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The Place of Persistence

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The Place of Persistence

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Master in Fine Arts in Theatre and Dance (Acting)

by

Megan Elyse Robinson

Committee in charge:

Professor Kyle Donnelly, Chair
Professor Charles Oates
Professor Manuel Rotenberg
Professor James Winker

2012
The thesis of Megan Elyse Robinson is approved in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2012
DEDICATION

To my mother, for her sturdy backbone and her open heart, and to Arthur Wagner, for breathing possibility into my passion.
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LIST OF SUPPLEMENTAL FILES

File 1.  The House of Bernarda Alba
File 2.  The Revenger’s Tragedy
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Thank you Eric Stine, Laura Konsin, Paula and Doug Modeen, and Charlotte Walter DeGroat for getting me here and just generally being there. Thank you Kyle, Ursula, Eva, Linda, both Marias, Jim, Charlie, Greg, Don, Jamie, and Gerhard, for trusting me with your gifts and allowing me to take them into the world. And of course, Arthur and Molli.
“Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence.” Calvin Coolidge once said, “Talent will not...”

Each day, the actor approaches the Colosseum of Theatre, armed to the teeth with vocal and physical technique, a barrage of strong character choices, and the beat of an open and curious heart. But these skills alone are not what separate the talented and interested from the passionate and successful.

The difference is persistence. Perhaps not persistence itself, but what lies beneath. It is the drive to find new depths in old work, to fearlessly brave the journey (which is uphill, both ways) of creating something from nothing and even more fearlessly letting it
fly away, to dust yourself off after challenges, time and time and time again, and find that you still shine vibrantly underneath.

The obvious gifts that my time at UCSD has bestowed are many. The range of my ability to transform, to plunge the farthest corners of my own imagination, and to guide audiences through the journey of a story has deepened almost immeasurably. There is focus and precision behind work that was once guided by pure instinct. The real gift, however, is not this new set of skills, but rather the backbone around which they were encouraged to grow. None of this would be possible without the persistence it took to gain these skills, and I am convinced that, if nothing else, it is this persistence which will carry me through my career.