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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Wholehearted Leadership through the Eyes of Titus Andronicus

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree

Master of Fine Arts

in

Theatre and Dance (Stage Management)

by

Cheng-Yu Wei

Committee in charge:

Lisa Porter, Chair

Charles Means

Eric Geiger

Ping-Hui Liao

2013

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This thesis of Cheng-Yu Wei is approved and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

Chair

University of California, San Diego
2013

DEDICATION

To Mom, Dad, Annie, Little Brother and Grandma.

To my friends in Taiwan, America and every corner of the world.

Without you, I wouldn't be able to get where I am now.

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LIST OF SUPPLEMENTAL FILES

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Wholehearted Leadership through the Eyes of Titus Andronicus

by

Cheng-Yu Wei

Master of Fine Arts in Theatre and Dance (Stage Management)

University of California, San Diego, 2013

Professor Lisa Porter, Chair

During the process of *Titus Andronicus*, I asked myself: what makes a good leader? How can I implement adaptive solutions in an unpredictable environment? Similarly to the character of Titus, I had many traditional expectations of myself as a leader: independent, strong, hard working, honorable, selfless, and endowed with formal authority. We both shouldered the weight of our family of collaborators and persevered alone through every challenge. This unyielding strategy did not support my work on the project. I was confused about how to position myself as a creative partner, just as Titus was disorientated by resigning his standing in society. I realized that focusing on

the technical aspects of stage management was not enough and I sought to engage wholeheartedly with my work.

I was fortunate that the director engaged fully with his collaborators, and I felt comfortable being vulnerable with him. I took a risk by confiding in him that I felt lost in our partnership and needed help. That conversation was the tipping point that allowed me to be more flexible and relax into the flow of the rehearsals. I softened my rigid approach, integrating the creative, spirited, and passionate parts of myself into my work and allowed myself to cross between the formal and informal aspects of my approach. When possible, I stopped making unilateral decisions in advance and chose to respond in the moment. I finessed my leadership style by remaining in response to the needs of the process while allowing the space for change.