

A PROJECT IN THE DIRECTION OF

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

BY AURAND HARRIS

By

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In loving memory of Baby Zirkenbach

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Chapter I: Script Analysis	1
Plot and Structure	1
Theme	4
Language	5
Spectacle	7
Character	9
Chapter II: Production Concept	16
Chapter III: Physical Production	18
Costumes	18
Makeup	23
Set	23
Lights	25
Sound	26
Chapter IV: Prompt Script	28
Chapter V: Evaluation	93
Costumes	93
Properties	95
Sound	96
Lights	98
Set	99
Budget	101
Publicity	102
Direction	102
Appendix A: Production Photographs	104
Appendix B: Schedules	114
Appendix C: Program	123
Appendix D: Directing Notes	126
Appendix E: Ground Plan	200

Bibliography 201

CHAPTER I

SCRIPT ANALYSIS

PLOT AND STRUCTURE

The Arkansaw Bear is a story about Tish, who is confronted with her grandfather's imminent death. At the beginning of the play, Tish, a little girl, sees a circus poster with a bear on it. When she rushes home to tell her grandfather about the circus, she discovers that he is dying. Because of her frustration and inability to understand death, she runs away to her private spot by a large tree. A star, named Star Bright, appears in the sky and offers Tish a wish. She wishes for all things to live forever, but Star Bright says she cannot grant this wish because it would upset the balance of nature. Tish then asks to know why her grandfather has to die, and although Star Bright cannot answer this question directly, she does address the question through a fable that she presents to Tish.

The fable is told through a metaphor of a circus and the actions of Mime, the World's Greatest Dancing Bear, the Ringmaster, and the Little Bear. Tish discovers that the Dancing Bear is running away from the Ringmaster, who wants to bring Dancing Bear to the Great Center Ring. Tish soon realizes that, within this fable, the Ringmaster represents death, and she decides to help

the Dancing Bear escape from him.

By talking about the things her grandfather has taught her, Tish helps Dancing Bear to realize that if he had someone to teach his dances to, a part of him would live on, and then, perhaps, his death would be easier to accept. Star Bright causes the Little Bear to appear, and the Dancing Bear and Mime make preparations to train him. Meanwhile, Tish convinces the Little Bear to help the Dancing Bear by learning the dances. Knowing that Little Bear will carry on his dances, the Dancing Bear finally accepts his fate and leaves with the Ringmaster to the Great Center Ring. Mime and Little Bear release a pink balloon to symbolize both their acceptance of Dancing Bear's fate and the letting go of the past. Through the fantasy Tish comes to an understanding of how to cope with the death of her grandfather, and she is thus able to return home and say goodbye to him.

The script contains three important sections: the beginning, the fantasy, and the end. The beginning and the end are much alike in that they both take place in the real world. The important difference between these two sections is that in the beginning there is chaos, and the ending resolves that chaos. The major portion of the script is devoted to the fantasy; hence, the information contained within the fantasy becomes important when considering production choices.

Most of the exposition can be found within the first few pages of the script; however, there are several lines of exposition

scattered throughout the text as Tish recalls specific background information. The first two lines of dialogue introduce the reader to a conflict which grows until Tish runs away. The author begins slowly to resolve the conflict through the fantasy, and, with the addition of several complications, the author reveals a path to the denouement.

The author could have ended the play with Star Bright granting Tish's wish. He chose, however, to add characters who help Tish understand her dilemma. The suspense of the play builds as time runs out on the Dancing Bear and does not subside until after the climax, when Dancing Bear leaves for the Great Center Ring.

The playwright neglects to give detailed information about the world of the play, neglecting to answer questions that may have a bearing on the conflict. For example: Is Tish's father living? If so, where is he? Does Grandfather live with Tish and her family? If not, where does he live, and who normally takes care of him? Does Aunt Ellen live with Tish's family? Where are the rest of the family relations? The circus is coming so we can presume it is summer time, but what month is it? Where are we in Arkansas? How old are the characters?

It is important to note that most of these circumstances can be decided arbitrarily by the director and cast members. The point is that the playwright found these, and questions like them, unimportant. However, it is important to know what the world of the play is like without conflict, so that one may know what the world

of the play at rest is like. The playwright tells us the only difference between the world in chaos and the world at rest is Tish's discovery that her grandfather is going to die. Obviously, this discovery must then be the most important aspect of the story.

THEME

The playwright admits that he cannot answer the question he sets up for himself in the beginning of the play--namely, why do people have to die? Tish asks this question, but she never gets a direct answer. The playwright does, however, offer an alternative which may better help Tish to accept her grandfather's death. He suggests that the best way to accept death is to "give your most to the living."¹ This idea, which Harris translates as "the riddle of life," is manifested in many different ways in the play.

The idea of the old becoming the new is one aspect of this theme. For example: "Tish: Grandpa has an old hat. Bear: Perhaps, if it had a new feather."² These lines form a circular pattern, reinforcing the idea that cycles can be created through the old and experienced character passing things down to the young. In the play, Tish's grandfather teaches her to whistle and dance a jig, passing down to her a bit of himself. This also happens with the Dancing Bear, who passes down his dances to the Little Bear because he realizes that in this way a bit of himself lives on.

The play is held together by the fact that Tish is working

out her problem through a fantasy, which is her answer to coping with death. Fantasy is a creative device for self-growth and is another idea presented in the play. It is not until Tish voices her concerns through the fantasy characters that she is made aware of them. Once able to identify her fears and her problem, she can work towards a solution.

One cannot ignore the circus images presented in the play. The circus theme presented in the fantasy world comes from the circus theme used in the poster, which is the last most impressionable information Tish acquires before the conflict in the play.

Since each character in the fantasy world comes from Tish's imagination, we can assume that the concerns of the characters are really Tish's concerns. Consistent with this theme, Star Bright says: If everyone lived forever, "think what a mixed up world it would be."³ This idea is too mature for Tish to grasp fully early in the play. Bear fears death and the unknown, as does Tish. Mime knows Bear will die and knows that Bear is afraid of dying, but Mime cannot totally understand what Bear is experiencing. Much like Tish, Mime does not know what to do in this situation. It is through these themes that Harris makes his statement on how to cope with death. This statement describes the through-line of the play.

LANGUAGE

The language in The Arkansaw Bear is very straight forward.

Harris consistently uses this simple and direct approach to language to convey the literal meaning of the text. The script includes only one exception to this approach. This can be found in the ironic statement made by Harris in the language of Dancing Bear as contrasted to that of Little Bear.

Dancing Bear uses elegant speech--more like poetry than any of the other characters--to try to hide his fear. One example will, perhaps, suffice:

Goodbye, good friend. Thank you
for everything. And sometimes when
the band plays . . . think of an old
bear. Yes, I remember when once we
said, 'Life is like a bright balloon.
Hold it tight. Because once you let
it go . . . it floats away forever.'⁴

One would think that the Dancing Bear, with his articulate speech, would be the character who best explains to Tish how to solve her problem. However, it is the Little Bear who, through simple and direct speech, gets right to the heart of the matter:

You have to go on living. So . . .
do your best. Give yourself to the
livin'. 'Cause that's the best way
to say goodbye to your Pa.

Oh, it don't mean I understand about
dyin'. I don't. But you do go on
living.⁵

Mother and Aunt Ellen also use simple speech patterns; and, ironically, although their speech is more refined than the Little Bear's, they offer little help to Tish.

SPECTACLE

The elements of set, lights, sound, costumes, and makeup together create the atmosphere of a play. Of the two worlds established within this play, the fantasy world is made more specific than the real world. The few elements of the real world are described in the stage directions:

(As the house lights dim, there is a glow on the front curtain. Over a loud speaker a man's whistling of "O Susannah" is heard. The curtain opens. Tish walks into a large spot of warm light L. The whistling dims out. Tish is a little girl and carries some hand-picked flowers. She listens to the voices, heard over a loud speaker, and reacts to them as if Mother and Aunt Ellen were on each side of her downstage.)⁶

Here we have disembodied voices heard from darkness with no reference to place. A spotlight is on Tish, but the author uses no other element to establish the real world. We know little--other than what we imagine--about what this place is, or what these people look like. The audience members must thus rely on what they hear.

The fantasy world, however, is described in detail throughout the script. For example:

(There is star music, tinkling with bells. From above, a small swing starts descending. Magic star light spots on it. Star Bright stands on the swing, which stops in mid-air. Music dims out.)⁷

(The full stage is seen, lighted brightly and in soft colors. There are the large tree at R, and open space with beautiful sky.)⁸

The fantasy world fills the empty space as it is introduced piece by

piece. The characters, the music, the lights, the properties--all have their basis in a circus motif. Sound and lights are used throughout the script to underscore events. The playwright suggests, for example: "(Royal music begins and continues during the scene.)";⁹ "Faint music of a calliope is heard. Bear stirs.";¹⁰ "(Star music and lights begin as Star Bright enters on swing.)";¹¹ and "(Mime motions. Soft band music of the circus is heard. Colorful lights play on the backdrop.)";¹² The last example cited points out another interesting aspect about the sound and lights. Mime's gestures control the music and lights, and they appear only because of Mime's magical abilities. The trunk full of Dancing Bear's costume pieces is also totally under the Mime's control. Thus the importance of the magical nature of the sound, lights, and properties cannot be over-emphasized.

The tree is the only set piece that the author suggests is essential. The tree represents Tish's personal space, a space where she is safe. The tree must also serve an important technical function. At one point in the script, the Ringmaster is enclosed within the tree through the magic of Star Bright.

The author is very specific about costumes and makeup:

(Mime appears at R. He is a showman, a magician and an accomplished mime who never speaks. He wears a long coat with many colorful patch pockets. He is not in white face, but his face is natural, friendly and expressive.)¹³

There is concern in the stage directions that the characters who are animals are not portrayed in an eerie or frightening manner.

The playwright views animal makeup or masks as "frightening or grotesque" and seems to be making a statement about not trying to fool the young audience in any way.¹⁴

CHARACTER

Tish is the protagonist because her actions unify the play. The other characters in the story originate in the protagonist's life and are transformed into characters who would exist within the protagonist's fantasy. The Mime is analogous to Tish's Aunt Ellen; they both care for Grandfather (Dancing Bear), but just can't seem to talk about his dying. The character Star Bright parallels Tish's mother, looking down on and caring for Tish, helping to solve her problems, and making her wishes come true to the best of her ability. Tish also helps herself within her fantasy, for one could view Little Bear as a Tish with a little more experience, a "grown-up" Tish. In the story Dancing Bear is equated with Grandfather. Grandfather's death is the source of Tish's conflict. Conversely, Dancing Bear's death helps Tish come to some acceptance of death, and thereby aids in the resolution of the conflict. Therefore, the same action which inadvertently causes pain and fear in Tish at the beginning of the play also causes growth and understanding at the end of the play.

I. Tish

Tish is not given a definite age in the script. However, through her actions and the language she uses, we can assume that Tish is approximately ten years old. She is very intelligent and polite, the kind of child who has learned to think for herself at an early age. We know she has a mother, an aunt named Ellen, and a grandfather. She was named Leticia after her grandmother. Her grandfather is very fond of Tish and calls her little Leticia, although everyone else calls her by her nickname, Tish. Even though Tish and her grandfather never have a scene together in the script, we know that there is a close relationship between the two. Grandfather taught Tish to whistle "O Susannah" and to dance jigs, and we see Tish bringing a bunch of her grandfather's favorite flowers to him in the opening scene.

Through Tish we see the world of this play as one of innocence, simplicity, and tender affection. Tish is both credible and attractive. She is credible because we can believe she is an average little girl living in Arkansas and that she is very fond of her grandfather. When confronted with her grandfather's death, she goes to her spot by the big tree to be by herself and to think out her problem. Almost every child has a favorite spot to go to when troubled, and Tish is no different. She is, however, special, because she willingly chooses to resolve her problem. Although her immediate reaction is to run away, Tish later discovers she has

more success in working out her problem through her own imagination. Tish's vast and vibrant imagination is probably her most positive attribute. The audience is attracted to Tish because, in addition to being physically appealing, she has a desirable, positive, and moral objective (to understand why her grandfather has to die). Tish easily and readily accepts the fantasy world. She believes in magic and in wishing on stars. She is willing to help people and to listen to them, and thus she easily makes friends.

II. Mother

We know little about Tish's mother. She tries to keep things calm in the opening, chaos-ridden scene and doesn't want Tish to go into her grandfather's room to see him die. Although she can't explain why he has to die, she makes every effort to protect her daughter from emotional pain. At the same time, Tish's mother is trying to keep Aunt Ellen from an emotional breakdown and trying to keep restraints on her own feelings. We see a strong, compassionate, protecting, and selfless woman who maintains control until driven to a point where she can no longer hold her own needs back. In the final scene, after the crisis is over, we see a woman who is even more understanding (willing to listen and ready to face Tish) than the pressured woman in the first scene.

III. Aunt Ellen

Aunt Ellen is Tish's great aunt (and probably the sister of the dying man, although this is never stated). Of the four characters who belong to the real world, she is the most distressed. Aunt Ellen lacks the patience that Tish's mother displays when dealing with Tish. She seems to be so emotionally upset with the death of Tish's grandfather that there is little else she can deal with. We know even less about Aunt Ellen than we know about Tish's mother. In the opening scene, Aunt Ellen finds Tish to be a nuisance; however, we later find that this tension is only caused by the critical circumstances and is complicated with the age difference between them. In the final scene, we see that Aunt Ellen is more tolerant of Tish, which suggests that this is the usual relationship between them.

IV. Grandfather

Although Tish's grandfather is one of the most important characters in the play, he is never seen and never heard. The script indicates to us that Grandfather has a heart problem and is dying. We know more about Grandfather than we know about Tish's mother and Aunt Ellen, because we are given information about him by Tish. (Please note the references to Grandfather discussed previously in the section describing Tish.)

V. Star Bright

Star Bright, although a part of the fantasy world, serves as a transitional character between the real world and the fantasy world. The character is of indeterminate sex and could be any age, although there is a child-like quality about the character. There is also a magical quality about Star Bright, an excited twinkling energy. Star Bright is very helpful to people but just slightly impatient with them. One of the main objectives in her life is to be the first star out so that she can grant a wish. Star Bright is the kind of character everyone in the audience adores. Our belief in Star Bright makes the rest of the fantasy world more believable.

VI. World's Greatest Dancing Bear

The World's Greatest Dancing Bear comes from a prestigious family of dancers. His father was born in Russia, and his mother was the prima ballerina bear of all Spain. He is the World's Greatest Dancing Bear, traveling throughout the world doing the dances his parents taught him and wearing the hats his father passed down to him. He has won many medals for his dancing talents, and he performs for important people. He does most of his traveling with a circus and enjoys the magic of the circus world. Besides dancing, his favorite activity is eating. The stage directions tell us: "He is a star performer, amusing, vain and loveable like a

teddy bear."¹⁵

VII. Mime

The Mime is the best friend of the World's Greatest Dancing Bear. Mime is an entertaining jack-of-all-trades, who, at any time, can magically pull things from his pockets (or from thin air). This character, like Star Bright, is of indeterminate sex and age. He is friendly, pleasant, and devoted to the Dancing Bear. Mime is a partner and confidante of Dancing Bear. Because Mime cannot communicate with words, he has developed his imagination, which has become very vivid and complex, in order to communicate with people who do use words. He is able to mime complex meanings to others with great success.

VIII. Great Ringmaster

The Great Ringmaster is very much like all circus ringmasters --he is an authoritarian figure, and his job is to see that the circus functions properly. In the play, he represents death; when he summons someone, that person must go to the Great Center Ring. In the script we only see him at his most unpleasant job. The playwright tells us that: "He has a friendly face, a pleasant voice, but walks and speaks with authority."¹⁶ He is probably the least understood character in the play because we do not separate him as

a person from the job he must perform. The Ringmaster does have compassion for the bear; however, he also goes by the rules and performs his job with directness. Because of his position he knows much about death, but even he does not understand what death is. When he is asked, he merely states: "When there is no answer, you do not ask the question."¹⁷

IX. Little Bear

Little Bear is an uneducated, friendly, loveable, little country bear. The playwright's description causes one to think of Paddington Bear:

He is a small cub, wearing country overalls and a little turned-up straw hat. Over his shoulder he carries a small fishing pole.¹⁸

Little Bear, who is of indeterminate sex, is small, child-like, friendly, and full of curiosity. Little Bear makes friends quickly and completely. He helps Tish by gently passing on a bit of his country wisdom.

CHAPTER II

PRODUCTION CONCEPT

There are several things to consider when developing a production concept. The most important consideration is to determine what the play is about. At first, I believed the play was about coping with death. This was because of the many references to death in the script, and because the playwright uses a death as the inciting incident of the play. But the idea of "death" is too broad and vague a notion on which to base a concept. In looking for a more specific and more positive through-line for the play, I considered how two ideas present within the play were tied together.

Prevalent in the script is the idea of the circus as a metaphor for life. In life people and things die, and therefore this metaphor also includes death. Our lives are viewed as a three-ring circus and when we die we must enter the Great Center Ring. The circus characters and images used within the script support this circus metaphor.

The second idea deals with the characters in the play. All the characters have some relationship to Tish. In her imagination, Tish takes the people she knows in the real world and transforms them into characters who exist with her fantasy world.

In each of these ideas there exists a pattern of growth. In the circus of life you are able to grow until the day you die.

There also exists for each character a representative "older" character who represents growth. Each character uses different processes in order to grow, just as people do throughout their lives. Tish grows to Little Bear's level of understanding when she learns to accept death, and she thereby learns that when we let go of the past, we grow to a new understanding of the present and the future.

Viewed from these two perspectives, then, The Arkansaw Bear is a play about growing up. People can tell you to grow up, and they can show you how to grow up, but ultimately the responsibility of growing up is left to the individual. The playwright tells us the way to cope with death is to go on living. It may not be the way, but it is a way. He also states the idea that in every ending there is a beginning. How you eventually arrive at an answer is just as important as finding the answer to coping with death. In this play the process of finding is done through fantasy. Everyone experiences and uses fantasy in his life, even if only through his dreams.

The concept used in this production of the play focuses on the theme of growth--emotional and spiritual maturation. An attempt was made to illustrate this idea literally through the actions of the characters and in the physicalization of both the real and the fantasy worlds.

CHAPTER III

PHYSICAL PRODUCTION

Budget, space, time, manpower, and communication all influence how a concept is translated into a workable, physical production. What follows is a discussion of how these factors influenced choices made in regard to the physical production.

COSTUMES

The first thing decided was the number of costumes needed for the show. The designer wanted to know whether or not the voices would be seen, and if costumes would be needed. The choice to have the characters who are voices not be seen helped the budget, since it eliminated two potential costumes. It was decided initially that the character Star Bright would be a puppet, which eliminated another potential costume. Thus, the costumes that were initially needed were for Tish, Little Bear, Dancing Bear, Mime, and Ringmaster. The decision was subsequently made to have Star Bright enacted by an actor rather than a puppet. This then necessitated an additional costume for that character.

The costumes were divided into two groups: the human costumes and the animal/object costumes. Tish, Mime, and the Ringmaster had human costumes; Dancing Bear, Little Bear, and Star Bright had

animal/object costumes.

The designer used stuffed bears, material swatches, and color samples as a basis to help our discussions of the costumes.

The color palette for the costumes included pink (and other various shades of red) and pale blue. These colors were chosen not just because they are traditionally associated with children, but also because it seemed likely that a little girl's fantasy would include these pastel colors.

Even before we knew what the costume budget would be, the designer informed me that most of that budget would have to go towards the construction of the bear costumes. An attempt was made to use fabric and accessories already available to the costume designer in order to keep the expense down.

I. Tish

Tish is a little girl who lives in Arkansas. What may be considered the standard dress for a little girl in Arkansas today is probably blue jeans and a T-shirt; unfortunately, the standard dress for a college student in Blacksburg, Virginia, today is also a T-shirt and blue jeans. Therefore, the costume designer and I did not feel that this particular apparel would help establish Tish's age or background.

The possibility of placing Tish in a dress was dismissed because that would indicate to the audience that it was a special day. It

was decided that the play takes place in mid-May, at which time Tish would still be in school; therefore, her attire needed to be something appropriate for her to wear to school. She would not be in her play clothes yet, because the action of the play begins just as Tish is walking home from school. We felt the best way to incorporate all of these ideas was to have Tish dressed in a jumper and top. Knee socks were added to accentuate her youth. We also arranged the twenty-year-old actress's hair in pig tails to make her look younger. Her jumper was blue and her top pink; thus, Tish's costume became the basis for all color associations made with the other characters.

II. Ringmaster

Tails, breeches, tall black boots, and a black top hat are the usual accouterments for a ringmaster. We used this traditional image of the ringmaster, which also happens to be the suggestion of the playwright. The costume was incorporated into the color scheme with its bright red color.

III. Mime

Mime is a magician, clown, and a caretaker of the Dancing Bear. His costume consisted of blue checked, calf-length pants, suspenders (which allowed freedom of movement), and a large pink coat with several colorful patch pockets. Mime also wore a bright red wig to

suggest more of a clown image than the traditional mime image. Although Mime's costume linked him to the fantasy, it was also like that of a clown from the real world.

IV. Dancing Bear

Dancing Bear's costume consisted of stomach padding, a fur suit, dancing shoes, gloves, and a red band-leader's jacket with matching hat. It was necessary to make a statement, through costume, that Dancing Bear was traveling with the circus. The circus posters I had seen as a child always had their dancing bear wearing a vest with a pill-box type hat. I felt Dancing Bear was classier than the average dancing bear, considering all his awards, and thus the designer and I decided on the band leader's jacket and hat. White gloves were used instead of bear paws to give the actor flexibility with his hands. For greater dancing flexibility, dancing shoes were also necessary.

V. Little Bear

The Little Bear required stomach padding and a fur suit. However, Little Bear did not require the hand or feet flexibility of the Dancing Bear because he did not have to change hats, nor dance with as much grace as Dancing Bear. Therefore, the Little Bear had mitten-style fur hands and fur feet. As a country bear, he needed

to wear practical clothing, such as blue overalls. A straw hat and a fishing pole added to the practical and simplistic image of the Arkansaw Bear. A pink scarf helped to make a subtle color connection between Tish and the Little Bear, and drew attention to the actor's face.

VI. Star Bright

Star Bright's costume was light blue, trimmed with reflective gold striping to outline her star shape. The costume was loose fitting to hide the rigging used to fly Star Bright and to enable the rigging to work properly.

PROPERTIES

Certain properties helped the audience to identify a particular character trait. For instance: Dancing Bear carried a cane to help establish his age, position, and vanity; Little Bear carried his bamboo fishing pole to help establish his adventuresome, fun-loving nature; Ringmaster carried his book to remind the audience he was performing his job; and Tish carried her grandfather's favorite flowers to help establish the close relationship between the two.

A large trunk was used to carry all of Dancing Bear's hats and accessories. This trunk had wheels to make it easier to maneuver on stage. A small pink, helium-filled balloon was used as the symbol

for the letting go of Dancing Bear's past.

MAKEUP

Two basic makeup decisions were made: the first was to avoid painting the actor's faces like animals in order to retain the human qualities of the characters; the second was to have the actor's faces seen clearly by the audience. Mime is the only character who used more than the standard makeup techniques. He used bright red to accent the cheeks to appear more clown-like.

SET

The set contained three major areas: in front of the curtain (representing the real world); Tish's tree on a hillside (representing Tish's private space); and an open space (to be filled with characters and objects from Tish's imagination).

Since the characters of the real world are not seen, neither were the environmental elements of that world. The only set piece used in front of the curtain was a poster with a bear on it. The orchestra pit was lowered slightly to represent a pond. Since it was only necessary for Tish to see a poster on her way home, and since the voices of Mother and Aunt Ellen suggest that these people are present and conversing with Tish, it was thought best to keep the scenery for this scene minimal.

By opening the main curtain we attempted to suggest to the audience that Tish had gone some distance to arrive at the tree. A set piece was positioned stage right to represent a grassy, green hillside with a large tree. The hillside was suggested with the use of a large, raked platform with green carpet. The tree was made of layers of cloth, dyed and hung to appear as a natural tree. An angled and raked platform sloped down from the center of the hillside to center stage. This helped to define the height of the hillside, while creating more variety of level for the actors to work on.

The circular patterns discussed in the script analysis were applied to the set design in several ways. The hillside was a large round platform, the ground cloth directly below the angled platform had a painted circle, and the upstage area was defined with sections of a circus ring.

Each character entered from the real world and crossed through the outer-most circle into the fantasy world. This outer-most circle was designed to exist in the real world as a street curb and in the fantasy world as a circus ring.

Three small circular platforms which supported weight were brought in by actors during the course of the play to give more variety of level and to support the circus motif. These platforms looked similar to elephant stands used in a circus.

Additional set dressing consisted of fragmented circus items, as they were imagined by Tish. These items were designed to fly in and out of the open space. The pieces consisted of a large version

of the circus poster with a bear on it, flags, banners, and a trapeze ladder.

LIGHTS

The real world was established with the use of a single spotlight. This use of the spotlight helped to focus the audience's attention on Tish. Within the fantasy world, we used colored lights, area lighting, lights for the sunrise, and special effects. One special effect, used to enhance the circus environment of the fantasy world, projected the shadows of circus jugglers on to the cyclorama. To help establish the fantastic qualities of the magic scenes, colored lights were hidden in the outer edges of the hill platform and the outer circle and were flashed on and off when we needed to suggest that magic was happening. As Tish's understanding of how to cope with her grandfather's death became clearer, the lights of the fantasy world which helped to guide her dimmed. The idea of Tish's new beginning was illustrated in lights through the indication of a sunrise seen on the cyclorama. Soon after the sunrise, Mother's call brings the curtain down and forces Tish back into the real world. This was placed in a spotlight, as in the opening scene, so that the cycle was completed with the lighting as well as with the action of the play.

SOUND

The only sounds of the real world, other than Tish's voice, were the voices of Mother and Aunt Ellen, which were amplified through speakers.

The sounds for the fantasy world came from many different sources. Recordings of bands, orchestras, and single instruments were used. The sound could only be brought into the realm of the fantasy world through the magic of the Mime. With a wave of his hand, Mime brought the appropriate music to the fantasy world from anywhere in the real world. Since Mime was a product of Tish's imagination, the specific music was selected with the idea that it should be music that Tish probably had heard in the real world. These sounds included: calliope music, royal music, chimes, a rooster crowing, polka music, tango music, and Russian music.

NOTES

¹ Aurand Harris, The Arkansaw Bear (New Orleans: Anchorage Press, Inc., 1980), p. 29.

² Harris, p. 15.

³ Harris, p. 11.

⁴ Harris, p. 36.

⁵ Harris, p. 29.

⁶ Harris, p. 9.

⁷ Harris, p. 10.

⁸ Harris, p. 12.

⁹ Harris, p. 16.

¹⁰ Harris, p. 19.

¹¹ Harris, p. 25.

¹² Harris, p. 25.

¹³ Harris, p. 12.

¹⁴ Harris, p. 12.

¹⁵ Harris, p. 12.

¹⁶ Harris, p. 19.

¹⁷ Harris, p. 37.

¹⁸ Harris, p. 26.

CHAPTER IV
PROMPT SCRIPT

PROMPT SCRIPT KEY

(A) Note given to an actor. The character's name appears first and then the note is given.

(L) Lighting notes

(S) Sound notes

(*) Blocking notes for major blocking changes.

DS--downstage

ES--elephant stand

EX--exit

L--left

R--right

S--stage

US--upstage

X--cross

s--sit

s̄--stand

Royalty Note

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The Arkansaw Bear



by Aurand Harris

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THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Cast

Tish

Star Bright

Mime

World's Greatest Dancing Bear

Great Ringmaster

Little Bear

Voices: Mother

Aunt Ellen

Announcer

Scene

The present. Somewhere in Arkansaw.

[As the house lights dim, there is a glow of light on the front curtain. Over a loud speaker a man's whistling of "O Susannah" is heard. The curtains open. Tish walks into a large spot of warm light at L. The whistling dims out. Tish is a little girl and carries some hand-picked flowers. She listens to the voices, heard over a loud speaker, and reacts to them as if Mother and Aunt Ellen were on each side of her, downstage.] 1

TISH: I've come to see Grandpa. 4

MOTHER'S VOICE: No, dear. No. You can't go in. 5

TISH: But Mother — — 3

MOTHER'S VOICE: No, Tish! You can't see Grandpa now. 6

TISH: I picked him some flowers. These are Grandpa's favorites. 7

AUNT ELLEN'S VOICE: *[She is Tish's great aunt, elderly, gentle and emotional]* Quiet, child. 8

TISH: But Aunt Ellen — — 9

AUNT ELLEN'S VOICE — The doctor is here. 10

TISH: The doctor? 11

MOTHER'S VOICE: Tish, dear.

TISH: Yes, mother?

MOTHER'S VOICE: Grandpa had a turn for the worse. His heart — — 12

AUNT ELLEN'S VOICE: ~~Oh, it's the end.~~

[Cries quietly]

TISH: ~~The end?~~

AUNT ELLEN'S VOICE: The doctor said . . . no hope. 13

[Tish reacts]

MOTHER'S VOICE: Don't cry, Aunt Ellen. 14

TISH: Is Grandpa going . . . to die?

AUNT ELLEN'S VOICE: Yes. 15

TISH: No! He can't.

MOTHER'S VOICE: We all have to die, dear.

TISH: I know. But not Grandpa.

[Start to move]

MOTHER'S VOICE: Stop. You can't go in.

TISH: Why can't he live forever!

AUNT ELLEN'S VOICE: You're too young to understand. Too full of life.

TISH: I have to tell him there's a circus coming. I saw a poster with a bear. 16

- 1 Beat One--The Problem, scene one, introduction, French Scene One, it is a new beat, the first beat which builds on an existing crisis unknown to Tish
Preshow: House to 1/2--House Out
(S) 1 Man whistling "Oh Susannah"
(L) 1 Spotlight on Tish
(A) Tish--throw pebbles into pit, move stage R to L
- 2 Hand-picked flowers--suggest good weather? Daytime?
- 3 (A) Mother--stage right (A) Aunt Ellen--stage left
(S) Mother and Aunt Ellen heard over loud speakers
- 4 Tish's objective: to get Grandfather to take me to the circus
- 5 (A) Mother--Why can't Tish see her grandfather?
- 6 Can Tish normally see her grandfather
- 7 Tish knows her grandfather's favorite flowers
- 8 Tish's great aunt, possibly the sister of the dying man. How old is Aunt Ellen?
- 9 (A) Tish--How do you feel toward Aunt Ellen?
- 10 (A) Aunt Ellen--What does it mean that the doctor is here?
Has he been here before?
- 11 (A) Tish--What does it mean to you that the doctor is here?
Why are you questioning your Aunt?
- 12 Grandfather has heart trouble. (A) Mother--What else were you going to say?
- 13 (A) Aunt Ellen--What were you going to say about what the doctor said? Are you hesitating?
- 14 (A) Mother--comforting her here? What is your role in this scene?
- 15 The Inciting Incident--the death of Grandfather
- 16 Tish sees a poster with a bear on it. Here is where the circus motif and the Dancing Bear come from in the fantasy.

- MOTHER'S VOICE: It doesn't matter now. 17
- TISH: Yes, it does! Do something!
- MOTHER'S VOICE: *[Firmly]* We've done all we can.
- TISH: But not enough! I . . . I didn't do enough!
- AUNT ELLEN'S VOICE: Quiet. Quiet. 18
- TISH: *[Softly]* Yes, if I'd been quiet so he could sleep. And — Oh! Once when I was mad, I said . . . I wish he was dead. Oh, I didn't mean it, Grandpa. I didn't mean it.
- MOTHER'S VOICE: Hush, dear. It's not your fault. Grandpa loved you.
- TISH: Then why is he . . . leaving me? 19
- [Pulls away as if being held]*
- TISH: *Oh, let me go!*
- MOTHER'S VOICE: *[Sharply, becoming edgy with emotion]* Yes/Go put the flowers in some water.
- TISH: He liked the pink ones. Now . . . he'll never see them. Oh, why . . . why does Grandpa have to die? 20
- MOTHER'S VOICE: *[Sternly, trying to control and cover her grief]* Run along, dear. Run along.
- AUNT ELLEN'S VOICE: Keep away. Away from his door. Away . . . ~~away~~.
- [The voices of Mother and Aunt Ellen overlap and mix together, as they keep repeating, "Run along," "Away," "Run . . . run," "Away . . . away," "Run," "Away," "Run . . . away; run . . . away." They build to a climax in a choral chant, "Run . . . away."]* 21
- TISH: I will. I'll run away. Up the hill . . . to my tree . . . ~~my tree~~ 22
- [She runs, circling to the tree which is at R, and on which the lights come up. The circle of light on the first scene dims out, and the chanting of the voices stop. Tish stands alone by her tree in the soft light of evening. She brushes back a tear, shakes her head, and throws the flowers on the ground]*
- [She sinks to the ground by the tree, hugs her knees, and looks up. She sees the first star, which is out of sight. Quickly she gets up, points to the star and chants]* 23
- Star light, star bright,
First star I see tonight,
I wish I may, I wish I might,
Have the wish I wish tonight.
I wish . . . I wish . . . Oh, Grandpa . . . why?
- [Goes back to tree]*
- Why do you have to die? 24
- [There is star music, tinkling with bells. From above, a small swing starts descending. Magic star light spots on it. Star Bright stands on the swing, which stops in mid-air. Music dims out]*

- 17 (A) Mother--Why doesn't it matter? (A) Tish--Of course it matters. Scene continues to build and build until echoing which is a transition into the next French Scene
- 18 (A) Tish--Feelings of guilt. (A) Aunt Ellen--What is your biggest concern at this point?
- 19 (A) Tish--Isn't this selfish? What matters now?
- 20 Here is the question the playwright sets up for himself--Why does Grandpa have to die?
- 21 Dream-like? Build into chaos. This is where the curtain comes up and we see Tish's private place.
- 22 French Scene Two, Scene 2--The Request Tish's objective to find a place to be by herself to think or cry or do as she wishes. To find security. (S) 2 Echoing voices over bizarre music. Curtain is up, Spotlight fades, Bear poster out, (L) 2
- 23 Transition 1 The Fantasy (S) Star music with tinkling bells, twinkling lights on Starbright (L) 3
- (* Tish--s SL of tree
Star Bright--flown in SL
- 24 Repeating the question which ties the show together

STAR BRIGHT: Repeat, please. 25

TISH: I wish . . . I wish . . .

STAR BRIGHT: I know you are wishing. That's why I'm here. But WHAT? Repeat please.

TISH: *[Sees and goes near him]* Who are you?

STAR BRIGHT: *[Slowly and proudly]* I am the first star out tonight!

[Happily]

I did it! I did it! I did it again!

[Excitedly]

First star . . . first star . . . first star out tonight!

[To Tish]

It's the early star, you know, who gets the wish. What is yours? Repeat, please.

TISH: Can you make a wish come true?

STAR BRIGHT: I've been making wishes come true for a thousand years.

TISH: A thousand years! You're older than Grandpa. 26

STAR BRIGHT: *[Sits on swing]* Old? Oh, no. I'll twinkle for another thousand years. 27

TISH: And then?

STAR BRIGHT: *[Cheerfully]* Then my light will go out.

TISH: Like Grandpa.

STAR BRIGHT: But there will be a new star. It's the great pattern . . . 28

TISH: I'll never have another Grandpa.

STAR BRIGHT: . . . the great circle of life. In every ending there is a new beginning. 29

TISH: *[Fully realizing it]* I'll never see Grandpa again. I'll never hear him whistle.

[Begins to whistle "O Susannah"] 30

STAR BRIGHT: Your wish? What is your wish?

TISH: I wish . . . I wish Grandpa could live a thousand years!

STAR BRIGHT: *[Startled]* What? Repeat, please!

TISH: *[Excited]* I wish he'd never die. Nobody would ever die! Everyone live forever!

STAR BRIGHT: Oh, no, no, no! Think what a mixed up world it would be! 31

TISH: *[Speaks intently]* I wish . . . I wish I knew why . . . why Grandpa has to die. 32

STAR BRIGHT: That is not a quick one-two-buckle-my shoe wish. No. That is a think-and-show-it, then you-know-it, come-true wish.

- 25 French Scene 3 Tish's objective: to have her wishes come true
- (*) Tish--X DS to Star Bright and \bar{s} SR of her.
- 26 Star Bright wants to be the first out. What does this say about her? (A) Star Bright--gradually get more excited when you realize you are the first star out.
- 27 (A) Star Bright--How old you are? How do you feel when Tish sees you as ancient?
- 28 Has Star Bright accepted the great pattern, much like what Mother says earlier that everyone must die
- 29 Circle of life--circles in circus ring? A circle has no ending or beginning
- 30 What is it that causes Tish to think of the whistle? Why doesn't she make the connection of passing down here?
- 31 What Tish wishes is to reconcile with herself and to understand. (A) Star Bright--What does this mean? What would happen? Can she force you to grant your wish?
- 32 Repeats again the question Why does Grandpa have to die?

TISH: Please.

STAR BRIGHT: *[With anticipated excitement]* Close your eyes. Whisper the words again. Open your eyes. And your wish will begin.

[Tish closes her eyes. Star Bright claps his hands, then motions. There are music and beautiful lights. Star Bright is delighted with the effect.]

Very good! Repeat, please.

[He claps and waves his hand. Again there are music and beautiful lights.]

Excellent! Thank you!

[The swing with Star Bright is pulled up and out of sight. The full stage is seen, lighted brightly and in soft colors. (Never is the stage dark, eerie, or frightening.) It is Tish's fantasy. There are the large tree at R, and open space with beautiful sky.]

33

Mime appears at R. He is a showman, a magician and an accomplished mime who never speaks. He wears a long coat with many colorful patch pockets. He is NOT in white face, but his face is natural, friendly and expressive. He enters cautiously, carrying a traveling box, which he sets down at C. On the side the audience sees, is painted the word, BEAR. On the other side is painted the word, DANCING. He beckons off R. The World's Greatest Dancing Bear enters R. He is a star performer, amusing, vain and loveable like a teddy bear. He does NOT wear an animal mask, nor is the actor's face painted, frightening or grotesque, with animal makeup. He wears his traveling hat. He hurries in, worried and out of breath.]

34

BEAR: I must stop and get my breath.

[Pants heavily]

My heart is pounding.

[Looks about]

Are we safe?

35

[Frightened]

I don't see him. I don't hear him. Yes, we have out run him.

[Motions and Mime places box for Bear to sit]

Where . . . where in this wide whirling wonderful world . . . do you think we are? Switzerland?

[Mime makes pointed mountain with his wrist, runs his fingers up and down the "mountain," then shakes his head.]

You are right. No mountains. England?

[Mime opens and holds up imaginary umbrella, holds hand out to feel the rain, shakes his head.]

You are right. No rain. India?

[Mime leans over, swings one arm for a trunk, then other for his tail and walks.]

33 French Scene 4 Tish's objective: to discover who the new characters are (S) Star music same as 3 (S) Fantasy music (L) 4 cyc. Lights, spots out (L) 5 Fantasy Lights

(*) Star Bright--EX
Dancing Bear and Mime--enter SL and move DS from center.

34 Very important concept found within these stage directions
Lots of clues to costume, makeup, and concern for the animals being human

(*) Dancing Bear and Mime--DS center

35 (A) Bear--Where are you going to? To find a safe place?
Where have you come from? What are you afraid of?
Why do you think you enter Tish's imagination at this point?

No elephants.

TISH: Excuse me.

[They freeze. She comes to them.]

I can tell you where you are. You are in Arkansas.

BEAR: Quick! Disguise. Hide.

[He and Mime hurry to R. Mime quickly takes from one of his pockets a pair of dark glasses and gives them to Bear who puts them on; then stands beside Bear to hide him.]

36

TISH: *[Recites with pride]* Arkansas was the 25th state to be admitted to the union. It is the 27th in size, and the state flower is apple blossom.

37

BEAR: Who is it?

[Mime pantomimes a girl]

A girl?

[Mime pantomimes a small girl]

A little girl? Tell her to go away. To run away.

[Mime pantomimes to Tish. Bear hides behind tree]

TISH: I have. I have run away. Have you run away, too?

[Mime nods]

38

Why?

[Mime looks frightened off R, then puts finger to lips]

Who are you?

[Mime takes a card from a pocket and presents it to her. She reads.]

"A Mime." You never speak.

[Mime shakes his head, and "walks" in one spot and tips his hat.]

"A Magician." You do tricks!

[Mime pulls handkerchief from sleeve]

39

"Friend." You give help.

[Mime touches handkerchief under her eyes]

Thank you. I was crying because my Grandpa . . . he's going to . . .

40

[Bear, without glasses steps out from behind the tree, does a loud tap dance step and poses. Mime turns the traveling box around and with a flourish points to the word painted on that side of the box. Tish reads it with amazement.]

Dancing.

[Mime turns box around again. She reads.]

Bear.

(*) Tish--slowly around tree DS using slant platform

36 Shows the humor of the characters

37 Tish knows an awful lot about Arkansas How important is this?
Shows us she is in about fourth grade
Intelligent

(*) Mime--move US to Tish

38 Running Away a thing they have in common

39 What does this say about the character Mime?

40 Subject is quickly changed, why? Is she sparing herself from pain?

(*) Mime--X to trunk

[Mime motions to Bear who steps forward.]

I've never met a bear. I've never seen a DANCING bear.

BEAR: *[To Mime]*

Should I?

41

[Mime nods]

Shall I?

[Mime nods]

I will! My Spanish hat.

[Mime jumps with joy and gets hat from box. Bear motions to Tish who sits on the ground.]

42

Be seated, please.

[Mime holds up handmirror, which he takes from a pocket, holds it up for Bear to look at himself, and fixes the hat.]

43

To the right . . . to the right . . . Ah, just right!

[Mime motions and a spot light comes on. An announcer's voice is heard over a loud speaker.]

44

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE: Ladies and Gentlemen: Presenting in his spectacular, special, Spanish dance, the World's famous, the World's favorite, the World's Greatest Dancing Bear!

45

BEAR: *[Mime motions and Spanish music is heard. Bear steps into the spot-light. He dances with professional perfection a Spanish dance, but he does not finish. At a climactic moment, he stops, holds his hand against his heart and speaks with short breaths.]*

46

Stop the music.

[Mime motions. Music stops.]

Dim the light.

[Mime motions. Spot dims out.]

47

TISH: What is it?

BEAR: *[Breathing heavily.]* He is near. He is coming.

48

TISH: Who?

BEAR: He is almost here. Hide. I must hide. He must not find me.

[Mime points to tree.]

Yes, the tree. Hurry!

[Mime helps Bear to tree.]

TISH: Who? Who is coming?

BEAR: The box. Cover the box.

- 41 (A) Bear--an audience What does it mean to you that someone has never seen a Dancing Bear before. If Tish has never seen one before, how does she imagine bear?
- 42 (A) Mime--why does this make you jump with joy?
(*) Mime and Tish--s on trunk SL
- 43 Displays Bear's vanity What are Mime's duties?
(*) Dancing Bear--X to center
- 44 Where does the Announcer's voice come from? French Scene 4a and Bear's re-entrance 4b (S) Spanish music
- 45 How Bear presents himself is very important. Where does Tish get this from? Is Grandfather like this?
- 46 Scene 4 The Close Call must be a dynamic change here
(*) Dancing Bear--quickly X SR and then SL
- 47 Note the stage directions have Mime stopping the music and Mime dimming the lights. She is in control
- 48 Who is coming near? How can we create the expectation of the audience? (A) Bear--What does this mean to you?
(*) Dancing Bear--go to tree SR

- 49 The state of many bears Is this why we use a bear as the main character in the fantasy? What is the connection between Arkansas and bears? What about Bears?
- 50 (A) Mime--What do you know? How important is it to you?
- 51 (A) Bear--Why don't you tell her? What is important now?
- (*) Bear--X to trunk and then X to SR
- 52 Why does it matter to Tish? What does she think she will find out? What information does she know about the bear at this time?
- 53 Where does this superstition come from? Why does death come if you say his name outloud? (A) Bear--are you superstitious?
- (*) Tish--s on large platform DSL
- 54 Old hat and new feather old-new another circle The subject is once again changed.

- 55 Exposition Leticia is her grandmother's name, we find out what Grandfather calls her
- 56 Because Grandfather has a special name for her Bear must as well
- 57 Scene 5 The Awards We see exposition of the Bear's life
- 58 Back to the subject of Grandfather, the connections are constantly hinted at between Grandfather and Bear
- (*) Tish-- \bar{s} on large platform
 Bear-- \bar{s} on slanted platform
 Mime--SL of Bear at ground level
- 59 (A) Bear--Why do you want to recall your glories? What does this do for you? (S) Royal music
- 60 French Scene 5 Tish not directly involved, used to give background information on the honors of the bear

[He disappears behind the tree. Mime sits on traveling box. Bear's head appears.]

Talk.

[Mime mime-talks with hands and face.]

Louder!

[Bear's head disappears. Mime motions for Tish to talk.]

TISH: Talk? What about?

BEAR: *[Head appears]* Arkansas.

[Head disappears]

TISH: *[Recites nervously]* Arkansas has mineral springs, natural caves, and . . . and . . . diamond mines.

[Looks off R and whispers frightened]

I don't hear anyone. I don't see anyone.

[Mime motions for her to talk.]

Arkansas was first known as the state of many bears. 49

[Looks and whispers mysteriously]

There isn't anyone. Nothing. Just quiet, nothing. Who is he running away from?

[Mime motions "Sh," then runs L to R and looks, then motions for Bear to come out.] 50

BEAR: *[Comes from behind tree]* He didn't find me. I escaped . . . this time. 51

[Pleased, but short of breath]

My traveling hat. We must go on.

[Mime takes Spanish hat and gives Bear traveling hat.]

TISH: Where? Where will you go? 52

BEAR: *[Looks off R, afraid]* I must keep ahead of him.

TISH: Ahead of who? Who!

BEAR: *[Cautiously]* Never speak his name aloud. 53

[Looks around]

He may be listening, and come at once.

[Mime gives him hat]

Oh, my poor hat. You and I have traveled together for many a mile and many a year. ~~We are both beginning to look a little scary.~~

[Puts hat on]

TISH: Grandpa has an old hat. 54

BEAR: Perhaps, if it had a new feather. ~~Yes! A bright new feather!~~

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE: The Royal Ribbon of Honor for Distinguished Service.

BEAR: It was during the war. I danced for the soldiers.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE: And today, a new decoration. Her Royal Highness, Princess Leticia presents, in honor of her Grandfather, the highest award in the State of Arkansas — the Turkey Feather. 61

[Mime takes a bright feather from a pocket and gives to it Tish. Bear parades to her, with a few dance steps, and she puts the feather in his hat. Royal music stops.] 62

BEAR: Thank you. A party! We will celebrate my new honor! 63

[To Mime]

Food and festivities! Honey bread!

[Mime nods]

Thick with honey spread!

[Mime nods twice, then makes magic motions toward Bear. Suddenly Mime turns and points to Leticia. She puts out her hand which, magically, holds a honey bun.] 64

TISH: *[Delighted]* O-o-oh! It looks delicious.

BEAR: *[Mime turns and points to Bear who puts out his hand which, also magically, holds a colorful honey bun.]*

A-a-ah! It IS delicious.

[Bear puts finger in it, then licks finger. Mime raises his hand.]

Yes, give us a toast.

[Bear and Tish hold honey buns up. Mime pantomimes "A toast . . ." holds up his hand; "to the winner . . ." clasps his hands and shakes them high in the air; "of the turkey feather," walks like a turkey, bobbing his head, then Mime pulls out an imaginary feather from his hip.] 65

Thank you.

TISH: What did he say?

BEAR: You didn't listen.

TISH: How can I hear when he doesn't speak?

BEAR: You listen with your eyes, and then YOU say the words. Listen. He will repeat the toast.

TISH: *[Mime pantomimes the toast again. She watches and specks aloud.]* "A toast . . . to the winner . . . of the turkey feather!"

BEAR: Thank you. Now entertainment! 66

[To Mime]

You tell us a story.

- 61 French Scene 6 Tish's objective to discover who the bear is running away from The Party
- 62 Celebrating a new honor
- 63 Why does the following information come out in story form?
Related to bed time stories?
- (*) Mime, Tish, Bear-- \bar{s} on large platform in triangle in this order from SR to SL
- 64 Magic of the Mime important
- (*) Mime-- \bar{s} to give toast
- 65 Flexibility of the Mime is shown here, also interesting format in which to toast Grandfather/Bear with the turkey feather
- 66 Bear takes control, why? What is on his mind? (A) Bear--what do you need here?

[To Tish]

You listen and say the words. 67

TISH: Me?

BEAR: And I will eat! 68

[Wiggles with excitement and sits on box.]

TISH: *[Mime pantomimes a story which Tish, watching him, repeats in words.]*
"Once there was . . . a princess . . . a beautiful princess!"

BEAR: Named

[Sings it]

Leticia.

[Takes a bite]

TISH: "One day . . . in the woods . . . she met . . .

[Doubtful]

. . . a cat?"

[Mime shakes his head. Mimes again.]

A . . . goosey-gander? 69

[Mime shakes his head. Mimes again.]

TISH: A . . . bear!

BEAR: The World's Greatest Dancing Bear!

[Seated, he makes his own vocal music and dances with his feet.]

TISH: "Under a spreading tree . . . they had a party . . . with honey bread, thick with honey spread."

BEAR: *[Licks his five fingers, one on each word.]* Yum . . . yum . . . TO . . . the . . . last . . . crumb.

[Licks his hand and picks and eats crumbs from his lap.]

TISH: "Now honey bread, thick with honey spread . . . made the bear ⁷⁰ very . . . sleepy. He yawned."

[Bear follows action of the story and goes to sleep.]

". . . gave a little sigh . . . and took a little nap."

[Bear snores]

He's asleep. Who . . . who is he running away from?

[Mime goes to sleeping Bear, puts his finger to his lips then mimes.]

"The World's Greatest Dancing Bear . . . is old and tired . . . and his heart . . . is tired."

[Herself]

67 Isn't there an irony here? Tish's character she has made up takes over and asks her to say the words. Isn't she saying the words all along?

68 Bear is fond of eating

69 Again the fun of the characters, the humor to be found within a potentially sad scene

70 Tish takes over and controls the actions of the Bear

(* Bear--fall asleep SL of tree

Like Grandpa.

[Speaking for Mime]

"He is running away from . . ." Who? "Someone is coming to take him away . . . forever." Does that mean if he's caught, he will die? 71

[Mime nods]

TISH: Is he running away . . . from death?

[Mime nods]

Oh! I'll help him. Yes, I'll help him.

[Faint music of a calliope is heard. Bear stirs] 72

He's waking up.

BEAR: *[Slowly wakes up]* Music . . . the calliope . . . circus music . . . of the Great Center ring! 73

[Rises]

The Ringmaster is coming!

TISH: *[To Mime]* Death?

[Mime nods]

BEAR: He is near. I hear the music.

TISH: I don't hear it.

[To Mime]

Do you?

[Mime shakes his head]

BEAR: Only I can hear him. Only I can see him. He is coming for me. Quick! We must go. 74

TISH: Yes, I'll help you.

BEAR: This way. Hurry!

[Mime carries box. Led by Bear they start L, but stop when the music becomes louder.] 75

No! No! The music is here. Quick! Turn! Run the other way.

[They rush to R and are stopped by music becoming louder.]

No! The music is coming from here. It is all around us! Here! There! Look! 76

[He points off R]

TISH: What?

BEAR: The Great Ringmaster. He is there! He is coming . . . for me!

[Ringmaster enters slowly from R. He wears an ornate ringmaster's jacket, boots and a tall hat. He has a friendly face, a pleasant voice, but walks and speaks with authority. He stops. Music stops.] 77

(*) Mime--move DS and bring Tish with you

71 What leads Tish to this connection? Has she known all along?

72 (S) Calliope music Tish's objective changes to help the bear

73 Scene 7 The Beckoning circus music and the great center ring part of the circus motif

(*) Bear--run down slanted platform
Mime--X to trunk and then move trunk SR
Tish--X to top of slanted platform

74 Why is this? Another philosophy on death?

75 The music is everywhere, all around us

76 All around us, more patterns of circles

77 Important description of the Ringmaster

(*) Ringmaster--enter SL

Quick! Hide me! Hide me!

[Bear runs to L. Tish and Mime follow. He quickly hides behind them when they stop. Bear peeks over Tish's shoulder.]

Tell him to go away.

TISH: I can't see him. Where is he?

BEAR: There.

[Hides]

TISH: *[Bravely speaks, facing front talking into space.]* Excuse me . . . sir. This is my secret place . . . by the big tree. You must leave at once. Go away. Now.

[Whispers to Bear]

78

Did he go?

BEAR: *[Peeks]* No.

[Hides]

RINGMASTER: *[Distinctly and with authority]* I have come for the Dancing Bear. I have come to take him to the Great Center Ring.

79

BEAR: Tell him he has made a mistake.

TISH: Excuse me . . . sir. You have made a mistake.

RINGMASTER: *[Opens book]* No. It is written plainly in the book. The date is today. The name is . . . the Dancing Bear.

80

BEAR: *[Who was hidden by Mime at the side, now steps into view, wearing boxing gloves and a sport cap.]* You HAVE made a mistake. I am a BOXING bear.

[Mime blows a whistle and continues to blow it, as Bear shadow boxes, comically, with a few dance steps and kicks thrown in. He ends in a heroic pose.]

81

Goodbye.

RINGMASTER: A boxing bear?

[Looks in book]

There has never been a mistake.

82

TISH: *[Whispers]* Have you tricked him? Outwitted him?

BEAR: *[Nods, then calls loudly]* Yes. Training time. On your mark; get set; ready — talleyho!

[Starts jogging off R]

RINGMASTER: *[Reads]* The book says: His father, born in Russia, a dancing bear.

83

BEAR: *[Stops, indignant]* Correct that. He was Russia's most honored dancing bear.

- 78 (A) Tish--What gives you this power and strength to chase away something you cannot see or understand?
- (*) Ringmaster--X slowly slanted platform to the center of the large platform
- 79 The Great Center Ring again French Scene 7 Tish's objective: to discover what the Ringmaster wants, to continue to help the bear
- 80 It is written plainly another philosophy about death
- (*) Bear--X to Ringmaster
- 81 The humor in the crisis scenes is important
- 82 There has never been a mistake, a comforting idea but yet another philosophical statement on death
- (*) Bear--X to SL
- 83 Background on the Dancing Bear, the idea of passing down from generation to generation begins here

RINGMASTER: His mother, born in Spain, also a dancing bear. 84

BEAR: She was the prima ballerina bear of all Spain!

RINGMASTER: He, only son — —

BEAR: Is the World's Greatest Dancing Bear!

RINGMASTER: Then you are the one I have come for!

BEAR: Yes!

RINGMASTER: Then we will have no more tricks or games.

[Bear realizes he has revealed himself.]

Come. Take my hand.

[Bear always reacts with fear to the Ringmaster's white gloved hand.] 85

I will show you the way to the Great Center Ring.

BEAR: No! No!

TISH: What is he saying?

BEAR: He is going to take me away.

RINGMASTER: Come. You must. And it is easier if you go quietly.

BEAR: No! I will not go with you. I will fight!

[Holds up boxing gloves]

TISH: Fight him! I'll help you!

BEAR: *I have fought all my life / Battled my way to the top / Look at my medals.*
I will fight to the end.

RINGMASTER: This, my friend, is the end. 86

BEAR: ~~No!~~ No! ~~Not for me.~~ Not yet! ~~Stay away!~~ I have new dances to do.

RINGMASTER: Today you will take you last bow.

BEAR: No! No.

[Savagely]

I will glow! I will eat! I will crush! I will kill! Kill! Kill!

[Violently throws boxing gloves away.]

To live! To live!

RINGMASTER: Everyone shouts when he is frightened of the dark.

BEAR: I WILL NOT DIE!

RINGMASTER: You have no choice.

BEAR: But . . . why? Why me? ME!

RINGMASTER: You are like all the others. Everyone thinks HE will live forever. Come. 87

84 more background on Bear

(*) Bear--move towards Ringmaster

85 Again the Center Ring What kind of place is this? Is it good or bad or undefined?

(*) Ringmaster--down slanted platform to SL

86 Here we place importance on the end. Cliche statements made about the last moments

87 Another idea towards the subject of death? Why? Which one are we to follow?

BEAR: No! What did I do wrong? What can I do now? To stop it!

RINGMASTER: Death comes to all. It has never been IF you will die. The only question has been WHEN you will die. Now you know. 88

BEAR: *[Runs]* I will run. I will hide.

RINGMASTER: *[With authority]* You cannot escape from death. 89

BEAR: *[Bargaining desperately]* More time. Give me more time. I have so much to do.

RINGMASTER: *[Slightly annoyed]* There is always that which is left undone. 90

BEAR: I don't know how . . . to die. I need to rehearse.

RINGMASTER: No one has to rehearse. It is very simple . . . very easy.

[Holds out hand]

Come. It is growing late.

BEAR: No!

[Desperate for any excuse]

I must write my memories! Tell the world the glories of my life. ~~My life~~ . . .

[Pause. Tish and Mime rush to him as he falters, place box and help him sit.]

~~it is almost over. And what was it? A few medals that will be lost.~~ No. There must be more to life. Give me ~~time~~. Time to find the answer. 91

TISH: *[Kneeling by him, pleads into space.]* Please . . . let him live.

RINGMASTER: Your life is over. Today is the day.

BEAR: But my day is not over. 92

[To Tish]

The day is not ended, is it?

TISH: Give him to the END of the day!

BEAR: Yes! To the end. Oh, you are a very smart little girl! 93

RINGMASTER: Well . . .

[Looks in his book]

TISH: What did he say?

BEAR: He's looking in his book.

RINGMASTER: The day you are to die is written plainly. But not the hour. 94

BEAR: Then give me the full day.

TISH: Please.

RINGMASTER: *[Pause]* I will give you until midnight. Until the last hour of your last day. 95

88 Another cliché on death

(*) Bear--move to Ringmaster

89 Another profound statement of death

90 And yet another, the Ringmaster has very little to say other than cliché statements on death

91 Scene 8 The Bargaining (A) Bear--What do you want here?

92 Who really thinks of the idea that the day is not over? Why create suspense at this point? What needs to be discovered?

93 How does this moment effect the relationship between Tish and the Dancing Bear?

94 Another statement about Death

95 Why does the Ringmaster decide to give them until the end of the day? Has this never come up before? Are you following the rules of the game?

(*) Ringmaster--X SL

BEAR: YES!

TISH: Can you live?

BEAR: YES! ~~Oh, let me shout to the world! I AM ALIVE!~~

[To Mime]

Give me my brightest, my happiest hat!

96

[To Ringmaster, who has gone]

Oh, thank you . . . thank you . . . He is gone . . . for a while.

[To Tish]

~~Oh, let me touch you, let me feel the warmth of the life in you. There is so much yet to do! And so little time. My life. It went too fast. I didn't stop to~~
~~listen. I didn't stop to see.~~

97

[Mimes waves clown hat in front of Bear]

Oh, yes! I will be the clown!

[Puts hat on. To Tish]

Come. Dance with me! ~~And we will make the world spin round and round with joy!~~

TISH: Grandpa taught me how to whistle and how to dance a jig.

[Quickly she whistles "O Susannah," and does a little jig, looking at her feet.]

BEAR: No, no, no. To dance is a great honor. Hold your head high.

[He follows his own instructions]

And first you smile to the right . . . then you smile to the left . . . and you bow to the center . . . and then . . . begin.

98

[Mime motions. A spotlight comes on Bear. Music is heard. Bear does a short, charming soft-shoe dance. Spotlight and music dim out. Tish applauds. Bear sits on box which Mime places for him. Bear is happy, but breathless.]

99

TISH: Oh, how wonderful!

BEAR: Thank you. Your Grandfather taught you to do a

TISH: ~~you're better than Grandpa! He can only do a little jig.~~ jig?

BEAR: ~~But he taught you?~~

TISH: Yes.

BEAR: And he taught you how to whistle?

100

TISH: Yes.

BEAR: *[Rises]* If I could teach my dances to someone . . . if someone could carry on the fame of my family . . . All my hats . . . there will be no one to wear my hats. ~~They, too, will be put in a box and forgotten.~~ Tell me, are you like your Grandfather?

- 96 French Scene 8 Tish's objective: To exchange talents with the bear and to later find out what he means by the riddle of life
- 97 Cut lots of sweetness and soap opera type view of life
- (*) Mime--X to trunk
Tish--go to Bear SL

 - (*) Bear--dance up slanted platform
- 98 Explanation of how simple the dances are, perhaps because they originate from Tish's imagination
- 99 Mime is in control of the music at this point as well
- (*) Bear--X to Tish
- 100 Things begin to come together for the bear, at what point now does Tish understand?

TISH: Daddy says I'm a chip off the old block.

BEAR: ~~You are a part of him. And you will carry on for him in life.~~

[Excited]

Yes! Yes, that is the answer to the riddle.

TISH: What riddle?

101

BEAR: The riddle of life. I must leave my dances! ~~They will be a part of me that will live on!~~ But who? Where! How!

TISH: Make a wish!

102

BEAR: A wish?

TISH: On the first star you see. And it will come true. It will. It will!

BEAR: *[Wanting to believe]* You are sure it will?

[Tish nods. To Mime]

Do you believe it will?

103

[Mime nods]

I could try.

TISH: Quick!

BEAR: Of course I don't believe in superstitions. But I did get up on the right side of the bed.

104

[Mime nods]

I did find a four leaf clover.

[Mime nods]

And I haven't sneezed once.

[Mime shakes his head]

Yes, luck is with me today! So . . . let me knock on wood — three times — and I will do it!

105

[Mime takes off hat. Bear knocks on Mime's head three times, with sound effects.]

What do I say?

106

TISH: Point to the first star you see.

BEAR: *[Looks about, then points.]* There! I see a bright twinkling one.

TISH: Say, "Star light, star bright . . ."

BEAR: *[To Mime]* The rabbit's foot! This wish must come true.

[Looks up]

"Star light, star bright."

(*) Bear--X to center

101 Tish's objective changes: to help the bear make his wish come true

102 Scene 10 The Wish

103 Why must you believe? What kind of morals is the play trying to sell us here?

(*) Tish, Bear, Mime--SL

104 Traditional Bear, but do you believe in superstitions? Why is it important for the Bear to believe?

(*) Mime--s on slanted platform
Bear--X to Mime

105 Humor again

106 Here Tish is in control and is asked to demonstrate what she knows to be so, such as wishing on stars

(*) Mime, Tish, Bear--in that order \bar{s} SL

TISH: "First star I see tonight." 107

BEAR: "First star I see tonight."

[Takes rabbit's foot from Mime and rubs it vigorously]

Oh, bring me luck. Make my wish come true.

TISH: "I wish I may, I wish I might . . ." 108

BEAR: "I wish I may, I wish I might" Oh, it won't work. It's nothing but a nursery rhyme.

TISH: "Have the wish I wish tonight." Say it. Say it!

BEAR: "Have the wish I wish tonight."

[Pause]

Nothing. Nothing. I told you so. 109

TISH: Look. Look! It's beginning to happen.

STAR BRIGHT: *[Star music and lights begin as Star Bright enters on swing. He is joyously happy.]* Tonight I'm blinking. Tonight I'm winking. Wishes are flying past. Wishes are coming quick and fast! ~~*[He twinkles bright and BRIGHT tonight!]*~~ 110

[Laughs]

Your wish, please.

BEAR: *[Lost in happy memories]* Look. It is like the circus. The trapeze high in a tent of blue . . . the music of the band . . . 111

[Mime motions. Soft band music of the circus is heard. Colorful lights play on the backdrop.] 112

the acrobats; the jugglers tossing, catching bouncing balls . . .

[Mime pantomimes juggling]

~~*the delicious smell of popcorn / ./. The dance on the high wire . . .*~~

[Tish holds up an imaginary umbrella and walks on an imaginary tight rope]

~~*the sweet taste of pink lemonade / ./. Oh the beauty, the wonder of life / Let me look at it / The happiness of living / ./. Oh, let me feel it / The joy of being alive! Let me keep it. Let me hold it forever.*~~

[Holds out his arms to embrace it all]

STAR BRIGHT: *[Claps his hands. Music and circus scene stop.]* Your wish. Your wish. Repeat, please.

BEAR: *[Confused, he is led by Mime to Star]* I wish to leave a footprint.

STAR BRIGHT: *[Puzzled]* Repeat, please. 113

- 107 French Scene 9 Tish's objective; to help the bear get his wish, is it not really her wish as well?
- 108 Again stressing the importance of belief
- 109 (S) Star music, circus music and the elements of the circus begin to fly in (L) change, spot on Star Bright Jugglers on cyc. trying to create fragments from the environment of the circus
- 110 First time all of the characters, except for the Ringmaster and Little Bear are on stage together. Star Bright is again the first star out. What does that say? Has she never left?
- 110a Here are the elements of the circus motif
- 111 Mime once again is in control of the magic as it occurs
Why does this happen? To please Bear?
- 112 Lights on cyc and hidden lights occur here to show the magic.
At this point all the elements which contribute to the circus atmosphere should be visible
- 113 Why do we repeat? to stress the point of leaving a part of you behind? To stress the answer to Tish?

TISH: The answer to the riddle.

BEAR: *[Intently]* I wish to leave with someone my dances so that I . . . so that they . . . will be remembered. 114

STAR BRIGHT: That is a wish I hear every night . . . every night. ~~A wish to shine on earth // And leave behind a trace // to learn, to earn the grace // of immortality.~~ Of your wish, half I can do. The other half is left for you. But quick! You must start. Because all wishes on a star must be done before the star is over shadowed by the sun. 115

[He claps his hands. Magic music and lights begin.]

One, two;
Sunset red;
Midnight blue;
The wish you wish
I give to you. 116

[Magic lights and music end as Star Bright exits up and out of sight. From off L, Little Bear is heard singing. All look to L. Little Bear enters finishing his song to the tune of "Turkey in the Straw." He is a small cub, wearing country overalls and a little turned-up straw hat. Over his shoulder he carries a small fishing pole.] 117

LITTLE BEAR: *[Sings]*

Turkey in the straw, haw, haw, haw;
Turkey in the hay, hay, hay, hay;
Bait the hook, give the line a swish;
Jumpin' jiggers, I caught a fish.

TISH: A little bear.

BEAR: *[Little Bear does a few dance steps of joy, and continues walking and singing]* A little dancing bear.

[To Mime]

Meet him. Greet him. Make him welcome.

[To Tish]

Quick, the handmirror.

[Tish holds mirror which Mime gives her and Bear preens. Mime hurries to Little Bear and pantomimes a big and friendly greeting. Little Bear, as if it were a game, happily imitates every movement of the Mime. It ends with both shaking hands. Then Little Bear gives a friendly goodbye wave and starts off R, singing.] 118

Stop him!

[Mime rushes in front of Little Bear and turns him around.]

I am ready to be presented.

[Mime, with a flourish, presents Bear.]

How do you do.

- 114 Again repeating the Bear's answer to coping with his death
- 115 Time limit placed on the action
- 116 French Scene 10 The Hope Tish's objective: to prepare the Bear for the Little Bear (L) and (S) Star music and "Turkey in the Straw" needs to be a light change to direct focus to Little Bear's entrance
- (*) Little Bear--enter SL to Center
- 117 Little Bear--Where have you come from? Why do you come across this spot? Why are you singing that song? Is there a connection between turkey and turkey feather?
- (*) Mime--stop Little Bear SL
- 118 What happens here between the characters and the Little Bear? What are the relationships at this point?

LITTLE BEAR: Howdy-do to you. 119

BEAR: You have come from my WISHING on a star.

LITTLE BEAR: Huh uh. I've come from my FISHING in the river.

BEAR: Oh, my little one, I am going to give you the treasure of my life. *Bestow* 120
on you all my gifts.

LITTLE BEAR: I could use a new fishing pole.

BEAR: I am going to teach you all my dances. You will wear all my hats. Oh-ho!
I have never felt so alive in my life!

[He gives a joyous whoop and jumps and clicks his heels. Little Bear is bewildered. Bear, with the eyes of a dancing master, looks Little Bear over.]

Yes, you have a good build. Good stance. Relaxed torso. 121

[Taps Little Bear's waist. Little Bear wiggles and giggles from the tickling.]

Legs sturdy. Up! Leg up. Up!

[Little Bear cautiously lifts leg.]

Up! Up!

[Bears raises Little Bear's leg high.]

LITTLE BEAR: Whoa!

BEAR: Point. Point!

LITTLE BEAR: *[Points with finger]* Point where?

BEAR: *[Holding Little Bear's foot high]* Point your foot. Ah, feet too stiff . . . too stiff.

[Lets leg down. Little Bear stands in profile, stomach pushed out.]

Stomach flat! 122

[Taps stomach. Little Bear pulls stomach in, but pushes hips out.]

Rear push in!

[Smacks Little Bear on the bottom. Little Bear pulls hips in, and turns facing audience.]

Stretch . . . up . . . up!

[Pulls Little Bear up who tries to stretch. His face is tense.]

Relax.

[Pats Little Bear on forehead. Little Bear slowly sinks to the ground. Bear lifts him up.]

Smile.

[Little Bear forces a tortured smile.]

- 119 (A) Little Bear--What does your first line tell you about the nature of the character?
- 120 Passing down theme once again
(*) Bear and Little Bear--center stage
- 121 (A) Little Bear--What do you think about what the Bear is saying about you? How do you react to strangers?
(A) Bear--What are your first impressions of the Little Bear? What does he mean to you?
(*) Tish and Mime--bring ES in. Little Bear's center, Bear's SR, Tish's SL.
- 122 Humor in this scene can be played

Walk! Walk!

[Little Bear starts walking stiffly.]

TISH: Will he be a good dancer?

BEAR: He will be magnificent!

[Puts arm out and stops Little Bear's escape.]

He will be — ME! My rehearsal hat. My father's Russian dancing hat!

[He dances a few steps of a Russian dance, and shouts a few Russian words.] 123

To the dressing room.

[He continues the dance steps and shouting as he exits at R. Mime, with traveling box follows him, imitating the dance steps.]

LITTLE BEAR: Who . . . who is he?

TISH: He is the greatest dancing bear in the world. 124

LITTLE BEAR: Oh!

TISH: And . . . he's going to die.

LITTLE BEAR: Oh.

TISH: My Grandpa is going to die and I don't know what to do. 125

LITTLE BEAR: Up in the hills, I've seen a lot of them die.

TISH: You have?

LITTLE BEAR: Old ones, little ones, and big ones, too. And there ain't nothing you can do about it. 'Cause as sure as you're born, you're as sure of dying. 126

TISH: It's sad.

LITTLE BEAR: Course it's sad.

TISH: It's frightening.

LITTLE BEAR: *[Thinking it out]* No. It ain't dyin' that you're afraid of. It's the not knowin' what comes AFTER you die. That's what scares you. 127

TISH: *[Tearful]* I'll never see Grandpa again.

LITTLE BEAR: *[With gentle understanding]* You go on. You have yourself a good cry. It'll help you to give him up. And you got to. 128

[With emphasis]

You got to let him go.

TISH: No.

LITTLE BEAR: You have to! 'Cause he gone . . . forever.

TISH: You don't know what it's like to have your Grandpa die. 129

- (*) Bear and Mime--X SR
- 123 French Scene 11 Tish's objective: to convince Little Bear to help Bear, simple dances
- 124 (A) Tish--When do you become convinced of this? Why do you suppose you need to encourage here?
- (*) Tish, Little Bear--s on ES
- 125 The connection is made again between the Bear and Grandfather, first time Tish states her problem out loud
- 126 Little Bear uses simple direct language, sums up the situation and explains
- 127 Has experienced the same thing Tish is going through this is what they have in common
- 128 The answer to coping, an answer to coping simply stated
- (*) Tish--X center stage
- 129 (A) Tish--What makes you react in this way? What is still preventing you from understanding?

LITTLE BEAR: Yes, I do. My Grandpa died last winter. And my Papa . . . ~~I say~~
~~a hunter shoot my Papa.~~

TISH: ~~[Shocked]~~ ~~Shoot~~ your Papa! Oh, what did you do?

LITTLE BEAR: First, I cried. Yes, I cried, and then I started hatin' and I kicked and I clawed 'cause I felt all alone.

TISH: *[Nods]* All by yourself.

LITTLE BEAR: Then my Mama said, "You have to go on living, so . . . do your best. Give yourself to the livin'. 'Cause that's the best way to say goodbye to your Pa." So I made my peace.

TISH: Your peace?

LITTLE BEAR: Inside myself. Oh, it don't mean I understand about dyin'. I don't. But you do go on living. ~~The next day.~~ ~~The next year.~~ So if you love your Grandpa like I loved my Papa . . .

TISH: Oh, I do.

LITTLE BEAR: Then show him you do.

TISH: How?

LITTLE BEAR: Tell him goodbye . . . by giving your most to the living. I'm wanting to do something . . . something big . . . just for Papa.

BEAR: *[Off]* All is ready!

TISH: Please, dance with him. He needs you.

LITTLE BEAR: Well, I like to help folks.

TISH: You said, "Give to the living."

LITTLE BEAR: And I do like the dance!

TISH: *[Excited with a new idea]* This is the big thing you can do for your Papa.

LITTLE BEAR: For Papa?

TISH: *[Points with her hand as she visualizes it]* Your name will be in lights. You will be the NEW World's Greatest Dancing Bear!

BEAR: *[Bear and Mime enter. Bear wearing his Russian Cossack hat]* Let the flags fly! Let the band play!

[To Little Bear]

We will start with a simple waltz. My mother's famous skating waltz. One, two, three: one, two, three . . .

[He dances, continuing during the next speeches]

LITTLE BEAR: *[Tries to do the step, then stops]* No. I'm just a country bear, with no schoolin'.

TISH: You will be the famous . . . "Arkansas Bear!"

[Urges him on]

LITTLE BEAR: Arkansas. I ain't right sure how to spell Arkansas.

130 An understanding of a common experience

131 Making peace within yourself, not important what the answer is but that you make peace within yourself

(*) Tish--s DS edge of round platform
Little Bear--X to Tish

132 Why? What will doing something big in memory do for the Little Bear? What need does the Little Bear still have?

(*) Bear and Mime--enter SR

133 (L) and (S) changes need to occur here Is it here that Tish has a better understanding?

134 French Scene 12 Tish's objective: to encourage Little Bear

135 (S) Waltz music beginning to compress time by going directly into the dances

136 Humor (A) Little Bear--do you really not know how to spell it?

[He moves in one spot to the beat of the music, wanting to dance, but afraid]

TISH: Like it sounds. A - R - - K - A - N - -

LITTLE BEAR: *[Shouts, eager to dance]* S - A - W! 137

[With a burst of energy he follows Bear and dances with joy, counting loudly and happily.]

One! Two! Three! One! Two! Three! I'm doing it!

[The first chime of midnight is heard, loud and distinct. The other chimes follow slowly. Mime runs to Bear, motions for him to listen.]

TISH: What is it? 138

BEAR: ~~The chimes are striking twelve.~~

LITTLE BEAR: It's the end of the day. Midnight.

BEAR: No! No! Not yet! I have not taught you my dances. Stop the clock!

TISH: Run! Hide! Before he comes back!

BEAR: Where?

LITTLE BEAR: In the caves! In the hills!

TISH: Hurry!

[Tish and Little Bear help Bear. Mime carries box. All start toward back. Soft calliope music is heard. Ringmaster enters R.]

RINGMASTER: Twelve. 139

[They stop]

Your day is ended. Your time is up. Come. I will take you to the Great Center Ring. 140

BEAR: No. No!

TISH: Is he here?

BEAR: Yes, he has come for me. 141

[Comes down stage. Backs off towards L.]

Stop him.

RINGMASTER: There is no way to stop death. 142

TISH: I know a way.

[Grabs Mime and points up toward star]

You! Make a wish on the first star you see. Say. 143

[Shouts]

Star light, star bright,
First star I see tonight . . .

- 137 Doesn't it sound that way, a play on words displays Little Bear's innocence
- 138 Chime again to compress time
- (* Tish, Little Bear, Bear--stand in that order SL on diagonal towards USR corner
Mime--US R of center
Ringmaster--enter SL
- 139 (S) Calliope music French Scene 13 Tish's objective: to stop death Scene 12 Buying Time
- 140 Great Center Ring mentioned again
- 141 Starting to come down before the build to Star Bright
- 142 Another statement on Death
- 143 Why is it that the character Star Bright is called on again? Have three days passed? Is it the same night? Does everyone who wishes on the first star get their wish?

[Mime quickly points and looks up, rapidly miming the words of the rhyme]

STAR BRIGHT: *[Off]* Louder, please.

RINGMASTER: Come.

[Holds out his hand and slowly crosses toward Bear at far L]

144

TISH: *[Mime pantomimes, repeating with larger gestures, while Tish says the words]*

I wish I may, I wish I might,
Have the wish I wish tonight.

STAR BRIGHT: *[Quickly descends into view]* Wish quickly chanted. Wish quickly granted.

145

TISH: *[Mime pantomimes her words]* Stop death!

[With a sound effect of a roll on a cymbal, Star Bright points at Ringmaster, who has advanced almost to Bear. Ringmaster stops in a walking position.]

Make him go away!

[A roll on a cymbal is heard, as Star Bright makes a circle with his hand. Ringmaster slowly turns around.]

LOCK HIM UP IN THE TREE!

146

[Another roll on the cymbal]

STAR BRIGHT: ~~Walk to the tree.~~

[Ringmaster slowly walks to a tree.]

Your home it will be . . . for a time.

[Ringmaster stops. Star Bright points to tree again. There is a roll on a cymbal as the trunk slowly opens.]

It is open wide . . . to welcome you. Step inside.

[Ringmaster faces tree and slowly steps inside the tree trunk, and turns and faces audience.]

Let it enfold and hold you . . . ~~to the tree!~~

147

[Waves his hand. There is a last roll on a cymbal. The tree trunk slowly closes shut.]

Locked, blocked, and enclosed!

148

[He laughs]

BEAR: *[To Tish]* You did it! You stopped death!

TISH: *[She and Bear shout together, while Mime jumps with joy and blows whistle.]* We did it!

BEAR: We did it!

(*) Star Bright--flown in SL

144 What happens if the Ringmaster touches you?

(*) Ringmaster--move slowly to SR using slanted platform
Little Bear--EX slowly SL

145 French Scene 14 Tish's objective: to trap death, to buy time

(*) Ringmaster--be SL of tree

146 Ringmaster must magically become entrapped within the tree
(S) used to punctuate Star Bright's commands

147 The idea of being held rather than trapped

148 French Scene 15 Tish's objective: to enjoy a triumph but
remember the time limit

(*) Bear and Mime--go to Tish SL

149

STAR BRIGHT: *[Claps his hands]* Remember . . . soon will come the morning sun, and then . . . Remember that is when . . . all wishes become . . . undone.

[Star music and light begin as he ascends out of sight, and then stop]

BEAR: *[Their joy changes to concern]* It is true! Time is short! Quick. I must teach the little one —

150

[Looks about. Little Bear has, unnoticed, slipped away when Ringmaster appeared.]

Where is he?

TISH: Little Bear!

[Pause. There is no answer.]

BEAR: Little Bear, come back!

151

TISH: *[She and Mime run looking for him]* Little Bear?

BEAR: He was frightened . . .

[Looks at tree]

of death. He is gone. And with him all my hopes are gone.

[He slumps, wearily]

TISH: *[Concerned, rushes to him]* You must rest, like Grandpa.

BEAR: Your Grandfather has you.

152

[Amused]

A chip off the old block, eh?

[She nods]

~~You gave him happiness in life . . . peace in death.~~

TISH: Are you all right?

BEAR: I am old, and weary and tired. And I am going to die.

TISH: No. We stopped death.

~~BEAR: But only for a brief time. Death, they say is a clock. Every minute our lives are ticking away. Now . . . stop . . . my clock will stop.~~

TISH: No.

~~BEAR: When I was young like you I wondered, "Where did I come from?" And now when I am old, I wonder, "Where am I going?"~~

153

[Mime looks and listens off R, then runs to them and excitedly mimes that Little Bear is coming.]

What is it?

[Mime pantomimes more]

Who? Where?

[Mime points to R. All watch as Little Bear enters]

- 149 Star Bright reminds them much like a mother's warning
(* Star Bright
- 150 French Scene 16 Tish's objective: to help in any way to have
Bear's dances passed down Scene 13 The Lesson
- 151 Crisis What happens if Little Bear doesn't come back?
- 152 Is this what triggers Tish's understanding?
- (* Bear--s on ES center
Tish--SR of Bear
Mime--SL of Bear
- 153 First time Bear admits he will die, change in mood
(* Little Bear--enter SL, through center to SL

You have come back.

LITTLE BEAR: I left my fishing pole.

BEAR: Have no fear. Death is locked in the tree. 154

[Little Bear reacts with fright at tree]

TISH: You have come back to help.

LITTLE BEAR: I come back to learn all your fancy dancin'. 155

TISH: *[Runs to Little Bear and hugs him]* Oh, you are the best, the sweetest, the most wonderful little bear in the world!

[Little Bear is embarrassed]

BEAR: Yes! Quick! We must begin the lesson. There is so little time and so much to learn. 156

[Looks frightened off R. To Mime]

Stand watch. Yes, watch for the first rays of the sun!

[Mime stands at R, anxiously looking off. Tish sits on box. Bear motions to Little Bear.]

Come! Come! Attention! I will teach you all I know. 157

[Takes position]

First, you smile to the right.

[Bear does the action with the words. Little Bear watches and tries to do the action.]

You smile to the left. You bow to the center. And then . . . begin . . . to dance. We will start with my father's famous Russian dance. Master this and all else will be easy. 158

[To Mime]

How many more minutes?

[Mime holds up ten fingers]

Ten! Position! Position!

[Little Bear imitates him]

Listen to the beat . . . the beat . . .

[Taps foot]

LITTLE BEAR: Beat what?

BEAR: Your feet! Your feet! The beat . . . the beat . . .

[Taps foot. Little Bear slowly and timidly taps beat]

Too slow. Too slow.

[Little Bear pivots in a circle, weight on one foot while tapping fast with the other foot.]

- 154 (A) Little Bear--Did you do this on purpose? Why do you really come back?
- 155 Is this the only reason the Little Bear comes back? I don't think he's telling all.
- (*) Little Bear--move up slanted platform
Tish--meet at top by \bar{s} on large platform
- 156 Now time must really be compressed and the action happens quickly
- 157 Who is teaching whom all they know? Is there another lesson here besides the dances? What happens between the characters in the lesson scene?
- 158 Master the idea of passing down and all will be easy for the Bear as well. What if Little Bear cannot dance?

Too fast. Too fast.

[Little Bear does it right]

Ah! Ah! Ah! Good! Good!

LITTLE BEAR: I'm doing it right!

159

BEAR: *[Shows him next Russian step]* The first step. Hop, hop, hop, switch, hop.

[Little Bear tries, awkward at first, then better]

Hop, hop, hop, switch, hop. Yes, hop, hop, hop, switch, hop. Yes! Yes!

[Shows him next step]

Deep knee, hop.

[Little Bear shakes his head]

Try. Try.

[Little Bear tries deep knee bends with a hop]

Deep knee, hop. Lower. Lower.

[Little Bear puts hands on floor in front of him and does step. He smiles at the audience at the easiness of it.]

160

No, no, no! No hands!

[Lifts Little Bear up. Little Bear continues to kick his feet.]

The next step. The finale.

[Shows step]

Turn, two, up, two. Turn, two, up, two.

LITTLE BEAR: Oh, my!

BEAR: Turn, two, up, two.

[Little Bear tries]

Turn, two, up, two. Faster. Faster.

LITTLE BEAR: *[Falls]* I can't do it. I can't do it.

BEAR: ~~Yay yay / Yay yay / Yay yay~~. I must leave my dances with you.

TISH: Try, please. Please, try.

161

LITTLE BEAR: Well . . .

[Gets up]

BEAR: Again. Again. Ready. Turn, two, up, two.

[Bear keeps repeating the count, and Little Bear does the step better and better, until he is perfect — and happy.]

He did it! He did it!

- 159 We need to feel a part of Little Bear's accomplishment belongs to us, a sense of working together
- (*) Tish, Little Bear, Bear--in that order to ES in triangle formation
- 160 Very strict like a dance instructor, Humor of the Little Bear trying to cheat
- 161 Why is it important? Encouragement Remember what if Little Bear doesn't learn the dances in time? What will happen? What does this mean to each character?

TISH: He did it!

LITTLE BEAR: I did it!

BEAR: *[To Mime]* How many minutes are left?

[Mime holds up eight fingers]

Eight minutes. Time is running out. Quick. The polka. The dance of the people.
Music!

[Mime motions. Music is heard. Bear dances a few steps. Little Bear quickly follows him and masters them. Music stops. Bear breathes heavily.]

162

How many more minutes?

[Mime holds up seven fingers]

Only seven minutes left! Hurry. My famous ~~tarentella~~ tango

[Mime motions and music is heard. Bear does a few steps. Little Bear again quickly does them and they dance together. Music stops. Bear pants for breath. Mime runs to him and holds up six fingers.]

Six minutes. And at the end take your bow. The first bow.

[Bear bows, short of breath]

The second bow.

[Bear bows, pauses, then with trembling voice he speaks with emotion, knowing it is his last bow.]

And the last and final bow.

163

TISH: More, more! Encore! Encore!

[Bear slumps to the floor. She rushes to him.]

He's fallen.

[She and Mime cradle Bear on either side]

Are you all right?

BEAR: *[Stirs, weakly]* How . . . many more minutes . . . do I have left?

[Mime holds up five fingers]

My little one, you will do my dances, you will carry on for me?

164

LITTLE BEAR: Yes. Yes.

BEAR: Take my father's hat . . . and it was HIS father's hat . . .

165

LITTLE BEAR: No, you must wear it.

BEAR: I will not need it where I am going. ~~I have taken my last bow.~~

TISH: No.

[Buries her head on his shoulder]

162 Mime controls all the music (S) polka music and switch
the Tarantella to a Tango

(*) Tango done on ground level off of ES

163 Final Bow foreshadowing

(*) Bear--s on Little Bear's ES
Little Bear--SL of Bear
Tish--SR of Bear

164 Scene 14 The Preparation

165 (A) Tish--Why have you not accepted death here?
What do you need?

BEAR: Ah, tears can be beautiful. ~~But there is no need to cry. I am content.~~ I was a part of what went before and I will be a part of what is yet to come. That is the answer to the riddle of life.

166

[Weakly]

How many more minutes?

167

[Mime holds up two fingers]

Two. Bring me my traveling hat. ~~I will wear it on my last journey!~~

[Little Bear gets traveling hat from box, as Mime and Tish help Bear to stand]

I must look my best when I enter the Great Center Ring.

168

[Mime puts hat on Bear, who smiles at Tish]

Does it look stylish?

TISH: Yes.

BEAR: Is it becoming?

[She nods]

Then I am ready.

[Gently pushes Tish and Mime away]

No. This journey I must go alone.

169

[Extends hand to Mime]

Goodbye, good friend. Thank you for everything. And sometimes when the band plays . . . think of an old bear.

[Mime motions for Bear to wait. Mime quickly gets a pink balloon on a string from the side and holds it out to Bear]

170

Yes, I remember when once we said, "Life is like a bright balloon." Hold it tight. Hold it tight. Because . . . once you let it go . . . it floats away forever.

[Breathless]

171

How many more minutes?

[Mime holds up one finger. Bear turns to Tish.]

I have one last request. When the end comes . . . when I enter the Great Center Ring . . . I want music. I want you to whistle the tune your Grandfather taught you.

172

TISH: "O Susannah."

BEAR: *[Nods and smiles]* You will find that when you whistle you cannot cry at the same time.

173

[A rooster is heard crowing]

Listen.

LITTLE BEAR: It's a rooster crowin'. It's almost mornin'.

- 166 Bear explains we are given an answer once again
Star Bright states this idea in the beginning
Tish says this later to her aunt
- 167 Time is running out, How does this affect the characters?
- 168 The Great Center Ring
(* Mime--X to Bear from US
- 169 Death being a journey to take alone another philosophy on
death but now stated by the Bear
- 170 Pink balloon symbol of what?
- 171 Metaphor letting something beautiful go
- 172 A last connection with Grandfather
- 173 (S) Rooster crowing the (L) sun should be up
Scene 15 The New Beginning
(* Little Bear--move SL

TISH: The sun is up. The stars are fading away. 174

STAR BRIGHT: *[Star music is heard as Star Bright descends into view. He speaks softly.]* Announcing: the first ray of sun is peeping out. Warning: all wishes end as the sun begins. The new day is starting, the old departing. That is the great pattern . . . the circle of life. Tomorrow is today. 175

[He points at the tree, and claps his hands. The tree trunk slowly opens.]

And the night and the stars fade away . . . fade away. 176

[There is star music as Star Bright disappears. Soft calliope music is heard which continues during the scene.] 177

RINGMASTER: *[Steps out from tree trunk. He speaks with authority.]* There is no more time. The book is closed. 178

BEAR: *Forgets/forget/ death/s/bury/s/sleep, but/who can tell me what I will/forget/*

RINGMASTER: *[Walks slowly to Bear]* Take my hand.

BEAR: Tell me, tell me what is death?

RINGMASTER: When there is no answer, you do not ask the question. Come.

BEAR: Yes, I am ready. 179

[To Little Bear]

My little one . . . I give you my feather . . . *and/you/././give/joy/././to/the/foxy/*

[Gives turkey feather to Little Bear. He whispers.]

Let the balloon go.

[Ringmaster holds out his hand, which Bear takes. Together they walk off L slowly. Mime lets the balloon go. He, Tish and Little Bear watch as it floats up and out of sight. At the same time the calliope music builds in volume. There is a second of silence. Then the Announcer's voice is heard, loud and distinctly.] 180

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE: Ladies and gentlemen: presenting for your pleasure and entertainment, the new dancing bear, the world's famous, the world's favorite, the world's greatest — The Arkansaw Bear! 181

[During the announcement, Mime points to Little Bear. Little Bear looks frightened, amazed and pleased. Mime holds up mirror and Little Bear puts feather in his hat. Mime motions for Little Bear to step forward, then motions a circle of light on the floor. Spotlight comes on and Little Bear steps into the light.] 182

BEAR'S VOICE: *[Over the loud speaker, Bear's voice is heard. He speaks softly and with emotion. Little Bear follows his instructions.]* You smile to the right . . . smile to the left . . . bow to the center . . . and then begin to dance!

[Music begins, lively "Turkey in the Straw." Little Bear begins his dance.]

My/dances/././your/dances/././and,make/the/world/spin/round/and/round/with joy.

[Little Bear dances with fun, excitement, and joy, a wonderful short

- 174 (S) Star music Calliope music (L) change Star Bright comes in
- 175 Great pattern mention once again French Scene 17
- 176 fade away--just as the fantasy should start to fade away back to becoming part of the real world
- 177 (S) Star music, calliope music Star Bright disappears this is the last time we see her
- 178 The book is closed cliché on death
- 179 This is not an answer. Ringmaster cops out here.
- 180 French Scene 18 the old
- 181 French Scene 19 the new
- 182 French Scene 20 a memory, Bear's last words (S) circus music (L) Change several times to focus attention from Bear to Little Bear to Tish

dance. During this Tish exits, and Mime exits with box. At the end of the dance, Little Bear bows as the audience applauds, and exits at L, peeks out and waves again. Spotlight goes out. Fantasy music is heard and a soft night light illuminates the tree. Tish is leaning against it. She looks up, sighs, picks up the flowers, and slowly circles back to the downstage area of the first scene, which becomes light as the tree area dims out. Fantasy music also fades out. Mother's and Aunt Ellen's voices are heard, and Tish answers as if they were standing on each side of her downstage.]

MOTHER'S VOICE: *[Worried]* Tish? Tish, is that you? 183

TISH: Yes, mother.

MOTHER'S VOICE: Where have you been?

TISH: I went up the hill to my tree. I want to see Grandpa. 184

AUNT ELLEN'S VOICE: He's dead . . . *Adad.*

[Cries]

TISH: *[Trying to be brave]* Dead. Tears can be beautiful, Aunt Ellen. But you have to give him up. Let the balloon go. 185

AUNT ELLEN'S VOICE: What?

TISH: *[Trying to keep back her tears]* I know everyone . . . everything has a time to die . . . and it's sad. But Grandpa knew the answer to the riddle.

AUNT ELLEN'S VOICE: The riddle? 186

TISH: He left his footprint. He left a chip off the old block.

MOTHER'S VOICE: What, dear? What did he leave? 187

TISH: Me! And I want to do something . . . something big for Grandpa. Because that's the best way to say goodbye.

[Softly]

Let me give him his flowers . . . the pink ones. 188

MOTHER'S VOICE: *[Positive, and with a mother's love and authority]* All right, dear. Come along. We'll go together and see Grandpa.

[Tish starts L, and begins to whistle]

What are you doing?

TISH: Whistling . . . for the bear . . . and for Grandpa. Because it helps . . . when you are afraid and in the dark. And . . . when you whistle, you can't cry.

[Whispers]

Goodbye, Grandpa, I . . . I love you. 190

[Tish exits L, bravely trying to control her crying. At the same time, lights slowly come up so the full stage is seen. The light on Tish's area dims out. The stage is bright with soft beautiful colors. The lone whistling of "O Susannah," the same as at the beginning of the play, is heard. There is a moment of a final picture — the living tree standing, as it has through the years, against a beautiful endless sky. The whistling continues as the curtains close.]

191

- (*) Tish-- \bar{s}
- 183 Scene 16 The Acceptance French Scene 21 Tish's objective:
to make her peace
- 184 What Tish wants repeating what Bear has just said
- 185 The idea of passing on the understanding to Aunt Ellen
(*) Tish--move slowly to center stage
- 186 Roles have changed here Tish now puts the pieces of ideas
from each of the fantasy characters together
- 187 Does Mother not know or is she trying to get Tish to say it?
- 188 Pink again, thinking back to the balloon, the flowers and the
connection with grandfather
- 189 Tish needs to make her peace, repeats what Bear says, the
idea of the whistling finally comes to use as being something
passed down, should take one last look at the fantasy before
we leave it, it is a memory now to remember the Bear and
Grandfather
- 190 Sentimental focus on Tish (L) spotlight curtain should
be down French Scene 22 (S) Whistling
- 191 Suspend moment House 1/2, House full

CHAPTER V

EVALUATION

COSTUMES

The costumes worked well, generally, and any changes made to them were the result of changes in character, rather than problems within the costume designs. There are three important functions which the costumes fulfilled successfully: they had their basis in the real world, yet could logically exist in the fantasy world; they accentuated the "humanness" of the animal characters; and they were functional, as well as aesthetically pleasing. This success of the costumes can be attributed both to the experience of the designer and to ease of communication between the director and designer.

The decision to pad both bears is an example of one of the successful aspects of the costumes. This padding made the bears appear cuddly and friendly. Both Little Bear and Dancing Bear were designed to represent brown bears. This padding and brown color made them appear like stuffed animals--a child-like image of bears thought appropriate for a child's fantasy. Although the bear costumes did limit the actors' movement, the image portrayed was worth the sacrifice of elaborate dances. As a result of this costume choice--and also the inability of the actor portraying the Dancing Bear to dance--the dances of the Dancing Bear were simpler than first imagined. The costume designer did warn me of this limited move-

ment, and if given the opportunity to do it again, the costume would stay the same.

Upon reflection, I would change Tish's costume to jumper pants. I think this change would have made a stronger connection between Tish and the Little Bear, since the Little Bear was in overalls (blue jean, jumper pants). The idea of Little Bear being the grown-up Tish of the fantasy world could have then been more evident.

Mine had problems getting properties in and out of her pants pockets. If the properties for the show had been available sooner, however, the pockets could have been made to fit those objects, and Mime would have had an easier time working with them.

The costume for Star Bright was designed by the person who originally was to design the puppet. A rendering was not made, and thus I did not know exactly how Star Bright would look until completed. There were several factors which worked against the success of this particular costume. First, the designer had only two weeks to change her ideas from puppet making into a costume. Second, because we decided Star Bright had to fly--a decision we would not repeat--the designer also had to work around rigging for the design.

Star Bright ultimately did not appear magical and enchanting, but this was only, in part, because of the costume. The actress was afraid of heights and the flying apparatus never functioned smoothly --all factors which contributed to Star Bright's visual effect. The costume was appropriately shiny and adequately suggested the shape of the star. Star Bright looked clumsy, however, and this caused

the costume to appear ill-fitting and disheveled.

With my recent experience in puppet making, I now know that we should have kept with the original idea of having Star Bright be a puppet. Unfortunately at the time we did not have any experience in puppets, and we relied on the technical staff to come up with possibilities for concealing the puppeteers. It was also a mistake to stick with the idea of having Star Bright fly. I now see that Star Bright could have appeared magically, but did not need to fly. Star Bright also did not have to leave the stage when she wasn't directly involved with the action of the play. Like a mother, Star Bright could have watched on from an inconspicuous spot on the stage. This would have helped to foster the idea that Mother equals Star Bright in the fantasy world.

PROPERTIES

There were several small props used in this production. Most of these were under Mime's care and were kept either in Mime's pockets or within Dancing Bear's traveling trunk. The organization of that trunk was left to the discretion of the actress playing Mime and the property mistress. For some reason, the props were never placed so that they were readily available to the actress. Since the trunk got shifted around during the production, some method of keeping the props attached to the inside of the trunk should have been devised. Too much time was wasted onstage getting or replacing

a prop which belonged in the trunk.

The pink balloon presented problems during two of the three performances. The property mistress did not anticipate that the shop where we got the helium for the balloon would not be open on the weekend. Because we ran out of helium, there were two performances where the balloon did not rise to the sky. Instead, Mime just held the balloon, an action which was certainly not as powerful as letting the balloon rise.

SOUND

The first indication that sound was going to be a problem was when no one wanted to assume the role of sound operator. We were almost a week and a half into rehearsal before we could convince anyone to work sound for the show. Even at this point, the sound person only agreed to find and tape the sound we needed, but not to operate the sound. Although it is not good to separate these two jobs, we had no choice.

We then had to motivate the sound designer to find the music needed for the show. The sound designer was convinced these sounds simply were unobtainable, and I, therefore, spent much of my free time helping her find appropriate music.

Once the music was collected, it had to be recorded to the exact length needed for the production. The stage manager noted these requirements at rehearsal and gave them to the designer. However,

once the tape was completed, we found several mistakes in length and number of times a certain piece was recorded. The major problem was that the tape was not completed until two days before opening, and the sound designer had already handed over her responsibility to the sound operator. At this point, I decided to work with this tape, which meant rewinding for some cues and moving ahead for others. This might not have been a bad decision had the sound operator been more capable of running the equipment.

The sound cues for the dress rehearsal were consistently late, missing, or incorrect. I believe the problems with late cues, no sound coming out of the speakers, and the wrong sound happening at the wrong time during dress rehearsal were due to attitude and communication problems between me and the sound operator. A day before our preview audience, I tried to decide whether or not to run the sound myself. A discussion among the sound operator, shop foreman, and me led to the decision to keep the operator.

Throughout the run of the show, important sound cues continued to happen late, early, or never--but seldom on cue. A suggestion was made in retrospect to have Mime make all the sounds needed through playing various instruments or objects. Although we did not think of this alternative at the time, we did hold late night tech rehearsals, hoping to improve the situation. We should have taken action to solve the sound problems sooner, and, in the beginning, when we had to talk people into working on the sound, we should have been thinking of alternatives to taped sound.

LIGHTS

The lighting generally provided adequate illumination for the actors faces, but it did not work well in some of the necessary special effects. Whenever a display of magic occurred (such as Star Bright granting a wish, Ringmaster getting trapped within the tree, or the circus images flying into the open space), the lights were to underscore this event with twinkling lights. What the audience saw, instead, were flashes of lights that were distracting rather than enhancing.

It was not until the technical rehearsal that I saw the designer's idea of magical twinkling lights. Hidden within the set were small colored lamps which flashed on and off while the magic occurred. This was not what I had expected after our discussions on how important the magical aspects of the show were to the concept of the production. The operation of the light cues, which was done by someone other than the lighting designer, was flawless.

Some specific lighting effects we had talked about never occurred. A gobo, which was supposed to be inserted in the lights to help darken the green carpet on the hillside and appear as shadows from the tree foliage, did not exist, and no attempt was made to achieve this effect. Through projections, the jugglers were to have appeared as silhouettes on the cyclorama; instead they were much too fuzzy and too large to get a clear picture of what it was being projected. I did not receive a light plot; the designer

informed me that the lights would twinkle and that the areas would be sufficiently lighted; but, he did not produce a plan to show me how this was going to be done. For technical rehearsal, the lights were hung but not focused or gelled, so I could not tell what result they would have on the set or costumes. The lights were not even completely hung, focused, or gelled until opening night.

SET

The lighting designer was also the set designer for this production. Because of my inability to communicate successfully with this person several problems occurred, and these were reflected in the final outcome of the set design. I must note that the final set design was never approved. After I received the initial sketches, which were vague, the designer and I had several discussions about what the set should be like. Weeks later, and with no time for changes to meet deadline, an elaborate form of the initial sketches was presented to me. I was thus confronted with the decision to use this set design or to have no set at all.

We decided the poster would be hung from the same batten as the curtain, so when the curtain disappeared into the fly space the poster would also. The poster design was taken from the publicity poster design and was the same as the cover design for the program. The painting of the poster did not flatter the design, and the final product was hung unevenly from the batten.

The platform upon which the tree stood caused the set to look heavy and unbalanced stage right, since stage left was basically open space. The play, on the other hand, has a more balanced structure. When graphed, the sections of the script appear symmetrical, and this symmetry was not reflected in the set design.

The platform's bright green carpet visually distracted the audience's attention to stage right. The rake of this platform, plus the slanted platform coming from the circular platform towards center stage, did help to state "hillside" to the audience. The edge of the platform did not reach stage level, however, and a step unit was added to get the actors on the platform from the front.

The circus ladder, flag banner, and large circus poster suggested the circus atmosphere appropriately; however, my choice to have them fly in and out of the space lessened their effectiveness. We also had a good deal of success with the tree, once the manipulators understood how to operate it.

In an attempt to make the set workable, three small circular platforms were added for Tish, Dancing Bear, and Little Bear to dance upon. These platforms were brought on the set by the actors and were thus inconsistent with the production concept, since they appeared to come from nowhere. They were of various sizes because it was thought that they would be stacked on top of one another somewhere in the blocking; but this did not occur, and the reason for them to be different sizes was obviated. In short, they were of no practical or artistic value.

Several factors contributed to the ineffectiveness of the set design. The major problem existed in the decision to present the play in Squires Theatre. The stage area is too large for this production. We should have either reduced the stage area in some manner or used another space altogether. I also should have contacted the set/light designer during the summer, which would have given us more time. At the first indication of communication problems, I should have found an impartial third party to attend and to moderate our discussions. At the time, these alternatives did not occur to me.

BUDGET

Budget was also a contributing factor to problems within the production. The allocation of money to specific productions was not yet determined within the department when the work began. Therefore, the person who was to give me an itemized budget could not do so until late within the process. The designers were trying to design a show not knowing their budget--knowing only that it was small. Because of this, the designers tried to use materials already available to them at no cost. The set designer kept the large round platform within his design because it was used in a previous show, and he could have it at no cost. The actual budget was never given to me, and so we continued to work with an estimated \$200.00 budget. The specific breakdown of money spent is as

follows: \$90.00 for royalties; \$35.00 for scripts; \$40.68 for the set; \$239.49 for costumes; \$15.63 for properties; \$22.31 for posters; \$112.72 for publicity, and \$250 for theatre rental. The total cost for the production was \$805.35. This obviously exceeds the \$200.00 estimated budget.

PUBLICITY

The publicity budget was spent on posters and brochures. All of the area grade schools were given enough brochures to inform the school teachers, who then informed their students. Posters were distributed only days before the show's opening. I was not shown a final copy of the posters or the program, and if I had, perhaps the important words--a children's theatre production--would not have been omitted. Although I was told every attempt was being made to get radio and press publicity, the lack of publicity led me to believe otherwise.

DIRECTION

I learned much from my experience directing The Arkansaw Bear. I need to improve my skills in communicating with designers. I also learned that I need to use other sources of help available to me, rather than attempting to handle every situation on my own.

I believe that I work well with actors and that I am able to

communicate with even the novice. Most of my cast was young and inexperienced. Even though I took some risks in casting, I feel the end results were worth the risks. The actor portraying the Dancing Bear had no acting experience, but was able to progress under my direction. Unfortunately, there was little time to solidify this progress before the performances, and then fear prevailed over newly-acquired skills. The actor portraying the Little Bear had had some acting experience. In working with her, I was able to break some bad acting habits, such as talking with her hands, not following through with objectives, and constantly looking to the director for approval.

The necessity of organizing myself much farther in advance of the first rehearsal was demonstrated through this production. In the future, I plan to keep better supervision over the process as a whole. I believe, given the right people, budget, time, and working atmosphere, that The Arkansaw Bear could have been a more rewarding experience.

APPENDIX A

PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHS

Production photographs for The Arkansaw Bear by Aurand Harris,
produced at Virginia Tech on October 23-25, 1981. Photography
by Richard Goff.



Tish takes time to think about the coming circus (which she has just read about from the circus poster) before running home to tell her grandfather. In her hands she carries her grandfather's flowers.



Mime looks on while Tish cheers up Dancing Bear.



Tish helps Dancing Bear prepare to meet the Little Bear, while Mime takes this time to greet the newcomer.



Ringmaster moves within the tree brought to life through Star Bright's magic.



Dancing Bear teaches Tish and Little Bear the Tango,
while Mime watches for the first signs of morning.



Tish's imagination fills the empty space with the sounds and sights of the circus.



Tish waves goodbye to her imaginary friends as the sun begins to rise.



The Cast of The Arkansaw Bear:
Tish (Laura Sharpe), Little Bear (Debbie Holzweig),
Mime (Mary Evans), Dancing Bear (Eric Crump),
and Star Bright (Caroline Smith).

APPENDIX B

SCHEDULES

Items included:

Master Calendar

Management Schedule

Rehearsal Schedule

Company Rules

Cast List

Cast Roster

Props List

AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

SEPTEMBER 1981

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
MEMO	MEMO	1	2	3	4	5
6	7 LABOR DAY	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29 FINAL DESIGN (B) AUDITIONS 6:30 PAB 204	30 COSTUME DESIGN TO SILVER AUDITIONS 6:30 PAB 204	MEMO	MEMO	MEMO

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

OCTOBER 1981

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUE. DAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
MEMO	MEMO	MEMO	MEMO	1 WORKING & DRAWINGS TO SHOP PMB 204 REHEARSALS	2 7:30 →	3 NO RELIEF
4	5	6 WORKING DRAWINGS TO SHOP	7	8	9	10
10 RELIEF	REHEARSALS, 7:30 PMB 204	→		YOM KEN PIM	→	
11	12 PHOTO CHL (PUBLICITY) REHEARSALS	13	14	15 CUE IN w/ Director	16	17
11:30 AM CHEMIST 2-5	REHEARSALS 7:30 PMB 204	→		→		RELIEF 2:30 PMB 204
18 MEETS UP w/ Day Hill SQUIRES 2 PM SQUIRES REL. NUTRITION	19 SQUIRES 5:00 PM REHEARSALS GUB HILL	20 3:00 COST. PREP 4:00 TALK HILL	21 3:00 DRESS REHEARSALS	22 9:00 AND REVIEW TALKS	23 7:00 PERFORM #1	24 2:00 PERFORM #2
25 2:00 PERFORM #3 STRIKE	26	27	28	29	30	31



THEATRE ARTS—UNIVERSITY THEATRE

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
 BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA 24061
 (703) 961-5200

ARKANSAW BEAR MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE

- Sept. 30 - Give Mary Therese poster ideas
- Oct. 5 - Radio PSA's, Calendar Sections, make appointment with Superintendent.
- Oct. 6 - contact Burger King for joint promotion effort
- Oct. 7 - flyers to Copy Center
- Oct. 8 - call churches for insertion into bulletin
- Oct. 9 - press release out
- Oct. 12 - Photo call
- Oct. 13 - Article to Fun Page
- Oct. 14 - Campus mailing, Spectrum article
- Oct. 15 - notify reviewers, program goes to Copy Center
- Oct. 16 - Poster up, feature out, discount coupons out to groceries
- Oct. 19 - tickets ready to go to printer

Rehearsal Schedule:

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

WEEK 1	time	olace	scenes
Oct. 1 (Thurs)	7:00 p.m.	PAB 204	read thru (full cast)
Oct. 2 (Fri.)	7:30 p.m.	PAB 204	read thru (full cast)
Oct. 3 (Sat.)	*****	*****	no rehearsal
WEEK 2			
Oct. 4 (Sun.)	*****	*****	no rehearsal
Oct. 5 (Mon.)	7:30 p.m.	PAB 204	sc. 1,16 3,5
Oct. 6 (Tue.)	7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.	PAB 204 "	sc. 2 sc. 7,8,12
Oct. 7 (Wed.)	7:30 p.m.	PAB 204	sc. 11,13,14
Oct. 8 (Thurs)	7:30 p.m.	PAB 204	sc. 4,6,9
Oct. 9 (Fri.)	7:30 p.m.	PAB 204	sc. 10,12
Oct. 10 (Sat.)	*****	*****	no rehearsal
WEEK 3			
Oct. 11 (Sun.)	2:00 p.m. 3:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m.	PAB 204 " "	sc. 15 sc. 11,13,14 sc. 4,6,9
Oct. 12 (Mon.)	7:30 p.m. 9:00 p.m.	PAB 204 "	sc. 3,4,5,6 sc. 9,13,14
Oct. 13 (Tue.)	7:30 p.m.	PAB 204	sc. 10,11,12,13,14 LINES OUE
Oct. 14 (Wed.)	7:30 p.m.	PAB 204	sc. 3,4,5,6,7,8 LINES OUE
Oct. 15 (Thurs.)	7:30 p.m. 8:30 p.m.	PAB 204 "	sc. 1,16 LINES OUE sc. 15,2,7,8,12 LINES OUE
Oct. 16 (Fri.)	7:30 p.m.	PAB 204	RUN THRU**ALL LINES OUE**
Oct. 17 (Sat.)	2:00 p.m.	PAB 204	RUN THRU
WEEK 4			
Oct. 18 (Sun.)	2:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.	Squires "	DRY TECH--no actors needed RUN THRU--full cast
Oct. 19 (Mon.)	5:00 p.m.	Squires	GLB THRU--full cast
Oct. 20 (Tue.)	2:30 p.m. 3:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m.	Squires " "	ACTORS CALLED COSTUME PARADE TECH. REH. #1
Oct. 21 (Wed.)	2:00 p.m. 3:00 p.m.	Squires "	ACTORS CALLED DRESS REH. #1
Oct. 22 (Thurs.)	7:30 p.m. 9:00 p.m.	Squires "	ACTORS CALLED DRESS REH. #2 (with audience)
Oct. 23 (Fri.)	5:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Squires "	ACTORS CALLED PERFORMANCE #1
Oct. 24 (Sat.)	12:30 p.m. 2:00 p.m.	Squires "	ACTORS CALLED PERFORMANCE #2
Oct. 25 (Sun.)	12:30 p.m. 2:00 p.m. 3:30 p.m.	Squires " "	ACTORS CALLED PERFORMANCE #3 STRIKE**

**ALL ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND STRIKE. PARTY AT MARIE'S IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING.
schedule subject to change--check daily for changes.

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Company Rules:

Congratulations on being selected as part of the company for The Arkansaw Bear. For those of you who are new to Theatre at Virginia Tech, the following is a list of rules, guidelines and common practices to help you through the rehearsal period and right up until closing night. For those of you who are familiar with these rules, let this just serve as a reminder.

1) Punctuality is equated with professionalism. It should go without saying that you will be expected to be on time for all rehearsals. That means being ready to warm up at the time posted on the rehearsal schedule, and to always know where you are supposed to be and when you are supposed to be there. The rehearsal schedule will be posted on the call board outside PAB 204. Check this daily for changes. There will be at least a 15 minute warm up each night, and participation is mandatory.

2) And, speaking of warm ups...wear comfortable clothing to rehearsal. Tights, warm ups, or any clothing which allows for free, comfortable movement will do fine. Also wear comfortable shoes, such as dance shoes, cloth shoes, or a well-broken in pair of sneakers will do.

3) Bring with you a pencil, and of course, your script.

4) To reinforce the statement about punctuality, it often helps to get to rehearsal about 15 minutes ahead of time to give yourself a chance to get yourself in the right frame of mind for rehearsal, and give yourself a breather between the hectic part of your day and your rehearsal time. It is very important that you devote your entire mental as well as physical energies to each rehearsal or performance.

5) Beginning about a week before the opening of the show, you will be required to sign in for rehearsals. The sign up sheet will be posted in a specified area near the dressing rooms, and it is extremely important that you sign in so that the stage manager or the assistant s.m. does not have to worry about whether or not you are here. Technical rehearsals and dress rehearsals are extremely hectic times, and it really helps the stage managers, technicians, and everybody if we don't have to hold everything to wait for you or look for you.

These rules are simply to help rehearsals and all aspects of the production to move as smoothly and efficiently as possible. Your cooperation will insure this. And most important: if you ever can't avoid (i.e. emergency) being late to a rehearsal, please call the s.m., or the box office, or anybody who will get the message to us that you will be late. These numbers are at the bottom of this page. Clip them and keep them with you at all times. And speaking of problems: if you have one concerning the production (anything at all) please bring them to the attention of the stage manager. My job is to make your job as easy and pleasant as possible. Have fun and break your proverbial legs!

Karen Morris,
Stage Manager

Phone Numbers You will Need:

Karen: (office)
Scene shop:
Costume shop
Ambulance:
Security:
Vince:
Fire:
Time and Temp:

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Cast List: Please Initial if you accept the role

Aunt Ellen.....	(Hermine) Shawn Du Bisson	_____
Mother.....	Gail Evans	_____
Announcer.....	Kurt Welsh	_____
Starbright.....	Caroline Smith	_____
Mime.....	Mary Evans	_____
Ringmaster.....	Kevin Wright	_____
Dancing Bear.....	Eric Crump	_____
Little Bear.....	Debbie Holweig	_____
Tish.....	Laura Sharpe	_____
The Players.....	Harold Wood Laurie Miller	_____

First Rehearsal is at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, Oct 1, 1981 in room 204 PAB.

Thank-you to all who auditioned.

CAST ROSTER: THE ARKANSAW BEAR

SHAWN DUBUISSON (HERMINE)
(Aunt Ellen)
Christiansburg, VA

CAROLINE SMITH
(Star Bright)
136 W. Eggleston

GAIL EVANS
(Mother)
C-31 Shawnee

LAURA SHARPE
(Tish)
709-C N. Main St

MARY EVANS
(Mime)
188 Slusher

DEBBIE HOLZWEIG
(Little Bear)
310 E. Eggleston

KEVIN R. WRIGHT
(Ringmaster)
2371 Terra Bella

ERIC CRUMP
(Bear)
321 Vawter

HAROLD WOOD
(Player)
442 Lee

KURT WELSH
(Announcer)
3117 E. Ambler Johnson

LAURIE MILLER
(player)
10030H Foxridge

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

props list:

flowers (Tish)

traveling box (Mime)

cane for bear?

dark glasses (mime)

card (mime)

handkerchief (mime)

hancmirror (mime)

velvet box for medals (mime)

medals (mime)

feathers (mime)

honey buns (mime)

boxing gloves

rabbits foot (mime)

fishing pole (little bear)

whistle (mime)

balloons (helium filled)

conductor's baton

music stand

Hats in box:

Spanish hat

traveling hat

sports hat

Clown hat

Russian hat

APPENDIX C

PROGRAM

Theatre Arts - University Theatre

presents

a Studio production of

THE ARKANSAWY BEAR

Squires Theatre

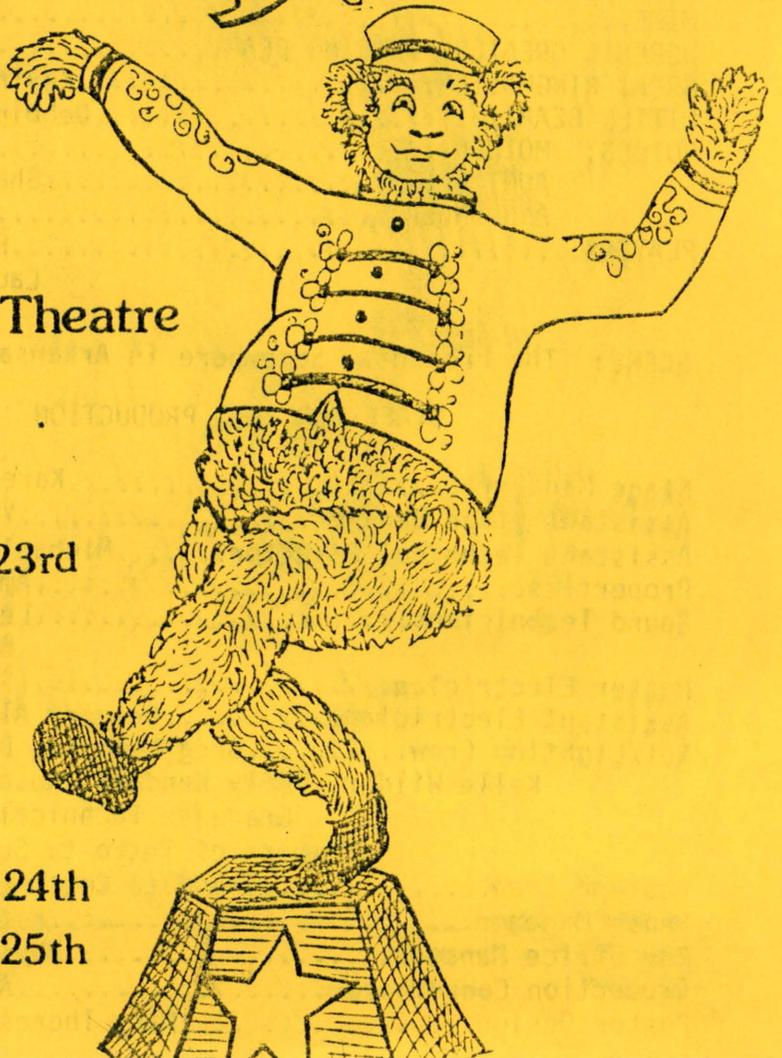
7 PM

Fri., Oct. 23rd

2 PM

Sat., Oct. 24th

Sun., Oct. 25th



APPENDIX D

DIRECTING NOTES

Items included:

Actual Direction Process (ten entries taken from the
director's diary)

Director's Notes

Stage Manager's Rehearsal Log

Set Designer's Initial Sketches

ACTUAL DIRECTION PROCESS

Entry 1

It always seems that there is never enough time to prepare for a show. It is more true than ever in this case. While working a summer stock job I tried to prepare for my show through constantly reading the script. With rehearsing every day and doing a show each night, very little was decided about the show before I arrived at school. The first day at school I was thrust into a production meeting of my own show which I didn't call and I wasn't prepared for.

First Production Meeting

It started out all wrong. Because the designers were anxious to get their designs done, the entire meeting was three steps ahead of itself. I wanted to discuss their feelings about the show, what they thought the play was about, and ideas about conceptual choices. Instead I found myself answering questions I didn't want to decide at the moment. I found out the pressure was basically coming from a schedule the department worked out. To supposedly prevent shows from getting behind and being rushed during the last week before the show, the department set up a schedule of when designs were to be approved, when drawings were to go to the shop, etc., covering all of the design aspects. Unfortunately it rushed my production in the early phases and therefore several mistakes were made.

I didn't even know what kind of a budget I had. How could I

make choices about the set and costumes? My production group was also assigned to me, and not everyone in the group would have been my choice. My production group includes:

Felice Proctor--Costume Designer

John Bailey--Scenic and Lighting Designer

Randy Ward--Technical Director

Karen Norris--Stage Manager

Felice did ask a lot of good questions about the characters, which produced the following results and responses.

1. Tish is an average little girl. We need to find a costume which portrays this stereotype. We both felt pants (especially blue jeans) on the actor available to do the role would look too every day college-ish. We talked about Tish being from 8-10 years old.

2. We made it clear that the voices were only voices and no costumes would be needed for those characters.

3. Mime I saw as a circus clown and a jack-of-all-trades. I felt the character could be either male or female. I knew the costume needed a lot of pockets because of all the things he's in charge of for Dancing Bear.

4. The relationship between Dancing Bear and Mime is one of close old friends. They have been through everything together.

5. Felice brought several stuffed bears and we talked about what the bears looked like. I felt they were both average brown bears. The need to keep the human face and not use makeup as the playwright suggests was discussed, and we both felt it was important

to leave it like that.

6. Out of the bears we had to look at and discussed, Little Bear was more of a Paddington Bear to us. A small country bear with straw hat and fishing pole.

7. Big Bear, being in the circus most of his life, I felt needed a uniform. Something like a band uniform with a hat. The flat top band hat would be his traveling hat. Dancing Bear has to dance, so I wanted shoes on his feet. Hands need to be functional as well, so the idea of gloves was discussed. Little Bear was less well off, so we thought he/she could be bare footed. I also felt Little Bear could be either sex.

8. The Ringmaster again brought to mind the stereotypic ringmaster. Black top hat, tails, and black boots. We wanted to make sure to strike the long mustache and black whip that is brought to mind with that image. It would be too frightening.

9. Star Bright we left up in the air because I was considering having Star Bright be a puppet. (A transitional character between the two worlds, one of reality and one of fantasy.)

10. Additional Characters--we talked about perhaps adding acrobats, jugglers, and clowns to the show. To help the budget (which we're not even sure of) I decided that if we added them perhaps they could be silhouetted, projected, taped, or filmed.

11. Another important point brought up was that no matter what the outcome of the designs, the bears will be the biggest expense. I felt Felice and I had a good understanding about the characters

to start drawing some design possibilities. The group briefly discussed the circus images and the importance of us keeping it Tish's story instead of getting lost placing too much emphasis on the bear. John felt he had some ideas from reading the script and wanted to come up with some sketches that we could then discuss.

Karen and I talked about the upcoming auditions.

1. I need a tape recorder to tape voices so that I can negate the face and just listen to the sound.

2. The standard audition forms need to be copied.

3. I felt she could use an assistant and should try to locate someone she felt comfortable with.

4. If she could do that before auditions, I'd like someone inside the room and one person outside to allow auditions to run more smoothly.

5. I need her to take clear and specific notes on blocking and what we discuss each day, since when I start working I tend to neglect writing things down and may later forget.

6. We need to locate a Sound person.

7. I asked that she keep close tabs on each section of the production process to try to avoid any problems. The meeting was over and I left feeling a lot of pressure on my shoulder. I felt like I was thrown into a pool of ice cold water. I went home and started making up my mind about which way I was going with the show.

Entry 2

During the Theatre Department's Open House I was asked to say a few words about the show. I tried to sell the sentimentality and the fact that there were no singing auditions needed for my show, which are required for the other productions. We seemed to get several people interested in helping with the show. A student confined to a wheelchair asked if she could audition. Karen and I talked about arranging an audition for her in a building accessible to her since the Theatre Arts building where auditions are being held is not.

Entry 3

Preparation for Auditions: It is time to take all the ideas of character in my head and from the script on to paper. For auditions I wrote down two lists which I would keep constant watch on during auditions. One list contains those qualities needed in each of the characters, and the other list contains possible exercises to see if those qualities are part of that person's general makeup.

The next step was to arrange an over-all schedule to make the best use of time after auditions. After all I have only four weeks until the show is up. I tried to set this schedule to make the best use of people's time, especially characters like the voices who are only in the first and second scenes. I've already divided the script into sections usually dependent on French scenes. There

are sixteen scenes in all.

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

The Qualities:

Voices

Mother

late 30's
 compassionate
 firm
 understanding
 female

Aunt Ellen

70's
 gentle
 emotional
 female

Announcer

articulate
 dynamic
 solid voice
 male

Puppet

Star Bright

very likable
 vibrant
 exciting
 emotional
 always happy
 nice laugh
 child-like
 mothering
 female

People

Mime

flexible body
 pleasant personality
 vivid imagination
 warm
 loving
 magician
 friend

Ringmaster

pleasant voice
 walks and speaks
 with authority
 not evil
 male

Little Bear

country bear
 cute
 cuddly
 small
 uneducated
 tiny voice
 polite
 kind
 likes to help
 likes to dance
 likes to fish

The Qualities continued:

World's Greatest Dancing Bear

vain
loveable
cuddly
proud
educated
big
frightened
male

Tish

average little girl
8-10 years old
vivid imagination
emotional
friendly
likable
educated

Acrobats
Jugglers
Clowns

Exercises:

Mime

do an elephant in pantomime
do opening an umbrella, find it stops raining
and shut the umbrella in pantomime
mime a small girl
tell me a story without speaking

Announcer

introduce to a large audience the World's Greatest Dancing Bear
introduce to a large audience the smallest Ant
introduce the person you would most like to meet
introduce yourself to a crowd of thousands

Exercises continued:

Ringmaster

ask someone to go where they do not want to go
 convince them they must go
 walk into a room having to make an important decision,
 make that decision and leave
 read passage

Mother Aunt Ellen Star Bright

read passage
 explain to a small child why the sky is blue
 finish the story

Tish

finish the story
 read passage
 play a game with me
 explain the rules
 tell me about where you live, what you do

Each group of five will come back to work improvisation games and creative drama games to see how they work within a group. This way I can get one more look at them while observing their ability to take direction and work within a group. Photographs of each group will be taken at this time.

Entry 4

I feel confident about the coming auditions now that I have had a little more time to prepare for them. The problem seems to be coming up with a set design which is due in one week. I have no visual conception of how the set should look. John and I have talked about several things, the most important include:

1. The space needs to be Tish's
2. Tish's tree has to be there
3. We want to incorporate the themes of circus, circles, and growth.
4. We want to incorporate the idea of everyone and everything coming from Tish and her imagination.
5. The idea of things growing out of familiar things in the real world
6. I wanted levels and angles to work with since I only have three actors on stage most of the time.
7. The fantasies need to be magical.

Communication with the set designer is often difficult. It is not one of my strong areas and I believe he has set ideas of his own on what they play should be. However he is not working with me or allowing me to know his feelings.

Entry 5

John and I looked over his beginning sketches. I could tell that he didn't have any more creative ideas about the set than I had.

He sees the first scene happening in the evening fog. I didn't understand the fog and didn't see the first scene happening in the evening. If Tish saw the circus poster, she probably saw it on her way home from school or while she was playing. I believe the first scene occurs in the afternoon.

He drew versions of the tree and asked me what the tree was like. The script tells us it is an old, large, spreading tree and we know it must exist in Arkansas. The tree should look like a real tree in the real world and should have the ability to become fantastical in the fantasy world. The tree must also, somehow conceal the Ringmaster as required in the script.

John also came up with his own concept of having three circles (like circus rings) which would represent three different worlds: the real world, the tree circle (which I don't understand), and the fantasy circle. He felt in order to enter the fantasy world one must first pass through the real world and then pass the tree circle (Tish's private spot) before getting to the fantasy world.

I liked the idea of the tree being on a circled ramp. It specified Tish's spot. However I still needed to know how the tree was going to work, how what he drew becomes magical, and I needed more variety of level. The set still didn't have function, purpose, or meaning. We talked more about things which may be in the fantasy world.

Since fantasies are often in the form of dreams or daydreams, the images of the circus could be fragmented. I felt we could still

use the circles as a design element rather than a conceptual emphasis within the set. We still didn't have any ideas about budget, but we knew it would be small. John went to work some more. I tried to think of what I could say or do to help our cause. We only have four days to approve a set design.

Entry 6

Felice seems to be having no problems with costumes. Either we communicate well or we just have the same ideas about the show. We talked about the costumes being in the pink and blue range, the pastels associated with little girls. She felt her sketches of the fantasy characters were beginning to look like childhood dolls. That was fine with me, because it supports the image of the characters having a basis in Tish's real world. They could indeed be or look like dolls she owns, has seen, or visualizes the circus people to look like.

Karen found an assistant stage manager. I asked her to provide me with schedules for the rooms we could use during rehearsal period and to come up with a specific list of understandings between us and the actors. I wanted to make sure everything was above board and the actors knew what to expect.

Entry 7

Felice and I have made final decisions on the costumes and I am very pleased. The costumes fall around the pinks, reds, and

blues of the color wheel. Star Bright is a puppet and has become Lynn Thorpe's project. I stressed that I want Star Bright to come down from the heavens, so Lynn has to work with the technical director to figure out how this will happen.

I tried to work with John on how we could hide the puppeteers working Star Bright on the set. Since our last meeting he has very few new ideas. Some elements of posters, circus flags, and the idea of elephant stands as seating devices were introduced to the set. But the set hasn't really changed much. Nothing holds it together and there is nothing spectacular about the fantasy.

Entry 8

Costumes were confirmed today. The designs are wonderful. I think they will work very well. The people portraying the bears will have a hot time of it, but the costumes are so right for those two characters.

The set has been given a few added changes. It is not what I want, nor what I pictured. The problem is that I haven't pictured. I am not a set designer and have a hard time seeing the show in terms of set. Obviously I also have a hard time communicating what ideas I do have about space to the designer. It is not even a matter of getting a great or good set anymore. It has come down to getting a set at all. The space devoted to Tish's private area has become a hillside with a tree on it. The circled area will be raked with access steps in front and back. A kind of steep, sliding

board was added running toward center stage giving me more levels and diagonals to work with. An outside ring representing a curbed sidewalk and conceptually the division between the great center ring of the circus and the real world. The raked platform and the outer ring are to have concealed lights that will twinkle during the fantasy. The tree will twinkle and magically move. How this is done I do not yet know. No word on Star Bright. I hear it's being discussed amongst the designer and technician how this star on a trapeze can come down and then puppeteers get to the puppet to manipulate it without being seen.

Entry 9

Auditions: September 29

I hope tomorrow I have more people audition. There are just no males who I feel could be the Dancing Bear. In fact, there have been very few people with any real talent vocally or physically tonight. As I listen to the tape and look at the list of names that have auditioned, I just don't know what I am going to do.

The audition process itself went very smoothly. Karen processed people outside, while Vince took care of photos and forms once the actors were inside. People from various classes attended auditions tonight to watch the process. They asked questions about why I had the people read, etc.. I explained how I was checking a list of particular qualities that I was looking for. For instance, I felt Little Bear needs to be smaller than Tish, along with being friendly

and energetic. I had some people count from one to ten. One being the softest they could speak and ten being the loudest, to check for vocal range and flexibility. I did private auditions just talking with the person first to make them feel more at ease. Then I had them read something to just listen. I then had them do something creative by finishing a story I made up or something similar. In small groups of five or six we then worked through a quick warm-up and some creative dramatics games to feel out group cooperation and input. I felt good about the organization and my ability to communicate with the people auditioning.

Entry 10

I finally found a Dancing Bear, a Tish, and a Mime. I am glad these people auditioned. There weren't many talented people who came my way. (I suppose because everyone auditioning is trying to audition for all three shows going up this fall.) The attitude of most people is that a children's show is their last preference. One of the other interesting events was bargaining for people with the other directors. I have to cast now, tonight if possible, and other directors can wait awhile. I let a few people go that I really wanted, but I couldn't see giving them a small part in my show as opposed to a larger part in the other shows, even if they were the best person for the role. Perhaps this is going to be a great mistake.

I had a slight run in with my set designer today. I was given

basically the same set we started with and told that was all he could do with a \$100.00 budget. I don't think he really cares, nor really worked at trying to work with me on developing a set. It seems to me he had this set in mind from the start and there was no compromise. I simply had to work with it because the deadline was up and the show was going up in less than a month now. If I wanted a set at all, I had better say yes to this one. At this point I feel at least I have something to work with and since I haven't been much help in my meeting with the designer, it is my consequence to take.

Selecting a cast wasn't very difficult because I had little to choose from in the first place. I took several chances. The person cast as Dancing Bear has never before acted. His voice and movement were the best of those who auditioned. The voices were fairly easy. I felt I had a wonderful contrast of vocal qualities between Mother, Aunt Ellen and Star Bright. Tish could only be Laura Sharpe and Debbie Holzweig is a Little Bear. Mary Evans was a bit too stylized for the Mime I had in mind, but no one else came close to her ability, creative ideas, or cooperation in working with others.

***Note:**

The following entries deal mostly with the actors and the directing process after completion of work found in the prompt script. They are intermixed with notes taken by the stage manager since I relied on the stage manager for note taking during rehearsals. As I

read through what I have written at that time I realize how much information is missing. I know now that my directing process relies 95% on discussions with people, discussions which would be impossible to reproduce.

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Friday

Date: Oct. 2, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 7:30 pmRead through, discussionPlace: PAB 204Present: Full company

To Do's: Passed out company rules to those who
didn't have them.

Additions to props list: binoculars

music stand

baton

Looked at characters in script

Looked at set renderings, ground plan

Personal Notes/Thoughts: 7:30 set as usual rehearsal
time.

Vince ran last nights rehearsal- passed out
company rules. I was away at Mt. Lake.

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/5/81

Sound--Check about microphones

Improv situation for chaos which develops

Think of objectives: What do you want?

What do you do that for?

What is the mood of this scene?

What do we need this scene for?

What happens in this scene?

Lights--Spotlight here?

Set--Can we get the poster to work with?

Tish--Where do you understand what is happening?

Tish--Dĩ

Tish--Let's establish what happens before. Try throwing pebbles, count clouds, walk on toes, heels, spit as far as you can, see poster, run as fast as you can, stop, look c,r,l first line

How do you feel? Why do you decide to do each of those things?

Look up. They are bigger than you.

Props--wheels on trunk

Bear--How does that make you feel to always be wrong?

"A girl?" How does that make you feel? Why ask?

Tish--How do you feel? Don't forget the fun.

Nice Stance Bear for preparation

Tish--Back up. Don't move until he invites you.

Humble Bear Humble

Bear--How does each honor make you feel?

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Monday
Date: Oct. 5, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 7:30 pm

Block scenes 1, 16, 3, 5

Place: PAB 204

Present: Laura Sharpe, Gail Evans, Shawn Dubuisson,

Kurt Welsh, Eric Crump, Mary Evans, Marie, Karen

To Do's: Taped floor at 6:00-7:30 Distributed ground

plans, rehearsal schedules and company roster

to cast. Add to props list (completed today)

Magic flowers, pop up mirror to have no mirror

(glass)

wheels on trunk

John Bailey - Spotlights?

Leslie Seigel- sound

Personal Notes/Thoughts: _____

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/6/81

Scene 2

Tish--Why do you wish on a star?

You're alone at your tree you sit down, what do you need?

Star--What does Tish's request mean? Do you have to do it?

Perhaps you better talk her out of it? Not an easy wish?

How does that make you feel?

How does making a little girl's wish come true make you feel?

Height? Voice projection.

Tish--don't whisper

What is the relationship between Tish and the Star?

How do you feel about one another?

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Tuesday
Date: Oct. 6, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 7:30

Place: PAB 204

Present: E. Crump, L. Sharpe, C. Smith, K. Wright,

D. Holzweig, M. Evans, M. Zirkenbach, K. Norris

To Do's: Props: Glitter, Book

John- Can one slide down the surface of ramp?

Poster needs to fly with curtain

Lynn- Will Starbright be able to walk?

When can we have the Trunk?

Personal Notes/Thoughts: Went well. Finding some

difficulty with blocking because scenes done

insequentially

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/7/81

Bear--wait till you see what Mime shows you

What about bears? Mime

Mime--don't let Tish look at Bear

Bear--How do you feel?

Scene 5 Box SR

Urgency

Tish--make fun of her name with Mime

Good Bear pick crumbs out of fur

Beat sitting down

Tish--I like the pat

Got model

Sunday 5:00 meeting with Leslie about Sound

Could we be in Burruss Sunday 11?

Friday tent. 5:00

Director's Notes 10/8/81

Inform actors about new cuts in script

pp. 15, 16, 18, 23, 24

Cut Lines p. 21

Don't forget to teach Bear dances

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Wednesday
Oct. 7, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 7:30 pm

Block scenes 11, 13, 14

Place: PAB 204

Present: Eric Crump, Mary Evans, Laura Sharpe, Debbie
Holzweig, Marie Zirkenbach, Karen Norris, Vince Dilosa

To Do's: Check with Don about rehearsing in Burruss
on Sunday 10/12 and the following weekend

Pick up trunk form Mike Russell

Personal Notes/Thoughts: Hoping to get Marie to switch
Friday's rehearsal to 5:00pm so that those going
to V T C will not have to drive all night!

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Thursday
Date: Oct. 8, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 7:30pm

Block scenes 4, 6, 9

Place: PAB 204

Present: Laura Sharpe, Mary Evans, Eric Crump, M.

Zirkenbach, K. Norris, V. Dilosa

To Do's: Notes to Marie:

1. A. Mc Carter informed us that we could not move
into Squires until Tues Oct. 20

2. Got Sound Operator- Brad Spencer

Amy Lee Darby- Props

3. Informed that Caroline Smith and Kevin Wright
missed costume shop appts., called to remind them.

4. Talked w/John Bailey concerning rescheduling of
Tech week. Cue-in on the 15th. Front steps on set
now two small steps.

Personal Notes/Thoughts: _____

Short rehearsal. Becoming concerned at the lack
of communication between production and design staff.

Will have to keep close watch on this. Starbright
is now a person. Lynn Thorpe is to make costume.

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/9/81

Scene 10 The Wish

Cut on p. 25

Urgency

Star Bright, are you excited? Impatient? Is this a wish you year all the time? How does that make you feel? Is it easy to do?

Scene 12

Work on timing of this scene

Again the urgency Something you must do now

Comparing the first scene with the second the first is less immediate but both need to fly

Bear--need to see your face

Tish--louder, "Stop Death."

Time scene 12

Tish--watch "ums"

Bear--did this and then did that

Tish--you know wishes come true

Star--give more time to your spell

Tish--try climbing rope here

Mime--up on ramp

Tish--quick because it has to be the first star

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Friday

Date: Oct. 9, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 5:00 pmBlock and review Sc. 10, 12Place: PAB 204Present: Laura Sharpe, Caroline Smith, Mary Evans, EricCrump, Debbie Hozsweig, Kevin Wright, Marie, Karen,To Do's: VinceCheck With John Bailey- Rope ladder comes down inSc. 10 goes back up and comes back down again. Can1st 2 rungs be climbed? Let sets know where wheelsgo on trunkchecked shop- rigging, set progressing, questionsfrom Mike Russell regarding rigging of StarbrightPersonal Notes/Thoughts: Running time for sc. 12: 1:08,1:06Mary Evans (mime) got a chance to look at trunkProps person Amy Lee Darby watched part of rehearsalEarly rehearsal because of V.T.C. auditions

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/11/81

Scene 15 Review 11, 13, 14, 4, 6, 9

Where is the trunk during each scene?

When does the Bear wear his hat?

T&LB--leave those two for their moment

Tish--cheat, move DS

Star--wave

Bear--look at Tish and everyone when you pass

What does the rooster crowing mean to each character?

Bear--stop, turn, then say line

LB--do you know your arms are way back?

Open Up

More room so move when you have to

Mime--duck

LB--good mimicking Bear Why are you telling the story?

Tish--I see your rear

LB--don't anticipate or look down on floor

Mime--don't forget fishing pole

Bear--oh, oh command

LB--How do you feel about each thing Bear tells you to do?

Tish--small voice

LB--stand up on "good cry"

Bear--really look for Little Bear, what does that mean to say I'm going to die?

Tish--Open up

What a mess Work scene 13

Scene 14

Bear--take time to see tree, go for it

Mime--cover her mouth if you have to

Scene 6

Bear--put head down make a clearer choice for that
arm gesture

Tish--pat on shoulder good

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Sunday
Oct. 11, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 2:00pm

Block and review scs. 15,

Place: Burruss

11, 13, 14, 4, 6, 9

Present: K. Wright, E. Crump, D. Holzswieg, M. Evans,
C. Smith, K. Welsh, L. Sharpe, Marie, Karen, Vince

To Do's: Met with Vince at 12:30 to tape floor.

Note's to do: 1. Get back to Mike and John about
rigging and flying 2. check with Felice regarding
costumes for 7:00 photo call tomorrow. Post notice

3. Amy Lee Darby- Where was she?

4. Make sure Randy Ward attends tues. production
meeting

5. Get program information

Personal Notes/Thoughts: _____

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/12/81

Scenes 3,4,5,6

Trying to get a sense of consistency, through-line

take each event as new

clean the choppiness, flow of the scene

Tell Mime binoculars are now telescope

Tish--giggle and hide, have fun with Mime and Bear

don't step off ramp

Everyone watch vocal level

Much quicker pick-ups on cues

Box farther DS

First Run 12 min.

Mime--stop music

Second Run

turn not quite it

don't put head behind

Mime--Does death smell bad?

Open up Tish

What a lousy set for blocking!

Scene 9 O.K. 1:23 time

call for him like calling for supper

nice movement with chin

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Monday

Date: Oct. 12, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 7:30 pm

Run scenes 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 13,

Place: PAB 204

14

Present: Laura, Mary, Kurt, Kevin, Debbie, Marie, Karen,
Vince

To Do's: Talked with Mike Russell about some Tech problems

Photo call at 8:30 tonight

Kurt conflict on Wed. 10/21

Go over tech schedule on Tues. meeting

Oil hinges on trunk

Blocked part of dances

Personal Notes/Thoughts: Amy Lee stopped by

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/13/81

Scenes 10-14

First time off book

Decisions on shapes in wood and light colors made by John today without any consulting with me

We are really not working together

Need props list

Ask Karen to diagram blocking actors that I have come up with so far

Actors--work on projection, flow of movement from one beat to another, connect events

Activity: I am blind, tell me what you see happening on stage. What sequence of events are there? Don't assume I know something until the script, action, or movement tells me so.

Time: 18:30

Tish--good energy, generally I need to know how you feel

LB--don't comment on your acting, don't look down

Open up, What do you think about what he's saying to you?

Tish--Why do you tell them your Grandpa's dying?

LB--Don't break when you call for lines, tight lips

Waltz accelerates

LB--Do you really think that's the way it's spelled, or are you planning a game?

Star--think of your laugh and what you are saying,

How important it is

Look everywhere for LB

Cut p. 29, 32, 35 a few more bad lines gone

Bear--minutes

Second Run 19:04 time

Tish--get him to try, what can you do? "say it"

much better and "look . . . good"

Star--louder Repeat, Can she not hear you?

Watch comments and movements

LB--Why do you jump and laugh on "Howdy do?"

Good Tish, you need to focus us

LB--Does midnight give you the giggles?

Tish--on ramp farther down from Star Bright and keep calling

for the Little Bear

LB--Is "left my fishing pole" a lie?

LB and Tish--check Bear out to see how it's done

Bear--turn other way, need to build to being tired

Cut He's Fallen go to are you alright

Box back Stage

Mime--it's your goodbye, try tears after he leaves

but before you sit

Work 13 Boring

Third Run Better

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Tuesday
Date: Oct. 13, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 7:30

Run 10-14 with lines (no

Place: PAB 204

script)

Present: Kevin, Eric, Mary, Caroline, Laura, Debbie,
Marie, Karen, Vince

To Do's: Get mime's jacket and some props

make sure hinges on trunk get oiled

set time for dry tech

reblock tree bit with Kevin

redo polka (too long)

need to get trunk CS in last scene 14

design of tree was changed today

Personal Notes/Thoughts: Production meeting earlier

today 4:00

Laura hates saying the lines "spell it like it

sounds" Had a discussion about it we'll deal with

it

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/14/81

Scenes 3-8

Mime and Bear--pull away after grab

Mime--shake head with hair, other hand

Bear--give back glasses, pick up on cues

Tish--what about trying line to Bear

Mime--Did you get his Spanish Hat?

Bear--fur

Tish and Bear--Voice comes from everywhere

Props--Buns in plastic because of gloves

Mime and Tish--story can go further

Work 7

Bear--take gloves off and throw to ground

Mime--pick up gloves

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Wednesday
Oct. 14, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 7:30

Run scenes 3-8 Lines Due

Place: PAB 204

Present: Eric, Laura, Kevin, Kurt, Mary, Marie, Karen

Vince

To Do's: 7:48 begin sc 3 end 8:26

8:48 begin again end 9:10 (22 min)

Felice- we need some hats to rehearse with

also need to set up time with Bear

Talk to Don Velcro?

Felice- Rehearsal gloves for Bears

Personal Notes/Thoughts: Dry Tech changed to 4:00 Mon

Glib through changed to 8:00 Mon

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/15/81

Lines Due 1 & 16

Activity: suggested by Laura, to actually have Mother and Aunt Ellen there a few times. Of course, Why didn't I think of that? Tried Aunt Ellen and Mother next to yelling. The tension of laughter.

Tish--just tell her

Mother--you are dealing with Tish but not Aunt Ellen

try thinking of 1. yelling

2. laughter

3. covering grief

4. annoyed by child

Tish--try to really have a tantrum, one out of frustration, ends of lines need to be picked up

Bear--forever/beat, look at the hand, stop absorb the room

Mime and Bear--your moment breaks too quickly, look at each other one last time

Tish--"Oh Susannah" perhaps does she understand there?

Star--smile, have a good time, Aren't you?

Bear--twelve is what turns you around

Mime--good looking for him

LB--come slower

Scene 2

Tish--closer to Star, Open up Tish's objective changes here no?

REHEARSAL LOG

Thursday THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Oct. 15, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 7:30

Run 1, 16

Place: PAB 204

Present: 7:30 Gail, Shawn, Laura 8:30 Eric, Deb, Kurt,

Mary, Caroline Marie, Karen, Vince

To Do's: Have coat tomorrow

get elephant stands

Ran sc 1, 16 for the first time since beginning

also hats and gloves

Leslie get on sound

Meeting tonight with Tech and design staff

Personal Notes/Thoughts: _____

Need to talk to Vince

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/16/81

First Run-Through

Pick up cues

Tish--not confident with lines, missed beat again
during tantrum, flowers are precious

Star--more pleased with yourself, have fun

S and T--Projection

Tish--Open up

Bear--don't look Tish's way when you first come in

B and M--Good opening energy

Bear--can you see without your glasses?

Mime--bears over mouth

Bear--"he didn't find me" quicker pick up

Mime--don't take time to first put cover

Bear--Tish had box on "pin them on me"

M and T--story a little quicker

Bear--nice energy and work, throw gloves to corner

LB--don't let him upstage you

Tish--"Please let him live" Open up

M and T--during death scene on upper corner platform

LB--stay down more

More more it is still too one-leveled

Karen--talk to Vince

When do elephant stands get to corner?

Nice work with rabbits foot gang

Caroline--stay in character, things will distract you during the show as well

B and T--don't upstage Star Bright

LB--nice work

Mime--pick up gloves

LB--watch stuttering, ds equal so not to upstage

Mime--when to get stand off?

Bear--give up and go to chair

13 and 14 Need work

Bear--Beat "then I am ready," walk as slowly as possible

Mime and Bear--don't sway when you hug, better

LB--cannot walk in front of tree

Bear--good exit, nicely timed

Announcer--more energy

LB and Mime--run off when you hear Mother

47:35 time

Second Run

Picked up

Tish--don't forget to move, more tantrum

T and S--cue pick up

Star--better projection

Tish--keep hanky

Bear--don't take time to deal with Tish, throw those lines,

keep salute, both gloves, give back rabbits foot on

"it does work"

Announcer--take beat before Turkey Feather

Mime--begin each music cue, wear hat

45:19 time

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Oct. 16, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 7:30

Run Through

Place: PAB 204

Present: Full Cast

To Do's: hats, gloves

Amy Lee- add tape measure to props list for mime

new baton, preset stand SR

Mime- pick up Bear's boxing gloves

Tish- you can use elephant stand to get to platform

John Bailey- Is ramp hollow underneath?

Pockets in Tish's costume?

Personal Notes/Thoughts: _____

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/17/81

Sound--add light cue p. 32 when Star Bright leaves

Leslie not ready with sound yet I am very upset

Publicity--I never saw the poster before it was printed
and it is up already. Where are the words A Children's Play?

Karen--all props are not at rehearsal yet

Bad Attitudes with people things are not getting done

Run Through 45:30 time

work projection and cue pick up, sense of through-line

Tish--still doesn't seem to be very upsetting to you,
too intellectual

Bear--good, even more energy and excitement

Announcer--you can't do that during the show,
get your mind on the show

Tish--lose line about grandfather's hat

Mime--metals, cue sound and Announcer

Feather all clap

Props--buns in pocket

Tish--"he's asleep" can't hear, try a stage whisper

Mime--get trunk almost totally off stage

LB--mistake, no cue pick up, yes you must stop

Bear from getting off stage, good choices

Tish--good listening

Bear--yes, "answer to riddle" let the voice do what the
body is doing

Mime--take off hat for knock on wood

Tish--"look, look" more energy

LB--hand waves on stop him

Don't think you can slide elephant stands on ground cloth

Karen--don't forget to tell Amy about tape, call Roger

tell him to come tomorrow

Mime--nice whistle on "let the flags. . ."

Death--put book in other hand

Mime--pick up fishing pole before lesson, little quicker
into hug

Tish--turn upstage to wave goodbye

Announcer--Are you asleep?

45:30 time

Second Run

Tish--quicker, "I wish. . ."

Star--good, more more you can move arms after you're out

Bear--ideas must come quicker

Mime--cut crazy sign

Bear--quicker "nothing . . .I escape," missed lines in
the same place what beat are you forgetting? Why?

Tish--go to Mime so your backs not to audience

Bear--much better, wait for Mime on "legs up"

LB--try a jump turn at end of walk, don't show little ones

Bear--in sandwich hug stay on the side and not behind

Balloon everyone look up as if you see her imaginary
balloon go away

Do Mime and LB go off together? Where are they going to?

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Oct. 17, 1981 Type/Purpose of Rehearsal: _____
 Time: 2:00 Run Through scene rehearsal
 Place: Burruss (13)
 Present: Debbie, Eric, Laura Practiced dances
Full cast at 3:00
 To Do's: Tish line on 1st page
Check with Felice on costumes
Will Amy Lee be ready?
pick up list from Mike Russell
where to end sound of chimes
oil wheels on trunk, tell props about buns in Mime's
pockets
Call Roger tell him he can come tomorrow
Marie Spanish Music?
 Personal Notes/Thoughts: Is so hard to get things done
when I have classes all day. What to do about
problems with sound? I think that worries me
most.

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/18/81

46:00 time

Tish--you have to move, more tantrum, you have to run

Scenes 1 and 2 Cue pick up

M and B--clean up the gag in the beginning

I'm bored

Bear--don't wait

cover the box the moment gets down

Mime--very sloppy today, bears over mouth must be clean

Are you people not having fun?

Bear--use other arm for the velvet box, started to pick up during turkey feather, salute

Mime--"heart is tired" was cut long time ago

Bear--Build "here, there, look", don't take so much time to absorb the insults from Death, the "no, no's" have to build, I know you have problems with the lines, stop upstaging Death, more urgency

Mime--forgot gloves

Bear--"oh, yes I will be the clown." must come from some kind of depression

Tish--"Quick"

Bear--don't point in Tish's face, missing a transition

Open Up Everyone

Sleeping Little Bear?

Tish--look off at Bear before you say he's going to die

LB--stuttering, why hold out "gone . . . forever"?

Bear--"Where" don't look up in the sky, don't take so much time looking for LB before you realize

Who took the fishing pole?

Bear--Tish tells LB you're the best Little Bear

and you say yes like big deal

No levels today at all. We must care about these people or it means nothing. Too long, you've lost the audience, moments too long

Roger was here. The worst rehearsal for a long time

They had several excuses, it is Sunday, after supper, after a great rehearsal, nerves. What are we going to do?

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Oct. 18, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 6:00

Run Through w/ Roger

Place: Burruss

Present: Full cast, Roger Bedard

To Do's: Call Leslie about voice overs

Is there a problem with the curtain?

Leslie music for the awards needs to be longer

Call Amy Lee

Call Harold Wood

Appointments with Felice: Debbie 3:00, Bear early
except 12-1, Kevin quickly anytime

Get program copy

Personal Notes/Thoughts: _____

Slow rehearsal, low energy

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/19/81

Sound System problems, sound not ready, of course we didn't start on time

Things I can already see still need to be done:

facing on platform

splatter ramp and circus ring

no color for Tech? Please

no gel, no sun

Tech promised these things done but what do you expect.

Who's in charge here? Am I dealing with John, Randy or Mike?

Karen--what about balloons?

Someone please get that stuff off the stage

Are we going to see that light USL?

No flags, no poster, no rope ladder, what about the trapeze for Star Bright?

John has a concern for getting things done fast and easy, but not right or on time.

Tree looks skimpy, can it be greener? What about gobo for images on carpet? Where are these things promised me?

Thought the tree was supposed to twinkle during fantasy?

Keep spotlight off the walls please

Is there a marque?

For all the time spent on getting Star Bright to fly, there is certainly nothing magical about it.

Why didn't the puppet work?

Technically this is a distaster!

Run through

Scene 1 much better

Aunt E--good cue pick ups nice energy

Tish--little cry, then rub look up and go

Tish--nice work on opening up

Scene 2 better pick up

Tish--good wishing

Star--good encouraging

Bear--move DS on "I don't see him. . ."

Clean up hug bit

Mime--stand on trunk for mirror bit

Tish--look forward on Bears

B and M--remember gloves

Mime--new blocking to get cover, crawl

Tish--keep turkey calling until Bear speaks, seem big eyed tonight, ask if he's running away from Death, look right through

Death--walk in front of Tish, get those cues

Bear--cut "stay away," good "no, no" build

Tish--go up by Mime during Death scene

Death--good work

Bear--good transition

LB--you have more time to get on during Star magic

Star--nice energy on Bear wish

Death--some nice new things you're trying

LB--good things as well, tongue might work, good turns,
try all kinds of walks, still stutter

Tish--expression before "You'll be. . ."

Star--nice gesture for "remember"

Bear--never correct yourself with "I mean"

LB--let's say you're ticklish

Death--What's so funny in that tree?

Bear--hug can come even sooner

Somebody get Little Bear's fishing pole out of there sooner

Bear--good absorbing of space before you go, get to micro
for "smiling"

Mother--wait till balloon's out of sight

M and LB--hide

Tish--pretend Mother's more in front of you in 1 and 16

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Oct. 19, 1981 Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:
Time: 4:00 (4:25) pm Dry Tech
Place: Squires
Present: Technical Crew

To Do's: Headsets for Fly rail?

Sound

Contact Harold Wood for rehearsal tomorrow

Personal Notes/Thoughts: _____

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Oct 19, 1981 Type/Purpose of Rehearsal: _____
 Time: 8:00 Run Through, Glib Through
 Place: PAB 204 _____
 Present: Full Cast _____

To Do's: Everything _____

Personal Notes/Thoughts: _____

Heek!? I don't feel like I have control- Dry Tech
was a disaster. I wish George was here.

Has no T.D. earlier everyone is coping out

I've never seen anything like it

Sound is a definite problem

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/20/81

Tuesday; two days before an audience, first time on the set
 at 12:30 no one but John in shop, it looks as though nothing
 was touched after yesterday's rehearsal, perhaps some gel put in
 Flag pole--being pulled from stock (no way)
 that piece of the set was in there a long time and should
 have been scheduled to be built

One major problem--Who is my Technical Director?

John, Randy, or Mike?

To Do's

Splatter ramp and steps

re-paint ground cloth so circle shows lighter in color
 more textured

Facing on platform

tree needs to be fuller, greener

Facing on tree

Mask light on floor and mask ladder

Bear poster, flag banner, rope ladder move over

Star Bright's trapeze

Thought tree was to twinkle

Magic flowers

Fix wheels on trunk, paint trunk

focus spotlights

Trim on Bear

Easel with poster

ladder stowing

steps in back

fix spotlight

get side things up

ends of circus rings

Death's top hat

Ringmaster boots

pink ribbon

Costumes look great

Karen--mop floor, picture call Saturday, when was that

brownie toup coming? comp forms? deadlines for complete

forms Oct. 30, class meetings, post mortum talk, critique,

ask actors to write impressions

List of things for me to check:

check to see Tech things get done

check lights what does it look like, color? is it bright

enough? Does it help create the mood? atmosphere? Will the

things Fly? What needs to be done by tomorrow? Sound? What

does it say?

Check blocking

Check projection

Check sight lines

Is everything safe? Do the actors feel comfortable

How does it look? How does it feel? How does it sound?

Do things read out in the audience?

Does tree work?

Check costumes

Rehearsal

Great rehearsal, good energy, some solid characters
pulled off tape and did glib through

more encouraging than dry tech, good concentration
tried to encourage for what may prove to be a horrid

Tech rehearsal

Velcro pockets for Mime

fix microphones

get side stairs out

Gail and Shawn--speak up

Tish--don't take so much time

Star--keep forward

Lights--light on wall

Tish--don't sit

Lights--more fantastical

Clean up hug bit

Bear--get cane

Mime--metals should be open, move trunk over, rehearse
with gloves, bobby pins

Props--fix honey buns to half

T and Bear--box further to ramp

Bear--cut second "me," see Star before you point

Sound persons--attitude on headset stinks

Cue pick up

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Oct. 20, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 2:30

Costume Parade- Tech Rehearsal

Place: Squires

Present: Full Cast Tech Crew

To Do's: Have a dry tech tonight, work with sound

Personal Notes/Thoughts: _____

Still real messy- but a lot more is getting done

Can't shake this feeling of ineptitude

Didn't start until almost 4:45

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Director's Notes 10/21/81

move speakers more DS, also rope hanging SL port

Light visible SR

Star--has to come in sooner and faster, get hair out
of face, don't readjust once out

Careful with cane Bear

Mime--where are your glasses? big head motions

Bear--"nothing" has to come sooner

T and Bear--don't speak during Mime and box bit

Bear--try laughing at "turkey caller"

Keep faces out

Bear--good hamming, even more

LB--enter on platform more center

Tish--don't move or look around there

Death--stand firm

Tish--nice hug to bear after his fight

Mime--good, hide that there

Bear--watch "father. . .grandfather"

Cut Magic dust Tech not ready

Karen--talk with Brad about his attitude

Banner pole cut to flags, draping on with rope ladder

Bear--the rabbits foot behind her

Props--Where is rabbits foot?

Karen--quiet at counterweight, How about Todd for flying?

LB--can't jump on things

LB and Mime--more of a diagonal

Karen--strike elephant stands

LB--keep face up

LB and Tish--in private scene you have to keep your faces
up or we lose you

Tish--open up on platform when sitting down

Good cover everyone

Music cover Star squeaky ropes

Tish--after waltz get right to calliope

LB--good ticklish movements

Sound--general dancing music can all come up a point

Karen--I can hear you give cues

Mime--music

Bear--don't turn face on "how many more minutes?"

LB--perk your ears up

Mime--you arrange props in the trunk so it doesn't take as
long to find them instead of props,

last goodbye faster

LB--look up on forever

Lights--nice sun at last some technical success

Star--come in faster

Mime--fishing pole has to leave

Generally quite good rehearsal if I don't kill the technical
staff

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Oct. 21

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 5:30 7:00 go

Tech Dress

Place: Squires

Present: Full company except T.D.

To Do's: Still need another Dry tech

Problems with sound

Personal Notes/Thoughts: _____

Marie and Mike talked with Brad he gets one more
chance Attitude problems

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Oct. 22, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 7:30

Final Dress Aud Preview

Place: Squires

Present: Full company

To Do's: _____

Personal Notes/Thoughts: 9:00 go 9:08 Held for Starbright

Running Time 47:00

pretty good show all things considered

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Oct 23, 1981

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 6:30

1st Performance

Place: Squires

Present: Full Cast

To Do's: _____

Personal Notes/Thoughts: _____

Curtain: 7:06

Time 43:30

fast show- messy sound

though it seems to be getting better

Picture call- Goff

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Oct 24, 1981 Type/Purpose of Rehearsal: _____
 Time: 12:30 2nd Performance
 Place: Squires _____
 Present: Full company _____

To Do's: _____

Personal Notes/Thoughts: _____
Curtain 2:09
Time 47:00
Picture Call Parris
Brownie Troup tour

Karen Norris
 STAGE MANAGER

REHEARSAL LOG

THE ARKANSAW BEAR

Date: Oct 25

Type/Purpose of Rehearsal:

Time: 12:30 call

3rd Performance

Place: Squires

Present: Full Company

To Do's: _____

Personal Notes/Thoughts: _____

Curtain : 2:13 (Held house for a large group)

Time 43:00

Karen Norris

STAGE MANAGER

Notes on Critique

Technical flaws at script which makes play not work
 self-consciousness, segmented within script

How about people rather than voices?

Problems with the character Star Bright, maybe should stay
 on stage as overseer

General, vague, script doesn't touch on problem

Not fantastical, rushed forced without urgency

Dancing Bear needs to Dance more and enjoy it

Voices of Mother and Aunt Ellen sound similar due to
 sound system

Why no dialects?

Death too cold, impersonal What point are they making?

Are they saying I said Death was bad?

Color of set more fantastical

elephant stands don't work

Facing circle ring, rigging, lighting colors bad choice

Ring not perceived as curb

One flag pole? Why not 50?

Mime as one man band instead of sound from different sources?

Music on tape? Why not all on stage?

Very negative critique, felt like this year's whipping post,

I am being very defensive about things I know didn't work, but
 when attacked it is natural

General Notes

Technical Director: Who was he? Why wasn't I given the support and consideration of any other show? Feel as though the department abandoned me. No drawings, things decided without discussion What happened to trapeze? Easel going up in the air?

Tech rehearsals and no technical director

Things not built or ready on due dates

All lights not hung or focused for Tech

No one to authorize use of theatre

Day before opening Tech people not to be found

Had problem with sound person which was never solved

Attitude to make due and find something or dig something up at last minute

Publicity: Virtually nothing heard of until two days before the show, slack poster distribution,

Posters not approved

No back up radio calls, noon shows, limited contact with schools

School bulletins without place listed

Programs a compromise, Bad general attitude

Sound: Fiasco, should have canned operator, designer did no valuable work, Attitude, no time commitment

Lights: running of lights ok, the design was not what I was promised, people just could care less

no professional or artistic attempt made at all

Set: unfinished, not what I wanted or what we talked about, sloppy work, things not organized or done on time, terrible

Costumes: No problem, wonderful worked very well

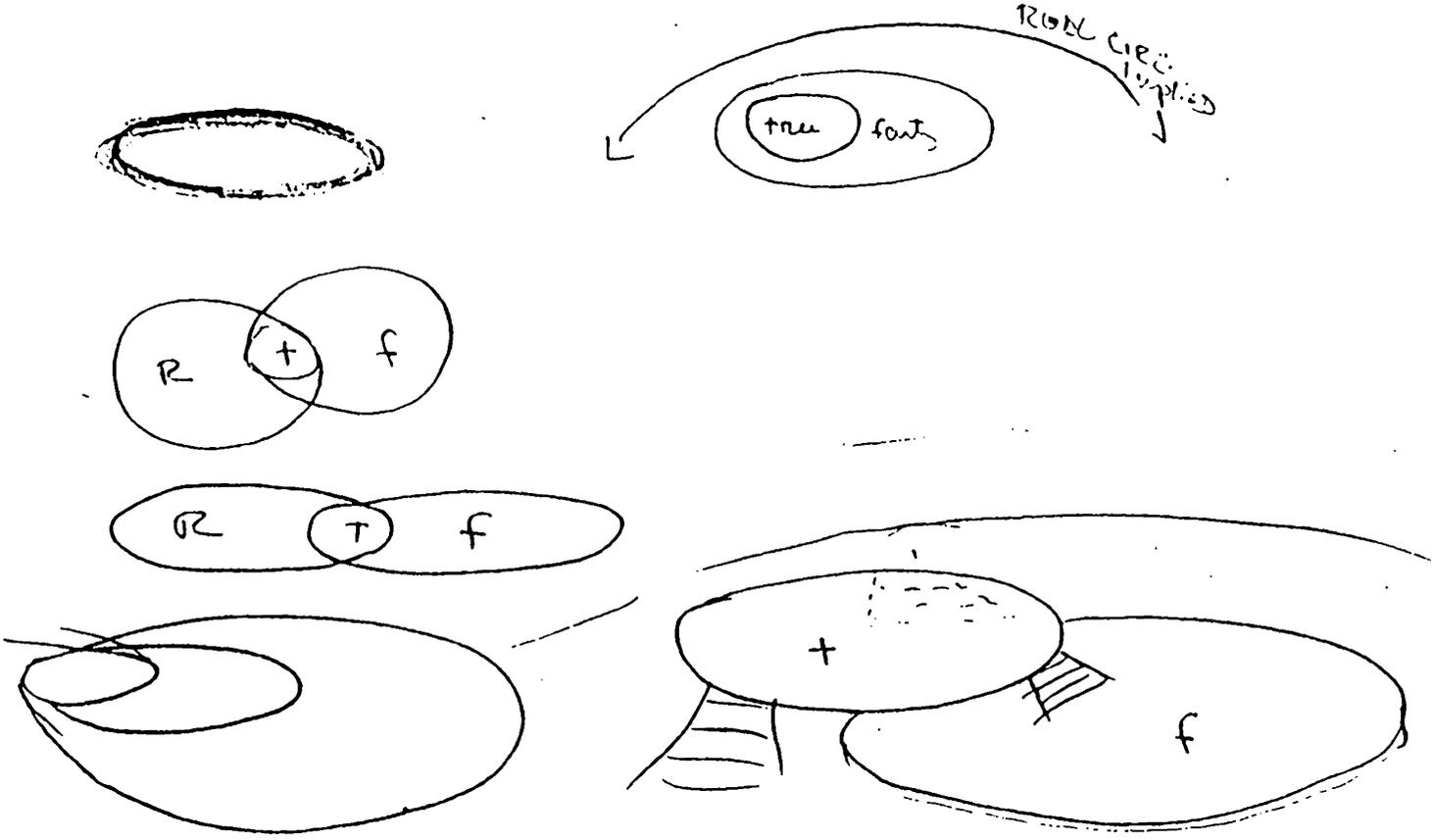
Stage Manager: Not prepared to handle situations, new to department and what or how people operate or do not operate, didn't take a step farther to foresee possible problems, not person to whom everyone could communicate with, didn't check up on things closely enough, arrive at rehearsals only shortly before I did, Needs to prepare for rehearsals better, needs to develop better note system, needs to review what's going to happen and what has just happened to better prepare

Assistant Stage Manager: Problem, tried to direct, distracted me and the actors, wasted valuable time, doesn't know role, asked questions and made comments of no concern to him which slowed down rehearsals

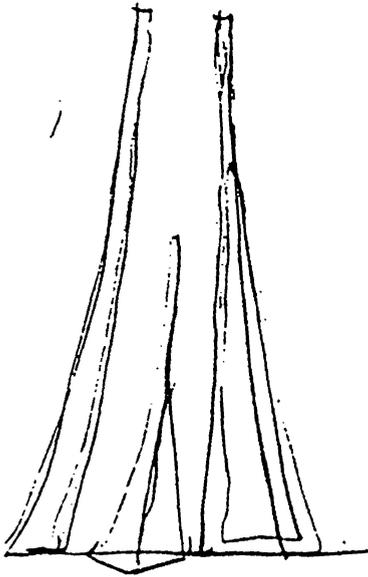
Communications the worst aspect of this production

Bad Attitudes

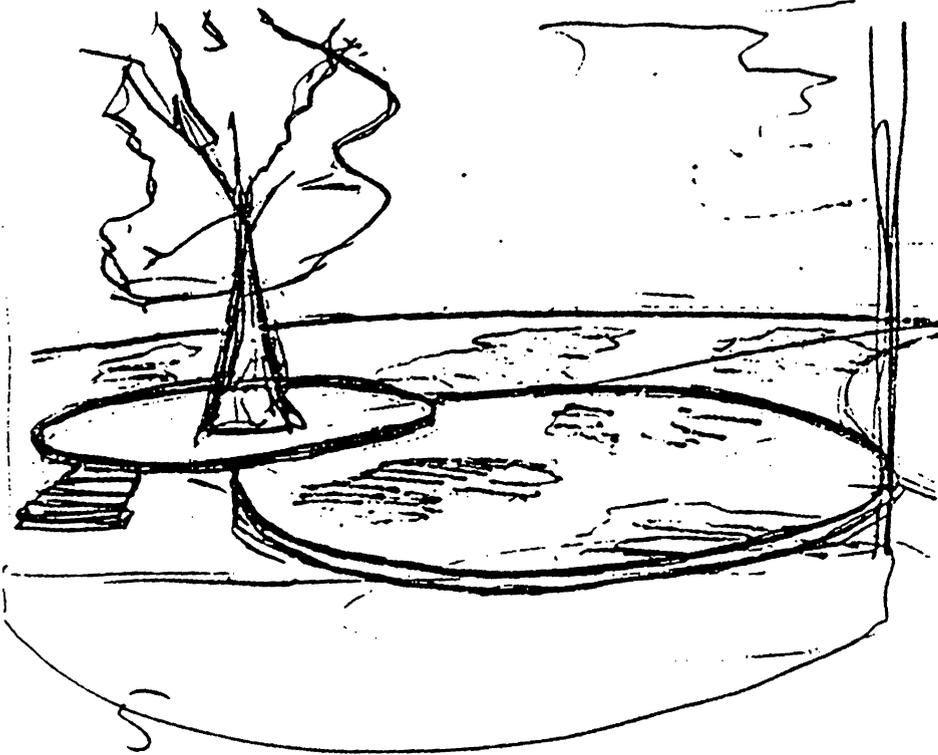
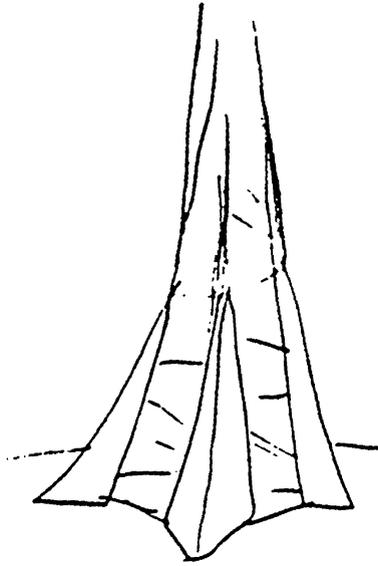
Bad Preparation



- circles of life -
- Ring of circus -



4



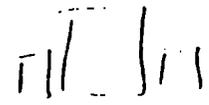


W

how is it structured?

T~~SH~~

T - SB - M DB - RM - LB - RM - SB^{RE} T, M DB, RM = SB, RM. - T

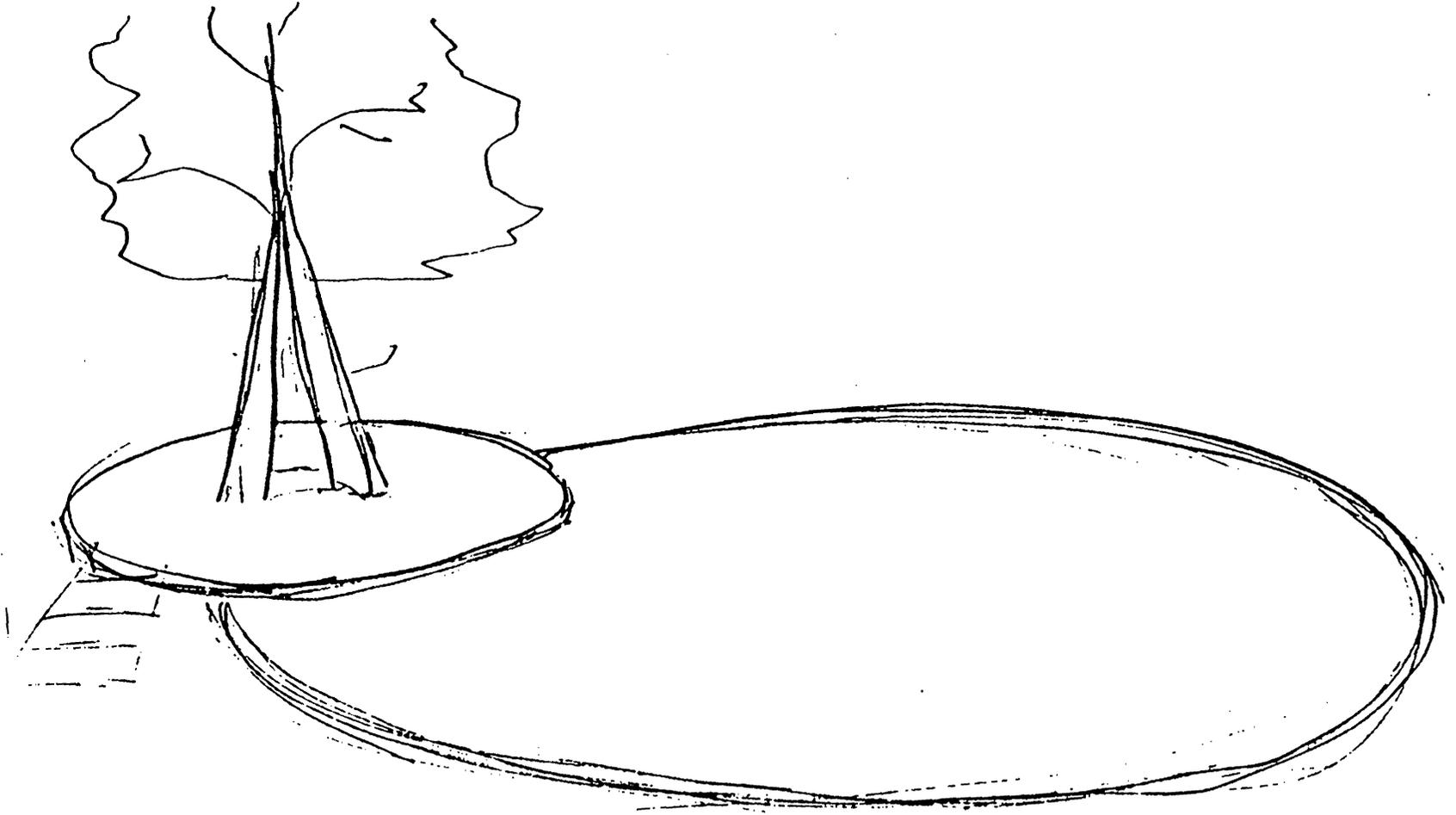


CONFUSION TO ORDER
"GETTING STRAIGHT"

→ FANTASY PLACE BRIGHT COLORS
BUT AT NIGHT
SUN RISE

TREE ⇒ CONTINUITY FOR TISH

FANTASY TREE -





APPENDIX E

GROUND PLAN

Ground Plan Included in Attached Envelope

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A PROJECT IN THE DIRECTION OF
THE ARKANSAW BEAR
BY AURAND HARRIS

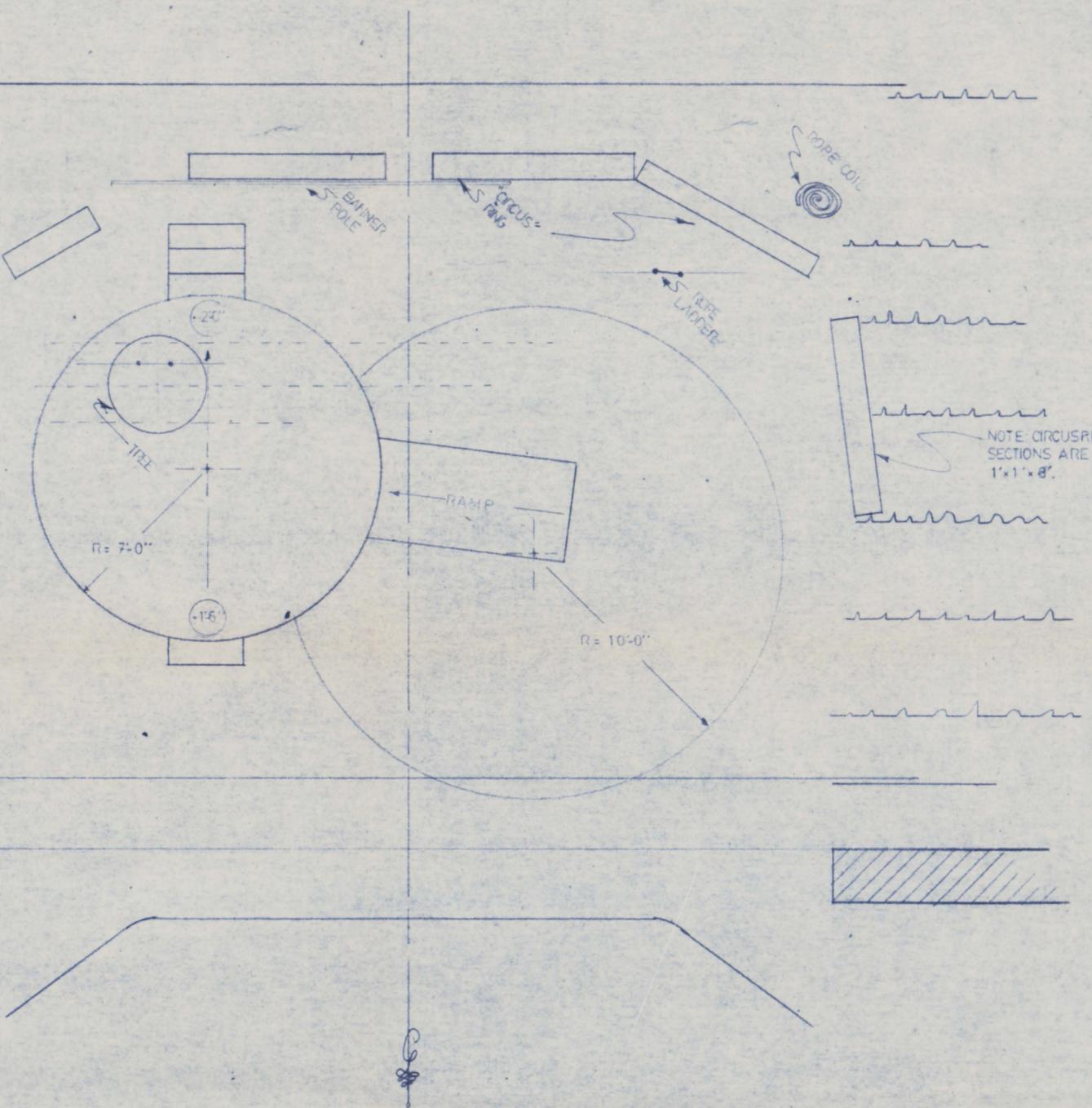
By
Marie Wendt Zirkenbach

(ABSTRACT)

The Arkansaw Bear, a children's play by Aurand Harris, was first performed on March 20-29, 1980, by The University of Texas at Austin. On October 23-25, 1981, the play was produced at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia under the direction of Marie Wendt Zirkenbach.

The author describes this production with a script analysis and a narrative of how the production evolved. A diary on the actual directing process used, an annotated prompt script, evaluation, production photos, production ground plans, and various relevant materials are included. The thesis also contains a narrative on how production choices were made.

- 34 LEGS
- 30 BANNER POLE
- 29 ROPE S L
- 28 LEGS
- 27 ROPE LADDER
- 26 ELECT
- 25 LEGS & FEASER
- 24 FOLIAGE
- 23 TREE TRUNK TOP
- 22 FOLIAGE
- 21 ELECT
- 20 LEGS
- 19 FOLIAGE
- 18 FEASER
- 16 LEGS
- 13 ELECT
- 12 FEASER
- 8 LEGS
- 7 FEASER
- 2 LEGS
- LIGHT PIPE
- HEADER - 15'-0" TRIM
- TORMS



ARKANSAW BEAR
 Virginia Tech: TA-UT
 DESIGNER: JOHN D. BAILEY
 GROUND PLAN
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0" (10-81)