Feb 22nd, 4:00 PM - 4:15 PM

Gained in Translation: Storytelling Through Theatrical Innovation

Shane Lutz
GAINED IN TRANSLATION
WOYZECK & THE ODYSSEY OF ADAPTATION

SHANE BRIDGER LUTZ
STORYTELLING THROUGH THEATRICAL INNOVATION

● THE 2019 STUDIO SHOW: Grad Qualifier Project
● The Goal: create new art under extensive constraints
  ○ 2 weeks of rehearsal
  ○ $100 budget
  ○ No design team
  ○ McGill Closing
● What play should be produced?
  ○ Political commentary
  ○ Large cast size
  ○ Relevant to the present climate
  ○ New theatrical forms
WOYZECK

- *Woyzeck* is a German Expressionist play by Georg Büchner in 1820.
- The play follows the tale of Woyzeck who kills his wife because of infidelity.

- Written in response to the complacency of the German people oppressed by the Holy Roman Empire.
- *Woyzeck* uses the cultural specificity of 1820s Bavaria to inspire revolution and resistance against dooming institutions.
- Considered vastly ahead of its time, the play is one of the first instances of a “working class tale” in which the trials of the lower class are portrayed onstage.
TRANSLATION STATION

- Büchner’s Original Text of *Woyzeck*
  - Unfinished and Public Domain

- German Expressionism vs. American Aesthetic

- Changes
  - Woyzeck as a woman
  - Germany 1820s/America 2019
  - Huckleberries, Sergeant Major, Mountains
  - Bavarian folk music vs. American canon
THE PRODUCTION

Experimental Theatre Work
- New approaches to generating work
- Ensemble Work
- Devised work through collaboration

Breaking Conventions
- Barren stage
- One actor, many roles
- Red, white, and blue color scheme
- Mixture of pop music with the American canon
PERFORMANCE

● Original Monologue
  ○ Length of text and speech as expression of agency
  ○ Stream of consciousness
  ○ Shallow exploration of psychology

● New Monologue
  ○ Deeper exploration of character
  ○ Breaking the fourth wall
  ○ Inclusion of the audience into Woyzeck’s predicament
  ○ This asks the question, “Are you complacent or complicit?”
CONCLUSION

- The Value of Preserving and Updating Old Texts
- The Need for New Theatrical Innovations
- The Responsibility of the Artist’s Individual Voice
QUESTIONS
DAS ENDE