UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

“This House Is Empty Now”: A Prologue to Becoming

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in

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by

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The Thesis of Andrew Gallop is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:


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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Signature Page ................................................................. iii

Dedication ........................................................................ iv

Table of Contents ............................................................... v

List of Supplemental Files ...................................................... vi

Acknowledgments ............................................................... vii

Abstract of the Thesis ......................................................... viii
LIST OF SUPPLEMENTAL FILES

File 1. Vieux Carré Photo 1
File 2. Vieux Carré Photo 2
File 3. Vieux Carré Photo 3
File 4. Vieux Carré Photo 4
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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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Professor Marc Barricelli, Chair

In the memoirs of American playwright Tennessee Williams, he asks “What does it mean to be a writer?”. Some of these memoirs are translated to the stage in his autobiographical play Vieux Carré, which follows a young writer through artistic and personal expansion, all while finding freedom from suffocation. In my second year at UCSD, I portrayed the central character in Vieux Carré, The Writer, acquiring the task of exploring these themes and presenting this question to an audience in a new way- “What does it mean to be an actor?”.
I came to notice many similarities in the character’s artistic process as a writer and my own as an actor; always observational, always taking note, internalizing the experience of those around him. While this yields a very sensitive (and necessary) approach to acting, I lacked the ability to attack the process ahead of me with vigor. Now, to “be an actor”, it has become my responsibility to do this in order to create the most visceral window for those that need awakening. In this production I achieved that by working in new forms of vocal production, toying with the dichotomy of attention to a live camera and a live audience at the same time, and by trusting the simplicity and intimacy of the text. As my time here ends and I prepare to leave, I feel now as Tennessee in New Orleans: cut open, fuming with desire to travel and reflect, and claiming artistic resilience.