



Arts
or
CrAFTS

Rob Roznowski

Norman Maine Publishing

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Norman Maine Publishing

P.O. Box 1400

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To
*Kate Bushmann and Lisa Herbold,
both great artists
and excellent craftspeople.*

Arts or CrArts was originally produced at Michigan State University in November 2007: Rob Roznowski, director; Justin Miller, scenery; Amber Marisa Cook and Jodi Ozimek, costumes; Samantha Bostwick, lighting; Kirk A. Domer, projections; Dave Wendelberger, assistant director and composer; Heather Laws and Rebecca Simon, stage managers.

Cast:

Marla Carter

Liz Chase

Jaclyn Hofmann

Stephanie Koenig

Rashida Morris

Diana Obradovich

Monica Percich

Amy Shelton

Jordon Sivosky

Kellyn Uhl

Phil Ashbrook

Jaret Bozigian

Lucas Daniels

Derek Elstro

Matt Kaufmann

Vinnie Mascola

Hazen Natzmer

Kamaal Reffigee

Dave Wendelberger

Alex West

Arts or CRAFTS

SKIT/MONOLOGUE COLLECTION. This fast-paced, interactive show takes a comical look at the thin line that often separates “art” from “craft.” From Greek architecture to nail art, a host of entertaining characters engage in this age-old debate, including the Mona Lisa, a scrapbooker, a community theatre actor and fan, a moonshiner, a rapper, a pop star, a plumber, a professor, theatre critics, quilters, and many more. Audience members can get in on the fun by making their own artwork at intermission and by voting on whether an audience member’s creation is “art” or “craft” at the end of the show. Easy to perform with just one simple set, skits and monologues from this collection can be selected to suit your casting needs and the desired length of your show. Skits and monologues may be performed individually as well.

Performance Time: Flexible, depending upon the number of skits/monologues performed. Entire show runs approximately 90 minutes.

NOTE: For a family-friendly version in which profanity and adult content have been edited out, please see the Big Dog Publishing version at www.BigDogPlays.com.

Synopsis of Scenes

ACT I

Prologue. Movie presentation.

Greek or Geek (3 flexible)

Fair or Fare (1 M, 3 F, 2 flexible)

Aria or Area (2 M, 2 F)

Emory or Memory (5 F)

Scraps or Scrapes (1 F)

Critique or Critical (2 M, 3 F)

Folk or Fine (2 flexible)

Exposed or Exposé (1 M, 2 F)

Mona or Moan (1 F)

Past or Passed (18 flexible)

Merit or Mar it (1 M)

Pietà or Piety (1 M, 3 flexible)

Plum or Plumb (2 M)

Play or Plié (6-8+ M)

Destry or Destroy (9 M, 3 F, 10 flexible)

Intermission. (Audience creates artwork.)

ACT II

Entr'acte (1 M, 1 F, 13 flexible)

Fan or Feign (1 M, 1 F)

Patches or Patchy (4 F)

Sew or So (6 F, opt. extras)

History or His Story (3 M, 1 F, 16 flexible)

Hyperbole or Hyper-ball (3 M) or (3 F)

Witch or Which (1 M, 1 F)

Lesson or Lessen (2 flexible)

Sale or Sail (2 M, 2 F, 2 flexible)

Fable or Feeble (1 M)

Arts or Crafts (Cast)

#ArArArAr

(Flexible cast 20+.)

(With doubling: 3 M, 6 F, 11 flexible, opt. extras.)

The number of actors used for production is flexible. It has been performed with as many as 20 actors and as few as six, depending upon the number of skits/monologues included in the show.

Production Note

Feel free to rearrange, cut, adjust, or add any elements to your production. You may even want to collaborate and create new skits or monologues to be included in your production.

SeT

The set can be a bare stage with set pieces unique to each scene. Titles for the scenes may be announced, written on a whiteboard, or dispensed with entirely.

The original production used the following set, which is optional. On one side of the stage, there is an ornate decorative art frame. On the other side of the stage, there is a frame made of Popsicle sticks. Between these two frames is the word "or." These elements remain onstage and showcase the projections and titles for each skit.

*“...a country
that has no culture
has no history.”*

—Mohammad Yousof Asefi

ACT I

Prologue

(AT RISE: A movie begins. [Movie can be optional]. The movie is a collection of interviews with real customers outside stores like Michael's Crafts, Hobby Lobby and Joanne Fabrics. The customers answer questions like "What did you buy today?" "What are you going to make?" "Why do you like making things?" "Would you consider yourself an artist or a craftsperson? Why?" When the movie is finished, two frames appear. On one side of the stage, an ornate decorative art frame appears. On the other side of the stage, a frame made of Popsicle sticks glides into view. Between these two elements descends the lighted word "or." These elements will showcase the projections and titles for each scene.)

Greek or **greek** (3 flexible)

(AT RISE: All wearing togas, Greeks 1, 2, 3 are sitting around shooting the breeze.)

GREEK 1: What do you think the difference is between craft and art? I mean...is that temple over there art or merely a nice-looking bunch of marble?

GREEK 2: (*Points.*) Oh, that temple over there? That is definitely craft.

GREEK 3: How can you be so sure? Take a closer look. Has the designer of that temple...what's his name?

GREEK 2: Arkitektos?

GREEK 1: No, I think he means Hank.

GREEK 2: Oh, yeah, sure, Hank.

GREEK 3: Does the fact that Hank knows how to craft a bunch of stones well make it art? (*Thinks.*) Hank does have a way with stones...

GREEK 1: No doubt. I mean, his altar at the Temple of Athena is to die for.

GREEK 2: (*Disagrees.*) See, I find it primitive.

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Fair or FAire

(1 M, 3 F, 2 flexible)

(AT RISE: *Town Crier enters, ringing a bell.*)

CRIER: (*Loudly.*) Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Welcome to the Arts and Crafts Fair!

(*A Woman and her Husband enters.*)

WOMAN: (*To Husband, indicating Crier.*) Oh, isn't that cute! A little bell guy walking around the fair. (*Husband mumbles something. To Town Crier.*) Bell guy, come here. This is our first time at the Arts and Crafts Fair, so tell me what to do, where to go, what to buy. (*To Husband.*) Only kidding, honey.

(*Husband mumbles something.*)

CRIER: (*Loudly.*) Well, here at the Arts and Crafts Fair, artists sell their craft.

WOMAN: Only makes sense with the name and all.

(*Woman laughs at her joke and then hits her Husband, who only half-chuckles.*)

CRIER: (*Loudly.*) What sets our fair apart is that we have all arts represented, not just the usual pottery or stained glass.

WOMAN: (*To husband.*) Oh, gosh, a stained glass would look great in our one-and-a-half season room, wouldn't it, honey? (*Husband mumbles something. To Crier.*) What do you sell here?

CRIER: (*Loudly.*) Funny you should ask. I am selling my art even as I speak. I was paid to inhabit the role of the town crier at the Arts and Crafts Fair. I have trained for years as

an actor and make my living selling myself playing roles as humiliating as this!

WOMAN: Well, you should be on Broadway... *(To Husband.)*
...shouldn't he? *(Husband mumbles something. To Crier.)* You
should do commercials or soap operas. Have you thought
of that?

CRIER: *(Quietly.)* Completely slipped my mind. *(Loudly.)*
Well, take a look around at the booths. And enjoy your day
at the Arts and Crafts Fair.

*(Crier exits, ringing his bell. Woman and Husband approach a booth
with a Poet.)*

WOMAN: *(To Poet.)* What can I buy here?

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Emory or MEMORY

(5 F)

(AT RISE: A beauty salon. Valerie sits under the dryer. Janice is sweeping up hair. Babs is painting her own nails. A bell rings. Suddenly, Mariana runs on screaming and crying. Her hair is teased and her nails are of an outrageous length and painted with an almost mural quality.)

MARIANA: He wants me to cut 'em.

BABS: Huh?

MARIANA: He wants me to cut 'em.

BABS: (Shouts.) No!

MARIANA: (On the floor in tears.) He wants me to cut 'em.

BABS: Not yer nails.

MARIANA: My nails!

BABS: That bastard!

MARIANA: He says that he is tired of me scratching him.

He's mad that I can't drive no more... 'cuz I ain't turning the wheel with these. And he's mad that now he has to buckle my bra.

BABS: But they're your...creative expression. They're what makes you...you!

MARIANA: Tell me about it.

VALERIE: (From under the dryer.) I can't hear anything. What is the girl with the big nails upset about?

BABS: Her husband is trying to stifle her creative expression.

VALERIE: That is awful!

BABS: He wants her to cut her nails.

VALERIE: Well, thank God! They're grotesque.

BABS: But I painted this one with *his* face on it. And I painted this one to look like your son swimming with a dolphin. You can't cut 'em.

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Scraps or **Scrapes**

(1 F)

(AT RISE: Sally is sitting at a scrapbook table. She is wearing a polyester outfit. She has a thick mid-western accent.)

SALLY: *(To audience, as if addressing her daughter.)* Oh, no, I'm not an artist. I am a scrapbooker. I don't even know why I am here. I mean, I work with pre-made stickers, and I buy those little corner tab things for my photos. I don't even take most of the photos I put in. I just arrange them. I shouldn't be here... *(Looks down and begins to work.)* ...I just scrapbook. I mean, I use my glitter pens to write funny captions like, "I can't believe I ate the whole thing!" under Marty's picture when we ate at the Sizzler. I didn't even make that caption up. It's a jingle or something. *(Looks down and begins to work again.)* I just scrapbook. I am not an artist. I mean, I do draw smiley faces next to happy pictures. I do draw a rainbow if it was an extra-specially lucky day.

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Critique or **CRITICAL**

(2 M, 3 F)

(Theatre critics Ben, David, Elysa, and Lesly enter. They address the audience.)

ALL: We are theatre critics.

BEN: We work for some of the nation's most renowned and trusted sources for theatrical arbitration.

DAVID: We define what is cutting edge.

ELYSA: We define the new directions theatre is taking.

LESLY: Ultimately, we decide what is art and what is not.

BEN: I am Ben Brantley, the leading drama critic for "The New York Times"—the paper that intimidates you to agree with us.

DAVID: I am David Rooney of "Variety," and I use terms like "boffo" without irony.

ELYSA: I am a theatre critic for one of the most widely read newspaper with color pictures...Elysa Gardner of "USA Today."

LESLY: *(Meekly.)* I am Lesly Savage... *(Other critics nod to encourage her to continue.)* ...I post my reviews on TheFrisky.com.

(After hearing this, Ben, Elysa, and David roll their eyes.)

BEN: *(To Lesly.)* Do you really mean to assert that your *postings* can be equated with our work?

ELYSA: *(To Lesly.)* Can your rants equal our editorials?

LESLY: *(Meekly.)* I don't know. I get paid in phone cards.

DAVID: *(To Ben and Elysa.)* Calm down. We are not here to attack each other. We are here to attack shows! We are here to attack actors, directors, and designers.

ELYSA: *(Begrudgingly.)* Sorry.

BEN: Let's talk about something we can agree on...how awful

Katie Holmes was in *All My Sons* a few seasons ago.

DAVID: Oh, god, yes.

LESLY: Oh, sure, we can hate her.

(Actual reviews from the critics are projected for the following. After each insult, the critics congratulate each other for their cleverness.)

BEN: *(Reads.)* "Mr. McBurney has staged Miller's tale of a self-deluding, guilt-crippled American family with the ritualistic formality and sense of inexorability of Aeschylus and Sophocles (but)...Ms. Holmes delivers most of her lines with meaningful asperity, *italicizing every word.*"

(Critics adlib kudos to Ben.)

DAVID: *(Reads.)* "Pairing Arthur Miller's probing social realism with Brit director Simon McBurney's multidisciplinary experimental approach was a gamble, but the payoff in "All My Sons" is considerable. Holmes handles her role as death's messenger with neither distinction nor embarrassment. She lacks the technique to match her co-stars' depths..."

(Critics adlib kudos to David.)

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Exposed or **EXPO** Sé

(1 M, 2 F)

(AT RISE: Spotlight up on a Woman wearing a robe.)

WOMAN: *(To audience.)* Sure, I pose nude for extra money. I am telling you it is great. I really love it. Sure, for the money, but really for the thrill. Not the thrill of being nude. Who cares about that? But the thrill that I am now...art. I like having these 50 different versions of me out there after each class. A guy goes home and shows his girlfriend, "Look what I did today!"

(Guy enters with Girlfriend. Note: The Woman in the robe is not heard or referred to as she walks through the scene and talks to the audience.)

GUY: *(To Girlfriend, proudly.)* Look. *(Unfurls a nude sketch.)*

WOMAN: *(To audience.)* That's me, you see.

GIRLFRIEND: *(Uneasy.)* Wow.

GUY: This was my first nude sketch.

(Girlfriend stares at the sketch.)

WOMAN: *(To audience.)* You can tell he has some potential. That is part of the thrill. You can see them get better over the semester.

GUY: *(To Girlfriend.)* What do you think?

GIRLFRIEND: I liked it better when you were drawing fruit.

WOMAN: *(To audience.)* Looking closer, you can see some really interesting things here...like look at how he did my hair. It looks so free.

GUY: *(To Girlfriend.)* Yeah, we moved past fruit. Now we're on nudes.

GIRLFRIEND: Can you stop saying “nudes”? Why are you even taking this class? You don’t want to be an artist. This is just an elective.

WOMAN: *(To audience, admiring sketch.)* He has some really nice work here with shadows and highlights.

GUY: *(To Girlfriend.)* I know I’m not an artist, but this is really fun, and the teacher said I was good.

GIRLFRIEND: Well, good for you. Are you changing majors?

GUY: No, it is just a hobby.

WOMAN: *(To audience.)* The breasts are done perfectly.

GIRLFRIEND: *(To Guy.)* Exactly!

GUY: I really like it.

GIRLFRIEND: Who is the nude... *(Corrects herself.)* ...naked girl in the picture?

GUY: It’s just some girl who comes into class.

WOMAN: *(To audience, admiring sketch.)* He caught me. He knows me. I love this piece.

GIRLFRIEND: What is her name...the pretty, nude girl?

GUY: I don’t know. She just came in—

GIRLFRIEND: And took off her robe...and got naked...and sat there in a provocative manner for you to draw her...for how long?

GUY: An hour.

GIRLFRIEND: Great! You stared at a nude girl for an hour.

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Mona or **m**oAn (1 F)

(AT RISE: Mona Lisa enters. She is rather soft-spoken and remote.)

MONA: People stare at me constantly. The patrons line up for hours and stare...looking for some hidden meaning, some secret that I won't reveal. I see their disappointment when I won't tell. They walk away, scratching their heads. I understand their confusion. I am considered one of the greatest pieces of art in the world. But why? *(Steps a little closer.)* I sit there politely...with a blank expression.

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Past or **pASSed** (18 flexible)

(AT RISE: Children 1-9 and Adults 1-9 mill about the stage.)

CHILD 1: *(Shouts.)* Paint by numbers

CHILD 2: *(Shouts.)* Magic tricks.

CHILD 3: *(Shouts.)* [LEGOs.] [*Or insert the name of another suitable toy.*]

CHILD 4: *(Shouts.)* [Malibu Barbie.]

CHILD 5: *(Shouts.)* [G.I. Joe.]

CHILD 6: *(Shouts.)* [Hot Wheels.]

CHILD 7: *(Shouts.)* [Polly Pocket.]

CHILD 8: *(Shouts.)* Baton twirling.

CHILD 9: *(Shouts.)* Puppets.

ADULT 1: *(Shouts.)* Accountant.

ADULT 2: *(Shouts.)* Oncologist.

ADULT 3: *(Shouts.)* Architect.

ADULT 4: *(Shouts.)* Homemaker.

ADULT 5: *(Shouts.)* Activist.

ADULT 6: *(Shouts.)* Bus driver.

ADULT 7: *(Shouts.)* Day-care worker.

ADULT 8: *(Shouts.)* Prison guard.

ADULT 9: *(Shouts.)* President of the United States.

(Adults 1-9 and Children 1-9 seek their match and pair up.)

CHILD 1: I used to paint by numbers...

ADULT 1: And now I am an accountant.

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Merit or **mAr iT**

(1 M)

(AT RISE: *Effeminate Boy Scout enters wearing a Boy Scout uniform.*)

BOY SCOUT: Hi. I would like to show you my Boy Scout merit badges. The Boy Scouts offer many varied merit badges for many different crafty things: woodworking merit badge, woodcarving merit badge, forestry merit badge, paper-and-pulp merit badge, leatherwork merit badge, model-building merit badge, coin collecting merit badge...ho-hum. Recently, though, I found my crafts weren't exactly what the Boy Scouts were into, if you know what I mean. Okay? So I decided to start my own scouting troop with my own merit badges for different crafts. (*Indicates badge.*) I have one here for starting your own bed-and-breakfast. (*Indicates badge.*) One here for creating a new martini. I created the prune-tini!

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Pietà or **Piety**

(1 M, 3 flexible)

(AT RISE: A museum. A Security Guard stands facing upstage. Patron 1, 2 cross and look at the Pietà, which is imagined downstage. Facing the imagined Pietà and audience, Patrons kneel and give the sign of the cross. Note: Laszlo Toth attacked Michelangelo's Pietà with a hammer on May 21, 1972.)

PATRON 1: Oh, wow! This is art.

PATRON 2: *(Points.)* There it is!

PATRON 1: Pictures don't do it justice.

PATRON 2: Look at the pain in their faces.

PATRON 1: So real.

(A mysterious man, Laszlo Toth, enters carrying a hammer. He walks up behind the Patrons and holds the hammer over their heads. Toth hides the hammer as the Patron rise and exit. Toth surveys the statue.)

TOTH: *(Building slowing in intensity.)* This is not my mother. This is not me. This is not truth. This is not art. This is not how it happened. This is not her face.

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Plumb or **plum**

(2 M)

(AT RISE: *A Plumber and his Apprentice sit eating sandwiches. Long pause.*)

PLUMBER: Friggin' bologna again.

APPRENTICE: You say that every day.

PLUMBER: And I *mean* it everyday. Friggin' bologna.

(Pause. *They chew.*)

APPRENTICE: Why don't you tell her not to pack it every day?

PLUMBER: Then I'd have to talk to her. (*They laugh. They chew.*) We got enough fittings to finish this up?

APPRENTICE: I think so.

PLUMBER: How many?

APPRENTICE: Five.

PLUMBER: Need two more half-inch nineties. Run out after lunch and get them. Hardware store five lights over. Left. Two blocks on the right.

(Pause. *They chew.*)

APPRENTICE: Do you like doing this?

PLUMBER: Eating?

APPRENTICE: No, plumbing. This job.

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Destry or **DESTROY**

(9 M, 3 F, 10 flexible)

(AT RISE: *All are onstage.*)

OTHERS: I was told—

DISCO DUCK: By my on-air producers to burn all of the station's disco albums. We thought it was funny. I mean, we all knew disco was crap—a cheap, easy, *terrible* way to make music. So they said to meet at the stadium to burn them all—ABBA through “Xanadu.” We were sort of forced to bring our own albums as well. We invited our listeners to come down to the stadium, too. It was a really big deal.

OTHERS: I was told—

LIBRARIAN: By the superintendent to take certain books off the shelves. The Board agreed that all of these books were offensive. They had inappropriate passages that dealt with death, slavery, and profanity. And I thought, “Quit reading my diary!” (*Laughs at her own joke.*) No, as the head librarian, I was given a list of books that were not approved, not acceptable. Mark Twain...not worthy. I had to take them all off of the shelf.

OTHERS: I was told—

AIDE 1: By Vice President Nixon in 1953 to investigate objectionable art in governmental buildings with the view to obtaining removal of all that is found to be inconsistent with American ideals and principles. That was my assignment at zero-seven-hundred hours on a Monday morning.

VOTER: To vote for [Sanjaya]. It was this whole conspiracy to vote to keep the worst one on. Wasn't that funny? We would show America how stupid they were to keep the worst one on “American Idol.” That would show how dumb and ridiculous the population was. (*Laughs.*) I voted like 95,000 times at 99 cents a call. [*Or insert the name of another “American Idol” contestant.*]

AIDE 2: By the governor that there would be a moratorium on funding for the arts. She wondered how, in the midst of these budget issues, could the arts receive so much support.

ALMA POWELL: U.N. officials hung a blue curtain over a tapestry reproduction of Picasso's "Guernica" at the entrance of the Security Council. The spot is where diplomats and others make statements to the press. And, basically, officials thought it would be inappropriate for my husband, Colin Powell, to speak about the war in Iraq with the 20th century's most iconic protest against the inhumanity of war as his backdrop.

OTHERS: I was told—

COLOROX BOTTLE: By my mother that I could make a little birdhouse for blue jays out of a Clorox bottle.

AIDE 3: By John Ashcroft to cover the partially nude statue at the Justice Department building, "Spirit of Justice," which was erected in 1934. He refused to give a press conference in front of this disgusting nude statue. I was told to buy some fabric so that it would be covered with a blue drape "for aesthetic reasons" so the press conference could go on as planned.

RAPPER: (*Rapping.*)

"That my rap lyrics was offensive to the masses,
All I talked about was bitches with fat asses.
Air play was gone,
Moms kicked me out m'home,
Now I'm back to flippin' burgers less I switch up m'tone."

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Intermission

(AT RISE: House lights come up, but before the audience can leave, Host springs onto the stage.)

HOST: *(To audience.)* Sorry to interrupt your bathroom break, but just some quick instructions for you. In the lobby are several tables at which you can create your own art. All the tables are supplied with craft products and qualified instructors, so use this intermezzo to go Picasso. *(Waves and exits. Intermission.)*

ACT II

ENTR'ACTE

(1 M, 1 F, 13 flexible)

(AT RISE: Pianist enters and plays “chopsticks” and then practices scales, which develop into an amazing Chico Marx piece with virtuosic technical skills, proving his musicianship. Note: For the following, make adjustments to the script based on your production. Rob enters.)

ROB: *(To audience, as Actor.)* Hi, I am an actor portraying Rob Roznowski, who wrote tonight’s show. *(As Rob.)* I started writing this play because I wanted to explore who has the right to decide what is “art” and what is “craft.” I wanted to start some debate or spark some discussion, really. That is all I have to say.

(Set Designer enters.)

SET DESIGNER: *(To audience.)* Hi, I am an actor portraying [Insert name of your set designer] the set designer for the show you are seeing tonight. I designed this set with, like, a whole origami kind of feel and thought it was really kind of cool and worked with the show.

(Costume Designers enters.)

COSTUME DESIGNER: *(To audience.)* Hi, I am the actor portraying [Insert name of your costume designer] and [Insert name of another costume designer]. We are co-costume designers. *(As Costume Designer 1.)* We get along pretty well. *(As Costume Designer 2.)* Yes, we do. *(As Costume Designer 1.)* We used a base costume for the actors and then layered on other pieces. *(As Costume Designer 2.)*

That's right. We wanted it to be about the structure of the outfit. We bought a lot of stuff at [Marshall's]. *(As Costume Designer 1.)* Don't tell them that. *(As Costume Designer 2.)* Why? *(As Costume Designer 1.)* Because that makes it seem less artsy. *(As Costume Designer 2.)* Oh. *(To audience.)* We think we did a pretty good job, yes, we do! *[Or insert the name of another store.]*

(Lighting Designer enters.)

LIGHTING DESIGNER: *(To audience.)* Hi, I am the actor portraying [Insert name of your lighting designer] the lighting designer for the show you are seeing tonight. This is my first show at graduate school. I want to make a good impression. I hope I am doing well.

(Set Designer 2 enters.)

SET DESIGNER 2: *(To Set Designer.)* Your set is really...so cliché. Folding boxes? *(Sarcastic.)* How novel! You stole that idea from hundreds of other better designers. You're just a parasite.

(Costume Designer 2 enters.)

COSTUME DESIGNER 2: *(To Costume Designer.)* You just bought clothing at a discount store. You didn't even design them. And it took *two* of you?

(Lighting Designer 2 enters.)

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Fan or Feign

(1 M, 1 F)

(AT RISE: Stacey stands CS wearing a faux fur jacket. She is tightly clutching an autograph book and pen. She has headgear braces on. She shivers.)

STACEY: *(Practicing line.)* “I really enjoyed your performance tonight.” *(To herself.)* No. Um... *(Practicing line.)* “I really thought you were awesome.” *(To herself.)* Dumb! *(Practicing line.)* “You are so hot!” *(To herself.)* God, Stacey, what are you, twelve? Jeesh! Calm down. He’s only a man...a gorgeous man....only a man...an actor. I hope he can act like he loves me. Stacey, stop it. *(Shivers.)* Jeesh, how long does it take him to get out of costume? *(Thinks.)* I bet he is naked right now. Stop it, Stacey! *(Practicing line.)* “I really love your work.” *(To herself.)* That’s good. *(Practicing line.)* “I really love your work.” *(To herself.)* That’s good. *(Practicing line.)* “Excuse me, but I love your work.” *(To herself.)* Good job, Stacey. That’s good. *(Star enters. He is dumpy-looking and is wearing a baseball jacket and earmuffs. To Star, awestruck.)* Excuse me, sir, but I love your work. *(Star does not hear her and continues walking. To herself.)* Good one, Stacey.

(Stacey runs past Star and lies on the ground to block his exit. Star stops, stares, and removes his earmuffs.)

STAR: Are you okay?

STACEY: *(Still on the ground. In one huge gush.)* I just wanted to tell you that I love your work and thought you were awesome tonight and loved each moment. I think you are the greatest actor of our generation with a maturity and complexity that [Leo DiCaprio], [Matt Damon] or [Ryan Phillippe]—although all fine and cute actors—could never

hope to achieve. Your performance tonight was perhaps the single greatest life-altering event of this world's long and varied history...and I love you. *[Or insert the names of other actors.]*

STAR: Um...thanks. Do you need some help getting up?

STACEY: If you would simply place one hand on my prone body, I would perhaps melt into this frigid asphalt. But, thank you, I will accept your offer if only out of a chance to spend more time in your presence.

(Star offers Stacey a hand. She gingerly takes his hand, shuddering at his touch.)

STAR: Are you okay?

STACEY: I am more than okay. I am changed. Your work tonight transported me to a different era.

STAR: Really? I felt off tonight.

STACEY: If by "off" you mean resplendent.

STAR: Well, thanks.

STACEY: If you will sign my breasts, I would appreciate it, but if that is too forward, I will ask you to sign my book.

(Stacey turns upstage and opens her jacket.)

STAR: *(Shocked.)* Um, I'll sign the book, I guess. *(Takes the book and begins signing it.)* How old are you, anyway?

STACEY: I am 42. *(Pause.)* Do not let the headgear fool you as my Invisaligns did not take.

STAR: Um...I gotta get going.

STACEY: Quick question: Where did you train? How did you perfect this difficult craft called "show"?

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Patches or **pATCH#Y**

(4 F)

(AT RISE: *Pilgrim women Goody Proctor, Goody Twoshoes, and Goody Standish are busy working on a quilt.*)

PROCTOR: (*To Goody Twoshoes, whispers.*) Goody Standish has had relations with me husband. I just knoweth it. My patch shall reflect it.

TWOSHOES: Oh, no. I am sure thou art mistaken.

STANDISH: Did that harlot Goody Proctor just intimate that I would lie in the corn silk with her husband? She needs to be brought down a rung or two on the council ladder. My patch shall reflect that!

GOODY TWOSHOES: Oh, pshaw, I am sure she meaneth it as a joke.

PROCTOR: My patch condemns adultery.

STANDISH: My patch mocks women who wear low-cut aprons.

TWOSHOES: Goodies, don't fight! (*They are quiet. A fat Pilgrim walks across the stage eating candy.*) Goody Gumdrops has put on weight!

STANDISH: Future generations of my family may discover the code I have left in my patches. If you look at the scraps, you can almost hear them whisper, "Goody Proctor is a strumpet!"

PROCTOR: My future generations will be smart enough to divine my message, "Goody Standish is a high-falutin' bitch!"

TWOSHOES: Hold thy tongues!

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Sew or \$

(6 F, opt. extras)

(AT RISE: Fabric store. A clerk enters, carrying a large bolt of fabric. The Clerk places the bolt on a counter and unrolls a black-and-white striped fabric for Customer 1. There is a line of Customers waiting behind Customer 1.)

CLERK: Pirate shirt?

CUSTOMER 1: No, Beetlejuice costume.

CLERK: Oh, that's perfect.

CUSTOMER 1: I hope he likes it. It's a surprise.

(Customer 1 exits. Clerk rolls out a second fabric for Customer 2.)

CUSTOMER 2: *(To Clerk.)* I'm going to make café curtains for my friend as a gift.

CLERK: No pattern?

CUSTOMER 2: I can do it.

CLERK: Good thinking. Us fabric-holics know what's going on!

(Customer 2 exits. Clerk unrolls a different fabric for Customer 3.)

CUSTOMER 3: Do you cut vinyl here?

CLERK: Sure enough do.

CUSTOMER 3: We are going to re-do our banquette. I'm tired of the old look.

CLERK: This cleans up nice. *(Customer 3 exits with the fabric. Customer 4, a harried mother, enters. She is in between one of the shifts of her many jobs.)* So, what are you making?

CUSTOMER 4: I'm going to make some clothes for my kids.

CLERK: Fun! Special occasion?

[END OF FREEVIEW]

History or *#is* Story

(3 M, 1 F, 16 flexible)

(With doubling: 3 M, 1 F, 8 flexible)

(AT RISE: *An officious Professor enters.*)

PROFESSOR: Good evening. My lecture tonight will trace the genesis of hobby from its humble beginning to its modern equivalents. My thesis is simple: Hobbies spring from boredom. (*Caveman 1, 2 enter.*) Once fire, wheels, and cave paintings were commonplace, the cave people grew bored. (*Caveman 1 pounds the ground with his fist. Caveman 2 notices this and joins in. They then discover the first game of rock-paper-scissors.*) The hobby as pastime was begun. In ancient Egypt, hieroglyphics reveal a younger generation restless without hobbies.

(*Mummy and Child enter.*)

EGYPTIAN CHILD: Mummy, I'm bored.

(*Mummy and Egyptian Child exit.*)

PROFESSOR: Later, in the time of Shakespeare, wordplay became hobby. To overcome boredom through wordsmithery became de rigueur.

(*Shakespearean Actors 1, 2 enter.*)

ACTOR 1: Ay, me. My humour is one of boredom. Zounds, a visitor. I shall spar with him. (*To Actor 2.*) Are'st thou bored?

ACTOR 2: If by bored thou meanest a log, then, good fool, I am not.

ACTOR 1: Too many knots in thy board.

ACTOR 2: Sirrah. I am lumbered by your wit.

ACTOR 1: No longer bored, our quipery has splintered the
doldrums.

(Shakespearean Actors 1, 2 exit.)

PROFESSOR: Hobbies began springing up wherever anyone
was bored. During the Victorian era...

(Victorian Man and Woman enter.)

VICTORIAN MAN: *(To Victorian Woman.)* Well, blast, if we
cannot partake in any sort of flesh manipulation, what shall
we do?

VICTORIAN WOMAN: There's this new invention called
Parcheesi...

(Victorian Man and Woman exit.)

PROFESSOR: During the World Wars...

(Soldier 1, 2 enter.)

SOLDIER 1: *(To Soldier 2.)* Well, we've got some time to kill in
these foxholes.

SOLDIER 2: Do you know how to crochet?

(Soldier 1, 2 exit.)

PROFESSOR: During the 1960s...

(Hippie enters.)

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Hyperbole or **#yper=ball**

(3 M) or (3 F)

(AT RISE: String, Foil, and Rubber proudly enter.)

STRING: Howdy.

FOIL: Hello.

RUBBER: Hi.

STRING/FOIL/RUBBER: I am the owner of the world's
biggest ball of—

STRING: String.

FOIL: Foil.

RUBBER: Rubber bands.

TOGETHER: I have spent years collecting—

STRING: String.

FOIL: Foil.

RUBBER: Rubber Bands.

STRING/FOIL/RUBBER: You may ask me why I collect—

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Witch or whid?

(1 M, 1 F)

(AT RISE: There are two armchairs onstage. A Priest sits, drinking a glass of wine in an armchair. A doorbell rings. He goes to the door and discovers a Witch standing there holding a broom. The Witch is wearing a witches' costume complete with a pointy hat.)

PRIEST: Oh, is it Halloween already?

WITCH: No, I was just driving by and saw your lights on and wanted to talk.

PRIEST: Surely. Come in, my child. *(Looks at Witch.)* May I call you "my child"?

WITCH: Probably better if you didn't.

PRIEST: Won't you sit down? *(Witch sits in the other armchair.)* Would you like some wine?

WITCH: Probably shouldn't, since I'm driving. *(Indicates her broom.)*

PRIEST: Certainly. You don't mind if I do? *(Indicates wineglass.)*

WITCH: No, feel free.

(Priest sits.)

PRIEST: So, tell me, my...friend... *(Witch nods.)* ...what did you want to talk about?

WITCH: Something has been bothering me for quite some time, and I thought you might have some answers.

PRIEST: I hope that I can help.

WITCH: Well, you see, I was just wondering why what I do is considered craft and what you do is considered high, sacred art. *(Pause.)* Know what I mean?

PRIEST: Interesting question that bears examination.

WITCH: I don't know why this is such a problem for me. Is it just a matter of respect? I'm not sure.

PRIEST: Well, I guess, on the base level, it is witchcraft because it's something one has to practice.

WITCH: So you didn't practice? Isn't that what the seminary is for? You mean you were just born with *it*? No practice involved?

PRIEST: Well, I guess I do have to practice, but I was called to this position by a higher power.

WITCH: Exactly how I got into this.

(Priest mulls this over.)

PRIEST: Well, you use potions. *(Witch looks over at Priest's wineglass. Priest blushes with embarrassment. Thinks.)* You use incantations.

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Lesson or **Lesson**

(2 flexible)

(AT RISE: Teacher and Student sit in a classroom. Pause. Silence.)

TEACHER: What are you going to do with your life?

STUDENT: Wow, could you ask a harder question? I really don't know.

TEACHER: You have lots of options, you know.

STUDENT: Options are good. I just don't know what to do.

My parents keep pushing me to one place, and my friends want me to go here, and my—

TEACHER: What?

STUDENT: Here comes the sappy part...my heart tells me to go another place.

TEACHER: That makes sense, doesn't it? It's cliché, sure, but these clichés are clichés for a reason. Just like my last sentence.

(Student and Teacher smile.)

STUDENT: What do you think I should do? Can I make a living at it?

TEACHER: You can't ask me that.

STUDENT: I see the statistics. I hear the warnings. I see you... *(Realizes.)* Sorry.

TEACHER: That's okay. I am so happy to be part of it in any way that I can. It is that important...to me. It doesn't have to be for you. That is the decision.

STUDENT: But I don't know if that is enough. Or what I want. Or if I have talent. Am I good?

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Safe or \$AiL

(2 M, 2 F, 2 flexible)

(All of the actors are onstage. Artist and Customer are frozen in mid-handshake.)

CUSTOMER: Wow, I really love it. I hear your message. I love the details and the passion. It's a masterpiece.

ARTIST: Thanks, that's why I do it—exactly for moments like these.

(Sound of a cash register bell. The following is played in fast-motion reverse. We are rewinding this entire scene including all blocking and sound effects. We are rewinding to the beginning of the story. We are there. Sound of a child crying. The Artist is 7 years old.)

MOM: Honey, that is a masterpiece.

ARTIST: Really, Mommy?

MOM: Sure. It's really good. You have so much talent!

ARTIST: Really, Mommy?

(Mom kisses Artist.)

MOM: Really.

ARTIST: I think I want to do this when I grow up.

(Mom laughs nervously.)

MOM: Honey, it's fine to play, but you are going to have to eat. How can I say this... *(Thinks.)* ...um, it's fine to have a hobby. But you can't do this—

ARTIST: I want to do this!

MOM: You have to make a living at it!

(Flash forward 10 years. Sound of 90s music. Artist is 17 years old. He kisses a girl, Rachel, who will later be his wife.)

RACHEL: That is a masterpiece.

ARTIST: Really? Do you like it, Rachel?

RACHEL: It is awesome. It is perfect for the prom. Perfect.

ARTIST: It's really cool that you liked it 'cuz, you know, you were my inspiration...my muse.

RACHEL: Shut up. Muse? Inspiration? We haven't even slept together yet.

ARTIST: With you by my side, I really feel like I can do this. Full-time. Like, forever.

RACHEL: Seriously? Cool! You really think you can make a living at this?

(Flash forward eight years. Sound of traffic. Artist is 25 years old. He is talking to Roger, a fellow artist.)

ROGER: *(To Artist.)* Dude, it's a masterpiece!

ARTIST: Roger, really?

ROGER: Dude! For real!

ARTIST: I mean, I hoped it was...I mean, it took a lot out of me.

ROGER: It's so good that I am jealous. Dude. That's big.

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Fable or **FeebLe**

(1 M)

(AT RISE: An old, feeble man with a walker enters.)

THEATRE: Hello. I am Theatre. You haven't seen much of me in tonight's entertainment. Notice I didn't call it a "play." It's not a play. It is a bunch of sophomoric skits without a beginning, middle or... *(Thinks.)* I don't know. Perhaps that's why I have fallen out of fashion. Too rigid. People don't want me anymore! They don't want art. I used to be surrounded by tuxedos and champagne. Now it's tank tops and plastic cups.

[END OF FREEVIEW]

Arts or CRAFTS

(Cast)

(AT RISE: Host enters.)

HOST: Don't you hate audience participation? It is the lowest form of theatre. (*Mood changes.*) Houselights, please! (*Houselights come up as the entire Cast enters.*) Will [Marge] please raise your hand? [*Insert name of audience member who will have his/her artwork displayed. Note: Audience member is not a plant.*] (*To Cast.*) Please bring [Marge] down here! (*Whichever Cast Member is closest to "Marge" goes into the audience and escorts "Marge" to the stage.*) Now, [Marge], thank you for being such a good sport. Do you know why you are here? (*"Marge" responds "no." If not, improv.*) Now, [Marge], you made something in the lobby at intermission, didn't you? (*"Marge" responds "yes."*) Well, the cast has chosen your piece for this segment. Your piece has been deemed to be "most interesting" by our cast. Please note I did not call it the "best" or the "worst." Or "art" or "craft." Simply..."interesting." Let's bring your piece out here. (*"Marge's" creation is shown to the audience and placed on display. Note: This section should not necessarily be played for laughs.*) Now, [Marge], have you had any formal training as an artist? (*"Marge" responds.*) Have you had experience as a craftsperson? (*"Marge" responds.*) Now, [Marge], tell us the title of your piece. (*"Marge" responds.*) [Marge], please tell us the message you were trying to express with this creation? (*"Marge" responds.*) Thank you. Now, audience, it is now your turn to decide whether [Marge's] creation, here, is art or craft. (*Creation is shown to the audience again and then placed on display.*) Audience, as you note, in nearly [insert number] scenes of this show tonight, we have endeavored to help you come to a personal definition of both "art" and "craft." Through your vote on [Marge's] work, you will

prove that after this debate you have come to a critical delineation of the difference between these two very different terms. Your choice will prove that you are now able to judge and classify what is art and what is craft. To assist in your decision, we have four cast members who have opposing views on the question of [Marge's] work and its categorization as "art" or "craft."

[END OF FREEVIEW]