

Learning Places Fall 2018

## SITE REPORT #3A

name of site report

NAMING PROTOCOL. When saving and posting your site reports on OpenLab, please follow the following format: SiteReport#Letter.LastnameFirstname. Here's an example: SiteReport2B.SwiftChristopher.



Select a meaningful image to that captures your perception of the performance site and provide a caption explaining what the image is.

**STUDENT NAME:**

Tanner Lee

**SITE OBSERVATIONS**

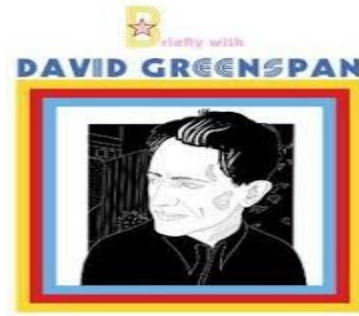
Insert 3 photographs and provide a title for each image. The title should be a a word or short phrase that sums up the subject matter of the photo or a visual theme present in the photo.



*Cast of the play*



*My view of the stage*



*David Greenspan Production*

Why did you choose these images? Do they summarize a feeling you have for the performance space? Do they focus on prominent objects or features? Explain.

I choose these three images not because they summarize the feeling I had for the performance space, but it captures my feeling of the play overall. The play in opinion, though being really short; it really was a well written play. It had good story; it kept bouncing time frames, because it's a memory play. The cast of play, utilizing just a small stage, with just one constant prop, a "dining room" brought your mind into a world of imagination. You were able to see envision the front of the house when the actors are ringing the doorbell to enter. You can imagine stairs leading upstairs to the second floor of the house, and you can imagine the kitchen in the back of the stage towards the right side, when the actors pretend they are cooking in the kitchen and entering the "dining room" from the right side. David Greenspan's in my opinion was able to write a capturing play in just 45 minutes, which is amazing, because he had me captured from the beginning of the play, to the end.

## **PERMANENT THEATER**

**Answer the questions below *only* if you attended a performance in a purpose-built theater or an adapted space that is now a permanent theater.**

1. Briefly describe the genre or type of performance (one sentence).  
The genre of the performance is a memory play.
2. Describe the dimensions, shapes, and arrangement of audience and performance spaces in the building: entrances, ingresses, egresses, lobbies, lounges, audience seating, box seats, and stage.

The entrance to the Bushwick Starr is a odd one. Upon entering the building, it looks like a regular apartment building. I was confused when trying to the find the stage and the seatings. It wasn't what I was expecting; I thought it was going to be like a grand

stage with clear cut directions. I thought the stage was going to be big, and the stage/seats would be bigger. However the stage and the seats were so small, and it didn't seem like a ton of room. The lobby was small too, there was also a small bar they managed to make for people to grab refreshments before the play.

3. Does the architectural design provide opportunities for voyeurism, food or alcohol consumption, reading, talking, or other interaction among audience members? Explain how the architecture might *encourage* or *limit* activities other than viewing the performance.

The design of the place is extremely linear; once you get past the confusing apartment area to get in to the stage area. Once you get in the ticket office is right on your right and in front of you is the bar to get drinks, and on the right of that is the seating for the audience. The bar area allows for people to meet up and interact, because it's a somewhat spacious area that allows people to gather. When I was there, that's where I saw groups of people meeting up, before making their way to the seats. Moving onto the seating area; it does invoke conversation, because of the closeness of the seats, and the limits of seats. You're going to always be close to someone, so you can interact with someone easily. Was it predicted to be that way, I wouldn't know. However the architecture of the bar/lobby area is meant to ignite activities other than the performance. There's no seats to the bar, but a lot of standing room within the area.

4. How did the architectural design and fixtures affect your reception of the play (sight lines, acoustics, lighting, etc.)?

The design of the architecture in my opinion was that of a great one. I didn't feel hindered and had my attention all on the play. The lighting was perfect it was dark all around, and just the stage was lit, so there was nothing else catching my attention. The seats were in a perfect rising position, so I was not looking at someones back of their head for the majority of the play.

5. Describe the dynamic between the audience space and the performer's space. Was the stage a proscenium, thrust, or theater-in-the-round arrangement? Did the performance and audiences spaces ever merge (audience in stage area, actors in audience area, for instance)

The dynamics of the stages was a black box or studio space. The first level audience is the same level as the stage, and the room was a paint black to allow the room to be changed for different performances. The performance did not merge, but there was one scene where the actor came extremely close to the audience and was performing a monologue. He was holding holding a pretend baby, and showing it to the audience as well.

6. Use a metaphor to describe the audience/stage relationship (ocean, layer-cake, peephole, for instance...*and don't use these examples!*). Explain why you chose that image or idea

The stage flowed onto the audience as if it was a rising sun stretching it's ray onto the audience. The audience to the stage is on the same level, so it almost looks like the stage just extends onto the audience and generates a feeling of closeness between the actor and an audience member. You feel as if you're a part of the act, so you act accordingly, to fit in.

## **PROVISIONAL THEATRE**

**Answer these questions only if you attended a site specific performance, a space temporarily adapted for this particular performance, or an outdoor performance in a place that was not designed for theatrical performance at all.**

1. Briefly describe the genre or type of performance (one sentence).
2. Why do you think the artists chose this particular space to present their play/dance/show? How do themes, choreographies, texts, or images in the play relate to the surrounding environment?
3. Describe the seating arrangement. How was the audience space demarcated from the performance space? Did these two spaces ever converge?
4. How did the natural or designed environment affect your reception of the play (sight lines, acoustics, lighting, temperature, etc.).

5. What kinds of social interaction among audience members or between performers and audience members did the space allow or encourage? Were there opportunities for voyeurism, food or alcohol consumption, relaxation and repose, talking, movement, or participation in the performance? Explain.
  
6. Use a metaphor to describe the environment (ocean, layer-cake, peephole, for instance...*and don't use these examples!*). Explain why you chose that image or idea.

## ANALYSIS/DISCOVERIES [FOR EVERYONE]

*Use this section to reflect on your observations. Remember to refer to your observations when drawing general conclusions.*

Performativity: ways in which theater becomes life, words become actions, audiences become actors, objects become agents, buildings convey meaning, and participants become engaged in broader social concerns.

1. Describe the moments in the production where *theater* became more like *life* or when something occurred in the performance space that exceeded the internal action of the play itself.

One moment that stood out to me when the play become more like like than just a play was when the actor was giving a monologue and holding his child. He was pretending to cradle a baby, and giving him a talk about when he'll be older and that he'll have to fight for himself. It broke the boundary of play versus real life, because during its a common thing for a parent to talk to their child like he was. So it felt genuine, and the acting was spot on.

2. How might the designed and/or natural features of the performance space enable moments of performativity? Or, on the other hand, do the architectural and/or natural elements inhibit performativity?

In my opinion, this stage inhibits performativity. The stage and lobby are not big enough for people to gather. Being that a social gathering normally generates a torn of people that gather and protest.

**QUESTIONS for FURTHER RESEARCH. Write down questions that require further research to answer.** These should follow directly from your analysis section and be complex and specific enough to serve as the basis of a research project; do not include questions you can answer with a quick google search.

1. Question?

In what way does the costumes serve as the characters complexity? Being that Mario (David Greenspan) is the only one wearing a blazer and two other male characters are not?

2. Question?

In what ways does the play correlate with a traditional Greek Tragedy?

3. Question?

What does the design of the stage with just one piece of furniture have to do with the way the play is unraveled?

# SITE REPORT #3B

STUDENT NAME:

Tanner Lee

## FURTHER RESEARCH

Develop a new research question (or revise one of your questions from part 3A of this report). **This question should concern EITHER:**

The relationship between the performance you viewed and the staging (if in a traditional theater space) or the place where it was performed (if in a provisional theater space).

OR

The relationship between a social / political issue and the performance you viewed.

**Research Question:**

What does the architecture of the stage have to do with the way the play is unraveled?

**Find 2 sources.** \*You can choose to use: internet sources, books, archival documents or ephemera, scholarly articles, newspaper articles, or performance reviews. Your choice should be intentional.

**1 source** should have to do with the **production or performance** (this could either be about the play itself or about something to do with the performance). For example, if I viewed a production of *Hamlet* that was interactive, I might research “Hamlet” or conduct research more broadly on “interactivity and Shakespeare.”

**1 source** should be about the **place or social / political issue** that is articulated in your research question.

**Write an MLA citation for each source:**

**Source 1**

“Sound as Structure:: Toward an Aural Architecture of Theatre.” *Dramaturgy of Sound in the Avant-Garde and Postdramatic Theatre*, MQUP, Montreal; Kingston; London; Ithaca, 2013, p. 145.

## Source 2

Brantley, Ben. "Review: Remembering the Way It Was (Not) in 'The Things That Were There'." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 14 Oct. 2018, [www.nytimes.com/2018/10/13/theater/the-things-that-were-there-review.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/13/theater/the-things-that-were-there-review.html).

Why did you select these sources? How do they address all or part of your research question?

I select these two sources, because they both explain how stage design and stage lighting can set the mood/tone of the play, and can also affect how to play flows. The first source explains that sounds of the play in correlation with the stage setting and lighting can greatly impact the play. It all ties into one. The second source, which is a New York Times article review of the play. It explains the setting of the play which can be described as a mere table where families have sat at for decades and signifies happy times, sad times, altercations throughout the years. Which coincides with the play; the play is about a family and shifts in time in mere seconds as they move around the stage, sit at the table. The table represents years of life within a family household, and the play is about that exact topic, memories.

Describe the process you used to find this source including any keywords and the search engine or tool you used to search.

The process I had was actually pretty complicated. It might've been by key words I was using. I knew the topic I was aiming for, but I just couldn't put it into proper words. The search engine I used was google for a review of the play, and then for a good academic source, I used City Tech's Library search.

What other sources or further information would you need to answer your question? Where would you look for that information?



My question can be answered more thoroughly of course by stretching deeper in to stage design, and the history of theatre. Fleshing those two major topics out, will allow for a more well detailed answer of why a table with chairs as the only prop for a memory play, serves as a perfect prop and can take you on a journey within just 45 minutes. To find more information, I would of course use more academic journals explaining the history of theatre.