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Margaret Z. Wilder

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PERFORMING YVONNE & NAOMI IN SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE

An honors paper submitted to the Department of Theatre and Dance of the University of Mary Washington in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Departmental Honors

Margaret Z. Wilder
April 2015

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Margaret Z. Wilder (digital signature)
04/29/15
Performing Yvonne & Naomi in
Sunday in the Park with George

submitted to the Department of Theatre & Dance
in fulfillment of THEA 482: Senior Project

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Margaret Z. Wilder

Gregg Stull, Project Advisor

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Gregg Stull, Chair
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REFLECTIONS

Well, it has been a week since the show closed. I decided to give myself some distance from the show before I wrote my final reflections about the process and about my past few years doing theatre at UMW. I didn't think that I could really have an aerial view of my thoughts without some time between closing the show and writing these reflections. There is also no way that I could express everything about this process in one short blog post, but here are some of my major thoughts:

I really enjoyed creating Yvonne and Naomi. I was so thrilled by the fact that I had the opportunity to create two completely distinct characters in the scope of one show. Granted, it had its challenges. Firstly, I had twice the amount of work to do than I normally would during the course of a show. I had to go through the process of character analysis for two characters from completely different time periods and backgrounds, which required twice the amount of research and thought. Also, because of the way that this show is structured, I was given so much more information about Yvonne than Naomi, which led to a tendency to think that the creation of Naomi was somehow secondary to the creation of Yvonne. I had to realize in the process that each character had to be just as developed and real as the other, despite the fact that Yvonne is more frequently on the stage. Transitioning between characters during each performance added to the difficulty of creating Naomi, due to the fact that I had a mere few minutes to run downstairs, change costume, and run back upstairs before my entrance. This situation did not allow for the complete process that I would have liked to truly transform into Naomi. Despite these challenges, I found it fulfilling to create the two characters of Yvonne and Naomi in one show. I felt a refreshed energy when I was Naomi, which is necessary in such a long show. I also think that the challenges of the dual process caused for much growth on my part as an actor, as it was a situation that I had never experienced before.

I always have a hard time with relaying self-critique, but I understand that it is a necessary part of the process for actors and performers. I think that I had many strengths throughout this process. I had great focus and determination in creating the characters of Yvonne and Naomi and in doing the necessary work to do so. I spent many hours outside of rehearsal doing the research and exploration in order to create these characters. I made a point to put all of my energy into rehearsal whenever I was called, making new choices at each rehearsal. Throughout performances, I did everything that I could to ignore the challenges I faced (such as being sick) while onstage in order to not let my performance suffer. I believe that I created two characters that were fully-developed and interesting people throughout this process, both onstage and off. I continued to grow throughout the entire process, bringing new energies to the characters each time that I became them. In terms of weaknesses, I also had many. Firstly, I had a difficult time expressing myself through blog posts, especially at the beginning of the process. I spent many thoughts at rehearsals that should have been fledged out through posts, but I was originally uncomfortable with the idea of letting people into my inner process. I became more comfortable with this idea as the process continued, but I regret not relying more of the original ideas that I had. Another weakness of mine that is present throughout all of my acting experience is my hesitance to really let go and be in the moment. I always have a hard time turning off the always-present voice in my head that is critiquing my choices. I have gradually become more comfortable with this idea, but it is still something that I am working on. I recognize that my performance sometimes suffers because I simply cannot turn off the Maggie part of my brain. I could make bolder and truer choices if I was able to do so. Despite these weaknesses, I do believe that by the end of this process, my performance revealed my hard work in the creation of two distinct characters.

I have always loved Sunday. It is a show that resonates with me on many levels. I love that it is a musical, but has the emotional depth and complicated characters that are often more indicative of a straight play. I also think that the music is lovely and contains some of the best work of Sondheim. Because of all of these reasons, I was more than excited to be cast in this show. I expected to be touched by it in a deeper way than I have been touched by any other show that I have been in. To a certain extent, these expectations were met. The first time hearing the orchestrations of “Sunday” at the sitz will be a moment that I will always
I remember, I will remember the challenges that I faced in creating Yvonne and Naomi and the relationship that I developed with the two characters. There were many great moments in rehearsal where I was inspired and found moments of truth. All of these moments were great, and I wouldn’t trade them for anything. However, I felt a disconnect with this show throughout the process. At first, I thought that it was just due to my busy schedule and inability to focus all of my energy on the show. However, as the process continued, I realized that it was possible due to the nature of the show itself. The show is structured in such a pointillist way that it does not allow for much true interaction between characters. I never met most of the people that I shared the stage space with. While I knew everyone off the stage, I think that this structure created a disconnect amongst the cast. I even noticed this in the dressing room; I primarily talked to Josh and Maggie, while other people also tended to primarily talk to those people who were connected to their characters. I have never been in a show that created such divisions just by the nature of the show, so it was a new experience for me. I think that is the sole reason for my feelings of disconnect, but I wish that I could have somehow remedied it. I really did enjoy the experience as a whole and it had countless great moments that will remain memories, but I somehow left this show with a feeling of isolation.

In reflecting on my total experiences in theatre here at UMW, I have so much that I could say. I have grown so much since my first audition for Into the Woods. I walked into the Acting Lab shaking like a leaf before that first audition, and now I can walk in with confidence and energy. I have learned a great deal about the art of performance, through both classes and stage experiences. My character analysis for my role in Into the Woods is a meager comparison to that which I did for Sunday. I now have a much better understanding of the process of creating a character and portraying that character to the audience. I have been challenged over the past three years by never having been cast as two similar characters, which has allowed for this growth. I have learned how to create a broad range of characters, which has been one of the most valuable experiences. I have developed as an actor, singer, and person because of my experiences in theatre at UMW. I do not know where I am going next year, but I will take all of the lessons that I have learned with me.

Last night’s show was one of the best yet. It felt especially good for me since I finally have my voice back. Chris noted how good last night’s performance was in vocal warm up today, and he said that it was due to us continuing to keep the material fresh and finding new moments. I think that is one of the great things about theatre; we continue to shape the show and grow as characters until closing day. In theory, each performance should get better and the final one should be the ultimate culmination. Granted, it doesn’t always work like that (casts always have off nights—due to sickness and the like), but I think that overall, we have followed that trend with this show, both on a general and an individual basis. We continue to develop a better rhythm to the show each night, and people continue to make small individual choices that contribute to the show as a whole. This show is so dependent on individual, fresh choices because it is written in such a pointillist style. It is a series of parts that only become a whole if each person maintains energy and freshness. I am excited to finish out this weekend with our best performances yet.

Being sick on stage is never fun, but I have never been as sick during a show as I was last weekend. Normally when I am sick, I do not notice it once I am on stage. I think this is partially due to the adrenaline and focus, but I also think it is due to truly taking on a character. I am still feeling less than perfect tonight, but when I went on as Yvonne and Naomi, my characters did not feel sick. That has always been such an interesting phenomenon to me. However, last weekend was a different story. I felt sick on stage no matter what I did, so my characters felt sick. I could not truly become Yvonne and Naomi while I was sick, which felt unfulfilling and incomplete. Both Yvonne and Naomi were sluggish and weak (at least compared to how they normally are), which is not appropriate for who they are. Luckily, I am feeling much better and am able to put aside my sickness while I am on stage. I hope that I am never that sick again during a show.

The first day back after a weekend break is always a little rough, but tonight felt especially hard for me. I didn’t miss any entrances or make any other technical mistakes, but I was fighting to find Yvonne and Naomi throughout the whole show. I think this was partially due to the fact that my energy level is low.
because I am fighting a cold, but I also think it was because this is the first time in months that I have not been in the process of finding these characters each day. In many ways, it is like seeing an old friend for the first time in a while; you still recognize them and know how to act around them, but you sometimes have a hard time feeling that connection. The show was also low energy in other aspects, which I think was in response to the relatively minimal audience response that we got tonight. However, we need to be able to find that energy even when the audience does not provide it. I hope that I can energize myself before tomorrow night’s performance so that I am able to find Yvonne and Naomi again.

November 9th, 2014

ONE WEEK DOWN

Well, today marks the end of the first week of the run, and I am certainly ready for a break. I knew that this show was going to exhausting from the start, but I did not realize how exhausting it was going to be. My body is sore from wearing the corset, the heavy clothes, and the shoes, and I am excited to go three days without wearing constricting clothing. I certainly now have an idea of what it felt like to have to wear these types of clothes every day (which is useful in developing my character), but I am ready to come back to the 21st Century for a few days. This show is also mentally/emotionally exhausting, due mostly to the quick switch between two characters. In order to make sure that both characters are real, fully-developed people, it takes a lot of mental and emotional energy. I will enjoy a few days of just being myself. Despite my exhaustion, I believe this has been a great opening week. The show seemed to have finally clicked with everyone on opening night, and we are in a great place. The show has a great energy that, especially with a few days of rest for everyone, is going to make the run a very successful one.

November 7th, 2014

OPENING NIGHT

Well, last night was opening night. I think that it was one of the best openings that I have ever been a part of. The show seemed to have a rhythm that it had yet to have, and it finally felt like a whole rather than a series of disconnected parts. In terms of my own performance, I was pretty pleased. I made some new choices intentionally due to notes that I had been given, which I felt good about. I also made some new choices unintentionally, due to the different energy created by having an audience, and they felt completely natural. I especially noticed some of these choices in my communication in the studio with Dot. This moment felt the most true that it had felt in all of the rehearsal process, and I felt a real relationship with Dot during that scene. I love that by merely having an audience, actors respond and make different choices. I noticed this in many actors last night, and I enjoyed the subtle changes. While we should not be making huge choices that greatly affect other actors at this point in the process, subtle choices bring a freshness to each role and to the show as a whole. I think that is one of my favorite elements of live theatre. No two performances are the same, and each is a fleeting moment that will not happen again. We need to continue to bring freshness to each performance so that our characters remain real, living people. After all, no day is the same in the life of a real person, and we should bring that sense to the people we create onstage.

November 6th, 2014

JUST THE BEGINNING

Gregg mentioned something last night after rehearsal that really struck me. He noted that opening night is not the end of our work. It is often viewed that opening night is the light at the end of the tunnel, but it really is just the beginning. We still have three weeks to live with our characters and continue to shape them into fully-developed people, and I love that idea. Sure, we have a pretty good idea of our characters at this point, but they are constantly evolving until closing night. I need to remind myself to keep making subtle choices and putting constant thought into the two people that I have shaped over this rehearsal process. I have really loved creating Yvonne and Naomi, and I am glad that that process is not yet over. I hope that by the end of these three weeks of shows I have an even clearer picture of these two women and have grown even closer to them.

November 4th, 2014

A BAD DRESS REHEARSAL...
Well the expression goes: a bad dress rehearsal leads to a good opening. I sure hope that expression is right. While tomorrow is technically our final dress, the day before invited dress always truly feels like our final dress rehearsal. And tonight was rough. The rhythm of the show was completely off tonight, for various reasons. There were many mistakes made tonight that have never been made before, all of which were relatively significant. We have developed a nice sense of the show as a whole over the past few days, but tonight has felt completely disjointed. For me, I felt off vocally and physically. This is due most likely to my exhaustion, so I hope I can find a renewed energy for tomorrow. I am also having a very hard time being in the moment while on stage, which is also because of the fact that I am so mentally exhausted. For example, I should have been able to better cover during the moment in which Louise reversed the order of her lines, but instead I merely answered in my patterned way. I am going to try to get some rest tonight and tomorrow, and I really hope that we are able to find our groove as a cast again tomorrow. Tonight has made me a little wary of opening in two days.

Comments Off | In: Uncategorized | #

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

After completing our first full run through of tech week, I have come to notice some similarities and differences in character between Yvonne and Naomi. A primary similarity is that they both enjoy being the center of attention. When I am both characters, I use my actions and words to gain the attention of those around me. However, Yvonne cares more about what those around her think about her, while Naomi cares more about how she can use people’s attention to benefit her. Both characters have significant vulnerabilities, but they mask them in different ways. Yvonne masks her vulnerabilities behind a ‘perfect’ life, while Naomi uses sarcasm and a thick skin to do so. Both characters are outgoing and receive their energy from interacting with other people. Naomi is a more independent woman than Yvonne, which is significantly due to the change in time period. Naomi does not have a partner that helps to define who she is like Yvonne has Jules. This allows Naomi to more easily speak her mind and let her opinions be known to those around her.

In noting these personality traits, I have also put some thought into how my personality relates to those of Yvonne and Naomi. Firstly, I generally do not like being the center of attention. I tend to enjoy blending into the background as opposed to being doted upon by those around me. I relate to Naomi in the way in which she masks her vulnerabilities, as I often use sarcasm to do so. I definitely have an introverted personality, as opposed to the outgoing ones of both Yvonne and Naomi, although I do occasionally find the presence of others as energizing. Finally, I like to think of myself as more similar to Naomi than Yvonne in the sense of my independence. I need to recognize these similarities and differences between myself and my characters in order to make a point to create characters that are not reincarnations of myself.

I have often wondered why Sondheim and Lapine chose to double the characters in the way that they did. Was it similarities between the characters? Was it what was most suitable for the original actors? I have searched for information about the original pairings, but I have been unable to find any. These thoughts have helped me to explore some of the possible reasons for this original casting. Maybe there was not even meant to be any similarities between the original pairs, but I have managed to find some in my creation of these two distinct characters.

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KEEPING FOCUS

I have a difficult time maintaining focus on stage during tech rehearsals. I know that tech rehearsals are not really for the actors, but we still need to be exploring new choices and further developing our characters. I find this process difficult when being stopped regularly. I hope that I do not lose the momentum that I have recently felt in creating Yvonne when we return to doing runs of the show. It is hard for me to maintain the necessary energy during tech rehearsals, but I need to be sure to find that energy again. I cannot create the characters of Yvonne and Naomi with low energy, since both characters are high energy characters.

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OCTOBER 30TH, 2014

SWALLOWED WHOLE

Gregg mentioned something a few days ago that I now fully understand after having done a rehearsal in costume and having seen the scenic/lighting design of the show firsthand. He stated that we would be swallowed whole by the show’s design if we did not bring great characterization to the table. I understood that sentiment in theory, but I did not truly feel the impact of the design until I was in the middle of it. Merely being in my costume, under the lights, and on the stage for a few hours has made me realize that I have so much more to offer to my creation of Yvonne (Naomi too, but we haven’t started tech-ing the second act). I always feel a sense of character rejuvenation during tech rehearsal, but this show is especially impacting in that manner. Yvonne needs to be larger than life if she is going to hold her own in this world. I am excited to make some new choices in the days to come to make my character Yvonne be a part of the world of the show.

Comments Off | In: Uncategorized | #

OCTOBER 29TH, 2014

A WORKOUT

I woke up sore two days ago, especially in my ankles and calves, and I did not originally realize why. It wasn’t until I put my rehearsal shoes back on and stood on the rake again yesterday until I realized that I was sore from standing on the rake. I don’t recall being sore from the rake of the *Spring Awakening* set, but I was also in flat boots for that show, as opposed to the heeled boots that I am wearing in this show. I will have to get accustomed to standing on the rake for this show and make a point to stretch before and after rehearsals. The costuming and the set design for this show are the most challenging that I have encountered in my theatre experience, making them an added challenge to creating Yvonne and Naomi. I have to be sure to take good care of my body over the next few weeks so that I am able to sustain my characters’ postures and movements.

Comments Off | In: Uncategorized | #

OCTOBER 27TH, 2014

SITZPROBE

The sitzprobe is always such an important part in the rehearsal process. Not only do you catch the first glimpse of the final sound of the show, but you become aware of a vast amount of aural information that you have otherwise been unaware of. Last night’s sitzprobe was no exception, revealing a great deal about the world of the show and about my character. Here are some of my observations:

The opening chords of the show reveal the somewhat imaginary and fantastical world that we (the characters) live in. They set the tone for the creation of the perfect park by Georges throughout the first act.

The orchestrations of ‘No Life’ have a slimy quality to them, as they mix high strings with deeper sounds from the synthesizer. This song is also one of the only numbers in 3/4 time of the show. These qualities reveal the nature of Jules’ and Yvonne’s characters, as our music sounds different from the general world of the show.

In ‘The Day Off’, Franz sings about our household, and during this, the harpsichord plays the notes of an otherwise sweet melody. This use of an eery-sounding instrument reveals that our house is not a perfect place, only one that seems to be.
Also during 'The Day Off', the orchestrations involve all of the instruments in quick rhythms that mimic the sounds of a busy city when we sing the lyrics that begin with "Taking the day on Sunday..." Maybe this isn't really a day off?

All of the instruments and all of the actors do not play/sing at once until the Act I finale. The combination of all of these elements for the first time creates an amazing build that truly represents the finishing of the painting and the final combination of all of the elements of the painting. Until this song, we are all disconnected pieces, but we finally come together at this point.

A tension is created throughout 'It's Hot Up Here' through multiple musical elements. These include the string instruments plucking rather than using their bows and the synthesizers playing staccato, low notes. The use of these techniques adds to the feeling of being stuck in the painting. Maybe they represent drops of sweat?

In the music of the Chromolume, the orchestrations sound like beams of light dancing over a surface. This sound is created through various synthesizer instruments playing repeated rhythms and melodies. The melody of color and light is also present in the orchestrations, tying George's creation to the first act.

In 'Putting it Together', the disconnected nature of the lyrics and scene is supported by the synthesizer playing a repetitive, busy melody and rhythm and by the use of staccato by many of the instruments. The orchestration grows at the end of the song and most of the instruments begin to play towards the end, supporting the idea of putting all the many pieces of a work together.

The Act II finale reinforces the idea of that of Act I, except that we (as the parts of the painting) come together ourselves in order to show our love and support of George. The orchestrations are warm and welcoming, and they inspire George to create new art.

During the past few rehearsals, I have discovered ways in which Yvonne can become a more complex person. I realized that I was originally creating a relatively flat character for Yvonne, but with the direction of Gregg I have come to understand how Yvonne can have a greater depth. At first, I did not think about how important the moments of vulnerability are to Yvonne's development. I have recently been exploring those moments of vulnerability, such as the moment between Yvonne and Dot in Georges' studio, in order to create a more well-rounded character. I have also managed to find smaller moments of vulnerability and release of tension throughout the show that allow Yvonne to be more than an antagonist in the show. One of these moments that I discovered, with the help of Gregg, is during the eulogies, when I give Louise a touch of love and support as opposed to a look of frustration and disappointment. I hope that I manage to create a character that is likeable and understandable to the audience, as opposed to the flat antagonist that Yvonne originally appears to be.

I wore my corset for the first time in rehearsal today, and it gave me a significant amount of information about my character. Prior to today, I had been trying to simulate the effect that a corset has on one's posture, but I did not truly feel that effect until today. Wearing the corset instantly transports me to the time period of the first act. Then, in taking the corset off, I am also transported to the time of the second act, as I feel the freedom that modern clothing (including that of the 80s) allows women. Wearing the corset not only gives me the appropriate posture for Yvonne, but it also gives me the sense of structure and rigidity that was a characteristic of the 1800s. This sense especially supports my character choices and development, as my character is one of the major representations of that structure and rigidity in the show. I have also been wearing a rehearsal skirt for the past few rehearsals, which changes the way in which I move about the space. I have to be more careful about my movements in order to maintain appropriateness. I am excited for the continuing addition of other rehearsal costumes, and eventually full costumes. I cannot truly shape my characters until I am aware of how they feel in their clothing.
Last night was the first Backstage Pass event that involved the cast of Sunday. It was great to be in the same room as the people of our community who care so much about our department that they want to be a part of our rehearsal process. The turnout for this event is testament to the impact that we have on our community, and I am excited to share our process with these people. It is great to see people who are so enthusiastic about our production, and it gave me a renewed passion to create a great piece of theatre. I hope to develop a relationship with these members of our community over the course of this rehearsal process because it will make the process of developing a character even more fulfilling.

OCTOBER 2ND, 2014

FIRST STUMBLE THROUGH

Tonight is our first stumble through, and I am both excited and anxious. The first stumble through is great because it allows you to see a first glimpse of the show with all of its elements, but it is also terrifying because it reveals how much work still needs to be done. I am off book for most of my material, and I am going to try to get through this stumble through without the crutch of my book. I have realized in this rehearsal process that most of the time that I carry my book I do so purely for comfort. I need to be more confident in my preparation and realize that I cannot truly begin to create my work on stage until the book is out of my hands. I have to become comfortable with the fact that I might mess up, and if I do, it is not the end of the world. I am going to use tonight's stumble through to take steps towards this different level of comfort, and hopefully my preparation carries me through.

SEPTEMBER 28TH, 2014

A PRODUCTIVE WEEKEND

This weekend was a great weekend of rehearsal for me. I love returning to scenes for the first time after they have been blocked, because that is the first step in the process of truly defining your character. I had a fun time exploring Yvonne during the past couple of rehearsals, and I am starting to realize how much possibility her character has. She may come off as an antagonist snob, but she is much more than that. She goes through a great deal of experience and change throughout the first act, which reveals her complexities. I left this weekend of rehearsal with many ideas and a renewed excitement for making choices that will define Yvonne. I have some work to do!

SEPTEMBER 25TH, 2014

FINDING CHARACTER IN COSTUME

Since I was cast in this show, I have been struggling with defining my second act character (Naomi). Sondheim and Lapine give us so much information about our first act characters, but our second act characters are more open to interpretation. Prior to my first costume fitting a couple of days ago, I was formulating a certain idea for Naomi, but seeing my costume pieces completely changed that idea. It is always interesting to me to see how much a person’s clothing says about them. Not only did the first glimpse of my costume change my thoughts about the character of Naomi, but it also gave me inspiration to explore a different path for her. I felt stuck in the characterization that I had previously done for her, but having a visual of her allowed me to liberate myself from that original struggle. I am so glad that I was able to see some of my costume pieces this early in the process.

SEPTEMBER 22ND, 2014

A BUSY WEEKEND

This weekend was full of rehearsal, which revealed a great deal about character and about the dynamic of the show as a whole. Unfortunately, my blog was inaccessible for a period of time, but I will use this post to examine many of the thoughts that I had during the weekend. The first blocking rehearsals are such an important step in the process. I love getting a show up on its feet and creating a skeleton on which to build for the next month. Walking on the floor plan of the set for the first time gives me a feeling for the physical atmosphere of the world of the show. For example, I mentally knew that the right side of the stage was the location of the river, but until we began blocking I did not think about the fact that (mostly) all entrances would be from stage left. I also enjoy blocking because it gives me the first physical relationship between
myself and the other characters. By seeing how my character relates to others spatially, I better understand the character dynamics of the show. The first blocking rehearsals also are revealing in that they show how much work I have yet to do in creating a full-fledged character. They are the first indication of how prepared I am with my music and lines, and they give me a first sense of what my character will be once the book is out of my hands. This weekend of rehearsals revealed that I am more prepared musically than in any other way, and that I still have a great deal of work to do character-wise. I know that through further rehearsal I will become more prepared, but I also recognize that I need to dedicate some more time outside of rehearsal to that preparation.
OVERWHELMED BY RESEARCH

I am starting to feel overwhelmed by the amount of research that creating these two roles is going to take. I enjoy the process of research, but I have never been in a show where I needed to create two distinct characters (thus requiring two distinct sets of research). In addition to that challenge, this show is more based in historical reality than most of the shows that I have been involved with. I am worried that without doing thorough research, I will make decisions that are inappropriate for the time period(s). I sat down to begin my character development, and realized that I have hardly made a dent in the information that I need to wade through in order to develop two characters. I have the type of personality that can easily become obsessed with the process of seeking out information, so I am also worried that I will spend too much time on research and leave insufficient time for character development. I need to learn where the appropriate balance is between the two extremes. Hopefully this process will help me to do so.

PRIVATE REHEARSAL

I have used the past few days that we have had off of rehearsal to focus on private rehearsal, familiarizing myself with the music that we have learned thus far. There is nothing more satisfying than being so comfortable with a melody or a harmony that it is in your ear without any help from the piano/recordings. This entire day, I have had a piece of my melody from "It's Hot Up Here" stuck in my head, which I hope is just proof that my practice time has been paying off. I am excited to rehearse as a group once again and see if that is really the case. It will be great to hear how my individual practice coalesces with that of all of my fellow cast members in the harmonies and melodies of the big group numbers.

AN INSTANT CONNECTION

I just finished reading my libretto in full for the first time since I was cast. Wow. I have read the book and lyrics of the show before, but never did I feel such a connection to the show. I have a feeling this show is going to seep into every pore of my life for the next few months, and I am both excited and mildly terrified. It is such a powerful show, and I cannot wait to explore it further with each rehearsal, research session, and subsequent reading. I hope that we are able to create a work of art that does justice to the amazing book and lyrics (not to mention music...that will come in other posts) of this show. If merely reading the text of this show can bring me to tears, I can only imagine the impact that we will be able to have on our audiences.

A CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

One week ago, I auditioned for UMW's production of Sunday in the Park with George. Three days later, I was cast in the roles of Yvonne/Naomi, and I could not be more thankful for the opportunity. With a few days of rehearsal under my belt, I can already tell that the process of creating and performing these characters will be an exciting challenge. This site will serve as my means of expressing these challenges and
documenting my journey from casting to performance. I hope to explore these new roles with the tools and knowledge that I have attained over the course of my three years at UMW and to create two fully-developed characters that I am proud to call my Senior Project. Visit my Recent Posts for my regular thoughts throughout the process and the Research and Character Development pages to learn more about important context and character work!

Comments Off | In: Uncategorized | | #
I will use this page to explore Uta Hagen’s Nine Questions as a means of developing my two characters in Sunday in the Park with George. I will update this page on occasion, but also look to my Recent Posts to see my most recent character development thoughts and concerns.

Who am I?
Name
Yvonne Dubois
Age
30-32 (over the course of the first act)
Address
18 Rue Chappe
Paris, Île-de-France
Relatives
Jules: my husband
Louise: my daughter
Vallerie Bernard: my mother
Pierre Dubois: my father
Likes
One of my major interests is art. Since my husband is a painter, I enjoy viewing works of art and appreciating the different techniques used to create them. I am particularly fond of the work of the Impressionist painters, because I think their technique captures the inherent fleeting nature of the world. I do not necessarily understand what makes art “good,” but I try my best to contribute to conversations about art. I also enjoy the occasions that I am able to spend time away from the house, on Sundays in particular, because I am able to escape the home that I am trapped in all week. I love when I am noticed by those surrounding me, so I enjoy going to events where I am able to show off my class and stature.
Dislikes
I do not like when I am ignored or disrespected. Because of this, I find being a mother frustrating. I do not find joy in the process of raising a child that does not listen to me. I also do not like the feeling of being trapped in a dependent relationship with my husband, because I would prefer to think of myself as being an independent person.
Hobbies
I do not have time for many hobbies due to the fact that my time is absorbed by keeping the house and maintaining a positive social position for my husband and myself. However, when I do have free time, I enjoy socializing with friends and acquaintances. I occasionally do some drawing and painting of my own. I occasionally do some reading and knitting.
Career
My sole ‘career’ is ensuring that my home and family are properly cared for and that my social calendar is full. I oversee the work that my servants do in my home and assist them with raising my daughter, Louise. I ensure that my husband and I always have events to go to that allow us to mingle with those of the bourgeois class and show off our status.
Description of Physical Traits
I am 5’7” and of medium build. I have dark red hair, light skin, and blue eyes. I always make sure to maintain good posture and keep each hair and article of clothing in place. I care very much about appearances.
Opinions and Beliefs
I believe that those of us in the bourgeois class deserve to be there. I think that we have earned the right to be higher in society and demand respect from those around us. Each person has his or her appropriate class, and people should not try to bridge the gaps between classes. In general, I do not think that people
should try to change the way things are currently done. The process of change is troubling and burdensome. One thing that I believe should be modified is the way in which women are viewed. I believe that women should be more revered than they are. Women are the ones who provide a suitable home and family life for their husbands, so they should be treated with dignity.

Religion
I was raised Catholic and continue to be a practicing Catholic. My family and I attend mass regularly each Sunday and on religious holidays, and I am raising my daughter to be a practicing Catholic. My relationship to the church and its beliefs is important to me, but I also recognize that the social implications of going to church are equally as important to me.

Education
I received primary education through a Catholic school. In addition to this minimal formal schooling, I was taught the ways of maintaining a household by my mother. I am able to read and write at an average level.

Origins
I come from an upper-bourgeois family from Paris. My mother and father were married in an arrangement between their two families, both from Paris and the surrounding areas. My father is a successful banker, and my mother is a typical wife and home-maker. I was an only child, so my parents ensured that I would have a successful social and financial future.

Enemies
I am not sure that I would classify anyone in my life as a true ‘enemy,’ but there is animosity between a couple of people and me. Firstly, my relationship with Dot has always been tense. She does not give me any respect, and I often find myself jealous of her. She does not recognize the similarities between our relationships and lives, through which I believe we could be friends. Secondly, I have negative feelings towards Frieda due to her inappropriate relationship with my husband. I always suspected that there might be something off about her character and her relationship with her husband, and I was right.

Loved Ones
My primary loved ones are my husband, my daughter, my mother, and my father. The relationship between my husband and me is complicated to explain. While we were arranged in marriage by our parents, we did at one point have a loving and passionate relationship. I appreciate the support he gives me, but I do not always think that he listens to me or considers my opinions and feelings when making decisions. Jules seems bored with what I have to offer him. We have gradually become this way over our years of marriage, and I wish our relationship could go back to the way it was. My relationship with my daughter also invokes conflicting emotions. I love my daughter as any mother loves her child, but I have never felt suited for motherhood. I find it frustrating to attempt to raise someone who refuses to listen to me and who does not understand the importance of social appearances. I do not see any traits of myself or my husband in my daughter, so I do not know how to relate to her. My relationships with my husband and daughter are fairly indicative of my relationships with my mother and father. I love my mother and father and appreciate their hands in raising me, but I was never close to either parent. My mother and father feel more like social acquaintances than they do family.

What time is it?
Century
Scenes 1.2, 1.5, 1.7a, 1.14c, 1.15, 2.8, 1.11b: 19th century
Scene 2.1a: 20th century
Scene 2.1b: no time

Season
Spring-Summer

Year
Scenes 1.2, 1.5, 1.7a, 1.14c, 1.15, 2.8, 1.11b: 1884-1886
Scene 2.1a: 1984
Scene 2.1b: no time

Day
Scenes 1.2, 1.5, 1.7a, 1.14c, 1.15, 2.8, 1.11b: Sundays
Scene 2.1a: Friday
Scene 2.1b: no time

Minute
Scenes 1.2, 1.5, 1.7a, 1.14c, 1.15, 2.8, 1.11b: Afternoons, 1:00-3:00 p.m. (roughly)
Scene 2.1a: 7:00 p.m.
Scene 2.1b: no time

Significance of Time
Time is very significant to my current situation. Since it is early afternoon on Sundays in the spring and summer, my family is strolling through the park to enjoy the weather. Because it is the 19th century, strolling through the park and socializing is a common Sunday afternoon activity. In addition, the passage of time reveals many changes in the dynamics of my personal relationships.

Where am I?
Country
Scenes 1.2, 1.5, 1.7a, 1.14c, 1.15, 2.8, 1.11b: France
Scenes 2.1a: The United States of America
Scene 2.1b: no place
City
Scene 1.2: Paris
Scenes 1.5, 1.7a, 1.14c, 1.15, 2.1a, 2.4b, 2.8: La Grande Jatte
Scene 1.11b: Paris
Scene 2.1a: Chicago, Illinois
Scene 2.1b: no place
Neighborhood
Scene 1.2: 1st arrondissement
Scenes 1.5, 1.7a, 1.14c, 1.15, 2.1a, 2.1b, 2.8: the park
Scene 1.11b: 10th arrondissement
Scene 2.1a: Grant Park
Scene 2.1b: no place
Home
Scene 1.2: temporary building adjacent to the Louvre
Scenes 1.5, 1.7a, 1.14c, 1.15, 2.1a, 2.1b, 2.8: outside
Scene 1.11b: studio of Georges (16 rue de Chabrol)
Scene 2.1a: The Art Institute of Chicago
Scene 2.1b: no place
Room
Scene 1.2: room displaying “Une Baignade Asnieres”
Scenes 1.5, 1.7a, 1.14c, 1.15, 2.1a, 2.1b, 2.8: outside
Scene 1.11b: studio, dressing room
Scene 2.1a: Second floor, Impressionist gallery
Scene 2.1b: no place
What surrounds me?
Scene 1.2: paintings, appreciators of art, food, drinks, waiters, artists
Scenes 1.5, 1.7a, 1.14c, 1.15, 2.1a, 2.1b, 2.8: Georges, Dot, an old lady, a nurse, Jules, a boatman, two girls names Celeste, Louise, Franz, Frieda, two soldiers, Louis, a man with a bicycle, a boy bathing in the river, a young man sitting on the bank, a man lying on the bank, trees, benches, dogs, a dog, Fifi, monkeys, the river, grass, parasols, ducks
Scene 1.11b: Georges, Dot, Jules, “A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte,” paintbrushes, paint, a table, a chair, bottles, a ladder, various incomplete and complete works of painting and drawing

What are the given circumstances?
Past
I was born in 1854 in Paris, France to Pierre Dubois and Vallerie Bernard. I grew up as an only child, attending a primary Catholic school. My parents were members of the upper bourgeois class, so I enjoyed a privileged life. We had four servants in my childhood home, and I learned from them and my mother how to keep a household. When I was 18, my parents began searching for a suitable husband. My family and the family of Jules were in the same social circles, so they decided that we would be a good match. Jules courted me for many months, and we were married in 1875. We enjoyed a year of marriage before I had Louise in 1876. During that year, we moved into our current apartment and hired the four servants that we have today. Jules and I discussed the possibility of having another child once Louise was born, but we decided that one was plenty enough to handle. For the past eight years, we have raised Louise in our household, with my primary focus being maintaining our family and home and with Jules’ primary focus being his artwork.

Present
Jules and I have gradually grown more distant throughout our relationship and marriage. Our relationship was originally passionate and affectionate, but currently we have become cold towards one another. Jules seems bored with me, and I do not know how to peak his interest. I have a feeling that he may have a mistress or two. My relationship with my daughter is also strained, which does not help my relationship with my husband. Overall, I currently feel stuck in my situation. I wish I could change the dynamic of my home, but I do not have the power to do so. I would appreciate a greater sense of independence in my life.

Future
In the next two years, Jules will have an affair with our primary female servant, Frieda. I will lose all trust in him and all hope in our relationship. In addition, Louise will continue to grow, and I will start to recognize that my parenting has allowed her to become undisciplined. Because of this realization and my lack of hope in my relationship with Jules, Louise and I will grow closer as she begins to reach womanhood. I will remain in my home with Jules, unhappy as I may be, in order to keep up appearances and maintain a household for my daughter.

What is my relationship?

To Total Events
My existence is a driving factor to multiple events. My relationship with Jules and his successful career is an example to Georges. We represent the life that Georges could have if he chose to do artwork in the mainstream Impressionist method. By being that representation, we give Georges something to conflict with and turn against. I am also a driving factor in Dot’s final decision to leave France and move to America.

http://seniorprojectmzw.umwblogs.org/character-development/
with Louis. I help to make her realize that she is lucky for the situation that she has found herself in by expressing my jealousy towards her. Finally, my presence in the park is a reminder to others in the park of the different social strata of the time and the importance of social class.

**To Other Characters**

I am the wife of Jules, the mother of Louise, the master of Franz and Frieda, the owner of Fifi, the acquaintance of Georges and Dot, and the fellow park-goer of an old lady, a nurse, Jules, a boatman, two girls names Celeste, Louise, Franz, Frieda, two soldiers, Louis, a man with a bicycle, a boy bathing in the river, a young man sitting on the bank, a man lying on the bank.

**To Things**

I am the owner of fine clothes and accessories. In addition, I have a parasol that I carry regularly. I enjoy owning belongings that reveal my wealth and importance.

**What do I want?**

Super Objective: To keep up appearances
Scene 1.2: To criticize
Scene 1.5: To gossip
Scene 1.7a: To flaunt To confront
Scene 1.11b: Tobefriend
Scene 1.14c: To blame
Scene 1.15: To assimilate To harmonize
Scene 2.1a: To complain
Scene 2.1b: To reflect
Scene 2.8: To assimilate To harmonize

**What is in my way?**

Super Objective: My obstacle is the fact that my life is not as perfect as I would like others to believe. My marriage is slowly deteriorating and my daughter refuses to listen to me. I am feeling stuck in my current situation, and there is nothing I can do to change that.

Scene 1.2: My obstacle is those people who find merit in Georges’ new painting. Jules supports the criticism that I am expressing, but there are others in the gallery who think Georges’ work is credible and that my comments are distasteful.

Scene 1.5: My obstacle is the presence of Georges and Dot. If they overhear that which I am saying, they would get angry and stop the gossip.

Scene 1.7a: My obstacle is all of the other people in the park. They are distractions from me being able to flaunt my appearances and my importance. My obstacle is that Louise is misbehaving. She told me that Franz and Frieda abused her, but now she wants to see the ducks and play with the bicycle. Also, other people keep taking any opportunity that I have to speak with Franz and Frieda (such as Louise).

Scene 1.11b: My primary obstacle is Dot’s predisposed opinion of me. She thinks that I am nothing more than a pretentious fool, so she does not want to listen to the ways in which I relate to her. Georges is another obstacle because he shares similar feelings, so he does nothing to foster a friendship between himself and me or Dot and me. Finally, the difficulty that I find in being vulnerable makes trying to befriend Dot by revealing personal secrets a challenge.

Scene 1.14c: My obstacle is the truth. I first try to blame Franz and Frieda for losing Louise, but I do not realize that there is a bigger issue at hand. I then try to blame Louise, but she reveals that Jules has been kissing Frieda in the park. It takes me a while to understand who my blame should be directed towards.

Scene 1.15: My obstacle is allowing myself to be a part of a whole rather than a distinct individual. I enjoy being regarded as more important than those around me, so it is difficult to assimilate and harmonize into something that does not make me the center of attention.

Scene 2.1a: My obstacle is that I am stuck in a painting for all eternity. No matter how much I complain, I cannot change my situation.

Scene 2.1b: My obstacle is allowing myself to show vulnerability to others. It is difficult for me to reveal to others that I truly care about the people in my life, even those that I judge.

Scene 2.8: My obstacle is allowing myself to be a part of a whole rather than a distinct individual. I enjoy being regarded as more important than those around me, so it is difficult to assimilate and harmonize into something that does not make me the center of attention.

**What do I do to get what I want?**

Super Objective: I criticize, I gossip, I flaunt, I befriendl, I blame, I assimilate, I complain, I connect
Scene 1.2: I judge, I mock, I joke, I laugh
Scene 1.5: I exclaim, I laugh, I mock, I joke, I judge
Scene 1.7a: I stroll, I draw attention, I show off, I glamorize I pursue, I blame, I question
Scene 1.11b: I relate, I open up, I communicate, I listen
Scene 1.14c: I accuse, I question, I punish, I yell, I search
Scene 1.15: I relax, I relate, I appreciate

Scene 2.1a: I exaggerate, I whine, I am unappreciative, I am stubborn
Scene 2.1b: I reflect, I open up, I communicate, I appreciate, I relate, I express
Scene 2.8: I relax, I relate, I appreciate
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Who am I?</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
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</table>
| **Address**   | 1140 N. LaSalle St.  
Chicago, IL 60610 |
| ** Relatives**| Tim Eisen: my father  
Deborah Eisen: my mother  
Lena Eisen: my sister |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>** Likes**</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My main interest is music. I grew up learning multiple instruments, with my primary focus being the piano and the violin. I continued in my music education by attending a music conservatory post high school and have since become a professional musician and composer. I have always been attracted to music due to its power to express and communicate emotion. In addition to music, I am interested in all things creative. I love art and art history, and I have many friends who are professional artists. I also enjoy reading and writing poetry and viewing theatre and dance performances.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Dislikes</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>As much as I enjoy all things art, I dislike the business component of art today. I do not like the fact that compromises must be made by artists due to a lack of funds or the incompatibility of collaborators. In relation to this, I do not like how quickly the world has become commercialized and run by big business. I do not like when a few people have all the power, making everyone else subject to them.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Hobbies</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My hobbies include playing music, writing music, listening to music, writing poetry, reading literature, and watching old movies. All of these activities give me inspiration to create my work and continue growing as a musician. In addition to these hobbies, I enjoy visiting art museums, attending theatre and dance performances, and socializing with fellow artists and musicians.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Career</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>I am a professional composer and musician. I am a member of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, playing the violin. In addition, I take on various independent compositional projects when such opportunities arise. I am still early in my music career, and I am excited about the various opportunities that will come to me in future years and the path that my career will take.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Description of Physical Traits</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>I am 5'7&quot; and of medium build. I have red hair, light skin, and blue eyes. I do not care much about physical traits and appearances, caring instead about what I feel like on the inside.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Opinions and Beliefs</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>I believe in the expression of individuality and being a free spirit. In my opinion, the country is taking a turn for the worse. The current president has many beliefs that are opposite of mine, such as big spending for military, conservative family values, and little support for social programs. Being in the arts community, I have seen many friends and loved ones struggle with the battle against AIDS, and I find it appalling that the president would rather spend money on the military than on those with real social needs. This big spending is apparent in various other components of society today, as everything is becoming commercialized and society is being encouraged to spend haphazardly. This commercialization is especially prevalent in the music and art industry, with MTV taking over the music world and art collectors collecting art as a status symbol. I find all of this spending and commercialization inconsistent with the inherent nature of society and art, and I hope that the country manages to change its attitudes and habits.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Religion</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>I was raised in a Lutheran household, but I currently do not practice any religion. I believe in a larger spirit and a higher purpose, but I do not believe in structured religious practices.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Education</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>I attended primary through high school education in my hometown of Chester County, Pennsylvania. Before my final years in high school, I realized that music was my true passion and thus applied to music schools for my further education. I decided to attend the Chicago Musical College of Roosevelt University, where I gained a conservatory-type music education and graduated with a Bachelor of Music in the area of Music Composition.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Origins</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I came from a wealthy family from Chester County, Pennsylvania. My parents are conservative Lutherans that raised me in a strict household. My father is a successful accountant, and my mother is not employed. My parents met in college and were married a year after graduating.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Enemies</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have conducted my life in a way that I have avoided making enemies whenever possible. Most of my less-than-friendly relationships have been caused by artistic differences between myself and my fellow collaborators. In college, I worked with a couple of musicians whose outlook and approach clashed with mine and caused great disagreement. In my recent project, my relationship with Dennis has been strained due to his overly-scientific approach to the project. I felt his approach was artistically limiting, so we got in many arguments over the course of the collaboration. In my recent project, my relationship with George has...</td>
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</table>
also been strained, as he often sides with Dennis when we are in disagreement and refuses to rightfully acknowledge the importance of my work to the project.

Loved Ones
My primary loved ones are my mother, my father, my sister, and my friends. My relationship with my parents has always been strained due to the fact that they have vastly different beliefs than I do. I respect my parents and appreciate all that they have done for me, but I have never felt particularly close to them. My sister and I were close when we were little, due mostly to the fact that we are only two years apart. However, as she grew older, she decided to follow the footsteps of our parents as opposed to those of her big sister. Lena and I are still close, but we do not connect the way that we once used to as kids. My friends are my greatest support system. I have a great number of friends from college, and I am constantly making new ones. George is one of my newest friends, and we have grown very close throughout the process of creating his latest Chromolume.

What time is it?
Century
20th century
Season
Spring
Year
1984
Day
Friday
Minute
7:00

Significance of Time
Time is significant because it sets the scene for this piece of art and its reception. The Chromolume is created in the popular post-modern technique of the 1980s, embracing historic references and abstract form. The music that I compose for the presentation of this piece of art resembles the electronic, synthesized music popular in the 1980s, with classical influences present throughout. The Chromolume is received in a way consistent with that of the 1980s as well, as it is judged based on its relevancy and potential marketability rather than its inherent artistic value. Because it is a Friday evening, the atmosphere is one of celebration and festivity, which effects the way in which people interact.

Where am I?
Country
The United States of America
City
Chicago, Illinois
Neighborhood
Grant Park
Home
The Art Institute of Chicago
Room
Second floor, Impressionist gallery

What surrounds me?
George, Marie, Dennis, Bob Greenberg, Harriet Pawling, Billy Webster, a photographer, a museum assistant, Charles Redmond, Alex, Betty, Lee Randolph, Blair Daniels, two waitresses, Elaine, other museum guests, “A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte,” various Impressionist paintings (Manet, Renoir, Monet, Degas, van Gogh, etc.), hors d’oeuvres, champagne

What are the given circumstances?
Past
I was born in 1954 in Chester County, Pennsylvania to Tim and Deborah Eisen. I attended primary through high school at Collegium Charter School, alongside my sister. I took private piano and violin lessons growing up, which led me to discover my passion for music. After graduating from Collegium, I continued my education at the Chicago Musical College of Roosevelt University. My parents paid for my university education because they have always supported my classical music training. While at Roosevelt, I further developed my passion for musical composition and I began to appreciate a wider field of inspiration. I experimented with an electronic and synthesized sound, and found great joy in it. After graduating from Roosevelt, I auditioned for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in order to have a steady stream of income and continue developing my classical skills. Last year, a friend of mine mentioned that she had a friend named George who was looking for a composer for an art exhibition. I contacted George, and it was instantly a good artistic connection.

Present
I am hoping that Chromolume #7 will be received well by the artistic community, because it could open up a whole realm of possibilities for me. I am excited to see the finished project and how George’s artistic creation melds with my musical creation. Because the project has put extra stress on me for the past year, I
am also excited to celebrate with friends and colleagues tonight. I think we all deserve to have a night of fun socialization.

Future
Within the next few weeks, Marie will pass away, ending George's inspiration to create Chromolumes. I had hoped thought that we would be able to continue our artistic collaboration on another project, but that will not be possible, at least in the near future. The presentation of Chromolume #7 and the connection of my work to George's will open up multiple possibilities in the future. Bob Greenberg will contract me to compose music for important museum events and exhibitions. In addition, other multimedia artists that are friends of George will ask me to a part of their future projects. I will go on to complete multiple compositional projects and have a successful music and compositional career.

What is my relationship?
To Total Events
I am an important component in Chromolume #7's existence and this presentation of it. Without my music, it is possible that this event would not be happening and this group of people would not be assembled to view it. I also have an important role in the Chromolume's technical difficulties. If I had been truthful about the amount of voltage that my synthesizer required (or had taken Dennis seriously enough to actually give him an accurate number), the machine would not have malfunctioned. I am an important part in developing the atmosphere of the reception, as my actions let other people know that this is an occasion for celebration and fun.

To People
I am the collaborator of Dennis; the collaborator and friend of George; the friend of Alex and Betty; the acquaintance of Marie, Bob Greenberg, and Elaine; and I become acquainted with Harriet Pawling, Billy Webster, and multiple other museum guests during the evening.

To Things
The Chromolume is an important object to me, as I care very much about its presentation. At the reception, the champagne is something that I enjoy and cannot get enough of. I do not care much for the hors d'oeuvres, and I usually ignore them when the waitresses pass by. I am still impressed by "A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte," but I have spent much of the last year focusing on it, so it has lost its initial attraction and intrigue. Finally, I do not care much about my clothes or accessories, as I do not hold much stake in appearances.

What do I want?
Super Objective: To impress
Scene 2.2: To present
Scene 2.3: To gauge
Scene 2.4a: To mingle
Scene 2.4b: To celebrate

What is in my way?
Super Objective: My major obstacle is that I am unknown amongst most of the guests at the exhibition. My work on the project, while very important to me, was only a small part of the collaboration as a whole. Therefore, I am trapped in George's shadow and have a hard time making my own impression.
Scene 2.2: My obstacles to presenting my collaborative work of art include Marie's inability to correctly follow the note cards and the technical difficulties. Both of these obstacles stall the presentation of Chromolume #7, which is irritating because I am antsy to have others see the finished product.
Scene 2.3: My obstacle is that there are many differing opinions about Chromolume #7. I am trying to gauge the general response to the art presentation, but there does not seem to be a consensus among the guests.
Scene 2.4a: My obstacle is that no one wants to talk to me for an extended period of time. This is likely due to the fact that I am having difficulty contributing meaningfully to any conversation because I have had multiple drinks.
Scene 2.4b: My primary obstacle is that I am still not sure if the guests enjoyed the presentation, so I am having a difficult time fully enjoying myself. Nonetheless, I have had a number of drinks more than most of the guests, which is dampening increasing my celebration because I am much more intoxicated than the people surrounding me.

What do I do to get what I want?
Super Objective: I present, I gauge, I mingle, I celebrate
Scene 2.2: I bow, I smile, I repair
Scene 2.3: I question, I agree, I disagree, I listen
Scene 2.4a: I walk, I talk, I drink, I introduce myself, I relate, I smile
Scene 2.4b: I drink, I laugh, I smile, I talk

In: | | #
Putting It Together
Creating a Person from a Painting

10/25/14

Scene 1.2:
- “Of course he’s young” needs to refer to how cute Georges is

Scene 1.11b:
- Watch your beat changes
- Beat before “I have been jealous of you on occasion”
- Reassure Dot with “You are very lucky”
- Beat before “Don’t you agree?”

Scene 1.15:
- Faces relax once Georges says “Order”

Scene 2.1b:
- Give Boatman a look after Louise runs off
- “Well most of the women did” is either a secret to the audience or a revelation to Jules

Scene 2.2:
- Enter before Dennis, as soon as musical equipment is mentioned

11/2/14

Scene 1.2:
- “that dress” do you want to try directing it to Jules? seems not quite right where we are playing it

Scene 1.5:
- “I agree, I agree.” It seems from the text that Jules admires Georges and is conflicted about Yvonne’s strong feelings about including Georges in the next group show. The first “I agree” should come from that conflict. The second “I agree” must be in response to Yvonne’s picking up on the fact that he is not convinced.

Scene 1.11b:
- do we see some of your recovery from climbing the stairs on your entrance? are you still recovering when you speak to Dot?
- Jules has rarely sketched me... emphasis on you... that fuels what you are feeling
- you are very lucky beat beat
- Oh I suppose Jules cares the second part is recovery from the first confession
- slowly get yourself US of the painting before you get him to leave... it’s like you secretly sneak away from Dot... don’t want it to seem like you are frozen and then come to life

Scene 2.1b:
- you must be very quiet when you are leaving this scene... I do not want to hear you walking down the steps... backstage... going to the stairwells
- it’s up to you where to play that last line... it’s lovely in both directions

Scene 2.4b:
- if you are downstage of a portal during a “freeze” you must freeze. Parts of the audience can see you until you are completely off deck…you are not offstage when you think you are
- on “dinner is served” talk amongst yourselves as you leave the stage…remember you are at a party

11/3/14

Scene 1.2:
- be sure we see how you feel about “the dog” since it comes up again and again
- that dress…very nice

Scene 1.8:
- maybe Louise is pulling Yvonne back into the park…so there is a full arm extension between the two of you…prior to Louis offering pastries

Scene 1.11b:
- nice on the stair climb…now add a beat when you first enter where you have to catch your breath before speaking
- nice…I have been jealous of you on occasion
- nice you have to have a life…don’t you agree?

Scene 1.15:
- the sharp turn on order needs to be clean…anticipate it so it happens without excess movement or energy

Scene 2.2:
- quicker entrance on…and give George a look on your exit…let us know how you feel about him getting all the attention
- surge from the musical equipment entrance…you know it’s not your fault…let us see it on your entrance
- more “there’s no juice” bigger declaration…that’s the diagnosis…not your equipment

Scene 2.4a:
- Naomi Eisen…say it so he will remember it…and spell it right on press releases

Scene 2.4b:
- nice talking…after dinner is served

Scene 2.8:
- very, very important…please be in your place offstage to make your entrances here by the time the Old Lady makes her entrance. If you enter after this, you are causing shadows when you walk through the sidelights to get into position to go onstage.
- clean up the bow…it should be simple and strong and happen exactly where intended

Bows:
- thank you! so easily staged thanks to your great focus…remember to smile and truly appreciate the audience and its appreciation of your work. It should be gracious, generous, and full of love.

11/4/14

Scene 1.2:
- nice energy and relationship on the song
- I love the dog…it’s invitational…as if you expect him to tell you more about the dog
- I love how you solved “that dress” thank you

Scene 1.7c:
- lovely entrance

Scene 1.10b:
- bigger gasp
- much, much bigger action looking at one another on the button

Scene 1.11b:
- strong entrance…don’t come so far into the room before May I take a peak?
- such fine listening…you are listening and letting her words affect you…very nice
- don’t smile on too flat too angular…these are hurtful words because you are not good enough for him
- get back to Jules says that’s what’s wrong with his painting…let her in on secret information that you
know...you are answering her question...what are you really doing here

Scene 1.15:
- very nice crisp turn on Order...thank you

Scene 2.2:
- we should see you at score...one look to Marie and a glance to George...don't stop on your exit
- we should see that you are offended when you enter the stage again
- there's no juice is your diagnosis...and they are morons for not knowing

Scene 2.3:
- open up when you are with Vanessa & Mc DS of the painting

Scene 2.4b:
- lovely work with Lee Randolph
- DON'T FORGET YOUR EXIT CONVERSATION. You got a positive not on this and then it disappeared. Make it happen.

BOWS:
- you should begin traveling as the previous group is bowing...we need to keep this going or people will stop clapping

11/5/14

Scene 1.10b:
- the turn to look at your neighbor is on the button not after...clean it up, please

Scene 1.11b:
- careful...don't milk extraordinary...try, maybe, letting it come from the fact that you are exhausted from climbing the stairs

Scene 2.1a:
- please, please, please be still when you take your place
- commit, commit, commit...you cannot pull back at anytime during this number...you need to play consonants and be disciplined to the text or we will lose your beautiful lines

Scene 2.1b:
- very nice moment at well most of the women did

Scene 2.2:
- great entrance, Naomi
- there is no juice needs to be a stronger, bigger declaration that it is not your fault

Scene 2.3:
- you must commit to your individual lyrics...there is a lot going on and we must be able to understand every single word

Scene 2.4b:
- please make conversation on your way to dinner...it stops when you leave the deck...but I must have the conversation

BOWS:
- keep the bows moving...it's a long call and I want you each to have your moment but it has to move along

In: || #
Putting It Together
Creating a Person from a Painting

This page is going to serve as a dumping ground for all of my research this semester. Much of it will be directly taken from its sources, so I do not take credit for the information presented or the conclusions drawn.

Putting it Together and Finishing the Hat? Deconstructing the Art of Making Art by Dominic Symonds

- The music and lyrics mimic the delicate application of dots of color that typifies Seurat’s work
- Seurat developed pointillism in the wake of scientific research that colors reach the eye in the form of light of varying wavelengths—desired hue is created when primary colors are processed on the viewer’s retina
- The depiction of the painting takes place wholly within the viewer’s inner consciousness
- The lyrics (Act I Finale) acknowledge the artifice of the painting—point to the strange gap that lies at the heart of the work
- If the work relies on the presence of the viewer to arrange its final completion, it is not a finished product
- The image relies on the space around the dot
- Throughout the show, the rhetoric of creation is compositional, but the final image of the show is a bare stage
- The show creates a paradox which deconstructs the concept of composition
- The music emulates the process of building up the image and the lyrics use compositional phrases to consolidate the idea of a constructive process
- By comparing Chromolume #7 to La Grande Jatte complexifies what might otherwise be the show’s simple dismissal of gimmicky modern art
- The mythology of ‘great art’ are exposed and we are guided towards a consideration of inner meaning (what lies between the dots)
- Sondheim and Lapine wrestle with the inner meaning of pointillist art-work by using their own interpretation of pointillism, which pricks and rips through the sonic and visual veil of performance space
- The pointillism of the music is the most obvious representation of Seurat’s dots and is one of the dominant characteristics of the score
- Arpeggiated spreading of notes forms harmonic texture and consolidates the thematic impressionism of the show with its 7ths, shifting harmonies, and oscillating arpeggio patterns
- The above effect gives the impression of unity
- Plurality of small notes on the page suggests the flickering of light effects of Seurat
- Paradox embodies the play of silence and music in the score and color and light in the painting
- What the ear arranges is what is beautiful—the discrete dots and spaces become subsumed into an impression of completion
- Rhythmic spurts of speech and melody represent the painting style
- Rests in music draws attention to the significance of space between the notes and causes us to recognize that silence is a fundamental part of the compositional whole
- Sondheim first tried and rejected a replication of Seurat’s color theory that led to a musical palette of chromatic sequences
- Instead made use of carefully calculated intervals
- Sondheim challenged the conventions of musical composition with an exploitation of where space should exist between the chords
- Following the Opening Prelude, the show opens with silence
- Reflects the blank of the canvas, the boredom of Georges’s muse Dot, and the still heat of the breezeless afternoon
- It is from this silence that composition begins to emerge
- Lapine exploits the stage space by having the characters interact and interweave in a way that they cannot on the canvas and by having Georges move between the characters
- Georges is amongst, behind, and between characters in ways that threaten the logic of the painting
Stephen Sondheim and the Disintegration of the American Dream: A Study of the Work of Stephen Sondheim from ‘Company’ to ‘Sunday in the Park with George’ by Orchard, Lee Frederick

- Lapine drafted a first act and arranged a reading of his material at Playwright’s Horizons
- A workshop version of Sunday was prepared for laboratory performance (5 songs)
- The show had a brief (25 performance) off-Broadway run
- Sondheim slowly supplemented and shaped his score
- During the first two weeks of performance, Sondheim added several numbers to complete the first act
- By the end of the run, a second act consisting of two more songs was included for the last three showings
- Original intention was to give the secondary characters songs, but audiences weren’t interested
- Sondheim and Lapine wrestled with the skeletal second act amid suggestions that the show should be produced on Broadway without it
- Sondheim and Lapine believed in the second act’s fundamental relationship to the overall effect and intent of the musical
- It was not until three nights before opening that Sondheim completed his last song (“Children and Art”)
- Sunday debuted at the Booth Theatre on May 2, 1984
- Ran for 540 performances
- Greeted with the reappearance of the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Musical
- Awarded the Pulitzer Prize, one of the most prestigious honors in the field of drama
- Critical reactions were mixed:
  - Clive Barnes: “a somewhat simplistic and bathetically pretentious course in art appreciation”
  - David Denby: “innovative yet dull, commercially hazardous yet academic… the triumph of theatrical vanity.”
  - Paul Berman: “the ideas on art and society march across the stage, proclaiming their single theme: avant-garde artists are superior to everyone else. Look, and bow your head. Avant-gardians are individualistic, principled, visionary, inspired, perhaps hard to get along with, but divine. The rest of the world is white bread at best, more likely covered with mold”
  - John Simon: “It is… intricate sculpture in ice: Instead of melting your heart, it melts itself.”
  - Howard Kissel: “Sunday is a thin and lifeless evening.”
  - David Denby: “Sunday in the Park with George is completely undramatic—especially in the songs”
  - Frank Rich: “Sunday is almost as unusual for what it is not as for what it is. It breaks with the history of the serious Broadway musical, much as Seurat broke with the history of art… Sondheim and Lapine have rewritten the rules by creating a musical which is as far removed from opera as it is from 42nd Street. Sunday is a watershed event that demands nothing less than a retrospective, even revisionist, look at the development of both the serious Broadway musical and of Sondheim’s groundbreaking career.”
  - Mark Czareski: “Sunday is a complex, intellectually challenging inquiry into the creative process.”
  - Jack Kroll: “Sondheim’s score is original even for him…To say that this show breaks new ground is not enough; it also breaks new sky, new water, new flesh and new spirit.”
  - Peter McWilliams: “This new score is the masterwork of a man who has spent the last thirty years writing for the American musical theatre. Just as “La Grande Jatte” did for Seurat, Sunday in the Park represents for Sondheim a bold and creative statement, one that embraces and yet goes dramatically beyond his earlier achievements.”

- Many believed there was an autobiographical nature to the production
- Sondheim’s connection with Sunday and George is profound and revealing
- Seurat was born on December 2, 1859 and painted only seven major canvases before his sudden death at the age of 31
- Seurat was ridiculed by critics and fellow artists and was unable to sell a single painting during his lifetime
- Seurat pioneered pointillism and rebelled against conventional practices of the time (the impressionist movement)
- Seurat applied the laws of science to his painting
- Seurat preferred the term “Chromo-Luminarist” to “Pointillist”
- Seurat took two years to compose “A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte,” which was shown at in 1886 at the Eighth Impressionist Exhibition
- Monet, Renoir, and Sisley withdrew their submission from the Exhibition in protest
- The show depicts both the painstaking process of bringing a work of art to life and the painful process of life itself
- Sunday’s impressionistic structure is observable in the show’s visual design—sonic elements are introduced, sometimes deleted, rearranged, and finally organized into a work of art
- In both Lapine’s book and Sondheim’s lyrics, a kind of linguistic pointillism prevails
- Sondheim employs the use of arpeggios and staccato accents placed upon numerous chord clusters to suggest Seurat’s brushstrokes, agitated rhythms to insinuate the feverish working of the artist’s mind, repetitive riffs of a variety of brief fragmentary musical figures, diatonic harmonies, and austere, although perhaps not readily hummable motifs
- The orchestration is scored for only eleven instruments to correlate with the eleven unmixed colors used by Seurat
- The repetition of certain motifs and phrases provided an aural equivalent of Seurat’s color scheme
- Sondheim shapes the commentaries of Jules and Yvonne into contained linguistic phrases to exemplify their rigid and unimaginative persons and sets their remarks to a waltz tempo carrying connotations of formality and conventionality
- The show focuses on the theme of disconnection and examines the difficulties its protagonists have maintaining meaningful relationships.
- Issues of anxiety and obsession are explored in the show.
- The theme of corruption is revealed in the second act.
- Sondheim discovers hope in *Sunday*.

**The Stephen Sondheim Reference Guide** compiled by Michael H. Hutchins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Previews:</td>
<td>began April 2, 1984 at the Booth Theatre, NYC (35 performances)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opened:</td>
<td>May 2, 1984 at the Booth Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closed:</td>
<td>October 13, 1985</td>
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<tr>
<td>Run:</td>
<td>604 performances</td>
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</tbody>
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Produced by The Shubert Organization and Emanuel Azenberg by arrangement with Playwrights Horizons

Directed by: James Lapine

Scenery by: Tony Straiges

Costumes by: Patricia Zipprodt and Ann Hould-Ward

Lighting by: Richard Nelson

Special Effects by: Bran Ferren

Sound by: Tom Morse

Hair and Makeup by: Lo Presto/Allen

Movement by: Randolyn Zinn

Music Published by: Tommy Valando

Musical Direction by: Paul Gemignani

Orchestrations by: Michael Starobin

Cast:

- George – Mandy Patinkin
- Dot – Bernadette Peters
- An Old Lady – Barbara Bryne
- Her Nurse – Judith Moore
- Franz – Brent Spiner
- A Boy – Danielle Ferland
- A Young Man Sitting on the Bank – Nancy Opel
- A Man Lying on the Bank – Cris Groenendaal
- Jules – Charles Kimbrough
- Yonne – Dana Ivey
- A Boatman – William Parry
- Celeste #1 – Melanie Vaughan
- Celeste #2 – Mary D’Arcy
- Louise – Danielle Ferland
- Freda – Nancy Opel
- Louis – Cris Groenendaal
- A Soldier – Robert Westenberg
- A Man With Bicycle – John Jellison
- A Little Girl – Michele Rigan
- A Woman With Baby Carriage – Sue Anne Gershenson
- Mr. – Kurt Knudson
- Mrs. – Judith Moore
- George – Mandy Patinkin
- Marie – Bernadette Peters
- Dennis – Brent Spiner
- Bob Greenberg – Charles Kimbrough
- Naomi Eisen – Dana Ivey
- Harriet Pawling – Judith Moore
- Billy Webster – Cris Groenendaal
- A Photographer – Sue Anne Gershenson
- A Museum Assistant – John Jellison
- Charles Redmond – William Parry
- Alex – Robert Westenberg
- Betty – Nancy Opel
- Lee Randolph – Kurt Knudson
- Blair Daniels – Barbara Bryne
- A Waitress – Melanie Vaughan
- Elaine – Mary D’Arcy

**Tony Awards:**

- Best Scenic Design (Tony Straiges)
- Best Lighting Design (Richard Nelson)

**Drama Desk Awards:**

- Best Musical
- Best Director of a Musical (James Lapine)
- Best Lyrics (Stephen Sondheim)
• Best Book of a Musical (James Lapine)
• Best Orchestrations (Michael Starobin)
• Best Scenery (Tony Straiges)
• Best Lighting (Richard Nelson)
• Best Special Effects (Bran Ferren)

Other Awards:
• 1985 Pulitzer Prize for Drama
• New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Musical
• Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Musical
• Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Scenery (Tony Straiges)

**Optics and Biologic Connectedness** by Polyxeni Potter

**Georges Seurat:**

• Pointillism was Seurat’s artistic contribution during his brief life
• Parisian, from a middle-class family, and enjoyed a comfortable life and proper education
• Showed an early talent for drawing
• Studied sculpture and attended the prestigious École Des Beaux-Arts
• Became interested in the workings of light through his photography
• Studied optics and the processes at work on the silver particles of photographic film
• A student of Ingres
• Believed in a systematic approach to art
• Nicknamed “le notaire” for his immaculate attention to his appearance
• Bend toward order and control
• Gifted with formidable observational skills, patience, concentration, and painstaking adherence to detail
• Interested in the relationship between natural light and the application of paint
• Wanted to create an impression not on the canvas, but on the viewer
• Influenced by the work of French chemist Michel-Eugène Chevreul, as he believed that next to each other, colors appear as dissimilar as possible, both in optical composition and tonal value
• Seurat’s color theory, with its emphasis on the viewer, influenced the development of modern art
• His artistic goal: to show “modern people, in their essential traits, move about as if on friezes, and place them on canvases organized by harmonies of color, by directions of the tones in harmony with the lines, and by the directions of the lines.”
• Seurat’s life embodied the personal isolation seen in Sunday on La Grande Jatte
• Intensely private about his affairs
• Parents did not know that he had a child until he was taken ill, possibly with diphtheria
• Died at age 31

**A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte:**

• Seurat’s masterpiece
• One of the best-known works of the 19th century
• Shows a local crowd during a moment of leisure outdoors
• Figures seem suspended in mid-moment, levitating yet permanently fixed
• Represent workers in shirt sleeves, fashionable couples, children at play, soldiers in uniform
• Seurat did not dwell on the figures’ faces, nor did he offer anything but their frontal or profile forms—classical, refined, distinct, balanced, and frozen in time
• The iconic setup impassionedly places people, animals, and objects in a suddenly interrupted scene
• Figures used as scene building blocks
• Elegantly curved and grouped in harmonious ensembles, the figures are isolated from each other and detached from the beauty around them
• Seurat was not interested in the emotional or evolutionary connectedness of the figures

**The Penguin Concise Dictionary of Art History** by Nancy Frazier

**Postmodernism:**

• Began around 1960
• Applauds the death of Modernism
• Rejects the formal attitude to both the making and critiquing of art in favor of eclecticism
• Embraces historic references such as classical conventions and renaissance adaptations
• Combines distinct period styles
• Rejects notions of “purity” and the concept of artistic authority
• Embraces irony
• Ideological values include: popular and pluralist, semiotic form, traditions and choice, elitist and participative, piecemeal, architect as representative and activist
• Stylistic values include: hybrid expression, complexity, variable space with surprises, conventional and abstract form, eclectic, semiotic articulation, pro-organic and applied ornament, pro-representation, pro-metaphor, pro-historical reference, pro-humour, pro-symbolic

**Paris and the Countryside** by the Portland Museum of Art

• Women and artists were seen as purveyors of visual urban culture
• The development of new working methods and the advent of more mechanized production systems put
Putting It Together » Research

A Social History of France in the 19th Century by Christophe Charle

- For women, domestic service still remained a considerable source of employment, equivalent to one-third of the work open to them
- Domestic service was not a bad option in the comparative balance sheet of constraints and rewards
- The male servant originated from an urban or family tradition
- Men were only employed in the houses of the upper echelons of the bourgeoisie
- The average age of marriage in the working class was 24
• The masters rejected married women as maids or made their family life almost impossible
• The majority of male servants were married because they worked in houses with several servants (their wives could also be employed there)
• There was a rapid staff turnover
• In the capital and the main towns, the hierarchy of wealth could be assessed by the number of servants
• The least affluent members of the middle classes had no qualms about devoting up to one-sixth of their income to wages in order to have the impression of being on the side of the masters
• Most Frenchmen remained in the social class that they had been born into
• France opened its doors to entry by elites from religious minorities
• There was a doubling of the overall fortunes of Frenchmen between 1850 and 1914
• The social status of the groups which the law kept on leading-strings at the beginning of the nineteenth century (women and youth) showed barely any improvement at the end
• The petty bourgeoisie and lower sections of the middle classes filled 13 percent of places alongside bourgeois groups proper at the Rennes lycée in 1875-1890
• The intermediate groups preferred to entrust their children to the education stream which was more open because it was free, in the intermediate schools which developed under the Third Republic
• In the provinces, the bourgeois owned chateaux and country houses
• In Paris, the bourgeois owned enormous apartments or individual residences
• Bourgeois were distinct by their pursuit of sport and the collection of objects, curios, furniture, souvenirs, and art collections
• The women of the bourgeois played an essential role in establishing the lifestyle—in charge of private life, the biological reproduction of the family and its spiritual perpetuation, and the inculcation of the manners and morals of the milieu into the heirs

The 1980s by Bob Batchelor and Scott Stoddart

• Ronald Reagan symbolized a 1950s view of America—patriotism, conservative family values, and conspicuous consumption
• The decade represents a time of great despair for many—the homeless, AIDS victims
• The nation grew more cynical and detached as the decade continued
• Reagan called for a dramatic increase in military spending
• Economic policy included freeing Americans from big government, implementing massive tax cuts for businesses and individuals, and increasing the national debt to build a stronger military
• The richest 20 percent of the population increased its income by one-third, while the total income of the lowest 60 percent fell in real dollars
• Massive federal deficit drove interest rates higher, ensuring that little extra funds existed for social programs designed to help the poor and needy
• By the end of the decade, more than 12 million people lived as hyper poor, making less than half the poverty line standard
• 50 percent of America’s towns saw a decrease in population as more people flocked to big cities
• By 1985, more than 8.4 million people developed AIDS worldwide, while 6.4 million died from the disease
• The AIDS crisis paved the way for many broad reaching initiatives that have had far-reaching social impact on American society
• Households became smaller and less traditional, falling from 2.76 members in 1980 to 2.63 in 1990
• More families suffered and endured divorce
• Families headed by unmarried men and women grew 32 percent in the decade
• The income gap between college graduates and non-college graduates increased
• Between 1980 and 1990, the number of women in the labor force jumped from 52 percent to 58 percent
• The youth were the children of liberals of the 1960s, empowered with advantages such as college, social justice, and prospects that involved higher paying jobs
• With younger members of society making more money, products, services, and entertainments were geared towards the young
• A revolution in technology fostered the mall culture
• Innovations in portable radio and cassette players enabled young people to listen to music constantly
• MTV transformed the music industry immediately, and turned into a true capitalist phenomenon
• Art industry was viewed by some as reflecting the self-absorbed, moneyed, self-congratulatory culture driven by Wall Street financiers and the newly rich who traded art like they did stocks and junk bonds
• The postwar baby boom created the need for an institutionalization of art teaching, creating a glut of artist on the market
• The financial security of the 1980s affected the art world critically, throwing art in to the speculative realm of the stock market
• Nouveau riche collectors paid outrageous prices for masterworks
• Artists became new celebrities with agents securing them multimedia deals
• Art was seen as the visibly relevant statements of a disenfranchised portion of the social culture
• The buyers changed the art world, not the artists
• Public outrage became commonplace in a sensationalized media environment
• Public art became hotly contested debates about art’s place in society

Behind the Name maintained by Mike Campbell and Tara Campbell
Yvonne:
- Gender: feminine
- Usage: French, English, German, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish
- Pronunciation: ee-VON (French), i-VAWN (English), ee-VAWN (German)
- Regularly used in the English-speaking world since the late 19th century
- Derived from the Medieval French form of Ivo
- Ivo was the name of two French saints: an 11th-century bishop of Chartres and a 13th-century parish priest and lawyer, also known as Ivo of Kemartin, the patron saint of Brittany
- Ivo was a Germanic name, originally a short form of names beginning with the Germanic element iv meaning "yew"
- Ivo was the name of several saints (who are also commonly known as Saint Yves or Ives)

Naomi:
- Gender: feminine
- Usage: English, Hebrew, Biblical
- Pronunciation: nay-O-mee (English), nie-O-mee (English)
- From the Hebrew name Na'omiy meaning "pleasantness"
- The name of the mother-in-law of Ruth in the Old Testament
- Not used as an English Christian name until after the Protestant Reformation

Ancestry.com

Eisen:
- German and Jewish
- Occupational name for an ironworker or smith, from Middle High German isen ("iron")
- May have been used as a nickname, with reference to the strength and hardness of iron or to its color
- As a Jewish name, it was adopted as an ornamental name from modern German Eisen ("iron") or the Yiddish cognate ayzn

French Surname Meanings & Origins by Kimberly Powell

French surnames developed from four major sources:

- patronymic and matronymic surnames
- occupational surnames
- descriptive surnames
- geographical surnames

Common French surnames:

- MARTIN = derived from the Roman god of fertility and war
- BERNARD = strong or brave as a bear
- THOMAS = comes from the Aramaic for "twin"
- PETIT = small
- DURAND = strong and enduring
- RICHARD = powerful or brave
- MOREAU = little dark
- DUBOIS = wood
- ROBERT = bright fame or famous in counsel
- LAURENT = wreathed or crowned in laurel
- SIMON = hearkening or listening
- MICHEL = like God
- LEROY = the king
- GARCIA = patronymic meaning
- LEFEBVRE = iron worker or smith
- ROUX = red, red hair or ruddy complexion
- DAVID = beloved
- BERTRAND = bright raven
- FOURNIER = man of the oven
- GIRARD = spear
- BONNET = maker of bonnets
- MOREL = dark and swarthy
- ROUSSEAU = red-haired person
- LAMBERT = light of the land
- BLANC = white, in hair or complexion

Studies of the Monkey by Seurat and Pisanello by Albert Boime

- Pisanello was one of the more fascinating early Renaissance artists, having a talent of drawing animals
- Pisanello's work appealed to Seurat
- Seurat often incorporated quadrupeds into his work
- The tiny monkey with the curled tail aroused many critical comments when the work was first exhibited
- The inclusion of the monkey may have been motivated by a number of reasons: previous artists had included monkeys in outdoor renaissances and spectacles and in royal renaissances; the monkey symbolized for the medieval and Renaissance societies man's material passions and all that was base in the human mind
The monkey accompanies the most aristocratic-looking types in Seurat's painting
Seurat's monkey bears a striking affinity with that of Pisanello
Seurat humorously exaggerated the contours of the monkey
Seurat rendered objects in the form of clean silhouettes with scarcely any modeling

Seurat and the Making of La Grande Jatte by the Art Institute of Chicago

Seurat was only 26 when he showed A Sunday on La Grande Jatte—1884 at the eighth annual and final Impressionist exhibition in 1886
In scale, technique, and composition it appeared as a scandalous eruption within Impressionism, a deliberate challenge to its first practitioners
The painting's visibility was dramatically increased in 1924, when Frederic Clay Bartlett purchased the picture and placed it on loan at the Art Institute
Seurat was born in Paris in December 1859 into a middle-class family with enough income to support him throughout his life
Seurat began his artistic career conventionally at the prestigious École des Beaux-Arts
Seurat quit school after a year and spent one year in the military before returning to his art
Seurat's work in black and white bears the earliest mark of his artistic maturity
Seurat's early paintings were informed by the law of contrast as articulated in the writings of M.-E. Chevreul (observed that just as dark and light oppositions enhance each other, any color is likewise heightened when placed beside its “complement”—located on the opposite side of the color wheel)
Seurat used the island of la Grande Jatte and the opposite shoreline as the setting for a number of paintings, and he was not the first artist to find inspiration on or near the island
Seurat converted a well-known Impressionist site into an open stage for la Grande Jatte
Seurat positioned a variety of characters across his canvas that he had developed in his many drawn and painted studies for the work
From the “auditions” of the characters, Seurat eventually selected the performers for the final production, combining the functions of both playwright and director
Seurat used as his setting a small section of the elongated island in the Seine just beyond Paris’s city limits
The many dining and dancing establishments, wine shops, and shipbuilders' yards located at different points on the island did not make their way into la Grande Jatte nor did the factories across the river, which had undermined the island’s social cachet
Seurat focused on the green park at the far northwestern tip, facing the town of Courbevoie
La Grande Jatte incorporates 3 dogs, 8 boats, and 48 people who congregate on a Sunday to enjoy and parade around in “nature,” including soldiers, boaters, the fashionably and casually dressed, the old and the young, families, couples, and single men and women
La Grande Jatte conveys grand solemnity in counterpoint with a wry sense of humor
Seurat's stated ambition for was to “make modern people in their essential traits move about as they do on [ancient Greek] friezes and place them on canvases organized by harmonies”
Seurat introduced an element of irony in by suggesting a sense of timelessness—in the frozen quality of the figures—while also insisting on a very up-to-the-moment awareness of fashion
Relationships between figures are implied, but the characters' overt lack of interaction makes it difficult to identify or even imagine the plot
While the figures appear to fit seamlessly within the whole, their exact social stations and motivations remain open to speculation and debate
Seurat was determined to create a new classicism that would remake Impressionism by eliminating the accidental and the momentary, while preserving the vitality of life in forms that embodied enduring ideals
Seurat drew on a variety of sources—ancient and modern, serious and comic—to realize his ambition through a subtle interweaving of seeming contraries
Divergent visual sources give the figures both modern flatness and anonymity and at the same time a pharaonic (ancient Egyptian) sense of timelessness and seriousness associated with large-scale history painting
La Grande Jatte’s preparation involved approximately 28 drawings, 28 panels, and 3 larger canvases