

Howard Lotker – Opponent for Kierstan DeVoe’s Master’s Thesis

Hunger

The Process of a Work in Progress

Department of Authorial Creativity and Pedagogy at DAMU Prague

March 20, 2021

Dear Colleagues:

I am happy say that I can give Kierstan DeVoe’s master’s thesis *Hunger* an excellent evaluation, I think it deserves an A. The thesis was so strong on so many different levels with so few weaknesses that it definitely deserves the best grade.

First to the Thesis’ strengths: In the introductions, Kierstan opens her thesis in much the same way she follows, with clear, and easy to read, pertinent discussions and analyses of her origins, paths, progress and blocks along the way. She achieves her stated goal of telling her personal story of her work in progress. She decided to share lots of personal details about the path and origins of her creative process and processual blocks, including her experience in therapy. and It would be very tempting in this context to be self-indulgent, or too intellectually distant at those parts. But Kierstan from the beginning finds a very natural, open and nearly perfect tone, and her choice of material to include is wonderful too.

Many writers have so many citations that they fail to present their ideas or tell their own story. Kierstan did not, sometimes she would write for three pages without quotes, because she is telling an important section of story, then she had some sections with tons of appropriate quotes from theater makers, department teachers and theorists, theater theory, and psychoanalytic literature, among others.

The subject matter of the thesis also includes intensely personal descriptions of moments in crisis and in joy in classes, rehearsal and therapy too. I think it is remarkable that the way that she seems to open up without fear or embarrassment and the fact that her written voice is entirely without self-pity or self-indulgence.

Now for the weak parts: Before the thesis itself begins, before the introduction itself there is a section entitled Operational Definitions – this is perhaps the weakest section of the thesis, it contains mostly brief explanations of department and DAMU course abbreviations. It would have been useful for the reader to do more in depth explanations and definitions of the subjects, it would have also been possible to offer her own provisional definitions of some of these courses and concepts.

The other weak section is the Conclusion, which was way too brief, less than one page, I think it would have been interesting to draw together her experiences and then said something about them, or ... I know that Kovid kept the project from being further developed and performed, but it would have been interesting to have some speculations here about ways she is interested in integrating storytelling, theater-making, personal stories, psychology and education, accompanied with a few more epic quotes and thoughts to send us on our way.

I am happy to say that despite the problems, Kierstan DeVoe's thesis *Hunger* deserves an A.

Opponent Questions for Kierstan (you can answer one or both of these during the exam):

- 1) Make more thorough definitions of at least two these subjects, please include your own subjective analysis and opinion: Authorial Acting, Authorial Reading, Dialogical Acting with the Inner Partner.
- 2) Please expand on your Conclusion section, what would you have added... include speculations here about ways to integrating storytelling, theater-making, personal stories, psychology and education, with a few epic quotes and thoughts to send us on our way.

If you have any questions or comments you can reach me as usual by email howardlotker@gmail.com or +420 777 303 289

Sincerely yours,

Howard Lotker

Lecturer at KATaP and KALD DAMU, Prague Film School

Artistic Director of HoME theater