fun.</p> <p>Henrietta: The sad boy started to leave, then—</p> <p>JUDAS: Wait...here.</p> <p>Matthias: What?</p> <p>JUDAS: You can have it.</p> <p>Matthias: I can have your spinning top?!</p> <p>JUDAS: Yeah.</p> <p>Matthias: For real?</p> <p>JUDAS: Yeah.</p> <p>Matthias: Wow-ee Zow-ee!!! Dag! Thank you, Judas.</p> <p>Henrietta: When people ask me who my son was, I tell them that story.</p> <p>Cunningham: Thank you, Ms. Iscariot. The witness is excused.</p>	<p>Look behind me.</p> <p>Take spinning top back.</p> <p>Offer spinning top.</p> <p>Look away still offering spinning top.</p> <p>Stand up, walk slowly back to USL pillar and sit back on box...back to catatonic.</p>
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<p>Satan: I spoke to him, yeah.</p> <p>El-Fayoumy: Care to share?</p> <p>Satan: Not a problem. I appeared to Mr. Iscariot at Bathsheeba's Bar and Grill shortly after the night in question. I was actually in town for a guy named Abdul Mazzi-Hatten, but, he never showed. When I encountered Mr. Iscariot, he appeared to have already taken full advantage of the Happy Hour. Oh. Hello, friend. How are you this evening?</p> <p>JUDAS: "How am I this evening?"— What are you, a fuckin maitre d', man?</p> <p>Satan: I'm Clementine. Clementine of Cappadocia.</p> <p>JUDAS: Yeah?! Well why don't you go home and fuck your mother, Cappa-douche-a okay?!</p> <p>Satan: "Doe-sha"—Cappa-doe-sha.</p> <p>JUDAS: What?!</p> <p>Satan: It's cappa-doe-sha.</p> <p>JUDAS: Well lemme ask you something—Cappa-douche-ah—do I look like someone who give a flying fuck right now about where the fuck your from?!</p> <p>Satan: I'm very sorry.</p> <p>JUDAS: Sorry don't mean shit, dick! Take all the "sorrys" in the world, pile em' one on top of the other, you know what you got, Cappa-douche?! You got a big pile a fuckin nuthin' is what you got! Okay?!</p> <p>Satan: You're right.</p>	<p>Music starts, stand up from USL and X staggering to table SL.</p> <p>Pull out chair, sit down and pour myself a drink.</p> <p>Follow two ladies walking out. Hang head low.</p> <p>Music fades out.</p> <p>Turn US.</p> <p>Turn away facing DS.</p> <p>Whip back US.</p> <p>Stand and counter Satan X SL to USL.</p> <p>X back to table SL.</p> <p>Move chair out of the way so there is nothing blocking me and Satan.</p>
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<p>JUDAS: You wanna do somethin' about it?!</p>	<p>Grab his shoulder and swing him around.</p>
<p>Satan: No sir</p>	
<p>JUDAS: Then go fuck you mother and leave me the fuck alone!</p>	<p>X right into his face.</p>
<p>Satan: I will. Thanks for the advice.</p>	
<p>JUDAS: Hey!!!...Where you going?!</p>	
<p>Satan: It seems like you preferred to be alone.</p>	
<p>JUDAS: Why would I prefer that?! What're you saying: I look like some kinda Lone Wolf? Like a fuckin' piranha, bro?</p>	<p>X around table and back to US.</p>
<p>Satan: Do you mean Pariah?</p>	
<p>JUDAS: I mean what I mean. Whaddy—need a light or something?</p>	<p>Get lighter out of pocket and offer it to Satan.</p>
<p>Satan: Oh. Thanks.</p>	
<p>JUDAS: Like this lighter?</p>	
<p>Satan: Very nice.</p>	
<p>JUDAS: I bought it today, man. Expensive shit, but—I got it like that.</p>	<p>Turn DS toward audience so as to not see the lighter not working for Satan.</p>
<p>Satan: I can see you're a man of wealth and substance, I admire that.</p>	<p>Take lighter back.</p>
<p>JUDAS: "Wealth and substance"—don't push it. So, what's your name?</p>	<p>X table SL and sit down in original seat.</p>
<p>Satan: ...Clementine. Clementine of Cappadocia.</p>	
<p>JUDAS: Clementine, eh? Isn't that a girl's name?</p>	<p>Lean back in chair.</p>
<p>Satan: Not in Cappadocia.</p>	

<p>JUDAS: Well, it is here, bro—you sure you ain't a girl man?</p>	
<p>Satan: Pretty sure, yeah.</p>	
<p>JUDAS: I'm Judas, Judas Iscariot--- maybe you heard of me?</p>	<p>Move into table.</p>
<p>Satan: Nah, man—I'm from out of town.</p>	
<p>JUDAS: You never heard of me?</p>	
<p>Satan: Nope.</p>	
<p>JUDAS: You don't get around much, do ya Clementine? So whereabouts you from, man—Egypt?</p>	
<p>Satan: Cappadocia.</p>	
<p>JUDAS: That's in Egypt though, right?</p>	<p>Turn back to look at bartender US left pillar.</p>
<p>Satan: No—Cappadocia is in Cappadocia.</p>	
<p>JUDAS: I dig your pyramids, man—and the Sphinx? Bartender! Hey! More of that Mesopotanium wine for my Nubian friend! And some dates and figs too! You smoke opium, Clam?</p>	<p>Turn back to Satan DS. Then back to Bartender US.</p>
<p>Satan: Clem.</p>	<p>Turn back to Satan DS.</p>
<p>JUDAS: And some opium, bartender—the good stuff!</p>	<p>Turn back to Bartender US.</p>
<p>Satan: You seem like a man on a mission.</p>	
<p>JUDAS: Took this girl to a puppet show today, man.</p>	<p>Turn back to Satan DS.</p>
<p>Satan: Yeah? How was it?</p>	
<p>JUDAS: Fuckin' sucked. Puppets are bullshit, ya know?</p>	
<p>Satan: In Cappadocia, we burn puppets!</p>	

<p>JUDAS: Well, you people got the right idea over there—that Pharaoh, he’s a smart man. Yeah, man. Hey, Clammy—Cheers!</p> <p>Satan: Cheers!</p>	<p>Pour Satan a drink.</p> <p>Clink glasses.</p>
<p>JUDAS: Yeah.—Whoa! Hey man, thass a nice shirt, what you pay for it?</p> <p>Satan: Two pieces of silver.</p>	<p>Drink, finishing whatever is left in the glass.</p>
<p>JUDAS: Two pieces of silver? HA!!! I’ll give you five. Here ya go, switch shirts with me.</p> <p>Satan: But, I’m rather fond of this shirt.</p>	<p>Stand, take money out and pound it on the table.</p>
<p>JUDAS: C’mon, man—switch shirts—switch shirts, we’re buds now, friends an’ shit—I’ll let you be my wing man—get you laid, bro!</p> <p>Satan: A nice brunette?</p>	<p>Throw money at Satan.</p>
<p>JUDAS: Two brunettes and a eunuch! C’mon strip!</p> <p>Satan: Oh Ok. He was so drunk, he didn’t even notice my unmistakably Satanic stench.</p>	<p>Point to one part of the audience and then another.</p> <p>Take off shirt and throw it at Satan.</p>
<p>JUDAS: Yo, I dig this shirt, what is it? Silk?</p> <p>Satan: From Cappadocia.</p>	<p>Put Satan’s shirt on X in a circle for all to see, ending facing SR.</p>
<p>JUDAS: Fuckin’ Cappadocian Silk! Alright!</p> <p>Satan: Your shirt is nice too.</p>	
<p>JUDAS: Yeah?</p> <p>Satan: Yeah.</p>	<p>Move chair so that the back of the chair is facing SR and sit.</p>

<p>JUDAS: Wow...Thanks, man. That's a nice thing to say. Yeah. Been a while since I heard something nice. That's really nice, bro. Hey man, if I told you something corny, would you think that I was, like, a dick?</p> <p>Satan: Not at all.</p> <p>JUDAS: Okay...I'm kinda mildly afraid of going to hell.</p> <p>Satan: Why?</p> <p>JUDAS: Minor incident last night—miscalculation on my part—nothing serious.</p> <p>Satan: Well, one thing I can tell you about hell: As an eternal destination, it's apparently vastly underrated.</p> <p>JUDAS: Yeah?</p> <p>Satan: And "hell is nothing more than the absence of God, which, if you're looking for a good time, is not at all a bad thing. You wanna play the lute, sing Mary Chapin Carpenter—that's what heaven's for. You wanna rock? Apparently, hell's the venue.</p> <p>JUDAS: Are there, like, girls down there?</p> <p>Satan: Not many, but I hear they import them from developing nations on weekends...But hey, I wouldn't worry about going to Hell.</p> <p>JUDAS: Even if I did something, perhaps, a little controversial?</p> <p>Satan: God understands.</p> <p>JUDAS: Yeah, but don't choices have, like, consequences?</p>	<p>Grab bottle.</p> <p>Drink out of bottle.</p> <p>X clockwise around the chair.</p> <p>Sit.</p>
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<p>Satan: C'mon, you really think we have a choice?</p> <p>JUDAS: Well, don't we?</p> <p>Satan: Okay: Did you pass by that fuckin' disgusting, stinky fuckin' leper on your way in her tonight.</p> <p>JUDAS: Who? Freddy?</p> <p>Satan: "Freddy," yeah: You think he had a choice, Freddy, stinkin it up out there, can't scratch his balls for fear a pullin' out his testes? Huh? And what about what's-his-face from the old days—Job? Don't you think if Job had a choice he woulda been like "Okay, God, enough! I get the fucking point"?! </p> <p>JUDAS: Yeah, but, Job did say that!</p> <p>Satan: Yes he did! And what happened next, Judas? God kept right on fucking with him until Job made the only choice available—which was to quietly keep his wrinkly ass cheeks spread wider than the Red Sea 'till God got tired of drilling him for oil!</p> <p>JUDAS: I guess...But say...Ah never mind.</p> <p>Satan: What?</p> <p>JUDAS: Not important.</p> <p>Satan: C'mon.</p> <p>JUDAS: Okay, Well, say what if someone were to betray, for example...the Messiah—</p> <p>Satan: --You mean the Messiah, Messiah?</p> <p>JUDAS: Yeah. Say some idiot had a choice to betray the Messiah or not</p>	<p>Looking and pointing DSL exit.</p> <p>Turn SR.</p> <p>Turn DS.</p>
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<p>betray him, and he chose to betray him?</p> <p>Satan: Gee, I couldn't say. Whadda you think?</p> <p>JUDAS: I'd say that guy's fucked, right?</p> <p>Satan: I really couldn't say.</p> <p>JUDAS: C'mon Clams, I'm just askin'.</p> <p>Satan: Well, since you asked, I guess I'd say that if this guy—</p> <p>JUDAS: Cuz this is just some hypothetical guy here—</p> <p>Satan: Right. I'd say that if this clown we're talking about betrayed the Messiah, that, probably, "It would've been better for that man if he had never been born."</p> <p>JUDAS: Never been born?!</p> <p>Satan: Hey—you asked.</p> <p>JUDAS: That's heavy, man. That's a fuckin' heavy trip man, Clams.</p> <p>Satan: I'm thirsty—how 'bout you?</p> <p>JUDAS: That's fuckin' really heavy.</p> <p>Satan: Let's have another round here, Pops! Two barrels of wine and a hooker menu! You okay, man?</p> <p>JUDAS: Clams, man, I just realized that I haven't been laid in three years bro. Can ya believe that—guy like me?</p> <p>Satan: Three years?</p> <p>JUDAS: I wasted my prime, man. And then I wasted my prime after my prime.</p> <p>Satan: Well, I think you'll prolly get</p>	<p>Move into the table.</p> <p>Head in hands.</p>
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<p>fucked tonight, bro.</p> <p>JUDAS: Ya think so?</p> <p>Satan: Yeah. I'm pretty sure.</p> <p>JUDAS: I wanna 'nother fuckin' drink. Tonight man, I'm gonna drink this fuckin' bar!</p> <p>Satan: Hey. Judas, lemme ask you something: Who is this Jesus of Nazareth guy I've been hearing about?</p> <p>JUDAS: Jesus of Nazareth?</p> <p>Satan: Yeah—I heard he's some kinda somebody.</p> <p>JUDAS: Some kinda somebody?</p> <p>Satan: Yeah, that's what I heard.</p> <p>JUDAS: Aw, fuck that guy, man—he's a bitch.</p> <p>El Fayoumy: "FUCK THAT GUY, HE'S A BITCH"!!! Your Honor! Nothing further!</p> <p>Judge: Cross?</p> <p>Cunningham: ...Not at this time.</p> <p>Judge: Lou, stick around.</p> <p>Satan: I know the drill.</p> <p>Judge: Meal break! Fifteen minutes!</p> <p>El Fayoumy: Fabiana, free for lunch?</p>	<p></p> <p>Stand up, slam table and turn US toward SL pillar/bar.</p> <p>Turn back DS.</p> <p>X DS a step.</p> <p>X DS to Satan.</p> <p>X, staggering back to US pillar and sit on box.</p> <p>Back into catatonic state.</p> <p>Music begins to play, hall light opens diagonally across stage where Jesus and I are on opposite sides. Blackout.</p>
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Tactical Score

First scene: Judas meets Matthias

Second scene: Judas meets Satan

Third scene: Judas and Jesus

Text	Action/Tactic	Obstacle
<p>Henrietta: Well, Judas didn't come home 'til very late. I waited by the fire. I was worried, he was only eight. I was concerned that maybe the Romans had detained him for shoplifting again—</p> <p>El-Fayoumy: A shoplifter! So please the court!</p> <p>Henrietta: But then he came home.</p> <p>JUDAS: Hi Mommy.</p> <p>Henrietta: Judas! I was so worried</p> <p>JUDAS: Look what I got, Mommy? A spinning top!</p> <p>Henrietta: Judas, did you catch any fish? Your sisters are weeping with hunger—</p> <p>El-Fayoumy: Weeping, your great sir! Weeping and wailing</p> <p>JUDAS: I caught five fish, Mommy!</p> <p>Henrietta: But where are they?</p> <p>JUDAS: I sold them in the market and bought this spinning top. Look how it spins, Mommy!</p> <p>Henrietta: Judas Iscariot, I am ashamed of you!</p>	<p>To greet</p> <p>To excite</p> <p>To impress</p>	<p>I am more interested in the spinning top.</p>

<p>JUDAS: But Mommy—</p> <p>Henrietta:--Selfish boy, you will come to no good!!!</p> <p>El-Fayoumy: “Selfish boy you will come to no good,” was that your statement at the time?</p> <p>Henrietta: He was only eight!</p> <p>El-Fayoumy: Eight—and too late!!! Nothing further, great sir!</p> <p>Judge: Cross</p> <p>El-Fayoumy: No, thank you.</p> <p>Judge: I wasn’t asking you.</p> <p>Cunningham: Ms. Iscariot, what happened the next day?</p> <p>Henrietta: Well, he ran away from home that night, and I searched for him all day. Late in the afternoon, I observed the following—</p> <p>Matthias: Hi.</p>	<p>To justify</p>	<p>She is not willing to hear me out.</p>
<p>JUDAS: Hi.</p> <p>Matthias: Hi.</p>	<p>To test</p>	<p>I am unaware someone else is there.</p>
<p>JUDAS: Hi...My name’s Judas. What’s yours?</p> <p>Matthias: Matthias of Galilee.</p>	<p>To greet</p>	<p>I do not know him.</p>
<p>JUDAS: Hey, I got an idea: Why don’t you go home and get your spinning top, and then, when you get back with your spinning top, we can play battle of the spinning tops?</p> <p>Matthias: I don’t got a spinning top.</p>	<p>To challenge</p>	<p>He does not have</p>

<p>JUDAS: Oh.</p> <p>Matthias: I wish I had a spinning top, all my friend got one except me.</p>	<p>To empathize</p>	<p>spinning top.</p>
<p>JUDAS: Yeah that’s rough. I used to not have one too.</p> <p>Matthias: All the kids, they call me “sissypants” cuz I don’t got no spinning top.</p>	<p>To nullify</p>	<p>He seems sad.</p>
<p>JUDAS: You should ask your mommy to buy you one.</p> <p>Matthias: I don’t got a mommy.</p>	<p>To offer</p>	<p>He does not have a mother.</p>
<p>JUDAS: Ask your daddy then.</p> <p>Matthias: I got a daddy, but he’s very stern. He don’t believe in spinning tops, so I can’t never get one.</p>		<p>Her father does not believe in spinning tops.</p>
<p>JUDAS: Wow</p> <p>Matthias: You prolly think I’m a sissypants too.</p>	<p>To embrace</p>	<p>He is not satisfied. He tries to leave me.</p>
<p>JUDAS: No. Hey man—don’t cry.</p> <p>Matthias: It’s just very hard to get through life without a spinning top, you know?</p> <p>JUDAS: You...You wanna try mine?</p> <p>Matthias: For real?</p>	<p>To calm</p>	
<p>JUDAS: Here</p> <p>Matthias: Wow! Nobody in Galilee’s got a spinning top like this—this is a wicked cool spinning top, Judas.</p> <p>JUDAS: I picked it out myself.</p>	<p>To boast</p>	

<p>Matthias: Boy oh boy, your father must really love you to buy you such a most-definitely dope sinning top as this!</p> <p>JUDAS: My father's dead.</p> <p>Matthias: What!!!???</p> <p>JUDAS: The Romans kilt him.</p> <p>Matthias: Yeah? The Romans, they took all our goats last month and now we don't have no money for nothing, even food, and so my father makes me go to the butcher and ask for bones for my dog but I don't have a dog and the butcher knows I don't have a dog, but he gives me the bones cuz he takes pity on me and then I give them to my father and he makes soup for us with the bones and we eat it and it tastes really bad and my grandmoms says my father's pride is wounded cuz he can't earn no money cuz the Romans took our goats and that's why everything's messed up and I can't have no spinning top or nothing.</p> <p>JUDAS: Wow!</p> <p>Matthias: Uh-oh!</p> <p>JUDAS: What?</p> <p>Matthias: I betta go home now. I have to be home before six. My father's very stern.</p> <p>JUDAS: Oh. Okay.</p> <p>Matthias: Thank you for letting me play with your spinning top, Judas. Maybe someday my daddy'll get some more goats and then I'll get a</p>	<p>To hide</p>	<p>I can not hide without leaving and I don't want to leave.</p>
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<p>Satan: I spoke to him, yeah.</p> <p>El-Fayoumy: Care to share?</p> <p>Satan: Not a problem. I appeared to Mr. Iscariot at Bathsheeba’s Bar and Grill shortly after the night in question. I was actually in town for a guy named Abdul Mazzi-Hatten, but, he never showed. When I encountered Mr. Iscariot, he appeared to have already taken full advantage of the Happy Hour. Oh. Hello, friend. How are you this evening?</p> <p>JUDAS: “How am I this evening?”—What are you, a fuckin maitre d’, man?</p> <p>Satan: I’m Clementine. Clementine of Cappadocia.</p> <p>JUDAS: Yeah?! Well why don’t you go home and fuck your mother, Cappa-douche-a okay?!</p> <p>Satan: “Doe-sha”—Cappa-doe-sha.</p> <p>JUDAS: What?!</p> <p>Satan: It’s cappa-doe-sha.</p> <p>JUDAS: Well lemme ask you something—Cappa-douche-ah—do I look like someone who give a flying fuck right now about where the fuck your from?!</p> <p>Satan: I’m very sorry.</p> <p>JUDAS: Sorry don’t mean shit, dick! Take all the “sorrys” in the world, pile em’ one on top of the other, you know what you got, Cappa-douche?! You got a big pile a fuckin nuthin’ is what you got!</p>	<p>To provoke</p> <p>To dispose of</p> <p>To instigate</p>	<p>I am drunk and everyone in this bar knows what I have done and have shunned me.</p> <p>He does not get the hint.</p> <p>I want a fight, but he is not taking the bait.</p>
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<p>Okay?!</p> <p>Satan: You're right.</p> <p>JUDAS: You wanna do somethin' about it?!</p> <p>Satan: No sir</p> <p>JUDAS: Then go fuck you mother and leave me the fuck alone!</p> <p>Satan: I will. Thanks for the advice.</p> <p>JUDAS: Hey!!!!...Where you going?!</p> <p>Satan: It seems like you preferred to be alone.</p> <p>JUDAS: Why would I prefer that?! What're you saying: I look like some kinda Lone Wolf? Like a fuckin' piranha, bro?</p> <p>Satan: Do you mean Pariah?</p> <p>JUDAS: I mean what I mean. Whaddya—need a light or something?</p> <p>Satan: Oh. Thanks.</p> <p>JUDAS: Like this lighter?</p> <p>Satan: Very nice.</p> <p>JUDAS: I bought it today, man. Expensive shit, but—I got it like that.</p> <p>Satan: I can see you're a man of wealth and substance, I admire that.</p> <p>JUDAS: "Wealth and substance"—don't push it. So, what's your name?</p>	<p>To shove</p> <p>To insult</p> <p>To mollify/To extend an olive branch</p> <p>To boast</p> <p>To acknowledge him</p>	<p>He does not counter.</p> <p>It does not affect him. He is not goaded into my advance.</p> <p>He may be completely turned off from me now that I acted as I did.</p> <p>The lighter doesn't work. He appears to be someone used to expensive items and may not be impressed.</p>
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<p>bartender—the good stuff!</p> <p>Satan: You seem like a man on a mission.</p> <p>JUDAS: Took this girl to a puppet show today, man.</p> <p>Satan: Yeah? How was it?</p> <p>JUDAS: Fuckin’ sucked. Puppets are bullshit, ya know?</p> <p>Satan: In Cappadocia, we burn puppets!</p> <p>JUDAS: Well, you people got the right idea over there—that Pharaoh, he’s a smart man. Yeah, man. Hey, Clammy—Cheers!</p> <p>Satan: Cheers!</p> <p>JUDAS: Yeah.—Whoa! Hey man, thass a nice shirt, what you pay for it?</p> <p>Satan: Two pieces of silver.</p> <p>JUDAS: Two pieces of silver? HA!!! I’ll give you five. Here ya go, switch shirts with me.</p> <p>Satan: But, I’m rather fond of this shirt.</p> <p>JUDAS: C’mon, man—switch shirts—switch shirts, we’re buds now, friends an’ shit—I’ll let you be my wing man—get you laid, bro!</p> <p>Satan: A nice brunette?</p> <p>JUDAS: Two brunettes and a eunuch! C’mon strip!</p>	<p>To impress</p> <p>To raise his spirits in order to raise mine</p> <p>To compliment</p> <p>To test</p> <p>To cajole</p> <p>To coax</p>	<p>There is a reoccurring motive to raise my own spirits through human contact, but it does not really ease my guilt.</p> <p>He may not want to switch shirts. His shirt is much nicer than mine.</p> <p>It is his favorite.</p>
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<p>Satan: Oh Ok. He was so drunk, he didn't even notice my unmistakably Satanic stench.</p> <p>JUDAS: Yo, I dig this shirt, what is it? Silk?</p> <p>Satan: From Cappadocia.</p> <p>JUDAS: Fuckin' Cappadocian Silk! Alright!</p> <p>Satan: Your shirt is nice too.</p> <p>JUDAS: Yeah?</p> <p>Satan: Yeah.</p> <p>JUDAS: Wow...Thanks, man. That's a nice thing to say. Yeah. Been a while since I heard something nice. That's really nice, bro. Hey man, if I told you something corny, would you think that I was, like, a dick?</p> <p>Satan: Not at all.</p> <p>JUDAS: Okay...I'm kinda mildly afraid of going to hell.</p> <p>Satan: Why?</p> <p>JUDAS: Minor incident last night—miscalculation on my part—nothing serious.</p> <p>Satan: Well, one thing I can tell you about hell: As an eternal destination, it's apparently vastly underrated.</p> <p>JUDAS: Yeah?</p> <p>Satan: And "hell is nothing more than the absence of God, which, if you're looking for a good time, is not at all a bad thing. You wanna play the lute,</p>	<p>To probe</p> <p>To indulge</p> <p>To alleviate</p>	<p>He may think I am a loser. This is not something people talk about...especially two people who just met.</p> <p>I may have said too much. He may think I am odd and leave me on my own.</p> <p>He may have already caught on. In order to be sent to hell you have to do something serious.</p>
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<p>the only choice available—which was to quietly keep his wrinkly ass cheeks spread wider than the Red Sea ‘till God got tired of drilling him for oil!</p> <p>JUDAS: I guess...But say...Ah never mind.</p>		
<p>Satan: What?</p>	<p>To precipitate</p>	<p>Again, it may be territory he would not want to be associated with.</p>
<p>JUDAS: Not important.</p> <p>Satan: C’mon.</p>		
<p>JUDAS: Okay, Well, say what if someone were to betray, for example...the Messiah—</p> <p>Satan: --You mean the Messiah, Messiah?</p>	<p>To question hypothetically</p>	
<p>JUDAS: Yeah. Say some idiot had a choice to betray the Messiah or not betray him, and he chose to betray him?</p> <p>Satan: Gee, I couldn’t say. Whadda you think?</p>	<p>To feign</p>	<p>I am not sure if I am ready to talk about this with him.</p>
<p>JUDAS: I’d say that guy’s fucked, right?</p> <p>Satan: I really couldn’t say.</p>	<p>To push</p>	
<p>JUDAS: C’mon Clams, I’m just askin’.</p> <p>Satan: Well, since you asked, I guess I’d say that if this guy—</p>	<p>To beg</p>	
<p>JUDAS: Cuz this is just some hypothetical guy here—</p> <p>Satan: Right. I’d say that if this clown we’re talking about betrayed the Messiah, that, probably, “It would’ve been better for that man if he had</p>	<p>To feign</p>	<p>I do not want him to catch on that it was me.</p>

<p>your heart, Judas. You were all heart. You were my heart! Don't you know that?!</p> <p>Judas: I'll tell you what I know: I watched you trip over your own dusty feet to heal the sick, the blind, the lame, the unclean—any two bit stranger stubbed their fuckin' toe! When some lowly distant relative—too cheap to buy enough wine for his own fuckin' wedding suddenly runs out of booze—no problem, you just “Presto Change-O”—and it was fuckin' Miller time in Ol' Cana again, wasn't it, bro”?! But when I fuckin' needed you—where the fuck were you, huh?!</p>	<p>To secure what was entitled to me</p>	<p>Jesus is the savior to all and it is selfish for me to think other wise.</p>
<p>Jesus: Judas—</p> <p>Judas: You forgave Peter and bullshit Thomas—you knocked Paul of Tarsus off a horse—you raised Lazarus from the fuckin' dead—but me? Me? Your “heart”... What about me?! What about me Jesus?! Huh?! You just, you just—I made a mistake! And if that was wrong, then you should have told me! And if a broken heart wasn't sufficient reason to hang, THEN YOU SHOULD HAVE TOLD ME THAT TOO!</p>	<p>To confess</p>	<p>It is hard to own up to my mistakes.</p>
<p>Jesus: Don't you think...that if I knew that it would have changed your mind...that I would have?</p> <p>Judas: All I know is that you broke me unfixable—and that I'm here...And, you wanna know when you delivered your message differently? At the Temple, Jesus—that's when. And you were beautiful there. And you left there</p>	<p>To guilt</p> <p>To glorify</p>	<p>I am still stuck where I am and still feel he left me.</p>

<p>three inches taller. And we all saw it. I loved you. That's all I did. And that's the truth. And now I'm here.</p> <p>Jesus: Judas—What if I were to tell you that you are not here? That you are with me in my kingdom even now, and that you have been there since the morning of my ascension and that you have never left?</p> <p>Judas: (Judas spits in Jesus' face) That's what I think about you.</p> <p>Jesus: I love you, Judas. I love you.</p> <p>Judas: Just stop!</p> <p>Jesus: Don't you see me here, Judas?</p> <p>Judas: I see a lot of things!</p> <p>Jesus: You see a lotta things?</p> <p>Judas: That's right!</p> <p>Jesus: How about him? Do you see him? (Satan appears.) Do you know him? Call unto him. Touch him. He is not there. Because he does not exist, Judas. Rather they much conjure him, and still he is but a vapor blown away by a hummingbird's breath. He is false. He is a lie. He is not real. Touch him, go ahead.</p> <p>Judas: I don't wanna touch him.</p> <p>Jesus: Stand up, Judas.</p> <p>Judas: You know I can't do that!</p> <p>Jesus: No. What I know—is that you can.</p> <p>Judas: Get the fuck over yourself!</p>	<p>To sever</p> <p>To plead</p> <p>To cast off</p>	<p>He turns the other cheek.</p> <p>He is unrelenting.</p>
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<p>Jesus: Will you feed my lambs, Judas?...Will you take care of my little sheep?...Will you feed my lambs?!</p> <p>Judas: “Feed your lambs.”</p> <p>Jesus: You know exactly what I’m asking you.</p> <p>Judas: Go away!</p> <p>Jesus: If you don’t love me, Judas— then you’re gonna have to look me in my eyes and say it.</p> <p>Judas: I don’t love you.</p> <p>Jesus: If you don’t love me, then why are you here?</p> <p>Judas: Go!</p> <p>Jesus: Judas!...Judas, don’t you know what would happen the very instant you got down on your knees?</p> <p>Judas: Why on my knees? They should buried me standing up—cuz I been on my knees my whole life! You left me.</p> <p>Jesus: I’m right here.</p> <p>Judas: I would have never believed that you could have left me.</p> <p>Jesus: I never left you</p> <p>Judas: That you didn’t love me.</p> <p>Jesus: I do love you.</p> <p>Judas: Why...didn’t you make me good enough...so that you could’ve love me?</p>	<p>To stab and twist...</p> <p>and twist</p> <p>and twist</p> <p>and twist</p> <p>To beseech</p>	<p>Anyway I try to dismiss him he tries harder to embrace me.</p> <p>I do love him.</p> <p>I may have hurt him enough. I do not want to hurt someone I love so much, but this is the first time that I can see my words affecting him.</p> <p>This is the question I want most answered, but it is the hardest to ask. It erases all the prideful pushing him away that I</p>
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<p>Jesus: ...Please take my hands, Judas. Please.</p>		<p>was working on earlier.</p>
<p>Judas: Where are they?</p>	<p>To grasp</p>	
<p>Jesus: Right here.</p>		
<p>Judas: I can't see them.</p>	<p>To search</p>	
<p>Jesus: They're right here.</p>		
<p>Judas: Where are you going?</p>		
<p>Jesus: I'm right here.</p>		<p>I am falling back into my despair and in turn falling back into my catatonic state.</p>
<p>Judas: Don't leave me!</p>	<p>To plead</p>	
<p>Jesus: I'm here.</p>		
<p>Judas: I can't hurt...</p>	<p>To bare</p>	<p>The strength of my pride is allowing my despair to take over.</p>
<p>Jesus: I love you, Judas.</p>		
<p>Judas: I can't...</p>		
<p>Jesus: Please stay.</p>	<p>To concede</p>	
<p>Judas: I can't hurt...</p>		
<p>Jesus: Please love me, Judas.</p>		
<p>Judas: I can't.</p>		

Performance

First Performance

There are clear remembrances of our first performance of *Judas*. There was a rational worry that, with only a one week run, there would be an inadequate number of seats for all of the students who were required to see the production. The department decided to have a “Theatre Majors Only” night for the final dress rehearsal. The space was completely filled. Typically I do not get nervous before performances, but this was indeed different. This would be the first time sitting on stage for the entirety of the production with an audience surrounding my character, and one never knew how they would react to a person frozen on stage. This was especially true during pre-show when the audience members were free to do or say whatever they pleased. A few comments were directed at me while I was in a catatonic state, but for the most part this was not a problem. The efforts put forth with EJ Cho on the sound design for the pre-show significantly helped set the atmosphere. Additionally it created what one would imagine the feeling to be of condemnation to the Ninth circle of hell. Within a few minutes of opening the show, after the audience had the opportunity to absorb the setting and feel comfortable with the world of the play, they began to vocally enjoy the show. It is not uncommon to be surprised by people laughing in unexpected places, but the number of times this occurred throughout the performance was a shock. The pace moved smoothly, and the transitions were seamless. After the show, we were greeted with some of the greatest praise from both the faculty and the students that I had received while at LSU. Many students approached me to express how moved they were by the story, while others told me how hilarious it was. I was given great feedback on my role as Judas, but I believe I was most proud of the comments I received about the direction of the play. Although I try not to focus on productions for the verbal feedback, it is always nice to hear great post-show reactions from your peers as both a director and an actor.

Last Performance

Following the first performance I had jokingly said that it would be quite acceptable for this to be the show's first and last performance. It was quite worrisome that perhaps it would not be possible to replicate the opening night's performance. Surprisingly, this concern was unfounded. The individual performances continued to grow and many of the actors made new and better choices. Although I tried not to listen to the show, there were times when this was impossible as the actors became more impressive with each performance. The weekend performances were less well attended, especially in comparison to the weekday performances. Nonetheless the cast did a good job at staying connected with the audiences who did attend.

My final performance was bitter sweet. Though exhausted from all of the work and concerns with the project, it was pleasing that the results of the efforts were far better than one could ever have dreamed. The final show was unremarkable through the first two scenes. While I was waiting for the final scene to begin, everything Cunningham and Satan said to each other took on a new light. Typically, the dialogue in the final scene helped in the preparation for my confrontation with Jesus. However, this time the connection was not as easy. When Jesus began his monologue I started to think about everything this relationship meant to me and to the character of Jesus. How I had followed him for three years and felt the bitter disappointment that he didn't live up to what I imagined he could have been? We could have been together? As I awoke from my catatonic state I listened deeply to what Reuben Mitchell (who played the role of Jesus) was saying. When casting Mitchell in the role of Jesus, the final scene was read with him, and his calming quality fit the character of the Messiah perfectly. This calm was something that nightly triggered an emotion that could not be held back. For some reason, however, this night was different with a complete disconnection from the relationship. I began to panic and started to push. This scene was one that I had done many times before and had never experienced a

problem reaching an emotional peak. “Why...couldn’t you make me good enough...so you could have loved me” (Guirgis 129). This line that had always evoked tears sounded as though I was talking to someone who I had never met before in my lifetime. After the show I was completely distraught and found a place to be alone. This was my attempt to understand why an experience that meant more than any other theatrical production before had ended in such a way. The fact was apparent - I did not want to let go. It had been a phenomenal experience to which I could not readily say goodbye. This is at the very least was my sincere hope.

Conclusion

Returning to the issue posed in this work, we question whether one can both direct and act successfully in the same production? Unfortunately the answer to this query is still not attainable or certain. During rehearsals the focus was on directing and not on the portrayal of the role of Judas. In working intensely on the other scenes there came an understanding of the role of Judas. The central focus of the scenes was consistently “How do we end the suffering?” which always seemed to return to the issue of how it related to Judas? For example, when working on the characters of Saint Peter and Saint Matthew there was a focus on what Jesus’ invitation to follow him would mean to each of them. That in turn helped me strengthen my relationship with Jesus. When Mary Magdalene, Simon the Zealot, or Thomas talk about Judas and what he stood for, there came to be a deeper understanding of Judas’ role within the fellowship of the apostles and his goals while following Jesus. While normally taking a holistic view in directing the piece would get in the way of an acting performance, this method later enabled me to bring together a fully realized character. This approach would most likely not be taken again. It was a happy accident that worked well. The nature of this play permitted me to work in this fashion, though most productions do not bring about this desired result.

Prior to completing this thesis, I was fortunate enough to watch the Inauguration Concert for President Obama. Near the end of the concert, two actors, Ashley Judd and Forest Whitaker spoke of the role of the artist:

Ashley Judd: This is a day when artists from around our wonderful country have come to this place to celebrate history and our future. President Kennedy spoke of the role of the artist at Amherst College in 1963. ‘I see little of more importance to the future of our country and civilization than the full recognition of the place of the artist. If artists are to nourish the roots of our culture, society must set the artist free to follow his vision wherever it takes him.’

Forest Whitaker: Our great novelist, William Faulkner when accepting the Nobel Prize spoke of the artist's duty: it is his privilege to help men endure by lifting his heart, by reminding him of the courage and honor and hope and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice which have been the glory of his past. The poet's voice need not merely be the record of man; it can be one of the props; the pillars that help him endure and prevail.

I too believe in the power of art to change the world for the better. Theatre is my art of choice because it best explores who we are and the relationships we cultivate in the most exciting, immediate way possible. If I can devote the rest of my life to working on such shows as *Judas*, a production which balanced an entertaining evening with a thought provoking message, then I will be artistically satisfied for the rest of my career, be it as an actor, director, or audience member.

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Appendix A: Rehearsal Goals

As given by George Judy

1. Relaxation/Freedom/Release

Evidence that you are pursuing a Daily discipline about work on voice, body, emotional availability and creative fantasy. A relaxed, energized and open actor preparation.

What kind of preparation do you personally need at this moment?

2. Identity

A living WHO. Clothes, jewelry, hairstyle..physicality, rhythm, fundamental driving desires and backstory....all CHOSEN and endowed...distinctive and unique to this individual life.

Who are you? Physically, Emotionally...What is the most distinctive and interesting thing about you at this moment. What makes you unique/sets you apart from the crowd?

3. Place

A living WHERE. Specific objects CHOSEN to personalize a defined and endowed space.

An environment that provides juice to the scene and destinations for discovered impulses.

Where are you? How does this place FEED the scene in some powerful way? What time is it?

How are those facts CRUCIAL to the scene? What are the most significant physical objects in the environment? How are they personally important to you in terms of the scene?

4. Circumstance

A living WHAT. Specific and endowed circumstances, past and present, discovered and EMBODIED that animate your condition and compel you to act.

What are at least THREE powerful things that have happened already that make this specific scene UNAVOIDABLE and NECESSARY?

5. Relationship

A living RELATIONSHIP with clearly defined needs, history.

To WHOM are you talking? What is the most powerful and visceral description of your relationship at this moment? Lovers—Best Friends—Parent /Child—Teacher/Student—Strangers—Husband and Wife...? WHO is your most powerful relationship in the scene that is NOT in the scene?

6. Objectives

Active, Playable and endowed goals driving you forward. Action>Receiver>Desired Response>Discovery>New Action...

What do you want? How do you need the person to whom you are speaking to CHANGE? How will you know if they DO CHANGE? What will they do? What will you see? Will they kiss you? Will they cry? Will they leave? Will they laugh? WHAT?

7. Obstacles/Conflict

Powerful endowed obstacles generating conflict and placing you AT RISK. Personal obstacles within yourself, within the circumstances, within your relationships, within the environment.

What is in the way of getting what you want? What is making it hard to get; generating conflict?

8. Tactics and Communication

Moment to moment discoveries and adjustments in relationship as you pursue goals and confront obstacles. Listening and responding with your whole body based on discoveries in the moment.

Negotiating the life coming at you. Discovery>Action>Receiver>Desired Response>Discovery>New Action...

HOW can you get what you want and need here? RIGHT NOW? What is going to work here?

Seduction, Confrontation, Coaxing, Humor, Reason...? What is this person or persons going to respond to? What power do you have to persuade or control them?

9. Importance/Point of View

Discovery of Stakes that place you at Risk. Powerful and clear visceral image EMBODIED of what you stand to WIN if you reach your goal and stand to LOSE if you do not. A sense that you have the RIGHT to do what you are doing...not apologizing for your actions or neutralizing them with tentative choices.

How can you LOAD the circumstances and desires here most powerfully? Raise the Stakes?

10. Event/Preparation

A clear and significant CHANGE in your state of life from the moment before to the moment after. A clear and living EVENT in the action. An active, playable moment before that accesses a clear state of life and brings you into your scene with a compelling opening objective.

What is your STATE OF LIFE, your actual condition, emotionally and physiologically in the Moment Before? The Moment After? At what moment were you most AT RISK in the scene?

What is the CLIMAX of this scene? How would describe your JOURNEY in this scene? In the moment before you felt? In the moment after you felt? How did you take that trip? What is an active, visceral preparation that will bring you into the scene fully alive and available.

Appendix B: Theatre Reviews

Hatcher Hall hosts a tragic comedy that won't betray you

TIGER WEEKLY December 3rd, 2008

By Jason Andreasen

So you allegedly betrayed Christ? That doesn't mean your legal rights are stripped from you, does it?

Apparently not in downtown purgatory. At least that's the way Stephen Adly Guirgis saw it when he wrote 2005's, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*. Having been performed off-Broadway and at London's Almeida Theatre, the controversial comedy/drama finally made its debut at LSU's Hatcher Hall on Tuesday, December 2 and will run through Sunday, December 7. Although the play is set in an unfamiliar location, its themes are undeniably universal. Just over two hours long, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* is a courtroom drama unlike any other you've likely been exposed to. It centers around an appeal hearing with more than just evidentiary concerns and habeas corpus at issue. Instead, the players involved here are at odds over the release of Christ's most notorious disciple, Judas, from the depths of hell. And while one might understandably postulate this to be a dry, tedious study of Christian text, co-director and star of *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, Scott Woltz, assures that such thought is blasphemy. "You don't have to have a religious background or a strong religious knowledge to understand what's going on. You really don't even need to know who Judas is because it's all explained," said Woltz. "There might be jokes here and there that might be caught on by the people who have a better understanding of religion, but it really is a show that everybody can come see and understand."

The play's accessibility has a great deal to do with the language and speech patterns employed by Guirgis' writing. Guirgis, a native New Yorker, applies the attitudes of modern-day New York to the setting of the play by using verbiage that one might easily hear in the Bronx or on the Upper East Side.

"The language is very contemporary, very urban. You can follow it, you can understand it," explained Woltz. "It's very humorous. We definitely updated it so it doesn't have a classical feel to it."

Another aspect of the play that adds to its accessibility is the wide ranging cast of characters it calls on. During the trial, testimony is heard from both fictitious and recognizable characters, Biblical figures and secular icons. In fact, everyone from the powerhouses of Jesus Christ and Satan are called to the stand.

"We go through fictional and non-fictional information about Judas. We hear testimony from different saints, Pontius Pilot, Sigmund Freud and Mother Teresa," explained Woltz. As Woltz continued, he repeatedly returned to the idea of ideals and spiritual quandaries. As is the case with anything spiritual or religious in nature, the play deals more with questions than it

does answers. *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* presents a number of questions within its relatively short running time and whether or not it answers any of them might be up to the interpretation of the audience.

“It goes along with the question of, ‘If God is all powerful, then why is he not all-forgiving as well?’. It talks about love, forgiveness, faith and truth,” said Woltz in the midst of a virtual laundry list of questions raised by the play. “Is Judas responsible for his own despair or was there some reason why Judas did it beyond the fact that he was just the betrayer that everyone knows him as? It touches on the idea of who Judas was and can that change who we think he is; and in turn, who we believe we are.”

Perhaps Woltz comes off as a bit overly sympathetic to Judas. That would be understandable given that, in addition to co-directing, he plays the title role.

“Judas is not the lead character, though. He is on stage the entire time, but he’s in a catatonic state. There are times where he comes out of it, but it’s really about the courtroom scene, the two lawyers, the judge and the testimonies you get to hear,” said Woltz.

While ideas such as a sympathetic Judas, the play could easily upset some religious stalwarts. However, the combination of levity and intensity lends itself to self-reflection for all.

The show will run through Sunday, December 7, so there are a number of opportunities for you to catch *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*. However, as Woltz warned, theatre students are required to see the play which means long lines and some might be turned away. Woltz advises anyone looking to get a good seat with their \$6 ticket (only available at the door) to get there early. There will be matinee performances in addition to the evening shows on Saturday and Sunday.

THE ADVOCATE THE ARTS

‘JUDAS’ FOCUSES ON FORGIVENESS, FAITH

By ROBIN MILLER

Arts writer

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Scott Woltz hasn’t given it much thought until now.

Until someone poses the question. And it was only fate that someone would.

Judas? At Christmas?

“Gosh,” he said.

“You know, it really didn’t occur to me.”

And it’s understandable. Woltz is juggling the jobs of director and lead character in the LSU Department of Theatre’s production of *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*.

The play is an MFA production, featuring the theater department's master of fine arts students in all the roles except one, which will be played by an undergraduate.

The play opens Tuesday, Dec. 2, in Hatcher Hall Theatre on the LSU campus. It will continue to Dec. 7.

"And people should get there early," Woltz said.

He's not being overconfident in making this statement. It's just that productions at LSU Hatcher Hall have been selling out early during the fall season with lines forming at the box office at least an hour before the play begins.

And this is the last play in the theater department's fall line-up.

"So, it might be good to get there early," Woltz said.

And once inside, audiences will play witness to the darkly comic, imagined world between Heaven and Hell. The story was written by Stephen Adly Guirgis. It premiered March 2, 2005, off Broadway in The Public Theatre.

Oscar winner Philip Seymour Hoffman was the director, Sam Rockwell played Judas Iscariot and Eric Bogosian played Satan.

That's only naming a few of the personalities that show up in this play.

"Jesus makes an appearance toward the end," Woltz said. "And there are the characters from the Bible like St. Peter, St. Thomas and Mary Magdalene. And there are even some iconic characters like Mother Teresa."

All of which combines for an interesting story. But again, this is the holiday season, where Christmas takes precedence, the celebration of Christ's birth.

And Judas? He usually doesn't come into the picture until Easter. Then again, Christians seek forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ, don't they? And since this is a play that examines forgiveness and faith, maybe an exploration of Judas, his life and his sin of betrayal might be a good subject for Christmas.

"It's about faith versus truth and betrayal versus forgiveness," Woltz said. "It's about seeking forgiveness and redemption and seeking love and not being able to find it. And it makes us ask, if God is all-powerful, shouldn't he also be all-forgiving?"

The Last Days of Judas Iscariot tells the story of Judas while in Purgatory. A courtroom is the setting for this play, where Judas' lawyers launch an appeal to clear the name of their client, Christ's most notorious disciple.

For it was Judas who ratted out Christ to the Romans for 30 pieces of silver. Does the terminology here seem a little too modern? Well, that's how Judas' betrayal would be seen these

days, especially in the modern trial to take place in Hatcher Hall. The story plays out in contemporary language through a cast of flamboyant, street-savvy characters. Sigmund Freud and Satan among them. And in the end, the story takes the audience to the heart of its own questions about spirit, love and despair.

Woltz and his cast have been rehearsing four hours a day, six days a week for six weeks. The play originally was scheduled as part of the theater department's Studio Series until Hurricane Gustav altered the Main Stage schedule.

Suddenly, A Cry of Players had to be pushed back on the schedule and couldn't be fully staged. So, more attention was focused on The Last Days of Judas Iscariot.

"It's definitely Main Stage quality," Woltz said.

The play not only will be fully staged but will have technical effects, as well.

George Judy chose the piece, and was originally set to direct it. Judy is director of the theater department's master of fine arts program.

"He's playing the judge in the play," Woltz said. "And I was set to play Judas, but then George asked if I'd be interested in directing. I'm in my third year in this program, and I wanted to direct a play before I graduated."

But directing and acting, well, that's different.

"It's really different," Woltz said. "It's something I've never done before, and it's hard, because I have to go back and forth from character to director, from director to character. George steps in and helps when I have to be on stage."

Still, playing Judas does have its advantages.

"He's not exactly the main character in that he doesn't have many lines," Woltz said. "But I did focus in on his psyche and his end suffering. Every character in this play has some bit of suffering."

Now that doesn't mean the play is heavy with guilt and grief. As billed in the beginning, it's a dark comedy, filled with funny, light moments.

"It makes us look at Judas in a very human way, no matter what religion you are," Woltz said.

Which is very much within the realm of Christmas spirit.

The cast includes: Satan, Yohance Myles; Gloria, Lauren Stotts; Mother Theresa, Jessica Wu; Judge Littlefield, George Judy; Caiaphas and St. Matthew, Andrew Fafoutakis; Loretta, Mary Magdalene, and Sister Glenna, Sarah Smith; Bailiff and Simon the Zealot, Josh Dawes; Sigmund Freud and St. Thomas, Alex Galick; Pontius Pilate, St. Peter, and Uncle Pino, Nick Rhoton;

Matthias of Galilee, Natalie Mejer; Jesus of Nazareth, Reuben Mitchell; Judas Iscariot, Scott Woltz; St. Monica, Michelle Guidry; Henrietta Iscariot, Josephine Hall; Butch Honeywell, Scott Siepker; Fabiana Aziza Cunningham, Leigh-Erin Balmer; Yusef El-Fayoumy, Kenneth De Abrew; understudies, Steven Bailey, Butch Honeywell; and John Fletcher, St. Matthew, Caiaphas.

The crew includes: director, Scott Woltz; scenic designer, Katie Headley; lighting designer, Ken White; costume designer, Sarah Bacot; sound designer, Eun Jin Cho; vocal and text coach, Joanna Battles; dramaturg, John Fletcher; acting coach/directing mentor, George Judy; videographer, Nick Erickson; and stage manager, Nicole Ingalsbe.

Appendix C: Production Photos



Production Photo: Judas and Jesus (Photo by Nick Erickson)



Production Photo: Judas and Satan (Photo by Nick Erickson)



Production Photo: Judas and Jesus (Photo by Nick Erickson)



Production Photo: Judas and Saint Monica (Photo by Nick Erickson)

Appendix D: Faculty E-mails- Reviews, Feedback, and Criticism

It was such a great pleasure to watch your work in JUDAS. The production is very strong, and I think (in fact, I know) that you'll be receiving much well deserved applause. Thank you all for your hard work.

Michael Tick (Professor and Chair of the Theatre Department)

Congratulations to you, Scott, and the cast and crew of Judas on your lovely, targeted, intelligent work in the show. It includes so much distinct character work and for me it was a truly hilarious, thought provoking evening.

Thank You,

Rick Holden (Assistant Professor of Acting and Directing; Co-Head Undergraduate Program)

Mr. Judas:

Don't talk to me about 2:45 Hrs!!! Show was well done, not well written, and endless. And in the end...nothing really happens...except Leigh-Erin breaks down, lots of actor-friendly skits and then an endless monologue involving T. Williams and Auden, for God's sake!!!...Finally, your feet are washed. Too much fiction posing as truth. Made all agnostics become atheists. Did the playwright ever read anything which he didn't dump into the play? Again, very well played and directed!! The MFA's did themselves proud, as did you and George. When I arrived home about 1:00 AM, it seemed I could not remember a confrontation where anything was a stake...not one...just wit, wit, wit, shock, smirks, and no payoff...

Come By,

John Dennis (Professor Emeritus)

I know I didn't get a chance to see many of you after last night, but I just wanted to add my two cents, and say WOW!!! I'm very impressed with all of your work, and having had the honor to see the progression of this piece, I applaud your hard work. It paid off in spades!!!

Have a great run!!!!

Break a leg,

Joanna Battles (Assistant Professor of Voice and Speech; Co-Head Undergraduate Program)

Vita

Scott Matthew Woltz was born in Washington D.C. As a son of a military officer he grew up all over the world including Seoul, Korea, Lubek, Germany, San Francisco, California, and Honolulu, Hawaii. After high school, he received his Bachelor of Science from Towson University in Towson, Maryland. Scott is currently a candidate for the degree of Master of Fine Arts from Louisiana State University, which will be conferred at the May 2009 commencement.