

Subject **Jan 5 2022 The Medium Diary**  
From Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>  
To Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>  
Cc Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
Date 2022-01-05 19:58



Dear Company Staff and Board,

First—we are reviving our diaries to bring you into the room as we venture both forward and backwards in time with our remount of The Medium. We miss you.

Here we find ourselves once again on the South Side of Pittsburgh. Into the studio once again walks Marc Masterson, a little grayer as we all are, and there, there is Gabriel, at the table is Patty Kelly. The friendships, memories and connections shimmer in the room. Old props, I mean OLD props sit patient and battered on tables to the side. I shipped an original script from Toga I'd found (Stephanie!) and another where I had shadowed Kelly in Japan and wrote down in the crudest way, her performance. I can't remember why, but that it was a learning opportunity. I remember trying to be a part of the making of the show in Toga, but working with SCOT, it really wasn't possible but for the times I snuck into the Ku-sanbo during stolen 'free time'.

Darron dove into the old pages enraptured. Antique font, old light cues! in some cases a very different script all together. A kind of paper clock.

The South Side, what I've seen, feels very much the same. But honestly we are only walking 2 minutes from housing to studio and back. Very little else. We are all striving to lock down and protect each other, the show, the process. We are fully masked all day this week, and its pretty moving and literally breathtaking to watch Bondo do the Rap in an N95. My god.

Next week we'll be in the theater. Its a wonderful space as I remember. I did Room here too long ago. Walked across one of the bridges in the freezing weather (not this climate change fake winter)to the show each night. Its where I learned the show.

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And we each have our own table! Patty Kelly set up long tables for each person, a station! As Anne pointed out, what a miracle this is. Actors not stashing shit in corners and loosing their scripts, shoes, glasses. A real table with one's own mug and space and pencils in a cup and ...as far as I can tell, its a rare good thing to come out of covid.

We are tired, and tasked with getting more up tomorrow, so I'll end this. its a long day starting at 10am. We try to make it till 6pm. We have an hour of a break in there, Covid tests, costume fittings. A company meeting tomorrow night. A year since the storming of the capital and that clouds my mind. dinner time. shower. vimeo.

and much love to each of you.

ellen

Ellen Lauren  
co artistic director  
SITI Company  
520 8th Avenue  
suite 310

Subject **Re: Jan 5 2022 The Medium Diary**  
From Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>  
To Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>  
Cc Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
Date 2022-01-06 21:51



Dear Friends,

This is the second of the entries. 01/06/2022. Thank you Ellen for such a beautiful beginning with yesterday's diary.

Today marks some anniversaries and holidays both happy and dark - but the happiest of them is Ellen's birthday! The staff here supplied cupcakes at lunch and we all sang to her. It was a happy moment. It really is these human moments more and more as we continue to work together that makes the reason for doing this more valuable. Happy Birthday once more old (meaning 'dear') friend.

Anne really touched me today as she spoke / responded to us after training. It had to do with 'Why' keep coming together like this and what are we doing together. Why endure the difficulties of travel and being away from home and dealing with the added difficulties of covid protocols and fears of falling sick. My take away, as I think about what she said, is that I ask "who am I now" and "who do I want to be?" In the spirit of Anne's remarks I look around the room frequently and wonder happily at who these people I've worked with for so long are now. For myself, I answer, I simply want to be a better person. Working on this play, now, is an opportunity to attempt just that - be a better person, citizen, and worthy friend to these wonderful, evolving humans. That's what I want.

Why else would we go through the trouble and difficulty of covid protocols for 6 weeks away from home and bubble in the actor housing?

Thank you Anne for the reminder.

Of course I look at Ellen and think about how we are the two remaining members left in the show along with the maestro Darron L West bringing remastered sound he made some sleeplessly weeks ago for this event. I marvel at Ellen's memory, her energy, her commitment always to make it better and better and relevant to the times we are in. I witness Stephen negotiating the SECOND role he's played in this show. How he's so respectful to the work JEd did while making something entirely new and awake. GM looking to both me and Stephen to learn the role we've both played and tossing about and beating himself up and stumbling around to finally yesterday when he settled down and just DID the Bob Wilson knee play repetition so beautifully that I recalled that young man so many years ago who walked on stage as Pizza Boy in *bobrauschenbergamerica* and knocked our socks off in that terrifying monolog. A tall order for a young actor in that situation. How is Violeta going to stand up to Kel Maurer's performance -- and then she does the TALK SHOW with Ellen and I burst out laughing with wet eyes at what she is managing there. Hilarious and true. Just one surprise after another. Finally, Barney who is tasked with learning ALL the roles but has the grace and always keen eyes to remind me of things I need to remember, ask me just the right questions that I have to confirm for myself, and is always there in my peripheral vision speaking and moving with me .... I'm growing to look over to him instinctively now for clues and confirmation and confidence .... Thank you.

And I wish you could have seen the company when we got permission to take our N95s off today while working above the tape line in scenes. We all tested again this morning and because we are self bubbling on the honor system we are clean so far ... The energy was just sparkling. Shining smiles and surprising facial hair .... and OH that's what I'm supposed to sound like. Now if I could just remember to stop shouting through the mask that I'm NOT wearing ....

It's snowing here today - just a soft misty kind of downfall. It's the first real taste of winter I've experienced this year.

I haven't listened to ANY news today so don't know whether the government is still standing .... But I have to work on the DATING GAME so that can wait ....

Speaking of which, we just had a zoom company meeting, and it did a body good to see Leon and Akiko and Samuel and JEd and Kel and Michelle and Claire.

Okay, more study now. Thanks for the day everyone.  
Warm wishes to you all far and wide.

And sweet dreams.

Bondo

will bond



[www.siti.org](http://www.siti.org)

On Wed, Jan 5, 2022 at 7:58 PM Ellen Lauren <[ellen@siti.org](mailto:ellen@siti.org)> wrote:

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Subject **Re: Jan 5 2022 The Medium Diary**  
 From Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>  
 To Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>  
 Cc Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
 Date 2022-01-08 08:11



Hey there friends. Welcome to our third diary entry for 1/7/22 from snowy Pittsburgh.

Time... Time... Time. I'm still grappling with it in so many ways. Personally. Emotionally. Artistically. More words than those too, I suppose. This process that we are in is all about time, it seems to me. And the complicated world that surrounds our little bubble here is grappling with time as well. If only we had more time to convince more people to get vaccinated, more time for Biden to get things done on the agenda, more time for the senate and congress to do their fucking jobs before the midterms. I think it truly takes a little more time to breathe these days.

I wake up at 6am. A cup of coffee. I scan emails, of course, to see if there's anything that needs immediate attention. Mostly a time suck. 30 minutes of yoga to try to get my body and breath pointed in the right direction for the day. I call the apartment in NYC to see if I can catch a snippet of the kids and the chaos that is undoubtedly unfolding there. Shower. Yogurt. Prepare lunch. And into script work for as long as I have before running to the rehearsal room for training which will begin our day there. Not enough time. I need double the amount. If only I had 48 hours in exchange for every 24. I know many people throughout history have remarked on this in more poetic ways but there it is.

My tendency is to rush. I want perfection and I want it now. But life (or my life anyway) mostly has other plans and deadlines. I have worked diligently in the last 20 years to slow down. It can make some people crazy. Maggie, my partner, gets annoyed with me when things get hectic or challenges arise. She says I slow down when I should be taking action. But actually, I am taking action. I'm slowing down so that I can process what's happening as opposed to rushing past the information that is actually embedded in the moment at hand. Rehearsal and performance are the same for me. It takes me time to listen to and digest the little strands of DNA that are wafting about the room. There's a strand there, there's a strand there – oh look, these fit together this way – phew, a double helix. I can move and act fast, no problem. But I need time to process. And at times this frustrates me as Will James Bond alluded to in the last diary entry. And then I remind myself that that's ok. Perfection is a myth anyway.

There is a moment in "the western" when "my character" spins four times to travel upstage left after Stephen's entrance. Stephen's entrance that has had its own remarkable journey through time with different actors. These spins that were originally created by Bondo 29 years ago and then saw themselves in a relationship with Stephen and now they are stuck with me. For now, anyway. On Thursday, while rehearsing this moment, the pipe (which is in my pocket and acting as a gun with me in this scene) flew out of my pocket and broke into two pieces on the rehearsal room floor. This pipe that has traveled through time for almost thirty years and has so much memory and sweat and frustration and elation inside of its grains. Broken into two pieces on the floor. This upset me and frustrated me because I wasn't taking the time to process. Patti, our stage manager, who people go way back with, reminded me that it was okay... that it was a pipe... that it had seen its time and done its work and that there was a pipe shop somewhere with a world of wonderful replacements. And indeed, the next day there was a beautiful new pipe on the prop table ready to begin its journey inside of this piece with us. Thank you Patti for your words and your craft. It really helped me in that moment. I suppose time also has a wicked sense of humor if one likes to think of it that way.

Speaking of which – I am out of time. Onto the next. Talk soon.

xo  
G

On Thu, Jan 6, 2022 at 9:52 PM Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com> wrote:

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Thank you all for these small but precious gifts of insight into a process I achingly miss.

I hope you all have a great day off. Sleep in and Bondo go get a massage!

my best to you allllll,

j.

J.Ed Araiza  
Chair, Department of Theater  
310-206-6856



UCLA Theater acknowledges the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples as the traditional caretakers of Tovaangar (the area known as Los Angeles basin and So. Channel Islands).

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**From:** Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>  
**Date:** Saturday, January 8, 2022 at 5:11 AM  
**To:** Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>  
**Cc:** Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
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J. Ed Araiza – Email response to Bondo's and GM's Week 1 diary entries for The Medium. Email sent Saturday, January 8 at 6:46 PM ET.

Subject: Re: Jan 5 2022 The Medium Diary

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310-206-6856

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 From Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
 To Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>  
 Cc Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>, Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Araiza, J. Ed <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>  
 Date 2022-01-09 14:29



Dear SITI Family,

Writing to you from the end of our first week here in Pittsburgh. Yesterday was our last day in the rehearsal studio and Monday we move into our beautiful theater. Can it be that we've only been at this for 5 days? As GM wrote, Time...Time...Time.... it's flying by and somehow it also feels we've been doing this forever.

I can only imagine what it's like for those in the room (and outside the room), who have carried this piece with them for so long - who created it or recreated it or are recreating it again - to continue to share it in many different places with many different people. There is so much sharing here in the safety (knock on wood) and joy and care of our covid bubble: sharing of history, of memory, of questions, of knowledge, of confusion. Can it really be that I get to step into not only Kelly's work (which is an incredible gift, the logic of which I learn from each day), but also the work of so many people over so much time, to stand alongside the artists in this room and dive-in together?

Yesterday I exited our taped-out stage and edged to the side of the room, where I meant to quickly review the upcoming Techno-Breakdown. I barely start this when my attention is drawn from so many 8-counts to Ellen and Bondo on stage as they work through The Drama, just before McLuhan's Aria. And as they finish this, Barney says something along the lines of "I just saw 30 years unfold." And there's a pause in the room as that really sinks in. From where I stand, so new to the overall life of this piece, those 30 years are unbelievably present in the room. I have the feeling of being always suspended in and supported by the details (some known and infinitely many unknown to me), of that time. Time of togetherness across so many years.

And then we're on to the Techno-Breakdown... Do we count quick 8s on the thumps? Slow 8s with the downbeat? The question of "Do we even need to count the 8s the same way individually, as long as we're together in the movement? That last question barely finishes before all agree, YES! So we review our notes and watch the video and mumble to ourselves while tracing through individual tracks. We pick up our chairs, ready to try this all together. I stand opposite GM as he sends me a "Ready?" grin from the opposite side of the room. Barney gives us 4 counts for nothing before guiding us through our "slow" 8's. Stephen whispers "Here we go," which for some reason makes me cackle...and we're off! We continue this way: running together, stopping to check-in, checking our own notes, the video, tracking through solo, clarifying with each other, then we push forward all together. And repeat. The details we exchange are many and again, the time flies by.

So, somehow it's already our day off and the rhythms of our rehearsal room are still buzzing in me, even as we adventure to Trader Joe's (masked and armed with multiple forms of hand sanitizer). Tomorrow we stage The Future and go back to the top in the theater, and I can't wait.

Sending love from PA,  
 Violeta

she/her/hers

Cuban-American actor, director, choreographer

"Picayo and Babb, whose contrasting stances — both headstrong and self-righteous in separate ways — bring fire...Picayo embodies defiance, as when she hurls a throaty 'I am your queen!' at her rival." -Maya Phillips, The New York Times

[www.VioletaPicayo.com](http://www.VioletaPicayo.com)

On Sat, Jan 8, 2022 at 6:46 PM Araiza, J. Ed <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu> wrote:

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From Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>  
To Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
Cc Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>, Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Araiza, J. Ed <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>  
Date 2022-01-11 20:48



Hello friends!

Oh so much history wrapped up in SITI's first devised piece. I remember in the summer of 1993 driving up to Saratoga to spend the weekend at Anne's apartment in downtown Saratoga to see The Medium and Suzuki's Tale of Lear, Waiting for Romeo, plus symposium and q and a's. It was a spectacular weekend of great art and friendship!

Little did I know the following year I would be invited into the Company, taking over Jefferson May's role in Small Live/Big Dreams, SITI's 2nd devised piece. Pittsburgh is also a special place for me. After I was born in Worcester, MA, my family immediately moved to Pittsburgh as my father got a job here. I spent the first year and a half of my life in Pittsburgh. All through my life, although I had no memories of it, for my parents and a few of my siblings, living in Pittsburgh was a really special time in their lives. My Dad still talks about it when we chat on the phone..

Also Akiko, Leon and I did a day trip to City Theater in Pittsburgh to catch SITI's Culture of Desire. Such a glorious production! The theater seemed so much bigger in my memory. Eventually I would once again take over Jefferson May's role of Diana Vreeland in that production at Portland Stage and the festival in Bogota, Colombia.

However this time I'm not taking over a role, I'm covering multiple roles. Apparently, in the time of Covid the understudies and covers are finally getting there well deserved praise. It's a really rough job and super stressful. So much to learn, so many words, so much staging, so many counts, and one really just has to self rehearse to prepare for the terrifying prospect of going on. I think if I were younger it would be less terrifying but now that I'm 55 the words are harder to get into the brain, the body is a lot slower. But everyday I try to get a little more in there to feel a little more confident. Making progress. Once I have the McLuhan track down I can move on to learning two more tracks. (So many words, so much staging, so many counts! Say it with me...)

I'll end with more history. On our day off on Sunday, the brilliant Marc Masterson, Co Artistic Director of City Theater and former AD of ATL, invited us to his stunning abode for a meal. We have been INTENSELY diligent about maintaining our bubble so we were able to gather at Marc's and finally remove our masks and share a spectacular meal! Marc has been a long time member of our family pre-SITI and during SITI's existence, he is deep family. There were stories of Bondo and Kelly's time working with Marc back in the day, Toga and our history there was present, and Anne and I went down our Trinity Rep days back in 89/90.

The Medium birthed this company. I wasn't around for the first show Chuck's Orestes, but I know for certain The Medium was the singular show that would influence all of our shows and how we work for the next three decades. All hail THE MEDIUM!

Stay warm everyone,

Signing off to bang my head against "the Techno"!

Warmest!  
Barn

Subject **Re: Jan 11th Medium Diary...**  
 From Stephen Webber <duffwebber@earthlink.net>  
 To Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>  
 Cc Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>, Bondo <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Araiza, J. Ed <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>  
 Date 2022-01-11 22:12



Medium Diary

Monday, January 10th 2022

I forgot to write this yesterday so here's what happened on Monday. Our days and nights are full here- rehearsing all day and getting ready for rehearsal at night. I spend a lot of time watching recordings of Mediums past and making notes in my script. I've also been watching movies and old tv shows that were the inspiration for many of these scenes: The Good, The Bad and the Ugly, The Dating Game, late night comedians, Jimmy Swaggert, Marcus Welby MD, etc. It's amazing what gems you can find. Between all of that there is little time or energy to write down what happened.

As we watch the show recordings and rehearsal footage shot in Toga we all express admiration for the people who made this show in an amazing three weeks (Bondo, Tom, Kelly, Puk, and Mark). How did they do that, anyway? We are also impressed by the company that honed the show into the version that was at NYTW, toured and played at the Miller Theater, its last incarnation before now (Jed, Ellen, Tom, Bondo, and Kelly). What is obvious on multiple viewings is that the connection that performers have with each other in time is amazing. Every single move seems to have a kinesthetic relationship to either another actor's movement or a sound cue or both. The web of connections spreads out from the first moment of the show to the last. In rehearsal we unearth as many of these connections in time as we can, knowing we are missing many, and hoping we will have time to embody them all with each other. It usually goes slowly. There is such a pleasure when you discover something though. Violeta and I discovered the beginning of the Dionne Warwick yesterday and we just started giggling when we did it.

In the past couple of days for the first time I have begun to feel that we'll have time to learn the show and also figure out the web of connections that underly and support it. Of course what we make will be different from any previous version of the show, but I think we are all intent on discovering as many of the timings in the earlier incarnations as possible. Of course the discovery will continue in performance.

Today we finished putting together the "Techno Breakdown", the super fast recapitulation of the show at the end. Tomorrow perhaps we'll put it to the tempo in the music instead of Barney's mercifully slower counting. If we do, wish us well...

SW

On Jan 11, 2022, at 8:48 PM, Bernard Hanlon <[barnohan@mac.com](mailto:barnohan@mac.com)> wrote:

Hello friends!

Oh so much history wrapped up in SITI's first devised piece. I remember in the summer of 1993 driving up to Saratoga to spend the weekend at Anne's apartment in downtown Saratoga to see The Medium and Suzuki's Tale of Lear, Waiting for Romeo, plus symposium and q and a's. It was a spectacular weekend of great art and friendship!

Little did I know the following year I would be invited into the Company, taking over Jefferson May's role in Small Live/Big Dreams, SITI's 2nd devised piece. Pittsburgh is also a special place for me. After I was born in Worcester, MA, my family immediately moved to Pittsburgh as my father got a job here. I spent the first year and a half of my life in Pittsburgh. All through my life, although I had no memories of it, for my parents and a few of my siblings, living in Pittsburgh was a really special time in their lives. My Dad still talks about it when we chat on the phone...

Also Akiko, Leon and I did a day trip to City Theater in Pittsburgh to catch SITI's Culture of Desire. Such a glorious production! The theater seemed so much bigger in my memory. Eventually I would once again take over Jefferson May's role of Diana Vreeland in that production at Portland Stage and the festival in Bogota, Colombia.

However this time I'm not taking over a role, I'm covering multiple roles. Apparently, in the time of Covid the understudies and covers are finally getting there well deserved praise. It's a really rough job and super stressful. So much to learn, so many words, so much staging, so many counts, and one really just has to self

Subject **Wednesday Jan 12 diary The Medium**  
 From Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>  
 To Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>  
 Cc jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, <spencer.whale@columbia.edu>  
 Date 2022-01-12 21:41



- clip\_image001.jpeg (~65 KB)
- January 12.docx (~503 KB)

January 12, 2022

The Medium week 2 Pittsburgh

Hello Friends,

Another day and each one that passes feels like a minor miracle. A gift. We take our covid tests regularly –a system run like a Swiss bank here by SITI and City. We are being so conscientious and I'm grateful and proud how everyone is making sure The Medium is the most important subject in their lives for now. This promise comes from each of us, but the staff of City Theater are fierce. They rise early, practice every precaution, and have kept their theater alive over these covid years. Marc Masterson. He's unflappable, innovative, careful. It isn't just about us, it's the whole community we are doing this for and Marc's commitment to them in infectious.

The routine of our days make these diaries more introspective perhaps. Its a short stretch between our housing and the theater, and my only experience of the city for now. We walk back and forth on Bingham St. and see little else. I love Pittsburgh, and like Bondo, Barney, have history here, but for now it's the quality of light in my apartment in the morning, the tips of the downtown buildings catching the morning sunrise. I've got a squirrel that travels the telephone wires at eye level at 8am sharp every morning. Remarkable. Its delightful. It reminds me we all have our schedules; we all have our maps.

So the question came up today in training and after–how do you ready the space, how do you focus it for the coming event. Perhaps for Darron it's about EQing the room–getting the frequencies all in line with one another. For someone else it might be meticulously setting and checking the physical space. For actors it is a mysterious process involving the tangible and the invisible. For me it's about bringing a space that is filled with necessary activity, diverse reasons for being there, coffee cups and cable, personal gear, and morning weariness, to a place of potential. It is taking a space from the everyday and transforming it into a formal space.

Training is a benediction that starts the day with the belief in the extraordinary. It is based upon the premise that we contain vast multitudes as humans, not usually exposed in our daily lives.

And because The Medium is based upon these rudimentary principles, training is critical. How we listen is how we will fare. How we are watched is how we will expand. Its important its thought of not as a warmup, but as the day's entrance into the belly of the whale.

Today we did the techno with music from start to finish. Today we worked up thru the Ventriloquist.

We follow the map of the play–our scripts, the vimeo recordings from different eras, old notes, scraps of paper, production books, personal memories, the music score, what is remembered in some of us, what is reinvented in others. My map is different from Violeta's. She is finding her fresh way in an old piece. I am finding a new way in an older body.

And tonight, I noticed bruises on the backs of my knees– O! I thought, the Western! Or the bruise on my arm–O! I thought, the Techno! Or my shins–O, the Suicide!

Our bodies are our map of the day's experience. I think about the web of telephone wires that little squirrel outside my window is methodically traveling each frosty morning. I think about what this is asking of each of us.

in friendship,

Ellen

---

Ellen Lauren  
co artistic director  
SITI Company  
520 8th Avenue  
suite 310  
New York, New York  
10018  
212-868-0860 office  
917-710-2057 cell  
[www.siti.org](http://www.siti.org)  
[ellen@siti.org](mailto:ellen@siti.org)

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~65 KB

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what this is asking of each of us.



Much love to each of you,

Ellen

Subject **Re: Wednesday Jan 12 diary The Medium**  
 From Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>  
 To Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>  
 Cc Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, <spencer.whale@columbia.edu>  
 Date 2022-01-13 20:07



MEDIUM Diary for January 13.

Just back from a grocery shopping run. Thank you Barney for the ride to the Giant Eagle. Walking would have been an effort I might have decided to postpone until the day off. But then what would I have made for the dinner break tomorrow? I put my PCR test packet next to the coffee maker so I remember NOT to drink or eat for 1/2 hour before doing the test .... Then I put a personal size pizza in the oven for supper and began typing here.

Just want to thank Ellen for that beautiful diary yesterday. It's hard to follow her. Aren't her entries beautiful? As I reread over Ellen's entry, I feel and find a marley burn on my left knee and think, "Oh right, the Drama scene in the table." As I type I feel the stiffness and pain in my neck and think, "Oh right, the Drama scene in the table ...." I'm moving now from the floor to the dining table to type and feel my hip catch and hesitate for a moment until it releases and think, "Oh right, the Drama in the table ...."

So today after working the Techno and the Future - essentially the last two scenes of the show - we went back to the Dating Game and into the Rap - which leads into (wait for it) the Drama scene in the table .... Yup, spent a lot of time in the table. And I think all the while ... How did Tom who has about 5 inches on me GET INTO that table!?

I have to say as much as I pick at the problem of being in the table, I love the drama scene. It has some of the most beautiful writing sequences to my mind. It's as if 27 years ago while writing and staging, we got better at it by the end of the show. We actually learned how to do it in those furiously fast 2 or 2 1/2 weeks in Japan, and came up with such an elegant solution. It's spare and elegant -- and not a little bit too difficult for each one of us. As Stephen remarked, each character is finally entirely alone and in a terribly compromised situation (read "position") by this point. We are in an asylum as much as we are in a hospital. "Mental breakdowns of varying degrees." And still these intrepid souls attempt to communicate. They are articulate in their damage. "The body has undergone a shock." Both the actors' and the characters' bodies.

I got scared at one point when McLuhan finally gets out of the table and on top of it with Ellen. As I did this scene with Ellen I could feel my heart break and my throat close as the situation began to overwhelm me. It's heartbreaking. And then I realized that the "ARIA" was coming and wondered whether Anne and Darron were going to let us go through it. I DIDN'T TAKE ENOUGH AIR! Okay, here we go! Ellen rolls off the table and I begin ... and mercifully Anne stops it.

The past isn't only prologue. The past is happening right now as we do this. Even as I try to explain the SEEMINGLY most rudimentary of moments to GM or Violeta who are new to this play as you know, and courageously constructing their way through it, or even to Stephen who is taking on yet another role in the show and wondering what the story of the Drama really is, I can feel the weight and emotion of it. Often, it isn't logical. That's how memory seems to work. There's the mind and there's the body. And each has its own logic. As Stephen observed, as McLuhan is disappearing into his shell (the table in the Drama) and into his mind because of the stroke, "... a mind and a personality might be freed from the limitations and risks of any particular physical body ..." the others are physically coming back to their broken bodies and feeling/remembers their situation. They are becoming more human perhaps as McLuhan disappears into his mind.

*The eye it cannot choose but see  
 We cannot bid the ear be still  
 Our bodies feel where e'er they be  
 Against or with our will.*  
 -W. Wordsworth -- in THE MEDIUM

Good Night everyone.

xo bondo

Freking gorgeous Bondo.  
Thank you

thank you all for being THERE and including us in the rehearsal.  
yeah I remember being offstage before Aria and several others scenes and thinking.  
"Do I have enough air"  
"Do I have enough legs left...enough stops left in me...enough awareness of the others....of the Space...can  
keep up with TIME..?..."  
Freking gorgeous,  
thank you Bondo  
thank you all for bringing allll that terror and that beauty back into my psyche

back to work here... but my current images are hardly worth sharing...so I will take and keep yours instead  
have a good rest folks... and keep letting us now what is hap happ happening there.  
your fan,  
j.

J.Ed Araiza  
Chair, Department of Theater  
310-206-6856



UCLA Theater acknowledges the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples as the traditional caretakers of Tovaangar (the area known as Los Angeles basin and So. Channel Islands).

---

**From:** Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>  
**Date:** Thursday, January 13, 2022 at 5:08 PM  
**To:** Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>  
**Cc:** Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, "Araiza, J. Ed" <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, "spencer.whale@columbia.edu" <spencer.whale@columbia.edu>  
**Subject:** Re: Wednesday Jan 12 diary The Medium

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J. Ed Araiza – Email response to Bondo's Week 2 diary entry for The Medium (dated Thursday, January 13, 2022). Email sent Thursday, January 13 at 8:35PM ET.

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Subject **Re: Wednesday Jan 12 diary The Medium**  
 From Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>  
 To Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>  
 Cc Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, <spencer.whale@columbia.edu>  
 Date 2022-01-18 15:33



MEDIUM diary for January 14th (late)

Hey friends,

This is the diary entry for Friday, January 14th which is late.

It has been a good and challenging week. Today was the last day of our work week with an unconventional 2 days off due to our run of 7 days in a row next week. The plan for today is to have a gun safety talk, run some specials, and then work through the whole show in chunks. Our bodies, or my body I should say, are starting to feel the fatigue from the repetition of the chairs and table being lifted and spun, and the leaps, catches and carries that happen throughout the show. Company management was kind enough to fulfill my request for a sheet of 2 ply to put between my mattress and box spring to help firm it up for my back. The staff at City Theatre are fabulous – every single one of them is kind, professional, and quick to respond to our needs and requests, however odd.

The name of our gun safety officer is Sam and he is a teacher and an actor in the community here. He had a very thorough and step-by-step approach to talking us through the handling of the gun in the show – which looks very real but is not fired; the shot fired is Daron's sound cue. He reminds us that we should handle it as if it is real and that the audience will have a real reaction to seeing it. All for safety's sake. At some point he mentioned that he recognizes Anne from Youtube which made me laugh. "Anne Bogart: Youtube Sensation"?. Anne, have you been holding out on us – we didn't know you were a youtube star as well?

We run specials. My body is tired. Today, I'm trying to find a balance between hitting my stops and keeping the body fully loaded with energy but also not injuring myself. The dance between structure and freedom. Yes, I feel that in every cell of my body. We start to move through our chunks and it is incredibly exciting and also, of course, scary. Can I actually do this? Am I ready for this? Stephen gives me a look when he sees an expression on my face and says, "this show is a killer." Truth, my friend.

We reach the end of our chunk-through and I'm exhausted but there is more work to do and we drill down into refining "the pinwheel". And we do, in fact, make it better. Otsukaresama is called. Thank you all for a wonderful and exciting week. Time for a little rest.

GM

On Thu, Jan 13, 2022 at 8:08 PM Will Bond <[bondowill@gmail.com](mailto:bondowill@gmail.com)> wrote:

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 From Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
 To Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>  
 Cc Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, <spencer.whale@columbia.edu>, Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>  
 Date 2022-01-18 21:59



Hello SITI Family,

This is Monday's 1/17 diary, a little late!

Yesterday we began our third week in Pittsburgh. It's snowy here!! All arrived safely to the theater and the 2-block walk from my apartment was beautiful. Shuffled through the unplowed snow and shouted grateful words at the one person I saw shoveling, who just happened to be dressed in Steelers swag.

It was also our first run through!! Which Darron reminded us (after the fact) is something that hasn't happened since 1997.

We all gathered for notes, most on stage and some still sitting in the house, with the chairs where we'd left them at the end of our run. After the hour and 32 minutes of THE MEDIUM (I think that's the runtime Patti clocked), it makes me giggle to see these chairs off-duty, being used just as chairs. Still where we placed them so meticulously after our "best pinwheel yet," resting *close* to the spikes I try so hard not to look at, but each chair almost exactly three inches off...It'll be better next time.

Anne brought up something we've been talking a lot about: the TUNING of this piece. How to tune the audience, how to tune the space, how to tune this piece to this particular NOW. "You must be alive in our own time," says McLuhan just before clicking us out of the Family Show, says the Dummy with her Ventriloquist, says McLuhan again to the contestants on the Dating Game.

There's a discussion of introfugal vs. centrifugal. Still grappling with "introfugal" (am I even spelling that right?), but I'm now slightly obsessed with understanding it in opposition to centrifugal force, which is something I have a vivid memory of learning about on a science show the summer before first grade...So I remember swinging a bucket of water in circles without it spilling, and wonder what an equal and opposite force *inward* might be.

After notes, we run through what feels like a short worklist of trouble spots and special requests. And then we're done for the day. We do the snow-shuffle home and get ready for our first day of tech.

Sending love,  
 Violeta

she/her/hers

Cuban-American actor, director, choreographer

"Picayo and Babb, whose contrasting stances — both headstrong and self-righteous in separate ways — bring fire...Picayo embodies defiance, as when she hurls a throaty 'I am your queen!' at her rival." -Maya Phillips, The New York Times

[www.VioletaPicayo.com](http://www.VioletaPicayo.com)

On Tue, Jan 18, 2022 at 3:33 PM Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com> wrote:  
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 From Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>  
 To Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>  
 Cc Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, spencer.whale@columbia.edu <spencer.whale@columbia.edu>, Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>  
 Date 2022-01-18 22:07



Thank you so much for including me in your sharing of diary entries. I love reading how you all are experiencing this process. It has been wonderful to watch and to be a part of the journey!

Patti Kelly | Resident Production Stage Manager | 412.431.4400 ext. 224  
 She/Her/Hers  
 City Theatre Company  
 1300 Bingham Street | Pittsburgh, PA 15203

**From:** Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 18, 2022 9:59 PM  
**To:** Board SITI <board@siti.org>; Company SITI <company@siti.org>  
**Cc:** Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>; Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>; Office Staff <office@siti.org>; J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>; Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>; jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>; spencer.whale@columbia.edu <spencer.whale@columbia.edu>; Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Re: Wednesday Jan 12 diary The Medium

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Subject **Re: Wednesday Jan 12 diary The Medium**  
From Stephen Webber <duffwebber@earthlink.net>  
To Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
Cc Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Bondo <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, <spencer.whale@columbia.edu>, Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>  
Date 2022-01-19 08:16



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### Medium Diary for Tuesday January 18th

Well, we started tech. Not much to say about tech. It's tech. Brian is putting light on the show, which I guess is the third lighting design the show has had. And of course we are figuring out the details of a hundred and one costume changes. Darron has been working on cues pretty much through rehearsal but he's putting the sound in the room too. We keep calibrating the scenes and working on timing issues that were not resolved in rehearsal, of which there are plenty to keep us busy. Anne talked about the need to "tune" the scenes for the ear of the contemporary audience. In the early to mid nineties the audience's ear heard the text very differently. Brian noted that back then the text seemed obscure and difficult to follow all the time, so in a way the ear could relax and the audience could just watch if they wanted to. Now, however, the text seems to leap off the stage and much more of it accurately describes our world. The world has caught up with McLuhan's text. So we need to change the way the text lives inside the piece, not by rewriting it, but just in how it exists in the scenes. Lighter perhaps.

For those of you who know what this means, the sharp edges of the Firing Line have been smoothed out a bit, and the text is more relaxed. The body is not necessarily relaxed, but the initial impression for the audience is more of a traditional news panel discussion. The audience doesn't slam into it as hard. At least that's what we're trying now. I am very curious how an audience will find this piece now. I do think it has something relevant to add to the current moment. Violence is increasing and questions of identity seem to be convulsing the country (world?), and McLuhan has a lot to say about the relationship between the loss of privacy, the loss of identity and the resulting increase in violence that follows. And who can't relate to a self protective numbing that results from being over exposed?

Well, back to tech.  
Stephen

On Jan 18, 2022, at 9:59 PM, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com> wrote:

Hello SITI Family,

This is Monday's 1/17 diary, a little late!

Yesterday we began our third week in Pittsburgh. It's snowy here!! All arrived safely to the theater and the 2-block walk from my apartment was beautiful. Shuffled through the unplowed snow and shouted grateful words at the one person I saw shoveling, who just happened to be dressed in Steelers swag.

It was also our first run through!! Which Darron reminded us (after the fact) is something that hasn't happened since 1997.

We all gathered for notes, most on stage and some still sitting in the house, with the chairs where we'd left them at the end of our run. After the hour and 32 minutes of THE MEDIUM (I think that's the runtime Patti clocked), it makes me giggle to see these chairs off-duty, being used just as chairs. Still where we placed them so meticulously after our "best pinwheel yet," resting *close* to the spikes I try so hard not to look at, but each chair almost exactly three inches off...It'll be better next time.

Anne brought up something we've been talking a lot about: the TUNING of this piece. How to tune the audience, how to tune the space, how to tune this piece to this particular NOW. "You must be alive in our own time," says McLuhan just before clicking us out of the Family Show, says the Dummy with her Ventriloquist, says McLuhan again to the contestants on the Dating Game.

There's a discussion of introfugal vs. centrifugal. Still grappling with "introfugal" (am I even spelling that right?), but I'm now slightly obsessed with understanding it in opposition to centrifugal force, which is something I have a vivid memory

Thank you Stephen that is super interesting to me and I cant wait to hear how the audience...."hears" it.

<<McLuhan has a lot to say about the relationship between the loss of privacy, the loss of identity and the resulting increase in violence that follows. And who can't relate to a self protective numbing that results from being over exposed? >>

That's... and earful..and a lot to chew on.  
Deeper and deeper.  
Have a good day two of tech everyone.  
j

J.Ed Araiza  
Chair, Department of Theater  
310-206-6856



UCLA Theater acknowledges the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples as the traditional caretakers of Tovaangar (the area known as Los Angeles basin and So. Channel Islands).

---

**From:** Stephen Webber <duffwebber@earthlink.net>  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 5:16 AM  
**To:** Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
**Cc:** Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, "Araiza, J. Ed" <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, "spencer.whale@columbia.edu" <spencer.whale@columbia.edu>, Gian-Murrino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Wednesday Jan 12 diary The Medium

Medium Diary for Tuesday January 18th

Well, we started tech. Not much to say about tech. It's tech. Brian is putting light on the show, which I guess is the third lighting design the show has had. And of course we are figuring out the details of a hundred and one costume changes. Darron has been working on cues pretty much through rehearsal but he's putting the sound in the room too. We keep calibrating the scenes and working on timing issues that were not resolved in rehearsal, of which there are plenty to keep us busy. Anne talked about the need to "tune" the scenes for the ear of the contemporary audience. In the early to mid nineties the audience's ear heard the text very differently. Brian noted that back then the text seemed obscure and difficult to follow all the time, so in a way the ear could relax and the audience could just watch if they wanted to. Now, however, the text seems to leap off the stage and much more of it accurately describes our world. The world has caught up with McLuhan's text. So we need to change the way the text lives inside the piece, not by rewriting it, but just in how it exists in the scenes. Lighter perhaps.

For those of you who know what this means, the sharp edges of the Firing Line have been smoothed out a bit and the text is more relaxed. The body is not necessarily relaxed, but the initial impression for the audience is more of a traditional news panel discussion. The audience doesn't slam into it as hard. At least that's what we're trying now. I am very curious how an audience will find this piece now. I do think it has something relevant to add to the current moment. Violence is increasing and questions of identity seem to be convulsing the country (world?), and McLuhan has a lot to say about the relationship between the loss of privacy, the loss of identity and the resulting increase in violence that follows. And who can't relate to a self protective numbing that results from being over exposed?

Subject **Re: Wednesday Jan 12 diary The Medium**  
From Jaan Whitehead <jaanwhitehead@gmail.com>  
To Stephen Webber <duffwebber@earthlink.net>  
Cc Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Bondo <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, <spencer.whale@columbia.edu> 1  
[more...](#)  
Date 2022-01-19 12:18



Greetings to "The Medium" family,

Thank you for bringing us back into the rehearsal room and sharing your time there. It means a great deal. For many of us, the rehearsal room is the heart of SITI, so it is a privilege to be there with you. As you go into Previews, my best wishes are with you. It is a historic moment.

Much love,

Jaan

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Subject **Medium Diary January 19, 2022**  
From **Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>**  
To **Stephen Webber <DuffWebber@earthlink.net>**  
Cc **Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Bondo <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, <spencer.whale@columbia.edu> 1 [more...](#)**  
Date **2022-01-20 08:17**



Hello all!

As I stepped out of our housing this morning headed to rehearsal I was shocked by how warm it was. 40 degrees at least and you could really feel the difference! All the snow here is starting to melt. Apparently the municipality doesn't plow the roads on the South Side of Pittsburgh, very slushy and muddy. However the temperature plummets tomorrow to freezing temperatures so everyone will have to walk very gingerly to work. All that slush will become ice probably overnight.

Today we finished our 2nd day of tech and it has been going beautifully. The show looks and sounds like a million bucks thanks to Darron, Gabriel, and Brian and the amazing team here at City Theater. The newbies in the cast, G.M. and Violeta, are doing brilliantly and I have to say I'm incredibly moved to see them growing as artists and humans through the litmus test of this particular production. I really feel like they are bringing a real freshness and energy while adhering to all of the strict and necessary markers set into place from the original cast and previous productions of the Medium.

And my other besties, the old timers as it were, are as spectacular as they ever were! It is deeply moving to watch their work as well! I have teared up quite a bit during this process here in Pittsburgh. It really is like watching one's life flash before one's eyes. Although they never show it, shows like the Medium cost more AFTER the rehearsal or run-through not during, for us old timers. That's the tricky thing about navigating shows like this as one gets older. It's all fine in the moment, it's when you get home that the aches and pains creep in. I remember the sensations from when we did 'A Rite' with Bill T. and company. During rehearsals I would be jacked up and could go for hours. Then I would get home and sit down and the wear and tear would set in. That first step out of bed in the morning was always a shock.

For my part this experience has been a bit of an identity quest and it continues to be so. SITI has NEVER, EVER had understudies so this experience has been quite a mystery to me. Who am I and what my role is in this process has been slippery for me for weeks on end. I have never understudied before I have only taken over roles. Not just roles but roles created by Jefferson Mayes, a formidable task. Fortunately for me I was young enough at the time to jump into Jefferson's skin without a care really. But this is very different. I have been focusing at the moment on learning Bondo's track, Marshall McLuhan, which has been a daunting task to say the least. And knowing the show so well I would never, ever cast me in that role. However when we were putting this piece back on it's feet in our studio in New York in the fall and I "went on" as it were, because Bondo wasn't able to be there, I thought, "Oh, maybe I can do this."

And I think I actually can do it and would enjoy it and be good at it but that would take so much rehearsal to feel like I was making the role my own and also being in a strong enough place for the cast, being there for them and their rhythms and the harmony that they have established. Hell, when I joined the company and took over for Jefferson in Small Lives/Big Dreams it wasn't until the Miller season where I had finally felt that I had made that role my own and we had already done it in two previous venues, Louisville at ATL and P.S. 122 in New York. So something like this takes a great deal of time to do right. And we don't have that time. AND we're still in a pandemic...

But today I slipped out of the theater and went into the rehearsal room and said all of my words out loud at show volume with all of the staging on my own. It wasn't perfect by any stretch but it was, I think, good enough if, God forbid, I had to go on. The language of the McLuhan role is impossible and diabolically difficult and a tongue twister in the mouth. That's really what I have been wrestling with the most, my mouth and my voice and this text. But I'm getting there...now on to Stephen and G.M.'s roles.

Ok, I've gone on too long. It's a thrilling thing that is happening here in Pittsburgh. I think we all hope that Omicron goes away so this run can happen safely and well and fully. City Theater and it's people are amazing! Some of us are bummed out we can't go to a bar on Carson Street and watch

a Steelers game while eating chicken wings and consuming copious amounts of beer, but we have to protect our bubble.

Gnight!  
Barney

Subject **Re: Medium Diary January 21, 2022**  
From Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>  
To Stephen Webber <DuffWebber@earthlink.net>  
Cc Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Bondo <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, <spencer.whale@columbia.edu> [1 more...](#)  
Date 2022-01-22 09:24



Hello again,

We reset whose leading the training order which means I'm on diary duty two times in a row.

Last night was The Medium's final dress rehearsal with some of City Theater's folks in attendance. It was nice to have some people in the house and experience the piece through their fresh ears. It went beautifully! I'm so very proud to be a member of this Company putting work like this out into the world. And the fact that this piece is almost 30 years old is astonishing! It is as awake and vital as ever...

The night before the final dress however was quite eventful! A transformer blew on an electrical pole outside of Violeta's window and plunged our building and some of the area into darkness. We all heard it and scurried outside in the freezing temperatures to see what had happened. Eventually the fire and electrical trucks came to fix the problem and from what I hear some SITI folks remained outside watching them work, transfixed by what they were doing. It was a late night. I had fallen asleep with no power or heat and was awoken at 2 am with the power coming on an my T.V. blaring! Not fun.

Today is the first preview. City Theater is reducing the audience size for Covid safety. It will be nice to have an audience of any size. We are maintaining our bubble and testing regularly and doing our best to stay Covid free.

We're doing that thing of heading into a regular performance schedule. It's been quite a long time since any of us has experienced that!

Sending love,  
Barney

Subject **Re: Medium Diary January 21, 2022**  
From Ruth Nightengale <ruth.nightengale@gmail.com>  
To Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>  
Cc Stephen Webber <DuffWebber@earthlink.net>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Bondo <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com> [2 more...](#)  
Date 2022-01-22 16:24



Happy First Preview, Everyone!!



Ruth Nightengale  
646-382-9273

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Subject **Re: Medium Diary January 21, 2022**  
From Akiko Aizawa <akikoaizawa@mac.com>  
To Ruth Nightengale <ruth.nightengale@gmail.com>  
Cc Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>, Stephen Webber <DuffWebber@earthlink.net>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, Board SITI <Board@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Bondo <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <Ellen@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org> [3 more...](#)  
Date 2022-01-22 16:28



Yes! Cheers from NYC 🍷 🍷 🍷 ~akiko

On Jan 22, 2022, at 16:25, Ruth Nightengale <[ruth.nightengale@gmail.com](mailto:ruth.nightengale@gmail.com)> wrote:

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Subject **Re: Medium Diary January 21, 2022**  
 From Kelly Maurer <kelmaurer@gmail.com>  
 To Akiko Aizawa <akiko aizawa@mac.com>  
 Cc Ruth Nightengale <ruth.nightengale@gmail.com>, Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>, Stephen Webber <DuffWebber@earthlink.net>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, Board SITI <Board@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Bondo <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <Ellen@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu> [4 more...](#)  
 Date 2022-01-22 16:38



To you all!!

Knock it out of the ballpark tonight.  
 Have a great time!  
 You are all superheroes and I'm in utter awe.

Much love,  
 Kel

On Sat, Jan 22, 2022 at 4:28 PM Akiko Aizawa <akiko aizawa@mac.com> wrote:

Yes! Cheers from NYC 🍷 🍷 🍷 ~akiko

> On Jan 22, 2022, at 16:25, Ruth Nightengale <ruth.nightengale@gmail.com> wrote:

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 > ❤️ 📺 🍷 🍷 ❤️

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Subject **Re: Medium Diary January 21, 2022**  
 From Kevin Kuhlke <kevin.kuhlke@nyu.edu>  
 To Ruth Nightengale <ruth.nightengale@gmail.com>  
 Cc Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>, Stephen Webber <DuffWebber@earthlink.net>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Bondo <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org> [3 more...](#)  
 Reply-To <kevin.kuhlke@nyu.edu>  
 Date 2022-01-22 16:39



Break Legs, Open Minds, Be the Medium and the Message, But even more importantly be the MASSAGE!, the visual aural kinetic stimulator of sensations and associations!

I still remember seeing it at NYTW. I was knocked out then. How prescient McLuhan was and how bold and prescient you were to embody aspects of his work. A great idea to resurrect it now and let it find new life in the new landscape that it predicted.

Have a blast. Be the blast. Blast the blast.

xo

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Subject **Re: Medium Diary January 21, 2022**  
 From Jessica Hanna <jessessa@gmail.com>  
 To <kevin.kuhlke@nyu.edu>  
 Cc Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Bondo <bondowill@gmail.com>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>  
[4 more...](#)  
 Date 2022-01-22 17:11



Thinking of you all and sending Merde & Stardust from the West Coast! I am continually amazed at what this company creates, under enormous constrictions (!!), with grace and artistry. I envy that audience tonight.

Have FUN!!  
 Love,  
 Jessica

On Sat, Jan 22, 2022 at 1:39 PM Kevin Kuhlke <[kevin.kuhlke@nyu.edu](mailto:kevin.kuhlke@nyu.edu)> wrote:  
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Subject **Re: Medium Diary January 21, 2022**  
 From Samuel Stricklen <sjstricklen@gmail.com>  
 To Ruth Nightengale <ruth.nightengale@gmail.com>  
 Cc Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Bondo <bondowill@gmail.com>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org> [3 more...](#)  
 Date 2022-01-22 17:42



Yes, Happy First Preview!! Have a fantastic run!! Enormous hugs to you all!!

Samuel

On Sat, Jan 22, 2022 at 4:32 PM Ruth Nightengale <[ruth.nightengale@gmail.com](mailto:ruth.nightengale@gmail.com)> wrote:  
 Happy First Preview, Everyone!!



Ruth Nightengale  
 646-382-9273

> On Jan 22, 2022, at 9:24 AM, Bernard Hanlon <[barnohan@mac.com](mailto:barnohan@mac.com)> wrote:

>  
 > Hello again,  
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 > We reset whose leading the training order which means I'm on diary duty two times in a row.  
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 > We're doing that thing of heading into a regular performance schedule. It's been quite a long time since any of us has experienced that!  
 >  
 > Sending love,  
 > Barney  
 >  
 >

Subject **Re: Medium Diary January 21, 2022**  
 From Christopher Healy <cloganhealy@gmail.com>  
 To Samuel Stricklen <sjstricklen@gmail.com>  
 Cc Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Bondo <bondowill@gmail.com>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org> [4 more...](#)  
 Reply-To <chris@lohan.net>  
 Date 2022-01-22 20:29



Thinking of you all tonight! You are in the thick of it!!

Love,  
 Chris

On Sat, Jan 22, 2022 at 5:42 PM Samuel Stricklen <sjstricklen@gmail.com> wrote:  
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Subject **Re: Medium Diary January 21, 2022**  
From Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>  
To Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>  
Cc Stephen Webber <DuffWebber@earthlink.net>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, <spencer.whale@columbia.edu> [1 more...](#)  
Date 2022-01-22 20:44



Thank you everyone for the wishes and the reminders and the encouragement and support. It means so much. You are all in the spirit of this, the work to get it here, and the years of making, and the memories of what has happened and what's to come. Thank you so much! It's really trippy and I'm sure will get more fun as we find our voices in this new world.

Warm wishes from chilly Pittsburgh.

Love  
Bondo

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Subject **Re: Medium Diary January 21, 2022**  
 From Nicole Hearn <nicole.hearn@icmpartners.com>  
 To kevin.kuhlke@nyu.edu <kevin.kuhlke@nyu.edu>  
 Cc Ruth Nightengale <ruth.nightengale@gmail.com>, Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>, Stephen Webber <duffwebber@earthlink.net>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Bondo <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, J. Ed Araiza <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu> [4 more...](#)  
 Date 2022-01-22 22:01



Been tracking all the diary entries and am taken back to the magic of seeing this spectacular creation in New York – an event that was life changing for me. Thank you. And sending love and best of everything for a stellar run.  
 – Nicole

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 22, 2022, at 4:40 PM, Kevin Kuhlke <kevin.kuhlke@nyu.edu> wrote:

Break Legs, Open Minds, Be the Medium and the Message, But even more importantly be the MESSAGE!, the visual aural kinetic stimulator of sensations and associations!

I still remember seeing it at NYTW. I was knocked out then. How prescient McLuhan was and how bold and prescient you were to embody aspects of his work. A great idea to resurrect it now and let it find new life in the new landscape that it predicted.

Have a blast. Be the blast. Blast the blast.

xo

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Subject **Re: Medium Diary January 21, 2022**  
 From Kim Ima <thekimima@gmail.com>  
 To Nicole Hearn <nicole.hearn@icmpartners.com>  
 Cc kevin.kuhlke@nyu.edu <kevin.kuhlke@nyu.edu>, Ruth Nightengale <ruth.nightengale@gmail.com>, Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>, Stephen Webber <duffwebber@earthlink.net>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Bondo <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org> [5 more...](#)  
 Date 2022-01-23 08:52



Sending my congratulations, love and cheers for all of your time in rehearsal and now in performance – and for sharing your thoughts and reflections in words, extending the reach of this extraordinary time with all of us. I am so excited to see you all at BAM very soon! I am so excited for all audiences that get to share the show with you in 2022.

Love and thanks,  
 Kim

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Subject **Medium Diary Jan 22, 2022**  
From Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>  
To SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <Board@siti.org>  
Cc Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>  
Date 2022-01-23 16:33



Friends,

I'm looking out at the fire escape that Violeta and my dressing room looks out on. Snow is softly falling. We are in day 7 of this week, with our 2nd preview tonight at 7pm. Last night brought the final element into the piece, the audience. Suddenly there was an audience and we all remarked how moving it was to feel them, see them, hear them. Across all the obstacles of this moment in our lives, -the pandemic and rage and ennui, let alone parking and the trouble one has to go to to just leave the house on a cold night-in they came. And the show began.

We gathered afterwards to discuss the task at hand now, how to calibrate the show. How to make the delicacy of this moment slam into the whiplash statement of that moment-where to tighten a thought and how to tighten a transition. The attention on the details that refine the show has begun, and is in a nascent stage. It will live with us from now till its final curtain in the future.

How does an audience hear this show now?, I wonder backstage. Listening to the audience lean in, or struggle to lean in, I thought, in some places the show even feels creaky to me, for all its prescient thought and au courant idea. And before, where we performed, in some sense, to show off to the audience, to show SCOT what we could do within our own cultural context with that training, today there is a different partnership that needs to be established. The creaky parts relished, objectified. Looking with the audience at them while all the while fully inhabiting the event. And the humor in it now comes from different sources. And perhaps there's a compassion with and for one another in the room. I really am only trying to figure this out as I write here, sitting at my dressing table, waiting to ready for tonight's show, looking at the snowy fire escape.

Pittsburgh lies at a confluence of rivers forming the steady Ohio. The neighborhoods are built on slopes, hillsides, heights. Houses cling to what look like impossible faces of surrounding mountains. There are streets here that are made up only of stairs, hundreds of them, some restored, a steep climb to an overlook, more often than not topped with a church or monastery or cathedral. The neighborhoods were, and still are in some cases here on the South Side, a quilt of cultures and traditions from block to block.

Along the waterfront are the vestiges of the steel mills that lined the river access. In WW2 Pittsburgh was known as the 'arsenal of democracy', supplying the war effort with its muscle of steel. And too, it was known as 'hell with the lid off'. The buildings blackened, the dome of smog over the city was famous worldwide. The South side in particular housed the mill and railroad workers who by 1980 had begun to lose their jobs by the tens of thousands. The population decreased by more than half. The city stumbled and fell. The rivers were dirty, the air filthy.

And then a kind of miracle. The city's economic regeneration is known as one of the fastest and most robust in the history of this country. Hi-tech. Robotics. The air began to clean itself, the rivers began to heal. Old mill houses now sport solar panels and mysteries inside. Technology. Robotics. Not paradise, but new life.

So now at the end of this show, I look to the city itself and I find a kind of hopefulness in the words we are saying, not all are dire predictions.

The Medium is reborn, new life in an old experience. I cannot think of a more perfect place to bring this piece to light.

Ellen



Ellen Lauren  
co artistic director  
SITI Company  
520 8th Avenue  
Suite 310  
NYC, NY 10018  
917-710-2057 mobile  
[www.siti.org](http://www.siti.org)  
(she/her/hers)

Subject **Re: Medium Diary Jan 22, 2022**  
 From Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>  
 To Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>  
 Cc SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <Board@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>  
 Date 2022-01-26 12:57



MEDIUM Diary for Tuesday, January 25, 2022

Good Morning Everyone.

Anne packed her sprained ankle, and her books, and her devotion to THE MEDIUM to go back to London, but left behind a lovely gift for each of THE MEDIUM company. At the end of notes last night after our 3rd preview, Anne recognized everyone in the room as she recalled calling us individually so many months ago to see whether we were on board to do or re-do the play. It was a different moment for each person. There was a version of "yes!" for everyone. And at the end one could feel the emotion in Anne's voice as she finished. Thank you for that Anne. Sorry to see you go, but another love is waiting to enfold you in her arms. Safe travels.

I had a brief talk with Anne while stretching before training -- just a quick exchange of thoughts. I remarked how strange it feels to be back in a theater like this and to rehearse and tech and be in the dressing room and live in actor housing ... and all of it. The "hi diddly dee an actor's life for me" life. It feels a bit like a distant dream. I know the designers have been working off and on with tours, and Broadway, and all, but for those of us on stage I think it is not like that. And I suggested to her that I feel "rusty" on the stage - not unprepared to do this play - but spiritually and socially rusty. And I feel the audience is too. The room feels older, quaint, and a little shy.

But here we are. And here "they", the audience is. It's so sweet to see them. They are sitting in their couple bubbles with empty seats on either side. No disguising who your person for the evening is. Or they are alone. They are masked. They are socially distant even in this most social of situations. And they were required to show proof of vaccination. Remember if you can what you had to do in the past "to go, to get there" (As Kelly said about audiences in our CABIN PRESSURE). Get the dinner done; get sitters for the kids; endure the metro or drive into downtown, whatever. Now add these social and safety measures on top. Heroic. These people clearly need to be here. The social experiment continues. Our responsibility is even clearer. The audience needs the players and vice versa to confirm the community, to confirm our common difficulties, our differences, our need for relationship, and our need to reach beyond ourselves to understand something else about ourselves and the world we now share -- which is what THE MEDIUM is about. Really touching.

We lose Brian Scott today also as he drives 6 1/2 hours back home to his family. Brian leaves us in an inspired light environment that has entirely its own story. Brian's energy in the room is so large and caring and warm. He buoys us with his attention more than perhaps he knows. I'm always very sad to see him go. Thank you Uncle Dogggs.

We are left in the capable hands of Darron West, our sound genius. By the way Darron won the macarthur award last night. NO not a real Mac Genius award. I write it with a small 'm' because this is our running joke for anyone who has a "brilliant" idea during the rehearsal. Darron lifted his hands in victory and shouted, "finally!" Apparently he's never gotten a rehearsal macarthur. But he's got some radical ideas for changes .... so ... more changes. We are really staying true to the original production, but it becomes clear that some of those early ideas were just made in our youthful, muscular, enthusiasm, and don't really work today -- so some staging and language changes or rather cuts/adjustments ("... adjustment is art, the art of life lies in a constant readjustment to our surroundings." - the Doctor in THE MEDIUM).

Yesterday the big work was on the Western scene - which we call the "crown jewel" of the show. That's our ironic way of acknowledging that no matter how much we work on the Western it continues to slip through our fingers. Big change in staging which necessitates rearrangement of some of the language. Some of the lines have been reapportioned between different actors ... It's hilarious how much time we spend on it EVERY time.

Okay ... "that's enough road and traffic information to get us to the next beacon." (Ellen - Talk Show).  
 Sending warm wishes from chilly, snowy Pittsburgh.

xo B

will bond

Brilliant, lovely and very touching.  
thanks for sharing Bondo

("... adjustment is art, the art of life lies in a constant readjustment to our surroundings.")  
I remember and LOVE that line. it was/is one of my favotire scenes a very different Rasa for everyone in th show.

So now I gotta go "TUCK IN MY KIDS FROM A PHONE BOOTH!"  
which means I must go prep for a Faculty meeting via ZOOM.  
Safe travels to Anne and Brian.

big love to all my heros.  
j.

J.Ed Araiza  
Chair, Department of Theater  
310-206-6856



UCLA Theater acknowledges the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples as the traditional caretakers of Tovaangar (the area known as Los Angeles basin and So. Channel Islands).

**From:** Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 26, 2022 at 9:58 AM  
**To:** Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>  
**Cc:** SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <Board@siti.or>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Medium Diary Jan 22, 2022

MEDIUM Diary for Tuesday, January 25, 2022

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Subject **Re: Medium Diary Jan 22, 2022**  
 From Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>  
 To Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>  
 Cc Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <Board@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
 Date 2022-01-27 23:15



The Medium Diary for January 26th,

I tried to get this out earlier today but the day was full. Don't worry, I was gently chided at the theatre by my colleagues.

Here are some rehearsal videos I took with my iphone yesterday – part of my interest in documenting this chapter in SITI Company's journey. Sent via google drive link. I hope you can open and enjoy.

 [3F3EF0D9-2B7D-434E-87DC-C63F6DA47AFE.mov](#)

 [96830F9B-A6AE-417B-88A0-AFA18BD433FE.mov](#)

Best,  
GM

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Subject **Medium Diary Jan 27, 2022**  
 From Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
 To SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <Board@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>  
 Date 2022-01-28 14:05



Medium Diary for January 27

Dear SITI Family,

Happy Opening!! Yesterday was our final preview and speediest run time so far, I think we came in just UNDER 1:32!

As you saw in GM's video and read in Bondo's diary, on Wednesday we re-teched top of show. There was so much excitement around this proposal...when it was first discussed during Tuesday's post-show notes an "AHA" ripple passed through the room, followed by a discussion of what that false entrance meant in the context of Toga, and what a direct initial greeting could create for an audience now. On Wednesday afternoon, all but Bondo rushed into the house to watch his very first crack at this new beginning. I found myself giddily choosing and re-choosing my seat, it was my first time seeing any bit of this piece from the audience. It's no wonder that when Bondo had just barely gotten his first word out that evening, the audience said "Hello" right back! Each step in the shaping of this new beginning is something thrilling and generous and so very live.

And on Thursday, I'm still overwhelmed by getting to watch this new beginning develop from the deep roots of this piece. Just one moment of this incredibly intricate thing we get to share. Of course the beginning is an important moment, but they're all important moments, each one carefully crafted and re-crafted over time with the expertise and meeting of so many different artists. It seems the lines between the original and the new and the certain and the still-on-trial moments are always shifting. And I realize that the process of reshaping this beginning is what we've been doing all along, with each moment. We share the score and each independently discover what holds it up exactly as it needs to be. For me, this continues to change and grow, I discover more roots and get to make some of my own. Sometimes from a whispered insight about the history of a particular gesture, sometimes from a logistical detail related to this particular theater, sometimes from a new question that THE MEDIUM and it's team are always game for.

And tonight, we get to meet another audience that has braved the snow, and covid, and more unknown. A group generous enough to share space in-person and trust us with their time.

Sending love,  
 Violeta



\*Waiting for post-show notes, just after eagerly checking our "Future" chair spikes.

she/her/hers

Cuban-American actor, director, choreographer

"Picayo and Babb, whose contrasting stances — both headstrong and self-righteous in separate ways — bring fire...Picayo embodies defiance, as when she hurls a throaty 'I am your queen!' at her rival." -Maya Phillips, The New York Times

[www.VioletaPicayo.com](http://www.VioletaPicayo.com)

YIKES!!! its 8:02 EST

I just finished my last of 4 straight meetings.

You are probably hilding for 3 minutes and about to carry those chair on stage.....  
"HELLO!"

oh my sooo many memories.

Take a deep breath...

hey bondo remember when ellen used to PLUG my nose as I did my breathing exercises at places!!!! **THE PAST**

the energy the wonder, the fear of this show.... am I good enough to TRY this.  
YES you ALL are!

hav a great good time tonight, see what you learn, hold onto each other and....

"see you on the other side I use to say to my mates."

Thinking of you now in this lonely office all alone everyone gone for the weekend..... I have about 45 email  
read or delete...hmmmmmm

ZAP that TV Clicker!!! **THE PRESENT**

Pinwheel

the DIONNE

Cyber COMIC

Cooking Show

Ventriloquist

Hospital Drama....num num numb

blind girl

Willow speech

Hurricane ( that what I called it)

the Rap... can we really call it that ???

The Rewind..... come on Jimmy Bond you can do it!

**The Future**

I am thinking of you all and actually breathing with you  
Gombate!!

J.Ed Araiza

Chair, Department of Theater

310-206-6856



UCLA Theater acknowledges the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples as the traditional caretakers of Tovaangar (the area known as Los Angeles basin and So. Channel Islands).

**From:** Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>

**Date:** Friday, January 28, 2022 at 11:08 AM

**To:** SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <Board@siti.org>  
Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>

**Subject:** Medium Diary Jan 27, 2022

Medium Diary for January 27

Dear SITI Family,

Subject **Re: Medium Diary January 29th 2022**  
From Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>  
To Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>  
Cc Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
Date 2022-01-30 09:06



Hello snow bunnies!

Here in Pittsburgh we didn't get any of the storm but the temperature plummeted so even walking the few blocks from the theater to the apartment is pretty brutal and also treacherous. Ice Ice baby!

Last night the Medium 2.0 opened here at City Theater in Pittsburgh! It was a spectacular opening! The audience leapt to their feet at the end. I was and continue to be super proud of our gang. This production is so, so good! City Theater, in Covid times, managed to throw a little opening night shindig for all of us in the theater with Proseco and sparkling water. The theater gave each of us a photo from the show which was such a brilliant stroke. The pictures are amazing and a real treasure to have and so thoughtful. City theater delivered a real class act for an opening, despite Covid!

I have really been remarking to myself how amazing City Theater's audience demographic is, from the old timers to the really young folks all in the same audience together. I have been quite moved by that and uplifted by it. The houses have been quite full as well, despite the pandemic, which has also been amazing. People seem to be wrapped by a piece created in 1993 that was addressing the future only to realize most of what was predicted has already happened or will happen. It's pretty extraordinary. I love what is happening here and it bodes well for BAM and our NY audience.

I want to give a huge shout out to the acting company! They continue to bring it over and over again. The acting company is at the top of their game still! I watch this show over and over and think no other actors could do what we do, it's extraordinary!

Much love! Stay safe!

Barney

Subject **Bravo to the opening of The Medium in Pittsburgh**  
From Barbara Cummings <brbcummings@gmail.com>  
To Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, <gm.gianino@gmail.com>, <barnohan@mac.com>  
Date 2022-01-30 10:55



It was snowing when I checked into a Pittsburgh hotel, around the corner from City Theater on January 20, 2001. The after parties of George W. Bush's inauguration had already begun as seen on the TV in the lobby bar. But I was there for a higher purpose, later that evening I attended the premiere of *Room*. Conjuring a feast of perfect alchemy, Bogart, Lauren and Wolfe created a story that has never stopped percolating in my consciousness.

Cut to August 1992, leaving a Saratoga Springs campsite to attend the premiere of *The Medium* at the Bernhard Theater at Skidmore College. I anticipated greatness and what followed was transformation. *The Medium* set in motion the astounding journey that is SITI Company.

October 9, 2007, opening night of *Hotel Cassiopeia* at BAM. As I watched SITI Company meticulously create the world of Joseph Cornell I was transported to a realm somewhere between the actual stage and heaven. After years of seeing the company's work, I recognized its ascension to a new realm of masterfulness.

Finally, Saturday, June 3, 2017, back at the Bernhard Theater, and I'm part of an intimate crowd, privileged to watch ninety minutes of conversation between Anne Bogart and Tadashi Suzuki. For those of us who have spent a life enthralled by theater and in particular SITI Company and its brand of theater, it was a historic moment. It felt like an origin story wrapped up in the illumination of the ever flowing current of performance art to which the company belongs.

Bless you all for your exploration and commitment to excellence and each other. I gratefully accept the largess of your labor, 30 years strong, and look forward to celebrating with you in the days and weeks ahead.

Love,  
Barbara

Subject **Re: Bravo to the opening of The Medium in Pittsburgh**  
From Araiza, J. Ed <j.ed@tft.ucla.edu>  
To Barbara Cummings <brbcummings@gmail.com>  
Cc Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, gm.gianino@gmail.com <gm.gianino@gmail.com>, barnohan@mac.com <barnohan@mac.com>  
Date 2022-01-30 13:23



Barbara,  
Thank you for sharing your lovely n very moving note.  
It has indeed been a long n winding road ...which is now perhaps leading us towards a new path.  
I treasure your letter.  
Thank you  
J

Pardon the brevity

On Jan 30, 2022, at 7:56 AM, Barbara Cummings <brbcummings@gmail.com> wrote:

It was snowing when I checked into a Pittsburgh hotel, around the corner from City Theater on January 20, 2001. The after parties of George W. Bush's inauguration had already begun as seen on the TV in the lobby bar. But I was there for a higher purpose, later that evening I attended the premiere of *Room*. Conjuring a feast of perfect alchemy, Bogart, Lauren and Wolfe created a story that has never stopped percolating in my consciousness.

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Love,  
Barbara

Subject **Re: Bravo to the opening of The Medium in Pittsburgh**  
From <gm.gianino@gmail.com>  
To Barbara Cummings <brbcummings@gmail.com>  
Cc Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <Board@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, <barnohan@mac.com>  
Date 2022-01-30 18:45



Wow. Beautiful, amazing words Barbara. Thank you for the gift.  
Xoxo

**Gian-Murray Gianino**  
SITI COMPANY  
Cell: 646-425-5775  
@bobthepizzaboy  
<https://vimeo.com/325089212>

On Jan 30, 2022, at 10:55 AM, Barbara Cummings <brbcummings@gmail.com> wrote:

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Love,  
Barbara

Subject **Re: Bravo to the opening of The Medium in Pittsburgh**  
From Anne Bogart <adbogart@me.com>  
To Barbara Cummings <brbcummings@gmail.com>  
Cc Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>, Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, GM Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>, Barney O'hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>  
Date 2022-01-31 06:29



What a gorgeous and meaningful missive Barbara!  
God bless you for reminiscing, writing and sending to all of us.  
Sending tons of love and gratitude for you and Jim,  
Anne

On Jan 30, 2022, at 3:55 PM, Barbara Cummings <brbcummings@gmail.com> wrote:

It was snowing when I checked into a Pittsburgh hotel, around the corner from City Theater on January 20, 2001. The after parties of George W. Bush's inauguration had already begun as seen on the TV in the lobby bar. But I was there for a higher purpose, later that evening I attended the premiere of *Room*. Conjuring a feast of perfect alchemy, Bogart, Lauren and Wolfe created a story that has never stopped percolating in my consciousness.

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Love,  
Barbara

Subject **Jan 30, 2022 Medium diary**  
 From Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>  
 To Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
 Date 2022-01-31 13:44



~ I finished last night with a few meetings about upcoming workshops and after hanging up, getting some emails out, a wave of exhaustion swelled and took me under. I was just too blasted to properly write last night. What an amazing week.

So now its the last day of January, bright and cold, and a day off. We ended the week with a matinee and talk back, a talkback! How long its been since we've sat post show on the stage in dialogue. It was a small gathering, tender in the way as Bondo noted, that we are all out of practice how these things go, how to talk to one another. Those that stayed were older (can I say that now, I wonder as I write..) but open and took a cold afternoon to get to the South Side and take a ride.

There were comments about the Clothes ("wonderful!") the Movement ("I watched your feet!") the Text ("it just kept me asking questions, I love that!") the Energy ("how will you do 2 shows a day?") its life in Japan ("how did that audience understand it?")  
 It felt to me that we all warmed up as it went on, and became more comfortable with one another, friends in a way. Leaving the theater there were 2 patrons gingerly walking the sidewalks as we all do, to their car. She said to me "No really, how will you do 2 of those in a day?" We are going to see.

We have two 2 show days this upcoming week. We have entered that chapter where almost every thought is how to manage oneself to be ready at places. So that all other 22hours and 28 minutes of a day are organized around that experience of our hour and 32. When to eat, stretch, walk, train, rest, think about it, don't think about it, stretch again, warm the back, the voice the knees, the back. When to shop to have enough food, what food, when to fucking eat in the first place...all a complicated equation on the black board of any given day to solve the mystery of performance. I love it with all my being.

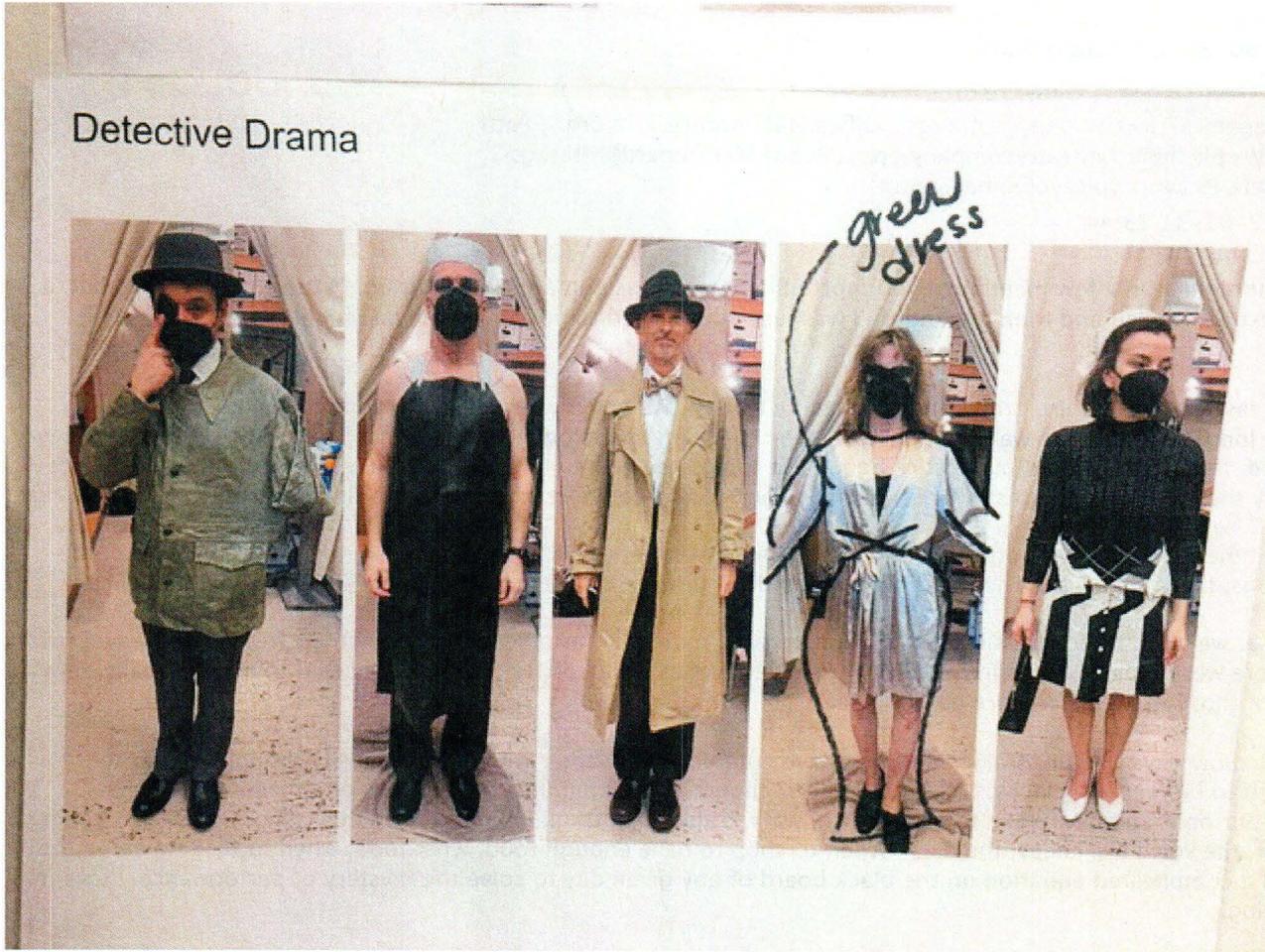
There is a structure to the show where we essentially begin and end with a human pinwheel that turns us in and out of McLuhan's final moments and hallucination. For a moment we stand shoulder to shoulder, and as we start Bondo and I exchange our secret signal with breath, 'good luck' we say to one another. At the end, once again touching shoulders, I whisper "yup, you did it". I can feel him trembling.

And I want to say that another of my favorite moments of the day is when we are back in the dressing room and there's a tap on the door from Barney just to check in, say good show, offer encouragement. His generosity has been unfailing. And he never stops working on this piece. It is a lesson in grace.

Yesterday morning as we gathered to train for the 2pm, bodies tired, heads sleepy, there was still the same appetite to tighten and fix and make better this thing called The Medium, as there was on day one. I wrote that to Darron and Brian yesterday- Its something I cherish with the group, and don't take for granted as this year passes.

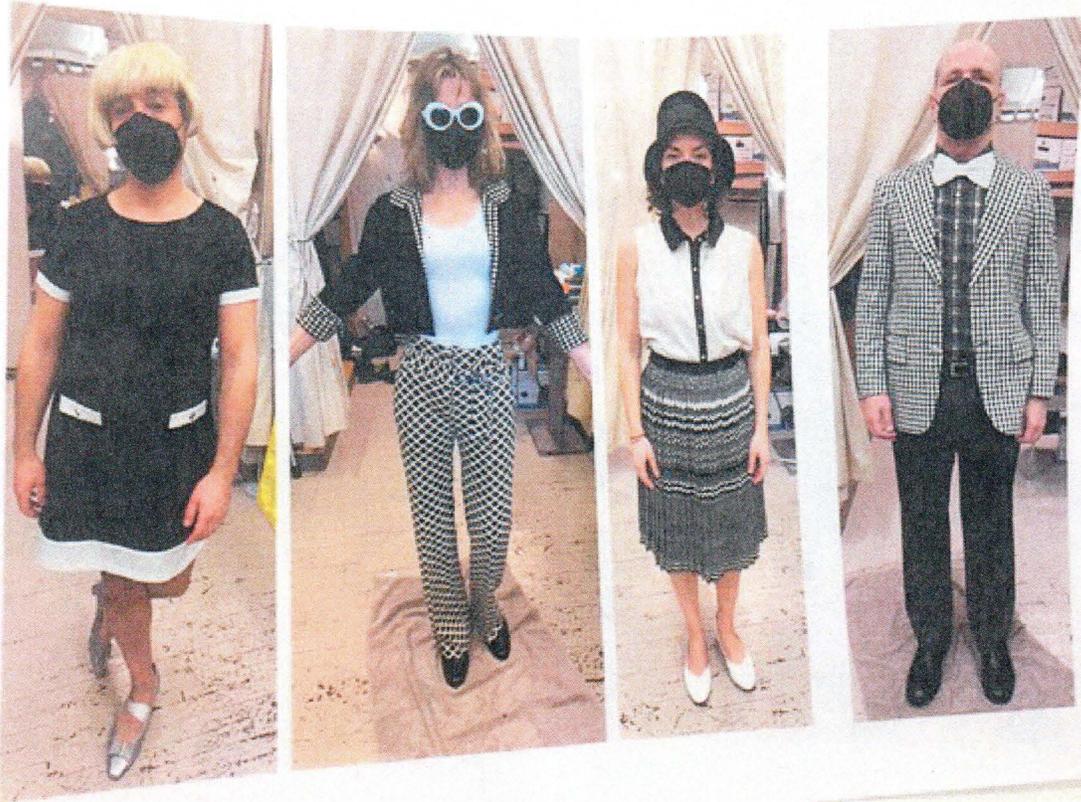
The SITI network around us has left now-Michelle came for opening, and brought us all cookies from her husband Brian - can you imagine?! He baked and packaged us each a bag of cookies that she carried on the plane for us...J.Ed sent us a bottle of Jameson that Barn helped get for the dressing room. Your letters thru the week for opening, none of it is taken for granted.

Now the day is turning to afternoon and I have yet to rouse and get life chores done. So I will leave you with this-for despite all superlatives and compliments and back patting ...I mean really? Brilliant costumes aside by Garbriel-Would you really leave a play in the hands of such a raggedy ass pack of players as these??



Or these

# Dating Game



Or God Help Us, these:

## Televangelist



?  
love ellen

Ellen Lauren  
co artistic director  
SITI Company  
520 8th Avenue  
suite 310  
New York, New York  
10018  
212-868-0860 office  
917-710-2057 cell  
[www.siti.org](http://www.siti.org)  
[ellen@siti.org](mailto:ellen@siti.org)

Subject **Re: Medium Diary Jan 22, 2022**  
 From Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>  
 To Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>  
 Cc Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <Board@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
 Date 2022-02-02 10:42



- PXL\_20220119\_202158889.jpg (~2.3 MB)
- PXL\_20220119\_202249302.jpg (~2.2 MB)

## Medium Diary February 1, 2022

Good morning friends.

These photos represent the daily now. As Ellen said, the adrenalin of the previews and the opening and the company posse enveloping us with notes and support and more notes being gone now, it is the daily work at hand to be attended to. This is where the daily training and practice comes into play. We go to work, stretch and change clothes, train, run specials, verify the legs and the voice, change clothes again, and get to places. Even then nothing is guaranteed.

Shout out to the audiences again. Yesterday, Tuesday, was a small group, older I think, someone unwrapping something in the dark during the first 1/4 of the opening speech of McLuhan (should I stop and allow them to finish?). A quiet show. Then, at the end, half of them stood up. Surprise! Barney thought it was a really good show, fresh, awake, so did Patti Kelly ... I felt short of air and could feel my voice hit a pitch ceiling by the end .... so, this morning adjust the breakfast to rice and beans and avocado (sorry cast) and adjust the yoga to maximize air capacity ...

First 2 show day today! Tomorrow's diary will have something to say about that I imagine.

Warm wishes to everyone!

xo B  
 will bond  
[www.siti.org](http://www.siti.org)

On Thu, Jan 27, 2022 at 11:15 PM Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com> wrote:  
 The Medium Diary for January 26th,

I tried to get this out earlier today but the day was full. Don't worry, I was gently chided at the theatre by my colleagues.

Here are some rehearsal videos I took with my iphone yesterday – part of my interest in documenting this chapter in SITI Company's journey. Sent via google drive link. I hope you can open and enjoy.

 [3F3EF0D9-2B7D-434E-87DC-C63F6DA47AFE.mov](#)

 [96830F9B-A6AE-417B-88A0-AFA18BD433FE.mov](#)

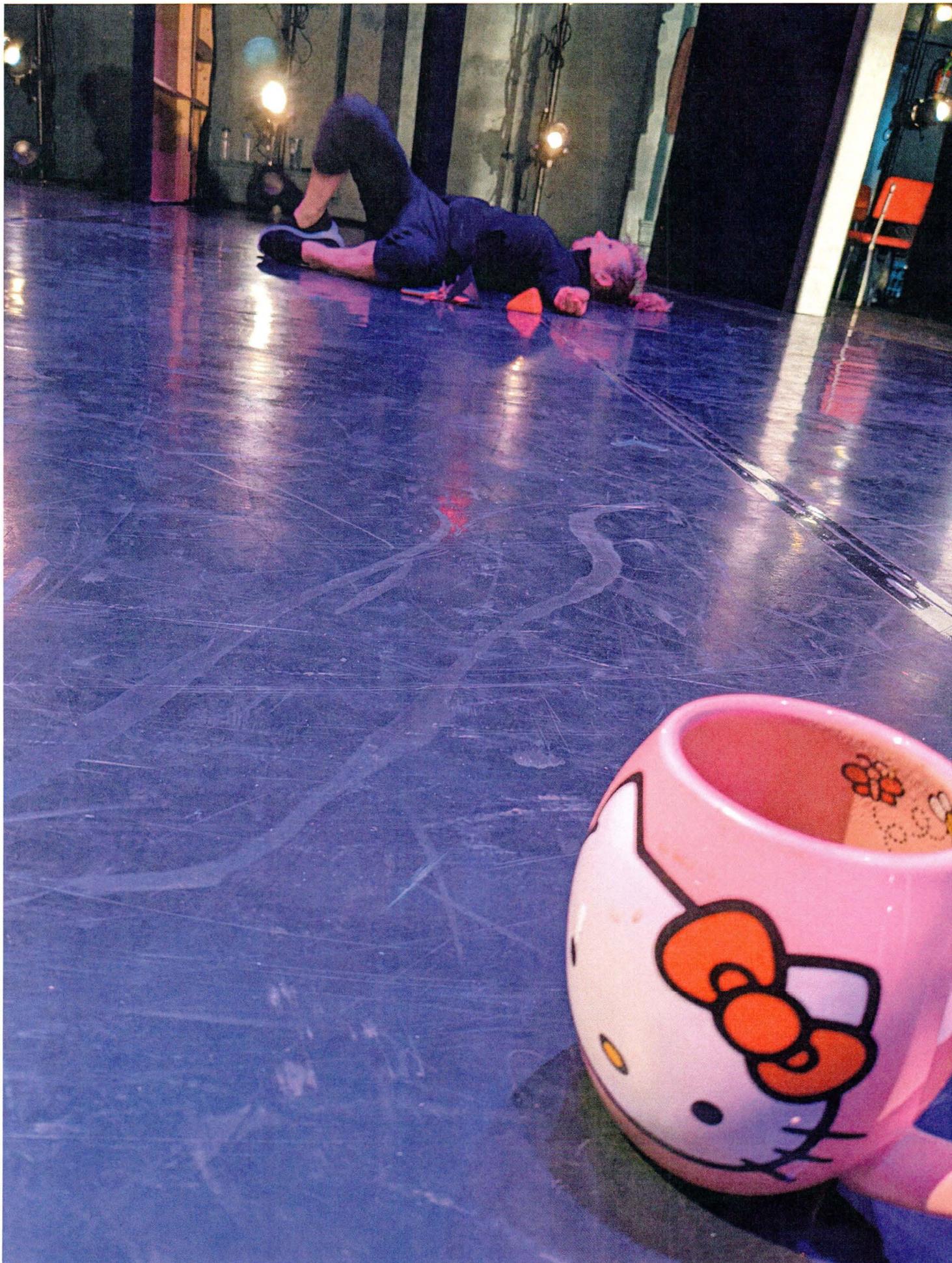
Best,  
 GM

On Wed, Jan 26, 2022 at 12:58 PM Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com> wrote:  
 MEDIUM Diary for Tuesday, January 25, 2022

Good Morning Everyone.

Anne packed her sprained ankle, and her books, and her devotion to THE MEDIUM to go back to London, but left behind a lovely gift for each of THE MEDIUM company. At the end of notes last night after our 3rd preview, Anne recognized





Subject **Re: Medium Diary Jan 22, 2022**  
From Gian-Murray Gianino <gm.gianino@gmail.com>  
To Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com>  
Cc Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>, SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Board SITI <Board@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
Date 2022-02-03 19:49



Dear beautiful people,

Yesterday was our first two-show day! It was quite an interesting experience trying to plan how to calibrate our energy. But, as always, despite the occasional protests and groans of the body, the brain got the fantastic fireworks that the show and the experience gives back. And both audiences were incredible.

The person that wins the McArthur for this entire experience is Barney. He is the rock in the theatre that takes care of us and the quality of the show. And also is pretty much entirely prepared to go on for any of us. Wow. I feel incredibly fortunate to be in company with such an extraordinary artist who is so devoted. Thank you Barney.

Ok, here I present some more videos of my experiences here in Pittsburgh...

 806173A5-F787-45A8-AB88-DAE29AABAA47.mov

 FEEB19B4-256F-4C54-9C4A-0CB4BEB43B55.mov

On Wed, Feb 2, 2022 at 10:42 AM Will Bond <bondowill@gmail.com> wrote:  
Medium Diary February 1, 2022

Good morning friends.

These photos represent the daily now. As Ellen said, the adrenalin of the previews and the opening and the company posse enveloping us with notes and support and more notes being gone now, it is the daily work at hand to be attended to. This is where the daily training and practice comes into play. We go to work, stretch and change clothes, train, run specials, verify the legs and the voice, change clothes again, and get to places. Even then nothing is guaranteed. Shout out to the audiences again. Yesterday, Tuesday, was a small group, older I think, someone unwrapping something in the dark during the first 1/4 of the opening speech of McLuhan (should I stop and allow them to finish?). A quiet show. Then, at the end, half of them stood up. Surprise! Barney thought it was a really good show, fresh, awake, so did Patti Kelly .... I felt short of air and could feel my voice hit a pitch ceiling by the end .... so, this morning adjust the breakfast to rice and beans and avocado (sorry cast) and adjust the yoga to maximize air capacity ...

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Warm wishes to everyone!

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will bond  
[www.siti.org](http://www.siti.org)

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The Medium Diary for January 26th,

I tried to get this out earlier today but the day was full. Don't worry, I was gently chided at the theatre by my colleagues.

Subject **Re: Medium Diary Jan 22, 2022**  
From Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>  
To SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Board SITI <Board@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>  
Date 2022-02-05 10:13



MEDIUM Diary February 4, 2022

Dear SITI Fam,

I watched the steady snowfall all yesterday morning, wondering if a second show would be canceled due to weather. Thursday's show was cancelled because of the storm and concerns about ice. The night off was a lovely surprise, but a strange and disorienting one too. I was grateful for yesterday's text saying we're on! As Patti said, "The audience will be a hearty one because they'll have made it here." And Akiko, Leon, and Claire were in the small but hearty audience, they braved the stormy drive and made it to our snow globe bubble of Pittsburgh!!

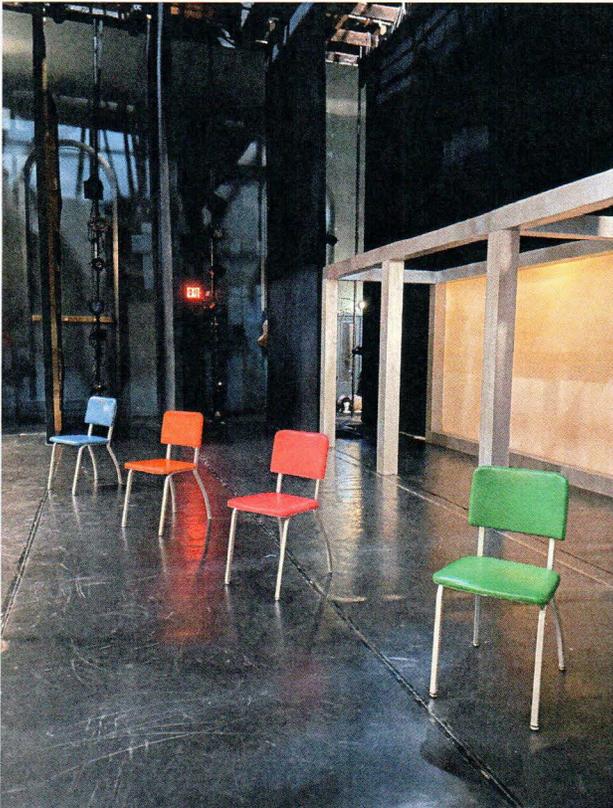
Now off to the theater for our second two show day!

Sending love,

Violeta



\*View from the slopes, just as the storm started



\*And one from the theater

Subject **Medium Diary 2/6/2022**  
From **Bernard Hanlon <barnohan@mac.com>**  
To **Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>**  
Cc **SITI Company <company@siti.org>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@citytheatrecompany.org>, Jonathan Taylor <jtt322@mac.com>**  
Date **2022-02-07 18:36**



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Hello all,

It's the day off here so I'm reporting on the weekend. Saturday was a two show day which is a killer for the gang, but the audiences were fantastic which helped keep everyone energized. Standing ovations all weekend!

Yesterday was a one show matinee day followed by a talk back. Another great show to end the week! Marc Masterson lead a wonderful post show discussion. It was a lively dialogue with the audience and the actors, even when it was over the audience were coming up to the actors to keep the conversation going!

One of the most brilliant pieces of feedback was from a younger person who grew up and doesn't know their life without technology. They were grateful to experience the show as it represented the world before computers became commonplace in our lives. The analogue/digital dialogue for sure. Really interesting!

After the talkback Marc and I got to hang out at his stunning apartment. It was super great to catch up with him one on one. Not only does he and SITI have a lot of history, he and I do as well outside the context of SITI, ATL being one example but we also have a number of actor friends in common not related to SITI. It was a warm experience getting caught up.

Today I didn't look at the script once! I am giving myself one full day not to say any of the words from the play. I am fully off book for Bondo, Stephen and GM's roles and pretty well know all of Bondo's staging and most of Stephen and GM's. I just need to follow each of them in the techno to learn that bear of a movement sequence!

Hope all is well in your corners of the world. 1 week and we'll be heading back home!  
I miss this creature:

Best,  
Barney



image.jpg  
~2.5 MB



On Feb 7, 2022, at 18:37, Bernard Hanlon <barroha@mac.com> wrote:

Hello all,

It's the day off here so I'm reporting on the weekend. Saturday was a two show day which is a killer for the gang, but the audiences were fantastic which helped keep everyone energized. Standing ovations all weekend!

Yesterday was a one show matinee day followed by a talk back. Another great show to end the week! Marc Materson lead a wonderful post show discussion. It was a lively dialogue with the audience and the actors, even when it was over the audience were coming up to the actors to keep the conversation going!

One of the most brilliant pieces of feedback was from a younger person who grew up and doesn't know their life without technology. They were grateful to experience the show as it represented the world before computers became commonplace in our lives. The analogue/digital dialogue for sure. Really interesting!

After the talkback Marc and I got to hang out at his stunning apartment. It was super great to catch up with him one on one. Not only does he and SFTI have a lot of history, he and I do as well outside the context of SFTI, ATL being one example but we also have a number of actor friends in common not related to SFTI. It was a warm experience getting caught up.

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Hope all is well in your corners of the world. 1 week and we'll be heading back home!

I miss this creature!





Subject: Re: Medium Diary 2/6/2022  
From: Akiko Aizawa <akiko@aizawa.com>  
To: Bernard Hanlon <bernhan@mac.com>  
Cc: Valenz Picco <vpicco@mac.com>, SMI Company <company@smi.org>, Board SMI <board@smi.org>, Office Staff <office@smi.org>, Patti Kelly <pkelly@cityhearecompany.org>, Jonathan Taylor <jt3322@mac.com>  
Date: 2022-02-08 11:17

Dear the team of The Medium:  
Wow!!! You gave me such an inspiration and encouragement. The show was mesmerizing with full of passion and elegance. Arigato. Have a great run this week!  
-Akiko



Subject **Feb 9, Medium Diary**  
From Ellen Lauren <ellen@siti.org>  
To Company SITI <company@siti.org>, Violeta Picayo <vpicayo@gmail.com>, Board SITI <board@siti.org>, Office Staff <office@siti.org>  
Date 2022-02-10 16:35



~Last few days now here in Pittsburgh. The weather keeps playing fickle, one moment teasing us with spring, the next with cold winds off the rivers. Monday, day off, was nice though, and walking is a pastime we can safely get away with, so many of us explore the city's neighborhoods and vistas. I walked downtown to marvel at the architecture -from the terrifying muscle of the US steel building, to the glass castles of the PPG complex, and I ended at the August Wilson Cultural Center. It was closed but a guard let me in and showed me around a bit. They are about to open the permanent exhibit about the life and works of Mr Wilson and I was allowed to take a look inside the gallery.

If you are ever here in Pittsburgh, go.

~Now, last few days here in Pittsburgh. We've entered what runner's call 'the hero's moment'. For a runner in training I've read it is the moment you open your eyes and force yourself into your sneakers and out the door, rain or shine. For us, for me now, it might come upon waking, or it might be the afternoon push as the body quiets, to get to the theater to warm up to warm up. Or it might be the seconds before the scene that challenges each one of us the most--the stillness as Bondo goes thru his terrifying breakdown before the Techno, loading Violeta over GM's shoulder for the Ventriloquist's scene, or slammed back in our chairs waiting to rush into the Rap...for me now its simply walking thru the curtains to backstage and standing at places. I think we all have this. Loaded like springs, hoping everything you've done to get there pays off, plays out.

~Last few days here, now, in Pittsburgh. We walk through the lobby and up the main stair case to get to places. We have to enter from the back of the house and slip one at a time as surreptitiously as possible up the house--left ramp then behind the curtained off backstage. Not Bondo, he's up center which is accessible from the green room. But the four of us walk up this staircase and the walls are lined with posters from the last 25 or so years of shows. The Medium is there from when we first performed it decades ago. A baby with futuristic sunglasses..I try to look at a new one each night. I also always hold the wooden polished banister on the way up. The theater was carved from an old church, designed by Leonard Perfido, and many of its lines still honor that function. As I go up the steps I think of the many different hands that touched this railing, in celebration for weddings, baptisms, to join a congregation in a weekly ritual ; or in sorrow, to honor a loved one and say good bye. A place of examination in the company of others, private and collective.

At the top of the stairs just before entering the back of house the last poster is of Kelly from years ago. I give her a thumbs up, might even stick my tongue out at her, and head into the night.

Here's a little weirdness from Pittsburgh

- the "Two Andys" , (Warhol and Carneige) amazing mural downtown. Can you see Andy reading 'Fences'? and Carneige soaking his nails?

And o, Violeta found a place to drink outside and throw axes but we'll have to do that next time...

much love for all each and everyone of you have done to get us here. It was the whole congregation.

xellen



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