

## 6. Post-Mortem

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I can say with certainty that my Directing Capstone was a resounding success! I learned much from the work in practice and getting to communicate my interpretation of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* proved truly worthwhile. Directing is quickly becoming more and more of a possibility for me in the professional industry.

Casting ended up working out in the end, but I actually did not receive my initial picks for two of my roles: Emily and George. I decided to trade my preferred Emily to another director in class because they grew upset when I picked an actress they hoped to have in their scene—I suppose I was feeling nice, which I do not regret. In the industry, however, I probably have to work a little more competitively and cast who I know is right for the part. This was made all the more clear when my preferred George got capped out in terms of the number of scenes they could be in. This frustrated me at the moment, but I looked back at my notes and made a smart, informed decision from the auditions I saw. I was thoroughly impressed by many auditioners and took a chance on some of the newer members in the Loyola Theatre department. Grace Anderson, Amanda Farmer, and Ryan Sweeney ended up being the best possible choices for this scene given their combination of talent and enthusiasm for this scene.

In rehearsals, I wish I developed and incorporated a more engaging warm-up than just “questions of the day.” I think this would have strengthened the ensemble and their skills even further than they already

were. Even as an actor, I struggle to maintain a consistent warm-up routine, so this area is something I definitely need to consider in the future.

I must confess that I grew misty-eyed watching my scene unfold with a full audience. Hearing their audible reactions and seeing their positive expressions around the theatre was like soaring on cloud nine. I almost broke completely as Emily reciprocated George's feelings—"I am now. I always have been." The audience made it all real, and it was an overwhelming success.

However, stage manager Sara accidentally brought up the lights too soon near the end of my scene and the final blackout moment was subsequently ineffective. She admitted to her mistake as we were cleaning up the stage, and I accepted her apology, but I still became hung up on that one fault in my scene. I have trouble coping with accidental elements beyond my control, and watching the end of the scene knowing that it was not what I intended and that I could do little about it was disheartening and distracting towards my enjoyment of the scene. I think, given the opportunity, I would have better clarified with Sara when to bring up lights at the end of my scene and would have also checked in with her before my scene began about whether she had any lasting confusions.

I was truly jarred by this one missed cue that I struggled to focus on the many positives from my presentation. I am now a director! It is an exhilarating feeling. My actors did exceptional, and I am immensely grateful for their dedication.

*Our Town* holds a very special spot in my heart as well as my evolution as a theatre artist. I remember purchasing my first copy of the play on a

whim years ago at the Mayfair Mall Barnes & Nobel in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. Knowing that my interpretation of this beloved text affected even just one person, let alone fifty, is truly affirming. I am glad that my directorial eye has proven to be effective, and I look forward to the next directing opportunity I receive!

— Noah Tibbetts  
Class of 2024