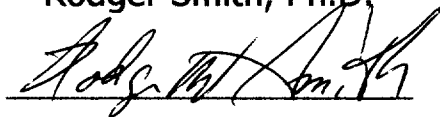


Days Ahead: An Actor's Preparation

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by Tonya Wathen

**Thesis Advisor
Rodger Smith, Ph.D.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rodger M. Smith", written over a horizontal line.

Ball State University

Muncie, Indiana

4/5/99

SpColl
Thesis
LD
2489
.Z4
1999
.W38

ABSTRACT

A question which plagues many seniors as they prepare to graduate is: "What next?" They wonder if they are really prepared to enter the "real world" as a working adult. As a theatre student, this question is even more volatile. Theatre is a highly unstable profession. Therefore, I have used my honors thesis to better prepare myself to succeed in that profession. I have asked myself what I will need beyond the performance skills and techniques I have learned in class, and set out to acquire those things. What follows, then, represents the culmination of a semester spent making those final preparations for the "real world" of the actor: a high quality headshot and resume, a sample cover letter, a five year plan (including goals and how to accomplish them), a tentative budget for the coming year, a strong repertoire of audition material (four monologues and fourteen songs), a musical theatre audition tape, and a database for contacts and mailings.



Tonya Wathen

Tonya J. Wathen

Ht: 5'7" / Wt: 115 / Eyes: Blue / Hair: Red / Voice: Mezzo-Soprano
Permanent Phone: [REDACTED]

Theatre

Grease	Marty/ Dance Captain	Galveston Island Outdoor Musicals
Anything Goes	Chastity/ D.C./ Erma (U.S.)	G.I.O.M
Hello Dolly	Ensemble/ D.C.	G.I.O.M
Cinderella	Ensemble/ D.C./ Queen (U.S.)	G.I.O.M
Noises Off	Brooke/Vicki	Ball State University Theatre
A Chorus Line	Dancer	Miami Valley Dinner Theatre
Oleanna	Carol	The Cave Theater
Talking With...	Twirler	Strother Theater
The Club	Patrick	Strother Theater
Joseph... Dreamcoat	Mrs. Potiphar/ Dance Captain	Middletown Summer Theatre
Jesus Christ Superstar	Ensemble	Ball State University Theatre
Boy Stuff, Girl Stuff	Karaline	Strother Theater
High Class Vaudeville	Katy Broome	Strother Theater
Medea	Dancer	Ball State University Theatre
The Secret Garden	Nurse	Ball State University Theatre

Education

Ball State University - Graduated summa cum laude with a B.S. in Musical Theatre - 1999

Training

Dance: Ballet - LouAnn Young, Jazz/ Tap - Michael Worcel, Modern - Sarah Mangelsdorf

Voice: Ayumi Nakamae

Acting: Beth Turcotte, Kathy Biesinger, Rodger Smith

Lessac Voice Training: Erica Tobolski

"Singers on Stage" Workshop: Bill Reed

Special Skills

Dance Captain, Gymnastics, In-line skating, Puppeteering, Irish accent, Swimming, Volley Ball, Driving (Automatic), OH Driver's License.

Five Year Plan



Economic Goals

Year 1: Break even without burning myself out (in other words, earn enough income to cover expenses)

In order to accomplish this goal, I will have to:

1. Work steadily at least 40 hours a week
2. Find an alternate source of income to supplement my day job (ie. catering, etc.)
3. Dip slightly into bond money only if necessary
4. Take full advantage of every opportunity to make extra money rather than lazily letting things slide
5. Borrow a little bit of money from my parents

Year 2: Earn enough money to be able to start paying my parents back

1. Continue steady work
2. Maybe find a higher paying job, or work hard enough to get a raise

Year 3: Earn enough money to finish paying my parents back and save some money

Year 4: Have enough money put away that I can comfortably make an extra trip home to visit

Year 5: Earn enough professionally that my day job is only supplemental income

1. Attend every audition possible
2. Keep up contacts (ie. letters, email, etc.)

Training Goals

Year 1: Find a strong voice teacher who does belt, mix, and legit. training.

1. Ask friends for references
2. Look in Backstage
3. Talk to and try new teachers until I find one with whom I click (don't settle for the first person who comes along if not comfortable)

Improve tap skills

1. Attend at least one tap class a week

Improve emotional commitment and vulnerability in acting

1. Find a good acting class
2. Work on my own with monologues at least once a week

Year 2: Develop a strong, consistent belt/mix voice

1. Take regular voice lessons
2. Do voice exercises every day
3. Practice music regularly

Maintain good, solid ballet technique

1. Attend ballet class twice a week

Year 3: Expand horizons

1. Be open to new and different opportunities (workshops, nonpaying gigs, etc.)
2. Search new and different opportunities

Professional Goals

Year 1: Make final callbacks for a professional show

1. Attend as many auditions as possible
2. Get good quality headshots, resumes, postcards
3. Keep in touch with contacts
4. Make bold choices and commit fully to those choices in every audition situation

Year 2: Get cast in a professional show (preferably a tour)

1. Keep up same habits created in year 1
2. Do nonpaying shows if possible to be seen

Year 3: Do a role other than chorus work

1. Keep up on training
2. Push myself to apply acting skills and techniques to songs and dance as well
3. Do homework!

Year 4: Work steadily (performing) for the duration of the year

1. Push myself to really search out work (auditions, mailings, etc.)
2. Do consistent mailings, follow-ups
3. When I am working, show full dedication and commitment (give 110%)

Year 5: Consider Equity card

1. Earn enough points to be eligible

Consider getting an agent

1. Research a lot!

Spiritual Goals

Year 1: Find a church I like and am comfortable attending

1. Look up churches in my area
2. Try different ones every week until I find one
3. Really make the effort to become part of the community by participating in events, volunteering, talking to people, etc.
4. Be open minded and give each church a chance

Stay close with family

1. See my family at least twice (Christmas and one other)
2. Save money whenever possible for travel
3. Make the time
4. Call once a week

Year 2: Maintain focus and center

1. Make time for quality "me time" (whenever needed)
2. Find 10 minutes of down time every day
3. Remember to pray and thus actively keep God in my life

Year 3: Maintain a good relationship with God

1. Go to church every Sunday possible
2. Pray regularly
3. Try to follow His calling
4. Remember to see Him in all the little things

Year 4: Get home to visit one more time than previous years

1. Save whatever money I can for trips
2. Make the time
3. Plan ahead!!!

Year 5: Take a good look at where I am and determine if I have followed the right path, and where I need to go from there

Physical Goals

Maintain weight at 120 lbs.

1. Exercise 3-5 times/week
2. Find a gym or aerobics classes in which to work out
3. Limit alcohol
4. Eat sensibly and healthily

Keep a flat stomach and definition

1. Do sit-ups every day
2. Limit fat intake

Maintain strong, healthy body in order to avoid injury or illness

1. Stretch regularly
2. Maintain a sensible diet
3. Do strength exercises (particularly for back)
4. Get good shoes if running, doing aerobics, etc.
5. Take vitamins regularly

Personal Goals

Feel safe and capable in my new home

1. Take a self-defense class
2. Get pepper spray or the like to carry with me
3. Find an apartment in "safe" neighborhood
4. Make sure to have good security
5. Learn to be aware

Build friendships

1. Make the effort to be sociable, go out when invited, etc.
2. Call and invite others to go out
3. Take a real active interest in friends' lives

Read a good book

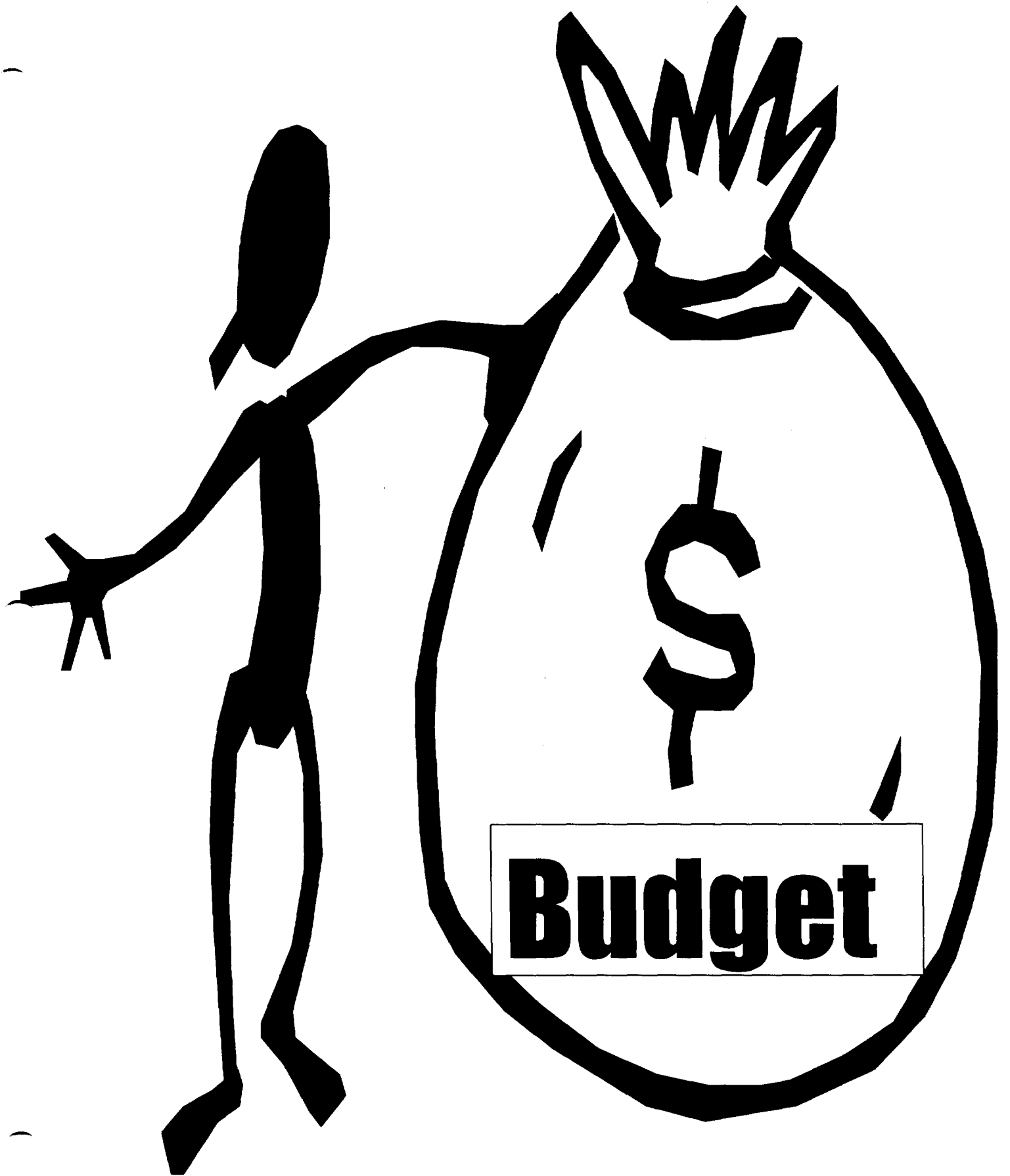
1. Make some time
2. Choose to read over T.V.

Keep in touch with out of town friends

1. Write at least one letter every week
2. Check email every other day or so

Learn more about American Musical Theatre and its history

1. Research shows in which I am involved
2. Read books, articles



Budget

Budget 1999-2000

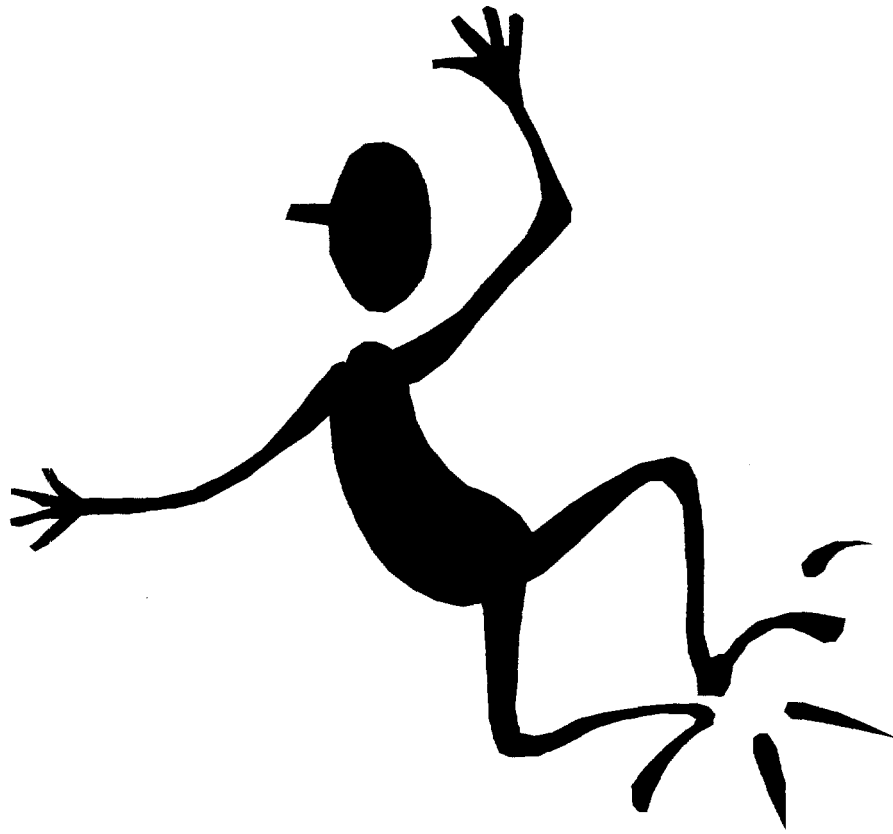
Economic Plan	Option 1	Option 2
Income:		
Investments	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Loans	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
Alternate income	\$ 5,720.00	\$ 2,600.00
Day Job	\$ 20,800.00	\$ 20,800.00
Professional		
SUB-TOTAL	\$ 34,020.00	\$ 29,900.00
Expenses:		
Pictures and Resumes	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Mailings of P/R	\$ 876.00	\$ 876.00
Other Advertising (cards, meals, tickets, reel)	\$ 730.00	\$ 730.00
Managers/Agents		
Dues		
Professional Literature	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
Clothes	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00
Food	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
Shelter	\$ 9,600.00	\$ 4,200.00
Phone (+voicemail)	\$ 576.00	\$ 576.00
Computer/Fax	\$ 60.00	\$ 60.00
Utilities	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
Moving Costs		
Insurance		
Loan Payments		
Training (workshops, classes)	\$ 4,440.00	\$ 5,160.00
Spiritual	\$ 300.00	\$ 500.00
Personal (Gym, Hair, Entert.)	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,300.00
Dance (clothes, shoes)	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
Taxes	\$ 8,752.00	\$ 7,722.00
Transportation	\$ 2,190.00	\$ 2,190.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
SUB-TOTAL	\$ 34,174.00	\$ 28,964.00
TOTAL	\$ (154.00)	\$ 936.00

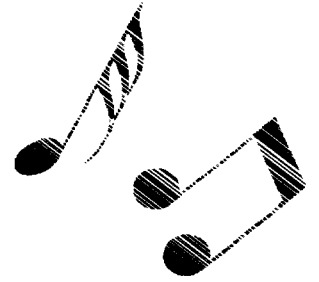


**Monologues
And Songs**

Acting Repertoire

Charity ... *Sweet Charity*
Rosalind ... *As You Like It* 5.3
Roxy ... *Chicago*
Arcadina ... *The Seagull*





Musical Theatre Repertoire

Someone Like You

The Bear, the Tiger, the Hamster and the Mole

Dance: Ten; Looks: Three

I've Been Here Before

No One is Alone

Much More

Someone Else's Story

Your Daddy's Son

Before I Gaze at You Again

How Could I Ever Know

I Don't Know How to Love Him

Heaven Help My Heart

Vanilla Ice-Cream

I Cain't Say No

Database



Tonya Wathen

SAMPLE

May 5, 1999

Uta Hagen
HB Studio
120 Bank St.
NYC, NY 10014

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my interest in your theatre. I am a dancer, actress, and singer who is looking for challenging and demanding work in the theatre. I think that HB Studio offers that kind of experience.

As a performer, I am highly dedicated to my craft. I will consistently give 110% in order to better myself and the show in which I am performing. I am a perfectionist and therefore strive for excellence in everything I do (realizing, of course, that there is no such thing as true perfection!) Furthermore, I graduated summa cum laude from Ball State University with a degree in Musical Theatre.

I have enclosed with this letter a headshot and resume for your perusal. You can reach me by voicemail at 123-4567 anytime. Thank you very much for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Tonya Wathen

Edge Studio
251 W. 30th St. Suite 9-fm
NY, NY 10001

The New Actors Workshop
259 W. 30th St., 2nd flr
NYC, NY 10001

N.E. Photo & Design
224 W. 30th St. 11th Fl.
NYC, NY 10001

Michael Howard Studios
Michael Howard
152 W. 25th St.
NYC, NY 10001

Peridance Center
132 4th Ave., 2nd Fl.
NYC, NY 10003

Stella Adler Conservatory of Acting
Stella Adler
419 Lafayette St.
NY, NY 100037033

Buckley Temporary Services
40 Exchange Place
NY, NY 10005

Message Bureau Inc.
80 Fifth Ave. Rm. 908
NYC, NY 10011

Musical Theatre Training Conservatory
18 West 18th St., 6th Fl.
NY, NY 10011

Gene Frankel Theatre & Film Wkshp.
24 Bond St.
NYC, NY 10012

Acting Class
David Gideon
111 Barrow St. #5A
NY, NY 10014

HB Studio
Uta Hagen
120 Bank St.
NYC, NY 10014

United Staffing
16 E. 40th St., 4th fl.
NY, NY 10016

Metropolitan Temporaries Inc.
110 E. 42nd St., Suite 802
NYC, NY 10017

Diversity Services
295 Madison Ave.
NY, NY 10017

J. Beninati Custom Laboratories
42 West 38th St.
NYC, NY 10018

East Coast Video
Mickey Koch
1650 Broadway
NYC, NY 10019

Broadway Dance Center
221 W. 57th St.
NY, NY 10019