

THE DARK SIDE OF THE TUNE:  
A STUDY OF VILLAINS

by

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## ABSTRACT

On “championing” the villain, there is a naïve quality that must be maintained even though the actor has rehearsed his tragic ending several times. There is a subtle difference between “to charm” and “to seduce.” The need for fame, glory, power, money, or other objects of affection drives antagonists so blindly that they’ve no hope of regaining a consciousness about their actions. If and when they do become aware, they infrequently feel remorse. I captured the essence of the villain by exposing these lightless characters to the sun.

On Monday, April 9<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2007, on the Gillespie stage in Daytona Beach, Florida, I performed a thirty-minute, one-act cabaret entitled The Dark Side of the Tune. By selecting pieces from the musical theatre genre to define and demonstrate the qualities of the stock character, the villain, I created a one-man show; a musical play, including an inciting incident, rising conflict, climax, and dénouement, with only a few moments of my own dialogue to help handle the unique transitions for my own particular story. By analyzing the arc of major historical villains and comparing them to some of the current dark characters, I will discuss the progression of the villain’s role within a production and the change from the clearly defined villain to modern misfits who are frequently far less scheming or obvious.

My research includes analysis of the dark references within each piece’s originating production, and how it has been integrated into the script for The Dark Side of the Tune and a breakdown of my cabaret’s script (Appendix A). I explore actors’ tools, specifically voice, movement, and characterization, and their use in creating villainous characters. I also discuss similarities in story progression for the deviant’s beginning, middle, and final positions within the plot structure of a production.

For Shirley, Joanne, Robert, and Timothy  
Who helped ensure I never became the villain.

For Michael  
Who made a career out of being a pilot.

And For Kathryn  
Who encouraged him to do just that.

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# INTRODUCTION

*“You've got to love the villain if you have to play him.”*

*Jim Dale*

A villain is determined from the protagonist's point of view. So, like the protagonist, a villain is someone of fame and must be known. Examples include Hitler and Mussolini of World War II, The Joker and Magneto of Marvel Comics, Dr. Claw from Inspector Gadget, Maleficent, Ursula, Hades, and Gaston of Disney fame, and Pennywise from Stephen King's It. Truly anybody, in any field, is subject to become the villain. If the protagonist of the story is a drug dealing thief, a policeman can easily be the antagonist, and therefore potentially the villain. On the opposite side of the spectrum is the stereotypical villain, often seen in melodramas. Though modern day audiences tend to laugh at the mustachioed antagonists of yesteryear, a well-rounded villain who charms or entices should leave audience members uneasy in their seats (Stein 280). A villain is also and most truly defined by his or her character alignment. The truly evil enjoy their work. A cleric who is a goodly character is never the villain, but a member of the clergy who is summoning demons becomes obviously untrustworthy.

There is a story that is frequently untold of the villain's growing reputation. “No villain can attract victims unless he has charm, charisma, position, or wealth” (Stein 280). For someone to be truly notorious, they must have committed several crimes, possibly murders or bank robberies. Or, it is the notoriety gained from sinking ten ships while stealing booty and making each sailor walk the plank that makes a true pirate villainous — one whose name drives fear into the hearts of others. It comes from the unexplainable disappearance of someone, deviously completing a task, taking credit for completed work, which leads to sliding up the corporate

ladder. The salesman who comes across too forward hardly succeeds at his business, but convincing the buyer that the car is perfect for the buyer's family takes that charm and charisma most noted in villains. Or, an offer of financial freedom might inspire unethical conduct to a morally questionable character. One way or another, each villainous character has had the time to develop a reputation. That reputation registers fear into less-defined characters, and it is that fear that gives villains the psychological advantage. Additionally, trusting that specific advantage can lead to a villain's downfall.

Since we follow the protagonist's story, it is from that perspective that a true villain is defined. Melodramas make it easy for the audience to determine the villain as he announces evil intentions before attempting ... and failing. "The banker was the stereotypical villain of melodrama — the fore closer of mortgages, the despoiler of widows and orphans" (Robb 57). Western films make it easy by costuming the villain in the black, 10-gallon hat as opposed to the white. "The Mexican alternated with the Indian and the half-breed as the stereotypical villain — treacherous, vindictive and bloodthirsty" (Langman 225). A villain must be defined by his relationship to the protagonist. Billy Flynn of John Kander and Fred Ebb's Chicago demonstrates this relationship: he is a public defense attorney fighting for the good of the people; however, he manipulates facts and the American Judicial System for purely personal gain. He makes money from both his clients, fame for being a successful lawyer, yet leaves Roxy and Velma without a second thought, even though they are both acquitted. He becomes the goodly villain. If the protagonist is working to resolve the major dramatic conflict, then the villain is actively working to contribute to the protagonist's conflict.

Next, there is the discussion of integrity. A person whose word can be trusted conveys integrity. Villains frequently lack any sort of integrity. A policeman who truly supports finding



the unbiased truth while remembering the policemen's motto, "to serve and protect" is guaranteed not to be the villain. However, a policeman speaking the words of the motto while accepting bribes or planting a murder weapon becomes a man with no integrity. For someone whose integrity is in question to begin with, a thief for example, the same rules apply. A thief thieving has integrity. His actions are practically predictable and he does as expected. A villain amongst thieves is the traitor then, the rat who decides he no longer shares the vision of the ultimate goal, and informs the police in exchange for protection from the law. "Is your antagonist morally bad, not just badly behaved? Does your antagonist enjoy doing wrong to people? Is your character not just mischievous but malicious? What I'm getting at is the degree of villainy. ...Readers find morally villainous characters more interesting" (Stein 280).

A test to find out how truly villainous a character is can be found by asking how much the character enjoys its actions. A minor crook, secondary character may feel remorse for having to take the kittens and throw them into the river. This may lead to comic relief or a change of heart or even justification to lighten his sentence, but it doesn't lead to a truly malicious character. Then, the opposite is true. The character who truly enjoys doing evil acts just for the sake of the pain, misery, or potential gain is the truly classic villain.

The villain, like every stage character, has a want ... or an objective. Sometimes the objective is fame, fortune, or posterity; sometimes it is the demise of something good, or all that is good, if possible. In a criminal setting, every person who commits a crime has a motive. Children are introduced to the concept of a villain as early as bedtime story characters like the wolf who ate Granny or Saturday morning cartoons like Stephen Spielberg's animated series, "Pinky and the Brain," where Brain, a master villain who is also a mouse, plans to do the same thing every night, which involves some elaborate scheme to take over the world. It is an

incredibly lofty goal for such small creatures, but, in the case of the comic duo, it provides brilliant challenges necessary for dramatic function. Sometimes the goal is as home based as ruining another character's happiness. Ms. Hannigan, the drunken hag who runs the orphanage in Annie, has to find some satisfaction in knowing that when she makes the orphans chant their love for her that they are biting back the sharp replies they'd rather be spewing. For some villains, the goal is as farfetched as taking over the world; for others, it's a smaller take; but through and through, the one who appreciates the catastrophic advantages he's creating is the one to fear.

The villain is defined from the protagonist's view, has an evil reputation, thrills on his mischievousness, and is actively working to make the protagonist's life a living hell. That being said, a villain doesn't need to be included for a play to be effective; it merely is a very useful tool for the writer to create dramatic conflict. From the embezzling corporate executive to the bribe-accepting judge, from the lowly pickpocket to the billion dollar master thief, the villain is generally viewed as the character who is acting against the law or moral society. The Oxford Book of Villains categorizes by type of villainy to some extent with such groupings as master crooks, minor crooks, con men, murderers, hypocrites, traitors, spies, and tyrants. "The out-and-out villain is a type before he is a character; he is defined by his moral and theatrical function as a wrong- or evildoer" (John 48). It is the villain's theatrical function to create dramatic conflict. If he didn't kidnap the young maiden, the prince wouldn't have a princess to rescue.

Aristotle believed a true villain could never play the protagonist because they could never evoke pity or fear from their audience. A true villain is one who honestly enjoys the work. So what happens when the devil himself gets bored with his job? This became the premise for the plot line of The Dark Side of the Tune, and the skeleton around which I'd construct the rest of

my material. I found the principal argument used for the plotline of The Dark Side of the Tune inside a coffee table book called The Book of Angels. This book suggested that St. Jerome, among others, theorized that if the Almighty had to have a nemesis, and was aware of that fact prior due to His omnipotence, then He had to choose His rival. The book suggests this rival is Samael, the Archangel. So, after introducing myself as Samael, and Samael as the devil himself, I proceeded to move forward where there could be conflict. What happens when the truly villainous would rather help an old granny across the street or do other good deeds? Or even, what happens when he's just ready to give up? This became the impetus for my creative process.

## CREATING THE SCRIPT

Aristotle said a villain never could be the protagonist because a villain cannot evoke pity or fear from his audience. I argue this is untrue as I artistically intended to make an audience feel those exact two emotions. Also notable is that truly villainous characters are those who actively enjoy their menace, demonstrated by the characters and song material I selected in The Dark Side of the Tune.

Though not originally selected, I ultimately opened with “Hospital Board” from Jekyll & Hyde, with book and lyrics by Leslie Bricusse and music by Frank Wildhorn. I entered the stage in the dark and the point of attack was Nate Beversluis, my musical director and accompanist, playing the opening haunting chords of the song as the spotlight came up on me, standing upstage. In the original Broadway production, Dr. Jekyll argues for money to pursue his chemical studies trying to separate the good from the evil inside any human being. I like false beginnings, so I used this theatrical tool to act as a human being seeking money and permission from audience members to bravely move forward with his daring and dangerous work. This is a false beginning, because even though the scientist essentially asks the audience whether or not they are willing to believe in the possibilities of separating the good from the evil within themselves, we never see him again.

The typical point of attack for a villain is actually rather varied. While Tartuffe has already infiltrated and made impressions upon the whole household, he’s nowhere to be found on the stage until Moliere’s Act III. Certainly, quite the opposite is also true. It is frequent and effective to have the point of attack for a production be the villain at work scheming for his next major victory. The point of attack for The Dark Side of the Tune was played out as the response

from a human, who seems to be aware the apocalypse is coming, and he's the only one with the answer to prevent it.

This was the first character of my cabaret production, the scientist looking for the permission and support to bravely move forward with his daring and dangerous work. With high risk, comes high rewards. This helped create an incredible sense of urgency from the point of attack through my request for financial support from the audience members. The lyrics of this song are used to enlighten the audience about the potentially positively influential implications of my experimentation. They invite faith by presenting the concoction, and, if I must, to beg for some audible confirmation of support. This song worked effectively to establish a character, but it was vocally challenging to sing in its original key. I could sing it as written, but it would have been placed in my falsetto, which I determined to be an unnecessarily difficult choice. I could sing it an octave lower, but it sounded comical. Nicholas Wuehrmann, my director, and Nate and I finally selected a key halfway in between to help facilitate my vocal challenges and serve the character in the production.

At the end of the song, I inserted "By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes" (Shakespeare 4.1.554). This famous quote from MacBeth became my "cheers" as I bravely prepared to drink the chemical concoction that would, in theory, change me either into Mr. Perfect or the alternate option. Whether I as the scientist had permission or not, I was moving forward with the experimentation and using myself as the test subject. I drank the concoction, which was a tequila sunrise, sans tequila, and moved to the prop chest for my first change.

The lab coat came off, the glass got put away, and a bowler was donned as I prepared to do a Fosse style improvisation for the opening section of "Willkommen." "Willkommen," from

Cabaret, with music by Fred Ebb, lyrics by John Kander, and book by Joe Masteroff, was utilized to represent the second beginning, and the introduction to the devilish character and protagonist of The Dark Side of the Tune, Samael, the Archangel. This section of The Dark Side of the Tune could be referred to as the introductions, and certainly was a portion of the exposition. This song was a welcome to the audience and an invitation to throw away their cares and trust in me, clearly a questionable figure. I also used this song to introduce the piano player as Nathaniel Webster, a reference to “The Devil and Daniel Webster” by Stephen Vincent Benet, as Nate’s gifts at the piano are truly a blessing, and comparable to Daniel Webster’s notable oratorical prowess as his silver tongue tames the devil. I also told the audience who I was, Samael, the Archangel, and that they might recognize me by other names, Lucifer, perhaps, but that my true name was Samael. This patter dialogue was underscored by the musical key change moving into the next piece. “Willkommen” itself isn’t sung by the villain of Cabaret but rather by the Emcee, who may be no moral idol but is hardly the villain. This song was another that endured a key change. Not because I couldn’t sing it in its original key, but rather because it made the musical transition more effective. I struggled for quite a while to get the pronunciation of the German and French lyrics, but they were well delivered by performance.

Having introduced myself as the devil in an unfamiliar fashion, I decided that next he should be introduced in a more familiar way by singing “Forbidden Fruit” from The Apple Tree, with music by Sheldon Bock, and lyrics by Jerry Harnick, and book by Sheldon Bock and Jerry Harnick. In the original Broadway production, this song was the invitation to Eve to come to the Tree of Knowledge and eat of its fruit. For me, this is the point at which the devil, and the actor, is building a repertoire with the audience. I previously discussed that villains need to have some charismatic qualities to lure their audience into their plans. This scene then is the opportunity for

Samael to lull the audience into some sense of trust in this admittedly devilish-angel and is also part of the exposition. Vocally, this song allows and even lends itself to an overexaggerated use of the “S” sound, resembling that of the snake from the garden. This scene, as a type of scene, is the salesman’s pitch. Instead of the written ending “Now!,” I changed the final word to be “Willkomen!,” per Nick’s suggestion, to tie the whole first beginning, second beginning, and introductions together.

Moving forward some five thousand years, we embark upon a new section of the plotline. This next section became the devil’s dilemma. It started with his stasis. Frequently the primary antagonist is actively working during the stasis to complete his master death ray, or already searching for the treasure map. In something closer to realism, the villain may be doing nothing more than sitting in jail or working to maintain the status quo. For The Dark Side of the Tune, Samael’s stasis is found in his boredom. I demonstrate this by singing “The Good Old Days” from Damn Yankees, with music and lyrics by Richard Adler and Jerry Ross, and book by George Abbott and Douglass Wallop. This song allows Samael to be reminiscent about his great achievements. In the original Broadway production, Applegate highlights some of the cruelties of the human history such as the guillotine, Jack the Ripper, and the Hundred Years War with sadistic pleasure. I felt this piece should be very casual in its presentation, so I relaxed in my comfortable office chair. Certain details of history, however, were engaging enough to bring me to my feet. Musically, this song presented two interesting challenges. First, the song occasionally has a small chromatic scale which required precision pitch execution while lending itself to be a much more speech-like song. Along this same line, there is pitched laughter that, while certainly can be ignored, is written, and therefore should be performed.

“Telegram!” Nate chimed in from the piano — a telegram arrived for Samael. This telegram suggested that Samael, as the devil, is doing nothing more than serving God as a function.

The inciting incident for a typical villain is another that varies by circumstance. It is a requirement that the protagonist be involved with the inciting incident, but not necessarily the villain. The villain in general may be nowhere around. Since my protagonist is the ultimate villain, he is there to serve the function of protagonist. His stasis has been changed, a question has been asked of him, and ahead of him he has an adventure, the story.

The inciting incident for The Dark Side of the Tune came from a proposition by Saint Jerome in the text from The Book of Angels with text by Todd Jordan: if God is all knowing, then he had to know he needed an adversary, like it’s a job, and that job could, in theory, be performed by anyone! This upsets the stasis because Samael is no longer bored. In fact he’s excited about the idea of being able to relinquish his duties. This also instigates the major dramatic question: Will the devil find a way out of his unholy role in history?

In response, Samael gets the idea to post a job wanted advertisement in hopes that he may find the ideal candidate to replace himself. As I listed the requirements, they served as foreshadowing. Dead puppy jokes were a glimpse into sick, twisted humor similar to black comedies. These three things — administer torture, withstand the temperature of Hellfire, and laugh at dead puppies — also reminded Samael of some of the perks of his position and led into a song classic, “Love For Sale.” A prostitute advertising her different loves for sale sang this piece in the original production of The New Yorkers, music and lyrics by Cole Porter and book by Herbert Fields. In The Dark Side of the Tune, I sang this song as though I were talking about the job of being the devil being on the auction block. It is quite possibly the greatest gift Samael



has to offer, and it is near and dear to his heart. This song presented some challenges in rehearsal, as it is such an incredibly familiar tune. I felt compelled to both pay tribute to the crooning style it is famous for while simultaneously making certain I was true to the character I created and the originality I could bring to the piece.

The patter section following “Love For Sale” was intended to suggest there were many applicants interested in the criminal mastermind position that had become available. In the interest of saving time, I narrowed down the list of possible applicants only to those Nate and I felt deemed worthy. “As Someday It Must Happen” from Gilbert and Sullivan’s The Mikado was the next chosen song. Chosen because it: (a) represented Gilbert and Sullivan, notable inspiration for American Musical Theatre; (b) it was satirical in nature; and (c) the song allowed me to obsess over finding my replacement. Affectionately called “A Little List,” this song is simply that, a little list of people that Ko-Ko, the original production’s character, found irritating or unnecessary. In his case, he was even willing to have any of them killed.

Within The Dark Side of the Tune, the context is very similar. This is a list of potential candidates for the occupation of ‘the devil’ chosen specifically from the musical theatre and similar categories, and also a rise in dramatic conflict due to the hopes that a replacement may be found and Samael could be released from his duties and allowed to roam in peace. Samael is creating his own conflict as he vainly continues forward on his quest to be released.

The rising conflict continues with what affectionately became the “monster montage.” While in some fashion or other I tried to rightly duplicate the characters from within their own context, it is still Samael, almost mocking at times, imitating these interviewees. The first and quite possibly the most dangerous candidate for the position of the devil is a human being crazed by the need for revenge:

- Sweeney Todd, from the show with the same title, as a character may arguably have never slit the throat of a single character, had Mrs. Lovett not hidden the fact that Todd's wife was alive. I chose to sing a section of the original production's opening number, which has an incredibly memorable feel to the posturing of the characters. I used this posture to create the sense of Todd's world as he's applying for the position. Vocally, like most Sondheim pieces, this was not the easiest piece of music to count, but as a piece it sat very nicely in my lower register, showing off some of the lowest notes of my vocal range. Having picked up the letter opener off the desk to represent Todd's famous razor blade, and true to fashion I raised my arm high. Then Nate, yelled, "Next!" and I pulled myself together, and we went to the next applicant.
  
- "My Name" from Oliver! with book, music, and lyrics by Lionel Bart, is sung by a British villain by the name of Bill Sikes. In Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist, Sikes beat his dog, was a known associate of Fagin, and eventually murdered Nancy. There is argument as to whether or not he felt remorse for the last of these three actions, or simply feared he might get caught, but villainous as they come, Bill Sikes had to make an appearance as an applicant. The lyrics within his song help demonstrate that villains need to have some notoriety to be effective. Singing "My Name," Bill Sikes boasts about his ability to affect people by his reputation for aggressive behavior. He's absolutely right. The villain's name should be recognized. Using a club from the prop chest for the 'jemmy' he refers to in the lyrics, I strutted like the cock of the walk for this number. This was a piece Nick and I had worked on in voice lessons previously, so singing notes were not a challenge. Dialect became an issue as I can be

inconsistent about the heaviness of my dialect application. As Nate asked what this applicant's name really was, to end the segment, I finished with this reply: "Why he's just my Bill." This line is an acknowledgement to Rodgers and Hammerstein's Carousel, whose own Bill is also arguably a villain-hero, as he is the protagonist but killed by his own actions on his own knife early within the script. Realizing that Sikes, while plausible for the position of devil, was not our ultimate choice, we went on with the next applicant.

- I followed this with the satirical Pirate King singing "Oh, Better Far to Live and Die" from Gilbert and Sullivan's The Pirates of Penzance. At first, I played this character very foppishly, but quickly came to realize that with yet another such memorable character, I need not distract from the truth of this comical villain. Again, this piece, though not of American Musical History, is certainly part of its predecessors, and since it is satirical in nature defends that the most villainous in nature are those who enjoy their work. These pirates have a reputable soft spot for orphans that has allowed them to let whole entire crews get away, and that plays out in a comic fashion repeatedly throughout the production. These would not be effective pirates.
  
- After the Pirate, I chose another typical villain, a politician. Discussing villains as a genre, I fear incomplete if there is no mention of bribe-accepting officers, crooked cops, or corrupt kings. Specifically notable for watching political ratings to determine political sway, the Governor sings "Sidestep" from The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas, with music and lyrics by Carol Hall, and book by Joe Masteroff and Larry

King. He expresses his talented linguistic gymnastics as he avoids taking strong political viewpoints until polls return. My acting choices re-created the physical comedy with a hat used in the number by Charles Durning in the 1982 movie version of this production. This song is usually sung with bit of a country twang, as this production is set in Texas, so I reached into the kid in me who was raised in the deserts of Arizona and found a Texan dialect much simpler to imitate than most. Still, another unacceptable candidate to fill Samael's shoes, we find ourselves looking to the next option.

- From a little house of whores to The Little Shop of Horrors, I next sang "Dentist," with book and lyrics by Howard Ashman and music by Alan Menken. In the original stage production, this sadist enjoys giving pain (a true villain) to his patients and has been characterized as a sort of 1950's motorcycle driving greaser. Truly a fright to children everywhere, the dentist is another example of the type of villain whose name alone provides some sort of paranoid discomfort, and to meet one who is eccentric about causing pain and gassing himself for pleasure would certainly cause question to any rational person. As an acting choice, I popped my collar and strutted, as I believe he would. This song wasn't anything challenging and actually a favorite short from my monster montage. My favorite reaction as Samael: "Overqualified."
  
- Jud Fry is the telltale villain from Rodgers and Hammerstein's classic Oklahoma! Clearly motivated by his own personal agenda to marry Laurey, Jud Fry is another character whose demise is brought about by his actions and his own knife. I chose

“Lonely Room” because there is frequently an inevitable loneliness in any villain’s life. They say it is lonely at the top, and if you’re a master villain, or even just Jud Fry, then he’s on a quest that few will likely support, and he’s likely to be disappointed in the end. For the villain, this lack of community support is hardly surprising and usually just feeds the desire to pursue a goal all the more. The desire to be right can be more motivating than the desire to do the right thing. I sat in my chair to sing these three words, which caused no vocal challenges.

- Jumping from my chair and moving onto the next applicant, I covered half of my face with my hand to characteristically sing from “The Phantom of the Opera,” from Andrew Lloyd Webber’s show of the same title. This tale of the Paris Opera House and its uninvited permanent houseguest is currently the longest-running show on Broadway and thus an unavoidable villain that must be recognized. Notable villainy includes murder with the use of a magic lasso, a staff that spits fire at Christine Daae, and the nerve to cause Carlotta’s voice to sound like that of a frog during a production. To be fair, he had warned the theatre directors to cast Christine Daae instead. This song was successful due to its incredible familiarity, which allowed it to be a very quick segment, ending just as abruptly with Nate’s insistence that we move on.
- I sang a larger portion of “Cruella DeVil” from Disney’s 101 Dalmatians! to cover two categories at once. First of all, I was paying tribute to the feminine villains while also pointing out that Disney doesn’t shy away from creating masterfully wicked characters. There are activists working year round to prevent the inhumane treatment

of animals, and while killing an animal in self-defense is one thing, or hunting to feed a family is another, skinning puppies for coats is downright despicable. While singing the song, I pulled a fuzzy scarf that resembled a boa from the trunk, draped it over my shoulders, and sauntered the stage as a lounge lizardess might. This piece was certainly another of my favorites to perform because there is natural comedy in a bass doing drag work.

- Dr. Seuss even created a villain for Christmas, so “You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch,” from The Grinch Who Stole Christmas, seemed the next perfect candidate. This villain has taken upon himself the task of ruining Christmas; a time intended to be joyous for the entire village of Whoville. Throwing on a green, fur-rimmed Santa cap, I tried to create the Grinch’s notoriously creepy movement as I sang this tune. Vocally, this character was originated by one of the greatest film villains of our time, Boris Karloff. Having that rich bass voice made the Grinch such a distinct character, and conveniently that’s where my vocal strengths lie, and I was able to give the low notes their due.
- To conclude this section, I chose a character known as the prince of humbug himself, P. T. Barnum. Samael truly is excited because he believes he has found the one among many who is worth granting such a prestigious position. The salesman as a character type is frequently viewed as villainous, and for the use of The Dark Side of the Tune, the perfect type to take the job of the Devil. Using “There is a Sucker Born Every Minute” from Cy Coleman’s Barnum, I sang this piece in its entirety to

emphasize my liking of his philosophy, clearly displayed in the title of the song, and my desire to offer him the position of supreme anarchist. As for acting the role, Barnum is the high-energy, fast talking salesman who would sell liquid ice to his own mother by reputation, so tumbling and trickery were certainly tactics I used. Again, there is major dramatic irony as the song finishes with Samael admitting that the biggest sucker is himself and not realizing how true that may be.

Essentially, Sweeney Todd, Bill Sikes, the Pirate King, the Governor, the Dentist, Jud Fry, the Phantom, Cruella, the Grinch, and Barnum were the “monster montage” for The Dark Side of the Tune. For some of them, I sang their tune in its entirety; for some of them, the section I chose included no more than three words. In theory, each of them was the next best option for taking the role of devil, creating not one but rather a series of rising conflicts paralleling that of a modern American play. As I said before, the series of rising conflicts for the typical villain can tend to be quite grueling and treacherous, as he is actively working at this point against the natural course.

The next action was the second telegram. This concluded St. Jerome’s theory by suggesting that even if the devil was a job that “anybody” could do, the Archangel Samael had been specifically chosen because he was the only one strong enough to withstand the “ravages of a Hellish station” (Jordan 111). Serving The Dark Side of the Tune as the major crisis, this telegram represented an absolute “No” to Samael’s hopes of being able to be free from his burden. The villain as a type is not necessarily present for the major crisis like the protagonist, but he isn’t necessarily far away either.

The climactic scene began with Samaels' response. A rant, again taken from The Book of Angels, only changed so that it was made personal. This was a childish emotional outburst as I realized I'm still trapped, demanding to be appropriately returned to my full rank and station as Archangel at the end time, knowing full well I arguably deserve nothing. I wanted freedom, and I was willing to keep fighting for it. This tirade began "Is This What You Call Love?" from Passion, with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, and book by James Lapine. In Passion, this scene is between Giorgio and Fosca; she has again come to meet him in the woods. Giorgio's rejection of Fosca's love is a brutal display of emotional abuse as he blatantly discredits her clingy outpouring of love. The climactic moment for any villain is critical as he is directly involved, whether a hand-to-hand fight, or a race to the finish, it's either now or never. For Samael, now was the time to vocally challenge God. Using Sondheim's piece, this song became an expression of disgust toward God, arguably a blasphemous statement, and then proceeds to tell God, "Leave me alone." This demonstrates a generally poor sportsmanlike response to a stressful situation. This piece was the most vocally challenging of the show as it is counted in very quick three. I'm singing complicated lyrics, thinking 2-3 for my rhythm counts, and having a hard time keeping focused on the task at hand, which is to chastise God. Instead, counting like this has me completely focused inward. At the end of this blasphemous rant, I collapsed on the floor defeated, as the lighting designer Chris Hill, or God, struck me with lightning. Broken, beaten down in front of an audience who had realized my hopes with me, and traveled along on my journey to be free, this moment was the first designed to do what Aristotle said not possible: evoke pity from an audience. The moment is hopes' death. The audience seemed even to forget these were the devil's hopes; they were so taken with the story of



someone's hopes that this devastation effectively silenced the room. The major dramatic question had been answered: no, the devil would not get out of his hellish duties.

Creating a new stasis, I say to the audience, "At least, you can always find me." This is an uncomfortable metaphor suggesting that it may be hard to find God but easy to find the devil. It is also uncomfortable thinking that comfort could be found in the protective arms of Lucifer, be he Samael, Old Scratch, or Satan. That feeling is why I next sang "I'll Be Here" from the Off-Broadway production of The Wild Party with book, music, and lyrics by Andrew Lippa. Designed to create fear for one's own soul, or at least get an audience to question their belief of an afterlife, this song was placed here to evoke fear from an audience, the second of Aristotle's emotions impossible for villains to evoke. Ironically, this is a love song in its original context. There is a creepy quality to the devil singing a lullaby and the words, "I'll Be Here." I'd say this song wasn't a vocal challenge, but by the end of the first evening's performance, I was emotionally exhausted, and my voice gave out during one of the last "here's." It appeared as though I was broken up, and perfect, just as it was.

The new stasis for a villain is another varied moment, but most frequently carries the quality of some repercussions for the criminal or deviant acts. Jud Fry and Sweeney Todd end up dead. Some villains, like Cruella, just land in jail. Few get away with their crimes, continue to govern the country or treat patients, while some waste time blaming their failures on others. Some are already actively figuring out the next approach. If at first you don't succeed ... Musically, "I'll Be Here" and "Those Were the Good Old Days" are in the same key, so as Samael has offered himself to everyone in the audience, he has accepted once again his role in the universe, and goes back to reminiscing about those wonderful historical facts. I sang the reprise of "Those Were the Good Old Days" while putting on my coat and hat, as if to leave the

audience. Since musically this is a repeated section, the only possible difficulty was the text, and wouldn't I have to go and drop the lyrics to the final build of the song during the first evening's performance. I skipped to the final line and the talented Nate Beversluis, my Nathaniel Webster, went with me as only a great accompanist could, and we concluded The Dark Side of the Tune. This concluded a cabaret complete with comedy, tragedy, song and dance, with a villain-hero serving as both protagonist and villain all in thirty minutes.

# REHEARSAL JOURNAL

Back in the fall of 2006, my colleagues and I began finding pieces of music we thought belonged in our cabarets. By this time, the title had already been chosen. The Dark Side of the Tune certainly opened the doors to the villainous path, but when first conceived, I hadn't chosen whether it was all villains, or songs in a minor key, songs about AIDS and death, or just plain raunchy lyrics. Within the genre of cabaret acts, frequently these are as simple as a singer, a stool, a microphone, and an accompanist. They may include props, usually have some jokes, and are best when personalized. The one thing I felt I brought to the table was a strong understanding of script analysis. That plus an awareness of our rehearsal time and performance space allowed me a much more physical cabaret that included the structure of a dramatic story.

Having been a part of the University of Central Florida's Award Winning production of Margo Veil: An Entertainment by Len Jenkins, I had worked with a production that had a false start. I liked that concept a lot but wasn't sure how to make it play. I'd have to figure out how to accomplish my own false start.

The first assignment associated with the cabaret process was to read The Cabaret Artist's Handbook by Bob Harrington. This book was generally informative about the methods of advertising and the purpose of performing cabarets, but certainly lacked advice on sources of inspiration for the creative process. First, there was the need to overshoot, so I made a list of roughly twenty-five different song possibilities, including a duet I felt would be appropriate for each one of my colleagues.

As I began to explore, surfing the net, I flew extremely outside of my box while Googling "devil music lyrics" or "the devil falls in love lyrics" or something like that, and it led me to

purchase my first Black Sabbath CD. Some of lead singer Ozzy Osborn's vocal dynamics are truly awe inspiring.

Our next assignment was to propose three songs for everyone else's cabarets. I'm happy to say that while "Soliloquy" from Carousel did not make it into Kip Taisey's cabaret, he did sing it as his voice final this semester. My suggestions for Timothy Ellis and Leah Page, "It's a Fine, Fine Line" from Avenue Q and "Reflections" from Disney's Mulan, respectively, did make it into their cabarets. Suggestions from classmates for me were relatively creative. All my colleagues found at least one song that made the list of realistic possibilities for my final production at some point or another. What finally stayed was Tim's "Sidestep" from The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas (monster montage); Kip's "Love For Sale" (reflection of the horrors/blessings of my job and how I appreciate them); Leah's "Is This What You Call Love" from Passion (my climactic moment); and Nick on several occasions suggested Jekyll & Hyde (which finally solidified the opening number "Hospital Board", along with my false start as a human being).

The next acting assignment was to piece two of our songs together, with the banter in between. I did my studying and decided I had a possible ending I believed would work. Conveniently, "I'll Be Here" from Andrew Lippa's The Wild Party and the reprise of "Good Old Days" from Damn Yankees were in the same key. I warned Nate, and he simply didn't end the piece and left me in the correct key. I performed this on the first day of this assignment with book in hand, and unanimously my colleagues were confused and believed they made no sense together. I explained it was the ending, and I'd have to build, but my vision was still unclear. A cause of frustration continuously in so many ways! So, back to the drawing board, and for that

assignment I performed “Willkommen” from Cabaret into “Forbidden Fruit” from The Apple Tree, which at the time I said were the opening two pieces.

At that time, we also turned in a book. I knew that though it was complete for the purpose of the assignment, it was inaccurate. Returning from the winter break meant the semester of the performance was at hand, and things had to get done! Over the holidays I had finalized a version of the script for a three-person cabaret including two of my classmates, Tara Snyder and Leah Page. At the first read through, Leah, Nick, Nate and I were present and arguments about the length of certain choices led to an agreement that the show should then be revised. After careful consideration of possible replacements, I opted to scrap all incorporated scene study and focus on a one-man production, which opened the doors for the reinclusion of the monster montage. The shaping was a painstaking process, but I had tripped on a goldmine over the holiday by purchasing The Book of Angels. All of a sudden, I had character research material -- The Archangel Samael, the being, who in time became Lucifer, the name given in irony after his fall from Grace.

Once the idea was in place, it merely became the process of expanding the ideas and conflicts. Many headaches later, there was the opening argument, the devil’s introduction, the devil’s dilemma, the monster montage, the divine intervention and climax, and the offer and conclusion. The monster montage was merely a sampling of many musical theater villains of sordid variety, and usually only small portions of their respective songs. The shortest was three words. Still, this was a very fun section to create as witty comments flew from Nick, Nate, and I as we rejected each prospective candidate for filling the devil’s job. Interestingly enough, the conclusion of the whole project came out to be exactly what I had proposed at the very first assignment back in the fall.

The rehearsal process was rather awkward until the montage gelled. Frequently, I would run the first three numbers of the production, “Hospital Board”, “Willkommen”, and “Good Old Days”, and these were comfortably blocked in one evening. Then we would skip to a sing through of “Love for Sale” (assuming it was making the final cuts, which it did) and “Is This What You Call Love”, which blocked itself as I paced every time I sang the number. Then I would finish the show... but there was this huge gap. It was the final piece and certainly one of the most fun sections to create and perform.

On the final rehearsals: I’m off pitch. I’m running out of breath. Nate forgot a cue line, which left us both floundering for a moment. Eh... Nick was continuing the argument that “Oh, Better Far to Live and Die” should be sung all the way through the end of the chorus. I had tried for just the verse originally. By the final dress, I was still running out of breath by “There is a Sucker Born Every Minute.” I was cracking on the high G note I should have at the end of the verse, and I was just tired of failing. I walked up for notes at the end of the run, waited my turn, and said, “How much ARE we cutting?” Nick looked confused, so I said, “I’m sorry, it doesn’t work, and I’m sick of cracking.” We agreed the first line of the chorus would be effective enough.

# PERFORMANCE NUMBER 1

First, I was very pleased to have an audience's reactions. This performance has certain successes the other did not, and, most importantly, was an obvious progression from the final dress rehearsal. One of the most notable moments of success at the first performance was the change to the devilish character. As the music changed to the opening of "Willkommen" and I reached in the trunk for the bowler, I felt good. When I turned around and started singing such a recognizable song to the audience, they applauded the transition. Talk about your confidence builder... they were with the story and the change of personae.

By the time I finished the opening section, I was visibly shaky about using the letter opener to open the letter from St. Jerome. I had built in the time to stop and take a drink from my water bottle. The one thing I learned most about a one-man show is to find your pacing... though this was never perfect it improved each time.

The changes made to the montage went extremely well as the timing between Nate and me was truly in place, and there was no need to continue the Pirate King's song through to the end of the verse. However, this brings me right back to the pacing point as there were a few breathless moments by the time I got back to the Barnum selection, which, of course, was the concluding character to the montage. For me as the actor, this section was the most fun, for each one of the characters had a completely different feel to their song, thus a completely different approach to their choices and tactics, creating roughly ten unique characters... all of whom were applying for the devil's job.

All in all, it was successful.

## PERFORMANCE NUMBER 2

I was thrilled to be closing the event. All of the blood sweat and tears were finally to be over with! I ran into a bit of trouble as I went into “Willkommen.” I remember thinking, “use your tactics, this song is a welcome to the devil’s world... think... to invite and charm”. This apparently DID NOT WORK, as I did not receive the applause at this transition that I did in the first week. Of course, this is also the night my thesis chairman, Earl Weaver, saw the production, and one of his immediate responses was that “Willkommen” might have been unnecessary. One audience voted yea, one voted nay – until I run it 10 more times, who’s to say?

Pacing – Yeah! I figured this out much more, as I got through the whole villain montage without losing voice due to lack of breath support! Hurray! I was still completely shaking when I sat down to read the next letter and move on to the climactic moment. It made it very difficult to open the letters I intentionally designed to open easily! I’m pretty sure I was laughing at myself inside but continued.

What made this version even more fun is I included the “in the moment” play with your audience qualities true to the cabaret form. When I was singing “Love for Sale,” I actually picked a man in the front row specifically and asked him, “You sir?” As if I expected him to walk up on my stage to become the next devil. I also picked a lady in the front row to suggest that she was the exception to the rule. This was a highly successful version, and I had a blast. Now it just needs a second act – the complete opposite perhaps... so if I had been the angelic devil – Act II would be the devilish angel... Cupid, perhaps?



## CONCLUSION

I started with a title, The Dark Side of the Tune, and ended up arguing against one of Aristotle's theories: a truly villainous character can never be the protagonist because he can evoke neither pity nor fear from his audience. This theory would be more appropriately applied to the principal antagonist; for the villain, this is simply untrue. When Samael was defeated at the end of "Is This What You Call Love?", it would be very easy for an audience to feel pity for this beaten character, and as he proceeds with "I'll Be Here," he evokes a certain fear for one's own salvation. The other academic question I addressed was that the truly villainous characters enjoy their work. So, if one day a villain was to stop enjoying causing mass mayhem, then what would they do? This presented dramatic conflict for Samael.

I learned that creating dramatic conflict is essential in comprising a story, even if unnecessary for a cabaret act. This gave me some artistic license in which I could structure this not only to have its plot driven center, but also to allow me to become conversational with my audience in a much more relaxed atmosphere.

On acting the villain, there are some challenges. First of all, like with any character, you can never play the ending before it has arrived. Also, it must be clear to the actor how much the character loves their villainy, as this is the only way the audience will be clear on how much the character enjoys his work.

The process of creating an original one-person show was a mixture of easy and difficult tasks -- not much fell in between. It was easy to create the opening and easy to create the ending. It was difficult to change cast size and rethink the middle section, and once rethought, it was difficult to arrange the monster montage and produce the wit in between. It was easy to sing "Willkommen" while difficult to handle "Is This What You Call Love". By the time performances

came, most of it was incredibly easy. The challenges of the piece were still there, but by the time the curtain went up, I was aware of them, prepared to get through them, and should I fail, the next song would come soon enough. As they say... the show must go on.

I learned a lot about pacing and its affect on breath control. By the final performance, it wasn't nearly the problem it had been through rehearsals, but it was still one of the most valuable lessons. Controlling breath for the purposes of both maintaining physical energy for stage movement as well as maintaining a consistent vocal quality was challenging. The answer: learn when to breathe quickly, in short sip-like breaths, and when to take deep breaths. This is also a function of making certain that you use all the breath in your lungs when possible to avoid hyperventilation. Even character laughs have to be well supported by breath.

My failures were the same as always -- the critic in my head and a lack of self-confidence. I wrestled these demons the best I could, but this battle may be an eternal one. All in all, my successes shone in my ability to create a storyline, a villain-hero with a traditional plotline, an interesting and diverse selection of music, and a performance capable of entertaining an audience when I was the only actor on stage. This marked a huge hurdle for me personally as I have made my career out of being third chorus boy from the left. For better or worse, they came, they saw, they applauded. The struggles were many and the rewards worthwhile -- this was my challenge, my heartache, headache, passion, and baby -- this was my graduate thesis.

# **APPENDIX A: LIBRETTO**

## The Dark Side of the Tune

### Original Libretto

(Song: “Hospital Board” from Jekyll & Hyde)

**Friends, you’re aware there are two sides to each of us,  
Good and evil, compassion and hate.  
If we could extract all the evil from each of us,  
think of the world that we could create.  
A world without anger or violence or strife,  
where man wouldn’t kill anymore:  
a world of compassion, where passion for life  
would banish the madness of war.**

**I have developed in actual reality, a chemical formulae which could and would  
alter the patterns of man’s personality, guiding him either to evil or good.  
Weigh the potentials, the great possibilities, colleagues, dear friends, understand,  
we have a chance to make history here in our hand.**

**Here is a chance to take charge of our fate,  
deep down you must know that tomorrow’s too late.  
One rule of life we cannot rearrange,  
the only thing constant is change,  
the only thing constant is change.**

(from MacBeth)

By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes.

(Song: “Willkommen” from Cabaret)

**Willkommen, Bienvenue, Welcome!  
Fremde, Etranger, Stranger.  
Glücklich, zusehen, je suis enchanté,  
Happy to see you,  
Bleibe, reste, stay.  
Willkommen, bienvenue, welcome  
Im cabaret, au cabaret, to cabaret.**

Meine Dammen und Herren, Mesdames et Messieurs, Ladies and gentlemen.  
Leave your troubles outside.  
In here, life is beautiful; you are beautiful, even the orchestra’s beautiful.  
See, I told you the orchestra is beautiful.  
On the keyboard – Nathaniel Webster!  
I am your host.

Given the name Samael...  
One of the archangels...  
The bright and poisonous one...  
“The Venom of God”.  
After the fall I became Lucifer  
But I repeat, I am Samael.  
Now, in our exploration  
“The Dark Side of the Tune”  
I should tell you the first offer I made.

(Song: “Forbidden Fruit” from The Apple Tree)

**Listen, closely, let me fill you in  
about the rich, ripe, round, red, rosy apple they call forbidden fruit.  
What I’m about to say is confidential so promise you’ll be mute,  
because if every creature in the garden knows they’ll come round like, hungry buffalos and  
in no time there’ll be none of those precious apples left for you and me.**

**Now in the average apple you’re accustomed to skin, seeds, flesh, and core,  
but you will find that these are special apples that give you something more.  
Why every seed contains some information you need to speed your education,  
The seeds, indeed, of all creation are here,  
Why be foolish, my dear?  
Come with me to that tree.**

**With every sweet and juicy luscious bite of this not forbidden fruit  
you’ll see your mind expand and your perceptions grow more and more acute,  
and you can teach him plumbing and philosophy, new techniques for glazing pottery, wood  
craft, first aid, home economy. Madam, Adam will be overjoyed.  
When he becomes aware of your attainments he’ll beam with loving pride  
and he will say: “ Oh, Eve, you’re indispensable--- please don’t leave my side.”  
And with your nifty newfound education, he’ll relish every conversation,  
Why, you’ll be Adam’s inspiration this way! Just an apple a day,  
Wait and see, come with me to that tree!**

Willkommen!

Now, life gets tedious. I don’t have to work to make a name for myself.

(Song: “Those Were the Good Old Days” from Damn Yankees)

**Whenever I’m from time to time depressed,  
and a trauma wells and swells within my breast,  
I find some pride deep inside of me,  
as I fondly walk the lane of memory.**

**I see Bonaparte, a mean one if ever I've seen one,  
and Nero fiddlin' thru that lovely blaze;  
Antoinette, dainty queen, with her quaint guillotine.  
Ha, ha, ha, ha, those were the good old days!**

**I see Indians draggin' an empty covered wagon  
when scalping the settlers was the latest craze,  
and that glorious morn, Jack the Ripper was born,  
Ha, Ha, Ha, ha! Those were the good old days!**

**I'd sit on my rocking chair so peacefully rocking there,  
counting my blessing by the score.  
The rack was in fashion, the plagues were my passion,  
each day held a new joy in store.**

Was anybody happy?

**I see cannibals munchin' a missionary luncheon,  
the years may have flown but the memory stays  
like the hopes that were dashed when the stock market crashed.  
Ha, ha, ha, ha, those were the good old days!**

**I'd walk a million miles or more, for some of the gore of those good old days!**

**Nate:** Telegram.

**M:** Dear Samael,  
I contend, and Gregory of Nyssa, Origen, St. Augustine, and Ambrosiaster all agree, at  
least, in principle, with my theory, that you, as Lucifer, may be playing a role for God.  
Signed, St. Jerome

Playing a role? As in a job... that someone else could have? So I put out an ad...  
Criminal Mastermind Needed. Business is booming and rewarding. Great Opportunities for  
Advancement. Must be able to administer torture, withstand the temperature of Hellfire, and  
laugh at dead puppies.

I'll have to admit... I'll miss the job.

(Song: "Love for Sale" from The New Yorkers.)

**When the only sound in the empty street  
is the heavy tread of the heavy feet  
that belong to a lonesome cop,  
I open shop.**

**When the moon so long has been gazing down  
On the wayward ways of this wayward town  
That her smile becomes a smirk,  
I go to work.**

**Love for Sale.  
Appetizing young Love for Sale.  
Love that's fresh and still unspoiled,  
Love that's only slightly soiled,  
Love for Sale.**

**Who? Who will buy?  
Who would like to sample my supply?  
Who's prepared to pay the price  
for a trip to paradise?  
Love for Sale.**

**Let the poets pipe of love in their childish ways,  
I know every type of love better far than they.  
If you want the thrill of love  
I've been through the mill of love.  
Old love, new love, every love but true  
Love for Sale .**

**Appetizing young Love for Sale.  
Who's prepared to buy my wares,  
follow me and climb the stairs.  
Love for Sale.  
Love for Sale.**

I filtered through most of the applicants and removed your standard deviants, thugs, murderers, cannibals, rapists, politicians, and lawyers and compiled a group of names for Nate and I to consider.

(Song: "As Someday It May Happen" from The Mikado)

**As some day it may happen that a victim must be found,  
I've got a little list — I've got a little list  
Of society offenders who might well be underground,  
And who never would be missed — who never would be missed!  
There's the pestilential nuisances who write for autographs —  
All people who have flabby hands and irritating laughs —  
All children who are up in dates, and floor you with 'em flat —  
All persons who in shaking hands, shake hands with you like that —  
And all third persons who on spoiling *tête-à-têtes* insist —  
They'd none of 'em be missed — I've got them on the list!**

**Nate:** So, Who is our first applicant?

**M:** Candidate for Master's Degree in murder education... barber... oral surgeon

(Song: "Prologue" from Sweeney Todd)

**Attend the tale of Sweeney Todd.  
His skin was pale and his eye was odd.  
He shaved the faces of gentlemen  
who never thereafter were heard of again.  
He trod a path that few have trod  
did Sweeney Todd  
the demon barber of Fleet Street.**

At last, my arm is complete again!!

**Nate:** Next

**M:** Next... Another Londoner, special skills... petty theft, grand larceny, thumbscrew, and garotting.

(Song: "My Name" from Oliver!)

**Strong men tremble when they hear it!  
They've got cause enough to fear it!  
It's much blacker than they smear it!  
Nobody mentions...  
My name!**

**Rich men hold their five-pound notes out --  
saves me emptying their coats out.  
They know I could tear their throats out  
just to live up to...  
My name!**

**Wiv me  
Jemmy in me hand,  
Lemme see the man who dares  
Stop me  
Taking what I may.  
He can start to say his prayers!**

**Biceps like an iron girder,  
fit for doing of a murder,  
if I just so much as heard a**



**Bloke even whisper...**

My name!

**Nate:** What is his name?

(Song: "My Bill" from Carousel)

**M: Well he's just my Bill!**

**Nate:** Tax Identification Number Please.

**M:** Next. Orphan. Paradoxical. Rough.

**Nate:** Rough. Rough.

(Song: "Oh, Better Far to Live and Die" from The Pirates of Penzance)

**When I sally forth to seek my prey  
I help myself in a royal way.  
I sink a few more ships, it's true,  
than a well-bred monarch ought to do;  
but many a king on a first-class throne,  
if he wants to call his crown his own,  
must manage somehow to get through  
more dirty work than ever I do,**

**For I am the Pirate King-**

**Nate:** Next.

**M:** Well, he did turn out to be a nobleman after all...

Next up, a Politician... this should be promising

(Song: "Sidestep" from The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas)

**Ooo, I love to dance a little sidestep.  
Now they see me, now they don't. I've come and gone.  
Ooo, I love to sweep around a widestep,  
cut a little swath and lead the people on.**

Another professional.

(Song: "Dentist" from The Little Shop of Horrors)

Oh, shut up. Open Wide! Here I come!  
**I am your dentist,  
and I enjoy the career that I picked.  
I am your dentist  
and I get off on the pain I inflict!**

Over qualified.

(Song: “Lonely Room” from Oklahoma!)

**The door creaks...**

**Nate:** Next.

(Song: “The Phantom of the Opera” from The Phantom of the Opera)

**M: I am your angel of music.**

**Nate:** Next.

Now, you can never underestimate the mouse, or the female applicants.

(Song: “Cruella De Vil” from Disney’s 101 Dalmatians!)

**The curl in her lips, the ice in her stair,  
all innocent children had better be ware.  
She's like a spider waiting for the kill.  
Look out for Cruella De Vil.**

**At first you think Cruella is a devil,  
but after time has worn away the shock  
you come to realize  
you've seen her kind of eyes  
watching you from underneath a rock.**

**This vampire bat, this inhuman beast,  
She ought to be locked up and never released.  
The world was such a wholesome place until  
Cruella, Cruella De Vil.**

You know, not even the holidays are safe.

(Song: “You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch” from The Grinch Who Stole Christmas)

**You're a mean one, Mr. Grinch.  
You really are a heel.**

**You're as cuddly as a cactus,  
you're as charming as an eel.  
Mr. Grinch.**

**Nate:** he's looking for seasonal work only it says.

**M:** But there's one that especially caught my eye.

(Song: "There's A Sucker Born Every Minute" from Barnum)

Barnum's the name. P.T. Barnum, and whether you think my humbug is a blessing or a curse, you're still gonna buy it. Why? Because every sixty seconds a delightful phenomenon takes place which absolutely guarantees it!

**There is a sucker born every minute.  
Each time the second hand sweeps to the top  
like dandelions up they pop.  
Their ears so big, their eyes so wide,  
and though I feed 'em bonafide baloney  
with no truth in it,  
why you can bet I'll find some rube to buy my corn.  
'Cause there's a sure-as-shooting sucker born a minute,  
and I'm referrin' to the minute you was born.**

**Each blessed hour brings sixty of 'em.  
Each time the wooden cuckoo shows his face  
another sucker takes his place,  
and plunks his quarter on the line  
to buy my brand of genuine malarkey.  
God bless and love 'em!  
But don't feel sad or hoppin' mad or cause a scene,  
'cause there's as sure-as-shooting sucker born a minute,  
But Ma'am you mighta been the minute in between.**

**If I allow that right here in my hands  
the smallest living human man,  
the sight of that is surely worth a dime.  
If I present an educated pooch  
who's trained to dance the hoochie cooch,  
what better way to waste a bit of time.  
If I import, at monumental cost,  
a lady, fair, who's head was lost,  
while crossing railroad tracks to pick some zinnias,  
who eats farina through a hose  
and wares pink tights instead of clothes.  
If that ain't worth a buck, my name ain't Phineas!**

**Aw, you say “that’s hog wash”. Well, who cares,  
you’ll buy my hog was long as**

**there’s a sucker born every minute.  
Each time the second hand sweeps to the top,  
like dandelions up they pop.  
Their ears so big, their eyes so wide,  
and though my tale is bonafide baloney,  
just let me spin it.  
There ain’t no man who can resist me wait and see,  
‘Cause there’s a sure-as-shooting sucker born a minute,  
And friends the biggest one excluding none is me!**

As it turns out, I can’t hire Mr. Barnum for his amazing ethics.

**Nate:** Telegram.

**M:** Oh, God.

Dear Samael,  
From my study of the scriptures, becoming the being known as Lucifer was a  
monumental task that God assigned to you, as you are the only Archangel strong enough  
to survive the ravages of a Hellish station.

This burden, to live as an exile within the Flames of Perdition until the End-time, will be  
revealed when, as a reward for my service, God will accept me back into the rank of angels and  
reinstate me to my full power and station as Archangel.

(Song: “Is This What You Call Love” from Passion)

**Is this what you call love?  
This endless and insatiable  
smothering,  
pursuit of me?  
You think that this is love?  
I’m sorry that you’re lonely.  
I’m sorry that you want me as you do.  
I’m sorry that I fail to feel the way you wish me to feel.  
I’m sorry that you’re ill,  
I’m sorry you’re in pain,  
I’m sorry that you aren’t beautiful,  
but yes I’d wish you’d go away and leave me alone.  
Everywhere I turn there you are.  
This is not love but some kind of obsession.  
Will you never learn when too far is too far?**

**Have you no concern for what I feel what I want?  
Love is what you earn and return  
when you care for another so much that the other's set free.  
Don't you see; can't you understand?  
Love's not a constant demand; it's a gift you bestow.  
Love isn't sudden surrender; its tender and slow,  
it must grow.**

**Yet every where I go  
you'll appear or I know you are near.  
This is not love, just a needful possession.  
Call it what you will; this is not love, this is the reverse,  
like a curse, something out of control.  
I've begun to fear for my soul.**

So, I'm stuck here, but at least you can always find me..

(Song: "I'll Be Here" from The Wild Party)

**When you cry, I can hold you.  
When you fall, shed no tear.  
When you lose your light in the naked night,  
I'll be here.  
I'll be here.**

**When you fail, I can soothe you.  
No more harm, no more fear.  
On the coldest climb, to the end of time,  
I'll be here.  
I'll be here.**

**I'll be standing by trying to comfort,  
hoping I am enough.  
I'll be flying high crying myself into happiness  
I've never known;  
a life I thought I'd never own.**

**Maybe I've been dreaming and this moment isn't real.  
How else can I explain this power that I feel?**

**You can run, I'll forgive you.  
I'm the one you can call.**

**I will need you.  
I will feed you.  
I will lead you to the clear.**

**I'll be here.  
I'll be here.**

(Song: "Those Were the Good Old Days Reprise" from Damn Yankees)

**I was so contented when prisons were invented,  
and the ones with gallows set my heart ablaze.  
I was burning with pride the day Bonnie met Clyde.  
Ha, ha, ha! Those were the good old days.**

**I'd doze by the fireside dreaming of Cyanide,  
never a worry or a care;  
and how can one measure, the infinite pleasure,  
of dreaming of the electric chair.**

Some people found it shocking.

**And in the aisles I'd lay 'em with arson and with mayhem;  
it's a hammy routine but it always plays.  
And my favorite encore was the hundred-year war!  
Ha, ha, ha, ha! Those were the good old days!  
I'd gladly sail the seven seas, for just one reprise  
of those good old days!**

## **APPENDIX B: TECHNICAL SHEET**

### **Intermission Music**

Nicholas Wuehrmann had us choose about ten minutes worth of music for an intermission between cabarets. I chose three songs that played to about ten minutes perfectly so that I could start right at the end of the third piece. My selections were as follows.

- 1) “Bring Me To Life” by Evanescence
- 2) “Are You There?” From the Musical Bare
- 3) “Unacceptable” by Maroon 5

### **Visual Inspiration**

To present Chris Hill and Andrew Wallace, lighting and set designers respectively, with an idea for the imagery of The Dark Side of the Tune, I gave them both the complete seasons of the HBO series “Carnivale”. Set in the American dustbowl, it was a time when carnival acts were enjoyed yet feared as gypsies, tramps, and thieves.

### **Set Pieces**

- 1) Desk
- 2) Chair
- 3) Trunk
- 4) Three Carnival Posters

### **Props**

- 1) Glass (filled with potion)
- 2) Bowler
- 3) Jimmy (Billy Club)
- 4) Feather Boa
- 5) Grinch Christmas Hat
- 6) Typewriter
- 7) Telegrams 1 & 2
- 8) Letter Opener

### **Costume**

- 1) Red Dress Shirt
- 2) Tan Striped Slacks
- 3) Red Vest
- 4) Dinner Jacket
- 5) Lab Coat (Opening Number)
- 6) Grinch Hat
- 7) Feather Boa

### **Make-Up**

Crazed out hair, and darkened eyes, as if to represent a scientist who hasn't slept in days being on the verge of discovering something world changing.



## **APPENDIX C: COMMITTEE CHAIR RESPONSE**

**MFA Thesis Response**  
***Michael Biggs Solo Cabaret***  
***“The Dark Side of the Tune”***

***Submitted by Earl D. Weaver, Committee Chair***

I attended the Tuesday, April 17, 2007 performance of “The Dark Side of the Tune,” a one-man thesis performance project by Michael Biggs. It was presented at the News-Journal Performing Arts Center in Daytona Beach. This presentation was the final culmination of months of research and rehearsal as Michael’s thesis project.

The performance piece was an exploration of villains used in the musical theatre genre. As well, Michael strategically interpolated villains from other sources of literature, which assisted him in thrusting his storyline forward. It was a clever and intelligent mixture of characters represented in monologue and song styling. The script led the audience through several unexpected twists and turns, which enhanced the entertainment value of the evening.

Michael’s success in the piece came with the variety of characters manifested in different physical forms. His use of movement and dance technique allowed him to easily maneuver from one person to the next. This was colored with vocal variety in speech as well, which made it easy for an audience to follow his transformations. The only character transformation that did not work for me was from Dr. Hyde at the beginning into the Emcee singing “Wilkommen” from “Cabaret”. Beginning a performance piece with such a villain as Dr. Hyde establishes a high precedent for other villains to exceed, and the Emcee didn’t do that for me. What would have been more interesting to me would have been to encounter Dr. Hyde singing “Wilkommen,” which could have carried more weight into the rest of the characters.

Most of the Michael’s singing work was rich and full. When he was working in his lower to middle range, he utilized his breath support to sustain his vocal tone and stay on pitch. He wasn’t as successful when he was required to sing in his upper register. Michael is more successful when he doesn’t push too hard and fully executes his breath control. I was amazed, however, that he had any breath at all after tackling “There is a Sucker Born Every Minute” from “Barnum.” That number was quite demanding physically, yet he managed to maintain clear articulation and vocal attack so we didn’t lose any of the words.

The structure of this piece is quite unique and not like any cabaret show I’ve ever seen. With some tightening and editing, it certainly could be an entertainment Michael could tour. It has a good mix of fun characters, entertainment value, and interesting musical perspective that displays Michael’s unique sense of humor and understanding of musical theatre repertoire. I would strongly encourage him to continue shaping the show.

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