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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

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A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Master of Fine Arts

in

Theatre and Dance (Acting)

by

Jack Mikesell

Committee in charge:

Professor Kyle Donnelly, Chair
Professor Charlie Oates
Professor Ursula Meyer
Professor Manuel Rotenberg

2013

The thesis of Jack Mikesell is approved and it is acceptable
in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

Chair

University of California, San Diego

2013

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my family. They have given me unconditional love and support not just my career choice, but in life as well.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To the faculty and my classmates, I thank you with all my heart.

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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by

Jack Mikesell

Master of Fine Arts in Theatre and Dance (Acting)

University of California, San Diego, 2013

Professor Kyle Donnelly, Chair

Kyle Donnelly said during the first week of classes, “Our job is to make you unfireable.” After three years of training I have gathered that the tools needed to become unfireable consist of three major traits: skill, efficiency, and control. The three traits overlap just as a Venn diagram, and that central sweet spot is the place we all strive for. There are shortcomings within us all, and the three traits rest differently in everyone.

8 hours a day for two and a half years we have built skills, from voice to dance we accumulated a set of skills that have prepared us for the world ahead. These skills make us unique and desirable.

Efficiency is of our own accord, unlike skill; no one can give us the ability to be efficient. We need to come to class prepared, be on time for rehearsal, and implement the skills we have gained from class in collaboration with the directors' concept in an efficient manner so time isn't wasted. Efficiency also deals with the ability to maintain our instruments through a learned technique (skills).

The last obstacle to tackle, which in my opinion may be the most challenging, is control. To become an unfireable actor you need to develop an intimate understanding of control: when you need to seize or relinquish it.