Creating the Role of Frederick Barrett in Titanic: The Musical

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CREATING THE ROLE OF FREDERICK BARRETT IN

*TITANIC: THE MUSICAL*

by

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A THESIS

IN FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

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ABSTRACT


This document is a thesis submitted in fulfillment of the master of Fine Arts degree in Musical Theatre. It is a detailed account of author Adam Yankowy’s artistic process in creating the role of Frederick Barrett in the Minnesota State University, Mankato’s production of Titanic: The Musical in the Fall of 2015. The thesis follows the actor’s process beginning with the early production analysis in the first chapter. The actor then discusses the work in its historical context followed by a detailed journal of the acting process in chapters two and three. Chapter four is the post-production analysis and the fifth chapter gives an overview of Yankowy’s growth and process through his time at Minnesota State, Mankato. Appendices and works cited are also included.
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CHAPTER 1

EARLY PRODUCTION ANALYSIS

This chapter contains the early production analysis for the role of Frederick Barrett in *Titanic: The Musical*, music and lyrics by Maury Yeston and book by Peter Stone, directed by Paul J. Hustoles. Production dates are August 25 through October 10, 2015. The show will run October 1-3 and 8-11 in the Ted Paul Theatre at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

This musical is incredibly ensemble heavy and every character is important to the story telling. It is difficult to label main characters but there are some who are more present throughout and help tell the story of Titanic. Those characters are Thomas Andrews, J. Bruce Ismay, Captain E.J. Smith, William Murdoch, Harold Bride, Frederick Barrett, Frederick Fleet, Henry Etches, Wallace Hartley, Ida and Isidor Straus, Alice Beane and Kate McGowan. There is no true protagonist or antagonist in this musical. The action revolves around the lives and the journey of the passengers aboard the Titanic. One could argue that the ship itself is the protagonist and that time and the iceberg are the antagonists however what makes this show interesting is not the actual ship but the people aboard. There are the third class passengers with the hope of a new life in America. The second class passengers hoping to move into the upper class and the first class hoping to maintain their status. There is also the argument that each individual is
their own antagonist as they manage their own feelings and expectations in a life threatening circumstance.

_Titanic: The Musical_’s main themes are about hope, redemption, danger, perseverance and love. These themes are expressed through the musical in multiple examples, the first being in the opening of the show when Thomas Andrews sings “In Every Age.” This song represents the ambition and hope that Andrews and all mankind need to be immortalized.

Within the third class there are several moments of hope represented throughout the show. In the song “I Must Get On That Ship #1,” the third class rush in to board the ship. They sing, “It’s to America we aim to find a better life we prayed to make this trip”(Stone Applause 59)! Another example of hope seen is in Act I, scene five, in the song “Lady’s Maid.” This song is the epitome of hope as it represents all of the third class passengers singing about what they hope their new life in America will be.

In the second class there is one character in particular that yearns to rise in her social status. Alice Beane hopes that by rubbing elbows and “hobnobbing” with the first class, she will be able to move up in the world. She says in Act I, scene three, “What’s the point of being on the same boat if we can’t hobnob with them”(74)? Her goal throughout the entire show is to befriend all of them so that she can move up.

There is one other couple in the second class that also represents the theme of hope. Charles Clark and Caroline Neville are engaged and traveling to America for a new life. Clark was born into the middle class whereas Neville is an aristocrat. Neville’s parents forbade their engagement so they are fleeing to America to start a new life. They
hope that the class system in America is less stringent and will allow them to be together free of judgment. Clarke says referring to marriage, “We would be if your snob of a father had permitted it. And that is exactly what we will be the minute we arrive in America”(76). The theme of hope is a prominent one in this musical.

Redemption is found in this show in many places throughout the musical. This is seen in Act I, scene nine. Katherine McGowan is talking with Jim Farrell about “a friend” who is pregnant out of wedlock. She says, “I was thinkin’ about a friend of mine—a very dear friend. It seems she left home because she’d made a mistake. A mistake she couldn’t get rid of”(100). She hints that she is talking about herself and that she is escaping to America to find a new life free of judgment. This ship represents an opportunity to redeem the “mistakes” she had made. Another moment of redemption found is during the “Finale II–Reprise: Godspeed Titanic” when the entire cast comes back and sings. This alludes to this idea that though many perished, they all live on in some way.

The theme of danger is represented throughout the end of Act I and the majority of Act II. At the end of “No Moon #2,” there is an eerie chromatic pattern, which moves back and forth from a minor second and a major second. This should cause unrest within the audience informing them that danger is coming. At the top of Act II, in the song “Wake Up, Wake Up!,” the stewards enter and wake up all of the passengers which is quite alarming. There is a sense of uncertainty and panic as each class is awakened. The panic and danger heighten as Act II continues until the ship sinks.
Perseverance is present in every character in this musical. In the beginning, the third class passengers are fighting for a new life in America. In the second act, in “The Staircase,” Kate McGowan and other third class passengers are attempting to get up to the deck so that they can get on a lifeboat. This is an indication of their fight for survival.

Alice Beane is another persevering character aboard the ship. She is constantly trying to get into the first class dining saloon or any other first class section on the ship so she can mingle. In Act I, scene eight, she actually sneaks into the first class Upper Promenade and attempts to dance with several of the elite. Head steward Henry Etches eventually kicks her out but she keeps trying throughout the remainder of the musical even up until the very end.

Love is another prevalent theme in this show. This is seen in all of the classes aboard the ship. In the first class the Strauses demonstrate a love that will last through eternity. In Act II, scene seven they sing the song “Still,” a poignant ballad between an older couple who declare their love will last through death. In the second class both sets of couples, Neville and Clarke and the Beanes, share a compelling love story. Neville and Clark are blissfully in love and are to be married as soon as they reach America. The Beanes share a beautiful moment as Alice is boarding the lifeboat where they profess their love and she survives while he is left behind to die. In the third class, McGowan and Farrell fall in love as the story progresses. When the couple reaches the lifeboats, McGowan states, “I’m not going without you, Jim. I don’t want to be a widow before I’m a bride”(148)! This demonstrates a love beyond life, as she is willing to sacrifice herself and her child so that she can be with him.
Lastly, there is a love duet between Barrett and Bride who sing love songs to their respective love interests. Barrett sings, “The Proposal” to his girl back home. He is declaring his love and desire to marry her. Bride sings, “The Night was Alive” which is a love song to the Marconi telegraph and his love for communicating with the entire world. The two songs overlap at the end making it a beautiful love duet.

In order to understand Frederick Barrett, several details are found in the libretto. He is twenty-four and is a stoker, which means he tends to the furnace on a steamship. He previously worked on the Baltic as a stoker. In Act I, scene two Barrett is given orders to set his screw to seventy-one. This is the rate of speed that the propeller will move. Barrett is a little defiant in his response to Joseph Bell, the chief engineer, when he tells Bell that seventy-one is a “mite soon.” He thinks that the speed is too fast and is concerned for his safety. The fact that he speaks up to Bell demonstrates that he has gumption and is not afraid to stand up for what he believes in.

Within “Barrett’s Song,” Barrett mentions that several of the men working in the boiler rooms are from the Midlands of England and that most of them were coal miners in the pits. He has dreams and desires to get out of the mines and aspires to be something more. However, Barrett realizes that stoking on the ship is not much better than being in the mine. He sings, “And nothing has changed, there’s nothing a miner can do. The pit and your mates turn into the hold and the crew”(74). This realization is very matter of fact as he continues to work because that is what he is being paid to do.

He has a girlfriend who is named Darlene Watkins and he promises to return to her. In the song “The Proposal,” Barrett proposes to Darlene via the Marconi telegraph.
In the scene prior, Barrett admits that he doesn’t make much money, about “one quid” which is about one British pound for a roundtrip sail on the Titanic. This tells us he is working class. He is, however, a romantic and admits to his love throughout the song. In Act II, scene three Barrett helps McGowan and other third class passengers escape the hulls of the ship. This shows courage, thoughtfulness, kindness and heroism. And in Act II, scene five Barrett pretends he does not know how to row a boat so that a passenger, Jim Farrell, McGowan’s love interest, can save himself. He sacrifices himself for another person, which makes him a hero and role model.

The story takes place from April 9 to April 15, 1912, starting in Southampton, England and transitions to the waters of the Atlantic Ocean. The libretto is mostly sung with very few spoken lines. A majority of the characters will have dialects. There are only a few that will speak with an American dialect. There is an indication within the dialogue that there will be Irish, Received Pronunciation (RP), Cockney, Liverpudlian and Scottish.

Due to the action being set on a boat, Barrett is fairly comfortable in this environment. He had previously worked on the Baltic as a stoker. He knows where secret stairwells are and can maneuver around the boat quite well. Because of his social status, he is not allowed in any of the passenger sections of the boat. He knows what his place is and mostly manages to stick within that place. Scenic Designer John Paul is creating a painted drop to represent the actual boat. There will be a stationary set that will be the deck of the ship. This design is different than the original, which had three different tiers, which helped to indicate the classes on board the ship.
Barrett can be any height but should appear strong. He has a history of mining and working for a living. He should appear to be muscular and, when in costume, should be dirty and grimy. He does, after all, work with coal all day. He should be able to move fairly quickly due to the stamina he would have from working hard in the mines and in the boiler rooms. Because of his musculature, he should stand broad and tall, and his feet should be firmly planted.

Barrett’s main objective in this musical is his desire to make a better living for himself by working hard and saving money. Time and authority are his biggest enemies. Time is against him because the ship inevitably will sink and he will not survive. Authority is an obstacle because the captain and crew above him force him to perform activities, which he believes are wrong and stupid.

There are several driving forces within Barrett. Barrett most likely grew up in a low-income home environment forcing him to start working at an early age. His father was also a miner, which is how he got his start. There is a sort of fire within him that drives him to rise above his current socio-economic status. Once he started working for the steamliners, there was an opportunity for advancement in career whereas the coalmines were a death trap. This hope and perseverance is one of the key character elements that make up Barrett’s identity.

Barrett is subject to the danger of the impending sinking of the ship. He is in the boiler room working when the ship hits the iceberg. In “No Moon #2” he sings “The screws were turning at eighty-one”(115). He is uncomfortable at the speed the ship is going and is aware that there are iceberg warnings. He learned of them when he went to
the Marconi room. Musically, the melodic line that he sings is a minor second pattern and moves to a major second. This pattern has an ominous feeling alluding to the impending danger. Another moment where this danger is present is in Act II, scene three. Barrett runs into McGowan, Farrell and other third class members who are trapped in a stairwell. He enters in a frenzy and is adamant about getting them to the deck of the ship to be saved. He knows a back way and in a frazzled persistent way he rushes them up to the boat deck.

Another driving force within Barrett is his love for Darlene. This relationship keeps him going throughout the entire show. He wants to make enough money so that he can come back and marry her. Throughout the musical, he is thinking of her and is often singing to a portrait of her. This almost resembles a soldier who carries a picture of his significant other in times of war.

This role is ideal for Adam Yankowy, the actor, due to his stature and his vocal abilities. The audience should care about Barrett, and this actor can bring a likeable personality to him. One personal experience that Yankowy can bring to the role is when he had to say goodbye to one of his aunts who passed away with pancreatic cancer. Yankowy was living in Macau, China, at the time and was very far from his family. It was very difficult to actually communicate with family and towards the end of his aunt’s life he had to call and say goodbye to her through the phone, even though she was nonresponsive. After she passed, Yankowy would look at several pictures of her to encourage positive memories of her. His final farewell to her was to record himself singing two songs and send them to be played at her funeral since he couldn’t be at the
funeral in person. This experience connects Yankowy to Barrett during Act II when he is singing a reprise of “The Proposal,” allowing himself to say goodbye to his loved one when he knows he will never see her again. Another personal experience that will help Yankowy play this role is when he played Leon Czolgosz in *Assassins*. Czolgosz, too, was a workingman who was fighting for survival and looking for opportunities to move up in the world but could never find a way. These similarities will help Yankowy to find some emotional depth in Barrett. One last reason that Yankowy is ideal for Barrett is his attachment to the actual ship. When the film came out in 1997, Yankowy became obsessed with all things involving Titanic. He will use this knowledge and research as a starting point for this role.

Yankowy’s mental, physical and emotional makeup will affect this character in many ways. He is a linear thinker, likes to be in control and is a very giving person. This is very characteristic of Barrett, who would like to be in control of the ship but understands his place. Physically, the actor’s appearance should enhance the character’s strength, stature and stage presence. Sometimes the actor’s disconnect from his body will affect his ability to ground himself or move freely on stage although this has improved over the past three years. Emotionally, Yankowy is very capable of playing the more sensitive and caring parts of this role. He tries to be compassionate and loving.

Director Paul J. Hustoles’s textual and theatrical concept is similar to the original production. He ideally wants the show to be about the people and not the actual boat. The staging should be fairly minimalistic during the scenes allowing the opportunity for the characters, music and story to stand out. The musical will be sung articulately and
several words will be substituted to help it to sound more like the RP dialect. Certain solos will be done in the dialect of the character.

Costume Designer David McCarl envisions Barrett to be a working man. He will be in high waisted pants and a period shirt. He will wear a cap and have a bandana around his neck to help with wiping sweat.

Yankowy is excited to play this role. It definitely presents several challenges for him and will play to his strengths. Yankowy is looking forward to the rehearsal process and developing this historically interesting and complex character.
CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE

This chapter introduces the theatrical history of Titanic: The Musical and its contributions to the theatre community. It will also look at the character of Frederick Barrett and how the writers of the musical romanticized him for the stage. The actor, Adam Yankowy, will hopefully be able to use this information to help establish a more detailed character development, as well as assist in making specific choices to better tell one of the greatest tragedies of mankind.

The tale of the Titanic is one known by many. There are many documentaries, books, one incredibly famous film and one large scale musical written about the infamous ship. On the date of its maiden voyage, Titanic was the largest vessel of its kind. She was 882 feet, 9 inches in length, 175 feet tall and 92 feet, 5 inches wide. The ship set sail on April 10, 1912, from Southampton, England. She had a smooth easy sail for five days and then hit the iceberg on April 14, 1912, at 11:40 PM. She sank on April 15, 1912, at 2:20 AM approximately 375 miles from Newfoundland. Out of the 2,208 passengers and crew on board, 1,496 perished and 712 survived that tragic night (Spignesi).

Frederick Barrett’s role in the story of the Titanic is a very compelling tale. Barrett was born in Liverpool, UK, in the year 1884. There is very limited biographical information on him prior to his voyage on the Titanic. It is known that he was living in Hanley and working as a coal miner. He was married but he found his wife to be
unfaithful, which forced him to flee. He began looking for work as a stoker aboard ships with hopes of eventually settling in America. Prior to boarding the ship, Barrett was listed as being on the ship City of New York and was a part of the engineering crew for that ship as well. He had experience in the field, which would imply that he was hired aboard Titanic for his skills in the boiler rooms. At the age of 28, he was named a lead fireman and worked in boiler room 6 aboard Titanic.

There is little known about the working conditions for the crew aboard Titanic. However there is one account from another leading fireman named Thomas Ford. Purportedly he was asleep in his bunk at the time of the collision during his off shift (Mr. Thomas Ford). This suggests that the stokers did receive breaks but the duration and frequency of those breaks is unknown. It is known that the pay for the stokers was decent. According to EncyclopediaTitanica.com, leading fireman were paid 6£ 10s for the entire roundtrip voyage. At the time, the exchange rate was $4.87 to 1 UK£ (Conversion Rate). Therefore Barrett made approximately $29.71. This was decent money for the time. According to Albert Rees, who wrote “Real Wages in Manufacturing, 1890-1914,” the daily rate for an employee in the factories in America was $2.00 a day. The voyage from England to America was approximately two weeks, which would equate to $2.80 a day proving that Barrett was paid a little more than average.

According to David Allen Butler, author of “Titanic Remembered,”

Titanic was built as a “triple-screw steamer,” which meant that she had three propellers, one mounted on the centerline of the ship, and two “wing
screws,” one mounted each to port and starboard. Turning these screws would be a distinctive power plant arrangement of reciprocating engines turning the wing propellers and an unusual low-pressure turbine powering the center one. But for the turbine to spin and the reciprocating engines to turn, steam was needed in greater quantities than any ship had ever before generated.

Titanic had 6 boiler rooms and each was managed by engineers and lead firemen. There were approximately 27 boilers and a total of 162 furnaces to stoke within the 6 boiler rooms. Everyday the ship used approximately 600 tons of coal to maintain a speed of 21 knots (Titanic’s Unsinkable). In the boiler room there were several different tasks being performed beyond just shoveling coal. There were “trimmers” who would wheelbarrow large pieces of coal in and place them at the foot of the fireboxes. They had to have knowledge of the weight and balance to maintain equilibrium of the ship. The stokers had to know exactly how much coal to shovel at a time to keep the speed of the ship maintained. This was very calculated and formulaic. In his detailed webpage article regarding remembering Titanic, Butler describes the tasks of the stoker.

Using his shovel and slice bar, a fireman would reduce the larger pieces into fragments roughly the size of a man’s fist. Next, timing his movements to the roll and pitch of the ship, he would swing open the door to a firebox and quickly thrust home his slice bar along the fire-grate, working it back and forth four times, once for each track of the grate, to improve the draft across the burning coals by breaking ashes and clinkers
loose. These were quickly raked into a pit below the firebox and the fire
doors swung closed again. On double-ended boilers the stokers worked in	
tandem so that doors at the opposite ends were never open at the same
time, preventing back-drafts that could blow the fire out into the firemen’s
faces. The fire door would be opened again, and the fireman would shovel
a layer of coal across the grate—a skilled fireman would usually feed in no
more than four shovelfuls of coal, spreading them over the grate at a
uniform depth of four inches.

The sheer strength and precision needed to perform this task make these men incredibly
valuable to the success of the ship’s sail. Butler continues by saying, “It would be
difficult to conceive of a task more demanding and demeaning, more backbreaking and
more soul-breaking, than feeding the furnaces of a coal-fired boiler on a steamship. The
entire chore was accomplished through sheer human muscle power.”

Prior to the sailing of Titanic there was a huge coal strike in England. The strike
was implemented because the miners demanded a minimum wage law be passed. The
strike was successful and a law was put into effect. However the strike caused great
dismay to the shipping industry because majority of the ships at the time were steam and
coal powered. When Titanic announced her maiden voyage, thousands of men applied
for the job of stoker. Frederick Barrett was one of the fortunate firemen given a job.

On the night of the sinking, Barrett was one of the few men who made it out of
the boiler room and up to the lifeboats. He was later quoted giving a direct account of
what happened. According to Barrett,
There was a rush of water into my stokehole. We were standing on plates about six feet above the tank tops, and the water came in about two feet above the plates. . . . I jumped through the doorway into No. 5 section. The watertight door between the sections was then open, but it shut just as we jumped through. This door is worked from the bridge. I do not know whether any more men in my stokehole were saved. The water was coming in fast enough through the side of the ship to flood the place. (Mr. Frederick Barrett)

Barrett then rushed through the hatchway up to A deck where he was placed in charge of lifeboat 13. He was one of very few firemen to survive the sinking.

_Titanic: The Musical_ began previews on March 29, 1997, three days later than scheduled at the Lunt-Fontanne theatre. There was much anticipation for the opening of _Titanic: The Musical_. There had been much talk around New York City if the show would actually set sail due to many technical difficulties. The show finally opened on April 23, 1997, after playing twenty-six previews. The musical received mixed reviews from its many critics. Ben Brantley of the _New York Times_ said, “Titanic fails to capitalize on the two obvious trump cards its subject has dealt it: sentimentality and suspense.” He also states in regards to the score, “Mr. Yeston . . . seems less confident here. There is evidence of intelligence and variety in the music (which often has a _Sweeney Todd_ meets ‘Jaws’ ominousness) but very little emotional pull, barring some full-throated anthemic chorales.” Ed Seigel of _The Boston Globe_, expressed, “Although it doesn't have a great song, the score as a whole holds together quite well and the
multiset staging is terrific.” Laurie Winer of the Los Angeles Times claimed, “Titanic isn't a disaster. But faint praise like that—applied to a new, much anticipated $10-million Broadway musical—isn't only oxymoronic, it's a huge, looming iceberg.” Winer mentions a $10 million budget, which is sizeable for any Broadway musical. According to the New York Times, “Michael David, a lead producer, would not say what the show’s exact loss was but he said the musical had earned back more than half of its initial investment. ‘We determined a dignified leave-taking was better than staying too long.’”

The show had a roller coaster of a Broadway run. It opened two months before the Tony Awards, and as mentioned above, to mixed reviews. However, the show was nominated for five awards and won in all five categories, which included Best Musical, Best Score, Best Orchestations, Best Book and Best Scenic Design. This gave the show the boost to keep running. James Cameron’s “Titanic” debuted in December of 1997. The film caused a Titanic mania across the globe and, fortunately, the musical benefited. The show sustained for the remainder of 1998 and by the start of 1999 it was time for the ship to leave Broadway.

Peter Stone, the book writer, discusses in great detail the process of writing the behemoth of a musical in the book Titanic: The Musical. Stone and Maury Yeston, who wrote music and lyrics, found in their research a recurring theme of threes. There are the three “common” men: Frederick Barrett, Harold Bride and Frederick Fleet. These three men all had first hand knowledge of the 3 forces (speed, ice, poor visibility) that sink the ship. Then there were the three “uncommon” men: the ship’s owner, J. Bruce Ismay; Captain E.J. Smith; and the ship’s architect, Thomas Andrews. These three men each
have a very distinct character flaw: Ismay with greed, Smith with compliance and Andrews with compromise. These traits combined create the perfect Greek tragedy. Stone says, “When their faults collide with the ineluctable forces of nature, the ship’s fate is sealed. In classical tragedy, this collision is inevitable. That it occurred in reality—was astounding” (16). There are two other sets of threes that round out the prominent roles in the musical. There are the three Kate’s in the third class and then there are the Beanes, Charles Clarke and Caroline Neville who make up the second class.

Once they found the characters to include, the writing team embraced the major themes of the musical, which include human control versus God’s control, the idea of social class systems and its parallels to the ship’s class system. Stone and Yeston wanted to explore the idea of human control versus God’s control because it is innately human. Stone says,

The reason for this attraction is, a desire on the part of us human beings to recognize and reaffirm our place in the cosmic order of things and to find, not only consolation, but solace in it. How comforting it is to know that no matter how high man rises, how Godlike his achievements, that he is subject to the same natural laws that encompass the rest of nature. What a load off our backs, what a relief to know that we’re not gods. (18)

The writing team felt that the relationship between the class systems on board and the social status class systems was worth discussing. They were mostly astounded by the number of survivors within each of the classes. “All but two of the women in First class were saved while one hundred and fifty-five women and children from Second and Third
(mostly Third) drowned” (18). They wanted to bring this detail to the forefront in their version of the telling. Several of the documentaries up until this point discussed the loss of the prominent First Class members, such as, John Jacob Astor, and the Strauses. They include a line in the script that Katherine McGowan (Third Class) has that captures this idea. She says, “And all ‘o them poor women and children in the Third Class who never even made it to the boats” (Stone 111).

They decided to structure the show with a lighthearted and carefree Act I, while Act II would demonstrate the progression of survival through a dramatic lens. Luckily for the creative team, the story lends itself to this tragic telling. The creative team also wanted the show to contribute to the musical theatre canon. This happened in Titanic within the score. Yeston took several different musical styles and synthesized them into a unique musical sensation. He revived the operetta patter song with “What A Remarkable Age This Is.” This is a tribute to the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas of the mid to late 19th century. Yeston also paid tribute to the anthem that the English Anglican church popularized. The “Prologue” is approximately twenty minutes and finishes with one of the most powerful anthems written in the musical theatre canon. According to Ethan Mordden, “Surely that ‘Prologue’ . . . followed by ‘The Launching,’ is the most sheerly musical opening of the era” (203). In addition to the anthems, there is a rag that pays tribute to the popular music of the Titanic’s time. The score has been likened to a Jerome Kern, Richard Rogers or Victor Herbert score. The song “Still” has been likened to that of a Herbert composition. Jessica Sternfield, in her book The Megamusical, states, “The score works better when it relies (as it often does) on large choral numbers” (319).
This wall of sound made in these numbers is what helps this show. The musical opens and closes with this sound leaving the audience overwhelmed and spreading the word about the show.

The creative license taken by the writers for dramatic effect speaks to the idea of rewriting history. Stone says, “Nonfiction is not compatible with the dramatic form. Either the facts must be changed to create dramatic unity and impact—thus corrupting truth” (10-11). For example, Frederick Barrett survived in real life. He ended up rowing lifeboat number thirteen. However, the writers decided to have him die because his romantic storyline would be more devastating for the audience than to have him survive. McGowan and Farrell died on the Titanic, yet they survive in the musical. Their romantic relationship established throughout allows the audience to care about them. When Barrett chooses to sacrifice himself, the combination of their survival and Barrett’s impending doom weave together for an emotional and dramatic effect.

Another character that dies in the musical but survived in real life was Edgar Beane. In real life his name was Edward Beane. Interestingly, he was one of the only Second class male survivors of the Titanic. In the musical, the writers’ choosing for him to die is more important because of his relationship with Alice. One story that the writers omitted was the Margaret Brown plot line. The film and other tellings of the Titanic tale rely on the “unsinkable” character but not Titanic: The Musical. In a conversation with Yeston, he states, “she has little to do with the actual story that we were painting and a reference to her calls to mind another show and takes the audience out of the immersion in our show.”
The actor intends to take these changes in Barrett’s story line to find depth and a heightened emotional portrayal of Barrett. When speaking with Yeston, Yankowy found clarity in the composition of Barrett. Yeston says,

I invented Barrett. I found his name; decided he’d be from the Midlands, from the coalmines. I then imagined him as a natural-born poet—my model was Mellors, the gamekeeper from Lady Chatterly’s Lover. Thus given his origin and the poetry of his dialogue, I colored Barrett’s musical style with elements of English folk-origins. There is nothing Irish about his language or his music. It’s English.

This conversation with Yeston gives insight into Barrett that will shape the role differently. It is fascinating that in this day in age it is possible to have this dialogue with the writers so that the actor can do justice to the storytelling.

In an interview, Allan Corduner who played Henry Etches in the original Broadway company, says, “How on earth can Titanic: The Musical work because we all know the story? You think you know what it’s about and of course you know what’s going to happen. But you do get to care about these people, which is very deft. There are so many people, how do you get close to them? And you do.” Yankowy intends on using this detailed historical analysis to bring depth and truth to the characterization of Barrett that he hopes will leave the audience caring about Barrett.
August 24, 2015

Today was the first day of my last year of graduate school. I spent the summer at Goodspeed Musicals fulfilling my internship requirement. I had a remarkable time being in the home of the American musical. I left the internship excited to finish my last year of school. The first day was exciting yet very busy day prepping for classes and putting final touches on my audition materials. I auditioned for *The Miracle Worker* and *Titanic: The Musical*. I was very pleased with both of my auditions. I did one of Captain Keller's monologues from *The Miracle Worker* although the director, Matthew Caron, asked for something not from the show. I later discussed this with Caron and he said that there was a miscommunication and that it was not a problem. I personally felt that the monologue went well and was one of my better monologue auditions. For the *Titanic: The Musical* audition, I prepared the end of "Barrett's Song." I had worked on it in my voice lessons in the spring semester and felt that this was one of the roles that would be good for me in this show. I was also interested in the role of Thomas Andrews. I was very pleased with my audition. My upper register was in great shape. After two hours of waiting, the list was posted and I was pleased to find out that I was cast as Frederick Barrett. I am excited to get to work on this show and write my thesis on this role.
August 25, 2015

Tonight was the first rehearsal for Titanic: The Musical. We had the opportunity to see Set Designer John Paul’s sketches for the show. He is painting one drop to represent the side of the ship as the passengers board and will have a finite portion that represents the main deck of the ship behind the drops. He will use rolling platforms to represent certain parts of the ship including the boiler room where I will sing “Barrett’s Song.” This idea definitely is simpler than the original production and should work nicely. One other element of the set design that I enjoyed is the Marconi room where I will sing, “The Proposal” and “The Night was Alive” with Gabriel Sell, who is playing Harold Bride.

We also had the opportunity to see some of Costume Designer David McCarl’s sketches for the show. McCarl pulled several images from the Internet to pull inspiration for the costume design. He intends to dress the crew in as close to the original uniform as possible. For the remainder of the costumes, he is stylizing them in the period. Barrett’s costume sketch was exactly what I envisioned and I was very excited to see the high waisted pants and kerchief around the neck. Overall, the design was very stirring.

The last presentation was from Director Paul J. Hustoles. His vision of the show is to really focus on the characters and tell their story while emphasizing the glorious Maury Yeston score. I’m excited to do some research about who Barrett is based on and find some character traits and details to make him well rounded and interesting.
After the designers and director discussed their concepts, the cast started learning the opening of the show. We got through a large chunk of Act I and spent most of our energy on the “Prologue.” This should be an exciting and powerful show.

August 26, 2015

Tonight Erin Horst, who is playing the role of Alice Beane, and I had the opportunity to sing for an event for the Minnesota House of Representative Capital Investment Committee tour. We got to reprise our Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival award winning performance of *The Bridges of Madison County* duet. The event went well and then Horst and I rushed back to rehearsal where we finished singing Act II. Act II is not very challenging for me. I sing a lot of the same material as I do in Act I. After that we ran the "Prologue" to see how much we had retained. Surprisingly it went pretty well and Nick Wayne, Musical Director, was quite pleased with the retention. After that, he let some of us go. Time to start memorizing.

August 27, 2015

Tonight's music work through was a stumble through of the entire score. The “Prologue” surprisingly wasn’t awful. The ensemble is sounding very good and it seems most people are working on it outside of rehearsal. Personally, I just need to memorize it. Then I sang "Barrett's Song" and I was disappointed with it. I felt vocally tired before I started and the high notes didn’t have as much vibrato as I would have liked. I felt tired at the end of the song because the song sits right in the middle of my passagio. I don’t
think that I got a thorough enough warm up and this show will require it. "The Proposal/The Night was Alive" duet went pretty well. There are some dynamic nuances that need to be worked and once my voice is more rested and hydrated I should be able to figure that out. The show is in pretty good shape for day three of rehearsal.

August 28, 2015

We did a full sing through of the show tonight with the exception of "Barrett's Song." I had talked to Wayne earlier in the day and requested to skip it. He was completely supportive of that. I was feeling better vocally but I appreciated the break so that I am ready for Sunday's work through. I did start my regiment of vocal health this afternoon with a vat of ginger tea, thorough warm up and plenty of water. These are all things I know I should have been doing from the get go but time here doesn’t always allow it. I did play with some of the musicality in “The Proposal” that didn’t work. The soft dynamics in the opening verse were not supported well and when I skipped into my head mix it cracked a little. This is due to fatigue and not enough practice. I will keep playing with these changes in dynamics.

August 30, 2015

Tonight was the first staging rehearsal and it went fairly well. The “Prologue” took about two hours to stage but was fun to work through because it allowed me time to develop a relationship with Sell and Daniel Lane who are playing Harold Bride and Frederick Fleet, respectively. This was important because Sell and I have several
encounters throughout the show. We got to “Barrett’s Song” but didn't really work on it because the set piece was not ready and, for the sake of time, it was best to move on. This was also good to have one more night to rest my voice as we prepare for a crazy week. Once we know what the set piece is, I should be able to play within the space and develop the song. After we skipped this, I was done for the rest of the evening. I sat in the house observing rehearsal and working through some memorization of the score.

September 1, 2015

I didn’t journal last night because I mostly sat and watched rehearsal. When we got to “The Proposal/The Night Was Alive” we skipped it for the sake of time. Tonight, we finished blocking Act I and started blocking Act II. As I wait and watch, I am attempting to memorize lines and do some research for the history section of my thesis.

September 2, 2015

Tonight we finished blocking Act II and then started a work through of Act I. I attempted to do this off book and was mostly successful. I had a few flubs in the “Prologue” with some of the choral lyrics but overall was pretty satisfied with the progress and memorization. We then ran the scene leading into “Barrett’s Song.” We found out what the set looks like and we got to run it. I need to smooth out some of the memorization of the lines. Initially Hustoles had me shoveling coal upstage and wanted me to turn over my shoulder to sing most of the song. Immediately I requested that we put the coal downstage so that I was not upstaging myself. The song went fairly well but
needs to line up more with the accompaniment and I need to spend a little more time with
the acting of the song. I could interact more with the other stokers in the scene and once I
could interact more with the other stokers in the scene and once I get my shovel, it should help.

We did get to “The Proposal/The Night Was Alive” but it was only okay. I was not off book for this scene and had some lyric flubs within the song. When we got finished, Hustoles gave us a few notes. Specifically he told me that I was singing with too much of a pop/rock belt sound throughout and that it should be sung more classically.

I think I know what he wants and will look at other ways to make this work. Otherwise, the scene should be a very touching moment in the show. We finished the act and then were dismissed. I am pleased with where I am with memorization.

September 3, 2015

Tonight we did a work through of Act II. We had to restage Act II, scene five, because we got a set piece that we didn’t have the first time. This changed quite a bit of the blocking and I feel made the scene much more dramatic. There were a few moments that I actually felt that I was on the boat. The great thing about this rehearsal was that I realized that I was about 80% off book. The unfortunate thing about this rehearsal is that the cast got scolded by Hustoles for several reasons but the one that affected me most was that the cast wasn’t off book. This is challenging because some people learn differently. For me, the lines and nuance of the lines happen when I work the scene with my partner and try different things. All we have really done at this point is run them once and move on. I also know that there are three more weeks of rehearsal, which, hopefully, we will
get to work the scenes in depth and not just run them. Tomorrow we run the show but I am mostly looking forward to the long weekend, which will prove useful in forcing the memorization.

September 4, 2015

Tonight we did a full run through of the show. This went much better than expected. I actually was completely off book for all of my spoken dialogue. In Act II, I haven’t really committed the song “We Meet Tomorrow” to memory. Tonight was also the first time that I had my shovel to use in “Barrett’s Song.” I was improvising the physical action throughout the entire song. There were moments that were awkward and that I need to work through. At the end of rehearsal, Hustoles commented that I was playing too much of an angry wash. I truly believe that I was more focused on the prop and not the intention of the song. I know in time this will work itself out so I am not worried about it at this point in the rehearsal process.

September 8, 2015

Tonight was a work through of Act I. We worked the large ensemble numbers and will work the smaller duets and solos later in the week. We started the “Prologue” but skipped the first solo in it because Matthew Stairs, the actor playing Thomas Andrews, was sick. This opens with my character singing about the size of the ship. Hustoles encouraged me to have larger gestures to aide in the storytelling. Shortly there after Sell and Lane burst on stage and we have a moment of excitement and camaraderie.
This high energy maintains throughout the entire prologue. It makes Barrett appear much younger, which I think is appropriate. After the prologue, I sat and worked on my history section for an hour and half as I waited for the next ensemble number. We did get to “No Moon #2” which was an easy number for me but, as a whole, provides a very dramatic finale of Act I.

September 9, 2015

Tonight I was called in later than the rest of the cast because Hustoles was working the opening scenes in Act II, which I am not in. I was appreciative of the more efficient time management. We worked “The Lifeboats” number, which is really shaping into a high intensity moment. We did add in the heroic moment for Barrett as he gives up his seat in the lifeboat to Jim Farrell and Katherine McGowan. This should prove to be a very touching moment. I was finally off book for my solo in “We’ll Meet Tomorrow” but still was clueless on the remainder of the lyrics. The clean up music rehearsal tomorrow will be useful to lock in the remainder of those lyrics.

We concluded the work through of the large ensemble numbers and then stayed and worked “The Proposal/The Night was Alive” sequence with Sell. Hustoles mentioned that my speaking voice was getting too high in my tessitura and that it should be lower. I assume this is to keep him masculine and to match my singing voice. Both of these things are items that I struggle with as an actor. He also told me that I was singing too loudly which would cause some trouble for the sound technicians as we got closer to tech. I will work with Wayne to find a better balance. The challenge with the song is
that it sits in my passagio and it is difficult to sing quietly. I also have eyebrow tension while singing and look consternated, and I should find a more pleasant expression. This means that mirror work is in my future. At the end of that he asked if I wanted to run “Barrett’s Song” and I politely requested we wait until tomorrow when it is not so late. This will give me more time to actually rehearse with the shovel before working it with Hustoles.

September 10, 2015

Another Titanic: The Musical rehearsal commenced this evening. Fortunately for the cast, we had a music rehearsal to clean the score. I was feeling incredibly tired overall. The music rehearsal was useful for me and helped remind me specifically what my parts are supposed to be in the choral sections. Wayne let Sell and myself go early so he and I worked on our scene together. I felt much better about this afterwards. Then Hustoles joined us and wanted to work solo numbers. We got to “Barrett’s Song” which was very difficult to sing. Vocally I was struggling and I just wanted to go home. I am so tired and feel like there is no time to catch up. I got home with the intention of working on things but I was so exhausted I passed out immediately.

September 11, 2015

We ran the show tonight. Personally, I thought this run was quite good for me. I was comfortably off book and vocally the music worked nicely. I do however know that I need to keep fine-tuning the physicality for Barrett. There are moments that are still not
firmly grounded. On the other hand, there were so many moments within the show that were train wrecks (e.g., large ensemble numbers) and need more work. I am hopeful that there will be time to rehearse these moments and not just keep running the show. On another note, Hustoles gave me the note tonight that my character is Irish. This is completely different than what I have been rehearsing and what we have talked about in our meetings. The music and the dialogue lend themselves to an Irish dialect with the Celtic flourishes and the phrasing of the lines. However, there is the line in “Barrett’s Song” where the character references being from the Midlands of the United Kingdom. Now I am confused. For now, I will keep doing the relaxed, working class RP. Hustoles also kept us forty-five minutes late and all we got was an apology. This was incredibly frustrating.

September 13, 2015

Tonight we ran the show again. I took the notes that I received from Hustoles, attempted to alter those acting moments and, in addition, I made new and different choices. I felt really good about my contribution to the run of the show. My voice felt good and I was connecting more to the character. However, there is one scene that I am really struggling to make work because of the staging. “The Staircase” scene has me completely upstaging myself. The three Kates are up on a staircase and I am downstage of them looking up at them. It might help to have them split up on all of the stairs, so that one of the women is on the bottom stair. I will talk to the ladies playing the Kates and see if there is a way to adjust. On another note, I realized that I should have my shovel
during the finale of Act I. Barrett is singing about the screws turning at eighty-one revolutions. Also in doing research, Barrett was in boiler room number six when the ship hit the iceberg. I will see what Hustoles says about it.

September 15, 2015

Last night we did a music work through of the show and then worked the “Prologue” sequence in detail. This was incredibly useful and actually a lot of fun. It was good to have time to work through minute details and connect more with Sell. He is very talented and fun to act with on stage. There was one moment where I got to actually talk with Maureen O’Malley who is playing Darlene Watkins, Barrett’s love interest in the beginning. In the past few run-throughs we have just been going through the motions and it always felt awkward and rushed. When acting opposite shorter people, I tend to lean forward, which makes me appear to be playing the Beast from Disney’s Beauty and the Beast. O’Malley and I worked out a way to for me to be standing straight yet for us to have a meaningful embrace.

The next night I wasn’t called until later and even once I arrived, I was only on stage for a total of twenty minutes in the remainder of rehearsal. The rehearsal was labeled as a work through yet we ran the scenes and then moved forward.

September 16, 2015

I was actually called individually tonight to work on Barrett and not just do it in the context of a run. This was incredibly useful. Up until this point, I feel that I have
brought some good choices to the table and now Hustoles could fine tune and provide a different lens. I appreciate working with him in this environment. It is incredibly productive and encouraging. However, I was pretty tired afterwards. Attempting to sing “Barrett’s Song” three times was a bit of a challenge for the vocal folds. Afterwards, Sell arrived and we worked “The Proposal/The Night was Alive” sequence. This is always a fun scene to rehearse because of the content and because of Sell. He has a great attitude and gives off a positive energy, which is wonderful to share the stage with.

September 18, 2015

I didn’t journal yesterday because it was a short musical clean up rehearsal. Although I will admit that the sound that was being created was quite remarkable and was very exciting. Tonight we are doing a full run through of the show. I am lacking energy and feel like the show was only all right. I felt that I had to work exceptionally hard to get through “Barrett’s Song.” Emotionally I was not invested but I felt that the song went well otherwise. I have used this run to play with the physicality of Barrett. I am trying to plant my feet in a balletic second position and am playing with my arms on my waist, almost in a “Superman” sort of pose. Hopefully this will continue to grow and morph into a consistent and appropriate physicality.

September 20, 2015

The run of the show felt good for me. Vocally, “Barrett’s Song” was the easiest it has been in weeks. Tonight we had the backstage crew in the audience. They provided
nice feedback and energy, which was very nice to have. During “We’ll Meet
Tomorrow,” I actually cried during my solo. This was the first time that I have had that
emotional experience during the run of the show.

Tomorrow, we are having A Christmas Story: The Musical auditions and I am
serving as the musical director for the show. This should be a very exciting endeavor for
me. It will also be a nice distraction from regular rehearsals and I am looking forward to
seeing the students from a different perspective.

September 22, 2015

Today I had my weekly meeting with Hustoles. This was an exceptionally useful
meeting. The first thing we discussed was about the dialect usage for Barrett. Hustoles
wants me to soften the “r” in my dialogue and also aim for a subdued Cockney sound.
The second thing we discussed was the physicality of Barrett. Hustoles liked the
“Supermanesque” pose that I have been working on. The problem with this pose is that it
made Barrett appear to be in a higher class. He challenged me to keep the same upper
torso carriage yet make Barrett have a low pelvis center. The last thing he suggested is
that Barrett is a little more dull and uneducated. I will try these this evening.

Tonight was our first sound technical rehearsal, which included sound cues and
microphones. I have been playing with the physical carriage and it has been quite
awkward to start. The more that I play with this it should become more natural. In
regards to the dialect, I need to write my lines out in the IPA to get more of the Cockney
flavor throughout.
The run overall went all right. I got the note that there was a disconnect between my speaking and singing voice. I was unaware of this tonight and I think I know how to fix it.

September 24, 2015

I am back into rehearsals tonight after being gone yesterday. I was in Des Moines performing for a September 11th memorial service. I sang “Bring Him Home” from the musical Les Misérables, which made the event quite emotional and special.

Tonight was the first light technical rehearsal. It was an interesting rehearsal. The boiler room was closer to looking finished today. They have added the doors to the boiler and added the coal box. Unfortunately the box was very light and I almost pushed it into the pit. This was also the first time that I could actually shovel the coal. I was dropping coal all over the place. I also had a difficult time seeing where to put the coal, which caused a lot of problems as well. I will have to practice with this set piece before our next run through.

During the finale of Act I, I normally come out with my shovel and sing “the screws were turning at eighty-one.” This was an actor choice and historically and textually makes sense. Barrett was in the boiler room when the ship hit the iceberg. Tonight, Hustoles asked me to cut it and not bring it out. I disagree with this note because I feel that it helps communicate to the audience but what the director says, goes.
September 25, 2015

The annual Minnesota State University, Mankato Gala was this evening at the Centennial Student Union. The cast of Titanic: The Musical were special guest performers for the event. We did a condensed version of the “Prologue,” which was well received from all those who were in attendance. After the event, we returned back to the Jane Earley Center for Performing Arts to prepare for another technical rehearsal. This was a stop and go to add several elements to the show. We finally had a portrait of Barrett’s love interest, as well as the doors to the Marconi room. Unfortunately, the coal box in the boiler room had not been adjusted and I was only a few inches from pushing it into the pit again. It is really hindering me from fully working through the shoveling and figuring out the timing of it all.

The remainder of the run through went rather well. We only stopped a few times towards the end of the show so the crew could figure out how to maneuver the ship’s railing and the sinking ship unit. Regardless of this, the show felt good for me vocally and the physicality is coming along. I am pleased with its direction.

September 26, 2015

Tonight we had another technical rehearsal. I sadly woke up right before it and didn’t really get to warm up as much as necessary. When we got to “Barrett’s Song,” I realized right before going onstage to do the number that more coal was added to the coal box. My hope was that this would have added more weight to it but sadly didn’t. It actually made it harder to get any coal onto the shovel. In addition to that, the coal box
almost fell into the pit again halfway through the song. I pulled it back but it took me out of the moment. The number was incredibly frustrating. I hope they fix this soon.

The rest of the run was all right. Here’s to another one again tomorrow. At least we add costumes, which should be fun.

September 27, 2015

Tonight was first dress rehearsal. We also had the orchestra in the pit for the first time. I got to school thirty minutes early to warm up yet it didn’t seem to help. I felt fatigue in the voice and sense that I have less control over vocal nuance, especially in the lighter mechanism. This was not helped in any way with the orchestra playing at half tempo for a majority of the music. We added approximately twenty minutes to Act I. The most difficult song to sing was “Barrett’s Song.” Because this dragged so much, I could not sustain in the passagio. The slow tempo also threw off the timing of the button of the song and some of the shoveling within. They finally added a weight to the coal box, which definitely helped. However, I am still struggling to get coal onto the shovel. I do not know if it is the coal prop that they have made or if it is operator error.

In regards to my costume, I am dressed in grey pants, a grey button down shirt, a tweed grey vest, a grey hat, a red bandana and brown boots. It isn’t really what I had envisioned and doesn’t match the initial sketches that McCarl provided. The pants are not high waisted and the shirt is a button down instead of a Henley type construction. However, as I wear it, it slowly is starting to help me add to the character of Barrett. I do enjoy having the hat and tried playing with it some in “The Proposal.” I’d like to use the
bandana during “Barrett’s Song” but need to practice with it. Tomorrow adding makeup smudges and more dirt will help add to the character as well.

Tonight during “We’ll Meet Tomorrow,” I became very emotional and was crying controllably. I was surprised by this overwhelming response although I don’t think that I should be considering the severity of the moment.

September 28, 2015

Tonight was our final dress rehearsal and I am feeling ill. My body is slightly achy and my throat has that small tickle. However, the show must go on. I think that adrenaline has kicked in to get me through the show. The tempos were incredibly slow again tonight, which is not helping either. In “Barrett’s Song,” the shoveling was much better today because I actually got to work with it a little before the show started. I think the main problem is that the shovel has some rough edges on the metal end and is getting stuck as I try to shovel. Musically, I thought I sounded pretty good considering the fatigue. I am still struggling with some of the tempos that Wayne is conducting the songs. In regards to the acting, the song made more sense and I actually felt that I was communicating the ideas more effectively. Perhaps that is because I was worrying less about the coal.

We had to stop the show tonight to re-set the sinking moment. The platform was not in the correct place. Our group of guys moved to our light to make up for the error, however this halted the show for fifteen minutes as it was re-spiked and the lights adjusted. Performance wise for me tonight, I sobbed even more during “We’ll Meet
Tomorrow.” The severity of the moment is really starting to sink in and affect me even more nightly.

September 29, 2015

Tonight was the theatre major’s preview performance. It was nice to finally have an audience. They were not incredibly responsive but that seems to be the nature of this show. It is awkward to respond with applause when the characters on stage are dying. Personally, the show went very well, however I had a few awkward moments. Hustoles gave me a note to deliver “How Did They Build Titanic” towards the center of the house and as soon as I finished the song I realized that I didn’t do it. During “Barrett’s Song” I struggled with the coal again. There was less coal in my box, which made it difficult to get any on my shovel. Also, the shovel was super sharp because they smoothed out the edge and so coal was getting stuck on the edge of the shovel. This was rather amusing to me as I was in the middle of a performance. “The Staircase” scene was the best it had felt. I think we are finally starting to connect more and the lines are becoming more responsive.

In Act II, during the lifeboats scene, the sinking ship set piece was off of its spike mark. This provided an interesting challenge to all of the actors on stage and off. While onstage we knew it was off so we were prepared to adjust. Several people were out of their light but the show went on and many people probably didn’t notice. The past two nights I got more choked up during “We’ll Meet Tomorrow” but tonight I didn’t. I actually started crying in the scene following.
The theatre was incredibly dry tonight. I felt that it was more challenging to sing because of it. Several people mentioned that they had the same experience. Wayne told us that the dew point had changed outside which caused the space to be drier. I will just drink more water to try and compensate for this tomorrow. On top of the dryness, I was not feeling well so I took some time this afternoon to rest to prepare for the show. I’m hoping that whatever is trying to infect my body will leave it soon.

September 30, 2015

Tonight was our corporate sponsor preview. I did not go to class at all today because I woke up with a 102-degree fever. I spent the day resting and sleeping with the hope that I would be able to perform the show this evening. Luckily, after a day of rest, my fever broke. However, I do not think that my body is over it yet. I was incredibly hot during vocal warm ups and even hotter out on stage.

My body’s adrenaline must have kicked in because I was able to get through “Barrett’s Song.” The coal shoveling was much better tonight, however I could not hear the orchestra during part of the song and was missing entrances. Several other cast members struggled tonight to stay with the orchestra as well. I am not sure if the monitors backstage are turned up all the way.

During intermission, I started feeling worse. I started to turn very cold and my stomach was completely upset. I was not playing the cold onstage tonight. I was freezing naturally. During “We’ll Meet Tomorrow,” I cried more than I ever have which
carried into the scene after. The finale went well and the audience seemed to be moved by the performance. They even gave us a standing ovation, which was appreciated.

October 1, 2015

Tonight is opening night of *Titanic: The Musical*. I woke up this morning still running a 102-degree fever and decided to stay home and in bed for the day so that I could do the show tonight. While at home, I decided to watch the James Cameron film “Titanic” in preparation of opening night. I was reminded of the grandeur and magnitude of the ship, which is incredibly helpful for the opening of the show when I sing “How Did They Build Titanic.” It was also useful to see the boiler room scenes in the film. It put into perspective the number of men that were down there working, as well as the amount of heat and soot that would be present. I think that I need to play even more with the heat element and should maybe make myself look dirtier with makeup.

“Barrett’s Song” felt really good tonight. I felt that I was more in sync with the orchestra and the shoveling worked nicely. My voice was even free on the high notes which was a pleasant surprise considering in my warm up I was struggling to get them out at all. During “The Proposal” scene, the audience laughed at some interesting places especially at the end when I turned out and give a huge grin once I realize the message has been received.

Act II went well. During “To the Lifeboats,” I had less control of the upper register. I felt that some notes were not as strong as they have been in the past. Also, I almost missed my entrance because Wayne rushed through the vamp. Perhaps, he was
confused that I was looking for my mark and he thought I was looking at him. I was less emotionally connected tonight but I was capable of crying throughout the remainder of the song. The audience was incredibly responsive and seemed to love the show. They laughed and cried a lot. It is possible to see them crying from the stage. To top it off, they gave us a standing ovation.

October 2, 2015

Today I felt the worse vocally I’ve felt throughout this entire process. I couldn’t sustain the passagio notes at all through my warm up. In “Barrett’s Song” I started to crack at the end of the song because I couldn’t continue singing the higher notes. I acted my way through it, however, I hate sounding bad. I am so frustrated with this viral infection. It has completely knocked me out for three full days and I just need it to leave so that I can give good performances.

“The Proposal” went well vocally. Thankfully it doesn’t go as high as “Barrett’s Song” so I was able to sustain without the sickness taking over. Unfortunately, my body chills came back during intermission and I was literally freezing and shaking for the remainder of Act II. It took all of my energy to finish the show. There was a moment during Act II, scene six, that I thought I was going to upstage others on stage from the shaking and teeth chattering. It was not easy to do this show. I was so excited to get home and go to bed.
October 3, 2015

Tonight the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival responder was in the audience. Personally, this was the worst show I have had vocally. I have been running a fever of 100 degrees or higher all day and my cough has gotten worse. I went to urgent care and they did a flu test, which came back negative. So they decided to treat me for walking pneumonia. I am taking a cough syrup and now on an antibiotic.

During the show, I struggled. In “Barrett’s Song,” I could not sustain on the word “be” and I was a semi-tone flat. In the moment, I cut it short because I couldn’t get through it. However, the end of the song was better than it was last night. I also struggled to shovel tonight. The shovel actually pulled up part of the coal box instead of picking up coal.

“The Proposal” went all right. Again, I have less control over the upper register and couldn’t sing as quiet as normal. It’s incredibly difficult to describe what is going on with my vocal folds. I think that there is a build up of mucus and the folds are not connecting like normal.

The remainder of the show was fine. I didn’t cry at all tonight during “We’ll Meet Tomorrow” or the scene following. This was weird for me. I do not know why the tears didn’t come more easily. I thought I sounded okay during this given the circumstances.

The audience was incredibly receptive to the performance and we received another standing ovation. After the show we had the meeting with the responder, Mike Riche. Riche is an instructor at North Hennipen Community College in Minneapolis,
Minnesota. His feedback was fairly vague. He congratulated the cast, crew, design and
direction on a job well done. He told me that I did strong work but gave me nothing
specific or critical. He also told Keegan Gore, another stoker in “Barrett’s Song,” that he
was working just as hard as I was, which I found to be an insult. In general, I do not feel
that this response was incredibly useful as an artist. We should be able to observe art and
celebrate the positives but also give criticism without fear of hurting people’s feelings.

October 8, 2015

After a successful first weekend, Titanic: The Musical opened for five more
performances. The break from the show was nice, however, several of the cast members
and myself did not get a night off because we were rehearsing A Christmas Story: The
Musical. After suffering from pneumonia the previous weekend, I felt much better
tonight. Wayne was also out tonight because his wife gave birth to a baby boy earlier
during the day. Jesse Buelke, assistant music director, was at the baton tonight. During
“Barrett’s Song,” I struggled with some of the coal shoveling again but my voice felt
pretty good. I did get off with the music but got back on after I jumped a measure. The
remainder of the show went well. During “We’ll Meet Tomorrow,” Buelke sped through
the song so quickly. The tempos definitely were faster this evening in general,
nevertheless I liked them for the most part.

After the show, we did the picture call. This was and always is a long evening.
Hopefully the photos turn out all right for my website and for this thesis.
October 9, 2015

Tonight’s show brought some interesting and different surprises. Buelke was at the baton again, which meant that tempos were different again. In “Barrett’s Song,” I made a lyric flub that I had never made. The line is “Coal it is that makes the steam that runs the machines that run the world that sends the men below the ground to mine the coal each day.” I said, “. . . that sends the men below the ground to mine each day the coal.” Sadly it didn’t rhyme with the next line but fortunately the line still made sense. I also had a difficult time getting coal onto my shovel tonight. The box was moving and I actually pulled it back at least once. There was a lot more coal left on stage than normal too. I do not know why this is different than normal. I preset the coal where it has worked the best. Oh well. I’ll try again tomorrow.

During “The Proposal” scene, I mixed up one of lines before the song. I am supposed to say “. . . send a message to my girl in England?” and I said, “send a message back to England to my girl.” Again, I was lucky that it still made sense but I am not sure why I am not as focused tonight.

My voice felt dry and not free during Act II. During the reprise of “The Proposal” I could not get the E5 to spin when singing the word “well.” This should not be difficult but it was tonight. While singing “We’ll Meet Tomorrow,” it took great effort to get through the phrase “And have each other evermore” on one breath. This is normally not a problem for me. I should have taken a catch breath but my pride got in the way.
October 10, 2015 Matinee Performance

Today is our only two show day. I woke up this morning with a tickle in my throat and was quite concerned that I would struggle throughout. However, I felt “Barrett’s Song” went very well. It felt great vocally and mostly had no problems with the shoveling. I did however miss the hole of the boiler and rammed the set piece hard with the shovel. Coal went all over. Fortunately, I could use it in the next part of the song.

My voice felt tighter in “The Proposal” than normal. I am not sure if it is under hydrated or still recovering from the sickness. I feel that I have less control over the soft sections and the passagio notes. I will keep drinking water and taking it easy throughout the remainder of the day so that I can give a solid performance tonight.

The remainder of the show went well. I felt that my voice was freer than last night and I was more emotionally connected throughout “We’ll Meet Tomorrow.” The audience was incredibly receptive. They gave us a standing ovation and several people were shouting when the final trio of guys came down for bows. This trio includes Matthew Stairs, who is playing Thomas Andrews, Sell and myself. This was a nice feeling.

October 10, 2015 Evening Performance

After a light dinner break, we came back to do another show. When I got to school, I felt that my throat was a little scratchy and that I had some phlegm that would not release itself from my vocal folds. I have been drinking water all day and do not feel
that it is helping the dry feeling. “Barrett’s Song” and “The Proposal” both went very well tonight. I started feeling very vocally tired by Act II. There was a tickle in my throat, which is very concerning. I hope with some rest and large consumptions of water that I will be able to get through the show tomorrow.

October 11, 2015

Today is the closing performance of *Titanic: The Musical*. It has been a joy to work on this show but I am incredibly relieved that it is coming to an end. This show has pushed me in many ways and has been good for me to do this role. It is a role that I could play again.

During “Barrett’s Song,” I felt that vocally it went great. However, the coal decided to be difficult yet again. Twice, I could only get one piece of coal on the shovel. As an actor it is an incredibly frustrating to have to deal with a badly designed prop. It took me out of the moment so many times throughout this run. I think that I did the best I could with what I was given.

“The Proposal” went well. The audience responded differently than past audiences. Normally, they laugh on the button of the song and today they did not. This isn’t a big deal but just an interesting observation. I do not think that I did anything different than I had in the past and I certainly wasn’t anticipating it.

The remainder of the show went well. I felt that my voice was a little less free during reprise of “The Proposal” and “We’ll Meet Tomorrow.” I do not know why this has happened consistently. I am doing low diaphragmatic breathing and producing the
sound the way I normally do. I wonder if I had sung more throughout intermission and the top of Act II if that would help. It almost feels as if the folds have cooled back down. The audience was very supportive on this last show. They gave us a standing ovation and cheered loudly throughout the bows and got louder for the last group of guys that came down. That is a wonderful feeling. So with that, *Titanic: The Musical* has sailed its last time at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Godspeed great ship; it has been a fun ride.
This post-production analysis looks at the role of Frederick Barrett as portrayed by Adam Yankowy in *Titanic: The Musical*. This show presented many new challenges for the actor. Normally, Yankowy has a strong understanding of his vocal abilities and they are his forte in performance. For this show, he struggled with several of the vocal elements. This show demanded vocal stamina, as well as a challenging dialect different than what the actor habitually has. He also faced the challenges of the physicality of Barrett.

The vocal elements of the show went through many stages. First of all, Yankowy did research to see where Frederick Barrett was originally raised. The real Barrett is from Liverpool, United Kingdom. The actor proposed a Liverpudlian dialect to Director Paul J. Hustoles and Hustoles thought that would be a bit odd. So Hustoles and Yankowy started discussing different ways to get the dialect to work. In the score, there are hints of Celtic musical patterns and the lyrics lean towards an Irish lilt. The dialogue of the book also hints towards an Irish flair. However, there is one lyric that states that Barrett is from the Midlands of the UK. Hustoles and Yankowy agreed to try a hybrid High British and Cockney that has been relaxed with the occasional Liverpudlian substitution. This was incredibly complicated for the actor. Even throughout the run, the dialect would morph into a variety of different regionalisms.
Another vocal challenge for the actor was the stamina of singing in his passagio. A majority of “Barrett’s Song” is written in this part of the actor’s range and took several hours of strengthening and working to make those notes sustainable, as well as have vibrato. Throughout the run of the show, the actor struggled with sickness, which also made this difficult to sing successfully. The actor found several techniques to help with specific moments in that song specifically. On the word “be” the composer wrote a G5. This is a very difficult vowel to sing on a high note. The actor prepped this by using the weight of the shovel and placing it behind his neck on his shoulders. This forced the actor to breathe low and engage the core muscles. The extra support allowed the actor to sing up to the note and make the word with more ease.

Yankowy had another challenge vocally. He struggled with making his speaking voice match his singing voice. This has been a problem for Yankowy throughout his acting career. This show illuminated that and forced Yankowy to be more aware of his varying tessituras. For example in “The Proposal,” Yankowy would speak the dialogue of the scene prior to the song with a light higher sound. This helped to provide a youthful characterization of Barrett. However when Yankowy sang he sounded much older and there became a disconnect between the two sounds. Hustoles brought this to Yankowy’s attention a couple times. The actor would rehearse the scene with Gabriel Sell, the actor playing Harold Bride, and ask for Sell to pay close attention to when it would go too high. This happened several times until Yankowy started to hear when it would stay down and not go up. There were several key words or phrases that Yankowy had to learn to keep down because they had a tendency to want to sit higher in the tessitura.
As far as the physical elements of Frederick Barrett are concerned, Yankowy approached this role differently than he had past roles. After being in graduate school for two years, he is more aware of his body and how to better use it. Now, saying that does not mean that he has mastered this but that he has more control and is more physically free. Barrett was very similar to Leon Czolgosz from the musical *Assassins* that Yankowy played earlier in the year, however, Barrett had some differences to make him less weathered and more strong. The physical journey of the character morphed through the entire run of the show. The actor started with the character having a high center but with heavy feet. After a meeting with Hustoles, he recommended a broad chest but with a stomach centered movement. Yankowy added the arms on the hips towards the end of rehearsals, which gave the actor a “supermanesque” pose that worked once the acting center had been adjusted. This immediately changed the class of Barrett and brought him down to blue collar.

There were several conversations with the director that Barrett needed to be even more earthy and grounded. The actor presented several ideas to continue to make him more working class but none of them seemed to come to life until the actor was given his character’s shoes. These were heavier than he had been rehearsing in and made Yankowy’s feet heavier and made his stance even stockier and more solid than the jazz shoes that Yankowy had been wearing in rehearsals. The remainder of the costume came two days before the first preview. This definitely added to the working class stature. So by the end of the first weekend, the actor was still playing with his body to make Barrett more physically dynamic.
In reviewing the pre-production analysis, there were many strengths to be found. The character breakdown and analysis of Frederick Barrett was very useful throughout the rehearsal process. It contributed to a deeper understanding of who Barrett is and what he wants at his core. The hard working, passionate nature really added a down-to-earth layer that Yankowy had fun doing every night. The self-sacrifice became key so that the audience cared about Barrett by the end of the show. This is what rounded out the arc of the character and made Barrett make more sense. Yankowy used several of his personal experiences regularly to bring more depth to this role. During “We’ll Meet Tomorrow,” the actor used the memory of his aunt passing to bring tears to his eyes. This memory has become an effective one that the actor can use yet has control over.

Yankowy’s feelings for this musical really showed in the work. He was apprehensive at first to do this musical as his thesis role. He has been fortunate in the past to create amazing roles, such as The Beast in Disney’s Beauty and the Beast and Javert in Les Misérables, that were some of his dream roles. Yankowy saw the national tour version of Titanic: The Musical in 1999 when he was still living in Louisville, Kentucky. He found the show to be boring and the storytelling not compelling. This was surprising to Yankowy because he loved the film that came out in 1997 and had become obsessed with all things Titanic. He thought the score had beautiful moments but, overall, was not impressed. When he realized that this was the show that he would be doing for his thesis, he started doing more research about the actual stories and found the musical more interesting because of the people on board the ship. His passion for the role changed throughout the process, which definitely helped the performance.
One weakness of the pre-production analysis was the actor’s awareness of the dialect and the usage. Normally Yankowy does well with dialect usage. He has taken a dialects course and is currently enrolled in one in which he consistently performs at a high standard, so was surprised to see how much he struggled with the execution of this during this show. Part of the problem was the irregularity within the material and the other was inconsistency with communication with the dialect coach and director. There were several times when the director was unsure of the direction of the dialect, which caused the actor to question where to place it. Once the actor had learned it one way it became difficult for the actor to change the delivery of the lines with the dialect. This required lots of practice. Even throughout the run of the show, the dialect would change and have different colors of different regions of the United Kingdom.

Another element that the actor continued to work on controlling was his breathing when he becomes nervous or extremely connected to the material. In the past, the actor had spells of hyperventilation and dizziness, and had not figured out how to correct the problem or cope with it in the moment. When working on Disney’s Beauty and the Beast, Yankowy gained more control over the hyperventilating but still had moments that he needed to work through the dizziness. He remembered how he worked through it with his performance of Javert in Les Misérables. He connected that it was caused from breathing and then started to be more conscious about the breath. After he figured out where to slow the breath and connect it in the song and dialogue, he knew how to manage it so it did not happen again. Yankowy was extremely pleased to realize that this
problem has gotten under control and has the knowledge and skills to work through it effectively.

Another element that the actor worked through in this production is the relationship with the set and props. The initial ship drop only gave Yankowy trouble when he had to run off stage quickly and there was a very tight traffic jam. This was one of those moments where the actor just worked through it and allowed the other actors to get through sooner. The priority for the gangplank to move was more important than the actor to get to his mark. Another moment where the actor had to be flexible in working with the set and props was during “Barrett’s Song.” The boiler set piece looked wonderful on stage but the damper was in a place where it was difficult to see and it was a small opening. Even with rehearsal, Yankowy missed the damper hole throughout performance. The coal was even worse than the damper hole. The coal was made of small irregular pieces of 2x4 that were painted black and it would get stuck to the edge of the shovel. The actor would practice with the coal often before rehearsals and performances trying to find ways for it to work more consistently. He tried rearranging it in the coal box every night to see which way would be the most effective. Unfortunately it was never dependable. This is another one of those moments where the actor had to be in the moment. This was important for Yankowy to be able to improvise throughout the song. This is normally frustrating to the actor who likes to be consistent in performance. However, this spontaneity was freeing and a very important element for the actor to learn throughout this process.
One interesting part of this process that is worth discussing is Yankowy’s method of creating the role and how that is affected when working with different directors. Yankowy normally tends to work best in scenarios where the director and actor collaborate to come up with the best possible scene. There were moments throughout this process that the actor acted like a diva and did not even try to do what the director had suggested. The actor realized that this behavior was not professional and tried to do a better job of being open throughout the rehearsal process. The actor also recognized during this process that he does not do as well in rehearsals where the director does a complete run of the show over and over and does not stop to workshop within the scene. The director then relies on notes to correct any choices that are not working. The actor likes to play within the scene and try different things as the inspiration appears. The rehearsals that were most effective were the ones where the director would work one on one and together the director and actor would discuss different options for the scene to work. Within “Barrett’s Song,” there was specifically one rehearsal that provided the actor with the in depth conversation with the director about the song and what it really is trying to communicate.

The costumes were an important element for the actor to lock into specific character traits. The initial design sketches gave the actor a visual aid that would assist in the creation of the role. Initially the actor believed that he would have a different style of pants and shirt however the finished product was still effective in giving the actor a distinct physicality that was appropriate to the character. The actor knew he was getting a bandana to wear around his neck but didn’t get it until dress rehearsal. At this point it
was very difficult to add this into the performance as a prop. The actor had initially wanted to use this to wipe sweat but once he got the bandana, the actor had found ways to wipe without it that were just as effective. Another costume piece that became a prop for the actor was his hat. The hat became an extension of the actor’s arm several times. He did not receive this hat until dress rehearsals. At this point, Yankowy used it in the spur of the moment during “The Proposal” and it ended up becoming a part of the performance. This happened several other times throughout performances when Yankowy wanted to emphasize a certain phrase and assist the audience in drawing focus. This understanding of the power of a costume is very important to the actor. Yankowy knew that it could add to performance but because the actor was more open and in the moment throughout this show the costume element really added another layer to the performance.

Performing while sick is never an easy experience for any performer. Self-consciousness takes control and tension becomes apparent within the performance. No actor wants to sound or look bad on stage unless it is part of the character they are playing. In this specific incident, Yankowy had to perform four shows while diagnosed with pneumonia and running a fever of one hundred and two degrees. The ability to do this high energy and highly emotional work was very difficult for the actor. He had to warm up more than normal, hydrate twice as much and rely on the support of his cast to get from moment to moment. One fascinating thing about the human body is that adrenaline can be an actor’s best friend or worst enemy. In this specific case, it was Yankowy’s best friend. His body knew that he had to do this show and it provided
enough adrenaline and energy to make the body work for the actor during this infirmed time. The astounding thing to the actor is that the audience was oblivious to the illness. At times, the cast was as well. Yankowy’s vocal technique turned on autopilot and allowed him to get through the performances. This was an excellent thing for the actor to realize by the end of the process. However, it is important for the actor to be as prepared as possible so that the body can perform during those moments.

It was a wonderful opportunity for Yankowy to be a part of this beautiful historical musical. The camaraderie and support shared amongst the cast was incredibly genuine and touching. However, due to the structure of the show, Barrett does not interact with the ensemble very much. Even so, he still felt the outpour of support from the cast every night when he came off stage. Yankowy spent the majority of his time with Sell, who was Yankowy’s biggest supporter throughout this entire musical. His energy and positive attitude helped Yankowy be a better performer. Sell is constantly giving on stage and just beams with energy when he is performing. That is a gift for any scene partner. Yankowy was incredibly fortunate to get to work so closely with Sell and hopes that he can do the same for all of his scene partners in the future.

The success of the show could be marked strictly in its success at the box office. *Titanic: The Musical* sold out for seven of eight performances during the run. Not only was that a sign of its success but also the audience’s response to the performance during every show was remarkable. Standing ovations were given every performance. In addition, the community response was very positive. Throughout the run, Yankowy would be approached by community members at restaurants and stores where they would
comment that the show was beautiful and a very moving experience. This show has a universal message of love and hope that rings true to many. It is the responsibility of the actors to tell it and tell it well. The response given after each performance was because of the beautiful performances and that the storytelling was clear to every person who saw the show.

Looking back over the entire experience, the production process flew by so quickly. There were times that it became overwhelming physically, mentally and emotionally but it was an experience that the actor has found invaluable. This process has challenged Yankowy to continue to be more aware of his body, thoughtful of his vocal abilities and to create a role that the actor should, hopefully, play many more times in his lifetime.
CHAPTER 5

PROCESS DEVELOPMENT

As an actor, Adam Yankowy has always strived to bring himself into every role that he plays, as well as to do justice to the role at hand. Yankowy’s undergraduate degree is in Music Education with an emphasis in instrumental music. He had very little acting training in his undergraduate program. He only started to study acting and voice in the last year of his undergraduate studies. He studied some of the Robert Cohen’s methodology, as well as classical voice training in the music department. This training only fueled his desire to pursue theatre even more. After he graduated from the University of Louisville in Kentucky, he moved to New York City where he attended the American Musical and Dramatic Academy (AMDA), a theatre conservatory. The training at AMDA was very good for Yankowy. He was dancing twenty hours a week, had hour voice lessons weekly, had 6 hours plus of musical theatre training weekly, many acting classes which included scene study, voice and speech courses and had a musical theatre history video laboratory. This program was an incredible learning experience. Vocal nuance grew tremendously, as well as acting skills. Knowledge of the musical theatre canon expanded greatly and dancing abilities increased, although they had only reached a proficient level. Yankowy worked professionally with the New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players and with the Siegel Entertainment Group where he performed in many iconic venues in New York City. It wasn’t until his last year or two in New York
City that he felt that something was not working. He was getting callback after callback but was not booking the job. He was caught in the struggle of either paying for more classes or for his rent. An opportunity was presented when he was offered a contract to work internationally. During his time in China, Yankowy realized that it was time to go back to graduate school to better his performing skills and to also gain some teaching experience. His passion for musical theatre coaching is remarkable at times. His arrival at Minnesota State University, Mankato was very exciting. He felt that this program was the best fit for what he wanted. Since his time at Minnesota State University, Mankato, Yankowy has come a long way. This chapter discusses that growth.

In his first semester at Minnesota State University, Mankato, Yankowy had the opportunity of playing Javert in *Les Misérables*. This role challenged Yankowy in more ways than he could have imagined. It immediately made him hyper aware of his voice and body disconnect. The rehearsal process challenged Yankowy to spend a lot of time in a mirror becoming aware of his own physique and how it reads on stage. This was a great lesson to learn. This show also reintroduced him to his breath control problem. Yankowy had experienced dizziness and lightheadedness before in previous performance experiences but never had the time to really figure out what was causing it. This show forced Yankowy to not only address it but also forced him to be in control of it. Javert was a wonderful experience and Yankowy hopes that he can revisit it after he has had more time to grow as an actor.

There have been several acting classes that have challenged Yankowy to be a better actor. One class that Yankowy valued greatly was Musical Theatre II co-taught by
Paul J. Hustoles and Nick Wayne. This course had Yankowy performing often and in different styles of musical theatre. The first half of the semester really focused on Yankowy’s body awareness and his need to connect his body to his voice. The growth that was seen from his first song of “Some Enchanted Evening” to his final number “Too Many Mornings,” clearly demonstrated growth and awareness. The class was useful in helping work through habituals but also to work on building a repertoire of material. This class also forced Yankowy to memorize material at a very fast pace, which is useful in an actor’s career.

Another class that Yankowy found valuable was Theatre Research. Yankowy did not think of himself as a writer when he first arrived at Minnesota State University, Mankato. This class forced him to become better. Heather Hamilton taught Theatre Research and was very supportive of the growth of Yankowy’s writing. She patiently worked with him to help him understand the style of academic writing, as well as the logistics of research papers. The course required each graduate student to write three to four research papers using a minimum of twenty-five supporting sources. The class was one of the most challenging classes to date but, by the end, Yankowy’s skill and knowledge of academic writing grew.

Theatre Speech II, taught by Hustoles, was a very useful class in the growth of Yankowy. Although Yankowy had two years of previous voice and speech training, this course reintroduced the actor to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and taught him about the ten vocal qualities. Yankowy knew the qualities but had never classified them nor done exercises to master them. The harsh quality was demonstrated in Disney’s
*Beauty and the Beast.* These were very useful and will continue to serve Yankowy in his acting career. The other useful skill acquired in this course was the grading and evaluating of other students. This exercise helped Yankowy focus feedback to be constructive and honest which will assist Yankowy in his career as an educator.

Scene Studies, taught by Hamilton, was also a valuable class. Although there were too many students in the course to assist in vast growth, much learning happened in this course. Hamilton teaches this course in the Stanislavski spectrum. She encourages honesty and realism with an internal connection to who the characters really are. This style was more of what Yankowy had been taught at AMDA. This course pushed him in other ways as well. Because of his awareness of his body, he could focus on the internalization of the character, as well as the physicality of the character. Hamilton’s feedback was useful and helped the actor be more aware of the blemishes in his acting.

The actor also took Advanced Acting Techniques taught by Hustoles. The course challenged the actor to think about characters and roles from a very different perspective. Hustoles teaches more of the Meyerhold techniques of outside-in character development. This course has provided the actor with several techniques that he will use in the future to help develop many different types of characters. For example, the psych and physical centers were incredibly useful for the creation of Frederick Barrett. Yankowy was able to apply these to create the physicality of Barrett. Another beneficial technique is the masking technique. The idea of putting on a grotesque outer mask and allowing that to completely affect the character is remarkable. These are just a few techniques that were taught and are incredibly useful for Yankowy’s career.
Yankowy also completed Intermediate Acting, also taught by Hustoles. This course challenged Yankowy in several ways. The first exercise was an observation of self. Yankowy had to perform a habitual complex action and then do the same action with the opposite of self. The self/anti-self exercise really forced the actor to think about his body center, physicality and vocal placement. The first scene in the class is classic realism. Yankowy had to perform a scene from Ibsen’s *Hedda Gabler*. This was one of the most challenging things Yankowy had to do. The language of the play and the syntax of the character challenged Yankowy’s memorization skills. This was an important acknowledgment for Yankowy who felt confident in his memorization skills. This class pushed Yankowy in many ways. He had to work with several partners in that class that were frustrating to work with and this taught him how to work with people that are not as skilled and how to still make a quality scene.

Acting Styles was a very rewarding class for Yankowy. Hustoles was the instructor for this class. This class really provided experiences for Yankowy to realize that he excels in several of the period styles. Yankowy really struggled with the Comedy of Manners round. The dialogue was incredibly challenging to memorize. Fortunately Yankowy had a wonderful partner in this round. He worked with Maria Camila Perez in a scene from Etheridge’s *The Man of Mode*. This scene turned out to be a lot of fun once the lines were learned. This script forced Yankowy to free his body and use it specifically to make different choices. Perez had such good energy and made it easy to act in the moment. She always made strong choices and therefore made it easier for
Yankowy to respond to throughout the scene. This was a good reminder for Yankowy to be the best scene partner that he can be at all times.

Another class that has helped Yankowy become a better actor and educator were the Theatre History courses. Hustoles taught Theatre History I. It not only challenged Yankowy academically but it introduced him to the history of theatre up until the year 1700. The plays written and the playwrights from the Ancient Greeks through the Restoration taught Yankowy about the time periods as well as gave him perspective about the options of theatre to perform. His appreciation for the material learned is great and he looks forward to being able to eventually pass down the knowledge learned to students in the future. Hamilton taught Theatre History II. This course challenged Yankowy to be a better educator of theatre history. Hamilton provided the opportunity for the graduate students to teach on an important historic figure in the theatre, as well as lead study groups for undergraduate students. These teaching experiences made Yankowy appreciate the amount of research and knowledge that goes into one lecture. It also taught him that he really loves teaching history and that this is a course that he would potentially enjoy instructing in the future.

An important class that has given the actor more tools is Stage Dialects I and II. This course taught by Hustoles added ten dialects to the actor’s toolbox. The course uses the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) to assist in learning the dialect. Becoming more fluent in the IPA was valuable but the real benefit of the class came with evaluating student’s performances. This allowed Yankowy to listen to the performances and
sharpen his ear so that he could effectively communicate how to make the dialect better. As an educator or potential dialect coach this is an essential tool.

Yankowy has taken three dance classes in his time so far at Minnesota State Mankato: Intermediate Jazz, Intermediate Tap and Beginning Ballet. Lynn Andrews taught Intermediate Jazz. Andrews was very supportive in the growth of Yankowy as a dancer. She pushed him to be confident and dance even if he couldn’t perform the step. Her approach to the class was influenced by some modern dance. This challenged Yankowy because he had no modern dance training. Reginald Haney III taught Intermediate Tap. Haney was also a graduate student at the time that Yankowy took the course. Haney had a very good understanding of the technique of tap dancing and pushed Yankowy to be better. By the end, Yankowy had successfully done pullbacks and had started the process of completing a wing step. Yankowy hopes for additional tap training in his time here. Alison Doughty Marquesen teaches Beginning Ballet. Yankowy is currently in this course for the second time. Yankowy had two years of ballet training while at AMDA but Marquesen has pushed him to approach ballet in a different way. She challenges Yankowy to learn all of the vocabulary and be cognitive of the body as the class progresses. She allows for questions and gives individual attention, pushing every dancer in the room to be a better ballet dancer. Her class continues to strengthen Yankowy’s core muscles, which help the actor in his theatrical career.

One role that helped Yankowy in his growth as a musical theatre actor was Feldzieg in *The Drowsy Chaperone*. This role was a lot of fun to play because of the cast. Jaclyn Joula, who played Kitty, allowed the actor to play on stage and she pushed
him to just have as much fun as possible. The dancing in the show was also another element that pushed Yankowy. The choreography was very challenging to Yankowy and he had to work on it daily to be able to execute it in performance. Recently, Yankowy watched the choreography in the show and was very surprised at the growth in his dancing.

Disney’s *Beauty and the Beast* was one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences while at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Yankowy struggled with so many vocal issues in the show. This show demanded vocal stamina, as well as a different vocal quality than the actor habitually has. He also faced the challenges of the animalistic physicality of the Beast. The vocal elements of the show went through many stages. The actor started out with a harsh quality that quickly caused vocal fatigue. The actor lost his voice early on during rehearsals and had to nurse the voice back. Yankowy and Hustoles started discussing ways of developing a vocal quality that would be consistent with the character and match the singing voice. This was a vivid reminder to prioritize vocal health.

Yankowy also had the opportunity to work with ZFX, the flying company, throughout this experience. The amount of physical strain that the flying caused the actor was vast. The actor was reminded that the physical body is the actor’s instrument and must be trained and if in better shape will be able to do what is needed. This forced Yankowy to start strengthening his abdominal muscles as well as his lower back muscles. Another portion of the flying component that was pertinent in the growth of Yankowy was learning to manage the anxiety that the actor possesses with any sort of theme park.
ride. The anxiety has been a huge part of Yankowy’s life and this experience has helped manage it and overcome it. Yankowy is not completely over this but has come a long way.

Another performance experience that was incredibly rewarding and educational was playing Leon Czogosz in Stephen Sondheim’s *Assassins*. This show pushed Yankowy physically, emotionally and vocally. Physically he had to play with different physical centers that would be appropriate for a poor immigrant. This took many tries but with the help of Hustoles, he finally found a distinct natural approach that worked well. Emotionally, this role went through many roller coasters. Yankowy has a tendency to play angry at first with these types of characters. However this role challenged him to find more nuance throughout. Czolgosz became a vulnerable and broken character based in truth. In regards to the voice, this role was perfect for Yankowy’s singing voice. However, he wrestled with the dialect throughout this process as well. Czolgosz was born in America to Polish parents but Yankowy and Hustoles decided to go with a very generic Eastern European sound that was at times too heavy but overall worked. The opportunity to work extensively on any Sondheim piece is truly a gift to any musical theatre actor. Sondheim writes such interesting and complex characters with challenging music. This show was one of the greatest acting experiences Yankowy had while at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Every year of his graduate school career, Yankowy has had the opportunity to be nominated for the Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship for the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival. The second year was the most rewarding at the festival.
Yankowy was partnered with Erin Horst, who played Alice Beane, and they made it to the final round and performed on the Guthrie Theater stage. The performance was well received and Yankowy was awarded the Best Musical Actor in the semi-final and final rounds. Also as part of the festival, Yankowy and three other cast members from *Assassins* performed as part of the Musical Theatre Intensive. The performance was so well received that it was selected to perform at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. The national festival was an amazingly awarding experience. While in D.C., Yankowy and his colleagues participated in workshops that were life changing. He worked with music director George Stitt, artistic director Eric Schaeffer and actor Bobby Smith. These three individuals were inspirational to Yankowy, giving him the focus to keep dreaming and working hard.

Yankowy has been very blessed to have had the opportunity to teach Acting for Everyone, Theatre Speech I and private voice lessons. Acting for Everyone has really challenged Yankowy to be a better teacher but also a better performer. He has learned to work through his ideologies of perfectionism and expectations and has become a better person because of this class. Being able to connect with students in a meaningful way has been a wonderful experience for Yankowy. He hopes that his love for theatre has been passed on to the one hundred students that he has had the opportunity to teach to date.

When Hustoles asked Yankowy to teach Theatre Speech I, Yankowy was hesitant. He wasn’t sure if he was the right person for the job but with some careful thought and reflection, Yankowy embraced the opportunity. Teaching this class was a
wonderful experience. The opportunity to create an entire new syllabus and course plan was invaluable to Yankowy. He learned different ways to teach vocal health and vocal technique for the stage. He had a previous knowledge from his training at AMDA but this class really challenged him to communicate his prior knowledge in different ways. Teaching voice lessons has been a great experience for Yankowy. His ability to communicate with students has improved, as well as his knowledge of the vocal instrument. These opportunities have been incredibly rewarding.

The actor is currently enrolled in Vocal Pedagogy taught by Stephanie Thorpe. This class has been a wonderful experience for Yankowy. He is taking the information learned in class directly into the vocal studio, which is making a huge difference in the growth of the students. The understanding of the anatomy of the voice as well as the respiration system has been the most useful. Previously, Yankowy had difficulty trying to communicate concepts to students in the most effective way and this course is helping him become more articulate in his demonstrations. Yankowy is incredibly grateful to Thorpe for her willingness to have him in the classroom and for the knowledge she is passing on to him.

Yankowy looks forward to his last semester here at Minnesota State Mankato. He has learned so much in the past two and half years and has grown as an educator and actor. He knows that he will take these skills and experiences with him wherever he goes after he graduates. He is grateful for all of the support of the faculty, staff and fellow graduate cohort. They have supported him in times of difficulty and that has made Yankowy a better actor, teacher and, most importantly, a better person.
APPENDIX A

PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHS

Adam Yankowy as Frederick Barrett
Daniel Lane as Frederick Fleet, Gabriel Sell as Harold Bride,

Adam Yankowy as Frederick Barrett
Adam Yankowy as Frederick Barrett,

Gabriel Sell as Harold Bride
Mathew Stairs as Thomas Andrews, Steven Labine as Charles Clark,
Adam Yankowy as Frederick Barrett, Salvatore Frattalone as Edgar Beane,
Gabriel Sell as Harold Bride
Adam Yankowy as Frederick Barrett
First Row: Michael Turner as Isidor Straus, Caroline Strauss as Ida Straus, Adam Yankowy as Frederick Barrett, Mathew Stairs as Thomas Andrews, Jake Jessup as Capt. E.J. Smith, Donald C. Hart as J. Bruce Ismay, Gabriel Sell as Harold Bride, Erin Horst as Alice Beane, Salvatore Frattalone as Edgar Beane
APPENDIX B

PROGRAM

M I N N E S O T A  S T A T E  U N I V E R S I T Y ,  M A N K A T O
Department of Theatre & Dance
Presents

TITANIC

Story and book by Peter Stone,
music and lyrics by Maury Yeston.

Oct. 1-3 & 8-11, 2015

Sponsored by the Consolidated Communications Community Fund

Director
Paul J. Hustoles

Musical Director
Nick Wayne

Scene Design
John Paul

Costume Design
David McCarl

Lighting Design
Steven Smith

Sound Design
George Grubb

Production Stage Manager
Jayme Caye Beerling

Titanic is produced through special arrangement with
Tams-Witmark, 560 Lexington Ave.,
New York, NY 10022.

A member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System and an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity University. Individuals with disabilities who need reasonable accommodation to participate in this event, please contact the Department of Theatre & Dance at 305-395-4781 or 711 (TDD/TTY). This document is available in alternative format to individuals with disabilities by calling the Department of Theatre & Dance at the above number.
Cast of Characters

Thomas Andrews (builder)......................................................................................... Mathew Stairs
J. Bruce Ismay (owner).............................................................................................. Donald C. Hart

Officers and Crew

Capt. E. J. Smith........................................................................................................... Luke Jessup
1st Officer Murdoch.......................................................................................... Andrew Anderson
2nd Officer Lightoller ............................................................................................. Gary DuCharme II
3rd Officer Pitman/Major ...................................................................................... Riley LinDell
4th Officer Boxhall .................................................................................................... Mitchell Evans
Quartermaster Hitchens ......................................................................................... John Nicoll
Harold Bride, Radioman ......................................................................................... Gabriel Sell
Frederick Barrett, Stoker ..................................................................................... Adam Yankowy
Frederick Fleet, Lookout ....................................................................................... Daniel Lane
Joseph Bell, Chief Engineer/Hartley ...................................................................... Jordan Wolfe
Henry Etches, Senior 1st Class Steward ................................................................. TS McCormick
Bellboy ..................................................................................................................... Billy Gleason
Andrew Latimer, Steward ...................................................................................... Tywuan Young
Stewardess Robinson ............................................................................................. Maureen O'Malley
Stewardess Hutchinson .......................................................................................... Colee Ludike
The DaMicos, dancers ............................................................................................ Ian Lah
Emily Scinto ............................................................................................................
Steward ..................................................................................................................... Benjamin Merz
Stevedore ................................................................................................................ Luke Donald Steinborn
Stoker ..................................................................................................................... Keegan Gore

First Class Passengers

Isidor Straus ............................................................................................................. Michael Turner
Ida Straus ................................................................................................................ Carolyn Bartell Strauss
John J. Astor ............................................................................................................. Dillon Swanson
Madeline Astor ....................................................................................................... Michaela Shapiro
Benjamin Guggenheim ............................................................................................ Brandon Gianni Schultz
Mrs. Astor ............................................................................................................... Jessica Stables
John B. Thayer ....................................................................................................... Brandon Homan
Marion Thayer ....................................................................................................... Caitlyn Kumpula
Jack Thayer ........................................................................................................... Joshua Ryder Brooks
George Widener ...................................................................................................... Cam Pederson
Eleanor Widener ..................................................................................................... Rachel Howard
Charlotte Cadoza .................................................................................................... Mikhaila Clausen
Edith Corse Evans ................................................................................................. Amanda Mai

Second Class Passengers

Alice Beane ............................................................................................................. Erin Horst
Edgar Beane ........................................................................................................... Salvatore Fritadolone
Charles Clark ........................................................................................................ Steven Labine
Caroline Neville ..................................................................................................... Claire Clausen

Third Class Passengers

Jim Farrell ............................................................................................................... Mathew Sather
Kate McGowan ..................................................................................................... Sophie Jones
Kate Mullins .......................................................................................................... Leigh Jacobson
Kate Murphy ......................................................................................................... Gianna Schiller
### TITANIC

#### REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

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<td>Full Cast: Bon Voyage!</td>
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<td>31</td>
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<td>6:35 - 8:30 w/ Melissa</td>
<td>Choreograph &quot;Fag&quot;</td>
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<td>8:30 - 10:00 w/ Paul</td>
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<td>Sound Tech</td>
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<td>Publicity Photo Call</td>
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<td>Noon</td>
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**Oct 8**

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<td><strong>Matinee Closing Performance; Strike!</strong></td>
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answers from Maury Yeston

Sarah L. Douglas <sarah@dandkartists.com>

Tue 10/27/2015 10:40 AM

To: Yankowy, Adam Val <adam.yankowy@mruu.edu>

best,

M

In writing *Titanic: The Musical*, how did you and Peter Stone decide which First Class Passengers you would include in your version?

We established groups of three. First, the three top authorities – Owner, Architect and Captain. Next, three crucial persons who could speak to critical reasons for the sinking: Stoker (going too fast), Lookout (too dark to see), Telegrapher (couldn’t get help in time).

Next...It was our intention to represent all three classes passengers: 3 Irish Girls...

A love couple for each class (3rd Kate and Jim – 2nd Carolyn and Charles – 1st The Strauses).

The show is a mixture of historic documentation, and fictionalization.

We determined that every character in the show would have a name that appeared in the Roster of original passengers and crew.

It was possible to invent and fictionalize 3rd and 2nd Class characters.

But the 1st Class people are constitutive of actual history, and thus we chose the most prominent – Widener, Thayers, Guggenheim, Astors, The Strauses

Why did you omit the Margaret Brown character from your version?

has very little to do with the actual story and larger picture we were painting
reference to her calls to mind another show and takes the audience out of the immersion in our show...

breaks the 4th wall

See above layout and strategy of “groups of 3”. She has no place in any of this.
When composing for Frederick Barrett, how did you settle on a more Celtic sound? In preparing for this role, it was quite intriguing to research the character of Barrett and find that he was born in Liverpool and had roots in the Midlands of the United Kingdom. Is there music that inspired you specifically for this role? Did you imagine him to be more Irish in decent?

I invented Barrett. I wanted a Stoker to be below decks, to witness and report on the undue and dangerous speed. I found his name, decided he'd be from the Midlands, from the coal mines — since he'd go from coal below land — to shoveling coal below decks — emblematic of the rigidity of the English class system.

I then imagined him as a natural-born poet — my model was Mellors, the gamekeeper from Lady Chatterley's lover. I'd spent a great deal of time (and school) in the UK — had been to the area from which I decided he came. I researched a Mine that had been closed (Bilsthorpe Nottinghamshire) and used it for his origin.

I gave him a girlfriend.

That led to the opening, in which I could use him to kiss her goodbye and say he'd see her in two weeks. This functioned to let the audience know that (even though we in the present know what happened) all the characters onstage do not.

This is one of my favorite things in the theater — a secret that the audience knows, that the characters onstage do not know.

In another moment of inspiration I wondered what would happen if he sneaked up to the Telegraph room to propose to her by telegraph.

Finally, I felt that (even though the real Barrett survived) it would serve the show if, fictionally, he did not. Thus — given his origin, and the poetry of his dialog, I colored Barrett's musical style with elements of English folk-origins. There is nothing Irish about his language or his music. It's English.

What was your favorite character to write for in the musical? Why?

Barrett...of course. He's the singer — he's the poet. (that would be me)

And Andrews: he's the Architect, the conceiver of the whole... the daddy of the work of Art that is the ship... (that would also be me, as the conceiver of the show)

I identify most with these two.
WORKS CITED


Yeston, Maury. Email Interview. 27 Oct. 2015.


