

Lindenwood University

Digital Commons@Lindenwood University

Theses

Theses & Dissertations

Fall 1982

Song Lyric as the Source of Character Jacque Brel Is... and The Hostage: A Comparative Analysis

Dianah Dulany

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.lindenwood.edu/theses>



Part of the Theatre and Performance Studies Commons

SONG LYRIC AS THE SOURCE OF CHARACTER

JACQUES BREL IS... and THE HOSTAGE:

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

a creative thesis presented to the faculty of
the Department of Fine and Performing Arts
The Lindenwood Colleges

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Fine Arts

by
Dianah Dulany
Fall 1982



5 Oct 1982

Thesis
D8865
1982

The Department of Fine and Performing Arts
of
The Lindenwood Colleges

Upon the recommendation of the
professor in charge of the thesis
and of the chairman of the Department
of Fine and Performing Arts
this thesis is hereby accepted in partial
fulfillment of the requirements of the
degree of Master of Fine Arts

by
Robert E. Peppers
Professor in charge of thesis

Robert E. Peppers
Chairman, Department of Fine and
Performing Arts

Edward T. Hinder
Committee member

Stoff
Committee member

5. OCT. 1982.
Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
I. THE FIRST SCENE	4
Scene, the man	5
Rehearsal Process/Character Analysis	11
Performance Notes	28
II. THE MONTAGE	27
Scene, the man	28
Rehearsal Process/Character Analysis	31
Performance Notes	45
<u>Song Lyric as the Source of Character</u>	
III. THE SONG LYRIC AS THE SOURCE OF CHARACTER A Creative Thesis	45
Preparation of Character	47
Rehearsal Process	50
Performance Notes	53
IV. CONCLUSION	55

APPENDICES

- A. Make-up Designs
- B. Production Photographs
- C. Production Programs
- D. Critical Reviews of the Productions
- E. Selected Bibliography

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		<u>Page</u>
I.	INTRODUCTION.	1
II.	JACQUES BREL IS...	4
	Brel, the man	5
	Rehearsal Process/Character Analysis. . .	11
	Performance Notes	25
III.	THE HOSTAGE	27
	Behen, the man.	28
	Rehearsal Process/Character Analysis. . .	33
	Performance Notes	45
IV.	JACQUES BREL IS...AND THE HOSTAGE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS.	46
	Preparation of Character.	47
	Rehearsal Process	50
	Performance Notes	53
V.	CONCLUSION.	55

APENDIXES

- A. Make-up Designs
- B. Production Photographs
- C. Production Programs
- D. Critical Reviews of the Productions
- E. Selected Bibliography

INTRODUCTION

"There are only four ways in which a character can be described to an audience in the theatre. These are: (1) by what other characters in the play say about him; (2) by what he says of himself; (3) by what he does; and, (4) by his appearance."¹

In the two acting assignments, lyric is the catalyst for the characters. JACQUES BREL IS... is a concert - a collage of impressions with the song being the whole. With Miss Gilchrist in THE HOSTAGE, the song is a punctuation of the character. Both are characters which evolve out of lyric.

When taking on a character in a musical production, the actor must go through the same analytical process as in a purely dramatic piece. Sonia Moore states: "There is no difference between the truth of existence in dramatic scenes and in dancing or vocal scenes. An actor must behave as if he were indispensable to sing or to dance through the logic of his character."² Just as when an actor works on a dramatic role, he must know to whom he is singing and what

¹Albright, Halstead, and Mitchell, Principles of Theatre Art, (Cambridge, Mass.: The Riverside Press, 1955) p.33

²Sonia Moore, The Stanislavski System, (New York: Penguin Books, LTD., 1965 -reprinted-) p.76,77

his objective is in singing it. He must know the "second plan", have a continuous film of images, an inner monologue, and justify what and why he is singing in the elevated mood that the song requires."³ This directs us back to the four ways in which a character can be described to an audience in the theatre, paralleling the process of dramatic and musical characters.

"When the lines are sung (lyric) the actor and director can exert control over rate, volume, voice quality, accent, articulation, pronunciation, the melodic line, and the contrasts between them for their (the lyric) dramatic effectiveness and their emotional meaning."⁴ The same treatment is exerted over spoken lines to a certain extent in order to achieve their (the spoken word) dramatic effectiveness and their emotional meaning.

Within the comparative analysis of the two roles (company member of JACQUES BREL IS...and Miss Gilchrist of THE HOSTAGE) it is essential to realize that both pieces are "telling a story"; Brel telling a story within the limitations of the song lyric - the song being the whole - and Behan using a broad story line with music in which his characters evolve. The problems posed on the actor in each piece vary within this similarity. With JACQUES BREL IS...

³Ibid., pp. 76, 77

⁴Op Cit., Principles of Theatre Art p.394

there is a constant changing of character for the company member, yet each needing to be complete for the brief time the song is sung, whether the character be simply narrating a story or actually sharing an emotion with the audience. Each song must be handled as a whole rather than a piece of a whole. The same analysis taken with Miss Gilchrist must be taken with the characters of "Funeral Tango", "Timid Frieda", "Old Folks", and "Song For Old Lovers." Such analysis would consist of given circumstances from the text, biographical statements, and musicalities of the song.

With Miss Gilchrist came the realization that her action intertwined with her song was the backbone of the character. Through her songs the audience saw her whole personality. Taking the analysis of Miss Gilchrist from her songs, the characterization was well-rounded with lyrics ranging from "Only a box of matches..." to "No one loves you like yourself..." and "Don't muck about..."

Although JACQUES BREL IS...and THE HOSTAGE are two different theatre forms, even so much that JACQUES BREL IS...was not originally "for the theatre", although both use song lyric to make a comment. The lyric is reflective, perhaps even objective, which becomes subjective when a character becomes involved. This comparison will deal with each process of analysis separately, in a subjective way. A summary of the analysis, including a contrast and comparison, will follow.

JACQUES BREL IS ALIVE AND WELL AND LIVING IN PARIS is most clearly described as "cabaret" with the conception of the piece being to use songs as the total text of the play.

"In popular usage, the work most generally conjures up visions of seedy strip joints on dank, dimly lit city streets, or, alternately, nightclubs where the exorbitant price of drinks is rarely linked with the meager stage fare. In effect, these versions of cabaret are only the impoverished distant relatives of the literary cabaret which emerged in France in the last century and blossomed into a unique medium for political and cultural satire in the German Kabarett of the Twenties and early Thirties. They share with them the artistic cabaret only the presence of spectacle and an intimate space in which people can smoke and talk, eat and drink."⁵

"The cabaret emerged either as a laboratory, a resting ground for young artists who after deliberately advertised themselves as an avant-garde, or as the satirical stage of contemporaneity, a critically reflective mirror of topical events, morals, politics and culture. In the best instances it was both."

"Apart from its satirical and avant-garde emphasis what remain more or less consistent in cabaret and allow it to be defined as a distinct form, are its structural elements: a small stage and smallish audience and an ambience of talk and smoke, where the relationship between performer and spectator is one at once of intimacy, the nodal points of participation and provocation. The cabaret performer plays directly to his audience, breaking down the illusory fourth wall of traditional theatre."⁶

⁵Lisa Appignanesi, The Cabaret (London: Studio Vista, 1975) p.9

⁶Ibid., p.12

I classify JACQUES BREL IS...as a form of cabaret; a cabaret which emphasizes song over the standard content of monologue, sketches, poetry and dance, but nonetheless cabaret.

"Three decades have now almost passed since Europe woke to the ravages left by total war. Cabarets have sprung up, shut their doors or had them forcibly shut by authority, in Europe both east and west, and in America. The cabaret form itself has been dismembered into its component parts to become a segment of our heritage through television and the mass distribution of records. Edith Piaf, for one, has brought the 'existential' chanson into every home, just as Jacques Brel, George Brassens and Tom Lehrer have done for the satirical song."⁷

"In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the song, or chanson, became the principle form of entertainment provided by the French cafes and bistros. Not only was the chanson a love lyric or mood piece which entertained, but it could function as a reporting vehicle - a performed alternative to the newspaper, which because of its dependence on machinery and finance, was largely controlled by the ruling class. As such, the chanson was one of the few means by which the people could record their daily history and publicly voice their reactions to contemporary events."⁸

This is precisely what Brel did, I think, when he wrote his songs. He was an emotional man, with many firm beliefs and sorrows. Not to say that all of his works were meant to be satirical or used as a weapon for criticism and protest, but they were all his thoughts, his perceptions on life and lives of others who surrounded him.

⁷ Ibid, p.1F1

⁸ Ibid, p.9

Who can know if
 They will free her
 On the street where
 She comes to join them
 There she goes
 With her valises
 Held so tightly in her hands.

Timid Frieda
 Will life seize her
 On the street where
 The new dreams gather
 Like fearless robins
 Joined together
 In high flying bands
 She feels taller
 Troubles smaller
 On the street where
 She's lost in wonder
 There she goes
 With her valises
 Held so tightly in her hands.

Timid Frieda
 Won't return now
 To the home where
 They do not need her
 But always feed her
 Little lessons
 And platitudes from cans
 She is free now
 She will be now
 On the street where
 The beat's electric
 There she goes
 With her valises
 Held so tightly in her hands.

Timid Frieda
 Who will lead her
 On the street where
 The cops all perish
 For they can't break her
 And she can take her
 Brave new fuck you stand
 Yet she's frightened
 Her senses heightened

On the street where
 The darkness brightens
 There she goes
 With her valises
 Held so tightly in her hands.

Timid Frieda
 If you see her
 On the street where
 The future gathers
 Just let her be her
 Let her play in
 The broken times of sand
 There she goes now
 Down the sidewalk
 On the street where
 The world is bursting
 There she goes
 With her valises
 Held so tightly in her hands.

Dr. Peffers chose to use myself, who sang the solo part, not as Frieda, but as a Salvation Army band leader who watched the sensual 'Timid Frieda'; therefore, it gave my character limitless choices. Through discovery in rehearsal we decided upon, again, a series of actions and attitudes of the character. In the beginning - which was "set-off" by the Army band marching onstage singing "Bringing In the Sheaves" - the song was a sermon; a judgment on the sinful actions of Frieda. Through a continual watch of Frieda's movement and sensuality, I am drawn away from my prim, proper, Salvation Army world, and catch myself actually enjoying the sexy feel of Frieda's world - a feeling I have never experienced, know I should not

experience, and yet it feels so damn good. Although I am taken aback with some of Frieda's actions (shown through the choreography) in the end, I make the tremendous and shocking decision to leave the Salvation Army behind and go with Frieda, giving my last intent to the band as an "up yours" attitude and join Frieda in her world of fun.

The main challenge in this piece was to show the complete opposites of the character - the prim, proper, virginal side and the wild, wicked, sensual, and carefree side, which were both inside me and both needed to be shown. My relationship with Frieda was the key in the portrayal of the character: the fact that I preached against her actions, yet I found myself enjoying the very actions of Frieda and finally giving over completely to the loose, carefree life of hers - leaving the Salvation Army "with my valises held so tightly in my hands".

"Old Folks"

The old folks don't talk much
 And they talk so slowly when they do
 They are rich, they are poor, their illusions are gone
 They share one heart for two.
 Their homes all smell of thyme, of old photographs
 And an old fashioned song
 Tho' you may live in town you live so far away
 When you've lived too long.

And have they laughed too much, do their dry voices crack
 Talking of times gone by
 And have they cried too much, a tear or two
 Still always seems to cloud the eye
 They tremble as they watch the old silver clock
 When day is through
 It tick tocks oh so slow, it says "yes" it says "no"
 It says

I'll wait for you.

The old folks dream no more
 The books have gone to sleep, the piano's out of tune
 The little cat is dead and no more do they sing
 On a Sunday afternoon
 The old folks move no more their world's become too small
 Their bodies feel like lead
 They might look out the window or else sit in a chair
 Or else they stay in bed
 And if they still go out, arm in arm, arm in arm
 In the morning's chill
 It's to have a good cry, to say their last goodbye
 To one who's older still
 And then they go home to the old silver clock
 When day is through
 It tick tocks oh so slow, it says "yes" it says "no"
 It says

I'll wait for you.

The old folks never die
 They just put down their heads and go to sleep one day
 They hold each other's hand like children in the dark
 But one will get lost anyway
 And the other will remain just sitting in that room
 Which makes no sound
 It doesn't matter now, the song has died away
 And echoes all around
 You'll see them when they walk thru the sun filled park
 Where children run and play
 It hurts too much to smile, it hurts too much but life goes on
 For still another day
 As they try to escape the old silver clock
 When day is through
 It tick tocks oh so slow, it says "yes" it says "no"
 It says

I'll wait for you.

The old, old silver clock
That's hanging on the wall
That waits for us
All

This piece was worked on with myself as a narrator. Dr. Peffers wanted it to be a bit "removed" - not caught up in the story in order to allow the slides to bring out the emotion.

The challenge here was to tell the story - to keep it clear and clean so that the audience heard the story while watching the slides. And the slides played an important part for me in the song too - probably the most rapport I had with them was in this song - for they were wonderful pictures of elderly people, sitting, staring, walking, talking, crying... - all the things the lyric of the song talk about. It is a beautiful story on its own, therefore the simplicity of the performance enhanced it.

Narrative: Youth dies.. Life hurts.. Love warms...
Understanding heals. The wounds and balms of the human conditions are so commonplace that men eventually experience them without noticing. And, as we age, we must fight against the numbness.

"Song For Old Lovers"

In spite of all we're still together
 So many years of smiles and tears.
 How many times we'd part forever
 And I would leave for parts unknown.

A day, a week, and I'd feel terror
 And crumble on the telephone
 And in bed we'd play confessions,
 And tell the truth, what truth we knew,
 That's how it's been with me and you,
 Then start upon a new digression.

Oh, my love
 My sweet, my old, my gentle love.
 From year to year is all the seasons for
 I love you more, you know
 I love you.

In spite of all we're still together
 So many years of smiles and tears.
 How many times I found another,
 But you loved others too my dear.

A day, a week, and I'd need pardon
 And fumble out the key to home,
 And take a wound that went unhealing,
 For you'd forgive without forgiving
 But of course we went on living
 For sorrows loved in Christmas scenes.

Oh, my love
 My sweet, my old, my gentle love.
 From year to year is all the seasons for
 I love you more, you know
 I love you.

And sometimes we were almost open,
 And sometimes we would almost touch.
 I think we wanted very little,
 But that always seemed too much.

And did we say we wanted children,
I really cannot quite recall,
What we wanted was our freedom
To dance through life, I think that's all,
We are just surrealist pilgrims
Melting clocks in marble halls.

Oh, My love
My sweet, my old, my gentle love,
From year to year is all the seasons for
I love you more, you know
I love you still.

This turned out to be my favorite song in the show, and most complete character as well. Through conferences with Dr. Peppers, we found her to be a very "heart-centered" character - mature, gentle, and soft were some of the adjectives used to describe her.

The song itself was a very intimate moment for me - I was sharing a very private conversation with the audience between myself and my lover, whom I do indeed love, but there is something very sad about where we are in our relationship now. I want so much for this relationship to work, and am not willing to quit trying for it, yet we are such completely different human beings, there are so many problems between us, that it is a bittersweet affair.

This, again, was done with simplicity as far as blocking and/or staging, which aided in the intimacy of it. I simply "had my conversation" with my love,

trying to understand in my own head that the relationship is not the best of one, that we are "just surrealist pilgrims, melting clocks in marble halls".

"Your own identity and self-knowledge are the main sources for any character you may play. Most human emotions have been experienced by each of us by the time we are eighteen, just as they have been by all human beings throughout the ages. That you gain control and understanding of them as you get older, that they may ease or intensify is self evident. We do not have to get psychoanalytical or delve into Freud, Jung, Reich or Adler to learn to understand ourselves and others to be healthy artists. We have to be truly curious about ourselves and others."¹⁹

Having been given so little for characterization - only the lyrics of the particular song - the biographies of the characters had to be pulled from the information we knew about why Brel wrote his songs and from our own human experiences and imagination. The possibilities were limitless, as with most roles, with the rehearsal process being a time not only to "pick and choose" what we wanted, but to also better develop the choices we did make.

¹⁹Uta Hagen, Respect for Acting, (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1973), p.29

PERFORMANCE NOTES

As we started toward performance, we were given new problems to solve, such as working with props and the use of the actual stage instead of the taped area we had been working on in the rehearsal hall. Most of the adjustments made were technical and not directly involved with character, although the time needed to be taken to familiarize ourselves with the set, which consisted of platform upon platform did take time away from working on the songs in character rather than purely technically.

Costumes formed no specific problems, as with make-up, which was purely as corrective as possible (see Appendix A). Props were minimal therefore posed no technical problems other than working out what was stored and where, and who would bring props on and then strike them after use.

We opened JACQUES BREL IS... on February 5, with no educational matinees being given before because of the extreme weather conditions. Houses were quite slim for the opening week-end, but did improve the following week-end when the weather allowed people to get out and come to the theatre. The lack of audience was a

disappointment, mainly because the show - at least for me personally - seemed to grow a great deal by having people to play off of. If nothing else, the morale of the company was highest during this last week-end, which aided a great deal in the performance of all.

Brendan Behan was born in Dublin on 9 February, 1923, during the Irish Civil War; at the time his father, Stephan Behan, was confined as a republican prisoner in Kilmainham Jail. When he was eight years of age, Brendan joined the junior ranks of the IRA, beginning an involvement with Irish republicanism for which he later served two year's detention in England, 1939-1941, four years' imprisonment in Ireland, 1942-1946, and four months in England again in 1947. His literary career, which began during his early teens in republican magazines, was strongly influenced by his political experiences: Borstal Boy describes his first sentence in England, THE QUARE FELLOW is an account of an execution which took place while he was imprisoned in Dublin's Mountjoy Jail, and THE HOSTAGE deals with an IRA kidnapping of a British soldier. Though many within the IRA believed that he brought the movement into disrepute during his latter years of fame and notoriety, he was nevertheless given a full military-style funeral by the IRA when he died in March 1964.

"I respect kindness to human beings first of all, and kindness to animals. I don't respect the law; I have a total irreverence for anything connected with society except that which makes the roads safer, the beer stronger, the food cheaper, and old men and old women warmer in the winter and happier in the summer."²⁰

Flann O'Brien, writing immediately after Behan's death, described him as much more a player than a playwright, and claimed that any attempt to rank him with other writers would be mistaken. "Behan was something better - a delightful rowdy, a wit, a man of

²⁰Rae Jeffs, Brendan Behan, Man and Showman (London: Hutchinson & Co., LTD., 1966) p.92

action in many dangerous undertakings where he thought his duty lay, a reckless drinker, a fearsome denouncer of humbug and pretense, and sole proprietor of the biggest heart that has beaten in Ireland for the last forty years."²¹ Many of those who knew Behan personally would agree that he was more than a writer, that his life contained more comedy and more tragedy than he managed to compress into his works, but, increasingly, his reputation will depend on those works.

The second play that Brenden Behan wrote was AN GIAL which was commissioned by the Irish language organization Gael Linn and was produced in Dublin's Damer Hall in June, 1958. The play had a routine run and apparently offended none of the Dubliners who viewed it. Joan Littlewood, who was responsible for the notable production of THE SQUARE FELLOW, wanted Behan to translate AN GIAL so that she could stage it in London, and Behan obliged.

"Miss Littlewood was unable to read the original script, but presumably she had a good idea of the nature and style of AN GIAL: if so, it would seem that she had much more than a straight translation in mind. An avant-garde producer, noted for her theatrical imagination and her social conscience, she would hardly have been content to repeat in English the traditional naturalism of AN GAIL.

²¹ Colbert Kearney, The Writings of Brendan Behan (Ireland: Gill and Macmillan LTD., 1977) p.xi

Her theatre was a genuine workshop, a community in which nobody was allowed to dominate. The dramatist was simply a member of the team and his script was by no means sacrosanct. The Theatre Workshop used the script as a basis, cutting what they thought weak, amending as they saw fit, and adding in material which they thought relevant. The objectives were not new - to please and instruct - but the method was. In order to gain the attention and goodwill of the audience, jokes and references to current events were included; a rapport established, 'messages' of philanthropy, tolerance, liberation and equality were promulgated."²²

To explain roughly how THE HOSTAGE, the English version of AN GIAL, was actually brought about, it is important to note the following: Within two months before THE HOSTAGE was due to open, very little of the play existed because Behan was still trying to complete Borstal Boy. It would seem that he decided to accommodate Joan Littlewood by providing the basis of a workshop play rather than a script in the traditional sense. He later said:

"Joan Littlewood, I found, suited my requirements exactly. She has the same views on the theatre that I have, which is that the music hall is the thing to aim at for to amuse people and any time they get bored, divert them with a song or a dance. I've always thought T. S. Eliot wasn't far wrong when he said that the main problem of the dramatist today was to keep his audience amused; and that while they were laughing their heads off, you could be up to any bloody thing behind their backs; and it was what you were doing behind their bloody backs that made your play great."²³

²²Ibid., p.129

²³Ibid., pg.130

"AN GIAL was, essentially, a naturalistic tragedy; THE HOSTAGE is a musical extravaganza. Characters were added - two male homosexuals, two whores, a Civil Servant, a social worker and a Russian sailor - and the action studded with songs so that a pianist was required on-stage. The Theatre Workshop knew that AN GIAL condemned political prejudice; it was up to them to communicate this to their audiences. A London (or a New York) audience could not be expected to be as interested in the IRA as a Dublin audience; the theme of prejudice must therefore be related to world politics, to the sufferings of blacks, homosexuals, and developing nations under the theatre of outworn systems and nuclear bombs. Miss Littlewood's contribution was a prodigious theatrical skill."²⁴

THE HOSTAGE opened on October 14, 1958 in Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop at Theatre Royal, Stratford, London. "The reviewers were generally good to THE HOSTAGE, though most seemed to be so carried along by the raucous byplay that they neglected to examine it in much depth."²⁵

THE HOSTAGE is categorized by at least one writer, Mr. Ted E. Boyle, as "theatre of the absurd", stating that:

"The outrageous humor and disconnected music-hall plot of THE HOSTAGE are most certainly designed to shock people out of their trite, mechanical, and complacent existence. Behan shows - as do Beckett, Ionesco, Pinter, and Genet - that man is ridiculous when he allows himself to be controlled by a system. In addition, Behan is in complete

²⁴Ibid., P.131-133

²⁵Ted E. Boyle, Brendan Behan (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1969) p.86

agreement with the other 'absurdist' dramatists in realizing that, in spite of man's historical fascination with the ingenious manacles of inhumanity which he has forged for himself, the human being contains a vital animal spirit which can be stilled neither by man's own stupidity nor by the absurdity of the universe."²⁶

Mr. Boyle goes on to qualify his statements by pointing out the similarity of Ionesco's RHINOCEROS to Behan's HOSTAGE - both ending with actions that seem to say "the human spirit is indomitable. Neither the world nor man can destroy it."²⁷

Behan satirizes many aspects of Irish stupidity throughout THE HOSTAGE. To give a pertinent example of such, I quote:

"Miss Gilchrist, who represents the irrelevance and shallow piety of religion, explains that her name is 'an old Irish name. In it's original form, Giola Christ, Servant or Gilly of Christ'. More 'gilly' than servant is Miss Gilchrist. She spouts hymns at any provocation, accepts insults 'in the name of our insulted savior', constantly prays for and forgives the residents of the house... Behan is attacking the ridiculous posturing of the shallowly pious and the basic irrelevance of any sort of religious ritual when a man's life is at stake."²⁸

²⁶Ibid., p.89

²⁷Ibid., p.90

²⁸Ibid., pp.94,95

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Miss Gilchrist is first introduced in the play not visually, but rather audibly, crooning her "first novena" with Mr. Mulleady, not wanting to quit before she has finished, despite the fact that she has disrupted the entire house with her noise.

The next time we see Miss Gilchrist, she realizes the English boy is in her presence, and perhaps to please him, asks if she may sing to him....

(To the tune of "Danny Boy")

You read the bible, in its golden pages
 You read those words, and speaking much of love.
 You read the works of Plato and the sages.
 They tell of Joy, and Hope, and Peace, and Love.
 But I'm afraid it's all a lot of nonsense,
 About as true as leprechaun or elf.

You realize that when you want somebody,
 That there is no one, no one, loves you like yourself.

I really think us lower middle-classes,
 Get thrown around just like snuff at a wake,
 Employers take us for a set of asses
 The scruffs they sneer at all attempts we make,
 To have nice manners and to speak correctly,
 And in the end we're left upon the shelf,
 We have no unions, cost of living bonus.

It's plain to see that no one loves you like yourself.

Although Miss Gilchrist does not sing all the verses herself, she is right there agreeing with everything that is sung - that contrary to even the very Gospel she preaches, no one loves you like yourself. And to

add even another dicotomy to the subject, by the end of the song, she is so enthralled with Mr. Mulleady, who sings this with her, that she practically drags him up the stairs to the bedroom.

The next time we see Miss Gilchrist is a time in which she is alone, with none but the audience to observe her actions, and she takes full advantage by singing the "ballsiest" - if you will - song in the show: "Only a Box of Matches"

Only a box of matches
I send dear mother to thee.
Only a box of matches
Across the Irish sea.

I met with a Gaelic pawnbroker
From Killarney's waterfalls,
With sobs he cried, "I wish I had died,
The Saxons have stolen my balls!"

It does indeed add more humour to the character, but also shows a truly different side to the social worker she is portraying, on this earth to save the souls of sinners, and this is even before she has had one drop of the "demon drink".

In the final act of THE HOSTAGE Miss Gilchrist indulges in the demon drink and takes to it like it was mother's milk. She becomes even more vocal in her keening, which is her way of moaning for the sorrows or ill-fate of others around her. In defense of her "religiousity" she "stands fast by her Lord, and will sing her hymn now...

I love my dear redeemer
 My Creator, too, as well,
 But, oh, that filthy devil,
 Should stay below in Hell.

I cry to all the Russians
 Please grant me this great boon,
 Don't muck about, don't muck about,
 Don't muck about with the moon.

I am a little Christian,
 My feet are white as snow,
 And every day, my prayers I say,
 For Leg of Lamb I go.

I cry to Albert Einstein,
 Now's there's the boy for me,
 You can eat your cake and have it too
 By relativity.

Don't muck about, don't muck about,
 Don't muck about with the moon.

I do indeed feel that Miss Gilchrist "wants her cake, and wants to eat it too", and that is exactly what she is having. Under the auspices of a Christian social worker she is eating her cake and at the same time making a very strong comment on "the religious". While the soul is in search, the body is in heat.

In creating a character Stanislavski used his "magic If" to aid the actor. He states:

"From the moment of the appearance of "If" the actor passes from the plane of actual reality into the plane of another life, created and imagined by him. In order to be emotionally involved in the imaginary world which the actor builds on the basis of a play, in order to be caught up in the action on the stage, he must believe in it...He asks himself 'But if this were real, how would

I react? What would I do?...'. This 'If' acts as a lever to lift him into a world of creativity. Add a whole series of contingencies based on your own experience in life, and you will see how easy it will be for you sincerely to believe in the possibility of what you are called upon to do on the stage."²⁹

In creating the characterization of Miss Gilchrist it was very necessary to find or create an autobiography for the character, an explanation of what happened before the play began, using my imagination and own experiences in life to fill in the details not given in the given circumstances of the play. An autobiography is very important to an actor in that it completes the life of the character. All background and previous action is explained, either through the given circumstances of the play or through the actor's imagination; therefore, motivation of the character is supported.

²⁹Constantin Stanislavski, An Actor's Handbook
(New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1963) p.94

Miss Gilchrist: Autobiography

I was born into this world in the brisk month of January in the year 1925, on a large country estate located in the western city port of Galway. Both my parents were inservice there as caretakers (so I'm told) but I was not to know this until much later in my life. At the age of three, just barely talking, I was wisked away from my estate environment and placed in a Catholic orphanage, just after both my parents were killed in a horrible accident. Being only three years old, I adapted to the change rather quickly and soon learned to accept that this was my new home and I was here to stay.

I loved the orphanage, where I lived, studied, and grew to love the Lord. The nuns fed me, bathed me, taught me, and in turn, I followed their strong example of strict Catholicism.

At the age of sixteen I had completed my schooling, but was allowed to stay at the orphanage and aid with the younger children who needed to be taught as I had been. Up until this time I had indeed loved my home, the orphanage, but I was beginning to feel just a bit restless with my life here. I had never been exposed to the world outside the orphanage, the real world, and I was quite curious about it. I talked to several of the nuns about these feelings, but was always "put off" and told that I should realize how much the Church had done for me and that I should be grateful and want to work for the Lord. This had been drilled into my mind for as long as I can remember. I SHOULD stay here, I SHOULD work for the Lord. I felt guilt for my feelings of wanting to leave, but also felt rebellion to get out. As time went on, I became more and more restless, and finally was allowed to be transferred to a clerical house in Dublin, where they needed a replacement for one of the housekeepers. I was scared to death, but also ecstatic that I was finally going out into the world.

I was totally overwhelmed by Dublin, and the house in which I worked was quite a new experience as well. It was a boarding house for young men in the seminary there in Dublin, and my duties were to clean, cook, and take care of other household duties such as deliver mail and messages. In the beginning, I rarely saw the boys that lived there. I liked watching them from a distance whenever I had the chance, for I had never been exposed to men, especially in such close quarters as this was. I'm sure they knew that I was quite uncomfortable around them, and sometimes I was sure that they laughed at me behind my back.

I was still in contact with the orphanage. I was to report to them as to how I was doing, and if I would decide to return there. I missed the orphanage a great deal, but was beginning to enjoy my life at the boarding house, and did not want to leave. The boys there finally seemed to "warm up" to me, and I was beginning to experience happiness for the first time in my life. Little did I know that this "warming up" to me was related to a totally different feeling than I had in mind.

One late evening I was awakened from my bed by very loud laughing and yelling. Apparently the boys had procured a great deal of alcohol, and had come home completely intoxicated by the demon drink. I left my room to try to calm them, telling them they had sinned greatly, and should be very ashamed. I was answered with more laughter, and even some rude comments regarding my personal life. The next thing I knew, three of them had approached me, and were pushing me up against the wall, mumbling obscenities and touching me where they had no business touching me. I had never in my life been exposed to sex of any kind. It was just something that I took for granted that I would most likely live without. It was a sin. It was dirty. Some of the other boys tried to persuade the three to leave me alone, but after getting no response, just left, leaving me alone with the three highly excited young boys. Without going into detail, what happened after we were left alone was beyond my control, or understanding. I was raped. I was raped emotionally and physically. I was nauseous after the fact. How could they do this to me? I had tried to set an example for them the entire time I was there. I had to leave.

I packed my bags that very night, and left the house, not knowing where to go, what to do, but knew that I had to get out. I checked into a hotel on the other side of Dublin, and stayed there for the next few days, trying to figure my life out. I felt so dirty. So sinful. And sad, because I knew there was no going back to the house, much less back to my position at the orphanage. I wanted to contact the nuns, but was fearful of what they would do and say. I sat in my hotel room for three solid days, without leaving once. After the shock was over, and the realization that I had to go on with my life, I began to feel very lonely. I wanted someone to talk to. I read my bible over and over, but it wasn't enough. I needed another human being to be with me.

On the fourth day of my "hybernation", I walked outside the hotel, got a paper, and began looking for jobs. There was absolutely nothing I was qualified to do. I felt totally beaten, and found myself wandering into a neighborhood pub. Me, a lady, in a pub, alone, in the middle of the day. I was desperate. I was approached by a man, who asked if he could sit with me and if he could buy me a drink. I was so lonely I jumped at the chance for some company, so I obliged. This was the beginning of my life as a "social worker". With the aid of the alcohol, my tongue began to loosen, and I told him my life, my thoughts, my beliefs, and my convictions. We sat, we talked, I preached, then we went to bed together. While my soul was in search, my body was in heat.

I continued this lifestyle for some time. In my head I was a social worker, and found man after man to preach to, to pray with, and eventually, after all the praying and keening was done, to sleep with.

On one particular afternoon I met a man named Eustace Mulleady who took me to a boarding house where he was staying. The rest is history.

REHEARSAL PROCESS

We began rehearsals of THE HOSTAGE on February 14, approximately four weeks before performances would begin. The first rehearsal was spent simply reading the script, without using dialects, to become familiar with the sequence and story of the play. Along with this reading and throughout following rehearsals Mr. Ian O'Connell, the guest artist who had actually been born in Ireland, shared with the company interesting articles and bits of information on Ireland and the playwright, Brenden Behan.

All rehearsals took place in the evening, except on week-ends, while during the day Mr. O'Connell worked with each of us on our particular dialect. (I say particular because even though most of the characters were Irish and lived in Ireland, we came from different areas of Ireland; therefore, did not have the same pronunciations of all words. I must say I found my dialect, which was more educated than most, and originated from the western part of Ireland, somewhat frustrating in the beginning. But with Mr. O'Connell's tutoring and the material on dialects he gave to us and lots and lots of practice, the dialect finally became second nature to me.

Character conferences also began that first week, with Mr. Ed Herendeen, the director, who posed questions about our characters.

Mr. Herendeen began blocking the show the second night of rehearsal, beginning with Act I. Because of the size of the cast, some scenes within the act took some time, but Act I was completely blocked by the end of the evening. The next night Act I was reviewed and Act II was blocked, and the next night, Act II reviewed and Act III blocked. For the remainder of that first week, we worked out problems in the blocking and difficult patterns of exiting and entering.

On Saturday, February 8, Father Shamis spoke to the company on Irish History. He stated that the trouble between the Protestants and Catholics and England and Ireland really began as far back as 1169. He accentuated such dates and events as the Battle of 1640, which gave Ireland in charge of its own destiny, the Battle of the Boin (1699) in which all Irish defense was crushed, the Penal Laws, the Great Famine (1845-1849), the Catholic Emancipation Act (1829), the "Golden Age of Nationalism in Ireland" (1890-1910), the Easter Rebellion (1916), the Civil War (1923), the reorganization of the IRA (1950), and the Civil Rights Movement (1968). His entire talk was quite interesting

and very relevant to us doing the play, for it is important that we understand, or at least are knowledgeable of, the happenings in the lives of the Irish people which aid in the molding of their actions and personalities.

That same Saturday afternoon we had our first complete run-thru of the entire show, with a short break between each of the three acts.

The next week was concentrated on working the acts separately, then running them. Mr. Herendeen stressed that we continue to read the play in its entirety each night to keep the consistency in our minds while he worked out the "kinks" in each act by doing them on separate nights.

The third week was devoted to full run-thrus, moving onto the stage and working on music each night before the run began at 8:00. At this time we were taking only one intermission after the first act, and compiling the second and third acts into one. At this time the set was not completed, but we were able to familiarize ourselves with the floor space and most importantly, the stairs. Rehearsal props were completed at this time, so, although it might not have

been the actual prop used in the performances, the actors accustomed themselves to at least handling a semblance of what they would be using. I found that my prayer book, my bible, was definitely a part of me, and a part of my strength as a human being; therefore, it was important that I have a book to carry on, and learn where and when I put it down and kept it with me.

The final week consisted of dress runs, starting with an 8:00 curtain. Make-up was not used until the 8th of March, three nights before opening. I discussed my make-up design with Mr. Herendeen, and it was decided that my face should appear as round as possible (which would not be difficult to do) with very thin, pursed lips. The following dress rehearsals were most important because of this, using it as a time to experiment with various techniques. (see Appendix A for final design).

With each rehearsal, especially once we began working on the set, the show began to become tighter, with new relationships appearing that had not become apparent before. For example, Miss Gilchrist and Pat began to really enjoy each other, even to become sexually attracted to one another, which gave both me and Pat something to work with, as well as Meg, who

could show her reaction to us as well. New things were found with each rehearsal which was vital in keeping the show fresh. It has been said to me that "THE HOSTAGE is an actors' show - more for the actors doing the production than for the audience who sees it." I don't necessarily agree with that totally, but I do agree that to work on this show is a very good experience for any actor serious about working in the theatre.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

As with JACQUES BREL IS..., the problems which we approached as we neared performance time were mostly technical, especially in the area of lighting cues synchronizing with exits and entrances.

We opened THE HOSTAGE March 12, with a preview performance on March 11. As in rehearsal, the show seemed to grow with each performance, and although the excitement was great by having an audience to see the production, I feel the show would be just as fulfilling without a large audience. It was truly a learning experience for all, and a very worthwhile project.

JACQUES BREL IS...AND THE HOSTAGE:

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

1. Jacques Brel, *Les chansons de Jacques Brel* (Paris: Editions de la Pléiade, 1965), p. 12.

A crucial purpose of this study is to compare and contrast the challenges of two different dramatic forms. To accomplish this it is necessary to delineate the differences in form between THE HOSTAGE and JACQUES BREL IS.... JACQUES BREL IS...would be classified in form as presentational, while THE HOSTAGE would be classified as representational.

"Realism set out nearly a hundred years ago to create an 'illusion of reality' on the stage. The theatre was to show nothing but the unadorned truth; all artifice, all formulas, styles, and interpretations were to be eliminated. Thus the realists were determined to deal directly with life itself. A play was to represent a slice of life. In time, the terms 'representational' and 'representationalism' came to be applied to realism, and 'presentational' and 'presentationalism' to all techniques, historical or new, that require the actor to speak directly to the audience or in any way to remind the audience that it is in a theatre rather than watching a bit of actual life."³⁰

³⁰George R. Kernodle, Invitation to the Theatre (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1967) P.5

JACQUES BREL IS...is clearly classified under the term of presentational theatre, being a form of caberet with the performer playing directly to his audience, breaking down the illusory fourth wall of traditional theatre. Brenden Behen wrote into THE HOSTAGE numerous asides to the audience, which did indeed remind them that they were sitting in a theatre watching a play, but overall, THE HOSTAGE would be classified as representational as it does have a story line and does indeed "represent" life in Ireland.

Working with these two very different art forms brought about very different challenges to the two acting assignments. The preparation of each character, the rehearsal procedures for each show, and the actual performance experiences all differed within the two productions. Taking each of these areas separately, the differences and similarities will now be discussed.

PREPARATION OF THE CHARACTER

The basic difference between the two acting assignments is that BREL involved a collage of characters, not necessarily related to one another in any way, whereas, in THE HOSTAGE, Miss Gilchrist was a unified character, singular in the fact that I was that character through the entirety of the play. With both acting assignments, a great

deal of initial research was involved, in terms of the factual history that played a major role in each. It was important in both that the actors understood what was happening in France when Brel wrote his songs, and what was and is going on in Ireland in order for the pieces to become important to us. Both directors guided the casts through bits of information relevant to the plays, discussing factual history, anecdotes, and entertaining ideas of what the authors might have been trying to say with his particular piece.

As far as the characterizations of each, less was given for BREL in the actual script, so a great deal of it had to come from the interpretations based on research and experimentation. Because so little was "given", the actual interpretations of the various songs were more pivotal, allowing the director and cast members to decide for themselves within the framework of Brel's material. In THE HOSTAGE, since it does have a broad story line, one could draw out of dialogue what the character was about, and where he/she would go from there. Because of the still prevalent unrest in Ireland, the show became very personal and relevant to our lives today, therefore we were drawn into the situation not only from history, but also the present.

As stated previously, both pieces are directly related to historical events taking place not only at the time they were written, but also today. They both deal with life in a particular environment, and comment on the people within this life. As an actress working to portray characters in these pieces, it was very important to understand the environment the authors were writing about, and to attempt to analysis the comment that was being made. The point here is that both dealt with real human ideas and emotions, which aided in the characterizations by pulling from one's own ideas and emotions, and intertwining them with the characters. Through the initial research and preparation, it was apparent that both dealt with human problems, which were the basis of the characters.

When Brenden Behen was asked by Eamonn Andrews how he saw himself in the world, he said: "Whistler, the English painter, remarked that the world is divided into two classes: invalids and nurses. I'm a nurse. I try to show the world to a certain extent what's the matter with it."³¹ Jacques Brel did much the same thing through his songs. They all came from his perceptions of life; what was wrong with it, what was right with it, and how it could be. These perceptions are the authors' plays, and crucial in the preparation of playing the characters created by these men.

³¹Sean McCann, The Wit of Brenden Behen (London: Leslie Frewin Publishers, 1968) p.24

Rehearsal Process

As stated previously, JACQUES BREL IS...was treated as a "collage of characters". We were given our assigned songs before Christmas vacation and were told to learn the lyrics and melodies, and to ponder on the characterizations of each. (Each song was treated as a whole; therefore, required a complete character and indepth analysis.) Actually learning the songs themselves posed no great problems, so the real work did not come until formal rehearsal began and we started experimenting with the characterizations. The most difficult of the four songs I sang was "Timid Frieda". In the beginning I was under the impression that I was Frieda, singing about my life, but after working with the director, he saw the song as a commentary on Frieda, with me being the Salvation Army worker who, after preaching against the lifestyle of Frieda, is drawn into that very lifestyle and leaves Salvation Army life behind. While the song took place, another company member took on the role of Frieda, doing a very sensual dance as the character, off of which I was to play. Because there was such a major change to take place in my character and because this change took place in so short a time period - the song lasted around four minutes - I was almost overwhelmed with the song, and became very uptight. The notes I received on the song were for the most part that

the transitions of my character were unclear and "not big enough". I felt comfortable with the character of the Salvation Army woman, but quite uncomfortable with the woman which emerged out of her. I would not allow myself to "let go" with the sensual movements and attitudes, which was simply Dianah Dulany holding back, as opposed to letting the character take me there. The struggle with this song lasted throughout the rehearsal period. My tenseness finally became lessened, and then being able to "have fun" with the role, the transitions became much more clear and the song was more focused. Because of the nature of JACQUES BREL IS... with it being an ensemble piece and having to portray more than one character, and those characters coming about only through the lyrics of a song, it was a much greater challenge to engross myself into those characters, leaving all my own inhibitions and thoughts behind.

THE HOSTAGE seemed to evolve more steadily through rehearsals. Discussions were held on every bit of the play, pondering why it was written, and what Behen was trying to say. Relationships were formed, and built on gradually. The only "hold back" I felt in the show was the musical aspect. Music had to be hand written off of the recording, then learned by rote. Although the songs in the show may seem incidental to the plot, they not only added to the

show, but in Miss Gilchrist's case, were an extension of her character. The lyrics were the catalyst, as in BREL, to show the audience different sides of her personality - some sides that were never really shown outwardly except in song.

Miss Gilchrist experienced a number of transitions throughout the course of the play, but in the end she was still Miss Gilchrist; changed a bit perhaps of the environment and the happenings around her, but still the same woman with the same past. The character was sustained throughout the play.

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Because of the pace of BREL, I found the greatest challenge to be recreating each character as it had been set in rehearsal, immediately after doing a big, showy number with the entire company. Sometimes it would take me until the beginning of the song for the character of the song to start coming through and overtaking the mood. Although all the songs had grown through research and experimentation, the length of time required to sustain any given character was very brief; therefore, it was important that the actor "become" the character of the song before the song had even begun.

The actual performing of the show was quite a pleasant experience. Relating directly to the audience, with them sitting at dinner tables, sipping wine, you knew when they were listening, and when they actually heard what you were trying to say. Because of the cabaret environment that was created in the theatre, the audience seemed most willing to accept our actions and emotions. It was a comfortable surrounding, with the company there to share something with them - a collage of characters.

The characterization of Miss Gilchrist also brought on challenges, which mainly centered around the fact that the character was to be sustained throughout the entire show.

There had been more "given" for this character, but to take her through the various transitions that she was to attain, both emotionally and physically (the demon drink) created the bigger challenge in performance rather than in preparing and development of the character.

Miss Gilchrist grew with each performance, forming new or more complete relationships with characters with whom she came into contact. I felt she was always learning new things about herself - why she did the things she did, why she felt the way she felt. I do believe this is an actor's show. Having an audience was exciting, but we didn't need to have an audience in order to delve into the characters, and for two short hours, be in Dublin, Ireland.

Dealing with two different performance experiences brought about different challenges. As an actress, you create a method of handling a role that best suits you, so basically, the initial introduction to a character will be similar to that of any other character. Therefore, the contrasts come in performances, in this case, the sustainment of Miss Gilchrist throughout the entire show in contrast to the collage of characters played in BREL, having a very limited "performance time" each.

The first of these was the fact that the author was not a professional writer, but a man who had spent his life in the service of his country. The spirit in which he wrote was one of sincerity and honesty, and it is this which makes his work so valuable. He was not writing for the sake of money or fame, but because he felt that he had a duty to do. His work is a reflection of his character, and it is this which makes it so interesting and so moving.

CONCLUSION

It is a pity that the author's work is so little known. He was a man of great ability and great courage, and his work is a masterpiece of the art of writing. It is a pity that his work is so little known, for it is a work which should be read by every man who is interested in the history of his country. His work is a reflection of his character, and it is this which makes it so interesting and so moving.

The author's work is a masterpiece of the art of writing. It is a work which should be read by every man who is interested in the history of his country. His work is a reflection of his character, and it is this which makes it so interesting and so moving. He was a man of great ability and great courage, and his work is a masterpiece of the art of writing.

Although JACQUES BREL IS...and THE HOSTAGE are two different art forms, BREL being presentational and HOSTAGE being representational, both use song lyric as a catalyst for the characters. The lyric is reflective, which becomes subjective when a character becomes involved. JACQUES BREL IS...is a concert - a collage of impressions with the song being the whole. With Miss Gilchrist in THE HOSTAGE, the song is a punctuation of the character. Both are characters which evolve out of lyric.

Brel was an emotional man with many firm beliefs and many sorrows. Not to say all of his works were meant to be satirical or used as a weapon for criticism and protest, but they were all his thoughts, his perceptions on life and the lives of others who surrounded him.

Brenden Behan was also a very emotional man, and included in his writings his thoughts and perceptions of life as well. Behan satirized many aspects of Irish stupidity throughout THE HOSTAGE. He makes a clear point of what he thinks of how many of his native people live and react.

Both Brel and Behan were clearly influenced by their own environments; therefore, it was important to study and research those environments. Initial research on both France and Ireland, as well as the two men's personal happenings aided in the understanding of the plays.

It was also beneficial to study how each of the pieces "came into being." JACQUES BREL IS..., which was not originally written for the theatre, was put together by Eric Blau and Mort Schumann, with the help of Brel himself, to form a theatre piece. THE HOSTAGE is an English translation of Behan's AN GIAL, which was taken by Joan Littlewood, and through experimentation and improvisation in her workshop, became the play as we now know it.

"To bring to an audience the revelation of the failings and aspirations, the dreams and desires, the negative and the positive aspects of human beings - this is what we should set as our goal...."

Uta Hagen

The challenges brought about through the characterizations of JACQUES BREL IS... and Miss Gilchrist in THE HOSTAGE varied throughout the processes of creating the characters, and these challenges were overcome at various times in that process, but all were overcome to a certain degree. There is always more to be studied and more development that can be achieved, but with the time limitations on research and rehearsals, there is always an ending point.

With both acting assignments, I started with the script, studying this for character ideas, actions and dialogue. Adding to the "given" was information gathered about the authors and their environments while writing the texts, which brought more motivation and reasoning for the characters. Bringing all the information together, along with my own personal resources as an actress, my goal was indeed to create characters that would be believable, complete with good qualities and others that were not as sympathetic. It is important to me as an actress to sincerely like the character I am portraying - it is an extension of myself, and although it may possess faults, or human failings, it is a very real, alive part of myself.

I feel that the challenges motivated within the two different assignments were met in the portrayal of my characters. In JACQUES BREL IS..., according to the reviews, "Song For Old Lovers" was the most impressive of all the pieces I sang. This was indeed my most complete character, one that I understood from the beginning and grew with as rehearsal and performances progressed. After discussion of all the characters I was to play in JACQUES BREL IS..., and experimentation was begun with each one, "Song For Old Lovers" solidified much sooner than any of the others. "Old Folks" was a narrative character, therefore, done with simply very little emotion which worked for me nicely, I feel. "Timid Frieda" and "Funeral Tango" took a great deal more effort in order for me to get over the self-consciousness I felt during these two songs. The challenge in JACQUES BREL IS... is to reveal to the audience several complete characters through the limited time element and the lyrics of the songs was indeed a great challenge, but a challenge which I met, although the accomplishments came at various times throughout the process of the production.

Miss Gilchrist was a character I thoroughly enjoyed and grew with throughout the entire process of the production. Through experimentation, discussion, and the communications I had with the other characters of the play, Miss Gilchrist became complete and each action was motivated. Because the

character of Miss Gilchrist satirizes the church so vividly in the play, it would have been easy to make her less than real, simply a caricature of a person, but we worked to motivate all her actions, therefore making her a real person. Miss Gilchrist had many different aspects of her life, the virginal social worker living only to work for the Lord, and the opposite of this in which she lived for the sins of the flesh. Both aspects came through in the dialogue and the songs she sang.

The characters of JACQUES BREL IS... and Miss Gilchrist in THE HOSTAGE were all growing experiences for me as an actress. The exposure to two different directors, to two different forms of theatre, and to two different processes of creating a character was a great learning and challenging experience. An actor must make himself flexible to ideas and try as many different things as possible before deciding on the finished product that will be used in the production. Through this flexibility and experimentation in both acting projects, well-rounded characters evolve within the framework of the plays and are believable within their own environment.

APPENDIX A

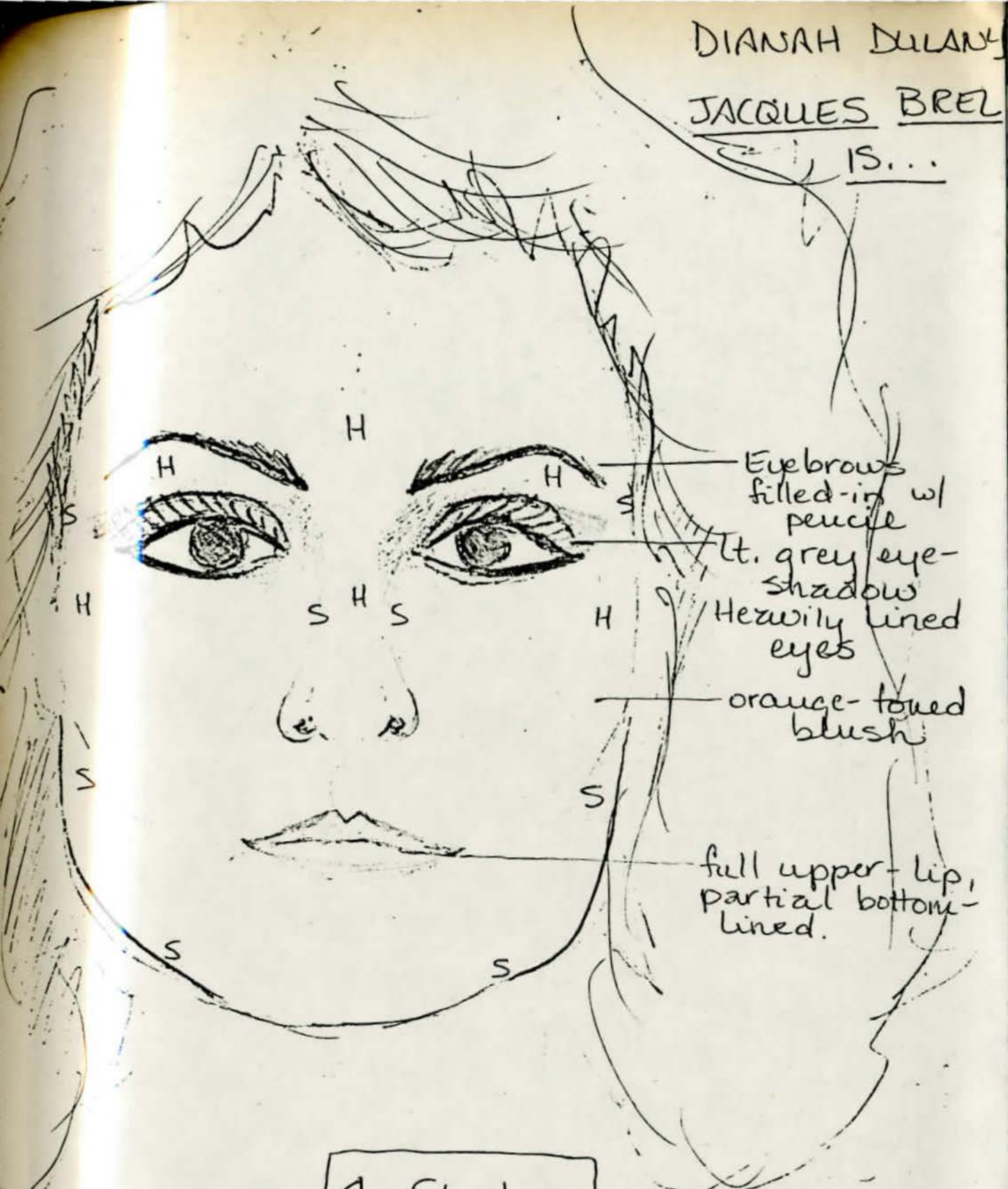
S. Shadna
H. P. P. P. P.

Chennai, India
M. S. P. P. P.
(1998-2000)

DIANAH DULANY

JACQUES BREZ

IS...



Eyebrows
 filled-in w/
 pencil
 lt. grey eye-
 shadow
 Heavily lined
 eyes
 orange-toned
 blush

full upper-lip,
 partial bottom-
 lined.

S - Shadow
 H - Highlight

COMPANY MEMBER
 MAKE-UP DESIGN
 (CORRECTIVE)

DANAH D
THE HO



Hair
back
w/ bar

Pencil
eyebrow

Grey-ton
shad

Highlight
plus light
covered w/
Decker bl

Heavily rou
thinly pur
draw dou

* Wanted to achieve a
full, round face, with
very pursed, small nose

S - Shadow
H - Highlight

MISS GILCH
MAKE-UP

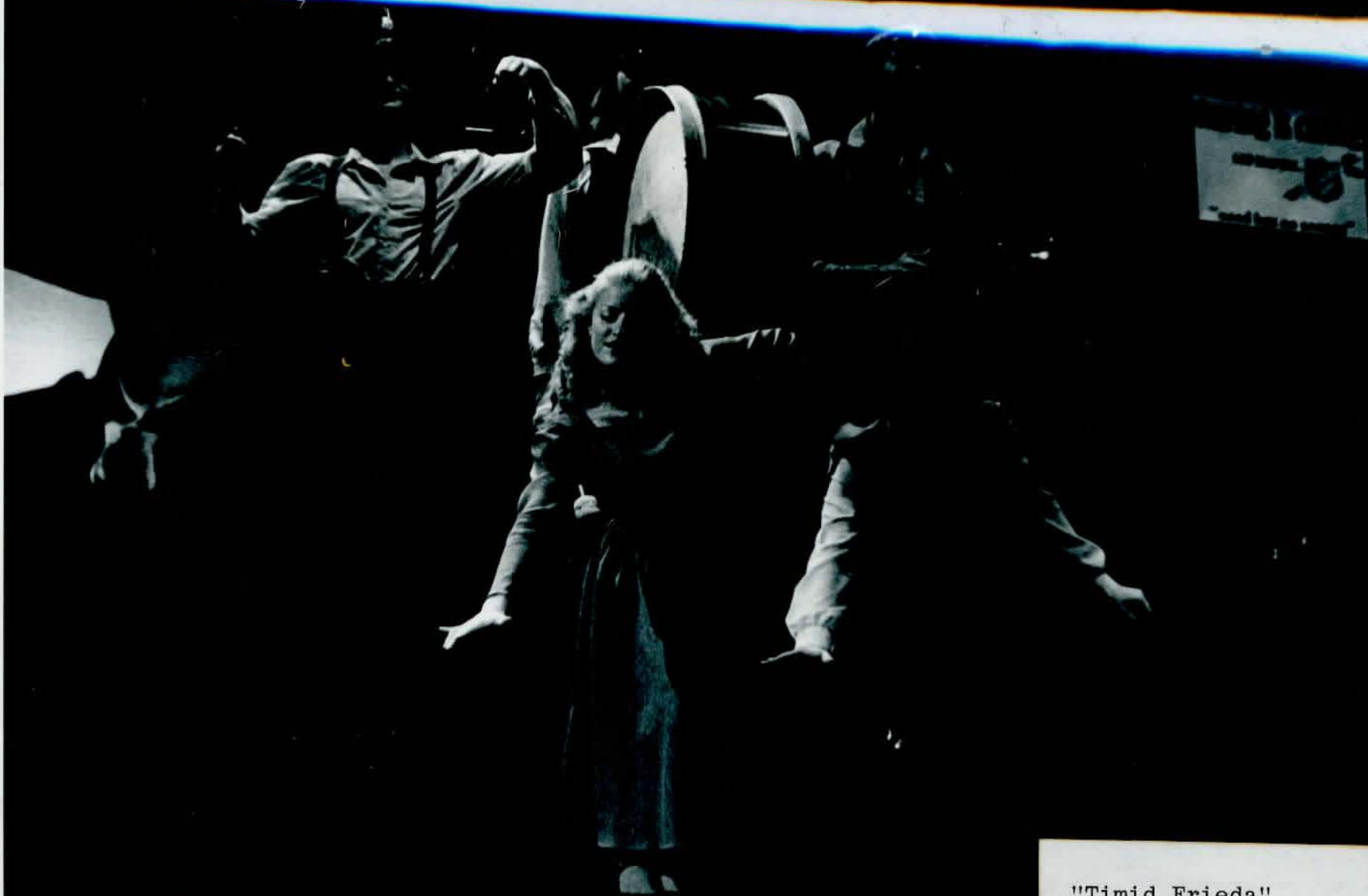


Resume Picture

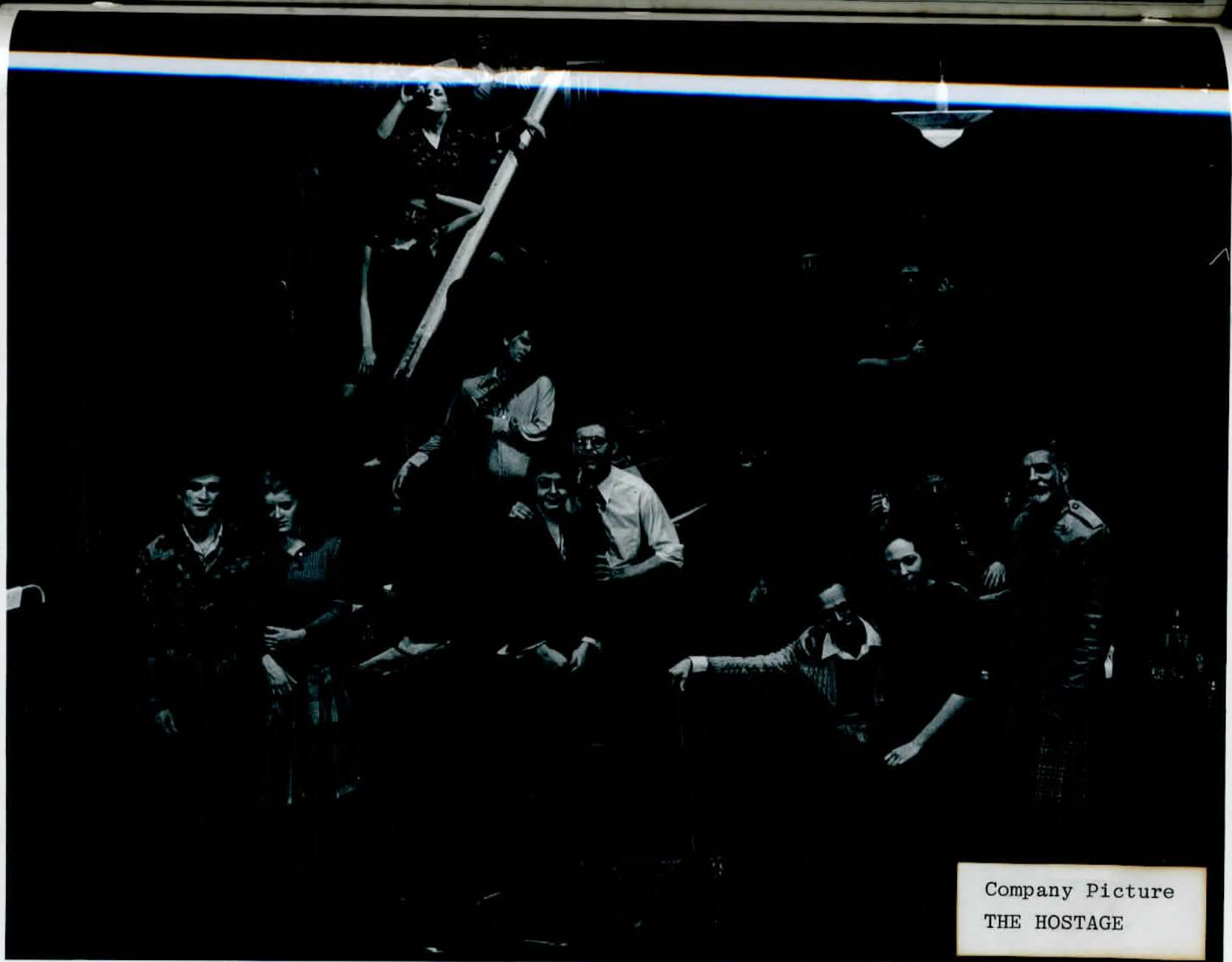
APPENDIX B



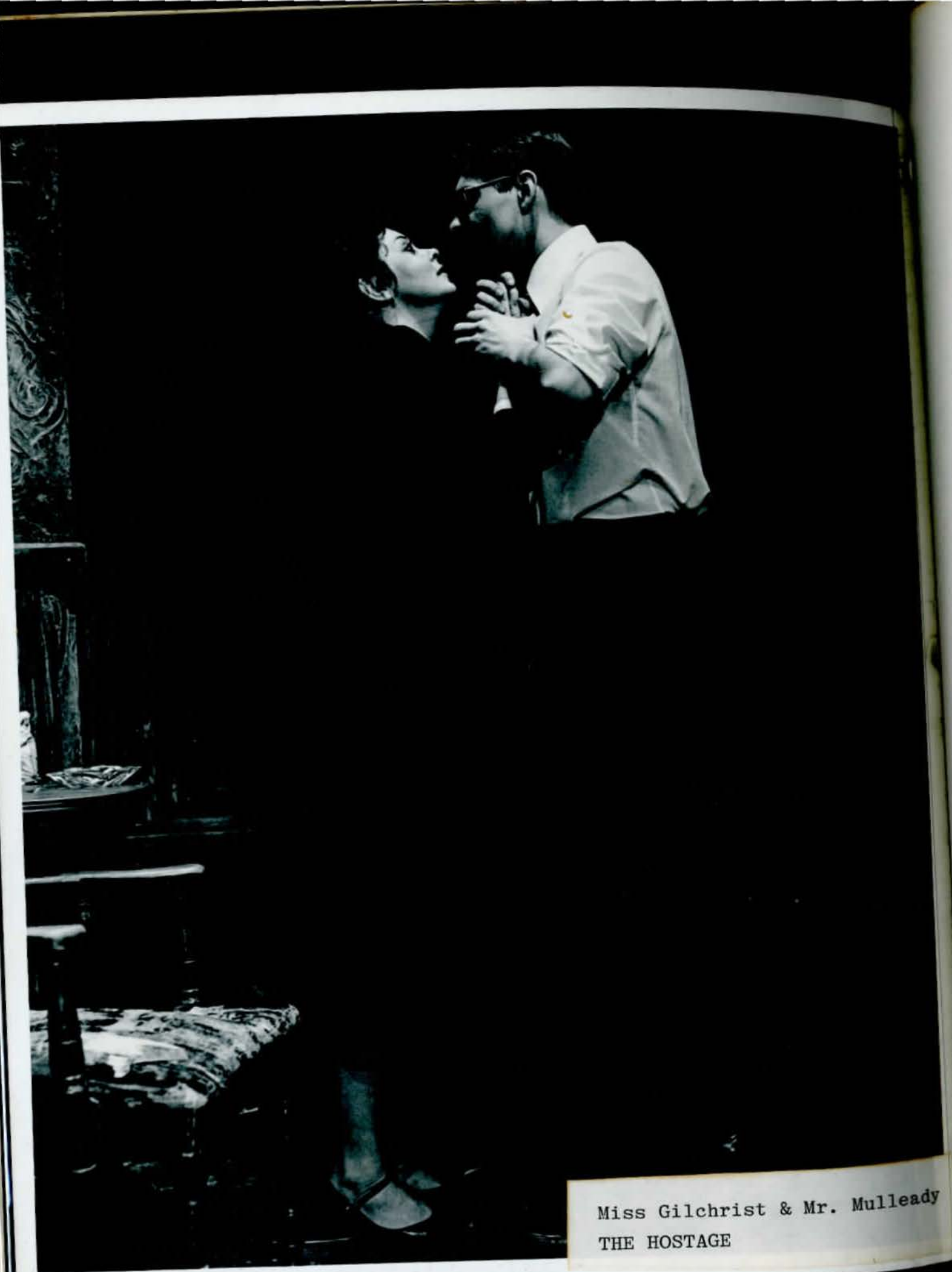
"Funeral Tango"
JACQUES BREL IS...



"Timid Frieda"
JACQUES BREL IS...



Company Picture
THE HOSTAGE



Miss Gilchrist & Mr. Mulleady
THE HOSTAGE

APPENDIX C

THE LINDENWOOD COLLEGES PRESENT



JACQUES BREL IS

February 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13
at 7:00 p.m.

February 7 at 11:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

THE LINDENWOOD COLLEGES PRESENT



THE HOSTAGE

March 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20 at 8:00 pm
March 14 at 2:00 pm

Privileged Accounts' Work

APPENDIX D

'Privileged Moments' With Brel

by HOWARD BARNETT
Special To The Journal
An ancient idea about art was that the artist does not invent his subject; he simply unveils it. Life is so saturated with familiarity that most of us have trouble seeing it as it really is. But the sculptor finds it in stone, the poet in words, the dancer in movement, and the musician in song.
The success of the unveiling, which the Greeks called *aleitheia*, is a privileged moment. This is why it is preserved through time, why we come to it again and again.
I don't think it an ex-

aggeration to say that the songs of Jacques Brel are privileged moments — at least for these generations after World War II. Gathered into a sequence for "Jacques Brel Is," those songs portray life in France and Europe in the 1950's and 1960's. They also speak to England, Germany and the United States — the kindred nations who share the anguish and the hope of the last part of the 20th century.

The songs are interpreted through cameo-like settings and dance routines. There are views of the aged, the young and the child. There are moments

with dancers, torch singers, a taxi-cab driver. There is timid Frieda of the Salvation Army. A war hero sings from within his stone statue.

Even though "Jacques Brel Is" has been called the first libretto-less musical, therefore, it is much more than a collection of songs. It is libretto-less in the sense that there is no plot and the performers are singers and dancers. They change characters with each number and the atmosphere is that of the French cabaret, where Brel's music had its first home. Yet the total effect is that of a man's life story — his vision, longing, disappointment and hope. The last song begins "If we only have love, then tomorrow will dawn."

When done well, this durable musical now in its second decade of continuous performances combines the entertainment of the musical with the emotional power of serious drama. Lindenwood Colleges' current production does it very well.

In terms of sheer artistry and overall effect, I think this is one of the best productions even given in Jelkyl Performing Arts Center. There were a few instances of missed timing in the preview performance on Thursday night, but all the nuances of the difficult French music and lyrics were in place.

Much of the credit for this must go to Steve Steiner who is musical director as well as a performer. Brel's songs are distinctively French with sudden shifts of key, unusual syncopation and moodiness of tone. The orchestra led by Groff Bittner is first-rate and the diction, sensitivity to mood changes and voice tones so important to Brel's music are impressive. Steiner himself sings the only song left untranslated: "Ne Me Quitte Past." It is well done, but perhaps too articulate for the typical French singer.

Janie Barbata and Kim Gruner seem to have mastered the French cabaret singer quality most sensitively. Ms. Barbata gives a perky rendering of "Sons Of" with its music box background. Kim Gruner has a fine, reedy, lyrical voice

which makes her performances of "My Death" and "Marieke" especially effective.

Robert Scoggins, while principally a dancer in this production, makes the song "Jackie" one of the most interesting of the songs. Susan Hutton joins Scoggins in "Desperate Ones" for one of the best of the dance scenes. In "Timid Frieda," Hutton shows us how to dance with her eyes.

Thomas Meurer has several fine songs. His best, perhaps, is "Amsterdam" but "Statues" has fine emotional power. Dianah Dulany in "Old Folks" and "Song for Old Lovers" is impressive in her sensitive modulations of mood and feeling.

One other feature of this production should not escape notice. The set includes a back-drop of out-size, photo-like paintings which are as much a part of the performance as the music and action. They are exceptionally well done. Mel Dickerson and Laura Phillips are the artists.

These performances of "Jacques Brel Is" are

set up with the option of dinner theatre. The Jelkyl Theatre was designed for this and patrons will be pleased with the arrangement of tables and chairs on the main floor. The dinner includes salad, a vegetable, quiche Lorraine, peach pie, coffee and wine.

The food and service last Thursday night (Feb. 4) were good and the performance was outstanding. "Jacques Brel Is" continues at Jelkyl Theatre through Feb. 13. For information, call 946-2004.

'Jacques Brel' At Lindenwood

By Lia Nower

"If we only have love, we can reach those in pain, we can heal all our wounds, we can use our own names."

So wrote Jacques Brel in a song 20 years ago. But, in Brel's music, we don't always have love. People suffer and hurt. They masquerade. So Brel's songs, though often happy, are tempered sometimes by grief or longing and always by the artist's keen insight into the human condition.

The Lindenwood Colleges theater department has utilized staging, casting and special effects to render a truly great montage of Brel's works in a comfortable dinner-theater setting. The performance, entitled "Jacques Brel Is," opened Thursday night in Jelkyl Theatre.

The effort marks the directorial debut of the department's chairman, Robert E. Peffers, and the show reflects his professional experience.

Jacques Brel, son of a prominent industrialist, was born in Brussels, Belgium, in 1929. In his late teens, he rebelled against his family and moved to Paris. Soon, he was one of the biggest concert draws in Europe, playing in small cafes as well as large auditoriums. He died in 1978 of cancer.

The program consists of 22 Brel songs from the celebrated musical "Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris," which toured the country in the mid-1970's. Now, however, Jacques Brel is dead and buried in the South Pacific.

Peffers and the cast of seven had to pull off two tasks in their rendition. First, the cast members had to acquaint the audience with Jacques Brel — who he was and what he meant to music. Second, they had to maintain enough mystery about the man to allow his music to tell a story.

This was difficult to do. For, in describing Brel, they might have dispelled the magic of the many moods and feelings in his works. But by being too vague about Brel, they might have left the audience wondering why anyone would dedicate an entire production to his works.

Luckily, the production was able to accomplish both adequately. To acquaint the audience with Brel, the cast begins the show by reciting newspaper and magazine reviews of the singer-composer's works during his lifetime. This might have been furthered by including a more extensive biography of Brel in the program. Though the audience should learn from the performance that Brel was a famous composer and performer from France, they will discover little else about his life and success.

review/drama

The second task is performed brilliantly. The small, acoustically perfect Jelkyl Theatre is ideal for an intimate atmosphere. The lower level, normally used for seating, is transformed into a cafe with small tables covered with white tableclothes. Dinner, served an hour before the performance, consists of quiche, green beans with almonds, salad, French

bread and pie. Wine is optional. The balcony seats guests for the show only.

Set Designer Mel Dickerson did an excellent job transforming eight photographs of different faces into huge black-and-white paintings, which served as the backdrop for the stage. He also alternates slides projected on a screen to lend significance to each number. This screen was used in the last theater production, but this time it was effective.

All seven performers in the production are good singers and dancers. From the upbeat "Marathon" to the frenzied "Carousel" to the solemn "Marieke," the cast handles each number with the proper intonation and interpretation to render a smooth, diversified picture.

Artist-in-residence Steve Steiner added and arranged three songs to the original montage, translated into English by Mort Shuman and Eric Blau. Steiner displays his versatility by delivering two melancholy numbers, "Alone" and "Fanette," in the first act, and following them in the second act with the humorous "The Middle Class" and "The Bulls."

His bass-baritone voice is clear and resonant, and his stage presence is the best of the group.

Steiner is an actor/singer as well as musical director for the show. He appeared last summer opposite Florence Henderson in "Annie Get Your Gun" at the Municipal Opera in St. Louis and continued on its tour of Atlanta and Dallas. He has also performed in "Carnival," "Never Too Late" and "Camelot."

Steiner's flair for acting and singing is balanced in the show by dancer Robert Scoggins, also an artist-in-residence. Scoggins has worked with Luigi Jazz Studio, the Joffrey Ballet and Eric Hawkins Dance in New York. His interpretive movements in numbers like "Desperate Ones" and "Jackie" provide yet another facet to the performance and help change the mood between pieces.

The other cast members give equally

Dianah Dulany, the best of the female singers, gives a touching rendition of mature love in "Song for Old Lovers." Her rich, full, alto voice carries well.

Kim Gruner, also an alto, sings "Marieke" in both English and Flemish, and her accent is excellent. The other performers, Thomas Meurer, Janie Barbata and Susan Hutton are all equally talented.

Meurer handles the more humorous of Brel's songs with a flair that elicited chuckles from the audience. Ms. Barbata, a lyric soprano, is the perfect choice for the sarcastic yet reminiscent "I Loved," and Susan Hutton's interpretive dance movements add much to the show.

It runs through Saturday.

There is a fine line in theater between acting and being.

Usually when an actor plays a part, the audience is mindful that the actor is merely acting — maybe well, maybe poorly, but the actor is portraying a character.

But sometimes the actor crosses the line — he becomes the character. To the audience, actor and part are one in the same. Then the performance crosses the line from good to truly memorable.

There were moments during "The Hostage," playing at Jelkyl Theatre at the Lindenwood Colleges, when actors crossed that line. It happened whenever Susan Hutton and Robert Scoggins were on stage together.

Ms. Hutton portrays Theresa, a country girl, and Scoggins is Leslie, a 19-year-old British soldier.

Before the action begins, an 18-year-old Irish soldier had killed a British policeman. The British had jailed him in Belfast and sentenced him to death. In retribution, soldiers of the Irish Republican Army capture Leslie and hold him hostage in a Dublin brothel.

Leslie is innocent and full of youthful energy. His knowledge of war is little more sophisticated than that of Theresa. She is a country girl who works at the house where Leslie is held.

The scenes between them are

Ms. Banholzer, as Meg Dillon, bickers furiously throughout with Miss Gilchrist, a social worker played by Dianah Dulany. At one point, Miss Gilchrist pompously tells Meg that she will give Meg her prayers. Meg replies, "You can shove 'em up your cathedral!" Lines such as that, delivered with frankness and fun, keep the audience laughing despite the seriousness of the situation.

That is intentional. The residents of the brothel are also victims. They are forced to keep the hostage. So they do their best to entertain him. But, just when the play slips into comedy, Behan yanks it back again with a serious scene.

The best scene in the play is instigated by Meg. In her usual taunting way, she starts on Pat the caretaker, played by Ian O'Connell. But, this time, instead of the antagonism turning into a joke, it results in a clash of values and of wills.

The scene, at the beginning of Act 3, reveals the true Pat. Pat is the pivotal character in the work. He is funny, strong, pitiful, unwieldy, all in the course of the play. In the beginning, he drinks ale and complains about his injured leg. He is humorous but not overly forceful. But when the hostage comes into the house, Pat runs the works. He surreptitiously directs the

review

touching and meaningful. They convey the senselessness of a war where young men, little more than children, fight for what they do not understand.

Director Edward Herendeen emphasizes the poignancy of the scenes by his staging and lighting. Throughout most of the play, the stage is filled with assorted characters, all going noisily about their business. But when Leslie and Theresa fall in love, the other characters leave, and the stage goes dark except for the two lone figures and their shadows. The effect works. It helps the audience focus solely on what is being said.

Scoggins and Ms. Hutton work well together. In one particularly good scene, Theresa is telling Leslie about her life in the convent where she grew up. She mentions the Blessed Mary. Leslie interrupts. "Blessed who?" he asks. Theresa replies that Leslie must be a Protestant. Leslie replies that he is not — he is Methodist. The exchange is funny, flirtatious yet ironic. A boy who does not even know the definition of a Protestant is expected to understand why he may die in exchange for another man.

IRA soldiers, entertains Leslie, and protects the residents of the household. He hides his power behind the facade of a prankster.

O'Connell steals the show with his performance. He is hilariously funny and then merely witty. He giggles and cracks jokes in a thick Dublin brogue. He jigs and sings. But, in the climactic scene, he once again crosses the line between actor and character.

The scene begins innocently with Pat flirting with Miss Gilchrist, much to Meg's consternation. But then Meg attacks Pat's politics. They argue. Pat trips and falls. Suddenly the scene turns around through Behan's mastery and the skill of O'Connell and Ms. Banholzer.

The suddenness jolts the audience, and O'Connell suspends the effect with his acting. He is pathetic and wretched. He no longer attempts to maintain the strength or humor of his facade.

The scene culminates with a song, "The Patriot's Game," which was added to the play by Herendeen for this performance. The song, composed by Behan's brother, is a fitting addition; it verbalizes one theme for the audience. If anyone has not understood until now that Behan is exposing some of the illogical reasons for war and its

One characteristic of "The Hostage" and all of playwright Brendan Behan's works is that the characters are written loosely enough to allow the actor maximum room for interpretation.

Scoggins is particularly effective, because he molds Leslie to fit his understanding of the character. He is able to maintain the buoyant naivete of Leslie even in times of stress. He displays anger, he yells and protests, yet he does not grasp the gravity of his situation.

To those who are not familiar with Behan, the play may seem strange. There are folk dances, speeches in poetry, jokes, jigs, monologues, asides and history lessons for both characters and audience. It is necessary to have some knowledge of the conflicts between Ireland and England before viewing the play or much of the dialogue will be lost.

The theater department could have avoided some confusion by providing a summary paragraph on the program to explain some of the political overtones.

Nevertheless, the humor in the play is obvious enough for most people to enjoy. Chris Banholzer is excellent as the "madame" of the house. She handles folk songs well in her strong alto voice. She belts out criticisms and jokes with style and seems to enjoy her character.

unnecessary injuries, the song drives it home.

All three acts of the play fit together coherently. There are places where exits and entrances seem too planned, but, on the whole, the action moves nicely and the 2¼ hours of the performance do not drag.

Dean Eckert delivers comic relief well as the senile Irish republican. But even with his character, Monsewer, it is difficult to typecast him as exclusively comedic. Monsewer and his obsession for wartime is a product of war itself. Eckert is able to convey this irony effectively by remaining ever somber — a foil for the other characters.

Tony Michalek and Michael Mollering both deliver solid performances as IRA officers. Mollering's accent is maintained throughout.

Michalek as the holier-than-thou IRA soldier keeps his blank, stern facade throughout and delivers the final irony of the play. The other characters are laughing and dancing. The audience responds to the jokes. Then Michalek yells, "Silence!" presumably to the characters. But he addresses the audience instead adding, "This is a serious play!"

And it is.

— Lia Nower

'The Hostage' Shows Harmony, Combativeness

By WANITA ZUMBRUNNEN

One criterion for success in a drama production is that all elements of the production (setting, costuming, directing, and acting) harmonize to highlight the playwright's intent. The Lindenwood Colleges' production of Brendan Behan's "The Hostage" achieves this result.

Behan uses Ireland's continual political turbulence to comment on the senselessness of war and its effect on human lives. An I.R.A. soldier shot a policeman and is to be hung. Although never on stage, he is an ever present character, and reference to "the boy in the Belfast jail" becomes a refrain throughout the play. He is also present in his British counterpart, the hostage

(Leslie) to be shot in reprisal. The savage irony of Behan's message is found in Leslie's question, "Why didn't they tell me why they took me?" and in the closing scene when Teresa, who has the most personal response to the hostage, is told, "No one meant to kill him," to which she replies, "But he's dead."

Although we remain in Mel Dickerson's authentic looking and homey boarding house set, the exterior world, "the war," is constantly brought inside. It is reflected in the combative relationship of Pat and Meg, excellently presented by Ian O'Connell, a visiting actor born in Ireland and now living in New York; and Christine Banholzer, a familiar and favorite face to Lindenwood audiences. Their conversa-

tions reveal Pat's allegiance to the war when he was a soldier and his scorn of the present I.R.A. activities. Meg consistently deglamorizes his accounts. Behan debunks not only popular "myths of war but also the need to "outdo other men and prove manhood. Pat's reactions reflect his present minimal role in the "patriot game."

review

The "war" atmosphere of the boarding house is contrast by Meg's sensitivity to Teresa, the innocent country maid initiated into the "battles" of life. Also effective are the private scenes between Leslie and Teresa, effectively staged by Direc-

tor Ed Herendeen, and convincingly and touchingly played by Robert Scoggins, who is irresistible as the hostage, and Susan Hutton, whose innocent but natural responses to the hostage ring true. In addition, the heaviness of Behan's message is relieved by Irish humor and vitality, which the cast conveys well. There is constant movement between the bawdy fun of the boarding-whore house life and the tragic aspects of the Irish political dilemma.

One reason this occurs is the careful delineation of the play's vibrant characters, which are well cast. Examples are Dean Eckert as the bagpipe playing Monsewer, Michael Mollering as the bumbling I.R.A. volunteer and Tony Michalek as the dedicated I.R.A. officer.

Eckert, Mollering, and Michalek sharply define the idiosyncrasies of the characters. Also adding to the play is Groff Bittner's blending of Billy Sullivan, the piano player, into the boarding house atmosphere.

Debbie Wilcox and Stephanie Church perform well as the young "girls" of the house captivating the attentions of James Gaspard's competent version of the confused Russian soldier. Jacquelyne Goodall brings an earthy quality to her more mature "woman of the night" character. The accent on sexuality continues in Paul Engelhardt and George Brown's believable masquerade as "gays." But the most devastating sexual perversion is the brand of Christianity the play presents. Diannah Dulany as Miss

Gilchrist and Thomas Meurer as M. Mulleady hilariously use a pious facade of Christian activities to indulge denied and therefore, consuming physical passion.

Ultimately this becomes a symbol for responses to the political struggle in Ireland. The "patriot game" a cover for individual desire. Teresa's closing line asserts that Pat is not really bothered by the death of either soldier but by his youth and crippled leg. In the end Behan accepts all aspects of the human condition. The hostage death song moves the tragic result of war to the buoyancy of human spirit which Behan dramatizes well and which the Lindenwood production successfully conveys.

ES

to t
and l
A. a
ent
Beh
myth
'outd
anho
prese
ame

of t
Mej
inoce
e "b
are t
ie a
Dir

as M
pio
to
nsu

ymt
stru
me"
lesir
s th
oy t
is le
e es
of t
tage
sult
spir
l a
acti

APPENDIX E

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Appignauesi, Lisa. The Cabaret. London: Studio Vista, 1975
- Behan, Brendan. The Hostage. New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1964
- Blau, Eric. Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1971
- Boyle, Ted E. Brendan Behan. New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1969
- Craig, David. On Singing Onstage. New York: Shirmer Books, Inc., 1978
- Hagen, Uta. Respect for Acting. New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1973
- Hobson, Harold. The French Theatre of Today. New York: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1965
- Jeffs, Rae. Brendan Behan, Man and Showman. London: Hutchinson and Company, LTD, 1966
- Kearney, Colbert. The Writings of Brendan Behan. Ireland: Gill and MacMillan, LTD, 1977
- Kernodle, George R. Invitation to the Theatre. New York: Garcourt, Brace & World, Inc. 1967
- McCan, Sean. The Wit of Brendan Behan. London: Leslie Frewin Publishers, 1968
- Moore, Sonia. The Stanislavski System. New York: Penguin Books, LTD, 1965
- Stanislavski, Constantin. An Actor's Handbook. New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1963