

University of New England

Theatre Studies

THEA 302 Approaches to Creative Arts Performance and Analysis

Example Project 3

I plan to act as the dramaturg and assistant director on a production of Nick Enright's *Mongrels* at my local theatre company in outback Queensland, which will be directed by [director]. [Staff member] has agreed to supervise my project. The theatre company abides by appropriate occupational health and safety practices and has public liability insurance with [insurance company] to the sum of [amount].

Aims:

To learn more about the process of rehearsing and staging a full-length play;

To learn more about the role and contribution of the dramaturg;

To contribute in a tangible way to the play in performance.

My work will fall into three phases.

A. Proposal:

[5 hours]

10%

Due 7 July

B. Preparation: I shall prepare for the production by:

- reading the script very thoroughly several times, and preparing for the production using relevant parts of the UNE Theatre Studies "Guidelines for the Actor's (and Director's) Preparation";
- reading and putting into practice the UNE Theatre Studies "Guidelines for Script Analysis" and "Guidelines for Dramaturgical Research"
- researching the lives and careers of Jim McNeill and Peter Kenna, using the AusStage and AustLit databases;
- researching the Australian theatre industry of the 1970s in the Currency Press *Companion to Theatre in Australia*;
- reading about Nick Enright and his work, starting with Veronica Kelly's article "Enright's 'Mongrels' as Intervention in the Canon of Contemporary Australian Drama", *Southerly*, vol.54 no.2, June 1994, pp.5-22;
- checking the play's stage history on AusStage;
- reading newspaper reviews of other productions of the play in the past, especially the Ensemble and the STC;
- thinking about the play's relevance to the 21st century;
- talking with the director to get ideas about her approach;
- discussing my research with the director and the designer;
- talking with my supervisor to get feedback on my progress;

- writing extended notes on the play, production and author for the program;
- writing up a journal which outlines what I have researched, and what ideas I have developed that I will take into the rehearsals with me;
- summarising the above into a 2000-word account to submit for assessment.

[40 hours]

30%

Due: 11 August

C. Rehearsals and performances:

- being 10 minutes early for all rehearsals for the production;
- being prepared for the start of all rehearsals;
- having all my research ready and available to the director, designer and actors;
- both contributing my own ideas, and listening to the director;
- contributing to the rehearsal process with discretion, not interfering with the director's work;
- informing my supervisor about rehearsals and getting feedback;
- asking my supervisor honestly what kind of mark I am headed for;
- attending technical rehearsals so that I can help with lighting, sound etc.
- giving the best intellectual, artistic and practical support I can to the production;
- providing my supervisor with evidence of my contribution in the form of a report from the director and documentation of the production (video, photos and the poster and program).

[65 hours]

30%

Due for completion: 29 September

D. Writing up:

- watching video of the performance and making notes;
- getting feedback from the director on my work as a dramaturg and assistant;
- getting feedback from my supervisor about problems I should address;
- evaluating the strengths and weakness of the production;
- evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of my contribution;
- writing a log of what I did and what I learned in Phase A;
- writing a log of my work in rehearsal and performance, including a log of the 70 hours of rehearsal and performance;
- thinking about how the work in Phase A contributed to the work in Phase B;
- thinking about what was good and what could have been better;
- thinking about what I would do differently if I had another chance;
- thinking about what I learned from the experience.
- writing up the above into a 2000-word summary to present for assessment.

[40 hours]

30%

Due: 28 October

To pass the unit I should complete all the work in Phase A to a basic level and demonstrate that I have a working knowledge of the research materials. I should make a solid contribution to the production, providing research information and assistance to the satisfaction of my director. My write-up will give a comprehensive overview of what I did and demonstrate what I have learned from the project.

To gain an above-average mark I should complete all the work in Phase A to a high level and demonstrate that I have real insight into the research materials. I should make a significant artistic, intellectual and practical contribution to the production. My write-up will give a comprehensive and insightful overview of what I did, show how I used my research to shape and inform my contribution, and demonstrate that I have learned a great deal that will be valuable for me in my study of theatre more generally from the project.

Preliminary Reference List:

AusStage website: www.ausstage.edu.au

AustLit website: www.austlit.edu.au.ezproxy.une.edu.au/

Kelly, Veronica, 1994. "Enright's 'Mongrels' as Intervention in the Canon of Contemporary Australian Drama", *Southerly*, vol.54 no.2, June, pp.5-22.

Parsons, Philip (ed.) 1995. *Companion to Theatre in Australia*, Currency Press, Sydney.